



Keeping remote Indigenous communities safe

Update 6 – 10 June 2020

Context

The sixth *Keeping remote Indigenous communities safe* update outlines how the industry is taking a cautious and careful approach to the lifting of COVID-19 public health measures restricting travel.

This bulletin will now be issued monthly to reflect changing circumstances.

Maintaining strict health and hygiene standards as remote area restrictions are lifted

Caution and care continues to underpin the minerals industry's approach as public health measures restricting travel are eased. This includes specific measures covering remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. Particular vigilance is also needed during the winter months.

Key ongoing actions include:

- Briefing senior industry leaders on areas for focus including stakeholder feedback at the weekly MCA COVID-19 Working Group meeting. Support for Indigenous communities remains a priority area
- Convening fortnightly meetings to discuss approaches and contribute to mine site, company and industry responses to support partner Indigenous communities. The meeting frequency moved from twice weekly to weekly and then fortnightly in May.
- Progressively updating resources developed to support site and company health, hygiene and engagement protocols to reflect easing of public health measures. All resources are available at <https://minerals.org.au/communities>
- Continuing engagement with national Indigenous organisations and government agencies to seek feedback and advice on measures to keep communities safe from COVID-19.

Sharing lessons with global mining sector

On Tuesday 9 June, Professor James Ward joined the MCA at the [International Council on Mining and Metals COVID-19 Community Support Call](#) to share lessons from engagement between the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health sector and the Australian minerals industry during the pandemic.

ICMM brings together 27 mining and metals companies and 38 regional and commodity associations to strengthen the industry's environmental and social performance.

The MCA invited Professor Ward to outline First Nations-led efforts to keep Indigenous populations and communities safe from COVID-19. The presentation also included an overview of the MCA's approach to engagement with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health sector.



Learning from the pandemic response

In June the MCA will seek feedback about its stakeholder engagement approach during the COVID-19 pandemic. Feedback will help the MCA improve and inform its future priorities, particularly in regards to maximising outcomes from partnerships with Indigenous Australians.

Snapshot: Supporting health and community outcomes during the COVID-19 pandemic

New examples are regularly added to the register of company contributions on the MCA COVID-19 Communities [webpage](#).

Queensland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Newcrest is providing \$1 million to support the University of Queensland's cutting edge research into a COVID-19 vaccine.
New South Wales	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Newcrest's Cadia Valley Mine has contributed more than \$250,000 in COVID-19 community support. This includes donating 10 Samsung tablets so that older people can connect virtually with support groups and providing almost \$40,000 for laptops so that families can access the Orange District Early Education Program during the pandemic Anglo American Australia is fast-tracking its grants program to assist community organisations responding to the pandemic. Particular focus is given to organisations supporting vulnerable populations or those experiencing financial hardship.
Victoria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rio Tinto is contributing \$670,000 towards the Murdoch Children's Research Institute's COVID Immune research program. The program is investigating the effects of COVID-19 on child immune systems.
Australia-wide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> BHP's Vital Resources Fund has now contributed more than \$3.3 million towards Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled health services. This includes support for the Queensland Aboriginal and Islander Health Council and the Aboriginal Health and Medical Research Council of New South Wales.