



First Nations Digital Inclusion Advisory Group – Meeting 5

Communique

The First Nations Digital Inclusion Advisory Group held its fifth meeting on Tuesday 7 November, 2023 on Larrakia Country, in Darwin.

Attendees included the Hon. Michelle Rowland MP, Minister for Communications, members of the Advisory Group and Digital Inclusion Expert Panel, representatives from Telstra and NBN Co, and representatives from across the Australian Government.

Minister's Update

Minister Rowland provided an update on broader priorities in the communications portfolio, including support for the community broadcasting sector, the recently announced review of the Universal Service Obligation (USO), and progress of round 3 of the Regional Connectivity Program.

The Minister indicated she is considering the recommendations of the Advisory Group's initial report and will continue to engage with Advisory Group as we move towards developing a roadmap for digital inclusion in 2024.

Recent meetings and outcomes

Members discussed the outcomes of recent meetings and engagement with stakeholders, including in Adelaide, Alice Springs and Darwin.

This included a presentation by Ms Naomi Moran at the Community Broadcasting Association of Australia (CBA) Annual Conference, a workshop with representatives from the First Nations media and broadcasting sector, and participation at the Aboriginal Economic Development Forum.

The Advisory Group discussed the positive reception from stakeholders to the initial report and noted the importance of working closely with stakeholders and communities in exploring how the initial report's recommendations can progress digital inclusion for our First Nations communities.

Hearing from the telcos

Representatives from Telstra and NBN Co attended the meeting. Telstra outlined its current work to explore ways to support improved affordability, particularly for customers on prepaid services.



NBN Co discussed its recent work around data mapping and how data can help support a better understanding of connectivity challenges in remote areas. NBN Co also provided the Advisory Group with an update on the School Student Broadband Initiative.

Next Steps

The Advisory Group will be finalising their 2024 workplan over the coming weeks. This will include identifying opportunities for stakeholder engagement over the next year, as well as the Advisory Group's schedule of meetings.

This engagement will help inform the development of a longer-term roadmap to support First Nations digital inclusion, which is a key focus for the Advisory Group in its next phase of work.