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## **CALL FOR ACTION 3**

### **Expansion of employment and recognition of the professionalism of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander remote media jobs**

#### ***Issues***

- Low level of remote ATSI media employment due to restricted funding
- Constraints on wage levels for funded employment inconsistent with Modern Award rates.

The Australian Bureau of Statistics notes that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people aged 15-64 are more than three times as likely as non-Indigenous people in the same age group to be unemployed.

The remote Indigenous media sector provides an opportunity to increase employment engagement. It provides a culturally appropriate employment environment that builds on the culture and language skills already held by Indigenous peoples.

In 2014, two hundred and seven (207) Indigenous people were employed across one hundred and fourteen (114) remote Indigenous media services. This is a very low rate of employment reflecting the low levels of funding for the sector.

There has been no increase in funding to the sector over a long period with a consequent loss of funding in real terms. Funding for the operation of the approximately one hundred and twenty (120) Indigenous remote and regional radio stations has stayed steady at around \$15 million per annum. There are no commercial opportunities in the thin markets of remote communities to generate the level of self-generated income required to make any significant increase to remote Indigenous employment levels.

Since late 2014 there has been additional employment funding flowing to Remote Indigenous Media Organisations that has largely supported the generation of the jobs noted above. However, jobs program funding levels are generally based on unskilled labour rates without recognition of the skills and qualifications levels required for media work.

#### **IRCA calls for:**

- **A doubling of Indigenous employment funding to Remote Indigenous Media Organisations.**
- **Enabling of Modern Award rates under Indigenous employment funding programs consistent with skills and experience levels of workers.**