

Introduction to the Inquiry

- 1.1 On 20 March 2013 the Committee adopted an inquiry into the issues surrounding cyber-safety for Indigenous Australians.
- 1.2 This inquiry followed the Committee's previous inquiries into *Cyber-Safety and the Young* and *Cybersafety for Senior Australians*. Following completion of those inquiries, the Committee believed that issues surrounding cyber-safety for Indigenous Australians warranted further, more in-depth investigation. Therefore, under paragraph (1)(b) of its Resolution of Appointment, the Committee adopted the inquiry which is the subject of this report.
- 1.3 As a Select Committee, under paragraph (17) of the Resolution of Appointment, the Committee must present its final report to Parliament no later than 27 June 2013. The terms of reference, which can be found at the start of this report, are far-reaching and could not be accomplished in any depth in the available timeframe.
- 1.4 The Committee, therefore resolved to use the available time to investigate to the extent possible what particular issues Indigenous people might be facing with cyber-safety. This brief report discusses those issues and finds that a longer, more in-depth investigation of the topic by a Committee in the 44th Parliament would be appropriate.

Conduct of the inquiry

- 1.5 Given the compressed timeframe, the Committee did not call for submissions for this inquiry from the general public. It did, however, write to several Australian Government departments and authorities to

notify them of the inquiry and to invite a brief submission if they wished to make one. The letter went to the Department of Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy (DBCDE); the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA); the Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA); and the Australian Communications Consumer Action Network (ACCAN).

- 1.6 The Committee also wrote to several Indigenous organisations in the Northern Territory with an invitation to make a brief submission if they wished.
- 1.7 The deadline for submissions was set at 24 May. Three submissions were received (see Appendix).
- 1.8 The Committee visited two schools in Brisbane to discuss with their Indigenous students their concerns about cyber-safety. Evidence given at a roundtable hearing at the Southside Education school was broadcast and the Hansard is available on the Committee's website.
- 1.9 Various constraints prevented a public record being made of the evidence taken at the Aboriginal and Islander Independent Community School (known as the Murri School) in Acacia Ridge, so an informal question and answer discussion between Committee Members and students and the Principal was held.
- 1.10 Committee members found the discussions with students at both schools to be informative and useful and are grateful for the time afforded to them by the Principal of each school, and by teachers and students.

This report

- 1.11 A brief background to Indigenous Information and Communications Technology (ICT) use follows in Chapter 2 of this report. Chapter 3 then discusses the risks and rewards of mobile telephones for Indigenous Australians and Chapter 4 makes concluding comments and suggestions for further inquiry in the 44th Parliament.