



# **Australian Government**

AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO THE  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES STANDING  
COMMITTEE ON ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT  
ISLANDER AFFAIRS REPORT:  
*OUR LAND OUR LANGUAGES - LANGUAGE  
LEARNING IN INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES*

June 2013

**Australian Government response to the House of Representatives Standing Committee on  
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs report:**

***Our Land Our Languages: Language Learning in Indigenous Communities***

This is the Australian Government's response to the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs Inquiry into language learning in Indigenous communities, the *Our Land Our Languages* report, as tabled on 17 September 2012.

The Government acknowledges the importance of the committee's research into language learning in Indigenous communities, and the value of its findings on contributing to the maintenance, transmission and revitalisation of Indigenous languages into the future. The report highlights that languages are the foundation upon which the capacity to learn and interact productively with other people is built and that the use of Indigenous languages can assist in improving educational, vocational and economic outcomes for Aboriginals and Torres Strait Islanders. As stated in the report, greater recognition of Indigenous languages will have a positive impact on slowing their rapid decline in active usage, as well as improving self-esteem and identity of Indigenous Australians, assisting in all areas of closing the gap on Indigenous disadvantage and improving reconciliation outcomes.

The recently released National Cultural Policy - *Creative Australia* recognises the central role Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures have in our national life. The Government has demonstrated its commitment to preserving this culture through providing an additional \$13.983 million over four years as an extension of the Indigenous Languages Support program.

The Government recognises the success of Indigenous communities currently working to maintain and revive their language. As detailed in the *Our Land Our Languages* report this includes many and varied activities, which are currently supported through the Government's Indigenous Language Support program. Some of these activities highlighted in the report were:

- the Miromaa Aboriginal Language and Technology Centre, which is a leader in information technology language programs through the development and support of the Miromaa product
- the Papulu Appar-kari Language Corporation, which undertakes language revival and develops innovative language resources for the languages of the Barkly region in the Northern Territory including the use of language nests
- the Mirima Dawang Woorlabgerring Language Centre, which works extensively with children and produces a series of children's books in language, as well as conducting training workshops and produces a variety of quality educational materials and other resources for language work
- the Mabu Yawaru Ngan-ga Language Centre, which is increasing the number of people speaking and writing the Yawaru language through the teaching of Yawaru in schools, and
- the Yan-nhangu Dictionary project, creating a full colour Yan-nhngu dictionary/encyclopaedia/grammar and learner's guide to pass onto future generations.

The Government considers it has an important ongoing role in supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in giving their language life and building strong and sustainable learning environments for continued use, which is reflected in this response to the committee's recommendations.

Recommendation	Position	Response
<p>1 - Closing the Gap framework - The Committee recommends that the Commonwealth Government include in the Closing the Gap framework acknowledgement of the fundamental role and importance of Indigenous languages in preserving heritage and improving outcomes for Indigenous peoples.</p>	<p>Agreed</p>	<p>The Closing the Gap Framework currently acknowledges the fundamental role and importance of Indigenous culture in Closing the Gap through the National Integrated Strategy for Closing the Gap in Indigenous Disadvantage, and the Service Delivery principles for designing and delivering services for Indigenous people.</p> <p>The Australian Government will continue to work with state and territory governments on the National Indigenous Reform Agreement and the Closing the Gap agenda.</p>
<p>2 - Signage in Indigenous languages - The Committee recommends the Commonwealth Government include in the National Indigenous Languages Policy 2009 a commitment to support and progress signage of place names and landmarks in local Indigenous languages.</p>	<p>Agreed</p>	<p>The commitment to support and progress signage of place names and landmarks in local Indigenous languages will be included in the revision and update of the National Indigenous Languages Policy.</p>
<p>3 – Parliamentary recognition of Indigenous languages - The Committee recommends the Commonwealth Parliament demonstrate leadership in the recognition and valuing of Indigenous languages by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• considering how to incorporate Indigenous languages in the Parliament House building and in the operations of the Parliament, and</li> <li>• encouraging all Members of Parliament to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ be aware of and recognise the Indigenous language groups local to their electorate</li> <li>○ where, possible and appropriate, acknowledge traditional owners and utilise language names for places and landmarks,</li> <li>○ support schools and community groups in their area to recognise, value and where possible utilise Indigenous language names.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>Agreed</p>	<p>Response of the Speaker tabled 18 March 2013:</p> <p><i>When indigenous artefacts or references are used in Parliament House, including exhibitions relating to Indigenous affairs, accompanying signs or documents will be expressed in the relevant indigenous language or languages, in addition to English text.</i></p> <p><i>Further, the Speaker agrees that this recommendation should be referred to the Standing Committee on Procedure to consider how best to further respond to all the aspects raised by this recommendation.</i></p>

Recommendation	Position	Response
<p>4 - Languages policy action plan - The Committee recommends that the Commonwealth Government review and make publically available by March 2013 an updated action plan with clear goals, accountability and reporting requirements to implement its National Indigenous Languages Policy.</p> <p>The Committee further recommends that relevant Commonwealth Government agencies are required to report annually on outcomes of the action plan.</p>	<p>Agreed in Principle</p>	<p>The Australian Government recognises the need for an Action Plan to be developed to implement the National Indigenous Languages Policy (NILP).</p> <p>Since the release of the NILP in 2009 there have been significant changes, such as, the National Plan for School Improvement and outcomes arising from the development of the Australian Curriculum: Languages.</p> <p>In consultation with Indigenous languages stakeholders the Australian Government will review and update the NILP and develop an Action Plan to implement the Policy. The Policy and Action Plan will take into account the recommendations made in the <i>Our Land Our Languages – Language Learning for Indigenous Communities</i> report, outcomes from the second National Indigenous Languages Survey and the development of the Australian Curriculum: Languages and incorporate action through state/territory and local governments.</p> <p>It is anticipated the Policy and Action Plan will be available in late 2013.</p>
<p>5 - Increased funding for Indigenous Languages Support - The Committee recommends that the Commonwealth Government substantially increase ongoing funding for the Indigenous Languages Support program in the 2013-14 Budget.</p>	<p>Agreed</p>	<p>The Australian Government has committed to providing \$13.983 million over four years to develop community-driven language resources and activities, as an extension of the Indigenous Languages Support program.</p>
<p>6 - Torres Strait Islander funding eligibility - The Committee recommends that the Minister for the Arts amend the guidelines for the Indigenous Languages Support program to allow Torres Strait Islander applications to be considered for funding.</p>	<p>Agreed</p>	<p>The Australian Government supports the recommendation that will see funding for languages activities in the Torres Strait delivered through the Indigenous Languages Support (ILS) program.</p> <p>A languages project being piloted in the Torres Strait Islands is receiving funding support from the Australian Government. Outcomes from this activity, which is due to be finalised in June 2013, will inform future work in relation to the transition of funding support and the required changes to the guidelines.</p> <p>The Office for the Arts, responsible for the administration of the ILS program, is working with the Torres Strait Regional Authority on the implementation of this recommendation.</p>
<p>7 - Deductible Gift Recipient eligibility - The Committee recommends that the Commonwealth Government immediately amend the criteria for an organisation to be entered on the Register of Cultural Organisations to include a provision for Indigenous language-related projects to be endorsed as a Deductible Gift Recipient by the Australian Taxation Office.</p>	<p>Agreed</p>	<p>The Australian Government supports the implementation of this recommendation to amend the criteria for an organisation to be entered on the Register of Cultural Organisations and therefore gain endorsement as a Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR), to include organisations engaged in projects relating to Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages.</p>

Recommendation	Position	Response
<p>8 - Constitutional recognition of Indigenous languages - The Committee recommends that the Commonwealth Government support Constitutional changes to include the recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages, as recommended by the Expert Panel on Constitutional Recognition for Indigenous Australians.</p>	<p>Agreed in Principle</p>	<p>The Government is committed to pursuing meaningful constitutional change that unites the nation and reflects the hopes and aspirations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians.</p> <p>Successful constitutional change will not occur without the support of the majority of Australians. The Government agrees with the unanimous finding of the Expert Panel that a referendum should be held at a time when it has the most chance of success. The Government is committed to constitutional change to: recognise the unique history and culture of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples; reflect the nation’s fundamental belief in the importance of equality and non-discrimination by removing references to race; and acknowledge that additional effort is needed to help close the gap in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples’ disadvantage.</p> <p>On 28 November 2012, the Government introduced legislation acknowledging the unique and special place of our first peoples to build momentum for successful constitutional change. The introduction of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Recognition Bill 2012 is an important step towards achieving constitutional change to recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Section 3(3) of the Bill states “The Parliament, on behalf of the people of Australia, acknowledges and respects the continuing cultures, languages and heritage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.”</p> <p>The legislation includes a sunset date of two years to allow the campaign for constitutional change to continue to build momentum and will provide an impetus for a future parliament to reassess how the campaign is travelling and timing for a successful referendum.</p> <p>The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Recognition Bill was granted Royal Assent on 27 March 2013. This demonstrates Parliament’s support and commitment to constitutional recognition of Australia’s First Peoples.</p> <p>In the spirit of the bipartisanship needed for a successful referendum, the Government agreed with the Opposition to establish a Joint Select Committee on Constitutional Recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples. The Committee will assess levels of support for amending the Constitution and consider current proposals for constitutional change.</p> <p>The Government is investing \$10 million to help build public awareness and community support for change. This important work is being led by Reconciliation Australia, supported by a reference group of business and community leaders.</p>

Recommendation	Position	Response
<p>9 - United Nations declaration implementation plan - The Committee recommends that by March 2013 the Commonwealth Government develop and announce an implementation plan given its endorsement of the United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in 2009.</p>	<p>Noted</p>	<p>The Australian Government takes the Declaration seriously and acknowledges the principles of the Declaration as guiding standards to be pursued in a spirit of partnership and mutual respect.</p> <p>The Government recognises the importance of underpinning these efforts to close the gap with respectful relationships and is committed to building stronger relationships with Indigenous people based on mutual respect. This has been demonstrated by the Australian Government through the National Apology to Australia's Indigenous Peoples, in particular the Stolen Generations, funding support for the development of the National Congress of Australia's First Peoples, and work to progress the constitutional recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.</p> <p>The principles of the Declaration, particularly those relating to participation, economic and social development and rights, are in line with the Government's strategy to close the gap on disadvantage between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians. In particular the principle underlying Article 21 of the Declaration is to take effective measures to improve the economic and social conditions experienced by Indigenous peoples.</p> <p>In partnership with States and Territories, the Government is making an unprecedented effort to bring about long term positive outcomes for Indigenous Australians. The Government is holding itself accountable to the Australian people for achieving the targets to close the gap through the Prime Minister's Closing the Gap report which is tabled in Parliament annually.</p> <p>The six Closing the Gap targets relate to life expectancy, child mortality, education and employment. Much progress has been made to address Indigenous disadvantage in the years since the Closing the Gap framework was agreed to. The target for early childhood education will be met this year. The target for under-five mortality is on track to be met and progress to meet the Year 12 attainment target is ahead of schedule. Since the start of the National Partnership Agreement on Remote Indigenous Housing in 2009, more than 1550 new homes in remote communities have been built and more than 5156 have been significantly refurbished or rebuilt, already exceeding the national refurbishment target nearly two years ahead of schedule.</p>

Recommendation	Position	Response
<p>10 - Convention ratification review - The Committee recommends that, given Australia has not yet ratified the Convention for Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, the Commonwealth Government conduct a review of the potential benefits and implications of its ratification.</p>	<p>Noted</p>	<p>The Australian Government considers that current policies and practices already align with the spirit of the Convention for Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, for example, that the Government's current range of arts and cultural programs support and protect the Convention objectives. The Government will continue to monitor the benefits of the Convention to ensure policies and programs remain consistent with its objectives.</p>
<p>11 - Indigenous language learning in school - The Committee recommends the Commonwealth Government coordinate with the states and territories to announce dates for the implementation of Phase 2 of the Australian Curriculum.</p>	<p>Agreed in Principle</p>	<p>The Standing Council on School Education and Early Childhood (SCSEEC) has tasked Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) to develop an Australian Curriculum, which will include a <i>Framework for Aboriginal languages and Torres Strait Islander languages</i> and the cross-curriculum priority of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures.</p> <p>The importance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages and culture has been recognised in the development of the Australian Curriculum.</p> <p>The <i>Framework for Aboriginal languages and Torres Strait Islander languages</i>, to be completed by the end 2013, will elaborate on the diverse program types, content, and achievement standards related to each language, as well as the protocols that must be followed in decision-making in learning and teaching of Aboriginal languages and Torres Strait Islander languages.</p> <p>The Australian Curriculum cross curriculum priority of <i>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures</i> will be represented across all learning areas in ways that are appropriate to those areas to allow all young Australians the opportunity to gain a deeper understanding and appreciation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures, their significance for Australia and the impact these have had, and continue to have, on our world.</p> <p>Once ACARA has developed Phase 2 of the Australian Curriculum, it will bring it to the SCSEEC for consideration.</p>

Recommendation	Position	Response
<p>12 a) – Language Nests - The Committee recommends that the Office for the Arts, through the Indigenous Languages Support (ILS) program, prioritise funding for Language Nest programs throughout Australia.</p>	<p>Noted</p>	<p>The Australian Government recognises the important role Language Nests can play in some communities to aid in language revival, maintenance and transmission. Language Nest strategies are among the many useful activities that are currently funded through the Indigenous Languages Support program.</p> <p>It is important that support continues to be made available to the range of language revival and maintenance activities that communities are choosing to adopt in their language work, based on their assessment of what will be most effective given their social, geographic, economic and linguistic circumstances. Language Nest activities may not be the best approach to language revival, maintenance and transmission in every language situation in Australia.</p> <p>The Australian Government will continue to work with communities to assist them to make informed decisions about the methods of language revival, maintenance and transmission most suited to their language situation and to support capacity building in communities to enable them to deliver strong and effective language activities, including Language Nests.</p>
<p>12 b) The Committee further recommends that the Commonwealth Government give consideration to establishing Language Nest programs in early childhood learning centres and preschools as set up under National Partnership Agreements.</p>	<p>Noted</p>	<p>Early childhood education programs such as those delivered in early childhood learning centres and preschools as set up under National Partnership Agreement on Early Childhood Education is a state and territory government responsibility.</p> <p>Decisions about the nature of teaching and learning programs at preschools or kindergartens are matters for state and territory governments in collaboration with early childhood education peak bodies, individual services and local communities. Services that are subject to the National Quality Framework for Early Childhood Education and Care are required to operate in accordance with the nationally agreed Early Years Learning Framework.</p>



Recommendation	Position	Response
<p>13 - First language assessment - The Committee recommends that the Minister for Education work through the Standing Council on School Education and Early Childhood to develop protocols for mandatory first-language assessment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children entering early childhood education.</p>	<p>Noted</p>	<p>The delivery of early childhood education / preschool is primarily a state and territory government responsibility.</p> <p>Early childhood education providers who are subject to the National Quality Framework for Early Childhood Education and Care are required to implement the Early Years Learning Framework, which clearly identifies the importance of supporting children in the language(s) that they speak.</p> <p>Decisions about implementing a mandatory consistent first-language assessment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children entering preschool are a matter for state and territory governments in consultation with peak bodies and individual services. It is important that such decisions are taken as close to the community and service provider settings as possible, to ensure that any system of first-language assessment is implemented in a way that is sensitive to cultural and community needs.</p>
<p>14 – Bilingual education programs - The Committee recommends that the Commonwealth Government work with state and territory governments to provide adequately resourced bilingual school education programs for Indigenous communities from the earliest years of learning, where the child’s first language is an Indigenous language (traditional or contact).</p>	<p>Noted</p>	<p>The Australian Government is committed to working with education authorities to maximise the learning opportunities and life chances of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians and recognises the important role Indigenous language learning plays in some schools and communities.</p> <p>The Australian Government works with states and territories to give every Australian school student access to a high quality, high equity education, no matter where they live, where they go to school or their personal circumstances. This is a key priority under the Australian Government’s Education Reform Agenda.</p> <p>Decisions about how schools offer learning programs, including bilingual education, are matters for state and territory education authorities.</p>

Recommendation	Position	Response
<p>15 – NAPLAN alternative assessment tool - The Committee recommends that the Minister for Education work through the Standing Council on School Education and Early Childhood to develop a National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) alternative assessment tool for all students learning English as an Additional Language/Dialect.</p>	<p>Not Agreed</p>	<p>The purpose of the National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) is to identify whether all students have the literacy and numeracy skills and knowledge which provide the critical foundation for other learning and for their productive and rewarding participation in school and the community.</p> <p>The value of NAPLAN is that it provides reliable, comparable information on how students, schools and school systems are performing against national standards, including national minimum standards in each of the assessed areas.</p> <p>An alternative assessment tool is incompatible with the purpose of the NAPLAN assessments.</p> <p>As part of the NAPLAN test development process, the proposed test items undergo quality assurance that takes cultural background into account. In preparing the assessments, test developers must ensure NAPLAN tests are not culturally biased against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.</p>
<p>16 - Limited authority to teach - The Committee recommends the Minister for Education work through the Standing Council on School Education and Early Childhood and teacher training authorities to develop a national framework of flexible and accessible training for Indigenous people to gain limited authority qualifications to teach.</p>	<p>Agreed in Principle</p>	<p>The Australian Government is implementing a number of significant reforms designed to support and improve the quality of teaching in Australia.</p> <p>The Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership, in consultation with the states and territories, has led the development of a new nationally consistent system for teacher registration. This system includes a set of elements that are common to the registration processes and requirements of each state and territory within Australia.</p> <p>One of the agreed elements of teacher registration is an alternative authorisation to teach. Teacher regulatory authorities will be responsible for granting alternative authorisation to teach in their relevant state or territory. For example, in the Northern Territory there is a recognised pathway for Indigenous Assistant Teachers to obtain qualifications that would enable them to apply for alternative authorisation to teach, the Indigenous Assistant Teachers school-based ‘teacher training’ model. Alternative authorisation to teach includes a category aimed at addressing workforce shortages (individuals not eligible for registration as a teacher, but are offered employment in a school due to a specified teacher shortage).</p> <p>Australian Government representatives will draw this recommendation to the attention of the Standing Council on School Education and Early Childhood’s Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Working Group as it considers the development of a National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Educator Workforce Strategy under Action 33 of the <i>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Action Plan 2010-2014</i>.</p>

Recommendation	Position	Response
<p>17 - Indigenous language teacher training - The Committee recommends the Minister for Education work through the Standing Council on School Education and Early Childhood to develop incentives for teacher training institutions to offer Indigenous language teacher training, such as a limited authority qualification to teach.</p>	<p>Agreed in Principle</p>	<p>The Australian Government is implementing a number of significant reforms designed to support and improve the quality of teaching in Australia.</p> <p>The <i>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Action Plan 2010-2014</i> includes a number of national collaborative, systemic and local actions that address critical areas of teacher workforce development. These actions support the provision of core components of good practice in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education and the teaching of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in pre-service teacher education courses.</p>
<p>18 - Indigenous language teachers - training and career pathways - The Committee recommends that the Minister for Education work through the Standing Council on School Education and Early Childhood to develop strategies for training Indigenous language teachers to improve access to qualifications, full accreditation and career pathways as well as providing school support and mentorship where required.</p>	<p>Agreed in Principle</p>	<p>The <i>Smarter Schools – Improving Teacher Quality National Partnership</i> has driven and rewarded systemic reforms to improve the quality of teaching and leadership in Australian schools. These include: Indigenous Education Workforce Pathways and Indigenous teachers and school leaders’ engagement with community members.</p> <p>The More Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Teachers Initiative is a national program aimed at addressing the low numbers and retention rates of Indigenous teachers in schools. The initiative will identify factors that contribute to Indigenous people entering and remaining in teaching positions and the work currently being undertaken across jurisdictions to attract and retain Indigenous teachers, to identify gaps and determine future priority initiatives.</p> <p>If the Standing Council on School Education and Early Childhood found that the number of Indigenous language teachers in relevant schools constituted a skills shortage, the Minister for School Education, Early Childhood and Youth and the Minister for Tertiary Education, Skills, Science and Research could request that the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership consult with initial teacher education providers, teacher employer and teacher regulatory authorities on the provision of Indigenous language teacher training.</p>
<p>19 – Master-apprentice schemes - The Committee recommends that the Minister for Education work through the Standing Council on School Education and Early Childhood to give consideration to establishing master-apprentice schemes in schools to provide in-service support for Indigenous language teachers.</p>	<p>Agreed in Principle</p>	<p>The Australian Government has driven and rewarded systemic reforms to improve Indigenous education workforce pathways in Australian schools through the <i>Smarter Schools – Improving Teacher Quality National Partnership</i> and is seeking to address critical areas of teacher workforce development through the <i>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Action Plan 2010-2014</i>.</p> <p>States and territories are primarily responsible for the provision of teacher professional development in schools.</p>

Recommendation	Position	Response
<p>20 - Sharing language teaching resources - The Committee recommends that the Commonwealth Government amend the Indigenous Language Support (ILS) program funding criteria to ensure that language materials produced with ILS program support should, where practical and culturally appropriate, be available to be shared with schools and educational institutions as a teaching resource, with proper acknowledgment of its creators.</p>	<p>Agreed in Principle</p>	<p>The Australian Government recognises the need to make more Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander language resources available to be used as teaching tools and materials. The majority of resources currently produced from Indigenous Languages Support (ILS) activities are already being provided to schools and communities to access.</p> <p>Following the completion of the <i>Framework for Aboriginal languages and Torres Strait Islander languages</i> currently being developed by the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority, the Office for the Arts and the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations will work together to ensure ILS funded activities can be extended to meet the needs of Australian schools. Through this process, ILS funded resources which meet the education criteria may be incorporated into the “Teach, learn, share” online curriculum resource.</p> <p>The Government recognises the importance of keeping Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages and cultures strong by enabling and supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to continue to maintain, safeguard, manage, control and develop their Traditional Cultural Expressions. This will be supported by the Australian Government’s commitment to develop a domestic policy framework to protect Traditional Cultural Expressions.</p>
<p>21 - Compulsory EAL/D training for teaching degrees - The Committee recommends the Minister for Education take to the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) a proposal to include a compulsory component of English as an Additional Language or Dialect (EAL/D) training for all teaching degrees.</p>	<p>Agreed in Principle</p>	<p>The Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership is leading the development of a nationally consistent approach to the accreditation of initial teacher education programs which builds on existing processes and is pursuing the development of an English as an Additional Language or Dialect (EAL/D) resource for pre-service teachers.</p> <p>The Senior Officers National Network of Indigenous Education, established to support key decision-makers of Indigenous education and training, is managing the development of an EAL/D Online Professional Learning Resource Project which is jointly funded through Australian Government funded activity and jurisdictional contribution.</p> <p>Through Action 37 in the <i>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Action Plan 2010-2014</i>, education providers have agreed to consult with teacher registration boards to ensure that completion of core components on good practice in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education and the teaching of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, including those from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds, in pre-service teacher education courses are a condition of registration.</p>

Recommendation	Position	Response
<p>22 – In-service EAL/D and cultural awareness training - The Committee recommends the Minister for Education take to the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) a proposal that all teachers already working in schools in Indigenous communities be required to complete in-service EAL/D and cultural awareness training as part of mandatory professional development.</p>	<p>Agreed in Principle</p>	<p>The Australian Professional Standards for Teachers will be implemented nationally from 2013. These standards articulate increasing levels of knowledge, practice and professional engagement in teacher understanding of the impact that culture, cultural identity and linguistic background has on the education of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and the use of teaching strategies that are responsive to these.</p> <p>The Australian Government is also supporting the Teach Remote initiative, led by the National Alliance for Remote Indigenous Schools (NARIS), which includes the development of an English as an Additional Language or Dialect (EAL/D) resource aimed at better preparing new teachers and enhancing the skills of existing teachers in meeting the language learning needs of EAL/D learners in remote Indigenous schools.</p> <p>The Senior Officers National Network of Indigenous Education, established to support key decision-makers of Indigenous education and training, is managing the development of an EAL/D Online Professional Learning Resource Project which is jointly funded through Australian Government funded activity within the NARIS and jurisdictional contribution.</p> <p>Through Action 41 of the <i>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Action Plan 2010-2014</i>, education providers have agreed to deliver professional learning to teachers to ensure high levels of cultural and linguistic understanding and competencies to inform the best teaching strategies for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.</p>
<p>23 - Protocol on the use of Indigenous interpreting services - The Committee recommends that the Minister for Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs expedite the release of a protocol on the use of Indigenous interpreting services for all Commonwealth Government agencies. The Committee further recommends that the Commonwealth Government raise at Council of Australian Governments (COAG) the need for all states and territories to have similar protocols and ensure the use of competent interpreters when required.</p>	<p>Agreed in Part</p>	<p>A protocol on the use of Indigenous interpreting for all Australian Government agencies is being developed. The Hon Jenny Macklin MP, Minister for Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, Minister for Disability Reform has written to her Australian Government counterparts asking for the support of their portfolios in the further development and implementation of the protocol.</p> <p>Under the Stronger Futures National Partnership Agreement, the Australian and Northern Territory governments have agreed to develop a standard policy protocol on the appropriate use of interpreters in the Northern Territory.</p> <p>The Council of Australian Governments agreed under the National Partnership Agreement on Remote Service Delivery to the development of a national framework for the effective supply and use of Indigenous language interpreters by states, territories and the Commonwealth. Work is continuing on the development of the National Framework and it is expected to be completed in 2013. It is anticipated that the framework will include a requirement recommendation for jurisdictions to develop protocols on the use of Indigenous interpreters.</p>

Recommendation	Position	Response
<p>24 - National Indigenous Interpreter Service - The Committee recommends that the Commonwealth Government, in partnership with the states and territories, establish a national Indigenous interpreter service that is suitably resourced to service urban, regional and remote Australia.</p>	<p>Agreed in Principle</p>	<p>The Council of Australian Governments agreed under the National Partnership Agreement on Remote Service Delivery to the development of a national framework for the effective supply and use of Indigenous language interpreters by states, territories and the Australian Government. Work is continuing on the development of the National Framework and it is expected to be completed in 2013. A coordinated and long term approach will be needed to improve Indigenous interpreting in Australia.</p> <p>Each jurisdiction has responsibility for ensuring interpreting services are available to clients of their services. It is essential that state and territory governments also contribute to the establishment and development of interpreting services. The Australian Government is seeking this support and partnership through the National Framework.</p> <p>The Australian Government is investing to help develop the Indigenous interpreting sector, as well as in the use of interpreters on the ground, in the delivery of Australian Government services.</p> <p>The Northern Territory Aboriginal Interpreter Service received \$8.085m over three years under the Closing the Gap Northern Territory National Partnership Agreement and has received approximately \$1.3m per year from Attorney-General's Department over the last decade. The Australian Government is providing \$36.1m over ten years for capacity building the Northern Territory Aboriginal Interpreter Service as part of the Stronger Futures National Partnership Agreement with the Northern Territory Government</p> <p>In addition, the Government has:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provided \$900,000 to help established interpreting services in the in the central Australian regions of South Australia and Western Australia.</li> <li>• funded the Kimberley Interpreting Service since 2009, providing \$200,000 in 2012-13.</li> <li>• provided \$286,000 to the National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters to improve the capacity of the accreditation system to meet the needs of Indigenous interpreters.</li> </ul>

Recommendation	Position	Response
<p>25 – Interpreting in health and justice sectors - The Committee recommends that the Commonwealth Government put in place immediate measures to ensure access to Indigenous interpreting services in the health and justice sectors, while a competent and comprehensive interpreting service is being developed.</p>	<p>Noted</p>	<p>The Australian Government recognises that Indigenous people who require assistance communicating in English should have access to an interpreter so they can understand and be understood.</p> <p>State and territory governments are responsible for key elements of the health and justice systems and it is essential that they ensure interpreters are available to clients of services they fund. Recognising the need for a coordinated approach, the Australian Government is currently seeking support of jurisdictions to develop a National Framework for the supply and use of Indigenous language interpreters.</p> <p>The Australian Government provides funding to support free access to interpreters for Northern Territory law and justice and health agencies and Australian Government funded legal service providers.</p> <p>The Australian Government also funds the National Auslan Interpreter Booking and Payment Service which assists Deaf Auslan users attending eligible medical appointments. In the Northern Territory the Service assists hearing impaired Indigenous people with both medical and legal interpreting. Aboriginal people comprise about a quarter of all users of the Service in the Territory.</p> <p>The Australian Government funds Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Controlled Health Services to provide comprehensive primary health care which is culturally appropriate for Indigenous communities.</p>
<p>26 - Interpreter training - The Committee recommends the Commonwealth Government, as part of developing the national framework for the effective supply and use of competent Indigenous language interpreters and translators, allocate resourcing to provide Indigenous interpreters with accessible training to achieve paraprofessional and professional levels.</p>	<p>Noted</p>	<p>State and territory governments have responsibility for ensuring interpreting services are available to clients of their services, including by allocating resources to training.</p> <p>The Council of Australian Governments (COAG) has agreed under the National Partnership Agreement on Remote Service Delivery to the development a national framework for the effective supply and use of Indigenous language interpreters. Work is continuing on the development of the National Framework and it is expected to be completed in 2013. A coordinated and long term approach will be needed to improve Indigenous interpreting in Australia, in particular to build the supply of qualified and accredited practitioners.</p> <p>Australian Government investments to help develop the Indigenous interpreting sector, which include capacity building funding for activities such as training, are outlined in response to Recommendation 24.</p>

Recommendation	Position	Response
<p>27 - Accreditation funding - The Committee recommends the Commonwealth Government, in partnership with the state and territory governments, ensure dedicated and ongoing funding to the National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters (NAATI) for Indigenous language interpreter accreditation to paraprofessional and professional level.</p>	<p>Agreed in Principle</p>	<p>In June 2012, the Australian Government provided \$286,000 to the National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters to improve the capacity of the accreditation system to meet the needs of Indigenous interpreters. The project complements \$295,000 funding to the Authority from the Northern Territory Government to develop accreditation material in Northern Territory Indigenous languages.</p> <p>Accreditation is also being discussed with state and territory governments as part of the development of the National Framework for the effective supply and use of Indigenous language interpreters and translators.</p>
<p>28 – Dedicated Indigenous language archive - The Committee recommends that the Commonwealth Government include in the 2013-14 Budget increased resources for the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies to carry out the storage and digitisation of Indigenous language materials.</p>	<p>Noted</p>	<p>The Australian Government, through the Department of Industry, Innovation, Science, Research and Tertiary Education will undertake a review of the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS) that will examine the agency’s strategic direction, roles and functions against its legislative objectives, and whether current circumstances and demands warrant any changes in structure, governance and/or funding to equip AIATSIS to effectively undertake its mission.</p>
<p>29 – AIATSIS research funding - The Committee recommends the Commonwealth Government consult with the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies to determine an appropriate and sustainable funding model in order for it to recommence its research grants program in the 2013-14 Budget.</p>	<p>Noted</p>	<p>The Australian Government, through the Department of Industry, Innovation, Science, Research and Tertiary Education will undertake a review of the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS) that will examine the agency’s strategic direction, roles and functions against its legislative objectives, and whether current circumstances and demands warrant any changes in structure, governance and/or funding to equip AIATSIS to effectively undertake its mission.</p>



Recommendation	Position	Response
<p>30 – Archiving of ILS language material - The Committee recommends that the Indigenous Languages Support (ILS) program funding guidelines be amended to include a stipulation that a copy of any language materials developed by ILS funding recipients must be deposited with the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies' Library or Audio-Visual Archive.</p>	<p>Partially Agreed</p>	<p>The Australian Government agrees with the intent of this recommendation, but does not agree to the amendment of the Indigenous Languages Support (ILS) program funding guidelines to stipulation that a copy of any language materials developed by ILS funding recipients must be deposited with the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies' (AIATSIS) Library or Audio-Visual Archive.</p> <p>Material developed by communities to capture and pass on their languages are subject to the traditional laws and customs of the community and therefore moves to archive and preserve this material is a matter for the communities to decide.</p> <p>The direction by Government to archive this material into a mandated repository would be inappropriate. Such a mandate would contradict the cultural and copyright issues that need to be acknowledged. It is not the role of the ILS program to enforce the deposit of language material into the AIATSIS' Library or Audio-Visual Archive.</p> <p>The Government recognises the importance of keeping Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages and cultures strong by enabling and supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to continue to maintain, safeguard, manage, control and develop their Traditional Cultural Expressions. This will be supported by the Australian Government's commitment to develop a domestic policy framework to protect Traditional Cultural Expressions.</p>