



Benefits of sport for Indigenous wellbeing

Canberra Public Hearing 12:15pm

Professor Colin Tatz will appear before the House of Representatives Committee on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs on Thursday, 1 November to discuss the contribution of sport to Indigenous wellbeing and mentoring. Professor Tatz will speak to the Committee as an academic who has conducted research on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and sport for over 20 years.

Professor Tatz argues that participation in sport can reduce antisocial behaviour, pointing to examples of how sport reduces delinquency rates in rural and remote Australia. He is interested in how sport can prevent suicide in Indigenous populations, contending that sport can ameliorate suicidal behaviour. Professor Tatz suggests that a formal study should be conducted on how sport can affect youth suicide rates, in addition to ensuring that appropriate sporting programs are put in place in Indigenous communities.

Professor Tatz notes that the benefits of sport are not confined to playing and people can be meaningfully involved as scorers, umpires, organisers, managers and fund raisers. However, remote communities may face increased barriers to participation, such as a lack of sport facilities, sporting equipment, organised competitions, funding and appropriate role models.

The Committee Chair, Mr Shayne Neumann MP said, “This is the first public hearing on the Committee’s inquiry into the contribution of sport to Indigenous wellbeing and mentoring. The Committee will examine how sporting bodies can increase opportunities for Indigenous participation, including for Indigenous women and how non-government organisations can use sport as a vehicle to improve outcomes for Indigenous people. The Committee will look at how Indigenous sporting programs can contribute to Closing the Gap targets.”

“Sport has great potential to bring Indigenous communities together. The Committee looks forward to hearing Professor Tatz’s thoughts on how to improve current initiatives in this area.”

The hearing will be broadcast live from Committee Room 1R2, Parliament House, Canberra from approximately 12:15pm via: <http://www.aph.gov.au/live>.

For more information, see the Committee’s website at www.aph.gov.au/sport or contact the committee secretariat on **(02) 6277 4559**.

For media comment, please contact the Committee Chair Mr Shayne Neumann on (07) 3201 5300. **For background information**, contact the Committee Secretariat on (02) 62774559 or atsia.reps@aph.gov.au