



CDEP in the Northern Territory Emergency Response

Questions and Answers

What are the changes that have been announced?

To support the Northern Territory emergency response, the Community Development Employment Projects (CDEP) programme in the Northern Territory will progressively be replaced with real jobs, training and mainstream employment programmes.

How do these changes support the broader Northern Territory Emergency Response which is focused on the safety of children?

The changes to CDEP in the Northern Territory are a key part of the broader emergency response to protect children, make communities safer and normalise services for Indigenous communities.

The changes will assist to normalise service provision in communities across the Northern Territory providing opportunities to create real economies and job opportunities.

Moving CDEP participants onto income support will allow a single system of quarantining to apply to welfare payments. This initiative will stem the flow of cash going towards alcohol and substance abuse and ensure that money meant for children's welfare is used for that purpose.

Where will the changes apply?

CDEP will be progressively removed in all locations across the Northern Territory on a community by community basis.

What will happen to CDEP in other locations?

These changes are specific to the Northern Territory.

How will people from remote communities find jobs?

An audit of job opportunities in 52 Indigenous communities in the Northern Territory conducted by the Local Government Association of the Northern Territory (LGANT) identified 2955 real jobs. Only 44 per cent of these jobs were held by Indigenous people. Vacant positions were identified within most communities, particularly for the positions of Aboriginal health workers, Aboriginal community police officers, general groundsmen and cleaners, childcare workers and in professional positions such as specialist teachers, nurses and tradespersons including electricians, mechanics, carpenters and builders.

There are also opportunities in a range of industries across the Northern Territory including construction, mining, pastoral, retail, hospitality and tourism.

Through comprehensive jobs strategies developed with each community, local people will be trained and supported to move into these positions.

Jobs will also be created across the Northern Territory through moving service delivery away from reliance on CDEP. CDEP currently delivers essential government services in many communities. By working closely with the Northern Territory Government, many CDEP participants will be transitioned from CDEP into real jobs.

People will also be supported to take up work in other locations with stronger job opportunities through mobility assistance.



Are the changes to CDEP going beyond prescribed communities?

Similar changes have already been successfully applied to CDEP in Darwin. More than 90 per cent of existing CDEP participants in the Northern Territory live in the prescribed areas. The Australian Government has decided that it is better for the long term employment prospects of all Indigenous Australians in the Northern Territory to also extend these new servicing arrangements to the minority living outside the prescribed areas.

The changes provide for better long term employment prospects for Indigenous Australians and form part of an overall economic development strategy for the Northern Territory.

What will happen to community services provided by CDEP?

The Department of Employment and Workplace Relations (DEWR) will work with relevant organisations and agencies to develop a plan to ensure that essential services continue to be provided.

When will this happen?

The changes will progressively commence from September 2007. The Australian Government will first ensure sufficient Work for the Dole, training places and other employment services are available in communities to make the transition as seamless as possible.

Participants

How will CDEP participants be informed about the changes?

DEWR and Centrelink will help CDEP participants understand how the changes affect them and what their options will be. DEWR will work with CDEP providers, Centrelink and providers of Australian Government employment services to help move participants to other appropriate services and payments.

CDEP participants will be sent a letter setting out the specific details of the changes and DEWR representatives will meet with participants to provide them with more information.

These strategies form part of a comprehensive plan to communicate the changes to participants, CDEP providers, community groups and providers of Australian Government employment services.

What will the change mean for CDEP participants?

CDEP participants in the Northern Territory will progressively move off CDEP participant payments into real jobs or onto income support.

Participants who move onto income support will have access to a range of employment and training activities including Structured Training and Employment Projects (STEP) and Work for the Dole.

Who will help CDEP participants move into work or training?

DEWR will work closely with CDEP and Work for the Dole providers, STEP brokers and other providers of Australian Government employment services through this transition process to ensure that CDEP participants receive the best assistance to meet their needs.

Can CDEP participants still continue in their current activities?

Participants will be able to continue in current activities until other arrangements are in place. Where appropriate, CDEP activities will be transitioned into real jobs, businesses, STEP or Work for the Dole activities.

How do CDEP participants apply for income support?

Former CDEP participants will be able to apply for income support through the normal process of registering with Centrelink. Once an application is received, Centrelink will assess each individual and determine their eligibility for Newstart Allowance or other payments.

What will be expected of people who move onto Income Support?

Most people who receive income support payments will have to take part in activities like looking for work, training or participating in Work for the Dole to get their payment.

Will there be any change to CDEP participants' income?

The type and amount of income support that participants are entitled to will depend on individual circumstances, for example age and whether they have children, so there may be a change in income.

Will CDEP participants get any assistance to transition to income support?

Existing CDEP participants in the Northern Territory may be eligible to receive a Northern Territory CDEP Transition Payment. This payment will assist eligible individuals to manage any changes in income that may result from their move to income support. New participants who join CDEP after 23 July 2007 will not be eligible for a transition payment.

How much will the Northern Territory CDEP Transition Payment be?

The calculation of the Transition Payment for each individual will take into account average CDEP earnings as at 23 July 2007 compared with the amount of any income support entitlement once CDEP payments cease.

How long will former CDEP participants receive the Northern Territory Transition Payment for?

Former CDEP participants may be eligible to receive this payment until 30 June 2008 depending on their circumstances.

Will the Transition Payments be subject to quarantining?

The Northern Territory CDEP Transition Payment will form part of income support payments so will be subject to the same quarantining arrangements as other income support payments.

Organisations

What is the impact on CDEP providers?

This change will see CDEP providers supported to move progressively from delivering CDEP activities to other arrangements on a community by community basis.

Some CDEP providers will move to delivering other employment services within communities. This may include becoming a Structured Training and Employment Project (STEP) broker or a Work for the Dole sponsor. Other CDEP providers will also be supported to develop their business activities. All providers will be assisted to make the most appropriate transition.

What will happen to CDEP contracts in the Northern Territory?

All CDEP providers in the Northern Territory currently have a three month Programme Funding Agreement with DEWR.

A new PFA will be offered to current CDEP providers that will provide funding for the ongoing delivery of critical CDEP activities until other arrangements are in place.

What do CDEP providers need to do for participants?

CDEP providers have an important role in supporting participants to prepare for and move into employment or make the transition from CDEP participant payments to income support.

They need to ensure participants actively engage in CDEP activities while they continue in the programme.

How will CDEP providers be supported to transition from CDEP provision?

DEWR will work with affected CDEP providers to develop a comprehensive transition plan to assist them with this process. Organisations will be assisted to identify the full impact and costs of transitioning away from the delivery of CDEP services.

Where organisations consider they are unable to manage the costs of transition, they may apply to DEWR for assistance.

Applications will be treated on a case-by-case basis according to:

- > the merit of the application; and
- > the organisation's capacity to meet any costs from their own or other sources.

How should CDEP providers manage the payment of participant entitlements?

DEWR will work with organisations to develop strategies for managing leave and other participant entitlements.

What will happen to CDEP businesses?

DEWR will work closely with each CDEP provider to identify and support CDEP activities that could develop into viable businesses.

Organisations may also consider applying for assistance with transitioning business activities through Indigenous Business Australia's business programmes or the Indigenous Small Business Fund.

What will happen to assets used in delivering CDEP?

Each CDEP provider's contract sets out the conditions under which assets have been provided to them. DEWR will work with CDEP providers to determine the appropriate action to take regarding CDEP-funded assets. This will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

What will happen to participants on host agreements?

DEWR will be working with CDEP providers and employers to achieve the best results for participants in host employment arrangements.

Assistance will be available to transition participants into ongoing jobs through Wage Assistance, STEP and Job Network.

Structured Training and Employment Projects (STEP)

What is the STEP broker panel?

The STEP broker panel is funded by DEWR. These brokers help businesses to employ and retain Indigenous job seekers. STEP brokers also provide tailored support and assistance for Indigenous job seekers to get into work.

What types of assistance could be provided to Indigenous job seekers and employers by STEP brokers?

Brokers can deliver STEP in a very flexible way, incorporating the needs of both job seekers and employers. The nature of the activities is negotiated between DEWR and the broker and is set out in individual contracts. These activities must be structured, lead to employment opportunities wherever possible and be tailored to the local job market.

Brokers could be contracted to provide activities that:

- > assist employers with pre-employment support services. These can include vocational training and recruitment strategies. These may also provide pre-employment assistance to job seekers who are not yet ready for employment or training;
- > assist employers with post-employment support such as mentoring;
- > place eligible Indigenous job seekers directly into jobs; and
- > assist employers and job seekers by providing specific vocational training either before being placed into employment or as part of a new job placement.

Indigenous job seekers may access STEP broker services and mainstream employment service providers at the same time.

How can prospective brokers apply?

The Australian Government will run a third open tender process in the Northern Territory to accommodate the need for more brokers as a result of the changes to CDEP in the Northern Territory. This will provide job seekers and employers with more STEP brokers to help place Indigenous people into work.

The tender process will be open and conducted in accordance with the Commonwealth Procurement Guidelines.

Details of this tender will be made available shortly.

How will brokers be paid?

Brokers will be paid under contracts with a strong emphasis on placing Indigenous Australians into jobs. Funding will be flexible, negotiated individually and reward organisations that place job seekers into jobs.

How is the STEP broker contract structured?

Organisations on the STEP broker panel will enter into a Deed of Standing Offer with DEWR. Contracts will then be negotiated with selected brokers. These will outline the specific services to be provided by each broker.

Is there any difference between current brokers on the STEP panel and any who may be appointed during the third open tender?

No. All brokers appointed to the panel are subject to the same conditions, regardless of when they were appointed to the panel.

Work for the Dole

What is Work for the Dole?

Work for the Dole is a work experience programme that provides structured activities that enhance a participant's employment prospects, vocational skills and their ability to actively and effectively participate in the workforce. The programme also develops participants' abilities to work as part of a team, take directions from a supervisor, work independently and communicate effectively.

Work for the Dole activities assist communities and are approved and monitored by Community Work Coordinators and delivered through not-for-profit organisations, for example community organisations and local government, to generate outcomes that involve and benefit local communities.

There might be activities that help with landscaping or cleaning up the local area, preparing food or helping teachers.

How do CDEP participants in the Northern Territory move into Work for the Dole?

CDEP participants who move onto income support will have access to Work for the Dole activities, training and a range of employment services. Representatives from DEWR and CDEP and Work for the Dole providers will assist CDEP participants to make this transition.

Will CDEP activities be replaced by Work for the Dole activities?

Some CDEP activities will transition into Work for the Dole activities where this is appropriate. Existing Work for the Dole activities can continue and new activities can be developed to assist with the emergency response (for example cleaning up communities).

How much do job seekers get paid for doing Work for the Dole?

Job seekers participating in Work for the Dole receive an extra \$20.80 each fortnight on top of their income support payment.

How can CDEP providers apply to become Work for the Dole sponsors?

CDEP providers can enter into arrangements directly with Work for the Dole providers to become activity sponsors.

What will these changes mean for Work for the Dole providers?

Work for the Dole providers will be involved in establishing new activities to support the emergency response. Work for the Dole providers will be encouraged to enter into sponsorship arrangements with CDEP providers where appropriate.

What will the changes mean for other employment service providers?

CDEP participants may register with Job Network and other mainstream employment programmes. Providers of Australian Government employment services will be expected to provide appropriate support for these job seekers.

It may also be possible for job seekers to participate in Structured Training and Employment Projects (STEP) and in another employment programme at the same time. The employment services provider and the broker will work together to achieve the best results for the participant. These participants must meet the requirements of both service providers.

What will the changes mean for employers?

DEWR will work with CDEP providers and employers to move CDEP participants in host employment arrangements into jobs.

A range of support will be available to employers to take on new Indigenous employees including Job Network services, Wage Assistance and STEP brokers.

The STEP brokerage model will provide employers with employees to fill their available jobs. Services for employers under these new arrangements will include:

- > pre-employment support services. These may include training and recruitment plans;
- > employment placement services to assist the placement and retention of Indigenous Australians in their workplace; and
- > mentoring services to help employers retain Indigenous employees.

More information

There will be information sessions across the Northern Territory in the following locations:

Location	Venue	Date	Time
Darwin	Darwin Entertainment Centre	26 July 2007	10:00am
Tennant Creek	Karguru Conference Room—Tennant Creek Training Centre	26 July 2007	1:30pm
Nhulunbuy	Arnhem Club Function Room	26 July 2007	1:30pm
Alice Springs	Voyages Resort	27 July 2007	11:00am
Katherine	Government Centre, First Street	27 July 2007	11:00am
Wadeye	Job Futures Conference Room	30 July 2007	10:30am

Or call the Northern Territory Emergency Response Hotline **1800 333 995**.