



## **World Indigenous Television Broadcasters Network ('WITBN') Council Report**

5<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> August 2008

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Any questions concerning this report or matters related to the World Indigenous Television Broadcasters Network should be directed to:

Jim Mather  
CEO / Tāhūhū Rangapū  
Māori Television

[jim.mather@maoritelevision.com](mailto:jim.mather@maoritelevision.com)

Ph +64 9 539 7090

# **WORLD INDIGENOUS TELEVISION BROADCASTERS NETWORK ('WITBN') COUNCIL REPORT**

## **INTRODUCTION**

The World Indigenous Television Broadcasters Network ('WITBN' or 'the Network') was established as a key outcome of the inaugural World Indigenous Television Broadcasting Conference (WITBC '08) held in Aotearoa New Zealand, and hosted by Māori Television from 26<sup>th</sup> to 28<sup>th</sup> March 2008.

Prior to the conference, a draft paper outlining the intent of the proposed Network was circulated to senior leaders of indigenous broadcasters. Those senior leaders and other key people were then invited to attend a luncheon hosted by the CEO of Māori Television during the conference, to discuss the merits of such an alliance.

The key outcome of the discussion was that participants formed an Interim Council for the proposed alliance, and Maori Television was designated to report back on the concept with a draft planning document. This would then give participants the chance to provide feedback, and formalise the Network.

The inaugural meeting of the Interim Council was hosted by Irish language television channel TG4 in Galway, Ireland, from 5<sup>th</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> August 2008. In attendance were TG4 (Ireland); Māori Television (Aotearoa New Zealand); NITV (Australia); TITV / PTS (Taiwan); BBC Alba (Scotland); NRK Sami Radio and Television (Norway); and S4C (Wales) with apologies from SABC (South Africa) and APTN (Canada).

Agenda items included the Network and council structure, capacity and capability building opportunities, the establishment of a WITBN website and the schedule and action plan for future meetings. This document is a summary of the key decisions that were made at this meeting.

The Commonwealth Broadcasting Association (CBA) also made a presentation to the Council meeting about the background and role of the CBA; the benefits of CBA membership such as training opportunities, bursaries and awards; areas of potential collaboration; and other potential sources of funding.

## **ESTABLISHMENT DECISIONS**

### **1. NETWORK AND COUNCIL STRUCTURE:**

- (a) A staged development was agreed, with a simplified structure.
- (b) The WITBN Council foundation members are:
  - APTN – Canada
  - BBC Alba – Scotland
  - Māori Television – Aotearoa New Zealand
  - NITV – Australia
  - S4C – Wales
  - NRK Sami Radio and Television – Samiland, Norway
  - TG4 – Ireland
  - TITV / PTS – Taiwan
  - SABC – South Africa (to be confirmed)
- (c) All WITBN Council member organisations are to pay an annual membership fee of US\$ 5,000 per calendar year starting from January 2008. All Council members in attendance agreed with NITV and BBC Alba to confirm.
- (d) Māori Television is to invoice all Council members for annual membership fees and introduce appropriate financial reporting control measures.

- (e) Māori Television will be the chair organisation of WITBN until WITBC 2010, and the CEO of Māori Television will be the inaugural WITBN chairman. Māori Television will provide secretariat support at no cost to WITBN.

**2. VISION:**

“Unifying television broadcasters worldwide to retain and grow our indigenous languages and cultures”

**3. MISSION:**

“To develop collaborative relationships between indigenous television broadcasters in order to create opportunities for:

- increased audiences;
- better access to resources;
- enhanced knowledge transfer;
- improved understanding of indigenous issues by all audiences;
- strategic international leadership;
- enhancement of schedules through programme exchange; and
- reaching out to all other indigenous television broadcasters”

**4. SPECIFIC ACTIVITIES:**

**Brand development**

- The same font for ‘WITBC’ will be retained and changed to ‘WITBN’ – World Indigenous Television Broadcasters Network. TITV / PTS will also retain the ‘Aotearoa ‘08’ and WITBC branding format.

## **Website development**

- ❑ Two separate websites are required for WITBN and WITBC. Māori Television will scope a website plan for the new WITBN website, identify costs and circulate to Council members for feedback, support and finalisation.
- ❑ The purpose of the WITBN website is 'to facilitate sharing' amongst indigenous television broadcasters. Specifications will include: transferability to a different host server at a later stage; capacity to stream short promo videos on each of the WITBN member organisations; info/links on member organisations; progress/projects section; contact points for work groups; capacity to publish articles and relevant info (procedures to be developed); and contact details. The website is to be completely open (no registered member sections).
- ❑ The chair organisation will be responsible for the WITBN website and will transfer responsibility to the host of WITBC at the next conference. Therefore, Māori Television will transfer WITBC website responsibility to TITV / PTS who will be responsible for the WITBC 2010 website. Relevant sections of WITBC 2008 will be archived on the WITBC 2010 website.
- ❑ The WITBN website will be funded from the annual membership fees. It will be linked to the WITBC 2010 website and will actively promote WITBC. The WITBC 2010 website will be bilingual (English and Mandarin).

## **Opportunities for staff exchanges, training, development and scholarships**

- ❑ Council members will consider staff exchange options and develop proposals directly with other WITBN organisation(s).

## **Weekly indigenous news programme**

- ❑ Māori Television tabled a proposal to develop a weekly 30-minute indigenous news 'wrap-up' programme of the major news stories of WITBN member

organisations. It is envisaged that a pilot with WITBN branding will be produced by Māori Television by December 2008.

## **COUNCIL SUB-COMMITTEES / WORKING GROUPS**

### **Training and development**

- Training and development activities will initially focus on staff exchange programmes.

### **Finance**

- An annual membership funding model will be adopted. Other funding options will be considered as opportunities arise.

### **Network Development**

- Various projects such as the development of the new WITBN and WITBC websites and staff exchanges were considered to be appropriate network development initiatives at this stage. Key communication tools will be the WITBN website and direct email communications.

### **Content Sharing**

- TG4 and NRK Sami Radio and Television will develop and circulate papers outlining the details of their respective proposals relating to programme production, exchange/content distribution and concept sharing arrangements.
- Council members will circulate those papers to senior executives within their respective organisations for additional technical advice and feedback.

## **6. MEMBERSHIP**

There are to be two levels of membership: Council and Associate. The Council reserves the right to decline WITBN membership applications.

Council members are member organisations involved in the direct leadership of WITBN which meet the following criteria:

- An indigenous television broadcaster that has a mandate to promote and revitalise the indigenous language(s) and culture(s) of their country; **or**
- A non-indigenous broadcaster able to demonstrate commitment and a proven record of contributing to retention and development of indigenous language(s) and culture(s).

**NB:** 'Broadcaster' can include content providers and aggregators.

Associate members are organisations:

- That meet the Council membership criteria but do not wish to participate in the leadership of WITBN.
- Are other key stakeholders who wish to support the objectives of WITBN.

**NB:** Associate members will have no decision-making capacity.

Council members will pay an annual membership fee of US\$ 5,000 (based on calendar year / payment January). Associate members to pay an annual membership fee of US\$ 1,000 (based on calendar year / payment January).

## **7. TAIWAN 2010**

Members of the TITV / PTS delegation provided a detailed presentation on 'Taiwan 2010' which will be held in Taipei in March 2010. The theme of the two-day conference will be 'Facing the Challenge in the Digital Age for Indigenous Media'. A special feature will be a film festival where indigenous broadcasters will be invited to showcase specially commissioned films.

Council members enthusiastically supported the 'Taiwan 2010' proposal and congratulated TITV / PTS on such an innovative plan. The role of the Council, in terms of WITBC, is to provide advice, feedback and support. Māori Television will arrange for the transfer to TITV / PTS of the WITBC 2008 database, budget information and other relevant information to support them with planning for WITBC 2010.

## **8. MEETING SCHEDULE**

Council members will meet on a six-monthly basis. The aim is to alternate meetings in different sectors of the world at a host indigenous broadcaster on each occasion. The tentative schedule is:

- WITBN 2 – March 2009 either at APTN (Canada) or SABC (South Africa) – to be confirmed.
  
- WITBN 3 – September 2009 either at BBC Alba (Scotland) or Sami Radio & Television (Samiland, Norway).
  
- WITBN 4 – March 2010 week prior to WITBC 2010, Taiwan.

## **9. CONCLUSION**

The inaugural meeting of the Interim Council of the World Indigenous Television Broadcasters Network provided the opportunity to finalise the set-up phase of WITBN. All of the Council members re-affirmed their commitment to the aims and objectives of a global alliance of

indigenous television broadcasters and other stakeholders, working together to achieve common goals.