



Submission No 123

Inquiry into Australia's Relations with Indonesia

Organisation: Asia Pacific Journalism Centre

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Sharing professional skills and insights in a changing world.

Asia Pacific Journalism Centre



Submission to the Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Inquiry into Australia's relations with Indonesia

The Asia Pacific Journalism Centre: status and mission

The APJC is an Australia-based not-for-profit organisation whose mission is to help journalists develop and share professional skills and insights in a changing world. It manages the delivery of:

- Professional development programs for journalists in countries with little independent press tradition.
- Exchanges and visits to develop international knowledge and awareness.
- Innovation seminars on international, technological and other change affecting news media work.

The APJC works with like-minded international organisations committed to strengthening the capacity of news media to produce robust, independent and informed journalism. It believes that effective journalism is closely linked to good governance, respect for human rights and international understanding.

More information on the APJC, including its origins, program and management, can be found at www.apjc.org.au.

APJC Fellowships: general

Under its exchanges and visits portfolio, the APJC has initiated a pilot program, the APJC Fellowships, to provide opportunities for Australian and other journalists in the region to learn firsthand about other cultures and societies. The Fellowships, which are modeled in part on the successful US Jefferson Fellowship program, aim to help news organisations build staff expertise on issues affecting the region, so that readers, listeners and viewers in the region may be better informed.

2004 APJC Fellowship program: Journey into Islam in Indonesia

The inaugural APJC Fellowship program focuses on Islam in Indonesia. Places are being offered to five Australian and five Indonesian journalists for a 10-day study tour of Islam in Indonesia. The program will begin in Surabaya on 22 May, when the Australian participants will join their Indonesian colleagues for a joint briefing session.

The Fellows will then travel by mini-bus through East and Central Java, visiting pesantren (boarding schools) and other Islamic communities, calling on universities and think tanks, meeting Islamic and civic leaders, and having discussions along the way with local editors and journalists, and amongst themselves.

The program will end in Jakarta with a discussion session organised by the Indonesian partners and a dinner hosted by the Jakarta Editors Club. The tour is being led by the former national desk editor of The Jakarta Post, Santi Soekanto, and APJC program director John Wallace.

Major goals of the program are to provide APJC Fellows with up-to-date information on Islam in Indonesia – its social and cultural role as the major religion and connections domestically and internationally with political life – and to permit participating journalists to share insights on reporting news to do with Islam. More details on the rationale for this program and the activities planned can be found at www.apjc.org.au -- click on Fellowship application.

Assistance with selection of Indonesian participants is being provided by an Indonesia planning committee with representatives of the Jakarta Editors Club, the Liberal Islam Network, the Independent Journalists Alliance and the Muslim Journalists Association.

Financial support is being provided the Myer Foundation. (An application for funding from the Australia Indonesia Institute was unsuccessful.)

APJC Fellowship development

The APJC board will review the outcome of this year's Fellowship program as a part of its on-going development and planning activity. The board has indicated that in future years it would like to be able to broaden the reach of the Fellowship program to include other regional journalists. At the same time it is aware of the particular opportunity, and arguably the special need, to promote more effective links between Indonesian and Australian journalists and their respective communities.

Development options will be affected by the funding available. Options can be expected to include:

- limiting the Fellowships to Australian and Indonesian journalists (as in 2004)
- offering the Fellowships to other regional journalists but retaining a focus on Indonesia and/or Islam in the region.
- offering the Fellowships to other regional journalists and introducing a separate fellowship program for Indonesian and Australian journalists.



John Wallace
Program Director
29 March 2004

The Asia Pacific Journalism Centre is an independent, not-for-profit organisation that runs professional development and international dialogue programs for journalists in the Asia Pacific region

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