

NIT

NATIONAL INDIGENOUS TIMES



Runway is a pathway

Fashion festival gives creatives a space to grow

STYLE UP STARTS PAGE 9

THE SILENCE ENDS HERE



Yoorrook Justice Commission deputy chair Travis Lovett arrives at Parliament House to finish the Yoorrook Justice Commission Walk for Truth.

Picture: Joel Carrett; AAP

DECLAN BRENNAN

As Travis Lovett approached Spring Street — the seat of Victoria’s Parliament and a symbol of more than 150 years of laws that have discriminated against First Nations people — a crowd of thousands erupted in applause.

The towering Kerrupmara Gunditjmarra man offered a tired but proud smile as he stood before Parliament, having completed a 500km journey on foot, marking the end

“We began where truths were buried and where they are now being unearthed through the stories and hard work of so many over such a long time. **Travis Lovett**

of the Yoorrook Justice Commission, the nation’s first formal truth-telling process.

“The first step was taken with the weight of history pressing through the soles of my shoes

and the voices of my people whispering, urging, steadying me forward,” he said last Wednesday.

Over 25 days, Mr Lovett — one of five Yoorrook Commissioners

— walked across nearly half the State, starting in Portland on Gunditjmarra Country, the place where colonisation in Victoria “took its first breath”.

“We began at the place where the first wounds were struck into the earth; where footsteps came ashore — not as visitors, but as claimants,” he said.

“Where the smoke of fires long burning was ignored, and where our presence was declared — absence.

“We began where truths were buried and where they are now

being unearthed through the stories and hard work of so many over such a long time.”

Schoolchildren, families, and supporters joined more than 10,000 people in signing up for parts of the walk.

More than 5000 walked alongside Mr Lovett on the final stretch to Parliament, when he delivered a message of truth to Victorian Premier Jacinta Allan.

On the steps of a place he

CONTINUED PAGE 3



Larrakia Elder Tibby Quall. Picture: Environmental Justice Australia

Larrakia win in tribunal

DECHLAN BRENNAN

Land clearing at Darwin's Binybara/Lee Point must stop until a legal challenge from senior Traditional Owner Tibby Quall is resolved, the Northern Territory Civil and Administrative Tribunal ruled last week.

The decision came after the Tribunal found the NT Heritage Council failed to properly consult Mr Quall — a Larrakia Danggalaba Elder — before granting Defence Housing Australia permission to “disturb and remove” 10 Indigenous archaeological objects from the site.

Mr Quall launched legal action in January, arguing the council had ignored earlier warnings about sacred sites and cultural artefacts in the area,

including a grindstone and stone tools.

DHA and the Heritage Council had tried to dismiss the case, calling it “futile and improper”, and claiming there was insufficient evidence Mr Quall owned the objects.

However, under NT heritage law, the tribunal found as a Larrakia Elder, Mr Quall was an owner of the artefacts.

It ordered DHA to halt all work on Lot 4873 Lee Point until the proceedings were concluded.

In its ruling, the tribunal said there were “flaws” in the consultation process. It challenged the Heritage Council’s earlier assessment that the artefacts were of “low archaeological significance”, noting there was “no recognition the Development Site is, in part, or whole, an

Aboriginal heritage place”.

Before approving the work, the Heritage Council was obliged to consider “the extent to which the application, if approved, would affect the heritage significance of the heritage place or object”.

“There is no evidence that the (Heritage Council) paid proper regard to its responsibilities to assess the heritage significance of the heritage objects, and how the works would affect the significance of the objects,” the tribunal said.

The tribunal indicated it intended to refer the decision back to the Heritage Council, subject to several conditions and directions.

The case is next listed for directions on August 15, with parties to make their written

submissions by August 1. Mr Quall welcomed the ruling as a powerful acknowledgement of Larrakia heritage.

“The old people would be very happy and very sympathetic to land rights and cultural rights. It’s a big thing for Larrakia people to win a case about land, especially around our sacred areas,” he said.

“Darriba Nunggalinya, he is our creator and the most powerful site. Old Man, he is our creator of everything, the land, the law, everything on the land, the people.”

Environmental Justice Australia, which represented Mr Quall, said the ruling confirmed his legal right to possess and control the cultural items and affirmed the ownership of such artefacts by Larrakia people.

The Environment Centre NT praised the outcome as a landmark decision, possibly the first time Traditional Owners had been legally recognised as owners of cultural artefacts under NT heritage legislation.

The DHA project aims to clear 132ha of old-growth coastal bushland to build 800 homes for military families, but has faced fierce opposition from Traditional Owners and environmental groups. The land holds deep cultural and ecological value. It is part of the Kenbi Dreaming Track and is also habitat for the endangered Gouldian finch.

Last year, Independent Senator Lidia Thorpe tabled a petition in Federal Parliament with more than 16,000 signatures calling for the return of Lee Point to the Larrakia people.

ALS says funds lacking to cope with ‘virtual’ bail

DECHLAN BRENNAN

The Aboriginal Legal Service NSW/ACT criticised the New South Wales government this month over changes it says will create “delays, chaos and unjust outcomes for Aboriginal people”.

It follows the Government’s rollout of new youth bail laws.

From July, anyone refused bail by police in regional NSW will have their case heard via a centralised “virtual” bail court.

The ALS said this shift was coming in without any additional funding for the organisa-

tion to continue representing Aboriginal children and adults.

ALS NSW/ACT chief executive Karly Warner said the absence of extra resources could leave nearly 40 Aboriginal people per day without culturally safe representation.

Ms Warner predicted the outcome would be “chaotic, dangerous and unjust”. She said she was already seeing First Nations people “languishing in watch-houses and prison cells waiting to make a bail application”.

“The NSW Government has now made changes to policy without considering the impact

on Aboriginal people and the Aboriginal Legal Service,” she said. “To date, the Aboriginal Legal Service has not received the necessary investment from the NSW Government to accompany legal system changes that disproportionately harm Aboriginal people, despite the life-saving support we provide to thousands of Aboriginal women, children and men each year.”

Her comments follow revelations that one year after the introduction of controversial youth bail laws, children are being held in custody for offence

that, if convicted, wouldn’t result in a jail sentence.

Figures from the Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research show a growing number of children and young people are being denied bail.

A spokesperson said the NSW Government acknowledges there were more Aboriginal people held on remand, mostly driven by an increase in the number of people refused bail for domestic violence offences.

“These are pervasive and complex national issues which remain a serious concern for our State,” they said. “The NSW

Government is working closely with communities to reduce the root causes of crime, and remains committed to our Closing the Gap targets.

“The NSW Government is also strongly committed to the Closing the Gap target of reducing the rate of family violence and abuse against Indigenous women and children. In the 2025-26 Budget, the Minns Labor Government will allocate \$246.8 million over the next four years through an additional \$202.4m to Close the Gap to improve the lives of Aboriginal people in NSW.”

Employment rules waived

GIOVANNI TORRE

Indigenous leaders and business figures have raised concerns after an audit of Federal contracts found Indigenous employment rules were dropped in two-thirds of cases, with \$70 billion worth of contracts not required to meet the minimum number of Indigenous staff hired or use Indigenous businesses.

First reported by the ABC, the Australian National Audit Office found almost 70 per cent of recorded contracts since 2016 were exempted from requirements for at least 3 per cent of the workforce to be Indigenous, or that amount of components sourced from Indigenous-owned businesses.

Auditors said contract exemptions were increasing, and while some were legitimate, others were given with little explanation. Of those contracts exempted from Indigenous participation rules, one-third listed their reason under the category “other”.

“The inappropriate use of exemptions impedes achievement of the Indigenous Procure-

ment Policy’s objectives ... Systems have been set up to allow potentially invalid exemptions,” the auditors said. Mandatory minimum indigenous participation requirements (MMRs) apply to contracts with an initial value over \$7.5 million in 19 industry categories.

They do not apply to contracts subject to Commonwealth procurement rules dealing with international peace, security, health, and national treasures; exclusions like building leases where there is little to no employment or supply chain involvement; contracts that are part of an approach to market established prior to the industry category being subject to MMRs; and contracts delivered overseas in whole or in part.

Northern Territory Indigenous Business Network chief executive Naomi Anstess told National Indigenous Times the findings “highlight a critical gap between the intent of the Indigenous Procurement Policy and its implementation in practice”.

“When almost 70 per cent of contracts are exempted and compliance checks are rare, it raises real questions about

accountability and the integrity of the system,” she said.

The auditors found of those contracts subject to Indigenous participation rules, only one in five was assessed for compliance, with 28 per cent of those assessed found to be in breach.

“The Indigenous Procurement Policy was designed to drive genuine economic participation for First Nations peoples — a key commitment under the Closing the Gap framework. These aren’t just contractual targets, they’re mechanisms for transformational change,” Ms Anstess said.

“Our members collectively ... employ more than 2700 Aboriginal people. These businesses are investment-ready, scalable, and proven, yet they continue to be overlooked when exemptions are applied without scrutiny or justification.”

Federal shadow minister for Indigenous Australians Senator Kerryne Liddle told National Indigenous Times the Federal Government “must explain why they have not applied or enforced mandatory minimum requirements under the Indigenous Procurement Policy for

government contracts”. “With business devastated by the state of Australia’s economy, this is no time to be giving exemptions to this policy without sufficient cause, explanation or justification,” the Arrernte senator for South Australia said.

“For transparency it is also important for the NIAA to reveal the impact of any exemption.”

Senator Lidia Thorpe told National Indigenous Times the audit findings were “a disgrace”.

“It appears the Government’s own rules to boost First Peoples’ employment are being ignored — or quietly waived behind closed doors without explanation,” she said.

The Gunnai, Gunditjmarra and Djab Wurrung woman, who represents Victoria in the Senate as an independent, said when two-thirds of contracts were exempt, and “barely any of the rest are checked for compliance, it tells you the policy is designed to allow business as usual”. A Federal Government spokesperson told National Indigenous Times the IPP was “an important part of First Nations economic empowerment, awarding over 80,000 contracts, with a total value of

over \$11.4 billion”. “This year, the ... Government announced reforms to the IPP to strengthen its eligibility criteria, increase its ambition, and drive better outcomes for First Nations businesses,” they said.

“In implementing recommendations from the recent ANAO report and in conjunction with announced IPP reforms, the National Indigenous Australians Agency is working to develop stronger processes for Government agencies and Indigenous businesses looking to tender for procurement contracts.”

National Indigenous Times understands the four-fifths of contracts that are yet to be assessed, in the period from 2016, have not been finalised.

The NIAA has agreed to implement in full six recommendations and the majority of one other recommendation made by the ANAO.

It is understood as these recommendations are implemented, the NIAA will look to strengthen its administration of the IPP by updating guidance, conducting more training, and exploring information technology enhancements.

Process of truth ‘not symbolic’ but time of ‘reckoning’

FROM PAGE 1

described as where “the lie of emptiness took root — a lie that was signed into law, written into school books, and carved into the stone,” Mr Lovett said he was standing “on the steps of power”.

“These stones have carried silence,” he said. “They have heard promises and watched them break. But today, they hear song; they hear story; and they hear presence.”

Federal and State politicians, members of the First Peoples’ Assembly, and thousands of First Peoples gathered around Mr Lovett, many visibly emotional as he recounted a journey of sorrow, survival and strength.

“We moved from massacre sites hidden beneath the paddocks and plaques, to suburban bus stops where our children waited in school uniforms stitched with the legacy of exclusion,” he said.

“We crossed bridges over rivers that once ran red, and followed footpaths through towns where our people were once forbidden to linger after sunset.”

The Walk for Truth was held to mark the completion of Yoorrook’s final report — which includes an official public record — and to urge Victorians to confront the State’s history and commit to a just future.



Travis Lovett speaks on the steps of the Victorian Parliament on Wednesday, June 18. Picture: Dechlan Brennan

“Victoria’s history is not a neat story,” Mr Lovett said.

“It’s a jagged, tangled one of invasion and survival; of denial and resurgence.

“It lives in policies and plaques, in stolen children and stolen wages, in sacred trees cut down for carparks. But it also lives in community halls, in sacred possum cloaks, in the organisations we have built for ourselves.”

The four-year inquiry is the longest-running inquiry with the powers of a royal commis-

sion in Victoria’s history. Since 2021, it has collected testimony from thousands of people — Indigenous and non-Indigenous — including Stolen Generations survivors, descendants of colonisers, and Ms Allan.

It has prompted 16 ministerial apologies and exposed billions of dollars earned by governments from Traditional Owners’ land and water that was not shared with First Peoples.

The final report is expected to

contain more than 100 recommendations addressing every aspect of government involvement in Aboriginal lives since colonisation.

“We have sat with testimonies that carry the weight of generations,” Mr Lovett said.

“Testimonies that do not ask for sympathy — but for justice, for dignity, for truth to be spoken aloud without interruption, without rephrasing, without being folded into the usual frameworks.”

Emphasising the importance

of truth-telling for First Peoples, whose lived experiences of colonisation have rarely been formally recorded, he said the process was “not a ritual”.

“It’s not symbolic. It’s a reckoning. It’s a commitment to change — structural, legal, cultural,” he said. Finishing an at times emotional speech to a powerful cheer from the crowd, a weary Mr Lovett declared: “We are here to say the silence ends here. The time of not knowing — of choosing not to know — is over.”

Commission seeks reform over deaths in custody

DECHLAN BRENNAN

All commissioners of the Australian Human Rights Commission united this month to urge reforms in response to the crisis of Indigenous deaths in custody.

The recent deaths of 24-year-old Warlpiri man Kumanjayi White and 68-year-old Wadeye Elder TN have sparked national outrage and renewed scrutiny of the justice system.

The Australian Institute of Criminology reports at least 597 First Nations people have died in custody since the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody brought down its findings in 1991, with 12 deaths occurring so far in 2025.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner Katie Kiss said governments must “respond genuinely” to their commitments under the Closing the Gap agreement.

“There is an urgent need to invest in prevention to stop people from entering the justice system in the first place,” she said.

First Nations people now account for 36 per cent of Australia’s prison population. Over the past two years, multiple jurisdictions have introduced laws that contravene human

‘Our people are dying’ – urgent human rights plea

rights conventions and key recommendations of the Royal Commission — including the Closing the Gap agreement itself.

In Queensland, the Government has suspended the State’s human rights Act three times to allow the detention of children in adult watch-houses. In the Northern Territory, the minimum age of criminal responsibility has been lowered to 10.

Ms Kiss said during a recent visit to the Northern Territory with Human Rights Commission president Hugh de Kretser, they heard repeated warnings of a “law and order disaster” for Aboriginal people — a message

she says is being echoed nationwide. “Our people are dying in a system that has failed them from the beginning. The need for transformational reform is undeniable,” the Kaanju and Birri/Widi woman said.

“Without an evidence and human rights-based approach to justice and corrections, the massive overrepresentation of our peoples in custody — and dying in custody — will remain a national shame.

“Enough is enough.”

National Children’s Commissioner Anne Hollonds said this month she felt “ashamed” of the ongoing injustices inflicted on vulnerable children.

She noted the evidence showed incarceration failed to improve community safety — particularly for children experiencing mental and physical health challenges.

“In the space of a 12-month period, we lost two young people while in youth detention in Western Australia,” Ms Hollonds said.

“Their families are still seeking answers in what has become a heartbreaking pattern across Australia. This is absolutely unacceptable.”

One of those young people was 16-year-old Cleveland Dodd, who died in October 2023 after being found unresponsive in Unit 18 —

a youth wing within a maximum-security adult prison in Perth.

The ongoing inquest into his death has exposed critical failings in WA’s youth justice system.

Earlier this year, National Indigenous Times reported Ms Hollonds was blocked from entering youth prisons in Victoria and Western Australia during a national visit in 2023.

Mr de Kretser also condemned the ongoing lack of justice for First Nations people, particularly in light of the NT Government’s refusal to allow an independent investigation into Mr White’s death.

“We need an adequately resourced independent police oversight authority to investigate all police contact deaths. Successful models exist worldwide,” he said.

“We need human rights Acts in all States and Territories and nationally to protect the rights of First Nations people.”

Ms Kiss called for the full implementation of both the 1991 royal commission’s recommendations and those of the 2023 disability royal commission.

“Over several decades, the commission has advocated for the establishment of independent entities to investigate police conduct across all jurisdictions,” she said.

“(The Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody) clearly established that investigations into police conduct must be independent of police, with transparency throughout and formal complainant support, including legal assistance.”

Own your story
**lead
your future**

Find your
more

 NAB First Nations Careers

more
than
money





Uncle Shane Charles and Uncle Ricky Baldwin.

Nine leaders inducted on to Honour Roll

JOSEPH GUENZLER

The significant contributions of nine First Nations leaders were recognised this month through the Victorian Aboriginal Honour Roll.

The induction ceremony for the nine honourees was held at the Arts Centre Melbourne, where Minister for Treaty and First Peoples Natalie Hutchins joined community members to celebrate their accomplishments.

This year's inductees included cultural educators, a broadcaster, a health advocate, community workers, a sports coach, and reconciliation leaders: Uncle Ricky Graham Baldwin, Aunty Lou Baulch, Aunty Iris Bysouth, Uncle Shane Charles, Uncle Dennis Fisher, Aunty Faye Lynam (posthumous), Bevan and Letty Nicholls (posthumous), and Uncle Harry Stewart.

Gunai Kurnai man Uncle Ricky said the recognition was deeply meaningful.

"It's a huge, huge honour to be recognised with all the Elders who have already been inducted," he told National Indigenous Times.

"My entire family on my mum's . . . side — every one of them were stolen at birth, so they never had the opportunity for a normal life.

"The last 14 months I have lost my mum and two aunts — they

all had their lives stolen from them.

"Having grown up with many Elders who are already inducted in the Victorian Honour Roll — Uncle Reg and Walda Blow (Dandenong Aboriginal Co-Op) — it's something very special to me.

"Now I work with many of them with cultural education workshops, such as Aunty Zeta Thomson, Aunty Eva-Jo Edwards."

Since its establishment in 2011, the Honour Roll has acknowledged 158 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people for their work in areas including justice, education, sport, arts, military service, and community leadership.

Uncle Ricky highlighted the Koorie Academy's support of young people in sport across Victoria.

"The impact Koorie Academy is having across Victoria at the grassroots level is very rewarding work," he said.

"One young athlete we just sponsored just won a gold medal in basketball for the Australian Pearls in basketball overseas in Astana, Kazakhstan."

He dedicated the honour to his mother.

"This is in honour of my mum, Mary Helen Darby Baldwin. She had her life stolen at birth. Now at peace in Dreamtime."

Axe falls on police review

DECHLAN BRENNAN

A long-promised review into racism within the Northern Territory Police Force has been scrapped, Attorney-General Marie-Claire Boothby confirmed this month — even as the force continues to face serious allegations of racism from Aboriginal communities.

The review was part of the bipartisan Aboriginal Justice Agreement, established in 2021, and further reinforced during the coronial inquest into the police shooting of Kumanjaji Walker.

However, at Budget Estimates on June 16, Ms Boothby revealed the \$300,000 allocated for the review had been redirected to Legal Aid NT.

Repeatedly questioned by

Arrernte and Gurindji man and Labor MLC Chansey Paech about the funding, she said the redirection was necessary to ensure Legal Aid could remain operational amid a major court backlog.

She argued the North Australian Aboriginal Justice Agency was "having problems and could not take on new clients" last year, and Legal Aid needed more funding.

"Under my portfolio I can confirm that the \$300,000 that was committed by the previous government to the Anti-Discrimination Commissioner to do a review into police was not able to be given to them and it has been given to Legal Aid to ensure that they could continue their delivery of service because we had this huge court backlog.

We need defendants and offenders to be represented by legal services," Ms Boothby said.

She said a review into racism in the police force was instead "being led by Leanne Liddle".

Ms Liddle, an Arrernte woman and South Australia's first Aboriginal police officer, was appointed to develop an internal anti-racism strategy within the NTPF following an apology last year from then-Commissioner Michael Murphy to Aboriginal Territorians for "the past harms and the injustices caused by members of the Northern Territory Police".

This prompted Mr Paech to state: "You are suggesting now that police are reviewing themselves about racism in the police force."

After a back-and-forth, Ms

Boothby eventually responded: "To my knowledge, there is an anti-racism strategy that police are working on."

The issue of police investigating themselves has become a flashpoint, only exacerbated following the recent deaths in custody of 24-year-old Warlpiri man Kumanjaji White and a 68-year-old Wadeye Elder, known as TN. Allegations of racism, over-policing and violence within the NTPF were central to the coronial inquest into Mr Walker's death. Coroner Elisabeth Armitage described some of the testimony as "deeply disturbing", including accounts of racist behaviour within the force.

Mr Walker's cousin, Samara Fernandez-Brown, told National Indigenous Times last year racism in the NT Police was long-

standing and well-known. "For us, it has been something that has existed forever," she said.

"I think when you work within the police force, it's hard for us to believe that anybody within the police force doesn't know that racism exists, because it comes across so obviously to us, particularly Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people."

A 2024 investigation by the NT Independent Commissioner Against Corruption, prompted by the inquest revelations — including evidence of "racist awards" — found evidence of historical racism, but none since 2015. This conclusion, criticised by legal representatives of three Aboriginal officers who have filed a human rights complaint, was welcomed by the Chief Minister.

Pacific nations call out French climate 'rebranding'

GIOVANNI TORRE

Pacific civil society organisations have this month challenged France's credentials in hosting a global ocean conference.

They say unless France makes itself accountable for its actions in the Pacific, its involvement in the event is nothing more than an exercise in "rebranding".

It came amidst the French-sponsored United Nations



Emmanuel Macron and his team at the conference. Picture: ABACA

Ocean Conference in Nice, at which President Emmanuel Macron hosted the France-Pacific Summit.

An alliance of nearly 50 Pacific civil society groups and leaders says it "firmly believes that our leaders must hold France accountable for its past actions and not allow it to launder its dirty linen in 'Blue Pacific' and 'critical transition' narratives".

The groups noted France's claims of being a responsible steward of the ocean were undermined by its actions.

These included a colonial legacy dating back to the mid-1800s,

with the annexation of island nations now known as Kanaky — New Caledonia and Ma'ohi Nui — French Polynesia; A refusal to complete the decolonisation process; and 30 years of nuclear violence in Ma'ohi Nui-French Polynesia with 193 test detonations.

"French leadership at this UNOC process is once again central to its ongoing efforts to rebrand itself as a global leader on climate action, a champion of ocean protection, and a promo-

ter of sovereignty," the group said.

"The reality is France is rather more interested in strengthening its position as a middle power in an Indo-Pacific rather than a Pacific framework, and as a balancing power within the context of big-power rivalry between the US and China, all of which undermines rather than enhances Pacific sovereignty."

The full version of this report and a list of the 49 groups is available at www.nit.com.au.

Call to get kids out of adult jail

CALLAN MORSE

The Tasmanian Aboriginal Legal Service this month highlighted “systemic failures” in Custodial Inspector Richard Connock’s new report, which found children being held in the State’s adult prisons were exposed to threats of sexual abuse, violent behaviour, and inhumane and degrading treatment.

TALS chief executive Jake Smith said the Children in Tasmania’s Prisons — Review Report 2025 revealed ongoing breaches of the Child and Youth Safe Organisations Act 2023.

“This is an issue facing all youth in contact with the police and the justice system,” the Palawa man said.

TALS was especially concerned about the mandated gender-specific searches and the lack of cultural support for Aboriginal youth, who are over-represented in custody.

“This report particularly highlights young Aboriginal girls have been searched by male workers at twice the rate of non-Aboriginal girls,” Mr Smith said. “It is shocking that this can happen and still occurs.

“The trauma and impact of a young person coming into police custody and the justice system is lifelong.

“To be searched by someone of a different gender and housed alongside adults further adds trauma.”

Mr Connock said the Tasmanian Government’s practice of holding children in adult prisons put their safety at risk and must change.

“Children should not be in prison. This is the clear conclusion from this report,” he said.

“And yet, in spite of the findings of the Commission of Inquiry and the significant youth justice reform agenda currently under way, children and young people continue to be held in prison watch-houses, exposing them to all manner of violations of their human rights.”

Mr Connock said the government was failing to adhere to the Child and Youth Safe Organisations Act 2023’s Child and Youth Safe Standards.

“Placing children in the same space as adults being held for a range of offences, including child sex offences, clearly does not meet these standards,” he said.

“Many children have informed us that watch-houses are noisy and that they can hear adults shouting at all hours.

“One child told us that while in a watch-house they were subjected to threats of sexual abuse by an adult held in a cell nearby.”

Tasmanian independent Member for Nelson, Meg Webb, highlighted the “disturbing” over-representation of Aboriginal children in prison watch-houses. “The independent Custodial Inspector’s latest and alarming report into the use of adult prisons to hold children throws into sharp relief how seriously we are failing young Tasmanians,” Ms Webb said.

Tasmania’s Interim Commissioner for Children and Young People Isabelle Crompton called for full and prompt implementation of the recommendations the report made.

“The Custodial Inspector’s report opens with a simple statement — a position long-championed by my office, and one I believe any reasonable Tasmanian would accept — that children should not be in prison. This is entirely avoidable and must change,” she said.



TALS chief Jake Smith. Picture: Angelica Perrie Photographique Studio




BHP Mitsubishi Alliance



"Giving them someone to look up to.
To me that's big!"

Discover how the Clontarf Foundation is helping mentor young Indigenous and Torres Strait Islander men to become the best versions of themselves.



Scan for more.

Assembly and Govt provide update

DECLAN BRENNAN

The First Peoples' Assembly of Victoria and the Victorian Government shared an update on the latest round of negotiations last Wednesday.

The negotiations, held on Dja Dja Wurrung Country in Bendigo, opened with a ceremony attended by Premier Jacinta Allan and assembly co-chairs Rueben Berg and Ngarra Murray.

"Treaty is about making sure Aboriginal communities right across this State always have the ability to come up with and deliver practical solutions at their local level," Ms Murray, a Dja Dja Wurrung, Wamba Wamba, Yorta Yorta and Dhudhuroa woman, said.

"That's why we've been holding negotiations across Victoria, so we can bring communities into these big conversations and make sure they are grounded in local knowledge."

A joint statement after the meeting said negotiations progressed on how an ongoing role for the assembly would "ensure First Peoples can make decisions on matters that impact their futures and play an ongoing role in truth-telling, including capturing stories from across Victoria and retaining an archive of this information".

The role of the Yoorrook Justice Commission — the nation's first formal truth-telling body — was also a central topic.

The commission will deliver its final report in coming weeks.

"Treaty is a pathway to acknowledging the past and making real, practical change to achieve better outcomes for Aboriginal Victorians," the joint statement said.



Dancers perform at the Myall Creek Massacre Memorial 25th anniversary event. Picture: Gillian Hembrow

Massacre memorial hits key milestone

JARRED CROSS

Aboriginal and non-Indigenous people gathered 25 years ago to establish a memorial to a shameful chapter of the past.

Every year, hundreds gather to mark the Myall Creek massacre at Bingara, NSW.

The memorial near the massacre site was erected in 2000, two years after a group of four people — Margaret Blacklock, Colin Isaacs, Ted Studdins and Paulette Hayes — began their project to acknowledge the crime and lay foundations for truth and healing.

On June 10, 1838, at least 28 Wirrayaraay children, women and men were murdered in an unprovoked attack by settler and convict stockmen.

Seven men from the group were hanged at Sydney Gaol; the first non-Indigenous men executed for killing Aboriginal people. Keith Munro, Aboriginal

co-chair of the Friends of Myall Creek Committee, told National Indigenous Times the anniversary presented "an opportunity for us to go at the Myall Creek memorial site and pay our respects and remember the horrible events that took place on the evening of the 10th of June, 1838".

Annual gatherings take place on the June long weekend close to the date — this year from June 6-8.

This year, Friends of Myall Creek encouraged people to come and reflect on the legacy of the massacre, and also to acknowledge the 25th anniversary of the memorial monument.

Mr Munro said the memorial came at a time of heightened concern in acknowledging Australia's history.

"Amongst all of that, you had this incredible meeting of people that saw the injustice that continued to remain, in truth-

telling aspects of our history," he said. "For them to be able to come together in that environment, to form a committee and to be steadfast in their passion to create a memorial that is honoured and reflected on the mass scale now in a country's history . . . it's pretty amazing."

Each year was an opportunity to reflect on ongoing "challenges and struggles we have as a country", Mr Munro said. "The memorial has always been about that truth-telling," he added.

Roger Knox — also known as the "Koori King of Country" — performed alongside Ngambaa Dhalaay Dancers, Gomeroi Dancers and the Tingha Nucoorilma Dancers to mark the occasion.

Every year, students from the first year of school through to Year 12 are invited to enter the Thoughts and Dreams — Student Art, Writing and Song Competi-

tion, with works by finalists displayed at the Myall Creek Memorial Hall.

Also, the Oorala Aboriginal Centre at the University of New England hosted the Myall Creek 25th Anniversary, co-hosted with Armidale Friends of Myall Creek.

"We are celebrating those who worked together to get it built and started the Friends of Myall Creek Memorial Committee," non-Aboriginal co-chair Dr Ann Daly told National Indigenous Times.

"Our job is truth-telling, holding the annual commemoration, maintaining the memorial, and fundraising to eventually build an education and cultural centre at the site."

Mr Munro said the memorial gatherings had grown, and become a place where people came together, reflected, paid respects "and remember part of the true history of this country".

Calls escalate for an end to deaths in custody

ANALYSIS
DECLAN BRENNAN

In the month since the death in custody of 24-year-old Warlpiri man Kumanjayi White, the national response has followed a grim and familiar pattern: grief, protest, and government silence.

Nearly 600 Indigenous people have died in custody since the 1991 royal commission. No one has ever been convicted.

Mr White's death — one of 12 First Nations deaths in custody in 2025 — has sparked vigils and protests around the country and renewed calls for systemic change.

For many, his death is evidence of a broader pattern.

"Every time an Aboriginal person dies in custody, the Government says 'never again'," said Dr John Paterson, chair of the Aboriginal Peak Organisations Northern Territory. "But here we are again . . . This is a national shame, and it has to stop."

State and Territory governments continue to pass punitive laws, despite signing the Closing the Gap agreement. In just two years, the NT has lowered the age of criminal responsibility to 10. Victoria and NSW have introduced strict bail laws condemned by human rights

groups. Queensland has brought in "adult crime, adult time" laws targeting children. The result is rising incarceration, especially among First Nations people held on remand without conviction — directly violating Royal Commission recommendations.

Robert Tickner, former Federal Aboriginal affairs minister and chair of the Justice Reform Initiative, says these laws are political theatre.

"Instead of being tough on crime, our politicians are being . . . incredibly dishonest . . . because they know . . . (these policies) will not make our communities safer," he said. Jade Lane, chief executive

of Change the Record, says children are "being locked in cells, far from family, country, and culture — frightened and alone".

The Prime Minister has declined to support an independent investigation into Mr White's death.

"I need to be convinced that people in Canberra know better than people in the Northern Territory about how to deal with these issues," he said.

For independent senator Lidia Thorpe, this is a deflection.

"Instead of vague targets, the Federal Government could implement hard consequences when States and Territories

fail to make progress," she said.

"But Albanese refuses to take any responsibility." Pat Turner AM, lead convenor of the Coalition of Peaks, has lost patience.

"The time for polite inaction is over," she said. "Our people are dying. The Northern Territory Government must act now — on police reform, on justice, and on the calls from our communities."

While the Federal Government insists it has moved beyond the Voice to "do things another way," Indigenous Australians — among the most incarcerated people on Earth — are still waiting to see what that actually means.



FIRST NATIONS CAREER PATHWAYS DESIGNED FOR YOUR SUCCESS

Your journey starts here.

Join our Vocational Training Employment
Centre (VTEC) program

Apply now for
Pilbara opportunities



fortescue.com



STYLEUP

FASHION,
BEAUTY &
LIFESTYLE



Runway lift-off

KAFTA Kimberley
creatives present their
fashions and textiles

ALSO INSIDE
Dear Son puts men's
business on stage
P12
BARKAA highlights
Darling River plight
P13

Models take to the runway in WA's Kimberley

PHOEBE BLOGG

Known for its gorgeous garments and stunning backdrops, the Kimberley Aboriginal Fashion Textiles and Art (KAFTA) runway wowed crowds again this month.

In response to calls for locally based creative and fashion industry pathways, in 2022 KAFTA established a platform for local creatives to develop and present their fashion and textiles.

KAFTA inspires Kimberley textile printers, fashion makers and designers as well as creatives in performance and photography year after year.

This year, the KAFTA runway at Broome's Town Beach jetty showcased the work of 23 designers — five of them from the Fitzroy Valley.

One designer who was thrilled to showcase her designs was Bianca Nargoodah who, with the help of Marra Worra Worra Aboriginal Corporation and its community development program, was able to head to Broome to debut her Coming Together collection.

"The collection was about coming together . . . from five different language groups, so it's a shared space, and coming together into a shared space where you can talk and have a laugh and create," Nargoodah told Style Up. "There's nothing here for young girls ages between 16-25, 30. And I've done KAFTA previously and I thought it would be good for the CDP participants and also the younger girls to feel good about themselves, so it wasn't just about the fashion and design, there was more personal development going into it."

"My next goal is going out to the communities, taking the fashion and design project out to communities so they can either look at it as a business revenue or further themselves — so whether it's designing garments or on the catwalk — so for the younger girls, just boosting their confidence and getting them looking beyond community life, beyond the small town," she said.

Marra Worra Worra Aboriginal Corporation general manager of programs Nicola Angell told Style Up it was rewarding to see women from the community involved in an event like KAFTA.

"It was a CDP project with Marra Worra Worra wanting to



engage some of the young women in the community in the fashion industry, and then we had a partnership but we also wanted to involve some young women who were attending our Night Place (Marra Worra Worra's highly successful youth centre in Fitzroy Crossing)," she said.

"It was just so beautiful to see the collection and the models."

"It was really beautiful to see the collection come into fruition and then be showcased at that beautiful location and that beautiful event that just gets bigger and better every year."

Angell said it was rewarding to see Fitzroy Valley's Kieara Holloway walk the runway.

"We had one of our young women who comes to the Night Place regularly, Kieara Holloway and so she modelled for the first time. And just to

see her smile and how proud she was of herself at the end of the night was just beautiful," she said.

Holloway said once she hit the runway she felt confident.

"It was my first time at KAFTA so I was nervous. I got nervous when I saw the people, but once I walked I wanted to do it again," she said.

Angell said she would love to see Marra Worra Worra collaborate with KAFTA again in the future.

"It's the first time that Marra Worra Worra has had a collection and I'm sure it's the first of many. I'm sure that our involvement in KAFTA will grow," she said.

Taking place as part of Broome Fringe Festival, KAFTA is completely Kimberley-run, engaging local businesses to provide equipment and event services.





The KAFTA fashion event was a roaring success. Pictures: Hazel Blake

An insight into men's business

JOSEPH GUENZLER

When *Dear Son* premieres at Queensland Theatre on Saturday, June 28, Torres Strait Islander actor Jimi Bani will help bring to life a collection of powerful letters that explore fatherhood, culture and connection.

Based on the book by Kaurareg Aboriginal and Kalkagal, Erubamle Torres Strait Islander man Thomas Mayo, *Dear Son* features letters written by 12 prominent Indigenous men, reflecting on their relationships with their sons, fathers and nephews.

The production is directed by Noongar man Isaac Drandic, known for his work on *37* and *Dear Brother*, and adapted with John Harvey.

For Bani, a Wadagadum man of Mabuiag Island, the production is an opportunity to share stories that are rarely spoken publicly.

"First of all, it's a really brave and courageous project," he told Style Up.

"I give props to Thomas Mayo for putting it together and to all the men who gave

their time to write these letters. These are stories we don't usually hear."

Bani said the portrayal of men in Australia often left little room for emotional expression.

"In this country, there's a certain way men are often portrayed," he said.

"We don't talk unless we're fishing or hanging out with brothers where we feel most comfortable.

"But to have these letters written, painted up, and printed — I'm really proud of all the men involved."

As a father and a son who was close to his late father and uncles, Bani said the project had profound personal meaning.

"This project really spoke to me. It's about telling the real stories. When Isaac mentioned it to me, I was all in," he said.

Bani described *Dear Son* as a rare insight into men's business.

"We're going on stage in a public space and inviting people into what's usually private — men's business," he said. "But there's a real need to share these stories."



Dear Son brings untold stories of fatherhood, culture and vulnerability to the stage. Pic: Queensland Theatre

He said the play created a unique environment for audiences to listen and reflect.

"It's interesting because it's a very private space, both in real life and culturally," he said.

"But theatre creates an environment where people come, sit quietly, and really listen.

"Outside, when men talk about these things, it often gets brushed off.

"On stage, people pay attention. It gives us the opportunity to share things

that aren't often heard in society."

Bani hopes audiences leave with a deeper sense of responsibility and connection.

"The importance lies in what audiences take from it. It's about passing knowledge and sharing stories," he said.

"Hopefully it will translate to everybody. No matter what colour you are, you can ask yourself: what am I doing to empower my son, my nephew, my grandson?"

Bani also reflected on the

experience of working alongside a strong cast and creative team, including Aaron Pedersen, Trevor Jamieson, Kirk Page and Waangenga Blanco.

"It's a blessing working with everyone. We're all learning from each other," he said.

"We're sharing with each other, and even in rehearsal, the show is already happening."

Dear Son will run from June 28 to July 19 at Queensland Theatre's Bille Brown Theatre in South Brisbane.



Pieces from Gulamanmanha — Bringing Something Closer.

Exhibit puts focus on ancestral items

PHOEBE BLOGG

Fusing ancient practices with contemporary form and materials, the Gulamanmanha — Bringing Something Closer (Wajarri) exhibition is a testament to the thriving culture of the Yamaji people.

The exhibition showcases works made by Yamaji artists in response to ancestral belongings held for more than 125 years in the Alexander Morton Collection at the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery. In collaboration with Yamaji Art,

designer Nicole Monks has worked to create a powerful collection of traditional kangaroo skin cloaks, to be given to TMAG in exchange for for Yamaji ancestral belongings.

The cloaks represent personal responses to belongings being held at institutions nationwide.

"Remaking these belongings reaches back into deep time, into the footsteps of our Yamaji ancestors," Monks said.

Monks is an award-winning artist of Yamaji Wajarri, Dutch and English heritage living and working on Worimi and Awabakal Country

(Newcastle). Her practice is informed by her cross-cultural identity, using storytelling as a way to connect the past with the present and future.

Her works aim to promote conversation and connection.

Spending time on Country with Elders to create this body of work, she learnt from other generations and strengthened her cultural ties. The items in the exhibition have been described as keepers of cultural knowledge and resilience, expressions of identity, and acts of revival. Artists featured in the

exhibition include, Jenine Boeree, Wade Boeree, Elvie Dann, Nicole Dickerson, Charmaine Green, Jennifer Green, Sheryl Green, and others.

This body of work was previously exhibited in collaboration with artworks by Ku'arlu Mangga artists from Northampton at the Museum of Geraldton as Yamaji Yanajingmanha Barna/Uthudu — Yamaji people coming together on Country.

The exhibition is on show at the Australian Design Centre in Sydney until Friday, July 4.

NAIDOC WEEK

COLLECTION



Celebrating 50 Years of NAIDOC Week

 NITV

 SBS50

STREAM FREE

Cassie leads way at Barunga

NICOLE BROWN

As the golden sun dipped behind the trees on Jawoyn Country earlier this month, a hush of anticipation swept through the crowd gathered for the Barunga Festival.

Under an open sky, the first Barunga's Next Top Model showcase was a celebration of culture, confidence, and community.

At its centre stood Cassie Puruntatameri, a proud Tiwi woman, model, mentor, and fierce advocate for First Nations representation.

Over the weekend of June 6-9, she guided a group of First Nations people from across the Northern Territory, walking with them through rehearsals, lifting spirits backstage, and reminding each person their story mattered and that showing up as yourself is the most powerful thing you can do.

"This weekend wasn't about me," Puruntatameri told Style Up. "It was about our mob. About letting our people know they belong here; on the runway, in leadership, wherever they want to be. They've just got to see it first."

And they saw it. As the showcase began, the makeshift runway lit up — bold, brilliant, and full of Blak pride.

Each model walked with purpose and power, their steps echoing stories older than any fashion trend. It was a moment of cultural connection and celebration.

As twilight softened the horizon, Puruntatameri closed the show. Wearing a garment created by artists from Jilamara Arts and the Pirlangimpi Women's Centre, she moved with quiet confidence and deep pride.

Reflecting on what it meant to return to Country and lead the Barunga Next Top Model's Unearthed program, Puruntatameri said: "It's hard to put into words how much it means to me to have the opportunity to mentor fresh new talent from community. I feel very lucky and proud of my people and culture."

"I'm from a small remote community in the NT and



Cassie Puruntatameri, and below, Barunga Next Top Model participants Shenala Taylor and Jaida-Marie Fejo wearing Injaluk Arts prints and Merrepen Arts Accessories. Pictures: Dave Blake and Grace Fox

moved to Melbourne at 19.

"Living in the city for nine years opened doors to opportunities like mainstream modelling work, training, travelling overseas and networking, but I had to leave home to access those spaces."

"What I've come to realise is that the industry often overlooks remote talent, perhaps because they don't see us out there. That's why we need pathways that reach into remote communities, so our talent can be

recognised without having to leave Country."

Puruntatameri's career has taken her from being scouted on a Melbourne tram to international runways, but one of her biggest lessons has stayed with her.

"The biggest lesson for me has been to know my worth and not settle for less," she said. "Success to me is seeing our mob step into their power. Watching their confidence grow; from feeling unsure at the start

to letting their full personality shine, whether it's in front of the camera or walking the runway proud."

"When I see them owning their space, connecting to who they are, little things like that is what success looks like for me."

"My uncle, aged in his 60s, jumped on the runway and absolutely stole the crowd."

"That's what it's all about; celebrating who we are, at every age."

Puruntatameri hopes to see broader change in the fashion world.

"I would love to see more support and representation for First Nations mob who live in remote and rural communities

across the nation," she said, pointing out the need for lasting community-connected opportunities in fashion, art, and media.

And for the next generation dreaming of walking a runway one day, her message is clear and full of love: "Take up space. Be proud of who you are and where you come from. If you dream of it, chase it."

With Puruntatameri leading the way, and community creatives like Jilamara and Pirlangimpi bringing culture to every stitch, the runway ahead isn't just brighter, it's deeply connected.

And the best part? Our mob are already walking it; strong, proud, and full of fire.



BARKAA track highlights climate issue

JOSEPH GUENZLER

Barkindji rapper BARKAA recently released her first single of 2025, Ngamaka, featuring fellow Barkindji man and Elder Uncle Leroy Johnson.

The track, produced by Jayteehazard, delivers a direct message about the environmental degradation of the Murray-Darling Basin. It highlights the impacts of climate change, over-irrigation, and mining on the Darling River (Baaka), which holds deep cultural, spiritual and social significance for the Barkindji people.

BARKAA said the word "Ngamaka" meant "mother" in Barkindji language.

"Our river is our mother; our water is our mother and heartbeat,"

she said. "Whenever the river is depleted, we feel down as people."

Uncle Leroy said the song's lyrics were drawn from the pain felt after mass fish deaths at Menindee.

"Nhaampa Puka means Bony Bream dead," he said.

"The Bony Bream is my totem... I wrote that through the eyes of our old people and tried to describe the devastation we saw through song."

"Music is the best way to share our language and our stories."

The accompanying music video was filmed on Barkindji Country at Menindee Lakes, Steamers Point, Wilcannia, and Mutawintji National Park.

Directed by Kieran Mpetyane Satour and shot by Ryan Andrew Lee, it captures the significance of the river.

BARKAA described the video shoot as a milestone moment. "It has been a long time coming to bring it back home and bring it on Country," she said. "I think the music video will speak for itself."

Uncle Leroy emphasised the significance of the location in the video. "It is the most beautiful spiritual place on Earth... I hope it shows people our place and how important it is for us to protect it," he said.

BARKAA said collaborating with Uncle Leroy and writing about Country was emotional and empowering.

"It was beautiful to write. It was emotional, I did cry when I was writing it... I feel very proud," she said. Ngamaka is out now via Bad Apples/UMA.



BARKAA and Uncle Leroy Johnson. Picture: Em Jensen

Stream free on



The Knowledge Keepers

Sharing the past to prepare for the future



Cops must not lead probe

EDITORIAL

The death of 24-year-old Warlpiri man Kumanjayi White in police custody in Mparntwe/Alice Springs must be investigated independently.

Mr White, who was under State care and reportedly living in supported accommodation, died on May 27 after being restrained by two plainclothes officers following an alleged altercation with a security guard.

Acting Commissioner of NT Police Martin Dole has rejected calls from the family for an independent investigation, saying he has “complete confidence” in the “robust and well-established” systems of oversight in place.

He expressed “full confidence” in the detectives and the “independent processes already in place within the NT Police Force”.

However, this belies the fact the investigation will be conducted by the same organisation that was involved in the death — something that rarely, if ever, occurs outside of policing.

Solicitor George Newhouse wrote to the acting commissioner on behalf of the family, arguing comments already made by the police alleging criminality on Mr White’s part risked

“prejudicing public understanding and (causing) significant and unnecessary distress to the family”.

“Furthermore, where the agency commenting is the very institution whose actions are under scrutiny and who are investigating themselves, such statements raise legitimate concerns about institutional bias and lack of procedural fairness,” he wrote.

The young man’s grandfather, Warlpiri Elder Ned Jampijinpa Hargraves, has called for the release of all CCTV footage.

We have seen the evidence from the inquest into the death of Warlpiri-Luritja teenager Kumanjayi Walker — alleging racism towards Aboriginal people in the NT — as a sign internal investigations can be tainted by bias.

First Nations people in Australia are among the most policed and incarcerated people on Earth and there have been close to 600 Indigenous deaths in custody since the 1991 Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody brought down its findings, including more than 300 recommendations — most of which have never been fully implemented.

On June 7, a 68-year-old senior Wadeye Elder, who had been taken into custody by



NT Chief Minister Lia Finocchiaro. Picture: AAP

Federal police at Darwin Airport on May 30, died in custody. Thamarrurr Development Corporation, representing Wangga, Lirrga, Wulthirri and Tharnpa peoples, said in a statement that TN, as the Elder is being referred to after his death, was a “much-loved and respected senior man, who was a mentor to us all”.

This month it was revealed

that among the 2010 approaches to the office of the NT Ombudsman in 2023-24, there were 369 complaints against police and 453 complaints against correctional services.

It is not good enough for any organisation to investigate itself. It is particularly inadequate in matters of life and death.

Territory Chief Minister Lia Finocchiaro, who is also the NT

Police Minister; Federal Attorney-General Michelle Rowland; and Federal Minister for Indigenous Australians Malarndirri McCarthy must ensure an entirely independent investigation is carried out.

It needs to be done at arm’s length, independent of the NT Police, and with full transparency.

This is the only way justice can be a realistic goal.

HANCOCK IRON ORE

Atlas Iron and Roy Hill coming together as one.



HANCOCK
IRON ORE

FOR AUSTRALIA

FNF aims to grow financial literacy

EXCLUSIVE
DAVID PRESTIPINO

Any marked growth in First Nations incomes in the workforce must be complemented by building financial literacy, and institutions adapting to the unique needs of Indigenous communities, says Leah Bennett, the new managing director of the First Nations Foundation.

The foundation, which supports the financial wellbeing and economic growth of Indigenous people, is Australia's only national Indigenous financial literacy organisation.

With almost 15 years of experience in superannuation, financial services and governance, the proud Wiradjuri woman has stepped into the role after inaugural CEO Phil Usher's departure.

Ms Bennett told National Indigenous Times she was determined to help eradicate the longstanding disparity in financial services between First Nations communities and the general population.

While several financial institutions like the Commonwealth Bank and Westpac now had dedicated First Nations teams and reconciliation action plans, many others were still dragging their feet, she said.

"There are still organisations within the financial services sector that have not employed a single First Nations person," Ms Bennett said.

"There's nobody in the room challenging how things are done operationally when a product is introduced, or removed," Ms Bennett said sev-

eral remote Indigenous communities still had no branches, ATMs, or a mechanism to actually contact an institution.

"For me, if you're willing to take First Nations peoples' money, you must be willing to serve them," she said.

As the sector moved from face-to-face contact to online servicing, the most vulnerable were not equipped to deal with rapid change, Ms Bennett said.

"This isn't just an issue for First Nations people; it impacts our elderly, our disabled, those in domestic violence situations . . . they are being left behind because we're not thinking about how we do banking, and how that serves those people. We just think about the general population," she said.

Ms Bennett said she was determined to maintain FNF's long-term relationships with communities.

"It's about building relationships in community engagement, rather than imposing solutions," she said, while also emphasising the FNF's work to bridge the gap between the financial services sector and Indigenous communities.

Ms Bennett said her initial focus would centre on improving financial education for Indigenous Australians, inter-generational wealth, economic independence, and First Nations leadership in the financial sector. "This moment's not a personal milestone, but a reflection of a future where First Nations voices are leading conversations in finance, driving systemic change and creating lasting benefits for our communities," she said.



Leah Bennett is the new managing director of First Nations Foundation. Picture: First Nations Foundation

Aboriginal-owned Djinda keeps produce trucking to miners

GIOVANNI TORRE

It's a long journey up Great Eastern Highway to the Goldfields, where truckloads of fresh fruit and vegetables are on their way to a mining village near Laverton, about 740km north-east of Boorloo (Perth).

Every day, Djinda Produce, a 100 per cent Aboriginal-owned business founded in 2014, supplies fresh produce to regional and remote mining locations in the Pilbara, Goldfields and Kimberley.

In the early hours of the morning, Cleave Narkle, warehouse team leader at Djinda



Cleave Narkle

Produce, is already in action, ensuring the packing of fresh produce.

His team handles everything, from hundreds of kilograms of potatoes and carrots to large

volumes of watermelon, all meticulously prepared for delivery to mining villages serviced by integrated food and facilities management company Sodexo.

A proud Noongar man and one of Djinda's longest-serving employees, Mr Narkle started working as a picker and packer, and now leads a diverse warehouse team of 12 people, including six Aboriginal staff.

"I'm a jack of all trades," he said. "I like helping out wherever I can. It's not just a job for me, it's my career."

Mr Narkle also plays an active role in mentoring the young

Indigenous team at Djinda. "It's good for our young people to see an older Indigenous staff member in a leadership position," he said.

He believes businesses like Djinda and Sodexo can play a vital role in building young people's confidence.

"Growing the confidence of young Aboriginal people is so important. It's about showing your work ethic and encouraging them to build the next chapter in the book of life," Mr Narkle said.

Keith Weston, managing director at Sodexo Australia, is proud of the decade-long partnership with Djinda and its

shared commitment to Indigenous employment.

"We are passionate about supporting local growers and small to medium enterprises, fostering regional and local community growth and resilience," Mr Weston said.

Over the past four years, Sodexo has invested more than \$100 million with more than 50 Indigenous-owned businesses across Australia. Beyond business, Djinda is committed to giving back to communities, donating more than 10.7 tonnes of produce to address local food security, with goals to increase this annually.

Company reflects on building the bridge

The Mineral Resources approach to reconciliation prioritises "education, mutual respect and positive action through on-ground cultural awareness, employment pathways and supporting economic empowerment of Indigenous businesses", the mining company said during National Reconciliation Week, May 27-June 3.

MinRes said through its Indigenous employment strategy, it was committed to providing a culturally supportive and safe work environment, while increasing representation across its workforce.

National Reconciliation Week prompts deeper reflection on the nation's journey towards reconciliation, and recognises the culture, history and achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

MinRes said the week's theme this year, Bridging Now to Next, "reflects the ongoing connection between past, present and future, and calls on all Australians to step forward together by recognising a shared responsibility in achieving reconciliation". In reflecting on National Reconciliation Week, MinRes employees shared insights into their career journey and ways culture and connection could guide reconciliation.

Kenneth Kelly started his boilermaker apprenticeship in early 2025, having spent the previous 12 months on site as a trade assistant at MinRes' Carina iron ore project.

"I like learning new stuff and challenging myself, which has been good as an apprentice, and I look forward to perfecting my trade over time with MinRes and continuing to learn new things," Mr Kelly said.

For Chloe Milera-McLennan and Jannikah Clinch, entry to the resources sector came through MinRes' Accelerate program, which supports increased Indigenous employment across its operations.

"At first, I felt quite intimidated by the mining industry but slowly found my space by enjoying what I do and being surrounded by like-minded people," Ms Milera-McLennan said.

"I like to connect through shared and differentiated experiences and comprehend what those perspectives mean to that person which allows us to connect.

"Connection to culture is what I hold dear to my heart as I have never forgotten where I come from and continue to hold that connection by revisiting my Country as often as I can."

For Ms Clinch, the ability to work independently and make connections across diverse teams and environments is a rewarding aspect of the job. "What I have been taught by my Elders, and what I hope to pass on, is the importance of staying in school and education, staying true to one's roots and embracing opportunities," she said.

MinRes director people Andrea Chapman said the company continued to prioritise economic empowerment, employment initiatives and cultural awareness programs for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as part of its "overarching reconciliation framework".

This report was produced with the support of MinRes.



Elder Kennedy Finlay at the PAMS Dialysis Centre in Newman.

\$5m Rio deal brings services to Country

EXCLUSIVE
DAVID PRESTIPINO

A landmark five-year partnership looks set to transform Indigenous health care in remote Pilbara communities.

Funding of \$5 million from Rio Tinto to the Pilbara Aboriginal Health Alliance will enhance Indigenous-led health care for families, and treat patients closer to Country.

The new Tom Price Dialysis Unit — the partnership's first project slated to open in 12-18 months — will provide transport, local accommodation and wraparound support for patients.

The unit, funded by the Federal Government, will operate six days a week and allow Aboriginal people to return to Country while having treatment.

PAHA chief executive Ashley Councillor said the Rio partnership was significant for its community-led approach, with services tailored and enhanced to specific needs, priorities and aspirations of remote communities across the Pilbara.

A Banjima man with deep roots in the Pilbara, Mr Councillor has experienced the health challenges the vast region faces, with family ties across the Banjima, Nyiyapar-

li, Ngarluma and Yindjibarndi peoples.

"This partnership is grounded in listening to communities and working together to strengthen services," said Mr Councillor.

The PAHA comprises member organisations Puntukurnu Aboriginal Medical Service (Newman), Wirraka Maya Health Service (Port Hedland) and Mawarnkarra Health Service (Roebourne and Karatha). Previously acting chief operating officer at Gumala Aboriginal Corporation, Mr Councillor helped drive community engagement and member-led approaches to decision-making.

He said the Rio Tinto partnership would improve the health of regional communities.

"It empowers Aboriginal leadership in health planning and service delivery, so that solutions are community-led and culturally appropriate," Mr Councillor said.

Aboriginal people are almost seven times more likely to be diagnosed with end-stage kidney disease than non-Indigenous Australians, according to Australian Institute of Health and Welfare data, and in remote communities across the Pil-

bara, those rates are even higher, as access to dialysis is limited.

Many Pilbara patients must relocate to towns far from their Country — or even to Boorloo/Perth — for dialysis and other essential treatments.

Patients in Newman have had no option but to live in homes with up to 10 others, or sleep at local sports clubs, while being treated, with suitable housing unavailable.

Mr Councillor said people staying on Country for treatment while living back home was beneficial not just for the patient, but also for their family and community.

While better access to treatment is now within sight, Mr Councillor is just as passionate and focused on prevention, citing poor housing as a major contributor to health inequality in the Pilbara.

"Investing in prevention, early intervention and Aboriginal-led governance structures helps set a proper foundation for long-term health improvements for our people," he said.

PAHA's partnership with Rio Tinto will also improve culturally appropriate primary health care for Aboriginal communities in the shire of Ash-

burton, as well as providing preventative health programs that promote healthier lifestyles to help reduce rates of chronic health conditions, including Type 2 diabetes.

Rio Tinto said the initial five-year partnership with PAHA was in recognition of the critical gap in essential health services where the global miner operated, particular in dialysis care.

"We're listening to people living in the communities where we operate... and are pleased to commit our support to PAHA so they can provide Aboriginal-led health programs that will have lasting benefits and improve the quality of life for people in the Pilbara," said Richard Cohen, Rio Tinto's managing director of rail, port and core services. Elder Kennedy Finlay, who grew up in Jigalong — a remote Pilbara community of 333 people — receives dialysis treatment at the Puntukurnu Aboriginal Medical Service Dialysis Centre in Newman, just 165km from where he was raised.

"Access to culturally safe, local care means staying close to community and Country," he said. "Newman is good. I feel better receiving treatment next to Jigalong."

Jetstar Asia closure to affect Kimberley tourism

GIOVANNI TORRE

WA Indigenous tourism operators have expressed disappointment at news flights between the Kimberley hub of Broome and Singapore will stop in July.

Qantas has announced Jetstar Asia will close, with flights on the Broome-Singapore route to cease from July 29.

Western Australian Indig-

enous Tourism Operators Council chief executive Rob Taylor told National Indigenous Times he believed "there has been a missed opportunity to connect the European market to a hub in Singapore and then straight into Broome rather than the alternative through Perth or other cities in Australia, which is a more expensive proposition".

"The cessation of these flights

will undoubtedly significantly impact tourism in the Kimberley region, which is renowned for its breathtaking landscapes and vibrant Indigenous cultures," he said.

"The decision affects not just the broader tourism industry but also specifically the many Aboriginal tourism businesses that rely on international visitors." A Jetstar Asia spokesper-

son said shutting down the service was a "difficult decision". "We regret any impacts to the local tourism industry due to the flying season ending earlier than expected," they said.

"We sincerely apologise for the inconvenience this has caused and all impacted customers have been offered full cash refunds so they can make alternative travel arrangements."

Leader takes CEO's seat

Adelaide Gibbs, a proud Kamilaroi woman from Namoi Waters Way, near Coonabarabran, is the latest First Nations leader to take part in Fortescue's CEO for a Day program.

Since joining Fortescue in 2021, her courage, determination and leadership have propelled her career, and she recently took the role of supervisor of Fortescue's mobilisation team. With two decades of military experience, Ms Gibbs continues to serve part-time while studying a Graduate Certificate in Business at Curtin University.

As part of the program, Ms Gibbs worked with Fortescue's executive leadership team, gaining first-hand insight into high-level decision-making.

This included shadowing Fortescue Metals CEO Dino Otranto during the delivery of the March quarterly results, as well as engaging with executives to observe how strategic choices are made at the highest levels.

Ms Gibbs said the program was a great opportunity.

"My favourite part has been meeting with each of our executives and hearing first-hand

what values drive them, and the lessons they've learnt throughout their careers," she said.

"These conversations were not only inspiring but also deeply grounding."

"It's rare to get such honest insight from leaders at this level, and I feel privileged and so thankful to have had that exposure."

"I've taken so much from the knowledge shared, especially around how to lead with purpose and authenticity."

"I've made a conscious effort to share what I've learnt. Being

exposed to real-world leadership in action has helped me make stronger connections between theory and practice.

"It's one thing to learn about leadership styles and values in the classroom, but seeing them lived out by our executives has brought those lessons to life in a really powerful way."

To round out her experience, Ms Gibbs attended ANZ's celebration of reaching \$150 million in lending to First Nations businesses.

This report was produced with the support of Fortescue.



Adelaide Gibbs and Fortescue Metals CEO Dino Otranto.

NOTICE TO GRANT MINING TENEMENTS NATIVE TITLE ACT 1993 (CTH) SECTION 29

The State of Western Australia HEREBY GIVES NOTICE that the Minister for Mines and Petroleum, C/- Department of Energy, Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety, 100 Plain Street, East Perth WA 6004 may grant the following tenement applications under the *Mining Act 1978*:

| Tenement Type | No. | Applicant | Area | Locality | Centroid | Shire |
|---------------------|-----------|--|----------|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|---|
| Exploration Licence | 08/3792 | JUNO GOLD PTY LTD | 62BL | 78.9km S'ly of Paraburdoo | Lat: 23° 54' S Long: 117° 41' E | MEEKATHARRA SHIRE, UPPER GASCOYNE SHIRE |
| Exploration Licence | 09/2993 | M61 HOLDINGS PTY LTD | 86BL | 121km S'ly of Mt Augustus | Lat: 25° 23' S Long: 116° 50' E | UPPER GASCOYNE SHIRE |
| Exploration Licence | 15/2111 | MINERALS 260 HOLDINGS PTY LTD | 1BL | 19.8km S'ly of Coolgardie | Lat: 31° 7' S Long: 121° 6' E | COOLGARDIE SHIRE |
| Exploration Licence | 15/2117 | MINERALS 260 HOLDINGS PTY LTD | 68BL | 35.2km S'ly of Coolgardie | Lat: 31° 15' S Long: 121° 17' E | COOLGARDIE SHIRE |
| Exploration Licence | 15/2118 | MINERALS 260 HOLDINGS PTY LTD | 10BL | 9.2km W'ly of Coolgardie | Lat: 30° 57' S Long: 121° 4' E | COOLGARDIE SHIRE |
| Exploration Licence | 15/2122 | A.C.N. 665 883 509 PTY LTD | 7BL | 21km W'ly of Kambalda | Lat: 31° 9' S Long: 121° 27' E | COOLGARDIE SHIRE |
| Exploration Licence | 16/665 | DYNAMIC METALS LIMITED | 4BL | 22.5km SW'ly of Ora Banda | Lat: 30° 29' S Long: 120° 52' E | COOLGARDIE SHIRE |
| Exploration Licence | 51/2276 | PLANETWEST CORPORATION PTY LTD | 54BL | 78.7km W'ly of Wiluna | Lat: 26° 21' S Long: 119° 29' E | MEEKATHARRA SHIRE |
| Exploration Licence | 57/1473 | FMG RESOURCES PTY LTD | 12BL | 102km SW'ly of Sandstone | Lat: 28° 50' S Long: 118° 53' E | SANDSTONE SHIRE |
| Exploration Licence | 57/1474 | FMG RESOURCES PTY LTD | 15BL | 107.3km S'ly of Sandstone | Lat: 28° 54' S Long: 118° 56' E | SANDSTONE SHIRE |
| Exploration Licence | 59/2948 | TRUDUT PTY LTD | 44BL | 52.4km NE'ly of Yalgoo | Lat: 28° 2' S Long: 117° 5' E | YALGOO SHIRE |
| Exploration Licence | 70/6715 | EMC URANIUM PTY LTD | 11BL | 10.1km NE'ly of Mukinbudin | Lat: 30° 49' S Long: 118° 15' E | MUKINBUDIN SHIRE |
| Exploration Licence | 77/2676 | QUATTRO GOLD PTY LTD | 33BL | 10.6km SE'ly of Southern cross | Lat: 31° 17' S Long: 119° 24' E | YILGARN SHIRE |
| Exploration Licence | 77/3270 | HARBOUR EXPLORATION PTY LTD | 8BL | 141.4km W'ly of Menzies | Lat: 29° 20' S Long: 119° 38' E | MENZIES SHIRE |
| Prospecting Licence | 16/3499 | DUFFUS, Mark Patrick | 134.33HA | 29.2km W'ly of Kalgoorlie | Lat: 30° 40' S Long: 121° 10' E | COOLGARDIE SHIRE |
| Prospecting Licence | 24/5631-S | MONSHIN, Andrew John | 8.37HA | 18.7km NW'ly of Ora Banda | Lat: 30° 15' S Long: 120° 54' E | KALGOORLIE-BOULDER CITY |
| Prospecting Licence | 24/5859 | NORTON GOLD FIELDS PTY LTD | 68.60HA | 17.8km S'ly of Broad Arrow | Lat: 30° 35' S Long: 121° 16' E | KALGOORLIE-BOULDER CITY |
| Prospecting Licence | 24/5860 | NORTON GOLD FIELDS PTY LTD | 24.07HA | 15.9km S'ly of Broad Arrow | Lat: 30° 34' S Long: 121° 16' E | KALGOORLIE-BOULDER CITY |
| Prospecting Licence | 24/5861 | NORTON GOLD FIELDS PTY LTD | 199.87HA | 13.9km S'ly of Broad Arrow | Lat: 30° 34' S Long: 121° 20' E | KALGOORLIE-BOULDER CITY |
| Prospecting Licence | 24/5862 | MAHONEY, Reece Anthony | 146.43HA | 17.9km N'ly of Broad Arrow | Lat: 30° 17' S Long: 121° 16' E | KALGOORLIE-BOULDER CITY |
| Prospecting Licence | 24/5863 | MAHONEY, Reece Anthony | 151.34HA | 17.1km N'ly of Broad Arrow | Lat: 30° 17' S Long: 121° 16' E | KALGOORLIE-BOULDER CITY |
| Prospecting Licence | 24/5864 | RAMSAY, Paul Brian | 4.97HA | 16.8km N'ly of Broad Arrow | Lat: 30° 17' S Long: 121° 17' E | KALGOORLIE-BOULDER CITY |
| Prospecting Licence | 24/5865 | RAMSAY, Paul Brian | 9.97HA | 7.5km NW'ly of Broad Arrow | Lat: 30° 23' S Long: 121° 16' E | KALGOORLIE-BOULDER CITY |
| Prospecting Licence | 25/2857 | BEHSMAN, Patricia Mary JOHNSON, Jillian Wendy | 174.41HA | 40.4km E'ly of Kalgoorlie | Lat: 30° 50' S Long: 121° 52' E | KALGOORLIE-BOULDER CITY |
| Prospecting Licence | 25/2858 | BEHSMAN, Patricia Mary JOHNSON, Jillian Wendy | 199.68HA | 37.8km E'ly of Kalgoorlie | Lat: 30° 49' S Long: 121° 51' E | KALGOORLIE-BOULDER CITY |
| Prospecting Licence | 26/4833 | LOHSE, Dennis | 44.42HA | 12.3km S'ly of Kalgoorlie | Lat: 30° 51' S Long: 121° 30' E | KALGOORLIE-BOULDER CITY |
| Prospecting Licence | 27/2620 | MURTAGH, Jason Lee | 184.71HA | 18.6km NE'ly of Kalgoorlie | Lat: 30° 39' S Long: 121° 38' E | KALGOORLIE-BOULDER CITY |
| Prospecting Licence | 29/2711 | MERRETT, Ashley John | 4.44HA | 63.3km NW'ly of Menzies | Lat: 29° 17' S Long: 120° 34' E | MENZIES SHIRE |
| Prospecting Licence | 57/1546 | BENNETT, John Paul | 9.55HA | 6.8km SE'ly of Sandstone | Lat: 28° 1' S Long: 119° 21' E | SANDSTONE SHIRE |

Nature of the act: Grant of prospecting licences which authorises the applicant to prospect for minerals for a term of 4 years from date of grant. Grant of Special Prospecting Licences, which authorises the applicant to prospect for minerals for a term up to 4 years from the date of grant. Grant of exploration licences, which authorises the applicant to explore for minerals for a term of 5 years from the date of grant. **Notification day: 18 June 2025. Native title parties:** Under section 30 of the *Native Title Act 1993* (Cth), persons have until 3 months after the notification day to take certain steps to become native title parties in relation to applications. The 3 month period closes on **18 September 2025**. Any person who is, or becomes a native title party, is entitled to the negotiation and/or procedural rights provided in Part 2 Division 3 Subdivision P of *Native Title Act 1993* (Cth). Enquiries in relation to filing a native title determination application to become a native title party should be directed to the Federal Court of Australia, 1 Victoria Avenue, Perth WA 6000, telephone (08) 9268 7100. **Expedited procedure:** The State of Western Australia considers that these acts are acts attracting the expedited procedure. Each licence may be granted unless, within the period of 4 months after the notification day (i.e. **18 October 2025**), a native title party lodges an objection with the National Native Title Tribunal against the inclusion of the statement that the State considers the grant of the licence is an act attracting the expedited procedure. Enquiries in relation to lodging an objection should be directed to the National Native Title Tribunal, Level 5, 1 Victoria Avenue, Perth, or GPO Box 9973, Perth, WA 6848, telephone (08) 9425 1000. For further information about the act (including extracts of plans showing the boundaries of the applications), contact the Department of Energy, Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety, 100 Plain Street, East Perth WA 6004, or telephone (08) 9222 3518. Please note – Not all Intention to Grant notifications are published in the National Indigenous Times. For more information please contact the Department above.

NOTICE TO GRANT MINING TENEMENTS NATIVE TITLE ACT 1993 (CTH) SECTION 29

The State of Western Australia HEREBY GIVES NOTICE that the Minister for Mines and Petroleum, C/- Department of Energy, Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety, 100 Plain Street, East Perth WA 6004 may grant the following tenement applications under the *Mining Act 1978*:

| Tenement Type | No. | Applicant | Area | Locality | Centroid | Shire |
|---------------|---------|---------------------------|----------|----------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Mining Lease | 15/1923 | FOCUS MINERALS LTD | 348.88HA | 12.9km SW'ly of Coolgardie | Lat: 31° 2' S Long: 121° 4' E | COOLGARDIE SHIRE |
| Mining Lease | 26/868 | FEYSVILLE MINING PTY LTD | 550.98HA | 26.1km S'ly of Kalgoorlie | Lat: 30° 58' S Long: 121° 34' E | KALGOORLIE-BOULDER CITY |
| Mining Lease | 27/526 | LA ZARZA MINERALS PTY LTD | 197.85HA | 17.6km N'ly of Kalgoorlie | Lat: 30° 35' S Long: 121° 30' E | KALGOORLIE-BOULDER CITY |
| Mining Lease | 77/1324 | STRANGE, Vernon Wesley | 9.01HA | 1.3km NW'ly of Marvel Loch | Lat: 31° 27' S Long: 119° 28' E | YILGARN SHIRE |

Nature of the act: Grant of mining leases, which authorises the applicant to mine for minerals for a term of 21 years from notification of grant and a right of renewal for 21 years. **Notification day: 18 June 2025. Native title parties:** Under section 30 of the *Native Title Act 1993* (Cth), persons have until 3 months after the notification day to take certain steps to become native title parties in relation to applications. The 3 month period closes on **18 September 2025**. Any person who is, or becomes a native title party, is entitled to the negotiation and/or procedural rights provided in Part 2 Division 3 Subdivision P of *Native Title Act 1993* (Cth). Enquiries in relation to filing a native title determination application to become a native title party should be directed to the Federal Court of Australia, 1 Victoria Avenue, Perth WA 6000, telephone (08) 9268 7100. The mining tenements may be granted if, by the end of the period of 4 months after the notification day (i.e. **18 October 2025**), there is no native title party under section 30 of the *Native Title Act 1993* (Cth) in relation to the area of the mining tenements. For further information about the act (including extracts of plans showing the boundaries of the applications), contact the Department of Energy, Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety, 100 Plain Street, East Perth WA 6004, or telephone (08) 9222 3518. Please note – Not all Intention to Grant notifications are published in the National Indigenous Times. For more information please contact the Department above.

NOTICE OF GRANT AMALGAMATION APPLICATIONS NATIVE TITLE ACT 1993 (CTH) SECTION 29

The State of Western Australia HEREBY GIVES NOTICE that the Minister for Mines and Petroleum, C/- Department of Energy, Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety, 100 Plain Street, East Perth WA 6004 may grant the following amalgamation applications under the *Mining Act 1978*:

| Exploration No. | Applicant | Amalg No. | Area | Locality | Centroid | Shire |
|-----------------|---|-----------|----------|--------------------------|---------------------------------|------------------|
| 15/1689 | SPARGOVILLE MINERALS PTY LTD | 696883 | 8.99HA | 24.9km SW'ly of Kambalda | Lat: 31° 21' S Long: 121° 28' E | COOLGARDIE SHIRE |
| 15/1689 | SPARGOVILLE MINERALS PTY LTD | 731412 | 9.99HA | 25km SW'ly of Kambalda | Lat: 31° 21' S Long: 121° 28' E | COOLGARDIE SHIRE |
| 30/511 | ROCKTIVITY GOLD PTY LTD | 734137 | 195.74HA | 54.5km SW'ly of Menzies | Lat: 29° 58' S Long: 120° 35' E | MENZIES SHIRE |
| 30/511 | ROCKTIVITY GOLD PTY LTD | 734138 | 189.34HA | 56.1km SW'ly of Menzies | Lat: 29° 59' S Long: 120° 34' E | MENZIES SHIRE |
| 30/511 | ROCKTIVITY GOLD PTY LTD | 734139 | 105.90HA | 59km SW'ly of Menzies | Lat: 30° 1' S Long: 120° 33' E | MENZIES SHIRE |
| 38/3466 | TEVEL PTY LTD MTM CRITICAL METALS LIMITED | 721664 | 188.48HA | 33.4km NE'ly of Laverton | Lat: 28° 22' S Long: 122° 35' E | LAVERTON SHIRE |

Nature of the act: Grant of amalgamation applications which authorises the applicant to explore for minerals. **Notification day: 18 June 2025. Native title parties:** Under Section 30 of the *Native Title Act 1993* (Cth), persons have until 3 months after the notification day to take certain steps to become native title parties in relation to the applications. The 3 month period closes on **18 September 2025**. Any person who is, or becomes a native title party, is entitled to the negotiation and/or procedural rights provided in Part 2 Division 3 Subdivision P of the *Native Title Act 1993* (Cth). Enquiries in relation to filing a native title determination application to become a native title party should be directed to the Federal Court of Australia, 1 Victoria Avenue, Perth, WA 6000, telephone (08) 9268 7100. **Expedited procedure:** The State of Western Australia considers that these acts are acts attracting the expedited procedure. Each amalgamation application may be granted unless, within the period of 4 months after the notification day (i.e. **18 October 2025**), a native title party lodges an objection with the National Native Title Tribunal against the inclusion of the statement that the State considers the grant of the licence is an act attracting the expedited procedure. Enquiries in relation to lodging an objection should be directed to the National Native Title Tribunal, Level 5, 1 Victoria Avenue, Perth, or GPO Box 9973, Perth, WA 6848, telephone (08) 9425 1000. For further information about the act (including extracts of plans showing the boundaries of the applications), contact the Department of Energy, Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety, 100 Plain Street, East Perth WA 6004, or telephone (08) 9222 3518. Please note – Not all Intention to Grant notifications are published in the National Indigenous Times. For more information please contact the Department above.

First Nations businesses not a part of initiative

GIOVANNI TORRE &
DAVID PRESTIPINO

Supply Nation, a major not-for-profit organisation which aims to grow the Indigenous business sector through supplier diversity, has announced a leadership roundtable which includes no Indigenous businesses.

Northern Territory Indigenous Business Network chief executive Naomi Anstess told National Indigenous Times the absence of First Nations businesses from the roundtable “flies in the face of genuine Aboriginal-led decision-making and the commitment to co-design that underpins the Closing the Gap agenda”.

“Excluding us is not an oversight. It is a blatant erasure of our legitimacy and our right to lead,” she said.

“True allies don’t lead on our behalf. They make space for us to lead, and when the narrative centres on what non-Indigenous corporates can do for Indigenous businesses, rather than with us, it reinforces a saviour mentality and sidelines our autonomy.”

Ms Anstess said there was an absence of initiatives at Supply Nation to encourage Indigenous-to-Indigenous trade.

Shut out of leadership roundtable

“The heavy lifting is being done by jurisdictional Blak Chambers . . . on the ground, in community, and deeply connected to the businesses they serve . . . building the kind of economy that uplifts all of us,” she said.

She said not including Indigenous businesses in the leadership roundtable sent a message “that we are not seen as equals, our leadership is neither recognised nor respected, and we must still compete for space, validation, and visibility in our own economy”.

“This exclusion . . . is structurally damaging and reinforces a colonial hierarchy that places our future in the hands of others, rather than trusting us to shape it ourselves . . . Indigenous businesses are positioned more as a ‘database’ than as stakeholders,” Ms Anstess said.

First Nations Senator Lidia Thorpe told National Indig-

enous Times the failure to include Aboriginal-owned businesses in the Roundtable was “deeply concerning”.

“Supply Nation is meant to empower our communities, not hand power to corporations . . . which already hold excessive political influence in this country,” she said.

“This is not self-determination . . . Indigenous leadership must be at the centre — not an afterthought.”

The independent Gunnai, Gunditjmarra and Djab Wurrung senator stressed “our communities must lead — full stop”.

“If we are not empowered to lead in spaces designed for us, where will we be allowed to lead at all?” she said.

“Our people have the answers. It’s time our voices were truly centred and respected.”

Senator Thorpe, who represents Victoria, said she had long-

standing concerns about the governance of the Indigenous procurement sector more broadly.

“The sector urgently needs reform — including independent oversight, greater transparency, and a stronger role for community-controlled organisations,” she said.

A Supply Nation spokesperson told National Indigenous Times the leadership roundtable was “a long-standing initiative that brings together representatives of our corporate, government and non-profit member organisations”.

“The aim is to provide a coordinated voice on matters relevant to their continued commitment to supplier diversity and procurement from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-owned businesses,” they said.

“The leadership roundtable commenced in 2015, was active

for five years, and was paused in 2019-20 due to the pandemic.

“The intent of the leadership roundtable is not to act as a forum for issues of importance to the Indigenous economy as a whole, or provide advocacy or policy advice, but rather to support members in their efforts to grow procurement and commercial collaboration with Indigenous-owned businesses by sharing best practices and collaboration.”

“The leadership roundtable is an initiative to build capacity with the member network and for Supply Nation to test concepts and programs and refine them before they are implemented to the broader member base.”

The spokesperson said members of the newly announced roundtable were chosen “through a process of consultation, development of selection criteria, expression of interest . . . and a robust governance framework . . . drawn from both government and corporates across a range of industry sectors and well-placed to co-ordinate the views of Supply Nation’s more than 850 member organisations”.

“These corporates and government departments are demonstrating strong leadership in growing and supporting the Indigenous business sector,” they said.

“The way in which Supply Nation communicates, engages with, and supports our members, suppliers, and other stakeholders is different. Other forums and mechanisms are used to seek feedback from suppliers and stakeholders.”

Help meet Australia’s energy needs for today and tomorrow.

Challenge accepted.


Australia needs energy. We need it to create jobs, to produce food and to drive industry. We need it to grow and prosper.

Because without a reliable source of affordable energy, like the natural gas produced by Woodside, we cannot maintain our standard of living, or hope to improve it.

To learn how Woodside is helping meet Australia’s energy needs, please visit woodside.com



Australia’s leading energy company

 Woodside Energy

SPORT

Yidinji woman picks up stick for Hockeyroos

JOSEPH GUENZLER

Jirrabul Mamu woman Jamie-Lee Surha of the Yidinji nation this month became the fifth Indigenous woman to represent the Hockeyroos.

Surha made her debut during the Hockeyroos' recent Pro League clash against the Netherlands at Wagener Stadium in Amstelveen, with Australia losing 5-1 to the world No.1 squad.

The Queensland striker is just the eighth Indigenous Australian hockey player overall to play for Australia at international level, proudly making her debut in the Hockeyroos' ochre Indigenous strip.

"Pulling on the Indigenous uniform was one of the most special moments for me, being a First Nations athlete in this team — I'm very proud to be here and in this uniform," she said.

Reflecting on the experience, Surha said the entire journey, from the moment she was called up to stepping on to the field, was surreal.

"It was everything I expected and more," she said. "The atmosphere the Dutch fans bring is incredible.

"From the call-up to getting on the plane two days later, to stepping on the field for the first time, it's all been a surreal and special moment."

While acknowledging the high pace of international play, Surha said the step up to elite competition was everything she had hoped for.

"I think it's definitely what I expected but more if I'm being honest," she said.

"The girls are so quick . . . but it's pret-



Mariah Williams and debutant Jamie-Lee Surha ahead of the clash with Netherlands. Picture: Hockeyroos

ty cool to experience it." She said she was "grateful for the opportunity to debut for my country".

Surha joins a small but significant group of Indigenous women to don the Hockeyroos uniform, following in the footsteps of Mariah Williams, Brooke Peris, Nova Peris and Lorelle Morrisey.

The match itself saw the Hockeyroos take an early lead through Alice Arnott, but the Dutch side quickly regained control and dominated for the rest of the game.



Jamie-Lee Surha
Picture: Facebook

Indigenous XI star

JARRED CROSS

Taking to the field in Papua New Guinea, the Australian Indigenous XI are representing their country, culture and the aspirations of future generations, skipper Christina Coulson says.

The women's national team were mid-way through a T20 series against Papua New Guinea, Vanuatu and Samoa in Port Moresby last week when the captain spoke with National Indigenous Times.

It had been a solid start for Coulson's side, beating each of their opponents in the opening days of fixtures.

"The girls have adapted pretty quickly, which is great," Coulson said.

"The pitch definitely has not as much bounce or as much to life in it as we're used to in Australia . . . we were already going to be spin-heavy (bowling), but it's been working in our favour, making them generate some



The Australian Indigenous women's cricket team. Pic: PacificAus Sports

pace." Some the side are familiar with their opponents from Vanuatu, who Coulson said have been employing more pace with the ball — something her Indigenous side matched in part during last Tuesday's six-wicket win.

In 2023, men's and women's Indigenous national teams toured Vanuatu for a series

against the Pacific neighbour.

Australian ODI, WBBL and NSW State cricketer Hannah Darlington captained the women's XI on that trip, rejoining this tour as assistant coach.

Samoa remained the greatest unknown heading into their current contests, Coulson said with a handful on PNG's side having spent summers in pre-

mier cricket competitions in Australia's capital cities.

Some members of Samoa's squad are also familiar faces from competition in domestic or matches played in Aotearoa/New Zealand.

"They're powerful girls with the bat, can hit a big ball," Coulson said.

This is Coulson's first time as skipper for international games.

"It's an absolute privilege," she said. "It's been awesome for me to have the opportunity to lead the group, but I'm still learning too."

Among the women on the team are Ella Hayward (Victoria), Mikayla Hinkley (WA/Perth Scorchers), Anika Learoyd (NSW/Sydney Thunder) and Emma Manix-Geeves (Tasmania/Hobart Hurricanes).

Learoyd made her debut for the side earlier in the series, with young WA talent Elsie Simpson heading over for her first tour. The side also features

a list of star performers from recent National Indigenous Cricket Championships.

Wearing the green-and-gold in a First Nations national representative side was special, Coulson said.

"It's super important for us, because everyone has a different experience with culture," she said.

"To be able to learn and understand each other on a deeper level as well helps us connect on the field and off the field.

Allrounder Clodagh Ryall and her siblings have created paintings to be part of exchanges with the other sides.

"We sat down as a group and discussed that not only are we representing our country, but we're representing our culture," Coulson added.

"That's something that we try to take onto the field every time we play, just remember that we're representing more than just Australia."