

**DIGITAL DREAMING:
A National Review of Indigenous Media
and Communications**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

March 1999

This work is copyright. Apart from any use as permitted under the *Copyright Act 1968*, no part may be reproduced without prior permission from the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission. Requests and inquiries concerning reproduction rights should be directed to the:

Director, Office of Public Affairs, ATSIC
PO Box 17, Woden, ACT 2606

Cover design and maps: Cameron Goold, IndigiNet Multimedia and Internet Services.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PREFACE	4
1. Introduction: TERMS OF REFERENCE THE REVIEW TEAM METHODOLOGY	6
2. Part A: POLICY ISSUES	10
3. Part B: TRAINING ISSUES	46
4. Part C: TECHNOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENTS	82
5. Part D: FUTURE DIRECTIONS	101
6. Appendix 1: SUMMARY OF CASE STUDIES	112
7. Appendix 2: LIST OF RECOMMENDATIONS	138

Preface

The report, *Digital Dreaming: A National Review of Indigenous Media and Communications*, is the result of a year long study undertaken by Indigenous Management Australia (IMA). The review was initiated by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission to assess the current status of indigenous media and communications and identify further developments. The last review of Indigenous media, *Out of the Silent Land*, was completed in 1984.

The original report is a detailed empirical study of 500 pages. An Executive Summary has been produced for distribution purposes; to provide a summary of the issues addressed in some 130 recommendations. All of the recommendations are listed at *Appendix 2* of the Executive Summary.

The report and its recommendations are based on extensive consultation with Indigenous people and representatives of various State and Commonwealth Government agencies. Indigenous Management Australia present a series of case studies of indigenous media associations and individuals to highlight their aims, the extent of the services they provide, the constraints under which these groups or individuals operate and any issues considered relevant to their future development. An outline of the case studies upon which the report is based are at *Appendix 1* of the Executive Summary.

Digital Dreaming outlines the involvement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in community radio, print and multimedia as well as in video and film production and it emphasises the importance of these media in providing a service to the Indigenous and the wider community. The review begins with the premise that all people should have access to a communications service of relevance to them. It suggests that Indigenous people are either invisible in the mainstream media or else negative images are perpetuated through systemic stereotyping. The review argues that a “first level of service” is provided by Indigenous media as they counteract

such images, disseminate information to, and interact with, their own communities and are also active in educating Australians about each other.

The review aimed to identify factors affecting the provision of effective media and communications services to Indigenous people and found that:

- issues of self-determination, cultural respect and indirect racial discrimination are central in assessing the provision of adequate services to Indigenous communities;
- the involvement of indigenous people in the development of projects, and at all levels of the production and decision making process, is important to their success;
- adequate resources and training, including in management and marketing, should be accessible to Indigenous media groups and individuals;
- increased interaction between Government agencies, service providers and Indigenous people is crucial for the provision of adequate services; and
- increased co-ordination and strategic planning at the local and national levels.

It is argued that, given Indigenous media offer an invaluable first level service, it is important to consider funding as an 'investment'. The review emphasises that Indigenous media are made up of a number of industry sectors with extraordinary growth in all sectors over the last decade. There are many projects across the different sectors with income generation and commercial potential. However, it is also important to recognise that it will never be possible for some Indigenous media associations to be independent of government funding – due to the demographics of their audiences, their location and their important community service obligations.

1. INTRODUCTION

Indigenous Management Australia commenced this review for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC) in May 1997. *Digital Dreaming: A National Review of Indigenous Media and Communications* was completed in June 1998.

Terms of Reference

The study team was asked to provide a user-friendly report that:

- explains current and new telecommunications technologies in radio, television, film, print and multimedia;
- identifies current developments in Indigenous media and outlines its effectiveness in meeting its stated objectives;
- considers the regulatory framework within which they operate;
- considers the strategic analyses and plans provided by Indigenous representatives in each sector;
- identifies the costs associated with the delivery of these service options;
- investigates viable commercial options for assistance from outside government; and
- makes detailed, costed recommendations on the future needs of the Indigenous media sectors, providing a detailed five-year plan for the staged coordinated and most cost-effective development of Indigenous media, including the role of government.

The Review Team

The Review Team consisted of:

- 1 Dr Helen Molnar, *Director, MC Media & Associates, Melbourne.*

- 2 Dr Michael Meadows, *Senior Lecturer in Print and Broadcast Journalism, Australian Key Centre for Cultural and Media Policy, Griffith University, Brisbane.*
- 3 Paul Scott, *Lecturer and Course Coordinator, BA (Communications Studies), University of Newcastle.*
- 4 David Soothill, *Director, Communications and Planning, SBS Corporation.*
- 5 Christine Morris, *Indigenous writer and Research Fellow, Australian Key Centre for Cultural and Media Policy, Griffith University, Brisbane.*
- 6 David Melzer, *General Manager, 3MBS-FM Melbourne, formerly Manager, Wangki Yupurnanupurra Association at Fitzroy Crossing and 3ZZZ in Melbourne.*
- 7 Ian Peter, *Ian Peter & Associates, NSW.*
- 8 Tracey Watts-Sen, *Manager, Indigenous Management Australia.*
- 9 Judi Cooper, *Director, MC Media & Associates, Melbourne.*
- 10 Kitty Van Vuuren, *PhD student, Griffith University.*
- 11 Peter Kepreotes, *Broadcast Communications Development Manager, ABC, Sydney.*

This Review would not have been possible without generous involvement of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander media people with whom the study team consulted.

Thanks are also due to Cameron Goold, Managing Director, IndigiNet Multimedia and Internet Services for the cover design and maps, as well as representatives of the National Indigenous Media Association of Australia (NIMAA), the Regional Telecommunications Infrastructure Fund (RTIF), the Outback Digital Network Working Party and ATSIC staff for offering

their time and advice. The Executive Summary was prepared by Peter Westerway.

Methodology

In order to collect comprehensive data and information on the different media sectors – print, community radio, remote community radio and video (BRACS), film, television and multimedia – the Review team:

- circulated requests for submissions through NIMAA and ATSIC;
- distributed questionnaires to a selection of representatives from each sector;
- conducted over 100 interviews with indigenous media people from the different sectors over a period of six months – the majority were telephone interviews; and
- sought input from a range of organisations and Government agencies (approximately 25), including policy makers in Canada and New Zealand, NIMAA, multimedia and educational institutions in various States and Territories, the (former) Department of Communications and the Arts; the (former) Department of Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs, Commonwealth agencies involved broadcasting amongst others.

In addition, a number of ATSIC internal documents were analysed. Three main reports informed the review, these were the:

- Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission 1991, *Racist Violence: Report of the National Inquiry into Racist Violence in Australia*, Canberra, AGPS.
- *Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody 1991*, volume 4, Canberra, AGPS.
- Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission 1997, *Bringing Them Home: Report of the National Inquiry into the Separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children from their Families*, April, Sydney.

Structure of the Report

The Report falls into four parts:

Part A: POLICY ISSUES (Chapters 2-4) is a wide-ranging discussion of systemic issues, but also includes considerable case material. In this Executive Summary, material dealing with specific cases is presented at *Appendix 1*.

Part B: TRAINING ISSUES (Chapters 5-10) is concerned with various forms of training required by the sector.

Part C: TECHNOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENTS (Chapters 11-13) addresses new technologies with relevance to Indigenous broadcasting; and

Part D: FUTURE DIRECTIONS (Chapter 14) makes general policy recommendations.

Editorial note: This Executive Summary provides an Abstract at the start of each chapter which sets out the broad argument. For the full list of recommendations, please refer to *Appendix 2*.

Part A: POLICY ISSUES

2. INDIGENOUS MEDIA DEVELOPMENT & BROADCASTING POLICY

ABSTRACT: The Indigenous media are heterogeneous, comprising print, radio, film & television and multimedia. There are some fifty Indigenous media associations represented nationally by NIMAA.

Radio is the most highly developed sector. It is an appropriate medium because it can easily provide Indigenous control, as compared to access. The Broadcasting for Remote Aboriginal Communities Scheme (BRACS), though poorly planned and implemented, is capable of making an invaluable contribution, providing information, entertainment and education to disadvantaged Indigenous Australians in a culturally appropriate manner.

Indigenous media are crucially important in maintaining and regenerating Indigenous languages and cultures. At a first level of service, Indigenous Australians should be assisted both to disseminate information to their own communities and actively to inform and educate Australians about each other.

The Review recommends that:

- ***ATSIC, NIMAA and the ABA assist Indigenous aspirant groups in applying for grant of a radio licence; and***
- ***DCA, the ABA and NIMAA reintroduce specialist Indigenous community radio licences.***

Indigenous people have a long communications history which includes song, performance, artistic genres of different kinds and the use of message sticks and smoke signals for distant transmissions (Michaels 1986:2¹). At colonisation there was an estimated 250 Aboriginal and Torres Strait

¹ Eric Michaels, 1986, *Aboriginal Invention of Television Central Australia 1982-1985*, Canberra, Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies.

Islander languages. There is less linguistic diversity today, however new forms of communication such as *Creole*, and new forms of communication technology serve to link Indigenous people.

Indigenous print media

Indigenous print media have a long history and serve an essential function in providing a forum for community-generated information as well as countering a generally negative coverage in the mainstream media. Funding is largely from subscription or government advertising, although ATSIC has provided occasional funds.

Indigenous radio

Radio has considerable advantages for Indigenous communications. It

- is relatively cheap to establish;
- has low operating costs;
- is low-tech, providing significant opportunities for training and employment;
- is informal in tone and content;
- provides an appropriate outlet for many aspects of Indigenous culture; e.g. music, drama and comedy;
- depends on the spoken, not the written, word; and
- is an intensely personal medium.

There have been a number of significant attempts to provide Indigenous communications through radio.

Since the 1980s the Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC) has been actively involved with Indigenous media associations, has established some channel-sharing arrangements and employs Indigenous broadcasters to produce two national programs. The Special Broadcasting Service (SBS) also provides a limited outlet.

Indigenous radio *per se* began as part of community broadcasting in the early 1970s. Currently there are 94 licensed Aboriginal stations: 10 community stations in urban areas, 80 stations under the Broadcasting for

Remote Aboriginal Communities Scheme (BRACS), 3 narrowcast stations and one commercial station. There is also one temporary licensee, plus 30-40 aspirant groups. Over one thousand hours of Indigenous radio are now broadcast each week.

Stations are served by two national distribution networks. The Aboriginal Program Exchange (TAPE) weekly distributes sound tapes compiled from material submitted by Indigenous broadcasters and stations. The National Indigenous Radio Service (NIRS) provides a continuous stream of quality programming for downloading via satellite to Indigenous stations.

Access, where one is a client, is not *control*, where one sets the agenda. However well-intentioned, neither mainstream stations (ABC, SBS or commercial), nor even general community stations, are able to provide wholly satisfactory vehicles for Indigenous communications. Radio is neither capital nor skill-intensive, yet it is a very effective communications medium in communities with a strong oral tradition.

Radio should be recognised as a highly appropriate medium for Indigenous communications. Moreover, it is capable of accommodating Indigenous control.

Indigenous Media Associations

There are up to fifty Indigenous media associations, ranging from large, sophisticated organisations like the Central Australian Aboriginal Media Association (CAAMA), with a television licence and major production capacity, to small associations like those at Halls Creek or Fitzroy Crossing. They are represented by an umbrella organisation funded by ATSIC: the National Indigenous Media Association of Australia (NIMAA).

Indigenous film, television and radio (FTV)

FTV production is very capital and skill-intensive. The ABC and the SBS have attempted to provide occasional markets for Indigenous productions and both have at times themselves produced relevant material.

ATSIC at one time made its own magazine program for regular distribution, *Aboriginal Australia*. However, the program was never given favourable exposure (usually shown midnight to dawn). After criticism from Indigenous producers that it (a) used a non-Indigenous production house; and (b) was primarily directed to educating non-Indigenous Australians, the program was dropped and funding was transferred to CAAMA, then to NIMAA. Currently it is split between SBS and a National Indigenous Documentary Fund administered by NIMAA.

CAAMA operates a remote commercial television service (RCTS) for Central Australia. Programming is 99% non Indigenous.

Some Indigenous communities have demonstrated considerable capacity to establish and operate television networks fashioned to their own design. Four desert communities (Yuendumu, Kintore, Lajamanu and Willowra) currently control the Tanami Network. This Network is funded by selling airtime to government and other users and since 1993/1994 has made a small operating profit. Significantly, the Network is locally controlled and governed by Warlpiri community cultural rules.

The Broadcasting for Remote Aboriginal Communities Scheme (BRACS)

BRACS was introduced in 1987 to deliver radio and television programs via satellite to Indigenous peoples in remote areas. The stations are capable of receiving one ABC radio service, the ABC television service and an RCTS. These are then re-transmitted to local communities.

Significant features of the BRACS model are that:

- it enables radio or television programs to be produced locally;
- these programs can use the language(s) chosen by the local community;
- local program material can then be embedded in broadcasts; and
- the local community can choose not to broadcast mainstream material.

Properly resourced and managed, the BRACS stations are capable of making an invaluable contribution, providing information, entertainment

and education to severely disadvantaged Indigenous Australians. They are also capable of providing a wide range of services, such as government information in Indigenous languages, cultural programs for school-age children and telemedicine.

Unfortunately, the roll-out of BRACS stations was poorly planned, consultation was minimal and training schemes, while valuable, need to be greatly expanded. Above all, arrangements for the funding of operational staff proved to be inadequate for the magnitude of the task.

Between 1993 and 1997 ATSIC funded a BRACS Revitalisation project costing \$7.6 million. This has been effective in providing for equipment upgrades and training (although not in the Torres Strait). The principal outstanding issues are operational funding, including wages, and a more comprehensive strategy on training. [Note: These issues are addressed in the Turner Report: *National Report on the Broadcasting for Remote Aboriginal Communities Scheme (1998)*].

A first level of service

Indigenous people are largely invisible in the mainstream media and what coverage is provided tends to reinforce and perpetuate negative stereotypes. Despite attempts by organisations such as the ABC and the SBS to counter the stereotypes, the coverage they can provide is inadequate.

Since most Australians will never meet an Indigenous person, let alone get to know them well, this is a matter for serious public concern. Studies by bodies such as the Office of Multicultural Affairs and the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission confirm the perpetuation and promotion of negative racial stereotypes in Australia. An Australian Broadcasting Tribunal study (1992) found that commercial radio talkback programs are a major source of stereotyping. This finding has been reinforced by the approach taken by these programs to issues such as the Mabo and Wik debates and the emergence of One Nation.

Much of this stereotyping is systemic, rather than individual. That is, journalists and others adopt the routines for news gathering, the editorial policies and the news values already in place. These are based upon a set

of assumptions about what is commercially attractive which exclude Indigenous Australians. The result is that, while mainstream media can and should make changes, these are unlikely to have any but a marginal effect.

The basic requirement of any reconciliation process is mutual understanding. Many well disposed people from non-Indigenous as well as Indigenous communities understand this.

At a first level of service, Indigenous Australians should be assisted to perform two distinct, but mutually reinforcing, roles:

- to disseminate information to their own communities; and
- to be active in informing and educating Australians about each other.

Indigenous culture and identity

As early as 1948 the United Nations declared that communication was a basic human right.

Communication is not just imparting information, but the representation of shared beliefs. It therefore does not meet a people's need for communication that others, no matter how well-intentioned, should speak on their behalf.

Indigenous media organisations commonly note that the dissemination of information must be culturally appropriate in order to be effective. While the Indigenous population may appear homogeneous to non-Indigenous Australians, it is in fact culturally and linguistically very diverse. It may be appropriate to encourage the use of English as the Australian *lingua franca*, but there is no substitute for a community's language in identifying suitable role models, identities and values - "If we lose our language, if we lose our culture ... we become lost ourselves" [Buzzacott in Aboriginal Languages Association Conference Report 1989, p 15].

The wider Australian public is unaware that the diverse Aboriginal and Islander languages record quite distinct histories, cultures and views of the world. In the 1980s, there was a significant resurgence of language awareness among many Indigenous peoples, which was closely linked to

the awakening of Indigenous identity and a concurrent demand for social and political rights.

Indigenous media should be recognised as crucially important in maintaining and regenerating Indigenous languages and cultures.

Towards an Indigenous media policy

Current *ATSIC Programme Policy & Guideline Statements* say that the goal of Indigenous broadcasting is to empower Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples through:

- *control* of their own broadcasting and communications services;
- *access* to other broadcasting and communications services; and
- *production* of their own linguistically and culturally relevant programmes.

ATSIC does play a major role in the development of Indigenous broadcasting. Indeed, given that it is a public service, the sector would not be so significant as it is today without ATSIC funding.

However, there are different, sometimes conflicting, criteria applied when allocating funds. For example:

- ATSIC total budget in 1997/1998 was \$931 million, while the allocation specifically for broadcasting was just over \$12 million;
- the broadcasting allocation
 - consists of projects funded at the national, multi-regional and regional council level; and
 - was largely used to fund regional media associations and the satellite subsidy to Imparja Television.
- meanwhile, \$495 million of the total ATSIC budget was allocated by 35 regional councils.
- each regional council determines its own funding priorities so that some councils allocated funds to media associations and/or BRACS, while others did not.

Thus, while the national office provided \$7.6 million between 1993 and 1997 for BRACS Revitalisation (training and equipment), a considerable number of BRACS stations, which are at the very heart of Indigenous broadcasting, have been denied annual operational funding (Turner estimates 19 unfunded and 40 underfunded in the last six years).

ATSIC's decision to focus on funding Indigenous radio is commended, as are its efforts to fund the revitalisation of BRACS. However, better co-ordination of general funding would be achieved by adapting the model used for allocating BRACS Revitalisation funds; i.e. a joint approach by the national office and the NIMAA BRACS Working Party.

The current ATSIC budget is demonstrably inadequate for funding Indigenous media. If recurrent funding for the BRACS stations is included, current funding cannot properly support even Indigenous radio.

ATSIC funding for the recurrent costs of Indigenous broadcasting needs to be increased to \$22.35 million per annum. This is almost double the existing budget. The following estimates were developed by the study team.

**Estimated Minimum ATSIC funding levels
for recurrent operational costs
(media associations, FTV and BRACS)***

1 Media Associations	No	Rate (\$million)	Total (\$million)
Large	8	0.8	6.4
Average size (4 aspirants)	9	0.5	4.5
Small (5 aspirants)	7	0.35	2.45
 2 Video production houses	 7	 0.5	 3.5
 3 BRACS	 101	 0.05	 5.5
<hr/> TOTAL <hr/>			<hr/> 22.35 <hr/>

**These estimates do not take into account ancillary matters, such as establishment costs (e.g. offices, furniture, studios, transmitters and antennae), or funding for non-broadcasting activities, such as print, multimedia, or on-line communications or additional aspirant groups.*

New Policy Directions

To date ATSIC has limited its policy and funding to broadcasting, and has not yet addressed issues involving information technology and telecommunications infrastructure.

However, all people are not equal in the information age. As previously noted, Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders do not present a demographic that is attractive to commercial interests. This is particularly so for those Indigenous communities who live in rural and remote Australia.

It is therefore critically important that public policy should not rely upon market forces to address the communication needs of Indigenous peoples.

The Department of Communications and the Arts (DCA)

The Commonwealth Government funds community media through a specialised grant-making body, the Community Broadcasting Foundation (CBF), which is an outlier to DCA. CBF was set up by community broadcasters themselves as a means of ensuring peer group assessments of applications for funds. Funds are channelled to CBF through both ATSIC and DCA.

CBF funding is allocated on the recommendation of four Grants Advisory Committees. In the case of Indigenous broadcasting, the relevant committee is the Aboriginal Grants Advisory Committee (AGAC), which is nominated by NIMAA.

In 1996/1997, CBF funded 129 hours of Aboriginal broadcasting. Historically the ATSIC component has been allocated to assist aspirant groups to purchase equipment. Other significant allocations have been for program costs, such as CD ROMS, mini-discs, travel and payments for airtime. These grants are made on the basis of hours broadcast. In 1996-1997 the largest grant was to NIRS for satellite equipment, an uplink, a computer, furniture and a project officer. NIMAA also received significant funding for its annual conference.

CBF reports concern over the falling number of applications from Indigenous broadcasters. It is suggested that this results from a combination of factors:

- the increasing number of Indigenous licensees (if these are already ATSIC funded they are ineligible for CBF funding);
- the level of fees charged for airtime by community stations;
- delays in planning by the Australian Broadcasting Authority (ABA);
- demanding requirements of CBF guidelines; and
- a preference for Indigenous staff on funding bodies.

CBF has recently funded an Indigenous field officer position to assist applicants in applying for funds. It has also introduced a Special Project Fund category that is open to Indigenous media associations and licensees, even if already funded by ATSIC.

The Australian Broadcasting Authority (ABA)

The ABA plans the development of broadcasting and allocates grant licences. During the late 1980s and early 1990s the Department (then known as the Department of Transport, Communications and the Arts) and the ABA (then known as the Australian Broadcasting Tribunal) interacted closely with ATSIC. This interaction allowed all relevant parties to monitor effectively the existence and development of aspirant broadcasters.

This interaction no longer occurs. Moreover, funding for aspirant groups is now handled by regional councils, not the national office. With no agreed policy criteria for funding aspirants, the availability of funding varies widely from region to region.

Secondly, NIMAA has no strategic plan setting out the stage of development, the rationale for existence (including proposed service area) and the proposed timetable for aspirant broadcasting groups.

The *Broadcasting Services Act 1992* abolished the S (Specialist) class of community broadcasting licence, which had been used for Aboriginal stations, subsuming all specialist licences into the broad category of community licences. Indigenous broadcasters feel that this implies :

- general access; and
- programming addressing all sectors of the community.

Department of Employment, Education, Training and Youth Affairs (DEETYA)

DEETYA and ATSIC both fund training in Indigenous media. The relevant issues are examined at Chapters 5-10.

Indigenous consultation, cultural protocols and intellectual property rights

Non-Indigenous policy makers must be alert to the diversity of Indigenous languages, beliefs and lifestyles. As the Department of Aboriginal Affairs' planning and implementation of BRACS illustrates, although widespread consultation is both difficult and costly, it is the only method available to avoid flaws in policy.

The main policy issues involved in Indigenous media are not about choosing between delivery systems, but about defining appropriate social and cultural uses for a variety of technologies. It is necessary always first to define the service required.

Many Indigenous people regard even a process of widespread consultation as inadequate. They argue for *self determination*, as defined by the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission (HREOC) in 1997. Self determination involves not only consultation and participation in service delivery, but control of the whole decision-making process, from policy analysis and development through to implementation.

Equality in the provision of services is not enough. Services designed to address the needs of non-Indigenous Australians will often fail to meet the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. "Cultural and language differences, remoteness, unique histories and particular emotional needs" (HREOC 1997, pp 329-20²) will not be met without distinctive approaches. "The objective of specialist services is to ensure equity of access and to overcome the discrimination which clients would otherwise

²² Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission 1997, *Bringing Them Home: Report of the National Inquiry into the Separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children from their Families*, April, Sydney.

experience if required to have their needs met by mainstream services.”
(*ibid*)

There is a need for policies that:

- acknowledge Indigenous culture and identity; i.e. *The Law*;
- recognise and protect Indigenous cultural and intellectual property rights (IPR); e.g literature, art, languages, cultural property, knowledge and resources and documentation of heritage; and
- identify both generic and specific *cultural protocols* for interaction with local communities; i.e. accepted customs and processes for dealing with them.

Indigenous media can play a pivotal role in these areas. They are dynamic and flexible, able to assist in raising community awareness and capable of helping to maintain the custodial ethic, where everything is interconnected.

After consultation with the community it serves, each media organisation should put in place a set of specific cultural protocols.

3. INDIGENOUS MEDIA CASE STUDIES: GOVERNMENT AND NON-GOVERNMENT FUNDING ISSUES

ABSTRACT: *Case studies from Indigenous media are presented at Appendix 1.*

Indigenous radio is unique and has unique problems. It is not simply another form of community radio. Therefore, it cannot be addressed successfully simply by re-cycling approaches prepared with quite different types of broadcasting in mind. Most Indigenous people see working in radio not as pro bono work, but as one of the very few careers to which they have access. Voluntarism may be useful in the first instance, as a means of attracting young people to the stations, but essentially Indigenous radio requires staff to be paid.

BRACS stations are under-funded, particularly in terms of wages and operating costs. Each BRACS station need a minimum of two core paid staff, plus volunteers.

The Yuendumu and Ernabella communities have demonstrated that video can be effective in preserving local traditions and cultures as well as a powerful tool for communicating with others. The most important issues regarding television are entry-level training, Indigenous protocols and the lack of production funding.

Indigenous print media can be very effective in reaching local audiences. They suffer from a lack of funding and opportunities to tender for print work. Indigenous multimedia are comparatively new, but suffer from the same lack of revenue.

The Review makes fifty-one recommendations, some of which relate specifically to particular case studies (See Appendix 1). The general recommendations are that ATSIC:

- *arrange for the training of Directors of Indigenous radio stations;*
- *periodically review station performance;*
- *fund audience research;*

- *cease to fund BRACS retransmission sites;*
- *develop criteria for future BRACS development;*
- *consider funding staff for BRACS stations;*
- *give urgent attention to the non-payment of BRACS operational funding in some areas;*
- *provide funding for a consultancy to draft a set of Indigenous protocols;*
- *together with SOCOG and the Office of National Tourism, convene an Indigenous working party on protocols for the Olympic Games 2000;*
- *provide funding for a consultancy to produce a data base on Indigenous film and television companies;*
- *streamline its funding processes;*
- *seek legal advice on giving Indigenous publishers first option on printing its material;*
- *investigate incentives for Indigenous printers;*
- *review its funding criteria to allow for print media to apply in the same way as radio;*
- *explore the possibility of funding Indigenous initiatives in multimedia and on-line production;*
- *resource effective media business plans;*
- *resource regional marketing workshops for Indigenous stations and print media;*
- *ensure that Indigenous media organisation have access to tendering processes;*
- *facilitate a working party to develop guidelines for federal government departments to use Indigenous media for language translation services;*
- *fund a national campaign to promote awareness of the Indigenous media sector;*
- *encourage and support regional and local cultural protocols;*
- *fund a feasibility study for the establishment of an Indigenous Investment and Marketing Agency to promote Indigenous media industries; and*
- *consider funding marketing positions in each State.*

The Review also recommends that:

- *ATSIC and DCA jointly fund a consultancy on the feasibility of establishing a national Indigenous television channel;*
- *DCA set up an investment fund of \$3.5 million, increasing to \$6.0 million, to support the Indigenous film and television industry. This fund should only be available to Indigenous film-makers;*
- *The Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation use Indigenous print media wherever possible;*
- *A high quality booklet be produced by an Indigenous media print organisation setting out details of the Indigenous media; and*
- *The Office of Government Information and Advertising (OGIA) adopt a policy of directing 2.5% of its budget to Indigenous media.*

Introduction

The Review extensively surveyed Indigenous media organisations. Case studies based on these surveys are summarised at *Appendix 1*.

This chapter examines :

- the experiences of Indigenous media in raising revenue;
- the strengths and weaknesses of each sector's approach;
- how Indigenous media can attract non-government revenue; and
- relevant social and cultural factors involved in moving towards a private enterprise model.

Issues

Radio offers the greatest potential for Indigenous access and control. However, print, film, video and multimedia are also significant. Moreover, as the technologies converge, traditional distinctions between these media

will be difficult to sustain. The general issue is how Indigenous media can best position themselves to maximise output and potential earnings.

Despite considerable effort, few Indigenous media workers have succeeded in generating substantial non-government revenue. Relevant factors are:

- lack of expertise and/or access to
 - business planning; and
 - marketing
- community service obligations that conflict with commercial imperatives
- limited funding options
- available funding is *ad hoc* and annual, preventing forward planning
- communities to be served (i.e. available markets) are often:
 - isolated and/or small; and
 - relatively poor
- limited understanding among potential sponsors (government and non-government)
- government, including ATSIC and the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation, are slow to use opportunities; and
- racism and perceptions that Indigenous media are 'second rate'.

PART A: RADIO

Three major issues need to be addressed:

1. Commercialisation of content
2. Audience research
3. Voluntarism

1 Commercialisation of content

Indigenous radio is supposed to offer a first (basic) level of service to the community it serves. This involves broadcasting in language and featuring Indigenous culture and concerns.

However, Indigenous stations are chronically under funded and the easiest way to earn extra revenue is to adopt one of several ‘commercial’ program formats. In terms of maximising revenue this succeeds; in terms of addressing the community the station is licensed to serve, it demonstrably fails.

The Review concludes that ‘commercialisation’ of Indigenous stations will be less likely to occur if two critical issues are addressed:

- the need for directors to have media experience and business skills as well as cultural understanding; and
- the need for regular, ongoing reviews of station performance.

2 Audience research

National, commercial (and even community) broadcasters rely heavily upon the feedback provided through quantitative and qualitative surveys. The information provided is essential in approaching potential advertisers, sponsors, or even government departments and authorities, for financial support.

Although they may recognise how crucial survey information is in developing a business plan, Indigenous stations are effectively prevented from using this tool because of the high costs involved, their relatively small audiences and their very large service areas.

In 1997 station 4AAA Brisbane undertook a pilot project designed to identify an appropriate approach to surveying the audiences of Indigenous stations. CAAMA and the ABC have also jointly developed a model for surveying audiences in Central Australia. Although they may still need to be adapted to individual station needs, these models provide a basic research methodology for broadcasters serving remote and other Indigenous communities.

3 Voluntarism

Apart from government funding, the major source of revenue for community stations is program sponsorship; i.e. payments received in return for on-air acknowledgement of support. Reported returns from sponsorship range widely; i.e. from less than \$500 per annum for BRACS stations to \$160 000 per annum for a community station serving a regional city. Most Indigenous stations are at the lower end of this scale.

The most successful community stations enjoy either long term institutional backing (e.g. educational stations) or an affluent target audience and subscribers (e.g. fine music stations). They therefore have a stable funding base and good infrastructure. They also have substantial paid, specialist staff and a considerable force of volunteers.

The largest stations have quite substantial incomes. For example, in 1997 3RRR Melbourne had 11 500 subscribers and its total income from radiothons, subscriptions and donations reached \$0.53 million. The year before 4MBS FM Brisbane raised \$222 000 from subscriptions and \$99 000 from sponsorships. A typical subscription rate is \$50 per annum.

The correct volunteer to staff ratio for these stations differs greatly according to its program format, with the level of paid staff required rising the more talk programs are produced. Specialist staff are required not only to produce quality talk programs, but also to train volunteers so that they in turn can do the same. So a progressive music and talk station like 3RRR has 150 volunteers and 14 paid staff; whereas a fine music station like 4MBS has 250 volunteers, but needs only 4.5 staff.

Indigenous stations rarely have affluent audiences (and therefore subscribers). Even a \$50 subscription rate would be well beyond the reach of most of their listeners.

The non-Indigenous community sector is quite different to the Indigenous sector. It provides alternatives to the mainstream media, whereas Indigenous radio provides communities with their first level of service.

And although some stations have attracted volunteers, these tend to be sympathetic non-Indigenous people. There is no body of affluent middle

class Indigenous people available to be mobilised, let alone ‘work’ for the station after retirement, bringing their professional skills with them.

Most Indigenous people see working in radio as one of the very few careers to which they have access. Voluntarism may be useful in the first instance, as a means of attracting young people to the stations, but essentially Indigenous radio requires staff to be paid.

Government assistance

The majority of Indigenous media organisations would prefer to be financially independent, but in the case of BRACS some level of government assistance will always be necessary. The areas served are too large and too remote; the communities served too small; and their levels of income too low. They simply do not provide – and never will provide – the basis for commercially attractive markets.

Yet BRACS has been woefully under-funded.

For example, the Yuendumu BRACS must rank among the most successful experiments in Indigenous community broadcasting. But it has received minimal funding. Despite having produced hundreds of hours of video and an award-winning children’s program, *Manyu wana (Have fun)*, the Warlpiri Media Association (WMA) has received only a ‘one-off’ grant of \$25 000 from DAA for equipment and a co-ordinator’s salary from DEETYA. (It has also received some funding to coordinate and train BRACS operators in the region). It badly needs recurrent funding for training and equipment upgrades.

Similarly, Ernabella BRACS produced the first Aboriginal video program, documenting developments on nearby homelands, in 1983. This led to requests from other homelands for similar programs and establishment of the Ernabella Video Television Project (EVTV), aimed at producing, broadcasting and selling videos, in 1984. EVTV used capital equipment funded by the Australian Film Commission.

In 1985 the Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara Media Association (PY Media) used \$1 000 worth of cheap transmission equipment to begin local broadcasting. It financed this by a ten-cent surcharge on cool drinks from the store.

Like the Warlpiri, the Pitjantjatjara people regard their television station as culturally and socially significant. They have used it to record the *Dreaming* lines and encourage new interest in traditional dance, performance and singing, as well as recording community projects, sports events, rock groups, etc. The station even ran its own Aid for Africa appeal, raising \$1 600 for Eritrean famine relief.

PY Media has also been active in BRACS coordination and training. The Pitjantjatjara language radio station, 5PY Umuwa (30 kilometres south of Ernabella), serves a network of nine BRACS stations and provides a model for other BRACS regional networks.

In 1996/97 PY Media received \$50 476 from the Regional Council, increased in 1997/98 to \$154 864 to assist in establishing the BRACS network. But it still needs funding to upgrade the television studios and building as well as wages for staff.

The Review comments that both WMA and PY Media are very poorly funded in comparison with CAAMA in the same region.

Conclusion

Finally, the Review considers that the following questions are relevant to many Indigenous stations and suggests that they are worth further investigation:

- how to produce convincing data on audience demographics, habits, interests;
- how to define stations' program strategies;
- how to package sponsorship presentations; and
- how to devise a sliding rate for subscriptions.

It considers that the experiences most likely to be helpful to Indigenous stations are those of the ethnic language programs.

PART B: BROADCASTING FOR REMOTE ABORIGINAL COMMUNITIES SCHEME (BRACS)

BRACS stations are more fully covered in the *National Report on the Broadcasting for Remote Aboriginal Communities Scheme* written by Neil Turner. However, the Review was given access to Turner's early findings. Relevant case studies are summarised at *Appendix 1*.

There are 101 BRACS stations, 80 of which are licensed as community radio stations. These stations:

- provide an essential free-to-air community service in socially and economically disadvantaged regions;
- have the potential to serve as hubs for community information on health, education and business; and
- may in future generate employment.

Because the stations are close to their communities and have the ability to act as “a community loudspeaker”, they have the potential to be the most interesting and important development in Indigenous media. (Note that these comments do not apply to retransmission sites).

However, the original (1987) criteria for establishing BRACS stations were poorly administered. There was no program of informing and educating communities in their use and no recurrent funding for wages and operational costs.

Very few BRACS stations receive revenue from sources other than their ATSIC Regional Council. ATSIC funding has now (1997-1998), reached the level of \$18 423 per station per annum. However, the stations are very small and relying on one or two part-time operators is unrealistic, particularly if they are expected to work as volunteers. Each station requires a minimum of two core paid staff, plus access to experienced volunteers.

The BRACS Revitalisation Project (1993-1997) improved equipment and training, except in the Torres Strait, but the essential issues of training and funding wages are yet to be addressed.

The Review believes that it is vital to:

- develop a co-ordinated national strategy;
- train BRACS operators; and
- fund recurring costs, particularly wages.

PART C: INDIGENOUS FILM AND TELEVISION PRODUCTION - METROPOLITAN AND REGIONAL AREAS

Indigenous film and television (FTV) has developed more slowly than either radio or print.

This is partly a question of comparative costs. For example, it costs \$125 000 for a single, half-hour television documentary, which is the equivalent of the annual wages of 2-3 staff in radio.

The industry consists of a number of small companies and self-employed film-makers centred on Sydney, Wollongong and Newcastle. Technical standards are high and there is a general commitment to challenging dominant ways of thinking about issues relating to Indigenous peoples.

Significant government funding comes from ATSIC and DEETYA as well as the Australian Film Commission (AFC). The main source of non-government funding is producing corporate videos. The industry finds it very difficult to generate enough commercial income to remain viable while continuing to meet the needs of Indigenous communities.

Common concerns are:

- the need for entry-level training for new participants in the industry with a view to increasing the number of Indigenous producers;
- lack of understanding of Indigenous protocols;
- increasing pressure for community based production houses to become self-sustaining; and
- difficulties in attracting production funding.

Training

The training issue is considered in detail in *Chapter 9*.

Indigenous protocols

Many organisations, including government authorities and departments, do not understand the protocols of working with Indigenous communities. Too often, they award tenders to producers on the basis of quotations that ignore the considerable costs involved in effective consultation, then have to commission 'clean-ups' by Indigenous companies; i.e. re-working of material so that it is culturally appropriate.

It is anticipated that this will be a major problem for overseas media units during the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games.

Production funding

Many respondents complained about the lack of funding or inappropriate processing of funding applications. They also stated that there were insufficient Indigenous producers and scriptwriters to ensure a flourishing industry.

Specific comments were:

ATSIC

- does not generally fund FTV production;
- does not understand the production process, particularly FTV budgeting;
- funding approval processes are slow and bureaucratic;
- it places only irregular advertising with Indigenous programs e.g. on *Imparja TV*; and
- Office of Public Affairs distribution of funds is too slow and sometimes inappropriate.

AUSTRALIAN Film Finance Corporation (AFFC)

- potential Indigenous applicants are unaware of funding possibilities.

Australian Film Commission (AFC)

- Indigenous Branch funds are inadequate; and
- questions professionalism of BRACS productions.

ABC and SBS

- act as ‘gatekeepers’, choosing to fund on the basis of dominant community standards rather than on Indigenous values; and
- should increase involvement with, and investment in, indigenous media organisations.

Indigenous community television

Sponsorship of Indigenous programs is negligible. The Review argues for the establishment of an Indigenous Film Production Development Fund, modelled on those of Canada and New Zealand. The general argument is that globalisation of the media is homogenising FTV content under centralised control. It is therefore necessary to produce material representing local cultures and ideals.

The Fund aim should be to develop “a more active Indigenous screen culture” and encourage development of “a critical mass of broadly-trained craftspeople, artists and producers”.

Therefore:

- a minimum quota of trainees should be required on each production;
- because of unusually high travel costs, a single line travel budget should always be required;

Indigenous people have been largely excluded from discussions about how they might want to use satellite technology. A national Indigenous television channel controlled by an Indigenous FTV company is feasible. It could be established along similar lines to Television North Canada (discussed in detail in Chapter 4). Such a channel would:

- boost the profile of Indigenous FTV;
- help generate further growth in the industry; and
- guarantee a distribution outlet for Indigenous products.

Indigenous FTV needs better coordination. A Film and Television Policy Officer at NIMAA is required to:

- represent the industry to government funding bodies;
- write funding and policy submissions;
- assist with accessing funds; and
- coordinate training for the sector.

PART D: INDIGENOUS PRINT MEDIA

Indigenous print media have persisted since the early 19th century because of the deep-seated desire of communities for local information. The Review focused on newspapers and magazines rather than more specialised publications, such as newsletters. Major issues include:

- low funding priority as ATSIC concentrates on broadcasting;
- lack of work from government bodies;
- need for business/market strategies;
- need for trained Indigenous personnel; and
- future as content for Internet, on-line services and multimedia.

The Indigenous print media argue that more of the money spent by government on reaching Indigenous people should be directed through them because:

- they have a better knowledge of the target audiences;
- the skills to make those audiences accessible, in English or language; and

- they provide a source of training in transferable skills.

PART E: INDIGENOUS MULTIMEDIA

Multimedia and on-line services are new to most non-Indigenous, as well as Indigenous, Australians. However, access for Indigenous peoples is an issue.

Because it is so easy for material to be misappropriated on-line, the issue of Indigenous cultural protocols is extremely relevant.

ATSIC could take a leading role in encouraging a whole-of-government approach to:

- the use of multimedia and on-line services in disseminating information to Indigenous peoples;
- promoting the work of Indigenous producers; and
- encouraging Indigenous business development in multimedia.

PART F: MOVES TOWARDS ECONOMIC INDEPENDENCE

Features generic to Indigenous media organisations are:

- non-profit;
- not self sufficient (this includes community radio stations, BRACS, print and FTV);
- serving relatively small, commercially unattractive, communities; and
- having a low level of business and marketing expertise.

Since these features are generic, the problems that arise from them should be addressed on a whole-of-industry basis.

For example, ATSIC could assist media associations with the development of business and marketing plans, then make the existence of such plans one of its performance indicators for grants. In co-operation with applicants, ATSIC could:

- identify sources of funding (State and federal);
- maintain a register of appropriate advisors; and
- provide funds for development (and review) of business plans.

Government contracts are always going to be important to Indigenous media. They therefore need policies ensuring them of the opportunity to tender.

Since neither government departments nor private corporations will consider tenders from organisations they know nothing about, it is also necessary to correct the extraordinary lack of knowledge in Australia generally about the extent, complexity and professionalism of the Indigenous media sectors.

Because Indigenous media organisations will face conflicts of interest in selling advertising, it would be helpful to have available *cultural protocols* to guide approaches to programming and advertising.

Although communities with shared language and culture (e.g the *Tanami* communities) may be able to develop appropriate regional protocols, what is appropriate for one community is often inappropriate for another. Therefore the protocols need to be regional or local. Accordingly, it will also be necessary to develop national guidelines – covering the major issues to be addressed at the local level.

Revenue from advertising and sponsorship

The primary obligation of all Indigenous media is to provide a first level of service that is accountable to their communities.

This inevitably limits their capacity to act commercially. For example, some communities will ban the advertising of alcohol and other products – even sponsorship by associated companies. Other factors that may limit the ability to earn income from non-government sources are:

- endemic racism in the community;
- the need to avoid commercialisation of programs; and

- a tendency at station level to overlook small sponsors in the search for large ones.

The Review surveyed ten private corporations and found that not one had a policy regarding Indigenous media; nor did they seem likely to develop such a policy.

The only recognised differentiation between target groups was on the basis of language; e.g. Cantonese-speakers - and even this was only regarded as significant if it indicated a niche market with buying power. Corporations made their buying decisions (both commissioning production and media placements) on the basis of cost-effectiveness among English-speaking, urban consumers.

There is need for industry-wide co-ordination. For example, a company wanting to buy sponsorship in Western Australian Indigenous media would currently need to identify and approach six radio stations, thirteen BRACS stations and at least three newspapers.

The industry also needs focused marketing expertise in:

- promoting the benefits of using Indigenous media;
- identifying and matching corporate sponsors with elements of the Indigenous media;
- packaging regional and national advertising proposals;
- responding to corporate inquiries; and
- assisting with submissions (proposals) for funding or sponsorship.

Accordingly, the Review proposes the establishment of a one-stop agency to promote advertising and sponsorship on the Indigenous media. This agency would act as the first point of call for interested parties, whether government or non-government. It would need staff specialising in the different forms of Indigenous media and have to be capable of formulating local, regional or national campaigns. It would also need regional marketing officers.

Finally, the Review canvassed the Office of Government Information and Advertising (OGIA). The Commonwealth Government is consistently one of the top five advertisers in Australia. It is anomalous that OGIA, as a

matter of policy, directs a minimum 7% of its press and radio budgets towards media that target people of non-English speaking background (NESB), yet it has no such policy on the targeting of Indigenous peoples.

4. INDIGENOUS MEDIA REVENUE: INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCES

ABSTRACT: Like Australia, New Zealand and Canada have pioneered the development of Indigenous media. The differences are that they have formally recognised the links between language and cultural maintenance, codified national attitudes in legislation and designated specific funding programs.

The Review recommends that ATSIC:

- ***should adopt the management plan criteria used in Canada as a model for funding applications; and***
- ***should amalgamate the portfolios of language, culture and media***

Like Australia, both New Zealand and Canada have pioneered the development of Indigenous media. But there are important differences.

New Zealand

Broadcasting is seen by many Maori as critical to language maintenance and cultural revival. A series of legal decisions, largely based on the Treaty of Waitangi, have upheld the view that the Maori language is a social asset and that the Crown has a responsibility to protect it.

The *Broadcasting Act 1989* established an agency, Te Mangai Paho, specifically charged with promoting Maori language and culture by funding

- broadcasting; and
- programs for broadcast.

The significance of language and cultural maintenance is also recognised in the *Maori Language Act 1987*, the *Education Act 1989* and the *New Zealand Bill of Rights 1990*.

Major sources of funding are:

- television licence fees (14%);
- Department of Communications budget; and
- expenditure, including cross-subsidies, by New Zealand On Air (NZOA - the national broadcaster).

Maori culture, especially music, has substantial appeal to mainstream audiences. NZOA funds a minimum of 250 hours of Maori programming on National Radio and funds production of music videos. About 15% of videos played since 1991 have been by Maori artists. Two of the ten most-played videos on N.Z. television are by Maori performers.

There are three major elements in Maori radio: Radio Aotearoa, the *iwi* stations and Mana Maori Media:

- Radio Aotearoa (RA) is a national radio network dedicated to serving urban Maori;
- the *iwi* stations are independent. Originally established with volunteer staff, 22 of the 24 are now funded for five full-time staff by NZOA. They have to demonstrate that they have a potential Maori audience of at least 10 000;
- Mana Maori Media is an independent Maori news agency. It produces five daily news bulletins, nightly current affairs, sports coverage and a general interest program, *Mana Hour*, in both English and Maori. Its programs are networked to RA and Radio New Zealand and are available for re-broadcast by *iwi* stations.

The Review makes three comments:

- 1 the system may not be particularly effective in maintaining Maori language and culture. The best performance indicators would seem to be the amount and quality of broadcasts on Maori issues, in language. However, content is not regulated and there are disagreements about Maori *control*, as opposed to Maori *content* and/or focus on Maori audiences. In fact,

- most stations use music, rather than talk, formats (easy listening or country music, interspersed with traditional Maori music);
 - Radio Aotearoa, the national radio network designed to serve urban Maoris, plays Classic Hits, plus American urban dance and rap; and
 - the most successful *iwi* station, MAI FM Auckland (weekly cumulative audience of 100 000) plays black urban dance music, with some Maori artists.
- 2 there is mutually destructive conflict between rival Maori groups; and
 - 3 there is no provision for training.

Canada

Canada's Indigenous peoples have a long history of media involvement. Early Native publications were supported by tribal governments and churches; the first broadcasts took place in Alaska in the 1930s.

Short wave broadcasting in language began in 1960, under the aegis of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC), which has been heavily involved in Indigenous broadcasting.

In 1970 the CBC created the Northern Service, a group of five stations broadcasting in eight languages which reaches 98% of the population north of the sixtieth parallel. In 1974 it set up an Office of Community Radio to provide access for communities where there was no provision for local programming in French, English or Aboriginal languages. Fifty-seven transmitters across the north provide radio and television services to remote communities of more than 500 people. (Note, however, that the majority of the Indigenous population live in urban centres to the south.)

Since the 1960s, thirteen independent Native Communications Societies (NCS) have concentrated on radio, partly through community stations, and print. However, they jointly lobbied for a satellite television network, and some do produce television programs or bilingual magazines or pages for the Internet. The NCS employ 200 Aboriginal staff and produce more than 300 hours of language programming weekly. They reach an estimated

audience of 240 000 in 300 communities – about 37% of the total Native population.

Community radio stations affiliated with the NCS broadcast in a fashion similar to BRACS; i.e. they re-transmit programs from their local NCS, but can interrupt this to insert their own programming. The sector as a whole provides news and information in twenty languages, employs about 400 staff (full and part-time) as well as volunteers, and produces some 5 000 hours of programming per week.

Between 1970 and 1990, NCS were well funded under a **Native Communications Program**, but this was suddenly abandoned and many now suffer viability problems. The federal government is one of Canada's largest advertisers, but makes little use of Indigenous stations. Between 40 and 45% of revenue now comes from non-government sources. The print sector has suffered worst, with some being forced to close and others sacking staff or reducing the frequency of publication.

In 1983 the **Northern Native Broadcast Access Program** was created to fund the *production and distribution* of regional radio and television programming aimed at protecting and enhancing Indigenous languages and culture in northern Canada.

The Program makes 'one-off' grants directed at assisting NCS to gain access to existing broadcasting services, but it has sometimes funded the establishment of radio networks. Current rates are CAN\$500 per hour and \$8 500 per hour for television. The level of funding depends upon a global amount allocated in the annual budget and this has fallen recently – mainly because broadcasters in the thirteen identified regions are now well established.

This Program is administered by the Department of Canadian Heritage. NCS applying for funds must be:

- incorporated as non-profit companies;
- managed and controlled by Indigenous people;
- responsible to the communities they serve; and
- independent of organisations with political or religious goals.

Among other things, the Department requires NCS applying for funding to provide a **business plan** based upon six elements:

- mission statement
- programming plans
- annual budget, including cash-flow projections
- proposed distribution system
- training of staff and board members; and
- detailed staffing and management plan.

The **staffing and management plan** includes:

- current staff list
- organisation chart
- salary scale
- job descriptions
- minutes of most recent board meeting
- schedule of future board meetings; and
- list of members of the board, with names, addresses, telephone numbers and expiry of term.

In addition to these requirements, NCS are also obliged to commission annual audience surveys by independent consultants. The cost is shared with the government, which contributes CAN\$15 000 per survey.

Television Northern Canada (TVNC)

After the launch of the *Anik* satellite system in the early 1970s, the NCS lobbied for a dedicated Native television network. A federal task force on broadcasting policy recommended that:

- the rights of Indigenous peoples to broadcasting services should be recognised in the *Broadcasting Act*; and
- NCS should share a transponder with the CBC Northern Service.

TVNC is a non-profit corporation controlled by a number of NCS and other interested parties, including CBC North, who provide all of the programming .

TVNC has a pan-Aboriginal approach; i.e. it broadcasts in thirteen Native languages, as well as English and French. The audience is about 100 000, spread across five time zones, and more than 50% of this is Indigenous. Audience surveys reveal high levels of interest, with the audience learning language and traditional skills.

Funding is through the Department of Communications, which allocated CAN\$10 million for establishment costs and now provides some \$3 million per annum.

TVNC is licensed as a commercial network and can advertise for up to 12 minutes per hour (ten minutes for members and two minutes for the network). However, about 60% of its budget is spent on transponder costs and its audience is remote, relatively poor and often unemployed, making it unattractive to advertisers.

Conclusion

Unlike Australia, both New Zealand and Canada have:

- **formally recognised** the links between language and cultural maintenance and the media;
- **codified** national attitudes towards Indigenous languages and cultures in legislation (especially their *Broadcasting Acts*); and
- **designated specific programs** through which Indigenous media are to be funded.

Part B: TRAINING ISSUES

5 INDIGENOUS MEDIA TRAINING: POLICIES AND FUNDING

ABSTRACT: ATSIC and DEETYA have not understood the diversity of the Indigenous media. This has resulted in uncoordinated and inconsistent approaches to training.

DEETYA should take a whole-of-organisation approach to training, directed at multi-skilling trainees, abandon the approach of demanding ‘real jobs’ after training and encourage those trainers who are controlled by Indigenous people.

The Review recommends that:

- ***ATSIC and DEETYA should devise more appropriate, equitable and flexible training policies, funding criteria and implementation strategies***
- ***DEETYA should:***
 - ***require mainstream organisations training Indigenous people to monitor the subsequent employment of trainees; and***
 - ***devise a national training policy taking into account the diversity of Indigenous media, the differing needs of media organisations and their cultural context***
- ***ATSIC should provide DEETYA with detailed sector employment profiles***

The key funding agencies, ATSIC and DEETYA (and their predecessors), have not understood the diversity of Indigenous media, the cultural and public service obligations impinging upon them, or their need for multi-skilling and commercial diversification.

They do not have a whole-of-media approach and are technology-led, rather than human resources-led.

These misunderstandings have resulted in:

- uncoordinated and inconsistent approaches to funds allocation;
- poorly designed and implemented courses, which:
 - do not address media organisations' specific requirements; and
 - fail to reflect the cultural context.
- duplication of courses;
- inappropriate training;
- one-off, short courses with no follow up; and
- funding to media organisations that lack the required staff and equipment.

ATSIC and DEETYA, which currently provides all the funds for training, should re-think their approaches. Training is an investment in future growth and development. The Indigenous media offer:

- opportunities for Indigenous **participation, access and control**;
- **employment opportunities**, offering real career paths;
- **employment in related industries**;
- development of **transferable skills**; and
- the potential for **commercial production**.

Flexible policies and multi-skilling

DEETYA takes a media-specific, job/skill-specific approach to training. A **whole-of-organisation approach** would recognise that the media environment is changing and that multi-skilling is therefore highly valued.

It is necessary to assess the long-term training requirements of each media organisation and to develop a specific **training profile** (covering a two to three year period) linked to operational and programming outcomes.

The question of 'Real jobs'

Funded training opportunities have shrunk dramatically since 1996.

ATSIC now funds training only through the BRACS Revitalisation Scheme. This involves a complicated process of assessment by Regional Offices, Regional Councils, the National Office and the BRACS Working Party. Moreover, it is irrelevant for non-BRACS organisations. The Review notes that ATSIC's current low level of commitment in the training area will make it difficult for it to meet its stated broadcasting objectives... "to ensure that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are given the opportunity to participate in radio and television broadcasting and communications" and "linguistically and culturally relevant programs"³.

DEETYA has also suffered severe budget cuts in the training area. Only the Training for Aboriginals and Torres Strait Islander Program (TAP) remains. This is funded at \$30 million.

DEETYA has a conceptual problem with training Indigenous peoples, because it uses **mainstream models** of professional training. In these models, the preferred outcome is achieving '**real jobs**'. These mainstream models are also unlikely to reflect the emphasis in ATSIC's broadcasting policy which is to "secure the empowerment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people through control of their own broadcasting and communications services; and preservation, development and promotion of their arts, cultures and languages"⁴.

Predictably, DEETYA guidelines conflict with ATSIC's funding cycle. For example, ATSIC funding is annual, which means that Indigenous media organisations by definition cannot guarantee the future employment of trainees. Yet that is exactly what DEETYA requires of them. Similarly, DEETYA requires considerable competency in non-Indigenous culture and language. Very few Indigenous trainees will already possess these capacities.

The critical need among Indigenous peoples is for **entry-level training**. Instead of regarding training in Indigenous media as an unprofessional

³ *ATSIC Annual Report 1995- 1996*, p 106.

⁴ *Ibid*, p 105.

option, DEETYA should view it as a stepping stone to future employment. It cannot be regarded as the precursor to a guaranteed job.

DEETYA has shown a preference for training in the mainstream media, most often based in cities or large regional towns. Yet these simply provide access; they are not controlled by Indigenous people. Training should be viewed in a cultural context. Centre-periphery models are less likely to succeed than socially and culturally interactive models.

DEETYA has negotiated employment strategy agreements with the ABC, the SBS and key federal film agencies – the Australian Film Commission, the Film Finance Corporation, the Australian Film Television and Radio School and Film Australia. While these organisations have provided valuable training to Indigenous people, it is necessary to:

- identify what training positions will be made available (and the reasons for these choices);
- examine whether these positions provide trainees with opportunities for multi-skilling;
- determine what level of training is required; and
- outline how the training is to be structured, implemented, monitored and assessed.

Both ATSIC and DEETYA have concentrated upon providing funding, rather than on monitoring and assessing training to ensure that the programs achieve the required outcomes.

Mainstream media versus Indigenous media

The key issue is not whether to devote training funds to mainstream, rather than Indigenous, media. It is how to ensure training opportunities in both.

Trainees attached to mainstream media (ABC, SBS, the film agencies) commonly are offered a package which includes:

- a training wage;
- in-house trainers;
- a career path; and
- optional tertiary training in a capital city.

On the other hand, trainees attached to Indigenous media are typically offered:

- Abstudy or CDEP (Community Employment Development Project) funding;
- no in-house trainers;
- no career path ; and
- compulsory tertiary study in a regional centre (usually Batchelor College in the Northern Territory or James Cook University, North Queensland).

In addition, mainstream media organisations have extensive administrative infrastructures and are well able to handle the bureaucratic complexities of dealing with DEETYA; Indigenous media organisations are not.

DEETYA shows a marked preference for organisations undertaking training **on behalf** of Indigenous peoples rather than those **controlled by them**. It proactively offers training funds to the ABC and the SBS, but shows no interest in encouraging Indigenous organisations to take training initiatives.

This is at least in part because DEETYA did not realise how quickly Indigenous broadcasting has developed. It also lacks expertise in the area. Unprepared with a policy on funding broadcasting training, and not understanding the field, its officers often apply general guidelines much too literally.

Larger, city-based Indigenous media organisations, such as CAAMA, BIMA, BAMA and the *Koori Mail*, have managed to secure training funds from DEETYA – and sometimes from other sources as well. However, even for them, the requirement to provide 50% of the training subsidy is a burden. Smaller organisations are effectively defined out of the contest; this is particularly relevant to FTV, small print media, BRACS and Indigenous people broadcasting on community radio.

DEETYA's Indigenous Employment Initiatives Branch has responsibility for national policy, but the Department's regional offices determine their own priorities. Similarly, ATSIC devolves prioritising to Regional Councils. Since neither department has formulated a coherent national

policy, there is no consistency in the allocation of training funds. Too often success depends upon the level of knowledge or interest of individual regional officers.

Towards an Indigenous media training policy

The key problem is this lack of an appropriate, co-ordinated, consistent policy that recognises the diversity of the Indigenous media.

DEETYA states that its core business is getting people into jobs **and training**, but it actually looks for jobs **through training**.

Moreover, if the 'real jobs' it seeks are defined as long-term and permanent; (i.e.. secure, tenured employment with the same organisation), then it is quite unrealistic to speak in these terms. The whole workforce is moving towards short-term, contractual positions.

In 1990s Australia very few industries provide such jobs and employment in the media has always been short-term. Reference to the careers of successful Indigenous broadcasters makes this point obvious. For example, Wayne Binder's career was:

1982-4	Community broadcaster 6NR Perth (funded by DAA)
1985-6	Broadcaster with CAAMA Alice Springs
1986-7	Broadcast officer ABC Perth
1987-9	Seconded to Waringarri Media as manager
1990	WAAMA as manager and training officer
1991-2	ABC Darwin as broadcast officer
1993-6	Batchelor College as Lecturer in Broadcasting and Journalism
1997	BAMA as relieving manager
1997+	Freelance in Darwin, plus part-time lecturing at Batchelor College

6. INDIGENOUS TERTIARY TRAINING

ABSTRACT: *Formal education for Indigenous people must be culturally appropriate; i.e. it should recognise the validity of diverse value systems, reflect cultural differences in its curriculum, provide a suitable environment and give trainees a sense of ownership of the courses.*

The Review examines three tertiary courses specifically directed at Indigenous trainees: the Batchelor College Associate Diploma (BCAD) and BRACS course (BCBC) and the James Cook University Diploma in Communications (JCU DC).

It makes twelve recommendations:

- *that DEETYA should:*
 - *adopt more flexible criteria for funding Indigenous media training; and*
 - *fund an Employment and Training Co-ordinator at NIMAA for three years.*
- *that ATSIC and DEETYA should:*
 - *develop strategies to raise awareness of the benefits of training; and*
 - *consider strategies for funding BRACS positions and developing a career structure for BRACS operators.*
- *that Batchelor College should:*
 - *establish a better relationship with Indigenous media associations in its area;*
 - *regularly communicate with BCBC students;*
 - *provide written reports on students' progress;*
 - *conduct five full-day workshops in community;*
 - *report annually to ATSIC on its use of ATSIC funds;*
 - *better utilise the Aboriginal Tutorial Assistance Scheme (ATAS); and*

- *that James Cook University should convene a meeting of stakeholders to discuss how its Diploma and Advanced Diploma courses could bet meet the requirements of Indigenous trainees*

The primary focus of most media and journalism degrees is to provide middle class students with (a) the theoretical understandings and (b) practical skills, necessary to gain employment in the mainstream media.

In 1996, only 1.1% of tertiary students were Indigenous and even among such students, there was a general tendency to opt for lower level degrees, seen as having a ‘practical’ application; e.g. education, nursing and Aboriginal studies.

In the case of media studies, this tendency is exacerbated, because:

- entry is highly competitive;
- merit is judged by performance in senior high school;
- industry experience is highly regarded;
- no concessions are made on the basis of:
 - minority cultural values; or
 - lack of competence in written and spoken English.

For formal education to be effective for Indigenous peoples, it is essential that it be **culturally appropriate**; i.e.

- the educational environment must recognise the validity and importance of diverse value systems;
- the cultural differences inherent in different value systems must be reflected in:
 - the contents of the curriculum; and
 - the teaching, learning and assessment strategies utilised.
- there must be a suitable physical and intellectual environment; and
- participants must feel a sense of ownership.

Indigenous people have typically been ‘trained’ through exposure to the fundamentals of panel operation at a community station or in short, one-off courses, ranging from a few days to two weeks in duration. This led to

demands for media courses that would teach essential media skills in a culturally appropriate manner.

There are now three tertiary courses specifically designed to meet the needs of Indigenous students wanting formal qualifications in media and another planned. They will be discussed in turn:

- 1. Batchelor (TAFE) College, Northern Territory**
Associate Diploma (3 years if no recognition of prior learning);
- 2. Batchelor (TAFE) College, Northern Territory**
BCBC (BRACS) Course (one year if no recognition of prior learning);
- 3. James Cook University, Townsville**
Diploma in Communications (2 years); and
- 4. Charles Sturt University, Bathurst**
plans to introduce a Bachelor of Arts (Indigenous Media) in 1998.

1. The Batchelor College Associate Diploma (BCAD)

From 1988-1993, the College offered majors in print, video production and radio production. However, most students came from regional Indigenous media associations and were only interested in radio. Since 1994, that has become the focus of the BCAD course.

Average annual intake is 20-25 students. Most students work full time at their media association and live in at Batchelor for two-week periods, four times a year. They also undertake work placements at another Indigenous media association (second year) and a mainstream media organisation (third year).

Since discontinuation of the Community Training Program (CTP) in 1996, they are paid through Abstudy or CDEP. However, this is not a training wage. There is considerable dissatisfaction with the present arrangements because:

- the level of Abstudy or CDEP payments is too low;
- payment is linked to undertaking formal study, which students sometimes regard as irrelevant;
- some components of the course are regarded as ‘paper work’ (e.g. management) or culturally inappropriate (e.g. journalism);
- formal education may be negatively valued in students’ communities (‘whitefella credentials’ conferring status and power on individuals).

The media associations themselves are often unaware of the potential of formal and informal training to further their aims and objectives. Consequently, students returning to their associations may be unable to put their new-found knowledge and skills into practice. For example, station managers with no comprehensive programming policy expect music shows to be presented as before, showing no evidence of the advanced radio production, pre-production or journalism skills learned by the student.

Outcomes of the BCAD

From 1988 to 1996, 20-30 students per annum enrolled in the BCAD. Between 1991 and 1997, thirty-seven students graduated. As of 6 August 1997, 62% of graduates were employed in communications industries, while 11 % were self employed in communications.

The Review notes that the BCAD course is highly regarded for the quality of its teaching, its learning outcomes and its culturally appropriate approach.

Probably because of the discontinuation of CTP and the cut-back in DEETYA programs, first-year enrolments in 1997 were down to nine students, with only three of these from non-BRACS communities. However, there has always been a high attrition rate (especially in the first three months), with only 20-25% of students eventually completing the course.

Anecdotal evidence suggests that Batchelor may be too small (population approximately 600) and isolated (110 kilometres south of Darwin) for students from cities and large regional centres.

However, few Indigenous media associations require students to demonstrate a commitment to radio before nominating them to the BCAD, whereas the Broome Aboriginal Media Association (BAMA), which requires potential nominees to work at the station for up to one year before enrolling, has had a 100% success rate. The answer may be to pay new recruits a training wage for a probationary period before enrolling them for formal study. Batchelor College is also taking steps to further utilise the Aboriginal Tutorial Assistance Scheme (ATAS).

In the light both of technological convergence and the industry's future need for multi-skilling, the current concentration on radio production may need to be reviewed. Students may have to be offered the option of specialising in one or other medium. It should also be noted that courses in management were originally offered, but proved unpopular with students. Since lack of management skills is one of the Indigenous media industry's urgent problems, this issue also needs to be addressed.

2. The Batchelor College BRACS Course (BCBC)

Students from BRACS communities have been attending Batchelor College since 1990. Coming from rural and remote communities, they have different needs to students from regional and metropolitan media associations. For example, they generally speak English as their second or third language, may experience difficulties with literacy in what for them is a foreign language and are unlikely to have attended school beyond the level correlating with year eight in the mainstream education system.

In 1992, Batchelor College demonstrated its responsiveness to these needs by introducing a separate BRACS course: *Certificate II in BRACS Broadcasting and Maintenance*. It is known as the Batchelor College BRACS Course, or BCBC. A significant number of students have progressed from the BCBC to the BCAD.

The College services three regions: the Pilbara/Kimberley region, the Central Australian region and the Top End region. Average enrolment in the course has been 25-30 students, rising in 1997 to 34 students from 12 communities.

There have been complaints that not enough places are offered for all interested media associations in these regions to place students and there are no formal arrangements to co-ordinate training delivery between Batchelor and several media associations which have themselves been granted training funds under BRACS Revitalisation.

Outcomes from the BCBC

During four years, with an intake of (say) 100-120 students, only 54 have graduated with the BCBC.

The attrition rate is higher than it should be. There are a variety of causes, but some are systemic factors relating to the structure of BRACS itself: professional isolation, the absence of a career structure and inadequate rates of pay.

Firstly, it is vitally important to realise that many BRACS stations are **run by lone operators**. In many cases if the operator leaves the station, even for training purposes, there is nobody to run the BRACS unit. They do not have the infrastructure support enjoyed by school, council and health workers working in regional and metropolitan areas. They have no direct supervision and no mentors. Because of the remoteness of their communities and the absence of reliable communications, consultation with their professional peers is virtually impossible. And we must add to this that their own communities may not value their work.

Secondly, BRACS operators have **no career structure**. No matter how well they perform, there is no place within BRACS for them to seek either recognition or promotion.

Thirdly, BRACS operators are **poorly paid**. They do not receive a training wage (Abstudy and CDEP are used) and even after training, they are given minimal remuneration (CDEP scheme).

The fact is that BRACS has been established and run on the cheap. If the scheme is to fulfil its potential and prove to be culturally significant, this problem must be addressed urgently.

The alternative is for the BRACS units to degenerate into mere retransmission sites for mainstream radio and television – thereby becoming a conduit for the cultural devastation the scheme was designed to prevent.

There are also a set of factors relating to the BCBC itself, rather than BRACS. These may be categorised as: cultural difficulties, communication and course structure.

Despite considerable efforts by Batchelor College, **cultural difficulties** are still a factor. For example, the sense of personal isolation is clearly important for many students, particularly those from small communities. The College has attempted to become more user friendly. Because of the time it takes to access Abstudy and the problems caused by the wet season, it has moved to mid-year enrolments. And in 1997 it also begun enrolling ‘community crews’; i.e. two to five people from a community at the one time. Nevertheless five of the students enrolled that year were lone operators and for them isolation will remain an important factor.

A related problem is that a significant number of students miss regional workshops. College staff are sympathetic; they accept that a student may need to attend to family or cultural matters instead, and students are not removed from the course for non-attendance. However, it is clearly difficult to ensure continuity in training.

In remote communities **communications** that are taken for granted in regional and metropolitan areas are often non-existent. To contact a student may take a series of telephone calls to organisations within the community; phone messages or faxes are often not passed on; mail is very slow; postal boxes in centres like Alice Springs may not be cleared for weeks; some students have little command of written English. Nevertheless, the BCBC course seems less effective than BCAD in communicating with students.

The **course structure** itself also needs further refinement. Most course work is done during community-based or regional workshops; e.g. students from the host community, as well as others from the same region, work at the BRACS unit. This work is project-based and utilises the unit both as a media centre and as a radio and video production unit.

The Review comments that:

- because of high travel and accommodation costs, workshops are expensive (up to \$8 000 each);
- they are only run for four days at a time (Tuesday-Friday);
- BCAD staff teach longer hours than BCBC staff;
- no consideration is given to gender difficulties (female and male trainers where students are both sexes);
- no use is made of ATAS tutors; and
- insufficient use is made of Indigenous (part-time) instructors.

ATSIC funding

ATSIC has provided \$400 000 to BCBC since 1993. These funds largely provide travel, travel allowances and wages for two part-time instructors and without them there would be no community delivery (they are now tied specifically to this).

There is no doubt that this is what the communities want: less travel, more community (or regional)-based workshops and direct contact with BRACS trainers.

BCBC is the only tertiary training course established to meet the demands of BRACS. The teaching is regarded as of high quality, but as neither regular nor sufficient.

The Review suggests that the current BCBC is conceptually flawed in treating radio and video as separate streams. Suggestions are:

- better forward planning, organisation, communication and co-ordination with other BRACS training units;
- combine radio and video workshops over seven days;
- employ Indigenous part-time instructors from the three regions teaching both radio and video; and
- view BCAD and BCBC students as one student body, albeit with differing needs.

3. The James Cook University Diploma in Communications (JCUDC)

This course resulted from negotiations between the Townsville Aboriginal and Islander Media Association (TAIMA) and JCU and was intended to meet the needs of Indigenous students on the Eastern seaboard. DEETYA provided seeding funding, enabling the purchase of 'high-end' equipment. Originally it was also hoped that this equipment would be utilised for community television, using material drawn from TAIMA's Big Eye Productions, the BRACS communities and JCU students.

The JCUDC is the only formally accredited course specifically offering training in print, video, television and radio production for Indigenous peoples. There have been 36 students over two years, including some from BRACS communities, especially in the Torres Strait. As of 1998 it will also offer an Advanced Diploma, demanding one year of study full-time in Townsville.

Although James Cook University is well-positioned to serve BRACS students in Queensland and the Torres Strait Islands, the course has experienced considerable difficulties. The Review noted:

- for two years, only one full-time staff member;
- involves three long (one-month) residential blocks;
- no regional or community-based workshops;
- ATAS used only at the initiative of individual students; and
- minimal consultation with Indigenous media industry.

The JCUDC is 'state of the art', but the Review questions whether it meets the needs of Indigenous students, particularly BRACS students. Since its inception there has been criticism of course content, its relevance to Indigenous media organisations, the level of staffing, the requirement for one-month residential, lack of consultation and the university's commitment to the course.

4. Charles Sturt University Bachelor of Arts (Indigenous Media)

In 1998 Charles Sturt (Bathurst Campus) is offering Indigenous people with the Bachelor College Associate Diploma (BCAD) or equivalent the opportunity to upgrade their qualifications to a university degree. The course will require four residential blocks of two weeks over one year and will cover FTV, multimedia and information technology.

Summary

The media industry is rapidly changing. Accordingly, there will be increased demand for multi-skilling. In the future, today's students will need to be skilled not only in production, but in computing, digital technology, information technology and multimedia. This must be reflected in the curricula they are offered.

Not enough Indigenous staff are involved in these courses full-time. The institutions concerned should be proactive, acknowledging that many Indigenous people now have extensive industry backgrounds and sometimes foregoing formal academic qualifications.

There is no co-ordination between the tertiary institutions offering media courses for Indigenous people. It is essential that the staff from these institutions share teaching strategies, research, curriculum development and plans for expanding courses. They also need to consult with the Indigenous media industry.

Vocational education is changing rapidly and alternatives to the traditional TAFEs and universities should now be considered. The new National Training Framework (NTF) allows for national recognition of training. Under its provisions, interested organisations no longer register as accredited course providers; instead, they register the products and services that they offer.

There are two components:

- *The Australian Recognition Framework (ARF)* allows registration of training delivery, skills recognition services, nationally recognised qualifications and statements of attainment. It aims to encourage diversification, participation in the training market and access to recognised services. Under its provisions, media associations may enter into partnership with a Registered Training Organisation (RTO), or themselves apply to become an RTO.
- *Training packages* comprise a set of competency standards, national qualifications and assessment guidelines applicable

across an industry. They will enable RTOs to develop flexible training programs to meet particular individual, or regional, or enterprise-specific training needs, while maintaining the integrity of a nationally recognised qualification.

While the Review considers that few Indigenous media associations will themselves seek to register as RTOs, these provisions do allow them to negotiate directly with educational providers to deliver courses specifically designed for their employees.

The Remote Indigenous Media Association of Queensland (RIMAQ), representing nine BRACS communities, has been working with NIMAA to develop a Community Producer's Certificate (CPC). The intention is to enable trainees from those communities to access accredited, community based, culturally appropriate training. DEETYA has provided a grant of \$112 000, but no curriculum is yet available.

The Review notes that there is a great deal of confusion about training options and funding and that this should be addressed as a matter of urgency.

7. PRINT INDUSTRY TRAINING NEEDS

ABSTRACT: *Although it makes a significant contribution to contemporary understanding of the issues faced by Indigenous people, the Indigenous print industry has been marginalised. ATSIC funding for print is minimal and the mainstream industry show no interest in Indigenous trainees.*

The Review recommends:

- *that ATSIC and DEETYA:*
 - *reconsider their current approaches; and*
 - *urgently consider how to assist in training more Indigenous people in business, marketing and management skills.*
- *that DEETYA consider how to provide more funded training opportunities; and*
- *that NIMAA seek funding for a feasibility study into an Indigenous publishing house based in Western Australia.*

The Indigenous print industry is marginalised in terms of funding, but makes a significant contribution to contemporary understanding of Indigenous Australia.

Newspapers have not been embraced with the same enthusiasm shown towards the electronic media because:

- mainstream papers have a non-Indigenous, urban orientation;
- mainstream readers need a high level of literacy in English;
- newspapers are hierarchically organised;
- distribution outside metropolitan areas is difficult; and
- newspapers need advertising to be viable.

National newspapers, such as the *Koori Mail* and *Land Rights News*, have enjoyed relative success and are popular with readers. However, most Indigenous publications, such as community papers, find it impossible to

raise funds for training. Between 1992-1997, ATSIC funding for print media was only a quarter of a million dollars – about 0.3% of the total media budget.

Marginalisation and neglect of the print sector has led to a low level of expertise. Specific training issues are:

- no clear policy regarding traineeships;
- no appropriate entry-level training;
- no relevant short and formal courses outside metropolitan areas;
- need for journalism skills;
- need for multimedia skills; e.g. electronic publishing and Web design;
- lack of management training; and
- lack of business planning and marketing skills.

Entry into the mainstream industry is highly competitive and now largely via tertiary training; e.g. ‘graduate cadetships’ of one year leading to grading as a J1 journalist. Few Indigenous aspirants can compete in this field, but even those that do are offered a European model, with little or no reference to Indigenous culture. Mainstream print, television and radio have shown little interest in facilitating Indigenous employment.

In 1996, with the assistance of NIMAA, the *Koori Mail* developed a three-year training strategy based upon DEET (now DETYA) meeting the training needs of Indigenous staff, while the paper provided funds for non-Indigenous staff. Although the proposal had some shortcomings (e.g. it did not detail the training required or suggest how the outcomes would be evaluated) it allowed the Indigenous media organisation to determine its own training needs and therefore provides a useful model for the future.

During the Review process, some leading Indigenous print media people argued strongly for an Indigenous publishing house which would combine publishing with on the job training. The Review believes that this initiative is suited for the ATSIC Business Incentive Program.

8. INDIGENOUS RADIO TRAINING

ABSTRACT: *The Review found that there are a significant number of indigenous people with well developed skills in broadcasting. There remain, however, a number of areas where training is needed, in particular, professional development in areas such as marketing and strategic planning as well as management skills. In addition, on-going training should be maintained and developed as referred to in previous chapters.*

The Review makes a total of nine recommendations:

- *that ATSIC and DEETYA:*
 - *support the development of a mentoring scheme for indigenous media managers;*
 - *support the development of an aspirant radio ABC course; and*
 - *provide training opportunities for Indigenous radio technicians.*
- *that ATSIC:*
 - *require training strategies to be developed and implemented for the management of all media associations;*
 - *develop a training program for archival management in indigenous media associations and ensure that all media associations have developed a policy on archival material; and*
 - *establish future needs in multi-media training and equipment and managing program strategies.*
- *that non-indigenous management training programs are assessed by independent experts and closely monitored by funding bodies.*

There is now a significant body of Indigenous people trained in radio production, presentation and journalism. However, past concentration on

developing skills at the front line of broadcasting has created four issues which need to be addressed:

- some (especially younger) staff see radio as simply announcing and playing music - they have few skills in areas like news, documentaries, oral history, drama, jingle and sponsorship production;
- there has been too little emphasis on Indigenous culture;
- training at community stations is often ‘hit-and-miss’; and
- other essential areas; e.g. management, financial control and marketing, have been neglected.

Insufficient funds have been provided to develop comprehensive training strategies. Moreover, there has been inadequate concentration on outcomes. For example, ATSIC performance indicators relate simply to the number of trainees; they make no reference to the **type** and **effectiveness** of training undertaken.

General points to be made are that:

- ATSIC has no knowledge of the program content of stations it funds;
- radio is a major employer of Indigenous people; and
- station managers themselves often cannot identify their training needs.

Above all, it must be recognised that Indigenous radio people see themselves as **professionals**.

The Review identifies urgently required skill areas as:

- management training
- human resources, including staff supervision
- financial management and budget control
- strategic planning
- legal requirements
- archival management
- training as directors
- technical training

- marketing
- programming, including advanced program training and strategies; and
- multimedia and on-line services.

Management training

This is perhaps the most pressing need, but it is difficult to locate appropriate courses for Indigenous people. On-the-job training assumes a career path that does not exist in Indigenous radio because of unpredictable funding cycles. Management courses in tertiary institutions assume cultural homogeneity and target their courses at the mainstream (as well as equating increased profits with good management). Management is ineffective unless it is culturally appropriate.

An approach of 'one suits all' will not work. The management requirements of each media organisation need to be considered individually. For example, it may be possible to use the training modules already developed by the ABC (as BIMA has successfully done), but these would probably have to be adapted to meet the needs of regional and remote, as well as metropolitan, areas. Above all, the approach must be long-term; e.g. a ten-year cycle.

Possibilities include a mentor scheme, whereby media managers with significant experience would be engaged to consult with a trainee in identifying areas for skill development, developing a time-frame and strategy to achieve those skills, then report to the funding bodies and the board of the relevant media association.

In Indigenous radio stations where Aboriginalisation policies are already in place, non-Indigenous managers may well be able to train their own replacements. However, the training process and expected outcomes must both be specified in detail. Their performance should be assessed by an independent expert; e.g. the manager of the ABC Indigenous Broadcasting Unit.

Training directors

Directors of Indigenous media associations need training in:

- the aims and operation of the media association;
- the role of the board of directors and its relationship to the staff;
- responsibilities of individual directors; and
- financial and legal responsibilities of directors.

However, directors may be senior persons with significant standing in their communities and considerable experience elsewhere. This would have to be handled carefully.

Technical training

There is a dearth of Indigenous technicians in Indigenous radio.

The Broadcast [Station Operators] Certificate of Proficiency (BCOP) is the essential industry standard of technical training for radio technicians. In 1995 a committee comprising the ABC (technical division and Indigenous Unit), NIMAA and RMIT Department of Technician [sic] Electronics developed a curriculum and delivery strategy for Indigenous trainees to achieve this qualification.

The arrangement was to be that the ABC would provide on-the-job training at sites nearest to the Indigenous media associations concerned. There would also be block-release training in Townsville. Trainees would win the Certificate of Basic Electronics (qualifying them for employment as technical assistants), then the BCOP.

The strategy was well-designed. It provided appropriate training methodologies and was well supported by NIMAA as well as the ABC and RMIT. But it was not funded by ATSIC and DEETYA, mainly because DEETYA would not accept the cost of living and travel allowances involved.

There is a critical need for Indigenous technicians. Moreover, technical qualifications would lead to 'real jobs' for Indigenous trainees.

Marketing training

All indigenous media associations require business and marketing strategies to ensure less reliance on government funding. Mainstream training in marketing will not necessarily be appropriate for all media associations for the reasons referred to above.

Archival training

Since some of the material produced by Indigenous media associations will be of significant value to both the Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities, an archives policy should be developed. Some material will also have commercial value. Cultural protocols must be observed and the Australian Institute for Aboriginal and Islander Studies could be of some assistance due its expertise in this area.

Programming training

It is important that stations reflect the aims and objectives of the relevant media association as well as their mandate from the communities they serve.

Limitations of time, resources and expertise prevent senior managers from:

- commissioning audience research;
- continuously reviewing program content;
- training younger staff; and
- considering other options (such as multimedia and on-line services).

The Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC)

The ABC provides considerable assistance to Indigenous media. For example, it:

- assists aspirant broadcasters;
- helps establish Indigenous media associations; e.g. large associations like the Central Australian Aboriginal Media Association (CAAMA) as well as smaller associations in Port Augusta, Cairns, Mt Isa, Broome, Fitzroy Crossing, Halls Creek and Kununurra.
- helped establish the BCAD course (*See Chapter 6*). It currently
 - pays for Indigenous people to attend workshops; and
 - pays for guest lecturers at Batchelor College.
- provides seven regional associations with access to its transmitters;
- runs specialist training workshops and funds to ‘backfill’ trainees’ positions;
- provides 1 200 hours per year of technical services;
- advises on purchase of equipment; and
- has a specialised Indigenous Broadcasting Unit (IBU) that provides hands-on training on request.

There are currently some ten aspirant Indigenous groups needing a comprehensive introduction to radio, preferably the equivalent of a year’s full-time training, plus on-the-job experience. (Note that their people need this before they gain a licence, so that they are in a state of broadcast-readiness when it is granted.)

The IBU is an experienced training provider and can ensure continuity of training. It is well equipped to design and implement such a course of training.

Multimedia training

A number of Indigenous media associations operating in radio are interested in diversifying. This will be dealt with in more detail in Chapter 10.

9. FILM, TELEVISION AND VIDEO TRAINING

ABSTRACT: *A new generation of indigenous film and television makers are building on powerful story-telling, visual art traditions and cultural perspectives to create an indigenous screen culture. The Review notes that rapid growth has been achieved despite the lack of interest of key funding agencies regarding the needs of aspirant indigenous film and television makers – largely due to significant contributions made by due to established groups and individuals. The Review recommends providing support for appropriate training as this is inhibiting growth in this sector.*

The Review recommends:

- *that DETYA:*
 - *extends its support for film and television trainees;*
 - *develop strategies to increase the number of indigenous film and television producers; and*
 - *develop a national indigenous film and television training strategy.*
- *that ATSIC:*
 - *provide support and funding for entry-level training, further levels of specialisation and negotiate an appropriate training framework;*
 - *ensure that a travel budget is provided; and*
 - *promote the work of indigenous production houses in conjunction with other relevant agencies (AFC etc.).*
- *that the employment of indigenous trainees are a condition of grant to indigenous film-makers.*

The FTV industry has the potential to be a significant employer. It can also make a contribution to Australia's cultural standing internationally.

The industry traditionally operates in a hierarchical manner, using teams of specialists. Multi-skilling is rare. Because of the relative costs, entry is usually via video rather than film production.

The Australian Film, Television and Radio School (AFTRS)

The AFTRS has provided introductory media training for Aboriginal community groups since the late 1970s. It continues to hold regional radio workshops, but now also presents introductory courses in video production, sound recording, management and documentary video production. These courses have been offered at Batchelor College, CAAMA, Imparja Television, Remote Area Media (RAM) and Murrimage Video Production.

AFTRS has also:

- provided equipment and staff to Indigenous communities;
- helped CAAMA to design a three-year training FTV program leading to a Diploma of Arts;
- run cinematography, sound and editing workshops at CAAMA; and
- monitored, reviewed and assessed TAIMA's three-year Associate Diploma (Video Production Techniques).

In 1993, AFTRS entered into a Recruitment and Career Development Strategy with DEET (now DEYTA). This provided five one-year scholarships, identified staff positions and a series of cross-cultural workshops, as well as the 20-week intensive video production courses taught by Mr Lester Bostock.

The Review notes Mr Bostock's point that Indigenous FTV training courses should be culturally appropriate. This implies:

- full-time entry level courses;
- open entry (no academic prerequisites); and
- an Indigenous environment.

In 1994 AFTRS ceased running introductory courses. It now channels resources for Indigenous people into scriptwriting, directing and producing. An Indigenous Program Initiative provides state-based advanced level scriptwriting courses. The Indigenous Scriptwriting Mentor Scheme pairs talented Indigenous storytellers with experienced scriptwriters.

Film Queensland

NIMAA and Film Queensland have negotiated a strategic plan of development support involving an Executive Producer Mentor Scheme. It aims to:

- establish a database on production, location, facilities, marketing and distribution;
- investigate market and distribution opportunities for Indigenous product;
- develop a package of four micro-documentaries (to first draft stage) and four short dramas for broadcast on the BRACS networks; and
- package products for presales.

CAAMA FTV training

Between 1987 and 1991, DETYA funded two intakes of five Indigenous trainees at CAAMA for three-year FTV courses. Several significant Indigenous FTV makers graduated from these courses, including the award-winning Rachel Perkins.

The Review suggest that the factors critical for success are:

- hands-on access to technology;
- an Indigenous environment; i.e. a critical mass of Indigenous people learning together;
- an educational environment that does not assume high levels of academic achievement;
- a supportive environment close to family and community;
- recognition of Indigenous culture as an integral component of the course; and
- a career pathway open to graduates.

It notes that DETYA funding has now been reduced to only two traineeships, which is below the critical mass considered necessary.

DETYA has made valuable contributions to training Indigenous FTV personnel, but its efforts have been uncoordinated and it clearly has difficulty dealing with an industry based largely on untenured work.

There is also a need for intermediate and advanced career training in the industry. The critical points are:

- support while making the transition from traineeship to work;
- filling the skill gaps in Indigenous personnel; and
- training Indigenous FTV producers.

It is necessary to raise the profile of Indigenous FTV and establish a national training strategy aimed at developing a vigorous, well-trained and economically sustainable industry.

9. MULTIMEDIA TRAINING

ABSTRACT: *The Review aims to highlight some of the areas where there has been and could be some training. The Review considers that multi-media and on-line services have considerable potential for use by Indigenous people living in remote and rural communities and advocates training be conducted in communities.*

The Review recommends:

- *that ATSIC establish a multi-media training program for indigenous people in custody; and*
- *that NIMAA, ATSIC, DEETYA and other relevant agencies develop a multi-media training strategy.*

Multimedia requires broadband connections; that is, cable or alternative delivery systems with sufficient bandwidth (delivery capacity). Urban areas are only now beginning to enjoy these facilities and rural a remote areas may not have them for some time. The education system in general, and the film industry in particular, are only now beginning to come to terms with digitalisation and the use of computers.

In the case of multimedia, the Indigenous community is no worse off than the general community and it may be able to take advantage of the opportunities offered.

The Review notes that on-line technology is often immediately attractive to young people, but that it is critically important that the Elders should also be involved. They must be able to assess the technology first hand, then identify potential benefits to their communities.

The AFC project

In 1996 the Australian Film Commission (AFC) Indigenous Branch conducted a project called *the bush track meets the information superhighway*, designed to provide twelve Indigenous communities with an

introduction to the Internet, the design and use of Web sites (electronic 'shopfronts') and the archival uses of CD-ROMS.

Community discussions after this project identified four key issues which would need to be addressed:

- strategies and resources for multimedia training;
- computer resources;
- strategies to establish or improve connectivity; and
- an Australia-wide on-line strategy for Indigenous people in custody.

QANTM Australia CMC

QANTM is a Co-operative Media Centre, or CMC, based in Darwin. When it was established in 1996, it saw the Indigenet program as a critically important part of its activities and negotiated a participation agreement with NIMAA.

QANTM has run some training courses (e.g. juvenile offenders, for vocational training, traditional owners) but none of these is accredited. QANTM is planning other courses but it requires training to be done on a cost recovery basis, including a dollar for dollar contribution from communities, and is therefore unlikely to deliver on its initial promise to provide significant opportunities for Indigenous people.

IMAGO CMC

IMAGO, based in Western Australia, is the only other CMC to consider Indigenous training.

The State Department of Education is concerned that some 93% of Indigenous students at primary level fail to qualify for post secondary education. IMAGO has proposed the concept of Modular Interactive Telecommunications Environments (MITEs), telecentres capable of providing educational and other services to remote communities. Each MITE telecentre will have six computers and could use its video conferencing capability to offer training.

IMAGO has funding for seven MITEs through the Regional Telecommunications Infrastructure Fund. However, until the centres are operational, it is not possible to assess their performance. It is important to note that MITE only provides the facility for training and other multi-media and on-line activities. Any formal training courses would have to be requested from a training provider and financed.

Aboriginal Nations (AN)

AN is a Sydney-based, non-profit company with an all Indigenous board (See case studies in *Appendix 2*). It is committed to training Indigenous people in digital animation for the film industry and runs a separate company, the School of Computer Graphics, for that purpose. Trainees are recruited from all over the country with no prior expertise and undergo a six-week introductory course in:

- basic computer literacy;
- computer graphics;
- introduction to animation;
- computer-generated animation; and
- Aboriginal studies.

Trainees continue under the TEAME training scheme for twelve months, then graduate with an industry-recognised certificate in multimedia production for film and television.

From 1998 the School will be a formally accredited training provider. Its retention rate is 80% and graduates are guaranteed a job with the company. Its employment policy allows for people to fulfil community and family obligations and there is mentor program.

AN have structured their course into portable modules and are currently considering taking it into communities.

The Australian Film Television and Radio School (AFTRS)

AFTRS is experimenting with a revolutionary on-line production course which will pioneer the idea of virtual studios. A pilot groups of twelve fellows will be accepted. They will need prior production skills which can be used in a digital environment. After a one-year course, they will emerge with the equivalent of a Masters Degree.

The course is of interest because it raises the possibility of a high level national production course for Indigenous people who prefer to remain in their communities.

Summary

There is little evidence that key institutions have considered facilitating the access of Indigenous communities to communication. Whether through lack of understanding or too narrow a focus on areas of specialisation (health, education, media, social security, employment), government agencies are unnecessarily compartmentalised.

Multimedia training must involve the Elders. It needs to be conducted in the communities by Indigenous trainers and be:

- hands on;
- project oriented;
- include relevant business skills;
- followed by the delivery of services (as part of the training program); and
- monitored by an appropriate Indigenous body.

Part C: TECHNOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENTS

11. EMERGING TELEPHONY, ON-LINE SERVICES AND MULTIMEDIA DEVELOPMENTS

ABSTRACT: Digitalisation of communications technology will have significant effects for Indigenous communities. The critical question is how to provide links capable of carrying sufficient data. Access to content providers will also be difficult for rural and remote communities.

There are a series of projects involving Indigenous people in e.g. running an Internet Service Provider (ISP), selling through Websites, video conferencing and accessing the Internet. Telemedicine and tele education in particular are involved.

The key questions are affordable access and an Indigenous Website.

The Review recommends:

That ATSIC, DCA and DEETYA:

- ***recognise the value of new media for Indigenous cultural and economic goals; and***
- ***fund a public awareness project to make Indigenous businesses and communities aware of available services.***

That ATSIC and DCA:

- ***address the special needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and do not recommend access to mainstream services; and***
- ***lobby Telstra for zone reform and provision of local call cost access to the Internet for all Indigenous people in rural and remote Australia.***

That ATSIC:

- ***take the lead in remote area service delivery;***
- ***recognise in its media and telecommunications policies the special needs of remote communities;***

- *support the development of an Outback Digital Network by taking an active role in design and implementation;*
- *support investigation of a business case for an Indigenous carrier or service provider;*
- *encourage development of an Indigenous Website run by an Indigenous company or producer;*
- *put in place strategies and funding for content generation and dissemination of Indigenous material and give Indigenous media organisations first option on ATSIC tenders which require the production of content; and*
- *in line with Recommendations 8.5 and 8.6, develop strategies for, and funding of, archiving material in a digital format.*

Digitalisation, which involves the use of digital rather than analogue technology, leads to convergence. That is, many forms of electronic communication that previously seemed unrelated now use the same basic technology. The profound social consequence is that they therefore become mutually compatible.

This is significant for all the Indigenous media because their future environment will be completely digital. Whether they are producing, storing or delivering content, they will use digitised systems. This new environment has been described as ‘many to many’. For example, a dance may be digitally recorded, then delivered to the ultimate user as a book, a CD-ROM, a video, a sound recording, an image on the Internet (the so-called World Wide Web) or in several other forms.

The major policy question arising for all forms of media is vertical integration. Major media outlets are already trying to integrate; i.e. to control each aspect of the chain from production to dissemination. So newspapers will present their material on-line as well as in print; television networks will offer a site on the Internet; telephone companies will try to position themselves in pay television as well as telephony.

Funding implications

Funding bodies such as ATSIC, DEETYA and DCA need to be aware that some of the technologies now in use will become obsolete and that others will need upgrading. This may be very expensive.

Nevertheless, it is important that Indigenous communities are educated and aware of the issues. The new systems are capable of :

- providing a vehicle for cultural expression;
- enhancing cultural tourism;
- increasing sales of Indigenous art;
- improving communications;
- reducing the sense of isolation;
- providing better health and education services;
- developing employment opportunities; and
- encouraging economic development.

Deregulation and privatisation of Telstra both have significant consequences for Indigenous communities. On the one hand, anyone can now seek to become a telecommunications carrier (someone who offers to carry other people's messages for an agreed fee); on the other hand, such carriers (including Telstra itself) will now have less incentive to offer services in unprofitable remote and rural areas.

In terms of physical structure, the major delivery options will remain copper (the 'twisted pair' of copper wires used for telephony), cable (e.g. a fibre optic trunk system), satellites or radio frequencies. Each has its own strengths and weaknesses.

From the point of view of Indigenous consumers, what matters about delivery systems is that some will not deliver the full range of services on offer. They will not always provide a line capable of carrying digital data.

For example, a consumer can access the World Wide Web, or Internet, only if an Integrated Services Digital Network (ISDN) connection is available. The voice quality carriers used for conventional telephones will not be enough. Similarly, multiple channel television (including High

Definition Television) and most health, education, banking and corrective services will demand considerable bandwidth (capacity).

Implications for remote communities

This will not matter too much to Indigenous peoples living in urban centres. For them the problem will be to win access to content provision.

But there are more than 1 300 Indigenous communities in remote areas and some 22 500 people live in communities of between 10 and 100 people. Small, remote communities like these may easily find themselves totally isolated from the mainstream of social communication.

This problem is not confined to Indigenous users. Most Australians can expect their standard telephone connection to carry data at a rate of 28.8 kbs (28.8 kilobits per second), which is enough to service a modem (the box used to access on-line services). But many rural users, such as those more than 5 kilometres from an exchange or served by a Digital Radio Concentrator System (DRCS), are unable to use a data channel. It is estimated that 4% of the Australian population still remain unserved in this way. And a significant number of these are Indigenous.

Technically, there are a number of possible solutions; e.g. Very High Radio Capacity Systems (VHRCS), Digital Subscriber Lines (DSL) or spread spectrum (radio) technologies. The Review believes that an Indigenous carrier, or a service provider, dealing with the specific infrastructure needs of remote communities is possible.

Indigenous multimedia and on-line services

Big River Internet, Maclean NSW is the only Internet Service Provider (ISP) owned by an Aboriginal community. It is funded by them and offers Email accounts, a public Internet terminal and creation of commercial home pages (Websites) to the broader town community.

Two organisations successfully use the Internet to sell Aboriginal art, music and musical instruments:

- **Aboriginal Art and Culture Centre (Alice Springs)**
 - Website: www.aboriginalart.com.
 - cultural tourism
 - sells didgeridoos in more than 75 countries.

- **Maningrida Arts and Culture (Central Arnhem Land)**
 - Website: www.peg.apc.org/~bawinanga/mac.html.
 - produces an on-line catalogue
 - brokers between artists and the art market
 - sells cassettes of ceremonial music

Videoconferencing and the delivery of government services

Rural Australia generally is suffering from a reduction in face-to-face government services. Electronic delivery cannot replace these, but it can make an important contribution. Neither state nor federal governments have approached these issues in an integrated manner.

Significant initiatives are:

- **the Tanami Network** – a six-point network linking remote communities with Alice Springs and Darwin. It is owned and controlled by Aboriginal people. The Network uses videoconferencing to address family and commercial matters, but also to provide services such as telemedicine and education.

- **Commonwealth Delivery Service Agency** – being created to deliver income support payments to retirees, the sick, disabled, etc. as well as student assistance, employment and child care assistance. Similar ‘one-stop shops’ are claimed for small business, primary industries and tax..

- **Health services**
 - Telehealth is mostly still in the trial stage;
 - The federal government has not yet acted on a 1995 report;
 - WA is considering state-wide videoconferencing;

- NSW is trialling a Health Telemedicine Initiative in 31 health centres; and
- There are also significant health initiatives using BRACS (Gulf area), CD-ROM (Kimberleys) and the Internet (Broome).
- **Educational services**
 - Most videoconferencing is still at trial stage. Examples are:

- **Modular Interactive Telecommunications Environment (MITE) project**

Project of IMAGO, the WA Co-operative Multimedia Centre with the WA government. A portable, modular multipurpose telecentre, designed to use videoconferencing and the Internet for education, health and other purposes. Planned for trial in Exmouth, WA.

- **NT Correspondence School pilot project**

Project of Northern Territory Correspondence School with the Tanami Network (1995). Linked Darwin and Alice Springs with four remote schools for the interactive teaching of Mathematics and English. Image quality proved to be poor because of inadequate bandwidth (carrying capacity) of the link. Although exam results improved, it was terminated because of lack of eligible students, mobility, poor attendance and cost.

The Internet

The Internet combines the processing power of computers with the communications capabilities of telecommunications networks. It is capable of slashing international communications costs. Providing sufficient bandwidth is available, it is also capable of carrying audio-visual program material (radio and video).

The two key factors for Indigenous Internet use are:

- affordable access: local (low cost) call charging for rural and remote areas; and
- an Indigenous Website:
 - featuring Indigenous cultural material; and
 - assisting Indigenous organisations with on-line production and access.

Affordable access

There are hundreds of Internet Service Providers (ISPs); i.e. organisations offering access to the World Wide Web.

Typically these ISPs offer their services on an hourly basis; i.e. the connection component of the charge is location independent. (It costs no more to connect Dubbo-Moscow than Dubbo-Parkes.)

However, they also have to pay the carrier; e.g. a telecommunications network provider like Telstra. This second component of the cost is charged as though it was an STD telephone call; i.e. by zone. Therefore the telecommunications component of the charge varies according to location. (It costs a great deal more for Dubbo to communicate with Moscow than with Parkes.)

Because a modern telecommunications network incurs no extra cost when calls travel a longer distance, many observers argue that these zone charges are illogical and unjustified.

The Review suggests two possible solutions:

- **A centralised system**

An ISP owned or leased by Indigenous bodies could provide a simple network linking remote communities, routers in each community and a central server (a powerful computer that stores and processes information for the network). Cost is estimated at \$10-20 000 per community for routers and \$3 000-20 000 per community for links.

- **A decentralised system**

An ISP owned or leased by Indigenous bodies could have a server in each community. This is more expensive and would require trained personnel in each location.

An Indigenous Website

A Website is an electronic 'address'. An Indigenous Website could also provide links to content created elsewhere. Possible activities include:

- training communities to provide content for the Internet
- brokering of Indigenous content services
- content development and digitisation of material
- promotion and development of content services
- development of electronic commerce services
- provision of suitable cultural links
- services and applications development
- marketing; and
- public awareness initiatives.

The Outback Digital Network (ODN)

The proposed ODN would link 80 remote communities in Queensland, Western Australia, South Australia and the Northern Territory.

Based upon the record of the Tanami Network, the ODN project is to be Indigenous owned. It envisages providing video conferencing, EFTPOS, electronic commerce, health and education services, Email and access to the Internet.

The project has Phase One (feasibility studies) funding from the Regional Telecommunications Infrastructure Fund (RTIF).

12. CONVERSION OF REMOTE AREA BROADCASTING SERVICES FROM ANALOGUE TO DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY

ABSTRACT: The Remote Area Broadcasting Service (RABS) provides a mix of national and commercial radio and television services to remote communities. It is delivered via satellite systems that use analogue technology.

The satellite systems will soon convert to digital technology, which will require conversion of all ground stations receiving RABS. These include the 103 Broadcasting for Remote Aboriginal Communities Scheme (BRACS) stations.

The cost of conversion is up to \$1 400 for households and up to \$2 500 per re-transmitting (BRACS) station.

The Review recommends:

That ATSIC and DCA:

- ***fund a consultancy to assess the viability of using RABS technology and the NIRS to distribute Indigenous video material to BRACS communities.***

That ATSIC:

- ***fund BRACS conversion costs not met by the Regional Telecommunications Infrastructure Fund (RITF); and***
- ***manage the conversion process.***

The Remote Area Broadcasting Service (RABS) is a collective term used to describe the radio and television services of five different broadcasters when they are delivered (via satellite) to the remote areas of Australia. The relevant broadcasters are:

- ABC
- SBS

- three commercial licensees: Telecasters Australia Ltd (Queensland), Imparja (SA and NT) and Golden West (WA).

The satellite systems used by the RABS currently use a technology called analogue mode. They will soon convert to digital mode; i.e. their transmissions will be in the form of discrete binary data, or bits.

In analogue mode these satellite systems are using a mix of national beams (which cover the whole country) and zonal beams (which only cover one area). When they convert to digital mode, they will only use national beams.

In order to achieve strong enough signals on the ground, RABS utilises the zonal beams. The practical effect of this is that RABS signals can be received by both professional and household quality satellite dishes. The professional dishes are used by stations that want to re-transmit the signals to their listeners; the household dishes serve individual homes.

The **Broadcasting for Remote Aboriginal Communities Scheme (BRACS)** consists of 103 re-transmission stations. Each BRACS station has a satellite dish and one or more satellite receivers. It picks up the RABS on this reception equipment, then re-broadcasts it to remote communities as conventional TV or radio. It may also interpolate program material from NIMAA (for example the National Indigenous Radio Service, or NIRS) or locally produced material.

Because digital technology is more effective than analogue, the new satellite systems will only transmit in national beams, but anyone wanting to receive their signals will still have to have digital reception equipment. This will have its advantages (better quality signals, more channels available, may be used for High Definition Television), but it does entail significant costs.

The digital reception equipment replacing the existing dishes is called an Integrated Receiver Decoder (IRD).

RTIF subsidies

In the case of individual households, an IRD and associated equipment will cost \$1 000 to \$1 400. In the case of professional IRDs, they will cost \$2 600 to \$4 000. The Regional Telecommunications Infrastructure Fund (RTIF) is prepared to subsidise these costs by contributing \$750 per household IRD and \$2 500 per professional IRD.

Components other than the IRD are not covered by the proposed RTIF subsidies. These may include items such as:

- replacing Low Noise Block Converter
- re-pointing dish
- second dish and LNB
- renewing cabling
- installation

13. BROADCASTING TECHNOLOGY: FUTURE DIRECTIONS, REMOTE NETWORKING, NIRS AND BRACS

ABSTRACT: This chapter has three parts:

Part A: Future directions in broadcasting:

- *although digital radio broadcasting (DRB) offers enhanced audio and multimedia capabilities, analogue radio will be dominant for many years;*
- *digital terrestrial television broadcasting (DTTB) will probably replace analogue television within twenty years; and*
- *the Internet will be an increasingly powerful communications tool.*

Part B: Networking options

The National Indigenous Radio Network (NIRS) is an important central hub, currently serving eight regional stations. BRACS communities need access to a range of similar program streams and should also be encouraged to experiment with local and regional networking. However, such initiatives will require substantial investment in receiving systems.

Part C: Technical maintenance

There is an urgent need to re-consider the current policy of funding the purchase of equipment, but not its ongoing operation and maintenance.

The Review recommends :

That the needs of Indigenous communities be taken into account in planning DRB and DTTB and a possible sixth digital channel.

That ATSIC, DCA and NIMAA consider how to provide BRACS communities with greater access to information through telecommunications.

That AT SIC, DCA, NIRS and NIMAA give urgent consideration to buying equipment to allow NIRS distribution to BRACS sites.

That AT SIC and/DCA fund a consultancy to investigate the equipment necessary for BRACS networking.

That

- *BRACS development should be a policy objective over the next three to five years,*
- *some local networks should be designated as pilot schemes; and*
- *AT SIC should coordinate funding of these pilot schemes.*

That AT SIC should:

- *establish an internal multi-departmental committee to develop a co-ordinated response to the communications requirements of Indigenous people; and*
- *fund an assistant to the NIRS manager, so that the manager can act as technical coordinator.*

PART A: FUTURE DIRECTIONS IN BROADCASTING

Broadcasting costs

Broadcasting involves four steps:

- collection of material; e.g. buying program material, interviewing;
- pre-production; e.g. editing, changing formats;
- on-air presentation; and
- distribution; e.g. transmission or dispatching tapes.

If BRACS stations are to perform all four functions, then they must have the trained staff, equipment, funds and other resources to do so.

Costs vary widely. For example, simply re-transmitting from a live external feed is the cheapest form of broadcasting. This is what most BRACS do, using radio and television program material from the RABS and sometimes the IRS. Substantial costs are incurred if program rights are

purchased, but tapes can be played with minimal staff and equipment. The most expensive form of broadcasting is local production.

The multichannel environment

The current digitalisation of satellite delivery systems (*see Chapter 12*) should not be confused with the digitalisation of terrestrial transmissions. The latter involves changing both transmitters and receivers. However, because analogue radio is portable, mobile and cheap, it will be around for many years to come.

Digital radio broadcasting (DRB) offers enhanced audio performance and multimedia capabilities so a lot of work is being done on it. It is expected that the DRB broadcasts will commence soon, with services initially in capital cities, then extending outwards over several years.

Since DRB offers the possibility of specialised broadcasting; e.g. language broadcasting, tourist radio and other narrowcast services, there are implications for Indigenous community radio. However, these are confined to capital cities for the moment. It is likely that the existing AM and FM radio technologies will remain dominant in remote areas for at least a decade.

Australia has been active in studying both terrestrial and satellite delivery of digital signals. Policy recommendations regarding DRB were presented to the Minister in September 1997.

Digital Terrestrial Television Broadcasting (DTTB) is also expected to replace the present analogue system, but probably over a twenty-year period. Again, initial services will be in the capital cities, but the roll out in regional centres may be much faster than for DRB. Policy recommendations regarding DTTB were presented to the Minister in January 1997 and field testing has been proceeding since October 1997.

The Internet

The Internet is becoming a very powerful communications tool. Potential uses for Indigenous communities include:

- a forum for communications of common interest;
- access to information; and
- access to and delivery of audio material.

It is important that this technology be available to BRACS communities at affordable prices, which should cover technical infrastructure, trained human resources and technical maintenance.

A number of satellite systems are now capable of delivering services over part or all of Australia. Their limitations tend to be driven by cost and regulation rather than technical capacity.

PART B: INDIGENOUS NETWORKING FOR REMOTE COMMUNITIES AND NIRS

An NIRS network

Some networking is already occurring at both national and community level – mostly in radio. This is welcome and should be encouraged.

The National Indigenous Radio Service (NIRS) in Brisbane is a central hub. It collects program material from large regional contributors, such as CAAMA, TSIMA, TAIMA and BIMA, then sends a program feed to Sydney, via an ISDN link, where it is uplinked to the satellite system. A group of eight regional stations receive the program stream off the satellite downlink.

NIRS are concerned about this arrangement in terms of cost, technical quality and operational arrangements. They would prefer to uplink direct from Brisbane (However, both capital and leasing costs would rise significantly).

It is important that BRACS communities should also have access to program streams of Indigenous material like the NIRS dealing with; e.g. news, education, health, language, entertainment, sport and music.

But if the BRACS communities are to join the network, then the current arrangements should be re-considered. More than 100 receiving sites would be involved, so the principal design concern should be to reduce the cost of receiving systems, even if this entails increased charges for uplinking and satellite delivery.

A centralised (or 'star') network involves program material being compiled into streams at a central hub, then distributed to the receiving stations. In a distributed (or 'mesh') network each contributing station uplinks its programming to the satellite.

The most practical network for NIRS and BRACS is probably a star network because this involves:

- lower capital costs
- lower satellite capacity charges
- lower reception costs ; and
- less technical capacity on the ground.

Regional networking

BRACS communities are managed on a regional basis; i.e. in groups of ten to twenty communities. Because there are natural affinities between neighbouring communities, this has led to several existing (and proposed) local or regional networks.

Deciding whether these should be encouraged depends on how highly one values cross-community links, particularly in remote Australia. The basic requirements are:

- trained staff at each contributing station, who can generate and produce program material (say) weekly;
- an adequate telecommunications structure, providing access to the central hub at an affordable price; and
- a delivery system, serving the constituent communities (usually the most expensive component).

Remote video networking

There has also been some limited networking of Indigenous video material, but since video demands sixty times the bandwidth required for audio, costs are considerably higher. The practicalities of using occasional video distribution would be worthwhile once suitable reception infrastructure is in place.

PART C: TECHNICAL MAINTENANCE FOR INDIGENOUS MEDIA

There is an urgent need for Indigenous technicians to operate and maintain Indigenous radio - particularly the BRACS stations. This is an important policy issue. For example, ATSIC funds the purchase of equipment, but does not consider how it will be operated or maintained.

Specific points are:

- BRACS communities require their own technician;
- priority is needed for repairs and maintenance, especially preventative maintenance;
- repair call-out times are too long – equipment can be out of action for months;
- freight costs to remote areas are very high;
- there is an ongoing need to:
 - keep abreast of changing technology;
 - access independent advice when purchasing equipment;
 - standardise equipment and ensure compatibility;
 - buy in bulk;
 - supply user friendly (English and Indigenous languages) technical manuals;
 - provide computer and network support;
 - access funds for technical maintenance and infrastructure; and
 - access advice on archiving material.

The Review found that NIMAA was universally accepted as the appropriate organisation to provide independent technical expertise.

Part D: FUTURE DIRECTIONS

14. FUTURE DIRECTIONS

ABSTRACT: Indigenous media are not just optional extras. They provide a first line of service to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. They are also very cost effective in reaching these communities, so that their funding should be seen not as welfare spending, but as an investment.

There is a great need for proactive, staged planning of the sector. As the major stakeholder, ATSIC should:

- ***coordinate government approaches;***
- ***require applicants to provide business and marketing plans;***
- ***establish a unit to deliver integrated strategies for on-line service delivery; and***
- ***press for preference to Indigenous media in tendering for government work in the area***

The Review recommends:

That an Indigenous Media Authority (IMA) should be established by 2001 to allocate government funding to Indigenous media organisations, along the same lines as the CBF [no formal recommendation].

That ATSIC should:

- ***fund a series of two day meetings with people from NIMAA to plan funding and development strategies for the next three to five years;***
- ***establish a unit to provide expertise on information technology, telecommunications and on-line service delivery;***
- ***set up an Indigenous Media and Communications Program Fund of \$6 million annually in 2001 to be applied to projects furthering Indigenous cultural, social and economic objectives;***
- ***increase its funding of media and communications by \$9.7 million [no formal recommendation];***

That ATSIC, DCA and DEETYA (Recommendation 6.12) should increase funding to NIMAA by \$200 000 per year, in order to increase its technical and policy capacities.

That ATSIC and DCA should re-allocate their Aboriginal Grant Funds to NIMAA so that its representatives can gain experience in the allocation of funds before the IMA is established.

That ATSIC and Imparja Television should seek DCA funding for the Imparja satellite subsidy.

That DCA should take responsibility for funding Indigenous media from 2001.

That the BRACS Working Party and IMA Working Party BRACS representatives should suggest ways to streamline the BRACS Revitalisation funding process.

Nine general issues arise for considering future growth strategies in the Indigenous media sector:

- 1 first level of service;
- 2 investment in long-term sustainability;
- 3 staged strategic planning and development strategies;
- 4 whole-of-organisation approach to increase co-ordination and funding agency interaction;
- 5 business and marketing plans;
- 6 convergence of content production, delivery systems and service;
- 7 government department interaction with Indigenous media;
- 8 commercial diversification; and
- 9 economic independence.

1 First level of service

The mainstream media usually either ignore Indigenous people and Indigenous issues, or present them in a negative context. They work within a non-Indigenous cultural framework, producing material for their primary audiences that is only occasionally relevant to the specific interests of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

In a democratic society, communication is a basic human right. In Australia this increasingly means electronic communication. It is critically important that Indigenous peoples have access to the means of communication with their communities.

This access must be unconditional, preferably through Indigenous ownership and control. But this does not imply creation of public service institutions analogous to the ABC and the SBS. It simply means that policy (and funding) should reflect the significance and unique nature of the Indigenous media.

This is valuable for Indigenous identity and self esteem, as well as for flow-on effects, such as creating cultural industries and employment. But for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, the Indigenous media are not just optional extras. They are a **first level of service** and Indigenous media policy and funding should reflect their significance.

2 Investment in long-term sustainability

Indigenous media are the most cost effective – and often the only - vehicle for communicating with Indigenous Australians. Therefore, funding of the sector should not be seen as welfare spending, but as an investment.

Critical deficiencies in current funding arrangements are:

- there are no nationally agreed funding criteria;
- ATSIC Regional Councils have funding autonomy;
- Regional and State offices set their own funding priorities (which may not include communications); and
- future funding is not guaranteed.

3 Staged strategic planning

Proactive planning is required.

For example, radio has been the focus of ATSIC funding, yet it has no set criteria for deciding what is an aspirant radio group and no strategies in place for helping such groups before they get a licence. Indigenous media training is uncoordinated and ad hoc. Neither ATSIC, nor DEETYA nor DCA appears to have a staged strategic plan for development of Indigenous media over e.g. three to five years.

Indigenous media organisations need to be well defined from their inception. Their aims, objectives, target audiences, service areas, staff and training requirements, infrastructure requirements and funding should all be known in advance.

4 Whole-of-organisation approach

ATSIC is the major shareholder and has overall responsibility for the sectors it funds. It should therefore coordinate the government approach to Indigenous media.

In radio, for example, currently:

- ATSIC funds operational costs, staff and equipment;
- DEETYA funds training;
- DCA (via CBF) funds:
 - programs and equipment for aspirants;
 - broadcasting on non-Indigenous community radio; and
 - special projects on Indigenous stations.
- ABA plans development of the broadcasting system and allocates licences.

This results in such anomalies as ATSIC providing BRACS stations with Revitalisation funds for equipment and the training of operators, yet relevant ATSIC Regional Councils failing to provide operational funds.

ATSIC will require increased staffing.

5 Business and marketing plans

As part of its funding process, and to maximise community service and revenue raising, ATSIC should require the provision of business and marketing plans. ATSIC Broadcasting should discuss training requirements with DEETYA and ATSIC Business Development and be the facilitator. If external expertise is required, consultants identified by ATSIC should work with key Indigenous management. The plans should be updated annually.

6 Convergence of content production, delivery systems and service providers

The forthcoming digital technologies radically change the way we think about communications. Unless Indigenous media can take advantage of these new technologies and forms of production, they will be marginalised.

These issues are important for every department of ATSIC, yet currently a single officer (in Housing and Infrastructure) deals part time with telecommunications and information network issues. Because the new media will affect all sectors of society, from health delivery and education to commerce and banking, ATSIC must take a broader approach. And address these issues at Commission level.

7 Government department interaction with Indigenous media

Given widespread community concern about Indigenous unemployment and health, the effective delivery of appropriately produced information on these issues should be encouraged. Research demonstrates that the information must be local, participatory and delivered in a relevant way.

There is widespread acknowledgement that it is difficult for government departments and agencies to communicate effectively with Indigenous peoples, but some reluctance to concede that the most effective means of communication will be Indigenous generated and produced.

ATSIC should press for Indigenous media organisations to be given the work of producing culturally appropriate material. It should also

- integrate Indigenous media and communications into its recent culture, tourism and rural strategies; and
- forge links between its Art, Culture and Language Programs and the Broadcasting Program.

8 Commercial diversification

There is potential for training, employment and cultural ‘spin-offs’ from the Indigenous media. For it to be realised, funding levels need to be stable and staff need both training and experience in business and marketing.

9 Economic independence

Most Indigenous media organisations are actively seeking economic independence. However, some level of government assistance will always be necessary. Given the potential cultural and economic benefits of effective Indigenous media, this should not be seen as burdensome.

THE NATIONAL INDIGENOUS MEDIA ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA (NIMAA)

NIMAA is the peak body of the Indigenous media. Since 1993, its main focus has been on radio, including the BRACS stations. However, it is under increasing pressure to deal with print, video and television, film and multimedia. It should now broaden its mandate to service these needs.

NIMAA urgently needs increased funding in the order of an extra \$200 000 per year.

Proposed NIMAA staffing structure

NIMAA staff positions	Cost (\$A ‘000s)
CEO	60-65
Deputy CEO	48-52

Radio Policy Officer	40-45
Television, Film and Video Policy Officer	40-45
Print and New Media Policy Officer	40-45
Training & Employment Policy Officer	40-45
NIRS Manager/Technical Coordinator	40-45
Technical Policy Officer	28-32
Administrative Officer – membership etc.	28-32
Administrative Officer – book-keeper	28-32
Secretary/Receptionist	24-26
Total	\$416-464

It has already been recommended that the Employment and Training Officer position be funded by DEETYA (*Recommendation 6.12*) and that ATSIC negotiate funding for the Television, Film and Video Policy Officer with federal and state film agencies (*Recommendation 3.29*).

INDIGENOUS MEDIA AUTHORITY (IMA)

There has been considerable reference to e.g. securing “the empowerment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people through control of their own broadcasting and communications services” (*ATSIC Annual Report 1995-96*, quoted at p. 434).

However, the apparent lack of interest and expertise in media and communications in the elected arm of ATSIC, the Regional Councils and some Regional and State offices has disadvantaged some media organisations. The present funding arrangements, which are based upon devolving funding to Regional Councils, are important to ATSIC, but result in variable funding decisions.

Accordingly, we recommend that an Indigenous Media Authority (IMA) be established by 2001. It should function along similar lines to the Community Broadcasting Foundation (CBF), allocating government funding to Indigenous media organisations in radio, BRACS, community print media, multimedia, television and community video, but not in film. Regarding film, the IMA should consult with the agency administering the Indigenous Film Fund referred to in *Recommendation 3.25*.

The Board of the IMA should be appointed by government and include representatives from ATSIC and DCA. It would need a staff of three and should be located in Canberra. Savings in funding should come from reduced cost of satellite transmissions after digital transmission and DCA funding the Imparja satellite subsidy.

Secondly, because ATSIC’s devolved funding model cannot provide the level of sustained investment required for Indigenous media development, the main operational funding of IMA should come through DCA. This would reflect the significance of Indigenous media and follow similar arrangements in Canada and New Zealand.

The Indigenous media perform a public service role similar to those of the ABC and the SBS. The SBS in particular acknowledges the special cultural and linguistic needs of ethnic Australians. Similarly, an IMA would acknowledge the needs of Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders. Nevertheless, ATSIC should retain a role in media and communications by

establishing a much needed Program Fund. This should be available to all Indigenous media, including film.

Moving towards the IMA: IMA Working Party

The next three years should be seen as the incubation phase for the IMA. By mid-1998, ATSIC and DCA should appoint and fund an IMA Working Party consisting of senior Indigenous media people from each sector, and an ATSIC Broadcasting Officer and a DCA officer. Areas of work should include:

- Program Performance Indicators (PPIs);
- Letters of Offer;
- funding processes & accountability;
- national criteria for funding aspirants; and
- advice to Regional Councils about funding applications.

Then, in order that its representatives gain experience in the allocation of funds, some program funds should be allocated to NIMAA.

Similarly, the BRACS Working Party needs experience in the allocation of funds.

ATSIC funding 1998/99 to 2000/01

In order to provide financial stability for Indigenous community radio, video and BRACS, ATSIC also needs to increase its own funding to media and communications.

In addition, to funding requirements outlined in Part A, the funding required is:

	A\$ million
New staffing at NIMAA	0.2
Conversion of Indigenous community	

radio stations to digital equipment	3.5
Provision of full wages for BRACS operators (three years)	3.0
Archiving in digital formats	1.0
Multimedia and on-line projects	2.0
Total	9.7

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: Case studies in Indigenous media

The case studies are from Chapter 3 of the original Report. They are presented separately here for ease of reference.

Part A: RADIO

A1 Townsville Aboriginal and Islander Media Association (TAIMA)

TAIMA is one of the larger media associations with revenue until recently of \$1.9 million annually and a staff of twenty-nine.

It runs a community radio station, 4KIG Townsville and a video production unit (Big Eye). It is also the coordinator of nine BRACS stations linked as the Remote Indigenous Media Association of Queensland (RIMAQ).

4KIG Townsville earned substantial sponsorship income by

- adopting mainstream programming; e.g. Country & Western music format
- relaying commercial shows aimed at a non-Indigenous audience; e.g. the highly-rated John Laws 'talkback' show out of 2UE Sydney

In terms of audience numbers (and therefore sponsorship income) this program strategy was highly successful. The licensee also made a significant contribution to Indigenous broadcasting by regularly providing program material to the NIRS and uplinking its programs to BRACS stations.

However, in terms of its own community of service (the listeners it is licensed to serve) the station fell short. The 'commercial' format (a) displaced Indigenous content; and (b) featured an imported talkback program that was often offensive to Indigenous peoples. In 1997 expressions of community concern led to an internal review, which found

that the licensee “had strayed greatly from its original intent and purpose” (*quoted* at p.47). A draconian cut of \$300 000 in ATSIC funding followed.

The Review notes that directors of community stations need experience in the media and some level of business skills and cultural expertise.

A2 Brisbane Indigenous Media Association (BIMA)

BIMA started broadcasting on 4ZZZ FM in 1984 as the weekly *Murri Hour*. By 1992 it was broadcasting sixteen hours a week and in 1991 was granted an ‘S’ class community licence of its own..

4AAA Murri Country is one of only two Indigenous stations in Brisbane.

It aims to:

- be owned and operated by Indigenous people
- maximise Indigenous program content
- provide an outlet for the creative talents of young Aborigines
- stimulate the growth of Aboriginal music, drama and story-telling; and
- work towards reconciliation.

The station plays 20-22% Indigenous music. It employs some twenty people and has a weekly audience of 100 000 (twice the size of its city’s Indigenous population). It claims to reach more than 60% of potential Indigenous listeners.

The station received \$0.73 million in funding from ATSIC in 1997. Despite its close relationship with the community that it is licensed to serve, it has enjoyed only limited success in attracting non-government funds. In 1997, a subscriber drive netted only 150 supporters. Although it has attracted occasional sponsorship (from government departments, local businesses and promoters of country music festivals), it has not yet achieved long-term corporate support.

The station comments that community radio is generally perceived as ‘unprofessional’ and unable to substantiate its claims regarding audience numbers (community stations do not appear in ratings surveys). It is suggested that:

- new stations require substantial government funding during their first five-years; and
- even established stations require continuing support from government; e.g. by buying of airtime to disseminate information and sponsorship from agencies such as ATSIC.

A3 Mt Isa Aboriginal Media Association (MIAMA)

MIAMA started broadcasting an hour per week on the commercial station, 4LM Mt Isa, in 1992, then shared channels with the local ABC station for one hour per day. In 1996 it also began full time narrowcasting. MIAMA was granted its own community licence in 1997 and now broadcasts as 4MOB FM.

A third of the town's population are Indigenous and the station has enjoyed generous ATSIC funding. In 1996/1997 the recurrent grant was \$0.23 million and in 1997/1998 \$0.394 million (it has also received \$0.529 for capital costs).

4MOB FM has a manager with commercial radio experience and its country music format attracts both Indigenous and non-Indigenous audiences. It has a high local profile, provides a training program for Indigenous people (*Learn Radio Skills*) and plans to venture into sound recording, merchandising and multimedia training. A five-year plan aims at achieving financial independence.

A4 Torres Strait Islander Media Association (TSIMA)

TSIMA is the only media association serving the Torres Strait Islands, but it also has significant reach into Northern Australia. Its directors represent five different regions and the audience of 10-12 000 is multicultural: a majority of Torres Strait Islanders, Aborigines, Papua-New Guineans and Malay, Japanese and Chinese resident minorities.

TSIMA has shared channels with the ABC station at Weipa (4TI) for many years. It has had a community licence since 1997, but is still dependent upon the ABC for technical support. TSIMA broadcasts twenty hours a

week in Torres Strait *Creole* and two Island languages. It has eight staff and two DEETYA trainees.

The station was previously ATSIC-funded, but is now funded completely by the Torres Strait Regional Authority (TSRA). While it has supported development of the nineteen BRACS stations in the region, these are seriously disadvantaged and only six produce local material. (They mostly re-transmit mainstream television, plus TSIMA and ABC Radio).

Major problems have been:

- high cost of travel over long distances
- insufficient funds for training
- no funding to pay operators
- no recurrent funding for operational costs
- no funding for network infrastructure (e.g. the station has neither e-mail nor ISDN); and
- BRACS Revitalisation funds frozen during the transfer of administration to the TSRA.

A5 Top End Aboriginal Bush Broadcasting Association (TEABBA)

TEABBA is one of five BRACS coordinating bodies, but is unusual in having been established specifically for that purpose. It is not itself licensed, but services 28 BRACS stations in Northern Australia and has now applied for a community licence.

The association broadcasts 6 a.m. to 12 noon weekdays, then from 12 noon to 6 p.m., relays news on the hour from CAAMA and coordinates localised BRACS inputs. It also utilises the ABC high frequency 'shower' for 25 hours per week.

TEABBA operates with around six staff and some volunteers. It received ATSIC funding of \$0.338 in 1996/1997 and attracted sponsorships worth \$40 000 (car dealers and health services). However, a lack of funding is an obstacle to further growth.

TEABBA has telephone and fax and will soon have e-mail. Plans are to supply media and communications services in the region, record music and set up a language service. However, it needs:

- funding for increased staff; and
- staff training (marketing, law, finance and business procedures such as payroll management).

A6 Central Australian Aboriginal Media Association (CAAMA): 8KIN FM

CAAMA is the oldest and largest media association in Australia. Its community radio station, 8KIN FM, broadcasts from Alice Springs via Imparja's satellite signal. It was licensed in 1984, the first Aboriginal community radio station in Australia, and its potential audience is 186 000, of whom 72 000 are Indigenous. 8KIN FM interacts with two of the four BRACS stations in its region, and broadcasts up to 15 hours of their programs weekly.

The main source of funding for the radio station is ATSIC. The station manager has had commercial experience and sponsorship amounts to \$30 000, but this comes mainly from government organisations (e.g. the Australian Taxation Office and a diabetes clinic). It will not accept sponsorships related to alcohol or politics, but has produced material for government and operates a recording studio. It reports a 'redneck' attitude that largely precludes local sponsorship.

A7 Waringarri Media

Conscious of the large Indigenous population, the ABC has worked with several Indigenous media associations in the Kimberleys since the 1980s.

Waringarri Media first went to air on ABC regional radio in 1987. In 1992 it was granted a community licence as 6WR. 60% of its potential audience, and 80% of its actual audience, is Aboriginal. Waringarri broadcasts twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week and uses a mix of local, NIRS and community radio satellite service material. The mix

includes stories in language, shows run by police and social security, music for schoolchildren, oral histories, news and current affairs.

Waringarri has endemic funding problems. It has nineteen non-Indigenous volunteers, but its studios and equipment need an upgrade, it has no trained Indigenous technical staff and no access to technical maintenance. Its full-time staff of nine was reduced to two (and several trainees who had won the associate diploma in Broadcasting and Journalism could not be employed) when ATSIC cut the Community Training Program in 1996.

In 1996/97 Waringarri received \$243 658 in ATSIC funding. It finds it difficult to convince its Regional Council and the ATSIC Regional Office that broadcasting should have a high priority. It has also received \$20-35 000 per year from local business and tour operators, but feels that cultural ignorance and racism limit its chances of attracting sponsorship. In addition, listener subscriptions are not considered viable (due to the dispersed location of listeners and a high unemployment rate generally in the region).

Waringarri operates a low-power tourist information service and feels that this has good potential. However, it does not have the expertise to develop a marketing plan. The Review supports this initiative.

A8 Goolarri Media Enterprises (GME)

GME includes the Broome Aboriginal Media Association (BAMA), a scheduled narrowcast TV service, a music recording studio, multimedia and technical services. It broadcasts on the ABC as Goolarri Radio, but expects to be licensed as a community radio station (in 1998).

Goolarri Radio has a potential audience of 20 000 and an estimated 9 000 Indigenous people. It broadcasts five hours a day and twenty-five hours a week in English and language. There is a staff of four all on CDEP with small 'top-ups' and a group of volunteers.

BAMA itself is dependent on ATSIC funding of about \$300 000 per year. Most of its staff (24 people) were on CDEP in 1997. BAMA is hoping to take advantage of sponsorship opportunities when it starts its own service and GME aims to take advantage of cross-media promotion. GME has

earned substantial returns from video sales, but listener based revenue for the radio station is likely to be limited (for similar reasons as noted above). It would like to develop its potential for involvement in cultural tourism, but lacks both resources and expertise.

A9 Wangki Yupurnanupurra Aboriginal Corporation, Fitzroy Crossing

Wangki Radio broadcasts up to thirty-eight hours over five days (each week). Programming is diverse – traditional music and language commentary, country music, pop and rock, Christian music (a request show), contemporary indigenous music and information current affairs and talk/interviews. It cannot afford to buy the equipment to receive the NIRS.

There are some twenty volunteers, mostly non-Indigenous, and the station is dependent upon underpaid staff. The population is very small (around 2 000 people, 90% of whom are Aboriginal) and ATSIC funding is minimal - \$172 500 in 1997/98. Wangki is limited by resources, having the station manager doubling as the program manager, and depends on the commitment of its staff and volunteers (as do many of the organisations cited in the Review). It is the only local media outlet and is considered by the Review to be providing an essential service.

A10 Puranyangu-Rangka Kerrem Media Association (PRK)

PRK broadcasts via the ABC regional service for two to three hours on three week nights. It has only one studio and its equipment is seven years old. ATSIC funding has been consistently low – around \$90 000 per year – and it has only one full-time paid staff member, plus three on CDEP and some volunteers.

It was originally intended that the Kimberley associations would band together to form a regional network. This is crucially important in an area where they are often the only radio service; that is, they provide the first level of service not just for Indigenous people, but for all Australians in the region. Yet most of the small stations are all too precariously balanced and dependent on CDEP for survival.

The Review feels that the situation in the Kimberleys is very serious and should be addressed by ATSIC as a matter of great urgency. [See Recommendation 3.6: Kimberley radio funding].

A11 Western Australian Aboriginal Media Association (WAAMA)

WAAMA was established in 1986. It broadcast on a number of community stations and the ABC before starting its own station, 6AR, in 1995.

6AR has eleven full-time staff, some part-time casuals and four trainees funded by DEETYA. The station features country music, plus strong news and information services. It also has a very popular weekly four hour request program for Indigenous people in custody. About 50% of its audience is estimated to be Indigenous.

WAAMA received \$573 614 in ATSIC funding during 1996/97, plus a small (\$13 000) income from non-government sources. It has a number of Government sponsors and believes that it may be able to develop this avenue further if it is able to relocate its transmitter. It is involved in several other activities, including community television (as part of a West Australian consortium) and subsidises a high-quality producer of Indigenous educational materials (illustrated books, magazines and videos) called the Aboriginal Education Resource Unit (AERU). However, this subsidy is likely to cease through lack of funds.

A12 Radio 6LN, Carnarvon

6LN is licensed to Yamatji Media and is the only commercial Aboriginal station in Australia. It has a potential audience of 19 000 (7 000 of them Indigenous) and a transitory tourist population of about 100 000.

The station broadcasts 6am to 6pm weekdays and 8am to 1pm weekends, then switches to a Perth commercial station feed; it does not restrict the advertising of alcohol or tobacco and does not take the NIRS feed because it wants to appeal to a wider, non-Indigenous audience. Station management accepts that community and commercial interests will often conflict.

ATSIC granted Yamatji Media \$150 000 in 1996 for its FM licence and funding in 1997/98 was \$106 000. In 1996/97 it earned \$18 000 from selling advertisements.

A13 Umeewarra Media

The association was established in 1987 and broadcast via the ABC and went to air as 5UMA – an open narrowcast station - in 1993. Umeewarra Media is the only regional media association in South Australia and 5UMA is the only Indigenous radio station in the State. It broadcasts eighteen hours a day, 50% local and 50% CAAMA and NIRS. Community announcements are often in one of the twelve local languages.

Umeewarra is active in reconciliation, but reports considerable hostility towards Indigenous people in the area. It has close links with the Aboriginal legal rights movement and the local health service and often features the native title debate. It has also participated in projects with the Correctional Services and Consumer and Business Affairs departments.

The radio station currently has three local sponsors but is heavily dependent upon government funding. It has attempted to diversify into video, a recording studio and television, but with little success. It has ageing ex-ABC equipment and only sporadic technical support from the ABC.

The association is also producing and posting out its own newsletter. The association believes that a printing business would be a viable alternative in Port Augusta as currently this now all goes to Adelaide.

Umeewarra Media has had up to ten trainees on Abstudy, ATSIC in-work and CDEP, but has had to reduce this number because of funding cuts. SUMA runs on four staff. In 1996/97 Umeewarra received \$421 000 from ATSIC and until recently also received funding of \$21 000 per year from the ABC. It finds the ATSIC Regional Council generally unsympathetic to its needs and suggests that a strategy such as BRACS Revitalisation should be applied to Aboriginal community radio stations.

A14 South-East Tasmanian Aboriginal Corporation (SETAC), Huon Valley

SETAC has been broadcasting on a local community station, HUON-FM, for three hours a week since 1997. It has a potential audience of 16 000 in the Huon Valley, 1 700 of whom are Indigenous.

SETAC aims to produce a one-hour documentary a month for NIRS and TAPE. ATSIC provides \$41 000 per year funding and there are no sponsors. Three DEETYA-funded trainees receiving a 100% salary subsidy.

A15 Goulburn Valley Aboriginal Media (GVAM), Shepparton

GVAM broadcasts on a local community station, 3 ONE FM. It has a potential audience of 60 000, 5 000 of whom are Indigenous. It has limited sponsorship income of \$2 500 per year.

A16 Muda Aboriginal Corporation (Muda), Bourke

Muda has had a difficult relationship with the local community station, 2WEB Bourke, which charges \$160 an hour for access. It was funded by ATSIC for \$65 000 in 1995/96, but had to use \$25 000 of this simply to pay for access. It now broadcasts three hours per week as *Mardi Radio*, using a temporary community licence.

Muda has been approached by nearby Regional Councils to extend its service, but as an aspirant finds it difficult to gain support from sponsors. It lacks sufficient expertise both to manage the station and to prepare submissions. This applies even to grants from ATSIC or the Community Broadcasting Foundation (CBF); e.g. it found its \$23 000 application to the CBF for funding equipment 'pretty heavy going'. It also lacks the resources to increase the hours broadcast or develop programming.

A17 Central Queensland Aboriginal Corporation for Media (CQACM), Rockhampton

There is no Indigenous community licence for Central Queensland. CQACM has been in existence since 1985 and has broadcast on a Christian community station, 4YAU, for half an hour per week since 1988/89. However, it finds it difficult to gain sufficient support from the Murri community.

The Regional Council has supported a feasibility study, but its funding is very limited. CQACM suggests that a strategic plan detailing specific areas of need that could be served by aspirant broadcasters is needed.

A18 Gadigal Information Service (GIS), Sydney

Koori Radio is the successor to *Radio Redfern*, which for many years broadcast up to thirty hours per week on a non-Indigenous community station, Radio Skid Row. It relies heavily on volunteers and currently has sixty, half of whom are broadcasters.

Radio Redfern was very innovative; e.g. regularly presenting for Indigenous people in prisons that allow family and friends to keep in touch and informing inmates of available options after leaving prison. Its building was open plan, with no door in order to encourage people to drop in off the street and send messages or cheerios to friends and family. Traditional designs and motifs snaked across the walls and ceilings, creating the atmosphere of a sacred cave.

When GIS replaced *Radio Redfern*, it originally continued broadcasting on Radio Skid Row. However, this ceased in 1996, when it decided to apply for its own licence and began test transmissions.

Koori Radio has made seven test transmissions – more than any other aspirant group in Sydney. It is very active in fund raising and developing other media, but emphasises that Indigenous people should control them. It has won a variety of awards and has expanded into the arts area; e.g. presenting *Guwany* (stories of Redfern) at the Museum of Sydney and running a booking service for Indigenous musicians and artists.

GIS serves the largest Indigenous population in Australia – 30 000 people in greater Sydney. It is seeking funding for its licence application and wants to develop an Indigenous multimedia centre. In addition to staff, a building and a transmitter, it will require four studios rather than its present one. *Koori Radio* has a recording studio and is very committed to playing Indigenous music. It also has a grant from the NSW Ministry of Arts to produce a CD profiling Indigenous musicians, singers and spoken word artists. However, GIS will need more (ATSIC) funding if it is to continue to develop in the areas detailed above.

B: BROADCASTING FOR REMOTE ABORIGINAL COMMUNITIES SCHEME (BRACS)

B1 Warlpiri Media Association (WMA), Yuendumu

The Warlpiri Media Association (WMA) was established in 1983, largely because of concerns that the local communities would be bombarded by foreign television emanating from the forthcoming satellite delivery system. The local school provided equipment and training and in 1985 local video producers began broadcasting low power television. WMA's purpose was to use video:

- as an educational tool in maintaining and extending their own traditions and culture;
- as a source of employment; and
- to lobby effectively with video letters to government.

By 1986 eleven producers had made 500 hours of programming detailing traditional ceremonies and skills, *Dreamtime* stories, oral histories, public meetings, adult education, sport, travel to other communities and sacred sites, art tapes of paintings, videotaped messages to other communities and the activities of community organisations. This body of material is socially and culturally significant. Crucially, it has been controlled throughout by the community itself.

WMA were also concerned about unsuitable foreign children's programs. For example, *Sesame Street* is in American English and covers topics that the Warlpiri people do not discuss. Accordingly, it produced the award-winning children's series, *Manyu wana (Have Fun)*, from which children can learn that it is important to speak Warlpiri first, then English.

Considering its pioneering role in establishing the first Aboriginal community television station in Australia, WMA has had minimal funding; e.g. a one-off grant of \$25 000 from DAA for equipment and a co-ordinator's salary from DEETYA. It has received some funding to coordinate and train BRACS operators in the region, but badly needs recurrent operational funding.

B2 Ernabella (EVTV)

The first Aboriginal video program, documenting developments on nearby homelands, was produced at Ernabella in 1983. This led to requests from other homelands for similar programs and establishment of the Ernabella Video Television Project (EVTV), aimed at producing, broadcasting and selling videos, in 1984. EVTV used capital equipment funded by the Australian Film Commission.

In 1985 the Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara Media Association (PY Media) used \$1 000 worth of cheap transmission equipment to begin local broadcasting. It was financed by a ten-cent surcharge on cool drinks from the store. Like the Warlpiri, the Pitjantjatjara people regard their television station as culturally and socially significant. They have used it to record the *Dreaming* lines and encourage new interest in traditional dance, performance and singing, as well as recording community projects, sports events, rock groups, etc. The station even ran its own Aid for Africa appeal, raising \$1 600 for Eritrean famine relief.

PY Media has been active in BRACS coordination and training. The Pitjantjatjara language radio station, 5PY Umuwa (30 kilometres south of Ernabella), will serve a network of nine BRACS stations and provide a model for other BRACS regional networks.

In 1996/97 PY Media received \$50 476 from the Regional Council, increased in 1997/98 to \$154 864 to assist in establishing the BRACS network. It still needs funding to upgrade the television studios and building as well as wages for staff.

The Review comments that both WMA and PY Media are very poorly funded by comparison with e.g. CAAMA in the same region.

C: INDIGENOUS FILM AND TELEVISION PRODUCTION - METROPOLITAN AND REGIONAL AREAS

C1 Lester Bostock, Independent film and television training consultant

Bostock is one of the pioneers of Indigenous media. In the 1970s he managed several Indigenous theatre and dance companies; in the 1980s he worked for SBS radio and television, including as executive producer of the ground-breaking current affairs program, *First in Line*. He also wrote a comprehensive set of guidelines and cultural protocols, *The Greater Perspective* and was associate producer of the film, *Lousy Little Sixpence*.

In the 1990s Bostock established culturally relevant training programs for young Indigenous people wanting to enter the industry and his long term aim is to ensure that such courses are able to run full time [*See Chapter 9*].

Bostock is now the president of Metro TV in Sydney and teaches Indigenous people there and elsewhere. He is also co-ordinating the establishment of an Indigenous Independent Producers Association.

C2 John Macumba, Macumba Media Enterprises Pty Ltd, Independent producer

Macumba was a founding director of CAAMA and the National Aboriginal and Islander Broadcasting Association (later to become NIMAA). He was active as an adviser to the Dix Committee in its review of the ABC and in 1986 established his own production company.

In 1989 Macumba founded Umeewarra Media, Port Augusta [*See A13 above*]. He advocates preference to Indigenous companies in awarding long-term contracts.

C3 Pauline Clague, Core Original Productions, Independent producer

Clague operates a small independent company that expands to thirty or more employees, mostly Indigenous, according to current contracts. The company's bread and butter income is from corporate videos in areas such as health and education. She advocates a revival of the defunct AFC scheme, *Distinctly Australian*, which provided funds for independent production houses to cover overheads and maintain their continuity.

Clague stresses that much of her company's work comes from 'clean-ups'; i.e. re-working productions from non-Indigenous companies which have won tenders, but failed to understand the protocols of working with Indigenous communities. She has three major concerns:

- many such tenders are let by government departments;
- claims that Core Productions is involved in the tender are often accepted without checking; and
- tenders are not routinely advertised in publications accessible to Indigenous producers and directors. (She suggests always including the *Koori Mail*.)

Clague says that ATSIC does not understand film and video production and needs to re-vamp its bureaucratic funding processes, which affect its response times.

She suggests that the Indigenous Branch of the AFC has appropriate processes and does assist entry into the industry. There is a need for many more Indigenous producers and production managers. Indigenous protocols will be particularly necessary before and during the Olympic Games.

C4 Rachel Perkins, Blackfella Films and Executive Producer, ABC Indigenous Unit, Independent producer

Perkins started as trainee in television at CAAMA in 1988. She is strongly supportive of the Indigenous environment and is committed to creating more Indigenous production opportunities - she points to the lack of Indigenous producers and scriptwriters as a key barrier to greater output. In addition, she emphasises the importance of obtaining production experience at the industry standard level. Perkins agrees that it is difficult

to obtain finance but there are untapped opportunities which should be explored. She does not feel that the ABC acts unfairly as a gatekeeper. In addition, she argues for segmentation of the Indigenous film market.

C5 Sally Riley, Independent director

Riley is an award-winning director, who has taught theatre, advised on film and television practices and been a stage manager. She has worked with Film Australia and currently works for NIMAA. At different times she teaches theatre, stage manages and advises on television and film practices.

Like Clague, Riley feels that ATSIC has little understanding of the industry and that its response times are too slow. However, she has experienced similar problems with the Indigenous Branch of the AFC. She believes there should be more opportunities and financial support for Indigenous film makers who show promise to get into the Australian Film Television and Radio School and support for mentorship schemes.

C6 Erica Glynn, Writer/director

Glynn is a graduate of the three-year FTV course. She began training at CAAMA in 1984 and spent the last two years on a DEETYA scholarship to the AFTRS. However, she has been making documentaries and television series since 1987. She notes that there are few funded opportunities for Indigenous film and she hopes that this will improve so that she can commit herself to an Indigenous industry.

Glynn is critical of the ABC and SBS, whom she feels act as gatekeepers meeting only minimally their obligation to broadcast Indigenous work. She feels that they should challenge their audiences with work that is not of the mainstream.

C7 Big Eye Productions (TAIMA)

TAIMA was being re-organised at the time of writing. TAIMA established Big Eye in 1988. Its core business is the production of culturally appropriate video and television for Indigenous people, in areas such as information, education, health and land rights.

Most of the staff are Indigenous. A significant part of its \$240 000 per annum running costs come from ATSIC, supplemented by corporate videos made for government departments and authorities. A cut in ATSIC funding has led to an increased reliance on commercial production, which tends to compromise Big Eye's aims of:

- giving Indigenous program-makers control over their own stories;
- contributing to the development of an Indigenous screen culture;
- developing Indigenous expertise in the industry; and
- building bridges between Indigenous and non-Indigenous members of the community.

Big Eye has maintained a production slate of corporate videos, advertisements and documentaries, but finds the pressure to commercialise difficult to handle. Community work is usually done at a loss, either by lending facilities at no cost or shooting community activities as a record of important events.

C8 Christine Peacock, Murri Image Community Video and Film Service, Independent producer/director

Peacock began as a volunteer in 1986, but has since won a DEETYA traineeship, then overseas study awards from the AFC and the Australia Council. She has worked in Brazil, Cuba, Canada and the UK.

Murri Image is partly funded by ATSIC, but is dependent upon a production slate of corporate videos running into \$54 000 per year. The company has worked out strategies to keep moving forward so as not to become too dependent on grants. It works closely with the Indigenous community, but finds that government departments do not understand the costs created by the need to consult extensively and to observe Indigenous protocols. Peacock is currently the executive producer of the mentor scheme funded by Film Queensland.

C9 Allan Collins, Cinematographer

In 1993 Collins joined Imparja as a cameraman, then videotape operator, learning on the job. He then joined CAAMA Productions and learned cinematography. He has won an ATSIC scholarship and studied at the AFTRS. He has worked on both documentaries and dramas.

Collins comments that:

- there are not enough people in the industry to work with and learn from;
- in order to develop the indigenous film industry needs guaranteed funding support;
- is concerned at the significant compromises in the quality of indigenous film making (i.e. most Indigenous work is shot on video) due to low investment levels;
- most people in the field are working at BRACS or community stations; and
- CAAMA needs a full-time camera trainee so that he can replace himself.

C10 CAAMA Productions

The company was formed by CAAMA in 1988 to function as a commercial television production company. It began producing videos for communities and government departments, but now provides a full range of services: television production, scripting, documentaries, commercials, video clips, drama and media consultancies.

Staff have been trained at CAAMA and the AFTRS. Six of CAAMA's seven full-time staff and three of four freelancers are Indigenous. It comments that most training schemes for Indigenous people are too short-sighted, focussing upon immediate outcomes rather than regarding training as an investment in the industry.

C11 Imparja Television

Until recently, Imparja, run by CAAMA, has been the only Indigenous-owned commercial television service in Australia (Goolari TV, a narrowcast service, was due to commence in 1998). Satellite-delivered as

one of three Remote Commercial Television Services (RCTS), its footprint covers most of Central Australia. It has a potential audience of 186 000.

Imparja has an Aboriginalisation policy and currently 40% of the fifty staff are Indigenous (but not at senior management level). Introduction of the Major Employment Strategy, funded by DEETYA, has provided a number of trainees with the opportunity to join the station as full-time employees or enter the industry.

At licensing, CAAMA hoped to make eight hours of Indigenous content per week. Commercial realities – small, widely dispersed audience, lack of support from business in supporting Indigenous programs and the high cost of local productions - have tempered these ambitions. An episode of *Blue Heelers* costs the station \$185, while to produce one episode of an Indigenous program, *Nganampa*, costs about \$15 000. Consequently, Imparja produces some of its own programs (e.g. a multicultural children's program called *Yamba's Playtime*), but 90% of its content is mainstream.

Imparja receives a \$2 million per year subsidy from ATSIC to meet transponder costs (comparable to the subsidies received by the other two RCTS from state governments or DCA), and all other revenue (\$6.5 million) comes from advertising.

Imparja comments that Indigenous ownership has had no impact on advertisers. Local business is interested in targeting non-Indigenous viewers with mainstream programming. Most sales comes from the east coast and are made through the RCTS central selling organisation, Central Television Network (CTN). The Office of Government Information and Advertising (OGIA) accounts for less than 10% of sales, while ATSIC advertises only irregularly and no advertising is placed by regional Aboriginal organisations. Indeed, many Aboriginal organisations feel that their advertising should be taken free. The Review comments that there is support for the notion of an Indigenous agency.

Part D: INDIGENOUS PRINT MEDIA

D1 The TSIMA Newsletter

The *Newsletter* was produced quarterly from 1984-1990 by the Torres Strait Island Media Association, based on Thursday Island. It had a circulation of 1 000 but ceased when ATSIC funding lapsed. The only printed source of information is now the mainstream *Torres Strait News*, whose staff are mostly non-Indigenous.

D2 The Koori Mail

The Lismore (NSW) - based *Koori Mail* is nationally distributed: 6 000 copies, half of them to subscribers at \$1.50 an issue (it claims readership at least double this figure). Substantial income is derived from classified advertising: local ads, notifications required by statute (e.g. under the *Native Title Act*) and job vacancies, with an occasional corporate advertisement. Three-quarters of this is from ads placed by government authorities and departments.

The paper has no marketing strategy but is the process of developing one. Due to financial reasons, it had to lose staff qualified in marketing and advertising. The *Koori Mail* hopes its proposed Website will eventually generate income and has plans for an electronic new service.

D3 Milli Milli Wungka

This is a quarterly magazine produced by Gordon Blackwood in Western Australia. Current circulation is 5 000 and the magazine invites Aboriginal organisations to buy space. The aim of the magazine is to improve Indigenous self esteem and community relations. The company has also diversified and produces high quality desk planners, letterheads and business cards.

Blackwood comments that government spends up to \$20 million on publications for Indigenous people, but non-Indigenous print media mostly benefit. He argues for preference to Indigenous print producers for state

and federal government printing and proposes that ATSIC should consider an Indigenous publishing house in Western Australia.

D4 Deadly Vibe

This magazine is aimed at Indigenous youth and complements a weekly radio program, *Deadly Sounds*, which is hosted by Rhoda Roberts and distributed on ComRadSat for community radio stations. The magazine is up-beat and contemporary, featuring articles, competitions and markets items.

D5 Yamaji News

Yamaji News is a Geraldton (WA) - based monthly supported by the local ATSIC Regional Council and published in a mixture of English, Aboriginal English and language. The print run is 2 500, but readership is claimed to be 10 000. The paper seeks to correct misconceptions about Indigenous peoples and cultures published in the mainstream media.

The paper has played a significant training role, employing 6-8 CDEP-funded trainees. However, it cannot attract enough advertising to remain viable and the paper's reliance on CDEP has prevented it from taking up a number of opportunities for further development. ATSIC has been supportive with the limited funding available to it. ATSIC provided \$105 000 during 1997/98.

D6 Land Rights News & Cape York Unity News

Land Rights News (NT), *Cape York Unity News*, *Land Rights Queensland*, *Message Stick* (Queensland Federation of Land Councils) and *Yarmbler* (Mirimbiak National Aboriginal Corporation, Victoria) all focus on a mix of land rights and other Indigenous issues. *Land Rights News* is a quarterly costing \$25.00 per year and is the largest, with a circulation of 13 000.

Land Rights Queensland has a circulation of 10 000 and *Cape York News* a print run of 5 000.

D7 Aboriginal Education Resource Unit (AERU)

Two excellent quarterly magazines for young people, *Djawal* and *Dugite*, are published by the Aboriginal Education Resource Unit (AERU) of the WA Education Department. They aim to provide positive role models for young Indigenous people, contain stories written by Indigenous children and are illustrated by the unit's graphic artists. The magazines were distributed to schools nationally and had a 10 000 print run, but their funding is now under threat.

D8 Noongar Warda

Produced by women from the Indigenous community in Bunbury, Western Australia, the paper is modelled on *Yamaji News*. It is free and concentrates upon community news, photographs and positive images of Indigenous people. There have been four editions since 1997 and *Noongar Warda* is now publishing 2 000 copies per edition.

The project has been funded under CDEP, but has also had printing and layout assistance from the local newspaper. The editors would like training in a range of areas, including in areas like marketing. They are also seeking ATSIC funding.

Part E: INDIGENOUS MULTIMEDIA

E1 Cameron Goold, Managing Director, IndigiNet Multimedia and Internet Services (www.indignet.com.au)

Goold owns this multimedia company and has his own Website. In 1996 he coordinated the AFC's *the bush track meets the information superhighway* project, which helped twelve Indigenous communities to build their own Websites.

He comments that some communities have been sold expensive and sometimes inappropriate computer equipment with no training provided, but is enthusiastic about the potential of on-line communication for Indigenous peoples. He believes that it is a matter of urgency that Indigenous communities use this technology to exchange information and to enable them to communicate with others. In addition, he comments that there is considerable potential for multimedia to reach young people who are demoralised and unemployed as well as providing important connections for those in prison.

As a part of his work, Goold is looking for best practice for Indigenous Websites. He emphasises that there are problems with so-called Indigenous sites which are neither high quality, nor authentic. He is also looking to create business opportunities on-line.

E2 Aboriginal Nations (www.ablnat.com.au)

Located in Sydney, Aboriginal Nations is probably the world's only Indigenous animation company. It was established in 1992 as a non-profit company with an all-Indigenous board committed to training Indigenous people in digital animation for the film industry [*See Chapter 10*].

The company employs more than thirty people, including an Indigenous production co-ordinator. In 1993/94, it won a contract with ATSIC and the ABC to produce *Dreaming Stories*, which will run to six series, each of thirteen episodes. It also produces CD-ROMS, games, print, film and animation products in 'edutainment'.

Aboriginal Nations has developed protocols to ensure that:

- communities and individuals who own stories control them at every stage;
- they are paid industry standard rates for their stories; and
- they retain copyright and are paid royalties.

Aboriginal Nations feels that the involvement of Indigenous people in the production process is imperative to its operating procedures. It is also active internationally in the complex area of intellectual property protocols.

Appendix 2: RECOMMENDATIONS

The Recommendations are grouped under the Chapter to which they refer.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER 2: INDIGENOUS MEDIA DEVELOPMENT AND BROADCASTING POLICY

RECOMMENDATION 2.1: Aspirant radio criteria and funding

That ATSIC, NIMAA and the ABA urgently meet to discuss the schedule for allocating community radio licences and narrowcast licences and the service areas/population numbers to be covered. ATSIC and NIMAA, in consultation with individual aspirants should then put in place a series of staged strategies, which assist the aspirant groups through to the licence application stage. This should include a set amount of establishment funding for at least two staff and recurrent costs.

RECOMMENDATION 2.2: Indigenous Radio Licences

That the federal Department of Communications and the Arts, in consultation with the ABA and NIMAA, reintroduce the community licence categories that were in place prior to the Broadcasting Services Act, in this instance, [the term:]specialist Indigenous community radio licences [should be used] to acknowledge the distinct nature and service of this sector.

CHAPTER 3: INDIGENOUS MEDIA CASE STUDIES: GOVERNMENT AND NON-GOVERNMENT FUNDING ISSUES

RECOMMENDATION 3.1: Directors

That Directors appointed to the boards of Indigenous radio stations [should] have a demonstrable understanding of media operations, the role of Indigenous media in Australia, and [that they should] represent a mix of specialist skills in business, marketing, legal and technical areas.

RECOMMENDATION 3.2: Periodic reviews

That there be periodic station ‘reviews’ involving the board of directors, ATSIC and the staff of the [relevant] media association. These should be held on an annual basis and take the form of a one to two-day working meeting. The agenda should be determined beforehand by the Indigenous media association in consultation with the board of directors and ATSIC. The board of directors and ATSIC should operate as working partners – not outside reviewers – focussing on what needs to be done to further the station’s development and how they can assist.

RECOMMENDATION 3.3: Media and tourism

That as a matter of urgency, ATSIC and the Office of National Tourism set up a working party with key Indigenous media organisations that have expressed an interest in tourist-related commercial ventures. This working party should develop a number of strategies, including a list of projects which focus on Indigenous cultural tourism initiatives, the Sydney 2000 Olympics and the Centenary of Federation. This working party should seek funding for these initiatives at state and federal levels.

RECOMMENDATION 3.4: Staged planning strategies

That ATSIC, the board of directors and the media associations adopt a staged series of planning strategies which include all aspects of an association’s operations from staffing and equipment to program output. That realistic targets be put in place and reviewed annually.

RECOMMENDATION 3.5: CDEP

That CDEP not be used as the basis for major staff and organisational expansion for Indigenous media associations. Limited CDEP staff with 'top-up' funds are acceptable at early stages of development but continuing reliance on CDEP beyond this raises industrial issues and seriously impacts on organisational stability, development and long-term sustainability.

RECOMMENDATION 3.6: Kimberley radio funding

That the ATSIC Commissioners for Broadcasting, ATSIC Broadcasting Canberra, and representatives of the Regional Offices and Councils in the Kimberleys, meet as a matter of urgency to discuss how media funding to this region can be increased so that it reflects the level of service required, and the funding to Aboriginal community radio stations in other regions.

RECOMMENDATION 3.7: Aboriginal Education Resource Unit

That ATSIC recognise the quality, educational value and uniqueness of the Aboriginal Education Resource Unit, and urgently assist with finding a financial solution (either through ATSIC Broadcasting, the IBIP [Indigenous Business Incentive Program) Scheme or a mixture of state and federal funds) to put AERU on a stable footing so that it can market its products nationally and overseas.

RECOMMENDATION 3.8: Regional Council media awareness

That ATSIC Commissioners and ATSIC Broadcasting staff in the National Office develop and implement strategies to inform ATSIC Regional Offices and Councils about the value of Indigenous media and communications.

RECOMMENDATION 3.9: Community radio equipment conversion

That given the significance of the Indigenous community radio stations, the national ATSIC office and DCA (through an extension of Community Access Network fund) seriously consider making available 'one-off' funding grants to enable these stations to upgrade old analogue equipment and establish the necessary computer networks.

RECOMMENDATION 3.10: Feasibility studies

That ATSIC and NIMAA review the current operation of feasibility studies with a view to developing set criteria for these, which should take into account the number of hours needed to meet the service requirements, staff, training, equipment, potential service diversification, opportunities for non-government revenue and the resources necessary to support the above. Finally, it is highly recommended that all feasibility studies involving Indigenous media organisations include at least one senior Indigenous media person.

RECOMMENDATION 3.11: Gadigal licence

That ATSIC urgently brief the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Senator John Herron on the community licence application timetable in Sydney, and request that he speak with the Minister for Communications, Information Economy and the Arts, Senator Richard Alston, and ask the Minister to indicate to the ABA that one Sydney community licence be categorised as Aboriginal.

RECOMMENDATION 3.12: Gadigal staffing

That ATSIC fund two extra staff members for Gadigal Information Services in the 1998/99 budget so that the manager can concentrate on the licence application, and then fund a core staff of eight people for the full Koori Radio service when it commences.

RECOMMENDATION 3.13: Gadigal capital grant

That ATSIC provide a one-off capital grant to Gadigal Information Services so that it can construct and equip two extra studios, and purchase a transmitter.

RECOMMENDATION 3.14: Audience surveys

That ATSIC and DCA, through NIMAA, determine the audience survey needs of the indigenous broadcasting sector and fund audience research projects based on qualitative methods determined by previous audience surveys. ATSIC should also fund the development and production of a plain English audience survey guide, appropriate for the Indigenous broadcasting sector, and make this available to media associations.

RECOMMENDATION 3.15: Retransmission sites

That ATSIC Regional Offices do not fund BRACS retransmission sites from broadcasting funds and that retransmission sites not be referred to as BRACS. Funding for retransmission sites should be requested from DCA.

RECOMMENDATION 3.16: Criteria for BRACS

That criteria for future BRACS development be established as a matter of urgency with the NIMAA Working Party. These criteria should include the following:

- *a commitment by communities to support BRACS through the involvement of the Elders, the community council and key community organisations*
- *the availability of at least two part-time operators*
- *a minimum of CDEP funds for both operators, preferably with top up from BRACS operational funds*
- *a commitment by the ATSIC Regional Council to pass on the operational funding in full*
- *potential external support from a regional media association and/or training institution; and*
- *access to training for up to three operators.*

RECOMMENDATION 3.17: BRACS staffing

That ATSIC, as part of its revitalisation strategy, give urgent consideration to the funding of two staff for each BRACS unit (with a mix of CDEP if this is definitely available).

RECOMMENDATION 3.18: BRACS operational funds

That ATSIC urgently reviews the allocation of BRACS operational funds by ATSIC Regional Councils, and considers making these funds part of the national allocation to overcome the serious inequities with the present funding system.

RECOMMENDATION 3.19: Warlpiri Media Association and PY Media

That the ATSIC Broadcasting Commissioners, ATSIC Broadcasting and representatives from ATSIC Regional Councils and Offices in Central Australia give urgent attention to the non-payment of BRACS operational funding to BRACS in the PY Media and WMA regions. And that funding to the WMA and PY Media be increased so that it better reflects the significance of both associations and the coordinating/training role they have with BRACS.

RECOMMENDATION 3.20: FTV protocols

That ATSIC provide funding for the NIMAA Film, Television and Video Committee to undertake a short-term consultancy to draft a set of Indigenous protocols which need to be addressed by government departments when producing Indigenous content. The draft should be circulated among the departments for discussion before a final version of the guidelines is produced. Ideally, these protocols should contain general guidelines, as well as chapters relating to the specific areas within each department, for example, health, education, youth and the arts.

RECOMMENDATION 3.21: FTV directory

That ATSIC provide funding for the NIMAA Film, Television and Video Committee to engage a consultant for six weeks to produce a detailed and up-to-date data base/directory of Indigenous film and television companies and independent film-makers. This database

should include examples of previous work so that government departments become more aware of the diversity and experience in this sector.

RECOMMENDATION 3.22: ATSIC funding strategies

That the national ATSIC Broadcasting Office consults with representatives of each NIMAA Industry Committee with a view to streamlining the ATSIC funding processes so that these better reflect the need for short-term and longer term funding for Indigenous media organisations.

RECOMMENDATION 3.23: SOCOG

That as a matter of urgency, SOCOG, the Office of National Tourism and ATSIC convene an Indigenous Working Party from each Indigenous media sector to work on the development of cultural protocols to be distributed to visiting media organisations at the Sydney 2000 Olympics. That this project involve the design and establishment of an Indigenous Web page with the SOCOG banner, which can carry this information on-line as well as a range of other information about Indigenous culture, issues and tourism, that can be accessed by overseas media and tourists. The Indigenous protocols and the Web page must be produced by Indigenous-run and staffed companies.

RECOMMENDATION 3.24: NIDF

That ATSIC Office of Public Affairs combines the amounts it gives to NIMAA (NIDF) and SBS (I-CAM) and gives this to NIMAA so that it can be administered by the NIMAA FTV committee. Criteria for the distribution of the fund and the broadcast outlets should be set by the NIMAA FTV committee in consultation with the AFC Indigenous Unit, the ABC and the SBS.

RECOMMENDATION 3.25: Indigenous film and television fund

That DCA in consultation with the AFC and NIMAA FTV Committee set up an investment fund to support the growth of the Indigenous film and television industry over a six-year period, with an initial amount in the order of \$3.5 million, increasing to \$6 million. The expenditure of these funds should be based on merit, pre-sales and co-production to leverage the value of the money. The management of the fund should be contracted to a managing organisation along the lines of the National Interest Program at FA [Film Australia], a four-year initiative, which received \$6 million in funding. New producers, directors and writers should be encouraged to apply for funding, and funding should be administered on a sliding scale depending on the FTV-maker's experience.

RECOMMENDATION 3.26: FTV economic sustainability

That the parameters for this fund should be set with the view that at the end of the period there exists a more active, Indigenous screen culture that has moved towards being more economically sustainable, with a critical mass of broadly-trained craftspeople, artists and producers.

RECOMMENDATION 3.27: FTV funding criteria

That funding should only be available to Indigenous film-makers, not non-Indigenous film-makers working on indigenous projects.

RECOMMENDATION 3.28: National Indigenous television channel

That ATSIC and DCA convene a meeting with the NIMAA FTV Committee and key film funding bodies, particularly the AFC, with a view to seeking funds for a consultancy to examine the feasibility of establishing a national Indigenous television channel. That the consultant write a detailed plan for implementation, including technical infrastructure required (taking into account regional differences, and the lack of infrastructure in remote areas); sources of content (this should include BRACS video and other community video initiatives); the operational structure and staff necessary to coordinate the service; business and marketing plans (national and overseas); and sources of funding for the service in Australia.

RECOMMENDATION 3.29: NIMAA film and television policy officer

That the NIMAA FTV committee write the proposal for a film and television policy officer based at NIMAA. That ATSIC use its authority to facilitate meetings with state film bodies and the AFC to seek funding for this position. This may include providing funding for a representative of NIMAA FTV committee to travel to meetings with these agencies.

RECOMMENDATION 3.30: ATSIC tenders and indigenous print media

That ATSIC seek legal advice about how it can put in place strategies that enable it to give first option to Indigenous publishers to print its material. That if a contract goes to a non-Indigenous publishing company, a condition of this should be that an Indigenous company be involved in at least one-quarter of the project. And that ATSIC investigate the possibility of offering an incentive for government printing contracts for Indigenous printers in their first two years of operation.

RECOMMENDATION 3.31: Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation tenders

That the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation make every effort to use Indigenous print media where possible to print its material.

RECOMMENDATION 3.32: Feasibility study for Indigenous publishing house

That ATSIC Business Development fund a feasibility study for an Indigenous publishing house in Western Australia. (This recommendation will be detailed further in Chapter Seven on Print Media Training.).

RECOMMENDATION 3.33: Funding for community newspapers

That ATSIC seriously reconsider its funding criteria to enable Indigenous community newspapers and educational print media such as AERU to apply for funding in the same way that Indigenous community radio does. And that funds be provided for these organisations to put together business and marketing plans as part of this funding requirement. These plans should identify potential revenue streams, and be used as a basis for seeking ATSIC business funding at a future date when the organisations are ready to develop commercially.

RECOMMENDATION 3.34: ATSIC multimedia working party

That ATSIC convenes a working party consisting of the NIMAA multimedia committee and invited Indigenous experts, the AFC, DCA, the Austrian Multimedia Enterprise (AME), the Australia Council, state government new media funding bodies, such as Multimedia Victoria, and state film offices, to explore the possibilities of funding a series of Indigenous initiatives in multimedia and on-line production. This fund should cover a range of projects from training to production and be easily accessible to Indigenous people in remote and rural as well as metropolitan areas.

RECOMMENDATION 3.35: Indigenous media business and marketing plans

That ATSIC should resource and co-ordinate, through NIMAA, the development of effective and appropriate Indigenous media business plans and marketing strategies on a sector-by-sector basis at national, regional and local levels.

RECOMMENDATION 3.36: Regional marketing workshops

That ATSIC, as part of a 'whole of media organisation' approach, resource in-station or regional marketing workshops where listeners and community representatives can provide feedback on the station's weaknesses and strengths. In this way the station can gain a more accurate sense of its audience, their interests and needs, and thus define more appropriate objectives and strategies. This would involve identifying a community position on sponsorship and setting up mechanisms to monitor the suitability of particular products or messages. That similar workshops be held for community print media like Yamaji News and Noongar Warda.

RECOMMENDATION 3.37: Indigenous media tendering protocols

That ATSIC develops and adopts a set of Indigenous tendering protocols which ensures that Indigenous media organisations have the opportunity to advertise tenders, when appropriate and, most importantly, that they have access to the tendering processes. Protocols should be developed following consultation with stakeholders ATSIC, NIMAA, representatives of Indigenous businesses, OGIA [the Office of Government Information and Advertising] and relevant federal government departments.

RECOMMENDATION 3.38: Language translation services

That ATSIC facilitates a working party which includes representatives from the Attorney General's department and Indigenous Language Centres to develop guidelines for all federal government departments to use Indigenous media for language translation services, where relevant, to ensure effective communication of important community information. The working party should include representatives from ATSIC, NIMAA, the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation, OGIA and relevant federal government departments.

RECOMMENDATION 3.39: National Indigenous media awareness campaign [See also 3.21]

That the Office of Public Affairs, ATSIC, in collaboration with Indigenous media representatives from each industry sector, funds a national campaign to promote awareness of the existence and extent of the Indigenous media sector in order to achieve a shift in policy. The campaign should be aimed specifically at federal, state, and local government departments and agencies, the non-government sector and Indigenous organisations.

RECOMMENDATION 3.40: Indigenous media directory [See also Recommendation 3.21]

That a high quality booklet be produced by an Indigenous media print organisation with details of all associations, companies and independent producers working in the different sectors, their contact details, and examples of their work. The material in this booklet be available on the Internet and updated every six months.

RECOMMENDATION 3.41: Community cultural protocols

That ATSIC, through NIMAA, should encourage and support the formation of national guidelines for communities to develop regional and local cultural protocols for the control and circulation of information between, out of, and into Indigenous communities by various media.

RECOMMENDATION 3.42: Indigenous Investment and Marketing Agency

That ATSIC business development funding be sought to undertake a feasibility study for the establishment of an Indigenous Investment and Marketing Agency to actively promote all Indigenous media industries (print, TV, video, film, radio and multimedia) to government and corporate sectors. One of the first tasks undertaken by the agency should be the preparation of the directory of Indigenous media recommended in Recommendation 3.40. This agency should be set up along similar lines to the National Indigenous Radio Service and work from NIMAA.

RECOMMENDATION 3.43: Regional marketing positions

That ATSIC considers funding regional marketing positions in every state except Victoria (which is not in position to utilise this position) and that ATSIC Broadcasting discuss the potential for Indigenous Business Incentive Program (IBIP) funding for these positions on the grounds that these people will be raising the business profile of Indigenous media organisations and attracting revenue. ATSIC Broadcasting should also consult with DEETYA and ATSIC Business Development about any funding the regional marketing officers may need for specialist marketing training.

RECOMMENDATION 3.44: Two forms of Indigenous radio licence

That the Australian Broadcasting Authority investigate the possibility of offering two forms of community radio licence in the Indigenous media sector to take account of the significant differences between non-competitive and competitive markets, and the obligations of Indigenous broadcasters to provide their communities with a first level of service.

RECOMMENDATION 3.45: Change radio sponsorship limits

That the Australian Broadcasting Authority reconsiders the sponsorship limits for Indigenous community radio stations and factors in the additional time needed for Indigenous language translations of English sponsorship announcements.

RECOMMENDATION 3.46: OGIA budget

That OGIA formally adopt a policy of directing a minimum proportion (2.5 per cent) of its advertising and campaign budget to Indigenous media so that government campaigns specifically target Indigenous people.

RECOMMENDATION 3.47: TAPE funding

That ATSIC Broadcasting funds The Aboriginal Program Exchange (TAPE) from the national budget. Despite its location in Victoria, TAPE is a national project.

RECOMMENDATION 3.48: TAPE digital equipment

That ATSIC funds a short-term consultancy to ascertain what digital equipment is appropriate for TAPE; how TAPE can complement the NIRS and develop further to take advantage of the new digital delivery systems (including the Internet); and how TAPE can market itself in a cost-effective manner to Indigenous and non-Indigenous organisations and institutions.

RECOMMENDATION 3.49: NIRS sponsorship strategies

That the NIRS, NIMAA and participating stations devise sponsorship strategies to ensure that local stations (community and BRACS) are not disadvantaged by national NIRS sponsorship campaigns. Production guidelines, which clarify the production roles of the NIRS, community stations and BRACS [stations] should also be put in place.

RECOMMENDATION 3.50: NIRS funding

That the NIRS should be seen as a separate entity and should have its own line of funding for infrastructure and maintenance, either directly through ATSIC or through the CBF.

RECOMMENDATION 3.51: Multimedia communication and education centres

That ATSIC should explore, through collaboration with NIMAA and communities involved, the possibility of selected media associations piloting the development of multimedia communication and education centres, where a range of technologies would be available and applied according to community cultural and linguistic needs. Media associations would work closely with other community organisations, such as health, language centres and schools, to use creative ways for education and linguistic and cultural maintenance.

**CHAPTER 4: INDIGENOUS MEDIA REVENUE-
INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCES**

RECOMMENDATION 4.1: **ATSIC criteria for media association funding**

That ATSIC initially adopt the management plan criteria used by Indigenous Canadian media associations as a model for all media association funding applications. ATSIC should work with NIMAA and relevant industry experts in modifying this to make it suitable for the Indigenous media sectors in Australia.

RECOMMENDATION 4.2: **Amalgamation of language, culture and media**

That ATSIC should move to formally amalgamate the portfolios of language, culture and media so that they can work together on strategies using national, regional and local media as tools of cultural and linguistic maintenance.

CHAPTER 5: INDIGENOUS MEDIA TRAINING-POLICIES AND FUNDING

RECOMMENDATION 5.1: **Training strategies**

That DEETYA and ATSIC, in consultation with each NIMAA industry sector committee and DCA (Community Broadcasting), devise training policies, funding criteria and implementation strategies that encourage appropriate, equitable and flexible training which takes into account the demands for multi-skilling and the long-term development of Indigenous media organisations.

RECOMMENDATION 5.2: **Mainstream training evaluation criteria**

That DEETYA design and implement a strategy for on-going training evaluation when funding mainstream organisations for Indigenous media training. DEETYA should require these organisations to submit details of employment gained once training has been completed, including the length of appointment, and provide follow up details, where possible, on the positions taken up by trainees who leave their employ after the training period has been completed.

RECOMMENDATION 5.3: National training policy for Indigenous media.

That DEETYA, in consultation with ATSIC and the NIMAA Industry Committees, devise a national policy on Indigenous media training, which takes into account the diverse nature of the Indigenous media sectors; the needs of metropolitan, rural and remote-based media organisations, regardless of their size; and the cultural context in which the different organisations operate.

RECOMMENDATION 5.4: Indigenous media job creation

That ATSIC and NIMAA provide DEETYA with detailed sector employment profiles that indicate where current and future employment opportunities lie and that DEETYA, in consultation with ATSIC and the NIMAA Industry Committees devise strategies for job creation in the Indigenous media sectors.

CHAPTER 6: INDIGENOUS TERTIARY TRAINING

RECOMMENDATION 6.1: Flexible criteria for Indigenous media training

That DEETYA, in consultation with ATSIC and NIMAA, adopt more flexible criteria for funding Indigenous media training and that these criteria take into account the right of Indigenous media organisations to determine the training needs of their staff.

RECOMMENDATION 6.2: Raising the benefits of training

That DEETYA and ATSIC, in consultation with NIMAA, develop strategies to raise awareness of the benefits of the range of training opportunities available to all Indigenous media organisations.

RECOMMENDATION 6.3: ATAS Scheme

That Batchelor College, as a matter of urgency, consults with the media associations that enrol students in the BCAD about how the ATAS scheme can be better utilised.

RECOMMENDATION 6.4: BRACS training co-ordination

That the BCBC establish a closer working relationship with regional Indigenous media associations in the Pilbara/Kimberley, Top End and Centre regions that receive funds from ATSIC for the purposes of BRACS training and have BRACS training units. When organising workshop plans for each year, BCBC staff should canvass each of these training units, to assist in specifically identifying regional training priorities; the availability of functional BRACS equipment in the students' home communities; suitable participants for training; strategies for the development of support from the community for BRACS operations; strategies to ensure that training is not duplicated or omitted; and areas for collaboration to maximise training outcomes through cost-effective use of resources.

RECOMMENDATION 6.5: Funding BRACS staff

That DEETYA and ATSIC, in consultation with the NIMAA BRACS Working Party, consider strategies for funding BRACS positions so that they are not reliant on CDEP, and examine the possibilities that exist to develop a career structure for BRACS operators.

RECOMMENDATION 6.6: BCBC staff/student communication

That BCBC staff communicate with students and communities on a regular basis (every four-six weeks) using a BRACS newsletter and a regular "About BRACS" program that is broadcast (every four-six weeks with provision for repeats) via larger Indigenous radio stations in the three regions serviced by the BCBC.

RECOMMENDATION 6.7: BCBC student reports

That BCBC staff provide written reports on students' work to their community supervisor after each Batchelor-based workshop so that they are informed about the student's progress and have clearer expectations about the course.

RECOMMENDATION 6.8: BCBC community workshops

That the BCBC conduct five full-day workshops in-community instead of the present four-day workshops, so that the learning outcomes and resources spent on the workshops are maximised.

RECOMMENDATION 6.9: Utilisation of ATAS tutors

That the BCBC make a demonstrable effort to arrange ATAS tutors from all regions where it draws students, so as to ensure contact between instructors and students at least every four-six weeks. Where suitable ATAS tutors cannot be located by BCBC staff, BCBC staff should utilise Batchelor College regional co-ordinators to assist with the engagement of suitable tutors.

RECOMMENDATION 6.10: BCBC annual report to ATSIC

That the BCBC provide ATSIC with an annual report which details how the course is utilising ATSIC funds to meet community and regional training requirements. This report should include an assessment of student needs and of the distribution of staff and resources across the BCBC and the BCAD. In order to further the continued development and delivery of community-based media training by Batchelor College, ATSIC should examine this report and consider changing the terms of the BCBC grant to provide for training delivery to BCAD students as well as those in the BCBC.

RECOMMENDATION 6.11: JCUDC media association meetings

That the JCUDC staff convene a meeting with NIMAA, TAIMA, TSIMA and other interested Indigenous media associations in Queensland, such as MIAMA and CQACM, to discuss how both the Diploma course and the Advanced Diploma can better meet the requirements of Indigenous media trainees.

RECOMMENDATION 6.12: Indigenous Media Employment and Training Co-ordinator

That DEETYA provides three year funding for an Employment and Training Co-ordinator to be based at NIMAA. The Employment and Training Co-ordinator will negotiate with state and commonwealth agencies to ensure that Indigenous media organisations are able to

gain access to training opportunities that best address their employees' needs and aspirations. The Co-ordinator will also regularly disseminate information on the various training and employment options available to Indigenous media through an Internet page.

CHAPTER 7: PRINT INDUSTRY TRAINING NEEDS

RECOMMENDATION 7.1: Training and recurrent funds for Indigenous print media

That ATSIC and DEETYA reconsider their current approaches to funding the Indigenous print media and provide training funds and recurrent funding to enable these organisations to develop further and seek non-government revenue.

RECOMMENDATION 7.2: Marketing and business training for indigenous print media

That ATSIC and DEETYA, in line with Recommendations 3.35 and 3.36 in Chapter Three, urgently consider how they can assist with training more Indigenous media people in business and marketing skills and management.

RECOMMENDATION 7.3: Funding Indigenous print media training

That DEETYA, in consultation with the NIMAA Print Media and Journalism Committee and ATSIC Broadcasting (Canberra), convene a meeting in 1998 to discuss how more funded training opportunities can be created for Indigenous print media.

RECOMMENDATION 7.4: Indigenous publishing house

That the NIMAA Print Media and Journalism Committee in consultation with ATSIC Broadcasting seeks IBIP funding for a feasibility study for the establishment of an Indigenous publishing house based in Western Australia.

CHAPTER 8: INDIGENOUS RADIO TRAINING

RECOMMENDATION 8.1: Management mentor scheme

That ATSIC and DEETYA provide funds for all Indigenous media managers who do not possess formal qualifications in management to participate in a mentor scheme for three months. At the end of this period, the mentor shall provide a comprehensive written report to ATSIC and DEETYA outlining the manager's skill level and need for further development including appropriate strategies to meet those needs. This report shall also be provided to the manager and the Board of Directors of the media association.

RECOMMENDATION 8.2: Non-Indigenous management training programs

That indigenous management training projects run by non-Indigenous managers contain clearly defined guidelines on content, performance indicators, learning outcomes, and the duration of training. That the non-Indigenous manager and the trainee manager both submit reports every six months to an independent management expert for comment and that these comments and reports are then forwarded to the funding agencies for consideration.

RECOMMENDATION 8.3: Training strategies for new board members

That ATSIC, as part of its funding agreements, requires the management of all media associations to formulate their own training strategy for new board members and demonstrate to ATSIC in their annual report that such training has been carried out.

RECOMMENDATION 8.4: BOCOP qualifications

That DEETYA, ATSIC, NIMAA and [the ABC] urgently re-commence negotiations to provide training opportunities for Indigenous radio technicians to gain a BOCOP qualification.

RECOMMENDATION 8.5: Training program for archival management

That ATSIC seek advice from Indigenous organisations experienced in contemporary practice relating to the storage, use and sale of archival material with a view to developing a training program for archival management in Indigenous media associations.

RECOMMENDATION 8.6: Archival management policy and funding

That ATSIC urgently provides each media association with the resources necessary to develop a policy on the storage, use and sale of archival material. Such a policy shall be relevant to that association and the people whose stories and voices are contained in the material. ATSIC and DCA should also disseminate information about the work they are doing on Indigenous cultural and intellectual property rights.

RECOMMENDATION 8.7: Managing program strategies [*See also Recommendation 8.1*]

That ATSIC, in consultation with NIMAA, devise strategies and provide funding for workshops for station management (manager, program manager, senior producer and marketing manager) which focus on issues such as programming mandates, program strategies, program diversification and how to achieve these. These workshops should be held every six months for a period of two years, with one two-day meeting timetabled as part of the NIMAA AGM. Media associations should also be encouraged to request funding to engage industry experts who could work as mentor/facilitators providing in-station workshops over a period of two weeks annually for a period of two to three years.

RECOMMENDATION 8.8: Aspirant radio ABC course

That ATSIC and DEETYA work with the ABC's Indigenous Broadcasting Unit, in consultation with NIMAA, on the development and implementation of the equivalent of one year's full-time training in radio production, presentation and administration. That ATSIC recommend that this course be completed by aspirant groups prior to commencement of their own service, and as a condition of receiving ATSIC funding for the full service.

RECOMMENDATION 8.9: Multi-media and radio reference group

That ATSIC work with NIMAA to establish an Indigenous multi-media and radio reference group to investigate current developments in radio, multi-media and on-line services, in order to investigate what training and equipment is required in the radio sector so that it can develop further in these areas.

CHAPTER 9: MULTIMEDIA TRAINING

RECOMMENDATION 9.1: CAAMA Productions FTV trainees

That DEETYA gives consideration to funding up to four three-year entry-level FTV traineeships at CAAMA Productions, commencing in 1999 with a review at the end of this period.

RECOMMENDATION 9.2: Indigenous FTV working party

That ATSIC convene an Indigenous FTV working party with representatives from DEETYA, DCA, the AFC, FA and the FFC and training institutions to address funding for entry-level training and traineeships. This working party should identify and negotiate an institutional framework for the national Indigenous television and video production course and ensure that the course and its implementation remain under Indigenous control.

RECOMMENDATION 9.3: Funding for a national Indigenous television and video production course

That funding be provided to conduct a full-time national Indigenous television and video production course at three levels: entry-level, and two further levels of specialisation as students decide on their place in the industry. These course would be based on the pre-existing courses taught with Metro [Television] and supported by [Enter] Arts Media. A register should be maintained on each of the graduate's careers to measure the success of these traineeships.

RECOMMENDATION 9.4: Travel budget for Indigenous FTV trainees

That any training budget for Indigenous FTV make provision for travel allowances so that Indigenous FTV trainees can undertake the travel necessary to produce their work. This will also assist in the development of a show-reel for each of the students as they move up in the industry.

RECOMMENDATION 9.5: Raising the profile of Indigenous FTV

That the ATSIC Office of Public Affairs, ATSIC Broadcasting, the Indigenous Branch of the AFC, FA and relevant state film funding bodies such as Screen West and Film Queensland, promote the work of Indigenous production houses including CAAMA productions and Big Eye Productions; key regional production centres such as Murriimage, Ernabella TV (EVTV), the Warlpiri Media Association, BAMA and WAAMA; Indigenous film companies; and active video-producing BRACS stations, in order to raise the profile of Indigenous film and television production in Australia. This publicity should be coordinated by the ATSIC Office of Public Affairs over a twelve-month period. The primary aim is to attract interest in Indigenous film and television production and investment that will result in more productions, and therefore more training opportunities.

RECOMMENDATION 9.6: FTV trainee attachments

That film financing bodies such as the AFC, FA, the FFC, state funding agencies and ATSIC Office of Public Affairs consider making the attachment of Indigenous trainees a condition of every grant to an Indigenous film-maker, so that Indigenous trainees can be attached to non-Indigenous crew, and that funding be sought from DEETYA and the film financing bodies listed above for this purpose.

RECOMMENDATION 9.7: Scholarships for FTV producers

That DEETYA, DCA and AFTRS discuss strategies to increase the number of Indigenous film and television producers, and the provision of scholarships to the AFTRS Producer's Course. These strategies should aim to train at least three new Indigenous producers each year for a period of three years, when the training requirements will be reviewed.

RECOMMENDATION 9.8: National Indigenous FTV training strategy

That DEETYA, in consultation with the ATSIC-convened FTV Working Party, and a cross-section of Indigenous FTV makers, work on the strategies to fund, design and implement a national Indigenous Film, Television and Video training strategy in order to coordinate training activities across the sector and to provide stability. This strategy would ideally be structured in three- to five-year cycles.

CHAPTER 10: FILM, TELEVISION AND VIDEO TRAINING

RECOMMENDATION 10.1: Promotion of Indigenous multimedia

That Aboriginal Nations be acknowledged for the significant work it is doing in developing young Indigenous talent and that ATSIC and DEETYA promote companies like Aboriginal Nations and [IndigeNet] to raise their profiles further, encouraging more business and training opportunities for Indigenous people.

RECOMMENDATION 10.2: AFTRS on-line production course

That the NIMAA Multimedia committee investigate the on-line production course [which will be] piloted at AFTRS in 1998 and consider its potential as a model for remote course delivery and if considered appropriate consult with AFTRS and DEETYA about the development of this course for Indigenous people.

RECOMMENDATION 10.3: Indigenous participants in AFTRS course

That NIMAA and ATSIC ask AFTRS to include Indigenous participants in the development of programs in multimedia such as the proposed on-line digital production course. This will [attempt to] ensure that multimedia courses are both culturally and

technically accessible to Indigenous artists in remote and metropolitan areas.

RECOMMENDATION 10.4: Establishment of multimedia working party on training requirements

In line with Recommendation 8.9 in Chapter Eight, ATSIC and NIMAA should set up an Indigenous working party with representatives from all traditional media sectors and independent producers to investigate what the major multimedia and on-line training requirements are in each sector. These requirements should then be discussed with ATSIC, DEETYA, DCA, AFC, ABC AND AFTRS to determine how the training strategies could be funded and implemented.

RECOMMENDATION 10.5: National multimedia training strategy

That a national multimedia training strategy be developed to coordinate multimedia and on-line training and to ensure that the available resources are used to maximum effect. This strategy should emerge from the work done by the NIMAA Multimedia Committee in consultation with ATSIC, DEETYA, DCA, AFC, ABC and AFTRS. It should take into account the range of possible uses of on-line technologies for the benefit of communities, and focus on hands-on and project based training. It should also include the Elders in planning, delivery and implementation of multimedia use in the community, then other community groups and the council; and provide on-going communication and advice to participants for twelve months after completion of the course whether in metropolitan, rural or remote areas. There should also be provision for follow-up courses and business training.

RECOMMENDATION 10.6: Multimedia training for Indigenous people in custody

That a specific multimedia training program be established for Indigenous people in custody in line with the recommendations in ATSIC's Cultural Industry Strategy on prison art.

RECOMMENDATION 10.7: Implementation of national multimedia training strategy

That the proposed NIMAA Employment and Training Officer oversee the implementation of the national multimedia training strategy in consultation with the NIMAA multimedia committee.

CHAPTER 11: EMERGING TELEPHONY, ON-LINE SERVICES AND MULTIMEDIA DEVELOPMENTS

RECOMMENDATION 11.1: Recognition of the value of new media for Indigenous cultural and economic goals

That ATSIC, DCA and DEETYA recognise the opportunities provided by new media to further Indigenous cultural and economic goals, and pursue policies, which will enable Indigenous communities to participate fully in economic development opportunities offered by new media and on-line services.

RECOMMENDATION 11.2: ATSIC take lead in remote area service delivery

That ATSIC become involved with, and have a leading voice [in], whole-of-government approaches to information and services availability for remote area people.

RECOMMENDATION 11.3: ATSIC, DCA, DEETYA new media Indigenous public awareness project

That ATSIC, in consultation with DCA and DEETYA, fund a comprehensive public awareness project to make Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses and communities aware of services available and issues surrounding new media and on-line services.

RECOMMENDATION 11.4: Recognition of special needs of remote areas

That ATSIC media and telecommunications policies should recognise the special needs of remote communities for infrastructure development in telecommunications.

RECOMMENDATION 11.5: Indigenous communications services in rural and metropolitan areas

That ATSIC and DCA address the special information and communications services needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in rural and metropolitan areas, and do not simply recommend access to mainstream services.

RECOMMENDATION 11.6: ATSIC support for Outback Digital Network

That ATSIC support the development of the proposal for an Outback Digital Network to provide comprehensive services development for remote communities in Northern Territory, South Australia, Queensland and Western Australia by taking an active role in the design and implementation of this network.

RECOMMENDATION 11.7: Indigenous carrier or service provider

That if requested, ATSIC support investigation of a business case for an Indigenous carrier or service provider and an examination of the advantages this may have for Indigenous communities.

RECOMMENDATION 11.8: Zone reform in remote areas

That ATSIC and DCA lobby Telstra for zone reform in remote areas to enable simpler provision of local call cost zones. They should also seek the provision of local call cost access to the Internet for all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in rural and remote Australia.

RECOMMENDATION 11.9: Indigenous Website

That ATSIC, as a matter of urgency, encourages the development of an Indigenous Website providing links to major Indigenous Websites already developed. The Website should be developed by an Indigenous company or Indigenous independent producer.

RECOMMENDATION 11.10: Strategies for new media content generation

That ATSIC puts in place strategies and funding to ensure that adequate attention is paid to content generation and dissemination of specialised material for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in metropolitan, rural and remote Australia. This should apply to all 'networked' government service delivery, and includes giving Indigenous media organisations first option on ATSIC tenders which require the production of content (multimedia, on-line services) for Indigenous people.

RECOMMENDATION 11.11: Digital archiving strategies

In line with Recommendations 8.5 and 8.6 ATSIC should, as a matter of urgency, put in place strategies and funding, in consultation with all Indigenous media organisations, for archiving material in a digital format. The historic and cultural significance of Indigenous audio, video, film and print material must be recognised before these valuable resources deteriorate and are lost to future generations.

CHAPTER 12: CONVERSION OF REMOTE AREA BROADCASTING SERVICES FROM ANALOGUE TO DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY

RECOMMENDATION 12.1: NIRS and video consultancy

That ATSIC and DCA fund a short term consultancy to be coordinated by the NIMAA BRACS coordinator and the manager of the NIRS to assess the viability of using RABS technology and the NIRS to distribute Indigenous video material to BRACS communities.

RECOMMENDATION 12.2: ATSIC to fund additional BRACS conversion cost

That ATSIC fund the additional costs of digital conversion of the BRACS [services] to make up for the shortfall in RTIF funds. And that ATSIC, in consultation with the NIMAA BRACS coordinator and the manager of NIRS, manages the conversion process and the RTIF subsidies in respect of BRACS services.

CHAPTER 13: BROADCASTING TECHNOLOGY-FUTURE DIRECTIONS, REMOTE NETWORKING, NIRS AND BRACS

RECOMMENDATION 13.1: Indigenous DRB requirements

That the needs of Indigenous communities be taken into account in the Digital Radio Broadcasting (DRB) planning taking place over the next three to five years. And that in the initial phase of DRB, the existing capital city Indigenous radio services be provided with the opportunity to participate in DRB at the same level as the commercial and national radio stations.

RECOMMENDATION 13.2: Indigenous DTTB services

That the needs of Indigenous communities, metropolitan, regional and remote, be taken into account in the planning for DTTB services.

RECOMMENDATION 13.3: Indigenous Sixth Channel use

That if the sixth digital channel becomes available as a shared digital channel, ATSIC and NIMAA request that the ABA and DCA allocate a part of this for Indigenous television services in capital cities using perhaps about one-fifth of such a channel's capacity.

RECOMMENDATION 13.4: Information services for BRACS

That over the next three to five years, ATSIC, DCA and NIMAA, in consultation with relevant state departments, seriously consider how to provide BRACS communities with greater access to information and potential program content through improved telecommunications facilities, notably including the Internet and ISDN.

RECOMMENDATION 13.5: Multi-departmental digital technology committee

That ATSIC establish an internal multi-departmental committee which includes representatives from DCA, government departments involved in Indigenous affairs, key broadcasters, Optus and Telstra to monitor developments in digital technology, terrestrial, satellite and cable, and the implications these would have for Indigenous people in metropolitan, rural and remote Australia.

That this committee assesses and develops a co-ordinated response to the communications requirements of Indigenous people in all areas of Australia, paying particular attention to the accessibility of service delivery and government information to rural and remote areas.

RECOMMENDATION 13.6: NIRS/BRACS reception

That ATSIC, DCA, NIRS and NIMAA give urgent consideration to the purchase of appropriate technical equipment to enable NIRS programming to be received at all BRACS sites as an additional source of relevant programming material.

RECOMMENDATION 13.7: BRACS networking equipment consultancy

That in the short term, ATSIC and/or DCA through the CBF, fund a short term consultancy to be co-ordinated by NIRS to investigate what equipment is necessary for BRACS networking and the costs of purchasing and installing this equipment.

RECOMMENDATION 13.8: BRACS program networking

That one of the objectives for BRACS development over the next three to five years is to increase the extent of networking of radio program material within regional BRACS groups. And that the NIMAA BRACS Working Party nominate one or two pilot schemes to explore the development of local networking between BRACS communities within a regional group. This should include both station-to-station networking and networking of program content to a hub site with distribution to all communities within the regional group. The funding for the pilot schemes should be coordinated by ATSIC in consultation with relevant state authorities, and comprise a mixture of ATSIC and state funds.

RECOMMENDATION 13.9: NIMAA technical coordinator

That ATSIC provides funds for an assistant to the NIRS manager at NIMAA, so that the manager can take on the role of the NIMAA technical coordinator. That these funds enable the coordinator to put together a technical data base which lists appropriate technical services for Indigenous media organisations and the associated costs and repair times; and develop a data base which provides information in an accessible way on current and future technical developments relevant to each Indigenous media sector – print, radio, TV, film, multimedia and on-line services. This information would be available on-line, and published in each NIMAA newsletter.

CHAPTER 14: FUTURE DIRECTIONS

RECOMMENDATION 14.1: Staged strategies for radio

That ATSIC fund a two day working meeting with key people from the NIMAA secretariat and the management of all Indigenous licensed community radio stations to formulate a staged series of funding and development strategies for the first five years of operation of Indigenous radio stations, and for the second five years. These strategies should also detail relevant Program Performance Indicators (PPIs) that provide ATSIC and the participants with transparent aims and objectives that can be clearly demonstrated in quantitative and qualitative terms.

RECOMMENDATION 14.2: Staged strategies for print media

That ATSIC fund a two day meeting with the NIMAA Print Media and Journalism committee to discuss and detail funding and development strategies for the first five years of community press and educational press operations, along the relevant PPI's that provide ATSIC and the participants with transparent aims and objectives that can be clearly demonstrated in quantitative and qualitative terms.

RECOMMENDATION 14.3: Staged strategies for film, television and multimedia

That ATSIC fund a two day meeting with the NIMAA Film, Television and Video committee and the Multimedia committee to discuss and detail what types of funding and development strategies are relevant for these sectors given their diversity, and how program performance can be measured.

RECOMMENDATION 14.4: ATSIC Information Technology Unit

That as a priority, ATSIC establishes a unit within the Commission with access to ongoing expertise in information technology, telecommunications and on-line service delivery. And that all ATSIC departments, in consultation with this Unit, develop integrated strategies for the use of on-line service delivery, and that where

appropriate, other government departments be involved in these discussions in order to minimise duplication. These strategies need to include significant components for content development.

RECOMMENDATION 14.5: Funding NIRS Manager

That ATSIC in consultation with DCA discuss the funding for the manager of the NIRS/Technical Coordinator with a view to ATSIC funding this position as part of NIMAA's operational grant, along with the technical assistant.

RECOMMENDATION 14.6: Imparja satellite subsidy

That ATSIC and Imparja Television seek DCA funding for Imparja satellite subsidy from [1998/99] onwards.

RECOMMENDATION 14.7: DCA funding for Indigenous media

That the Department of Communications and the Arts take responsibility for funding Indigenous media from 2001. The recommended funding level is a minimum of \$25 million annually (see calculations in Chapter 2). This would be allocated to the IMA for distribution to the Indigenous media and communications sectors.

RECOMMENDATION 14.8: ATSIC Program Fund

That ATSIC set up an Indigenous Media and Communications Program Fund in 2001 which all Indigenous media can apply for. The fund should consist of at least \$6 million annually and be distributed to Indigenous media organisations for projects which further Indigenous cultural, social and economic objectives.

RECOMMENDATION 14.9: DCA and ATSIC Aboriginal Grants to NIMAA

That DCA and ATSIC allocate their Aboriginal Grant Funds (currently with the CBF) to NIMAA if possible by 1998/99 so that the radio representatives of the IMA Working Party and the NIMAA Community Broadcasting and Radio Committee allocate these funds to Indigenous radio groups broadcasting on non-Indigenous radio

and aspirants according to the criteria and PPIs set by the IMA Working Party. This funding should then be transferred to the IMA in 2001.

RECOMMENDATION 14.10: Allocation of BRACS Funding

That the BRACS Working Party and IMA Working Party BRACS representatives suggest ways for streamlining the present BRACS Revitalisation funding process, and that in consultation with ATSIC Broadcasting, [they should] work in partnership with the Regional Councils to allocate the BRACS Revitalisation and operational funds according to criteria and PPI's set by the IMA Working Party.