First Circles engaging Indigenous leaders of the future

9 December 2014

The newly appointed members of First Circles today met for the first time to prepare for a year of mentoring, development and engagement with Government.

Minister for Community Services Bess Price said the First Circles program aimed to support and mentor upcoming Indigenous leaders.

“First Circle members will put forward ideas they are passionate about and develop projects which will be supported by departmental staff to make concepts a reality,” Mrs Price said.

“Members will develop leadership skills while being actively involved in decision making around Indigenous issues and have the opportunity to attend one Cabinet meeting a year and work directly with Ministers, local authorities and government agencies.

“The First Circles engagement program will increase member’s knowledge and understanding of government processes and build the confidence of members to help them engage with community issues and improve the participation of the community in local decision making.

“This initial workshop aims to ensure members understand the program, the importance of their role and prepares them for a Cabinet meeting in early 2015.

“This collaborative model of consultation is an Australian first as never before has a group had a direct voice into an Australian Cabinet.

“This program is a fantastic way to improve the participation of the community in local decision making.

“First Circles will ensure Indigenous people can provide advice on the development and implementation of policy, directly to Government.”

Members include 16 men and 14 women of varying ages from communities around the Northern Territory.

There will be two branches, one in the Top End and the other in Central Australia, which will have 15 members each.

Media Contact: Lauren Crawley 0417 145 050