



Fact Sheet

Minister for Employment and Workplace Relations

Tony Abbott MHR

Indigenous Employment Policy

In this Budget, the Government has announced funding of up to \$10.5 million over four years from 2003-04 for an innovative Indigenous Capital Assistance initiative under the Indigenous Employment Policy (IEP). This initiative builds on a solid foundation established in the Indigenous labour market.

Across the Employment and Workplace Relations portfolio:

- The number of job placements under the Indigenous Employment Programme between 1 July 2002 and 31 March 2003 was 6009 at a cost of \$34.1 million. At 31 March 2003 the Indigenous Employment Programme was forecast to place 8461 Indigenous job seekers in the 2002-03 financial year from a total budget of \$57.7 million.
- Over 25,400 Indigenous people have now found jobs through Indigenous Employment Programmes since July 1999 at a cost of \$158.4 million. These figures include the Indigenous Small Business Fund and Indigenous Australians placed through Indigenous Employment Centres which was an initiative of the 2001 *Australians Working Together* Budget initiative.
- In addition, Job Network has made a significant contribution to assisting Indigenous Australians:
 - between 1 July 2002 and 31 March 2003 over 14,600 Indigenous job seekers received Intensive Assistance with nearly 4,200 achieving interim outcomes (employment placements lasting at least 13 weeks); and
 - over 8,800 Indigenous job seekers were placed in employment through Job Matching services between 1 July 2002 and 31 March 2003.
- The number of job placements under Wage Assistance between 1 July 2002 and 31 March 2003 was 1,759. Over 7,700 Indigenous people have now found jobs through Wage Assistance since July 1999.
- The number of Indigenous people commencing traineeships and apprenticeships has increased significantly from around 800 in 1994 to approximately 6,250 in 2002.
- A total of 193 Structured Training and Employment Projects (STEP) projects were approved between 1 July 2002 and 31 March 2003. Over 15,500 Indigenous job seekers have now gained access to accredited training and employment since STEP was introduced in July 1999.

- A total of 64 Australian companies have signed up to the Corporate Leaders for Indigenous Employment Project, with commitments to provide over 4,340 jobs.
- The National Indigenous Cadetship Project provides opportunities for full time undergraduate students to gain the professional qualifications needed for a range of jobs in both the public and private sectors. There was a record 158 new cadetships in 2001-02 and this is expected to be exceeded in 2002-03.
- Indigenous Employment Centres (IECs) have been established to assist CDEP participants find on-going employment outside of CDEP. By 31 March 2003, IECs had assisted over 1,000 CDEP participants and placed 174 people into employment. The number of IECs will expand significantly in 2003-04.
- Between 1 July 2002 to end March 2003, 340 CDEP Placement Incentive payments were made to CDEP for participants who found off-CDEP employment. Most of these jobs were in the private sector.
- The Indigenous Small Business Fund is jointly administered by the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations (DEWR) and ATSIC. It provides support for development and expansion of Indigenous businesses and enterprises including skills development programs, mentoring, networking activities, advisory services and market development (including export opportunities). DEWR had approved over 130 business development projects between early 2000 when the first proposals from organisations were received, and 31 March 2003.
- The Indigenous Community Volunteers (ICV) programme assists Indigenous communities by supporting skills transfer projects that have lasting value. It links skilled volunteers with communities that have asked for particular skills. 120 projects had been approved for communities throughout Australia between late 2001 when ICV became fully operational, and 31 March 2003.
- A Self Help Programme (funded through the IEP) is being trialled in selected regions around the country to promote self-employment initiatives. The trial will provide business advice and support, financial literacy training and funding assistance of up to \$5,500 through a loan arrangement, to assist with non-wage costs for individuals that are able to demonstrate a savings pattern to assist with the set up costs of their self-employment.

