

COMMUNIQUE

Broken Hill – Musicians Club

10 May 2017

The workshop commenced with a Welcome to Country by Aunty Maureen O'Donnell a local Wilyakali Elder.

Participants made it very clear and that it is very important that there needs to be an acknowledgement of why languages were lost and the possibility of a preamble as way to recognise history and heartache.

The group reiterated that Aboriginal people in NSW suffered because were not allowed to speak their language, and as a result languages in the State are in a poorer position than other locations. Despite this imposed restriction, language was kept alive - "Our people got through it."

There was support for 'First Languages of NSW' and 'First Nations Languages of NSW' to replace the word 'Aboriginal'. The group affirmed that legislation was a start and a step in the right direction and were keen for a local Aboriginal Language Centre to allow good access to language and to help promote language in the community.

Additionally, it was important to the group for the recognition, accreditation and approval of Aboriginal language teachers was as an area needing significant improvement. Resource allocation also needed to be included the legislation and supporting documentation.

In relation to a proposed Aboriginal Language Centre, some people thought the Language Centre should be a meeting place for everyone, however, it needs to ensure it has cultural authority. Participants discussed their language circle which meets every term to support languages getting into the schools and community.

A representative thanked Jack Beetson and the consultation team – "very important because we are waking sleeping language. We are talking it goes larger than just language."