

**Indigenous Remote Communications Association  
Call for Government Support for the  
Indigenous Media Sector  
Election 2016**



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**CALL FOR ACTION 1**

**Recognition of remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander media organisations as providing essential services in remote Indigenous communities and recognition of the need for adequate funding**

***Issue: The essential role of remote Indigenous media organisations in provision of broadcasting services is not recognised by government with the consequence of inadequate funding to fulfil their roles.***

Communications and media are essential services in remote Indigenous communities, but this has not been turned into government policy. severely impacting on the prioritisation of providing communications infrastructure to remote communities, as well as the funding to establish and maintain these services.

The remote media sector is unique in that there are no other service providers for media and communications operating in the regions supported by remote Indigenous media organisations. The role of these organisations is drastically under-valued by all levels of government and regional shires, and the resourcing inadequate for the vast regions and range of services being delivered.

Remote Indigenous media organisations install and maintain all radio services, produce and broadcast local language programming, set up production and broadcast facilities, deliver training, coordinate regional networks and manage licensing for these services. With a presence in all communities in their regions, they understand the media and communications needs of the communities better than any other agency, and are expected to be able to support these needs.

The 1999 'Digital Dreaming' report noted the funding for the sector was "demonstrably inadequate" and needed to be increased from \$12 million to \$22.35 million. This recommendation was not implemented. Despite a significant increase in the number of Indigenous media organisations across Australia and demand for funding more than doubling since 1996, the funding levels have remained virtually unchanged. The budget is currently at \$14.786 million, only a 23% increase in 11 years. The success of the program and outcomes to date should be recognised with increased funding.

**IRCA calls for:**

**The funding of the existing Indigenous Media organisations be provided at a minimum of \$23 million per annum in order to adequately carry their role as the primary service provider of media and communications services in Indigenous communities.**