

IYEC Presentation – Speaking Notes

Intro

- Acknowledge Gubbi Gubbi people – the traditional custodians of this land we meet
- Welcome all participants of workshop
- It has often been said that:
“Change happens not by trying to make yourself (as an individual) to change, but by becoming conscious of what is not working”.

Ice Breaker

‘Stronger Culture, Strong Choices’

What does this mean?

Brief History/Background

The demographic for Indigenous Australians is very different to the total population, with a much younger age profile.

The Indigenous population is relatively young compared to the non-Indigenous population.

- about 60% of Indigenous population is under the age of 25years old

Furthermore, approximately 40% of the Indigenous population is 14 years old or under. This means there is a growing number of Indigenous young people that will be soon entering the ‘transition’ period between school and work.

School completion is of primary importance to lifelong employment outcomes but education and employment outcomes for Indigenous youth are consistently poor.

- Only 40% of Indigenous young people retention to Year 12 or equivalent.

In the last census the unemployment rate for Indigenous people aged 15 to 19 years was shown to be as high as 30.9 percent compared to 16.3 percent for non-Indigenous 15 to 19 year olds.

And so it is this age group, which needs to be empowered to make informed decisions and choices, so that they can realise their full potential and take full responsibility for managing their own lives.

However, the current reality is that many Indigenous young people have not received adequate support and have fallen through the gaps of previous government programmes.

Therefore against this backdrop, was the creation of the ‘Whole-of –Government’ approach, whereby the Australian Government adopted a more ‘hands on’ and ‘unified’ approach to achieving better outcomes for Indigenous Australians by:

- Improving the delivery of services,
- Building greater opportunities: and

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- Helping the Indigenous people and communities to become more self-sufficient.

Quite simply, the ‘old way of doing things’, wasn’t improving the atrocious conditions in Indigenous Australia.

However, achieving sustainable improvements for Indigenous people will take some time and will require a cooperative effort from Indigenous people and governments at all levels.

The Australian Government is committed to playing a leadership role with the Ministerial Taskforce on Indigenous affairs providing a leadership and strategic direction at the national level, advised by the Secretaries’ Group and the National Indigenous Council (NIC).

At the highest level of Government, the Indigenous Ministerial Taskforce in its first meeting in 2004 ,developed a long term vision for Indigenous Australians; that over the next 20-30 years:

- *“Indigenous people, wherever they live, have the same opportunities as other Australians to make informed choices about their lives to realise their full potential in whatever they choose to do and to take responsibility for managing their own affairs”.*

In achieving this vision the Indigenous Ministerial Taskforce was of the view that one area which needed priority attention was;

- ‘the reduction of dependency on passive welfare and the boosting of employment and economic development in Indigenous communities’.

We want to provide the young Indigenous people with the same opportunities as other Australians

DEWR Background

What does this mean from a DEWR perspective?

The department aims to maximise the ability of all Australians of working age to find work, particularly those that face the most severe barriers to work; and support strong employment growth and the improved productive performance of enterprises in Australia.

To do this, the department provides the Government with high quality advice, programmes and services to achieve three outcomes:

- an effectively functioning labour market
- higher productivity, higher pay workplaces, and
- increased workforce participation.

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These outcomes:

- are integrally linked to the achievement of broader Government economic performance, employment and social goals
- contribute substantially to other Government policy measures directed towards sustaining a fundamentally sound economy that is better able to adjust to external shocks, and designed to increase ‘welfare-to-work’ incentives
- are based on the knowledge that there is a direct link between the quality of workplace relations and employment
- will have an impact on communities, organisations, business and individuals in metropolitan, regional and remote areas
- incorporate equity considerations in policy development, and through the way the department’s programmes and services are implemented
- reflect the mutual benefits of providing businesses, employers, employees and job seekers with access to electronic services delivered through the Internet and by telephone, and
- recognise the requirements for further reform to create competitive workplaces.

DEWR Programmes

DEWR provides a number of programmes and services to the community. The main programmes that Indigenous people are accessing to assist them to employment and create enterprise are:

- Job Network Services (JNS)
- New Enterprise Incentive Scheme (NEIS)
- Work for the Dole
- Disability Open Employment Services (DOES)
- Community Development and Employment
- Indigenous Employment Programmes (IEP)

IEP Programmes

The Indigenous Employment Programme Branch

- National Indigenous Cadetship Programme (NICP)
- Structured Training and Employment Scheme (STEPS)
- Indigenous Self Business Fund (ISBF)
- Indigenous Capital Assistance Scheme (ICAS)
- Indigenous Self Employment Programme (ISEP)
- Corporate Leaders for Indigenous Employment Programme (CLIEP)

But today, we are here to showcase the Indigenous Youth Employment Consultant (IYEC) Programme.

IYEC Programme

In the May 2004 Budget, the Australian Government dedicated \$13.1 million over 4 years to provide the IYEC programme across 30 sites in Australia.

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This decision was based on factors including:

- rising proportion of Indigenous young people
- limited achievement of secondary education and training outcomes for - Indigenous young people (esp 15 – 19 year olds)
- disproportionate unemployment rates

Consultants were to be employed by Job Network providers in Employment Service Areas (ESA) which had:

- a viable labour market;
- a proportionate number of Indigenous youth population;
- a fulltime JNM site.

As such, there are now 30 Consultants employed by Job Network providers across Australia.

The IYEC Programme

So how does IYEC work? Or what is IYEC?

The Indigenous Youth Employment Consultant (IYEC) programme seeks to enhance the employment, education and/or training outcomes for Indigenous Australian young people.

The programme is aimed at Indigenous youth aged 15 to 19 years who:

- are disengaged from school;
- want to leave school and are considering entering the workforce; or
- intend on continuing with their education and/or training before entering the workforce but would benefit from additional support to maintain participation.

The objectives of the programme are to:

- Increase the proportion of Participants achieving positive, sustained employment, education, and/or training outcomes including retention in secondary school, enrolment in further education and/or training, and participation in employment services;
- Provide a one-to-one personalised service that will best meet the Participant's needs.
- Increase Indigenous young peoples use of mainstream employment services, through direct engagement by Job Network members with young Indigenous people;
- Complement and utilise existing programmes as part of developing a whole of government response to improving the transition from school to work for young Indigenous people; and
- Reduce inter-generational reliance on welfare, by assisting young Indigenous people to make the transition from income support to work.

Eligibility

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Who is eligible for the IYEC programme?

To be eligible, young people must be:

- an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person aged 15-19 years old;
- but does not have to be unemployed or registered with Centrelink; and
- Living in an ESA where an IYEC is located.

IYEC Outcomes

The IYEC outcomes and performance are monitored each quarter, where IYECs are expected to submit a quarterly report which outlines participant numbers, outcomes and activities.

Since the programme commenced in January 2005, there has been a steady increase of participant numbers and participant outcomes being achieved.

The last quarterly report from January-March 2006 showed **826** participants were placed into employment, placed into education/training and/or supported to remain in education/training.

The break down of these figures show that:

- Employment placements = 198.
- Education/training placements = 259
- Supported to remain in education/training = 369
- Full-time = 139
- Part-time = 19
- Casual = 40
- Traineeships = 32
- Apprenticeships = 29

This brings the total number of participants supported by IYECs since January 2005 to 4150.

With 2503 placements/outcomes achieved (or 60 percent achievement rate for outcomes).

IYEC Roles

The Consultants work closely with Participants, as well as their families, communities, local schools, vocational education and training providers, local businesses and other Job Network providers to provide better connections to work and education/training opportunities.

The role of the consultant includes;

- (a) Provide one-on-one support
- (b) Identifying labour market opportunities for Participants;

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- (c) Develop and implement strategies for identifying and attracting Participants;
- (d) Ensure employment services information is readily available to Participants through schools, community organisations and other stakeholders as identified;
- (e) Consult, work closely with and develop relationships with relevant stakeholders including, communities, local schools, vocational education and training providers, local businesses, training bodies, employment services providers, other Job Network members and Indigenous Coordination Centres (ICC);
- (f) Conduct interviews and undertake assessments with Participants to determine the outcome which best meets their requirements and to determine readiness and suitability for referral to appropriate services, including Job Network Services;
- (g) Prepare a Participant Activity Plan for each Participant and retain each Participant Activity Plan on the relevant Participant's file. Each Participant Activity Plan must be specifically tailored for each Participant and must, as a minimum, include:
 - (i) Personal details; and
 - (ii) Personal experiences, goals and all IYEC Planned Activities aimed at achieving engagement in education, employment and / or training.
 - (iii) Results of all IYEC Activities that were undertaken
- (h)
- (i) Facilitate access and/or refer Participants to complementary Commonwealth, State, Territory and local government programmes, to any locally run initiatives specifically targeted at Indigenous Australians, and to other support services, as appropriate;
- (j) Where appropriate, refer Participants to another Job Network provider in the ESA; and
- (k) Provide pre and post placement/outcome support to the Participants for the Service Period.

IYEC Success

The success of the programme is due to:

- IYECs are building strong relationships with participants.
- IYECs continuing to provide support and assistance to participants to achieve positive employment, education and training outcomes.
- IYECs willingness to work and support disadvantage youth in their community.
- IYECs are building stronger networks/links within the community with local Indigenous organisations, businesses, youth and community groups, Local, State and Commonwealth departments, to create more opportunities for participants to obtain further education or training and employment. In

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some areas, it is encouraging to see IYECs are meeting with Corporate Leaders and corporate organisations, such as; BHP Advisory Council and AFL, to discuss future recruitment processes for Indigenous people.

Good News Stories

There has been a huge amount of success stories that have been submitted to us by Consultants. These stories are articles about participants who are making ‘Strong Choices’ for their future. We have had the opportunity of having couple of these success stories featured in the monthly national Deadly Vibe Magazine. Watch out for the June edition for two more wonderful stories about a young woman in Rockhampton who has overcome all obstacles to pursue her dreams and about a young man from Adelaide who found that the IYEC was a perfect way to fulfil his ambitions.

Note: Refer participants to GNS Booklet

Future Directions

As all IYECs are currently performing against their KPIs, two year contract extensions to 30 June 2008 have been offered to all Job Network IYEC providers.

Discussions will get under way in the near future to plan the second National IYEC forum, after the success of the first one held in March this year.

Conclusion

We need to take a unified approach to how the IYEC programme is going to succeed in the community and without doubt, to achieve the Indigenous Ministerial Taskforce’s vision, a shared commitment is needed by DEWR, Job Network providers, employers, schools and training institutions and especially by the members of the Indigenous community.

And build on the success of IYEC and undertake continuous improvements.