



Aboriginal Way

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Above: Quentin Agius with Elizabeth Newchurch and Ngaduri dancers at the Orroroo Determination.

Three Aboriginal nations sharing Country

Three Aboriginal nations have overcome challenges to have their shared native title rights recognised in a federal court hearing in the town of Orroroo late last year.

The Federal Court decision brings together the Ngadjuri, Wilyakali and Adnyamathanha peoples in a joint determination of their native title rights and interests in the mid north of South Australia.

The consent determination is the first for the Ngadjuri, who also have a larger claim before the courts for an area adjacent to the determined overlap area.

The Chairperson of the Ngadjuri Nation Aboriginal Corporation, Quentin Agius spoke to *Aboriginal Way* following the determination and said that it was a very emotional day for himself and other Ngadjuri people.

“It’s been a long time coming. Like the court said, it being over 15 years that we’ve all been trying to work towards this. It’s upsetting that the Elders that started all this process off weren’t here today. A lot of them have passed on, but we feel that their spirit is here with us today in this country, for this major milestone.”

Mr Agius was very aware of the contribution of Ngadjuri old people on the day.

“Without that knowledge of country and the spirits of our old people with us, walking with us today, I don’t think we would have got and achieved what we have.

“My emotions got the best of me today by feeling them old people with me, and accepting the consent determination from the government” he said.

The journey to native title had been long and sometimes difficult said Mr Agius.

“All three groups, Ngadjuri Nations, Wilyakali, and Adnyamathanha, it’s been a hard slog for us.

“Sometimes you don’t see eye to eye, but as people and family we move forward, and the outcome of getting this determination is joyous for us Ngadjuri” he said.

There have been many twists and turns in the Ngadjuri’s journey to native title recognition according to their legal representative and SANTS Principal Legal Officer, Andrew Beckworth.

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Three Aboriginal nations sharing Country

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At the Federal Court hearing in the Orroroo Town Hall, Mr Beckworth acknowledged those Ngadjuri Elders who have now passed who had been a “driving force in the early days of the native title claim”.

Graham Harbour, Lawyer for the Adnyamathanha told the Court that the first Adnyamathanha native title claim was registered in 1994. Several areas were combined into the Adnyamathanha Claim #1. Over the years, areas of the claim have been resolved with this determination finalising the claim.

It was also the last native title matter before the Courts for the Adnyamathanha people.

Original named applicants to the Adnyamathanha claim, Mark McKenzie Snr and Beverley Patterson were at the hearing to witness the conclusion of the long-standing Adnyamathanha claim.

Vince Coulthard, Adnyamathanha Traditional Land Owners Association (ATLA) CEO told *Aboriginal Way* that the day marked “the final leg of a large

claim”, however the work on managing native title rights would continue.

“That’s dealing with third-party interest groups wanting to do things on country. That ranges from mining activities right through to government personnel, like putting up towers and putting in infrastructure like roads and so on.

“The work continues for us, but it’s a beginning for some, particularly for the Ngadjuri and Wilyakali people” Mr Coulthard said.

Wilyakali Elder and named applicant Maureen O’Donnell told *Aboriginal Way* before the hearing, that the day is a welcome recognition after a long fight.

“It means so much to be recognised by the white man’s law, that it’s Wilyakali country. What we always knew was true, it’s been a long hard fight to get it, but we finally did” she said.

Mrs O’Donnell spoke of the challenges in pursuing a native title claim over many years.

“It brings to you again things that were taken away many years ago” she said.

“We had to go to a lot of meetings, a lot of travel even when people were not well. We had to bare our soul about our culture, things that were natural to us, but we had to speak about them and put them out there” she said.

“But now that this day has come, we thank the Courts, and also the Ngadjuri and Adnyamathanha people for working with us and listening to us” Mrs O’Donnell said.

Lawyer Peter Tonkin for the state of South Australia told the hearing in Orroroo that the determination “shows what can be done if groups work together, and these groups have been working together for a long time”.

In presenting his written reasons for granting the determination, Justice White for the Federal Court said that “determination involves a recognition that there is one single society made up of three groups”.

“The determination will have the effect of recognising that Adnyamathanha, Wilyakali and Ngadjuri people inhabited this area prior to European settlement and have maintained this connection ever since” he told the crowd assembled in Orroroo.

Justice White said that “in the case of most the determination is made on the basis that one nation, a shared claim is relatively rare in native title history, there have only been six in the past. This shared outcome required considerable effort by the members of the three groups”.

“They have had to reconcile their differences and this resolution requires some compromise. Each group is to be commended.

“The area being determined had an ancient history, the geological remnants of the ice age had been documented by explorer Douglas Mawson around 1905.

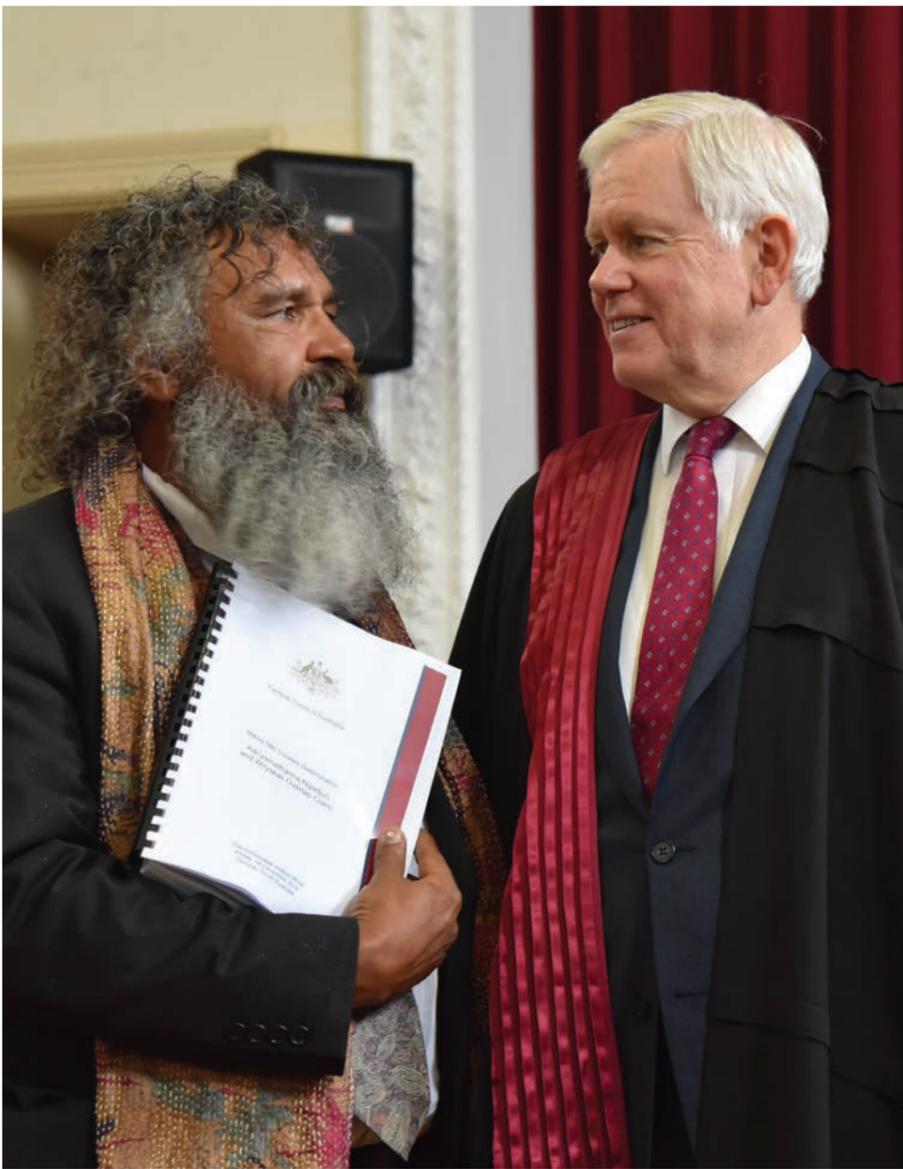
This ancient physical history of the land is a fitting backdrop to ancient connection of the Adnyamathanha, Wilyakali and Ngadjuri people” said Justice White.

This is “a new beginning with a very long history” Justice White told the court hearing in Orroroo.

The Ngadjuri, Wilyakali and Adnyamathanha people have registered a new corporation to manage the native title overlapping area.



This page, left to right, from top: Ngadjuri dancers; Terrence Coulthard, Adnyamathanha; Mark McKenzie (Snr) and Beverley Patterson, Adnyamathanha; Vincent Branson and Quentin Agius, Ngadjuri with Justice White; the crowd gathers for the hearing in the Orroroo Council Chambers.



This page, left to right, from top: Quenten Agius with Justice White; Betty Branson, Roslyn Weetra, Deanna Newchurch, Rod Newchurch, Elizabeth Newchurch and Vincent Branson, Ngadjuri; Vincent Coulthard, Adnyamathanha with Justice White; Lorna Crowe Firebrace, Wilyakali, Vincent Coulthard, Lawyer Ewan Vickery, Glen O'Donnell, Wilyakali, Justice White, Elizabeth Hunter, Wilyakali; A representative from Epic Energy; Quenten Agius, Vincent Branson; Ngadjuri people including Vincent Branson, Quenten Agius, Roslyn Weetra, Evelyn Walker, Katie Agius with Justice White and Ngadjuri Lawyer, SANTS PLO Andrew Beckworth.

Who should care for Old People?

The management of Aboriginal ancestral remains held by the South Australian Museum is set to change following years of questioning by community members and in the face of the deteriorating state of the Museum's storage space.

A new policy on the management of Aboriginal heritage collections was approved by the Museum Board in December.

The South Australian Museum holds one of the world's largest collections of Aboriginal artefacts. The collections include human remains of many Aboriginal old people from across the state and country.

A major forum between Aboriginal community members late in 2018 has marked a new approach to the care of ancestral remains.

The forum followed a statement by the Director of the Museum Brian Oldman, where he said, "museums must change with the times".

Mr Oldman said that he wanted to "signal a new era of Aboriginal involvement and empowerment in the priorities of the South Australian Museum".

In the statement acknowledged the scale of the ancestral remains held by his institution and touched on how they had been collected.

"The remains of some 4600 Aboriginal people rest in the South Australian Museum under our care. Some of these remains were collected by researchers in the past, some were disturbed by developments here in Adelaide and around South Australia" he said.

He said that these remains now need to be returned to country, echoing calls that have been made by Aboriginal community members for many years.

"There are many reasons why museums around Australia have to care for human remains, but there is now one responsibility underpinning them all – the need to return these individuals to Country where they belong. The Museum recognises this as a moral responsibility above all others" he said.

In August, when the remains of a Kurna old person was returned from a European institution, Kurna Elder Jeffrey Newchurch criticised the Museum's holding of the ancestral remains and called for such a return.

"There currently appears to be ancestral remains of over 800 Kurna old peoples held at the South Australian Museum's bulk store. This is disrespectful and wrong.

"One day I hope all ancestral remains of the Kurna old people will be returned to Country" Mr Newchurch said.

Researchers into collections of Aboriginal ancestral remains have argued that ideas of a hierarchy between races of peoples at the time of colonisation made Aboriginal people's remains highly sought after. This fierce competition

for Aboriginal people's remains in that era meant that many were deliberately stolen from burial sites, as well as being discovered during settlement activities.

Their placement within Museums has supported research in the years since, including research into Aboriginal people's ancestry.

Much questioning from Indigenous people across the globe and in Australia about the holding of the remains of their ancestors has seen a shift in the way these artefacts are viewed, as well as their potential future care and management.

Now work to create a 'new era' at the South Australian Museum has commenced. A new policy on Aboriginal heritage collections was approved by the Museum Board in December, Anna Russo, South Australian Museum Aboriginal Heritage and Repatriation Manager, told *Aboriginal Way* late in 2018.

The new policy was developed by a reference group of Aboriginal elders which was established by the Museum's board.

Ms Russo said they have spent the last 12 months rewriting the museum's repatriation policy to replace a dated policy.

"The previous policy was written in 1987, and that predates the Aboriginal Heritage Act here in South Australia.

"The previous policy, it's focus on Aboriginal ancestral remains was as scientific specimens, is essentially how it treated those ancestors.

"Repatriation was only considered under that policy for a very small sub-set of ancestral remains," Ms Russo said.

Ms Russo said the new policy has a very different approach.

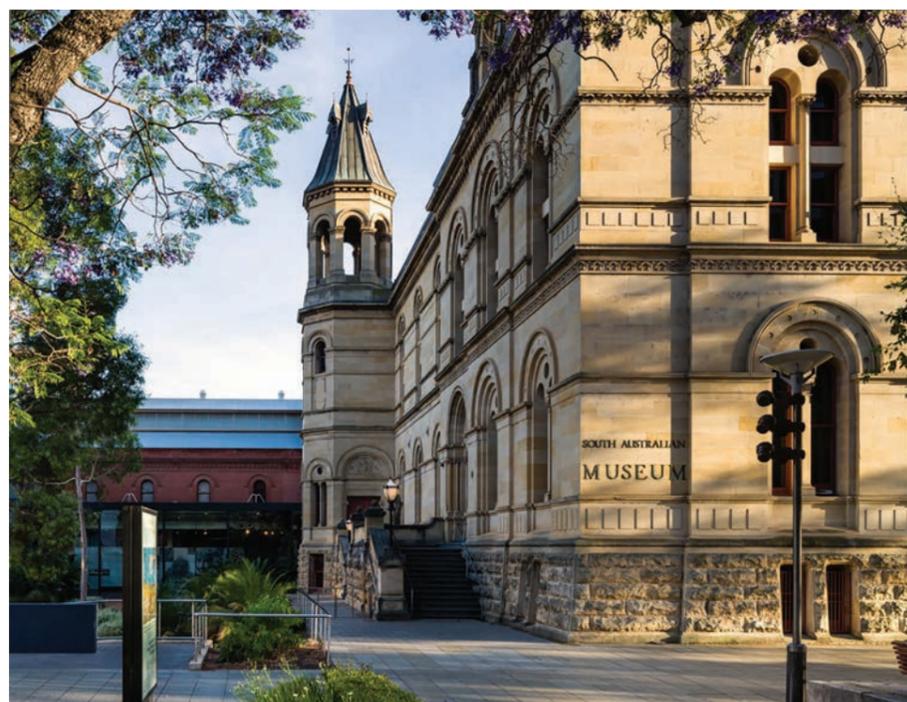
"The new policy has put Aboriginal cultural authority at the heart of it, and particularly those decisions of the value of the remains, the scientific value. So it's essentially flipped that convention from 1987 on its head" she said.

The new approach at the Museum takes its cues from international developments and new national standards about Indigenous people's ancestral remains.

"It takes its reference points from the United Nations Declaration on the rights of Indigenous peoples, and their ancestral remains. It references the national policy on Indigenous repatriation, and what the Commonwealth government expects, and the Aboriginal Heritage Act in South Australia.

"So it's got some very strong points of reference, and it's being developed by those Aboriginal leaders. You know, it's really a huge cultural shift for this museum. Long overdue" Ms Russo said.

In mid-October, the Museum hosted a major forum to talk about the Museum's proposed new approach with Aboriginal community members.



"For us at the South Australia Museum, it was an opportunity to introduce a new relationship with South Australian Aboriginal communities because we are really stepping up our focus on repatriation of ancestral remains" Ms Russo told *Aboriginal Way*.

The forum included 51 traditional owners from 15 different Aboriginal organisations who are affected by the repatriation programs, as well as the chair of the State Aboriginal Committee, the Commissioner for Aboriginal Engagement and Aboriginal staff from the South Australian Museum.

At the workshop, discussions were centred around themes drawn from the new policy approach of responsible research, repatriation practice, enduring relationships, education and awareness and protection in perpetuity.

The Museum asked participants "what elements of responsible research can be strengthened?"

Some feedback included acknowledgement of ownership and self-determination with Aboriginal control of artefacts was needed.

They were told that further consultation is needed between the Museum and communities and that the Museum should acknowledge proper ownership of the remains.

One commented noted was "policy by museums should not dictate what community can or can't do with their old people".

The Museum told those present at the forum that one of its key objectives was "recognising the impact of collection and research practices of the past, affirming the Museum's commitment to culturally appropriate collection management and repatriation of Aboriginal ancestral remains".

It asked Aboriginal community members and traditional owners "what are the actions the Museum or Government can take to demonstrate it is authentic in its approach to repatriation and build trust with Aboriginal Communities?"

The responses included that "the SA Museum and the SA Government should apologise for stealing the 'collections' and recognise that some of the 'collections' are stolen and held as such". Other responses suggested that a healing process is required to move forward.

Community members called for Aboriginal leadership and ongoing input in policy development. It was also noted that appropriate funding was required to employ specialist staff and to consult with traditional owners.

Ms Russo told *Aboriginal Way* why enduring relationships are a central question in furthering the discussion and repatriation work.

"The relationships are a key part of the repatriation practice. So we want to have a new model where we work through three steps of informing people, then consulting at a whole community level.

"And then collaborating on how do we actually move ancestors from the museum back to country for reburial, and what does that collaboration look like?" she said.

The Museum identified that it wants to "through public programs and engagement activities, identify, document and present repatriation stories".

Community members at the forum called for "the Museum... to be honest and transparent about what has happened and share through exhibition, etc. Don't be afraid to tell the hard stories" – was one comment.

There was also a call for "keeping places" for ancestral remains to be held under the control of traditional owners.

Ms Russo says that "Aboriginal communities have been asking for the space to tell the stories, we've got a lot of work to do there.

"We're just putting these things out there to let them know that we are thinking about things people have said before. We're not starting from scratch. We know people have views and have expressed them previously, so let's build on that" she said.

National radioactive waste site delayed by Human Rights complaints

Decisions on plans for a national radioactive waste site in regional South Australia have been delayed with two groups of traditional owners lodging human rights complaints over the decision-making process.

In December 2018, the Adnyamathanha Traditional Lands Association (ATLA) lodged an Australian Human Rights Commission (AHRC) complaint alleging a fundamentally flawed process in the consideration of a site near Hawker, Flinders Ranges.

The Barngarla Determination Aboriginal Corporation had previously lodged an injunction on a ballot over a proposed site that was planned over a site near Kimba on the Eyre Peninsula.

After being referred to the Australian Human Rights Commission for conciliation, that complaint was heard in the Federal Court on 30 January 2019.

That legal action caused the Kimba District Council to delay the planned ballot. The Department of Industry, Innovation and Science, which holds responsibility for the establishment of the site said in a statement "it is not possible at this point to fix a date for the closure of the consultative process".

The latest complaint by the Adnyamathanha people alleges that both the ballot to assess community support for the waste facility, which excludes many traditional owners, and the damage done to significant cultural heritage sites by Commonwealth contractors constitutes unlawful discrimination.

Maurice Blackburn lawyer Nicki Lees, acting for ATLA, said the nomination process for the Hawker site has been fundamentally flawed from its inception and the AHRC complaint is necessary to seek independent insight into the adequacy of the process.

Vince Coulthard, CEO of ATLA said that "ATLA remains strongly opposed to any nomination of their land for a



further radioactive waste dump site and the lodging of an AHRC complaint is important in seeking a fair hearing for our deep concerns."

Speaking outside the Federal court in Adelaide on lodging the complaint, Mr Coulthard explained the complaint further.

"We have had put on us a proposed waste dump in the Flinders Ranges region, at Wallerberdina. The Adnyamathanha people have voted against the waste dump. We don't want the waste dump on our country. We are part of the community. The department in its consultation has gone and spoken to other people in the region, other interest groups, they've never come out and spoken directly with the Traditional Lands Association. ATLA is a PBC, a representative body under the native title process and is an Aboriginal Regional Authority. We have a right to go and speak for our country. The Government should be speaking to traditional owners, that's what we ask.

Michael Anderson, the Chair of ATLA supported the call for consultation with the traditional owners.

"Our people are very united on this, we're not going to give up, we don't give up easy. We've been on our country since the beginning of time, we'll always be on that country and we'll always keep the fight going" he said.



Top: Vince Coulthard and Damien Coulthard outside the Federal Court. Above: Adnyamathanha outside the Federal Court.

Recognition for young Kamilaroi scholar in London

Young Kamilaroi woman Jessica Buck has been awarded the 2019 Young Australian Achiever of the Year in the UK as part of the Australia Day Honours on 26 January in London.

Jessica is currently undertaking a DPhil in Oncology at Green Templeton College, Oxford, after successfully completing an MSc in Neuroscience at Oxford.

She was nominated for the prestigious award by Professor Dame Valerie Beral, who called her "one of the most impressive students she's come across in 30 years of working in Oxford".

In her acceptance speech at the Australia Day gala dinner at Australia House, Jessica said:

"10 years ago, there had never been an Aboriginal person study at Oxbridge. Now, there are 40 of us, and we have the trailblazers who came before us to thank.

"Our mob are doing great things in mathematics, in medicine, in the arts, and in the sciences. We are setting a path for the next generation of young Australians to follow, and I hope we can be successful in teaching and inspiring them to reach their potential" she said.

Jessica's studies have been supported by the Charlie Perkins Scholarships and the Aurora Education Foundation, as well as Commonwealth Government, the British Government through the Chevening Program, Green Templeton College at Oxford and Oxford University.

Deadly new doco series highlights Aboriginal talent

Three Aboriginal families and their artistic talents are the focus of a new documentary series to be aired on iView in 2019.

The series, *Deadly Family portraits* features acclaimed actors Lillian Crombie and her daughter Elaine Crombie, awarded visual artist Robert Fielding and his musician son Zaachariaha Fielding, and dancers and sisters Taree and Caleena Sansbury.

Each 10 minute episode will be produced by an Aboriginal film-making team to create an intriguing conversation between artist and

filmmaker; as they reflect upon identity, culture, life, art, country and family.

The documentary series is an initiative of the South Australian Film Corporation (SAFC), ABC Arts iView and Arts South Australia.

Lee-Ann Buckskin, SAFC Aboriginal Screen Strategy Consultant said, "this is an amazing opportunity to nurture the careers of extraordinary up and coming Aboriginal directors and producers alongside such inspiring Aboriginal artists, while creating compelling and insightful viewing for a national audience."

High Court dismisses Lake Torrens native title appeal

An appeal against the dismissal of an application for the recognition of native title rights over the lands and waters of Lake Torrens has been rejected by the High Court.

On 6 November 2018 the High Court quashed an appeal over a Federal Court judgement over the Lake Torrens Overlap Proceedings, which was made by Justice Mansfield in August 2016.

Since the 2016 decision, three native title groups representing Kokatha,

Adnyamathanha and Barngarla peoples have appealed to the Full Federal Courts and High Courts of Australia over the decision.

Since the dismissal by the High Court late last year, the Torrens joint venture between the corporations Argonaut and Aeris is preparing to commence drilling in the area.

The three native title groups will continue to work together for their rights over their traditional lands and waters.

A Ngurra for Indigenous Australia in Canberra

The Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS) is calling for the development of a dedicated Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander precinct in Canberra.

Craig Ritchie, the CEO of AIATSIS told *Aboriginal Way* that the bold idea is “an opportunity to invest in and to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, to tell our story to the nation”.

“We think that if you look at the way the national capital tells the story of Australia, the glaring omission is Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander components of our national story” Mr Ritchie said.

The precinct would include a new home for AIATSIS, a National Indigenous Cultures and Knowledges Centre and a National Resting Place, which would be for repatriated ancestral remains that are not able to be returned to their own country.

“We think that it’s really important that there’s a national place that appropriately cares for, and respectfully cares for, our ancestral remains in that situation” Mr Ritchie said.

AIATSIS is working on collaborations to make the vision a reality.

“We will be looking for partners who are keen to join with us in our vision of making sure that we live in a world where our cultures, our knowledges,

are not only recognised and respected, but celebrated and valued.

“We’re talking to the Government about how important this is, what an opportunity this is to invest in and to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, to tell our story to the nation.

“We’ll also continue to engage with the private sector, to try and generate support” he said.

AIATSIS has called the ambitious proposal the Ngurra Project.

“Ngurra is a word that it appears in many different Aboriginal languages around the country, that basically has the same meaning. It’s the word for ‘home’, ‘camp’, ‘a place of belonging’, ‘a place of inclusion” Mr Ritchie said.

The proposal is a key initiative of the 55-year-old institution’s new strategic plan, which covers their priorities and activities for next five years.

On launching the plan late last year, Mr Ritchie called AIATSIS “the nation’s best kept secret”.

He explained to *Aboriginal Way* that while AIATSIS is known to many people, the knowledge of the general public about the research institution is low.

“For stakeholders that have had a bit to do with the organisation, so the native title sector, for example, and the academy, museums and the cultural sector, people in those areas are fairly familiar with us.

“But in terms of people just generally, the general public, knowing ‘oh, there’s AIATSIS over there – what is it that you do? Are you part of the museum? Are you part of ANU?’ Many people just don’t know” he said.

“Fairly tight” funding has been a challenge for the organisation in recent years and that has influenced its public profile, Mr Ritchie said.

“We tended, I think, to be a fairly inward-facing institution” he said.

The new strategic plan presents ambitions to change that. AIATSIS’ vision is to create “a world in which Aboriginal

and Torres Strait Islander people’s knowledge and cultures are recognised, respected, celebrated and valued” and through that to “help Australia forge a more inclusive national identity”.

“We have a real responsibility to be speaking to the nation about the first component of our strategic plan, to tell the story of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australia” Mr Ritchie said.

According to Mr Ritchie, the organisation’s ambitions to be more public comes at crucial time for Australia.

“It’s a really important time in the history of the nation, I think. It’s at a time when questions of who we are nationally, and national identity are front and centre in lots of people’s minds.

“You have on the one hand a fairly resurgent, conservative perspective on Australian national identity that positions our Australian identity as something that’s largely white, Anglo, and Christian.

“In an environment like that, there’s not a lot of room for migrant populations, there’s not a lot of room for Indigenous culture and heritage.

“We think we have a responsibility to work with Indigenous Australians and communities, to be able to make sure that our story is being told, and it’s being told by us, by Indigenous Australians” he said.

In this Year of Indigenous Languages, AIATSIS will also pursue what it calls a “Resurgence Initiative” that is about contributing to cultural resurgence across Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australia.

“Over the next year or two, we will publish somewhere between 20 and 25 Indigenous language dictionaries” Mr Ritchie explained.

“That will become a really important tool and resource for communities and educators and academics to support the resurgence of Aboriginal languages, and Torres Strait Islander languages.

“It is absolutely critical to language revitalisation that you have a dictionary. Not just a word list, but a really good dictionary” he said.

AIATSIS will also focus on “transformation”, starting with young Australian students.

“It’s really healthy to transform people’s understanding about Indigenous Australia, and that will include a real focus on school education and curriculum issues, a well as supporting better teaching of Indigenous Australia’s history and cultures, in our school education in classroom context” Mr Ritchie said.

As part of that initiative, AIATSIS will produce textbooks and classroom resources for Australia primary schools.

“We think that if you don’t transform the way that Australians think about Indigenous Australia, and think about

what really is the first story of this country, the 65,000 year old story of Indigenous Australia, then schools are a really critical vehicle for transforming people’s understanding” Mr Ritchie said.

In further educational activity, AIATSIS will offer a cultural awareness program to the corporate sector.

“That’s really about giving people the skills that they need in their professional life, to be able to engage respectfully with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. It’s a foundation course, it’s not meant to replace face to face engagement at a local level, which is absolutely critical. It’s meant to support and to drive that local engagement” said Mr Ritchie.

AIATSIS is looking to use information technology to reach out from its Canberra base.

“This is really looking at options that are available to the institute to be genuinely national in our focus, and to think about how we can extend both our influence, but also our presence, physically and digitally across the country.

“And so we want to be working particularly with the states and the territories on what those options might look like, but also thinking about having the kind of online presence that means, even though we’re a Canberra based institution, we’re really trying to be everywhere” Mr Ritchie told *Aboriginal Way*.

AIATSIS will also continue to work to raise the profile of Australian Indigenous people internationally Mr Ritchie said, with several research partnerships established with institutions across the UK, Canada and New Zealand.

As Australia’s Indigenous research organisation looks to the future, its CEO has also been looking to the past and the original reasons the organisation was established in the 60s.

“I read some of the speeches that were made in Parliament, in the debates in 1964 leading up to the passage of the first Act that established the institute. And one of the things that struck me about that was the sentiment expressed by several of the people who were speaking in Parliament” Mr Ritchie told *Aboriginal Way*.

“They spoke about how important this institution is, not just to Aboriginal people, and not just to Australians, but to humanity at large. And I was really excited about that, I was a bit surprised, I’m going to say, that such sentiments were expressed in 1964.

But it really spoke to the role that the institute has, not just in relation to Indigenous people, but also to all Australians, but also internationally” he said.

The AIATSIS Strategic Plan 2018–2023 is available on their website www.aiatsis.gov.au



One place, many stories



Above, left: The NSW property "Millpost". Centre: Ancient axe quarry site. Right: Dave Johnston with Dr Chris Wilson from Flinders University.

The discovery of a site of significant Aboriginal heritage in New South Wales has brought farmers and traditional owners together in a rare collaboration.

Indigenous archaeologist and anthropologist Dave Johnston discovered an ancient axe quarry site on a NSW property called "Millpost" that has now been listed on the State's special sites register.

Since then, the farmers of the property and the traditional owners of the area, the Ngunnawal and Nambri people, have cooperated to protect and promote the area.

It's a rare collaboration because very few sites of significant Aboriginal heritage listed in NSW are on privately held land. It seems that for many years farmers have kept heritage discoveries on their property secret.

Last year, Dave Johnston told an audience at Flinders University about the site and the work that had been done to protect and promote it.

He spoke to *Aboriginal Way* after the event and explained how he came to identify the axe quarry site after being invited for a picnic by the property owners, the Watson family.

"We were invited out for a picnic with a group of friends, to go up to David Watson's favourite place on the property, up on this hill where he grew up as a kid, it was his favourite place.

"He was hoping there might be something there. I looked around, I couldn't see any evidence straight away, but I said, look, it's a good visual point, you can see the Brindabellas and the various ranges around Canberra, into the valley, Millpost Valley.

"But then I looked around again as we were leaving, I thought what was a granite outcrop, I looked and saw this blue stone. I thought, oh, that's a bit different, it's been chipped too. And I thought, oh, a vehicle has chipped this big block. Then it just dawned on me as I looked around, this isn't granite, it's basalt, which is the most popular stone for making stone axes around the country.

"And I realised that this outcrop was basalt, not granite... and I could see

it growing in my eyes, and as being a massive outcrop of basalt that has been quarried. And the axe blanks were there specifically for making axes, and it was an axe quarry site for the metadolerite" he said.

Mr Johnston had worked with the local Nambri and Ngunnawal communities in the area for over 35 years and so immediately spoke to them about the find at Millpost.

"So I thought, well here we are, we'll stop here. We'll go and contact the Elders. The farmers were keen to meet with the traditional owners, the custodians" he said.

Dave Johnston worked with the traditional owners, the farmers and the Office of Environment and Heritage New South Wales and the outcrop was recorded as "majorly significant Aboriginal site" and a special site for the state.

"Just recently the Minister in New South Wales declared it an Aboriginal place on their special list, that's a separate list to just the general Aboriginal sites registrar. So it's quite a significant find.

"It's just such an important and great opportunity for the communities to come together and share and recognise and look after the place, which they're doing" Mr Johnston said.

The Watson farming family were happy to collaborate with the traditional custodians on protecting the site. It can be a rare attitude still for many pastoralists and property owners said Mr Johnston.

"The original false news was, you know, from a native title, came that Aboriginal peoples and farmers just couldn't be friends, so to speak. Aboriginal people were going to steal their land through this native title. And all these false news and false stories that have gone on.

"The Watsons broke the mold in saying 'well look, we actually want to know about the local community'".

The Watsons have been on the property for five generations and expressed a respect for the Aboriginal people before them as well as an interest in the full history of the site.

"There are many histories, but if people who love country, their families, have an attachment to the land, and look,

are worried and concerned about its future and their children's future, who better than Aboriginal communities and property owners?" asked Mr Johnston.

"There are so many histories. And everyone has an angle of their history. But that is shared" he said.

Engaging with the site was also significant for local Ngunnawal and Nambri people, including Matilda House, Molly Bell and Carl and James Mundy.

"The Aboriginal people that came to the site, even though they hadn't been out Millpost in their generation, finding the sites was part of their heritage.

"This is a process where people are coming together to say, hey, we actually do care about our local history and heritage, and if governments aren't adequately, I would argue, looking after our heritage, Australia's heritage and Indigenous heritage, then you know, the locals and good people can" Mr Johnston said.

The significant find at Millpost offers potential for tourism and other economic development, with people working in partnership," said Mr Johnston.

"We've just run an Indigenous outreach program utilising that site and hospitality of the Watsons.

"It's the start. Now we're growing it, and we're also looking, can we get some economic opportunities alternate for the farmers, having some cultural tourism both European and Aboriginal with the traditional owners working together in partnerships, and that's what we're starting. It can't be everywhere do that, but it's certainly working here" he said.

This particular site, while special in the way it has been managed, is not unique in terms of heritage across the nation explained Mr Johnston.

"Australia as a whole is a cultural landscape. Aboriginal people have been here for 65,000 plus years, their survival, everyone, you know, making tools, implements, that is our archaeology. That's our physical remains that are there, our existence symbolising it.

"It's our footprints in the sand, so to speak" said Mr Johnston.

Mr Johnston said people have been unwilling share their findings on their property.

"In the past, property owners may have been reluctant to share their finds.

"Every farm would have a collection. However, it's illegal to collect and destroy sites by collecting them, but in the old days everyone did it.

"So we always said, you know, every farmer has the best collection under the house. And that's true. The difficulty is that there's fears that 'we've taken the artefacts, we might get sued'. Well, it is illegal now to do that, but the old collections prior to that legislation are fine."

"For years, because they didn't want black fellas coming in to take their land, so... But when they realised they don't, there's an opportunity for a conversation.

"that conversation has commenced, led by examples such as Millpost and changing attitudes among farmers," Mr Johnston said.

"The ANU just the last couple of weeks have been running some workshops with farmers and Aboriginal groups about some of the collections they've had under their sheds, collected from years ago before the laws said it was illegal to do that.

"But more importantly the Watsons, and other farmers like that, are talking to their neighbours, talking to their family down the road, talking at the local shows.

"They are the better ones to let the other farmers know, 'hey, this is a great relationship we've got here, we've got so much to gain and little to lose'.

"The other farmers will listen to the other farmers first. Breaking down those stumbling blocks that are actually just glass houses is wonderful to see, and watching the community grow in this way" Mr Johnston said.

You can see a video about the Millpost project here: <https://vimeo.com/184172289>

Showing respect at a local level

A family stroll around the neighbourhood has sparked a growing grassroots initiative to pay respect to traditional owners

The Sign of Respect project distributes simple signs of acknowledgement to Kurna people of the Adelaide area for people to place on their fences, and may spread further across Australia.

The founder of A Sign of Respect Kate Rush says that the idea occurred to her after completing cultural respect training with Ngarrindjeri woman Sharon Gollan.

“I had never been so aware of the fact that my white culture was having this influence on people and often that influence happened sub consciously because we don’t spend time thinking about the influence that we have on others.

“A lot of the time that influence has, obviously historically been full of tragedy and horrendous kind of history, but also the fact that today, on a day to day basis, we think and act a lot without thinking about the impact of our culture on others.

“My partner and I were out walking our dog one day and we saw an old plaque that was acknowledging Aboriginal people as traditional owners and we thought, I wonder if we put a sign like that on our fence, it’s a way of making a public statement to people in our street about the fact that we value and recognise first nations people in our neighbourhood?” Ms Rush told *Aboriginal Way*.

She had a good reaction to the sign from others in her area.

“It actually sparked a lot of interest from our neighbours asking, what was this sign all about and what were we doing and we explained that was just about giving respect where it was due” she said.

That interest led Kate Rush and her family to look at extending the act of acknowledgement.

“We started to realise that other people were quite interested in showing respect in a similar way.

“My partner, who is a graphic designer, put together a flyer and we dropped them around the neighbourhood and we said, who wants a sign? And ended up giving away 10 signs quite quickly to people in our neighbourhood who were interested in doing that.”

The signs garnered interest from both non-Aboriginal and Aboriginal people, Ms Rush said, and that created valued opportunities for connection.

“Some of the people that we gave signs to through that process were local Aboriginal people that we hadn’t necessarily met before or connected with before as well as other neighbours that we hadn’t necessarily met either and it became a great way of hearing people’s experiences and what was important to them” she said.

Once they had seen the interest, Ms Rush began to realise the initiative could grow and become more meaningful to a local community.

“We spoke with Kurna Elders, Aboriginal community and education groups, as well as broader community members” she said.

From there they were encouraged to combine the simple sign with information about local country and culture. They enlisted Supply Nation accredited businesses, including Ochre Dawn to work with artist Allan Sumner and Print Junction to produce a new sign that could be distributed more widely.

The project has become about much more than a sign on a front fence, Ms Rush says.

“People were saying that it’s good to give something practical that people can do but we also want to make sure that people are encouraged to learn



Kate Rush.

about Kurna culture and to go on their personal journey of learning and respecting culture by understanding the culture that exists in the land that they live on or work on.

“Community members also started to create ways for that to happen very informally, so I had a neighbour pop over who I hadn’t met through the previous experience she said look, you know, I’ve organised a bit of a get together at the local café, why don’t you come along and talk about the sign and what it means and all those sorts of things.

“So there is a real sense of community kind of helping to drive what the initiative looks like and how it sort of grew very organically if you like” Ms Rush said.

A Sign of Respect operates as a social enterprise and is in the process of formally registering as a not-for-profit organisation that aims to be sustainable without reliance on government funding.

The project now sells A Sign of Respect support packs online and at events, with any profits being reinvested into the project.

The project has also formed a Community Advisory Group to gain input and support into the direction of the project. Through a new community based governance structure, the group will consider how to manage requests for signs for other people’s country.

“We’ve had a lot of requests for signs that recognise other nations and I guess one of the things that we want to honour is the way in which A Sign of Respect came together over the last 12 plus months and make sure we go through the process of engaging and involving community through the development of any new signs or any new area or acknowledging any new country” said Ms Rush.

“Because that grass roots approach has been very important I think, not just in how it came together but also in how I think it will continue to grow and operate. What we want to do, is do it in a way that keeps a strong connection with community as it grows.”

You can find out more about A Sign of Respect at www.asignofrespect.com

SA Government’s plan for action

Late last year the South Australian Government announced the launch of its Aboriginal Action Plan to guide services and outcomes for the state’s Aboriginal people.

The Action Plan is the first of its kind and outlines 32 activities including; actions, priorities, desired outcomes and the Ministers and agencies responsible for them.

Premier Steven Marshall launched the plan at an event at Ayers House in December 2018.

“Developed following engagement with Aboriginal community leaders and a coordinated across government effort, this plan will deliver positive and practical on-the-ground outcomes through 32 specific activities over the next two years” he said.

Those activities include actions in the areas of apprenticeships and traineeships, Aboriginal Ranger

employment pathways, Aboriginal employment in South Australia Police, Aboriginal Business Policy, Stronger Partners Stronger Futures, Municipal Services to Aboriginal Communities Strategy and South Australian Museum Aboriginal Collection Store. Each action has a nominated responsible Minister and lead agencies within the government identified.

“There will be regular updates on our progress so that we can identify what is working and just as importantly, what isn’t working” the Premier stated in the Plan.

“This will also provide a benchmark for continuous improvement in government policies and in the program and services Aboriginal people and communities receive.”

Roger Thomas, Commissioner for Aboriginal Engagement was given a role in consulting about the proposed Action

Plan before its release, and liaised with three selected Aboriginal agencies – the Aboriginal Lands Trust, the Aboriginal Heritage Committee and the South Australian Aboriginal Advisory Council – on the plan.

“I was asked by the Premier to save feedback from targeted stakeholders and to include in the feedback any potential and possible blockages and overall concerns in the delivery and implementation of these Action Plans” he said on the launch of the plan.

“All groups emphasised the success in delivery of these Actions Plans should be contingent upon the government being able to deliver a culturally appropriate and community relevant [framework].”

The Commissioner said community involvement is integral for the success of the plan and that it must not be another policy failure.

“What was clear to all groups, was consistently raised, was the issue of genuine engagement. Not just engagement, but genuine engagement with Aboriginal people and stakeholders with the developing and implementation of these actions.

“There are a number of other points of feedback with a strong concluding observation stressing that the Aboriginal action plan must be successful and that we cannot afford to have a plan with bells and whistles and delivers little in terms of outcomes for the Aboriginal community, its wellbeing and certainly the future. It is important that we ensure that this is not another government report that sits on the shelf to which a number of agencies and staff say, “Yes, we’ve delivered” said the Commissioner.

Keith Thomas, SA Native Title Services CEO said wider consultation with the Aboriginal community and existing Aboriginal decision making structures is needed.

Far West Coast investments paying dividends

After years of planning and transition, the Far West Coast Aboriginal Corporation has taken control over investment monies held for their community and their investment arm has been recognised as a national award winner.

In November 2018, Equity Trustees announced that it had resigned from the role of Trustee for the Far West Coast community's native title funds and handed full control over to Far West Coast (FWC) Investments, an arm of the Far West Coast Aboriginal Corporation.

Former Trustee manager Ian Westley explained to the *Paper Tracker* radio program that the Far West Coast investment story began back in 2010, when the trust was created, and Equity Trustee were appointed to manage it by the Far West Coast Aboriginal Corporation.

"At that time the decision was made to appoint a professional trustee company like Equity in recognition that the community needed assistance in running a trustee of the trust that was being created" he said.

"Since 2010 we've worked closely with the community in managing the trust for the benefit of the community.

"We've been working together with them now over four years and they've been able to demonstrate their capability in managing initiatives that deliver economic development and other trustee services on behalf of the Far West Coast peoples."

Mr Westley said that the recent appointment of FWC investments to the be trustee of the original community trust now gives the Far West Coast Aboriginal Corporation total control over all of the monies they've been awarded through the native title claim.

"It allows them to better protect the money into the future for not only today's community but tomorrow's as well" he said.

Another important day for the Far West Coast community and the investment arm of their corporation took place in November 2018 when they were presented with the 2018 Indigenous Business of the Year award at the inaugural AEMEE (Aboriginal Enterprises in Mining, Energy and Exploration) Resource Sector Awards held in Western Australia.

The awards highlight the success of Indigenous businesses which service and support the resource sector.

Far West Coast Investments (FWCI) directors April Lawrie, Sandra Miller and Emily Ware attended the conference and awards ceremony.

Far West Coast Aboriginal Corporation Chief Executive Officer Ljuba Mojovic told the *West Coast Sentinel* that FWC Investments had claimed the coveted award against some very strong competition.

"Our companies were competing against Aboriginal businesses from around Australia with substantial mining operations," he said.

"This award demonstrates that we are the national leaders in terms of both economic and social impact in the mining and resources sector.

"It is a great privilege for our entire management team to deliver these results to the 1700 plus traditional owner members that we serve" he said.

FWC Investments General Manager, John Isgar also told the *West Coast Sentinel* that he was happy with the group's success.

"Initially the application was daunting, but I was able to highlight the involvement of the FWC Investments in many businesses

and employment outcomes for the Far West Coast group of entities and clearly demonstrate high levels of community impact, self-determination and wealth creation outcomes for the Far West Coast native title holders" he said.

According to the local newspaper, the award win was noted by Senator Nigel Scullion, who congratulated FWC Investments in a letter for their "commitment to Indigenous economic development and to the future of the six Indigenous groups on the Far West Coast".

In further positive news for the community, the Far West Coast Aboriginal Corporation and Iluka Resources were announced as the Winner of the Premiers Award for Diversity at a gala dinner and presentation night held in Adelaide on 30 November 2018.

The award stated that Iluka Resources has demonstrated a strong and enduring commitment to develop a diverse and engaged workforce in its Jacinth-Ambrosia project, which is delivered in partnership with the Far West Coast Aboriginal Corporation through the FWC Iluka Liaison Committee.

The award was an acknowledgement that "successful commitment to and implementation of the Native Title Mining Agreement (NTMA) and a strong relationship with the FWC has resulted the achievement and maintenance of a 20% aspirational employment target of Indigenous people throughout mining operations."

It was announced that "the winning program is exemplary for its diversity and social inclusion outcomes. It is also a model of how the resources sector can partner with local communities to deliver positive socio-economic outcomes in market downturns, as well as in the boom times."



Sandra Miller, Derek Flucker, April Lawrie and Emily Ware at AEMEE Awards.

"I welcome the launch of the first Aboriginal Action Plan and I hope to see more engagement with traditional owners and to get a better understanding of what the South Australian government plans to achieve over the next two years. I certainly would praise a clear plan which supports native title groups and their economic potential" said Mr Thomas.

The new policy comes after the Government announced the discontinuation of the previous Labor Government's Regional Authorities Policy.

The Regional Authorities Policy focussed on service delivery by region and supported established Aboriginal communities to negotiate and work closely with government on providing local services.

The Government's Aboriginal Action Plan will be a positive force for Aboriginal people in the state, the Premier said.

"This plan provides opportunities for Aboriginal employment and decision-making and building the capacity of Aboriginal communities to manage their own affairs and engage effectively with government.

"Collaboratively, the government and Aboriginal communities will pilot new and innovative activities for implementation across the state. It will enable us to draw on each other's strengths and expertise, to deliver culturally-appropriate

and community-driven services and programs," the Premier announced on launching the plan.

A copy of the Action Plan is available at www.dpc.sa.gov.au/aboriginalaffairsactionplan



Roger Thomas, Premier Steven Marshall, Kristy Parker and Nerida Saunders.

Aboriginal families hold the key to transformation for children

April Lawrie (pictured) is passionate about having the strength of Aboriginal families and culture recognised. When she met with *Aboriginal Way* in a bustling café in Adelaide's Central Markets recently, she shared a stream of ideas about ways to use the strength of families and culture to improve the lives of young people in her new role as Aboriginal Children's Commissioner.

Her well-rounded experience, knowledge, and skills, with a lived experience provide crucial perspective on how the South Australian system is working for Aboriginal children.

When she spoke to *Aboriginal Way*, Ms Lawrie had been only a few weeks at her office as South Australia's first Aboriginal Children's Commissioner, having commenced prior to the summer break on 3 December 2019.

Already she has a strong sense of what needs to be done over her three-year term, beginning with the importance of better support services for vulnerable families to prevent Aboriginal children being removed.

She also emphasises the importance of the Aboriginal Child Placement Principle, meaning Aboriginal children who have been removed from their homes are placed with extended family or community or own kinship group.

"Adhering to the Aboriginal Child Placement Principle, we know it's the right way and it's the best way, supporting Aboriginal children be safe and be identity and culture strong.

"Because we know the legacy of the Stolen Generation and what that's yielded for Aboriginal children and young people and for the entire Aboriginal population, the whole experience of intergenerational trauma.

"We know that we need to remedy the past practices that have been detrimental to Aboriginal children and our future generations" she said.

The way forward is in the hands of the Aboriginal community itself Ms Lawrie said.

"We have the solutions, we have maintained ourselves in our societies for thousands of years, and we know what's required within our own families and our own communities to maintain children safely and with culture.

"Aboriginal community controlled for child wellbeing is critical if we are to actually fulfil Aboriginal self-determination, when it comes to building a robust future for Aboriginal communities.

"That means Aboriginal people taking the lead and Aboriginal people having greater say, involvement, participation, and implementation of the programs and services that affect the wellbeing of our Aboriginal children and young people" she told *Aboriginal Way*.



The Commissioner for Aboriginal Children was appointed by the SA Government to influence change in policy, practice, and service delivery across health, welfare, education, and child protection and justice for the benefit of Aboriginal children, Ms Lawrie explained.

"That means getting joined-up services, ensuring that we've got collaboration between agencies and cooperation between services, particularly supporting our most vulnerable children and their families when it comes to the care, safety, and wellbeing of our children and young people.

"It isn't about duplicating anyone's efforts, but truly bringing to the fore the advocacy that's required based on the evidence that is there before us" she said.

Changing the approach that government systems take is crucial to the future of Aboriginal children and community members, Ms Lawrie said.

"They're creating another society of Stolen Generation. The very things that we've highlighted in the national inquiry into the removal of Aboriginal children from their families has been replicated in the practices of continued removal at alarming rates and unprecedented levels of kids in non-Aboriginal care. That's madness."

The employment of Aboriginal people within the service system is one key to change, Ms Lawrie believes. However, it's more than just a numbers game, those Aboriginal workers need to be in real positions of influence and in the right roles she said.

"We criticise the system that remove our children but we have to be in there to change it and to stop it.

"We know that there are Aboriginal employees across the various child focussed systems in the state, whether it's education, child protection, youth justice or health.

"But when you talk about the interface with child protection, more than likely at the front end of a child protection investigation, it's a non-Aboriginal worker.

Our whole service system in child protection is dominated by a very foreign culture of service delivery, which is more than often white and middle-class.

"There is a compelling argument to grow our Aboriginal workforce in social work services, so that we're able to build culturally appropriate responses" Ms Lawrie said.

"but there is also getting the rest of the workforce, especially in the front line, to address their cultural bias and be culturally competent in effectively engaging Aboriginal children and their families.

The contribution of more Aboriginal families to providing care is key to overcoming the challenges facing Aboriginal children in the care system, this needs to be further teased out and supported Ms Lawrie told *Aboriginal Way*.

"We know that if the child's cultural identity and relationships is well developed, maintained and supported alongside the child's safety and wellbeing, we begin to reduce the impact of intergenerational trauma" she said.

Recognising the stressors and pressures that are put on a child's family is an important step Ms Lawrie believes, and is linked to understanding the need for early intervention.

"The reality is that we have families needing extra support beyond that of universal services" Ms Lawrie said.

"There are a multitude of things that have happened that have impacted on families. All the things that determine your life outcome, we know we've got intergenerational trauma, we've got issues of family violence, as well as substance misuse impacting our Aboriginal communities and impacting on our families and the ability of people to care, provide for, and keep their children safe and well.

"We know all those things that are out there. There is the data, but there is also the stories and experiences of vulnerable Aboriginal children and young people and their families that need to be heard.

"While there is a big emphasis on closing the gap, I firmly believe the focus should be on preventing the gap.

"A focus on early intervention and prevention is therefore critical" she said.

On considering how a single Commissioner can take on such large challenges, Ms Lawrie appears undaunted.

"The focus on the first thousand days of life is absolutely critical to identifying the things in the system that are letting down our Aboriginal children.

"So, there's a lot of things happening, but at the same time we're not getting the change in practice, nor the marked improvement that we desire, and we also know there are resources being injected into services, but are they going to the right places?"

Ms Lawrie is keen to collaborate with key stakeholders on research and promoting early intervention and prevention.

"We need a call to action with what the data is saying and implement to make a difference, and I'm ensuring that I've got a very close working relationship with the Early Intervention Research Directorate, which is now placed within the Department of Human Services.

"I'll also look to partner with key Aboriginal groups and advocates, such as the Aboriginal Community Leadership Reference Group who have done great advocacy, and the Aboriginal Family Health Research Group who have undertaken some fantastic research into the things that make a difference in better outcomes for families and Aboriginal children in the early years" she said.

Ms Lawrie will also focus on consultation with community members and bringing Aboriginal community perspectives in the reporting required by her role.

"I'm required to report annually, that will be through the statutory role of the Commissioner for Children and Young People, based on the requirements of the Advocacy and Oversight Bodies Act" Ms Lawrie said.

Ms Lawrie is committed to getting on with the role in collaboration with that Commissioner, Ms Helen Connolly, as well as Mr Roger Thomas, the Aboriginal Engagement Commissioner.

"I've got three years, and particularly the first 12 months is going to be crucial in not only defining priority areas to tackle, but also establishing the role, and really identifying where it's best placed and developing the key working relationships."

"What I'm most focussed on is that examination of policy, practice and service delivery to work to improve outcomes for vulnerable Aboriginal children and young people, especially in early intervention and prevention, and from the voices of Aboriginal children and their families".

Report captures Indigenous Youth Health

A major report on Indigenous Youth Health across Australia has found that the majority of young people think that their own health is very good and feel an important connection to their traditional lands.

In contrast, unfair treatment and racism, mental health and experiences of violence are real challenges as they face the transition to adulthood often in an environment of inter-generational trauma and socioeconomic disadvantage

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Adolescent and Youth Health and Wellbeing 2018 report, released by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) looks at 10-24 year olds and reveals specific information about their perceptions of their health as well as other health outcomes for the first time.

The report focusses on health and wellbeing outcomes, social determinants

and risk factors and the use of health services by young Indigenous people across Australia, including in remote and non-remote areas.

Key findings include; the majority of young Indigenous people assessed their health as very good (63%), many young people felt a connection to their traditional lands and were involved in cultural events (69%), there has been an increase in young Indigenous people finishing year 12 or equivalent and there is a decrease in smoking among youth (31% smoke daily in 2015 from 45% in 2002).

Other key findings include the news that the mortality rate for young Indigenous people has declined, from 70 per 100,000 in 2005 to 67 per 100,000 in 2015.

In 2015, the leading causes of hospitalisations for young Indigenous people were injury and poisoning and mental and behavioural disorders.

This contrasted to findings in 2011 which found self-inflicted injuries, traffic accidents and alcohol disorders as the leading causes of hospitalisation.

AIHW spokesperson, Dr Fadwa Al-Yaman noted that although young Indigenous Australians generally have good health based on a range of measures, not all are as healthy as they could be.

“Experiences of unfair treatment or racism, mental health, injuries and experiences of violence were areas of concern” she said.

In 2014/2015, about 1 in 3 (33%) young Indigenous Australians reported experiencing high to very high levels of psychological distress in the previous month. In 2011, the leading contributors to the disease burden for Indigenous 10 to 24-year-olds were suicide and self-inflicted injuries (13%) and anxiety disorders (8%).

Tobacco smoking, alcohol and substance use were also areas of concern. Despite an increase in the number of young people who never smoked – 44% in 2002 to 56% in 2014/2015, 3 in 10 were still daily smokers.

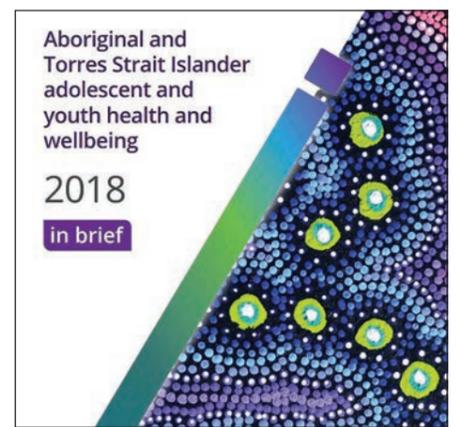
Although the death rate for young Indigenous Australians aged 10–24 has fallen over the last 10 years, around 490 (83%) of these deaths in 2011–2015 were classified as potentially avoidable, such as deaths from suicides, transport accidents and assault.

Dr Al-Yaman said that these challenges are complex, with social factors – such as education, employment and housing – playing an important role in health and wellbeing.

John Singer NACCHO chair said the “snapshot-style report has been designed to provide an easy overview of the key issues, suitable for a wide audience”.

Mr Singer said it is important to understand the health and everyday experiences of Indigenous youth.

“Youth is a key transition period in a person’s life. It is a time when decisions



are made about relationships, education and career paths, employment and finances. The social, economic, environmental and technological changes that have occurred in recent decades mean that young people now face issues that previous generations may not have experienced.

“Young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people may face additional obstacles in making a successful transition to adulthood. The effect of inter-generational trauma, racism and prejudice, and socioeconomic disadvantage are all relevant in understanding the experiences of young Indigenous people today” he said.

The report also raises some of the challenges faced by young First Australians including 42 per cent who were not engaged in education, employment or training.

Although there has been a decline in smoking rates for young First Australians, one in three people aged between 15–24 was still a daily smoker in 2014/2015 and many faced long term health challenges such as respiratory or vision problems, and mental health conditions.

Health Minister Ken Wyatt said the report gives insight into youth health for Closing the Gap.

“It will inform the Closing the Gap refresh and help us to understand what is working well and where we need to focus our energies, so all young First Australians can reap the benefits of better health and wellbeing” said Minister Wyatt.



Minister for Indigenous Health Ken Wyatt launches the report.

First Indigenous ORIC Registrar appointed

Gunggari man Selwyn Button has been appointed the Registrar of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Corporations, making him the first Indigenous person appointed to the role.

Minister for Indigenous Affairs, Nigel Scullion congratulated Mr Button on his appointment as the chief corporate regulator of Indigenous corporations registered under the Corporations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) Act 2006 (CATSI Act).

“Mr Selwyn Button is an eminently qualified and credentialed individual, and we are very lucky to bring his wealth of experience to the role of Registrar

of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander corporations” Minister Scullion said.

The role of the Registrar and ORIC is to facilitate and improve the effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and accountability of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander corporations.

Mr Button is a qualified teacher and a former member of the Queensland Police Service. Most recently, he worked for the Queensland Government as the Assistant Director-General (Indigenous Education). Prior to that, he was the Chief Executive Officer of the Queensland Aboriginal and Islander Health Council and Chair of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Health Service Brisbane Limited.

He has served on a number of Indigenous councils and committees including the Queensland Indigenous Education Consultative Committee, Queensland Council of Social Services and the Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Human Services Coalition.

Mr Button is currently a Director of the Lowitja Institute.

Mr Button will replace acting Registrar Mike Fordham in the role for a period of five years, he commenced on 10 December 2018.

The incoming Registrar, Mr Selwyn Button, said he is privileged to have been given the opportunity to work

with Indigenous corporations around the country in this important role.

“Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander corporations are increasingly at the forefront of service delivery in our communities, and the more we continue this movement the more empowered our communities will be” Mr Button said.

“As Registrar I am looking forward to working with Indigenous corporations to build capacity to take on even larger projects, and ensure the highest standards of governance to give governments and the private sector increased confidence to do business with Indigenous corporations.”

Celebrating Survival, pushing for change

Tandanya's annual Survival Day event at Semaphore foreshore was a popular choice for many South Australians on 26 January this year.

Hundreds of people gathered for a day of music, food and cultural activities.

Jessica Sumner, a stallholder on the day, cooked cultural food with a twist including kangaroo burgers and meatballs.

Ms Sumner said she would like all Australians to come together to celebrate Australia, just not on 26 January.

"I like the idea of celebrating Australia and for all Australians to come to together, not for it to be a cultural thing, but for all of us to celebrate and acknowledge our past as well and yeah, to change the date would be good" said Ms Sumner.

Byron Pickett who attended the Survival Day event said it is important to celebrate family and culture.

"I am proud to be a part of it and this is what our ancestors have fought for, although we are still wanting some answers today, we are a strong, proud

family and we will keep battling away. We have grandkids now, and I'd like to set goals for the little ones" he said.

Jordan, a Survival Day attendee, said the day is about acknowledgement.

"It's the day that our people survived and it's about getting together and remembering who you are and where you are from."

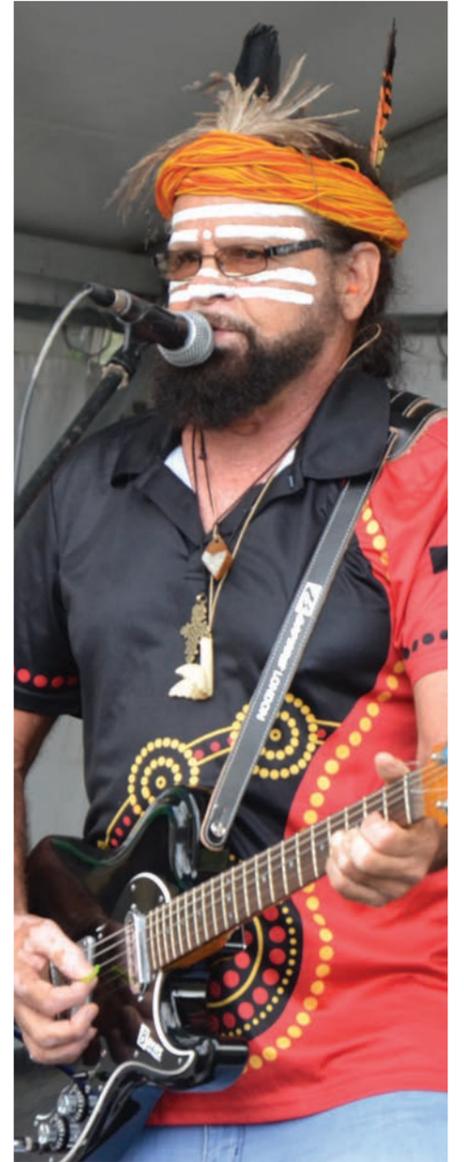
26 January has only served as an official national holiday for 23 years. It was the date on which captain Arthur Philip declared New South Wales as a new British settlement and it was the

first time the British flag was raised on Australian soil.

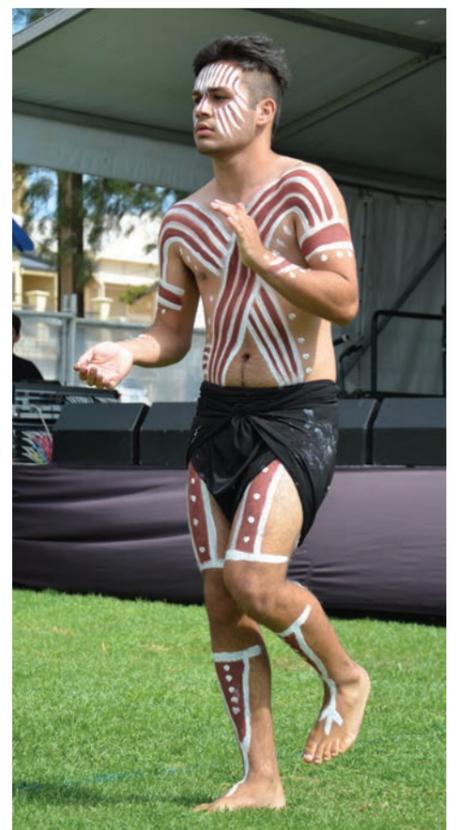
Since 1994 all states and territories have celebrated Australia Day on that date.

Thousands of people across the country chose to remember the date as Invasion day. This year, according ABC news, thousands of protestors took to the streets across Australia in support of changing the date.

Attendance was estimated to be over 30,000 across the country with record numbers gathering at Flinders Street in Melbourne.



This page, left to right, from top: Crowd at Survival Day; Bunna Lawrie; Dancer from Tal-Kin Jeri Dance Group; Mai-Ly Irvine and Lettie K-Ewing.



This page, left to right, from top: Tal-Kin Jeri Dance Group; Jason Petersen; Uncle Cliff, Carrie, Shayla, Sariaya; Dancer from Tal-Kin Jeri Dance Group; Uncle Major "Moogy" Sumner; Bec and Sudu; Coloured Stone; Dancer from Tal-Kin Jeri Dance Group.

Our column **in review** features reviews and stories on Aboriginal writers, artists and musicians. We welcome your feedback and suggestions. So if you know of a new work about to be published or an artist or musician please contact us on (08) 8110 2800.

IN REVIEW

A new story about a clever wak (crow)!

A beautiful new children's book brings together the illustrations of a renowned Indigenous artist and a traditional story from North East Arnhem Land.

Clever Crow is a tale about a crafty crow's quest for food.

Bronwyn Bancroft's bright and bold illustrations captures the clever crow's journey as he attempts to steal a turtle egg from some people at a ceremony.

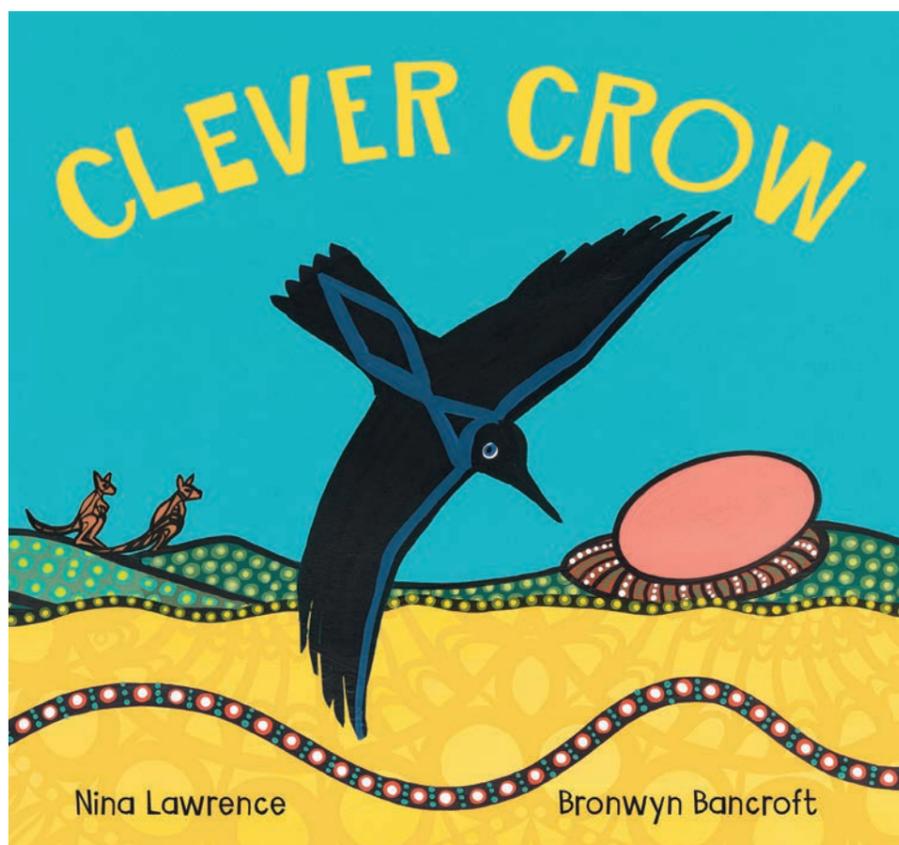
The story features many distinct Australian animals and shares traditional ways of the Yolŋu people from North East Arnhem Land. It is told in English and in the Djambarrpuyŋu language – Yolŋu language.

The enchanting book makes the language and stories of North East Arnhem Land accessible to children and adults alike.

The book is written by Gimuy Walubara Yidinji author Nina Lawrence. She was born on Yidinji country in Far North Queensland and is interested in the preservation and promotion of Indigenous Australian languages as well as being passionate about bilingual literacy.

Clever Crow was inspired by Nina's work in the Northern Territory where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander traditional hunting methods are still used.

Illustrator Bronwyn Bancroft is a Djanbun clan member of the Bundjalung Nation. She illustrated her first book in 1992 and has worked on nearly 40 children's books since then. Bronwyn Bancroft has had extensive recognition for her illustrations, including being the Australian finalist for the international Hans Christian Andersen Award (Illustrator 2016).



Oodnadatta Track Re-Sheeting Project (Scope 1)

Application for Authorisation under Sections 21, 23 & 29(1)(B) of the Aboriginal Heritage Act 1988

Yankunytjatjara Native Title Aboriginal Corporation has a delegation from the Minister responsible for Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation, under section 6(1) of the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 1988* (the Act). YNTAC, acting under this delegation, has received an application for authorisation under section 21 (excavate land for the purpose of uncovering any Aboriginal site, object or remains), section 23 (damage, disturb or interfere with Aboriginal sites, objects or remains) and section 29(1) (b) (remove an Aboriginal object from the State) of the Act, from the Department of Planning, Transport and Infrastructure (DPTI) for Scope 1 of the Oodnadatta Track Re-Sheeting Project.

This consultation deals with that area of Scope 1 adjacent to Oodnadatta and which intersects with the Yankunytjatjara Native Title Aboriginal Corporation areas of interest. The proposed road re-sheeting, re-forming and widening works have the potential to impact currently unrecorded Aboriginal sites, objects or remains. In September 2018 Fraser Vickery and Sandy Jarvis along with select Traditional Owners went out and did a Cultural Heritage Survey of the Scope 1 area, all works proposed in the application are in accordance with the clearances given in this survey.

Consultation and submissions
Prior to considering the application, section 13 of the Act requires Yankunytjatjara Native Title Aboriginal Corporation to consult with traditional owners as well as any Aboriginal persons or organisations that, in the opinion of the corporation, may have a particular interest in the matter.

Accordingly, a consultation meeting will be held for **Yankunytjatjara** on **Friday 15 March 2019** between 10:00am and 12:30pm Marla Progress Association Lot 6, Cockatoo Crescent, Marla SA). A light lunch will be provided. A consultation information pack can also be requested from SANTS (contact details below), however they will also be available at the meeting.

Verbal and written submissions are also invited from parties who satisfy the requirements of section 13 of the Act. The closing date for submissions is 12:00 pm **Wednesday 6 March 2019**.

For further details, please call Olivia Brownsey or Tom Jenkin of South Australian Native Title Services on 8110 2800 or Freecall 1800 010 360 or email oliviab@nativetitlesa.org

SANTS performance reviewed

Late last year, South Australian Native Title Services underwent a review of its operations by the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (PM&C).

PM&C commissioned consultancy company "Nous" to review six Native Title Representative Bodies and Service Providers (NTRB-SPs) last year, to complete a review of all native title services providers and representative bodies across Australia.

The independent assessment of SANTS covered a wide range of its operations including native title claim

outcomes for clients, cost effectiveness, complaints and planning for the post-determination environment.

It focussed mostly on achievements and operations over the last three years. Consultants interviewed a range of SANTS employees and the management team to get a varied understanding of SANTS.

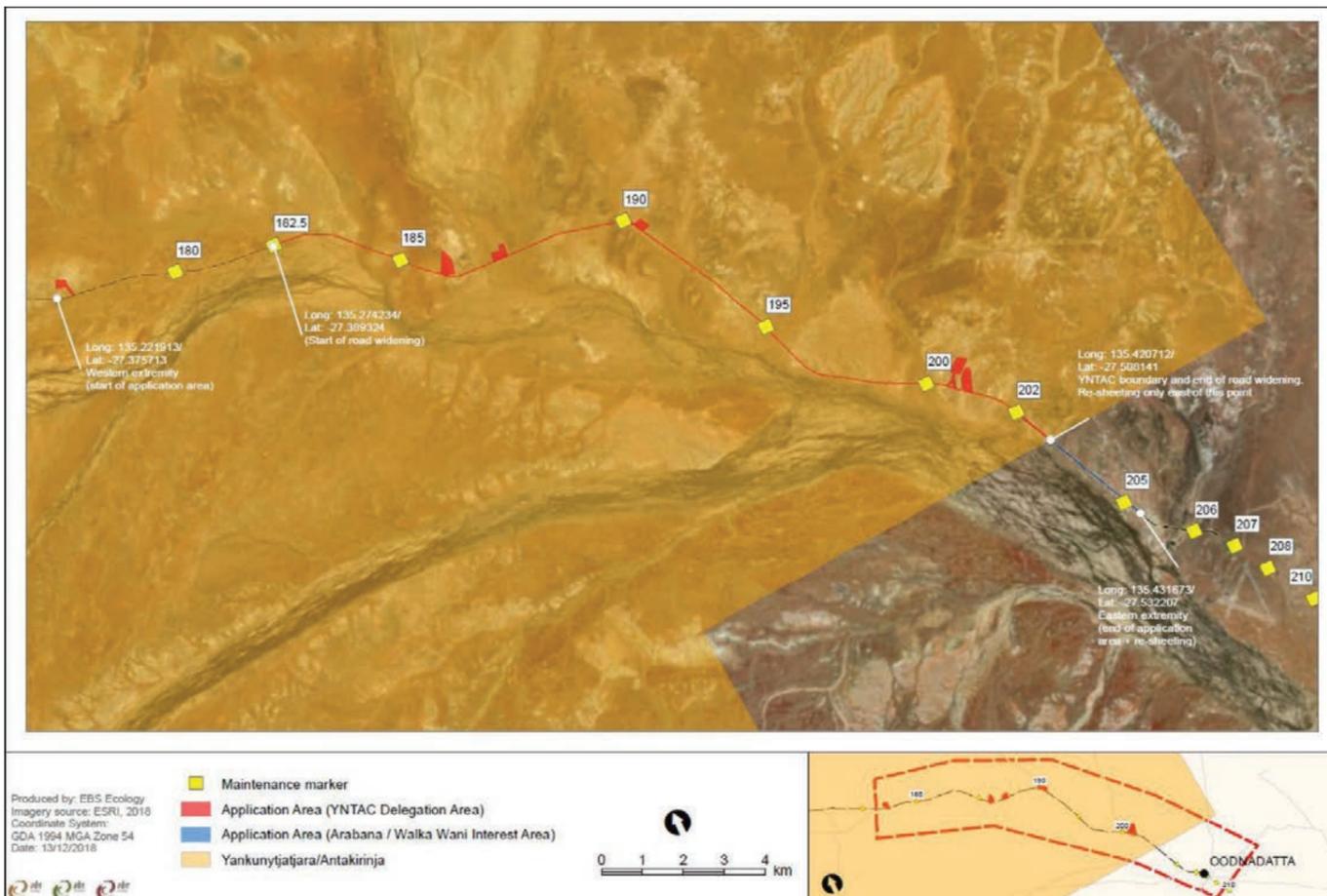
All SANTS employees were asked to complete an online survey on SANTS operations.

The outcome of the review will be a report which will make recommendations on what changes SANTS could make to improve its efficiency and effectiveness.

Keith Thomas, SANTS CEO said he is certain the outcome of the review will be positive.

"I am confident that it will find SANTS operations are of a high standard because we have achieved strong native title outcomes for our clients and continue to work tirelessly to resolve the remaining claims across the state.

"I look forward to seeing where we can improve our operations and most importantly how this translates to better services for our clients," he said.



National Native Title Council (NNTC) open to PBCs

The National Native Title Council (NNTC) has welcomed 15 native title groups from across Australia to its membership, continuing its transition to becoming a peak body for the native title sector.

In October 2017, the NNTC agreed at an AGM to make changes to its structure to open up membership to include native title groups known as Prescribed Bodies Corporate (PBCs) and Traditional Owner Corporations (TOCs), when previously it had only included Native Title Representative Bodies (NTRBs) and Native Title Service Providers (NTSPs), which are state or region wide bodies in place to assist native title groups.

At that time the NNTC also changed its governance structure so that it has a 10-person Board, to be made up of four local members (PBCs) and four regional

members (native title representative bodies), with the two other positions to be appointed by the Board.

Taking up membership of the NNTC offers a valuable opportunity to native title groups said Matthew Storey, NNTC CEO.

“Being a part of this national body allows PBCs to contribute to influencing policy development and legislative reform at a national level” he told *Aboriginal Way*.

“There is currently no membership fee for PBCs who join the NNTC, and that allows native title groups who join to be a part of setting a workable fee structure into the future” he said.

The NNTC continues to deliver ‘Native Title Operations & Management’ (NTOMT) training for PBC members in 2019.

The next course will take place in Melbourne, with new dates currently being discussed for delivery in Cairns, Broome, Brisbane and Adelaide.

The five-day intensive course covers topics such as communications and marketing, business fundamentals, strategic conversations, stakeholder relationships, HR, finance and more. It is supported by AIATSIS, RMIT and the Melbourne School of Business. The cost of the training is covered, but participants will need to fund their own travel and accommodation.

Applications to complete the training are invited from all PBC members, directors, CEOs, staff, traditional owners and Board members.

For more information:
www.nntc.com.au



Scott Lyndon from Budina Aboriginal Corporation explaining his work during the Perth Native Title Operations & Management Training, earlier in November.



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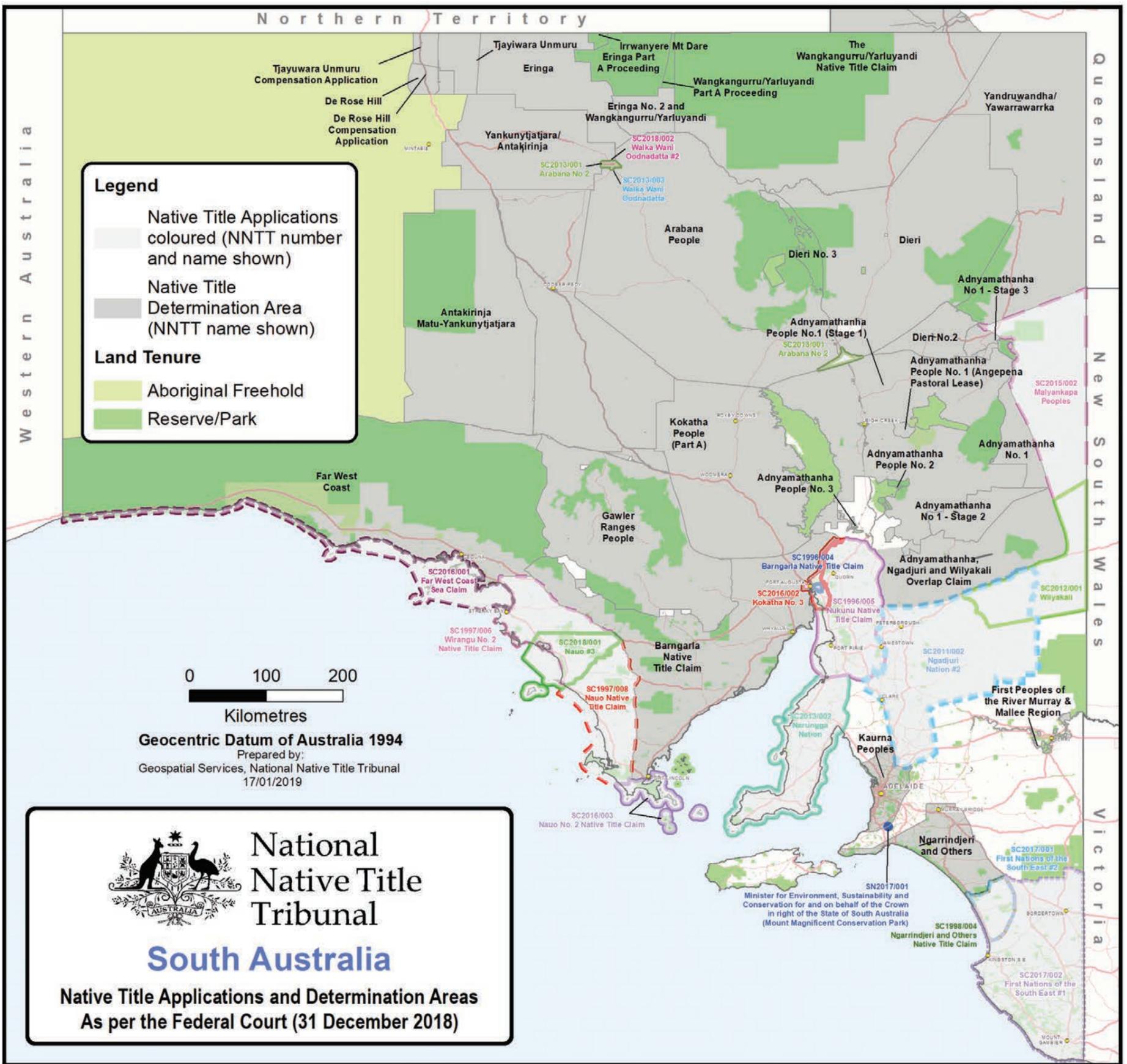
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