



Reaching Out – breaking down barriers and working with all segments of society.

Scouts Australia opens to the indigenous community in Queensland

SUMMARY

Scouts Australia Queensland Branch is reaching out to the indigenous community to help integrate young people into Australian society and combat some of the social problems faced in these isolated communities.

Scout Groups have been set up in the Napranum and Northern Peninsula areas of Queensland. Around 50 young people from 6-17 years old have joined the Scout Groups and 23 indigenous and island adults have been recruited as leaders.

The young people experience Scouting, have fun and learn to work together in teams. The adults are supported in their role with training in youth programme, leadership and management. This is an important project for the young indigenous people who live in these isolated communities and is supported by a full-time Project Office.



The project started following concerns expressed by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island Community leaders about the situation of young indigenous people in this area. Alcohol and drug abuse can be a particular problem in indigenous



communities and in some communities there is a total ban on alcohol to try to reduce the problems.

Young people in particular are affected. They lack education, self-confidence and self-esteem resulting in a variety of community problems. There are a number of initiatives from the government to support the integration of the two communities and Scouts Australia and now playing their part in this initiative.

Three communities were selected to participate in the project – Naparanum, Bamaga and Lockhart River. A project officer, Bryan Brown has been appointed. He has visits the communities regularly to establish a relationship with the community leaders with the aim of setting up more Scout Groups.

