

# Submission

to

Senate Employment, Workplace Relations and Education  
Legislation Committee

## **Inquiry into the Indigenous Education (Targeted Assistance) Amendment Bill 2005**

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**Submission no:** 13

**Received:** 25/07/2005

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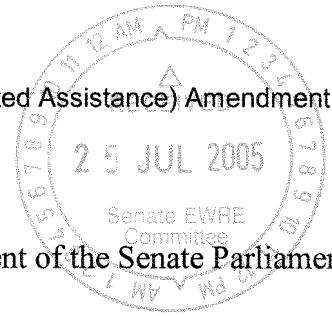
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**From:** Cat Kutay [ckutay@cse.unsw.edu.au]  
**Sent:** Monday, 25 July 2005 10:33 AM  
**To:** EET, Committee (SEN)  
**Subject:** Inquiry into provisions of the Indigenous Education (Targeted Assistance) Amendment Bill 2005



Secretary  
Senate Employment, Workplace Relations and Education Committee Department of the Senate Parliament  
House Canberra ACT 2600 Australia

Dear Sir/Madam,

Please accept this late submission to the Inquiry into provisions of the Indigenous Education (Targeted Assistance) Amendment Bill 2005. I was only just made aware that this bill was open for debate. It concerns me that the four colleges which have been set up by Indigenous initiative over the last 20 years are to be denied funding. It is difficult to verify from the information provided as to whether the funding will still go to the colleges through the enrolment of distant students or not, but I am presuming this amount is to be taken from their budget. Surely it would be more appropriate to redirect funding from programs which are not catering for indigenous needs into funds to enable remote indigenous students to attend such mainstream programs. We need to increase the scope available to students rather than limit or change the scope.

For instance there are now many indigenous students who have parents with experience in the education system and feel able to integrate, and so should be encouraged. However we have even more still on the fringes who parents have not yet found the scope to negotiate. We also need to continue to encourage these students to access the resources set up at places such as Tranby. It would be naive and premature to assume these institutions are past their usefulness in the present day society. In particular the four institutions cited have a reputation for

providing education for individuals who have gone on to contribute to our society in a new and novel format. In the day and age when innovation even in management is becoming difficult as so much has already been done, I believe it is the time to start looking at possible contributions from alternative societies. In fact the indigenous culture of this land has a very real contribution to make in terms of the new emphasis on team work and project management skills in our University education. While much of this process is new to Europeans, the indigenous people have been using roles to strengthen and organise their communities through their 'skin' grouping since pre-history. By allocating skins or relationship groupings to individuals from birth, children are brought up to understand their place in society, and as they travel, this is already 'preset' before they enter any new community. Hence the difficult task of finding your friends/mentors/etc is circumvented, and the job of negotiation/trade/etc can start upon entry to the community. I believe this approach to team work could improve our understanding of team skills and group work in our students and future engineers.

Yet such ideas will not be promoted in our society simply by mainstream education for our indigenous students.

Thank you

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