

FACT SHEET

INDIGENOUS ECONOMIC PARTICIPATION NATIONAL PARTNERSHIP

What is the content of the National Partnership?

The Indigenous Economic Participation National Partnership (NP) between the Commonwealth and the States and Territories (the States) will improve significantly opportunities for Indigenous people to engage in private and public sector jobs through:

- (a) creating real sustainable employment in areas of government service delivery that have previously relied on subsidisation through the Community Development Employment Projects (CDEP) program;
- (b) strengthening current government procurement policies to maximise Indigenous employment;
- (c) reviewing all Public Sector Indigenous employment and career development strategies to increase employment to reflect national Indigenous working age population share by 2015; and
- (d) building Indigenous workforce strategies into implementation plans for all reforms contributing to COAG's Closing the Gap in Indigenous disadvantage agenda.

The NP will contribute to the COAG target to halve the gap in employment outcomes between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians within a decade.

What will the impact of the National Partnership be?

The NP will improve opportunities for Indigenous people to find and retain employment and connect more Indigenous people with employment and the real economy.

What will change?

In rural and remote Indigenous communities where employment is largely derived from government service provision, CDEP has been used to support a range of community, municipal and other government-funded services. Following the NP, sustainable Indigenous employment opportunities with normalised employment conditions will be created from appropriate CDEP activities.

As major purchasers of goods and services, governments are in a position to increase Indigenous economic participation and employment by introducing or strengthening Indigenous employment requirements in government procurement processes. Government procurement provisions will be implemented in all jurisdictions to require successful contractors of major projects to implement Indigenous training, employment and supplier strategies. As a result, jobs will be created for Indigenous Australians, the skills of Indigenous Australians will be developed and Indigenous businesses will be created and supported.

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The Commonwealth and the States are investing significantly in capital development, procurement and service delivery through the full range of COAG reforms. Indigenous workforce strategies will be built into implementation plans for all reforms contributing to Closing the Gap, such as the Improving Teacher Quality NP.

Currently, Indigenous representation in public sector employment is below the Indigenous proportion of the working age population. COAG has agreed to a national target of at least 2.6 per cent of public sector employment for Indigenous people across all classifications by 2015 to increase employment to reflect the expected national Indigenous working age population share. Indigenous employment and career development strategies will be strengthened by the Commonwealth and the States with a view to achieving strengthened Indigenous participation in public sector employment that reflects working age population share and improving representation at higher levels.

What are the benefits that will flow from the National Partnership?

Up to 13,000 Indigenous Australians will be assisted into employment over four years through the creation of jobs from CDEP positions that have supported government service delivery through paid employment, Indigenous public sector recruitment drives, strengthened procurement policies and the development of COAG Indigenous workforce strategies.

Additionally, the proportion of welfare payments as part of overall Indigenous household income will decline as the call on welfare payments by working aged Indigenous Australians is reduced and tax revenue is increased.

When will the changes take effect?

Implementation of the Indigenous Economic Participation NP will commence in 2009, with the roll-out of jobs created from CDEP activities to be completed by 1 July 2009.