



NEWS RELEASE

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MBF CONTRACTS FIRST ABORIGINAL NATIONAL TELECOMMUNICATIONS SERVICE PROVIDER FOR MULTIMEDIA CONFERENCING NEEDS

DIVERSIFIED private health insurer MBF has signed with Message Stick Communications -- Australia's first Aboriginal national telecommunications service provider -- to handle the group's multimedia conferencing needs.

Under the two-year agreement, Message Stick will provide MBF businesses in health and financial services with state of the art online audio and web conferencing services.

In entering the agreement, MBF has joined other major Australian companies that have entrusted vital telecommunications services to Message Stick, which was established by founding director, Michael McLeod.

MBF Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer, Mr Eric Dodd, said the agreement satisfied a business need and provided an opportunity to support Message Stick's broader goals on behalf of indigenous Australians.

"In addition to being confident in Message Stick's ability to deliver a communications service, their objective for indigenous Australians to achieve personal economic independence resonates with MBF," Mr Dodd said.

"Our business strategy is underpinned by addressing our customers' desire for independence and peace of mind in relation to their health and financial security, which is currently sadly out of reach to many in Australia's indigenous community.

"The Message Stick business model gives Australian companies access to effective communication and an opportunity to show that indigenous Australians can professionally manage commercial relationships and responsibilities."

As a national organisation providing private health insurance, financial services and lifestyle management programs, MBF has a growing need for effective communication across business units.

The use of sophisticated multimedia conferencing services is vital to achieve cost effective and efficient communications throughout the organisation.

Message Stick Chief Executive Officer, Mr Michael McLeod, said the company was delighted to have MBF as the latest Australian company to use Message Stick's services.

"MBF has given Message Stick the opportunity to again confirm that independence and reconciliation can be achieved by establishing positive business relationships between indigenous and non-indigenous Australians," Mr McLeod said.

Message Stick's business objectives are to:

- Remain financially independent without the need for grants, subsidies or other 'socially based' concessions of any kind.
- Promote understanding and awareness of the indigenous community with the non-indigenous business community.
- Contribute to reconciliation by providing a working example in the business environment of how positive relationships between indigenous and non-indigenous Australians can thrive and produce meaningful outcomes.
- Support and develop successful indigenous business executives as role models for the indigenous community particularly its youth.

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