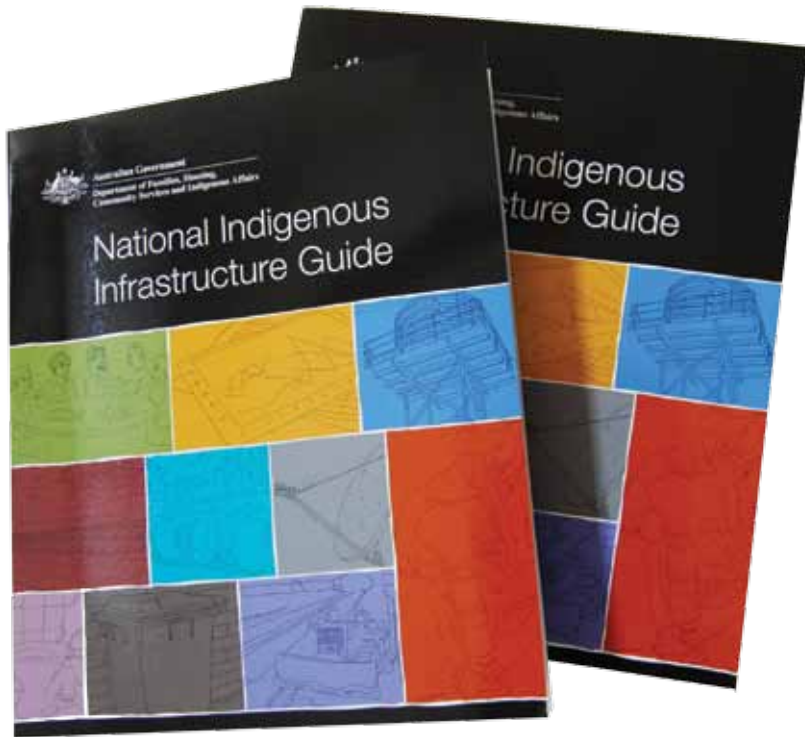


Housing & Infrastructure services



DEVELOPMENT OF THE NATIONAL INDIGENOUS INFRASTRUCTURE GUIDE



“ I ordered a copy of the *National Indigenous Infrastructure Guide* (NIIG) because I am involved in an assessment of the foundation areas which contribute to Indigenous economic development. My impression of NIIG is that it is philosophically sound. Not only does it clearly outline the infrastructure responsibilities of CAT, but it accurately identifies the need to work in with and engage Indigenous community members in decisions which select, operate, maintain and address infrastructure demands.

Daron Keogh
Karrayili Adult Education Centre

CONTEXT

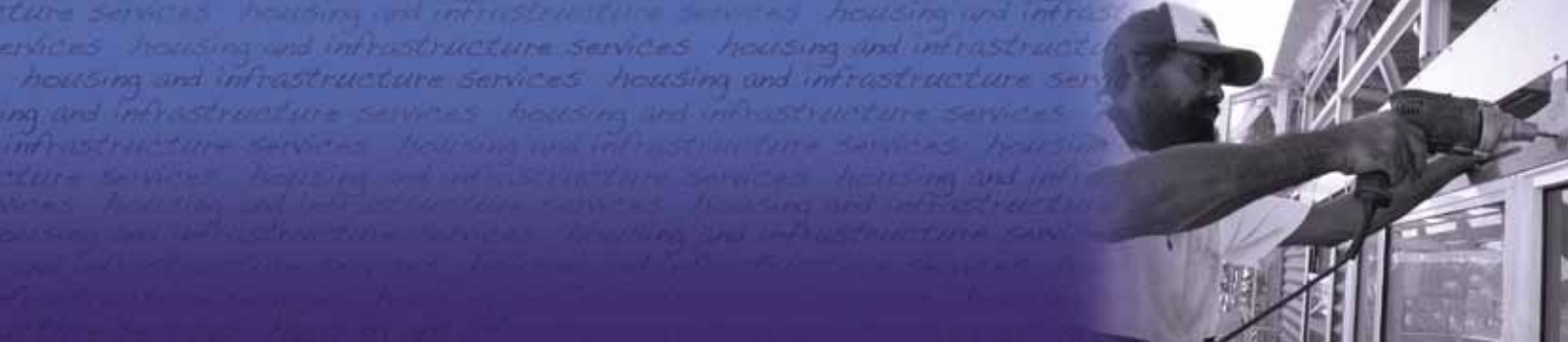
CAT has had long experience in providing a range of appropriate technology services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in Australia. In the 1980s and 1990s these services were largely focussed on mechanical products and training associated with helping people to live productively on country. CAT designed and fabricated household items such as water heaters, water pumps, washing machines, toilets, and ovens. Since 2000, the focus has shifted to include community level infrastructure, as there has been an increase in the availability of conventional housing, whitegoods and services in remote communities. Community level infrastructure includes elements such as water and waste management systems, energy supplies, telecommunications and transport. At the same time,

CAT's role has evolved to include greater provision of independent advice in these areas, rather than being the builder and supplier of the goods themselves.

The natural evolution of this process has been the recent development of the *National Indigenous Infrastructure Guide*, produced by CAT. CAT was the compiler and major contributor of subject matter for the *Infrastructure Guide*. The Guide is a complement to the *National Indigenous Housing Guide*, first published in 1999 which focused on environmental health in Indigenous housing.

PROJECT SCOPE

The *National Indigenous Infrastructure Guide* provides an integrated framework for understanding major infrastructure provision issues for remote communities.



(Left) The NIIG website download page where the Guide can be downloaded by individual chapters or the whole Guide can be downloaded.

While the *Housing Guide* focused on safety and health, the *Infrastructure Guide* is themed on sustainability. Integral to it is an emphasis on involvement of community members, especially in the maintenance and management of infrastructure.

Rather than being a comprehensive 'how to' manual, it seeks to provide community managers, local and state government officers, and those working in planning and developing infrastructure projects with an awareness of the issues that need to be considered when working with various aspects of infrastructure. Its modest technical scope can be expanded as demand requires.

The *Infrastructure Guide* covers:

- Water supply
- Stormwater
- Wastewater
- Waste management
- Electrical energy
- Telecommunications
- Transport

It also extends beyond these specific technology areas to discuss approaches to community involvement, project management, infrastructure asset management and maintenance.

The development of the guide involved thorough peer review and reference group processes involving subject matter experts external to CAT who have extensive experience in remote community infrastructure.

Funding for the project and management of the editorial and publication design tasks was provided by the Australian Government Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs.

OUTCOME

The *National Indigenous Infrastructure Guide* was published in February 2010 both in printed and online form. NIIG is available to download at www.icat.org.au. Feedback is encouraged, so that the experience and viewpoints of users of the Guide can be incorporated in future editions.

Since December 2010, over 12,000 copies of the NIIG handbook have been downloaded (free) from the CAT website.

The most popular downloaded chapters of the NIIG Handbook have been those on stormwater, waste water and water supplies.

NIIG is also being used by outstation resource agencies for consultancy and training purposes.