

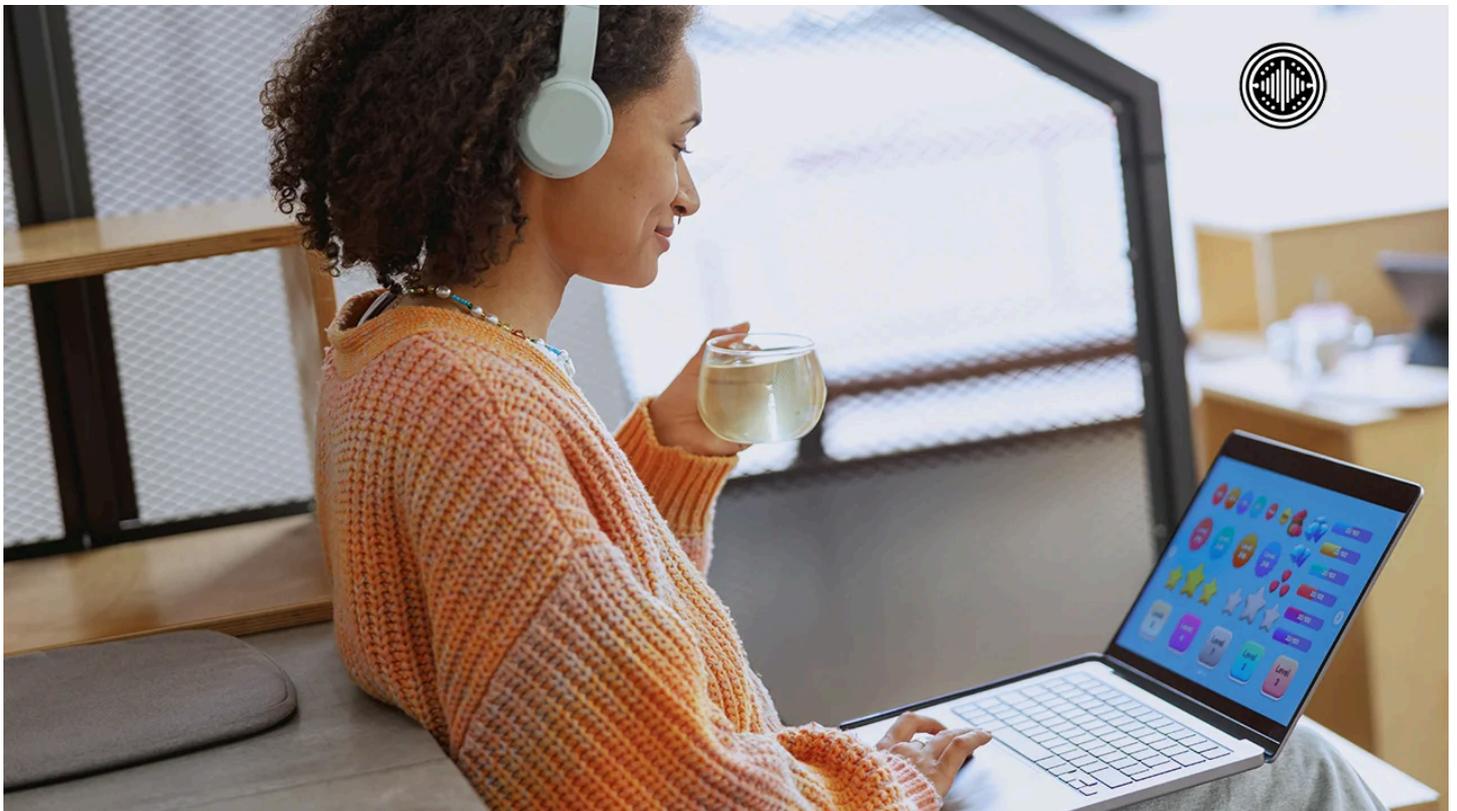
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Feds Hit Halfway Mark in Remote Jobs Program, 1,500 Jobs Delivered

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– Categories: Human Rights



The Australian federal government has announced it has reached the halfway point of its Remote Jobs and Economic Development (RJED) program, delivering 1,500 of the promised 3,000 jobs to remote and regional communities. The initiative, launched in 2023 by the Albanese Government, aims to boost economic opportunities in areas with historically high unemployment, particularly in rural and Indigenous communities, according to a Department of Employment and Workplace Relations (DEWR) statement on August 6, 2025. While the milestone has been touted as progress, critics argue the program's effectiveness and sustainability remain under scrutiny.

The RJED program, with a \$200 million budget over four years, funds projects in sectors like agriculture, renewable energy, and community services to create sustainable

employment. As of July 2025, 1,500 jobs have been created across 50 projects, including roles in solar farm construction in outback Queensland and tourism ventures in the Northern Territory, per *The Australian*. DEWR reports that 60% of these jobs have gone to Indigenous Australians, aligning with the program's goal to address economic disparities in remote areas. Minister for Employment Tony Burke stated that the initiative is "delivering real opportunities for communities too often left behind," as reported by *ABC News* on August 6, 2025.

However, concerns persist about the program's long-term viability. Opposition employment spokesperson Michaelia Cash, speaking to *Sky News* on August 7, 2025, criticized the government for lacking a clear plan to ensure job retention beyond initial funding. "Creating jobs is one thing, but without infrastructure and training, these roles risk vanishing," she said. A 2024 report by the Productivity Commission noted that similar past initiatives struggled with job sustainability, with only 40% of roles lasting beyond three years. Regional business owners, like Alice Springs-based contractor Mark Evans, echoed this, telling *The Australian* that "short-term funding doesn't build long-term economies."

Despite the milestone, the government faces pressure to address logistical challenges, such as limited access to training and transport in remote areas. With two years left to deliver the remaining 1,500 jobs, the RJED program's success will hinge on overcoming these barriers and proving its economic impact, especially as regional unemployment remains at 5.2%, per the Australian Bureau of Statistics.