



Hon. Michael Gunner, Chief Minister
Minister for Aboriginal Affairs
Northern Territory Government
chief.minister@nt.gov.au

3 August 2017

Re: Proposal to introduce Indigenous Digital Inclusion as a Closing the Gap key performance measure

Dear Chief Minister

This letter is written on behalf of the Broadband for the Bush Alliance, the Indigenous Remote Communications Association, and numerous Indigenous peak agencies, Indigenous businesses and NT community organisations (see list of signatories attached).

The Broadband for the Bush Alliance held its 6th annual Broadband for the Bush (B4B) Forum in Perth WA on 21-23 June with over 140 delegates from across regional and remote Australia. Each B4B forum includes an Indigenous Focus Day, where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and organisations present digital projects, research and needs for broadband provision in remote Indigenous communities. A key recommendation from both the 2017 Indigenous Focus Day and B4B forum was that:

Indigenous Digital Inclusion be adopted by the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) as a key performance measure within the Closing the Gap framework.

We are seeking the support of the Northern Territory Government to recommend this new measure, along with a targeted *Indigenous Digital Inclusion* program, to the next meeting of the Council of Australian Governments as a matter of urgency.

We understand that the Commonwealth is reviewing the Closing the Gap (CTG) framework based on the limited progress against many of the key performance indicators and that COAG has agreed that the existing Closing the Gap agenda and targets be refreshed.

This renewal provides a key opportunity for COAG to address a structural and skills issue that is impacting on the ability of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to firstly, engage with Internet delivered services and resources that enhance employment and educational opportunities and secondly, ensure access to government (MyGov) services and safety nets, especially in remote areas.

Indigenous Australians have been recognised to have a significant gap in digital inclusion compared with the broader Australian population within the Digital Inclusion Index (14% gap based on 2011 ABS data). It is well known that this gap is much greater for remote Indigenous Australians¹,

¹ The Northern Territory Homelands and Outstations Assets and Access Review (CAT, 2016) www.icat.org.au surveyed 401 Indigenous Homelands and Outstations in the NT (population 10,000). Only 20% had mobile
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however there is currently inadequate data collection to measure the full extent of this gap nationally. Without such data and targeted programs to address the gaps, Federal and State governments will need to continue to deliver these essential services face to face.

The *Indigenous Digital Inclusion* proposal addresses the provision of appropriate, accessible and affordable Internet access to vital online government services such as MyGov in remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. More generally, the proposal addresses the opportunities provided by Internet access, including access to jobs sites, educational resources, online learning, e-commerce sites, online banking, and the potential for establishing online businesses.

The *Indigenous Digital Inclusion* program proposal has six components:

1. Data collection to measure whether remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members have broadband available to them with the minimal requirements in terms of access, availability, affordability and digital literacy in order to access online services.
2. Prioritisation of the roll-out of broadband services, including mobile coverage, to identified remote Indigenous communities that do not have minimal community-wide online access.
3. Provision of public Internet access to the identified communities through community WiFi and LTE systems.
4. Implementation of unmetered access to all online government services (including MyGov), banking, education, employment, justice and health services.
5. Roll-out of a culturally and language appropriate digital literacy program for remote community members.
6. A Community Digital Mentors program to provide meaningful community-based jobs in remote communities to support digital engagement, literacy and support via a peer learning model.

The Appendix to this letter provides the background and support for the *Indigenous Digital Inclusion* program. In order to stress the importance of the proposal, we draw your attention to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' experiences of disproportionately higher rates of unemployment, financial stress and homelessness². Centrelink is a vital safety net for this reason. A section of the Appendix specifically refers to the need for addressing issues in access to MyGov and Centrelink services.

The latest Closing the Gap figures highlight the need to address the underlying issue of poverty in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, especially remote communities, that is contributing to delays in reaching Closing the Gap targets. Poverty is a key factor in differential health and education outcomes for vulnerable social and demographic groups.

The *2015 Dropping off the Edge*³ report notes that low family income is a central factor in shaping individual and family life opportunities, with research evidence indicating that family income is

phone network access and 37% communities had access to the internet. However, in 80% of the communities with access, only a single internet access point was available.

² The ABS *2014-2015 National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey* indicates an employment rate at only 46% nationally and 35.6% in remote areas for persons over 15 years of age, compared to 64.3% for non-Indigenous people. 28.9% of remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people reported having run out of money for basic living expenses in the 12 months prior to the survey. Another 29.1% of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people nationally report having experienced homelessness, compared to the non-Indigenous rate of 13.1%. <http://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/DetailsPage/4714.02014-15?OpenDocument>.

³ Vinson, T and Rawsthorne, M (2015). *Dropping off the Edge: persistent communal disadvantage in Australia*. Jesuit Social Services/Catholic Social Services Australia. Viewed at http://k46cs13u1432b9asz49wnhcx-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/0001_dote_2015.pdf

interwoven with the influence of other forms of disadvantage (p.6). The report includes lack of Internet access as one of 22 forms of disadvantage (pp.7-8)

A research report published in *Family Matters* (2013: 33)⁴ notes that:

Early childhood is a particularly sensitive period in which economic deprivation may compromise children's health and employment opportunities. ... In the case of welfare policies, imposing sanctions and other regulations that deny benefits to families with very young children would appear to be particularly harmful. Not only do young children appear to be most vulnerable to the consequences of deep poverty, but mothers with very young children are also least able to support themselves through employment in the labour market.

Consequently, the *Indigenous Digital Inclusion* program proposal includes, as part of a wider aim of digital inclusion addressing disadvantage, a specific practical aim of preventing reporting breaches occasioned by lack of access to MyGov. This practical aim is about maintaining the minimum financial resources critical for engagement in education as well as health services access and adequate housing arrangements.

With many essential services now moving online, the proposal also addresses the need for affordable connectivity and digital skills to access other services such as telehealth, weather, video-judicial hearings/compliance and emergency information as well as online education, employment, banking, shopping and library services.

Digital literacy is becoming a day to day need for all citizens. This is of particular importance for people living in remote Indigenous communities. Digital inclusion is increasingly being described as a human right.

We know that the Northern Territory government understands the need for improved access to communications for remote and Indigenous people. This is evidenced by the co-investment in mobile and ADSL coverage in remote communities and the planned rollout and upgrade of free NT Library WiFi hotspots in 46 communities⁵.

Given these efforts, as well the high Indigenous population in NT (over 30%), we believe that you are well positioned to recommend this proposal to COAG.

We look forward to a positive response and working together to make a real difference in addressing this critical issue. We would be happy to meet with you to discuss this proposal in person.

Yours Sincerely



Daniel Featherstone

*Director, Broadband for the Bush Alliance
General Manager, Indigenous Remote Communications Association
(IRCA is co-host of the Indigenous Focus Day)*

⁴ Duncan, G, Kalil, A, Ziolo-Guest, K (2013). Early childhood poverty and adult achievement, employment and health. *Family matters*, no. 93, 27-35. Viewed at <https://aifs.gov.au/sites/default/files/fm93c.pdf>.

⁵ As outlined in the *Connected Communities: Vision for Northern Territory Public Libraries 2017-2023* document

With support from the following organisations:

Apolline Kohen, Chair
Broadband for the Bush Alliance

Teresa Corbin, CEO
Australian Communications Consumer Action
Network

CEO
Aboriginal Resource & Development Service

Robert Somerville, CEO
Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary
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Eileen Van Iersel, CEO
Central Australian Aboriginal Legal Aid Service

Karl Hampton, CEO
Central Australian Aboriginal Media
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Blair McFarland, Operations Manager
Central Australian Youth Link Up Service

Steve Rogers, CEO
Centre for Appropriate Technology

Lauren Ganley, CEO
Desert Knowledge Australia

David Spriggs, CEO
InfoXchange

Mark Finlay, General Manager
Ngaanyatjarra Media Aboriginal Corporation

Priscilla Collins, CEO
Northern Australian Aboriginal Justice
Association

Michael Taylor, General Manager
Pintubi Anmatjerre Warlpiri (PAW) Media

Neil Turner, Manager
Pilbara and Kimberley Aboriginal Media

Kate Peake, CEO
Regional Development Australia NT

Appendix: Indigenous Digital Inclusion CTG measure and program

What is digital inclusion and why is it important?

According to the Australian Digital Inclusion Index website⁶:

Digital inclusion is not just about computers, the internet or even technology. It is about using technology as a channel to improve skills, to enhance quality of life, to drive education and to promote economic wellbeing across all elements of society. Digital inclusion is really about social inclusion.

This Northern Territory Library's *Connected Communities* strategic vision document⁷, which includes a section devoted to digital inclusion, notes:

Although internet access is now widespread throughout the community (86% of Australian households have internet access), access is not universal, and there are significant numbers of older persons, people with low incomes and people in rural areas (among others) who do not have home or mobile internet access. There are also many people, including those population groups mentioned here as well as other people, who have low levels of digital literacy and are not confident in accessing and using computers effectively.

This is supported by the Digital Inclusion Index (DII)⁸, which identifies the key population groups with low rates of Digital Inclusion to be people over 64, Indigenous Australians, low socio-economic groups, people with disabilities, migrants, culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) people, and remote and rural Australians. While specifically mentioned, Indigenous Australians also make up high proportions of other categories, particularly remoteness, low socio-economic base, disabled, and CALD, as many remote people speak a first language other than English. However, as noted later in this document, the data collection for the DII is very limited in remote Australia, with targeted data collection needed to understand the extent of the issue.

Digital inclusion is increasingly being described as a basic human right. In fact, France determined that Internet access be considered a basic human right in 2009 (Sparks 2009). In 2010, Finland legislated to make broadband access a legal right for every citizen, aiming for a minimum download speed of 100Mbps by 2015 (BBC News 2010). Extensive programs are being rolled out in developing countries to reduce the digital divide and increase digital capability. Australia is lagging behind (<http://www.smh.com.au/technology/innovation/a-nonsensationalist-look-at-australian-internet-speeds-20160325-gnr0p7.html>).

Walton et al (2016)⁹ describe internet access as a “basic utility not dissimilar to gas, electricity or water”. They describe digital inclusion as “one of the major social justice challenges of our time”, arguing that it is “vital to employment participation, economic development, educational achievement, social and civic inclusion, health and wellbeing.”

⁶ <https://digitalinclusionindex.org.au/about/about-digital-inclusion/>

⁷ P12-14, *Connected Communities: Vision for Northern Territory Public Libraries 2017-2023* document

⁸ The Digital Inclusion Index, developed by Prof. Julian Thomas and his team from RMIT, uses three key measures - Access, Affordability and Digital Ability.

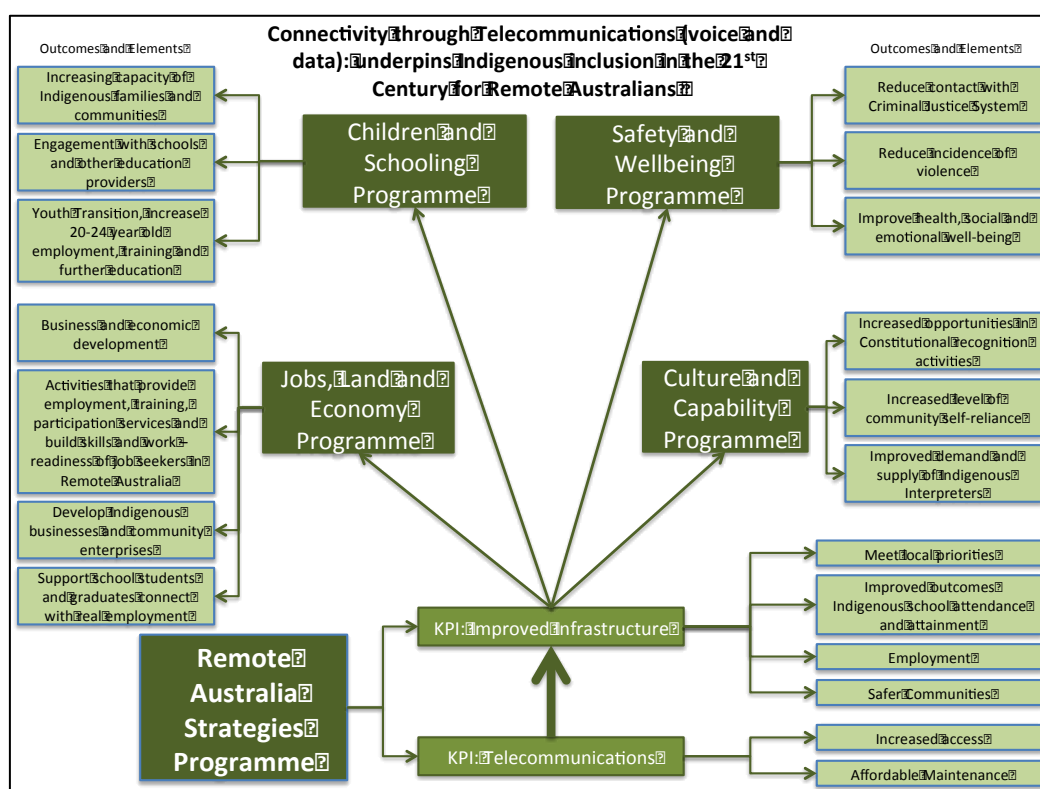
⁹ Walton, Top, Sprigg, Fitzgerald 2013. ‘A digital inclusion- Empowering all Australian’ in *Australian Journal of Telecommunications And The Digital Economy*, Volume 1 Number 1, November 2013

Why digital inclusion needs to be included within the CTG measures

The ABS Census of Population and Housing, 2011 found that only 63 per cent of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander households reported having internet access at home versus 77 per cent for non-Indigenous households. This indicates a national 14% gap. While this gap has been decreasing gradually, there is a growing divide between those in regional and urban areas with access to fixed broadband and mobile services and those without. However, while there is a lack of granular data, it is estimated that more than 50% of remote and very remote people have little or no access to information and communication technologies (ICTs) or online services, and an even greater percentage have very limited digital literacy.

Digital inclusion is a key enabler for Indigenous social, cultural and economic development. Digital inclusion will drive opportunities for employment, enterprise development, and access to more affordable products and services. It promotes individual capability to independently access services including online education, telehealth services (reducing costs of patient transport). It enables text/image-based communication (Facebook, SMS) and audio-visual communication (e.g. mobile, skype) with family, dispersed social networks, service providers, employers, teachers/trainers and so on. Social media platforms such as Facebook have become a primary means of communication where internet is available, both for personal use as well as accessing service providers, politicians, NGOs and discussion groups, including in language.

Digital inclusion will promote improvements in most other CTG measures, including education, health, social inclusion, governance, compliance with government regulations and ability to participate in employment and economic improvements. Chapter 5 of the Closing the Gap policy relates to economic development and Chapter 7 relates to social inclusion. Both of these key outcomes will be improved by addressing Digital Inclusion. The importance of Telecommunications and Infrastructure underpins the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet's Indigenous Advancement Strategy.



However, this is not currently being measured or seen as part of an integrated framework to achieve improved capability and access to services to drive outcomes in other areas.

In addition, digital inclusion is an important strategy for addressing disadvantage. The 2015 *Dropping off the Edge* report¹⁰ includes lack of Internet access as one of 22 indicators of disadvantage because it's lack adds to the burden of overall disadvantage. The report notes that those lacking internet access are also "those on low incomes, without tertiary education, living in rural/remote areas, of ATSI heritage, with disabilities, with a language background other than English, and aged over 55" (p35).

The Australian Council of Social Services (2016:3)¹¹ also notes the importance of digital inclusion as part of the approach to reducing disadvantage:

"While the concept of 'inclusion' has an ever-changing meaning socially, culturally and economically, digital engagement is increasingly seen as a key vehicle to social and economic inclusion. Policies designed to ensure income adequacy and alleviate poverty, and programs that address deprivation and hardship, need to incorporate digital inclusion and core elements of infrastructure (for example through access to the internet)."

If the growing digital divide for Indigenous Australians is not being addressed through a holistic and targeted digital inclusion strategy as soon as possible, it will become increasingly difficult to achieve, risking the creation of a burgeoning digital under-class. Conversely, it is an area that can have very good outcomes and flow-on benefits to other CTG measures as a result of targeted programs in this area.

Critical Issues in Accessing Online Government Services including MyGov

The Federal Government is undertaking a whole of government move to online service delivery with the Digital Transformation Agency tasked with overseeing this process. Centrelink has already transferred much of its welfare payment management and reporting to online access via MyGov and telephony based delivery, and My Aged Care and health records are moving onto the MyHealth service including PBS for pharmaceutical management.

The move to online Centrelink reporting via MyGov has introduced a structural barrier for many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Internet access is limited in many communities, is often congested and slow, is unaffordable, or is provided through community facilities that have limited opening hours during the working week. In many remote NT communities there is no public Internet access available and mobile coverage is available in only about 20% of remote NT communities.

¹⁰ Vinson, T and Rawsthorne, M (2015). *Dropping off the Edge: persistent communal disadvantage in Australia*. Jesuit Social Services/Catholic Social Services Australia. Viewed at http://k46cs13u1432b9asz49wnhcx-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/0001_dote_2015.pdf 4 July 2017

¹¹ Australian Council of Social Services. 2016. *Staying connected: the impact of digital exclusion on people living on low incomes and the community organisations that support them*. <http://www.acoss.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/Digital-Divide-Policy-Snapshot-2016-Final.pdf>. Viewed 4 July 2017.

This is leading to increased issues with access and resultant loss of Centrelink payments for people in remote communities. CAYLUS have estimated that 20,000 of the 45,360 eligible people in remote Indigenous communities in the NT have no income support, citing lack of internet and telephony access as key obstacles to Centrelink services for remote people.

It should be noted that mobile devices are primarily used for Internet access by remote Indigenous people, requiring 3G/4G access or WiFi to enable access as well as mobile-friendly interfaces for online services. Where individuals do have access to Internet services, those services are generally accessed through prepaid plans with people often unable to afford to top up their credit in order to meet reporting deadlines. The MyGov interface is itself difficult to work through for a range of reasons, with training in MyGov a vital need for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Phone access to Centrelink is not a solution to the lack of Internet access. Access to landline phones is limited in remote communities, with language barriers an added barrier. Where mobile phone coverage is available, prepaid is the plan of choice, with the same issue as above for Internet with credit not being available in a timely manner.

The failure to report to Centrelink, results in many cases, in a breach and the loss of benefits for extended periods, as well as fines for not submitting electronic reports. Lack of Internet access and digital skills deficits are directly implicated in this situation of multiplying disadvantage.

This was made very clear by remote delegates at the recent Indigenous Focus Day in Fremantle, where many examples of the impact of the lack of digital access and literacy were described. In one powerful video presentation, a young man from Arlparra community described how several people from the Utopia homelands were unable to report to Centrelink due to not having money for mobile credit or coverage and consequently did not receive their payments. This meant that they could not feed their families nor get mobile credit or fuel to travel to Arlparra to rectify the situation.

Others described the issue of not having sufficient English or digital literacy to use the MyGov services or helpline, resulting in being breached and eventually giving up on seeking to access Centrelink payments. According to CAYLUS, situations like this have resulted in 47% of eligible people not accessing unemployment benefits in remote NT communities. There are no such measures for remote WA, SA, Queensland or outback NSW and Victoria.

The *Indigenous Digital Inclusion* proposal will enable vulnerable Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to maintain access to the regular household finances that underpin educational and health engagement.

Addressing the Obstacles to Digital Inclusion

The *Connected Communities* document identifies the key barriers to digital inclusion as:

- Infrastructure (e.g. the availability of internet services in a particular location)
- Affordability (internet services are often most expensive in remote locations)
- Skills (individuals need to be able to operate technology and understand the online environment; language skills are also relevant)

- Relevance (people need a reason to engage with online services)¹²

The Commonwealth is rolling out a range of programs to increase connectivity in remote and regional Australia, including the NBN Sky Muster and fixed wireless rollout, and expanded mobile coverage under Mobile Black Spots Program. NT Government is also seeking to address access issues through its co-investment in mobile and ADSL coverage in remote communities and the rollout and upgrade of free NT Library WiFi hotspots in 46 communities. These are important developments however the research indicates that infrastructure in itself will not address the digital divide.

The Productivity Commission (PC) recently handed down its final report from its review of the Universal Service Obligation (USO). The PC report found that the USO is “anachronistic and costly” and should be “replaced by a new framework to reflect changing policy, market and technological realities”. It argued for more targeted strategies in a future universal service model, including the proposal to remove public payphones from a future USO. Clearly there is an ongoing need for basic telephony as well as affordable data access in remote communities. B4BA does not support the discontinued funding of payphones unless a viable and reliable alternative is made available.

While some elements of this proposal may be able to be addressed through a better targeted USO, it is critical that these be recurrent legislated instruments rather than short term programs that can change with political cycles. A Digital Inclusion measure would help to provide evidence as to where the targeted strategies should be directed and their ongoing effectiveness.

A holistic approach is needed beyond improved infrastructure. Indigenous Focus Day delegates identified the need for other activities including: last-mile infrastructure (e.g. WiFi, copper to the home), community access ICT facilities, availability of devices and recharge cards, IT training, local digital mentors (to provide culturally appropriate support in local language), technical maintenance, cyber-safety information, appropriate content and interface for people with English as a second (or 3rd/4th/5th) language.

The proposed *Indigenous Digital Inclusion* program

As outlined, the *Indigenous Digital Inclusion* program proposal has six components:

1. Data collection to measure whether remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members have access to the minimal requirements in terms of broadband access, availability, affordability and digital literacy in order to access online services.
2. Prioritisation of the roll-out of broadband services, including mobile coverage, to identified remote Indigenous communities that do not have minimal community-wide online access.
3. Provision of public Internet access to the identified communities through community WiFi and LTE systems.
4. Implementation of unmetered access to all online government services (including MyGov), banking, education, employment, justice and health services.

¹² P13, *Connected Communities: Vision for Northern Territory Public Libraries 2017-2023* document

5. Roll-out of a culturally and language appropriate digital literacy program for remote community members.
6. A Community Digital Mentors program to provide meaningful community-based jobs in remote communities to support digital engagement, literacy and support via a peer learning model.

A critical element of this program is that it is recurrent, not a one-off activity. Continuity and ongoing development of programs are critical factors in their success. It is also important that there is local ownership in all aspects of the program and building upon the capacity of existing organisations, infrastructure and programs, avoiding duplication of effort. A flexible and locally targeted approach is more likely to work than a one-size-fits-all model. This relies on a community-based partnership model to ensure the program addresses local needs and planning. This will ensure engagement and positive outcomes.

Other targeted strategies could include support for community media and communication centres, technical support services and community training, and development of appropriate content and apps to promote learning and engagement.

The Community Digital Mentors employment program is proposed as a culturally appropriate model and business model for transfer of digital skills and cyber-safety awareness, providing basic technical support, assisting users to access online services and mobile apps, providing advice on reducing downloads and costs, and helping to develop locally relevant training resources, tools and content for the community. This model is currently being demonstrated by IRCA's inDigiMOB project in NT communities, building upon the learnings of programs run by several remote Indigenous media organisations, CAYLUS and NT Library.

Additionally, the implementation of the proposal will enhance opportunities for existing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander broadcasters and media organisations to expand delivery of essential information services to new audiences, distribute relevant content via new platforms (including cached content to reduce download costs), and provide skills development and employment. It will also help service providers and land councils, Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations, ranger groups, training providers and other community organisations to effectively communicate with members, clients and employees. Internet access will also enable access to other national media services - for news, information, national and jurisdictional inquiries, sports coverage etc. – where these are not available locally.

A more detailed outline of this program proposal can be developed upon request.

Lack of Current Programs to Address Digital Inclusion for Indigenous Australians

It is becoming critical that all Australians have affordable access and the skills to access online services. While a \$50m Commonwealth digital literacy program is currently being established to improve digital inclusion for older Australians, there is no equivalent program in place for Indigenous Australians, especially in remote Australia, where the divide is even greater and where generic programs will have little impact.

Only about \$2m per annum is currently being spent on addressing telecommunications needs for remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders¹³, the most digitally excluded population group in Australia. Most of this funding is currently focused on setting up WiFi services, and is primarily being directed to small communities and homelands with populations of under 50 people.

This is a significant under-investment at this critical time while communications infrastructure is being rolled out and support for culturally safe engagement is required. It is hoped that the establishment of a Digital Inclusion CTG measure will help to leverage Commonwealth funding to implement the *Indigenous Digital Inclusion* program.

The Need for Reliable Data on Indigenous Digital Inclusion

There is currently no reliable measurement of communications access and digital literacy in remote Australia to determine the full extent of this critical issue. The recently developed Digital Inclusion Index does not include data from remote and Indigenous Australia due to the methodology and limited scope of the survey on which this Index was based. Therefore the very low level of digital inclusion for Indigenous people, particularly in remote Australia, is not even on the radar for the current primary measurement tool.

The ABS data for remote Indigenous Australia are unreliable due to the challenges in getting remote Indigenous people to respond to surveys, mobility and lack of fixed address, shared households and cross-cultural challenges in the data collection. As a result, the people most likely to be without internet and telephony access are the least likely to be surveyed especially with on-line lodgement of Census Forms, as in 2016.

An appropriate methodology is needed for research in remote Indigenous communities. For example, surveys are often more effective if they are short, undertaken in person rather than by phone or online, conducted by an appropriate and trusted person (factors include race, age, gender, kinship relationship etc.), and in language where appropriate. As remote people are regularly surveyed with very little indication of a resultant benefit, there needs to be a clear explanation of why the data is being collected and the intended outcome. Such surveys need to be undertaken by trained community residents who become involved in the analysis of data including crowd sourcing.

Other References

Digital Democracy: <http://www.nesta.org.uk/publications/digital-democracy-tools-transforming-political-engagement>

http://www.nesta.org.uk/sites/default/files/digital_democracy.pdf (full document)

<http://www.desertknowledge.com.au/Files/Fixing-the-hole-in-Australia-s-Heartland.aspx>,

Professor Fran Baum: *Social Determinants of Indigenous Health: what might really make the difference to health outcomes*. Flinders University. View [Part 1](#), [Part 2](#) and [Part 3](#)

¹³ The Remote Indigenous IT Activity, managed by the Broadcasting and Telecommunications section of the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, is primarily targeted at maintenance of the Community Phones program and establishing WiFi services. 2017/18 is the third and last year for this program.

IRCA and Broadband for the Bush Alliance can provide further background information upon request. We would welcome the opportunity to play a role in determining the performance measures for Digital Inclusion and the data collection methodology and questions.

For further information, please contact:

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Appendix 2: Signatory Organisations

Broadband for the Bush Alliance (B4BA)



B4BA is an alliance of organisations that seeks to advance the digital capacity and capability of remote Australians. B4BA seeks the best possible communication access and digital inclusion outcomes for remote and rural Australians and promotes the need for targeted remote telecommunications strategies and policy.

Indigenous Remote Communications Association (IRCA)



Established in 2001, IRCA is the national peak body for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander broadcasting, media and communications industry. Based in Alice Springs, IRCA advocates on behalf of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in relation to their media and telecommunications needs, including supporting strong employment, education and health outcomes.

Australian Communications Consumer Action Network (ACCAN)



ACCAN is the peak body that represents all consumers on communications issues including telecommunications, broadband and emerging new services. ACCAN provides a strong unified voice to industry and government as consumers work towards availability, accessibility and affordability of communications services for all Australians.

Aboriginal Resource and Development Service (ARDS)



ARDS Aboriginal Corporation are communication and creative media specialists, who have been working with Indigenous communities in the Northern Territory for over 40 years. ARDS operates Yolngu Radio, providing Indigenous language based media to communities and homelands across north east Arnhem Land plus Darwin. ARDS also specialises in facilitating cross cultural communication, providing Indigenous language services, community education, film and event production and more.

Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education (BIITE)



Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education sits uniquely in the Australian educational landscape as the only Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander dual sector tertiary education provider. Under its 'Both-ways' philosophy, the Institute significantly provides an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander lens to a mainstream education system.

Central Australian Aboriginal Legal Aid Service



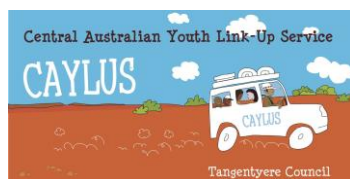
CAALAS provides high quality, culturally appropriate legal advice and representation to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living in Central Australia in the areas of criminal, civil, family and welfare rights law. The organisation advocates for the rights of Aboriginal people and improved social justice outcomes. Additionally, CAALAS provides community legal education, support for young people interacting with the justice system and assistance to prisoners and their families to support reintegration into the community.

Central Australian Aboriginal Media Association (CAAMA)



The Central Australian Aboriginal Media Association (CAAMA) came to life in 1982 with the establishment of radio station 8KIN FM. CAAMA's social charter is to use the mediums of radio and television to give Aboriginal people a strong voice in the development of country, culture, politics and education; to use the broadcasting arts and sciences to arrest cultural disintegration, to empower people and bring inspiration to their lives. CAAMA is governed by an elected Indigenous Board reporting to Indigenous members, while operations are managed by our CEO.

Central Australian Youth Link Up Service (CAYLUS)



CAYLUS started life in 2002 as an anti-petrol sniffing program, and has since developed a range of inhalant and other substance supply and demand reduction strategies. One of the demand reduction/youth services development strategies CAYLUS supports and facilitates is 21 remote Aboriginal community computer rooms and internet wifi hotspots. CAYLUS has been working with remote Aboriginal communities and partner organisations for 9 years to support internet connectivity and access to computers in remote regions across the southern part of the NT, south of Tennant Creek.

Centre for Appropriate Technology



CAT Ltd is a national Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander controlled, ASIC incorporated science and technology not-for-profit business, established in 1980. CAT Ltd exists to support people in regional and remote Australia to have choices to maintain their relationship with country; live on, visit, develop and protect. Providing technical solutions to built infrastructure, renewable power, digital connectivity associated training and skill development to address remote challenges.

Desert Knowledge Australia



Desert Knowledge Australia (DKA) is a national organisation focused on innovative economic and social development in remote Australia. DKA creates collaboration and alliances across cultures, sectors and State/Territory borders to strengthen remote people, communities, businesses and governments. DKA is a founding member of groups such as the Broadband for the Bush Alliance, Outback Business Networks, and the Outback Alliance. DKA manages the Desert Knowledge Precinct, a 73-hectare site in Alice Springs that is home to multiple Indigenous, regional and national organisations. In 2017, DKA is creating a Remote Renewable Energy Hub.

InfoXchange



InfoXchange is a not-for-profit social enterprise that has delivered technology for social justice for over 25 years. With over 100 staff across Australia and New Zealand we tackle the biggest social challenges through the smart and creative use of technology. Our community programs focus on digital inclusion. We use technology to improve the lives of vulnerable people, driving social inclusion and creating stronger communities. We believe no-one should be left behind in today's digital world.

Northern Australian Aboriginal Justice Association



NAAJA delivers quality and culturally appropriate Aboriginal legal services to the Top End of the Northern Territory in the areas of criminal law, family law, civil law, and welfare rights including Centrelink and income management problems.

NAAJA also provides prisoner support and through-care services, conducts research and provides advocacy and community legal education.

Ngaanyatjarra (NG) Media Aboriginal Corporation



NG Media is a Remote Indigenous Media Organisation servicing 14 communities spread across an area of more than 250,000 square kilometres between the Great Victoria and Gibson Deserts in Western Australia. Through NG Media, Yarnangu voices - in the form of radio, film, music and online content - are heard around the country and the world. It operates public computing centres as part of its service to its communities, and provides regular employment to 35 Yarnangu.

Pintubi Anmatjerre Warlpiri (PAW) Media



PAW Media and Communications is an Aboriginal media organisation situated at Yuendumu in the Northern Territory of Australia. We are a Remote Indigenous Media Organisation (RIMO) providing coordination services to RIBS (remote Indigenous Broadcasting Services) in the wider Tanami area of Central Australia. RIBs are community radio stations established throughout the 1990s under the Broadcasting for Remote Aboriginal Communities Scheme (BRACS).

Pilbara and Kimberley Aboriginal Media

PAKAM supports radio broadcast and community TV in indigenous communities in the Pilbara and Kimberley regions of Western Australia through the employment of remote community media workers, the operation of the PAKAM satellite radio Network and the production of video content for Indigenous Community Television and NITV.

Regional Development Australia NT (RDANT)



Regional Development Australia Northern Territory (RDA NT) is a local not-for-profit concerned with supporting the sustainable development of the Northern Territory. We work to identify and facilitate diverse projects that contribute towards this broad objective. We use the power of partnerships, across three tiers of government, industry, and other not-for-profits, to maximise our impact. RDA NT is part of a national network of 55 RDAs.