

§ ABORIGINAL WOMEN'S TASK FORCE

An Aboriginal Women's Task Force has been set up in the Office of the Status of Women in the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet.

The Task Force will be seeking the views of Aboriginal women on a wide range of issues including land rights, culture, health, housing, education, employment, legal aid, adoption and the fostering of Aboriginal children.

Task Force members are Phyllis Daylight and Mary Johnstone. Ms Daylight was born in Queensland. Before her appointment she was an Education Officer with the Department of Education and Youth Affairs in Darwin. Ms Johnstone, originally from Yass, New South Wales, was formerly on the staff of Medibank Private in Melbourne and Sydney.

Ms Daylight and Ms Johnstone will work closely with the women members of the National Aboriginal Conference and the Federation of Aboriginal Women. The National Aboriginal Conference has fully endorsed the establishment of the Task Force.

In announcing the new Task Force, Senator Susan Ryan, the Minister Assisting the Prime Minister on the Status of Women, said that the most important objective of the Task Force is to ensure that Aboriginal women themselves identify their own needs. She said:

The Task Force's recommendations will be based on the views of Aboriginal women. This will add a vital new dimension to government planning and programs and be a first step in ensuring that the views of Aboriginal women are taken into account in the formulation and implementation of government policy.

(Senator Susan Ryan)

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