

MEDIA RELEASE



1pm, Thursday 5 August, 2010

ANTaR welcomes Greens ‘Justice Reinvestment’ initiative

ANTaR welcomes the Greens launch today of its ‘Justice Reinvestment’ initiative and challenges all major parties to commit to the national rollout of Justice Reinvestment strategies in cooperation with State and Territory Governments.

“The rate of imprisonment of Indigenous Australians is a national shame. With Indigenous incarceration rates increasing, new approaches are urgently needed,” said Dr Janet Hunt, ANTaR President.

Indigenous adults are imprisoned at a rate 13 times higher than non-Indigenous adults and Indigenous young people are 28 times more likely to be detained than their non-Indigenous counterparts.

“Imprisonment is expensive – at more than \$1000 per week - and has little impact on reducing offending, with recidivism rates for Indigenous offenders at nearly 75%.”

“This election, ANTaR is calling for a radical rethink of governments’ approaches to Indigenous offending,” said Dr Hunt.

Justice Reinvestment works by diverting a proportion of the funds that would normally go to imprisonment to local communities which have a high concentration of offenders. The funds are directed to addressing the underlying causes of offending.

“Justice Reinvestment is based on the principle that prevention pays social and economic dividends. It is supported by compelling evidence from the US experience.”

ANTaR congratulates the Greens on the launch of its Justice Reinvestment initiative and calls on all major parties to commit to:

- Setting criminal justice targets through COAG that are integrated into the Closing the Gap agenda; and
- Funding pilot Justice Reinvestment projects in targeted communities, with a view to rolling-out the scheme more broadly informed by evidence from these pilots.

For more information see ANTaR's election priorities statement at:

<http://www.antar.org.au/sites/default/files/ANTaR%20election%20platform%20final.pdf>

ANTaR is the pre-eminent non-Indigenous national advocacy organisation dedicated specifically to the rights - and overcoming the disadvantage - of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

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