MEDIA RELEASE

12 November 2010

Young Indigenous men graduate from course to develop career skills

Ten young Indigenous men from South Australia have taken their first steps on the path to career success, armed with new skills, graduating from the Indigenous Employment Development Course (IEDC).

Developed in 2009, the IEDC aims to prepare Aboriginal people with the necessary skills and confidence to seek employment in the wider community.

In the first course held in South Australia, ten participants aged from 17-24 from Port Lincoln, Ceduna and Murray Bridge, trained in English language, literacy and numeracy skills, general life skills, and learnt about health and fitness levels, leadership and teamwork abilities.

Minister for Indigenous Employment and Economic Development, Mark Arbib, and Minister for Defence Science and Personnel, Warren Snowdon, today congratulated the participants for undertaking the eight week training course.

Mr Arbib said that today’s graduation ceremony in Port Lincoln, South Australia was a fitting tribute to the commitment shown by the participants.

“These young men were taken out of their comfort zone, challenged to push themselves physically, mentally and at times emotionally, and all have achieved great results,” Senator Arbib said.

“Thanks to this training young Indigenous people can go on to earn a good living and support themselves and their community.”

Mr Snowdon said the graduates can use the program as a stepping stone to general employment in their community, or with the view to gaining employment in the Australian Defence Force.

“Each participant obtains TAFE qualifications which range from a Certificate I in Introductory Vocational Education to Certificate II in Education and Skills Development.”

Mr Snowdon said he was proud to be involved in the initial stages of the Indigenous Employment Development Course in 2007.

“This is only the second course that’s been held, the first was in Dubbo, NSW in 2009 in conjunction with NSW Police and other agencies.”
The IEDC program is a collaboration between the Australian Government, Regional Development Australia, the South Australian Government and the Australian Defence Force.

The Australian Government has committed more than $750 million over five years to the Indigenous Employment Program, to assist Indigenous Australians into ongoing, sustainable work.

Senator Arbib applauded the coordinated approach between the various organisations that has led to the success of the program.

"With so many people coming together, this is a great example of the dedication to closing the gap on Indigenous employment disadvantage," Senator Arbib said.

Editor's note: Course participants are available for interview. To arrange please call defence Public Affairs on 02 6127 1999.

Media contact:
DEEWR Media: media@deewr.gov.au  Non-media enquiries: 1300 363 079