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**Australian Government**

**Department of Employment and  
Workplace Relations**

**National Office**

GPO Box 9879 CANBERRA ACT 2601

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BY: ATSI

The Secretary  
House of Representatives Standing Committee  
on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Sir/Madam

**Inquiry into Indigenous Employment**

On behalf of the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, I am pleased to provide a submission to the Inquiry into Indigenous Employment.

If you have any queries regarding the Department's submission, please contact me on 02 6121 6211.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Bob Harvey'.

Bob Harvey  
Acting Deputy Secretary, Workforce Participation

4 August 2005

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
STANDING COMMITTEE ON  
ABORIGINAL AND TORRES  
STRAIT ISLANDER AFFAIRS

Inquiry into Indigenous Employment

Submission by the Department of  
Employment and Workplace Relations

August 2005

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## Acronyms

ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
APM	Active Participation Model
CDEP	Community Development Employment Projects
CLIEP	Corporate Leaders for Indigenous Employment Project
COAG	Council of Australian Governments'
DEWR	Department of Employment and Workplace Relations
FFS	Fee For Service
IBA	Indigenous Business Australia
IEC	Indigenous Employment Centre
IEP	Indigenous Employment Policy
ISBF	Indigenous Small Business Fund
ISEP	Indigenous Self Employment Programme
JNM	Job Network Member
JPET	The Job Placement, Employment and Training Programme
NATSISS	National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey
NEIS	New Enterprise Incentive Scheme
NICP	National Indigenous Cadetship Programme
SRA	Shared Responsibility Agreement
STEP	Structured Training and Employment Projects

# 1. Introduction

The Department of Employment and Workplace Relations (DEWR) aims to:

- Increase workforce participation;
- Improve the effectiveness of the labour market; and
- Support highly productive workplaces.

This submission outlines the range of programmes and services that DEWR administers to achieve these outcomes and address the disadvantage experienced by many Indigenous Australians along with case studies which provide examples of how these services are achieving results. Many factors contribute to the relative disadvantage of Indigenous Australians including higher levels of unemployment and lower educational outcomes. The 2001 ABS Census of Population and Housing reported that at the time of the Census:

- The participation rate for the working age population (15 – 64 years) was 54.1 per cent for Indigenous people, compared to 73.3 per cent for non-Indigenous people;
- The Indigenous employment to population ratio for persons aged 15-64 was 43.2 per cent, compared with 68 per cent for non-Indigenous people; and
- The unemployment rate for Indigenous people was 20 per cent compared with 7.2 per cent for non-Indigenous people.<sup>1</sup>

However, we are beginning to see improvements. For example, the rate of unemployment for Indigenous people fell from 22.7 per cent in 1996 to 20 per cent in 2001. Improvements in the employment and unemployment rates since the 1996 Census are also reflected in the ABS 2002 National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey (NATSISS)<sup>2</sup>. This survey reported:

- Encouraging signs in the reduction of long-term Indigenous unemployment.
- Very high perceptions of job security among employed Indigenous Australians. Around 88 per cent of employed Indigenous Australians expected to be in the same job in 12 months.
- A significant proportion of employment growth occurred outside of Community Development Employment Projects (CDEP). Non-CDEP employment accounted for nearly 70 per cent of the increase in total employment for Indigenous employment between 1994 and 2002.
- The proportion of Indigenous Australians who rely on government pensions and benefits decreased from 55 per cent to 50 per cent in the eight years to 2002.

Through consultations on reforms to the CDEP, the Government received a very positive response for the need to achieve greater employment outcomes through this community-based programme.

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<sup>1</sup> Data from the ABS Labour Force Survey show that Australia's unemployment rate has declined from 6.9 per cent in August 2001 (the time of the Census) to 5.1 per cent in April 2005. Due to a range of methodological and conceptual differences, Census and Labour Force Survey data are not strictly comparable.

<sup>2</sup> ABS Cat no. 4714.0. Data refer to persons aged 15 years and over. Comparisons over time for Indigenous persons are made between NATSISS 2002 and the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Survey (NATSISS) 1994.

## **2. The Indigenous Employment and Economic Development Toolkits**

The Employment and Workplace Relations portfolio has a range of mainstream and Indigenous-specific services which are contributing to a changing environment for Indigenous Australians. These "toolkits" can be applied by communities, individuals and employers in different ways to provide solutions to a diverse range of situations.

### **Employment Toolkit**

#### Job Network

- Intensive Support
- Job Seeker Account
- Fee for Service trials

#### Community Development Employment Projects (CDEP)

#### Indigenous Employment Policy (IEP)

- Indigenous Employment Centres (IECs)
- Structured Training and Employment Projects (STEP)
- Wage Assistance
- Corporate Leaders for Indigenous Employment
- CDEP Placement Incentive
- National Indigenous Cadetships Programme

#### Indigenous Youth Employment Consultants

#### Indigenous Community Volunteers

#### Disability Open Employment

#### Job Placement, Employment and Training Programme (JPET)

### **Economic Development Toolkit**

#### Job Network

- New Enterprise Incentive Scheme

#### CDEP

#### Indigenous Business Australia

- Joint Ventures
- Business Development Programme
- Home Ownership Programme

#### Indigenous Employment Policy

- Indigenous Self Employment Programme
- Indigenous Capital Assistance Scheme
- Indigenous Small Business Fund

#### Emerging Indigenous Entrepreneurs Strategy

#### Indigenous Community Volunteers

These toolkits are applied by staff in portfolio agencies including in DEWR's National, State, Territory and Regional offices as well as by staff in Indigenous Coordination Centres to develop and support the initiatives highlighted in this submission.

### 3. Job Network

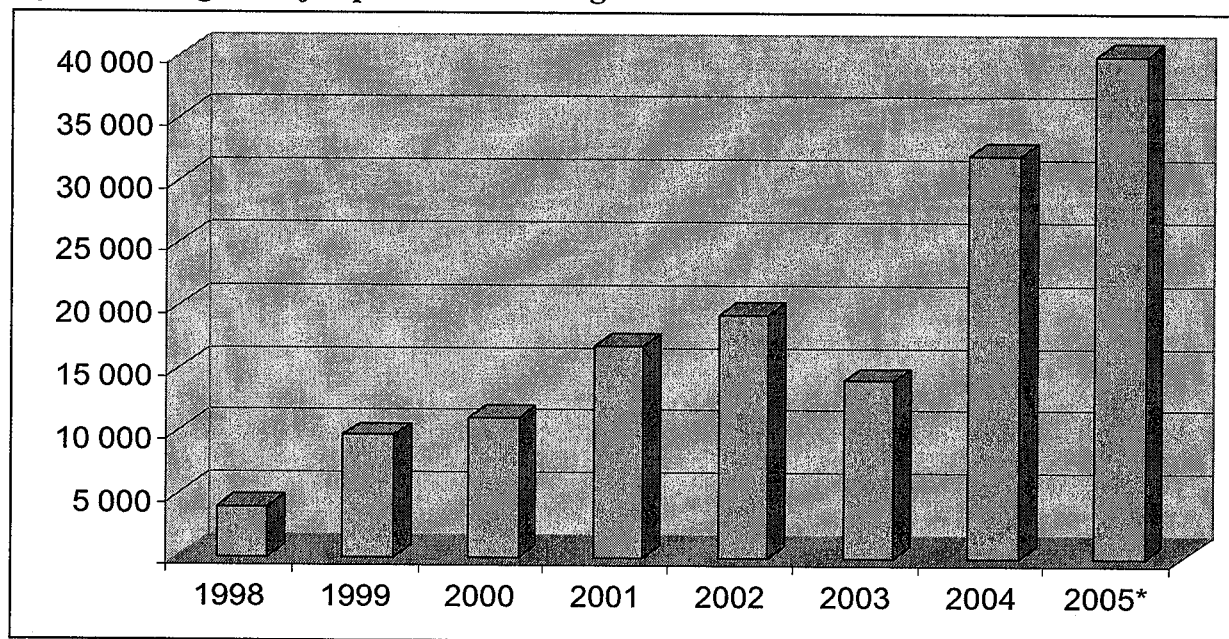
Job Network is a national network of private and community organisations dedicated to finding jobs for unemployed people, particularly the long-term unemployed. It is the primary source of employment assistance to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and after a measured start, has been making significant improvements in recent years.

One of the most significant improvements to the Job Network was the introduction of the Active Participation Model (APM) in July 2003. Under the APM all job seekers now have simpler and faster access to services provided by a single Job Network member of their choice for the duration of their unemployment.

The APM offers flexible linkages with complementary employment and training programmes provided by DEWR and other Australian Government, State and Territory funded providers. Improved linkages can increase the programme and service support available to Job Network members to assist job seekers to overcome an identified vocational or motivational barrier to employment. Complementary programmes include the New Enterprise Incentive Scheme and the Literacy and Numeracy programme.

Under the APM, from 1 July 2003 to 30 June 2004, over 22,000 Indigenous job seekers were placed in jobs. Job Network bettered that record in 2004-05 with over 39,000 Indigenous people placed in work. The graph below illustrates the growth in Job Network outcomes for Indigenous Australians by calendar year.

**Figure 1: Indigenous job placements through Job Network 1998 to 2005**



\*Note: the figure for 2005 is a projection of expected outcomes for Indigenous Australians for 2005

A key feature of the APM is that an Indigenous client can choose their preferred Job Network member, including Indigenous specialist providers in some areas. This choice can be informed by a star rating which is weighted towards the achievement of Indigenous employment outcomes.

Job Network members focus on the needs of job seekers by providing Job Search Support and Intensive Support services. Assistance is provided earlier for most Indigenous job seekers

registered with Job Network. Indigenous job seekers have the option to voluntarily access Intensive Support Job Search Training as soon as they are registered with a Job Network Member, rather than having access to this assistance after 3 months of unemployment. Most Indigenous job seekers, together with other job seekers who are classified by Centrelink as Highly Disadvantaged through the Job Seeker Classification Instrument assessment tool, have immediate entry into Intensive Support Customised Assistance. Access to Customised Assistance normally commences when the job seeker has been unemployed for 12 months. As at 29 April 2005, there were over 61,000 Indigenous job seekers on the active case load. Of these, over 49,000 were on Intensive Support."

Job Network members also have access to a Job Seeker Account to purchase services or other forms of assistance to help job seekers secure work and encourage ongoing active participation. The assistance could include employment related training, clothing and equipment, wage subsidies and transport assistance. The Job Seeker Account is designed to allow flexibility for tailoring assistance to the individual needs and barriers of each job seeker. Indigenous job seekers can also access additional training funds through the Training Account to meet the cost of accredited training, including that provided by the employer. There is no upper limit placed on funds available to job seekers. This funding is in addition to the Training Credit which is earned through participation in Work for the Dole or Community Work.

Flexible servicing arrangements have also been introduced in some rural and remote areas to provide Job Network services to meet the needs of these communities. These arrangements are negotiated between the community and the Job Network member. In some areas which did not have Job Network, Fee for Service (FFS) arrangements were negotiated to extend the coverage of the Job Network. This arrangement currently operates in remote locations in six employment service areas. Like flexible servicing, arrangements are negotiated with local communities so as to reflect local conditions. FFS will differ from one community to the next and arrangements can include development of plans to deliver local jobs for local people and participatory activities.

*Industry Strategies* – One of the methods the Department uses to advance the application of the APM and use of the government's employment services is to engage with specific industries and employers to tailor recruitment strategies to meet their needs. This is achieved by making better connections between industries, regions, IECs, employers and employment services, drawing on other services where appropriate. The focus is on industries with high potential employment growth, skill shortages and good prospects for job seekers. Five industries have been identified for initial consultation based on industry analysis and labour market characteristics. These are Retail, Manufacturing, Health and Community Services, Property and Business Services and Accommodation, Restaurants and Cafes. In addition, the industry specific approach is complemented with a regional cross-industry approach.

In collaboration with employers and employment service providers, the Department seeks to facilitate the development of business solutions that meet industry needs. Projects include initiatives that create better relationships between Job Network members and specific employers or industries, vocational training pathways for specific jobs, screening or assessment tools for specific industries or recruitment and training packages. The projects also provide an opportunity to trial innovative approaches that may challenge existing employer attitudes or recruitment methods. Some of these have targeted assistance to Indigenous job seekers. In particular an industry strategy with Accor Hotels has seen Job Network organisations working with Accor to train Indigenous job seekers to be employed in their establishments.



## **Job Network Case Studies**

### *Job Network puts Tatiara in touch with Indigenous Australia - Tatiara Meat Company*

*In 2002 the SA office of the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations (DEWR) approached the Tatiara Meat Company (TMC) at Bordertown, 200kms south east of Adelaide, about employment opportunities for Indigenous clients.*

*DEWR knew TMC was committed to improving the employment prospects of minority groups through workplace diversity for which it received the 'Large Rural Employer Award' for non-discriminatory practices in 2003.*

*TMC were very keen about the DEWR proposal, in particular to ensure that any new workers had the right skills and were ready for long-term employment. Job seekers with personal problems or those who lacked employment skills were encouraged to do some pre-employment training, including workplace communications skills.*

*Job Network members Complete Personnel, Mission Australia and The Salvation Army Employment Plus, in both South Australia (SA) and Victoria, were involved in the process, as was Burrandies Indigenous Employment Centre (IEC) in Mt. Gambier. So far they have helped 37 Indigenous job seekers start work at TMC.*

*Mission Australia's Port Augusta site in SA, successfully placed 10 of the job seekers and believes one-on-one support is a key reason for its success. The Job Seeker Account was used to assist the successful applicants with accommodation and travel costs. In addition Mission Australia conducted a post-placement support programme.*

*The Burrandies IEC has referred six participants to TMC over a three month period. The IEC co-ordinator drove the recruits to Bordertown to help find them accommodation while TMC organised their uniforms, footwear and safety equipment.*

*The IEC co-ordinator credits TMC with 'going the extra mile' to support and retain Indigenous workers. TMC believes that their success in attracting and retaining Aboriginal staff is in the company's flexible approach and respect for Indigenous culture. Indigenous employees at TMC are supported by a buddy-system which helps newcomers get used to the workplace.*

Sourced from an Indigenous Best Practise study. DEWR has permission to publish.

### *Tying it all together for Indigenous Clients – Jobs Australia*

*Jobs Australia, a Job Network member in Armidale, has packaged Indigenous employment assistance together as a strategy to present to employers in the north west of NSW. The strategy packages types of assistance available to businesses for the employment of Indigenous Australians. It includes the provision of wage subsidies funded using the Job Seeker Account, as well as Wage Assistance under the Indigenous Employment Policy, traineeship assistance (involving the local New Apprenticeship centre), offering an Aboriginal mentor, providing work clothing and pre-work training (in such things as occupational health and safety), fuel assistance in the first few weeks of work (or lifts with the mentor) as well as the offer of training in cultural awareness for existing staff prior to the job seeker starting work.*

*Jobs Australia in Armidale is currently working with the local council; a major local employer. The council is very keen to achieve close to eight per cent Indigenous employment within their*

*workforce. Interviews are held with Indigenous job seekers and from these, one or two of them are chosen to participate in a paid work placement with the council. The work experience helps identify suitable candidates to take on full-time positions. Job seekers not successful in gaining a full-time position still benefit by gaining valuable work experience and feedback.*

*Using the Job Seeker Account to individually tailor assistance to suit the needs of the client has made a real difference to the success of this initiative. So far the strategy has seen the placement of job seekers into positions such as Indigenous rangers and in the council's bridge and civil construction and the administration and tourism sections. Work trials are currently occurring in the areas of administration, parks and gardens, water, sewerage and civil construction.*

Sourced from Employment Extra, Indigenous Supplement. February 2005. Page 15.

## 4. Community Development Employment Projects (CDEP)

The Community Development Employment Projects (CDEP) programme is a national initiative aimed at increasing employment, community activities and business development opportunities for Indigenous people and their communities to help improve the economic, social and cultural status of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. The CDEP programme is delivered by around 220 organisations in remote, regional and urban regions across Australia. There are around 37,000 places for participants per year in CDEP activities.

In February 2005 the Minister for Employment and Workplace Relations the Hon Kevin Andrews MP released the discussion paper *Building on Success* proposing changes to CDEP. A comprehensive public consultation process followed with sessions held in over 40 locations. Feedback was received from more than 2100 people who attended the consultation sessions and through over 100 written submissions.

There was strong support for the proposed improvements to CDEP and as a result the Minister announced changes to the programme to be implemented from July 2005. These changes are detailed in the *CDEP- Future Directions* paper and include:

- ⇒ Maintaining and building on the flexibility of CDEP with each CDEP organisation providing a unique mix of employment, community activities and business development;
- ⇒ A stronger emphasis on performance in employment, meeting the needs of communities and business development;
- ⇒ A new funding model with emphasis on funding going to activities;
- ⇒ A stronger partnership being built between DEWR, CDEP organisations and other service providers to improve results; and
- ⇒ Negotiations with CDEP organisations to reduce the number of non-Indigenous participants in CDEP.

Improving employment outcomes through CDEP will involve making better linkages with Job Network providers but also taking better advantage of Indigenous Employment Centres (IECs) and the CDEP Placement Incentive. IECs are discussed later in this submission, but the CDEP Placement Incentive is an initiative which provides a financial incentive to CDEP organisations that place CDEP participants into open employment and off CDEP. Over 2000 CDEP participants have been placed in employment outside of CDEP since the inception of the initiative.

Under the CDEP Placement Incentive, CDEP organisations receive a cash payment of up to \$2,200 for each participant who leaves CDEP and goes into ongoing employment for at least 13 hours per week. CDEP organisations receive an initial payment of \$550 on job placement and \$1650 after 13 weeks of non-CDEP employment. DEWR is also seeking to increase the promotion of the Placement Incentive to ensure CDEP organisations are aware of their entitlements.

### **Pathways to Employment Project**

DEWR has funded a project with the Australian National Training Authority (ANTA) to work with 16 CDEPs over an 18 month period to develop frameworks that create pathways to employment and small business for CDEP participants. The project is a direct response to a recommended action under the Partners in a Learning Culture Blueprint for Implementation endorsed by the Ministerial Council on the ANTA. The project will work with the CDEPs to

identify participants' training needs, facilitate appropriate vocational education and training responses and develop networks that will result in employment and small business outcomes. The project is scheduled for implementation with CDEP organisations from June 2005. An outcome of the project will be the development of models for replication of the project in other CDEP organisations.

## **CDEP Case Studies**

### Lockhart River CDEP Road Gang

*The 'Old Site' Road leads to a number of the outstations and over the years has received little maintenance. During the wet season, which runs from December to May, the road becomes impassable due to many of the creek crossings becoming badly eroded. These become increasingly difficult to transverse until they have completely dried up, which means it is dangerous to go to the outstations until after the wet season is finished. To overcome this problem and enable earlier access to outstations it was decided to work on the road over the next few years and to immediately concentrate on the creek crossing which historically had caused problems with access to outstations.*

*The CDEP gang, all recipients of the CDEP wage, led by the CDEP Coordinator and supervisor, formed a team of up to 20 workers. They established a camp base, constructed by-passes, graded the approaches to the creeks, reformed the creek crossing and then built form work to lay the cement causeways. During this exercise, the participants showed initiative, innovation, self-motivation and are learning work ethics.*

*During the time of the road building project there was an outbreak of petrol sniffing within the community. The CDEP coordinator took a number of young boys who had been sniffing out to the camp and gave them tasks to do around the camp. He also taught them how to make spears, trap fish and look for bush tucker. These kids have since returned to town and are no longer sniffing petrol.*

*The 'road gang' group worked really hard five days a week for six weeks, camped out on the road for four nights per week and commenced work at 7am to get a lot of work done in the cool of the day. During this time they were able to construct two complete causeways and prepare another before the wet season forced them back into town. They are now in the planning process for next year, looking at what worked well, where they had problems, and what additional machinery and tools are needed to enable them to get the job done more efficiently.*

*This project is a fine example of the CDEP workforce undertaking a task that was not only upskilling the workers but also of great benefit to the whole community. In undertaking this project the workers have gained skills in using heavy plant and equipment, form work and concreting which they will use in town in the wet season.*

Sourced from CDEP News. March 2005 Edition. Page 13.

## 5. Indigenous Employment Policy

The *Indigenous Employment Policy (IEP)* was introduced by the Government in 1999 and has increased the emphasis on creating opportunities for Indigenous people in the private sector. The flexibility of assistance provided through the IEP builds on three key principles:

- boosting the demand for jobs in the private sector and small business to improve the level of participation in private sector jobs;
- addressing the supply of Indigenous workers through appropriate and innovative assistance that prepares Indigenous people for available jobs, including giving priority to accredited employment-based training such as traineeships and apprenticeships; and
- improving the matching of supply and demand, particularly through Job Network.

The Indigenous Employment Programme comprises:

- Employment initiatives:
  - *Structured Training and Employment Projects (STEP)* - flexible financial assistance for projects that offer structured training leading to lasting employment for Indigenous job seekers,
  - The *Corporate Leaders for Indigenous Employment Project (CLIEP)* – a partnership between individual companies and the Australian Government to generate more jobs for Indigenous Australians,
  - *Wage Assistance* - a wage subsidy over 26 weeks for employers that offer ongoing full time work.
  - The *National Indigenous Cadetship Project (NICP)* - links Indigenous students undertaking diploma, advanced diploma and undergraduate degree courses and employers in an arrangement that involves full time study and work placements,
  - The *CDEP Placement Incentive* – an incentive payment to CDEP organisations for each participant who is placed in open employment and off CDEP payments, and
  - *Indigenous Community Volunteers (ICV)* - links skilled volunteers with communities that have asked for expert assistance in areas such as business, financial management and the trades.
- Initiatives to stimulate Indigenous economic activity comprising:
  - The *Indigenous Self Employment Programme (ISEP)* - assists individuals to establish their own small business by providing business advice and support, financial literacy training and up to \$5,500 through a loan funding arrangement,
  - The *Indigenous Small Business Fund (ISBF)* - funding for individuals and Indigenous organisations for activities including feasibility studies, business planning, marketing and other facilitative projects, and
  - The *Indigenous Capital Assistance Scheme (ICAS)* - flexible assistance packages including professional support and mentoring and business development loans from \$50,000 to \$500,000.
- Measures to improve employment services and outcomes for Indigenous Australians in addition to Job Network:
  - *Indigenous Employment Centres (IECs)* - IECs complement Job Network and are operated by CDEP organisations to provide employment services to participants. There are currently 33 IECs operating nationally, with an additional 15 announced in the 2005 Australian Government budget, and
  - *Indigenous Youth Employment Consultants (IYECs)* – Based with Job Network providers, 14 Indigenous Employment Consultants are working with young Indigenous people,

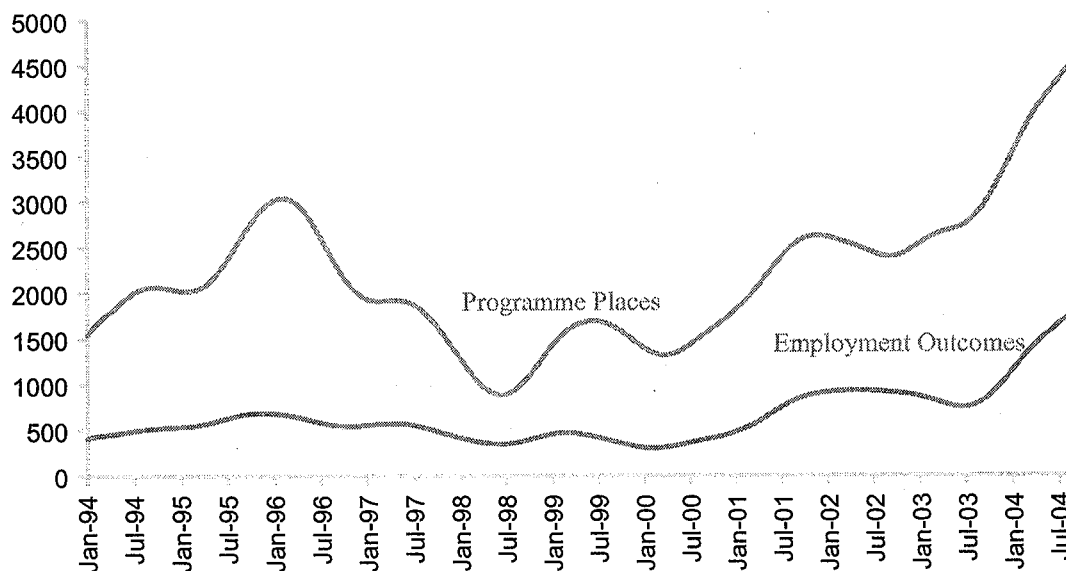
providing linkages to work opportunities or further education and training. A further 16 consultants are expected to commence later this year.

From its establishment in 1999 through to 30 June 2005, there have been over 45,500 commencements under the IEP. The following table provides a breakdown of how the IEP has been assisting Indigenous Australians.

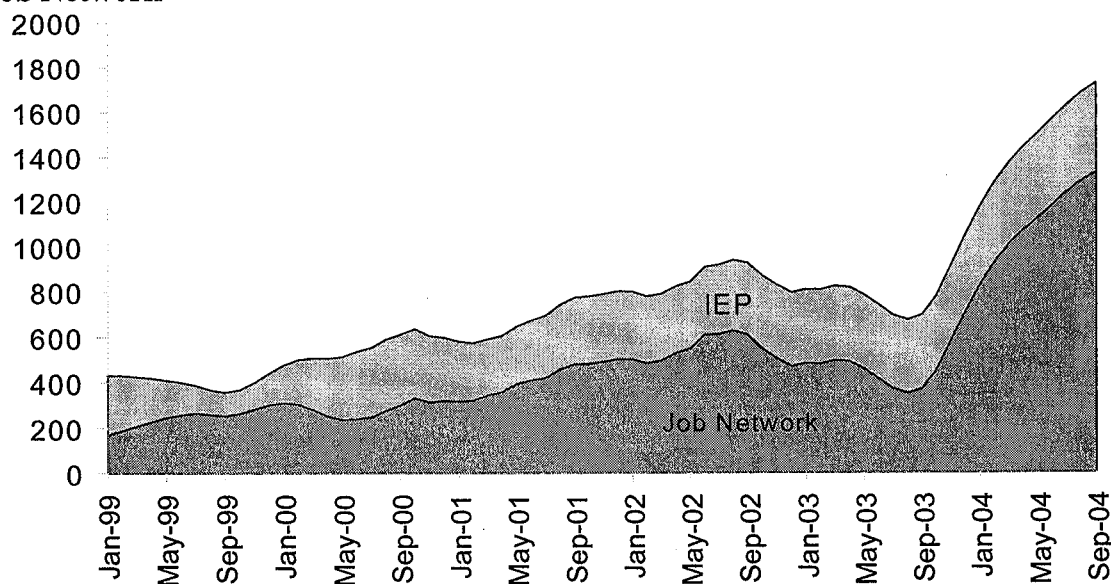
*Commencements*

<i>Period</i>	<i>STEP/ CLIEP</i>	<i>Wage Assistance</i>	<i>CDEP PI</i>	<i>IEC</i>	<i>NICP</i>	<i>TOTAL</i>
<i>1 July 2004 to 30 June 2005</i>	<i>3,990</i>	<i>2,845</i>	<i>432</i>	<i>1,143</i>	<i>189</i>	<i>8,599</i>
<i>Total since IEP began in 1999</i>	<i>27,115</i>	<i>14,141</i>	<i>2,186</i>	<i>2,139</i>	<i>882</i>	<i>46,463</i>

**Figure 2: Indigenous Employment Outcomes and Programme Places**



**Figure 3: Indigenous Employment Outcomes for the Indigenous Employment Policy and Job Network**



## **5.1 Structured Training and Employment Projects (STEP)**

STEP funds projects that lead to lasting employment opportunities for Indigenous job seekers. These projects often include structured training, such as apprenticeships or traineeships as a lead into or part of a job.

STEP offers a tailored package of assistance to meet business needs and maximise opportunities for Indigenous job seekers. Projects are not limited to any particular industry or region and both private and public sector employers participate.

Since its beginning in 1999, 1,426 STEP projects have provided employment and training opportunities for over 27,000 Indigenous Australians. STEP projects provide employment and training opportunities in a variety of industries including: Education, Building and Construction, Transport and Distribution, Finance and Management, Retail, Hospitality, Customer Service, Housing, Mining and Tourism. For those who participated in STEP during 2003-04, 72% were still in work or further education and training three months after completing their placement.

### **STEP Case Studies**

#### STEPping up the ladder

*The Ladders to Success STEP programme is proving to be very successful. Ladders to Success is a three year STEP funded project contracted through the City of Greater Shepparton to an Indigenous organisation. The project works to secure ongoing, paid, full-time employment for 100 local Indigenous Australians in the Goulburn Valley region. The project is on target to reach this goal with 62 job placements made as at 31 December 2004. Ladders to Success runs until December 2005.*

*The project follows the implementation of the 2002 Council of Australian Governments (COAG) strategy in Shepparton and was developed in consultation with representatives from both State and local governments. The Victorian State government also contributed to the initiative via a contract with the City of Greater Shepparton.*

*Participants are given pre-employment assistance tailored to their needs, receive post-placement support and mentoring support when they begin work in a new job.*

*The project is managed by the local community with local Indigenous, business and training representatives plus all levels of government participating on the board of management for the project.*

Sourced from Employment Extra, Indigenous Supplement. February 2005. Page 5

#### South Burnett Beef (SBB) - STEP

*SBB are recruiting 35 Indigenous Australians into its Murgon meatworks. New recruits will under go a seven day Meat Industry Familiarisation course before commencing work. SBB is working closely with the nearby Cherbourg Council (CDEP) and local Job Network Members and Job Placement Organisations. A joint Employer/JNM information session has been held for CDEP participants to ensure that they are aware of the employment opportunities available and potential benefits available through linking with the Job Network. Following a series of meetings involving the Indigenous Coordination Centres, Cherbourg Council and DEWR it is likely that a major element of the local SRA will involve promoting a much stronger link between the Cherbourg community and the Job Network through the establishment by JNMs of a visiting service to Cherbourg and thereby increase the community access to "outside" employment - the*

*SBB STEP arrangements will be used as a model as it demonstrates the whole-of-government approach.*

Permission has been granted for DEWR to include this case study in the submission.

## **5.2 Corporate Leaders for Indigenous Employment Projects**

The Corporate Leaders for Indigenous Employment Projects (CLIEP) is based on a partnership between companies and the Australian Government to create more private sector jobs for Indigenous Australians. It aims to develop a strategic approach to generate more private sector jobs for Indigenous Australians through partnerships with larger companies. Companies commit to employ more Indigenous people and design an employment strategy to achieve this objective. The Government provides funding to support the implementation of this strategy.

There are three stages to participation in CLIEP. These stages are designed to progress a company from the initial stage of making a public commitment to improve the employment prospects of Indigenous people through to entering into a formal contract to take on a specific number of Indigenous employees. However, not all Corporate Leader companies participate in all stages and some companies may elect to enter into a contract before signing the public statement. There are currently 65 signatories to the Corporate Leaders for Indigenous Employment Project.

### **CLIEP Case Studies**

#### *Accor Grove Pty Ltd*

*Winner of the Outstanding Organisation category in 2003, Accor has strengthened its commitment to Indigenous employment in 2004, continuing to increase recruitment of Indigenous Australians and bringing on board more disadvantaged job seekers.*

*The opportunity to be part of the Accor Indigenous Employment Programme is available to more Indigenous people across Australia as it not operates in over 90 Accor properties across Australia providing over 100 jobs for Indigenous Australians in tourism and hospitality. Retention rates of Indigenous employees are the same as those of non-Indigenous staff and are in line with industry benchmarks. It provides full time, part time and casual employment from entry level positions to management positions.*

*As a Registered Training Organisation, Accor is also able to give Indigenous employees the chance to complete Certificate II or III in Hospitality Operations and the Diploma in Hospitality Management. Accor's Indigenous Employment Programme has a high profile within the company and enjoys a high level of commitment from management and staff. They have also extended their internal marketing, maintained a commitment to an Indigenous Employment Co-ordinator and the delivery of cross cultural awareness training, and ensures that culturally appropriate staff support services are available to Indigenous staff.*

Case study sourced from Corporate Leaders for Indigenous Employment Awards 2004 publication. Page 16.

#### *Argyle Diamond Mine (ADM) Corporate Leaders for Indigenous Employment Project (CLIEP)*

*DEWR provides Structured Training and Employment Projects funding to support the employment of 150 Indigenous Australians at Argyle's diamond mine in the East Kimberley region of WA. To date 112 people have been placed in employment. Argyle Diamonds recently won the Most Outstanding Manager category of the CLIEP Awards 2004.*



*Argyle has implemented specialist strategies designed to increase the recruitment of local people. For example, they travel to surrounding communities such as Wyndham and Halls Creek (each over 200km from the mine site) to pick up potential employees and bring them to the Argyle mine for orientation and medical tests, as part of the screening and recruitment phase. Applicants are invited to a 3-day workshop to assess their suitability for a position, which includes aptitude testing, practical exercises and team building activities. Argyle continues to work with those candidates that are unsuccessful to improve their chances of gaining a position in the future.*

*Argyle demonstrates a highly individualised approach to the assistance they provide to each participant. Some of the people completing Traineeships through Argyle are actually working in their own communities while Argyle is employing them. They have also developed a relationship with a local training provider to assist in facilitating the formal training of the project participants. Off-the-job training is conducted at TAFE in Perth and Kununurra. A wide range of additional accredited training is also provided. In addition to Traineeships and Apprenticeships, participants have been employed in positions such as Recruitment Administrator, Lease Access Control Officer, Operator, Security Officer and Team Leader.*

*DEWR provides funding over the life of the contract for Indigenous Business Development Funding. This is to be utilised to assist local Indigenous people to develop business opportunities and to provide business mentoring services for existing and new Indigenous businesses. Two Argyle staff members are involved in working with local people in this regard. Some of the opportunities currently being examined include: tourism, haulage and plant nursery and canvas products.*

Permission has been granted for DEWR to include this case study in the submission.

### **5.3 Wage Assistance**

Wage Assistance is an Indigenous specific wage subsidy (\$4400 over 26 weeks for full time and \$2200 for part time) initiative for employers who are offering ongoing full-time or part-time jobs. The job needs to be ongoing and operate under a normal employer-employee relationship to be eligible for the subsidy.

For the 2004-05 financial year Wage Assistance was approved for 2,845 placements. The top four sectors for these placements have been in the Manufacturing, Property and Business services, Construction and Retail. Of these placements, over 85% were with private sector employers, primarily small businesses and over 35% were assisted by a Job Network member. For those who participated in Wage Assistance during 2003-04, 70% were still in work or further education and training three months after completing their placement.

#### **Wage Assistance Case Studies**

##### *Shared Vision Aboriginal Corporation*

*In December 2002, during a visit to his local Job Network member, a participant was told about a vacant field officer position at the local Aboriginal Corporation. An employment consultant assisted him with his job application and within no time he got an interview. The participant showed his Wage Assistance card during the interview and by the end of the week was selected for the full-time position.*

*A week after commencing employment, Shared Vision Aboriginal Corporation applied for the Wage Assistance subsidy. This subsidy was used to send the participant to the local TAFE to upgrade his computer skills. Through ongoing work training and education, the participant also developed many other skills that he thought were not achievable at his age.*

*As a field officer, the participant visits up to thirteen Indigenous communities in Northern, New South Wales where he promotes access to government services. His upgraded skills have enabled him to effectively communicate in a clear, friendly and culturally appropriate manner.*

*Since his commencement with Shared Vision, service delivery to communities has increased and the working relationship between the organisation and the communities has greatly improved. This is due to the participant having cultural knowledge of the areas which he visits as a field officer.*

Sourced from Employment Extra, Indigenous Supplement. February 2005. Page 13

#### **5.4 National Indigenous Cadetship Programme**

The National Indigenous Cadetship Projects (NICP) helps Indigenous Australians obtain professional qualifications and jobs, while employers obtain Indigenous employees with the qualifications and skills they need. The programme links students and employers in a cadetship arrangement involving full-time study and work placements. The projects provide financial assistance to cadets while they undertake full time study and a paid work placement which is generally undertaken during the long vacation break.

Between July 1999 to 30 June 2005, 882 Indigenous students had commenced in the NICP and there are approximately 450 current cadets. Of the cadetships to date, approximately 15 per cent have been in the category of business, management, economics and commerce, 16 per cent in law, 16 per cent in science and engineering and 5 per cent in information technology. In addition, 10 per cent have been in education and 12 per cent in health related disciplines (including 8 cadets in medicine and 27 in nursing).

In 2003-04, NICP assisted 209 Indigenous students.

#### **NICP Case Studies**

##### *First Indigenous female doctor graduates through NICP*

*The NICP has seen its first Indigenous female doctor graduate since the IEP was launched in 1999. The participant registered with NICP in 2001 and is now a qualified doctor. She is currently doing her internship at the Gosford Hospital in New South Wales.*

*Later this year she will be eligible to apply for the General Practice training programme starting in 2006. If successful, she will be able to do a combination of further hospital based training, various general practice placements and a year of special rural skills training.*

##### *NICP Helps to Combine Love for Rugby League with Tertiary Education*

*A participant from Atherton in north Queensland, has recently begun a cadetship with the rugby league organisation, the North Queensland Cowboys.*

*The Cadetship will see the participant undertake 12 weeks of paid work experience each year as he studies for his Bachelor of Sport and Exercise Science at Townsville Campus of James Cook*

*University. As part of the work experience, he will help deliver rugby league clinics to communities throughout northern Australia. It is a great opportunity, with potential to lead to full-time employment in the sports industry on completion of his degree.*

Both case studies sourced from Employment Extra, Indigenous Supplement. February 2005.  
Page 8

### **5.5 Indigenous Community Volunteers**

In Australia over four million people are involved in volunteering activities in the general community. However, volunteering in Indigenous communities is a relatively new concept and there is considerable scope to realise significant economic and social outcomes for Indigenous Australians.

Indigenous Community Volunteers (ICV) links skilled volunteers with Indigenous communities and organisations that have asked for expert assistance in areas such as financial management and corporate governance, IT, horticulture, art, tourism, business planning and marketing. In addition to meeting the needs of Indigenous Australian communities and organisations, ICV encourages skills transfer and the development of longer term strategic relationships between the community and the private sector.

ICV operates as a not-for-profit company limited by guarantee under contract to the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations.

An additional \$20 million was provided in the 2004-05 Budget to expand the activities of Indigenous Community Volunteers. The additional funding has provided ICV with a substantial resource base to strengthen its engagement of the corporate and philanthropic sectors to help build the capacity of Indigenous communities and organisations. The funds will also enable significant expansion in the number of volunteer projects and for longer duration placements (up to two years) to help consolidate skill and knowledge transfer. It is anticipated that ICV will be an important contributor in the Shared Responsibility Agreement process.

Since August 2001 when it commenced operations, ICV has placed more than 300 volunteers in the field to work within Indigenous communities.

#### **ICV Case Studies**

Examples of ICV's work are presented in the following projects being undertaken in 2005.

##### *Elimatta Housing Aboriginal Corporation*

*Elimatta Housing Aboriginal Corporation is located in the Coonamble region of New South Wales. The Community has requested assistance with training CDEP participants in the design and printing of work with silk-screens, including with the maintenance of equipment. The project request came from the interest of CDEP participants in developing knowledge of silk-screening and their desire to develop these skills further into a viable enterprise.*

*The Community hopes to become skilled in the manufacture of silk-screening for the purpose of further developing a small business enterprise.*

##### *Emama Nguda Aboriginal Corporation*

*Emama Nguda Aboriginal Corporation is located in the Kimberley region of Western Australia. The organisation has requested a volunteer with a background in horticulture and business*

*development. The idea evolved from the community council identifying a need for an enterprise that most members are familiar with from a social and cultural perspective.*

*The establishment of a mudcrab hatchery and development of a suitable business structure for the enterprise are the key objectives. Community members will be trained in the planning and operations of the proposed enterprise. Tourism opportunities will also be explored as part of the project.*

Both case studies sourced from ICV. ICV have cleared the use of these case studies with relevant parties.

### **5.6 Indigenous Employment Centres**

Indigenous Employment Centres (IECs) were established in 2002 with the aim of assisting CDEP organisations to improve employment outcomes. IECs are funded specifically to assist in moving participants off CDEP in locations where there are jobs.

There are currently 33 IECs providing services to CDEP participants across Australia with an additional 15 IECs to be established as part of the CDEP reforms. Since the inception of IECs, 2,139 Indigenous people have received assistance. The proportion of participants placed into employment is improving steadily as IECs become increasingly familiar with their role.

IECs are contracted by DEWR to provide services which are tailored to the needs of individual CDEP participants and to the labour market in which they operate. The range of services that an IEC can provide includes:

- ⇒ mentoring and on-going support during IEC assistance;
- ⇒ job search support and skills development such as how to write a job application and interview techniques;
- ⇒ assistance with writing resumés, job applications and seeking references;
- ⇒ arranging training that is relevant to the labour market - IECs have a Training Account that can be used to pay for this training;
- ⇒ arranging work experience relevant to the labour market;
- ⇒ pre-employment and post-placement support; and
- ⇒ support to access other services (in particular the services provided under Job Network).

Indigenous people not on CDEP, but registered with Centrelink as looking for work, are able to receive limited support and mentoring assistance from the IEC (for instance, to facilitate access to Centrelink or a Job Network member or assistance in talking to an employer).

There are three important characteristics of IECs:

- ⇒ IECs are not a stand alone employment service — rather IEC services complement the services that are available from other employment services providers, in particular Job Network. A key role for IECs is to develop linkages with Job Network members that have a proven track record in delivering job outcomes for Indigenous job seekers;
- ⇒ IECs are focussed on outcomes. Although the quality of the services that IECs provide is important and is supported by a Code of Practice, it is ultimately the number of

participants who are placed into non-CDEP jobs and that remain in employment that will determine the success of IECs;

- ⇒ Participation in IECs is time limited, generally for 12 months, but this can be extended where the IEC and the participant believe that the additional assistance is likely to lead to an employment outcome.

## **Indigenous Employment Centre Case Studies**

### Perth, Western Australia

*An IEC in Western Australia commenced operation in July 2002. It is one of the largest IECs and has placed the second highest number of participants into employment. Examples of successful strategies deployed by the IEC are listed below.*

- ⇒ *Appointing staff with experience in delivering employment services – recruiting suitably qualified staff significantly increased their effectiveness.*
- ⇒ *Assisting participants to become work-ready. The IEC uses CDEP activities to provide work experience, increase confidence and improve work habits of potential clients. It also encourages clients to acquire/update certification where these are required or will increase the chances of getting their preferred job. The IEC funds such training through the Training Account. Where the type of employment sought requires a greater level of training they are more likely to try to find appropriate apprenticeships.*
- ⇒ *Monitoring clients and making them accountable - for example, by expecting them to be in touch at least once a week. The IEC is willing to reinforce this requirement by suspending CDEP payments.*
- ⇒ *Focusing on 'reverse marketing' of clients rather than on gathering vacancies from employers. The IEC, in consultation with the client, identifies two potential employment/career path options taking into account the client's abilities, qualifications and personal circumstances. It then canvasses employers they consider are suitable, actively matching clients to employers and seeking out repeat business with employers where they have had successful placements in the past.*
- ⇒ *Encouraging employers to trial the IEC client on a work experience basis. The IEC/CDEP is willing to continue paying a client CDEP wages while on work experience for up to 2 weeks, provided the employer tops up the wages where the job seeker works more than the 17 hours a week funded by the CDEP wages. This strategy is particularly successful where the job seeker may be disadvantaged by conventional job selection processes, such as interviews.*
- ⇒ *Working with local JNMs, particularly if the IEC and the JNM can share the cost of assisting the job seeker.*
- ⇒ *IECs and JNMs both having funding available to provide assistance to job seekers such as transport to attend interviews, tools and equipment needed for employment and post-placement support. IECs and Job Network Members can pool this funding for mutual clients.*

Case study sourced from the DEWR submission to a Senate Inquiry into Indigenous Training and Employment Outcomes. July 2004. Pages 21-22. Submission available publicly on the committee website at [www.aph.gov.au/Senate/committee/eet\\_ctte/indigenous04/submissions/sublist.htm](http://www.aph.gov.au/Senate/committee/eet_ctte/indigenous04/submissions/sublist.htm)

### Koori Habitat Indigenous Employment Centre

*A young Indigenous Australian commenced with the Shoalhaven Community Development Aboriginal Corporation in 2003, undertaking a variety of off-work training/work experience placements. These ranged from working in a landscaping office, a Job Network office and as a receptionist in a Drug and Alcohol Rehabilitation centre. The participant even did some work as a bar and gambling steward at a bowling and recreation club.*

*With the additional off-site work to supplement her on-the-job training, the participant enhanced her work skills and gained confidence to improve her self esteem.*

*A year later the participant completed certificates in Computer skills, Responsible Service of Alcohol, Responsible Conduct of Gaming and First Aid. As a single mum with two children under school age, she managed to juggle her personal life with studies and even took on casual employment.*

*In December 2004 she enrolled as a client with Koori Habitat Indigenous Employment Centre (IEC) under the guidance of the IEC manager, who continues to assess her training needs and career path options.*

*With the lack of public transport in Shoalhaven, the IEC was able to provide funds for driving lessons, to pay for her car registration and related travel costs.*

*When the CDEP co-ordinator at Koori Habitat left, the participant found herself in line for the job. Her keen interest in employment services, sound clerical skills and an ability with IT programmes has added to her well developed people and communication skills.*

*The participant was offered a three-month trial before she was eventually hired for the job. The IEC continues to monitor her work and provides support as her on-the-job trainer in the Certificate 3 in Employment Services traineeship.*

*The participant said:*

*“Without the IEC I wouldn’t have had the opportunities that are now available to me. In particular I would like to record my appreciation to the IEC managers for their help and the training assistance provided. Both have been very beneficial to my career.”*

DEWR has permission to publish this story. Case study also appears in Employment Extra, Indigenous Supplement. February 2005. Page 13

### **5.7 Indigenous Youth Employment Consultants**

The Indigenous Youth Employment Consultants (IYEC) programme aims to enhance the employment, education and/or training outcomes for young Indigenous Australians. The programme is aimed at Indigenous young people aged 15 to 19 years who are disengaged from school; want to leave school and are considering entering the workforce; or who intend continuing with their education and/or training before entering the workforce but would benefit from additional support to maintain participation. Funding has been allocated to support up to 30 Indigenous Youth Employment Consultants to be engaged by Job Network providers to deliver the programme practical support and assistance.

The first 14 Consultants commenced in January 2005 with an additional 13 Consultants commencing in June 2005. A further three will commence in July 2005. The Consultants are

located in areas where there is a viable labour market and a significant Indigenous youth population.

The Consultants are employed by Job Network providers and work with families, communities, local schools, vocational education and training providers and local businesses to provide Indigenous young people with better connections to work opportunities, further education and training.

### **IYEC Case Study**

#### *Indigenous Youth Employment Consultant making a difference*

*An Indigenous Youth Employment Consultant (IYEC) has been employed in Palmerston, Northern Territory, to work with young Indigenous people who are unemployed, disengaged from school or who need help getting into further education or training. Her role has required her to form relationships not just with the Indigenous youth of the area, but also with other organisations, employers and schools.*

*The IYEC said:*

*“So far (after two months) I’ve helped four young people get into university. Two are studying to be PE teachers, one is studying education and the other is doing business studies. Their major issue was needing financial assistance, as their families just couldn’t afford it. Another young girl I was working with who was homeless has now secured accommodation. She won a scholarship and is now at high school and hopes to study law.”*

*One of the clients has found full-time employment as an administration assistant at Mission Australia. The IYEC is also working with several other young people who are seeking traineeships.*

*“Today I took an 18-year-old to sit a maths test to see if he will get accepted into a four-month bridging course in electro-technology with Advanced Training International. He wants to be an electrician. I think he’ll get in.”*

Sourced from Deadly Vibes. Printed April 2005.

### **5.8 Indigenous Self Employment Programme**

The Indigenous Self Employment Programme (ISEP) provides loan funding for the non wage cost of establishing small businesses. The Programme combines loan funding of up to \$5,500 (GST inclusive) with financial literacy training and business advice and support. The repayment schedule is determined by an individual’s capacity to repay over a period of two years.

There were 84 participants in ISEP at April 2005.

### **ISEP Case Study**

#### *Red Earth Hair Studio*

*An Indigenous Australian from Lightning Ridge, New South Wales commenced her hair dressing apprenticeship in 2001. She received on the job training with Michael Tierney Hair Salon in Dubbo for three years and Pro Attitude of Dubbo for one year, while attending the Western Institute of TAFE, Dubbo campus to complete accredited modules in hair styling, cutting,*

colouring, etc. She also acquired a Statement of Attainment in beauty therapy, nail extensions and manicuring.

In 2004 she moved to Lightning Ridge to be with her family and was hoping to secure her own business. She learned of the Indigenous Self Employment Programme Trial auspiced by the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations and approached the Parkes Forbes Business Enterprise Centre (BEC) for assistance with a programme application, funding and business development.

In February she commenced trading with the opening of the Red Earth Hair Studio in Lightning Ridge and now has a successful business. Recently the business required an assistant so they recruited an apprentice. The person successfully employed was a local Aboriginal woman who had recently commenced her 1st year apprenticeship at Western Institute of TAFE, Dubbo and is also a qualified nail technician.

During March the salon participated in the Leukaemia Foundation's World's Greatest Shave for a Cure Day. The Red Earth Hair Studio was on hand to offer their services to those who wanted a shave or a colour in their hair. 'The day was a success raising over \$400.00 for the Leukaemia Foundation' and is hoping to get more people from the community involved next year.

The BEC will continue to provide specialist assistance through business mentoring, financial assistance and training.

The ISEP recipient said that 'the Indigenous Self Employment Programme Trial and the BEC have been a great help to the establishment of the Red Earth Hair Studio and with their ongoing support, the business should remain successful for years to come'."

Sourced from Indigenous Employment Programmes Branch. Permission obtained in June 2004.

### **5.9 Indigenous Small Business Fund**

The Indigenous Small Business Fund (ISBF) offers funding to Indigenous organisations and individuals to assist Indigenous Australians to learn about business, develop good business skills and/or the development and expansion of Indigenous businesses and enterprises that include feasibility studies, business planning and marketing.

Between June 2004 and 30 June 2005, 61 ISBF projects commenced with total funding of \$3,375,000. These projects were in Education, Building and Construction, Finance and Management, Hospitality, Housing, and Tourism.

#### **ISBF Case Study**

##### Beche De Mer (Sea Cucumber)

They may look like giant slugs, but beche de mer, commonly known as sea cucumbers, are considered a delicacy in Asia. While the Nunukul Ngugi people traditionally don't eat sea cucumbers, they are able to harvest them with permits from the Queensland Department of State Development and Innovation. Export sales to Asia are estimated to be worth \$6 million, making the harvesting and processing of sea cucumbers very lucrative. The Nunukul Ngugi Cultural Heritage Corporation opened its new processing facility at Dunwich on North Stradbroke Island on 28 January 2005. Funding was provided by DEWR under the ISBF and along with a number of other government agencies.



*The facility is a marine-based harvesting and processing operation owned and operated by local Indigenous people. Since starting in April 2003, the business has grown to employ 18 locals, with the number of jobs likely to double in the next 12 months. New jobs will be created at the facility with the inclusion of a hatchery.*

Sourced from Employment Extra. March 2005. Page 12

### **5.10 Indigenous Capital Assistance Scheme**

The Indigenous Capital Assistance Scheme (ICAS) aims to increase employment opportunities for Indigenous Australians by giving Indigenous businesses access to commercial finance and culturally appropriate professional and mentoring support services through a participating financial institution with a provision of interest rate subsidies for the first three years.

Since its introduction on 1 March 2004 there have been more than 100 enquiries about the programme from across all States to 30 June 2005. There have been three ICAS loans signed with Westpac to 30 June 2005.

#### **ICAS Case Study**

##### *Kepa Kurl Enterprises*

*Kepa Kurl Enterprises is an Aboriginal owned and operated Eco-Cultural business that also has an Aboriginal Art Gallery. Kepa Kurl also provides cross cultural awareness training and a consultancy venture. A loan provided by DEWR through ICAS allowed Kepa Kurl to buy out one of their competitors and thus their market share of tourists has increased quite significantly. Kepa Kurl have also increased their marketing, with their vehicle being seen more often on tours and they also do offshoot work related to Aboriginal culture.*

*Kepa Kurl currently employs three Aboriginal staff and have eight part time workers carrying out many functions on a needs basis. Kepa Kurl have found that business has increased right across their operations. "The assistance provided through ICAS has allowed this to happen and we are grateful to be a recipient of this programme."*

Case study provided by Kepa Kurl Enterprises. Permission has been granted for DEWR to utilise this case study in the submission.

## **6. Aboriginal Employment Strategy**

The Aboriginal Employment Strategy (AES) was established in 1997 in response to the high Indigenous unemployment rate in Moree, north-western New South Wales. The Department has supported the AES in Moree for several years and more recently, in Tamworth and Dubbo. The AES has demonstrated its ability to engage employers and to establish good post placement monitoring for its participants.

As part of the 2005 budget, the Australian Government announced funding of \$17 million over four years to continue the provision of Indigenous-specific employment services in Moree, Tamworth and Dubbo and to expand to other new locations including Maitland, in the Hunter Valley, and western Sydney. The western Sydney office will also operate an outreach employment service in central Sydney.

The expanded AES will complement other employment services including the Job Network and Indigenous Employment Centres increasing choice for Indigenous Australians in more locations.

## 7. Indigenous Business Australia

Established in 2001 as an independent Commonwealth statutory authority under the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission Amendment Act, Indigenous Business Australia (IBA) is now part of the portfolio of the Minister for Employment and Workplace Relations, the Hon Kevin Andrews MP. However, it will continue to report to its Government appointed nine-member Board with a key part of its statutory charter to engage in commercial activities to advance the cause of Indigenous people, families and communities.

The March 2005 passage of the *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Act 2005* resulted in the transfer of two key economic programs to IBA, the Indigenous Business Development Programme (IBDP) from the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations (DEWR) and the Home Ownership Programme (HOP) from the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC). The legislation also provided for the transfer of responsibility to IBA of all of the outstanding IBDP and HOP loans and a number of assets of ATSIC.

The combination of these programs will enable IBA to contribute more holistically to the economic development of Indigenous Australians through a suite of complementary programs. With this expanded role, IBA is now a key player in the whole-of-government approach to Indigenous economic development. While employment outcomes are not a key objective of IBA under the enabling legislation, IBA's activities clearly contribute to employment outcomes directly and indirectly.

Under the new provisions Indigenous Business Australia remains committed to improving the opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to participate in business and to buy their own homes. Participation in business and asset accumulation through home ownership is seen as a key part of economic development.

In seeking opportunities for economic development for Indigenous people, IBA actively pursues strategic alliances with local, state and Australian Government programmes, the banking industry, private sector and Indigenous organisations. It also gathers regional market intelligence for analysis and improves awareness of training and entrepreneurial opportunities available to Indigenous people in regional and remote areas.

### The Equity and Investment Programme

The Equity and Investment Programme facilitates Indigenous engagement in commercial activities through entering into joint ventures with the private sector, investing in commercial properties, developing strategic partnerships and the provision of guarantees. The programme is fully commercial, meeting its costs from returns on its investment activities.

IBA, through its Equity and Investment Programme, generally invests directly (via investment vehicles) in business opportunities with industry partners that have recognised industry expertise. This approach is important to IBA achieving even better job and business opportunities for Indigenous Australians in the future.

There are four main investment portfolios in which IBA holds equity. These include:

- the Tourism Portfolio which contains accommodation facilities, tour companies and a cultural theme park;
- the Mining and Services Portfolio which contains equity in mining, a commercial waste transfer station, a commercial laundry, insurance brokerage and various companies associated with the provision of services to the mining industry;

- the Property Portfolio which contains a diversity of properties located Australia wide and includes office, retail and light industrial accommodation; and
- the Primary Industries Portfolio which includes abalone and crab licences and a dairy farm.

The keys to the success of IBA's Equity and Investment Programme have been its assessment of opportunities through careful analysis of commercial viability and assessment of appropriateness within the IBA investment portfolio. Of equal importance is the strong level of mentoring and support the Equity and Investment Programme provides to IBA's Indigenous partners. IBA, through its Equity and Investment Programme, is actively involved in joint ventures, seeking to facilitate Indigenous employment and training outcomes within the joint ventures.

### *The Indigenous Business Development Programme*

IBA's Indigenous Business Development Programme (IBDP) aims to facilitate the establishment of commercially viable enterprises among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. It does so by providing Indigenous Australians with vital market intelligence, business skills and alternative funding that helps to motivate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to seek out economic and business development opportunities of their own. Apart from facilitating the acquisition of skills required by Indigenous operators to manage commercial enterprises, the IBDP develops tailored financial products and services that bridge the gap between the financial needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and mainstream financial products and services.

The IBDP package provides:

- **Business support Services** – includes access to professional business and marketing assistance, business and management training, mentoring and access to public and private sector services.
- **Business finance** – reduced interest loans, grants and/or guarantees are available to Indigenous individuals or eligible businesses. For businesses wanting finance the primary consideration is commercial viability.
- IBDP also funds **Economic Development Initiatives** that includes practical guidance on how to develop or implement business ideas, upfront business related skill activities and access to tailored information and products.

### *The Home Ownership Programme*

The Home Ownership Programme provides a range of housing loan products to eligible Indigenous Australians to assist them buy and eventually own their home, and thereby increase the home ownership rate of Indigenous Australians. This program is funded through a trust account requiring all loan capital and interest repayments to be credited to the fund.

Lending is targeted at Indigenous families with low incomes, or those who have modest savings and are generally unable to secure or afford commercial sector housing loan finance due to these factors. The majority of clients (over 75 per cent) that the Home Ownership Programme lends to are first home buyers with small deposits and low incomes. The First Home Owners Grant can be used to meet deposit requirements. About 90 per cent of families assisted by the Home Ownership Programme have an adjusted family income that is less than National Average Weekly Male Earnings.

The Home Ownership Programme fills a unique niche in the home lending market, particularly given the current trend of mainstream lenders towards clients with higher incomes and/or

deposit and equity levels, who are not first home buyers. The programme provides a home ownership entry point for low income Indigenous people who otherwise would be unable to participate in home ownership and derive the economic and social benefits that flow from it.

While not directly contributing to employment, the Home Ownership Programme is a powerful driver of economic empowerment as it provides a foundation for individuals and families to build an asset base for their future prosperity. The stability associated with home ownership supports the development of social capital that can support greater take up of economic opportunities by Indigenous people.

### **IBA Case study**

*Ngarda Civil and Mining is a contract-mining business based in Port Hedland. It was established in 2001 as a joint venture and is 50% owned by Henry Walker Eltin, 25% by IBA and 25% by the Ngarda Ngarli Yarndu Foundation. At the end of last financial year, over 100 of Ngarda Civil and Mining's 118 staff were Aboriginal. The venture has been very successful in up-skilling of Indigenous employees, with many going on to further their new careers with large mining companies. In 2003, Ngarda won the Prime Minister's award for Community Business Partnership in the large business category.*

Sourced from IBA submission. IBA have the necessary permissions.

**Refer to IBA's submission for additional information and case studies on IBA's initiatives.**

## **8. Disability Employment Services**

DEWR administers a range of services to aid people with a disability to gain and sustain employment. Disability open employment services assist job seekers with disabilities who have significant and/or ongoing support needs, by providing training, job placement and on-the-job support. Open employment and vocational rehabilitation services are part of the APM. In 2003-04, open employment services helped over 48,000 people with moderate to severe disabilities find and keep work in the open employment market or in self-employment. Nationally there are 229 organisations providing open employment services from 326 outlets.

The 2004 disability census shows that the proportion of Indigenous job-seekers increased slightly in the 2003-04 financial year and accounted for around 2.5% of all people receiving assistance through disability open employment services providers.

CRS Australia delivers vocational rehabilitation services to Australians of working age who have a disability, injury or health condition. Rehabilitation programmes are tailored to individual needs and can include vocational assessment and counselling, job preparation, placement and training, injury management and workplace modifications. CRS Australia currently provides services through 176 outlets across Australia, and assists over 35,000 job seekers with disabilities annually to gain or retain employment.

In their 2003-04 performance report to the government CRS reported that of the 24,535 new clients they accepted in 2003/04, 247 (1.01%) were from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander background. This is an improvement compared to last financial year's figure of 183 (0.81%).

CRS Australia has a range of culturally sensitive programs for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People. An initiative that is currently underway in the Northern Territory is a cycle of visits out of Katherine to two remote areas, Borroloola and Kalkarindji, with visits to Wadeye to commence from May 2005. The program is a three-four week cycle covering about twelve Indigenous clients across the two existing communities with a potential of 24 referrals flagged for Wadeye.

DEWR also runs a project that aims to improve the employment options of Indigenous people with a disability living in remote areas by helping them to participate in Community Development Employment Projects (CDEP) with the assistance of a non-disabled CDEP worker, or Buddy.

## **9. Job Placement, Employment and Training Programme**

The Job Placement, Employment and Training Programme (JPET) is an employment preparatory programme that assists disadvantaged and disconnected young people aged 15 to 21 years (with a focus on 15-19 year olds) to overcome multiple personal and social barriers that severely limit their capacity to:

- ⇒ take up or re-engage with education, study or vocational training;
- ⇒ find and keep work or be ready to find and keep work;
- ⇒ benefit from employment assistance; and
- ⇒ participate socially in the life of their communities.

Young people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness are the primary target group for JPET. JPET also assists young people who face multiple personal and social barriers that severely limit their participation, who are leaving care or the juvenile justice system, refugees or who are particularly disadvantaged because of geographic isolation.

The focus of JPET is on helping at-risk young people to stabilise their life situation and then to address their severe and often multiple barriers so that they can move on to employment assistance or re-engage in education. The type of barriers JPET seeks to assist young people overcome include:

- ⇒ homelessness and insecure housing;
- ⇒ drug and alcohol misuse;
- ⇒ sexual abuse or violence;
- ⇒ behavioural issues;
- ⇒ mental health issues;
- ⇒ torture/trauma and other stress disorders;
- ⇒ social isolation and alienation;
- ⇒ low education levels; and
- ⇒ poor communication/language skills.

JPET is delivered by a network of services with experience in assisting disadvantaged young people and who can draw on and work collaboratively with existing community support services and networks within their local community.

There have been 2083 Indigenous clients commence in JPET from July 2004 to 30 April 2005. This represents 17% of all clients. Of these clients 22% were homeless; 60% were at risk of homelessness; 6% have been in care; 28% were young offenders and 11% were geographically isolated (noting that some Indigenous Australians experience multiple barriers which explains why the proportions outlined above sum to more than 100%).

## 10. Directions for the future

Fact sheets for new initiatives announced as part of the 2005-06 Budget are at [Appendix B](#) to this submission. Within the Government's Indigenous employment strategies the Department's immediate focus for improving Indigenous employment outcomes is to:

- Further improve the performance of employment services;
- Improve the ability of CDEP to find jobs and increase participation;
- Improve linkages with vocational education and training;
- Work with key industries to develop targeted strategies;
- Support local people into local jobs; and
- Develop business skills and support enterprise opportunities.

### 10.1 Whole-of-Government

The new Indigenous servicing arrangements are developing under a whole-of-government commitment and are presenting opportunities for across portfolio and across jurisdiction action. Recognising the interconnectedness of improving employment, housing, education and health outcomes, DEWR is working with Indigenous communities and other agencies to provide whole-of-government approaches that address local circumstances.

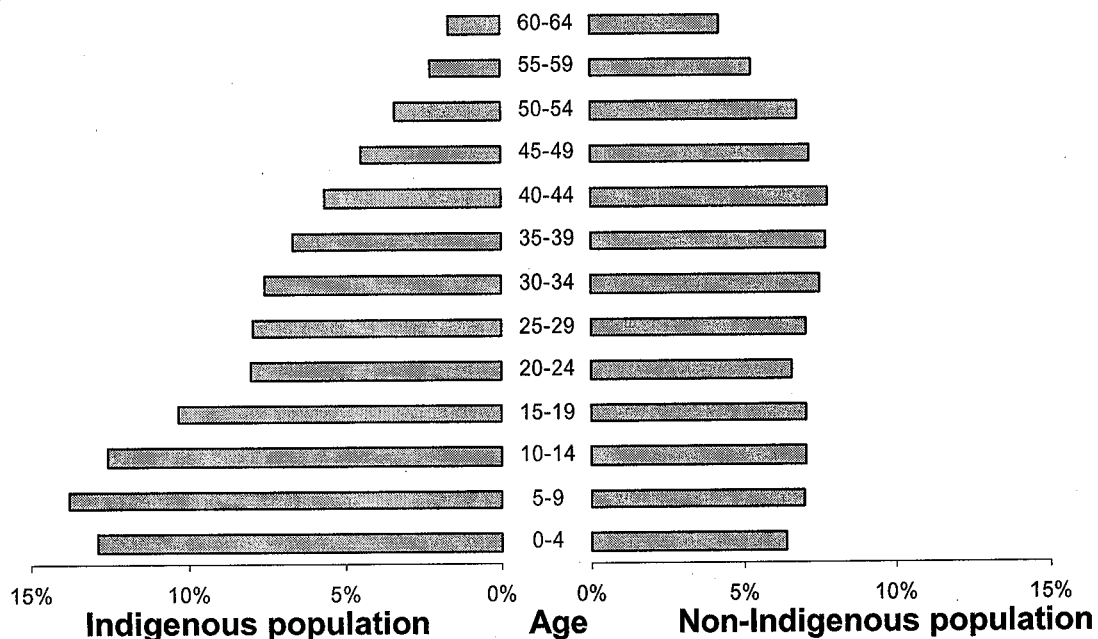
### 10.2 Industry Strategies

DEWR has identified current and future labour shortages in a number of industries. To improve Indigenous employment outcomes, DEWR is working with industry groups to develop targeted Indigenous strategies to fill these labour shortages. A key to this will be to ensure Indigenous Australians are ready and able to secure these jobs and possess the right skills, qualifications and experience.

### 10.3 Indigenous Youth

At the 2001 Census, there was a clear difference between the Indigenous and non-Indigenous demographic profile.

**Figure 4: Indigenous and all Australian populations by age groups in 2001**





The Indigenous population is relatively young compared to the non-Indigenous population. In 2001, almost 60 per cent were under 25 years of age compared with 35 per cent for the total Australian population. The Australian Government has established services such as the Indigenous Youth Employment Consultants to specifically address the issue of an Indigenous "baby boom" which is increasingly reaching working age. Whole-of-government strategies are required to ensure this group of Indigenous Australians have good opportunities to participate in the labour force. Industry strategies will certainly be important in this context as will improved education and training outcomes. Experience through the Council of Australian Governments trials is showing that Indigenous communities are very aware of this issue and are eager to prioritise activities focussed on improving outcomes for youth.

#### **10.4 Self-employment**

In 2001, 5% of the Indigenous Australian labour force was self employed in comparison to 16% of the non-Indigenous Australian labour force. The identification of self-employment opportunities has the potential to take advantage of Indigenous knowledge in maturing the labour market in areas with traditionally poor job prospects. DEWR has identified self-employment opportunities in the delivery of community services in remote areas. With the right skills, Indigenous community members can be better placed to win contracts in and around their community. Indigenous people know the local conditions and networks far better than outside labour. Furthermore, locals have chosen to live in these areas and therefore reduce the cost of transporting and resettling outside labour.

Self-employment opportunities can also arise from the development of new industries in a location. Business experts working with Indigenous entrepreneurs can identify and develop these businesses to suit the location. Successful aquaculture, agriculture, tourism and arts industries have been developed by Indigenous entrepreneurs. DEWR and Indigenous Business Australia will be working with Indigenous Australians, other government agencies and the private sector to improve business skills development, provide business mentoring support and facilitate greater access to finance for Indigenous Australians.

#### **10.5 Active Participation**

As at March 2005 there were around 120,000 Indigenous Australians in receipt of working age payments. This accounts for around half of the Indigenous working age population. The Government has expressed a clear agenda to improve Indigenous living standards through economic independence.

This policy was articulated by the Prime Minister on 3 May 2005 in his Menzies Lecture address. Whilst speaking about the Australian population generally, the Prime Minister said "We approach welfare reform with two straight-forward and I believe fair propositions. Firstly, the best form of family income comes from a job rather than a welfare payment. And secondly, that people on income support who have the capacity to work should be required to seek work to their level of capacity". The Prime Minister went on to say "Our aim is to ensure that people on welfare support have incentives to move into work, have access to better services and can pursue work voluntarily, even if they are not obliged to do so. A steady job remains the best means of overcoming disadvantage in our society. People in work are financially better off, they acquire skills and experience and they are more closely connected with their communities".

Through initiatives such as the APM and now welfare to work measures and Indigenous Economic Development, DEWR is progressing the Government's policy agenda. In many

remote areas combining service delivery arrangements is necessary to ensure participation. DEWR has been working with Indigenous communities, Job Network members, Centrelink and the Office of Indigenous Policy Coordination to lift remote area exemptions from participation. Through this process ways will be identified to achieve greater participation in remote Indigenous communities.

## **11. Conclusion**

A key objective must be to reduce welfare dependency and increase participation in private sector employment for Indigenous Australians to take best advantage of a growing economy. Marketable skills are required to secure supply side outcomes, whilst Indigenous business development and mainstream private sector engagement with Indigenous Australians is required to secure demand side outcomes. DEWR recognises that different circumstances will require different approaches to achieve employment outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. DEWR administers a toolkit of services to support these approaches and works in cooperation with other agencies particularly through the Indigenous Coordination Centre network. As this submission highlights, there are many productive partnerships across the country improving Indigenous employment programmes.

## APPENDIX A: Profile of the Labour Market and Indigenous Australians

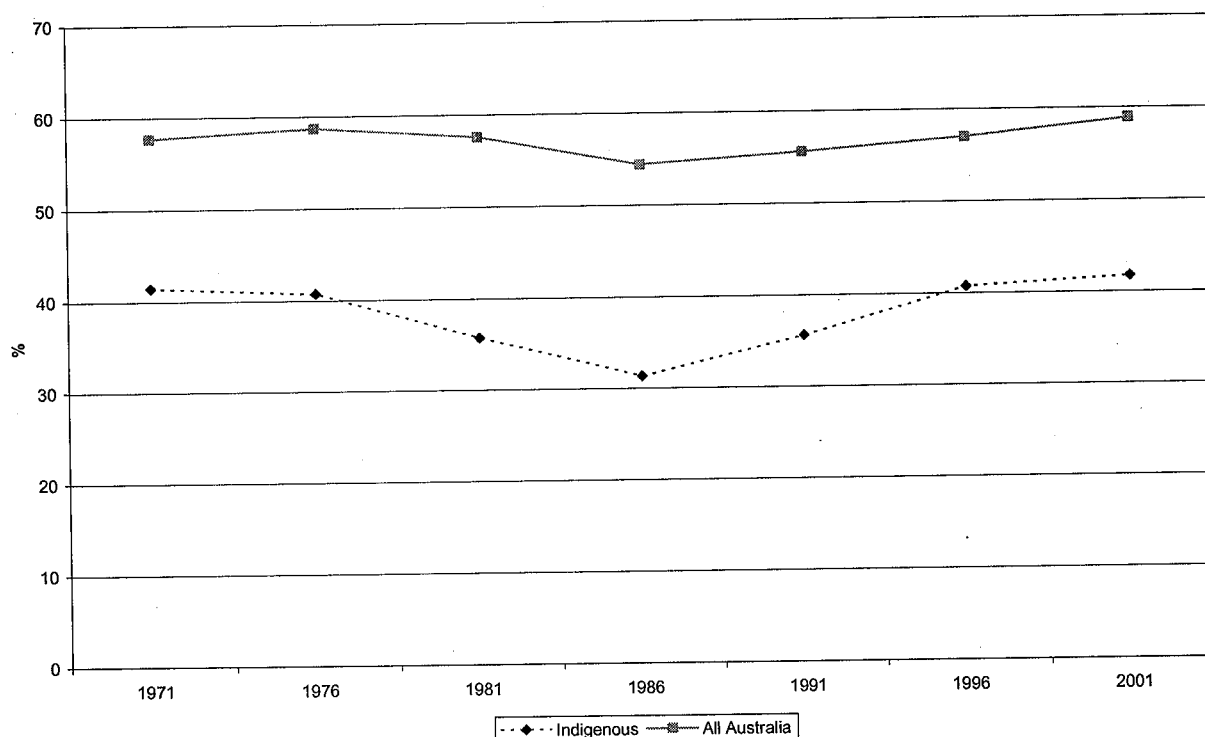
The ABS 2001 Census identified that in 2001:

- the Indigenous population was **410,003**.
- the number of people who identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander grew by 16% between 1996 and 2001, compared with a 4% increase in the number of non-Indigenous persons.
- **60%** of Indigenous Australians were **under 25** years of age compared to **35%** of the total population. Over **75,000** Indigenous people were aged between **15-24** years of age.
- **240,859** Indigenous Australians were of working age (**59%** of the total Indigenous population).
- there were **100,400** Indigenous Australians in employment.

**Table 1: Unemployment rates (%) 1971 - 2001**

Year	Indigenous Australian	All Australians
1971	9.3	1.7
1976	12.6	3.2
1981	24.5	6.1
1986	22.7	6.6
1991	30.8	11.6
1996	22.7	9.2
2001	20.0	7.3

**Figure 5: Indigenous and all Australian employment to population ratios 1971 to 2001**



The 'employment to population ratio' or 'employment rate' measures the proportion of the population (age groups can vary, but it usually refers to persons aged 15-64) who are employed.

The 'participation rate' measures the proportion of the population (again, age groups can vary, but usually this relates to persons aged 15 and over) who are either employed or unemployed.

**Table 2: Labour force participation rates (%) 1971 - 2001**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Indigenous Australian</b>	<b>All Australians</b>
1971	45.6	58.7
1976	49.5	61.4
1981	47.3	61.3
1986	48.3	63.1
1991	53.5	62.9
1996	52.7	61.9
2001	52.1	62.8

The Census indicated that in 2001, around 41 per cent of employed Indigenous Australians were in the public and community sector.

**Table 3: Percentage of the Indigenous population aged 15 years and over employed in the CDEP programme**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Number of places</b>	<b>% of total population aged 15+ in CDEP</b>
1971	Nil	-
1976	100	-
1981	1,300	1
1986	6,000	2
1991	20,100	7
1996	30,100	8
2001	34,200	11

## APPENDIX B: 2005-06 Budget Fact sheets



The Hon Kevin Andrews MP

Minister for Employment and Workplace Relations

Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for the Public Service

### Changes to the CDEP (Community Development Employment Projects) Programme

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Why does CDEP need to be changed?

- ▶ The Government's CDEP discussion paper *Building on Success* set out a number of areas where CDEP can do more to help Indigenous Australians become more self reliant and find jobs away from Government assistance. In feedback to the discussion paper, most people agreed on the need for change and the directions proposed.

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What are the future directions for CDEP?

- ▶ The Government has listened to the questions and concerns people had about some of the proposals in the Discussion Paper and is addressing these in the plan for CDEP. In 2005-06 the CDEP programme will:
  - ▶ Remain flexible with emphasis on a unique mix of employment, community activities and business development;
  - ▶ Have a stronger emphasis on results;
  - ▶ Use a new funding model which puts an emphasis on funding activities;
  - ▶ Involve a partnership between Department of Employment and Workplace Relations (DEWR) and CDEP organisations to improve results and meet community needs.

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What will DEWR do to implement the future directions?

- ▶ In 2005-06 DEWR will improve the links between its programmes for Indigenous people to make the best use of funds and get the best results. This will include links to training through Job Network. DEWR will work with its other service providers, especially those in Job Network and Disability Open Employment Services, to help them partner with CDEP organisations.
- ▶ DEWR will improve its communication with Indigenous people and communities so that they will know where and how to get help, especially with employment and business development.



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- ▶ DEWR will support CDEP organisations to work towards realistic goals for 2005-06, taking account of their local job opportunities and services available. It will help those CDEP organisations who become Indigenous Employment Centres or who trial employment services to make the transition to these new roles.
  - ▶ DEWR will negotiate with CDEP organisations to set targets which make sure that CDEP provides the right incentives to get Indigenous people non-CDEP jobs.
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What will happen in the future?

- ▶ DEWR will be carefully monitoring the changes made to CDEP in 2005-06. Also during 2005-06, DEWR will look at the links between CDEP, income support payments and changes being made to welfare, to ensure that Indigenous people have the best incentives to participate in opportunities, particularly work, to improve their lives.
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## The Hon Kevin Andrews MP

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### Indigenous Economic Independence Strategy

What will the Indigenous Economic Independence Strategy do?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▶ Gaining a job, owning a property, and building one's own wealth for the next generation are key elements of Indigenous economic independence. The Indigenous Economic Independence Strategy will present a whole-of-government approach to removing barriers to Indigenous Australians achieving true economic independence. It will increase levels of Indigenous participation in the labour force through employment, self-employment and business development. It will assist with managing and acquiring assets including home ownership and assist Indigenous Australians to participate in the broader economy.</li></ul>
How will this work in practice?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▶ The Strategy will set the key direction for future Indigenous policy development. Government and programme administrators will use the Strategy as a tool to ensure initiatives are strategically aligned.</li></ul>
Why is this change needed?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▶ By formalising the Howard Government's strategic direction, more Indigenous Australians will be able to find ways out of poverty and dependence on welfare leading to economic independence.</li></ul>
How will the Indigenous Economic Independence Strategy help people?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▶ A strategic direction will provide a coordinated approach by government that will ultimately assist Indigenous Australians to achieve better economic outcomes for themselves and their families.</li></ul>
Key facts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▶ The number of Indigenous people relying on pensions and benefits fell from 55 per cent in 1994 to 50 per cent in 2002 - twice the rate of non-Indigenous Australians.</li><li>▶ According to the 2001 Census, Indigenous unemployment was at 20 per cent when it was 7 per cent for the rest of the population.</li><li>▶ Self-employment was 5 per cent for Indigenous Australians compared to 16 per cent for the rest of the Australian labour market.</li><li>▶ The rate of home ownership was 32 per cent compared to 67 per cent for non-Indigenous Australians.</li></ul>



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### Indigenous Economic Development Strategy

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What will the Indigenous Economic Development Strategy do?

- ▶ The *Indigenous Economic Development Strategy* (IEDS) will provide greater access to the range of business support and mainstream programmes provided to Indigenous Australians.

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How will this work in practice?

- ▶ The *Indigenous Economic Development Strategy* will enable greater access in rural and regional Australia to a range of existing business support programmes. It will provide a more flexible approach to supporting the development of business opportunities.

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Why is this change needed?

- ▶ Due to key changes, the opportunity now exists to remove the duplication between some of the programmes and to provide a more flexible, whole-of-government approach to providing services to Indigenous entrepreneurs.

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How will the Indigenous Economic Development Strategy help people?

- ▶ The Strategy will ensure greater access to programmes and services that foster the development of local Indigenous entrepreneurs who have business opportunities at the regional level. It will also provide advice on accessing capital assistance and mentoring support through Indigenous Business Australia and State and Territory programmes.

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Key facts:

- ▶ Self-employment is 5 per cent for Indigenous Australians compared to 16 per cent for the rest of the Australian labour market.
  - ▶ The number of Indigenous people relying on pensions and benefits fell from 55 per cent in 1994 to 50 per cent in 2002 - twice the rate of non-Indigenous Australians.
  - ▶ According to the 2001 Census, Indigenous unemployment was at 20 per cent when it was 7 per cent for the rest of the population.
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## Emerging Indigenous Entrepreneurs Strategy

What will the Emerging Indigenous Entrepreneurs Strategy do?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▶ The Emerging Indigenous Entrepreneurs Strategy will link emerging Indigenous entrepreneurs with private sector mentors who have sound financial expertise. It will also provide financial literacy training to community members wanting to start a business. Particularly in regional areas where employment opportunities are very limited, the new strategy, worth \$4.5 million over four years, will enable Indigenous entrepreneurs to take up self-employment and small business opportunities.</li></ul>
How will this work in practice?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▶ The strategy will assist Indigenous Australians to gain skills, create networks and receive coaching from people expert in private sector business. It will assist them to enter and establish themselves in business.</li></ul>
Why is this change needed?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▶ There is an identified need for Indigenous entrepreneurs to partner with experienced entrepreneurs who can provide detailed knowledge of their experiences when operating within a business environment.</li></ul>
How will the Emerging Indigenous Entrepreneurs Strategy help people?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▶ The <i>Emerging Indigenous Entrepreneurs Strategy</i> will link promising Indigenous entrepreneurs with private sector mentors. These mentors will provide assistance through transfer of their knowledge and skills, and introducing their network of business contacts, enabling the Indigenous entrepreneur to become business-ready.</li></ul>
Key facts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▶ Self-employment was 5 per cent for Indigenous Australians compared to 16 per cent for the rest of the Australian labour market.</li><li>▶ The number of Indigenous people relying on pensions and benefits fell from 55 per cent in 1994 to 50 per cent in 2002 - twice the rate of non-Indigenous Australians.</li></ul> <p>According to the 2001 Census, Indigenous unemployment was at 20 per cent when it was 7 per cent for the rest of the population.</p>



## The Hon Kevin Andrews MP

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### Aboriginal Employment Strategy (AES)

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What funding is the government committing to the Aboriginal Employment Strategy?

- ▶ The Howard Government will provide funding of \$17 million over four years to continue and expand the operations of the AES.
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What will the Aboriginal Employment Strategy do?

- ▶ The Aboriginal Employment Strategy started in Moree and has assisted many Indigenous Australians to find jobs. Offices are now also located in Tamworth and Dubbo.
  - ▶ The Aboriginal Employment Strategy will continue to improve employment outcomes for Indigenous Australians and to expand to new locations over four years.
  - ▶ Its expansion provides increased choice for Indigenous Australians in more locations. This is an example of the Howard Government's commitment to practical reconciliation. It will also highlight for many employers the opportunities and advantages of employing Indigenous Australians and it is a practical plan to get unemployed Indigenous Australians into real jobs.
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How will this work in practice?

- ▶ Over the next four years, the Aboriginal Employment Strategy will complement other employment services in the Moree, Tamworth and Dubbo areas, as well as the other sites where it expands its operations. During this period, the Aboriginal Employment Strategy will further develop its employment services for Indigenous job-seekers and learnings will be shared, maximising results in these rural and regional locations.
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When will this start and how will it be funded?

- ▶ New funding has been provided to enable the measure to continue from 1 July 2005 and to expand its operations into new areas. Funding for the Aboriginal Employment Strategy will comprise a combination of service and outcome fees and a quarantined pool of funds, akin to the Job Seeker Account in the Job Network, that the Aboriginal Employment Strategy can use to purchase assistance for job seekers.
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**The Hon Kevin Andrews MP**  
**Minister for Employment and Workplace Relations**  
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Why is change needed?

- ▶ By securing funding over the next four years, the Howard Government will ensure that the strengths of the Aboriginal Employment Strategy can be further developed and utilised to support improved services for Indigenous Australians.

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How will Aboriginal Employment Strategy help people?

- ▶ In addition to working closely with employers, the Aboriginal Employment Strategy will match Indigenous job-seekers with job opportunities and provide support for both the employer and job-seeker to promote long-term job outcomes.

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Key Facts

- ▶ \$17million over four years to support Indigenous-specific employment services in Moree, Tamworth, Dubbo and other new locations.
  - ▶ Builds on existing Aboriginal Employment Strategy.
  - ▶ More choice in employment services for Indigenous Australians.
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