



## Indigenous language interpreting services a focus for languages inquiry

Indigenous language interpreting will be the focus of tomorrow's public hearing of the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs' inquiry into language learning in Indigenous communities.

The Committee will hear from the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA), the lead agency responsible for developing the National Framework for the effective supply and use of Indigenous language interpreters. Representatives of FaHCSIA, the Department of Human Services and the Attorney-General's Department will discuss the practical experiences of accessing and using interpreters in government engagement activities and in service delivery.

The National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters (NAATI) is the national standards and accreditation authority for translators and interpreters in Australia. NAATI advises governments and agencies about best practice in translating and interpreting. It is currently working with the Department of Human Services to improve the availability of accredited Indigenous interpreters.

For many Indigenous Australians, English is a second, third, or fourth language. Indigenous people who require assistance communicating in English should have access to an interpreter. The Committee has heard that Indigenous interpreting services are lacking particularly in areas such as the health sector and justice systems.

The Chair of the Committee Mr Shayne Neumann MP said "The Committee will be interested to hear about measures being undertaken to improve Indigenous language interpreting services across Australia. This is an area that has been lacking attention for many years. Attracting, training and retaining Indigenous language interpreters is essential to strengthen inclusion and participation in Australian society.

It is important that we continue to build the capacity of Indigenous language interpreting services. Indigenous interpreting services are an essential part of governments' ability to engage with communities and to provide effective services."

The hearing will be broadcast live from Committee Room 1R2, Parliament House, Canberra from 12:00noon on Thursday 15 March via:

<http://webcast.aph.gov.au/livebroadcasting/>

Information about the inquiry including the program can be found at the inquiry's website: [www.aph.gov.au/languages](http://www.aph.gov.au/languages)

**For media comment**, please contact the Committee Chair Mr Shayne Neumann on (02) 6277 4755.

**For background information**, contact the Committee Secretariat on (02) 62774559 or [atsia.reps@aph.gov.au](mailto:atsia.reps@aph.gov.au)