MATCHING ABORIGINAL STUDENTS’ ASPIRATIONS TO REAL JOBS

Minister for Aboriginal Affairs Victor Dominello has announced a call for Expressions of Interest from non-government organisations to operate Opportunity Hubs which are designed to coordinate and match local education, training and employment opportunities that lead to sustainable jobs for young Aboriginal people.

Opportunity Hubs are part of OCHRE – Opportunity, Choice, Healing, Responsibility, Empowerment – the NSW Government’s plan for Aboriginal affairs.

The NSW Department of Education and Communities is seeking EOIs to operate Hubs in two communities – Dubbo and the Upper Hunter. Two additional communities wanting to be part of the trial will be announced shortly.

“The Hubs will assess the aspirations of Aboriginal students’ between years 5 and 12 and match them with local opportunities to support them to stay at school and transition into work,” Mr Dominello said.

“Hubs will act as a bank for local employers, universities and TAFEs to deposit opportunities including employment, training, mentoring, scholarships or volunteer work.

“Through brokering partnerships between schools, employers and education providers, we can get smarter about matching students to jobs.

“During the development of OCHRE, we were told that Aboriginal young people need hands-on assistance to gain the necessary knowledge, confidence and skills to find employment,” Mr Dominello said.

“We believe that having that positive link between local employers and local students will provide an incentive to stay at school.

“The progress of the students will be tracked after they leave school.

“This is not about announcing new programs, but coordinating existing successful programs around individual student needs,” Mr Dominello said.

The locations for the Hubs were chosen because they have significant employment and training opportunities, a large Aboriginal student population and strong support from the local Aboriginal community.

Professor Shane Houston, the University of Sydney’s Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Indigenous Strategy and Services), who was part of the NSW Government’s Ministerial Task Force on Aboriginal Affairs, applauded the initiative.
“Strategies that build our young people's capability to not only stay at school but do well, to be confident and to build strong futures must be supported,” Professor Houston said.

“I look forward to these young people going on to graduate from The University of Sydney and other universities, taking their place as doctors, lawyers, engineers and community leaders.”

Organisations wanting to operate an Opportunity Hub in Dubbo or the Upper Hunter have until 9.30am on 24 September to lodge an Expression of Interest at www.tenders.NSW.gov.au/det

Media: Jim O’Rourke 0409 185 431

**EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST BRIEFING SESSIONS**

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<tr>
<th>Proposed HUB</th>
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| Upper Hunter, Muswellbrook and Singleton HUB | Thursday, 29 August 2013 at 1.30pm – 3:00pm | Singleton Visitor Information and Enterprise Centre  
Townhead Park, New England Highway |
| Dubbo HUB                           | Friday, 30 August 2013 at 11:am – 12.30pm    | Aboriginal Affairs Dubbo Regional Office  
Level 1, 65 Church Street, Dubbo |