



# Closing the gap for Indigenous Australians

The final public hearing of an inquiry into developing Indigenous enterprises will be held this Thursday 25th September in Parliament House, Canberra, with appearances by two key organisations which work in different but complementary ways to close the gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians.

Appearing before the House of Representatives Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs Committee, Indigenous Business Australia (IBA) and Reconciliation Australia will outline the work they are doing to promote Indigenous business, governance and leadership.

IBA, through IBA Enterprises, assists Indigenous Australians to establish, acquire and grow small to medium businesses through business loans and business support services, which include business planning, business-related skills development and mentoring.

This will be the second appearance of IBA, “recognising the pivotal role they play in the development of Indigenous enterprises across Australia,” Committee Chair Richard Marles said.

“We’ve heard from many participants about the role IBA plays in developing their business as well as the assistance that IBA offers to those who provide business support services to Indigenous Australians wanting to start their own business,” he said.

The Committee will also hear from Barbara Livesey, Chief Executive of Reconciliation Australia, the peak national organisation building and promoting reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians for the wellbeing of the nation.

Reconciliation Australia forms partnerships with corporations, Indigenous and non-Indigenous organisations, government and community groups, as well as individuals.

“The Committee has travelled across Australia and heard evidence from a wide range of participants, ranging from Indigenous business sole traders in Darwin to an overseas delegation of major global organisations,” Mr Marles said.

“It is fitting that the final public hearing of the inquiry will feature two key organisations which are working to make a difference to the everyday life of Indigenous Australians.”

## **Public hearing for Thursday 25 September 2008 in Committee Room 2R2 Parliament House**

The hearing will be webcast (audio only) on: <http://webcast.aph.gov.au/livebroadcasting/>

**12.15pm Indigenous Business Australia**

**12.45pm Reconciliation Australia**

Further details on the inquiry can be obtained from the Committee’s website at <http://www.aph.gov.au/atsia>.

For **media comment**, please contact the Committee Chair, Mr Richard Marles MP, on 02 6277 4330 (Canberra) or 03 5221 3033 (Electorate Office).

For **background information**, please contact the Committee Secretariat on (02) 6277 4559 or by email at [atsia.reps@aph.gov.au](mailto:atsia.reps@aph.gov.au)