Joint Select Committee on Cyber-Safety

Chair: Senator Catryna Bilyk
Deputy Chair: Alex Hawke MP

Cyber-Safety Committee presents final report

Parliament's Cyber-Safety Committee has called for a wide ranging inquiry into how Indigenous Australians are accessing and using the internet, in the report of its inquiry into Issues Surrounding Cyber-Safety for Indigenous Australians which has been tabled in Parliament.

The committee found that many Indigenous Australians, particularly those who live in remote regions, lack access to the internet for various reasons.

As most non-Indigenous Australians gain internet access and go online, people who do not have internet access are at particular risk of being left behind.

The committee's brief inquiry into issues surrounding cyber-safety for Indigenous Australians concluded that a far-reaching inquiry should be conducted during the next parliament to investigate all aspects of ICT access and use by Indigenous Australians.

Where internet access is available, research suggests that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders are even more enthusiastic users of the technology than the mainstream community, demonstrating the importance technology can play in maintaining Indigenous social networks.

 "The Committee took evidence that smartphones best suit the needs of many Indigenous people who require a transportable internet platform. This allows for individual management and prepayment of bills while avoiding shared bills in households," chair Senator Catryna Bilyk said.

Submissions to the inquiry also identified an urgent need to raise digital literacy among Indigenous Elders and other seniors to help them to manage mobile enabled cyber-bullying and other threats in remote communities.

"The relative newness of the technology and lack of digital literacy amongst older people makes it difficult for Elders and others in community leadership positions to respond effectively to cyber-safety issues in remote communities."

For further information on the inquiry visit the committee's website: www.aph.gov.au/cybersafety-indigenous or phone the Secretariat on (02) 6277 4202.

For media comment: please contact the Committee Chair, Senator Catryna Bilyk on (03) 6229 4444 or 0419 694 512

For further information: please contact the Secretariat on (02) 6277 4202