



PRESS RELEASE

‘Speaking To Country, Speaking From Country’ 17th National Remote Indigenous Media Festival wraps up in Lajamanu

Last week 180 remote media workers and industry partners from across Australia gathered in Lajamanu community on Gurindji and Warlpiri Country for the 17th National Remote Indigenous Media Festival. The Festival was co-hosted by the Indigenous Remote Communications Association (IRCA) in partnership with Pintubi Anmatjerre Warlpiri (PAW) Media and Indigenous Community Television (ICTV).

The Festival brought together Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander media practitioners from across remote Australia who participated in a packed program of industry forums, award presentations and an array of skills workshops and short courses led by inspiring trainers from across the national Indigenous media industry. The Festival plays an important professional development role for people working in very remote communities.

Following a cultural dance performance and welcome by the traditional owners, the Festival was officially opened by Senator the Hon. Nigel Scullion, Minister for Indigenous Affairs. Minister Scullion described the importance of Indigenous media in providing essential services and employment to remote Indigenous people and communities. He said:

The Government is proud to invest in an industry that impacts so positively on the lives of Indigenous Australians. It’s great to have this Festival to provide a showcase of the many forms of Indigenous media and celebrate all that’s been achieved.

Minister Scullion announced the Australian Government’s decision to fund IRCA to become the national peak body from mid 2016 and encouraged the industry to work together to ensure a strong and cohesive voice. IRCA Chairperson John Tadam Lockyer thanked the Minister and agreed to consult broadly to develop a powerful and connected voice for all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander media practitioners.

Local leader Steve Wanta Patrick said the Festival theme ‘Speaking to Country, Speaking from Country’ (*Wintaru Wangkanjaku Ngurruku* in Warlpiri) described the role of Indigenous media in creating networks that connect people, places and stories across the country to strengthen culture, identity and wellbeing.

Well known radio personality and performer Dr Mark Bin Bakar (aka Mary G) delivered an inspirational keynote address that described the positive impact of broadcasting in breaking down barriers, addressing social issues and empowering people to tell their stories.

The Festival’s Public Program saw more than 300 Lajamanu community members join Festival delegates for the ICTV Outdoor Cinema followed by two nights of screening for the Lajamanu youth. The Closing Night Concert attracted over 600 people for a BBQ and a fantastic showcase of local musical talent, including Lajamanu Teenage Band, North Tanami Band, Lazy Late Boys, Warnayaka Band and more.

Those unable to attend tuned in to PAW Media’s radio network, which was carried on other regional radio networks across the country, or followed the highlights via Twitter: #rimf and Facebook: IRCA Australia.

IRCA thanks the traditional owners and community leaders for having welcomed delegates to their country. IRCA acknowledges the significant support and contribution from the Lajamanu community and local organisations, as well as our funding partners and sponsors, including Australian Government, Northern Territory Government, Community Broadcasting Foundation and NITV.

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Photo: Delegates gathered in Lajamanu with traditional owners and Minister Scullion at the Opening Ceremony of the 17th National Remote Indigenous Media Festival (Photo: Wayne Quilliam)

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