

**INQUIRY INTO THE FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES FOR
AUSTRALIA'S FILM, ANIMATION, SPECIAL
EFFECTS AND ELECTRONIC GAMES INDUSTRIES**

BY

**The House of Representatives Standing Committee on
Communications, Information Technology and the Arts**

Submission by

Indigenous Screen Australia

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CONTENTS

Recommendations	4
Introduction	6
Background	8
Indigenous Screen Australia proposal for Indigenous content creation in the digital environment	11
The benefits	14
Future opportunities for growth	15
Infrastructure and bandwidth needs	16
Developing the current Indigenous skills base ...	17
Linkages – Indigenous multimedia industries and the cultural/information technology sectors	18
The experience of overseas Indigenous Broadcasters	18
Aligning government support with future trends and opportunities	19
Appendix A	21
Appendix B	23
Appendix C	27

Indigenous Screen Australia welcomes the opportunity to contribute to this Inquiry and will focus its submission on the following terms of reference:

- (b) the economic, social and cultural benefits of these industries;
- (c) future opportunities for further growth of these industries, including through the application of advanced digital technologies, online interactivity and broadband;
- (d) the current and likely future infrastructure needs of these industries, including access to bandwidth;
- (e) the skills required to facilitate future growth in these industries and the capacity of the education and training Service to meet these demands;
- (f) the effectiveness of the existing linkages between these industries and the wider cultural and information technology sectors;
- (g) how Australia's capabilities in these industries, including in education and training, can be best leveraged to maximise export and investment opportunities; and
- (h) whether any changes should be made to existing government support programs to ensure they are aligned with the future opportunities and trends in these industries.

This submission is supported by The Special Broadcasting Service (SBS), the Australian Film Commission (AFC) and The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC).

Recommendations

To fully align government support with future opportunities offered by the Indigenous creative industry to produce a range of unique, quality content appealing to international and national audiences Indigenous Screen Australia recommends:

To fully align government support with future opportunities offered by the Indigenous creative industry to produce a range of unique, quality content appealing to international and national audiences Indigenous Screen Australia recommends:

1. That the federal government initiates a migratory strategy **now** in building toward a television service for a National Indigenous Broadcast Service as outlined in *Tools for Empowerment, a National Indigenous Broadcasting Service*, a feasibility study prepared for ATSIC in 2000.
2. That, as part of the migratory strategy, options for interim housing of an Indigenous Television Service be fully and expeditiously explored, including the possibility of establishing the Service within or in partnership with an existing public broadcaster. The investigation would consider issues such as availability of spectrum (whether analogue or digital), the capacity of existing facilities to house the Service and synergies between the objectives of the host/partner and the Indigenous Television Service. The Service's Indigenous Director, working within broad Indigenous advisory group guidelines, would commission and buy Indigenous content and schedule programming. This recommendation falls well within the history of Indigenous/national broadcaster relationships: Throughout the 1990s SBS and the ABC supported the production of Indigenous programs by Indigenous staff and independent producers and are both required to broadcast Indigenous programs under their respective Charters.
3. That, subject to a final agreement on how the Indigenous Television Service is housed and delivered, the federal government make a special start up funding allocation in the 2004 budget of \$9 million dollars and maintain annual funding for five financial years. If the Service is housed within or in partnership with a public broadcaster, the funding could be added to that organisation's annual budget allocation, as a separate budget line item, until the conclusion of the arrangement in 2008.
4. That the second step in a migratory path for an Indigenous television service be the formation of an independent, federally funded, Indigenous managed audio visual agency with a remit to commission content for this service, strike accords with funding agencies, source non government finance, and market content in Australia and foreign territories, establish

and maintain an online Indigenous creative industry portal and plan for Indigenous professional development in partnership with key training institutions across Australia. It is expected that this agency, with its accumulated experience, will form the heart of the television strand of a National Indigenous Broadcasting Service.

Introduction

Indigenous Screen Australia (ISA) believes the benefits of a fully realised Indigenous creative industries sector are considerable: In representing Indigenous Australian contemporary achievements, our diverse cultures and history we acknowledge and promote these as part of a shared Australian heritage and future, and want to continue contributing to its complex richness.

In both cultural and economic terms we believe there are unexplored opportunities for marketing Indigenous Australian film and television features internationally.

In a speech to the National Press Club in March 2003, Federal Tourism Minister, Mr Joe Hockey said:

Over 130,000 international visitors came here (in 2002) to experience indigenous culture. These visitors spent \$426 million on indigenous tourism. That's nearly half a billion dollars. Put in perspective, indigenous tourism is as valuable an export for Australia as nickel and, significantly, more than uranium or rice. Over 410,000 visitors or 10% of all visitors to Australia said they experienced aboriginal art and crafts and cultural displays. Around 200,000 tourists visited an Aboriginal site or community. The highest number of visitors came from the United Kingdom, followed by the rest of Europe, the USA and Japan. Importantly, these markets are also our highest-spending markets.

These observations and figures represent more than a niche opportunity to capitalise on expanding international interest through increasing the production and marketing of Australian Indigenous film and television features and documentaries.

In this submission Indigenous Screen Australia refers substantially to a major recent initiative to expand and consolidate Indigenous creative output through the creation of a National Indigenous Broadcast Service. *Tools for Empowerment, a National Indigenous Broadcasting Service*, recommended the creation of a tri media service, including television, online and radio, and a clear migratory strategy for each strand to build a broadcast Service over time.

It is an initiative Indigenous Screen Australia endorses. In this submission we propose the first steps in a migratory path required to develop the television strand of that Service.

ISA's submission is that the first steps are required **now** to establish an Indigenous television service which will mature over the next few years to form the heart of a television service within a National Indigenous Broadcast Service.

Building a television service will provide the focus for:

- producing features and programs which will enrich, entertain and appeal to Australian and international audiences,
- the development of a production slate which will more coherently and cooperatively utilise the emerging critical mass of Indigenous creative professionals in digital content creation,
- long term planning to enable the production of continuous multi platform content to meet the considerable demands of television, film and broadband
- sourcing a range of funding support, including government, philanthropic and commercial,
- striking accords with major documentary funders,
- developing an Indigenous training strategy including the development of business, marketing, technical and management skills and a mentoring network,
- maximising the aggregation of bandwidth, within the federal government's broadband Internet strategy – particularly important for already active regional and remote area creatives who are disadvantaged by poor broadband penetration, and
- establishing a digital rights management regime for Indigenous productions commissioned or bought.

Indigenous Screen Australia nonetheless envisages that the broadcast of Indigenous produced content will continue, and increase, across Australian TV channels and networks and Indigenous productions will continue to contribute to the diversity of programming on Australian television.

Background

In December 2000 a study into the feasibility of a proposed National Indigenous Broadcast Service was prepared for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC) and the national Indigenous Media Association of Australia (NIMAA).

The Belonging Network: Tools for Empowerment detailed comprehensive, practical plans for the establishment of a tri media (radio, television and online) National Indigenous Broadcast Service, including indicative financial estimates. (*Exhibit A, CD Rom, courtesy of ATSIC*).

The study was undertaken at a key time in the developing digital environment in Australia: Digital television was launched the following year.

The Belonging Network study envisaged a migratory strategy for the establishment of a National Indigenous Broadcast Service (NIBS), taking account of:

- The planned government inquiry into Indigenous TV due to be held before 1 January, 2005.
- Existing Indigenous media services across Australia.
- The potential multi faceted role of a National Indigenous Broadcasting Service as:
 - A primary service for Indigenous people
 - An informative service for non Indigenous Australians.
- The structure and operation of a NIBS, including regulatory issues.
- The central role of Indigenous content creation and programming.
- Exploration of spectrum and licensing issues.
- Investigation of a transmission delivery service for NIBS.
- An indicative financial plan including potential revenue sources for a NIBS.
- Marketing and branding considerations.
- Training and development of Indigenous multi media professionals.
- The experience of overseas Indigenous broadcasters – the Aboriginal People’s Television Network (APTN) in Canada and The Maori Broadcasting Funding Agency in New Zealand in particular.

The study built on key milestones in Indigenous broadcasting in this country and the emerging critical mass of Indigenous audio visual professionals, suggesting that there was now a clear need for the establishment of an Indigenous managed national broadcast Service.

Key milestones in the recognition and development of Indigenous media include:

1. The Broadcasting Services Act 1992 now has as one of its objects of the Act, in Section 3(1):
*to ensure the maintenance and, where possible, the development of diversity, including public, community **and Indigenous broadcasting**, in the Australian broadcasting Service in the transition to digital broadcasting.*
2. This followed the Productivity Commission Inquiry into Broadcasting, 1999, recommending that:
 - A new licence category for Indigenous broadcasters should be created, with appropriate conditions related to advertising.
 - Spectrum should be reserved for Indigenous broadcasters to provide a primary service for Indigenous communities, where appropriate.
3. This was reinforced by Recommendation 4 in *Local Voices and Inquiry into Regional Radio* by the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Communications, Transport and the Arts in 2001, namely:

The Minister for Communications, Information Technology and the Arts should prepare amendments to the Broadcasting Services Act 1992 to xiii establish an additional category of broadcasting service relating to Indigenous broadcasting services. (paragraph 2.109 of that Report).
4. The publication of “The Black Book Directory 2000”, the first consolidated database of available Indigenous creative personnel in this country. (**Exhibit B, book in hard copy**)
5. The establishment in 1993 of the Australian Film Commission’s Indigenous Unit which has provided funding and significant support for a range of Indigenous content creation including Australian and international award winning features.
6. The continued expansion of media services around Australia which have built on a history of bold leaps and imaginative creation – often with limited funding:
 - 1980s - Low-cost video, videoconferencing and radio Services, adapted technically for the specific needs of Indigenous communities in remote Australia.

- 1980s – The establishment of ‘pirate’ community television stations at Yuendumu and Ernabella, operating without licences, eventually led to the creation of what became known as BRACS, the Broadcasting for Remote Aboriginal Communities Scheme.
- Productions undertaken in urban areas, such as the Aboriginal Medical Service in Sydney, which gave early experience to internationally renowned photographer and filmmaker, Tracey Moffatt, in devising videos with culturally and socially appropriate information on HIV/AIDS and Hepatitis B.
- Early Central Australian Aboriginal Media Association (CAAMA) video productions including music video clips of local bands as well as educational video for the Consumer Affairs Bureau on purchasing second hand cars.

It has also included a range of productions which have reached international and national audiences, including:

- Ivan Sen’s 2002 feature film *Beneath Clouds*, award winner at the Berlin International Film Festival, multiple AFI award and IF award winner.
- Broome-based Goolari Media’s entertainment production *Mary G*, televised nationally in 2002 and 2003 by SBS television.
- In 2000 Rachel Perkins’ AFI award winning feature *Radiance* selected as one of the representative Australian films exhibited at Australian Embassy film festivals around the world.
- Central Australia’s Warlpiri Media’s AFI award winning *Bush Mechanics*, produced in 1998, shown on ABC TV and distributed widely on video.
- The documentary *Red Storm* commissioned by the US Discovery Channel, produced by the Central Australian Aboriginal Media Association (CAAMA) in 2000 and shown on Discovery cable channels worldwide.
- In addition, several BRACS networks in north west and central Australia are currently utilising the second channel of the Alice Springs based Remote Commercial Television Service, Imparja, to distribute locally produced programming to remote area audiences who access it via a satellite dish and Imparja authorised smart card. The BRACS networks include PAKAM, PY Media and Warlpiri Media.

As *The Belonging Network* study noted:

Indigenous communities and individuals have produced a remarkable range of video, film, television and radio material and today form a substantial, skilled creative group.

It is important to capitalize **now** on this aggregation of skills and experience in building towards a television service within a National Indigenous Broadcast Service. It is also important to recognise that Indigenous film and television activities are rather fragmented and require a supportive framework to drive more cohesive, cooperative development.

See Rachel Perkins' discussion of Indigenous screen culture at **Appendix A**.

Indigenous Screen Australia proposal for Indigenous content creation in the digital environment

Since the submission to ATSIC of *The Belonging Network* study Indigenous creative industry professionals have looked to a tangible commitment by the federal government to support a migratory strategy which builds towards a National Indigenous Broadcast Service.

Indigenous Screen Australia proposes that clear and measured steps be taken to initiate a migratory path for the television service strand of a National Indigenous Broadcast Service (NIBS). Indigenous Screen Australia believes that it is time to take these steps to expand Indigenous digital content across many platforms - television, broadband, DVD sales and rental, cinema, and games - for international and national markets.

The first step is to fully and expeditiously investigate options for housing the new Indigenous Television Service. This could, for example, be done in partnership with or under the umbrella of one of the public broadcasters. The investigation would consider issues such as availability of spectrum (whether analogue or digital), the capacity of existing facilities to house the Service and synergies between the objectives of the host/partner and the Indigenous Television Service.

This falls well within the history of Indigenous/national broadcaster relationships: Throughout the 1990s SBS and the ABC supported the production of Indigenous programs by Indigenous staff and independent producers.

It is recommended that, in the 2004 federal budget, a special additional \$9 million be allocated to the Service. If the Service was delivered as a partnership with public broadcasting, this could be done through the annual budget allocation of the broadcaster, in a separate budget line. The Service would require annual funding for five financial years – from 2004–2008. Its brief would be to

commission, buy and deliver a range of live and produced Indigenous programming.

Additional distribution methods would be explored to ensure remote Australian community access to this material. One might be through an available second channel of the Regional Commercial Television Service, Imparja. Several BRACS networks are utilising this second channel now to distribute programming to remote area audiences, as noted earlier. Costs would need to be met from the Indigenous Television Service's budget.

If housed within another broadcaster, the Service would create its own Vision Statement, Strategic Plan, Programming Plan/Schedule and Goals within the broadcaster's Corporate Plan and could be responsible directly to its Managing Director.

The Service would also run a watching brief on digital television developments and devise a strategy for aggregating spectrum nationally for the delivery of television within a National Indigenous Broadcast Service as the migratory strategy matures.

The Indigenous Television Service would also be tasked with drawing up an Indigenous professional development program in partnership with a public broadcaster and a national training institution, such as the Australian Film Television and Radio School, to deliver key digital production, management, technical and business training skills and mentoring. The establishment of a distinct, branded Indigenous broadband presence could also be undertaken by this Unit, developing more fully into an Indigenous digital content portal under the independent Indigenous managed entity.

The transition phase to the next step will require careful planning and coordination.

The second step would be to migrate the Indigenous Television Service to the status of an independent, Indigenous managed entity for digital content creation with a broader remit which will build on the skills and experience gained.

It would require federal government funding with the ability to seek additional non-government finance from, for example, philanthropic and commercial sources.

An independent, high profile, branded entity would drive an expanded Indigenous production output through commissioning and funding strategies which encouraged even greater production cooperation among Indigenous creative

professionals. It would also take responsibility for targeted industry development of Indigenous professionals through a range of creative and business skills.

Such an entity would also have the responsibility for securing television spectrum nationally, and this would require finalisation well before 2008 when digital terrestrial television broadcasting is projected to switch entirely to digital. An independent entity could also expand and promote a highly visible, branded online portal presence.

In summary an independent entity could:

- commission and fund a range of productions, including rural and remote content with interactive elements for broadcast on a nascent television service within a National Indigenous Broadcast Service,
- encourage consolidation of Indigenous content creation through a slate of productions,
- strike appropriate accords with industry funding bodies,
- bid for funding from non-government sources including philanthropic organisations,
- ensure the national aggregation of required spectrum to deliver a television service,
- maintain digital rights management for Indigenous productions funded by the entity,
- establish partnerships with key creative media training institutions
- establish achievable training targets in key sectors including business, technical, management, marketing and advertising skills,
- establish an online portal which would provide:
 - a source of key business/industry information on funding guidelines, training courses, mentorships, development courses
 - provide online hotlinks to Indigenous media producers and organisations across Australia
 - provide digital rights management for funded productions
 - enable secure distribution of short productions to remote TV playout centres, ie BRACS
 - e-commerce/promotional website for DVD, CD or video sales of funded productions

Indigenous professionals would thus accumulate a critical mass of production, management, technical, marketing, advertising, policy development and digital rights management skills within this decade.

This would align with the federal government's indicative timetable for the progression of digital terrestrial television (DTTV) and analogue television switch

off (in 2008), and the anticipated availability of additional spectrum nationwide. By the end of this decade both production output levels and organisational skills and experience would underpin a well-developed and mature content creation entity which could migrate to a National Indigenous Broadcast Service.

The Benefits

We support the ultimate aim of a National Indigenous Broadcast Service which is to provide:

- A primary television service for Indigenous Australians.
- An informative service for non Indigenous Australians.
- An independent, Indigenous managed sector of national media.
- Feature and documentary productions which can be sold to international territories.
- Provide a conduit for introducing Indigenous language programs and language education for all Australians.

We believe that the two-stepped establishment of Indigenous production and management entities provides a path to achieving these goals.

In addition, the identifiable base of Indigenous creative and technical skills can be drawn out and harnessed by this developing television presence, deepening production skills across digital platforms and strengthening a unique Indigenous screen culture.

We believe that a National Indigenous Broadcast Service can play a key role in moving towards a more tolerant and unified nation and being a spearhead for reconciliation.

As *The Belonging Network* report observes a National Indigenous Broadcast Service would be able to contribute to:

- the organic development within Indigenous communities of a sense of control and empowerment in relation to their use of media, and empowerment more generally,
- the development of skills which can create a new avenue for Indigenous employment and career advancement as Australia enters the information age, and
- the use of media for the credible and effective delivery of social and cultural services and community development initiatives.

We believe the economic benefits which flow from an expanding international interest in Indigenous Australian culture as reflected in Australian Tourism Commission research, and the export opportunities offered by well marketed Indigenous audio visual productions, has yet to be fully explored and tested.

Future opportunities for growth

Indigenous creative workers have shown remarkable ingenuity in production output. **Appendix B** lists known Indigenous productions between 1990-2000, totalling around 316 hours and including children's TV, documentaries, feature films, TV long form and short form drama.

Building on this *The Belonging Network* report outlined a menu of core programming concepts for a fully developed NIBS television service, the rationale behind these choices and indicative budgets.

Key programming genres would include a particular focus on children's programming, a morning and evening news program, news analysis, education, culture (including, critically, language learning), drama and sitcoms, music programming, sport and infotainment. News and news analysis and children's programs are seen as critical: News because the presentation of a differentiated perspective on Indigenous aspirations and experience is seen as important for both Indigenous and non Indigenous viewers; children's because it is crucial to deliver quality educational programming to the next generation of Indigenous and non Indigenous children.

To counter the extreme loss of Indigenous languages to Australia, a NIBS television service would take a leading role in language maintenance and development, through entertainment and education programs, and introduce more non-Indigenous Australians to Indigenous languages.

Productions would be primarily outsourced. We believe the production "menu" at Appendix C provides a basis for and a pointer to future growth opportunities for the Indigenous creative sector.

See Appendix C.

See also *The Tri Media Newsroom: Chapter 17, pp 124, The Project Report. See also Starting NIBS News, Workstream Report, Chapter 12, pp 163*

Infrastructure and bandwidth needs

The Tools for Empowerment report delivered a practical and comprehensive blueprint, and migratory strategy, for a tri media National Indigenous Broadcast Service.

Regulatory issues relating to a NIBS were discussed, spectrum, licensing and transmission recommendations were made, an online presence planned, mechanisms for the delivery of material to playout centres and broadcast methods were outlined. See *The Workstream Report* on the CD Rom for detailed information on these issues, including the indicative financial plan.

In the interim, Indigenous Screen Australia's recommendations for a two step approach to consolidating Indigenous production capacity and will create structures around which Indigenous audio visual production and management skills can more effectively expand.

In the first stage an SBS multichannel will provide a major distribution outlet and other transmission possibilities in remote Australia, through for example the RCTS Imparja, will be explored. Meanwhile Indigenous broadcasters will need to devise a strategy to secure spectrum on a national basis and this will require a keen watching brief on the dynamic digital television environment. It is a critical priority if Indigenous content creation is to realise its full potential.

The creation of a broadband presence is critical and both the SBS Indigenous Television Service, and the subsequent independent entity, would be natural focal points to pursue the opportunities enabled by the federal government's broadband development strategy announced in June, 2003. A broadband online presence would build on existing Indigenous media websites, including those of remote media associations.

Greater broadband access would enable:

- The secure distribution of pre production material as happens amongst the various sectors of production and post production sectors in metropolitan areas.
- The ability to securely forward film and television 'rushes' for viewing nationally and internationally.
- The establishment of an Indigenous creative industry portal for marketing, e-commerce, Indigenous industry linkages, industry information, digital rights management.

- A platform for distributing broadband specific and repurposed television content - particularly short form
- A promotional platform for Indigenous digital content
- Access to online industry training and education modules.

Developing the current Indigenous skills base

The Belonging Network report enumerated the training requirements of Indigenous creatives, and the *Workstream Report* detailed costs.

Indigenous people saw training as crucial to their continued professional development and the success of any future NIBS.

The training plan combined workplace based production training and mentoring, modular training for management and financial training and some tertiary courses for key organisational operatives, such as technical engineers. The plan envisages strong linkages with relevant training institutions. The Australian Film Television and Radio School, for examples, was very responsive to further discussing training needs and targeted scholarships with a constituted NIBS.

In a migratory strategy to a NIBS the Indigenous Television Service, (potentially attached to a public broadcaster), and the independent Indigenous audio visual production entity which follows, can play a key role in drawing up an training and development strategy with training institutions whilst determining the ongoing skills and experience required by Indigenous professionals.

***See Training and Development: A key to success, The Project Report, pp 90.
See also The Workstream Report, Indicative Financial Plan, pp190.***

Linkages – Indigenous multimedia industries and the cultural/information technology sectors

The Belonging Network report acknowledged that NIBS “would come into being at a momentous time, when digitisation and the development of networks is enabling the rapid convergence of media, information technology and communications. The establishment of NIBS on the cusp of the digital transition in Australia offers both a great opportunity and a challenge.”

See *The Project Report, Chapter 13, The Digital Environment, pp107.*

Navigating the shifting sands of the digital terrestrial television environment remains a challenge for the Indigenous creative industry sector. It requires the leadership that the establishment of an Indigenous Television Service, moving to an independent entity, will provide in this process. It will also be crucial to forging deeper Indigenous linkages to the wider cultural and information technology sectors.

The experience of overseas Indigenous broadcasters

In Canada and New Zealand there is clear existing financial support for Indigenous media broadcasting.

In Canada in 1999 the most extensive Indigenous TV undertaking so far, the Aboriginal People’s Television Network (APTN) was launched. The Canadian broadcasting regulator, the CRTC, licensed the APTN as “a unique and significant undertaking” and said that a national Aboriginal channel should be ‘widely available throughout Canada in order to serve the diverse needs of the various Aboriginal communities, as well as other Canadians.’

Further, the CRTC decided that the APTN should be carried on Canada’s pay TV Services as a mandatory service in the basic tier. APTN is allowed to charge 15c per month per subscriber. As the service is distributed to about eight million cable Direct to Home (DTH) and wireless households APTN’s income from subscriptions alone is likely to be around \$CAN 14.4 million annually.

In New Zealand the Maori Broadcasting Funding Agency, Te Mangai Paho, has provided total annual funding of around \$NZ 10 million. This included \$NZ 6 million to fund the 20 Iwi-based organisations and other Maori radio services throughout New Zealand and \$NZ 4 million for programming and distribution.

Te Mangai Paho also provides \$NZ 4 million annual funding for Maori television programs broadcast by TVNZ. The New Zealand broadcast production funding body, New Zealand On Air, also supports Maori production.

A separate country wide Maori TV service is under review by the New Zealand government following the closure of a pilot service broadcasting to the Auckland regions in 1998 after governance and financial problems. The government has commenced the process of identifying government-reserved UHF frequencies and seeking a suitable Maori broadcast enterprise to operate the service on a contract basis.

See The Project Report, Chapter 18, The experience of overseas Indigenous broadcasters, pp 128. See also The Project Report, Chapter 7, A NIBS Television service: Building a new TV presence, pp 578.

Aligning government support with future trends and opportunities

To fully align government support with future opportunities offered by the emerging critical mass of Indigenous creative industry skills, the potential to produce a range of unique, quality content appealing to international and national audiences Indigenous Screen Australia recommends the following:

1. That the federal government initiates a migratory strategy **now** in building toward a television service for a National Indigenous Broadcast Service as outlined in *Tools for Empowerment, a National Indigenous Broadcasting Service*, a feasibility study prepared for ATSIC in 2000.
2. That, as part of the migratory strategy, options for interim housing of an Indigenous Television Service be fully and expeditiously explored, including the possibility of establishing the Service within or in partnership with an existing public broadcaster. The investigation would consider issues such as availability of spectrum (whether analogue or digital), the capacity of existing facilities to house the Service and synergies between the objectives of the host/partner and the Indigenous Television Service. The Service's Indigenous Director, working within broad Indigenous advisory group guidelines, would commission and buy Indigenous content and schedule programming. This recommendation falls well within the history of Indigenous/national broadcaster relationships: Throughout the 1990s SBS and the ABC supported the production of Indigenous programs by Indigenous staff and independent producers and are both required to broadcast Indigenous programs under their respective Charters.

3. That, subject to a final agreement on how the Indigenous Television Service is housed and delivered, the federal government make a special start up funding allocation in the 2004 budget of \$9 million dollars and maintain annual funding for five financial years. If the Service is housed within or in partnership with a public broadcaster, the funding could be added to that organisation's annual budget allocation, as a separate budget line item, until the conclusion of the arrangement in 2008.
4. That the second step in a migratory path for an Indigenous television service be the formation of an independent, federally funded, Indigenous managed audio visual agency with a remit to commission content for this service, strike accords with funding agencies, source non government finance, market content in Australia and foreign territories, establish and maintain an online Indigenous creative industry portal and plan for Indigenous professional develop in partnership with key training institutions across Australia. It is expected that this agency, with its accumulated experience, will form the heart of the television strand of a National Indigenous Broadcasting Service.

APPENDIX A

Indigenous screen culture

Indigenous producer and director, Rachel Perkins defines Indigenous screen culture in the following manner:

“The use of visual storytelling is a natural expression for Aboriginal Australians, whose society is based on the oral transmission and communication of history and culture. The ease of the transition from oral traditions to visual communication is demonstrated in the extraordinary growth of Indigenous film and television in the last fifteen years. An increased access to production resources and an enthusiastic adoption of film and video production within Indigenous communities has created a vibrant Indigenous screen culture. The most prolific examples of which can be seen in remote communities where video has been embraced primarily as a vehicle for the documentation of traditional culture. But Indigenous screen culture encompasses a far greater spectrum than simple documentation or contemporary ethnographic style films. It is a diverse collection of different forms of production, broadcast and exhibition that although relatively unknown, is one of the most exciting developments in the recent history of Australian Film and Television industry.

As with other aspects of Indigenous culture, western society has attempted to define Indigenous film and the nature of an ‘Indigenous screen culture’. But as with other aspects of our culture and people, Indigenous filmmaking defies simple definitions. There is a multitude of approaches to filmmaking and a variety of environments of consumption of video and film products. Indigenous film includes most formats and genres. It can be low budget or high-end production, set in both urban, rural and remote environments, made collectively by communities or individuals and be political, commercial or artistic in content. It must also be acknowledged that Indigenous people and their films do not exist in isolation and that global influences can be seen within Indigenous film, as with any other creative expression of culture, such as music and literature.

Yet, Indigenous film does speak with a different voice, one which sets it apart from mainstream Australian film. It is distinctive but varied in style, so it is the commonality that draws this diverse body of work together which defines the heart of Indigenous screen culture.

What is perhaps unique within Indigenous filmmaking is the common perspective in the telling of stories, in the context of a shared history of Indigenous experience. Therefore, Indigenous films are enriched by layers of sub text which reflect an ancient society, which has been impacted by colonisation, but which

strives toward de-colonisation and self-determination. This provides for recurring themes or subjects within Indigenous film. Some of which include the assertion of traditional culture and the erosion of that culture, affiliation with land and the loss of land, importance of family, identity and the loss of identity, equality, self determination and colonial exploitation. All of which are the shared experience of Indigenous Australians. Today's Indigenous filmmaking is permeated with this past and in coming to terms with this past, looks forward toward the future.

Indigenous film and television products are also made for specific audiences and consumed by these audiences in a variety of situations. This ranges from small community environments to international audiences. Indigenous films are tailored to these different markets and serve different outcomes, such as education and entertainment. The opportunities for the exhibition of Indigenous film has expanded considerably. The growth in the consumption of Indigenous film and video products has also given rise to an increasing body of critical analysis of Indigenous screen culture and its role within our society.

Indigenous screen culture in Australia is part of a global movement of Indigenous people who aim to use the medium of film and television to speak through. Yet in Australia, the longevity of Indigenous screen culture and the many voices represented through this conduit still struggle to be heard. It is critical for Australians to hear these voices and understand them in order for reconciliation to be achieved. Indigenous screen culture offers this possibility and a national radio and television service will provide a platform for it to be heard and understood by all Australians for the first time."

APPENDIX B

Known local Indigenous productions made during 1990-2000

The total number of hours of locally produced Indigenous programming is estimated to be in the range of 316 hours.

Although the amount of programming is increasing there is insufficient programming in the genres of children's, drama series, language programming (except the central desert region), infotainment or sitcoms. This would need to be either produced in house or commissioned by NIBS.

Documentaries – Half Hour

No	Title	Yr	Dur
1	A Memory –NIDF	98	15
2	Apakathe	98	30
3	Artists Up Front – Gary Lee	97	30
4	Artists Up Front – Rita Mills	97	30
5	A Walk With Words	99	30
6	Blacktracker	97	30
7	Black Sheep	99	30
8	Bunjie	97	30
9	Bush Mechanics - NIDF	98	30
10	Bungarun Orchestra	98	30
11	Crim TV	97	30
12	Copyrites	99	60
13	Defining Black	97	30
14	Glad	97	15
15	Common Ground	94	30
16	From The Bush	93	30
17	Home	99	30
18	In Search of Archie	98	00
19	Kangaroo Hunters	97	30
20	Leah Purcell – A One Woman Show	98	30
21	Look Listen Speak	96	30
22	Malangi	91	30
23	Media Nomads	00	30
24	Milerum	97	30
25	Minyma Kutjara Tjukurpa	99	30
26	Missing In Alice	98	30
27	Mooditj Yorgas	-	30
28	Mungo Lady	93	30
29	Night Patrol	97	30
30	Nyawa Kulia Wangka	-	30
31	Peeping Through The Louvres	98	15
32	Photographic Memory	98	30
33	Quest For Country	93	30
34	Rites of Passage	98	30

35	Saltwater Bluesman	99	30
36	Shifting Shelter	98	30
37	Silent Legacy	98	30
38	Sissy	98	30
39	Storytellers of The Pacific	95	30
40	Tentboxing	98	30
41	This One Voice	00	30
42	This River Still Got Song	99	30
43	Uncle Kiddo	99	30
44	Unheard Colours	95	30
45	Vanish	97	30
46	Voices of The Future	96	30
47	Willigens Fitzroy	99	30
48	Wrap Me Up In Paperbark	99	30
Total hours 24			

Documentaries – One Hour:

1	Balgo Art	97	60
2	Buffalo Legends	97	60
3	Fish	98	60
4	Freedom Ride – Blood Brothers	93	60
5	Land of The Little Kings	00	60
6	Malpas	00	60
7	Marn Grook Football Dreaming	97	60
8	Milli Milli	96	60
9	Speak Quiet Speak Strong	95	60
10	Stolen Generations	00	60
Total 10 hours			

Children's TV

1	The Dreaming 1	Aboriginal Nations for ABC	94	13 x 12	2.6
2	The Dreaming 2	Aboriginal Nations for ABC	95	13 x 12	2.6
3	The Dreaming 3	Aboriginal Nations for ABC	96	13 x 12	2.6
4	The Dreaming 4	Aboriginal Nations for ABC	97	13 x 12	2.6
5	The Dreaming 5	Aboriginal Nations for ABC	98	13 x 12	2.6
6	The Dreaming 6	Aboriginal Nations for ABC	99	13 x 12	2.6
7	Manyu Wanna	Warpiri Media	94	6 x 30	3
8	WAAMA series	WAAMA	-	N/Avail	
Total Hours					19

Short Drama:

1	Box	97	10
2	Empire	97	10
3	Fly Pee Wee Fly	97	10
4	Fragments	99	10
5	Grace	98	10
6	Journey	97	10
7	My Bed Your Bed	98	10
8	My Colour Your Kind	98	10
9	Passing Through	98	10
10	Payback	97	10
11	Promise	98	10
14	No Way To Forget	97	10
15	Redreaming The Dark	98	10
16	Roundup	97	10
17	Tears	98	10
18	Two Bob Mermaid	97	10
19	Warm Strangers	97	10
Total hours 3.5			

Long Form Drama:

1	Confessions Of A Headhunter	99	30
2	Saturday Night Sunday Morning	99	30
3	I Don't Wanna Be A Bludger	99	30
4	Saturday Night Sunday Morning	98	30
5	Wind	98	30
6	Strike Your Heart	97	30
7	Poison	91	30
8	My Mother My Son	99	30
9	Dust	99	30
10	Road	99	30
11	Harry's War	98	30
12	Nice Coloured Girls	92	30
13	Night Cries	95	30
14	One Night The Moon	00	60
Total hours 7.5			

Features:

1	Beneath Clouds	00	90
2	Radiance	98	90
3	Bedevil	-	90
4	Jindalee Lady	-	90
Total hours 6			

Television Series:

1	ICAM Series 1	SBS	96	13 x 30	6.5
2	ICAM Series 2	SBS	96	13 x 30	6.5
3	ICAM Series 3	SBS	97	13 x 30	6.5
4	ICAM Series 4	SBS	97	13 x 30	6.5
5	ICAM Series 5	SBS	98	13 x 30	6.5
6	ICAM Series 6	SBS	98	13 x 30	6.5
7	ICAM Series 7	SBS	99	13 x 30	6.5
8	ICAM Series 8	SBS	99	13 x 30	6.5
9	ICAM Series 9	SBS	00	13 x 30	6.5
10	ICAM Series 10	SBS	00	13 x 30	6.5
10	Blackout Series 1	ABC	88	21 x 30	10.5
11	Blackout Series 2	ABC	89	24 x 30	12
12	Blackout Series 3	ABC	91	5 x 30	2.5
13	Blackout Series 4	ABC	92	6 x 30	3
14	Blackout Series 5	ABC	92	22 x 30	11
15	Blackout Series 6	ABC	93	12 x 30	6
16	Blackout Series 7	ABC	94	12 x 30	6
17	Nganampa Anwernekenhe Series 1	CAAMA/Imparja	88	13 x 30	6.5
18	Nganampa Anwernekenhe Series 2	CAAMA/Imparja	89	13 x 30	6.5
19	Nganampa Anwernekenhe Series 3	CAAMA/Imparja	90	13 x 30	6.5
20	Nganampa Anwernekenhe Series 4	CAAMA/Imparja	91	13 x 30	6.5
21	Nganampa Anwernekenhe Series 5	CAAMA/Imparja	92	13 x 30	6.5
22	Nganampa Anwernekenhe Series 6	CAAMA/Imparja	93	13 x 30	6.5
23	Nganampa Anwernekenhe Series 7	CAAMA/Imparja	94	13 x 30	6.5
24	Nganampa Anwernekenhe Series 8	CAAMA/Imparja	95	13 x 30	6.5
25	Nganampa Anwernekenhe Series 9	CAAMA/Imparja	96	13 x 30	6.5
26	Nganampa Anwernekenhe Series 10	CAAMA/Imparja	97	13 x 30	6.5
27	Nganampa Anwernekenhe Series 11	CAAMA/Imparja	98	13 x 30	6.5
28	Nganampa Anwernekenhe Series 12	CAAMA/Imparja	99	13 x 30	6.5
29	Nganampa Anwernekenhe Series 13	CAAMA/Imparja	00	13 x 30	6.5
30	Songlines Series 1	ABC	97	9 x 30	4.5
31	Aboriginal Australia Series 1	CAAMA	91	13 x 30	6.5
32	Aboriginal Australia Series 2	CAAMA	92	13 x 30	6.5
33	Aboriginal Australia Series 3	CAAMA	93	13 x 30	6.5
34	Corroboree Rock Series 1	Imparja	96	6 x 30	3
35	Corroboree Rock Series 2	Imparja	97	6 x 30	3
36	Corroboree Rock Series 3	Imparja	98	3 x 30	1.5
37	Corroboree Rock Series 4	Imparja	00	4 x 30	2
38	Message Stick Series 1	ABC	99	8 x 30	4
39	Message Stick Series 2	ABC	00	8 x 30	4
40	The Mary G Show	Goolari Media	00	6 x 30	3
41	Guitar Palyers of Broome	Goolari Media Ent	00	6 x 10	1
Total Hours					246

From The Belonging Network, Workstream Report CDRom, Page 59

APPENDIX C

NIBS Television Service - Program Outlines and Rationale

(This is based on optimal funding for a fully matured television service. Such maturation may take up to five years from the establishment of a National Indigenous Broadcast Service. It is assumed the programming will be broadcast on a six hour rotating schedule).

Key programming genres would include a particular focus on children's programming, a morning and evening news program, news analysis, education, culture (including language learning), drama and sitcoms, music programming, sport and infotainment.

NIBS management will determine television's key broadcast strategies, such as a concentration on children's programming and news, periodically. For the purposes of this feasibility study, we have therefore not provided fully developed program proposals. Rather we have allowed for the adequate budgeting of sufficient programming. This will allow NIBS to deliver a reasonably comprehensive service to be determined by management in line with the draft NIBS charter.

Following are program outlines and costing information on core programming for a six hours rotating schedule of a full scheduled NIBS television service:

News Department:

The following programs would be produced by the news department:

Evening News

Format: Nightly News Bulletin

Screening: 6:30pm to 7pm- Daily

A significant percentage of the daily run down will be filled with Indigenous based news stories, covering local, national and international politics, economic development, sports and weather.

The program will have a unique and readily identifiable Indigenous focus. Major non-Indigenous national stories will be accessed through licensed acquisition agreements.

As NIBS TV expands, a daily morning news may be produced.

Indigenous News Analysis Program

Format: 50 x 30 minutes per week

Screening: Thursdays 7:30pm-8:00pm with Repeats on Saturdays @6:00pm.

A half-hour investigative program, covering topics ranging from politics, sociology, economics, business, history, agriculture and technology. The current affairs program will be presenter driven and studio based, and will bring insight, context and depth of understanding to major topical events. The program may involve studio audiences, debate and discussion panels depending upon issues at hand.

**News Department Costing:
Total Ongoing Operational cost\$3.52m**

Children's Programming Department:

NIBS should aim to produce children's programming with a strong emphasis on Indigenous and multi-cultural content. NIBS could investigate a co-production with other children television producers with shared copyright and broadcasting rights.

"Good Morning Kids"

Format: 52 x 60 minutes episodes per year

Screening: 7-8am week days

A kids program featuring a mascot and host presenting an interesting mix of entertainment, cultural and educational programming, augmented by the best selection of acquired cartoons. The acquisition of short, interesting cultural stories from BRACS and other Indigenous producers will add to its uniqueness.

"After School Kids"

Format: 52 x 30 minute episodes per year

Screening; 4-5pm Daily

An afternoon kids program targeted at lower and upper Primary School audience (5-12 year olds). The programme content could include acquired children's programming such as Warlpiri Media's, *Manu Wana* Series. The show will also feature various Aboriginal people telling illustrated dream-time stories.

"Kids Week End"

Format: 52 x 60 minutes episodes per year

Screening: 7am-9am Saturdays and Sundays

A children's animation and entertainment program targeted at the 5-12 year age group. The program will feature special guests, such as bands, cartoonists, interesting professionals, Indigenous teachers, actors, scientists etc with an emphasis on Indigenous achievement, vocational opportunities, culture, language, bush foods and kinship Services.

Total estimated costs for Children's programming

Excluding staff costs: \$.67m.

Drama Department:

Drama is the most expensive of all programming to produce. Costings for drama vary significantly, depending on content and approach. In order to estimate a total budget for this area, we have given broad costings for a number of nominal projects. These costings are set in lower range of average Australian budgets. The NIBS drama department would access programming by both acquiring and commissioning, through a mix of pre-sales and investment. Approaches to financing drama differ according to the sort of drama being produced.

Commissioned Drama:

Government guidelines for the support of drama determine that only certain projects receive their support. This includes features and shorts. In these cases we have provided for the industry average pre-sales for broadcast licenses. The remaining project funding would be contributed through government funding, distribution advances against sales and foreign pre-sales.

It should be noted that government funds are already committed to a heavily dependent 'mainstream' Australian industry. The emergence of NIBS will put further pressure on these already limited funds. Agreement would have to be sought from government film agencies to increase the level of their current commitment for Indigenous projects in order to support the commissioned programming proposed in this report. NIBS TV should initiate discussions with the relevant Ministers and departmental officers on the option of additional funding being made available to the film bodies to accommodate additional indigenous production demand.

All other drama formats such as sitcoms, drama series and mini-series, must be funded in alternate ways. This is usually done by broadcasters providing greater investment and license fees towards the total production budget. Larger investments can be potentially offset by pre-sales to foreign territories. In these instances the broadcaster would take greater rights and a share of copyright and investment. Given that it is difficult for mainstream Australian drama series to be pre-sold overseas, we have anticipated a worst case scenario (no overseas pre-sales) and have budgeted for their entire cost.

Acquired Drama:

Where drama has already been produced, it can be acquired for considerably less than providing pre-sales. SBS pays \$100/minute on average for programming it acquires from foreign and local sources. It is anticipated that NIBS will pay fifty dollars per minute for acquired programming.

It is important to note here, that the current supply of Indigenous drama is not significant at all and will be depleted by the end of the first year of television broadcasting. The current supply will be broadcast in the first year. Quite clearly, it will be necessary for NIBS TV to commission the majority of drama for broadcast, rather than acquire it. Local programming supply is not sufficient.

Drama Department – Programming:

It is proposed that the following drama content might be scheduled annually and financed in the following way.

Sitcom	Fifty half hour episodes	Fully funded	Australian
Drama Series	Fifty half hour episodes	Fully funded	Australian
Feature films	Three feature length films	Pre-sales	Australian
Feature films	Twenty two feature length films	Acquired	Australian - O/S
Shorts films	Ten at ten minutes	Pre-sales	Australian
Shorts films	Ten packages of sixty minutes	Acquired	Australian - O/S

Drama Programming Budget:

Project	Finance	Package	External \$	NIBS \$	Total Other	Total
Sitcom	Total funds	50 x 75	-	3,750	-	3,750
Series	Total funds	50 x 100	-	5,000	-	5,000
Features	Pre-sale	3 x 2,500	3 x 2250	750	6,750	7,500
	Acquired	22 x 9	-	198		
Shorts	Acquired	50 x 3	-	150	-	150
	Pre-sale	10 x 150	10 x 112.5	375	1,125	1,500
Total Drama Programming Budget				10,233	7,875	18,108

The proposed annual budget for the NIBS Drama Department with staff input is \$10.563m..

Documentary Department:

The overwhelming majority of documentaries produced in Australia are known as 'accords'. The accords are agreements between the Film Finance Corporation (FFC) and both national broadcasters, for the FFC to provide the remaining finance after pre-sales advances for a set number of documentaries produced annually. SBS offers nine one-hour accord pre-sales annually, while the ABC offers fourteen.

Documentary production outside the accord arrangements is minimal. When they occur, funding is usually a combination of FFC funding with Australian and international pre-sales. The Australian Film Commission and the state agencies also provide script development funding and invest production funds in a small amount of documentaries each year. These non-accords accounts for a small proportion of documentaries produced each year.

Film Australia also has an accord with the ABC to produce ten documentaries each year. The budgets are usually higher than those of the FFC accords. This relationship could be extended to NIBS and the consultants recommend that this option be explored by NIBS TV management.

As with drama, agreement with government film agencies to enter into documentary accords is crucial in delivering drama production. Government funds are again limited in this area, perhaps even more than in drama and a strategy to negotiate accords should be a high priority for NIBS management.

Commissioned Documentary:

Industry standards set pre-sales are thirty percent of the total budget which is paid in advance. Budgets are usually around two hundred and fifty thousand per hour. Programs produced through pre-sales would give NIBS TV a broadcast license for a certain amount of transmissions over a limited period of time (usually three runs over five years, the first run exclusive and the second two non-exclusive).

The following budgets are based on these established standards.

Acquired Documentary:

Approximately 34 hours of local documentaries are available to acquire locally. As with already produced drama, the consultants believe existing documentaries could be purchased for fifty dollars per minute.

Documentary Department – Programming:

For the NIBS Documentary department, a mix of commissioned and acquired documentary programming is proposed. We have allowed for fifty weeks of half-hour documentaries and fifty weeks of one-hour documentaries.

Forty Half hour Documentaries Acquired
 Ten Half hour Documentaries Commissioned
 Forty Half Hour Documentaries Acquired
 Ten One Hour Documentaries Commissioned

Documentary Programming Budget:

Project	Finance	NIBS Fund	Other Funds	Total NIBS	Total	Total Other
Half Hours	Acquired	40 x	-	60,000	-	60,000
	Pre-sale	1,500	10 x	375,000	1,125,000	1,250,000
Half hours		10 x	112,500			
		37,500				
One Hours	Acquired	40 x	-	120,000	-	120,000
	Pre-sale	3,000	10 x	750,000	1,750,000	2,500,000
One Hours		10 x	175,000			
		75,000				
Total Documentary Budget				1,305,000	2,875,000	3,930,000

The proposed NIBS Total Documentary budget is \$1,635m. (The ABC’s annual documentary budget is around \$6 million.)

Language & Culture Department

ATSIC provides resources toward Indigenous languages throughout Australia. These funds are already extremely limited. Although funds could be sought from other government sources, it is important for NIBS Language programming to be fully funded from within its own budgets.

Language and Culture Department - Programming

It is proposed that two series per year, relating to one language per state, be produced. Each language would have a series targeted at early childhood audiences and adults. A new language would be introduced from each state per year. This would enable the eventual broadcast of a considerable body of language learning across the many Australian languages.

