



The Honourable Lauren Moss MLA  
Minister for Corporate and Information Services  
Northern Territory Government  
GPO Box 3146  
Darwin NT 0801

12 October 2017

Re: Digital Territory Strategy

**Dear Minister Moss**

Thank you for creating the opportunity to make a contribution to the Digital Territory Strategy. Desert Knowledge Australia (DKA) and the Indigenous Remote Communication Association (IRCA) have prepared for your consideration a set of proposals that we believe will make a real and lasting positive impact in Central Australia, both socially and economically.

We would be very happy to provide further details about the proposals and look forward to working with you and your department in the creation of a new digital strategy for the Northern Territory.

Yours sincerely,

Lauren Ganley  
CEO  
DKA

Daniel Featherstone  
General Manager  
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# A digital strategy for Central Australia

Fixing access and connectivity is an absolute priority but that won't be enough to effect real and sustainable economic and social development in the digital future of Central Australia.

## Executive Summary

The following proposal represents two sets of opportunities for the Northern Territory that combined will work to ensure the social and economic security of Central Australia for decades to come.

This proposal builds on a foundation of work that has already been done to lay the tracks in remote and regional NT; and suggests that there is an opportunity to connect those tracks to the digital superhighway. This proposal aims to 1) increase connectivity, access and digital inclusion in remote NT communities; and 2) foster a new driver of economic activity through the establishment of a 'silicon valley' in Alice Springs, where big, fast data can be analysed, stored and shared at data sites that are power assured through renewable energies; and where the ingenuity of Central Australia can be harnessed in a creative industries hub that fosters disruption and innovation.

The two following sets of opportunities sit side by side and are integrated rather than sequential. They recognise that we can't wait, for remote areas in particular, to have full connectivity before we move into establishing new digital industries. In fact, the unique and complex challenges of providing appropriate access, connectivity, communication systems and skills in Central Australia provide a significant opportunity for disruption and innovation and.

### Alice Springs Satellite Gets A Deadly Makeover

Rae Johnston  
Nov 11, 2016, 7:15am. Filed to: Alice Springs

Share f t in d e



Image: Supplied

In a world first, Geoscience Australia has painted an Indigenous artwork on its satellite antenna as part of a major upgrade - making the Alice Springs antenna unique in more ways than one.

The upgraded Alice Springs antenna was commissioned today in a ceremony highlighting both the antenna's key role in the United States Landsat program, and the artwork painted on its surface that recognises the Arrernte people as traditional custodians of the land.

<https://www.gizmodo.com.au/2016/11/alice-springs-satellite-gets-a-deadly-makeover/>

## Digital inclusion in regional and remote Central Australia

*Bringing regional and remote Northern Territory fully into the digital era*

1. Data collection on access, availability, affordability and digital literacy
2. Prioritisation of the roll-out of broadband services and mobile coverage
3. Provision of public Internet access
4. Implementation of unmetered access to select internet sites
5. Delivery of a digital literacy program
6. Community Digital Mentors

## Establish Alice Springs as a digital hub for Central Australia

*Create a new digital industry for Central Australia through establishing significant capacity and capability in Alice Springs*

7. Data hosting infrastructure
8. Digital Asset Management: The Community Collections archive project
9. Data facilitation services
10. Establish a Centre for Future Tech

### Advanced technology and manufacturing necessary for Australia's future: BAE chairman

✉ G+ f t in v



Australian scientists have been responsible for the development of world-leading defence technologies such as the over-the-horizon radar capability. Supplied

by Roger Carr

By any measure 2016 has been an eventful year. Weak global economic growth, rising security threats and a clear sense that the benefits of globalisation have not been shared equally have brought about political change – most notably in the United States and Britain. But the challenges of securing sustained growth, greater prosperity and a fairer society are just as relevant to Australia and all major advanced economies around the world.

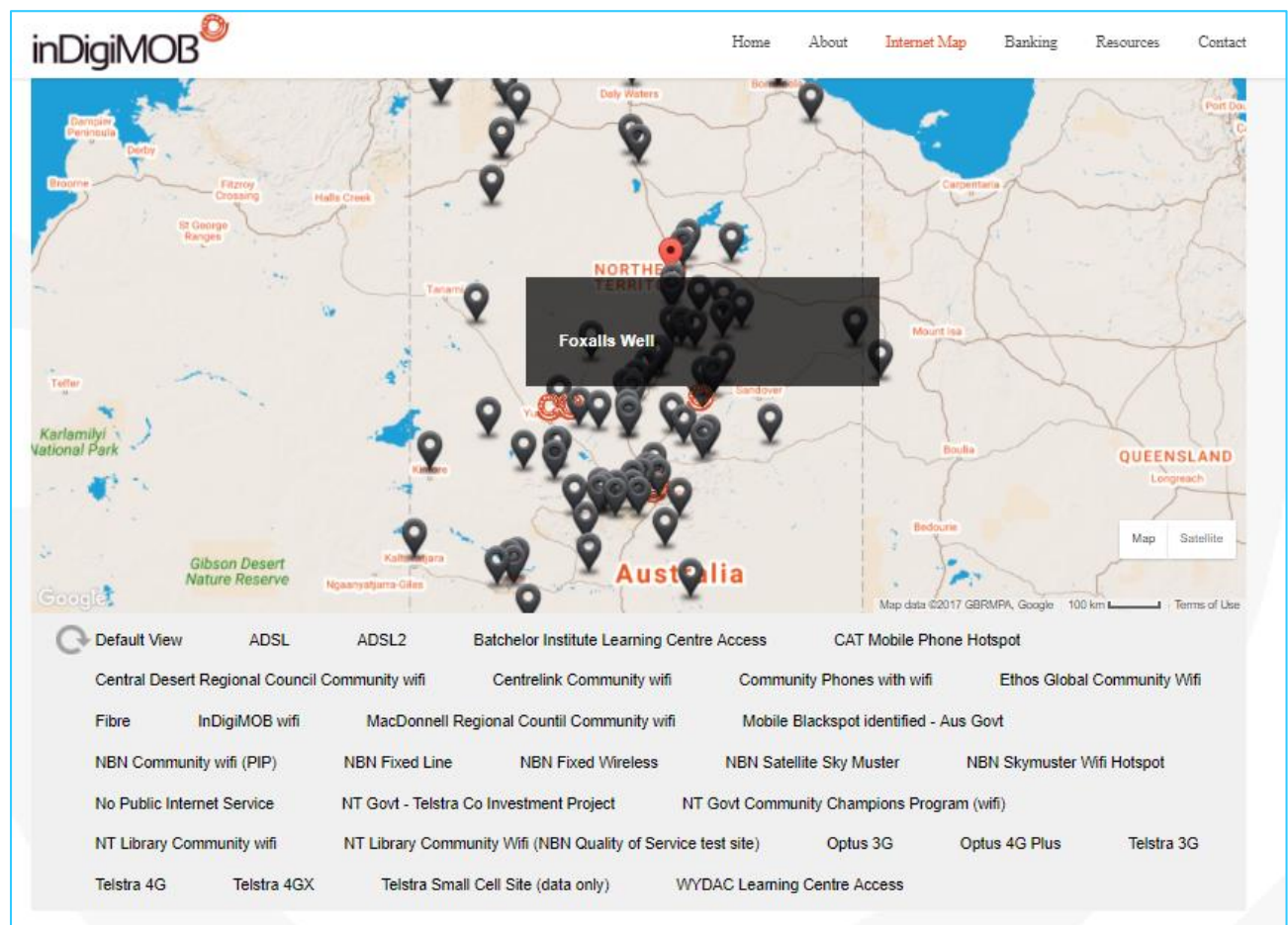
<http://www.afr.com/news/special-reports/defence-innovation/advanced-technology-and-manufacturing-necessary-for-australias-future--bae-chairman-20161121-gsu82t>

# Digital inclusion: bringing regional and remote NT fully into the digital era

## Background

Both the Northern Territory and Commonwealth policy acknowledge the need to invest in infrastructure and education in order for all remote and regional areas of the NT to be fully connected and safely online. A dedicated multi-pronged approach is urgently needed to ensure that the digital divide does not widen in remote NT and that all NT residents have reliable and affordable access to effective communications and online services.

Attached to this proposal is a letter sent in August 2017 from key organisations in the Northern Territory, through the Broadband for the Bush Alliance and the Indigenous Remote Communications Association (IRCA); that digital inclusion needs to be a key performance measure within the Closing the Gap framework. The Indigenous Digital Inclusion program proposed in that letter has six components, which provide a sensible, evidence-led approach.



<http://indigimob.com.au/map/>


## 1. Data Collection

*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.*

The most recent report on Australia's Digital Inclusion Index (DII) did not include sampling from remote areas of Australia. This is an opportune moment to work with the DII project to ensure a more rigorous and detailed data collection is in place that better reflects the situation in the NT and to use this data to inform evidence-based policy decisions on Northern Territory Government investment in infrastructure and projects.

The ABS data for remote Indigenous Australia in particular is unreliable due to the limited amount of response 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, mobile and telephony access are those who were least likely to be surveyed, especially with on-line lodgement of Census Forms, as in 2016.

This is an ideal opportunity for the Northern Territory Government to generate, manage and utilise our own data sets. It is also an opportunity for the Northern Territory Government to implement best practice models around consultation and data collection, establishing a benchmark approach for use nationally and internationally.



The screenshot shows a news article with a title, a date, a byline, and several paragraphs of text. On the left side, there are social media sharing icons for Email, Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, and Print, each with a corresponding count. The article discusses the digital divide in Australia, mentioning that while internet access is growing, disparities persist. It references an analysis of data released by the Australian Bureau of Statistics, noting that 85% of Australians aged 15 and older were internet users in 2014-15, up from 83% in 2007-08. The article also mentions that the disadvantage of being offline grows as more Australians go online.

**Australia's digital divide is narrowing, but getting deeper**

February 25, 2016 6:02am AEDT

Internet access continues to grow but some people are still not connected. Pixabay, CC BY

Email 99  
Twitter 128  
Facebook 78  
LinkedIn  
Print

The digital divide continues to narrow in Australia but important divisions persist, and there are clear disparities between different groups in their use of the internet.

It's a pattern that's been apparent for some time and it has been confirmed by [an analysis of data](#) on the household use of technology [released last week](#) by the Australian Bureau of Statistics.

First, the good news. The research found 85% of Australians aged 15 and older were internet users and that 86% of Australian households had internet access in 2014-15 (up from 83% two years previous and 67% in 2007-08).

**The digital divide**

The kicker in these figures is that as more and more Australians are online, the disadvantage of being offline grows. So as the divide narrows, it gets deeper.

<http://theconversation.com/australias-digital-divide-is-narrowing-but-getting-deeper-55232>



## 2. Prioritisation

*Prioritisation of the roll-out of broadband services and mobile coverage, to identified remote Indigenous communities that do not have minimal community-wide online access.*

Whilst there are major infrastructure investments underway to increase connectivity in remote communities, there remains a need to ensure that all NT residents and visitors have access to a basic level of internet access.

The Commonwealth has 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 the Mobile Black Spot Program. We acknowledge that the NT Government is also seeking to address access issues through its co-investment with Telstra to increase broadband and mobile coverage in a number of remote communities as well as providing free NT Library Wi-Fi hotspots in 46 communities. We applaud these measures but note there is still more to be done.

We recommend that an overarching policy, strategy and monitoring framework be implemented to ensure that everyone is connected and stays connected, through the most effective technologies available.

**2.94 The committee recommends that the Australian Government direct nbn to establish a regional and remote reference group to support the rollout of the NBN in rural and remote Australia. The reference group would include consumer advocate groups and departmental representation from the Department of Communications and the Arts and the Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development. Business decisions that fundamentally change the nbn experience for the end user in regional and remote communities should be referred to the reference group for consideration and analysis as to whether the decision will result in nbn not meeting its responsibilities as outlined in the Statement of Expectations.**

Joint Standing Committee on the National Broadband Network The rollout of the National Broadband Network  
1st Report of the 45th Parliament, <http://apo.org.au/system/files/112416/apo-nid112416-441606.pdf>

### 3. Public access

*Provision of public Internet access to targeted communities through community Wi-Fi and mobile systems.*

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 only available in about 20% of remote NT communities.

This has led to increased issues with access and resultant loss of Centrelink payments for people in remote communities. The Central Australia Aboriginal Youth Link Up Service (CAYLUS) has 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 communicating with Centrelink.

It should be noted that mobile access is the preferred choice of technology for Indigenous people in remote communities, using 3G/4G or Wi-Fi. Where individuals have access to the Internet, it is generally through the use of prepaid plans which have higher price points making it unaffordable, putting at risk reporting deadlines required by Centrelink. Additionally, the MyGov website has many layers to it and it is difficult to navigate, training is vital and urgent for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in remote communities

Phone access to Centrelink is not a viable alternative solution. Access to landlines is limited in remote communities, with language barriers adding further complexity. Where mobile phone coverage is available, often people have no credit to report in a timely manner resulting in a breach and the loss of benefits for extended periods, as well as fines for not submitting electronic reports. Lack of Internet access, low levels of digital literacy and technology costs are direct implications that add to increased disadvantage.

In a powerful video presentation at the 2017 Broadband for the Bush Forum, a young man from Arlparra community recounted how several people from the Utopia homelands were unable to report to Centrelink due to not having money to purchase mobile credit and consequently did not receive their payments. This meant they could not feed their families nor buy mobile credit or fuel to travel to Arlparra to rectify the situation.



*The Northern Territory Library and CAYLUS have partnered to deliver internet connectivity and computer rooms into many central Australian Aboriginal communities*

[https://dta.nt.gov.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0009/427482/connected-communities-vision-for-nt-public-libraries-2017-2023.pdf](https://dta.nt.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0009/427482/connected-communities-vision-for-nt-public-libraries-2017-2023.pdf)

#### 4. Unmetered access

*Implementation of unmetered access to all online government websites including MyGov, education, employment, justice and health sites.*

The Federal Government is undertaking a whole of government approach to online service delivery with the Digital Transformation Agency tasked with overseeing this process. Centrelink has 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.

This shift has highlighted the challenges of accessing online services in many remote communities due to limited technology or prohibitive pricing structures. We recommend that essential online services are unmetered.



<http://broadbandforthebush.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/Daniel-Sacchero.pdf>





## 5. Digital Literacy

*Delivery of a culturally and language appropriate digital literacy program for remote community members.*


For Indigenous people in the NT who do not have sufficient English or digital literacy to use the available online services such as MyGov or helpline services, many are finding themselves in breach by Centrelink and then eventually give up seeking access to payments. According to CAYLUS, situations like this have resulted in 47% of eligible people not accessing unemployment benefits in remote NT communities.

We acknowledge that there are a number of programs already in place, but there is no coordinated, fully funded program that works with communities to develop, support and maintain digital literacies. As the digital world continues to grow, these skills will become even more essential for education, health and social inclusion.


a partnership between



community partners



Batchelor  
Institute



TANGENTYERE  
COUNCIL

# Media Release

8 February 2017

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## Digital literacy takes off with inDigiMOB

On **Wednesday 15 February** inDigiMOB will celebrate the wrap up of its pilot year and embark on the rollout of the next phase to new communities in the Northern Territory.

inDigiMOB, a partnership between the Indigenous Remote Communications Association (IRCA) and Telstra, aims to bridge the digital divide in remote communities through informal peer-to-peer digital skills training that values the experience and knowledge of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

"As more of our daily actions and activities move online, being able to use digital technologies brings a growing range of important benefits, especially for Indigenous people in remote locations who often experience significant barriers to digital inclusion," says IRCA General Manager Daniel Featherstone.

<https://www.irca.net.au/sites/default/files/files/1IRCA-inDigiMOB%20Phase%202-20170208.pdf>

## 6. Digital Mentors

*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 Community Digital Mentors employment program is proposed as a culturally appropriate model and a 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.



Digital mentors in action (photo supplied by IRCA)

# Establish Alice Springs as a digital hub for Central Australia

## Background

There exists in Central Australia an opportunity to expand the existing digital industry which will benefit the region, as well as the economy of the Northern Territory. Alice Springs currently hosts a number of significant defence facilities that, as national and international technology users, make best use of the desert's clear skies to ensure minimal interference with transmission.

Further to this, Central Australia is host to a wealth of creative activity in arts and culture creating a synergy with the rapid changing digital technologies available to express and represent the rich stories of this country.



<https://parrtjimaaustralia.com.au/>

## 7. Data Hosting Infrastructure

*Host the NT Data Recovery Centre in Alice Springs in order to seed further commercial investments.*

This proposal builds on decades of experience to suggest that the conditions make Central Australia an undeveloped site of great potential with regards to data hosting and storage. One example is to site the data recovery centre for the Northern Territory Government in Alice Springs – this proposal has been presented separately. Other commercial interests can be attracted to host their data sites in Central Australia by the establishment of power guaranteed sites with high speed connectivity.

An investment by the Northern Territory Government into renewable energies is leading this work – and in Central Australia the soon to be announced Centre of Excellence for Renewable Energy at the Desert Knowledge Precinct is part of that ‘future proofing’ of our energy supplies. Through that project, the precinct will become a test bed for a multi-tenancy industrial micro grid. This creates the right environment for attracting new commercial interests in the digital industry to Alice Springs, creating the need for infrastructure development and new jobs.

An investment by the Northern Territory Government into a data recovery site in Alice Springs would signal to potential investors that this is a serious commitment. It will provide jobs for technicians required to support the site and will create an opportunity for a training program for technical pathways. As data storage and data certainty become the keystones to commercial success, this is a significant opportunity in the digital sector.

The establishment of such a facility will create local jobs in an industry that will continue to grow as the need for geologically and environmentally stable locations with good access to infrastructure becomes a key market driver in this space. It will also establish Alice Springs as a suitable site for other commercial organisations to host their mirror sites in the geographic centre of Australia. For example, there are a range of companies within Australia that require secure, Australian based, data backup facilities that are outside of urban regions. Leadership from the NT Government would provide the commercial opportunities for this to be marketed.

As the digital economy grows further, having digital industries based in Alice Springs will create the need for data workers and support staff, thus ensuring an economic base into the future – the red centre version of Silicon Valley.



<http://dkasolarcentre.com.au/news>



## 8. Digital Asset Management: The Community Collections Archiving Resource Facility

### *Fund the IRCA proposal for the Community Collections Archive Project*

The Northern Territory is host to hundreds of community-owned collections of photographs, videos, audio and music recordings and printed materials, many of which are still in analogue formats and are yet to be digitised. These contain significant social and cultural history as recorded by Territorians. There is very limited time before analogue materials will no longer be able to be retrievable. This has given rise to a number of archive projects that have done remarkable work in collecting, storing and sharing materials.

However, most organisations do not know how to go about archiving their community collections and want assistance to establish local management and access control, rather than donating their collections to a State or national archive. It is critical to get archiving right first time- from digitisation, storage, cataloguing, interoperability, and ongoing management systems based on national best practise, including cultural management protocols for remote Indigenous collections. IRCA has worked closely with AIATSIS, NFSA, NT library and remote collections to develop a Remote Media National Archiving Strategy and set of training resources.

IRCA proposes to establish a Community Collections Archiving Resource Facility to support education, training and resourcing of remote community archiving projects will see the cultural knowledge management and potential economic benefit shift from centralised services back to the knowledge owners. This will include the establishment of culturally appropriate digital asset management system that enables community control but interoperability with existing collections (Trove, AIATSIS, NFSA, NSLA, Ara Iritjita/ Community Stories etc.).

The screenshot shows the IRCA (Indigenous Remote Communications Association) website. The header includes the IRCA logo and navigation links: HOME, ABOUT, OUR INDUSTRY, NEWS, PROJECTS, EVENTS, and RESOURCES. A sidebar on the left lists various projects and resources, including inDigiMOB, Indigitube, Remote Audience Survey 2016, Broadband for the Bush, Ngaanyatjarra Media - Remote Indigenous Public Internet Access, Archiving Project, About, and Indigenous Remote Archival Fellowship. The main content area is titled 'Archiving Project' and features the 'Remote Media National Archiving Strategy'. It describes the project's goal to develop a National Archiving Strategy and lists nine key outputs.

**IRCA**  
Indigenous Remote Communications Association

HOME ABOUT OUR INDUSTRY NEWS PROJECTS EVENTS RESOURCES

SIGN IN

inDigiMOB  
Indigitube  
Remote Audience Survey 2016  
Broadband for the Bush  
Ngaanyatjarra Media - Remote Indigenous Public Internet Access  
Archiving Project  
About  
Indigenous Remote Archival Fellowship

## Archiving Project

### Remote Media National Archiving Strategy

With sector organisations holding fast deteriorating archives of culturally rich and historically valuable video content in old formats, IRCA is leading the development of a National Archiving Strategy in preparation for digitisation; and seeking funding partners for this important national work.

Key outputs of the project are to:

1. Promote principles of cultural management and operation of remote archives
2. Develop baseline data (quantitative and qualitative) of remote archives as at 2014 and identify archives at risk of damage or loss or closure
3. Lobby for funding of archives, including strategic funding for archives at risk
4. Develop a training strategy for remote archive staff, volunteers and cultural advisors
5. Make handbooks/resources on key archive operations available to the sector
6. Investigate and support opportunities for sharing of resources between remote archives
7. Facilitate and support relationship development and partnerships development between the remote archive sector and major Indigenous collecting agencies and researchers
8. Promote and celebrate the significance of remote archives
9. Develop a remote archive 'manifesto' with regard to cultural rights, governance, protocols, principles and practices

<https://www.irca.net.au/projects/archiving-project>



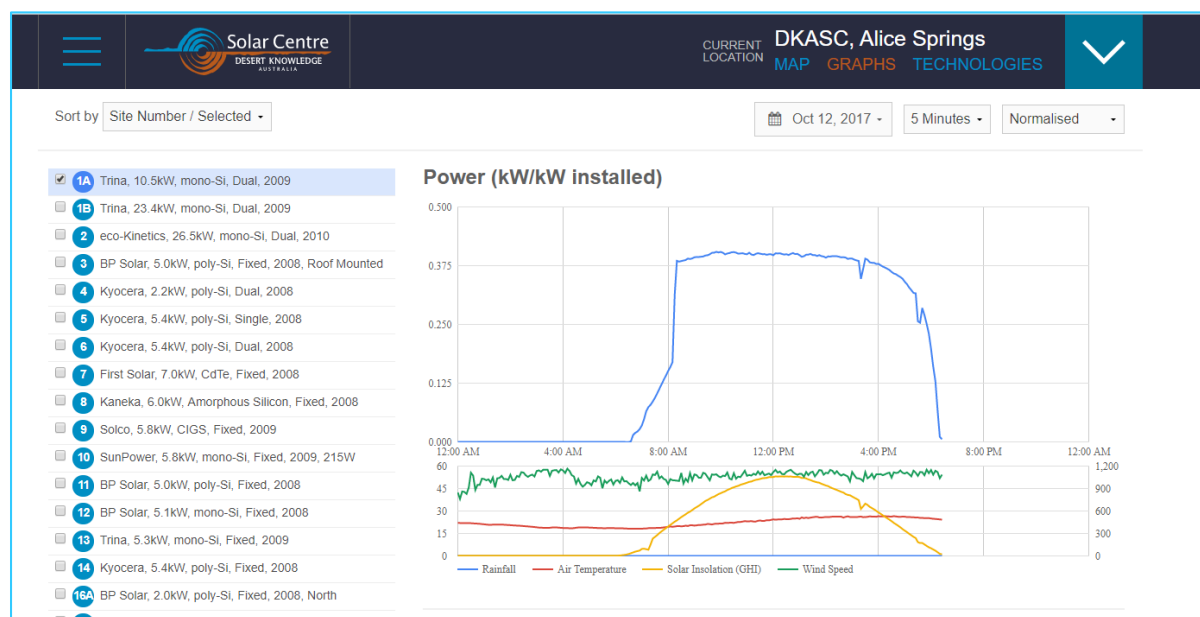
## 9. Data facilitation services

### *Establish a data facilitation service in Alice Springs*

If data is the new currency, there is a risk that the NT is keeping all its money under the mattress and not realising the full of the worth that we have. In Central Australia, and across the whole of the NT, there sits an enormous bank of existing data. However, most of that data is hosted in silos, sitting separately and even warehoused.

Existing data includes the research outputs from a multitude of research projects, community actions and Local and Territory Government projects that have not been curated into a facilitated knowledge base. By building interoperability across these existing systems we can create an opportunity for data sharing and analytics that will help to inform future policy directions, investments and projects. This can establish a new digital industry in Central Australia, that of data facilitation – knowledge sharing in the digital age.

A data facilitation service located in Alice Springs would create an opportunity for Territorians to engage not only in the theory of data analytics, but to gain local employment working on our own data sharing programs. This also ensures that the NT data is being used to create economic advantage in the NT rather than through its exploitation by external data miners.



<http://dkasolarcentre.com.au/locations/alice-springs/graphs>

## 10. Establish a Centre for Future Tech

*Build a Centre of Excellence in Future Tech that partners with the Centre of Excellence in Renewable Energy*

As the digital age progresses, our children are gaining training and skills that will take them far beyond the current usage and we have an opportunity to offer to them the space to innovate and create. We are already seeing it playing out in our classrooms and homes across the NT, where the children are programming and coding with ease, changing how we use social media, changing the jobs of the future. The children of Central Australia are highly innovative and creative system thinkers – the very environment in which we live requires it, and we celebrate this.

We are proposing that the establishment of a Centre for Future Tech in Alice Springs that fosters innovation and creativity in all things digital, will create the potential for digital disruption and innovation. It is also worth noting that we have a considerable number of people working in Central Australia at Ekistica, CAT Ltd, Pine Gap and the Over the Horizon Radar just to name a few, who could become part of the network.

One example of this is the current lease negotiation underway for the BAE Research and Development Group to site themselves at the Desert Knowledge Precinct. This colocation creates an opportunity to make connections between their Research and Development work, the work of the Centre of Excellence in Renewable Energy, and existing precinct partners such as CAT Ltd and Ekistica.

The Centre could work to host a CRC for Remote Digital Innovation that could invest in research to build the digital component of areas that Central Australia has expertise in, including remote monitoring and management systems, cultural knowledge management systems, land management, Indigenous employment and training and service delivery to remote communities.

Alice Springs also has a large population of people working in creative industries, an existing potential workforce suitable for a creative hub that would support Indigenous digital industries and start-ups. This creative innovation space could build on and work with other programs such as the Community Collections Archive Resource Facility (IRCA), Indigenous arts and media organisations; establish a new digital tourism industry through linkages to the National Indigenous Arts Centre and Trail and the National Indigenous Cultural Centre proposals, and serve to make these spaces state-of-the-art immersive cultural experiences. The recent Parrtjima Festival held here in Alice Springs is a great example of the potential of this.

Finally, the centre presents an opportunity for Central Australia to make a contribution to the broader Australian knowledge base, using our desert know-how to respond to challenges and to forge new tracks into that mainstream superhighway.

## Contacts



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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 6<sup>th</sup> 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 Australians<sup>1</sup>,

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<sup>1</sup> The Northern Territory Homelands and Outstations Assets and Access Review (CAT, 2016) [www.icat.org.au](http://www.icat.org.au) surveyed 401 Indigenous Homelands and Outstations in the NT (population 10,000). Only 20% had mobile  
eo@broadbandforthebush.com.au | [www.broadbandforthebush.com.au](http://www.broadbandforthebush.com.au)

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 homelessness<sup>2</sup>. 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*<sup>3</sup> 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

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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.

<sup>2</sup> 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>.

<sup>3</sup> 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](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)<sup>4</sup> 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 communities<sup>5</sup>.

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)*

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<sup>4</sup> 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>.

<sup>5</sup> 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



Lauren Ganley, CEO  
Desert Knowledge Australia



Teresa Corbin, CEO  
Australian Communications Consumer Action  
Network



David Spriggs, CEO  
InfoXchange



CEO  
Aboriginal Resource & Development Service



Mark Finlay, General Manager  
Ngaanyatjarra Media Aboriginal Corporation



Robert Somerville, CEO  
Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary  
Education



Priscilla Collins, CEO  
Northern Australian Aboriginal Justice  
Association



Eileen Van Iersel, CEO  
Central Australian Aboriginal Legal Aid Service



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



Karl Hampton, CEO  
Central Australian Aboriginal Media  
Association



Neil Turner, Manager  
Pilbara and Kimberley Aboriginal Media



Blair McFarland, Operations Manager  
Central Australian Youth Link Up Service



Kate Peake, CEO  
Regional Development Australia NT



Steve Rogers, CEO  
Centre for Appropriate Technology

## Appendix: *Indigenous Digital Inclusion* CTG measure and program

### What is digital inclusion and why is it important?

According to the Australian Digital Inclusion Index website<sup>6</sup>:

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 document<sup>7</sup>, 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)<sup>8</sup>, 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)<sup>9</sup> 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.”

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

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

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

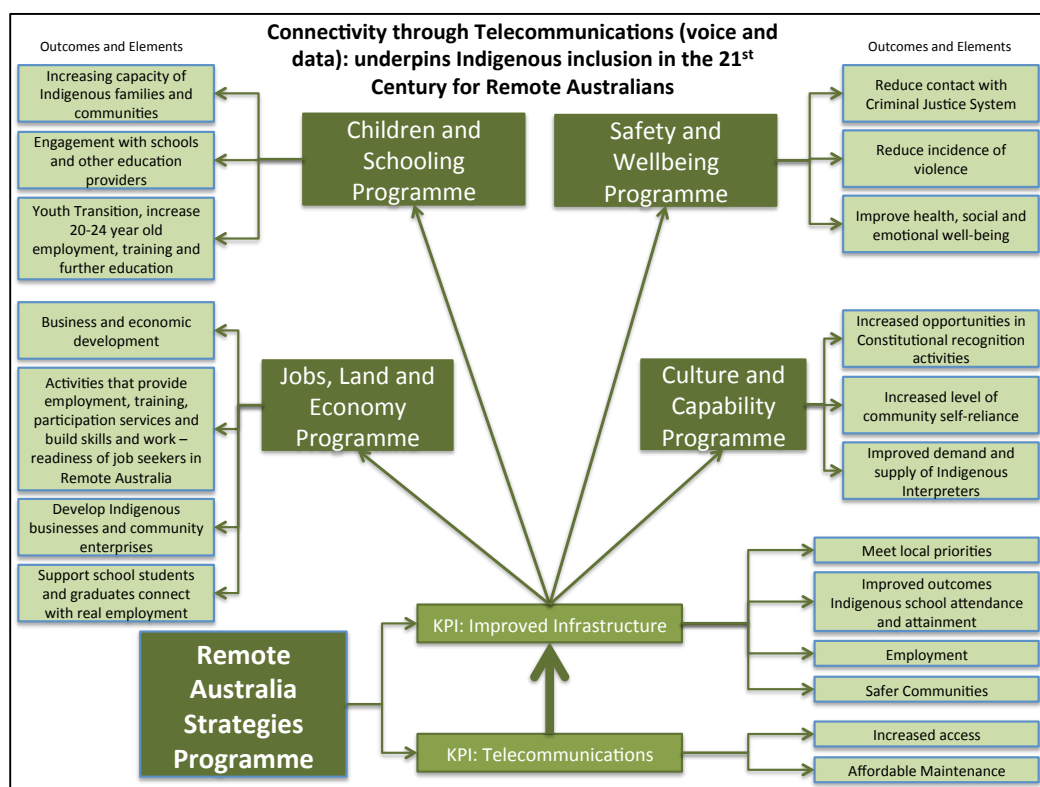
<sup>9</sup> Walton, Top, Sprigg, Fitzgerald 2013. ‘A digital inclusion- Empowering all Australian’ in *Australian Journal of Telecommunications And The Digital Economy*, Volume 1 Number 1, November 2013

## 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* report<sup>10</sup> 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)<sup>11</sup> 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.

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<sup>10</sup> 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](http://k46cs13u1432b9asz49wnhcx-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/0001_dote_2015.pdf) 4 July 2017

<sup>11</sup> 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)<sup>12</sup>

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 3<sup>rd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup>/5<sup>th</sup>) 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.

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<sup>12</sup> 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 Islanders<sup>13</sup>, 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](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](#)

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<sup>13</sup> 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.