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RUN WELCOMES BEHRENDT REPORT ON INDIGENOUS HIGHER EDUCATION

The Regional Universities Network (RUN) has welcomed the release of the Higher Education Access and Outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People report, chaired by Professor Larissa Behrendt.

The Chair of RUN, Professor David Battersby, urged the Federal Government to give serious consideration to the report's recommendations and noted the strong performance amongst RUN universities in Indigenous participation.

"RUN universities teach 15 per cent of all Indigenous students enrolled in higher education. The recently released 2013 edition of the Good Universities Guide has confirmed the strength of our universities in this area," Professor Battersby said.

"While Indigenous participation at most RUN institutions is already at or near parity with the Indigenous share of working age population (2.2 per cent), in line with the report's recommendations RUN universities have set targets in their compacts to increase Indigenous participation rates.

"We support the report's goal of increasing the number of Indigenous students at our universities. We also support the report's recommendation that universities should be recognised for training Indigenous students in enabling courses, regardless of whether they pursue higher education at that university or elsewhere. RUN universities teach over 30 per cent of all students in enabling courses.

"Higher education at RUN universities transforms lives. Regional universities understand, are engaged with and relate to regional communities," Professor Battersby said.

"We have pioneered higher education access schemes that enable Indigenous, low socio-economic status, regional and remote students, first in family and mature aged students to participate in and succeed at university and become professionals.

"RUN universities enable the best use of regional human capital and resources and contribute to educational opportunities for regional Australians."

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