



Inquiry into the Social Security Legislation Amendment (Remote Engagement Program) Bill 2021

REGIONAL ANANGU SERVICES
ABORIGINAL CORPORATION

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Submission by Regional Anangu Services Aboriginal Corporation

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Regional Anangu Services Aboriginal Corporation (RASAC) is an Anangu owned and governed not-for-profit Aboriginal Organisation which is the provider of the Community Development Program (CDP) in Region 19 – Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara (APY) Lands, South Australia which is part of the NPY Empowered Communities region. Anangu is the cultural group of Aboriginal people who live in the APY Lands.

RASAC is currently the largest employer of Anangu workers in the APY Lands. We have developed an employment and training model that is focussed on building workforce participation, training and development that provides and maximises entry level employment, work-related training, and career progression opportunities for Anangu workers.

RASAC supports the intention of the Government to *‘collaborate with stakeholders to develop a new remote engagement program that will better enable jobseekers to contribute to the goods and services that will strengthen the economic, social and cultural life of communities and build in-demand skills and, at the same time, create a pathway for these jobseekers to build skills to find local jobs’*. This intention aligns with the RASAC vision to ***‘Improve the quality of life for Anangu on the APY Lands, and create opportunities to improve sustainable outcomes for Anangu’***.

We also agree that the new Remote Engagement Program should focus on opportunities to enable local jobseekers to build the skills and experience to gain employment to deliver services in their communities.

We understand that the new job seeker ‘supplementary’ payments, linked to employment placements which are proposed in the Social Security Legislation Amendment (Remote Engagement Program) Bill 2021, are design elements of the new *Remote Engagement Program* which the Government would like to co-design with communities. We support the approach of providing payments as incentives for job seekers to engage in employment and training placements with local employers, so that they can gain the relevant work experience and skills to secure on-going employment. We would further support fully remunerated and employment entitlement payments that reflect the value of work undertaken in these positions.

We encourage the government to consider implementation arrangements that include **flexible employment, training and support arrangements** that meet the needs of very disadvantaged job seekers in the most remote communities, to build sustainable local workforce participation and engagement across these communities. In doing this, we note that the co-design process must provide the opportunity for communities to have input into how these supplementary payments are applied.

We also support the intention of the government to engage in genuine co-design of the new *Remote Engagement Program* and would welcome the opportunity to participate in the co-design process for the APY Lands, South Australia. RASAC supports a focus on building overall Anangu workforce participation, development and engagement through flexible and practical ways that enable Anangu workers to gain the skills and experience to work and lead in the delivery of services in their local communities.