

# NIT

NATIONAL INDIGENOUS TIMES



**Catwalk calling**  
STYLE UP  
STARTS P9

## Celebrating 'a powerful moment'



Uluru at sunset during the 40th anniversary of its handback to traditional owners. RIGHT: Anangu woman Alison Carroll. Pictures: Sara Maiorino and Lloyd Jones



### DECHLAN BRENNAN

Prime Minister Anthony Albanese has joined Traditional Owners at Uluru to mark 40 years since the return of Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park to the Anangu — an event he described as “a powerful moment in the story of our continent”.

Speaking at the anniversary ceremony on Saturday, Mr Albanese reflected on the 1985 Handback, when then-governor-general Sir Ninian Stephen formally returned the title deeds to the Anangu after years of lobbying by Traditional Owners.

The 1985 event fulfilled a commitment

made by former prime minister Bob Hawke two years earlier to amend the Federal Aboriginal Land Rights Act.

“We come together on the eve of an anniversary that stands tall in the story of our nation: 40 years since the Commonwealth of Australia returned Uluru and Kata Tjuta to the Anangu people,” Mr Albanese said.

“It was a milestone in Aboriginal land rights, and a powerful moment in the story of our continent.”

Quoting Anangu Traditional Owner Aunty Pamela Taylor, who attended the

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# CALL FOR PROBE INTO NT JUSTICE

### DECHLAN BRENNAN

Independent Senator Lidia Thorpe referred the Northern Territory's Attorney-General to the Territory's corruption watchdog last week, two days before the A-G's Department took the unusual step of publicly releasing emails between the NT's top judge and senior bureaucrats.

Last Tuesday, Senator Thorpe referred Attorney-General Marie-Claire Boothby to the NT Independent Commissioner

## Senator refers A-G to corruption body

Against Corruption, raising concerns over the Attorney-General's undisclosed family connection to Jake Danby — her sister's stepson.

In September, Danby received no prison time for a hit-and-run incident in June 2024 in which 39-year-old Indigenous man Mr Whitehurst was killed and another Indigenous man injured. Danby mocked

the men and used racial slurs about them after the hit-and-run.

Ms Boothby had not previously disclosed publicly her family connection to Mr Danby, despite speaking to reporters about the case and sentencing.

Only after the relationship was revealed by the NT Independent did Ms Boothby say she informed Chief Minister Lia

Finocchiaro “immediately” after the accident last year, and denied any wrongdoing.

CLP leader Ms Finocchiaro has defended Ms Boothby, saying she has “full confidence” in her.

National Indigenous Times does not suggest Ms Boothby has done anything untoward or outside the realms of her role, only that there has been a sub-

mission to ICAC. Ms Boothby declined to comment when contacted by National Indigenous Times last Wednesday about the ICAC referral.

Senator Thorpe said she had referred Ms Boothby to ICAC because there are “serious questions about what's been going on with the Danby hit-and-run case”, including the delay in Ms Boothby revealing her connection to Mr Danby.

“ICAC needs to get to the

**CONTINUED PAGE 3**

# Treaty is 'justice' co-chairs declare

DECHLAN BRENNAN ANALYSIS

When the co-chairs of the First Peoples' Assembly, Rueben Berg and Ngarra Murray, walked across the well-worn carpet of Victoria's Legislative Assembly earlier this month to speak on Treaty, they did so facing both history and a wave of misinformation that continues to follow policies aimed at improving outcomes for First Nations people.

Mr Berg, a Gunditjmarra man whose father, Jim Berg — founder of the Koorie Heritage Trust — gave powerful evidence to the Yoorrook Justice Commission about the violence and dispossession faced by the Koorie people, made it clear Treaty was “not a favour asked, but a right recognised . . . not charity, but justice”.

“We do this not to divide Victoria, but to complete it. Not to take anything from anyone, but to make this place more whole for everyone,” he told the chamber.

Treaty opponents have been vocal in recent weeks. Peta Credlin and Janet Albrechtsen argued that Treaty threatens elements of Australia's rule of law and democracy, suggesting the Government is ignoring voters after the defeat of the Voice referendum. But Treaty was a key Labor policy at both the 2018 and 2022 elections, which delivered the party clear victories. The Opposition had previously supported the creation of the First Peoples' Assembly before withdrawing from the bipartisan process at the start of last year.

Some have also claimed Treaty could allow “different laws for

different people”, despite no such provisions existing in the Treaty Bill. The First Peoples' Assembly anticipated this, warning that misinformation would likely intensify as the Bill progressed through Parliament.

“While this Bill is being debated in Parliament we expect to hear a lot of misinformation from a noisy minority, but through our conversations over the last 10 years, we know the sensible majority of Victorians want practical, cost-effective solutions that close gaps between First Peoples and non-Aboriginal people and get better outcomes for our kids and Elders,” Ms Murray said.

The Opposition's alternative proposal — to replace Treaty with a new department and an unelected Aboriginal advisory body — has drawn criticism from Indigenous leaders. Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service CEO and Assembly member Nerita Waight said it was “incredibly insulting” to hear the plan announced in Parliament.

“This unwanted intervention from the Opposition, which essentially proposes to deny the right of Aboriginal peoples to decide for ourselves how to organise politically, shows exactly why Treaty is needed,” she said.

Nearly every critic of Treaty says they aspire to address Indigenous disadvantage, but argue that Treaty, like the Voice, is not the way to do so. “Our commitment is to work alongside Aboriginal organisations, Elders and communities to ensure that every initiative is grounded in cultural safety, trust and local knowledge,” Liberal leader Brad



Assembly co-chairs Ngarra Murray and Rueben Berg arrive to speak at Parliament. Picture: James Ross

Battin said. But, if alternative solutions truly worked, two centuries since colonisation began seems a long time to keep them hidden in the cupboard.

Critics of Treaty have warned it could lead to a two-tiered system, but many Indigenous advocates note the reality is that such inequality already exists. Across almost every social and economic measure, First Peoples continue to experience worse outcomes — particularly in the justice system.

Of the justice system, former chief justice of WA Wayne Martin put it starkly in 2017: “Aboriginal people are much more likely to be questioned by police than non-Aboriginal people. When questioned they are more

likely to be arrested. If they are arrested, they are much more likely to be remanded in custody than given bail . . . and at the end of their term of imprisonment they are much less likely to get parole than non-Aboriginal people.”

One critic wrote that Treaty legislation means the “foundation of Victoria (and by implication Australia as a whole) was based on a fundamental act of injustice”. For many, that is not an opinion but a matter of record. The Yoorrook Justice Commission heard and recorded extensive testimony about massacres, forced removals, and the dispossession of land and rights that continue to affect communities today.

As Ms Murray told Parliament: “Our people felt the impacts of colonisation and dispossession physically, culturally, spiritually, economically and legally. From today, we are no longer asking for a seat at the government's table,” Mr Berg said. “From today, we set our own table — and we lead the work that affects us.”

In many ways, that is what Treaty in Victoria represents: not a symbolic gesture or an act of division, but a practical framework for self-determination and respect. It's a process that acknowledges the past while aiming to build a fairer relationship between First Peoples and the State — one based on partnership, not permission.

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## Fatal crash sentencing anger will not abate

FROM PAGE 1

bottom of this, and the NT Attorney-General can't just shrug it off. If she (Ms Boothby) denies involvement, she should welcome an ICAC investigation," she said last Wednesday.

The release last Thursday of emails related to the Danby case between Chief Justice Michael Grant and the A-G Department followed the publication of a leaked email from the Chief Justice to the acting chief executive of the department, Leonique Swart, accusing the department of blocking the release of a media statement to The Australian newspaper.

A department spokesperson told the ABC on Thursday that the emails — seen by National Indigenous Times and showing a conversation between Chief Justice Grant and Ms Swart on October 8 — demonstrate that the department "never intended to intervene" in the court's media processes and that the matter "did not involve the Attorney-General".

In the emails, Chief Justice Grant wrote to Ms Swart, saying he had been advised she "recently and unilaterally directed the court's media liaison officer not to send a communication to The Australian newspaper which I requested him to send".

He said he was "extremely disturbed that you have purported to interfere with the court's independence and operations in this fashion, and more disturbed that you have done so without making any attempt to discuss the matter with me".

"Please confirm without delay that you will no longer seek to interfere in this well-established function of the Supreme Court, and that you will not purport to exercise any right of veto concerning statements by the Supreme Court to media organisations under the name of a 'court spokesperson'," he wrote.

Ms Swart denied any interference, saying there had been a "number of misunderstandings". She said she "did not intend to veto the court" by declining to approve a correction in a court media statement. "I was under the apprehension I was being asked to approve a correction being released by the Attorney-General's Department which at the time I did not approve. That apprehension was, now that matters have been made clearer to me, in error," she said. "Finally, I can assure you I have full respect for the separation of powers and I defend it frequently."

Both the court's media office and the department described the issue as a "misunderstanding" that had been resolved. The emails reviewed by National Indigenous Times show no evidence of improper influence from the department.

The exchange followed The Australian's coverage of the sentencing of Indigenous man Stephen Rioli for a similar crime, which it compared to the case of Mr Danby.



Ned Jampijinpa Hargraves  
Picture: James Ross/AAP

# Call for openness after custody death

DECLAN BRENNAN

The family of Warlpiri man Kumanjayi White demanded transparency and accountability as a directions hearing regarding the inquest into his death in custody began last week.

The hearing was held last Thursday, nearly five months after the 24-year-old died while being restrained by two plain-clothed Northern Territory Police officers at a Coles supermarket in Mparntwe/Alice Springs.

Mr White lived with a disability, and was under State guardianship in supported accommodation at the time of his death in May. Despite receiving the final autopsy

report in September, NT Police are yet to lay charges or stand down any officers involved.

Also last month, NT Police confirmed the decision on whether to prosecute now rests with the Director of Public Prosecutions.

The officers involved remain in "non-operational, forward-facing administrative roles", Police Commissioner Martin Dole said, citing policy against commenting on individuals.

Mr White's grandfather and senior next of kin, Ned Jampijinpa Hargraves, said the family still had "no justice" and remained "in the dark" about the case.

"We know that if an Aboriginal person had done this,

they would be behind bars," he said. "We want parumpurru — justice — because parumpurru is the truth."

The family has been denied access to CCTV footage from the incident and criticised a planned DPP media briefing as culturally unsafe and insensitive.

National Justice Project principal solicitor George Newhouse said the lack of transparency was "eroding what little faith the family has in our legal system" and called for the officers to be stood down and for an independent investigation.

Counsel assisting the Coroner, Peggy Dwyer, told the court a brief of evidence had not yet been served but said this was

"not uncommon" while the criminal investigation continued. Coroner Elisabeth Armitage described the process as "slow, but careful and considered", saying the court would work to ensure "as much of the truth can be uncovered as possible".

The directions hearing, held in the Alice Springs Local Court, also confirmed Coles Supermarkets, Talice Security, NT Health, the Public Trustee and Life Without Barriers — the care provider responsible for Mr White's welfare — would be among those likely to give evidence.

A further directions hearing is expected in February, though no date has been set for the full inquest.

## Handback of Uluru is labelled a defining moment

FROM PAGE 1

original ceremony in 1985, Mr Albanese recalled her words: "We were so happy that after all that struggle, all the talking, the fight to get it back — that it was finally going to be given back ... Everybody drew together to celebrate; it was a really happy time."

Anangu chair of the Uluru-Kata Tjuta Board of Management, Tapaya Edwards,

said the Handback remains deeply significant.

"Uluru and Kata Tjuta are very important to Anangu. We have always lived here, and having the land returned to us 40 years ago was an important moment for us," he said.

Shaeleigh Swan, the first Indigenous manager of the national park, welcomed the opportunity to acknowledge the Anangu Elders and what they fought for.

"They really wanted to make change for the land rights for all the grandchildren and the future generations," she said.

Joint management of the park had been a great partnership for Anangu and the Commonwealth to look after Country in a very productive way, Ms Swan said.

Anangu woman Alison Milyika Carroll remembers attending the event with her father and seeing the title deeds handed over to Elders.

"This rock belongs to Anangu and is for everybody," she said at Uluru.

"We love people coming here from all over to walk around and see it. They enjoy it — to see this amazing rock."

Minister for Indigenous Australians, Malarndirri McCarthy, said the Handback was "a defining moment in the history of land rights in Australia".

with AAP

# Push for NSW rights act

DECHLAN BRENNAN

More than 100 organisations and individuals have urged NSW MPs to support a public inquiry into introducing a Human Rights Act, arguing the State is falling behind the rest of the country.

Last Thursday Greens MP Jenny Leong introduced a private member's Bill to NSW Parliament, proposing a model similar to those in place in Victoria, the ACT and Queensland.

In Question Time in March, Ms Leong said a Human Rights Act would strengthen protections in NSW for fundamental rights, including freedom of protest, education and housing.

"The NSW Government cannot be trusted when it comes to

protecting and promoting human rights for people in our State," she said.

Attorney-General Michael Daly said the Government was "always open to considering the issue and working constructively to determine whether this proposal is a course of action that is in the best interests of the people of NSW".

The NSW Labor platform, re-endorsed last year, commits to community consultation on new laws to better protect residents' human rights.

Human Rights Act for NSW — an alliance of 90 peak and community organisations — has called for Ms Leong's Bill to be referred for public consultation.

Karly Warner, chief executive of the Aboriginal Legal Service

NSW/ACT, said new legislation was essential, as the rights of First Nations people are routinely violated in prisons, the child protection system, and by police. She added that any consultation on a Human Rights Act must include First Nations voices.

"Enacting a Human Rights Act for NSW could provide much-needed protection and recourse for when these rights are not upheld as they should be," Ms Warner said.

"Having a Human Rights Act would bring NSW in line with Victoria, Queensland and the ACT, where human rights protections are already enshrined."

National director of ANTAR, Blake Alan Cansdale, said: "For too long, the inherent human rights of Aboriginal peoples

have been treated as optional in NSW. A Human Rights Act would help change that, by embedding fairness, dignity and accountability into the way that the NSW Government makes laws, develops policy and delivers services.

"It would also bring NSW standards of governance into greater alignment with international standards, including the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples."

In Queensland, the Human Rights Act has been suspended several times by both major parties to permit children to be held in adult watch-houses and face potential life imprisonment. Despite this, former human rights commissioner Scott McDougall — who helped implement the

Act — defended it, telling National Indigenous Times this month its effectiveness during the COVID-19 pandemic proved its value. He noted that, unlike the Closing the Gap agreement, Queensland's Act is enforceable and similar provisions should be rolled out nationally.

"We do need a national Human Rights Act, unquestionably," he said. "We really need a responsive human rights protection regime in Australia."

"Australia definitely needs to shore up its protections of human rights, and really, at the international level, we're seeing it play out now. Australia was originally a very willing participant and . . . a leader of many of the early treaties. Sadly, we seem to have lost that leadership."

## Apology at site of massacre in move of healing

GIOVANNI TORRE

The Governor of WA, Chris Dawson, accepted an invitation to the annual memorial gathering at the site of the Pinjarra Massacre on Tuesday — and was due to make a formal apology for the actions of his predecessor nearly 200 years ago.

October 28 this year marks the 191st anniversary of the day many Bindjareb Noongar people were shot and killed by an armed party of 25 men led by WA governor Sir James Stirling in Pinjarra, in WA's South West.

After an initial encounter on the banks of the river, the Bindjareb Noongar people escaped into the river and were faced with Governor Stirling's party, who fired continuously at them for over one hour, killing multiple innocent victims.

Every year on this date, Traditional Owners, Elders and locals from Pinjarra gather to pay respect to those who died and to remember this crime.

This year, the Governor was invited to attend the gathering and give an address and took the opportunity to issue a formal apology for the actions of his predecessor in 1834.

The event scheduled included an exchange of trees as a symbol of ongoing reconciliation. The Governor was to present an olive tree, propagated from the olive tree planted in the grounds of Government House by Governor Stirling around 1835.

In return, Traditional Own-



Part of the site of the Pinjarra Massacre.

ers were presenting him with a jarrah tree from Bindjareb Country, which will be planted in the grounds of Government House in Boorloo/Perth.

"I believe this action will be a significant step along the pathway to meaningful reconciliation," Mr Dawson said.

Medallions produced by the Perth Mint to mark the apology depict a Pinjarra tree, with the words *karnadjil*, *wungening* and *boordiya*. The reverse depicts the Government House olive tree and the same three words in English: truth, healing and growth.

“I believe this action will be a significant step along the pathway to meaningful reconciliation.

Chris Dawson

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#### CIRCULATION

Distributed on the last Tuesday of each month in The West Australian in WA, and the last Wednesday of each month in The Courier-Mail, The Daily Telegraph, Adelaide Advertiser, NT News, The Mercury and The Herald Sun.



The National Indigenous Times is a Supply Nation-certified 100 per cent Aboriginal-owned media company.

# Hate crime alleged

## Crossbench calls for charges to note racial motivation



A still from video footage during the attack on Camp Sovereignty, and below, Senator Lidia Thorpe.

### DECHLAN BRENNAN

More than 20 members of the Federal parliamentary crossbench wrote to the Albanese Government this month, calling for the attack on Camp Sovereignty to be treated as a hate crime.

The attack on the sacred site on August 31 came after anti-immigration rallies across the country.

In footage seen by National Indigenous Times, about 40 men dressed in black — many allegedly linked to the National Socialist Network and some carrying flagpoles and sticks — stormed the Indigenous camp. The footage showed men verbally abusing camp members and stamping on the Aboriginal flag.

Several Aboriginal people were injured, and at least 15 people — including NSN leader Thomas Sewell — have been charged over the alleged incident.

Independent senator Lidia Thorpe said the assault was “an attack on First Peoples” intended to “intimidate, terrorise, and spread fear in First Peoples and the broader black and brown community”.

“It was clearly a racially motivated attack and must be

investigated as a hate crime,” she said.

In a letter sent to Prime Minister Anthony Albanese, Indigenous Australians Minister Malarndirri McCarthy, Attorney-General Michelle Rowland, and the heads of Victoria Police, the Australian Federal Police, and the respective Directors of Public Prosecutions, the crossbench called for the alleged attack to be dealt with under hate crime legislation.

Division 80.2A of the Commonwealth Criminal Code Act 1995 makes it an offence to advocate force or violence against a group distinguished by race, religion, gender, or other protected characteristics, while Division 100 of the code notes terrorist acts are actions intended to advance a political, religious, or ideological cause and are done to coerce a government or intimidate the public.

The victims of the alleged attack hold protected attributes under legislation, including their racial status, ethnic origin and gender, which the letter notes makes the application of hate crime provisions clear.

Signed by 22 Greens and independent MPs and senators, the letter follows an online petition

calling for the incident to be recognised as a hate crime, which has gained more than 380,000 signatures. Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service CEO Nerita Waight previously told The Age they “still expect these actions will be investigated as hate crimes and acts of domestic terrorism”.

The letter highlighted the Christchurch mosque attacks, in which Australian white supremacist Brenton Tarrant killed 51 people, as evidence of the need to further crack down on white supremacist groups.

Camp Sovereignty, set up in 2006 by Krautungalung Elder Robbie Thorpe, is described as a peaceful place for community gathering, reflection, and ceremony. It is also the resting site of repatriated remains of 38 Aboriginal Victorians.

While Victoria Police’s counter-terrorism investigative unit has been involved in the investigation, it is understood neither Victoria Police nor the AFP are pursuing hate crime charges under the Federal criminal code.



Picture: AAP

Prosecutors opposed bail for Mr Sewell last month, describing him as an “unacceptable risk” to community safety. He and several others were remanded in custody. Others charged have been released on bail.

Most charges so far relate to assault and affray, but do not address the alleged racial motivation. Many of those involved were reportedly associated with the NSN, a white nationalist organisation, and the attack came directly after an anti-immigration rally where racist slogans

were chanted. Last month, Victoria Police Supt Troy Papworth admitted they “didn’t have intelligence to suggest there was going to be any issues with Camp Sovereignty” before the rallies but the camp was now front of mind “for us in making sure people are safe” during future protests.

Senator Thorpe said the Commonwealth and law enforcement “must act”, arguing if the same attack had been at “a synagogue or a church”, the AFP and Government would have “jumped to action”.

“But again, First Peoples are treated as lesser,” she said.

“This is about justice, accountability, and protecting our communities from the growing threat of far-right terror. These dangerous groups need to be taken much more seriously.

“The safety of our communities must come first. Governments, police, and prosecutors have a duty to act decisively. This is about preventing further attacks, holding perpetrators accountable, and sending a clear message: violence and racism will never be tolerated.”

## Prisons short of health and rehabilitation staff

### GIOVANNI TORRE

WA’s prison system has “prolonged shortages” of non-custodial staff in the areas of health, mental health, rehabilitation, and reintegration which have caused delays in health assessments, case management, and rehabilitation planning — a new report by the Inspector of Custodial Services has found.

The report revealed one in five Department of Justice positions in Health and Wellbeing roles were vacant while more than one in four rehabilitation and reintegration positions were unstaffed. Published last Tuesday, the report found

delays caused by shortages meant the State’s Department of Justice “risks continued service shortfalls that compromise the wellbeing, rehabilitation, and reintegration outcomes for people in custody”.

Inspector Eamon Ryan said there was a shortage of non-custodial staffing across the State.

“(The) department is not an employer of choice,” he said. “We found staff attrition was linked to increased workloads, unsafe working conditions, limited opportunities for career progression or innovation, a lack of clinical supervision, and an undesirable workplace culture.

“Without comprehensive reform

and sustained investment, the department risks continued service shortfalls that compromise the wellbeing, rehabilitation, and reintegration outcomes for people in custody. This means people will stay in prison for longer and come out no better than when they went in, driving up the size of the prison population, and not making communities any safer.”

Kurin Minang human rights expert and law academic, Dr Hannah McGlade, said staff shortages “translate to shocking outcomes for Aboriginal people in the State, including incarceration in cruel and inhumane conditions contrary to international law”.

“This is a direct contributor to Aboriginal deaths in custody today, with the latest death in Hakea being entirely foreseeable due to the appalling conditions,” she said.

“We know of cases of Aboriginal prisoners who have been incarcerated well beyond, years past their release dates, and Aboriginal people now subjected to disastrous indefinite definition laws.

“The State Government and the WA police especially must make a genuine commitment to addressing Aboriginal incarceration which is an absolute disgrace. It’s well known that too many people are being charged and sent to prison only to

be released shortly before the court date. If the case was not warranted; why were they even charged?”

Mr Ryan welcomed the department convening the Clinical Shortages Workforce Group to address the staff shortfalls.

“Some promising strategies have been introduced; however more robust retention measures and competitive incentives are urgently needed,” he said.

WA Department of Justice director-general Kylie Maj said prisoner population growth has placed greater demands on the delivery of non-custodial support services and programs in WA’s correctional system.

# 'Alarming' incarceration rates put Qld and NT in the spotlight

DECHLAN BRENNAN

Federal Minister for Indigenous Australians Malarndirri McCarthy has condemned the "alarming" incarceration rates in the Northern Territory and Queensland, reaffirming her plan to introduce penalties for jurisdictions that fail to meet Closing the Gap targets.

The Closing the Gap agreement, signed in 2020 under then-Indigenous affairs minister Ken Wyatt, set national targets to address inequality but did not include funding or enforcement mechanisms — something Senator McCarthy described as "problematic" during Senate Estimates this month.

"There is currently no penalty in the agreement," she said.

"I'm trying to look at Federal funding arrangements with each State and Territory over whatever the agreement might be as to how we can input into that so that there is some kind of penalty as to why you're not achieving targets."

The minister reiterated the need for action, telling the ABC that the growing rates of Indigenous incarceration and early deaths "demand our country's full attention".

"There is no doubt that Queensland and the Northern Territory's targets are alarming, in particular the Northern Territory, around the high

## Minister eyes sanctions for missed targets

incarceration rates of First Nations people, in particular youth," she said.

This month, *National Indigenous Times* heard from experts on the stark levels of human rights violations — especially towards Indigenous people — in Queensland. The State locks up more First Nations children than any other jurisdiction in the country, and has introduced laws to allow kids as young as 10 to be given life sentences.

In the Northern Territory, incarceration has reached crisis levels, with more than one per cent of the total Territory population behind bars — nearly 90 per cent of them Indig-

enous, and almost half on remand. Despite this, the Country Liberal government has defended its tough-on-crime agenda, which includes lowering the age of criminal responsibility and tightening bail laws.

Children in both States are also being held in adult watch houses. In one case, a 13-year-old child with disabilities was detained for 24 hours after allegedly shoplifting candy in the NT. The child was denied access to medication brought by their foster carer and was not allowed contact despite repeated requests.

Both Queensland and the Territory have resisted

reforms under the national Closing the Gap agreement, saying their law-and-order priorities come first.

At a Standing Council of Attorneys-General meeting in Sydney in August, Queensland's Attorney-General Deb Frecklington reportedly said the LNP Government "won't be changing anything" on youth justice laws. The NT's Attorney-General similarly argued that Closing the Gap "could not come at the expense of community safety".

Nationally, only four of 19 Closing the Gap targets are on track to be met, with outcomes worsening in key areas including adult imprisonment, child

removals, suicide, and early childhood development.

In the NT, eight of 17 targets are going backwards — the worst in the nation.

Earlier this year, the North Australian Aboriginal Justice Agency urged the Federal Government to suspend funding for remote policing in the NT, describing incarceration levels as a "crisis". In August, the family of late NT Supreme Court Justice James Muirhead called on the Prime Minister to intervene, describing the CLP's approach as "regressive".

Senator McCarthy said potential changes to funding arrangements are "a long way down the track".

"I have to do my homework on it. I obviously have to speak with my colleagues, I have to speak with the States and Territories, but I am serious about having a look at it," she told the ABC.

She also rejected the notion that youth incarceration was necessary for safety.

"Here the responses of the (State and Territory) attorneys-general in this regard, where they say that safety should come first before Closing the Gap, I don't think the two are inseparable," she said.

"We should have a safe community, but we should be able to do it working with our young people to make sure they stay out of prisons."

## environment plan

seeking relevant persons' input



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The feedback we receive during consultation will inform and enhance the Legacy Wellhead Decommissioning Environment Plan, which must be accepted by the National Offshore Petroleum Safety and Environmental Management Authority (NOPSEMA) before activities may commence.

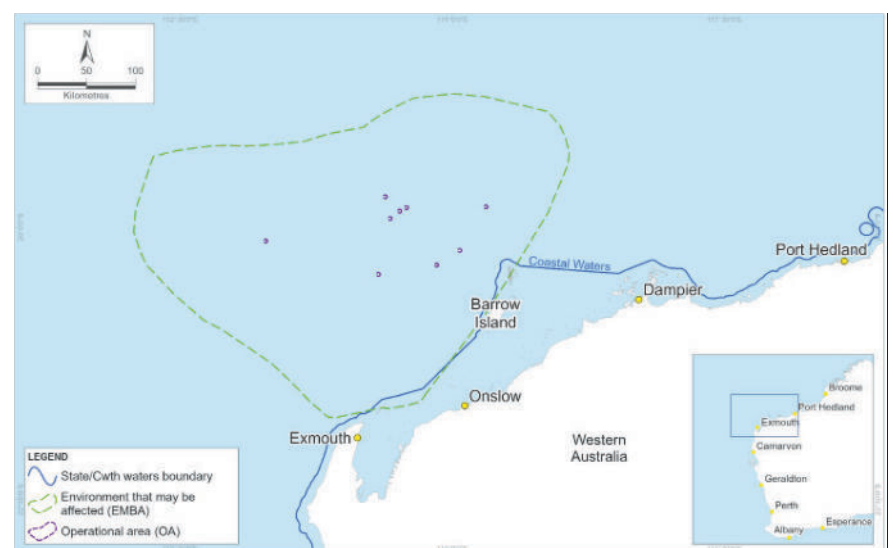
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As part of our environmental assessment and consultation process, we create an EMBA map to provide geographical context for stakeholders to determine if their functions, interests or activities may be affected by an offshore activity during operations or in an emergency scenario.

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Please contact us by 19 November 2025 to be included in consultations. Visit [australia.chevron.com/feedback](https://australia.chevron.com/feedback), call tollfree on 1800 225 195 or scan the QR code for more information.



# Stance on Treaty is labelled offensive

DECHLAN BRENNAN

Victoria's main Indigenous legal organisation says it is "very clear" the State Opposition did not consult with First Nations leaders or Aboriginal community-controlled organisations before deciding to oppose the State's historic Treaty.

Earlier this month, the Victorian Opposition announced it would scrap the Treaty Bill if it wins next year's election.

Despite widespread support for Treaty among Traditional Owners across Victoria, and despite having no Indigenous MPs, the Liberals and Nationals said they would introduce legislation within their first 100 days to repeal the Treaty Act, claiming the process is not the "best way to close the gap and deliver better outcomes for Indigenous communities".

On October 16, the legislation passed the Lower House with overwhelming support and is expected to pass the Upper House in the next parliamentary sitting with crossbench backing.

The Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service — which has also criticised the Labor Government's criminal justice policies, including bail law changes — said it was "very clear that the Liberal party has not consulted with any First Nations leaders or Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations".

"How our voices are heard must not be dictated by a political party," a statement read.

VALS chief executive Nerita Waight, who also sits on the First Peoples' Assembly as a metro region member, said it was "incredibly insulting" to sit in Parliament and hear the Opposition's proposal.

Under that plan, the Coalition would replace the Treaty process with a new department, First Nations Victoria, and an unelected Aboriginal advisory body. It argues this model would deliver greater transparency and measurable outcomes by working "alongside Indigenous Victorians to implement a com-

munity-led, co-ordinated and transparent approach to policy, funding and service delivery".

Ms Waight said this is "not what Aboriginal people want... they have not consulted with us". "This unwanted intervention from the Opposition, which essentially proposes to deny the right of Aboriginal peoples to decide for ourselves how to organise politically, shows exactly why Treaty is needed," she said.

"We have tried on numerous occasions to meet with the Opposition Leader, to establish a strong working relationship based on mutual respect, but clearly, they have no interest in hearing from Aboriginal people about what works best for our people. I will not be spoken for anymore."

VALS chairperson Associate Professor Crystal McKinnon said the call for Treaty had "echoed for generations," describing the Opposition's stance as "disrespectful, misjudged and offensive".

"It is a stark reminder that the colonial project continues. Their proposal is a step backwards; it is nothing new, nothing that will change the trajectory of our lives, and the lives of generations to come," she said.

"Treaty is future-focused; we invite the Opposition to join us in this journey."

Ms McKinnon said Treaty offers a pathway to address key issues affecting First Nations communities and advance self-determination.

The Opposition withdrew from the previously bipartisan Treaty process in January last year, without notifying the First Peoples' Assembly.

This month Liberal Leader Brad Battin said 'First Nations Victoria' will "work in genuine partnership with Aboriginal community-controlled organisations, traditional owners, Elders and local communities to co-design and deliver services that reflect their priorities".

Assembly co-chair Rueben Berg urged the Opposition to reconsider.



Some of the returned items.  
Picture: AIATSI

## ARTEFACTS FINALLY BACK IN THEIR RIGHTFUL HANDS

GIOVANNI TORRE

The Warumungu community of Tennant Creek gathered at the Nyinkka Nyunyu Art and Culture Centre on October 16 to celebrate the return of 40 culturally significant items from four international museums; an occasion marking the culmination of years of collaboration between the Warumungu community, the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, and collecting institutions internationally.

The collections — returned from Tamaki Paenga Hira Auckland War Memorial Museum (NZ), Tuhura Otago Museum (NZ), Fowler Museum at UCLA (USA) and Horniman Museum and Gardens (UK) — include ceremonial and everyday items such as Wirli or Ngurrulumuru (fighting pick), Marttan (stone knife), Kupija (adze), Wartilykirri (hooked boomerang), and restricted men's sacred items.

The items were originally acquired in the early 1900s

through collectors including Walter Baldwin Spencer, Francis Gillen and James Field. The Fowler Museum's collection also includes items acquired via the Wellcome Trust in 1965.

Senior Warumungu Elder Michael Jones Jampin, who was instrumental to all four returns, said Traditional Owners were glad to see the items returned home.

"This is where they're gone from, and we wanted to bring it back (on to Country) so we can pass it on and teach our young ones about traditional things, like hunting and other sacred things," he said.

"We've still got songs and all that, that is important as back-up, but we are happy to see the objects returned and we're glad the museums wanted to give them back."

AIATSI accompanied Warumungu representatives on international delegations to Aotearoa/NZ, the United States and the United Kingdom between 2022 to 2024, where formal handover ceremonies were held

with museum staff and local custodians.

The collections have been temporarily stored at AIATSI in Canberra, as directed by Senior Warumungu men, until renovations at the Nyinkka Nyunyu Art and Culture Centre were complete.

With the centre now ready to care for and display the items, they have been returned to Country, where they will be preserved and shared with future generations.

"At AIATSI, we tell the story of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australia and to support cultural resurgence," said AIATSI chief executive Leonard Hill.

"The return of these Warumungu items is a powerful example of our purpose in action; restoring cultural heritage to its rightful custodians and strengthening the connection between people, place and history.

"AIATSI is proud to have worked alongside the Warumungu community and our international partners across several years to make this On-Country Return Event possible."

## Women unite to demand \$10m investment in reform

NATASHA CLARK

The Kimberley Aboriginal Women's Council has formally requested a \$10 million Federal investment over five years to support Aboriginal-led service reform and economic justice across northern Western Australia.

KAWC chief executive Jodie Bell and director Rhiana Powers met Federal Minister for Indigenous Australians, Senator Malarndirri McCarthy to present the council's priorities for family safety, service design, and economic empowerment.

In a letter to the minister, the council outlined a proposal to

channel half of the funding into strengthening Aboriginal-led service reform across the Kimberley, with the remaining \$5 million supporting Maganda Makers to deliver a Kimberley Aboriginal Women's Economic Justice Roadmap.

Ms Bell said the funding would allow Aboriginal women to lead

the design and delivery of solutions that keep families safe and children at home.

"Aboriginal women are the matriarchs of our families and communities. Investing in our leadership is investing in family stability, cultural healing, and the rebuilding of our nation," she said.

KAWC believes locally-driven reform can transform systems and strengthen communities.

Senator McCarthy was presented with the council's plan during the meeting, which focused on how Federal investment could accelerate Aboriginal-led solutions in remote and regional communities.



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# STYLEUP

FASHION, BEAUTY  
& LIFESTYLE

## Naarm calling

Indigenous designers  
take Melbourne Fashion  
Week by storm

Gammin Threads  
Picture: Long Story Short

**ALSO INSIDE**  
Torch offers bright  
light after jail **P12**  
Empowerment  
comes home for  
model **P13**



Gammin Threads Picture: Aidan McCorry



Yapa Mali Picture: Aidan McCorry



Banbu on the runway. Picture: Gemma Thomas

# Country-inspired creations dazzle

## PHOEBE BLOGG

First Nations designers were centre stage on Melbourne Fashion Week's opening night earlier this month.

Showcasing their work on the week's all-Indigenous ganbu marra runway were established and emerging brands and designers including Banbu, Kaninda, Yanggurdi, King King Creative, Yapa Mali, Gamin Threads, Goompi's Girl, and Laundry Gallery.

The runway also profiled creations from leading Indigenous Art Centres, including work from the Yarrenyty Arltere Artists and Tjarlirli & Kaltukatjara Art.

Multi-talented First Nations creative Lindyn Rowland took on the role of creative director and runway stylist, with Karinda Mutabazi as consultant and mentor.

Known for his down-to-earth nature, creative drive and exquisite styling choices, Rowland was the perfect fit when it came to who would lead the creative direction of the popular runway.

"I have walked in the ganbu marra runway . . . and now I'm styling the show. I truly manifested this," Rowland told Style Up.

"I believe as a stylist you're booked to bring your personal flavour to the show, and of course I have no plans leaving my 'Concrete Cowboy' era, so that is exactly what this year's show is."

From cowboy-esque jumpsuits, to floor grazing sequined maxi dresses, in 2025 the ganbu marra runway showcased a slice of everything.

While all designers demonstrated their unique style, it was

clear they shared a passion for creating garments that fused elements of Country into their designs.

"I like to think of Banbu as the 'out-there cousin' among First Nations designers — it reflects a bit of how I feel in my own family: bold, playful, and a little unexpected," Banbu designer Brooke McGlone said.

"Each piece has movement and personality, letting people express themselves while staying comfortable and effortless. It's contemporary style with meaning, made to feel authentic and individual.

"There's a lot of love that goes into





Photography by Long Story Short

every stage of the process, from sketching to sewing, to make sure everything feels cohesive and true to Banbu."

Aside from ganbu marra, First Nations designers also took part in several runway shows during Melbourne Fashion Week.

Clair Helen and Ngali's designers were displayed on the Opulent Tastes runway while the Fashion X Music runway (presented by Collarts) featured designers Grace Lillian Lee and Sarrita King.

"It is always exciting to be in Melbourne during MFW and

showing as part of the program makes it even more exciting and special. I love the atmosphere and the build as we get the week underway," Ngali designer Denni Francisco told Style Up.

Taking place from October 20 to 26 under this year's theme,

Come As You Are, in 2025 Melbourne Fashion Week invited guests from far and wide to be part of the citywide celebration of self-expression.

This year the program featured six premium runways at stand-out locations across the city. Showcasing emerging,

independent and established designers, it continued its focus on sustainability and inclusivity whilst celebrating Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island cultures.

**For more fashion, arts, culture and lifestyle news subscribe for free to the Style Up newsletter.**

# Torch offers bright light after prison

JARRED CROSS

Palawa artist Tye had barely picked up a brush 12 months ago, but as of Friday his work hangs on display and for sale in Future Dreaming, an annual exhibition featuring pieces by First Nations artists incarcerated in Victorian prisons, presented by The Torch.

The not-for-profit organisation and project, established in 2011, delivers Indigenous arts programs in prisons and post-release across the State. Artists keep 100 per cent of profits from sales.

Over 200 works, created in 15 prisons across Victoria this year, are hung on the walls of their Naarm gallery for the exhibition.

It's a representation of the artists' vision for themselves — personally, spiritually, for their relationships, systems ranging from politics to social and the environment — their future after emerging from the prison

system. "When I imagine what my future holds, I always think of security and protection for the people I love," said Wallumattagal artist Karlie, whose art features in Future Dreaming.

"The geckos symbolise past loved ones in my family and they often show up after funerals. I like to believe in my future my ancestors are looking down on my family, keeping us safe and helping us pave a happy future beyond prison."

For Tye, The Torch gave him more than purpose to pass time while incarcerated, it helped him further connect with his culture, he told National Indigenous Times, and look ahead to reconnecting with his "rock", his dog. "She's nine years old now. She's been there through lots of times with me, through the hard times, good times," he said.

"Finally connecting with my culture — Palawa ... I'm hoping to keep going and keep learning about it and hopefully can



The Torch arts officer Matty Chilly at Future Dreaming. Picture: Jarred Cross

keep going with my art work." Matty Chilly visits male prisons around the State and works with program participants as an arts officer with The Torch.

Originally from Mildura — with Wemba-Wemba, Neri-Neri, Yiti-Yiti, Mutti-Mutti, Wuradjuri, Yorta-Yorta, Watti-Watti, Barapa-Barapa, Gubbi Gubbi and Maori family connections — Mr Chilly is a multidisciplinary artist,

His journey in art, with knotting textile works, started young, taught by his parents,

Aunties and Uncles. For some of those he works with, it's their first introduction to art. For others he said it's about helping them find their "muscle memory".

"You can see, over time, their change in development of their styles, their techniques, their just overall content on the canvas," he said.

"They're getting that feel for the brush on canvas."

Mr Chilly says it's a privilege to see the relationships and see something develop in many of the men.

"All they know is the four walls. We're making impacts for these guys in their lives, with their art, with opening their eyes to a new type of path ... to make their future a little brighter. I see that happen. It's very important."

The Torch identifies an 11 per cent reduction in recidivism as a result of the program, Mr Chilly said.

Future Dreaming opened October 24 and will be held at 146 Elgin Street in Carlton for one month. All works are also available to purchase online.

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# Empowerment comes home



Billie Jean Hamlet and a participant from the fashion workshop.

## NATASHA CLARK

International model and proud Walmajarri, Gooniyandi, Wajarri and Yamatji woman Billie Jean Hamlet says she wishes the After the Flood Fashion Project had existed when she was a girl growing up in Fitzroy Crossing.

The remote town is around 400km east of Broome, in WA's Kimberley region.

"Having an all-female space where girls can express themselves without judgment is so important. I would have loved something like that when I was growing up," she says.

Billie recently returned home with Brodie George, founder of Jalayimiya swimwear, and Camilla Sawford, founder of Litiyalla earrings, to run two days of fashion and wellbeing workshops for local teenage girls at The Night Space, operated by Marra Worra Worra Aboriginal Corporation.

The After the Flood program was initiated by Marra Worra Worra and jointly funded by the Federal and WA governments through disaster recovery funding arrangements.

In January 2023, record flooding tore through the Fitzroy Valley, inundating communities and cutting key crossings. Although the bridge has been rebuilt, many families say the emotional fallout for young people has lingered.

Centred on building confidence, femininity, cultural safety and practical skills, the sessions drew 15 girls on day one and 18 on day two, all aged 10-17.

What looked like beauty basics was used deliberately as care and repair. While Billie taught skincare and make-up, every mask and brushed brow moved beyond pampering, into restoration, healing, and the building of self-esteem.

"Doing the girls' make-up, I couldn't help but look at their beautiful little faces and wonder about their stories and what they're exposed to," she



Pictures: Marra Worra Worra

said. "I definitely saw myself in each and every one of them — and some were even my relatives."

Growing up in Fitzroy Crossing raised her in culture, but also in "hard truths": domestic violence, substance use in the community, and tough, precarious housing.

"I don't think a lot of people realise, but growing up in an Indigenous, remote community is actually quite challenging. But there are also so many beautiful parts — like being connected to nature and culture, and being surrounded by your family," she said.

Coming back was confronting but cathartic for Billie. "There was an intention to help the girls feel beautiful and uplifted, but for me it was also about reconnecting with my inner child," Ms Hamlet said. "I've come back with a sense of peace and joy and feel stronger than ever."

The desire to provide a female safe space has long driven her.

"In a town like Fitzroy there's not much for girls to do unless they're sporty. The boys have footy, fishing, hunting, but the girls didn't really have spaces to feel beautiful or express themselves.

"That's why this project was so important, to show them they can do 'girly' things, feel confident and express their femininity freely."

It's a sentiment shared by Ms George, a proud

Walmajarri, Gooniyandi woman whose swimwear brand is rooted in female empowerment.

"I think girls in Fitzroy miss out on a lot. There are a lot of programs — particularly for boys and sport. I don't think there are many programs specifically for girls," she said.

"It's important to get people like myself who are in business — and I've got a background in beauty — to show them they can go down a few different paths. It doesn't have to be one path."

For proud Gooniyandi and Kija woman Camilla the tone in the room mattered as much as the techniques.

"I really stamped out the negative talk," she says.

"As Aboriginal people we like to make fun of each other — it can be a love language — but I said no: 'What do you think about her hair?' and changed the narrative to positive."

That insistence on self-respect is culturally significant, says Ms George.

In November the trio will return to Fitzroy Crossing for the After the Flood Fashion Show, where the girls' creations will shimmer under the evening light on the Old Crossing Bridge — the same bridge that once marked the height of the floods.

Head of Community Programs at MWWAC, Nicola Angell, said the centre's youth programs provide a platform for community-led projects.

# Rapper sees second album as artistic statement

## JOSEPH GUENZLER

ARIA Award-winning Yolnu artist Baker Boy is returning with his second studio album DJANDJAY — a deeply personal and culturally grounded follow-up to his acclaimed debut Gela.

Out now via Island Records/UMA, DJANDJAY marks a new chapter for the proud Yolnu musician.

Where Gela introduced audiences to Baker Boy's vibrant energy and party anthems, the new record reveals a more mature and layered side tackling resilience, identity and growth.

"It was a lot of pressure for me to try and top Gela," he told National Indigenous Times.

"The difference between Gela and DJANDJAY is more about storytelling



Baker Boy's second studio album is out now. Pic: Sulaiman Enayatzada

and me being able to be vulnerable. At the end of the day, I'm human."

The album takes its name from a powerful source of inspiration.

DJANDJAY is both the name of a Yolnu spirit, an octopus that guides souls forward and Baker Boy's late grandmother, who played a central

role in shaping his family's relationship with music and performance.

"Naming this album after my grandmother was because she was the pillar of the family," he said.

"She was always telling everyone to get up and dance and not be

shame. She would get up with you and do the dance, and that's something I inherited from her."

That spirit of movement and connection is deeply woven into Baker Boy's identity.

Hip-hop and performance were part of his upbringing, with his father and uncle once touring remote communities under the name Baker Boys, a name that would later become his own.

"I grew up around traditional dancing but also hip-hop, so it's always been in my bones," he said.

"Becoming a musician was just part of it, it was already there."

While Gela was filled with upbeat tracks designed for the dancefloor, DJANDJAY tackles deeper themes, from the fallout of the Voice referendum to racism and the

pressures of public life. Baker Boy said this evolution was about showing the full picture of who he is.

On tracks such as Lightning featuring REDD, Baker Boy raps in three languages: Yolnu Matha, English, and Burarra, his mother's language from Maningrida.

"In Lightning I'm rapping in three languages, going back and forward," he said.

"It's one of the most evolved sounds sonically, and I finally get to share my mother's language on the album."

Baker Boy hopes listeners will see 'DJANDJAY' as more than just an album, but as a complete artistic statement.

Baker Boy will take DJANDJAY on the road in 2026 with a national headline tour.

# Whiskey's work to go on display

## PHOEBE BLOGG

The work of Yankunytjatjara artist Kaylene Whiskey will be celebrated in the National Portrait Gallery's major summer exhibition from November 15-March 9.

"Super Kaylene Whiskey" brings together Whiskey's joyous portraits of pop culture icons amid everyday life in Indulkana.

Whiskey's celebrated paintings foreground her traditional Anangu culture alongside depictions of her heroes – Cher, Wonder Woman, Tina Turner and, notably, Dolly Parton. It's a world where local plants and Coca Cola commingle, where Whiskey and her idols hunt and collect bush tucker, and every scene is composed to soundtracks of classic rock, pop and country music.

Radiating elation and irreverent humour yet also candid about the realities of personal experience, Whiskey's

representations of First Nations culture are empowering, captivating and enduring.

"I'm so happy that my exhibition Super Kaylene Whiskey is opening at the National Portrait Gallery in November. You can see all my artworks come together for one big special show – it will be like a big party celebrating kungka kunpu (strong women), friends, family, culture and, of course, Dolly Parton," Whiskey said.

"I want to share a peek into Kaylene's world with visitors to the exhibition, and I hope it will make you laugh and smile . . . and maybe even dance and sing too."

National Portrait Gallery director Bree Pickering said Whiskey was among the most exciting contemporary artists working in Australia today.

"Every detail in her portraits signals what matters to her, her passions, interests and strong



Flying over Indulkana by Kaylene Whiskey.

sense of self, and are always delivered with humour and lightness," she said.

Exhibition curator April Phillips said Whiskey's work typified the potential of First Nations portraiture to explore identity from the perspective of lived experience.

"Kaylene's portraits represent her, often on Country, and within the contexts of her culture, placed in unfolding moments across time," she said.

"Then, she takes her locality a step further, to include the glittering world of celebrity, universal brands and a sprinkling of emoji-like

symbolism for good measure.

"Kaylene is dancing in many worlds and invites us to join her."

Whiskey works out of Iwantja Arts, an Indigenous-owned and governed Aboriginal art centre in the Indulkana Community of the Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara Lands in the north-west of South Australia.

A three-time Archibald Prize finalist and winner of the 2018 Sulman Prize, Whiskey's collaborations with knitwear label Wah-Wah and Mecca and the National Gallery of Victoria have seen her fast become a household name in Australia.

Her now famous 2020 work, Dolly Visits Indulkana, was projected on to the sails of the Sydney Opera House for Badu Gili: Wonder Women, in collaboration with the Art Gallery of New South Wales in 2021.

Super Kaylene Whiskey will include a new commission made specifically for the exhibition, the epic interactive installation Kaylene TV, commissioned for the 2024 Biennale of Sydney, and her renowned 2021 painting Seven Sistas Story.

Super Kaylene Whiskey will be accompanied by a program of special events.

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# First Pasifika mayor steps up in Aotearoa

JOSEPH GUENZLER

Fauono Ken Laban has become the first Pasifika person to be elected mayor in Aotearoa/New Zealand, winning the election for the position in Hutt City this month.

The long-time broadcaster and former police officer secured 8704 votes, ahead of Brady Dyer on 6974, Karen Morgan on 5529, and Prabha Ravi on 3608.

Mr Laban, who has also served as a councillor and regional representative in the Hutt Valley, is widely known for his advocacy on inclusion, youth opportunities, and community safety.

His sister, Luamanuvao Winnie Laban, was the first Pasifika

woman elected to Aotearoa Parliament in 1999.

Mr Laban said his election was a shared achievement for the people of Lower Hutt.

"It's both an honour and a privilege to have been elected your mayor," he said.

"This isn't just a win for me; it's a win for our community, for the people who love the Hutt, for those who believe in our collective potential as a city, and it's a win for the values that make our city special — our diversity, resilience and our sense of community."

Mr Laban said his focus as mayor would be on delivering practical outcomes and strengthening trust in local government.

"I'm humbled by the mandate from residents of the Hutt to

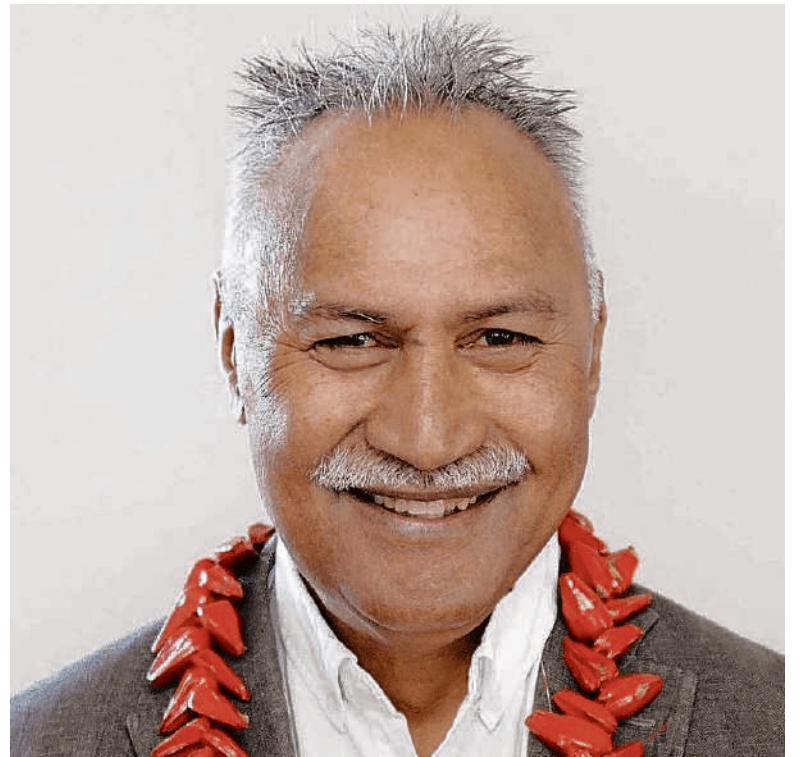
deliver for them and grow confidence in our city's direction," he said.

"Residents and ratepayers have voted for a return to basics: keeping water affordable, safer roads, investment in core infrastructure and services, and action on the cost of living."

He promised a council that "listens and delivers".

"My campaign wasn't about politics; it was about people. I'm committed to making sure that every resident, from across Hutt City, feels seen, heard, and are part of our city's future," he said.

"We will be a council that listens and delivers — not one that overpromises and underdelivers. Elections are about choice, and our city has made theirs.



Fauono Ken Laban Picture: Fauono Ken Laban; Facebook

"Now it's time to roll up our sleeves and get to work."

The 2025 local elections have seen a notable rise in Pasifika representation across Aotearoa/New Zealand.

In Hutt City, Mele Tonga-Grant won a council seat, while Lesa Bingley, Vatau Sagaga and Lahraine Sagaga were elected to the Wainuiomata Community Board.

Across the country, Pasifika

candidates secured key roles, including Gabriel Tupou on the Greater Wellington Regional Council, Izzy Ford on Porirua's Onepoto General Ward, and Rachel Karalus on Hamilton City Council.

Mr Laban's election marks a historic milestone for Pasifika leadership in Aotearoa, signalling growing political participation and representation across all levels of local government.

## Tuvalu's PM addresses UN on climate change

Funafuti, the main island of the nation state of Tuvalu.

Picture: Alastair Grant/AP

ANDREW MATHIESON

Tuvalu has demanded that international polluters enter legally binding obligations that could protect the tiny Pacific nation's existence.

Prime Minister Feleti Teo said climate change was the biggest security threat to the quality of life and food and water security in the island nation, and challenged its "future statehood and sovereignty".

In an address on September 26, Mr Teo highlighted to the United Nations' General Assembly its actions that included amending the constitution "to ensure Tuvalu's statehood in perpetuity, and its maritime boundaries are protected and remain permanent".

Tuvalu was one of several Pacific island nations including the Marshall Islands that had the



Prime Minister of Tuvalu Feleti Teo. Picture: Eduardo Munoz/Reuters

open floor inside the UN's New York headquarters, stressing rising sea levels posed a risk to the very survival of its 25.14sqkm land surface of Tuvalu, composed of three reef islands and six atolls, and home to just over 10,000 residents.

In addition to the Falepili Union Treaty with Australia legally committing the regional power to recognise Tuvalu's sovereignty in perpetuity, Tuvalu strongly advocated for the inclusion of a UN declaration on sea level rise. Australia earlier this

year opened up visa lottery applications to Tuvalu nationals amid predictions from climate change scientists the Pacific nation will be submerged this century.

Tuvalu called for a sea level rise declaration to "affirm statehood continuity and the permanency of maritime boundaries amidst the climate crisis" and to "promote secure, organised and dignified pathways for human mobility" in the region.

In his UN address, Mr Teo welcomed recent advisory opinions from the International Court of Justice and the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea, noting it "shift the conversation from political commitments to legally binding obligations".

Speaking on a theme of Better Together: 80 Years and More for Peace, Development and Human Rights, Mr Teo affirmed that

"genuine and durable partnership is not a choice, but a necessity".

"No challenge is insurmountable when we face it together in solidarity and unity of purpose," he said.

Mr Teo has also called for the "rapid operationalisation and replenishment of the loss and damage fund".

The conference of the parties established new funding arrangements to assist developing countries that are vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change with a loss and damage fund to include cover for extreme weather events.

Mr Teo called on UN member states to move forward in unity against climate change.

"While progress may have not come as swift as we desire, it is far more meaningful when it is achieved collectively," he said.

# Deal will widen the gap

HANNAH MCGLADE

Anthony Albanese's long-awaited meeting with US President Donald Trump is being touted as a success in terms of commitments made between the two countries on the AUKUS submarine deal and access to Australia's critical minerals.

But what will these commitments mean for Aboriginal people who continue to face significant disadvantage and denial of human rights?

The Prime Minister's endorsement of AUKUS was made with one day's consideration and there are serious concerns about whether the US can even deliver on its promise, as it struggles to meet its own military demands. Many would wonder how such investment could be made at a time of an unprecedented cost-of-living crisis, which has placed housing affordability out of reach for so many Aboriginal people, especially women, living under the poverty line and far from wage equality.

Every day more people are unable to put a roof over their family's heads, experience hunger, and can't provide for children's basic needs.

Hospitals and health systems are failing with lifesaving medical treatments becoming out of reach. Higher education, once free, comes at a great cost and universities now operate as corporate ventures with profit driving operations.

I've seen these changes in my own lifetime, as a child born in the late 1960s, who benefited from free university education and relatively accessible public housing. We never slept in cars, or parks, experienced the cold and the dangers of the street, because our families had public housing and we could still look after each other. Working in human rights, the United Nations principle of "Leaving no one behind" shaped my life's work but is neglected in Australian mainstream politics geared towards the interests of the wealthy.

Unsurprisingly media are promoting Australia's meeting with Trump as a great success, with the two countries agreeing to jointly fund critical minerals projects, at least six of which are in Australia, and signing an \$8.5 billion critical minerals deal.

The focus on critical minerals was intense during the Voice referendum year and

occupied much of the Government's attention. Barely weeks after the defeated referendum, the Attorney-General got Northern Territory land councils in a room and said they would be mining their lands for critical minerals, and told them to get on board.

The AG said they would be giving Arafura Rare Earths \$840 million of grants and loans to mine critical minerals. In January this year the Federal Government made a direct \$200 million investment in this project through the National Reconstruction Fund and the PM announced at the same time as the White House meeting a further direct investment of \$100 million (being a total investment of \$1.14 billion) sending the share price of the company soaring.

According to the 2025 bilateral framework on critical minerals reached with the White House, Australia and the US are "taking measures to accelerate, streamline, or deregulate permitting timelines and processes, including to obtain permits for critical minerals and rare earths mining, separation and processing within their respective domestic regulatory

systems, consistent with applicable laws". This language of de-regulation and expedited approvals raises the real prospect of further erosion of existing native title and heritage protections. According to the Senate Inquiry into Aboriginal Heritage the existing legislative regimes for the protection of Aboriginal Heritage need to be strengthened.

We know the future acts processes in the Native Title Act are heavily weighted in favour of mining companies and an Australian Law Reform Commission inquiry is looking at legislated changes in this area. The White House deal indicates there may be little support for even the existing legal regime — certainly not for any further legislative protection for Indigenous peoples' rights.

It can be read as an endorsement by the Federal Government of the US administration's position on critical minerals articulated by Trump, namely that Indigenous people opposed to critical mineral developments for legitimate heritage and environmental reasons are radical left activists and enemies of the state. The

importance of a just transition towards clean energy has been a priority of the UN Secretary-General for the last several years with a panel tasked to report on this issue. A just transition means Aboriginal people should not, must not, be left further behind in this economy. In a report on critical minerals tabled at the UN Permanent Forum for Indigenous Issues we called on member states to ensure legislation to guarantee the free, prior and informed consent of Indigenous Peoples is respected as a condition for undertaking any mining that affects their lands and territories.

Australia has not heeded our advice, and the commitments it made with Trump will not ensure that Aboriginal people, whose land will be mined, have their right to free prior and informed consent upheld and respected. Clearly, in the context of critical minerals and the US agreement, there may be some benefits for a few, but not for most of the Aboriginal community, who will be left behind.

**Dr Hannah McGlade is a Kurin Minang human rights expert, law academic and member of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues.**

## Supporting strong First Nations outcomes.

### Challenge accepted.

Woodside's 2024 RAP Report outlines the actions we're taking with First Nations peoples to build employment, strengthen leadership, improve cultural heritage outcomes and support economic participation.

In 2024, we spent \$42.3 million with Indigenous businesses in Western Australia. Of this, \$25.7 million went directly to Traditional Owner and Custodian businesses. That's more than the total of the previous three years combined.

This growth reflects new partnerships with businesses like Cherratta and expanded scopes with established partners such as Winyama, who were awarded Woodside's largest-ever Traditional Owner-led construction contract. These contracts are creating jobs, increasing local capability and supporting long-term business growth.

The report highlights areas where progress is being made and identifies where additional effort is required.



To find out more about how Woodside is strengthening First Nations outcomes scan the QR code or go to : [www.woodside.com/sustainability/social/first-nations-cultural-heritage-and-engagement](http://www.woodside.com/sustainability/social/first-nations-cultural-heritage-and-engagement).

Australia's leading energy company

 Woodside Energy

# Economic power boost

REECE HARLEY

Indigenous Business Australia joined forces with the Larrakia Development Corporation and Aboriginal Investment NT in a landmark agreement this month to co-ordinate Aboriginal investment and strengthen long-term economic control and ownership in the Northern Territory.

The memorandum of understanding creates a co-operative framework for identifying and assessing commercial and infrastructure projects while setting out how the three organisations will share due diligence resources, align financing, and plan investments.

"This partnership is a new approach for IBA in our legislative purpose and in advancing the economic interests of Traditional Owners — on their own lands," IBA chair Darren Godwell said.

"The partners have begun seeking out investment opportunities to secure economic outcomes for the Larrakia peoples."

Mr Godwell said the partnership aligned with IBA's expanding mandate following legislative reforms earlier this year that allow it to raise and deploy capital more flexibly.

"This type of relationship building is very much front and centre of those new powers," he said.

"It allows us to prepare to invest in infrastructure on the lands of the Larrakia people."

He said IBA's broader strategy focused on mobilising capital with Aboriginal institutions.

In recent months Mr Godwell has outlined a 10-year vision for IBA that includes developing Indigenous-controlled capital markets and supporting Traditional Owners to build lasting economic assets.

"IBA is changing — in purpose, in scale, and in mindset," he said in Darwin this month.

"We now have the tools to act more like a true development bank for Indigenous Australia."



IBA's Darren Godwell, AINT's Barbara Shaw and LDC's Mark Motlop sign the partnership agreement. Picture: Reece Harley

For Mark Motlop, chair of the Larrakia Development Corporation, the agreement builds on the long history of Larrakia leadership in securing rights and pursuing self-determined development.

"For many decades Larrakia Elders and leaders fought to secure their interests and rights through the Kenbi Land Claim," Mr Motlop said.

"This is the next step in securing Larrakia economic rights and economic futures."

The LDC was established in 2002 as the business arm of the Larrakia people. Its revenue is reinvested in community programs including scholarships, cultural initiatives and support for Elders.

Mr Motlop said the new partnership would enable Larrakia to examine larger-scale projects while maintaining local oversight. Barbara Shaw, chair of

Aboriginal Investment NT, said the agreement showed how Aboriginal institutions could combine their experience and networks to strengthen control over the Territory's economic future.

"This partnership demonstrates the strength of collaboration between Aboriginal organisations with shared values and ambitions," Ms Shaw said.

Ms Shaw said the partnership gave Aboriginal investors a structure to coordinate their approach to major projects.

The memorandum is non-binding but provides the partners with a framework to collaborate on upcoming opportunities. It allows for shared due diligence, pooled capital contributions and coordinated decision-making.

Mr Godwell said the framework would help ensure Aboriginal organisations were ready

to act when significant projects arose.

"It's about preparation," he said.

"It ensures that when the right opportunities come along, Indigenous investors can respond together with confidence."

The signing coincides with the Federal review of the Port of Darwin, leased to Chinese company Landbridge in 2015.

Beyond the port, the partners say they will focus on opportunities across sectors including energy, logistics, transport and housing — areas that align with long-term regional development and Aboriginal ownership.

For IBA, the partnership represents an early example of its legislative reforms being applied in practice.

"It's about supporting Traditional Owners to create assets that last for generations," Mr Godwell said. Mr Motlop said the

partnership would help ensure the benefits of development stayed connected to Country.

"We are ready to take responsibility for our economic future," he said.

Ms Shaw said co-operation at this level demonstrated confidence in Aboriginal leadership.

"We are bringing together the capital and governance needed to lead major projects," she said.

"It shows that Aboriginal organisations are ready to take a direct role in shaping the Territory's economy."

The three organisations are expected to begin identifying potential investments in the months ahead.

"It brings together the experience and capability already within our communities," Ms Shaw said.

"This is how we build prosperity that lasts."

## Upgrades to begin on station

DAVID PRESTIPINO

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander readers are advised the following story contains the name of a person who has died.

Site upgrades will soon start on a 6651ha Indigenous cattle station on the border of Queensland and New South Wales.

Currawillinghi Station is a sheep and cattle grazing property recently acquired by the Indigenous Land and Sea Corporation, which will now work with the Yuwaalaraay Euahlayi Aboriginal Corporation on creating further capacity for future generations.

The land on Yuwaalaraay Euahlayi Country in Hebel, Queensland, has a pastoral history going back to the 1870s, with strong family ties to the community.

YEAC has Native Title rights over Currawillinghi, and in coming months Aboriginal Rangers from Queensland Murray-Darling

Catchments will erect fences to protect and manage cultural sites, rectify water points for stock, and secure storage for pastoral operations.

The upgrades aim to create greater cultural, social, and economic opportunities for Yuwaalaraay Euahlayi people.

Queensland Murray-Darling Catchments Aboriginal ranger program manager Cheryl Buchanan said the upcoming work of rangers provided benefits beyond financial ones.

"Gaining access to cultural sites and getting Country back assists in the truth-telling and healing process critical to supporting generational trauma," she said.

Currawillinghi has deep cultural and traditional values, bearing the resting place of the ILSC's first Indigenous general manager, Murray Chapman, whose family consider the site "ngurrmbaa", a Yuwaalaraay term meaning "the place where one's spirit is born and exits the world".

Several of Currawillinghi's outbuildings, as well as its main residence, were destroyed in storms, and most of the site is overgrown with weeds and rubbish, posing the risk of wildfire damage.

The late Mr Chapman had long urged the importance of returning Country to First Nations peoples.

ILSC group chief executive Joe Morrison said the Currawillinghi station development was a major turning point for the Yuwaalaraay Euahlayi community.

"We will work closely with YEAC, Yuwaalaraay Euahlayi Traditional Owners and Elders to ensure the station is fit for purpose for many years," he said.

The NSW Supreme Court in 2015 ordered the winding up of Ngurampaa, which held title for Currawillinghi and Mogila stations, in NSW, before ILSC secured the title in July 2019 and reacquired possession of Currawillinghi in May this year.



Yuwaalaraay Euahlayi Aboriginal Corporation director Jason Wilson and chair Tim Know at Currawillinghi Station. Picture: ILSC



## 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 Mines, Petroleum and Exploration, 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	38/3988	AMERY HOLDINGS PTY LTD	16BL.	130.2km NE'ly of Laverton	Lat: 27° 43' S Long: 123° 15' E	LAVERTON SHIRE
Exploration Licence	38/4018	KALLENIA MINES PTY LTD	5BL.	182.5km NE'ly of Leinster	Lat: 26° 58' S Long: 122° 12' E	LAVERTON SHIRE
Exploration Licence	38/4019	KALLENIA MINES PTY LTD	13BL.	175.6km N'ly of Laverton	Lat: 27° 2' S Long: 122° 13' E	LAVERTON SHIRE
Exploration Licence	38/4028	DUKETON GOLD PROJECT PTY LTD	5BL.	37.7km N'ly of Laverton	Lat: 28° 17' S Long: 122° 21' E	LAVERTON SHIRE
Exploration Licence	38/4031	RICHMOND, William Robert	4BL.	65.5km N'ly of Laverton	Lat: 28° 2' S Long: 122° 26' E	LAVERTON SHIRE
Exploration Licence	77/3308	GEKO EXPLORE PTY LTD	1BL.	13.7km NW'ly of Marvel Loch	Lat: 31° 21' S Long: 119° 25' E	YILGARN SHIRE
Prospecting Licence	15/6997	FLEMING, Leo Glenn	161.86HA.	19.8km S'ly of Kalgoorlie	Lat: 30° 55' S Long: 121° 27' E	COOLGARDIE SHIRE, KALGOORLIE-BOULDER CITY
Prospecting Licence	16/3511	TOMAHAWK RESOURCES PTY LTD	191.78HA.	35.3km NW'ly of Coolgardie	Lat: 30° 42' S Long: 120° 55' E	COOLGARDIE SHIRE
Prospecting Licence	16/3512	TOMAHAWK RESOURCES PTY LTD	193.25HA.	34.2km NW'ly of Coolgardie	Lat: 30° 43' S Long: 120° 55' E	COOLGARDIE SHIRE
Prospecting Licence	16/3541-S	RAMSAY, Paul Brian	9.97HA.	28.1km S'ly of Ora Banda	Lat: 30° 36' S Long: 120° 57' E	COOLGARDIE SHIRE
Prospecting Licence	16/3542-S	RAMSAY, Paul Brian	10.00HA.	27.2km S'ly of Ora Banda	Lat: 30° 36' S Long: 120° 59' E	COOLGARDIE SHIRE
Prospecting Licence	16/3543-S	RAMSAY, Paul Brian	9.96HA.	26.1km S'ly of Ora Banda	Lat: 30° 35' S Long: 120° 57' E	COOLGARDIE SHIRE
Prospecting Licence	16/3544-S	RAMSAY, Paul Brian	9.93HA.	26.2km S'ly of Ora Banda	Lat: 30° 35' S Long: 120° 57' E	COOLGARDIE SHIRE
Prospecting Licence	16/3552-S	RAMSAY, Paul Brian	9.98HA.	27.6km S'ly of Ora Banda	Lat: 30° 36' S Long: 120° 58' E	COOLGARDIE SHIRE
Prospecting Licence	24/5828	MAHONEY, Reece Anthony	174.64HA.	11.2km W'ly of Ora Banda	Lat: 30° 22' S Long: 120° 56' E	KALGOORLIE-BOULDER CITY
Prospecting Licence	24/5832	MAHONEY, Reece Anthony	152.14HA.	11.5km W'ly of Ora Banda	Lat: 30° 23' S Long: 120° 56' E	KALGOORLIE-BOULDER CITY
Prospecting Licence	24/5887-S	PARRY, Brenton Anthony	9.71HA.	6km W'ly of Broad Arrow	Lat: 30° 26' S Long: 121° 15' E	KALGOORLIE-BOULDER CITY
Prospecting Licence	24/5896	FLEMING, Leo Glenn	9.52HA.	17.1km S'ly of Broad Arrow	Lat: 30° 35' S Long: 121° 16' E	KALGOORLIE-BOULDER CITY
Prospecting Licence	24/5897	RAMSAY, Paul Brian	9.99HA.	9.8km S'ly of Broad Arrow	Lat: 30° 31' S Long: 121° 20' E	KALGOORLIE-BOULDER CITY
Prospecting Licence	24/5898	DE LA MONTAGNE, Queenie Kathryn	9.99HA.	12.7km S'ly of Broad Arrow	Lat: 30° 33' S Long: 121° 20' E	KALGOORLIE-BOULDER CITY
Prospecting Licence	25/2848	EV MINERALS PTY LTD	49.04HA.	29km E'ly of Kalgoorlie	Lat: 30° 47' S Long: 121° 46' E	KALGOORLIE-BOULDER CITY
Prospecting Licence	25/2880	HOGAN, Patrick Charles OWEN, Rodney James	189.32HA.	40.7km E'ly of Kalgoorlie	Lat: 30° 50' S Long: 121° 53' E	KALGOORLIE-BOULDER CITY
Prospecting Licence	26/4850	FLEMING, Leo Glenn	191.53HA.	26.6km NE'ly of Kambalda	Lat: 31° 1' S Long: 121° 50' E	KALGOORLIE-BOULDER CITY
Prospecting Licence	26/4851	FLEMING, Leo Glenn	197.14HA.	26.8km NE'ly of Kambalda	Lat: 31° 0' S Long: 121° 50' E	KALGOORLIE-BOULDER CITY
Prospecting Licence	77/4684	GEKO EXPLORE PTY LTD	27.04HA.	12.6km NW'ly of Marvel Loch	Lat: 31° 21' S Long: 119° 26' E	YILGARN SHIRE
Prospecting Licence	77/4692	WEST AUSTRALIAN PROSPECTORS PTY LTD	100.00HA.	129.1km N'ly of Southern Cross	Lat: 30° 3' S Long: 119° 15' E	YILGARN SHIRE
Prospecting Licence	77/4693	WEST AUSTRALIAN PROSPECTORS PTY LTD	200.00HA.	129.2km N'ly of Southern Cross	Lat: 30° 3' S Long: 119° 14' E	YILGARN SHIRE
Prospecting Licence	80/1896	SANDALWOOD RESOURCES PTY LTD	9.99HA.	18.2km W'ly of Kununurra	Lat: 15° 46' S Long: 128° 34' E	WYNDHAM-EAST KIMBERLEY 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: 22 October 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 **22 January 2026**. 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. **22 February 2026**), 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 Mines, Petroleum and Exploration, 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.**

\* – 1 Graticular Block = 2.8 km<sup>2</sup>



## 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 Mines, Petroleum and Exploration, 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	16/589	SIMMONDS, Paul John BOULDER INVESTMENTS GROUP PTY LTD	23.74HA.	34.9km SW'ly of Ora Banda	Lat: 30° 39' S Long: 120° 54' E	COOLGARDIE SHIRE
Mining Lease	16/590	SIMMONDS, Paul John BOULDER INVESTMENTS GROUP PTY LTD	670.05HA.	33.1km SW'ly of Ora Banda	Lat: 30° 37' S Long: 120° 53' E	COOLGARDIE SHIRE
Mining Lease	16/605	GREENSTONE RESOURCES PTY LIMITED	121.45HA.	27.1km S'ly of Ora Banda	Lat: 30° 35' S Long: 120° 56' E	COOLGARDIE SHIRE
Mining Lease	16/606	GREENSTONE RESOURCES PTY LIMITED	121.58HA.	27.5km SW'ly of Ora Banda	Lat: 30° 35' S Long: 120° 56' E	COOLGARDIE SHIRE
Mining Lease	16/607	GREENSTONE RESOURCES PTY LIMITED	121.11HA.	27.9km SW'ly of Ora Banda	Lat: 30° 35' S Long: 120° 55' E	COOLGARDIE SHIRE
Mining Lease	16/608	GREENSTONE RESOURCES PTY LIMITED	121.42HA.	26.8km SW'ly of Ora Banda	Lat: 30° 34' S Long: 120° 55' E	COOLGARDIE SHIRE
Mining Lease	16/609	GREENSTONE RESOURCES PTY LIMITED	121.43HA.	25.7km SW'ly of Ora Banda	Lat: 30° 34' S Long: 120° 55' E	COOLGARDIE SHIRE
Mining Lease	16/610	GREENSTONE RESOURCES PTY LIMITED	18.30HA.	23.2km SW'ly of Ora Banda	Lat: 30° 32' S Long: 120° 55' E	COOLGARDIE SHIRE
Mining Lease	16/611	BOULDER INVESTMENTS GROUP PTY LTD	361.65HA.	35.1km SW'ly of Ora Banda	Lat: 30° 38' S Long: 120° 51' E	COOLGARDIE SHIRE
Mining Lease	24/1012	BELLIN SUPER PTY LTD	21.04HA.	18.3km NE'ly of Ora Banda	Lat: 30° 17' S Long: 121° 13' E	KALGOORLIE-BOULDER CITY
Mining Lease	26/866	OPTIMUM RESOURCES PTY LTD	8.07HA.	7.2km E'ly of Kalgoorlie	Lat: 30° 46' S Long: 121° 32' E	KALGOORLIE-BOULDER CITY
Mining Lease	29/459	MT IDA LITHIUM PTY LTD	628.64HA.	89.5km W'ly of Leonora	Lat: 29° 3' S Long: 120° 26' E	MENZIES SHIRE
Mining Lease	57/675	AM-AUSTRALIAN MINERALS EXPLORATION PTY LTD	532.24HA.	62.9km S'ly of Sandstone	Lat: 28° 31' S Long: 119° 6' E	SANDSTONE 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: 22 October 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 **22 January 2026**. 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. **22 February 2026**), 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 Mines, Petroleum and Exploration, 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 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 Mines, Petroleum and Exploration, 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
26/214	THUNDER METALS PTY LTD MIRAMAR (GOLDFIELDS) PTY LTD	741764	10.80HA.	16.2km N'ly of Kalgoorlie	Lat: 30° 36' S Long: 121° 26' E	KALGOORLIE-BOULDER CITY
26/214	THUNDER METALS PTY LTD MIRAMAR (GOLDFIELDS) PTY LTD	741766	59.88HA.	14.9km N'ly of Kalgoorlie	Lat: 30° 36' S Long: 121° 27' E	KALGOORLIE-BOULDER CITY
26/225	THUNDER METALS PTY LTD MIRAMAR (GOLDFIELDS) PTY LTD	741769	106.04HA.	15.9km N'ly of Kalgoorlie	Lat: 30° 36' S Long: 121° 27' E	KALGOORLIE-BOULDER CITY
26/225	THUNDER METALS PTY LTD MIRAMAR (GOLDFIELDS) PTY LTD	741770	41.93HA.	15.2km N'ly of Kalgoorlie	Lat: 30° 36' S Long: 121° 27' E	KALGOORLIE-BOULDER CITY

**Nature of the act:** Grant of amalgamation applications which authorises the applicant to explore for minerals. **Notification day: 22 October 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 **22 January 2026**. 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. **22 February 2026**), 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 Mines, Petroleum and Exploration, 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.**



Sage Lockyer Picture: Fortescue

## Graduates look ahead with bright outlook

Fortescue has celebrated its latest Vocational Training and Employment Centre graduates, recognising their dedication and commitment to building stronger futures for themselves, their families and their communities.

Held in Port Hedland, the recent VTEC graduation brought together families, mentors and Fortescue team members to celebrate the newest cohort of participants to complete the intensive program; designed to provide meaningful employment and long-term career pathways for First Nations Australians. Among the graduates was proud Yindjibarndi man Sage Lockyer, pictured, who reflected on how the program has helped him grow both personally and professionally.

"My confidence has really improved. I came into the program quite shy, but being given the opportunity to lead pre-starts helped me build the confidence to speak in front of others," Mr Lockyer said. "I think VTEC is a really good way for me to improve my leadership, build my knowledge and help me be something."

Fortescue's director approvals, communities & environment, Rosli Wheelock, said the success of VTEC graduates such as Sage demonstrates the powerful, long-term impact the program has across communities.

"Over the years, we have watched participants grow in confidence and purpose. Many have become leaders within Fortescue and their communities, showing what's possible when the right support and opportunity come together," Mr Wheelock said.

"As graduates step into new roles across Fortescue's sites, their success is a testament to the strength of the VTEC model. This program is proof that when we invest in people, we create lasting impact, not just for them, but for their families and future generations."

Established in 2006, Fortescue's VTEC program has supported more than 1500 First Nations people across WA to gain practical skills and sustainable employment. It offers job-specific training, mentoring and wellbeing support to prepare participants for roles across Fortescue's Pilbara operations.

Fortescue's commitment to First Nations employment remains a core part of its business, with First Nations people representing about 12 per cent of its Australian workforce.

*This report was produced with the support of Fortescue.*

# Network calls for a new era of equity

REECE HARLEY

At the Northern Territory Indigenous Business Network's Blak & Bold conference on Larakia country in Darwin this month, Jyi Lawton, chief executive officer of Aboriginal Enterprises in Mining, Energy and Exploration, called for a new era of Aboriginal ownership, equity, and governance in Australia's resources and critical minerals sectors.

Mr Lawton argued Aboriginal people must not just participate in the next phase of mining and clean energy expansion; they must control it.

"It reminds us that being bold is not always about volume," he said.

"It is about conviction, the quiet power that comes from knowing exactly where you stand and what you stand for."

AEMEE is the national Indigenous body representing Aboriginal interests in the mining, energy, and exploration sectors. It connects Traditional Owners and Indigenous businesses with major companies and governments to ensure a move towards meaningful partnership and ownership.

Mr Lawton recounted how his ancestors, and thousands of other Aboriginal people, built the foundations of Australia's pastoral economy without pay or recognition.

"They were never paid — not underpaid or poorly treated in the modern industrial sense. They were not paid at all," he said. "For many families like mine, the journey began with exclusion from wages, from ownership, and from opportunity."

That exclusion, Mr Lawton argued, made economic empowerment essential for genuine freedom.

"If you do not have the means to make decisions that affect your life, your family, or your future, then you're arguably not truly free," he said.

Mr Lawton said the global shift to renewable energy would expand mining.

"The transition to renewables doesn't happen on sunlight and wind alone," he said.

Clean energy technology, he said, required up to 10 times more metal than traditional energy systems, including copper, nickel, lithium, cobalt, and rare earths.

Those resources, Mr Lawton said, were overwhelmingly



CEO of Aboriginal Enterprises in Mining, Energy and Exploration Jyi Lawton. Picture: Reece Harley

found on Aboriginal land.

"When the world says Australia's critical minerals, let's be very clear, they're talking about our Country, our water, our stories," he said.

"If the world needs what comes from our Country, then our people should be the ones setting the standard, managing the risks, protecting the stories, and sharing the wealth that follows."

"Being in the room doesn't mean selling out. It means showing up with knowledge, power, and confidence, and making sure the rules of the game change while we're playing. Because if we're not there, the mines will still open, the trucks will still roll, the profits will still flow. They just won't flow our way."

Mr Lawton described AEMEE's Indigenous Business Network as evidence of the progress already being made.

It includes dozens of Indigenous enterprises in mining, energy, construction, and environmental services. About 15 per cent generate more than \$10 million a year, and collectively they employ more than

1200 people. "We're talking about strong, capable, growing businesses contributing to the national economy," Mr Lawton said.

Northern Territory Indigenous Business Network CEO Naomi Anstess reinforced Mr Lawton's message, urging governments and industry to create genuine space for Indigenous leadership and investment.

Ms Anstess said the NT's Indigenous business community was already a major economic force that should be recognised as central to the region's future.

"We are the largest ethnic group in the Territory, so if doing stuff for those who are also the most dispossessed and impoverished mob in the Territory — if lifting us up isn't good for all Territorians, I don't know what is," she said.

"Our businesses here are ... delivering multi-million-dollar projects with the appropriate safety, insurance, and ISO qualifications."

"We've got a \$3 billion revenue in our member base that equates to a \$15b return."

Federal Minister for Indigenous Australians Malarndirri McCarthy placed Mr Lawton's message within a national framework, describing the strength of First Nations business as central to Australia's future economy.

"First Nations businesses are thriving from construction and tourism to professional services, the arts and clean energy," she said. "Together, our businesses contribute more than \$16 billion to the national economy and employ more than 116,000 people."

She cited the Indigenous Procurement Policy as one of the most significant tools driving that growth.

"Since 2015, the IPP has awarded more than 80,000 contracts worth \$12.6 billion to more than 4500 Indigenous businesses," she said.

"First Nation businesses are not just participating in the economy; they are leading it."

"And together we are building a stronger, fairer, and more inclusive economy, one that recognises the strength, talent, and potential of First Nations people."

## Canadian grants for Indigenous minerals projects

GIOVANNI TORRE

Canada's Federal Government is encouraging Indigenous organisations and their partners to apply for funding to support engagement in critical minerals and clean energy infrastructure projects.

Canadian Minister of Energy

and Natural Resources Tim Hodgson announced on October 6 the launch of the Critical Minerals Infrastructure Fund Indigenous Grants stream, which will provide up to \$C3 million (\$3.29m) in total funding.

Individual grants can reach \$150,000, with up to \$200,000 available for initiatives led by or

benefiting Indigenous organisations in northern or remote communities.

"The funding supports Indigenous engagement and participation in key critical minerals infrastructure projects, positioning Canada as a global leader in sustainably sourced minerals while creating good jobs

and long-term growth for communities," Mr Hodgson said.

The CMIF Indigenous Grants stream was established to provide resources for Canadian Indigenous groups to participate in critical minerals development, including clean energy and transportation infrastructure projects.

## SPORT

## Story of inspiration

JARRED CROSS

Driving through the Northern Territory to visit family in Borroloola, artist, advocate, sporting trailblazer and Stolen Generations survivor John Moriarty relayed his life experiences into a tape recorder.

Those drives were made with his wife — and business partner — Ros, and were the starting point of his inspirational personal story in *Saltwater Fella*, first published in 2000.

*Saltwater Fella* has been republished this month, with some additions, by Melbourne University Publishing, via Miegunyah Press.

The Yanyuma man was removed from his mother and community in Borroloola, near the Gulf of Carpentaria, as a young boy.

"Years later, when I found my mother, I asked, 'Why did you let me go?'" Moriarty writes.

"My mother told me, in a very soft voice, 'My son, you were going to school. I took you to school every day ... then I went to pick you up this day and you were gone'."

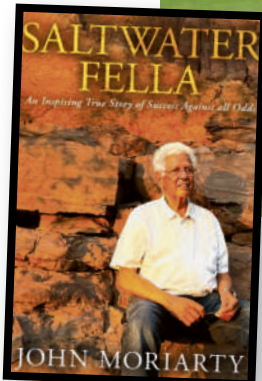
Moriarty recounts his and other young people's survival and forced disconnection from culture in institutions, school and university — where he was the first Aboriginal person to graduate from Flinders University in Adelaide — life in sport, and entry into what has been a life in advocacy, art and policy in Federal and State governments.

In 1960 he was the first Indigenous person selected in the Australian national soccer/football team.

In recent years, the John Moriarty Foundation and John Moriarty Football has worked to open the doors for others to follow, and empower healthy, strong Indigenous kids in



John Moriarty with wife Ros. Picture: John Moriarty Football



regional and remote areas.

At heart *Saltwater Fella* explores his journey of reconnecting with his people and Country.

In opening pages Moriarty writes: "All along I've tried to regain the pieces of life that I should have had, the one that was shattered when I was a kid."

He told National Indigenous Times reuniting with his mother in Mparntwe (Alice Springs) as a teenager and returning to Borroloola as a young adult — "filling in the gaps of my knowledge of culture and my Country so I could then take my lifelong place there" — are moments

for which he will always be grateful.

Travelling to Ireland to discover the roots on his father's side, "which is such a strong part of who I am", and joining his first football team are similarly moments "that changed my life's trajectory".

Later in *Saltwater Fella*, recounting his university days, Moriarty writes his Aboriginality was "that inner fabric you build on to do all other things, to keep an end goal in your sights, even when it is only achievable over a decade or two or longer. It keeps you going while you're still striving for things".

His career "has been focused on building bridges of understanding and reconciliation be-

tween Aboriginal and non-Indigenous people, whether this is through sport, art and design, business or government policy".

"This is what drove me to share my story. Like my Yanyuma and Irish ancestors before me understood, storytelling is powerful and by sharing mine I want to inspire others to stand up for what they believe in, to take action when they see a need for change and that change is possible."

In the 25 years since *Saltwater Fella* was first published, Kevin Rudd delivered an apology to the Stolen Generations, the Uluru Statement from the Heart was issued, and some significant steps forward have

been taken, though challenges remain and the work is far from done.

In the same year of the book's initial release — 2000 — the Walk for Reconciliation crossed the Sydney Harbour Bridge in extraordinary numbers.

"Australia is quite a different nation than it was in 2000," Moriarty said.

"The appreciation of Aboriginal culture and the groundswell for reconciliation was only just beginning to ignite."

"25 years on, there is certainly more awareness and interest in Aboriginal culture and history. I can see a real movement for embracing Australia's Aboriginal narrative within our national identity."

## Gruelling run pushes limits for worthy cause

JARRED CROSS

Around Christmas last year Noah Solomon-Wortley was driving back home from Newcastle to Tamworth when he and his mates said "imagine running this road".

This month, the 20-year-old Gamilaroi man did exactly that; covering 100km a day, over three days, and raising thousands for breast cancer patients in his local community.

At midnight, just ticking over to the morning of Thursday, October 2, Solomon-Wortley set off from Tamworth on the gruelling trek for

a cause. "I put my hand up, and said 'I'll give it a crack,' he said of that drive back from the coast.

"I set myself a goal ... and then I said 'if it's going to be such a big thing, why not put a charity behind it?'" Solomon-Wortley's carer had gone through breast cancer 18 months earlier, he told National Indigenous Times. She chose Serendipity Tamworth, a charity supporting local breast cancer patients as the place he could donate funds raised for the run.

It was a worthy cause on a couple of fronts for Solomon-Wortley, who wanted it

going back into his community and with an organisation where every dollar goes towards the work being done. So far, he's raised more than \$6300, with hopes the number continues to grow.

"Cancer has deeply affected someone close to me, and I've seen firsthand how it changes daily life not just for them, but for everyone in our home," Solomon-Wortley wrote on online platform GoFundMe. "This run is bigger than me. It's about showing people that we can push our limits for something greater. If my running can inspire one more person, help

one more family, or bring hope to someone fighting their hardest battle, then every step of those 300km will be worth it."

He took the occasional break to change his shoes and clothes, eat a proper meal, and "forget about the last 50" before setting off again.

"It was rough, honestly," Solomon-Wortley said.

A crowd was waiting at Bar Beach carpark in Newcastle for him to complete the feat.

Despite the exhaustive weekend, Solomon-Wortley's already looking at taking on "something bigger in the future".



Noah Solomon-Wortley on his run for a worthy cause.