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Minister for Finance and Deregulation

SENATOR THE HON MARK ARBIB

Minister for Indigenous Employment and Economic
Development

Minister for Sport

Minister for Social Housing and Homelessness

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**GOVERNMENT PROCUREMENT TO DRIVE
INDIGENOUS JOBS**

Minister for Finance and Deregulation Penny Wong and Minister for Indigenous Employment and Economic Development Mark Arbib today welcomed approval of the first Indigenous Training, Employment and Supplier Plan under the Gillard Government's enhanced Indigenous Opportunities Policy (IOP).

The enhanced IOP is part of the Government's commitment to Closing the Gap on Indigenous disadvantage, and halving the gap in Indigenous unemployment within a decade.

"This is about encouraging corporate responsibility, while also changing the way the Australian Government does its business," Senator Wong said.

"Companies in regions with a significant Indigenous population that bid for Government contracts will need to train and employ Indigenous Australians and use Indigenous suppliers."

Senator Arbib said Government procurement was a powerful driver for change.

“Government procurement can help bring about change, particularly in regional and remote communities,” Senator Arbib said.

“The IOP will ensure that Indigenous employment and training and supplier use becomes standard business practice for companies that tender for Government work.

“It will help us better harness it to create employment opportunities and support the growth of Indigenous business.”

From 1 July 2011, in regions with a significant Indigenous population, tenderers for Government contracts over \$5 million (\$6 million for construction projects), will need approved plans for employing and training local Indigenous people and for using Indigenous suppliers.

The Government has also re-issued the Indigenous Opportunities Policy guidelines which now specify the transition date for the shift from 50 per cent ownership to 51 per cent ownership in relation to the definition of an Indigenous business.

This change follows further discussions with representatives from the Indigenous business sector which is excited about the policy’s potential to grow business for Indigenous enterprises.

IOP Information sessions will be held in the second half of April and throughout May. The Government encourages people to attend the IOP information sessions and continue to provide feedback as the Policy is implemented.

You can register your interest in attending an information session at iop@deewr.gov.au.

Further information and IOP guidelines can be found at www.deewr.gov.au/iop.

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