



Education and employment pathways leading to reduced incarceration of Indigenous youth

The House of Representatives Standing Committee on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs will hold a public hearing with representatives of the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) on Thursday 17 June as part of its inquiry into the high level of involvement of Indigenous juveniles and young adults in the criminal justice system.

DEEWR is responsible for early childhood education, schooling, and employment participation, and will discuss the links between poor educational outcomes and high levels of contact with the criminal justice system. Unemployment is also a correlating factor for young Indigenous people involved in the criminal justice system.

However, Indigenous people face documented disadvantages in the education system and in employment participation. The Committee will discuss with DEEWR how education and employment pathways for young Indigenous people can be more effective and accessible.

The Hon Bob Debus MP, Committee Chair, said, “Incarcerated Indigenous males are less likely to have completed year 10 than their peers in the general population. The Committee has repeatedly heard evidence at public hearings around the country that education plays a vital role in promoting positive social engagement and deterring future involvement in the criminal justice system. Addressing the Schooling and Economic Participation Building Blocks of the Closing the Gap policy will in turn contribute to improving the Safe Communities Building Block.”

Public hearing program:

12.15pm, Thursday 17 June 2010

Committee Room 1R2

Parliament House, Canberra

Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations

To listen to the public hearing on your computer, go to <http://webcast.aph.gov.au/livebroadcasting/>

For background information, contact the Committee Secretariat on (02) 62774559 or atsia.reps@aph.gov.au or see the Committee’s website at <http://www.aph.gov.au/atsia>