

# NIT

NATIONAL INDIGENOUS TIMES

## Cultural sovereignty

STYLE UP  
STARTS  
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# HISTORY REPEATING

### Fear that NT stance will create more Stolen Generations



A vigil held in Naarm/Melbourne for Kumanjayi Little Baby, whose death sparked nationwide mourning and the NT Government's renewed push to change the child protection system. Story on page 4. Picture: Jarred Cross

**DECLAN BRENNAN**

The Northern Territory Government is facing a mounting backlash over sweeping changes to the Territory's child protection laws, with Aboriginal leaders, commissioners, and advocates warning the reforms risk weakening protections for Indigenous children and repeating the wrongs which created the Stolen Generations.

Changes to the Care and Protection of Children Act announced this month by the Country Liberal Government

would significantly reshape the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle.

National Commissioner for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children and Young People Sue-Anne Hunter warned the changes would "weaken the longstanding protections designed to ensure Aboriginal children remain connected to their families, community, culture and Country ... despite decades of evidence that Aboriginal children have better long-term outcomes because of it".

"The Bill reduces obligations to actively pursue reunification and expands coercive and punitive powers over families, while structural issues remain unaddressed," she said.

The NT Government will introduce a new "universal principle", which will, it says, "for the first time" list the safety of the child "as the primary consideration, placing the best interests of every child first, regardless of background".

Despite the Government's comments, the Act, in its current form, does not disregard the rights of children based on

race. Rather, it states its primary objective is to "promote the wellbeing of children, including: to protect children from harm and exploitation".

It further notes: "When a decision involving a child is made, the best interests of the child are the paramount concern."

Data shows only 17 per cent of Indigenous children aged 0-17 in out-of-home care in the NT were placed with an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander relative or kin — the lowest rate in the country.

NT Child Protection Minister Robyn Cahill said the amend-

ments would provide more "consistent support and better outcomes for both children and their families". "Every child matters regardless of where they come from, their race or religion, I am not prepared to turn a blind eye and abandon another generation of families and children," she said.

NT shadow minister for child protection Chansey Paech, told the National Indigenous Times the Territory must "fix the system, not blame people" to keep children and families safe.

**CONTINUED PAGE 3**



The UN's headquarters in Geneva. Picture: Giovanni Torre

# UN slams Aus juvenile justice

DECHLAN BRENNAN

The over-representation of Indigenous children in Australia's criminal justice system "reflects systemic and structural racial discrimination", the United Nations said this month.

Despite making up only 6.5 per cent of children aged 10-17 nationwide, Indigenous children and young people account for 65 per cent of the youth prison population, according to the latest data.

In a statement on May 6, responding to a complaint lodged by Indigenous international law experts Professor Megan Davis and Associate Professor Hannah McGlade last year, the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination cited the extreme rate of Indigenous young people in prison, racial profiling, over-policing and ill-treatment in detention as evidence of racial discrimination in Australia. "The committee expressed grave concern that

Indigenous children and communities continue to face racial discrimination in the enjoyment of economic, social and cultural rights, including education, healthcare, social security and housing," the committee said in a statement.

The committee noted "racial profiling in law enforcement operations and the over-policing" as evidence of discrimination, along with recently changed laws in several States — namely Victoria and Queensland — which see "harsh adult penalties ... applied to Indigenous children — including life imprisonment in some cases".

Both states, along with the NT, have passed legislation eliminating detention as a last resort when sentencing children for some crimes.

Professor Davis, a former expert member of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues and the UN Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, said 50 years

after the introduction of the Racial Discrimination Act, Australia continued to ignore its human rights commitments.

As a result, she argued, "our children are paying the price".

Dr McGlade, an expert member of the UN Permanent Forum for Indigenous Issues, said the committee's statement "highlights serious violations of the treaty prohibiting race discrimination". "We say we are a country that condemns racism, yet it is evident that the criminal justice systems and laws are racially discriminatory. The Albanese Government can't simply neglect its obligations under international law," she said.

In response, a Federal Government spokesperson said "only States and Territories can set justice policies" and that "where we can, we are working to support early intervention diversion and, importantly, reduce recidivism".

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## Vaccines, testing urged to prevent diphtheria spread

GIOVANNI TORRE

Public health experts have urged people to get tested and vaccinated as diphtheria spreads from the NT to WA, Queensland and SA.

The outbreak, which has overwhelmingly affected Aboriginal communities, has caused at least one death, the Central Australian Aboriginal Congress reported earlier this month.

The strain of respiratory diphtheria can be deadly if left untreated, but diphtheria is a vaccine-preventable disease and had last caused a death in Australia in 2018.

The Territory's Health Department declared an outbreak of the disease in March — the first in Australia for about three decades.

Australian Centre for Disease Control data indicates the vast majority of locally acquired cases are residents in "outer regional", remote, or very remote areas and more than 98 per cent of cases are Indigenous.

Dr Milena Dalton, the head of immunisation and health systems strengthening at the Burnet Institute, said last week reports the outbreak had spread into Western Australia, Queensland and South Australia were "deeply concerning".

"This is no longer an isolated outbreak and it highlights how quickly vaccine-preventable diseases can re-emerge when there are immunity gaps," she said.

"Diphtheria remains rare in Australia because vaccination works. But this outbreak is a reminder that rare does not mean impossible, and that

protection needs to be maintained through timely boosters for adolescents and adults. The most important message is that diphtheria is preventable. Vaccination and boosters remain our best protection against severe disease, hospitalisation and death, and they are especially urgent in communities where people face barriers to health care."

Dr Dalton said the fact the outbreak was affecting Aboriginal communities "points to the need for a rapid and culturally safe public health response".

"That means working with Aboriginal community-controlled health services, trusted local leaders and frontline workers to make testing, treatment and vaccination as accessible as possible," she said. "Getting tested, treated and vaccinated protects individuals, families and the wider community."

More than 230 diphtheria cases have been recorded this year; 30 times the usual annual average and the largest outbreak since national records began.

Last Thursday, the Federal Government announced a \$7.2 million funding package, including \$5.2m for the National Critical Care and Trauma Response Centre to deploy additional doctors and nurses, deliver booster vaccinations and treatment, and purchase more vaccines and antibiotics. Another \$2m will go to national Aboriginal community-controlled health organisations to work with the Aboriginal Medical Services Alliance NT, local services and other groups in affected areas.

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# Child protection concern

FROM PAGE 1

Mr Paech, an Arrernte and Gurindji man, said child protection “is under real pressure”.

“We’re seeing services stretched, programs aren’t growing, and too many families still don’t have a dedicated case manager,” he said. “Child safety must come first but demonising Aboriginal families... is wrong.”

Mr Paech represents Gwoja, an electorate of which 75 per cent of residents are Indigenous, and includes scores of remote communities.

“This is not an Aboriginal failure, this is a systems failure; a government failure,” he said.

“You can’t police your way out of complex social issues... We are seeing millions go into prisons and police, while courts, legal services, and prevention continue to miss out.” SNAICC

— National Voice for Our Children chief executive Catherine Liddle said the NT Government risked repeating historic mistakes by sidelining Aboriginal voices from the reform process.

“The Child Placement Principle is not red tape, it is a safety framework built on decades of evidence, designed to keep Aboriginal children connected to family, culture and community, and to ensure the mistakes of the past are never repeated,” she said.

The reforms have been accelerated after five-year-old Kumanjayi Little Baby’s death last month, despite calls from the family not to politicise her loss.

Jefferson Lewis, 47, has been charged with her alleged murder, along with two other offences. Ms Cahill said three child protection workers had been stood down over circumstances

leading up to her abduction and death. It has also been reported six notifications regarding Kumanjayi Little Baby’s welfare were made to the NT child protection department in the six weeks before her disappearance, though there is no evidence any of them were substantiated.

Ms Hunter said the changes extended far beyond the case of Kumanjayi Little Baby and would have long-lasting consequences for First Nations children and families.

“It’s misleading for the NT Government to state that these reforms are in response to or would have prevented recent events, particularly when no review has occurred,” she said.

First Nations Social Justice Commissioner Katie Kiss warned the Government was making a “serious mistake” by pursuing the changes without

evidence-based consultation, arguing the reforms risked deepening mistrust in a system already viewed with fear by many Aboriginal families.

“Weakening that safeguard is a backward step that risks entrenching harm, deepening distrust, and repeating the very injustices governments say they want to end,” she said.

Criticism has also intensified over the scope and composition of the Government’s child protection inquiry, which will only run for three months.

Aboriginal leaders say the review is too narrow in scope and lacks Indigenous representation, limiting its ability to examine the systemic causes driving child removals properly.

Furthermore, neither of the two people slated to run the inquiry — former NSW police commissioner Karen Webb and

Territory public servant Greg Shanahan — is Indigenous.

Advocates are instead calling for an inquiry that examines not only child protection, but interconnected systems including housing, health, policing, and youth justice.

NT Children’s Commissioner Shahleena Musk acknowledged the child protection system required substantial reform, but warned rushed amendments risked unintended consequences and would not deliver meaningful systemic reform to improve child safety.

“This is not just about the child protection system; there are many other systems outside of my legislative remit that are failing vulnerable children and families and must be included within the review,” she said.

OPINION PAGE 18

## Calls for Federal Budget to reach further

DECLAN BRENNAN

Remote employment, housing, health care, and community safety formed the centrepiece of Indigenous-specific spending in this year’s Federal Budget, but advocates say significant gaps remain in legal assistance, child welfare and broader structural reform.

This month the Federal Government announced more than \$1.2 billion in Closing the Gap-related investments over five years, including funding for remote jobs, healthcare infrastructure and family violence prevention.

“We are committed to the principles of ‘no one held back’ and ‘no one left behind,’” Minister for Indigenous Australians, Malarndirri McCarthy said.

“We are delivering a range of actions to improve outcomes for First Nations people across the country.”

Among the headline measures was \$299 million over five years to expand the remote jobs and economic development program, bringing the number of remote jobs to 6000 by the end of the decade, alongside investments in housing and health infrastructure in regional and remote communities.

More than \$200m was directed to help 40 Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations to deliver specialist community-led services as part of the Our Ways — Strong Ways — Our Voices: National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Plan to End Family, Domestic and Sexual Violence



Minister for Indigenous Australians Malarndirri McCarthy, Minister for Trade Don Farrell, President Sue Lines, Minister for Foreign Affairs Penny Wong and Minister for Finance Katy Gallagher listen to Treasurer Jim Chalmers, below, delivering the Federal Budget. Pictures: AAP



2026-2036. The Budget included targeted education support, with additional funding for scholarships and youth programs, while healthcare spending focused on improving access in remote areas and strengthening culturally responsive services.

One of the most widely welcomed measures was a \$3.2m commitment to exempt Stolen Generations redress payments from aged care means testing.

Advocates had long argued survivors were being unfairly penalised for receiving compensation payments linked to

the trauma of forced removals.

Those payments will no longer affect eligibility or costs associated with residential aged care. “Our Elders should not have been forced to effectively pay the State back for their own care using compensation provided for lifelong trauma and injustice,” Senator Lidia Thorpe said.

“While there is still much more work to do to ensure our Elders receive the care, dignity and justice they deserve, this is a meaningful and hard-won reform.” Some major Indigenous organisations and advo-

advocates described the Budget as uneven, warning it failed to confront worsening inequality and service demand.

Community-controlled sectors welcomed investments in health and violence prevention, but said the Budget stopped short of the transformational change needed to meet Closing the Gap targets.

National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation chair Donnella Mills said the Government’s support for the community-controlled sector demonstrated what could be achieved with sustained backing.

“This Budget takes important steps, and we are genuinely grateful. But the next step is the one that matters most: the needs-based funding model we have built together over nine years,” she said.

“That is the reform that lets ACCHOs deliver at the scale our communities deserve. We have done the work. We are ready to walk this road together.”

SNAICC — National Voice For our Children chief executive Catherine Liddle said the Budget was not one of genera-

tional fairness for Indigenous Australians, but rather one of “missed opportunities”.

“One of those missed opportunities is not investing in the community-led solutions that were on the table,” she said.

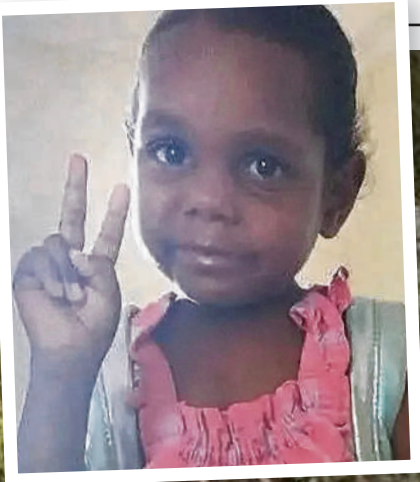
The sharpest criticism came from legal advocates, who condemned the absence of a significant funding increase for Indigenous legal services.

The National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Services said frontline organisations were already turning away vulnerable clients due to demand pressures, particularly in family violence, child protection and youth justice matters.

Advocates warned without substantial new investment, legal services would remain overstretched.

“Failing to properly fund ATSILS directly undermines national commitments to Closing the Gap,” NATSILS chair Nerita Waight said.

“This results in inequality for our people in terms of access to justice, but also inequality for the sector because yet again we cannot offer pay parity with mainstream legal aid.”



## Candlelit vigils for five-year-old



Kumanjayi Little Baby's family members with the Prime Minister. Inset: Kumanjayi Little Baby.

# Family grieves little girl

DECLAN BRENNAN

The shocking death of a five-year-old Aboriginal girl in Central Australia has sent reverberations through Australian politics and the wider Aboriginal community.

Kumanjayi Little Baby, as she is now known for cultural reasons, disappeared from the Old Timers Town Camp outside Mparntwe/Alice Springs on April 25.

After an extensive search involving police, Indigenous trackers and community members, her body was found five days later.

Jefferson Lewis, 47 — who is not related to Kumanjayi Little Baby and had no role in her care — has been charged with her murder and two other offences. His arrest sparked unrest in

Mparntwe as hundreds of people gathered outside the hospital where Mr Lewis had been taken by police.

In the wake of her death, Robin Granites, a senior Yapa (Warlpiri) Elder and spokesperson for the family of Kumanjayi Little Baby, appealed for calm.

He said it was now time for Sorry Business and to “show respect for our family and have space for grieving and remembering”.

Vigils were held across the country, with NT Police executive director of cultural reform Leanne Liddle reading a statement from Kumanjayi Little Baby's family in Mparntwe.

“I want you all to know that my heart is broken into a million pieces. And I want you to know that I am having trouble knowing how I can repair it and

how I can live without my little baby,” the statement read.

“My baby was special to me, to our family. She loved cuddling puppies.

“She loved playing games on my phone. She loved watching Bluey and Masha and the Bear.

“She loved listening to Rose and Bruno Mars, APT, and Golden by KPop Demon Hunters. And she loved playing Minecraft with her big brother.

“When she was a little baby, she would smile when she watched Cocomelon.

“She was my little princess.

“My princess who loved the colour pink. She also loved all the colours of the rainbow. And when she was older, she loved going to kindy.

“For all these reasons, I ask that her short life not be used by politicians for reasons that

do not honour and respect her.”

However, during a condolence motion in Parliament, Senator Jacinta Nampijinpa Price — Kumanjayi Little Baby's aunt — argued Australia could no longer “hide behind race”, issuing an emotional plea for change in town camps and remote communities.

“We cannot continue pretending that lowering expectations for Aboriginal children is compassion,” she said.

“It's not compassion, it's neglect. It's the racism of low expectations. Children deserve safety before ideology. Most of all, we need courage.”

Senator Lidia Thorpe said the family had asked for their child's death not to become a political football during their “sorry time”.

“Not everyone has respected

those wishes. We have seen damaging commentary and calls for reforms that would further harm our people,” she said.

Federal Minister for Indigenous Australians Malarndirri McCarthy paid tribute to the thousands of people who attended candlelight vigils across Australia in honour of the little girl.

Prime Minister Anthony Albanese, alongside Senator McCarthy and Member for Lingiari Marion Scrymgour, met with the family in Mparntwe. The PM said the visit was “mainly an opportunity just to say to the family . . . they are not alone”.

“This is a young person lost far too early under circumstances that are unbearable,” he said.

## Program spans 3 governments

DECLAN BRENNAN

A new “tri-state child protection initiative” was launched in Mparntwe/Alice Springs this month by the NPY Women's Council in partnership with the South Australian, West Australian, Northern Territory and Federal governments.

The Ngura Kutja pilot program will deliver an integrated and simplified child protection system for children and families across the Central Australian region of the Ngaanyatjarra Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara Lands.

Meaning “one place”, Ngura Kutja is an Anangu-led solution shaped by decades of advocacy from Anangu and Yarnangu leaders. The one-year pilot is

supported by the Federal Government, including \$259,484 in funding, and brings together an NPYWC co-ordinator and child protection staff from SA, WA and the NT into one co-located team working alongside communities.

For many of the 6000 Anangu and Yarnangu people living across the NPY Lands, life spans three jurisdictions, with three governments co-ordinating child protection responses.

Ngura Kutja aims to respond directly to calls for a more co-ordinated approach.

NPYWC chair Margaret Smith, a Yankunytjatjara woman from the Imanpa Community, said the project was the culmination of years of community advocacy. “We have been

talking about three States, three governments and three sets of rules for a long time — and how hard that is for our families,” she said. “Ngura Kutja is about one place, one number, and one story for our families.”

Ngura Kutja responds to priorities under Safe and Supported: The National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children 2021-2031, with federal Social Services Minister Tanya Plibersek noting children thrived when connected to community and culture. “For too long, families have had to navigate three sets of rules to keep their children safe, often talking to different organisations with different workers and little shared understanding. This initiative changes that,” she said.

## Qld death in custody under investigation

GIOVANNI TORRE

The death in custody of a young Indigenous man at Queensland's Lotus Glen Correctional Centre this month is under investigation.

Queensland Police, who are preparing a report for the Coroner on the May 1 death of the 27-year-old man, said it was “not suspicious”. “This is standard practice for all deaths in custody,” a Queensland Corrective Services spokesperson said in a statement.

“Support is available to the responding officers and their colleagues.” The young man was from Normanton. According

to Queensland Government data, about 70 per cent per cent of Lotus Glen's prison population are Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander.

Fourteen Indigenous people have died in custody across Australia to date this year, and well over 600 have died in custody since the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody brought down its findings and issued hundreds of recommendations for reform in 1991; many of which remain unimplemented.

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The entry into Akgwertnarre – Morris Soak Town Camp.

# Residents paint grim picture of camp life in the NT

**NATASHA CLARK**

For two decades, John Smith (not his real name) has called Morris Soak — a camp near Mparntwe / Alice Springs — home. But on May 15 he stood behind his gate, fearful that drug-related violence would end his life before morning.

He claims a non-Indigenous man, who had moved in with a young Aboriginal woman in the camp and was allegedly selling drugs, threatened him with an axe and tried to run him over.

Other Morris Soak residents say methamphetamine, elder abuse and housing disputes are driving fear and instability, and they say authorities ignore repeated pleas for help.

“There are about 13 kids in that street,” Mr Smith said.

He claims to have alerted police many times to drug-dealing, particularly on nights like that Friday when traffic had made the narrow streets unsafe.

“I’ve told them many times: they’re selling ice and cars from outside, keep coming through the street,” he said. “But they (police) always arrive five or six hours after I’ve called them.”

He accuses Alice Springs police of turning away, blaming racial bias for their inaction.

“Because we’re Indigenous... they always say, ‘Oh, whatever, it’s a family feud, we can’t get involved,’” he said. “It’s not a family feud; I’m just telling someone to stop selling ice.”

An NT Police spokesperson told National Indigenous Times: “At this stage, for operational reasons, the NTPF is currently unable to provide a response to these questions.”

However, Jack Doe (not his real name), who previously lived for years in Morris Soak, shares Mr Smith’s concerns about outsiders moving in.

“We’ve got all these non-Indigenous people coming into these damn camps now in Alice Springs, and they’ve infiltrated, and police aren’t doing anything about it. The (NT) Government isn’t doing anything about it,” he said.

National Indigenous Times contacted NT Chief Minister Lia Finocchiaro for comment, but at the time of publication, there had been no response.

According to another local resident, who also wanted to remain anonymous, the meth dealing at one home in Morris Soak undermines the values that bind the rest of the community, like hard work, family respect, and protection of culture.

“We work really hard and contribute to society, and yet these people take from society,” the resident said.

For Shirley Miller, a Luritja, Arrernte and Pertame woman, experiencing the decline in safety, culture and harmony has been a painful reckoning. Ms Miller, her mother, and her then partner, an Aboriginal activist who has since passed and is not named for cultural reasons, founded Morris Soak Town Camp in 1974.

Former NT minister Karl Hampton described her late partner as someone who “walked in two worlds”.

“Through his association with the Central Australian

Aboriginal Congress Association, the Moving Forward Project and Tangentyere Council, he fought hard for the establishment of town camp leases, including Morris Soak,” an NT government statement said in 2011.

But nearly five decades later, Ms Miller said her return to Morris Soak left her feeling unsafe in the place she helped create. “I used to really love Alice Springs, but it’s not a safe place for me anymore,” Ms Miller said.

When she returned to Morris Soak in 2023 to retire, Commu-



ity Housing Central Australia placed her in her late brother’s home, a decision she says clashed with cultural tradition.

CHCA manages the day-to-day housing side of Mparntwe / Alice Springs town camps on behalf of the NT Government, including allocating houses, managing tenancies, maintenance, and responding to tenants’ complaints. Meanwhile, the Tangentyere Council Aboriginal Corporation is the primary advocacy and support body for town camp residents,

providing tenancy support, aged care, youth and family programs, community safety initiatives, and municipal services in some camps.

Ms Miller’s daughter, Luritja, Anmatjerre woman Deirdre Lechleitner, said the family was concerned that the housing allocation had not been taken into account. But no one in the family foresaw how quickly the harassment would escalate.

Tensions surfaced soon after Ms Miller moved in. Verbal abuse, intimidation and harassment soon followed, targeting her as an Elder. Towards the end of 2023, Ms Miller alleges, a neighbour attempted to enter her home and assault her, resulting in police involvement and a trespass notice being issued.

Weeks later, Ms Miller alleges she was physically assaulted inside her home, while her daughter, Lynda Lechleitner, was allegedly bashed with an iron bar after trying to support her mother while police were on their way.

While NT Police could not confirm the identities of the alleged victims or offenders, they did reference an incident that matched Ms Miller’s description.

“Based on the date provided, police can confirm on 9 December 2023, police responded to a domestic disturbance involving three women at a residence in Morris Soak,” NT Police said.

“One woman suffered a minor injury to her foot and was conveyed to hospital for assessment, before being issued a Domestic Violence Order by police.

“We don’t have any information regarding a trespass notice being issued in 2023.”

Since then, Ms Miller says she has continued to face intimidation from neighbours, while alleged meth dealing has made the camp feel more unsettled and exposed to people coming in from outside.

For three years, Ms Miller has called the police when threatened, but long delays have left her doubting the efficacy of reporting disturbances to the authorities.

NT Police said response times depended on the severity of incidents and the availability of police units.

Ms Miller says she filed written and in-person complaints about antisocial behaviour with both CHCA and Tangentyere Council, but had been ignored.

National Indigenous Times has seen written complaints from Ms Miller, submitted to CHCA.

Her daughter says tenancy rules have gone unenforced.

National Indigenous Times contacted Tangentyere Council Aboriginal Corporation for comment.

CHCA chief executive Ken Marchingo responded to the allegations raised by Ms Miller, saying there were “regular instances of tenants reporting anti-social behaviour”.

Mr Marchingo said CHCA was aware “of a number of families within the camp that have difficulties residing with each other, and many counterclaims are made”.

For now, Ms Miller is staying at her daughter’s home in Broome but hopes to return.



Shirley Miller says she has been the victim of elder abuse at Morris Soak Town Camp and below, the welcome sign at Morris Soak. Picture: Natasha Clark.

# Honour for a life dedicated to stories

GIOVANNI TORRE

The National NAIDOC Committee this month named the late Rhoda Roberts AO as the recipient of the 2026 National NAIDOC Lifetime Achievement Award.

A proud Widjabul Wia-bal woman from Bundjalung Country, Ms Roberts dedicated her life to elevating First Nations voices through storytelling, performance, creative direction and cultural leadership.

Her work transformed Australia's artistic and cultural landscape, creating space for Indigenous stories to be seen, heard and celebrated on the nation's biggest stages.

While the National NAIDOC Committee does not ordinarily present this award posthumously,

ly, the Committee said Ms Roberts had been selected by the Committee prior to her passing.

"It was deeply important to honour the extraordinary legacy she leaves behind," the National NAIDOC Committee said in a statement.

SBS and NITV said the award honoured "Rhoda's profound and lasting impact on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and the nation" and her "immense contribution across culture, theatre, arts, dance, media, journalism and public life in Australia".

SBS Director, First Nations, Tanya Denning-Orman, said: "Few people have shaped Australian culture as profoundly as Rhoda."

"She was deadly in so many ways — a visionary leader, trail-



The late Rhoda Roberts AO.

blazer and tireless advocate for First Nations voices. She transformed Australia's cultural landscape with courage, integrity and unwavering purpose. Her dedication to storytelling and truth-telling embodies what this NAIDOC Lifetime Achievement Award represents and we congratulate the Roberts/Field family on this prestigious honour," Ms Denning-Orman said.

National NAIDOC Committee Co-Chair Lynette Riley said "Rhoda Roberts AO was a force

— fearless, brilliant and deeply committed to community and culture". Fellow Co-Chair Steven Satour said Ms Roberts "embodied what '50 Years of Deadly' represents". "She showed our people that our stories belong everywhere," he said.

The National NAIDOC Committee said it extends "our deepest respect to Rhoda's family, loved ones and community as we honour her enduring contribution to First Nations arts, culture and leadership".

“

Few people have shaped Australian culture as profoundly as Rhoda.

Tanya Denning-Orman

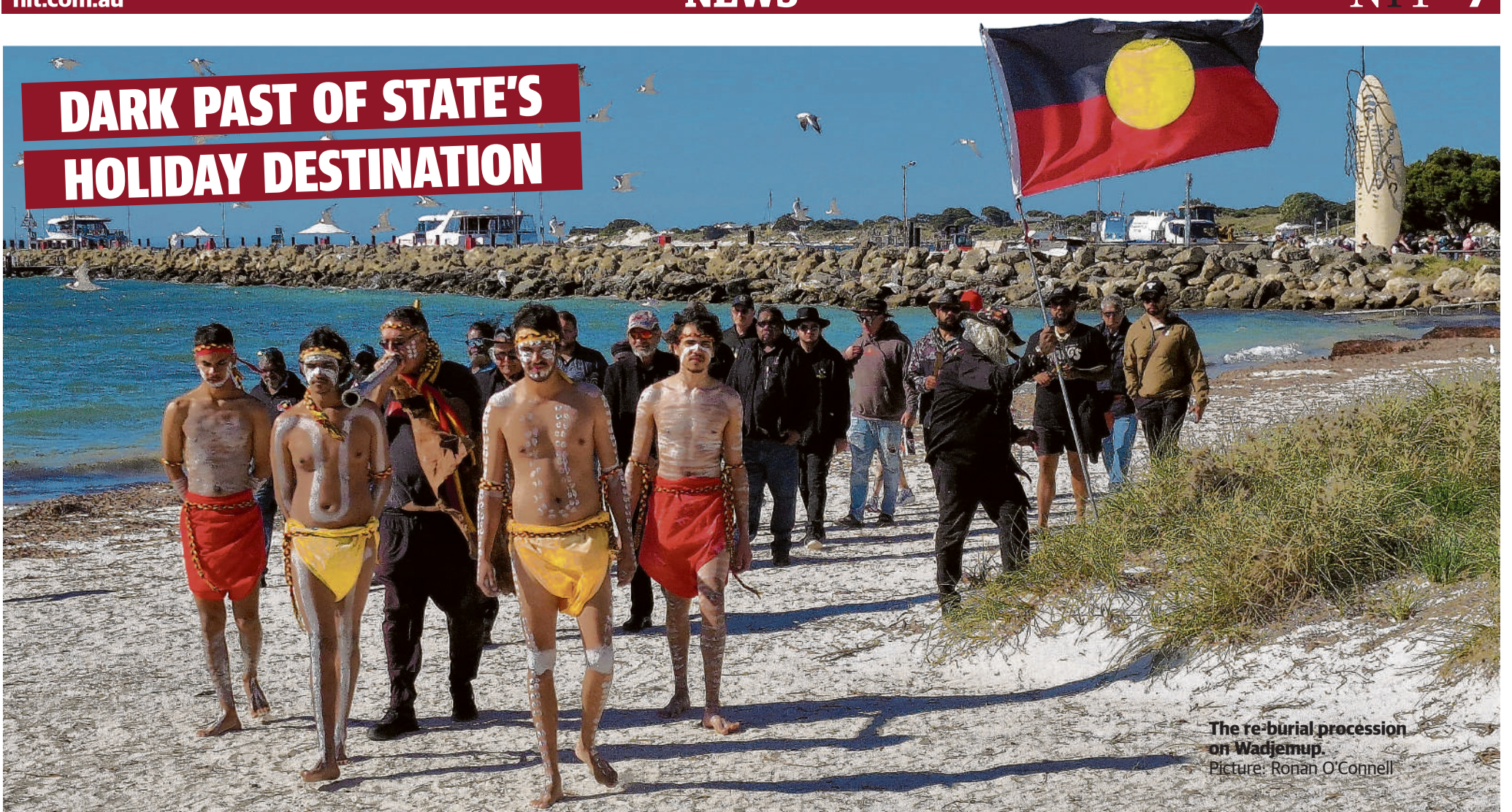
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## DARK PAST OF STATE'S HOLIDAY DESTINATION



The re-burial procession on Wadjemup.  
Picture: Ronan O'Connell

# Island remains re-buried

RONAN O'CONNELL

The human remains of Indigenous ancestry uncovered on Wadjemup/Rottneest Island last month were given a traditional burial on May 9 on the island by dozens of Indigenous men from across Western Australia.

The group, including many Elders, paid their respects to the ancestral remains found on April 8.

Leaving the ferry in the morning, the group of about 50 men formed a procession along the pier to North Thompson beach, where they held a smoking ceremony.

They conducted further smoking ceremonies at the Quod, a former prison building; and at the site where they buried the remains. The ceremonies were performed in that order to retrace the steps Indigenous prisoners used to tread after arriving on Wadjemup according to George Hayden, a Noon-gar Elder and cultural en-

gagement co-ordinator for Whadjuk Aboriginal Corporation.

Mr Hayden said they returned the remains, known culturally as Baalang, so the unknown male could find peace in the afterlife.

"Today was very culturally significant but also very emotional and sad," he said.

A crowd of about 40 were allowed to watch the initial part of the burial, before the Elders asked for privacy.

A Rottneest Island Authority spokesperson said since the remains were discovered, the RIA had been working closely with the Whadjuk Aboriginal Corporation to follow cultural protocols.

They said archaeological investigation would take place the following week "to confirm if the anomalies are burial sites".

"WAC and RIA will share the findings of those investigations with the senior Whadjuk Elders

and respected Aboriginal representatives and determine next steps," the spokesperson said.

WAC member and Whadjuk Elder Kelvin Garlett said it was crucial to conduct comprehensive investigations into further remains on the island.

Mr Garlett said a lot of mystery remained about the number of Indigenous men buried on Wadjemup, as the official written history did not match Indigenous oral history.

Stan Headland, a Whadjuk Elder and WAC cultural advisory committee member, said in time all the "lost souls" on Wadjemup would be discovered thanks to emerging technologies.

"People are walking all over the ground here not knowing there's people underneath them," Mr Headland said.

"We need to find lots more (Indigenous graves) so we can have those areas blocked off from the public."

His sentiments were echoed

by Bunuba man Keith Andrews, who travelled to Wadjemup from Fitzroy Crossing, about 1800km away.

Mr Andrews said he didn't hesitate to make the trip because of its cultural importance. As a child, he regularly heard Elders in his community telling stories about how their ancestors were unfairly imprisoned at Wadjemup. He said it was important this dark history stayed in the public spotlight.

From 1838-1931 WA's colonial authorities ran a prison and forced labour centre on Wadjemup, where at least 3700 Indigenous men and boys were imprisoned, many of whom were later found to have been innocent of their alleged crimes, but had been beaten until they confessed. Hundreds were buried on the island.

On the eve of the re-burial, Iva Hayward-Jackson and Bella Bropho of the Rottneest Island Deaths Group Aboriginal Corporation contacted WA Premier

Roger Cook to raise their concerns about the process. In a letter to the Premier, the RIDGAC representatives requested that the Whadjuk Aboriginal Corporation cancel the re-burial.

"Traditional Owners have not been advised and included in this matter. All Aboriginal people with concerns must also be funded to attend Wadjemup to pay respects," they wrote.

"Our Ancestors belong to all of us and not just the WAC people."

Despite the sinister colonial history of Wadjemup, the island later became a major holiday destination frequented by visitors who mostly knew nothing of its past. Now, however, far greater efforts are being made to acknowledge this history and commemorate the Indigenous victims of Wadjemup's prison era, and the campground and prison accommodation have been closed as part of a WA Government reconciliation effort.

## Camp Embassy to protest Olympic use of Country

JOSEPH GUENZLER

Traditional Owners and supporters are preparing for a five-day Goori Camp Embassy at Barrambin Victoria Park as calls grow for permanent protection of the culturally significant site ahead of the Brisbane 2032 Olympic Games.

The Fill The Park To Defend Living Heritage gathering will run from May 29-June 2 near Gilchrist Avenue, with organisers inviting mob and allies to camp on Country and take part in cultural exchange, music, learning and discussions around self-determination and

land rights. The embassy has been active since April, 5, when a Sacred Fire was established at the site by Uncle Derek Oram and Derek "Deejay" Oram Sandy Jr in support of Traditional Owners connected to Barrambin.

Organisers said the fire was part of maintaining living cultural heritage under the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Heritage Protection Act 1984.

Donations are also being sought to support the ongoing camp, described as a peaceful resistance movement focused on protecting living culture,

land rights, and healing spaces for mob on Country.

Senior Indigenous Elders are pursuing Section 10 applications seeking permanent protection for Barrambin Victoria Park under Federal heritage laws.

The applications are being assessed by independent reporter Dominic McGann, appointed by Federal Environment Minister Murray Watt.

Yagara Elder Gaja Kerry Charlton said Barrambin was a living cultural landscape with continuous connections spanning thousands of years.

"We have been here for thou-

sands of years. Barrambin is a homeland — a place of gathering, festivals and ceremony," she said.

"Barrambin is not empty land. It is a living place that holds our ancestors, stories and responsibilities.

"Our great-great-great-great-grandparents were here, and we are still here."

Traditional Owners encourage the community to support the Section 10 submissions through a public campaign organised by Save Victoria Park.

The submissions argue Barrambin contains permanent

campgrounds, ceremony sites, bora grounds, burial grounds, waterways and significant trees tied to cultural lore, kinship systems and creation stories.

The applications state the proposed 63,000-seat Olympic stadium, National Aquatic Centre and associated infrastructure pose a serious threat to the site and could cause irreversible damage to one of the last remaining culturally significant areas in Magandjin (Brisbane) where Indigenous people maintain connection to traditional homelands.

# All in for National Reconciliation Week.

## Challenge accepted.

National Reconciliation Week is a time to reflect, learn and strengthen relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples. For Woodside, reconciliation is an ongoing responsibility that guides how we operate, partner and make decisions.

Since 2009, Woodside has worked alongside Indigenous Peoples and communities to build respectful relationships, embed cultural understanding, and support participation through employment, business partnerships and community-led initiatives outlined in our Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP).

The cover artwork of our latest RAP Report is titled Ngalpuru (pictured below), meaning “all of us”, and was created by Aboriginal artist Sara Riches to reflect connection to Country, collaboration and the collective effort required to strengthen relationships.



Scan the QR Code to learn more about Woodside's Indigenous Peoples cultural heritage and engagement.



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# STYLING UP

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Reclamation event  
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# Tarnanthi takes tour of country

## PHOEBE BLOGG

The Art Gallery of South Australia's renowned Tarnanthi program will embark on a nationwide tour from 2026-28, from Boorloo/Perth to Rockhampton, with a showcase of ground-breaking works by contemporary Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists.

The touring exhibition, Tarnanthi On Tour: Too Deadly, features more than 30 works from previous Tarnanthi Festivals, many never seen outside of Adelaide, including paintings, installations and moving image works.

After the major exhibition Too Deadly: Ten Years Of Tarnanthi, presented at the Art Gallery of South Australia last year to mark the 10th anniversary of Tarnanthi, this touring exhibition will include significant works featured in festivals from the past decade

that reflect the creative diversity, innovation and cultural depth of contemporary Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art.

Too Deadly features landmark works by celebrated First Nations artists, from satirical chronicles of Australian identity to works from the perspective of Aboriginal stockmen and women on the pastoral frontier, to large-scale collaborative paintings that express enduring connections to Country.

Tarnanthi On Tour: Too Deadly will travel to six venues across four States.

It launches on July 25 at Rockhampton Museum of Art (Qld) before heading to Maitland Regional Art Gallery (NSW), Ngununggula (NSW), Caboolture Art Gallery (Qld), Geelong Gallery (Vic), and the Lawrence Wilson Art Gallery (WA).

"For more than a decade, Adelaide and Tarnanthi have



Australia: Mix It All Up by Walmajarri artist John Prince Siddon.

been a nexus for First Nations artists from across Australia," AGSA director Jason Smith said.

"Now, AGSA will celebrate 10 years of Tarnanthi by taking their stories on the road, connecting audiences around Australia with Tarnanthi's nation-leading approach as a platform for conversations, deep listening and important cultural sharing."

South Australian Minister for Arts Kyam Maher said the Tarnanthi Festival had grown in stature.

"Over the last 10 years, the Tarnanthi Festival has become a mainstay of South Australia's cultural calendar and an important celebration of First Nations creativity, community

and cultural continuity," he said.

"Tarnanthi On Tour: Too Deadly offers a unique chance for audiences outside of South Australia to experience Tarnanthi and engage with the scale, detail and deep histories of significant works drawn from the festival's first decade."

Too Deadly features major installations and works by artists including Tony Albert, Byron Brooks, Kunmanara Carroll, Sammy Dodd, Karen Mills, Reko Rennie, Ian Rictor, Kunmanara (Roy) Underwood, Lennard Walker, and Mumu Mike Williams.

Since 2015, Tarnanthi has established itself as a nation leader in presenting the

nuanced complexity and ingenuity of contemporary First Nations art.

More than 2.2 million people have visited Tarnanthi exhibitions and events, and more than 10,000 First Nations artists have presented their works of art, building understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art and culture for audiences in Australia and around the world.

The word tarnanthi (pronounced TAR-nan-dee) comes from the language of the Kurna people, the traditional owners of the Adelaide Plains.

It means to spring forth or appear, like the sun and the first emergence of light.



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Rapper BARKAA's take on an Amyl And The Sniffers hit shook the audience into life.

## Incredible year of songcraft

PHOEBE BLOGG

Folk-pop singer Emily Wurramara has been honoured as emerging songwriter of the year at the 2026 APRA Music Awards for her incredible body of work over the past year.

The winners of the awards were announced at a star-studded centenary celebration at Sydney's Hordern Pavilion on April 29.

The evening featured special performances for APRA's centenary including an opening performance by Christine Anu, Ngulmiya and Rob Ruha.

Barkaa kicked things off with a bang with her electrifying rendition of Amyl and The Sniffers' Jerkin'.

Wurramara expressed her joy in an Instagram post after the win.

"I am honoured to be the FIRST Indigenous woman to receive this award



Emily Wurramara at the APRA Music Awards. Pic: Lucinda Goodwin

in this category," she wrote. "Songwriting is more than words, it's storytelling, it's capturing feelings, creating worlds, casting spells, it's past, present, future, it reflects the times and the moments, the truth, burns the lies, gives people hope, feel compassion, feel empathy, it inspires and empowers.

"Songwriting is standing in your most vulnerable truth and honouring your honesty with integrity and pride, it's learning to let go of more than just your words. It is walking with courage to dig deep and pull out parts of you that make you wanna run and hide.

"This is more than just an emerging award for me, it's a solid nod that my truth is being heard, that my stories

matter, that my people's stories matter.

"This is something that has been passed down from Generation to generation for over 65,000+ it is ancient. It is sacred. With that being said, I honour my ancestors with love and deep respect."

Wurramara sent out "a big thank you" to "everyone who has supported me throughout the years, and continues to show up in this space".

"It can be damn hard being out there, but I don't give up, I push through because I know my community is the final boss," she said.

"I'm also honoured to have received this award in front of my Gagu @ngulmiya, love you Gagu made me so proud to see you on that stage. When one of us wins, we all do."

# Sound of The Ghan sparks glam rock single

JOSEPH GUENZLER

Akaye glam-rock outfit Mulga Bore Hard Rock released new single Big Train this month ahead of their debut album Sweet Home Mulga Bore, out on Friday May 29 through Community Music.

The new track was released on May 1 with an accompanying video.

Big Train opens with the distant sound of a train before building into the band's hard rock sound, led by heavy guitars, fast-paced drums and Alvin Manfong's vocals.

The song centres on the dream of leaving home to travel with the band and family, while still carrying a connection to community and Country.

Manfong said the track was shaped by a dream of travel and the sound of The Ghan near home.

"This song is about my dream to travel the world with my band and my family," he said.

"When we're home in our community, we can hear the Big Train coming down the tracks, that's The Ghan.

"That's my dream, to jump on that Big Train and see the world."

The single follows the band's recent track Stay, which received rotation on Double J, FBi Radio and RTR FM, and

coverage including from Rolling Stone Australia and ABC Indigenous.

The band were named triple j Unearthed's feature artist Isdy September.

Sweet Home Mulga Bore will feature previously released singles including Stay, Young Men, Heavy Rain, and Sweet Home Mulga Bore.

The eight-track record was made with producers Dave Walker and Craig Harneth at Harneth's Hothouse Audio in St Kilda.

Songs of love, dreams of faraway places and the importance of carrying Country with them feature on the album, which draws on the band's upbringing in Mulga Bore.

The project was made with support from Sharp Film Productions, Songlines Aboriginal Music Corporation, the Bush Music Fund and Bright Moon Trust.

The six-piece previously supported KISS on the Australian leg of their End Of The Road Tour.

They have also appeared at Bigsound and SXSW Sydney, where they drew attention from Australian music media and industry figures.

Big Train is now available on all major streaming platforms.



Mulga Bore Hard Rock. Picture: James Caswell

## Book aims to help kids navigate uncertainty

PHOEBE BLOGG

Wiradjuri man Jake Gablonski will release Brave Like Bunji, a children's book exploring identity, belonging and self-understanding, on June 2 ahead of National Reconciliation Week.

The book, published by Allen & Unwin, draws on his experience growing up navigating spaces where different parts of his identity were not always equally accepted.

Raised in Katherine in the Northern Territory, Gablonski said those early experiences shaped how he learnt to navigate identity from a young age.

"As a kid, you start to notice what feels safe and what doesn't. Sometimes one part of you might be welcome in a space, but another isn't," he said.

As a gay First Nations man, that awareness followed him into adulthood, and he found himself

adjusting how much of himself he brought into environments, from school through to later roles in on-the-ground community work and community radio.

"I showed up as two different people depending on where I was," he said. "Over time, you realise that comes at a cost."

Brave Like Bunji began as the story Gablonski wished he had growing up.

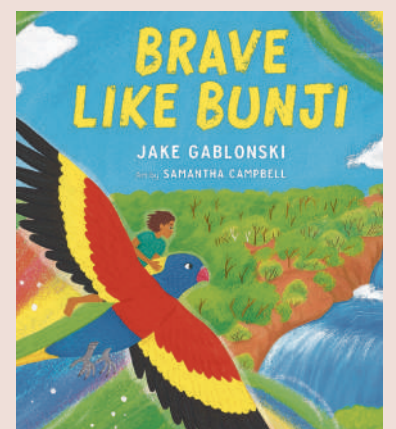
"I wanted to write something

gentle," he said. "Something that reassures young people they don't have to do it alone, and they don't have to rush figuring things out."

The book follows Bunji, a young boy navigating uncertainty, grounded by the people and environment around him.

"Seeing yourself reflected can make a real difference," Gablonski said.

"It can reduce self-doubt before it has a chance to take hold."



Picture: Allen & Unwin

# Reclamation a statement of

## PHOEBE BLOGG

On the eve of Australian Fashion Week this month, First Nations Fashion + Design Runway: Reclamation delivered a platform for Indigenous designers and creatives as powerful as it was engaging.

Presented as an independent First Nations-led platform created by mob, for mob, Reclamation stood as a rejection of a fashion system historically built on exclusion, extraction and the erasure of First Nations authorship.

Reclamation repositioned First Nations fashion at the centre of the national conversation, not as a moment of inclusion but as a demonstration of cultural authority and self-determination.

Presented at Artspace Woolloomooloo, FNFD brought together six First Nations designers:

Tjarlirli & Kaltukatjara Arts, Nungala Creative, MumRed, Merrepen Arts, KingKing Creative and Grace Lillian Lee.

“The opportunity to work with FNFD came through shared values around celebrating and elevating First Nations creativity, storytelling, and innovation,” KingKing Creative designer Tarisee King said.

“We’ve always admired the work FNFD does to create spaces for Blak designers and artists to be seen and celebrated, so being invited to showcase as part of the

Reclamation runway felt like a natural and meaningful collaboration. We’re proud to stand alongside such talented designers and artists who are all contributing to the growth and visibility of Blak excellence within the fashion industry.”

Shining a light on First Nations designers, organisations and art centres, the runway welcomed emerging and established creatives.

Nungala Creative founder and proud Warumungu, Wombaya woman Jessica Johnson reflected on the power that comes from First Nations runways, and the advocacy it creates for mob. “Being involved in the FNFD runway ahead of Australian Fashion Week was epic,” she said.

“Black-led runways are a vibe. We don’t get to celebrate each other in this collective space enough.

“Just seeing mob elevated, all the beauty, pride serving looks off and on the runway. No bias, we’re stunning — not in a Eurocentric way either, all the shapes and colour — we glow.”

The Reclamation runway was presented in partnership with RUSSH Magazine, with

executive fashion director Hannah Cooper and fashion assistant Koby Dulac-Daley providing mentorship to two First Nations fashion students from the University of Technology Sydney, who styled the runway presentation alongside the FNFD creative team.

“At RUSSH, storytelling has always been at the centre of how we understand fashion,



KingKing Creative.

culture and identity, which is why partnering with First Nations Fashion + Design feels both deeply meaningful and entirely natural,” publisher and editor-in-chief Jess Blanch said.

“As an independent publication and a community for creative minds, we acknowledge First Nations people are this country’s original storytellers — carrying knowledge, creativity and connection through generations with an integrity and perspective that continues to shape contemporary Australian culture. This partnership is about creating space for those voices to be

seen, heard and celebrated on their own terms.”

FNFD founder Grace Lillian Lee spoke on the two businesses’ partnership.

“True partnership begins with listening, trust and a willingness to shift power,” she said.

“What RUSSH understood from the beginning was that this could not simply be about representation, it had to be about authorship, agency and creating a platform where First Nations creatives could



Charvanie Walsh wearing Nungala Creative.



Bianca Hunt in Mum Red.

# sovereignty



lead the narrative entirely on our own terms. What is happening now is not the emergence of First Nations fashion, but the industry finally recognising the depth, sophistication and sovereignty that has always existed here.

"Having young First Nations fashion students involved in styling the runway was especially important to me because this work is not only about the present moment—it is about building legacy, pathways and infrastructure for the next generation.

"Reclamation was never designed to fit comfortably within the existing fashion system. It was designed to challenge it, expand it, and ensure that our voices are not invited in temporarily, but embedded permanently

within the future of Australian fashion."

The evening also featured performances by William Barton and ARIA-winning rapper Barkaa, as well as a runway appearance from Bianca Hunt.

The show's program included exclusive costume works from Lillian Lee's collaboration for Flora, presented by The Australian Ballet in partnership with Bangarra Dance Theatre, recontextualised within a sovereign First Nations framework.

"Reclamation was never about visibility within existing systems," Lillian Lee said.

"It was about dismantling those systems and rebuilding them on our terms. Our culture is not a trend, a reference point, or a resource. It is sovereign."

Aavaisha Cockatoo-Collins wearing Tjarlirli and Kaltukatjara Art. Far left: Barkaa performs at the Reclamation Runway. Centre: Merrepen Arts. Right: Mum Red. Pictures: Wendell Teodoro/Lucas Dawson



**CREDITS:** Beauty was created in partnership with AVEDA, led by hair director Darren Summers, and make-up was in partnership with The Ordinary, led by make-up director Isabella Schmid. Reclamation was presented with support from Orange & Sardine, Indigenous Capital Limited, Creative Australia, Artspace, RUSSH Magazine, AVEDA, The Ordinary, EPSON, BONDS, IndiGrow, Usher Tinkler Wines, Beer Farm, and DAZIE footwear provided by the ICONIC.



KingKing Creative.



Zanthe Evans wearing Grace Lillian Lee.



**Rio Tinto**

# into Caring for Country

Jacqueline Keppel, Winchanam clan

This National Reconciliation Week, we recognise the importance of working together.

Indigital and Rio Tinto are partnering with communities in Weipa, Aurukun, Napranum and Mapoon on a co-designed Caring for Country initiative. Blending cultural knowledge with digital technology, the program supports communities to strengthen language, share knowledge and build skills for a sustainable future.



Learn more at [www.indigital.net.au](http://www.indigital.net.au)

## Minerva Decommissioning and Field Management Environment Plans (Commonwealth and State)

Woodside has led the development of the LNG industry in Australia and today aims to thrive through the global energy transition. Woodside consults with relevant persons to gather feedback to inform its Commonwealth and State Environment Plans.

### Minerva Decommissioning and Field Management Environment Plans

Woodside is planning to undertake Campaign 2 of decommissioning activities for the Minerva Field, which includes the removal of the Minerva pipeline bundle and stabilisation mattresses in Commonwealth and State waters. Woodside is consulting relevant persons on two Environment Plans regarding the proposed activities:

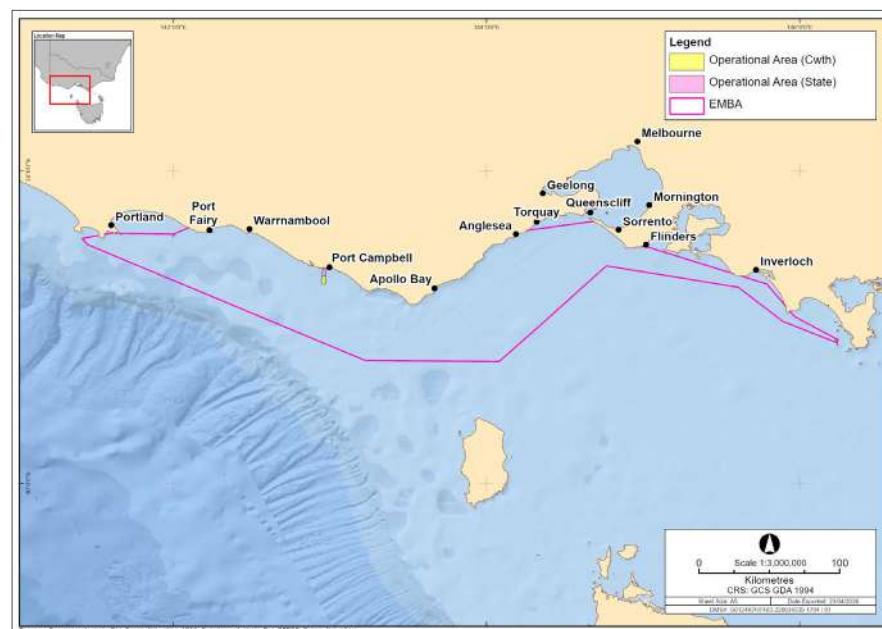
- Minerva Decommissioning and Field Management Environment Plan (Commonwealth)
- Minerva Decommissioning and Field Management Environment Plan (State)

### Environment that May Be Affected (EMBA)

The EMBA is the largest geographic area where an unplanned event could potentially have an environmental consequence. In the highly unlikely event a hydrocarbon release does occur, the whole EMBA would not be affected.

### We would like to hear from you

If you are an individual, organisation or community group and believe your functions, interests or activities may be affected by the activities under these Environment Plans, we would like to hear from you by **12 June 2026**.



[feedback@woodside.com](mailto:feedback@woodside.com)  
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[woodside.com](http://woodside.com)

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# Vibrant line-up for Vivid Live

PHOEBE BLOGG

Running until June 13 during Vivid Sydney, Vivid Live has brought more than 50 international and Australian artists to play at Sydney Opera House.

The yearly centrepiece of the venue's contemporary music program, is being curated for the 11th time by the opera house's Ben Marshall.

The line-up spans global icons, local trailblazers and emerging voices, with world and Australian exclusives and premieres, one-off collaborations, anniversaries, studio parties and a curated cinema program alongside the spectacular Lighting of the Sails.

Among those taking to the Vivid Live stage this year are First Nations musicians Miles Nautu, King Stingray, Beddy Rays, Jem Cassar-Daley, Zipporah & Mi-kaisha, and Drifting Clouds.

Sydney Opera House head of First Nations programming Michael Hutchings shared his excitement about the diverse First Nations talent featured.

"The artists on the line-up demonstrate the depth and breadth of First Nations talent across genres and are from urban, regional and remote country," Hutchings told Style Up.

"We put a focus first up on exciting emerging talent that is on the verge of commercial breakthrough, including Zipporah, Jem Cassar-Daley, Mi-kaisha, Miles Nautu, and Drifting Clouds, as the Vivid Live at Sydney Opera House stage will give them an important launch



Jem Cassar-Daley  
Pictures: Vivid Sydney

platform for future success.

"We also celebrate artists that are currently launching into successful music careers across Australia and the world like King Stingray and Beddy Rays.

"What excites me is that First Nations contemporary music is no longer an add-on or token inclusion.

"It is becoming an important

and potent part of the contemporary music and cultural landscape, as it should be."

Hutchings noted music played a key role in keeping First Nations culture and storytelling alive.

"Music has been vital to the continuation of the oral storytelling tradition that helps keep culture alive," he

said. "In times of forced institutionalised displacement from country as well as racism, poverty and abuse, music has acted as a vital lifeline to tell stories from country, create new stories, keep hope alive, tell the truth, and also entertain, have a good time and dance.

"I have learnt that music acts on two levels for First

King Stingray.

Nations artists; one is that it speaks for and to First Nations communities first up, and the other is that many artists now want to take their music and stories beyond here and to the world.

"Both are valid and important avenues of expression."

Marshall said this year's Vivid Live program would spotlight and showcase a diverse range of talent.

"Vivid Live at Sydney Opera House is a unique moment when the gold standard of live music fills every corner of this building — itself a testament to the transformative power of art — while Vivid Sydney pulses energy through the city," he said.

Vivid Sydney is owned, managed and produced by the NSW Government's tourism and major events agency, Destination NSW.

## Festival to showcase wide range of movies

PHOEBE BLOGG

The Sydney Film Festival will feature several First Nations films from June 3-14, showcasing storytelling and culture.

The festival will present 248 films from 81 countries in total, including 19 world premieres, three international premieres and 140 Australian premieres, with screenings at the State Theatre,

Sydney Opera House, and cinemas across the city.

First Nations films to be screened include: Yumburra, Lomu, ARRU, Powwow People, At The Place Of Ghosts, Wrong Husband, Nika & Madison, Aanikoobijigan, and Sukundimi Walks Before Me.

Attendees will also be able to connect with fellow filmgoers and filmmakers, participate

in special events and exclusive talks, or grab a drink and a bite to eat at The Hub at Lower Town Hall.

"We want to invite you to join us at SFF this year, where each moment offers an opportunity for discovery and empathy," Sydney Film Festival director Nashen Moodley said.

"Art and cinema help us make sense of the world, take us into the

lives of people far away from us, and remind us to remain vigilant about our own rights and freedoms.

"And we can't forget, they're also an enormous source of joy."

The festival is supported by the NSW Government through Screen NSW and Destination NSW; the Federal Government through Screen Australia; and the City of Sydney.

## Inkabee celebrates birthday with mix

JOSEPH GUENZLER

Noongar Wongi artist Inkabee dropped his debut mixtape Chapter 14 this month, with the release arriving on his 14th birthday.

Released via First Nations Focus, the project brings together tracks from across Inkabee's catalogue and frames them as a time capsule of music written and recorded between the ages of 10 and 13.

The mixtape documents his evolution as an artist and a young person, blending his hip-hop foundations with a stronger RnB influence, a more melodic sound, interludes, archival audio and newer

material that points towards his next chapter.

Inkabee said the mixtape captures how much his sound had changed over time.

"When I listen back, I can hear such a change in my voice, the sound, and even just my confidence," he said.

"It's like the earlier tracks were the foundation, and now I'm closer to the true sound of my artistry."

Chapter 14 includes his debut single Beat The Odds, two versions of Rabbit Proof Fence recorded at ages 10 and 13, and newer material including Vibe and On The Move, which signal sonic and personal growth.

Inkabee said releasing the

project on his birthday felt like the right way to mark that shift.

"Time's gone so fast, it's mad, and dropping this on my birthday just felt right," he said.

"Closing one chapter and starting the next."

The mixtape also serves as a scrapbook of the moments that have shaped Inkabee's rise.

From Boorloo/Perth, Inkabee first broke through at 10 years old with Beat The Odds and has since built a profile as one of Australia's emerging young voices, while continuing to shape his own identity.

His career has included a widely shared viral

performance for Chance the Rapper, becoming the youngest artist to perform on triple j's Like A Version with a rendition of Where Is The Love by Black Eyed Peas, and millions of views of viral performances including his triple j Bars Of Steel appearance with We Dat Good. He was also recognised as triple j's feature artist in 2024.

His performances have taken him to America's Got Talent, SXSW Sydney and Austin, the International Indigenous Music Summit, and New York's Central Park.

Chapter 14 is out now and available to hear on all streaming platforms.



Inkabee Picture: Jenna Elson



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# UN urges Canada reforms

GIOVANNI TORRE

The United Nations Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples took the significant step of issuing Technical Advice to Canada this month regarding implementation of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and Canada's Bill S-2, an Act to amend the Indian Act (new registration entitlements).

The EMRIP's Technical Advice, issued on May 7, urges Canada to end continuing sex and race-based discrimination in the Indian Act and remove the second-generation cut-off because of its assimilatory effects.

EMRIP has raised concerns about forced assimilation of First Nations in Canada, accomplished through the second-generation cut-off in violation of the UN Declaration, which guarantees Indigenous Peoples' right not to be forcibly assimilated by the State (Article 8).

The Union of British Columbia Indian Chiefs and First Nations women from the Indian Act Sex Discrimination Working Group backed the advice from EMRIP for the Canadian Government to pass Bill S-2 as amended by the Senate without further delay.

Bill S-2 was introduced as a limited response to the BC Supreme Court's August 2025 decision in *Nicholas v Canada* relating to discrimination against the descendants of a parent, grandparent, or great-grandparent who enfranchised (no longer had Indian status).

However, the Canadian Senate amended the Bill with a historic unanimous vote, to remove provisions that perpetuate sex and race discrimination and to remove the second-generation cut-off.

The second-generation cut-off limits how Indian status (registration) is transmitted from parents to children under the Indian Act. After two gener-



Chief Marilyn Slett outside the United Nations building in Geneva. Picture: Heiltsuk Tribal Council

ations of parenting with a person who does not have Indian status, the children will not be entitled to be registered as Indians. In a statement on May 12, the UBCIC warned the second-generation cut-off rule would cause "the legislative extinction of status Indians" within several generations and "cause irreparable harm to families and First Nations".

The union noted the Senate's amendments were made at the request of First Nations leaders and supported by resolutions, as well as at the request of First Nations women and youth, and First Nation organisations from all over Canada.

"Despite this near-unanimous support from First Nations, Canada's Federal Government insists it cannot accept the Senate amendments because it needs further consultations with those very same First Nations," UBCIC noted.

This is the second time in 2026 the UN has called on Canada to address forced assimilation and ongoing discrimination in the Indian Act by adopting Bill S-2 as amended by the Senate.

In March, the UN Human Rights Committee recommended that Canada "eliminate the remaining discriminatory effects of the Indian Act on Indigenous women and their descendants" by "adopting proposed amendments (in Bill S-2) concerning the second-generation cut-off rule".

UBCIC said EMRIP's technical advice represented "a unique opportunity for Canada to show its commitment to its international human rights obligations and its own legislation ... which affirms the application of the UN Declaration in Canadian law".

Mi'kmaq lawyer and member of the Eel River Bar First Nation Dr Pamela Palmater

said Canadian authorities continued to "delay justice for First Nations women and children by maintaining sex and race-based discrimination in the Indian Act, while insulating itself from liability for the irreparable harms done to these women and children, their families and, ultimately, their First Nations".

Union of BC Indian Chiefs secretary-treasurer Marilyn Slett said First Nations chiefs and leaders from across the country had "explicitly and publicly called for an end to the second-generation cut-off via numerous resolutions", since Canada introduced it in 1985.

Chief Slett, who is also chief councillor of the Heiltsuk Tribal Council, noted eliminating the cut-off was supported by UN human rights bodies including the Human Rights Committee, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against

Women, and now the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, as well as by parliamentary committees, and numerous witnesses who had testified before the Canadian Government on its harmful effects.

"After 150 years of forced assimilation and denial of rights under the Indian Act, we are facing mathematical genocide before our eyes. Now is the time to act and pass Bill S-2 as amended by Senate," she said.

Lower Nicola Band member Sharon McIvor, lead plaintiff in the *McIvor v Canada* case and author of a successful petition to the UN Human Rights Committee, said: "I have been fighting sex and race discrimination in the Indian Act for 60 years. Over 18 ministers of the Crown have promised me they would address the ongoing discrimination later, but that promise has never been kept," she said.

# Minister tells unions to focus on women's safety

REBEKAH RASMUSSEN

Fiji's Minister for Women, Children and Social Protection Sashi Kiran this month urged trade unions to take a stronger role in preventing violence against women, arguing workplace safety, fair wages, and gender equality must be treated as connected issues.

Ms Kiran raised the issue during her address to the Fiji Trades Union Congress' 51st Biennial Delegates Conference.

The conference focused on the role of unions in promoting decent work, fair wages and safer workplaces across Fiji.

Ms Kiran argued decent work could not be separated from the barriers women continued to face in employment and income security.

She linked women's employ-



Sashi Kiran

ment barriers to structural inequality.

"Women remain concentrated in low-paid and insecure sectors, while many are underemployed or unemployed," Ms Kiran said.

"This is not by chance.

"These are structural inequalities that continue to affect women and their families."

The Ministry of Women, Children and Social Protection has framed the issue as part of its wider work to advance the rights, safety and wellbeing of women, children and vulnerable communities.

Ms Kiran also highlighted the need for greater investment in training and employment opportunities for women and people living with disabilities, including sectors where Fiji relied on overseas workers.

She acknowledged the Fiji Trades Union Congress for launching its 50/50 by 2050 initiative earlier this year.

The initiative aims to address gender inequality in workplaces and increase female representation in union leadership structures.

Ms Kiran told delegates unions had a role beyond wages

and conditions, including supporting women workers experiencing violence and abuse.

She warned violence against women affected workplaces, families and the wider economy.

"More than 60 per cent of women in Fiji have experienced some form of violence," Ms Kiran said.

"Violence affects productivity through absenteeism, stress, injuries and loss of focus at work.

"These are not only workplace issues; they are human rights issues."

The call came as the ministry continued to frame women's safety and workplace equality alongside wider econ

In Cakaudrove, the ministry recently handed equipment to the Manutabu Women's Club of

Biaugunu Village, Saqani, to support a community homesite project.

The project is expected to create income opportunities for women while providing accommodation for government officials, development partners, visitors and travellers in the Saqani area.

The ministry will monitor the project over six months to assess its progress, impact and long-term sustainability, and has described the assistance as part of the Government's continued work to support women through entrepreneurship, sustainable livelihoods and inclusive economic development.

Ms Kiran also recognised past and present union leaders for their work in advocating for workers' rights and social justice.

# Culture demonised again

TRACY WESTERMAN

Every time an Aboriginal child dies, the response is the same. It's not to fund services. Not to resource families. It's to demonise an entire culture.

I cannot think of a single instance when a non-Indigenous child's death has prompted calls to demonise all non-Indigenous people.

Yet here we are. Again. The data tells a different story from the one being weaponised right now. Ninety-two per cent of children in NT care are already Aboriginal.

The system has never gone soft on Aboriginal people.

Eighty-two per cent of those removals are for neglect — the lowest level on the risk continuum, the most vulnerable to cultural bias, and the one that warrants intensive family support — not removal.

Sexual abuse — where

people's minds immediately go — accounts for 6 per cent of notifications for Aboriginal children. It's 10 per cent for non-Indigenous children.

We have now surpassed 25,000 Aboriginal children removed from their families. The same number as the Stolen Generations. We are not learning. We are repeating.

In WA, removing just four of 20 child protection districts — the most remote, the most under-resourced — drops the Aboriginal removal rate from 61 per cent to 38 per cent.

In the Kimberley, 100 per cent of children in care are Aboriginal. In the Pilbara, it's 96 per cent.

It defies logic. We are supposed to believe there has never been a non-Indigenous child in the Kimberley deemed in need of State protection.

The Kimberley also has the highest rates of child suicide in the country — Indigenous

“

We have now surpassed 25,000 Aboriginal children removed from their families. The same number as the Stolen Generations. We are not learning. We are repeating.

children dying at six times the rate of non-Indigenous children. Removal does not protect children. It destroys them, and the harm is generational.

Meanwhile, the Government

funds intensive family support programs that 80 per cent non-Indigenous families access — delivered by a 90 per cent non-Indigenous workforce.

Over the past decade, the non-Indigenous removal rate has fallen by 13 per cent, and the Indigenous rate has risen by 120 per cent. Same system, same decade. One group served, one group not.

Only 5 per cent of child protection notifications come from wealthy suburbs.

We are targeting poor Black families while other children go unseen. Child abuse is a human issue. Linking culture to abuse is eugenics. The pipeline is straightforward: removal — justice system — substance use — violence — poor health — poor education.

Every organisation working on those outcomes exists largely because of the Stolen Generations. We are building

the next generation of that client base right now.

The Child Placement Principle has never stopped authorities from protecting a child at genuine risk. If Senator Jacinta Nampjinpa Price and the Country Liberal Party believe otherwise, they need to show us exactly where. Not rhetoric. Actual cases. And report those cases. Don't stand in front of the country and demonise an entire culture acting like the system hasn't removed children at breathtaking numbers, and deny the fact that when families reach out for help they are being harmed instead.

What the Child Placement Principle does is prevent us from repeating history.

We are repeating history.

**Dr Tracy Westerman is a Nyamal woman and the founder and executive chair of The Westerman Jilya Institute for Indigenous Mental Health.**

## Practical ways to turn allyship into real action

TANESHA BENNELL

In 2026 we've seen an uptake of right-wing extremism.

Over the past few years, we've seen this coming slowly but surely. People with hateful ideologies have been given permission, in effect, by the lack of action from our leaders to become more organised and more public in their violence and discrimination.

After the Indigenous Voice to Parliament referendum in 2023, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities have been able to quantify with statistics the lack of support we have from our non-Indigenous Australian peers, that in conjunction with our politicians using sacred and ancient cultural practices as election campaign slogans and strategies, it's no surprise neo-nazi/white Australia groups are emboldened.

In WA, these hateful campaigns have expanded to our LGBTIQ+ community members. This has included violent attacks against trans and gender-diverse people, targeted flyer campaigns doxxing and accusing LGBTIQ+ community members in Boorloo/Perth of being predators, and organisations and events being targeted in an attempt to shut them down — and we aren't seeing an end to it.

If anything we're seeing more organised efforts.

In the first five months of 2026 we've seen a steady unveiling of the depth of Australia's racism, beginning with the removal of the

Survival Day Birak Concert from the City of Perth's annual "Australia Day events".

First Nations communities in Boorloo were left blindsided as we received no communication a beloved annual event had been cancelled without adequate community consultation.

Alongside other Aboriginal community members Ilona McGuire, who started a petition to bring back the concert, and her father Noongar Elder Walter McGuire, we put forward a motion at the City of Perth Annual AGM on January 27 to bring it back.

I note the date because it was the day following the alleged attempted terrorist attack at Forrest Place. Rewinding to January 26 2026, a day that already holds so much pain and re-traumatisation for the First Nations community, people who gathered in Forrest Place on Whadjuk Noongar Boodja were exposed to a new level of hate we have not seen in WA.

A device which has been identified as a homemade explosive device was thrown into the crowd within metres of First Nations elders, children, community members and our allies.

While this was happening, a counter March for Australia rally was being held less than 2km away.

Before people in attendance even knew the full extent of the risk we were at or had even finished marching, politicians and WA Police had already started releasing statements — the narrative of our trauma taken from First Nations



communities once again and coming out of the mouths of people who weren't even on the ground.

Since January 26, we have lost 14 First Nations community members to deaths in custody, including two women in the same WA prison within a fortnight.

Now imagine the First Nations LGBTIQ+ people who sit at these two intersections.

We talk in theory of compounding marginalisation but I urge you to look at the facts. The Walkern Katatdjin Roadmap Report clearly outlines the severely low social and emotional wellbeing of First Nations LGBTIQ+ communities.

This is due to layers of racism, queerphobia, lack of access to culture, and all the other forms of violence to which we are exposed.

Safety means safety for all, and without anti-racism

frameworks and legislation, First Nations LGBTIQ+ people face a wider gap in terms of protection from discrimination, racial vilification, and general safety in community.

An intersectional lens is not only beneficial but essential to have holistic and meaningful impact across all First Nations communities, but specifically for intersectional First Nations communities who we know are often overlooked, over-criminalised, and don't receive the same amount of support.

Until all community needs are being met with sustainable, up-to-date, and tangible impacts, the symbolic and inaccessible current anti-discrimination policies are insufficient in protecting First Nations LGBTIQ+ communities in WA.

I'm calling on the community to turn "ally" from a noun to a

verb and to start acting. Here are some easy ways you can do this:

This month, Rainbow Futures WA, Youth Pride Network, and Living Proud have called for change and they are asking the community to amplify the message. Share our social media posts to raise awareness. Write to your local MP. It takes five minutes, and it really matters.

I would also call on First Nations community members to enter submissions to the inquiry into racism, hate and violence directed at Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people which has now been extended until June 1.

Everyone deserves to feel safe. Please do your part to ensure this for us and for our younger generations.

**Tanisha Bennell is a Bibulmun Noongar yorga and an Aboriginal Community Organiser at Rainbow Futures WA.**

# YEC deal signed and sealed for solar plan

DAVID PRESTIPINO

Yindjibarndi Energy Corporation, a partnership between the Yindjibarndi People and multinational renewable energy developer ACEN, will begin construction of the Jinbi Solar Project in the Pilbara after signing a 30-year power purchase agreement with Rio Tinto this month.

The finalisation of the project's financing marks a major step in delivering renewable energy on Yindjibarndi Ngurra (Country), with all the key funding, contractual arrangements, government approvals and consents required to proceed to construction now satisfied.

A central component of the commercial framework was a long-term power purchase agreement for stage one of the project with Rio, which will receive 100 per cent of electricity generated by Jinbi, supporting decarbonisation of the global miner's Pilbara iron ore operations once the project is operational.

Stage one of the project will comprise a 75 megawatt alternating current solar facility, with an option to expand to

150MWac, including the potential addition of battery energy storage systems.

YEC has issued notices to proceed to its engineering, procurement and construction contractor DT Infrastructure and its construction accommodation provider Rapid Camps.

Construction will begin in accordance with the approved schedule, with full commercial operations, with the start of the 30-year PPA supply period expected in mid-2028.

Early site works have already begun, with Yurra, a Yindjibarndi Nation enterprise and YEC's preferred civil works partner, carrying out site preparation and mobilisation activities to ready the site for construction.

Yindjibarndi Nation CEO Michael Woodley said financial close on Jinbi was a pivotal step in translating long-held aspirations into enduring outcomes for Yindjibarndi people.

"Reaching financial close demonstrates that when development is Yindjibarndi-led, underpinned by strong governance and the right partnerships, it can deliver outcomes that are both commercially



YEC's Craig Ricato, Yindjibarndi leader Michael Woodley, ACEN's Anton Rohner and YEC's Aaron Hubert.

sound and culturally grounded," he said.

Rio Tinto iron ore chief executive Matthew Holcz congratulated YEC and acknowledged the leadership of the Yindjibarndi People in achieving the milestone.

"We're proud to be part of the Jinbi project, which reflects years of work by many, and led by the Yindjibarndi People," Mr Holcz said.

"Developing renewable energy on Yindjibarndi Country, in partnership with its Traditional Custodians, creates enduring value — supporting our operations while contributing to long-term economic opportunities on Country."

ACEN group chief investment officer Patrice Clause said the Jinbi Solar Project reflected the strength of its partnership with Yindjibarndi.

"Jinbi demonstrates what is possible when Traditional Owner leadership, long-term vision, and disciplined project development come together," he said.

"ACEN is proud to partner with Yindjibarndi on a project that meets rigorous commercial standards while setting a strong benchmark for responsible and respectful renewable energy development in Australia."

Formed in 2023, YEC is one of Australia's biggest Indigenous-

led renewable energy initiatives, with plans to develop a portfolio of up to 3GW of renewable energy capacity within about 13,000sqm of Yindjibarndi Ngurra, supporting decarbonisation, electrification, and new industries across the Pilbara while delivering enduring economic and social benefits for Yindjibarndi people.

Its strategy is structured on two key renewable energy hubs: the Chichester Range Renewable Energy Hub, and the Eastern Development Zone Renewable Energy Hub, which form the backbone of YEC's more than 1.5GW of wind, solar, BESS and related infrastructure projects currently in development.

# Community seeks remote bank hub

NATASHA CLARK

A remote Aboriginal community on Western Australia's Kimberley coast is proposing a first-of-its-kind banking hub to tackle financial exclusion across the Dampier Peninsula, citing the fact that residents must travel 200km to access basic banking services.

The proposal, led by Djarindjin Aboriginal Corporation, calls on Australia's four major banks to jointly fund a community-led banking service for remote communities, including Djarindjin, Lombadina, Beagle Bay and Ardyaloon, which have a combined population of about 2000 people.

Veronica Johnson of DAC's Goolboo Jawal financial counselling service is advocating for the hub, having observed the financial damage caused by the lack of banking services.

"People are needing assistance with banking, everything from financial abuse to basic activating of cards," Ms Johnson told National Indigenous

Times. "Community members are struggling to put food on the table or fuel, and you can't have one without the other. If you can't activate your card, you can't get your money."

Ms Johnson said she spent much of her time helping residents with banking, and financial exploitation persisted in the area.

"People are struggling," she said. "There's a lot of financial abuse and a lot of complex banking matters that I need to attend to as a financial counselor."

DAC chief executive Nathan McIvor said the hub would be "a solution for a long-term problem".

Mr McIvor noted the hub would boost local employment and give "autonomy to the communities in dealing with banking for local community people".

After viewing the proposal, Australia's Securities and Investment Commission has encouraged "financial institutions to consider these long-



The Djarindjin community is calling for a banking hub on the Dampier Peninsula.

standing barriers when providing services to their customers".

"We consider access to banking services as a key foundation of economic empowerment and participation," an ASIC spokesperson said.

Ms Johnson said Commonwealth Bank had formally denied the request, while Westpac and ANZ had not provided definitive answers.

She described the Commonwealth Bank's denial of the hub as a "kick in the guts".

"They said they're doing enough by travelling to Dja-

rindjin three times a year, but it doesn't really cover it," Ms Johnson said.

Responding to the upset caused by the rejection, Commonwealth Bank said: "Our First Nations Reach program delivers quarterly visits to selected communities, typically for one to three business days."

"This provides face-to-face help with account access, identification issues, fraud inquiries and banking education."

Ms Johnson said Westpac and ANZ had not issued formal rejections but had "stopped re-

plying to emails". ANZ and Westpac provided background information to National Indigenous Times but did not comment.

In contrast, Ms Johnson praised NAB for its responsiveness and encouragement, noting senior management had reached out to her directly regarding the proposal.

Despite the setbacks, Ms Johnson isn't prepared to give up the fight for the community-led banking hub.

"It's about little communities like Djarindjin making things happen," she said.

# Strategy is taking shape

CALLAN MORSE

Indigenous business leaders came together at the annual NSW Aboriginal Business Roundtable recently to discuss strategies to ensure the Aboriginal business sector continues to thrive into the future.

Held in Sydney, the ninth Roundtable — a NSW Government initiative — had a sector-wide focus on future growth.

The event saw participants provide input to help shape an inaugural NSW Aboriginal Business Strategy, to be finalised in the coming months.

Topics discussed at the roundtable included procurement, access to capital and support for Aboriginal businesses.

NSW Aboriginal Business Taskforce co-chair, Phil Usher, said the task force's work is ongoing.

"We are in a privileged position to be able to represent the voices of Aboriginal businesses in a way that can shape meaningful change," Mr Usher said.

"Over the next five years we expect that half of the Aboriginal businesses within the State will be regionally based.

"This will lead to more jobs for Aboriginal people and a great opportunity for self-determination on our terms."



NSW Aboriginal Business Taskforce co-chair Phil Usher speaking at the Aboriginal Business Roundtable.

Participants also provided input to help shape an inaugural NSW Aboriginal Business Strategy, which will be finalised in the coming months.

The NSW Government is developing the strategy in collaboration with the NSW Aboriginal Business Taskforce, an advisory body established by the Government in 2025.

It came following a recommendation made at a previous roundtable to provide government with strategic advice on the sector and how it can be supported to grow.

NSW Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Treaty David Harris said the Government is proud to work in partnership with Aboriginal business lead-

ers "to support the success and growth of the sector".

NSW is unique in having a Closing The Gap Priority Reform 5, which specifically focuses on Aboriginal economic prosperity, employment and nurturing businesses.

According to last year's NSW Treasury report, there are more registered Aboriginal

businesses in New South Wales than any other State or Territory, with more than 940 businesses representing more than 31 per cent of First Nations businesses nationwide.

The Government said 175 businesses have emerged since 2020, showing strong momentum and growth in the State's Aboriginal business sector.

## Environment plan

### Seeking relevant persons' input

**Chevron has been operating in Australia for more than 70 years – creating enduring benefits and delivering reliable, affordable energy. We welcome feedback to enhance our environmental management measures as we progress offshore activities to support the ongoing supply of natural gas to Western Australia and the Asia Pacific region.**

#### Our activities

Chevron Australia is planning to undertake pipelay, subsea installation and pre-commissioning activities in the Geryon and Eurytion gas fields, as part of Gorgon Stage 3 (GS3).

The offshore activities will take place in Commonwealth waters, approximately 95 kilometres (km) off the northwest coast of WA at water depths of more than 1,000 metres. The activities are indicatively scheduled to commence from mid-2027 and will take approximately 18–24 months to complete.

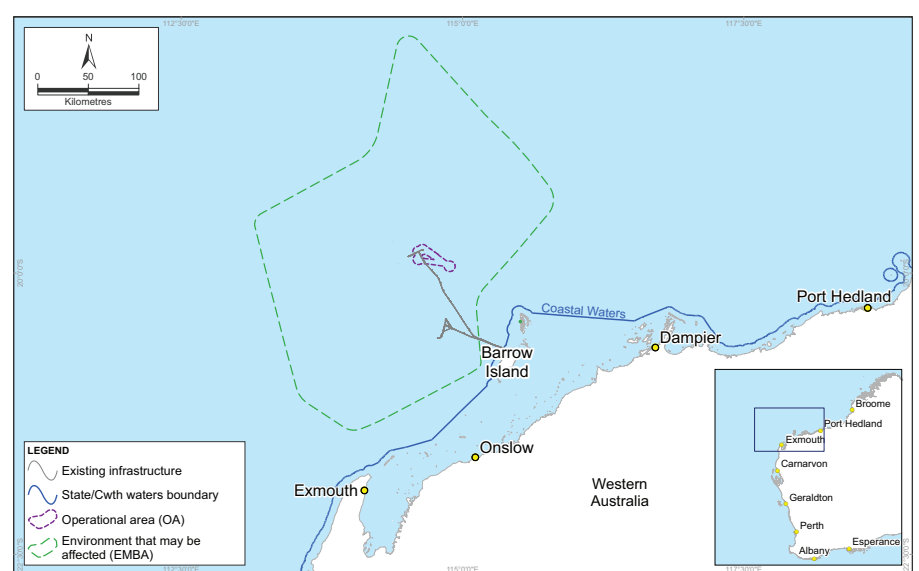
The feedback we receive during consultation will inform and enhance the GS3 Pipelay, Subsea Installation, and Pre-commissioning Environment Plan, which must be accepted by the National Offshore Petroleum Safety and Environmental Management Authority (NOPSEMA) before activities may commence.

#### Environment that may be affected (EMBA)

As part of our environmental assessment and consultation process, we create maps to provide geographical context for relevant persons to determine if their functions, interests or activities may be affected by an offshore petroleum activity during planned activities (e.g. routine or contingency operations) or from an unplanned event (e.g. emergency scenarios).

The map shows the operational area (OA), which is a 5 km radius buffer around the indicative location of the infrastructure, and the EMBA, which is based on a worst-case unplanned release of hydrocarbon scenario (an oil spill) resulting from a vessel collision event.

The EMBA has been defined through combining multiple oil spill model simulations for the unplanned release scenario under different weather and ocean conditions. This means that in the highly unlikely event an unplanned release does occur, a geographical area much smaller than the EMBA would be affected.



Most of the impacts and risks directly arising from planned activities would occur within, or within proximity of, the OA.

Chevron Australia has systematic control measures to prevent and mitigate emergencies and to reduce the impact of planned activities on the environment, including ecological, social and cultural sensitivities.

#### We want to hear from you

We are now seeking feedback and input if you consider your functions, interests, or activities may be affected. This may include Traditional Owners and Custodians with a spiritual and cultural connection to land and sea Country, local community members, and those involved in commercial or recreational fishing and tourism.

Please contact us by **17 June 2026** 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.



# NT urged to focus on Aboriginal business

GIOVANNI TORRE

The Northern Territory Indigenous Business Network has responded to the NT Budget this month with a call to position Aboriginal businesses at the centre of the Territory's economic growth.

With record-level capital infrastructure investment, NTIBN says the focus must now shift to ensuring Aboriginal businesses are supported to participate in and benefit from this growth.

Noting Aboriginal Territorians represented more than 30 per cent of the population, the network said equitable participation in procurement and mainstream economic opportunities was "essential to inclusive outcomes".

NTIBN said it would advocate for a 30 per cent per capita increase in Aboriginal business participation in government procurement, particularly in major remote investment areas such as flood recovery, remote roads, and housing.

Network chief executive Naomi Anstess said "record infrastructure investment must translate into record participation for Aboriginal businesses".

"This is where the greatest opportunity sits; ensuring that investment in remote communities directly supports local Aboriginal enterprises, builds capability, and drives long-term economic and employment outcomes," she said.

Ms Anstess noted while continued investment aligned to Closing the Gap in housing, health, education and community services was essential, "long-term outcomes will be driven through economic participation". "Closing the Gap



NTIBN CEO Naomi Anstess. Picture: NTIBN

cannot be achieved through service delivery alone," she said. "Economic participation, business ownership and wealth creation must be treated as core economic priorities and embedded across the Territory's growth agenda."

A research project undertaken by NTIBN in partnership with Yamagigu Consulting and Deloitte Access Economics confirmed Aboriginal businesses were a major economic force, with the sector contributing an estimated \$3.4 billion to total economic activity in 2024-25 — equivalent to 10.1 per cent of Gross Territory Product.

The sector also plays a critical role in employment, supporting about 11,500 full-time equivalent jobs, including about 10,000 Aboriginal em-

ployees — more than 8 per cent of total Territory employment.

The research — published this month — found Aboriginal businesses contributed significantly to government revenue, generating an estimated \$840 million in taxation.

"If the Indigenous business sector were supported to grow to approximately 30 per cent of the Territory economy by 2035, reflecting population parity, it could deliver an additional \$6 billion in net present value to the Northern Territory economy," the NTIBN noted.

NTIBN highlighted the need for co-ordinated, Territory-led investment in regional and remote Aboriginal economic development, ensuring businesses in these areas were equipped to engage in and ben-

efit from growth. "If Aboriginal businesses are expected to participate in the economy, the structures that support them must also be in place," Ms Anstess said.

NTIBN's Budget response calls for Aboriginal economic development to be "embedded across key government portfolios", supported by "co-ordinated, long-term strategies and strengthened participation mechanisms", including consistent implementation of the Aboriginal Procurement Policy across all agencies. "The Territory is investing billions into industry and infrastructure. The opportunity is to ensure that investment delivers full economic return by embedding Aboriginal businesses within it," Ms Anstess said.

## New \$20m in funding a boost for tourism operators

GIOVANNI TORRE

The WA Indigenous Tourism Operators Council this month welcomed a commitment of \$20 million over four years by the WA Government and Tourism WA towards the development of Aboriginal tourism experiences under Jina: WA Aboriginal Tourism Action Plan 2026-2030.

WAITOC — representing over 200 Aboriginal tourism businesses across the State — worked with Tourism WA and other agencies to develop the plan, and will continue to collaborate on its delivery over four years.

Announced on May 7, Jina ("foot/footprint") aims to build the capacity for Aboriginal people to enter the sector and facilitate the development of Aboriginal cultural experiences to meet growing demand from visitors.

Announcing the plan, WAITOC noted visitors have "long been captivated by Western Australia's vast, ancient landscapes and the stories of its First Nations Peoples, who are custodians of the world's oldest living culture spanning more than 60,000 years".

"As the world's longest-serving guides, Aboriginal people offer deep connections to Country, making it vital to continue expanding cultural tourism experiences across WA," the council said.

The funding under Jina will enable WAITOC to continue its declared aim of supporting Aboriginal tourism operators, driving business growth, strengthening business capacity, and creating sustainable economic and social opportunities for Aboriginal communities.

WAITOC chief executive Robert Taylor said the Jina 2021-2025 program has already delivered strong outcomes for Aboriginal tourism businesses and the visitor economy.

"Jina has proven to be a highly successful program, supporting Aboriginal tourism operators to build capability, grow their businesses and share culture with domestic and international visitors in a meaningful way," Mr Taylor said.

"We are grateful for the continued investment from the State Government. This new funding to 2030 will allow us to build on that success and ensure Aboriginal tourism businesses across Western Australia are supported to thrive well into the future."

Chair Darren Capewell said "that for over 24 years, WAITOC has been at the forefront of developing Aboriginal tourism businesses and promoting WA's cultural experiences on a global scale".

"We have demonstrated our ability to deliver real results, supporting a growing Aboriginal tourism sector that now sustains hundreds of jobs across Western Australia," he said.

## Bone research a health game changer

GIOVANNI TORRE

Spartan First Imaging and its academic partners from Monash University and Edith Cowan University welcomed leading researchers, Associate Professor Ayse Zengin and Professor Josh Lewis, to Kalgoorlie-Boulder this month as they calibrate advanced peripheral quantitative computed tomography (pQCT) technology and train Spartan's local team in its use as part of the groundbreaking SIMBA (Study of Indigenous Muscle and Bone Ageing) project.

Spartan First Imaging is Australia's first private Indigenous-owned medical imaging provider. The collaboration represents both the arrival of new technology and a critical step towards addressing a long-standing and deeply concerning inequity in Australian

health care: the under-recognition, under-screening, and under-treatment of bone disease in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Spartan CEO, Noongar-Yamatji man Des Headland, said "too often" Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples "have been expected to fit within healthcare frameworks that were never properly designed to reflect their unique health profiles, communities, or lived experiences".

"By helping establish accurate bone health reference data and advocating for earlier, equitable access to Medicare-supported screening, we have an opportunity to address a serious but under-recognised health disparity," he said.

"Our people deserve access to the same standard of preventative health care, informed by evidence that truly reflects

them. This collaboration is not only about science — it is about equity, dignity, and ensuring future generations are no longer overlooked when it comes to musculoskeletal health."

Medicare-rebated bone mineral density screening criteria often fails to account for the earlier onset and disproportionate burden of musculoskeletal disease experienced by many Indigenous people in Australia. As a result, too many people may be missing opportunities for early diagnosis, preventive intervention, and appropriate management.

The SIMBA study seeks to change this.

By combining "gold standard" DXA imaging with advanced pQCT bone tomography, researchers will generate the first detailed musculoskeletal ageing and bone density database focused on

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander populations.

This will provide evidence to: advocate for lowering the Medicare rebate eligibility age for Indigenous Australians to better match real-world disease burden; develop appropriate population-specific reference standards for bone density and fracture risk assessment; improve early diagnosis of osteoporosis and related bone disorders; guide culturally informed prevention and treatment; reduce preventable fractures, disability, and associated chronic health complications; and support Indigenous Australians to remain healthy, independent, connected to family, and on Country for longer.

Spartan said it is "demonstrating that rural and Indigenous communities should not be excluded from cutting-edge scientific advancement".

# Miner boosts kids' hearing

Hundreds of Aboriginal and at-risk children across the Pilbara are experiencing improved hearing and stronger classroom engagement through an Earbus Foundation of Western Australia program delivering essential ear health support in regional communities.

Supported through Fortescue's Community Grants Program, the Better Hearing, Better Listening program assessed almost 1,000 children and rolled out a library of 100 bone conduction headset and microphone kits designed for children experi-

encing conductive hearing loss — a condition that can significantly impact learning, communication and development.

The technology works by transmitting a teacher's voice directly to the child's inner ear, helping reduce the effects of background noise and improving speech clarity in busy classroom environments.

Clinicians involved in the program say the response from children has been immediate and encouraging, with many students demonstrating greater confidence, stronger engage-

ment in lessons and improved communication.

Earbus Foundation of Western Australia chief executive and co-founder Dr Lara Shur said the initiative was helping address one of the most common health challenges facing children in remote communities.

"Hearing health plays a critical role in a child's learning, wellbeing and connection to community," she said.

"These devices are helping children better participate in the classroom and everyday life, while also supporting schools

and families with practical tools that make a real difference."

Conductive hearing loss is prevalent among Aboriginal children living in remote and regional Australia, often caused by chronic ear infections and limited access to specialist services. By combining outreach health services with practical classroom support, the Earbus program aims to improve health and educational outcomes for children across the Pilbara.

The initiative is one of 36 projects funded through Fortescue's FY26 Community Grants

Program, which distributed more than \$270,000 across grassroots organisations delivering practical outcomes across health and wellbeing, education, emergency services, environmental initiatives, sporting organisations and First Nations programs across the Pilbara.

Fortescue's director of approvals, communities and services Rosli Wheelock said such initiatives showed the lasting impact community-led programs can have.

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



## 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	16/683	WEST AUSTRALIAN PROSPECTORS PTY LTD	1BL	39.2km W'ly of Ora Banda	Lat: 30° 18' S Long: 120° 39' E	COOLGARDIE SHIRE
Exploration Licence	26/266	YARRI RESOURCES PTY LTD	4BL	22.5km N'ly of Kambalda	Lat: 31° 0' S Long: 121° 39' E	KALGOORLIE-BOULDER CITY
Exploration Licence	30/596	NXT1 PTY LTD	9BL	124.3km W'ly of Menzies	Lat: 29° 28' S Long: 119° 46' E	MENZIES SHIRE
Exploration Licence	45/7253	CGN RESOURCES LIMITED	54BL	72.7km SW'ly of Telfer	Lat: 22° 12' S Long: 121° 46' E	EAST PILBARA SHIRE
Exploration Licence	57/1454	GATEWAY MINING LIMITED	1BL	64.1km N'ly of Sandstone	Lat: 27° 26' S Long: 119° 30' E	SANDSTONE SHIRE
Exploration Licence	63/2534	DANAKALI LTD	2BL	118.2km W'ly of Norseman	Lat: 32° 4' S Long: 120° 32' E	DUNDAS SHIRE
Prospecting Licence	16/3585	FORRESTANIA RESOURCES LIMITED	149.24HA	35.8km S'ly of Ora Banda	Lat: 30° 40' S Long: 120° 56' E	COOLGARDIE SHIRE
Prospecting Licence	24/5948	ANNEEN PTY LTD	121.36HA	22.7km N'ly of Broad Arrow	Lat: 30° 14' S Long: 121° 15' E	KALGOORLIE-BOULDER CITY
Prospecting Licence	24/5966	RECHARGE METALS LIMITED	199.75HA	8.2km W'ly of Ora Banda	Lat: 30° 23' S Long: 120° 58' E	KALGOORLIE-BOULDER CITY
Prospecting Licence	24/5967	RECHARGE METALS LIMITED	199.46HA	6.9km SW'ly of Ora Banda	Lat: 30° 24' S Long: 120° 59' E	KALGOORLIE-BOULDER CITY
Prospecting Licence	24/5970	RECHARGE METALS LIMITED	199.89HA	8.8km W'ly of Ora Banda	Lat: 30° 23' S Long: 120° 58' E	KALGOORLIE-BOULDER CITY
Prospecting Licence	24/5971	RECHARGE METALS LIMITED	199.88HA	8km W'ly of Ora Banda	Lat: 30° 23' S Long: 120° 58' E	KALGOORLIE-BOULDER CITY
Prospecting Licence	24/5972	RECHARGE METALS LIMITED	200.02HA	7.5km SW'ly of Ora Banda	Lat: 30° 23' S Long: 120° 59' E	KALGOORLIE-BOULDER CITY
Prospecting Licence	24/5973	RECHARGE METALS LIMITED	129.45HA	8km W'ly of Ora Banda	Lat: 30° 20' S Long: 120° 58' E	KALGOORLIE-BOULDER CITY
Prospecting Licence	24/5974	RECHARGE METALS LIMITED	168.84HA	9.2km W'ly of Ora Banda	Lat: 30° 20' S Long: 120° 58' E	KALGOORLIE-BOULDER CITY
Prospecting Licence	24/5976-S	MACKIE, Glen Alan	9.92HA	7km NW'ly of Ora Banda	Lat: 30° 18' S Long: 121° 1' E	KALGOORLIE-BOULDER CITY
Prospecting Licence	39/6522-S	HASELL, Brian Joseph	0.24HA	45.7km W'ly of Laverton	Lat: 28° 36' S Long: 121° 56' E	LAVERTON 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: 20 May 2026 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 **20 August 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. **20 September 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	26/880	CASCADE RESOURCES PTY LTD & LOYAL METALS LTD	16.98HA	25.2km NE'ly of Kambalda	Lat: 31° 0' S Long: 121° 48' E	KALGOORLIE-BOULDER CITY
Mining Lease	38/1327	REGIS RESOURCES LIMITED	134.90HA	83.3km N'ly of Laverton	Lat: 27° 52' S Long: 122° 17' E	LAVERTON SHIRE
Mining Lease	38/1328	REGIS RESOURCES LIMITED	78.31HA	72.2km N'ly of Laverton	Lat: 27° 58' S Long: 122° 22' E	LAVERTON SHIRE
Mining Lease	38/1329	REGIS RESOURCES LIMITED	114.15HA	79.8km N'ly of Laverton	Lat: 27° 55' S Long: 122° 14' E	LAVERTON SHIRE
Mining Lease	38/1330	REGIS RESOURCES LIMITED	355.69HA	48.3km N'ly of Laverton	Lat: 28° 11' S Long: 122° 23' E	LAVERTON 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: 20 May 2026 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 **20 August 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. **20 September 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 OF PROPOSAL TO RENEW MINING LEASE

### 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 renew the following mining lease under section 78(2) of the *Mining Act 1978*:

Mining No.	Renewal of Term No.	Applicant	Area	Locality	Centroid	Shire
M 15/105	749201	WYLOO KAMBALDA PTY LTD	9.68HA	33.1km S'ly of Kambalda	Lat 31° 29' 5" S Long 121° 33' 18" E	COOLGARDIE SHIRE
M 15/103	749202	WYLOO KAMBALDA PTY LTD	921.69HA	32.7km S'ly of Kambalda	Lat 31° 28' 50" S Long 121° 33' 9" E	COOLGARDIE SHIRE
M 15/40	750107	MACPHERSONS REWARD PTY LTD	213.67HA	7.5km S'ly of Coolgardie	Lat 31° 0' 56" S Long 121° 11' 32" E	COOLGARDIE SHIRE
M 15/59	749256	GEKO EXPLORE PTY LTD	8.55HA	23.5km W'ly of Coolgardie	Lat 30° 56' 36" S Long 120° 55' 5" E	COOLGARDIE SHIRE

**Nature of the act:** The renewal of mining lease, which authorises the applicant to mine for minerals for a term of up to 21 years. **Notification day: 20 May 2026 Native title parties:** Under section 30 of the *Native Title Act 1993* (Cth), persons have until three months after the notification day to take certain steps to become native title parties in relation to the notice. The three-month period closes on **20 August 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 lease may be renewed if, by the end of the period of four months after the notification day (i.e. **20 September 2026**), there is no native title party under section 30 of the *Native Title Act 1993* (Cth) in relation to the area of the application for renewal. For further information about the act (including extracts of plans showing the boundaries of the application for renewal), 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.\*\*

# Northern Territory proud to host the Dreamtime clash

JACKSON CLARK

Darwin will once again host one of the AFLW season's marquee fixtures this year, with the annual Richmond v Essendon Dreamtime clash locked in for a third consecutive year.

The match will be played at TIO Stadium in AFLW round three, forming part of the opening week of the competition's Indigenous Round celebrations.

The Dreamtime in Darwin fixture is one of the AFLW calendar's standout events.

Its return continues a strong connection between Darwin and the Dreamtime game which dates back to 2020 when the AFL's annual Dreamtime at the 'G blockbuster was temporarily moved to TIO Stadium because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

That match sold out almost immediately and highlighted the Territory's appetite for major football events.

Since Essendon joined the AFLW competition in 2022, the Bombers and Tigers women's teams have built their Dreamtime tradition in Darwin.

Last year's clash attracted close to 6000 fans to TIO Stadium

and drew more than 1000 interstate visitors, while previous matches have also delivered plenty of excitement, including a draw in 2024.

Head of AFL Northern Territory Sam Gibson said the match had become a key event for the Territory. "It's clear this match has become a meaningful and anticipated event on the football calendar," Gibson said.

"It's more than just a game — it's a celebration of culture, identity and community, and something the Northern Territory is incredibly proud to host.

"The support from the local community over the past two years has been outstanding, and we look forward to building on that again in 2026."

The fixture shines a spotlight on women's football in the Territory, where AFLNT says more than 40 per cent of participants identify as female — more than double the national average.

Essendon chief executive Tim Roberts said the club was eager to return to Darwin for another Dreamtime clash.

"Dreamtime in Darwin has become a significant occasion, and we feel privileged to play a role in celebrating Aboriginal



Essendon and Richmond at a previous AFLW Dreamtime match in Darwin. Picture: AFL

and Torres Strait Islander people on such an important stage," Roberts said.

"The connection between Essendon and the Northern Territory is extremely important to our club, so to return for a third consecutive year is very special to us."

Richmond CEO Shane Dunne said the Dreamtime match "has

quickly established itself as a great celebration of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and contribution to the game".

"I know how much the game means to our playing group, and they can't wait to connect with the local community again," he said.

"It is a highlight of the AFLW

fixture." Northern Territory ministers welcomed the announcement this month, pointing to the economic and tourism benefits major sporting events bring to the region.

Further details on the match date, ticketing, and community events are expected to be announced in the coming months.

# Clinics hit the road to teach youth

JOSEPH GUENZLER

Koorie Academy Basketball announced its 2026 Outback Tour this month, celebrating "50 years of deadly" during the 50th anniversary of NAIDOC Week.

The not-for-profit organisation based in Naarm/Melbourne will take basketball, culture and community connection to regional and remote areas of New South Wales, visiting Wilcannia, Ivanhoe, Menindee and Dareton.

Founded by Gunai Kurnai man Ricky Baldwin, Koorie Academy Basketball works to empower Indigenous youth through sport, using basketball to promote cultural identity and create opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people.

The Outback Tour will include basketball clinics to engage with youth.

A Koorie Academy spokesperson said the tour



Koorie Academy participants. Picture: Koorie Academy

would celebrate NAIDOC Week — the first full week of July — while strengthening connections with young people and communities.

"This tour is about more than just basketball; it's about connection, culture, and celebrating 50 years of NAIDOC Week," they said.

Following the outback leg of the tour, Koorie Academy will return to Naarm for a community day to close out NAIDOC Week, featuring a large-scale clinic for local youth, with a focus on skill development, teamwork and

cultural pride. The day will also include the All-star game, an exhibition match between the Koorie Academy Allstars and Team Ngwala.

The match is expected to showcase Indigenous basketball talent and community spirit.

The Koorie Academy has a history of partnering with organisations including Ngwala Aboriginal Corporation to deliver community programs.

Ngwala has also come on as Koorie Academy's major sponsor for the next three years.

## PUBLIC NOTICE

### Sea Country consultation

#### Review of the Bass Non-production Well Operations Environment Plan

Beach Energy (Beach) is consulting on the Bass Non-production Well Operations (Trefoil-1 and Yolla-1) Environment Plan (EP) 5-year review, as required under commonwealth regulations.

The EP relates to the continued temporary suspension and monitoring of two existing offshore wells, Trefoil-1 and Yolla-1, located in the Bass Strait in commonwealth waters. The wells are not in production and are subject to routine inspection and monitoring to ensure ongoing well integrity and environmental safety while they remain suspended. No new drilling or construction activities are proposed. The wells are planned to be permanently plugged and abandoned once operational scheduling allows.

Consultation is open to relevant persons whose functions, interests or activities may be affected by the activities described in the EP. Beach recognises the cultural, spiritual and environmental importance of Sea Country and is committed to respectful and culturally appropriate consultation.

The consultation period is **open from 4 May 2026 and will close at 5.00 pm AEST on 5 June 2026.**

To consult or for further information, including maps, activity descriptions and environmental information, visit Engage Beach.

Please see the National Offshore Petroleum Safety and Environmental Management Authority's brochure titled *Consultation on offshore petroleum environment plans* at [consultation.nopsema.gov.au](http://consultation.nopsema.gov.au) for information regarding consultation.

#### To find out more or provide feedback

P 1800 797 011

E [community@beachenergy.com.au](mailto:community@beachenergy.com.au)

[engage.beachenergy.com.au](http://engage.beachenergy.com.au)

[beachenergy.com.au](http://beachenergy.com.au)



READ MORE

## SPORT

# Magic is humbled to be in national spotlight

JARRED CROSS

He's an All-Australian, two-time best and fairest, member of the Indigenous team of the Century and decorated coach in his home town, but Michael "Magic" McLean had to come around to the idea of joining the list of names amongst Sir Doug Nicholls Round honourees.

When the AFL's annual recognition of First Nations players, culture and history arrives each year, it comes with a pinch of envy, the Northern Territory footy great said, because it wasn't around during his career. In 2026 it was celebrated in his honour.

When "Magic" hopped off the plane from Darwin at Tullamarine on his way to Footscray ahead of the 1983 VFL season, he'd never met a Bulldogs official. He was also bucking the usual trend of Territory talent being lured to South Australia or Western Australia.

A decade and a half later, he'd run out for 183 VFL/AFL games between the Bulldogs, and the Brisbane Bears and Lions. A near 20-year coaching career followed, lifting a wooden spoon side to premiership glory in a single season and introducing the NT Thunder into the football landscape.

"Pretty surreal," McLean said of being named the honouree. "I'm OK with it now, after reflecting a bit."

McLean's buoyed by the recognition also being an acknowledgment of his off-field impact, including working with disengaged youth, both Indigenous and non-Indigenous, for three decades.

"I envy (today's) players. It was never a thing when I played," McLean said of Sir Doug Nicholls Round.

"I just think it's great. The jumpers, people talking about

where they're from, what it means to them. I never got that opportunity. So, I'm a little bit envious, I suppose."

Magic quickly established himself in the VFL and was adored by the Bulldogs faithful. All-Australian selection came during the 1988 season.

Stranded on 95 games and having starred with NT representative honours without a VFL home the previous year, the Brisbane Bears picked him up ahead of the 1991 season.

The late Robert Walls "took a punt on me", McLean said. "That was unheard of back in those days."

It paid off. McLean claimed the club's best-and-fairest award in his first season at the Bears, and added another in 1993. After 88 games with the Queensland club, he is a member of the Brisbane Lions' Hall of Fame.

McLean could have succeeded in a range of sports.

"I was pretty good at most things," McLean, conscious of not sounding like a trumpet-blower, said recounting his early days in Darwin.

Rugby league, boxing, athletics and of course, Aussie Rules came fairly naturally. He started senior footy aged 15.

"It was funny, when I got to Melbourne, I lost a lot of confidence. Rather than being a bit of an extrovert, I became an introvert. I just went into my shell a bit and started doubting myself," he said.

"All of a sudden, you're in the big pond with so many good players around."

He was more or less just "hanging in there" by the end of his time at the Dogs, dealing with chronic ankle injuries and close to ten surgeries.

"I reckon in the 95 games I played at the Bulldogs, I played a lot of good ones," McLean



Picture: Brisbane Lions

said. However, at Brisbane, he said: "I played every game like it was my last."

On where he hopes his legacy in football was most significant, McLean reflects back to his home and people.

McLean not only ran out to play and represent the NT, he also played in and coached Indigenous All-Stars sides.

"I've got things that I look back on. It's a couple of B&Fs, leadership roles (at the Bulldogs and Brisbane)," he said.

"I captained my people in the 1994 All Stars against Collingwood, then coached them three times in '03, '05 and '07.

"That's pretty cool to be able to do that, to be able to play and captain your people and coach them as well: the best of the best."

McLean captained the NT as a player and fondly remembers vice captaining the first ever

Allies State of Origin side and combined NT-Queensland outfits.

"And then to coach locally, I just love coaching and supporting people, uniting them ... playing for each other," he said.

Among 18 years of coaching, the bulk in Darwin, a highlight of McLean's is arriving at Southern Districts. The Crocs has finished wooden spooners the previous year, with McLean lifting them to an NTFL premiership in his first year.

McLean also held the reins at his boyhood club Nightcliff.

He's an inductee of the Northern Territory Sports' Hall of Champions and a Legend in the NTFL Hall of Fame.

In a lasting impact on footy, McLean is also recognised as a key contributor to the introduction of the AFL's Anti-Vilification Policy.

Michael Long, McLean, Gil-

bert McAdam and Che Cockatoo-Collins are recognised in their roles assisting the rule's development. "He showed extreme courage to persist with it," McLean said of Long, while stressing the work of McAdam and Cockatoo-Collins.

Sadly, racism was something McLean also endured during his career.

At present, the number of First Nations players in the AFL is at a two-decade low.

McLean supports all initiatives aimed at reversing the decline, particularly investing into local footy.

Since his playing career, McLean has worked in youth diversion, school engagement programs and as a mentor in junior football pathways.

The most important thing is family, his wife Linda, four children and soon-to-be eight grandchildren.