



Keeping remote Indigenous communities safe

Update 4 – 12 May 2020

Context

This is the MCA's fourth update outlining how the minerals industry is working to support remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community responses during the COVID-19 pandemic.

It details careful planning underway to prepare for the gradual relaxation of public health measures in different parts of the country while maintaining the highest levels of vigilance to keep vulnerable populations safe.

The bulletin also provides a snapshot of contributions by industry to assist local pandemic responses. Stakeholders asked for more examples following the previous bulletin.

Preparing for COVID-19 Safe engagement

The minerals industry will maintain stringent health and hygiene standards as Australia transitions to a COVID-safe environment. Our priority, as always, is keeping workers, families and communities safe while sustaining the nation's economy.

While maintaining high vigilance and standards, careful planning is underway to prepare for a safe transition when public health travel restrictions and other measures to protect vulnerable populations are gradually lifted. Careful planning and stakeholder engagement now is critical to a safe transition to a COVID-safe environment.

Key considerations for industry include:

- Maintaining vigilance, the highest standards and complying with public health travel restrictions, biosecurity zones and requirements. Some mines are operating under up to five layers of requirements
- Engaging with vulnerable workers to develop a shared return to work plan, considering individual health considerations and caring, family and cultural responsibilities
- Developing shared medium-term engagement protocols with individual stakeholder groups and communities reflecting local risks, preferences and requirements
- Understanding and planning to meet business needs, including the need for maintenance and other activities that may have been postponed.

The MCA is continuing to support information-sharing and collaboration as companies develop tailored approaches.

Celebrating the contribution of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people during COVID-19

Thank you to Indigenous Women in Mining and Resources Australia for this great [video](#) celebrating the contribution and resilience of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The MCA is proud to partner with IWIMRA on various initiatives to celebrate and promote Indigenous people, businesses and communities in the minerals industry.

Snapshot: Supporting community-led responses in remote and regional communities

Like all Australians, the minerals industry is working with its partners to support communities during the COVID-19 pandemic. This includes a particular focus on supporting locally-led pandemic responses in remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. Approaches vary depending on local need and preferences, company resources and other factors. The table below provides a snapshot of contributions.

Northern Territory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rio Tinto has donated 6,000 litres of hand cleaning products to communities in the Northern Territory as well as Queensland and Western Australia • Based on its strong relationships, Newmont's Tanami Operations is working to support its priority communities of Yuendumu, Lajamanu, Nyirripi and Willowra • Glencore McArthur River Mine has redeployed 30 Borroloola workers to support community projects while travel restrictions are in place. Last week the team worked to beautify the town with support from Roper Gulf Regional Council, Mabunji and Borroloola School.
Queensland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anglo American Australia is donating 10,000 face masks to the National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation for distribution to local Aboriginal health services providers • Glencore assisted with purchase of a COVID-19 testing machine and donation of medical supplies in the Mount Isa region • Rio Tinto and the Royal Flying Doctor Service Queensland's new partnership will expand emergency health services and provide resources to assist during the pandemic.
Western Australia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BHP assisted East Pilbara Independence Support to establish a quarantine house to be used by the Indigenous community as needed. Other contributions include to Bega Garnbirringu Health Service and the Puntuturnu Aboriginal Medical Service • Through the Minderoo Foundation, FMG is contributing significant supplies across Western Australia. It also made a \$1 million donation to the Royal Flying Doctor Service Western Operations • Through its COVID-19 Community Support Fund, Newcrest's Telfer Operations is providing assistance to the Martu communities of Punmu, Kunawarritji, Kiwirrkurra, Nullagine, Warralong, Strelley and Parnngurr. These communities range from 140 to 801 kilometres via road from site.
Other states	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In South Australia, BHP provided support to assist the Kokatha, Kuyani and Barngarla peoples and their extended families to self-isolate if needed during the pandemic • In Victoria, Kirkland Lake Gold Fosterville Gold Mine delivered \$20,000 of grocery and fuel vouchers to relief agencies in Bendigo • In New South Wales, Newcrest's Cadia Valley operation donated 200 food hampers. Canobolas Clontarf Academy helped pack the hampers.