



Enhancing opportunities for employment and participation in remote communities

PORTFOLIOS: EMPLOYMENT AND WORKPLACE RELATIONS; FAMILIES, COMMUNITY SERVICES AND INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS

Why is this important?

- The Australian Government is committed to reducing welfare dependency and making unconditional welfare in remote communities a thing of the past.
- Active participation in work-related activities is the first step towards economic independence for income-support recipients living in remote areas.
- Many individuals living in the approximately 1200 remote communities and outstations do not benefit from the job preparation and placement services available to job seekers in other parts of Australia, because they are exempt from any activity testing to get their welfare payments.
- This measure will accelerate the lifting of Remote Area Exemptions from activity testing. All exemptions will be removed by 2010–11.
- The measure will ensure that people living in remote areas have access to training and other work-related activities that will improve their chances of gaining employment.

Who will benefit?

- All Indigenous people and their communities in remote areas that are currently exempt from activity testing will benefit.

What funding is the Government committing to the initiative?

- The Australian Government will provide an additional \$23.0 million over five years to speed up the work being undertaken in 2006–07.

What have we done in the past?

- \$18 million was provided in the 2006 Budget to support the removal of Remote Area Exemptions across Australia.
- Since July 2005, exemptions have been completely removed in 42 communities (plus 20 associated outstations). An additional 12 communities (plus 113 associated outstations) are in the process of having exemptions removed and consultations have commenced in a further 17 communities (plus 49 associated outstations).

When will the initiative conclude?

- This measure will conclude on 30 June 2011, when all Remote Area Exemptions will have been removed.