Implementing the Remote Jobs and Communities Program

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What might a community driven program look like ?

- Diverse providers, different approaches in different places
- Lots of local people employed and engaged in delivery
- Strong sense of ownership and control at the local level
- Staff and money being invested in the things that matter most on the ground
- Trust in contracting relationship, lots of listening in Canberra

Designing the RJCP

- Before RJCP: JSA, CDEP, DES, IEP
- August 2011 Discussion Paper identifies four problems
  - Services fragmented, goals not aligned
  - Programs unresponsive to community needs and aspirations
  - Communities and community members confused by multiple providers
  - CDEP places underutilised

Market driven employment services don't address the issues specific to remote Australia
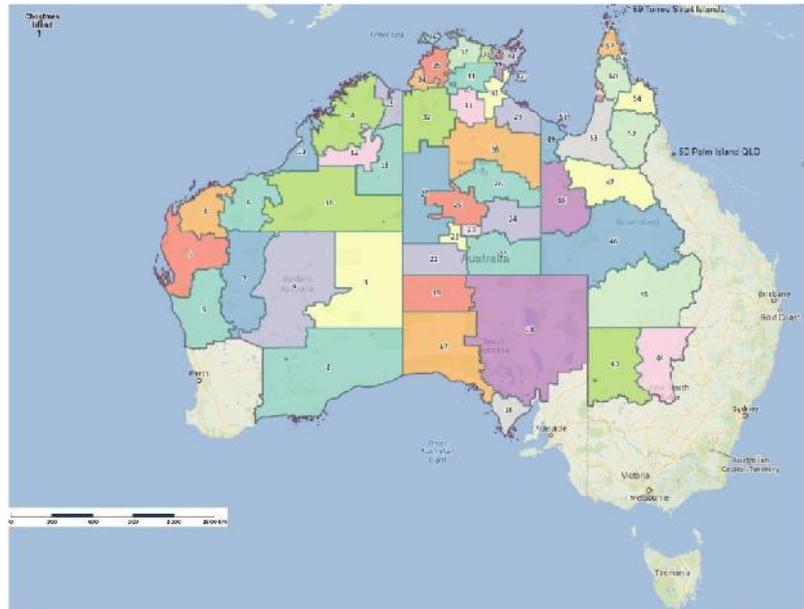
Key features of the new system

- Replaces JSA, CDEP, DES and (initially) IEP
- Single provider in each region
- 'local people and providers work together to set goals and priorities through Community Action Plans'
- Community Development Fund
- Individuals required to engage in 'meaningful activities' from day one - generally 20 hours pw
- Monthly contacts
- Payment based on activity and outcomes

32,000 JSA participants, representing around 4% of the total JSA caseload (about 1/3 of the JSA Indigenous caseload)
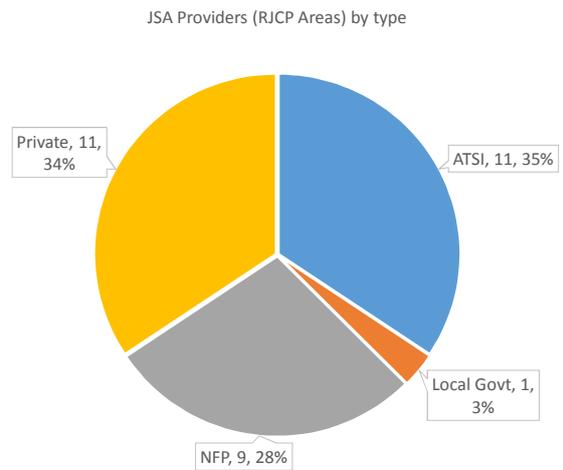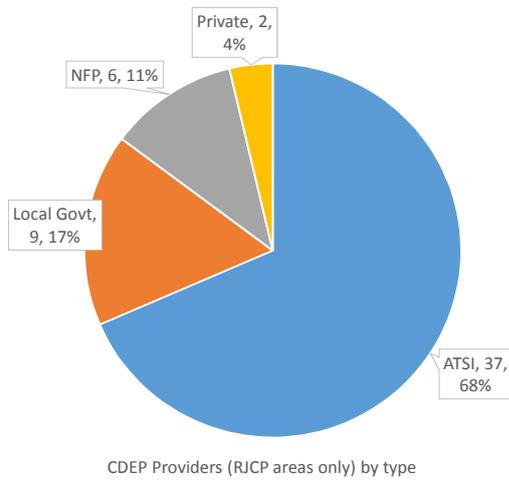
10,500 CDEP participants, about 1/3 on wages

1200 Disability Employment Services participants

Program started 1 July 2013

Before RJCP – CDEP & JSA providers in relevant areas

Private, 2, 4%

NFP, 6, 11%

Local Govt, 9, 17%

ATSI, 37, 68%

CDEP Providers (RJCP areas only) by type

JSA Providers (RJCP Areas) by type

Private, 11, 34%

ATSI, 11, 35%

Local Govt, 1, 3%

NFP, 9, 28%

Lead RJCP Providers and groupings

Number of providers and unique delivery groups

Mixed JV, 3
PRIV, 6
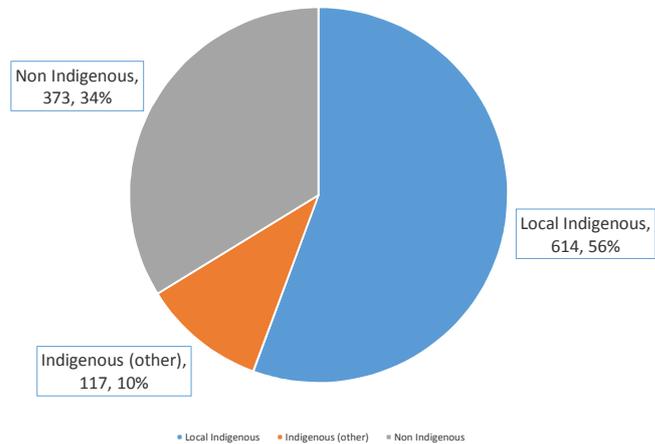NFP, 5
LG, 4
ATSI, 22
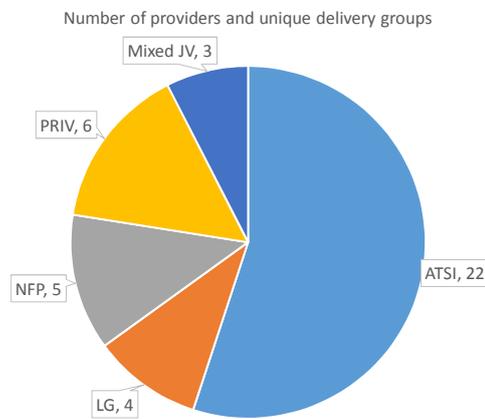
Biggest challenges in communities

- Not enough jobs for people who want them
- Lack of investment in local services, jobs and people
- People too used to welfare for nothing

Most effective solutions
- Creating new jobs
- Improving literacy and numeracy
- Developing jobs in culturally based enterprises

Employees delivering the RJCP

Profile of employees working on RJCP

Non Indigenous, 373, 34%

Local Indigenous, 614, 56%

Indigenous (other), 117, 10%

• Local Indigenous   • Indigenous (other)   • Non Indigenous

Delivering the program?

• Most staff spend most of their day in front of a computer (77%)

• The IT system guides most of our day to day work (74%)

• A lot of our work with job seekers is about compliance, not what they want or need (71%)

Average caseload 1:100

Dealing with Government

- Government changes the rules of the game too often (65%)
- Government is too focussed on compliance and not enough on community development

Local PM&C
- Overall positive view of local PM&C
- Helpful and responsive
- 95% agree that they are compliance focussed
- Not able to achieve rule changes when needed

Trying to get changes

- 21 organisations said that they had put forward proposals for change
- 3 said that they had either got some minor changes or, in one case, CDF funding
- 23% agreed that local PM&C staff were able to achieve rule changes when needed
- More people disagreed with the statement that government listens and acts on our ideas than agreed with it

Some issues to think about

- Forrest Review implications
- Impact of higher activity requirements and breaching
- Impact of more interventions in personal and family life
- Role of Indigenous organisations (a 'natural experiment')
- Relevance of business processes designed for JSA
- Lack of voice of RJCP providers (esp ATSI) on policy