

1989

THE PARLIAMENT OF THE
COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ABORIGINAL EDUCATION
(SUPPLEMENTARY ASSISTANCE)
BILL 1989

EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM

(Circulated by authority of the
Minister for Employment, Education and Training,
the Honourable J S Dawkins, MP)

ABORIGINAL EDUCATION (SUPPLEMENTARY ASSISTANCE) BILL 1989

OUTLINE

The purpose of this Bill is to develop appropriate ways of responding effectively and sensitively to the educational needs and aspirations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. The Bill aims to promote educational equality between Aboriginal people and other Australians in access, participation and outcomes in all forms of education.

The Policy to be implemented as a result of this Bill will entail improved integration of Commonwealth programs with the efforts of the main education providers in the States and Territories. Part 1 of the Bill clearly sets out the objects of the legislation which form the basis for cooperation and collaboration between educational institutions, States and Territories and the Commonwealth in association with Aboriginal people.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

The costs attributed to this Bill are designed to supplement mainstream education funding agreements between the Commonwealth, States and Territories, and participating non-government and higher education bodies.

The Government's 1989/90 Budget decisions provided for a total of \$265.9599 million in 1989/90 budget prices to be made available over the next three years for Aboriginal education initiatives, of which \$236.2599 million is appropriated by this Bill.

The standard appropriations and agreed supplementation procedures provided for are detailed at Clause 11 and Clause 12 of the Bill.

NOTES ON CLAUSES OF THE BILL

PART 1 - PRELIMINARY

- Clause 1 : Short title
- Clause 2 : Commencement: The Act comes into operation on Royal Assent.
- Clause 3 : Interpretation: Defines words and terms used in the Bill.
- Clause 4 : Object of Act - increasing Aboriginal involvement in educational decisions: to ensure the maximum participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the development, delivery and implementation of education services that affect them.
- Clause 5 : Object of the Act - equal access to education by Aboriginals: to ensure that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children/students throughout all education sectors have equal access to education services on a basis comparable to that available to other Australian children/students.
- Clause 6 : Object of Act - equity of participation by Aboriginals in education: to ensure that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children/students participate at all levels of education for a similar period to other Australian children/students.
- Clause 7 : Object of Act - equitable and appropriate educational outcomes for Aboriginals: to ensure that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children/students attain skills levels and complete courses of study at levels commensurate with those of all Australian students. Also to ensure that all students are provided with an understanding and respect for Aboriginal history, culture and identity.

PART 2 - ABORIGINAL EDUCATION ARRANGEMENTS

- Clause 8 : Aboriginal education agreements: The clause provides for the Minister, on behalf of the Commonwealth, to enter into agreements with other parties to implement the objects of this Bill.

- Clause 9 : Persons who may be parties to agreements: The clause defines those with whom the Minister may enter into agreements.
- Clause 10 : Conditions of payments under agreements: The clause sets out the conditions attached to grants made under this Bill.

PART 3 - FUNDS FOR ASSISTANCE

- Clause 11 : Appropriation in other Acts: The clause identifies monies in Appropriation Acts (Nos. 1 and 2) 1989-90 for appropriation under this Bill for 1990, and it identifies the 1990 monies in the States Grants (Schools Assistance) Act 1988 as amended for appropriation under this Bill for 1990.
- Clause 12 : Appropriation for 1990-1992: The clause provides for the appropriation of the remaining monies required for 1990 and for the total appropriations under this Bill for 1991-1992.
- Clause 13 : Deflator Percentages: The clause provides for standard mechanisms to index appropriations made under this Bill.
- Clause 14 : Report by Minister in 1992: The clause requires the Minister to report to each House of the Parliament as soon as practicable after 1 July 1992 on the effectiveness of the Act.