



Australian Government

Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

Submission to the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Communication and the Arts

Inquiry into the importance of public and commercial broadcasting, online content and live production to rural and regional Australia, including the arts, news and other services

February 2016

The Australian Government has invested in the Indigenous broadcasting sector in recognition that the services are of value to both Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians. Indigenous broadcasting present programmes about Indigenous issues, music, culture and language, while promoting the understanding of Indigenous culture to non-Indigenous Australians. Many also provide training, local news services and play a powerful role in reinforcing government messaging in local communities, supporting the Australian Government's policy objectives in Indigenous Affairs.

The Government delivers funding for broadcasting services under the Indigenous Advancement Strategy (IAS), Culture and Capability Programme. In 2015-16, \$21,007,195 is being provided to support Indigenous broadcasting. This funding supports operational costs for broadcasters including employment and equipment upgrades.

The IAS Culture and Capability Programme supports the provision of the following services.

The National Indigenous Radio Service (NIRS)

The National Indigenous Radio Service Limited (NIRS) is a national service provided from a hub station in Brisbane. The NIRS supplies professional quality news, current affairs and content entertainment to local broadcasters who retransmit the service when relevant. The NIRS enables urban, regional and remote area broadcasters to provide relevant Indigenous broadcasting to a community, with the opportunity to insert NIRS content to suit local programming time slots as each community/broadcasting area desires.

Indigenous Community Television (ICTV)

ICTV was established in 2001. It is a grassroots, community-based organisation that focuses on supporting the specific and unique needs of Indigenous people in remote communities to strengthen language and culture. It transmits locally produced content to approximately 150 communities with around 80 per cent of that content delivered in over 20 Indigenous languages. ICTV supports community education, cultural expression and social inclusion. Content is predominantly provided by Indigenous media and broadcasting organisations.

Imparja Television

Imparja is a free-to-air television broadcaster, established in Alice Springs in 1988. The commercial television station is available to remote television markets throughout the nation with the exception of Western Australia.

Imparja receives IAS funding to provide:

- playout services by satellite for the Indigenous Community Television; and
- uplink services for 14 remote Indigenous radio services.

Indigitube

Indigitube is a joint venture developed and operated by ICTV and the Indigenous Remote Communications Association (IRCA). Indigitube is a video and radio online portal that enables sharing and accessing of media made by, and for, Indigenous people in remote Australia.

Indigitube is funded by ICTV and IRCA which receive IAS funding.

Radio services

IAS funding supports 121 licensed broadcasting radio services (see attachments):

- 9 very remote, 6 remote, 11 regional and 4 urban radio stations;
- 6 Remote Indigenous Media Organisations (RIMOs); and
- 91 Remote Indigenous Broadcasting Services (RIBs).

Remote, regional and urban stations

Regional and urban Indigenous broadcasting stations present programmes about Indigenous issues, music, culture and language, while promoting an understanding of Indigenous culture to non-Indigenous Australians. Many also provide training, local news services and tailored messages for local communities.

Remote Indigenous Broadcasting Services (RIBS)

RIBS are small broadcasting services located throughout remote Australia. RIBS mostly broadcast in language and are staffed by the community. They comprise a studio, transmitter and contribution/distribution facilities, usually housed in the local shire building. They are required to broadcast a minimum of two hours per day of local content. RIBS are mostly maintained through a 'hub and spokes' arrangement with a RIMO. Some shires/regional councils also receive funding to support employment in their local RIBS.

Remote Indigenous Media Organisations (RIMOS)

RIMOs are large media organisations that provide RIBS with technical support, content distribution and training. The RIMOs are important to the remote creative industry sector. They host and support Indigenous music, digital content, cultural preservation and archiving projects. RIMOs work to ensure the range of creative product and the locally tailored content acts as an attraction to keeping younger cohorts on Country and community members engaged.

RIMOs are funded for operational costs as a general principle. They also receive funding for employment support. Operational costs for RIBS are relatively high because of the expense of providing equipment maintenance and training in remote locations.

IAS funding also supports urban, regional and remote stations. The four urban stations are in Brisbane, Sydney, Melbourne and Perth.

Aboriginal Benefit Account

From time to time Indigenous broadcasters in the Northern Territory receive one-off grants through the Aboriginals Benefit Account¹ (ABA). Broadcasters compete against other non-broadcasting grant applicants for funds.

¹ The Aboriginal Benefits Account (ABA) receives statutory royalty equivalent monies from appropriations, the level of which is determined by the value of royalties generated from mining on Aboriginal land in the Northern Territory.

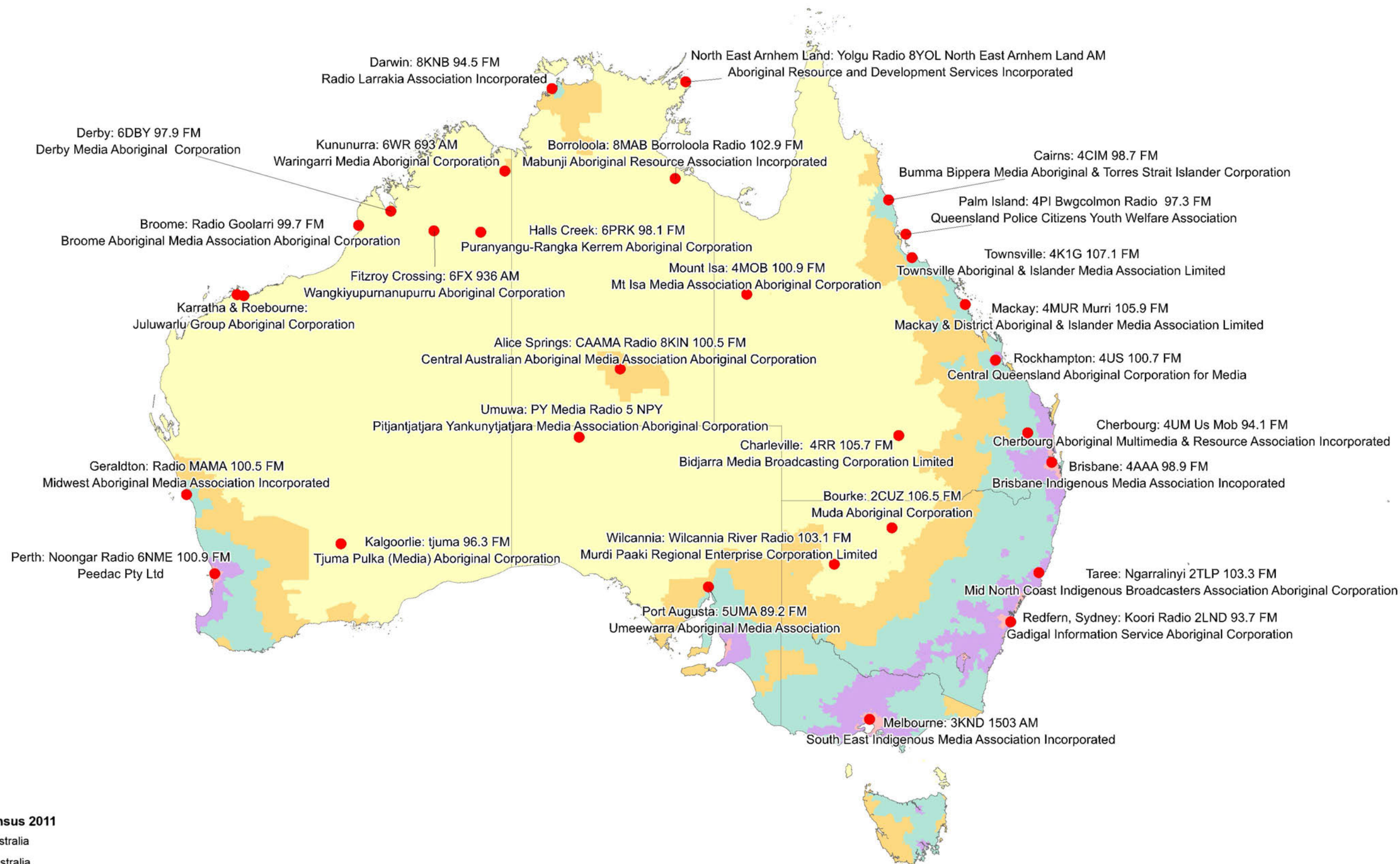
Recent ABA grants have been:

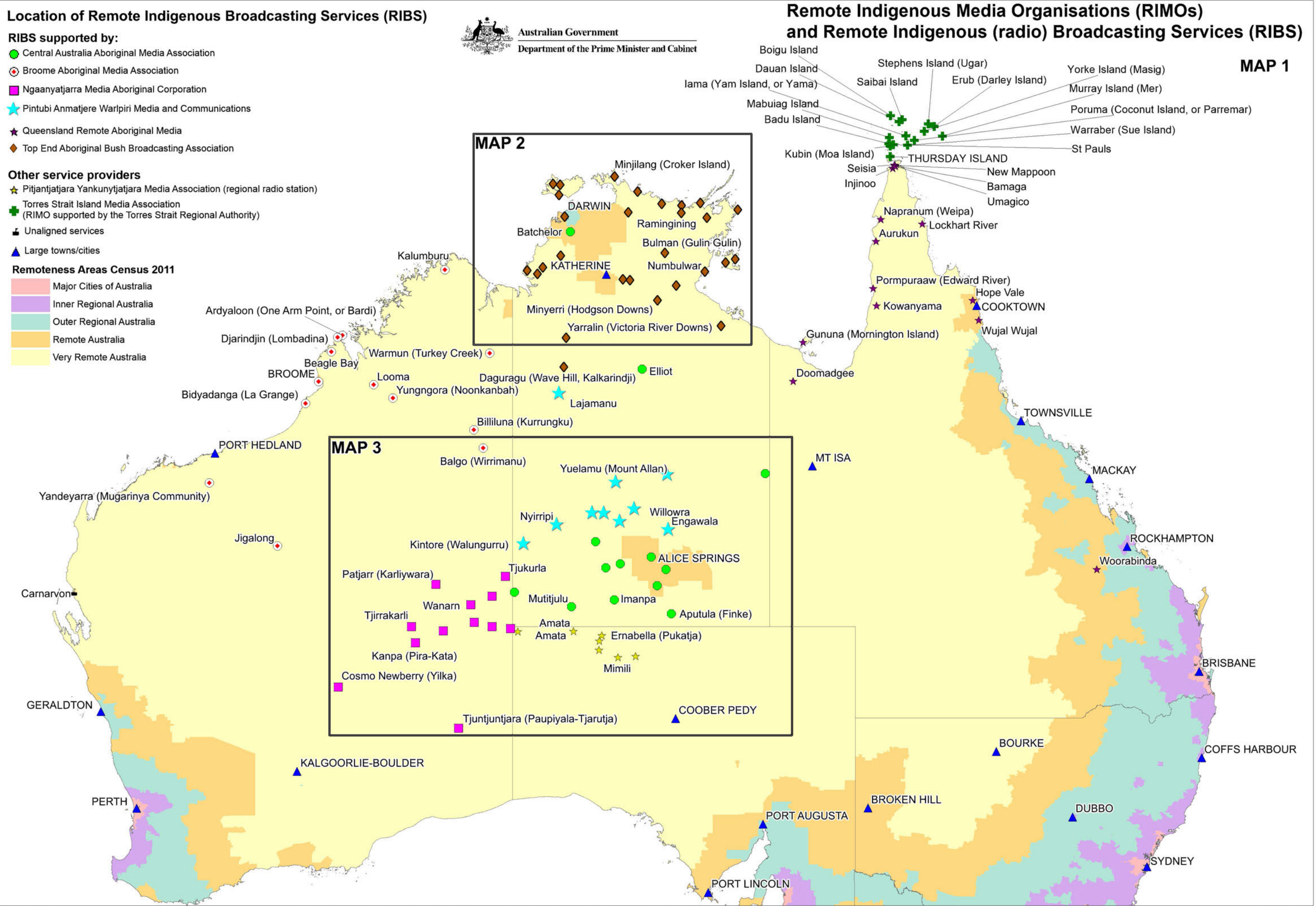
- Aboriginal Resource and Development Services Inc (ARDS) in Darwin for
 - Yolngu Media Archive
 - Yolngu Radio/Gaynuru Studios (mobile remote broadcasting system)
 - Yolngu Radio Network Upgrade

Metropolitan, Regional and Remote Indigenous Radio Stations funded through the Indigenous Advancement Strategy

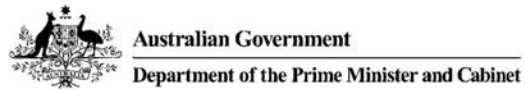


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Location of Remote Indigenous Broadcasting Services (RIBS)



Top End Remote Indigenous (radio) Broadcasting Services (RIBS)

MAP 2

RIBS supported by:

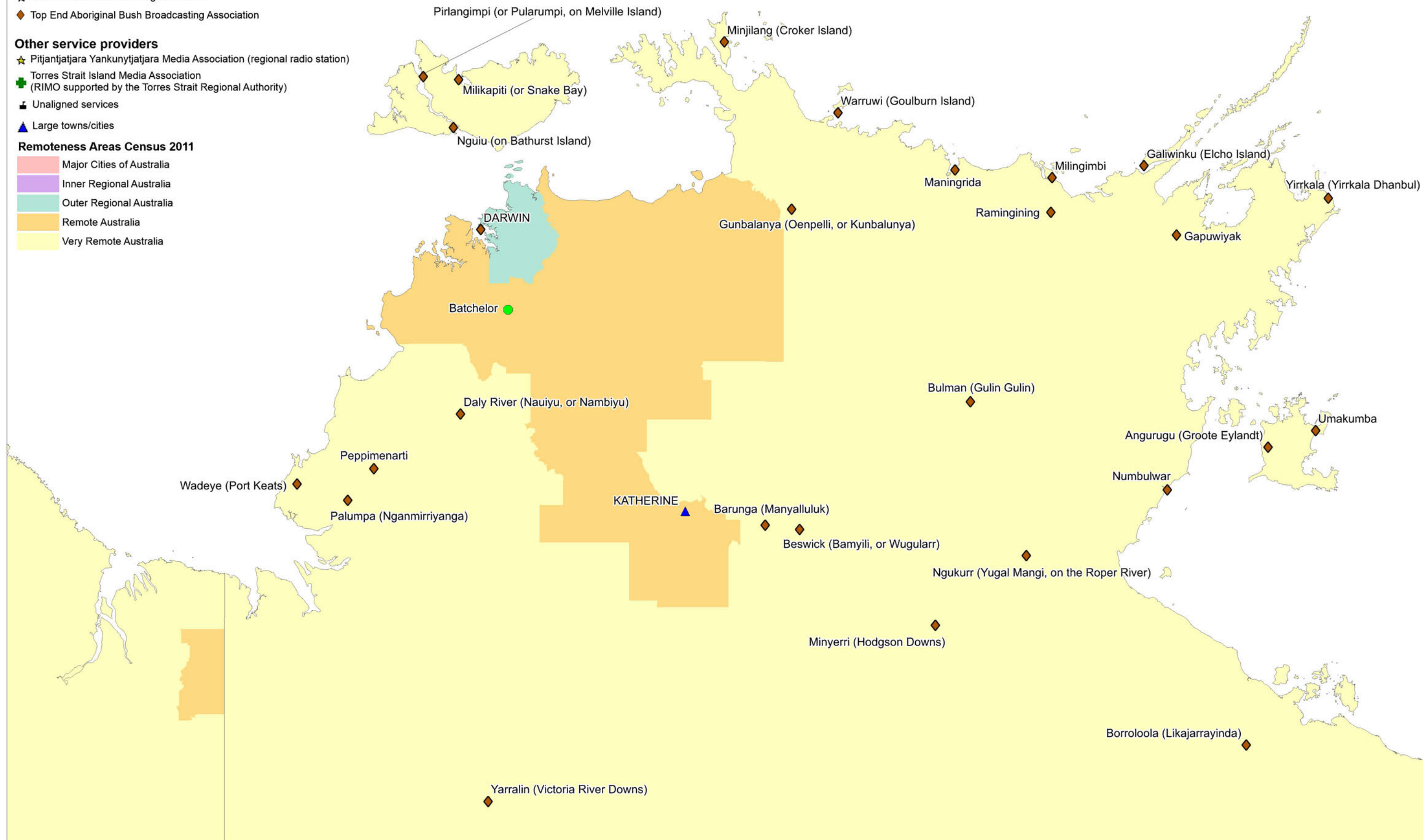
- Central Australia Aboriginal Media Association
- ⊕ Broome Aboriginal Media Association
- Ngaanyatjarra Media Aboriginal Corporation
- ★ Pintubi Anmatjere Warlpiri Media and Communications
- ★ Queensland Remote Aboriginal Media
- ◆ Top End Aboriginal Bush Broadcasting Association

Other service providers

- ★ Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara Media Association (regional radio station)
- + Torres Strait Island Media Association (RIMO supported by the Torres Strait Regional Authority)
- ⚡ Unaligned services
- ▲ Large towns/cities

Remoteness Areas Census 2011

- Major Cities of Australia
- Inner Regional Australia
- Outer Regional Australia
- Remote Australia
- Very Remote Australia



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Central Australian Remote Indigenous (radio) Broadcasting Services (RIBS)

MAP 3

