

# Media Statement



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better system*

19 August 2016

## **NNTC WELCOMES INVESTMENT IN RANGER PROGRAM**

The National Native Title Council (NNTC) has welcomed the commitment of the Minister for Indigenous Affairs, Senator Nigel Scullion, to fund the Indigenous ranger program until 2020.

NNTC CEO Glen Kelly said the Working on Country program provided vital employment and economic development opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders throughout remote and rural areas of the country.

“The Indigenous Ranger program employed a number of Rangers across Australia, which allowed Indigenous people to work from their communities to protect their country and culture.

“The NNTC has consistently advocated for on-country employment for Indigenous peoples as a practical solution to help close the disadvantage gap,” said Mr Kelly. “The Ranger program, in particular has a proven track record in providing sustainable employment pathways for Indigenous peoples where it is most needed and that is in rural and remote regions.

“The Ranger program provides employment opportunities for both men and women alike and achieves high retention rates as well as significant social benefits in a variety of areas”.

Mr Kelly said that whilst the commitment of funding would provide Traditional Owners with employment security until 2020, there needs to be serious consideration about the continuation of funding after that time.

“Relatively speaking the employment of Indigenous Rangers is a low cost program for Government that helps achieve targets for their Closing the Gap agenda as well as other areas of Government investment,” said Mr Kelly. “It also assists in the protection of important environmental assets that will benefit future generations of the broader Australian community.

“The NNTC looks forward to the Minister’s verbal commitment being translated into a formal one, not only until 2020 but beyond”.

The NNTC is the peak body for the Indigenous native title sector.

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