Australian Government

**Department of Employment,
Skills, Small and Family Business**

Foundation Skills for Your Future
Remote Community Pilots

DRAFT Program Guidelines

December 2019

Contents

1. Purpose of the Guidelines

These guidelines provide a framework for administering the Foundation Skills for Your Future Remote Community Pilots (the Pilots).

The Department of Employment, Skills, Small and Family Business (the department) administers the Pilots. These guidelines may be amended at any time during the life of the Pilots to reflect Australian Government priorities. Service Providers will be advised in writing of any changes through existing departmental communication methods. Changes to these guidelines will also be reflected on the department's website (employment.gov.au).

The guidelines are not an exhaustive statement of the Australian Government's requirements for the Pilots. Service Providers will be required to read the guidelines in conjunction with their Agreement.

Capitalised terms used in these guidelines have the meaning set out in the Glossary at section 12.

An Advisory Committee will be established in the relevant jurisdictions to oversee each Pilot, providing strategic direction and leadership to ensure each Pilot delivers on its intended outcomes.

2. Remote Community Pilots - Program Overview

The Pilots are an initiative in the 2019-20 Budget under the measure Skills Package: Delivering Skills for Today and Tomorrow,[1] Foundation Skills for Your Future. The initiative provides $9.9 million (GST excl.) over three years, to 30 June 2022, to deliver foundation language, literacy, numeracy and digital (LLND) skills training and assessment in four Remote Communities. The four Pilots are to be located in the Northern Territory, Western Australia, South Australia and Northern Queensland.

The Pilots aim to:

- improve the LLND skills of community members in the Remote Communities;
- identify and develop systemic approaches to LLND skills training delivery in the Remote Communities; **and**
- inform future program delivery, new funding arrangements and/or changes to existing programs such as the Skills for Education and Employment (SEE) program.

The department intends to enter into an Agreement with one or more Indigenous small and medium enterprises (SMEs) as Service Providers to provide tailored, flexible and locally relevant LLND training and assessment services in the four Pilot Remote Communities.

3. Language, Literacy, Numeracy and Digital Skills Training

Service Providers will be expected to deliver the Pilot (as set out in their Agreement), including to develop and deliver a training model, to conduct assessments and to participate in a co-design process, as set out below.

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[1] 2019-20 Budget – Skills Package description can be found on page 69 of Budget Paper 2 | Budget 2019-20.

Pilot Training Model

The Pilots will trial up to four different LLND training models. This reflects research suggesting that a 'one size fits all' approach to LLND delivery is unlikely to work for all remote communities. Pilot training models should recognise and build on the work already underway to develop LLND in remote communities, refer to Attachment A for examples of literature research in this area.

Pilot training models may be based on Accredited LLND Training (that is, Vocational Education and Training (VET) Accredited Courses), Non-accredited Training or a combination of both, and should:

- raise community awareness of the benefits of LLND skills;
- make learning meaningful, flexible and tailored to meet the diverse learning and cultural needs of participants in the local community;
- include a mechanism to build LLND capacity within the community by engaging community adults to mentor and support others;
- consolidate LLND skills by providing post-training support;
- engage with local employers, Community Development Program providers and other service delivery organisations in the community;
- develop resources to help boost community LLND;
- incorporate the development of digital literacy; **and**
- be free of charge to community members.

The training model may also include wrap-around services such as child-care and transport. These wrap-around services may be funded under the Pilots if it can be shown they will facilitate community members' participation in training.

Service Providers must work with the local Community Development Program (CDP) provider to ensure that undertaking training through a Pilot is an approved activity under the CDP.

Assessment

Service Providers will be required to assess the language, literacy and numeracy skills of participants on entry and exit through the Australian Core Skills Framework (ACSF) and the Digital Skills Framework (DLSF).

Assessments should be conducted in a way that is flexible and tailored to meet the learning and cultural needs of participants. This may include trainers assessing the LLND skills of participants in an unobtrusive way over the course of several weeks.

Co-design

The Pilots will be underpinned by a co-design process to ensure ongoing involvement of communities in design, implementation and evaluation activities that are meaningful and engenders respect, empowerment and ownership.[2]

Each Service Provider will be expected to lead a co-design process with key stakeholders including local Indigenous community members, employers and providers of services in the relevant Remote Community (including the CDP provider) to ensure the proposed Pilot training model is tailored to that Remote Community's needs and aspirations.

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[2] https://www.aboriginalaffairs.nsw.gov.au/pdfs/new-knowledge/Weaving-Knowledges-codesign-report-FINAL.pdf

4. Service Provider Eligibility

In accordance with the Australian Government's [Indigenous Procurement Policy](#), Service Providers applying to deliver the Pilots must be:

- a legal entity and have the legal capacity to enter into an Agreement with the Commonwealth; **and**
- an Indigenous SME.[3]

Indigenous SMEs may work in collaboration with external LLND experts, non-Indigenous businesses or large Indigenous enterprises to leverage their capacity to deliver a Pilot. However, the entity that enters into an Agreement with the department must be an Indigenous SME.

Organisations proposing to deliver Accredited LLND Training must be a Registered Training Organisation (RTO) and meet the requirements of the Training Package or VET Accredited Course they are proposing to deliver (including the trainer and assessor requirements) as specified in the *Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015*.

Tendering Process

The department will approach the market through a two-stage procurement process. Firstly, the department will issue a Request for Expression of Interest (REOI) to the open market seeking responses from Indigenous SMEs.

The purpose of the REOI is to identify and shortlist suitable Indigenous SMEs to deliver the Pilots. Shortlisted respondents will be invited to a workshop hosted by the department to provide an opportunity for respondents to refine their proposed approach to pilot co-design and delivery in line with the requirements of the department.

The second stage of the procurement process will be a Request for Quote in which shortlisted respondents will be invited to submit a quote for the co-design and delivery of LLND training in a specific Remote Community.

In the event that the REOI fails to identify suitable respondents to deliver the Pilots, the department may directly invite Indigenous SMEs to submit a quote to deliver a Pilot in response to a request from a community or organisation.

Respondents applying to deliver the Pilots will be required to demonstrate:

- their experience and expertise in the provision of adult LLND training in remote communities;
- their experience in delivering training in English as a second language in remote communities;
- their capacity to deliver the proposed model of adult LLND training delivery in remote communities;
- their strategies for delivering a Pilot to meet the objectives of the Remote Community Pilots;
- the suitability of the Remote Community in which they propose to deliver the Pilot; **and**
- their approach to co-designing the Pilot with Remote Communities and their key Indigenous leaders.

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[3] An Indigenous SME must be 50 per cent or more Indigenous owned and have fewer than 200 full-time equivalent employees (Indigenous Procurement Policy).

Respondents will also be required to identify in their proposals one or more Remote Communities to which they propose to deliver the Pilots.

5. Pilot Sites

Respondents will be required to demonstrate:

- their proposed community is located in a remote region (refer note below) in the Northern Territory, Western Australia, Northern Queensland or South Australia;
- their existing positive relationship with the proposed community;
- that adult LLND training is a priority need for the proposed community; **and**
- that the proposed community has the capacity to host a Pilot, including available infrastructure and well-established governance frameworks.

Communities may ***NOT*** be proposed as a Pilot site if:

- they are receiving active whole of community LLND training support from another source for the same outcome (for example a state, territory or other Australian government specific program); **or**
- there is an active Skills for Education and Employment (SEE) provider in the community with 10 or more clients participating in the program at the time these guidelines are released (refer note below).

The Advisory Committee in the relevant jurisdiction will advise on the suitability of proposed communities with reference to the considerations listed above.

Note:

For the purposes of these guidelines the definition of remote regions is based on the regions defined for the Community Development Program (CDP). Refer to Attachment B for a map of the eligible communities. Remote Communities do not include the cities and towns of Broome, Geraldton, Kalgoorlie, Esperance, Port Lincoln, Port Augusta, Whyalla, Darwin, Alice Springs and Mt Isa.

Remote Communities which are ineligible due to the presence of an active SEE provider are Galiwinku, Milingimbi, Derby, Karratha and Port Hedland.

A Remote Community may include a group of communities with historical, cultural, familial and linguistic links (e.g. the Ngaanyatjarra Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara (NPY) Lands).

6. Participant Eligibility Criteria

Participant Eligibility

Participants will be eligible to access training through the Pilots if they:

- are aged 15 years and over;
- have left secondary school education; **and**
- are living in a Remote Community.

7. Payments

Payments for the delivery of the Pilots will be made to Service Providers in line with the Agreement between the department and the Service Provider. The department will require Service Providers to provide financial and performance reports in accordance with the Agreement.

Payments will be made on the achievement of agreed milestones nominated in the Agreement. Payments may be withheld by the department if the Service Provider fails to meet an agreed milestone, including the delivery of the end of Pilot report.

8. Performance Framework

Program Outcomes

The department will assess the performance of the Pilots. The department will use several processes to monitor service delivery standards which will be set out in the Agreement, including: regular reports, measuring performance against the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), compliance monitoring and site visits, and feedback from clients and stakeholders.

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

KPIs will be developed to measure the performance level of Service Providers against identified outcomes as set out in the Agreement. These KPIs will represent the department's expectations of service provider performance.

The KPIs will be set out in the Agreement with each Service Provider and may relate to:

- the proposal for co-design approach;
- the extent of participation of stakeholders and community in the co-design process;
- the proposed training model;
- participant numbers - alignment of expected and actual participant numbers;
- participant engagement - proportion of participants who remain meaningfully engaged in the Pilot for an agreed minimum period;
- participant outcomes - the extent to which participants are more confident in meeting the language, literacy, numeracy and digital literacy demands of their life;
- quality of service - the extent to which participants are satisfied with the services received;
- milestone completion - the extent to which the Service Provider completes milestones by the milestone dates specified in the Agreement;
- reporting timeliness - the extent to which reporting is provided within the required timeframes; **and**
- reporting accuracy - the extent to which data provided in reporting is accurate.

In addition, the department expects the Agreement will include community KPIs that are developed during the co-design process.

Evaluation

Evaluation activities will be conducted throughout the duration of the Pilots and will be based on best practice principles for yielding high quality, ethical and inclusive approaches.

The department will enter into a contract with an independent third-party to conduct a formal evaluation of each Pilot. Service Providers must participate in the evaluation of the Pilots by collecting and providing data as required by the department or the independent evaluator.

9. General Information

Agreement

Service Providers will enter into an Agreement with the department before commencing a Pilot. The Agreement will set out detailed requirements in relation to the delivery of the Pilot, including the timeframe, milestones, expected and/or measurable outcomes, payment schedule and reporting requirements.

Complaints

The Program Delegate will formulate a complaints handling process for the handling of complaints concerning the Pilots. Complaints concerning the Pilots will, in the first instance, be directed to the relevant Service Provider. If the complainant is not satisfied with the complaint resolution procedure, the complainant may escalate the complaint to the department. The complainant is also entitled to lodge a complaint with the Commonwealth Ombudsman.

Conflict of Interest

All personnel involved in the evaluation process will be required to declare any perceived or actual conflict of interest and undertake to keep response information confidential before commencing the evaluation.

Respondents will also be required to disclose any situation or relationship which may constitute an actual or potential conflict of interest. Where a conflict of interest is identified, the Respondent will be required to specify how it proposes to address the issue and manage the potential for conflicts that may arise.

Compliance with Laws

Service Providers will be bound in the Agreement to comply with all relevant laws and any policies identified by the department. This may include but is not limited to laws relating to disclosure of information, working with vulnerable people and fraud. Failure to comply with these contractual provisions may be a breach of the Agreement and the relevant law.

Freedom of Information

All documents in the possession of the department, including those relating to the Pilots, are subject to the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* (FOI Act). This includes documents created or held by the department's contractors who provide services to the public or third parties on behalf of the department. Service Providers will be bound in the Agreement to assist the department in complying with requests made under the FOI Act.

Under the FOI Act, members of the public can seek access to documents held by the Australian Government. This right of access is only limited by those circumstances set out in the FOI Act. More information about how the department handles FOI requests can be found at the following link https://www.employment.gov.au/freedom-information-0.

False or Misleading Information and Documents

It is an offence under the Criminal Code to provide false and misleading information and documents to the Commonwealth, including in an application or proposal submitted to the Commonwealth.

Fraud

The Australian Government takes fraud seriously and is committed to preventing, detecting and dealing with fraud. Fraud is defined in the Commonwealth Fraud Control Framework as 'dishonestly obtaining a benefit or causing a loss by deception or other means.' The Agreement will set out the Service Providers' obligations in relation to fraud.

More information about how the Australian government deals with fraud can be found at the following website: https://www.ag.gov.au/Integrity/FraudControl/Pages/FraudControlFramework.aspx.

Indigenous Procurement Policy

In establishing the Pilots, the department will comply with requirements outlined in the Australian Government's Indigenous Procurement Policy (IPP) to stimulate Indigenous entrepreneurship and business development and to provide Indigenous Australians with more opportunities to participate in the economy and access government procurement contracts.

Privacy

The department is bound to comply with the *Privacy Act 1988* (Cth) in its collection, uses and/ or disclosure of personal information. The department's privacy policy contains information about how the department handles personal information, including how to access or correct personal information the department holds or to make a privacy complaint. The policy can be found at https://docs.employment.gov.au/documents/Department-jobs-and-small-business-privacy-policy.

Publicity

The Agreement will set out that Service Providers must ensure that all publicity relating to the Pilots must acknowledge funding provided by the Australian Government.

Service Providers must ensure that:

- branding is applied in accordance with the Australian Government Branding Guidelines; **and**
- all representations of the Pilots and the department or its policy are accurate and do not bring the Pilots, the department or the Australian Government into disrepute.

Service Providers must advise the department at least eight weeks in advance of public functions, events or openings in relation to the Pilots to enable departmental staff to extend invitations to the Minister.

Work Health and Safety

Service Providers must meet all applicable work, health and safety standards under the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (Cth)* (the *Act*). In addition to their obligations under the *Act*, Service Providers must take all reasonable steps to ensure that participants and others are not unreasonably put at risk of harm or loss, by implementing and adopting appropriate procedures and practices, engaging expert advice as appropriate, providing appropriate training to personnel and implementing procedures to identify risk.

10. Roles and Responsibilities

The Minister for Employment, Skills, Small and Family Business

The Minister for Employment, Skills, Small and Family Business has overall responsibility for the Pilots.

The Department of Employment, Skills, Small and Family Business (the department)

The department administers the Foundation Skills for Your Future Remote Community Pilots. This includes developing policy, providing reporting guides and templates, contracting Service Providers, monitoring the delivery of training and conducting program improvement activities including program evaluations.

Advisory Committees

The Advisory Committees will provide strategic direction and leadership to ensure the Pilots deliver on their intended outcomes within the specified period. An Advisory Committee will be formed for each Pilot and will include representation from the Pilot community, the Department of Employment Skills, Small and Family Business, the National Indigenous Australians Agency, relevant state and territory departments and other individuals and organisations as determined by the department.

Program Delegate

The Program Delegate is authorised to make decisions in relation to the administration of the Pilots. The Program Delegate will also give direction to Service Providers regarding the interpretation of these guidelines and any other relevant documents issued in relation to the Pilots.

The Program Delegate will have regard to the policy objective of the Pilots when performing any function, or making any decision in relation to the Pilots.

The Program Delegate may make policies, authorisations and delegations, consider exceptions, and issue guidance documents for the administration of the Pilots. These policies and documents must not be inconsistent with these guidelines.

The Program Delegate is responsible for:

- ensuring overall efficient and effective administration of the Pilots;
- approving the Agreements to support the delivery of the Pilots; **and**
- authorising the process through which Service Providers receive payments from the Commonwealth.

The Program Delegate may carry out other functions as authorised by the Minister and the Secretary.

Service Providers

Service Providers must deliver the Pilots and comply with all requirements outlined in the Agreement. Service providers are responsible for:

- providing services that are effective, efficient and appropriately targeted;
- working collaboratively with communities and other parties to maximise the outcomes for the Pilots;
- applying the highest standards of duty of care for all participants in their project; **and**

- operating activities in line with, and complying with the requirements set out within all state and territory and Commonwealth legislation and regulations.

11. Further Information

For any queries in relation to the REOI process, please contact the Contact Officer specified in the REOI.

For any other queries in relation to the Remote Community Pilots, please email Employment-FoundationSkills@employment.gov.au.

12. Glossary

Definitions are as laid out in these guidelines, unless the contrary intention appears:

Term	Definition
Accredited LLND Training	LLND units of competency, skills sets or modules as listed on the national register <training.gov.au>, or VET Accredited Courses.
Australian Core Skills Framework (ACSF)	A tool which assists both specialist and non-specialist English language, literacy and numeracy practitioners to describe an individual's performance in the five core skills of learning, reading, writing, oral communication and numeracy. The ACSF provides a consistent national approach to identifying and developing the core skills in three diverse contexts; personal and community; workplace and employment; and education and training.
Advisory Committee	A committee established by the department in each jurisdiction that will oversee each Pilot, providing strategic direction and leadership to ensure the Pilot delivers on its intended outcomes.
Agreement	The legal agreement between the Department of Employment, Skills, Small and Family Business and the Service Provider, which details the obligations and responsibilities of both parties for delivery of the relevant Pilot.
Commonwealth	Commonwealth of Australia, including, but not limited to, where the context so permits, the Commonwealth as represented by the Department of Employment, Skills, Small and Family Business.
Community Development Program (CDP)	A remote employment and community development service managed by the National Indigenous Australians Agency which supports job seekers in remote Australia to build skills, address barriers and contribute to their communities through a range of flexible activities.
Digital Skills	A combination of digital knowledge including: the use of logical, intuitive, creative thinking in the digital space; the use of digital tools such as hardware, software, information and security systems; the ability to learn, adapt and apply digital knowledge in a new setting.
Digital Literacy Skills Framework (DLSF)	A tool which has been developed specifically for the Foundation Skills for Your Future initiatives to assist practitioners to describe a Participant's Digital Skills performance against the four focus areas of: connecting with others, digital safety and risk, digital technologies

Term	Definition
	and systems and ability to access, organise, create and present information.
GST	Has the meaning as given in Section 195-1 of the *A New Tax System (Goods and Services Tax) Act 1999*.
Indigenous enterprise	An enterprise that is 50 per cent or more owned by Indigenous Australians that is operating a business. It may take the form of a company, incorporated association or trust. For clarity, a social enterprise or registered charity may also be an Indigenous enterprise if it is operating a business.
Indigenous SME	An Indigenous enterprise that is a SME.
Language	The understanding and use of spoken and written English.
Literacy	The integration of listening, speaking, reading, writing and critical thinking. Literacy includes the cultural knowledge that enables a speaker, writer or reader to recognise and use language appropriate to different situations.
Non-accredited Training	Training that is not nationally recognised and does not lead to a nationally recognised certification as defined by the VET regulator in accordance with the *Standards for VET Accredited Courses 2012*.
Numeracy	The knowledge and skills required to effectively manage and respond to the mathematical demands of work, education, social interaction and negotiation of everyday living.
Participant	An individual who meets the eligibility criteria under the heading 'Participant eligibility' at section 6 of these guidelines.
Pilot	A pilot LLND training program delivered in relation to department's program, the Foundation Skills for Your Future - Remote Community Pilots.
Program Delegate	The person in the Department of Employment, Skills, Small and Family Business with direct responsibility for the management of the Pilots.
Registered Training Organisation (RTO)	A training organisation listed on the National Register as a registered training organisation <training.gov.au>.
Remote Community	A community that is selected by the Advisory Committee in the relevant jurisdiction as meeting the criteria set out in section 5 of these guidelines.

| Term	Definition
Small and Medium Enterprise (SME)	An Australian or New Zealand firm with fewer than 200 full-time equivalent employees, as set out in the Commonwealth Procurement Rules.
Service Provider	An Indigenous SME which has been successful in the procurement process for the Pilots (as determined by the department) and has entered into an Agreement.
Training Package	The components of a training package endorsed by the Industry and Skills Council in accordance with the *National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011* (Cth).
VET	Vocational Education and Training.
VET Accredited Course	A course accredited by the VET regulator in accordance with the *National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011* (Cth).

Attachment A – Literature review – delivering LLN in remote communities

The following list of articles is indicative only.

Bauer, R 2017, 'Adult literacy and socio cultural Learning at Pina Pina Jarrinjaku (Yuendumu Learning Centre): A case study' Whole of Community Engagement Initiative, <https://remotengagetoedu.com.au/uploads/assets/uploads/files/WCE_PinaPinaJarrinjakuLLN_CaseStudy_2017.pdf>

Boughton, B 2014, 'Aboriginal adult literacy campaign state two pilot: Final evaluation report', University of New England, <https://www.lflf.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/UNEEvaluation.pdf>

Conway, L & Do, D 2017, 'Can Australia learn from our colleagues across the ditch?', in A. Stewart (ed), *Action for Change: Aboriginal adult English language literacy and numeracy symposium report*, Australian Council of Adult Literacy, pp. 24-29, <http://www.acal.edu.au/conference/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/ACAL_Symposium_Report_final3.pdf>

Hayes, C, Golding, B & Harvey, J 2004, 'Adult learning through fire and emergency service organisations in small and remote Australian towns', National Centre for Vocational Education Research, <https://www.ncver.edu.au/research-and-statistics/publications/all-publications/adult-learning-through-fire-and-emergency-service-organisations-in-small-and-remote-australian-towns>

Kral, I & Schwab, RG 2003, 'The realities of Aboriginal adult literacy acquisition and practice: Implications for remote community capacity building', <https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Inge_Kral/publication/255527263_The_Realities_of_Aboriginal_Adult_Literacy_Acquisition_and_Practice_Implications_for_Remote_Community_Capacity_Building/links/553450c70cf20ea0a076a86f.pdf>

Kral, I 2009, 'The literacy question in remote Indigenous Australia', Centre for Aboriginal Economic Policy Research, Topical Issue No. 6/2009, <https://atesolnt.org.au/wp-content/uploads/research-resources/Kral_Literacy_0609.pdf>

National Centre for Vocational Education 2017, 'VET Retention in remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities', <https://www.ncver.edu.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0018/510750/VET-retention-ATSI-communities.pdf>

Spiers, H & and Spiers, M 2007, 'Northern Territory adult literacy and numeracy best practice', <https://www.cdu.edu.au/centres/ntalnbp/docs/innovative_practice.pdf>

Attachment B – Remote Community Map
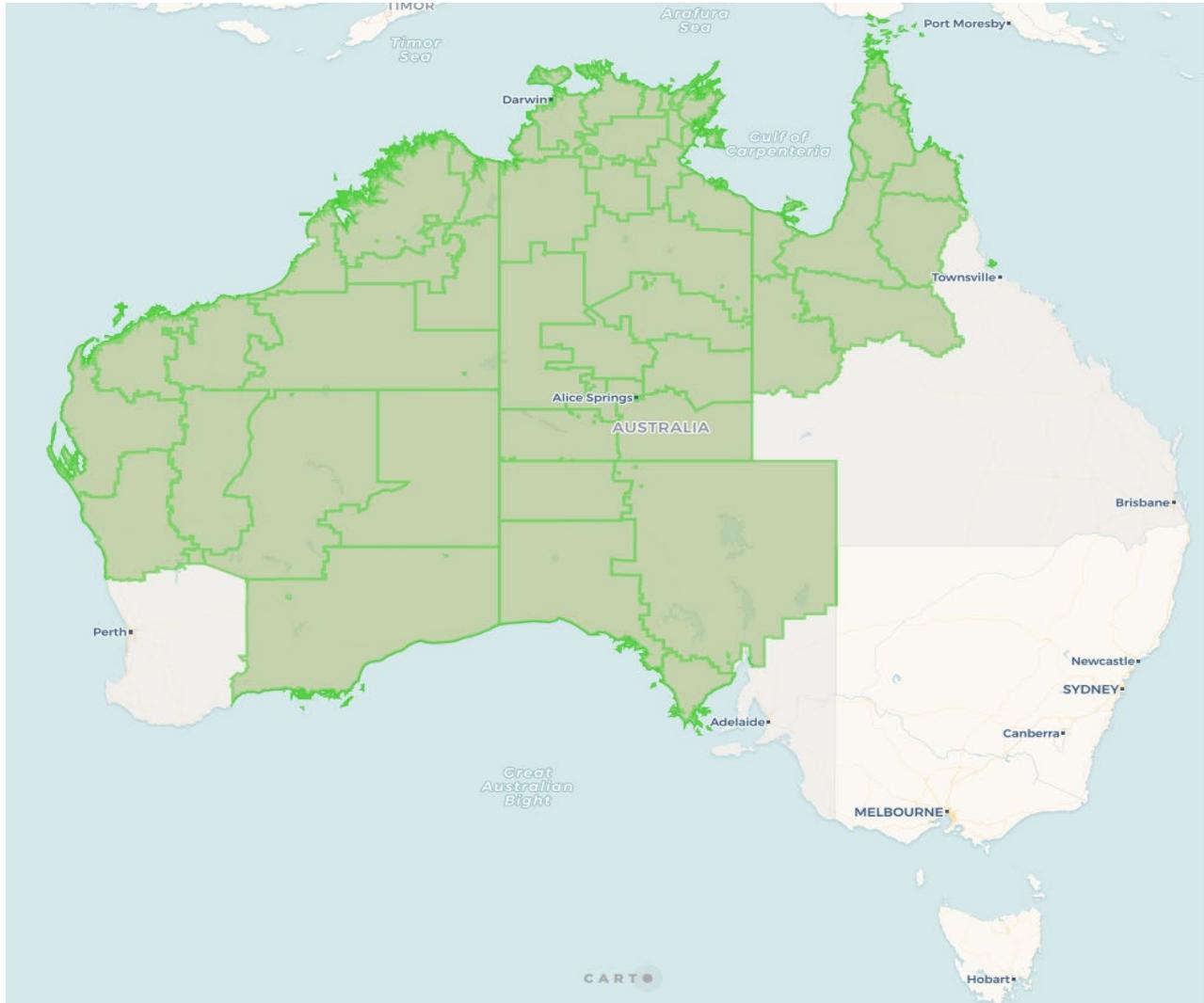
For the purposes of these guidelines, communities in the regions coloured green in this map are 'Remote Communities', with the exception of the cities and towns of Broome, Geraldton, Kalgoorlie, Esperance, Port Lincoln, Port Augusta, Whyalla, Darwin, Alice Springs and Mt Isa.