

BACKING INDIGENOUS ABILITY

DELIVERING A COMPREHENSIVE
TELECOMMUNICATIONS PACKAGE IN
INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES

DISCUSSION PAPER

Response by
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Q1 What did TAPRIC and previous initiatives do well? Where did TAPRIC and previous initiatives fall short?

The previous offer of telstra broadband services through stallelite installation and PC computer package was not clearly understood by community members – only 1 indigenous household took up the offer – Problems were;-

- Time lines were too short to enable understanding of package
- Need for face to face explanation
- Need for training for operation and maintenance

Q2 How can the design and delivery of Backing Indigenous Ability be optimised to achieve long term sustainable quality telecommunications solutions for Indigenous communities?

- Target established community bodies eg BRACS and school or Library to deliver information and define community and individual needs.

Q3 Should the installation of community phones into Indigenous communities be regarded as a priority under Backing Indigenous Ability?

No - as mobiles phone coverage is extending and improving

Q7 Are hub communities the appropriate location for implementing public access Internet facilities? If so, how best can hub communities be prioritised as appropriate locations for new Internet access?

- Island communities need to be provided for as individual communities
- Location needs to be developed within existing infrastructure framework such as Arts & Cultural facilities or State Library Indigenous Knowledge Centres (IKC)

Q8 Should ICCs, regional agents or other assistance be used to identify communities with a need for Internet facilities and assist them in an application process? How else could priority sites for Internet facilities be identified?

- The process for community consultation at a local level with the opportunity for local groups as above to apply

Q9 Is it appropriate to use an application process for communities to identify a need for Internet facilities? If so, what should be the key elements of the application process? What alternative process could be used?

- Application process needs to be streamlined and easy to navigate through
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Q10 Once implemented in a community, how best can the use of the facilities be encouraged?

- Through program orientated training that develops skills
- Using the interest levels in community eg: internet banking, email, creating programs for community/family/cultural events, keeping in touch with children at boarding school, documenting family histories,
- Q11 Are there more innovative models of delivering Internet access to Indigenous communities?
- YES – Linking BRACS by internet for cross community broadcasting

Q12 Are PC-based webcam videoconferencing facilities appropriate for Indigenous community needs? What parameters should be set for deciding when dedicated videoconferencing facilities need to be implemented into sites? What size of community is appropriate to receive videoconferencing facilities in the context of sustainability?

- Webcam would be more appropriate in this community as video conferencing requires high levels maintenance, space and organisation to run effectively.

Q18 How best can skill gaps be identified? Is it appropriate to use the ICCs, community champions and regional agents to identify priority areas for training and skills development in the area of telecommunications? How else could training and skills development needs of communities be identified?

Skill gaps could be identified through local surveys that target specific information bases eg: Do you want to track your family history? Do you want to purchase and compare prices through online shopping – getting the best deal.

Q19 What types of training and skills development sessions on telecommunications are appropriate and how should these be implemented? Are different approaches required for different age groups? What flexible or innovative approaches could be undertaken to identify and deliver training and development sessions?

- Hands on locally constructed training linked to identified interests – Not guide book delivery
- Different approaches for different age groups – times and delivery people
- Discuss delivery with community institutions – Schools, IKCs , BRACS

Q20 Is a grants program an appropriate way to fund communities to deliver training and skills development sessions within accountability guidelines?

YES – Well published

Q21 How could communities support appropriate training and skills development programs?

- With commitment to the training by the use of the skills in programs and employment opportunities such as Art Gangs, Developing and documenting cultural events for publication and sale.

Q22 What obstacles exist for the successful delivery of training and skills development?

- Building in flexibility eg: allowing for deaths etc.
- Finding the right people (resourceful) to deliver in remote indigenous communities

Q23 Are community champions an appropriate way to engage the community and assist them in using telecommunications technology? For what size of community would a community champion be appropriate? Would every Indigenous community with a phone, Internet or videoconferencing facility need access to a local champion?

- Small communities have problems identifying champions as skilled people are already very busy.
- Community champions maybe identified on a community cluster/region level

Q24 What roles could community champions play within communities?

- Economic development advice

Q27 What models of delivering increased culturally appropriate content to the Internet could be introduced under Backing Indigenous Ability?

- Program based training that develops interactive stories linking elders and young people
- Programs that link into and extends school programs

Q28 How could a grant or funding model to encourage development of culturally appropriate content be structured? What are the benefits and risks of the models?

- A funding model needs to be developed as a holistic program with defined staged learnings and outcomes, allowing for flexibility and suitable timeframes given community/individuals circumstances
- Benefits are for selfpaced learning, That a longterm program can access different facilitators and still maintain focus
- Risks are the match of initial planning with community needs

Q29 Will the ability to digitally record and archive culturally significant material encourage usage of Internet services?

YES

Q30 What funding approaches could be adopted to encourage the recording and archiving of culturally significant material under Backing Indigenous Ability?

- Supporting large organisations such as Libraries, museums, Indigenous Media and community based cultural organisations

Q37 How should funding be provided under Backing Indigenous Ability?

- Making sure that Large gov/business initiatives support and realise the potential of smaller community based initiatives

Q39 Should a mix of funding approaches be used?

YES

Q40 How can communities be assisted to develop grants applications so as to compete on a more equal basis for funding?

- Creating equity across all indigeous communities needs to be transparent
- Personal expertise delivered to interested communities eg; stage 1 proposal clients come together for refining of full proposals under guidance and then additional phone support to complete submission

Q41 In delivering Backing Indigenous Ability in a culturally appropriate manner, what should be done to enable acceptance and ownership of telecommunications technology to aid sustainability within Indigenous communities?

- Create programs that lead to greater training as career pathways are identified

Q42 What are some best practices in engaging communities in the planning,

development and implementation stages of introducing or improving telecommunications technology?

- Target key participants at local level by using agencies such as Libraries (IKC) schools and cultural organisations

Q43 How can telecommunications services delivered to Indigenous communities become operationally and financially sustainable and remain sustainable beyond the life of the package?

- By developing career pathways within cultural organisations that allow people to create publishable/saleable items

Q45 How could telecommunications industry participants be encouraged to form partnerships with Indigenous communities? What form might these arrangements take?

- To be involved in projects (eg; talking books) that improve health and literacy and demonstrate outcomes that encourage people to purchase computers for their homes

Q53 How best can the progress of Backing Indigenous Ability be monitored and assessed? How often should a formal assessment of Backing Indigenous Ability be undertaken?

- By staged contributions to a website with excerpts from the program running in that community

5:00pm (Australian Eastern Standard Time),
Friday, 19 May 2006.