



Media Release

PETER GARRETT MP

Minister for Environment Protection, Heritage and the Arts

JENNY MACKLIN MP

Minister for Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs

SENATOR STEPHEN CONROY

Minister for Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy
Deputy Leader of the Government in the Senate

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INDIGENOUS BROADCASTING AND MEDIA SECTOR REVIEW

The Gillard Government today announced details of the review of the Government's investment in the Indigenous broadcasting and media sector.

The Minister for the Arts, Peter Garrett, said the Indigenous broadcasting and media sector provides an important voice to Indigenous Australians.

"We want to make sure that Indigenous Australians continue to have a strong voice in the media, that the sector contributes to employment opportunities and ensures access to information for Indigenous Australians," Mr Garrett said.

"This will be an independent review of the Government's funding of Indigenous broadcasting carried out in consultation with the sector and the public.

"Mr Neville Stevens AO will lead the review, bringing his extensive experience in the public service and in developing and implementing policy in information technology and communications in Australia to this role.

"Mr Stevens will be supported by an expert panel, comprised of Mr Laurie Patton and Ms Kerryne Liddle."

Mr Patton was the inaugural Chief Executive of Television Sydney and Secretary of the Australian Community Television Alliance. Ms Kerryne Liddle is a professional journalist and has held a range of council and board roles relating to health, women's and Indigenous issues.

The Australian Government funds NITV and Imparja Television, as well as supporting Indigenous Community Television, five community radio stations in Sydney, Melbourne, Perth, Brisbane and Darwin, licensed community radio stations in 22 regional centres, eight Remote Indigenous Media Organisations and 71 Remote Indigenous Broadcasting Services.

The Minister for Indigenous Affairs, Jenny Macklin, said the Government was determined to ensure the resources allocated to Indigenous broadcasting deliver the best outcomes for Indigenous people

"Indigenous broadcasting provides a powerful vehicle for Indigenous people to communicate their perspective on national, regional, local and community issues," Ms Macklin said.

The Minister for Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy, Senator Stephen Conroy, said the review will also look at other Australian Government investment in the sector.

“This includes the ABC, SBS and the Community Broadcasting Foundation. These organisations make a substantial contribution to the production and distribution of Indigenous broadcasting content, but fall outside the \$14.5 million Indigenous Broadcasting Program,” Senator Conroy said.

“The review must take into account the many changes taking place in the delivery of broadcast media, such as the switch to digital-only television and the introduction of the broadband network. These changes will bring new opportunities to all media including the Indigenous media sector,” Senator Conroy said.

The review will provide the Government with important information to assist in making informed decisions about the free-to-air carriage of Indigenous television and radio content on new digital broadcasting platforms, including the Government-funded Viewer Access Satellite Television (VAST) service.

The terms of reference for the independent review have been developed in consultation with the Indigenous broadcasting and media sector. The terms of reference are to:

- consider the specific policy and cultural outcomes for Indigenous Australians to be realised through the Australian Government’s investment in Indigenous broadcasting and media;
- consider and make recommendations on the most efficient, effective appropriate forms of the Australian Government’s investment;
- consider the impact of media convergence on the Indigenous broadcasting and media sector and the carriage of Indigenous broadcasting and media on new digital platforms, including terrestrial services, broadband enabled platforms and the new Government-funded satellite service;
- identify the contribution of Indigenous broadcasting to *Closing the Gap*;
- assess future options for funding the delivery of Indigenous broadcasting and media in light of future challenges and opportunities and uncertainty about the sustainability of existing funding models and taking into account regional and cultural language requirements;
- develop a robust performance framework for the Indigenous broadcasting and media sector; and
- assess the options for the most efficient, effective and appropriate arrangements within the Australian Government for the administration of Indigenous broadcasting and media.

The review is expected to be completed by 31 December 2010.

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