



Shopping in the Central Desert –inquiring into remote community stores

The House of Representatives Standing Committee on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs will next travel to the Northern Territory to visit remote Papunya and then Alice Springs, the second largest town in the Territory, and shopping central for the Arrente in remote communities across the Central Desert.

Papunya is a small remote community roughly 240 km northwest of 'Alice'. It is populated by the Pintubi and Luritja tribes, forcibly displaced from their traditional lands in the 1930s. Papunya is now world famous for its Papunya Tula art - traditional dot painting. It is less well known for its large and well stocked community store.

The Committee is pleased to visit Papunya where it will inspect the store then hold a formal hearing and a community meeting outside the Shire Office. In Alice Springs the next day Darryl Pearce of the Lhere Artepe Aboriginal Corporation will open a full day of public hearings on behalf of the traditional owners of Mparntwe, as Alice Springs is known to the Central Arrente.

Chairman of the Committee Mr Richard Males MP stated:

“The visit to Papunya and Arrente country will give the Committee the opportunity to consult directly with local people and their representatives about their health needs and expectations, as well as to investigate opportunities for them to improve food security and well being with expert partners.”

In its hearings in Alice Springs, the Committee will hear from key stakeholders including Outback Stores and from Ninti Corporate Services who supply and manage store networks.

The Naganampa Health Council and the Ngaanyatjarra Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara (NPY) Women's Council will report on Anangu health and the Mai Wiru (Good Food) store policy developed for the Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara (APY) Lands, where the Committee travels the next day.

The Committee will also consult with Desert Knowledge CRC, Centre Farm Aboriginal Horticulture Ltd and the Centre for Appropriate Technology, bodies which work to improve and diversify food production and energy supplies in remote communities.

Public hearings and meetings –Monday 27 April 2009 & Tuesday 28 April 2009

27 April Papunya — Store inspection, public hearing & community meeting
3.00pm to 5.30pm

28 April Alice Springs — Public hearings – 9.00am and 5.15pm *see overleaf*

For media comment, please contact the Committee Chair Mr Richard Marles on (03) 5221 3033 **For background information**, contact the Committee Secretariat on (02) 62774559 or atsia.reps@aph.gov.au