



**2017  
CONVERGE**  
OUR MEDIA  
CONNECTS

**ACTIVITIES AND OUTCOMES REPORT**  
CONVERGE NATIONAL ABORIGINAL & TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER MEDIA SUMMIT





22–24 MAY 2017 | MBANTUA–ALICE SPRINGS

# CONVERGE

NATIONAL ABORIGINAL & TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER MEDIA SUMMIT

**APURTE IRRETYE-KE  
IWERRE ANYENTE-LE**

**MEETING TOGETHER, MOVING IN ONE DIRECTION**

## ACTIVITIES AND OUTCOMES REPORT

**DIVERSE PEOPLE, STORIES AND LANDS CONVERGE TO INVIGORATE THE POWERFUL  
AND CONNECTED VOICE OF ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER MEDIA**

The Indigenous Remote Communications Association acknowledges the traditional ownership of the land on which CONVERGE was held. We pay our respects to Arrernte Elders past, present and future, and to the Elders past, present and future of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander nations of those attending CONVERGE.







CONVERGE 2017  
OPENING NIGHT

# ACTIVITIES

## WELCOME TO COUNTRY

Delegates were welcomed to Arrernte country by Elder Kumalie Riley and dancers during the Monday night Opening Ceremony, celebrating the local culture of Eastern and Central Arrernte. Apurte irreye-ke iwerre anyente-le translates as meeting together and moving in one direction in the local Arrernte language of Mbantua (Alice Springs).



**“WE ARE THE NEW CUSTODIANS, WE ARE WALKING IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF THE PIONEERS TO ENSURE OUR INDUSTRY KEEPS GROWING AND EVOLVING TO ACHIEVE ITS FULL POTENTIAL.”**

JOHN ‘TADAM’ LOCKYER (Pilbara and Kimberley Aboriginal Media and Outgoing IRCA Chairperson)

## RECOGNISING THE PIONEERS

Throughout CONVERGE the pioneers of the industry were celebrated and acknowledged for their work over the past 40 years in the struggle for the rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders to create our own media – to have their voices heard on the airwaves, their faces and stories on film and TV, their journalism and images in print and online. Many of these people have passed on and are greatly missed. They were essential to building our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander media sector to what it is today – a vibrant, strong and independent voice.

## OPENING NIGHT AND DELEGATES DINNER

Delegates gathered on Monday night for the opening of CONVERGE with entertainment provided by Broome legend Stephen ‘Baamba’ Albert and strong desert woman Catherine Satour. On the two evenings of CONVERGE, delegates listened to stories, history and shared memories of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander media.

## ABOUT CONVERGE

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander broadcasting and media workers from across Australia met up at CONVERGE, the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Media Summit, in Alice Springs on Monday 22 May - Wednesday 24 May 2017. CONVERGE set out to:

- Acknowledge the achievements of the pioneers who established and built our national Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander media industry over the last 40 years.
- Develop the key plans of an updated policy framework for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander media. The framework seeks to take into account sector growth and diversity, convergence and multi-media multi-platform delivery, impact of media industry changes, and the broader policy environment.
- Unify the sector around a common direction and shared values.
- Introduce IRCA as the new national peak body and seek input into its functions and priorities to effectively represent our sector and support its development.

Background to CONVERGE:

- There has been no updated policy since 1993 despite several efforts. There have been major changes with convergence, a changing media landscape, broadband and mobile access, vastly increased media choices for audiences, social media use, and sponsorship moving to online and targeted delivery. Policy has not kept up, constraining the development of our sector.
- Funding for broadcasting has not increased in real terms in 20 years, yet the number of funded organisations and services has increased significantly.
- Our sector is already evolving to meet community needs but this is not reflected or supported by current policy.



# SPEAKERS, PRESENTERS AND MCs

Thank you to all of our MCs, facilitators, speakers and presenters for their valuable contribution toward CONVERGE being a great success, setting the future direction for our media industry.

## KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

John 'Tadam' Lockyer (Pilbara and Kimberley Aboriginal Media and Outgoing IRCA Chairperson)  
 Gary Powell (Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet)  
 Dot West (Goolarri Media and IRCA Board)  
 Christopher Roper (Australian Government, Department of Employment)  
 Paul Ah Chee (Alice Springs Desert Park)

## MCs

Lola Forester (Koori Radio)  
 Patrick Ah Kit (Central Australian Aboriginal Media Association)  
 Sylvia Tabua (Torres Strait Islanders Media Association and IRCA Board)

## FORUM FACILITATOR

Dot West (Goolarri Media and IRCA Board)

## MEDIA HISTORY PRESENTERS

Adam Manovic (National Indigenous Television)  
 Neil Turner (Pilbara and Kimberley Aboriginal Media)  
 Dot West (Goolarri Media)  
 Gavin Ivey (Koori Radio)  
 Jodie Bell (Goolarri Media)  
 Kaava Watson (Brisbane Indigenous Media Association)  
 Karl Hampton (Central Australian Aboriginal Media Association)  
 Naomi Moran (Koori Mail)  
 Ralph Saunders (Mid North Coast Indigenous Broadcasters Association)  
 Romina Fujii (Torres Strait Regional Authority)  
 Valerie Martin (Pintubi Anmatjere and Warlpiri Media and Communications)

## INDUSTRY SHOWCASE PRESENTERS

Debbie Carmody (Tjuma Pulka)  
 Gavin Ivey (Koori Radio)  
 Jodie Bell (Goolarri Media)  
 Karl Hampton (Central Australian Aboriginal Media Association)  
 Michael Taylor (Pintubi Anmatjere and Warlpiri Media and Communications)  
 Ralph Saunders (Mid North Coast Indigenous Broadcasters Association)



KUMALIE RILEY



DOT WEST



PATRICK AH KIT & LOLA FORESTER



SYLVIA TABUA & NEIL TURNER



GARY POWELL



DELEGATES AT WORK



KARL HAMPTON



JOHN 'TADAM' LOCKYER



ROMINA FUJII



KAAVA WATSON



MICHAEL TAYLOR & VALERIE MARTIN



JODIE BELL



NAOMI MORAN



BAAMBA



CATHERINE SATOUR



RALPH SAUNDERS



GAVIN IVEY



DEBBIE CARMODY



JENNIFER NIXON



ADAM MANOVIC



PAUL AH CHEE



CHRISTOPHER ROPER



# INTERACTIVE FORUMS

Four interactive forums, facilitated by Dot West, enabled delegates to contribute their knowledge and experience in defining the key values and importance of our industry as well as the key challenges and opportunities.

## INTERACTIVE FORUM 1 OUR MEDIA

In groups, delegates built on the phrase 'Our Media...' to describe the shared value propositions for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander media sector from the perspective of the communities we serve. While acknowledging the diversity in the sector, delegates set out to identify the common themes that define and unify the sector. What makes Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander media services unique and critical? Why are our organisations best placed to meet our communities' diverse and evolving communication needs?

## INTERACTIVE FORUM 2 OUR STORIES

Delegates broke into groups to share case studies of how identified values are effected through our media organisations and community activities. Delegates shared examples of how our organisations or services are actively implementing the 'Our Media' statements. Delegates shared case studies of how our organisations are providing essential services and emergency information, connecting and empowering their communities, creating meaningful jobs, preserving local histories, strengthening culture and language, building awareness and understanding, and developing leaders.

## INTERACTIVE FORUM 3 OUR INDUSTRY

Delegates working in groups undertook a SWOT analysis to identify the key issues and challenges for the sector, as well as the strengths and opportunities going forward. This process helped provide the ground work for a sector-driven policy direction drawing from the values identified in Forum 1.

## INTERACTIVE FORUM 4 OUR FUTURE

Key questions were addressed: Where to next? How can we work together to build our industry in a convergent era? What can IRCA do to progress the key actions coming out of CONVERGE?

**"OUR MEDIA IS VERY IMPORTANT TO OUR COMMUNITIES – IT KEEPS OUR LANGUAGES AND CULTURE STRONG, CONNECTS OUR COMMUNITIES AND FAMILIES AND PROVIDES MEANINGFUL JOBS AND SKILLS. OUR MEDIA CREATES AND SHARES THE STORIES, NEWS AND MUSIC WE WANT TO HEAR AND PROVIDES A TRAINING GROUND FOR OUR YOUNG LEADERS"**

SYLVIA TABUA, (Torres Strait Islanders Media Association and IRCA Board)

## DELEGATE ORGANISATIONS

Aboriginal Resource and Development Service (ARDS) / Yolngu Radio  
Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education  
Central Australian Aboriginal Media Association (CAAMA)  
Community Broadcasting Association of Australia (CBAA)  
Community Broadcasting Foundation (CBF)  
Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet  
Ethos Global Foundation  
Gadigal Information Service Aboriginal Corporation (Koori Radio)  
Goolarri Media (6GME)  
Imparja Television Pty Ltd  
Indigenous Community Television (ICTV)  
Koori Mail  
Mid North Coast Indigenous Broadcasters Association (2TLP Ngarralinyi)  
National Indigenous Television (NITV)  
Ngaanyatjarra Media (NG Media)  
Nunga Wangga Aboriginal Corporation  
Pilbara and Kimberley Aboriginal Media (PAKAM)  
Pintubi Anmatjere Warlpiri Media and Communications (PAW Media)  
Spots and Space  
Tjuma Pulka Media (6PAC)  
Top End Aboriginal Bush Broadcasting Association (TEABBA)  
Torres Strait Islander Media Association (TSIMA)  
Waringari Media Aboriginal Corporation (6WR)  
Wujal Wujal RIBS



# OUTPUTS

CONVERGE delegates developed a series of outcome statements on the themes of values, strengths, industry Impact, concerns and next steps.

## VALUES

Delegates affirmed the core values of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander broadcasting and media production through the following statements:

- 1 Our media is our voice
- 2 Our media keeps culture strong through the generations
- 3 Our media creates, connects and empowers
- 4 Our media is our identity
- 5 Our media is archiving our history
- 6 Our media provides meaningful jobs and skills
- 7 Our media is preserving our languages
- 8 Our media entertains
- 9 Our media builds bridges with the wider community
- 10 Our media connects our communities
- 11 Our media is culturally appropriate for local communities
- 12 Our media educates

Other values were identified in the forums, including saving lives, developing leaders, providing an essential service, providing relevant news and content, creating partnerships, promoting digital inclusion and technology access.

## STRENGTHS

Delegates identified the core strengths of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander broadcasting and media production as:

- 1 Independence and self-management
- 2 Clarity of identity
- 3 Resilience
- 4 Cultural respect and acknowledgement
- 5 Capacity to build bridges with non-Indigenous communities
- 6 Trust of local communities
- 7 Connection with local communities
- 8 Language broadcasting and production
- 9 Commitment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander media workers
- 10 Commitment to development of communities and individuals

## INDUSTRY IMPACT

Delegates spoke with pride of their work in our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander broadcasting and media industry. Our industry is seen as a success story, demonstrating the vision and skills of Aboriginal and Torres Strait peoples, supported through community commitment and government investment. Our industry:

- Has more than doubled in size and employment levels in last 20 years.
- Has grown from nothing 40 years ago to a strong independent voice.
- Has created jobs growth, skills, education, health, governance and leadership outcomes.
- Has high level of generated income and diversification of service delivery.
- Delivers frontline services that meet the needs of communities.
- Enables and promotes other service delivery in communities.

The pioneers of our industry have paved the way for our industry to grow to what it is today:

- Radio services able to reach around 320,000 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander persons, including around 100,000 very hard to reach people in remote Indigenous communities, or approximately 47% of the Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population.
- Over 230 radio broadcast sites across Australia.
- A free to air national TV service, a satellite TV service reaching 240,000 remote and regional households, and a national radio and news service.
- A multimillion dollar industry with over 35 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community owned and managed not for profit media organisations.
- Capacity to be a preferred supplier for all government messaging to our communities.
- The most relevant and appropriate service for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander audiences with the highest listenership, community engagement and local ownership of all media services.
- In remote communities, the most reliable and ubiquitous radio and media services.
- Media services delivered in the first language of many remote people.



# OUTPUTS

## CONCERNS

Delegates expressed their concerns about a range of challenges and pressures in their continuing provision of quality media. These included concerns about:

- 1 Lack of up-to-date policy: There has been no updated Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australian government policy since 1993 despite several report recommendations and major changes with convergence and new modes of communication.
- 2 Declining funding: Funding for broadcasting has not increased in real terms in 20 years, while the number of funded organisations and services has increased significantly in that time.
- 3 One-size-fits-all: The model of 'one-size-fits-all' still pervades government decision-making, impeding the development of community relevant activities, programs and services.
- 4 Racism: Racism remains a continuing issue in the development of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander broadcasting and media, creating structural barriers for skills development, employment and career pathways, program implementation and alternative income streams.
- 5 Breaching of cultural protocols: Breaches of cultural protocols by non-Indigenous news outlets and media producers making media about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities still occurs.
- 6 Loss of archives: The analogue media archives produced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander are in danger of being lost due to recording media deterioration, player obsolescence and lack of funding for community-managed collections.
- 7 Mainstream media encroachment: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities are being increasingly inundated by mainstream media that does not meet specific cultural and language needs. Meanwhile, funding for relevant Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander broadcasting services is declining.





# OUTCOMES

## COMMUNIQUE

Delegates committed to the development of a Communique to Government addressing the sector's concerns about the decline in funding and consequent capacity challenges to meet new audience needs and to incorporate new technologies.

[http://irca.net.au/sites/default/files/files/Communique%20Converge%202017\\_0.pdf](http://irca.net.au/sites/default/files/files/Communique%20Converge%202017_0.pdf)

## NEXT STEPS FOR IRCA

### COMMITMENTS WERE MADE BY IRCA TO:

- 1 Advocate on behalf of the sector on the key priorities outlined by delegates at CONVERGE.
- 2 Produce, with sector input, a set of policy statements to advance the development of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander broadcasting and media industry.
- 3 Develop an Our Media cause campaign to promote the value and importance of the sector to its communities, non-Indigenous communities and government.
- 4 Establish sector Advisory Groups for knowledge sharing and addressing of key issues in the areas of content development, employment and skills development, technology and innovation, and archiving.
- 5 Establish an annual national conference and an annual awards program.
- 6 Establish an educational webinar program around key industry development topics.
- 7 Expand the IndigiTUBE app for promoting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander radio services and content sharing within the industry.
- 8 Promote industry outcomes and inform members through a regular online newsletter, social media posts and website.
- 9 Progressively increase the range of member services to meet industry needs.



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**IRCA** [IRCA.NET.AU/CONVERGE](http://IRCA.NET.AU/CONVERGE)  
Indigenous Remote Communications Association  
A POWERFUL AND CONNECTED VOICE

# OUR MEDIA CONNECTS

Funding and in-kind support



 **#CONVERGE17**

