

29 May 2008

AIATSIS welcomes Arnhem Land elders

Nine senior Arnhem Land men will respond to a formal Ngunnawal Welcome to Country at the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS) on Monday 2 June, ahead of viewing cultural materials held in the Institute's archives.

The delegation's Canberra visit will enable them to view audiovisual and library items with specific cultural heritage significance to the Arnhem Land communities at AIATSIS, and other Canberra based national collecting institutions.

Ngunnawal and Ngambri elder Matilda House will deliver the Welcome to Country and the senior men will then give a traditional response to her welcome.

AIATSIS Principal Steve Larkin said he was delighted to welcome the Arnhem Land delegation to Canberra and the Institute.

"We have many thousands of items in our collection that are relevant to the people of Arnhem Land," Mr Larkin said.

"We're pleased to have the opportunity to show the Arnhem Land men the extent of our collection."

AIATSIS is the world's premier Institution for information and research about the cultures and lifestyles of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

The Institute undertakes community-based research, and holds a priceless collection of films, photographs, video and audio recordings, as well as the world's largest collections of printed and other resource materials for Indigenous Studies. In addition it has its own publishing house, the *Aboriginal Studies Press*.

In addition to their tour of AIATSIS, the men will visit other National collecting institutions including the National Film and Sound Archive, the National Museum of Australia, the National Library of Australia, the National Gallery and the Australian National University as part of their week-long visit to Canberra, which has been organised by the National Film and Sound Archive.

***Ends

Photo opportunities at AIATSIS, Monday 2 June 2008 at 10.30am

- Ms Matilda House – welcome to country
- Arnhem Land delegation – response to welcome to country

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