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**Standing Committee on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
Affairs
Inquiry into Indigenous Employment**



**Submission by Central Australian Aboriginal Media Association
(CAAMA)
April 2005**

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Thank you for inviting CAAMA to participate in this inquiry.

CAAMA (Central Australian Aboriginal Media Association) Aboriginal Organisation is owned by the Aboriginal people of Central Australia and was established in 1980. The founders framed its objects on the social, cultural and economic advancement of Aboriginal people.

The clear mandate of the organisation is to promote Aboriginal culture, language, dance and music, while generating economic benefits such as training and employment of Aboriginal people in order for them to progress into the mainstream employment market.

CAAMA comprises of Radio Broadcasting, RIBS facilities and an Independent Music Label. Our subsidiaries CAAMA Productions (Film and TV), Shops and Imparja Television indicate the scope of our expertise.

- **CAAMA Radio 8 KIN-FM.**
Radio 8 KIN-FM provides a 24-hour Indigenous radio service to regional rural and remote people throughout the footprint area with Indigenous Broadcasters.

Our footprint area reached a potential audience of over 500,000 people in Australia.

This is a unique service in Australia and ensures Aboriginal people have access to a service that most people take for granted.

- **Broadcasting in Remote Aboriginal Communities Service (RIBS)**
The RIBS program trains and equips four major Central Australian communities to broadcast in their own language. Technical support and resources provide the communities of Papunya, Ntaria (Hermansburg), Ltyentye Apurte (Santa Teresa) and Areyonga with local broadcasting of programs by the community, including those of 8 KIN FM and other locally produced programs.

- **CAAMA Music.**

CAAMA Music is a unique record label with a high quality-recording studio, producing Indigenous music for the world. CAAMA Music supports and promotes Aboriginal music as an expression of Aboriginal culture.

CAAMA Music produces and provides 60% of Indigenous Music currently being broadcast on radio stations nationally.

Approximately 90% of CAAMA Music recordings are in Indigenous language.

- **Corporate Services Group.**

CAAMA Corporate services co-ordinates and provides a range of operational management assistance to the CAAMA Group.

- **Technical Services**

CAAMA's Technical Services unit supports the work of CAAMA by ensuring that the infrastructure on the Aboriginal communities is in good working order. It also provides Information and broadcasting technological services to communities, especially in conjunction with the CAAMA Broadcasting in Remote Aboriginal Communities Services (RIBS) program

- **CAAMA Shops Pty Ltd**

CAAMA Shop is a thriving retail and wholesale outlet, operating from our main premises. CAAMA Shops operates on a commercial basis, while supporting and distributing the CAAMA Music label to promote the role of music in the social and cultural lives of Aboriginal people. Products sold by CAAMA shops include videos, artifacts, music, literature and craft created by Aboriginal people of the region.

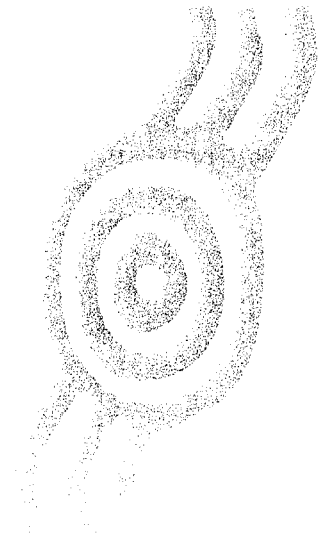
- **CAAMA Productions Pty Ltd**

CAAMA Productions is the largest Indigenous owned film and television production house in Australia producing world-class programming on Indigenous culture, life style and issues for the world. CAAMA Productions offers a complete production service with Indigenous Producers, Directors, Camera crews and Editors.

CAAMA Productions promotes Indigenous culture worldwide by showcasing Indigenous film and develops and enhances the craft of filmmaking among Indigenous people.

- **IMPARJA Television Pty Ltd**

Imparja Television is a commercial Television Station operating from the rural location of Alice Springs. The purpose of this entity is to private Aboriginal and other people living in remote areas with the ability to view television.



Terms of Reference

- (1) Recommend to the government ways this can inform future policy development***
- (2) Assess what significant factors have contributed to those positive outcomes identified including what contribution practical reconciliation has made.***

(1) Recommend to the government ways this can inform future policy development

The leaders of Australia need to be committed to meeting its primary objective of improving Indigenous employment prospects of Indigenous Australians particularly those in remote and regional Australia.

The Government needs to make a commitment to an Indigenous Employment programme for regional Australians recognizing that it would take several years for the programme to reflect positive outcomes.

Getting and keeping jobs for people who are less skilled and less job-ready requires considerable commitment and innovation from our leaders.

We would like to recommend to the government the following ways they can develop future policy with the outcome of full time employment for Indigenous people:

- Consolidate all current Indigenous employment and training programs into one department for easy access by organizations and companies. Currently funding is fragmented and makes it difficult for the private and community sector to access funding and resources on ways they can assist in obtaining indigenous employment.
- If you are not familiar with and part of the training networks you will have no idea of what training programs are available to better assist your business and employee needs.
- It is difficult for CAAMA to access and identify funds for our training needs. Currently we go to the following organizations for funds:
Arrernte Council- CDEP Funding
DEWR STEP Funding
Apprentice Centre Apprenticeship funding
We can't deliver specialized training to our staff, as funding is not available under the above programs
The Charles Darwin University has multimedia modules but does not have the trainers to deliver. This is very detrimental for the advancement of our staff's progress, and for our staff to receive accredited training we need to send them interstate money in which CAAMA does not get funding for outside of the NT.
There is no flexibility in the above programs, each program has restrictions on how the money is spent.
- Develop a National Indigenous Employment Strategy which would include:
 - Three to four year on the job Indigenous training

- Three to four year accredited Training
 - Funding for the trainees to obtain specialized accredited training, which may not necessarily be associated with increased income to the trainee.
 - Allowance for An Indigenous mentor for the Indigenous trainees
 - Flexible Programs as long as milestones and outcomes are being achieved.
- Offer the National Indigenous Employment Strategy to both the private and community sector with greater incentive for the private sector to employ Indigenous people.
 - Outcomes from the strategy are to implement moving participants in Community Development Employment projects (CDEP) into open meaningful training and employment.
 - Increase CDEP Allowance. Currently there is no financial incentive for Indigenous people to go on CDEP. The need to make more allowance available for those undertaking accredited training to make it attractive to undertake training.
 - There needs to be an increase in the traineeship/apprenticeship wages. Students earn more working weekends at supermarkets then they do on apprenticeship/traineeship wages.
 - Programme improvements are also needed to respond to the significant barriers faced by Indigenous people. These improvements include:
 - Promoting innovation and proactive forms of support that help retain Indigenous people in jobs;
 - Improving recruitment into projects, and high quality mentoring programmes which improve take-up and retention, and assist employers;
 - Encouraging new employers to participate in the Indigenous Employment strategy and providing a significant level of guidance to these employers.
 - Educate employees of the social, economic and cultural issues faced by Indigenous people and offer support to these employees.
 - A major challenge is to improve overall effectiveness in a rapidly growing Indigenous population. The years ahead will see a significant inflow of predominantly young people into the labour force.
 - The continued success of Indigenous employment requires a strong focus on helping younger job seekers.

- Careful targeting of employers and ongoing development of employer commitment is needed to maximise the impact of Indigenous employment particularly through avenues such as using experienced employers to help less skilled Indigenous people.
- Establish host Indigenous organizations with larger resources to support employers
- The government needs to focus on education and training of employers and employees in order for the employment of Indigenous people to increase.
- The incentive for providers to pursue education or training outcomes could be strengthened through linking the education/training outcome fee to milestones reflecting retention in and completion of education or training.
- Using Indigenous-specific networks to recruit workers is more successful than mainstream recruitment methods.
- There is scope to improve take-up by increasing the use of Indigenous networks and Indigenous organisations in recruitment
- Formal mentoring seems to lead to better retention rates
- Encouraging private sector companies to take responsibility for ongoing workplace change is vital to ensuring a sustained impact of Indigenous employment over the longer term.
- Structured Training and Employment Projects. The flexibility and variability among projects has resulted in a range of employment-related outcomes, such as completion of training or a job subsidy period, or sustained employment outcome after assistance.
- To increase Indigenous employment and training opportunities the government should include criteria for Indigenous organizations to employ and train Indigenous people.
- Collaborate with organizations who already have experience and expertise in providing training services for Indigenous people
- Government to review how they advertise Indigenous positions using Indigenous media through television, RIBS, radio and print

(2) Access the significant factors have contributed to those positive outcomes identified including what contribution practical reconciliation has made.

CAAMA has an active Aboriginalisation policy, 65% of our employees are Indigenous.

We currently have 35 employees, 8 are trainees.

Over the past 25 years CAAMA has trained over 100 Indigenous people.

CAAMA is a critical incubator for Indigenous trainees who have progressed to receive national and international recognition by their peers in the film and broadcasting industries.

Examples of successful Indigenous trainees of CAAMA are included in Attachment A.

CAAMA's Indigenous trainees were part of the Major Indigenous Employment Strategy from 1988-1993.


The Major Indigenous Employment Strategy was implemented during 1988-1993 comprised of:

- Three year on the job traineeship at CAAMA in all the CAAMA Group Departments
- Three year accredited training through Australian Film Television and Radio School
- Attachments to Industry projects i.e. Feature Films, Live Outside Radio and Television Broadcasts
- Full time Mentor for the Indigenous Trainees for three years
- Flexible Training program

The significant factors for the success of CAAMA training and employing Indigenous people has been:

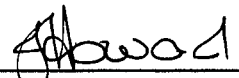
- Strong commitment by the government during 1988-1993 to train and employ Indigenous people in remote and regional Australia.
- Implementation of the Major Employment Strategy 1988-1993.
- Understand Indigenous peoples social, economic and cultural issues
- Flexible learning environment

Signed



Priscilla Collins
CEO

Signed



Jennifer Howard
Corporate Services
Manager

ATTACHMENT A

SUCCESSFUL CAAMA INDIGENOUS TRAINEES

Rachel Perkins
Writer/Director
Winner of AFI for Best Director

Beck Cole
Writer/Director
"Plains Empty Film" selected for Screening at Sundance Film Festival USA

Allan Collins
Director/Cinematographer
Winner of AFI for Best cinematographer
Winner of IF Award for Best Cinematographer
First Indigenous Cinematographer to receive honor of accreditation to the Australian Cinematography Society 2004

Danielle McLean
Writer/Director
Winner of AFI Best Original Screenplay

Warwick Thornton
Director/Cinematographer
"Green Bush" film winner of Berlin Film Festival

Erica Glynn
Writer/Director
Nominated for AFI for Best short Film

Steven McGregor
Writer/Director
Nominated for AFI for Best Original Screenplay

David Tranter
Director
Film Selected for Screening in IMAGEation Van Couver

Jason Ramp Director/Cinematographer
Currently doing is Master of Arts at Australian Film Television and Radio School

Tricia Moreton Thomas
Actress
Feature Film Radiance

Priscilla Collins
Executive producer
Nominated for AFI for Best Original Screenplay

Peter Clarke
On Line Editor
Imparja Television

Angela Bates
Journalist
SBS Television

SMURF
Indigenous Tutor
Batchelor College

Selena Sullivan
Indigenous Training Manager
Batchelor College