Annual
Report
2015

IRCa

Indigenous Remote
Communications Association

L-R Noel Heenan, Nelson Conboy, Brian Gordon, Elizabeth Katakarinja, Annette Victor, Bernard Namok, Tadam Lockyer, Sylvia Tabua

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

It's been a busy year for IRCA during a period of change and uncertainty. At times like this IRCA plays a critical role for its members. Through the introduction of the Indigenous Advancement Strategy, IRCA provided leadership and assisted RIMOs to achieve successful outcomes.

IRCA co-hosted with QRAM a fantastic festival in the NPA region of Cape York, delivered a series of Archiving skills workshops across the country, coordinated the RIMO RIBS Audit, auspiced Broadband for the Bush Alliance, and ran several key planning workshops with IRCA Board and the RIMOs.

Through the IAS, IRCA maintained it`s funding for 2015/16, but has been asked by Minister Scullion to expand its representation to become the national peak body from July 2016. The Board have welcomed this endorsement of IRCA's work and decided to take a steady but courageous step forward. We are keen to support an inclusive and cooperative approach with the regional and urban broadcasting sector and other Indigenous media organisations and producers. We understand that peak bodies are grown from the ground up and want to make sure everyone feels included and their voice is represented.

IRCA met with Minister Scullion and Government agencies in March 2015. We talked about the important role remote media and broadcasting plays providing information and enabling service delivery that improves school attendance, employment and community safety. We also talked about building more digital inclusion of remote Indigenous people through IT training projects, establishing more mobile telephony and WiFi hot spots, and providing pre-paid broadband services under NBN.

We have the best media networks and strategies to effectively convey government and other messages to our communities using local voices and language. We also need to use our networks to tell the real stories in our communities. We saw how quickly people across the nation rallied behind those WA communities threatened with being closing down.

IRCA has been proactive collecting data on infrastructure, service delivery and outcomes in the sector that provide evidence to Government on investment in our industry. We need to work on our `business plans` to ensure our years of development now generate income and lead to more employment.

The Board has worked well together to set direction for IRCA. A Strategic planning workshop in June began the new direction towards becoming a National peak body and resource agency.

I want to thank all of the IRCA Board for their leadership and consideration of the needs of the broader sector. Together we need to connect to our communities across the country and harness the fabric that holds us together as a people.

John 'Tadam' Lockyer, Chairman

GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT

2014/15 has been one of the most challenging yet rewarding years for IRCA to date. The Federal Government's decision to amalgamate 150 programs into the Indigenous Advancement Strategy led to the abolition of the Indigenous Broadcasting Program and National Jobs Package, creating significant concern in the sector. IRCA provided industry planning meetings, advocacy and grant application support to ensure remote media organisations successfully navigated this transition.

During the year IRCA has delivered a number of successful projects and events including the 16th National Remote Media Indigenous Festival in the Northern Peninsula Area of Cape York that brought together 150 people for a fantastic week of showcasing, learning, networking and celebrating the achievements of the sector.

Another major project was the Archiving Strategy. Following an archiving forum at the 2013 festival, a working party was established to develop a Strategy. IRCA also coordinated a series of archiving training workshops to help communities develop skills and knowledge to manage their community collections. IRCA is currently setting up partnership agreements with national institutions to progress the Strategy and developing more training and resourcing to ensure these important cultural and social heritage collections are preserved and accessible to future generations.

Following recommendations of the Watson Review in 2014, several RIMOs have now taken over responsibility for RIBS equipment maintenance and support. Additionally, using the evidence from the 2014 RIBS Audit, IRCA co-ordinated a successful RIBS Facilities Upgrade project this year, enabling RIMOs to replace some ageing equipment in order to provide more reliable radio services and employment opportunities.

Tackling the IAS challenge demonstrated the strength and unity in the sector as IRCA Board and sector Managers worked together towards a common goal. IRCA's consultation and planning led to the development of the 'Remote and Connected: on air, online, on country' Sector Strategy, which puts legs to the Sector Vision of 'a powerful and connected voice for remote Indigenous Australia'. This strategy aims to grow remote Indigenous employment, enterprise, digital capacity and engagement through the network of Remote Indigenous Media and Communications Organisations. Within this Sector Strategy sits IRCA's 'Communic8 Plan' (submitted to the IAS), which sets out 12 projects under 8 themes (See page 5). The CommuniC8 Plan is IRCA's operational plan and supports the development of connected, creative and capable remote Indigenous people, communities and media organisations.

IRCA has maintained its funding for 2015/16 but, has been asked by Minister Scullion to expand its representation to become the national peak body from July 2016. This represents a significant change from IRCA's current mandate. The IRCA Board and membership have agreed to accept this challenge. We will take an inclusive and consultative approach once IRCA has the capacity to expand its services and representation.

Daniel Featherstone, General Manager

IRCA BOARD 2014–15

Chair	John 'Tadam' Lockyer
Secretary	Sylvia Tabua
Treasurer	Annette Victor
	Nelson Conboy
	Brian Gordon
	Karl Hampton
	Noel Heenan
	Bernard Namok
	Shane White

IRCA STAFF 2014–15

General Manager	Daniel Featherstone
Assistant Manager (p/t)	Linda Hughes
Office Administration & Membership Officer	Jacinta Barbour
Projects Officer	Liam Campbell
Projects & Research Officer (p/t)	Susan Locke
Festival Director (p/t)	Imogen Semmler
Broadband for the Bush Forum Coordinator (p/t)	Maor Bar-Ziv

ABOUT IRCA

OUR VISION

To be 'a powerful and connected voice for remote ATSI Australia'

PURPOSE

Industry development for (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders) Media and Communications

OUR VALUES

- Strong language and culture, fundamental to identity and wellbeing.
- Strong, healthy, connected communities.
- Remote Indigenous people working in culturally meaningful jobs in Indigenous owned organisations.
- Remote indigenous people creating their own media and cultural expression.
- Recognition of cultural authority as local; a diverse group of media organisations enables the full expression of the diversity of remote local Indigenous cultures and languages. One size does not fit all.

NEW IRCA ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP

Following changes to the Rule Book made at the 2014 AGM, IRCA is now accepting applications for Associate Membership following ORIC's approval.

Associate Membership is open to those over 18 who don't qualify for Ordinary Membership but who have a passion and commitment to seeing IRCA's aspirations achieved.
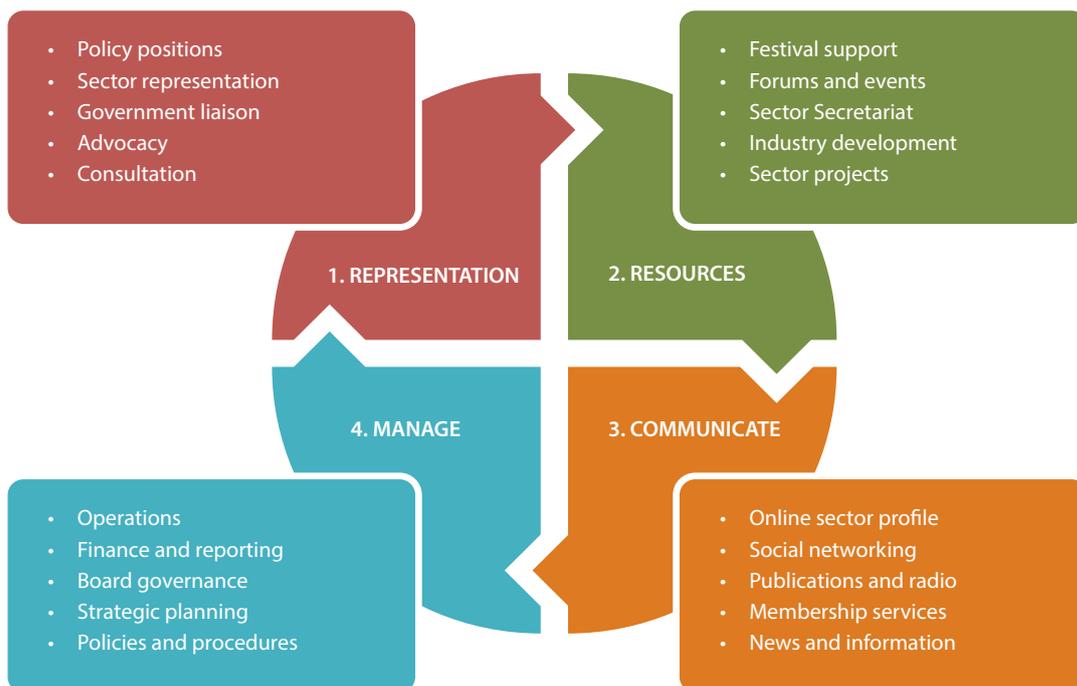
Associate Members are invited to attend the annual Festival and other events, forums and focus groups organized by IRCA. They may also attend and request to speak at Special or General Meetings. Associate Members will be kept informed of sector activities through newsletters and mailouts.

Download an application form from irca.net.au/about/members

NOW WITH DGR STATUS IRCA CAN MOVE ON PROJECTS

IRCA is now a registered charity with DGR status and is seeking to engage with philanthropic partners to support key projects identified by the sector, but sitting outside the priorities of Government. To support IRCA activities or receive information about projects contact: asstmgr@irca.net.au

OUR ACTIVITIES

1. REPRESENTATION
- Policy positions
- Sector representation
- Government liaison
- Advocacy
- Consultation

2. RESOURCES
- Festival support
- Forums and events
- Sector Secretariat
- Industry development
- Sector projects

3. COMMUNICATE
- Online sector profile
- Social networking
- Publications and radio
- Membership services
- News and information

4. MANAGE
- Operations
- Finance and reporting
- Board governance
- Strategic planning
- Policies and procedures

SECTOR STRATEGY

In response to the governments re-structuring and introduction of the Indigenous Advancement Strategy, IRCA facilitated a think tank with sector organisations to articulate a cohesive model forward. The following Communic8 Plan was proposed, discussed and endorsed.

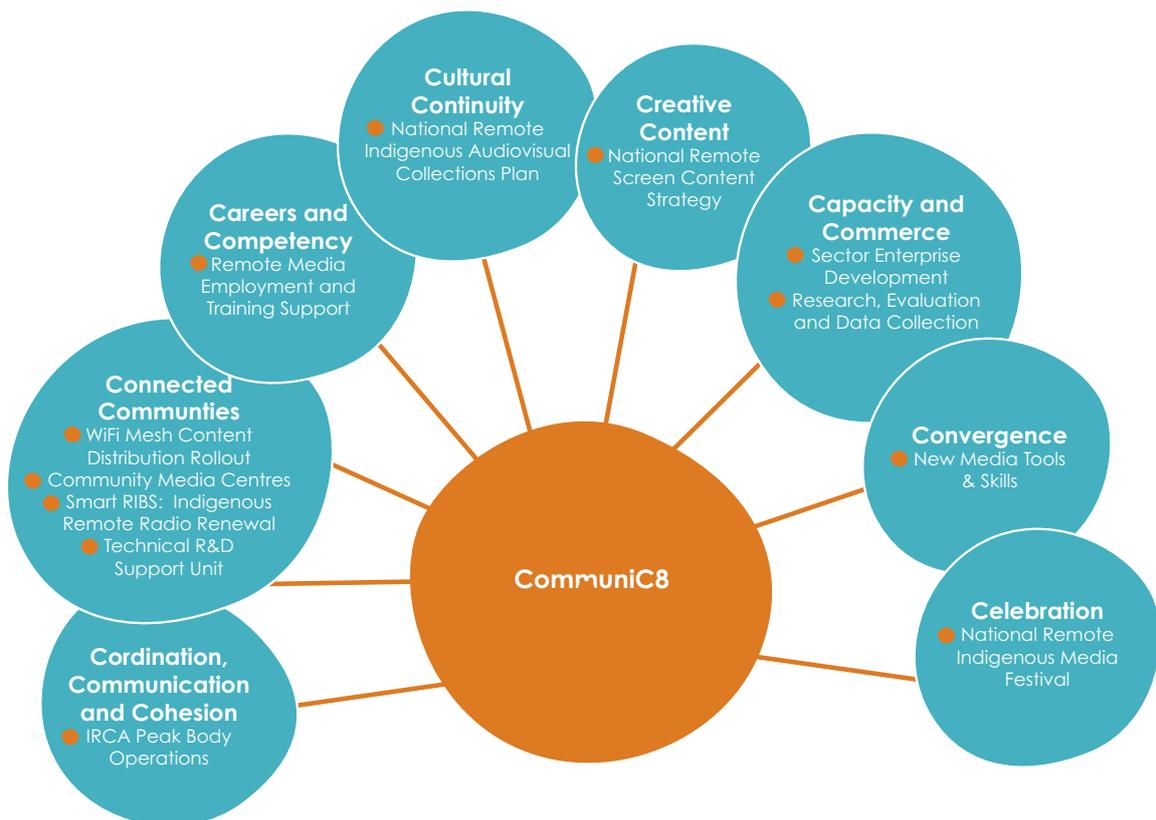The diagram below sets out the eight key values and the projects proposed under each.

PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

Landmark meetings were held in May this year, attended by all 8 RIMO Managers and representatives, eight of IRCA's nine Board members, IRCA staff and business consultant, John Mero. These meetings endorsed in principle, a process that will expand IRCA's operations to become a national peak body from mid 2016.

The IRCA Board then attended 2 days of governance training and strategic planning workshops resulting in a new IRCA Strategic Plan for 2015-18. A survey conducted with delegates during these meetings returned a strong endorsement of IRCA's activities as a peak body.

IRCA'S CommuniC8 Plan

Cultural Continuity
- National Remote Indigenous Audiovisual Collections Plan

Creative Content
- National Remote Screen Content Strategy

Careers and Competency
- Remote Media Employment and Training Support

Capacity and Commerce
- Sector Enterprise Development
- Research, Evaluation and Data Collection

Connected Communties
- WiFi Mesh Content Distribution Rollout
- Community Media Centres
- Smart RIBS: Indigenous Remote Radio Renewal
- Technical R&D Support Unit

Convergence
- New Media Tools & Skills

Celebration
- National Remote Indigenous Media Festival

Cordination, Communication and Cohesion
- IRCA Peak Body Operations

CommuniC8

Digital Archive Project

Preserving Heritage Audio Visual Collections

Remote Indigenous communities hold collections of thousands of unique video, audio, photographs and print media. The collections are managed by Indigenous organisations that aim in many cases to keep the collections on-country so that the important language and cultural content held in the collections can be managed through proper cultural protocols, as well as be accessible to the local community.

IRCA has long recognised the need to ensure that this media is preserved for future generations given its vulnerability to the harsh environmental conditions of remote communities. IRCA also recognised the need to support remote Indigenous organisations enhance the management of their collections and skills in digitisation, cataloguing and storage.

National Remote ATSI Audiovisual Collections Plan

With these needs in mind, IRCA brought together remote community organisations with state/territory and national cultural organisations to develop the National Remote ATSI Audiovisuals Collection Plan. The Plan was launched in November 2014 and provides a comprehensive strategy for working towards the preservation of these vital cultural collections. IRCA acknowledges the invaluable and extensive support provided in the development of the Plan from the

National Film and Sound Archive, the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Association and the Northern Territory Library.

Thank you also to other Working Group Members: Remote Indigenous Media Organisations, Strehlow Research Centre, Ara Irititja Archival Project, Buku-Larnggay Mulka Centre, Centre for Australian Languages and Linguistics, Indigenous Community Television, Dr Michael Christie and Lyndon Ormond-Parker.

Employment

A key component of the Plan is the recognition that these remote collections provide a strong base for culturally relevant employment in a range of skill areas, including digitisation, managing community access and cultural cataloguing.

Training Workshops

During the year four weeks of Archiving Training workshops were delivered to over 40 participants in Canberra, Darwin, Alice Springs and Broome

Standards

Standards and recommendations have now been agreed on for digitised media formats and metadata for moving images, still images and audio recordings. These will be released at the National Remote Indigenous Media Festival in September 2015.

Pic left top: Archiving Working Group members meet in Alice Springs at the Strehlow Research Centre

Pic left bottom: Archive Working group members and Trainees meet in Canberra at the NFSA

*Clint Dixon of PAKAM looking at the archiving and preserving equipment employed at AIATSIS*

Archiving Training Workshop in PAKAM offices in Broome led by Mick Newnham, NFSA

Plan Principles

Culture	• Respect and advocacy for ICIP • Cultural management & protocols • Knowledge transfer to future generations
Conservation	• Community managed collections • Sustainability through local capacity & skills • Preserve records for social and cultural heritage
Connection	• Recognise significance of community collections • Recognise value of language and culture • Local, regional, national partnerships • Access guided by community needs

Key Elements of the Plan
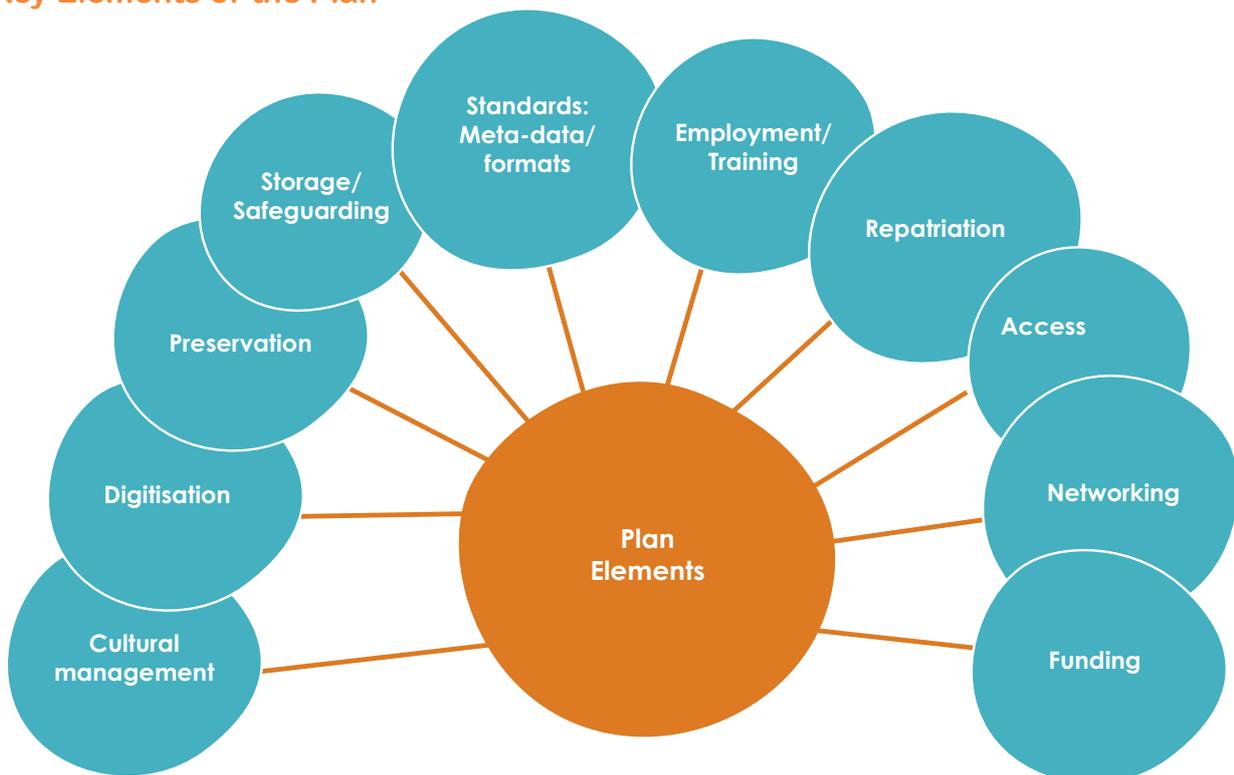
REMOTE MEDIA & COMMUNICATIONS IN AUSTRALIA

REMOTE RIMO & RIBS NETWORKS*

● **CAAMA & Regional**
Central Australian Aboriginal Media Association

● **QRAM**
Queensland Remote Aboriginal Media

● **NG MEDIA**
Ngaanyatjarra Media

● **PAKAM**
Pilbara & Kimberley Aboriginal Media Association

● **PAW Media**
Pintubi, Anmatjerre, Warlpiri Media & Communications

● **PY MEDIA**
Pitjantjatjara Yankuntjatjara Media

● **TEABBA**
Top End Aboriginal Bush Broadcasting Association

● **TSIMA**
Torres Strait Islanders Media Association

OTHER REMOTE MEDIA ORGANISATIONS OR NETWORKS

▲ Indigenous Remote Communications Association
(IRCA), Alice Springs

△ Indigenous Community Television (ICTV), Alice Springs
ARDS Yolngu Radio Network, Arnhem Land, NT
Ngaarda Media, Roebourne, WA
Derby Media Aboriginal Corporation, WA
Puranyangu Rangka Kerrem 6PRK Radio Halls Creek
Erub Arts, Darnley Island, TSI
Juluwarlu Aboriginal Corporation, Roebourne, WA
Goolarri Media Enterprises, Broome, WA
Mulka Project, Yirrkala

INDUSTRY SERVICES

Radio Broadcasting & Outdoor Broadcasts
Video Production
Community Television Broadcasting
Music Production
Language and Culture
Festivals & Events
Online Platforms
Archiving Historic Collections
Training & Employment
IT Training & Access
Technical Services
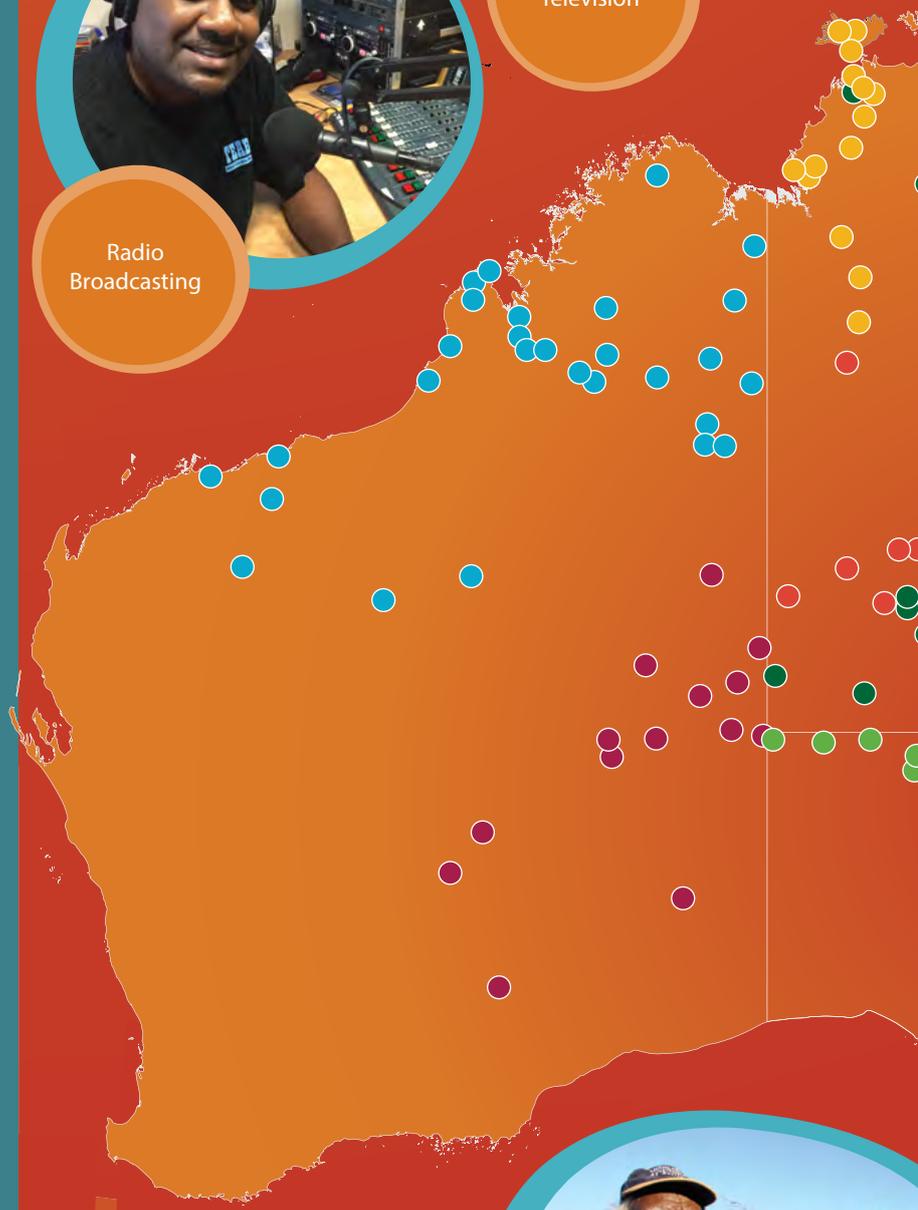
*Note***
RIMO = Remote Indigenous Media Organisation
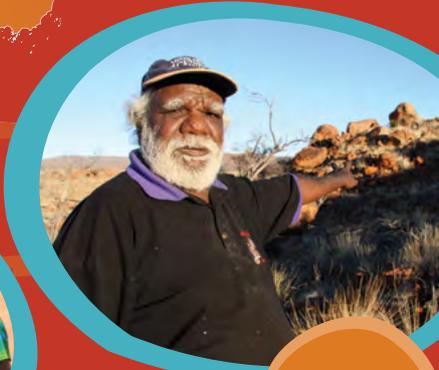*RIBS = Remote Indigenous Broadcasting Service*

Community Television

Radio Broadcasting
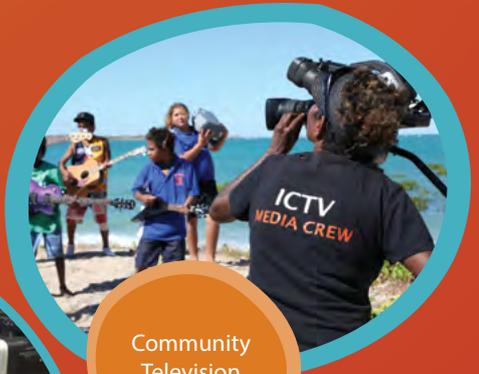
Industry Training and Employment

Language & Culture

Video Production

Archiving
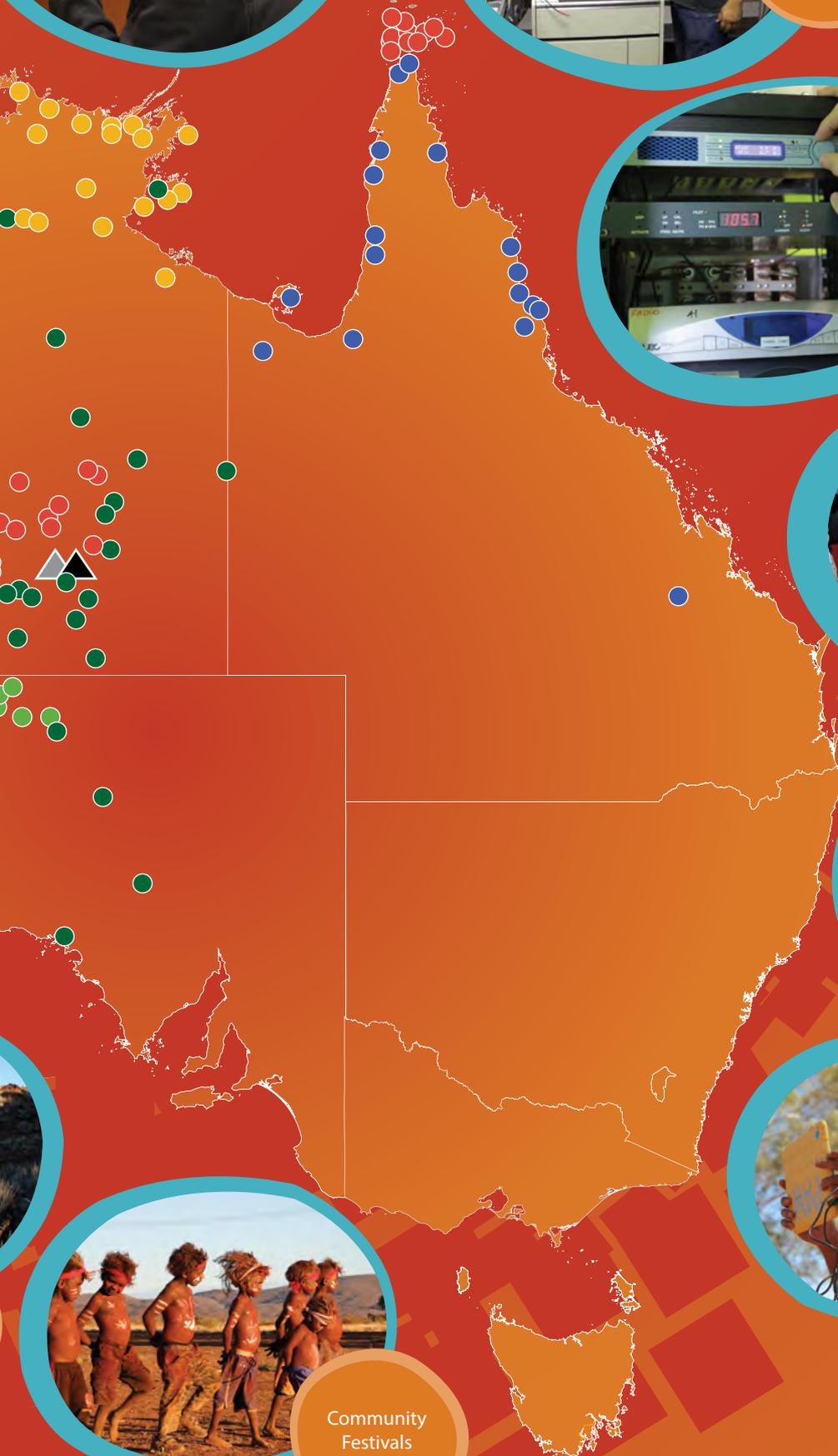
Technical Services

Music Production

IT Training and Access

Online Patforms

Community Festivals

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RIBS FACILITY UPGRADES

The work of IRCA in collaboration with RIMOs and Councils in 2013/2014 collecting detailed data on the infrastructure, equipment and operational status of RIBS and RIMOs has already begun to bring results.

IRCA working with the RIMOs, used the data in a successful bid for Emergency Infrastructure funding in February 2015. This has enabled the replacement of sub-standard infrastructure and equipment. Professional receivers were rolled out to a further 16 sites; ageing or non-functioning RIBS studio equipment, satellite receivers, satellite dishes and transmitters were replaced; and in some cases facilities upgrades or relocations were funded.

Sector Audit data will continue to be updated to provide an ongoing evidence base for identifying areas of critical need. IRCA provides a central online content management system that houses the data allowing RIMOs to maintain and update their data remotely.

The Audit provides a clear picture of the state of buildings, equipment and transmission gear and clearly demonstrates that in many RIBS, the infrastructure and equipment falls well below standards for delivering valued community radio services.

Pic left: Non-operation Beagle Bay RIBS

Pic right: New Beagle Bay RIBS Studio now operational with 2014 Preston Award winner Henry Augustine, back on air.

FESTIVAL

16th National Remote Indigenous Media Festival, NPA, Queensland - September 2014

The Festival is IRCA's peak industry event. This year in partnership with host RIMO QRAM, IRCA was thrilled to meet with 150 remote media workers and industry stakeholders in the NPA. Delegates came together from across Australia to network and share ideas, information and stories. We were treated to the generous hospitality and cultural richness of the NPA peoples, the beauty of red dust country and the tropical coastline at the northernmost tip of Australia.

The program included industry roundtables, skills workshops, outdoor cinema, a concert and cultural dance spectacular, the Remote Media and ICTV Awards ceremonies and the IRCA and ICTV AGMs. QRAM conducted a live Outside Broadcast each day and a Festival documentary was produced by delegates as a training activity. (This is available on indigitube.com.au/video/item/2273).

The Festival this year was a great opportunity for sector organisations to meet with IRCA and prepare a cohesive vision for the sector, prior to submitting new IAS applications due the following month.

After the Festival IRCA produced the 2014 Festival Pictorial Magazine, a 24 page page full-colour publication. This fabulous visual record details the activities and achievements of this wonderful industry event. This was distributed to delegates, stakeholders, government and sponsors. The magazine is downloadable from the IRCA website www.irca.net.au/publications/irca

The Festival is a key opportunity for IRCA to consult with its Membership and communicate industry directions and opportunities. It is an important opportunity to showcase achievements, celebrate successes and inspire remote media workers. Importantly, the Festival brings front line workers together with government and sector leaders, to share and hear concerns.

Remote Indigenous Media Awards

Congratulations to Award winners this year. Pictured below left is Henry Augustine, winner of the prestigious Preston Award for Lifetime Achievement, and right, all Major Award recipients.

BROADBAND FOR THE BUSH ALLIANCE & 2015 FORUM

The Broadband for the Bush Alliance is now a not-for-profit organization. Seeded originally from an IRCA 2011 technical forum, the Alliance now advocates broadly for the needs of remote Australia to ensure appropriate digital infrastructure, improved capacity and digital inclusion.

IRCA currently auspices the Alliance and maintains the Alliance website - broadbandforthebush.com.au.

Achievements this year

Have included: key discussions with government policy makers and industry leaders including: the Hon Paul Fletcher, Parliamentary Secretary for Regional Communications; Gavin Williams, GM Fixed Wireless and Satellite, NBN Co; Paul Roberts, National Mobile Networks Manager, Telstra, Grant Young, National Centre for Indigenous Excellence.

The Alliance has published remote digital policies supported by research which are accessible via the broadbandforthebush.com.au website.

The Alliance continues to communicate with key stakeholders about the digital challenges faced in the bush.

IRCA played a key role coordinating the 2015 Broadband for the Bush Forum and Indigenous Focus Day titled 'Unlocking the Digital Potential of the Bush' in partnership with the Australian Communications Consumer Action Network, Darwin, 14 to 16 July.

IRCA coordinated the logistics, auspiced a dedicated project officer and assisted attract significant sponsorship to ensure the success of this year's event and maintain the ongoing work of the Alliance.

BROADBAND
for the Bush Forum IV

 broadbandforthebush   @BushBroadband

Percy Bishop of Umbakumba explains the obstacles to connectivity and impact on communities.

ACMA Consumer Consultative Forum

Daniel Featherstone has been appointed to the ACMA's [Australian Communications and Media Authority] Consumer Consultative Forum, enabling him to directly advocate on remote area challenges and Indigenous digital inclusion.

2015 Broadband for the Bush Indigenous Focus Day delegates outside the CDU Darwin venue

Indigenous Remote Communications Association

SECTOR ONLINE PLATFORMS

IRCA - www.irca.net.au

IRCA's website now on Drupal CMS, includes a new RIBS communities directory with a back-end database for RIMOs to log in and update their Audit data.

IRCA's Facebook connections have increased from 1478 to 1648 likes over the year, and has a following of 1899 on Twitter.

Support

During the year IRCA's Online Projects Officer assisted a number of RIMOs with their website development needs and provided on site training to staff.

IRCA also set up and maintained the website and social media for the Broadband for the Bush Alliance.

IndigiTUBE - www.indigitube.com.au

This platform has recorded tripled pageviews over the previous year demonstrating the growing popularity of the platform.

The majority of referrals coming from Facebook with 90% of visitors from Australia. 54% of visitors were using a computer, 35% on a mobile phone and 11% on a tablet.

The most popular sections of IndigiTUBE were Music Video, Video and Music respectively.

The IndigiTUBE Facebook following grew from 2083 to 4279 likes and its Twitter account now has 926 followers.
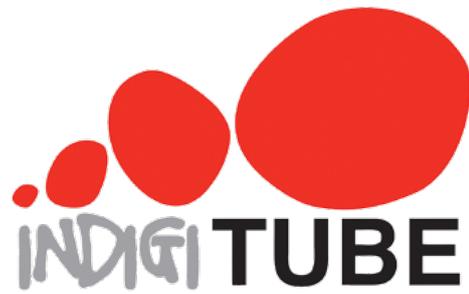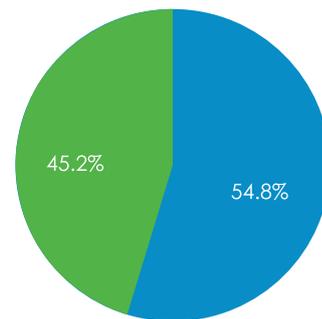
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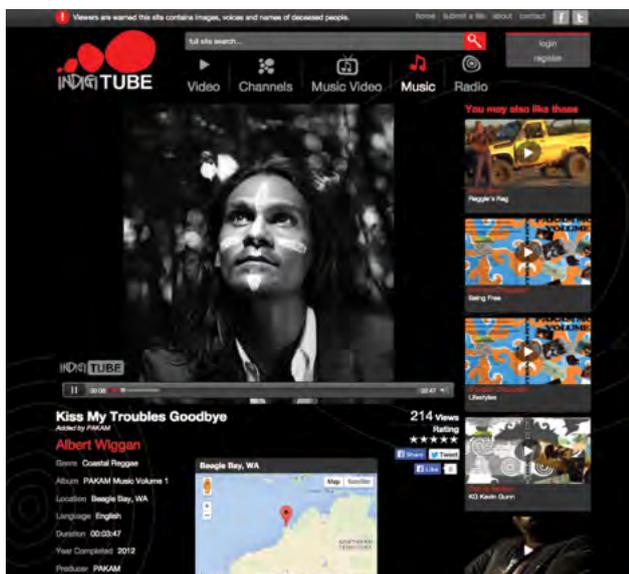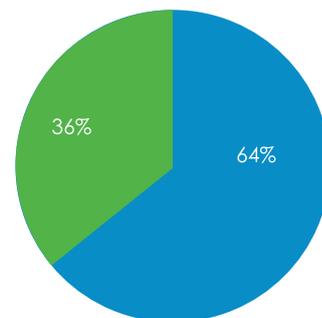
Music videos now very popular on IndigiTUBE!

2013-2014

■ Returning Visitor   ■ New Visitor

Sessions	12,233
Users	5,557
Pageviews	118,321

2014-2015

■ New Visitor   ■ Returning Visitor

Sessions	58,055
Users	37,596
Pageviews	370,906

Graph: Comparative Google analytics of IndigiTUBE's performance

INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT & SUPPORT

During the year IRCA has kept the sector informed of key changes from government, funding bodies and associated agencies.

IRCA has raised the profile of the sector using social media, newsletters, website stories and content. A new Festival documentary now provides a powerful tool to reach people online and over community television; and the Festival Magazine showcases this annual industry event and the sector's strength, diversity and reach.

IRCA responds to reviews and provides relevant feedback on policy. During the year IRCA prepared three CBF Review responses. IRCA also works strongly with ACCAN and participated in their 'Rethinking the USO' Forum in March.

The Chair and General Manager met with Minister Scullion and Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet Department heads in March to discuss proposed peak body changes, RIBS funding and National Jobs Package changes.

Developing Funding Opportunities

IRCA distributes information about funding opportunities to sector organisations and is always seeking new avenues to advance sector strategies and projects.

During May, with new DGR charitable status and membership of the Strategic Grants Hub and Philanthropy Australia, IRCA visited philanthropic organisations in Melbourne to build relationships and identify best directions forward.

Developing Commercial Opportunities

A social marketing contract for coordinating the 'Remote School Attendance Strategy' Radio Project has seen IRCA play a role in facilitating government communications investment through the network of remote media organisations. RIMOs are best placed to develop and deliver appropriate content using local talent that effectively conveys messages and information to remote communities.

Industry Employment

IRCA continues to develop strategies to see increased employment and training within the sector. This work has included advocacy for changes to the National Jobs Package to better meet sector needs; working with Registered Training Organisations in relation to delivery of remote media training in Central Australia; developing a training and employment strategy for archiving work on communities; and employing staff who can assist to facilitate this work.

Strong relationships with key stakeholders

IRCA has developed strong industry networks with remote media organisations, peak bodies, screen agencies and broadcasters, government and funding bodies, Broadband for the Bush Alliance partners, research agencies, registered training organisations and the new Archiving working group (NFSA, AIATSIS, Strehlow Resource Centre, NT Libraries, Ara Irititja Archival Project, Mulka Media, University of Melbourne, Charles Darwin University).

Sector support

IRCA responds to requests for assistance from remote media organisations and their Boards. This includes help with developing a website, training staff, assisting with HR processes, strategic planning support or providing advice to Boards and Managers on sector directions, strategies and opportunities.

IRCA has monthly meetings with RIMOs to share information and hear about outcomes and needs.

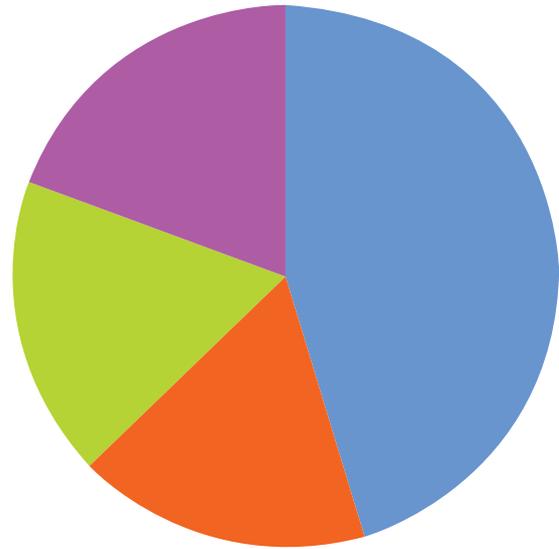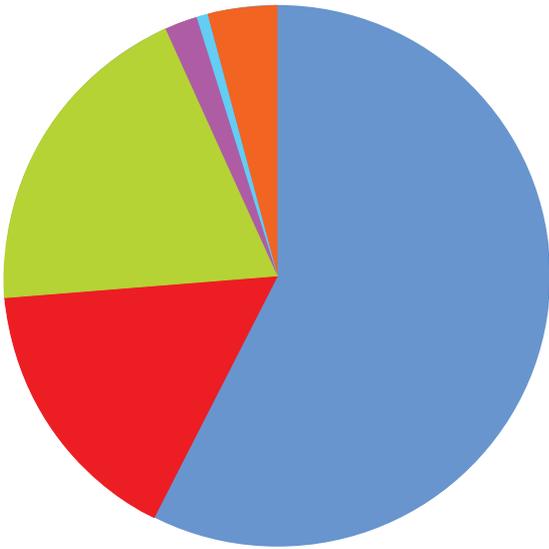*Pic Above: IRCA GM with TSIMA Board Members for planning support, November 2014*

Pic right: IRCA GM and Festival Producer, Imogen, at planning meeting with Lajamanu elders to discuss the 2015 Festival

Pic above: IRCA participating in the Aboriginal Interpreter Service meeting in Alice Springs June 2015

FINANCIAL REPORT

Income $ 937,374.89   Expenditure $ 942,347.45

Grants · Festival · Registration, Fees, Sponsorsip

Profit on Sale · Other Revenue · Reimbursement

Staff & Contractors · Travel · Capital

Festivals, Meetings & Events · Admin & Operations

IRCA's full financial report can be downloaded from the website - www.irca.net.au/publications

Auditor's Opinion

In my opinion, the financial statements of Indigenous Remote Communications Assoc Aboriginal Corporation is in accordance with:

   (a) the Corporations (Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander) Act 2006, including:

      (i)   giving a true and fair view of the company's financial position at the year ended June 30 2015 and of their performance for the year ended on that date; and

      (ii) complying with Australian Accounting Standards in Australia; and

   (b) other mandatory professional reporting requirements

Brian Tucker CPA

Brian Tucker Accounting
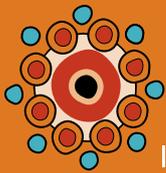
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*Front cover pics: Lee Hewitt, TEABBA
(top) and Anne Bennett (PAKAM)
Background image: Dancer at 2014
Festival, NPA Queensland*