



Australian Education Union

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Federal Secretary: Robert Durbridge Federal President: Pat Byrne*

13 August 2004

Mr Jonathan Curtis
Secretary
Senate Select Committee on the
Administration of Indigenous Affairs
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2601

Dear Mr Curtis

Re: Inquiry into ATSIC Bill and the administration of Indigenous programs and services by mainstream departments

The Australian Education Union represents over 160,000 workers in public education systems in all states and territories of Australia. We have a strong commitment to high quality educational opportunities and outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

We recognise that the health and vibrancy of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, the strength of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation in Australian public life, and the respect with which Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and their leaders are shown by Commonwealth, State and Territory Governments, are all key factors in building a culture of respect in which Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students have a genuine opportunity to excel.

In this context, the AEU is deeply concerned by the damage to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities done by the Federal Government's recent actions in relation to ATSIC and we strongly oppose the proposed mainstreaming of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander programs and services.

The Australian Education Union has contributed to the submission of the Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU) and we support and endorse that submission and its recommendations to the Select Committee.

Yours sincerely,

Susan Hopgood,
Acting Federal Secretary