

From: Brad Parnes
Sent: Friday, 8 April 2005 2:20 PM
To: Committee, ATSIA (REPS)
Subject: Inquiry into Indigenous Employment

Cheryl Scarlett,
Inquiry Secretary
Standing Committee on Aboriginal
And Torres Strait Islander Affairs
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

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BY: ATSIA

8 April, 2005

Dear Madam,

Re: Inquiry into Indigenous Employment

We wish to acknowledge receipt of your letter dated 24 March, 2005 and would like to take this opportunity to introduce our company, The Rainbow Serpent. A family owned and operated business which has been trading successfully as a specialty retailer of authentic Aboriginal art, craft and design for 14 years. We have seven Aboriginal art and craft stores located at Sydney and Brisbane International Airports and an office and warehouse in Marrickville, Sydney.

We note that the Standing Committee on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs is committed to developing business and employment opportunities for Indigenous people in order to increase their economic independence. Further that the Government places strong emphasis on working with employers to generate job opportunities for Indigenous people in the private sector and supporting the growth of Indigenous small business.

We see a great opportunity to grow our business and become a real national brand and believe that there would be great benefits and synergy in forming a partnership with Indigenous, Cultural and Economic programs initiated by the Government. There is an opportunity for the Government and indigenous Australia to invest in a company with a solid trading history required to operate and administer such a significant Aboriginal retail enterprise.

As the Inquiry Secretary for the Standing Committee on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs, there could be many benefits for the government to invest in our Aboriginal Art and Craft business.

- Employment opportunities for Aboriginals and Torres Strait Islanders
- Increase economic benefit for indigenous artists.
- Provide training opportunities and cultural education
- Encourage the growth and prosperity of cultural industries
- Protect the rights of artists and the integrity of Indigenous art
- Promote general awareness of indigenous culture

We work at a grass roots level with Aboriginal artists and Indigenous family businesses as well as community art centres from all parts of Australia and it has been our long term vision to ultimately establish an even more significant partnership with Indigenous Australia.

Aboriginal people would benefit most from a potential joint venture through employment and training opportunities, maintaining and strengthening cultural values and ensuring that Australia's Indigenous art sector continues to flourish and excel.

Attached please find a promotional book about our company and our wholesale sales catalogue that we hope will provide you with a deeper insight into our business.

We would be happy to provide you with more information if required and discuss the above with you further at your convenience.

By supporting and growing The Rainbow Serpent, the Government would be supporting hundred's of Aboriginal suppliers and create training and employment opportunities for Indigenous Australians within the organization.

In the words of Sir William Deane, co-patron of Reconciliation Australia, "It's not enough to walk and talk together but time to work and achieve together."

Yours faithfully,
The Rainbow Serpent

Brad Parnes
Director

Ph No 02 85775301
Mob 0408 852120