

1994

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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

**ABORIGINAL EDUCATION (SUPPLEMENTARY ASSISTANCE)
AMENDMENT BILL 1994**

EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM

**(Circulated by the authority of the Minister for Schools, Vocational Education and
Training the Hon. Ross Free MP)**

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**ABORIGINAL EDUCATION (SUPPLEMENTARY ASSISTANCE)
AMENDMENT BILL 1994**

OUTLINE

The purpose of this Bill is to amend the *Aboriginal Education (Supplementary Assistance) Act 1989* which enables grants of financial assistance to be made to the State and Territory governments, non government school systems, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education institutions and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education consultative bodies for the purpose of advancing the education of Aboriginals.

The current Act provides funding for the period 1 January 1993 to 30 June 1996. This Bill amends the funding level for the period 1 January 1995 to 30 June 1996 and provides for the appropriation of a specified amount for the period 1 January 1996 to 30 June 1997.

A subsequent Amendment Bill will be introduced at a later date to provide continuing base level funding for the years 1996 to 1988 inclusive.

PURPOSE OF THE BILL

This Bill provides for an increase in the funds appropriated under the *Aboriginal Education (Supplementary Assistance) Act 1988* to support tertiary education of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. The funds concerned are to be transferred from the *Higher Education Funding Act 1988*.

The funds concerned will be made available under the Commonwealth's Aboriginal Education Strategic Initiatives Program. This program was introduced in 1990 and underpins the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Policy (AEP). Funding for this program is presently appropriated on a triennial basis with the second triennium covering the years 1993 to 1995.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

This Bill provides for the appropriation of \$84.131m for the period 1 January 1995 to 30 June 1996 and \$256,000 for the period 1 January 1996 to 30 June 1997. These funding levels reflect an increase of \$212,000 for the first period and \$256,000 for the second period. The base level of funding for the second period has not yet been appropriated.

NOTES ON CLAUSES

Clause 1 - Short title etc

This clause provides for the Act to be cited as the *Aboriginal Education (Supplementary Assistance) Amendment Act 1994*.

It also provides that the *Aboriginal Education (Supplementary Assistance) Act 1989* is the 'Principal Act'.

Clause 2 - Commencement

This clause provides that the Act shall come into effect on 1 January 1995.

Clause 3 - Appropriations for 1 January 1993 to 30 June 1997

Section 13B of the Principal Act provides for the appropriation of amounts from the Consolidated Revenue Fund for the purpose of making payments under the Act.

Clause 3(a) amends the amount appropriated for the period from 1 January 1995 to 30 June 1996 by increasing the amount from \$83,919,000 to \$84,131,000.

Clause 3(b) adds a new subsection 13B(4) which appropriates the amount of \$256,000 for the period from 1 January 1996 to 30 June 1997. This figure represents the amount of funds to be transferred from the Higher Education Funding Act to support the provision of tertiary education for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in remote areas. A later amending Bill will be introduced to increase this figure to provide the continuing base level funding.