MEDIA RELEASE

Tuesday, 28 February 2012

FEMALE REPRESENTATIVES TO BOOST MINISTERIAL TASKFORCE

The Ministerial Taskforce on Aboriginal Affairs has been enhanced by the addition of two female Aboriginal members, Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Taskforce Chair Victor Dominello MP announced today.

Ms Iris White, who is of the Walbunga and Ngarigo people, and Ms Maydina Penrith, who is of the Wiradjuri and Yuin people, have accepted their nominations on behalf of the Coalition of Aboriginal Peak Organisations to join the Taskforce and will commence duties immediately.

“We have extended the membership of the Ministerial Taskforce to include these two outstanding Aboriginal women following requests from the Aboriginal community for greater recognition of Aboriginal women,” Mr Dominello said.

Whilst the original Taskforce membership included female representation through the Coalition of Aboriginal Peak Organisations, the Minister for Health Jillian Skinner MP and the Minister for Women and Minister for Family and Community Services Pru Goward MP, the Aboriginal community requested additional Aboriginal female representation be added to the Taskforce.

“This is a Taskforce built on real partnership with the Aboriginal community. In line with our partnership commitment, we have listened to the community and responded positively,” Mr Dominello said.

“Ms White and Ms Penrith will add considerable further insights to the Taskforce and, together with the other members, I warmly welcome them to the Taskforce.

“We have a busy period ahead as we review the results of our extensive public consultation process, which involved some 1500 people across NSW, and take the next steps toward a new strategy for Aboriginal affairs policy in NSW,” Mr Dominello said.

Ms Iris White brings a wealth of experience to the Taskforce and has worked in the field of vocation and adult education and training for more than twenty years. She is currently the Chair of the NSW/ACT Aboriginal Legal Service and Chair of the Gulaga National Park Board of Management.

“I am honoured to participate in such an influential process to represent our communities and work with Government and other stakeholders to improve outcomes for Aboriginal people in a way that has not been done before,” Ms White said.
Ms Maydina Penrith is a former member of the NSW Youth Advisory Council and has held the positions of President of the Griffith Local Aboriginal Education Consultative Group and Chair of the Creative Riverina Youth Team.

“I am greatly honoured to be able to contribute my ideas and advocate for young Aboriginal people as a member of the Ministerial Taskforce, I’m passionate about improving education and employment opportunities and grateful to have the opportunity to do that,” Ms Penrith said.

For more information about the Ministerial Taskforce, including information on how to have your say, please visit: http://www.daa.nsw.gov.au/taskforce/ or phone (02) 9219 0702.

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