

For Immediate Release

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LEGAL HIGHLIGHTED IN 'BRIDGING THE GAP' SEMINARS

Legal sector professionals are expected to benefit from a fresh round of seminars designed to improve cross-cultural understanding between Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities.

Richard Trudgen, CEO of the not-for-profit, Indigenous organization; Aboriginal Resource and Development Services Inc (ARDS) said ARDS had been working to help Indigenous people understand the mainstream legal system and dispel some of the misconceptions about it.

“Legal terms and jargon are difficult for anyone to understand” Trudgen said.

“It is almost impossible for people who have English as their second – or even their tenth language.”

Trudgen said he believed the *Bridging the Gap* seminars would help people working in the legal field to understand the particular challenges facing Indigenous and ethnic groups in the legal context.

The seminars also provide necessary skills for meeting our international obligations for a fair and equitable justice system, as well as invaluable cross-cultural communication theory to underpin these skills.

“We often hear lawyers giving their Indigenous clients advice, which the client does not understand,” Trudgen commented.

“It does not lead to justice for all, or harmony in the Australian community. In fact, it often leads to fear, suspicion and polarisation between different cultural groups in the community.”

The *Bridging the Gap* seminars outline strategies, successfully used by the people of north-east Arnhem Land – the Yolŋu people, who still practice one of Australia's oldest living cultures.

Trudgen, author of acclaimed book “Why Warriors Lie Down and Die”, and ARDS work daily to bridge the gap between Yolngu people and dominant culture Australia.

Trudgen brings with him two co-presenters from north-east Arnhem Land including Witiyana Marika, founding member of internationally renowned band Yothu Yindi, and Dianne Gondarra, presenter on Yolngu Radio.

The next round of seminars is scheduled for;

Melbourne – Melbourne Business School 19/20 November

Canberra – Canberra National Convention Centre 23/24 November

Sydney – Australian Museum 26/27 November.

Seminars start from 8am each day.

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