

Thursday, 15 October 2015

OCHRE PLAN IMPROVING OUTCOMES IN ABORIGINAL COMMUNITIES

Minister for Aboriginal Affairs Leslie Williams today released the *OCHRE: Two Years On* report, which highlights the progress of the NSW Government's plan for Aboriginal affairs.

"*OCHRE* is a significant departure from previous approaches. For the first time, Local Decision Making alliances have the power to direct government services to areas of need. Two years on, the success of *OCHRE* relies on the NSW Government listening, responding and working with local communities," Mrs Williams said.

Sam Jefferies, Chair of the Murdi Paaki Regional Assembly in Western NSW, worked with his community to sign the first formal Accord with the NSW Government.

"Local Decision Making is the most exciting initiative to enter the government services and program areas that impact on Aboriginal people. The level of openness and transparency is unprecedented," Mr Jefferies said.

The *OCHRE* plan covers a number of areas including employment, education and other government services. This year 3,769 students are learning an Aboriginal language; this is the first time the NSW Government has measured the uptake of Aboriginal Languages by school students. Connected Communities operates in 15 schools across the State, delivering a range of services from birth, through school, to further training and employment.

OCHRE is creating new job opportunities for Aboriginal people and three major industry agreements are now signed and operational. Opportunity Hubs, which connect school students with career advice and job opportunities, are also having a positive effect.

The number of students accessing advice through the Hubs has increased from 33 students in 2014 to 1,102 students in 2015. The number of schools partnering with the Hubs has also increased, from 36 schools to 102 schools over the same period.

A copy of the report is available at: <http://www.aboriginalaffairs.nsw.gov.au>

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