



Information sheet

Reforming the Remote Jobs and Communities Programme

On 6 December 2014, the Minister for Indigenous Affairs announced that the Remote Jobs and Communities Programme (RJCP) would be reformed to deliver better opportunities for remote job seekers and foster stronger economic and social outcomes in remote Australia. These changes will ensure job seekers are active and contributing to their communities to make them better places to live.

On 3 June 2015, the Minister for Indigenous Affairs announced that in response to feedback from communities and service providers, the RJCP will in future be renamed the Community Development Programme.

The new name doesn't change the reforms that will start 1 July – but it does signal that the Government wants policies into the future to reflect community wishes.

The changes that take effect on 1 July include:

- **A requirement** for all adults between 18 and 49 years who are not in work or study to undertake work-like activities for up to 25 hours per week, depending on their assessed capacity to work.
- **Training for job seekers** that is linked to a real job or their participation activities. No training for training's sake.
- **A simple Job Plan** with measures to support better attendance amongst job seekers.
- **Community development** through activities that make remote areas better places to live and run over five days to support school attendance.

- **Stronger incentives** for employers and providers to support job seekers from the bush into lasting employment.
- **Funding for new enterprises** that provide jobs and work experience opportunities in remote communities.
- **Reduced red tape** and simplified processes for providers to allow them to focus on assisting job seekers.
- **Grandfathered CDEP Wages** will wind down early. From 1 July 2015 all job seekers will be on the same system and treated in the same way.

What will the changes mean for communities?

Consultation and engagement with Indigenous leaders, remote communities, remote employment service providers and other organisations in remote Australia is well underway. This will make sure that people are engaged in interesting projects and activities communities want.

As a result, more people will be active and contributing to community life – working on country, caring for elderly parents, working in the school canteen, attending their kids' preschool.

Families and communities will be working together to make sure that children go to school and learn. Activities will run five days a week to support school attendance. Communities will see new businesses and new jobs for local people.

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What will the changes mean for job seekers?

Job seekers will be engaged in activity that is work-like, purposeful and meaningful. They will develop the skills and experience that will make them work ready. At the same time, they will be contributing to their community – making it a better place to live.

Activities will be tailored to the needs and circumstances of the job seeker.

Job seekers will be able to get on-the-job experience in real workplaces. They will be doing training that helps prepare them for work - for example, language, literacy and numeracy training or obtaining a driver's licence.

Job seekers will continue to receive support to address health issues or drug or alcohol problems.

Job seekers will also be able to take reasonable 'time off' where a person has caring or cultural responsibilities and during normal shut-down periods for example over Christmas.

What will the changes mean for employers?

There will be strong incentives to get people into paid work – to encourage employers to look to the bush for employees.

Businesses can also provide work-like experience for job seekers by hosting activities, giving them an opportunity to get to know the job seeker before offering them employment.

Providers will deliver mentoring, training and other support to ensure that job seekers are

well supported while placed with a local employer.

How will the reforms be rolled out?

Implementation of reforms to remote employment services will be carefully staged over a 12 month period, from 1 July 2015. The Government is working closely with communities and providers and will continue to do so as the programme scales up to full implementation by July 2016. There will be a careful transition, with a six-month start-up period and support for providers.

The Minister also announced on 3 June 2015 that further reforms may be introduced at a later stage, subject to the passage of legislation, to ensure that changes to remote employment services continue to build on the things that have worked well in remote Australia in the past.

The introduction of any further reforms will also be managed carefully to minimise disruption. They will be developed in consultation with Indigenous leaders, remote communities, providers and other organisations in remote Australia.

Find out more

- Contact the PM&C Regional Network: www.indigenous.gov.au/regional-network/network-regions
- Visit www.dpmc.gov.au/indigenous-affairs
- Email the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet: RJCPreforams@pmc.gov.au