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NATIONAL INDIGENOUS TIMES

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Picture: Wendell Teodoro

JUSTICE CRY

Coroner's findings on Walker shooting prompt global criticism

DECLHAN BRENNAN

The findings of Coroner Elisabeth Armitage on the death of Kumanjayi Walker, released this month, sparked national and even international calls for fundamental systemic change.

After a nearly three-year inquest, the Coroner's findings on the 2019 fatal shooting of the 19-year-old Warlpiri-Luritja man in Yuendumu identified signs of institutional racism in the Northern Territory Police. Ms Armitage said Mr Walk-

er's death was "avoidable", criticising the conduct, training, and culture of NT Police.

"Officers needlessly put themselves in danger, making themselves and others vulnerable and creating a situation that justifies the use of deadly force," she said.

Mr Walker was shot three times by then-constable Zachary Rolfe during a failed arrest attempt at a family home. Mr Rolfe was acquitted of murder and manslaughter in March 2022.



On the road to Yuendumu. Picture: Declhan Brennan

Ms Armitage said Mr Rolfe's actions were enabled by poor leadership and a lack of accountability within the force. "An officer who dehumanis-

es and devalues the lives of arrestees may be less inclined to do everything necessary to avoid injuring them," she said.

She found the NT Police failed to intervene or discipline Mr Rolfe, creating a culture of impunity. "There was direct evidence of clearly racist comments made by Mr Rolfe, and between Mr Rolfe and his superiors," she said. "His racist messages were not mere aberrations. They were at least in part reflective of a work culture that tolerated racism."

Mr Walker's family, who have campaigned for justice since his death, said the findings confirmed what Aboriginal people already knew. "To hear the coroner identify structural and entrenched racism in the NT Police has made us feel validated. Our family and community have always felt that racism killed Kumanjayi," Mr Walker's cousin, Samara Fernandez-Brown said.

The family criticised the lack

CONTINUED PAGE 2



Coroner Elisabeth Armitage in Yuendumu and below, members of Mr Walker's family, Warlpiri Elder Ned Jampijinpa Hargraves and Samara Fernandez-Brown. Pictures: Declan Brennan

Change urged over institutional racism

FROM PAGE 1

of accountability in the coroner's findings, with her recommendations not including a call for an independent police ombudsman — a key demand from both the Walker family and Aboriginal legal services.

"Without this accountability, our community will continue to be failed, the NT Police will continue their unchecked, excessive use of force and our people will continue to die at their hands. For this we are disappointed," Mr Walker's family said.

Ms Armitage said Mr Rolfe's racism, combined with his attitude towards women, authority, and remote policing, likely influenced his conduct during the attempted arrest.

"This was not a case of one bad apple," she said. "Racist behaviour or language, although not uniform, was normalised within the Alice Springs police station during Mr Rolfe's time there."

She also reflected on Mr Walker's life, describing the effects of trauma, poverty, and systemic neglect, including his exposure to alcohol in utero and large time spent in custody.

Among 32 recommendations, the Coroner urged NT Police to reform its internal complaints process and engage with Yuendumu leadership, including considering when it may be



appropriate for police officers not to carry weapons in the community.

United Nations human rights chief Volker Turk said the findings "uncovers disturbing allegations of institutional racism in Northern Territory policing, and use of excessive force".

"Findings by the Coroner reinforce urgent need for comprehensive reforms to address injustice suffered by First Nations people," Mr Turk wrote.

Federal Minister for Indigenous Australians, Malarndirri McCarthy said responding to the inquest findings should be "above politics".

"My job is to continually try to reach out to all governments, to all political leaders. This has to be above politics, and I'll continue to do that with the Chief Minister of the Northern Territory and her ministers.

"This is too important. It is not about the Chief Minister or myself. It is about the families of Yuendumu who need the

leadership of this country to act on the concerns they raise," she said.

"I encourage the Northern Territory Government to carefully review and consider the recommendations in full. It is time to be at the table with First Nations people."

Shadow minister for Indigenous Australians, Kerryne Liddle, said she hopes the NT Government will act on the Coroner's recommendations, particularly in improving community policing, youth support, and mental health services.

"Everyone should be saddened by what the Coroner has found," Senator Liddle said, while also calling for Federal accountability, noting the Commonwealth's "significant" investment in NT policing and services.

"(The Coroner) looked comprehensively at some of the drivers and protective factors that will support people to ensure that this does not happen again," Senator Liddle said.

"That is a really important part of this, and it is for the Northern Territory Government to look very closely at the findings, because they are in charge in the territory of the police and protective services.

"But the Commonwealth does have a role to play, because the Commonwealth will often

fund the drivers of those things, the protective factors that the coroner also talked about."

Gunnai, Guditjmara and Djab Wurrung woman and independent senator for Victoria Lidia Thorpe said the inquest showed "what First Peoples have known forever — racism is killing us", and called for broader justice reforms.

"The colonial legal system criminalises and harms our people and all too often kills them.

"Diversionary programs, developed and led by community, can bring much better outcomes for the individual, the family and the whole community," she said.

Acting NT Police Commissioner Martin Dole acknowledged the deep cultural issues highlighted during the inquest.

"I acknowledge all forms of racism have existed within the NT Police Force at various times, and that this was borne out in the evidence received during this inquest," he said. "What was tolerated in the past will no longer be acceptable."

The NT Government has not committed to implementing any of the 32 recommendations, with Chief Minister Lia Finocchiaro instead flagging changes to the Coroner's Act expected to limit the time and resources that can be dedicated to inquests.

Nature-rich parcel of Tassie land returned

CALLAN MORSE

A parcel of land on Tasmania's north-west coast was returned to Aboriginal ownership this month.

Located at Dempster Creek in Loongana, south-west of Ulverstone, the 10.5ha title was returned to the Aboriginal Land Council of Tasmania (ALCT) by its previous owners, Barbara and Ian Sale.

ALCT general manager Sarah Wilcox said the area was "a beautiful and quite significant piece of Country".

"We are absolutely beyond excited by this return through such generosity of the Sales," Ms Wilcox told ABC Radio Hobart.

The property's landscape is said to have notable cultural and environmental significance.

"It's filled with natural values. There's white gum forest, there's masked owls that have been seen breeding there, grey goshawks, giant freshwater crayfish, platypus, quolls, devils, you know, it's absolutely stunning," Ms Wilcox said.

Ms Wilcox said the parcel of land had been well cared for by its previous owners.

"It's been cared for for a very long time by (a) landcare group up there, and obviously the Sales leading in that," she said.

"It's got its own Facebook group.

"It's a really loved area, and that will continue . . .

"(We're) really committed to making sure that connection for the people of Loongana continues on that site."

Mr Sale wrote on social media: "After around 42 years of owning and protecting this place we are handing this land back to our First Nations people

"For people who live in Loongana, and those who visit to walk, fish, paint, discover, kayak, photograph or do sciency things, the place remains open and welcoming," Mr Sale said.

"The conservation of this place is now further strengthened.

"And for us the connection with this place is undimmed."

The return comes after the ALCT launched Giving Land Back in 2022, a website designed to encourage members of the public to return private land.

In addition to accepting land donations, the initiative also accepts tax deductible donations and land bequests.

So far \$180,000 of its \$250,000 target has been raised, according to an ALCT's Giving Land Back online fundraiser.

Ms Wilcox said the donated land at Loongana would provide junior rangers with experience training in a new environment.

Premier is accused of hiding from big issues

JOSEPH GUENZLER

Queensland Premier David Crisafulli and Member for Cook David Kempton came under fire this month for bypassing the Cape York Peninsula during a recent ministerial visit across Far North Queensland.

While the delegation visited Cairns and the Torres Strait Islands, no stops were made in the Cape region, which contributes significantly to the State's economy and tourism sector.

Mapoon Traditional Owner Jack Wilkie-Jans said the omission showed the LNP had "no direction, no answers" for the region.

"It would seem the Premier and his ministers are hiding from the Cape, with the Member for Cook unable to coax them out," Mr Wilkie-Jans said.

He said while the Government had honoured several commitments made under the previous Labor administration and included standard health and housing infrastructure in the 2025 Budget, no policies had been introduced to tackle social challenges, economic diversification, or ongoing land tenure and vegetation management issues.

Mr Wilkie-Jans also raised concerns about the lack of progress on the State's review of a controversial World Heritage Listing proposal, which has faced opposition from local communities.

In response to questions from National Indigenous Times, a spokesperson for Mr Kempton noted a press release highlighting a \$3 million investment by the Crisafulli Government to support the social and emotional wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

The funding includes support for Wujal Wujal Justice Group's Healing On Country program, which delivers traditional activities such as cultural camps, storytelling, and yarning circles.

Wujal Wujal, located on the Bloomfield River north of Cairns, is considered part of the southern Cape York Peninsula.

State report urges significant redress

DECHLAN BRENNAN

The Victorian Government must deliver redress through both Statewide and Traditional Owner group treaties to address the ongoing harms caused by colonisation, the Yoorrook Justice Commission found in its final report, tabled in the State's Parliament this month.

Australia's first truth-telling body said redress must address "consequent damage and loss, including economic and non-economic loss for genocide, crimes against humanity and denial of freedoms" — consistent with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

"Redress should take the form of: Restitution of traditional lands, waters and natural resources ownership rights to First Peoples; monetary compensation; tax relief; and such other financial or other benefits as may be requested by the First Peoples' Assembly of Victoria or the local treaty bodies in treaty negotiations," the report said.

The commission also urged the Government to formally acknowledge its responsibility for systemic injustices and issue a public apology.

"Our lands were taken, and with them, something deeper: the essence of culture, and the ability to continue traditional practices and maintain identity," Yoorrook chair Professor Eleanor Bourke wrote in the report's foreword.

"Death, violence, disease, dispossession and government control changed the landscape."

The final report, titled Yoorrook For Transformation, includes 100 recommendations across five volumes. It is accompanied by Yoorrook Truth Be Told, a public record of Victoria's post-colonial history and a chronicle of the commission's four-year inquiry.

The findings draw on 67 days of hearings, more than 200 witness testimonies and input from more than 2000 people — including 1500 First Peoples. The commission also collected 1300 written submissions.

The commission heard that successive governments had benefited economically from land and water, while First Peoples saw little return. During the inquiry, 16 formal apologies were made by ministers and departmental heads.

The report calls for a fundamental overhaul of systems that have harmed First Peoples, including justice, health, education, and housing.

It urges the government to "transfer decision-making power, authority, control and resources to First Peoples," giving full effect to self-determination across social, economic and political life. It also recommends legislating the principles of UNDRIP, which Australia has signed but not enacted into law.

"The Victorian Government must support the establishment of an

accountability mechanism to transfer monitoring functions and full decision-making power, authority, control and resources to First Peoples for First Peoples-related policies and programs," the report said.

Additional redress measures include compensation or land grants for those affected by Soldier Settlement Schemes.

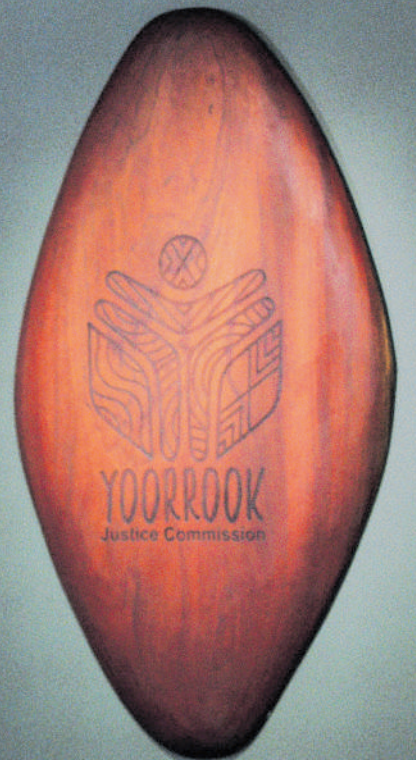
In education, the report recommends First Peoples take control of curriculum, pedagogy, governance and funding. In family violence prevention, it proposes a new First Peoples peak body with legislative authority and long-term funding for Aboriginal community controlled organisations.

It remains unclear how many recommendations the Government will implement. Less than 20 per cent of recommendations from Yoorrook's earlier interim report have been adopted.

Premier Jacinta Allan, who previously pledged to apologise for past government policies, has yet to fulfil that promise.

"Thank you to the commission for these historic reports — they shine a light on hard truths and lay the foundations for a better future for all Victorians," she said.

Yoorrook Justice Commission chair Professor Eleanor Bourke at a public hearing of the commission in Melbourne.
Picture: AAP



“

Our lands were taken, and with them, something deeper: the essence of culture, and the ability to continue traditional practices and maintain identity.

Eleanor Bourke



Report to UN details ongoing injustices in Australia

DECHLAN BRENNAN

A new report submitted to the United Nations Human Rights Council has found persistent failures by Australian governments to implement recommendations from royal commissions and coronial inquests are contributing to ongoing systemic injustices experienced by First Nations people.

The report, backed by an alliance of more than 150 Indigenous, human rights, legal, disability, refugee, LGBTIQ+ and climate organisations, was presented this month ahead of Australia's Universal Periodic Review; a regular assessment of member states' human rights performance.

It calls for the urgent creation

of a national action plan and an independent Indigenous-led monitoring body to implement the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, in genuine partnership with First Nations communities. The report also recommends establishing a Makarrata Commission within 18 months to oversee national truth-telling and treaty negotiations.

Additionally, the groups are urging the Federal Government to introduce reparations for Stolen Generations survivors, enact a Human Rights Act within two years, and ensure all existing laws are compatible with human rights obligations.

Caitlin Reiger, CEO at the Human Rights Law Centre, said Australia's human rights frame-

work is failing to protect thousands of people. "The Albanese Government must take urgent action — including legislating an Australian Human Rights Act — to ensure everyone is treated with dignity, equality and respect," she said.

Earlier this year, the Queensland Government, while introducing its controversial "adult crime, adult time" laws, admitted the legislation did not stand up to human rights scrutiny and would disproportionately impact First Nations children.

Other jurisdictions, including WA, where children are incarcerated in a wing of an adult maximum security prison, and the NT, which has lowered the age of criminal responsibility to 10 and has been housing up to 20

people in single watch house cells, have been accused of breaching human rights.

Indigenous Peoples' Organisation Australia co-chair Cathryn Eatock said systemic inequality is being entrenched.

"Our children are dying of preventable rheumatic heart disease caused by poverty and overcrowding, with often 20 people per house in remote communities, reflecting abysmal Third World conditions," Ms Eatock said. "Children as young as 10 are incarcerated, funneling them into later crime, where deaths in custody is a regular occurrence."

Despite the dire findings, Ms Eatock believes change is possible; if governments commit to genuine self-determination.

"Victoria's treaty processes have shown the way; to implement UNDRIP, instil self-determination and respectful relations," she said.

The report places strong emphasis on First Nations land rights and justice, areas it says are being further eroded.

It calls for Federal funding within 12 months to help establish a permanent national Indigenous representative body and human rights institutions.

On justice, it demands urgent reforms: raising the minimum age of criminal responsibility to 14, implementing community-based diversion programs, auditing policing laws to eliminate discriminatory practices, and reforming strip-search laws across all jurisdictions.

Vic proposed bail law reforms a 'disaster waiting to happen'

DECHLAN BRENNAN

This report discusses suicide, mental health, and abuse. If you or anyone you know is affected, there are helplines at the end of the article. The report also includes the names of First Nations people who have died.

Indigenous justice advocates this month labelled the second tranche of Victoria's proposed bail law reforms as a "disaster waiting to happen" that will "inevitably result in more Aboriginal deaths in custody".

Expected to be introduced by the Labor Government soon, the changes follow the first round of bail laws passed earlier this year — labelled "dangerous and discriminatory" by legal advocates.

The initial reforms scrapped key protections, including the principle that incarceration on remand should be a "last resort" for youth offenders. They also made it an offence to breach bail conditions or commit an indictable offence while on bail.

Since then, incarceration rates have surged.

Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service chief executive Nerita Waight said the impact is already severe, noting 60 per cent of youth in detention and 40 per cent of adults in custody are currently unsentenced and being held on remand.

"We have seen a 300 per cent

Warning of more deaths in custody

increase in our Balit Ngulu clients being denied bail over the past year," Ms Waight said, calling it a "reckless approach to community safety when we know how deeply unsafe corrections facilities can be".

"The prison system is already overwhelmed and inundated, with base levels of care not being met for people who are currently incarcerated. The amendments of tranche two are reckless and will inevitably result in more Aboriginal deaths in custody."

Further changes expected in the second tranche include the High Harm Test — which has resulted in over 90 per cent of Aboriginal children being denied bail in New South Wales — and the Two Strike Test,

described as an "unmitigated disaster" by the Coroner during the inquest into the 2020 death in custody of Veronica Nelson.

Ms Nelson, a Gunditjmara, Dja Dja Wurrung, Wiradjuri, and Yorta Yorta woman, died in a "vomit-ridden" cell from a rare gastrointestinal condition after being arrested for alleged shoplifting and denied bail.

Although changes to bail laws followed advocacy from Ms Nelson's family in 2023, Victoria's Premier Jacinta Allan this year said those changes were "wrong".

Human Rights Law Centre First Nations Director Maggie Munn said: "Bail saves lives, yet the Allan Government is pursuing legislation that will put even more people behind bars."

"Victoria's regressive and discriminatory bail laws are already driving up the number of people in prison and condemning generations of children and adults to the trauma of pre-trial detention," they said.

"The Allan Government should abandon the second tranche of dangerous bail laws and instead implement Pocum's (Ms Nelson's childhood nickname) Law in full to make Victoria's bail laws safer and fairer for everyone."

Ms Waight said it should not take "another coronial inquest" to demonstrate how dangerous the new laws will be for Aboriginal people, who already face higher levels of criminalisation.

"Our message is clear — it is

fundamentally irresponsible to progress with Tranche Two. The risk to human life is too high," she said.

In April, National Indigenous Times revealed staff shortages have triggered rolling lockdowns, resulting in multiple suicide attempts, at Dame Phyllis Frost Centre, the State's only women's high-security prison. VALS says the facility has been in lockdown for 249 of the past 303 days, with an average lockdown duration of more than three hours.

Ms Waight said solitary confinement is a punishment inflicted on inmates because the Government can't "adequately staff their facilities for the population increase that they have single-handedly caused".

Lawyers have told National Indigenous Times some Aboriginal clients have been unable to attend their Koorie Court bail applications due to a lack of transport or space in courthouse cells, keeping them on remand even longer.

Ms Waight urged the Government to reconsider its approach. "Punitive, regressive policies do not work. Broken systems don't heal trauma."

"Instead, they will cause significant harm to our community as we see legal and corrections systems pushed to breaking point," she said.

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Reform in childcare must have 'systemic changes'

DECHLAN BRENNAN

New childcare legislation introduced into Federal Parliament has been welcomed by the Indigenous sector's peak body, but the organisation warns deeper problems can't be solved by adding more layers of bureaucracy.

Education Minister Jason Clare said last week that the Commonwealth's "biggest weapon" to improve safety and quality in the early childhood education and care sector is its funding power.

"This is not about shutting centres down. It's about lifting standards up and giving us the powers to make that happen," he said.

SNAICC — National Voice for our Children chief executive Catherine Liddle said legislative change is important, but must be accompanied by deeper, systemic reform.

"Imposing new regulations involving fines and funding cuts are only one part of the systematic change that is necessary to drive improvements in safety and quality issues in early education," Ms Liddle said.

"We need to deal with the root causes of this system such as workforce shortages, inequitable and difficult access to services and a funding model that incentivises profit over care."

The legislation focuses on increasing spot checks and cutting off funding to underperforming centres.

Mr Clare acknowledged legislation alone would not fix deeper issues, pointing to the need for a national register to track childcare workers across jurisdictions.

"In the last few weeks, people have been arrested and convicted of offences like those alleged before, and governments of different colours, State and Federal have taken action, but not enough, and not fast enough. That's the truth," he said.

The renewed scrutiny on the sector follows the arrest of Joshua Dale Brown who was charged with more than 70 offences relating to the alleged abuse of very young children while working across over 20 centres in Melbourne and Geelong.

Investigators identified a lack of communication between different childcare providers for whom he had worked.

Ms Liddle urged the Government to take the opportunity for "long-term solutions and real reform of the system", while also pointing to the success of Aboriginal community-controlled early years services in delivering culturally safe, high-quality care.

She said a funding model that supports Aboriginal community controlled organisations would allow greater flexibility in delivering early education that reflects the "individual and unique needs of their families and communities".



The Uncles and their legal team heading into court on July 15.

New hope follows climate court blow

JOSEPH GUENZLER

Days after the Federal Court dismissed a climate case brought by Torres Strait Islander Traditional Owners Uncle Paul Kabai and Uncle Pabai Pabai, ruling that the Federal Government does not owe a legal duty of care to protect island communities from the impacts of climate change, the world's highest court stated national governments have a legal obligation to address the environmental crisis.

Despite acknowledging that the Torres Strait Islands are "ravaged by climate change," Justice Michael Wigney ruled in the Federal Court on July 15 that emissions targets are a matter of "high or core govern-

ment policy" and not subject to common law negligence.

The case, filed in 2021, alleged the Government failed to act in line with scientific advice to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, placing communities on Boigu and Saibai at risk of becoming Australia's first climate change refugees.

Justice Wigney accepted the islands were experiencing sea level rise, erosion, flooding, and loss of cultural connection.

However, he ruled cultural loss is not recognised as a compensable harm under Australian law, and that no legal duty of care applied to government policy decisions.

Uncle Pabai Pabai said the decision has left him heartbroken. "My heart is broken for my

family and my community," he said. "Love has driven us on this journey for the last five years, love for our families and communities. That love will keep driving us."

Uncle Paul Kabai said he was shocked by the outcome.

"I thought the decision would be in our favour, and I'm in shock," he said. "This pain isn't just for me; it's for all people Indigenous and non-Indigenous who have been affected by climate change. What do any of us say to our families now?"

Aunty McRose Elu said she felt a deep grief for future generations. "What will I say to my grandchildren about this decision? It's their future, not mine."

Within eight days of the deci-

sion, the International Court of Justice declared states have a legal obligation to address climate change and a failure to do so is a "wrongful act" that could lead to reparations.

The ICJ advisory opinion last Wednesday said climate change was an "urgent and existential threat" to humanity and countries had a "duty to cooperate" on tackling it.

"Failure of a state to take appropriate action to protect the climate system . . . may constitute an internationally wrongful act," court president Yuji Iwasawa said, the ABC reported.

The finding could pave the way for nations most affected by climate change to litigate against big polluting countries.

Fresh call for inquiry into Hakea jail

GIOVANNI TORRE

WA's Inspector of Custodial Services has called for an inquiry into the "entirely unacceptable" conditions at Hakea Prison.

Inspector Eamon Ryan last week released the report for the 2025 follow-up inspection of Hakea, which re-visited problems identified in the 2024 inspection, where a Show Cause Notice was issued due to concerns prisoners were being held in inhumane conditions.

The latest inspection found conditions at Hakea, in which Aboriginal people are significantly over-represented, "had slightly improved but remained entirely unacceptable".

The inspector noted that with the creation of the Hakea safer custody taskforce efforts have been made to address conditions

and staffing shortages, "but this is slow progress".

The inspector found "men at Hakea — most of whom are unsentenced and being held on remand — are being held in conditions that fail to meet basic standards".

"The prison system is operating beyond its capacity, placing immense strain on staff, infrastructure, and prisoner welfare. These pressures are undermining the effectiveness of prison operations and having a significant toll on both staff wellbeing and the humane treatment of prisoners," he said.

"Ultimately, for the majority of adult prisoners effective rehabilitation is simply not happening."

Mr Ryan said the new report "yet again highlights the unacceptable conditions at Hakea — a prison

holding individuals held on remand who have not yet been convicted".

"It is deeply concerning that in a modern justice system, people are sleeping on floors beside toilets, denied daily access to showers, cannot get access to clean clothing, have immense difficulty contacting family, and are deprived of fresh air," he said.

"I have recommended that the Government initiate a formal inquiry into the operations of Hakea Prison. Such an inquiry is essential to identify practical solutions that uphold the rights of prisoners and ensure a safe, sustainable working environment for staff."

Kurin Minang law academic and human rights expert Dr Hannah McGlade backed the inspector's call.

"The prison poses unacceptable level of risk as we know that

Aboriginal men have died in this same prison in recent years. This prison is dangerous. If the WA government cannot manage this prison safely then they should be relieved of that responsibility until they can," she said.

The WA Department of Justice said it was implementing changes at Hakea Prison, guided by matters raised by the inspector to improve conditions.

National Indigenous Times asked Minister for Corrective Services Paul Papalia if and when the government will conduct an inquiry into Hakea Prison, and, if it wouldn't conduct an inquiry, why not.

Mr Papalia did not answer the questions. "A long-term custodial infrastructure plan to meet current and future population demands is now being considered by government," he said.



Discover how the Tarnanthi Festival enables artists like Lavene to share their stories of country.

Public Notice

Consultation for review of Bass Gas Offshore Operations Environment Plan



Beach Energy (Beach) supplies natural gas from offshore Victoria to the local market through existing infrastructure, including pipelines, offshore platforms, and onshore production facilities.

In accordance with regulatory requirements, Beach has commenced planning and consulting for the 5-year review of the Bass Gas Offshore Operation Environment Plan (EP) to cover ongoing production operations.

Bass Gas Operations produce natural gas and condensate from the Yolla gas field in the Bass Strait. The gas field is serviced by the Yolla-A Offshore Platform (Yolla Platform), and an approximately 147 km subsea pipeline that transports the gas and liquids from the platform to the Victorian mainland near Kilcunda. Commercial production of gas from the Yolla field started in June 2006 and may extend to 2030.

The revised EP will include the operation of the offshore wells, Yolla Platform and pipeline in the Bass Strait in commonwealth and state waters, and the ongoing maintenance and inspections to ensure safe ongoing field operations.

Consultation for this EP commenced on 14 July 2025 and will close at 5pm AEST on 10 October 2025.

Invitation to consult with Beach

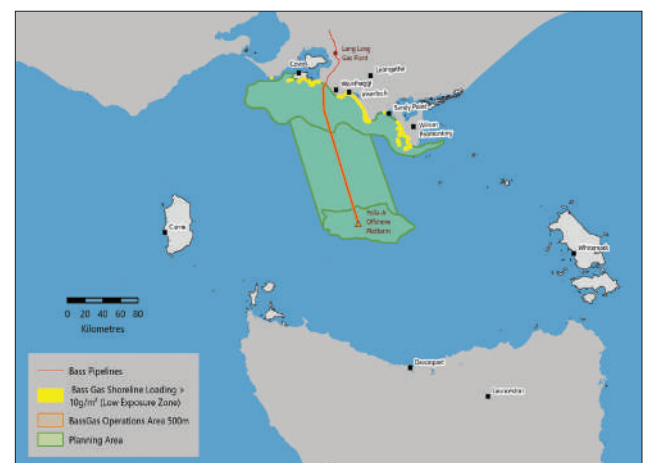
Beach consults with relevant persons so appropriate measures can be considered in response to objections or information received during consultation. Community information sessions and webinars will inform about the Bass Gas Operations. We invite culturally sensitive and open consultation with persons and organisations whose functions, interests, or activities may be affected by the activities described in the EP.

To register your interest in attending a webinar, please email community@beachenergy.com.au advising the session you would like to attend, and we will send you registration details.

Environment that may be affected (EMBA)

The map in this notice shows the largest geographic area where operational activities under the EP could potentially have a direct or indirect impact under worst-case scenarios.

Within the EMBA, the environment values and sensitivities are defined, potential impacts are assessed, and control measures are developed to mitigate impacts. The EMBA is divided into an operational area for activities defined in the EP, and a planning area where emergency response plans must be ready for activation in the unlikely event of an accident.



Further information

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

To arrange a meeting or seek further information, please contact Beach. For further project information scan the QR code or visit engage.beach.com.au.

Consultation dates and information

Online consultation hub	engage.beachenergy.com.au Engage Beach, includes information in different formats including maps; diagrams; questions and answers; and detailed information sheets.	
Dedicated culturally sensitive First Nations information sessions (registration not required)	Wonthaggi RSL, 60 Graham Street, Wonthaggi Tuesday 19 August, 11am to 3pm (AEST) Wednesday 20 August, 6pm to 8pm (AEST)	
Open information sessions (registration not required)	Wonthaggi RSL, 60 Graham Street, Wonthaggi Tuesday 19 August, 6pm to 8pm (AEST) Wednesday 20 August, 11am to 3pm (AEST)	
Dedicated culturally sensitive First Nations online information sessions (webinars)	Tuesday 9 September, 7pm to 7.45pm (AEST) Wednesday 10 September, 2.15pm to 3pm (AEST)	Please contact us to register for a webinar
Open online information sessions (webinars)	Tuesday 9 September, 2.15pm to 3pm (AEST) Wednesday 10 September, 7pm to 7.45pm (AEST)	Please contact us to register for a webinar

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READ MORE

Relief and joy as rock art on heritage list

GIOVANNI TORRE

UNESCO voted this month to include the Murujuga Cultural Landscape, home to the world's greatest collection of ancient rock art, on the World Heritage List.

The bid for the listing was driven by the Murujuga Aboriginal Corporation and supported by the Australian and WA governments.

After the listing was approved at the UNESCO meeting in Paris, Murujuga Aboriginal Corporation vice-chair Belinda Churnside addressed the forum.

"We have come together, from far away, from the Murujuga lands. This has been a long-awaited journey, for our old people," she said.

"We are thankful to receive this recognition on a global scale. Thank you everyone."

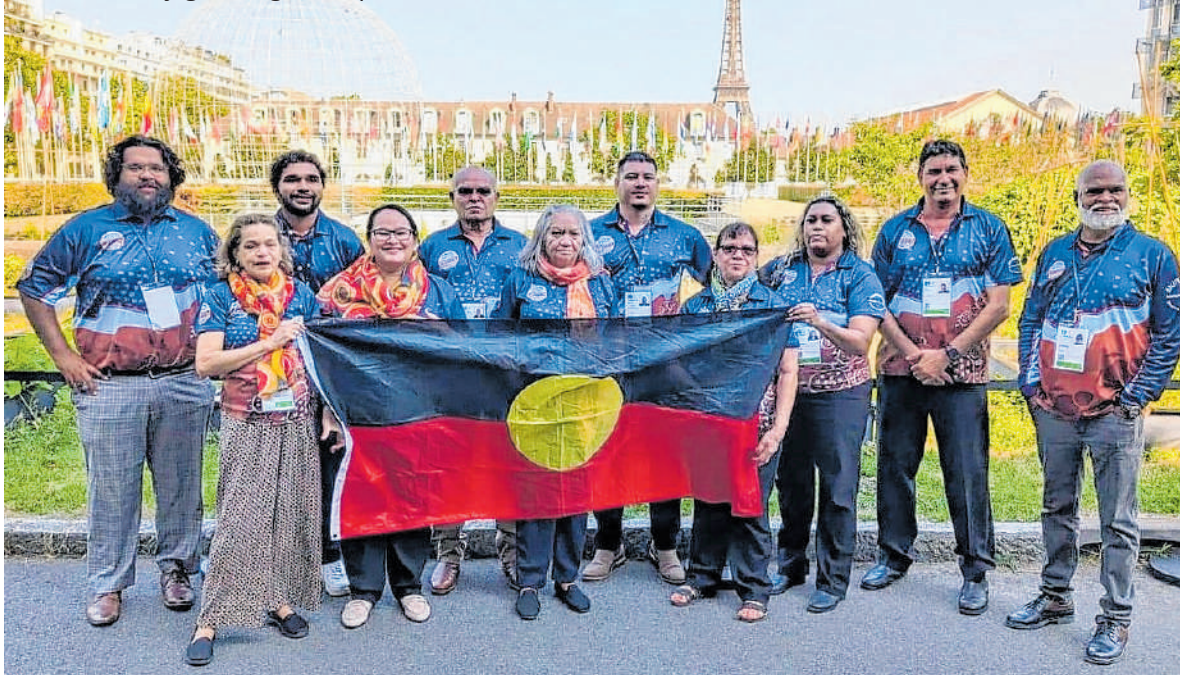
Murujuga Aboriginal Corporation chairperson Peter Hicks acknowledged the community for their support and "our Elders past and present", and thanked the delegates for the decision.

Delegates including those from Zambia, Jamaica, the Republic of Korea (South Korea), St Vincent and the Grenadines, Kazakhstan, Rwanda, Argentina and Qatar praised the strength of the nomination and congratulated the Murujuga Aboriginal Corporation.

Many delegates stressed the importance of ongoing monitoring on the site and vigilance in regards to industrial development and pollution in or near the area.

Delegates also acknowledged the Ngarda-Ngarli, Traditional

Murujuga Aboriginal Corporation delegates outside the UNESCO HQ in Paris.
Picture: Murujuga Aboriginal Corporation



Owners of the site, for their stewardship of and connection to the land over tens of thousands of years.

The Jamaican representative backed the listing, and added "we strongly encourage heightened engagement with all Traditional Owners" and the placement of "strict" environmental protections on the area.

Bulgaria's delegate said "the dossier clearly demonstrates the importance of the nomination to protect Aboriginal rock art".

Lebanon's delegate noted "concerns remain regarding the developing and encouraging of industrial development" in the area which "may put at

risk" the heritage and ecological values of the site.

The representative of St Vincent and the Grenadines urged "continued atmospheric observations by the state party (Australia)" to protect the site.

Federal Environment Minister Murray Watts said a World Heritage Listing "will better protect the living cultural traditions. . . (and) will better protect the knowledge and culture of the Ngarda-Ngarli".

Kenya and many other states moved an amendment calling for the Australian Government, in collaboration with Traditional Owners, to: conduct ongoing research and studies of the impact of industrial activity



Circle and radiating lines geometric motif on the Southern Burrup.

Picture: A. Stevens (via Murujuga Aboriginal Corporation).

progress in implementing the recommendations. It was then agreed Australia would provide a "progress report" in December 2026 and a "comprehensive report" in December 2027.

The Murujuga Cultural Landscape was nominated for inscription on the World Heritage List more than two years ago, in late January 2023.

Representatives of the Murujuga Aboriginal Corporation were present at the UNESCO meeting in Paris to hear the long-awaited decision.

Murujuga is now only the second site in Australia listed for World Heritage Status for First Nations cultural heritage.

Murujuga Aboriginal Corporation released a statement shortly after the decision.

"In a deeply emotional moment for Traditional Owners and Custodians, the Murujuga Cultural Landscape in North West Australia has been inscribed on UNESCO's World Heritage List," the MAC said.

"Acknowledging its profound cultural and spiritual significance, the World Heritage Committee met for its 47th session in Paris this week and made the decision to inscribe the Murujuga Cultural Landscape this morning."

Mr Hicks said: "We are elated to see the Murujuga Cultural Landscape recognised for its outstanding universal value."

"While today's inscription is recognition of the hard work that MAC has put in to progressing this nomination over the past two years, more importantly, it is recognition of the way our ancestors have managed this extraordinary landscape for over 50,000 years."

on the petroglyphs and properly; ensure the monitoring program and the legal regulatory framework protect the landscape; incorporate any undeveloped strategic land in the area into the heritage estate; and ensure decommissioning and rehabilitation plans are in place for industrial activity in the area.

The Belgian representative added that the conditions include the state party "ensure compliance with all reporting requirements and the operational guidelines", which was adopted.

The Australian Government was initially given a deadline of December 1, 2026, to report on

Councils demand to be heard

DECHLAN BRENNAN

The Northern Territory's four land councils issued a united call this month for the NT Government to engage with them directly, accusing the Territory's leaders of failing to consult meaningfully and treat them as equal partners.

Last week leaders from the Northern Land Council, Central Land Council, Tiwi Land Council, and Anindilyakwa Land Council gathered together and sharply criticised the NT Government's approach to Indigenous affairs, labelling its engagement "pathetic" and urging the Federal Government to intervene.

The land council leaders said none of the policies introduced by the country Liberals were working.

"We encourage the Northern Territory Government to speak with us," NLC chair Matthew Ryan said.

"Face to face. Be serious about economic development opportunities."

CLC deputy chair Barbara Shaw accused the Government of focusing solely on punitive measures.

"Unfortunately, the CLP always gets in on law and order. But us Aboriginal people are the most incarcerated people in the Northern Territory," she said. "It is so disgusting that this Government is not listening to our Elders."

The Territory government has faced mounting criticism from legal, human rights, and Indigenous groups over its law-and-order agenda, particularly changes including stricter bail laws and lowering the age of criminal responsibility from 12 to 10.

ALC chair Cherelle Wurrailya said land councils would not accept being sidelined.

"Everyone will suffer if governments keep punishing and neglecting our people, but we will all gain when governments work with us," she said. "Just look at the big drop in crime we achieved on Groote Island since we took control of delivering justice."

Recent data shows that since the introduction of the NT's first Community Court and Community Justice Group on Groote Eylandt, crime has fallen significantly. There were 130 offences recorded in the past year, down from 1041 in 2019 – a drop of nearly 88 per cent. Youth offences dropped from 267 in 2019 to 28 in the past 12 months.

Land council leaders also responded to the findings of the coronial inquest into the police shooting of Kumanjayi Walker, which exposed widespread institutional racism within the NT Police Force.



Northern Land Council chair Matthew Ryan speaking last Thursday.

Mr Ryan said the land councils want to co-design the terms of reference for an independent inquiry into systemic racism in policing, in partnership with other Aboriginal organisations.

"We want a working group of relevant agencies to develop and implement better procedures to address complaints by Aboriginal people about police racism and use

of force; a group that consults with the land councils and affected families and communities," he said.

He stressed the urgency of engagement with Acting Police Commissioner Martin Dole but said progress had been minimal. "We haven't seen any movement," Mr Ryan said. "As a collective, we can work together. (and make) a better policing model."



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STYLEUP

FASHION, BEAUTY & LIFESTYLE

Dream weaver sways Paris

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Luke Currie-Richardson
wearing Grace Lillian Lee.
Picture: Wendell Teodoro

Designer sparkles amc

Vinka Barunga
Pictures: Wendell
Teodoro



MARIA MAROUCHTCHAK

Paris Couture Fashion Week 2025 was introduced to the name Grace Lillian Lee.

Etching herself on to the scene — the Meriam Mer woman will be hard to forget, having garnered the attention of friend and former collaborator Jean Paul Gaultier and head curator of the Anna Wintour Costume Centre at New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art, Andrew Bolton.

Debuting *The Guardians* at 229LAB in the Marais district of Paris during the fashion world's week of weeks and, coincidentally, NAIDOC Week, Lee became the first Indigenous designer to independently showcase a collection.

Guided by her ancestors, the journey from Cairns to Paris was one rooted in self-determination and paying homage to her lineage of guardians that stood before her.

"I think that we belong here," Lee told *Style Up*. "It's been a very intentional journey to push our culture to the limits and have the work shown on such a global platform."

"I think the purpose of us being here was not only to share my culture and my stories but to also share that opportunity to have more representation here at Couture Fashion Week."

In the lead-up to her show, the designer embodied composure, remained down to earth and got it done; all without breaking a sweat.

Joining Lee was a dedicated team of friends and family who were in Paris to share in the historic experience. Among them, Kuku Yalanji, Djabugay, Munaldjali, Butchulla and Meriam man Luke Currie-Richardson who showcased his talents by representing the Dream Weaver; with a breathtaking performance inviting the audience to open their hearts and minds.

"My process kind of is about embodying story, embodying, I guess you'd say, cultural aspects that I've been blessed to learn while infusing those with my contemporary dance styles," Currie-Richardson shared with *Style Up*.

Lee's latest collection is an expansion of her solo exhibition, *The Dream Weaver: Guardians of Grace*, which was recently acquired by the Queensland Art Gallery of Modern Art.

"The Dream Weaver to me is this continuous celebration of culture and that we continue to dream and create these stories and allow our culture to live on and be strong," she reflected.

"So it was really important to have that essence of the Dream Weaver, like a spirit that was moving through this space and to prepare everyone for what was about to happen."

"My work is a little bit ethereal and a bit of an escape, like to create these sculptures that aren't worn by anybody but they embody an idea of a body."

Worrorra woman Vinka Burunga and Gungalidda woman Mayarr Yanner also took part in the milestone moment.



Grace Lillian Lee and Andrew Bolton.



Grace Lillian Lee and Jean Paul Gaultier.

Dr Burunga, who originally planned on joining her husband, Currie-Richardson, to support him, was asked to model one of Lee's exquisite garments. "I thought, why not?," Dr Burunga told *Style Up* before the show.

"When am I ever going to get the opportunity to do this again? From a little country town in northern West Australia, but also being a doctor — it's not in my repertoire, if you will — so I thought, why not?"

Yanner, who hails from the Mougibi, works at the local Burketown State School as a partnership initiative officer and language teacher.

Passionate about empowering youth through education and culture, she was inspired to use her moment in the spotlight to show her students that you can do anything.

"It's so important to see our

ong the stars of Paris



The Guardians collection.

culture displayed in places it would otherwise be invisible," Ms Yanner said.

"There's no space that our Mob don't belong."

A love letter to those who walked before her, Lee explained that *The Guardians* allows her "to stand here today".

Blending art, fashion, ritual and ancestral storytelling, the garments feature intricate handwoven techniques, striking laser-cut acrylic beadwork and sculptural silhouettes.

Lee shared how her work is a powerful fusion of tradition and innovation — where art, culture, and fashion seamlessly intertwine to honour her Torres Strait Islander, Chinese and European heritage while pushing creative boundaries and carrying this forward through her contemporary, couture designs.

"For me, art, culture and fashion are not separate; they move together. I translate my artworks into wearable forms, carrying forward the stories, symbols and motifs embedded within them," she said.

While the experience was impossible to encapsulate in words, Lee emphasised the significance of her debut, which also marked the start of her residency at the Cite Internationale des Arts.

"It's incredible to see all of us Mob here, celebrating ourselves, enjoying the beauty of Paris but also understanding the importance of that resilience of liberty that we are experiencing and sharing," she said.

"Being able to see people's response to the work and what we just shared with the world... I am lost for words on how incredible that was."



Luke Currie-Richardson.

Work's call to attention wins praise

RHIANNON CLARKE

Some of Queensland's top Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists were honoured this month as winners at the 2025 Cairns Indigenous Art Fair Art Awards, which celebrates excellence, culture and creativity.

CIAF's 2025 honour roll recognised emerging and established artists whose work challenges, inspires, and captures the evolving narratives of their communities; many of whom are featured in this year's Art Fair Showcase.

Hundreds of artworks were exhibited in the 2025 showcase, with a total prize pool of \$60,000 awarded to six artists.

The six major awards recognised a diverse range of artists and art centres. Bernard Singleton (Yakal Creatives) received the Premier's Award for Excellence for his work *Offering* (2025).

The Art Centre Award was

presented to Hopevale Arts & Culture Centre, while Alick Tipoti received the Innovation Award for Mawaw Danaka (2025).

Kyra Mancktelow was honoured in the 3D Design, Sculpture and Installation category for her full body of work, represented by N. Smith Gallery.

The Emerging Art Award (Acquisitive) went to Roy Gray (Bunda Art) for *Syriacarpia Gloulifera* (Turpentine/Gulumbi), a collaborative piece with Jo Ann Beikoff and the People's Choice Award, announced during CIAF's closing ceremony on 13 July, was awarded to Dylan Sarra for his work *Gulmari*.

Winners were selected by an esteemed judging panel consisting of Waanyi, Teppathiggi and Tjungundji man, artist and Aboriginal affairs advocate, Jack Wilkie-Jans; Burramattagal man, independent curator and 2022 Adelaide Biennial curator,



Bernard Singleton, third from left, in front of his winning work, *Offering*. Picture: CIAF

Sebastian Goldspink; and the Museum of Contemporary Art's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Collections and Exhibitions curator, Meriam woman Rebecca Ray.

The judging panel said they found *Offering* (2025) demonstrated "a mastery in traditional carving technique, producing an arresting and commanding work that audiences pay attention to".

In a joint statement, the panel said: "The innovative qualities of the work push the boundaries of First Nations' aesthetics and visuality, and to an impressive scale for the artist's practice."

"The piece is rooted in Djabugay/Yirrgay knowledge, which speaks to Singleton's

upbringing and inter-generational storytelling. The work highlights reciprocal responsibility and the crucial role relationships play in caring for Country, for one another, our futures, and both the tangible and intangible aspects of the world," they said.

"The Hairy Men (known by many names) have a presence across Singleton's and Tropical North Queensland's forests as protectors of Country, their associated and diverse Lore also connects knowledge from across First Nations Australia and globally. Through techniques rooted in both traditional and contemporary experimentation, Singleton embodies CIAF's 2025 theme, "Pay Attention!": Truth-telling

through creativity. Singleton's contribution stands as both protest and invitation — urging people to pay attention to what is often unseen and unheard and to challenge them to reckon with the legacies and futures of Indigenous sovereignty."

CIAF's artistic director, Teho Ropeyarn, extended warm congratulations.

"These awards are not just about recognising great art, they're about honouring our ancestors, amplifying our voices, and ensuring that future generations can see their stories and sovereignty reflected on canvas, in sculpture, and across every form of creative expression," Mr Ropeyarn said.

HANCOCK IRON ORE

Atlas Iron and Roy Hill coming together as one.

HANCOCK
IRON ORE

FOR AUSTRALIA

NIMAs wield creative power

NICOLE BROWN

On August 9, the sounds of Country will rise under the open sky of Garramilla as the National Indigenous Music Awards (NIMAs) return to the Darwin Amphitheatre to celebrate 21 years of Blak excellence, resilience and creative power.

With six major award categories and an electrifying live performance line-up, the 2025 NIMAs shine a spotlight on the stories, strength and innovation of First Nations artists.

Leading the nominations are 3%, whose ARIA-winning protest album *Kill The Dead* has been heralded as a generational anthem for justice. Proud Warnindhilyagwa singer-songwriter Emily Wurramara follows closely with her soul-stirring album *NARA*, which weaves deep emotion with ancient language and legacy. Also receiving four nominations are Andrew Gurruwiwi Band, whose debut *Sing Your Own Song* has filled festivals with joyful, saltwater-fuelled energy.

Not far behind are King Stingray and BARKAA, each with three nominations.



BARKAA, 3% and King Stingray. Picture: Bad Apples Music, Instagram @3three.percent. and Art Gallery of NSW.

BARKAA's raw and fearless EP *Big Tidda* continues to define her as one of Australia's most vital hip-hop voices. In the running for artist of the year are powerhouses such as Jessica Mauboy, Emma Donovan and genre-bending storyteller *Radical Son*.

Among the best new talent nominees, the future of Blak music is on full display. From Maningrida's fierce *Ripple Effect Band*, who sing in multiple Arnhem Land languages, to Naarm-based rapper Miss Kaninna whose debut EP refuses to be boxed in; each act carries a unique voice and purpose. Also nominated

are Tjaka, *DriftingClouds* and the ever-energetic *Andrew Gurruwiwi Band*; all testament to the diversity and innovation emerging across community and Country.

The Community Clip of the Year category reminds us of music's power to strengthen, heal and inspire. From Kalkaringi School's anthem *Gurindji Dream Big*, to Mapoon Community's meditative *Breathe In Breathe Out* and Warmun's vivid storytelling in *Turkey Creek*, these works reflect the heart and hope of our people; honouring language, land and legacy through sound and story.

Taking to the stage for this year's live performances are a line-up of legends and rising stars. From Troy Cassar-Daley and Jessica Mauboy, to Emma Donovan, Velvet Trip, Kobie Dee, Kankawa Nagarra, and Eleanor Jawurlngali with Mick Turner (*Dirty Three*); the 2025 NIMAs will be a sonic journey across generations and genres.

Cassar-Daley, reflecting on his long ties to the Top End, said: "My connection to Larrakia Country has been a long one, first visiting over there at 21 I fell in love with the country and its people. I can't wait to celebrate our mob's achievements in Garramilla. I

have my guitar at the ready and songs to sing as we celebrate 21 years of the NIMAs together."

Presented by YouTube, the full ceremony will be livestreamed globally.

Marion Goodman-Briand, from YouTube Australia & New Zealand, said the NIMAs "stand as a powerful platform, showcasing the extraordinary talent and rich narratives embedded within First Nations music".

"We extend our warmest congratulations to all the nominees . . . and we're honoured to amplify these voices to a global audience."

Tickets are on sale now.

Actor banishes his doubts after winning musical role

JARRED CROSS

Ngali Shaw is still wrapping his head around having secured a role in a modern mega-hit penned by one of musical theatre's biggest names.

Shaw hits the stage as Benny in Lin Manuel-Miranda's quadruple Tony Award-winning debut musical *In The Heights* when it opens in Naarm/Melbourne on August 1.

The upcoming production's New York City-setting is a long way from Shaw's beginnings as an actor in Dubbo. He wasn't convinced it was for him when his mum came into his bedroom during the COVID-19 pandemic holding up an ad from a casting agent she had seen online.

It was seeking Indigenous actors, no experience required, Shaw told *National Indigenous Times*. After first dismissing the idea, and acting, he paused from making music to give it another think.

"I'll give it a try. So, I ended up auditioning for it. It was a little self-tape at the time," Shaw said.

His audition was knocked back but not without encouraging words and getting himself on the casting company's radar.

By the next week they'd sent over what would become his first successful audition — a guest role on Seven Network drama series *RFDS: Royal Flying Doctor Service*.

Five years on, the Wiradjuri, Murawari and Kunja actor's CV has grown to include a list of TV credits, an Australian main-stage



Ngali Shaw has landed a key role in the musical *In The Heights*.

debut with Arrernte playwright Declan Furber Gillick's *Jacky*, and the lead role in Nathan Maynard and Isaac Drandic's sports drama-comedy *37*. He was also named the inaugural recipient of the Brian Walsh Award for best emerging talent at the 2024 AACTA's.

Shaw said he owed a lot to the Dubbo Ballet Studio for honing his skills in creative performance.

"It's a whole different world," a self-described "raw" Shaw, now based in Sydney's west, said of taking on musical theatre and a US hit. "At one point in my life, I was set on music . . . I really wanted to do music. But singing

here on stage, musical theatre, and singing in my room is completely different. It's a whole different style, whole different energy," he said.

"I'm still wrapping my head around the fact that I am good enough to be here. I wouldn't be here if it wasn't."

In The Heights tells the story of community and culture in a Latin-American neighbourhood in New York City's Washington Heights; love, working-class life and the ambitions and dreams of those who call it home.

In The Heights opens its limited run at the Melbourne Comedy Theatre on August 1.

Artist's works of note reimagined in music

JOSEPH GUENZLER

Wulli Wulli artist Arabella Walker and the Queensland Symphony Orchestra (QSO) Compose Program recently collaborated on a project in which her artworks became the foundation for new compositions by secondary school students.

Walker began painting during the COVID-19 pandemic as a way to explore her cultural identity and heritage.

"I decided I wanted to swap degrees and study painting and learn a bit more about my cultural heritage and family history," she said.

As part of the QSO Compose Program, Walker presented a series of paintings depicting native animals, alongside cultural context and personal stories linked to her connection to Auburn Station and her Wulli Wulli heritage.

"I gave them a selection of

different works and talked about them in a cultural sense but also how I made them, the layering of colours and patterns," she said.

Students used this background to create original classical compositions, interpreting Walker's visual storytelling through music.

Ms Walker said hearing the compositions for the first time was a surreal moment.

"I went to the rehearsals a few weeks ago and I was just like, wow," she said.

"They interpreted it and added layers to it as if I was painting it. It was really cool to hear that cross between contemporary art in a cultural sense, and something so classical."

The QSO Compose Program compositions will be performed later this year.

Walker's artworks were on display in the QSO foyer during NAIDOC Week.



Arabella Walker's art has been reimagined by QSO students. Pic: CIAF

Elder takes her artwork to London

DAVID PRESTIPINO

Yinjabarndi artist and Elder Allery Sandy took her first overseas journey this month, at the age of 70, as artist-in-residence at a 20th anniversary exhibition of Pilbara art in London, held from July 14-18.

Before the trip, Ms Sandy told National Indigenous Times she was “looking forward to a wider audience to listen to my story, to see why Country that connects to the Aboriginal people is so important”.

“For me to just stand up there and tell my story, and just meet everyone, is going to be an honour,” she said before leaving for the UK, where the Rio Tinto-funded exhibition has been taken overseas for the first time, before another stint on the road back home in Busselton in August, and a final showing in Boorloo/Perth in September.

Ms Sandy shared the

inspiration behind her signature piece *After The Rain*, part of a curated selection of works from six Pilbara artists at the special London showing.

“When the rain comes, it makes the country flourish again, and brings the beauty of the land that we live in . . . it provides all that we need,” she said.

“When the heavy dew comes along, it’s nature itself, it just waters the Mother Earth and slowly brings the beauty, the wildflowers and the fruits that we can get from the trees.”

The *Colours Of Our Country* exhibition has become a vital support for artists in the Pilbara over its two decades and brought much attention to the region and Roebourne specifically, where many craft their works at Yinjaa-Barni Art Centre.

The selection for the London showing features nine artworks from six artists. Accompanying Ms Sandy to London was fellow



Rachael Sandover and Allery Sandy at Yinjaa-Barni Art Centre ahead of the London exhibition.

artist Lynette Upton, a Pilbara Nyamal woman, and Rachael Sandover, the centre’s executive manager.

“The exhibition is a real highlight for the artists they’ve been supporting for the 20 years it’s been running, and allowed for a lot of attention . . . that they otherwise might not receive,” Ms Sandover said.

She said Ms Sandy, the signature artist for the 2025 exhibition, was an amazing woman and passionate about her culture and inspiring others into the medium.

“To be in her presence, you

can really feel that power. She really wants to preserve Yindjibarndi culture,” Ms Sandover said.

“She also wants to encourage lots of other people to practise their art and consider it as a meaningful source of income.”

Ms Sandy said she was proud painting was still important to many local artists throughout the years.

“Today we see what we have developed, and how we are proud of our work and what we can achieve in this, and seeing all that we have done . . . we’ve lost count of how many

paintings and artwork we’ve done over the years.”

Ms Sandy hopes sharing the connection Aboriginal people have to Country would enlighten the broader London audience, and inspire young people back home to share theirs. “I’d love to encourage my younger generations today to stand up for who they are and tell their story boldly, strong and just be who they are,” the Elder said.

The exhibitions are open to the public in Busselton (August 25-29) and Perth (September 15-26).

Greater Western Flank Phase 4 Drilling and Subsea Installation Environment Plan

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 Environment Plans.

Greater Western Flank Phase 4 (GWF-4) Drilling and Subsea Installation Environment Plan (EP)

The Greater Western Flank Phase 4 (GWF-4) Project intends to partially fill ullage (unused production capacity) at the existing Goodwyn Alpha (GWA) facility. The GWF-4 Drilling and Subsea Installation EP comprises drilling offshore wells in nearfields and the Wilcox Field which will be tied back to existing GWF subsea infrastructure. Woodside plans to drill up to six wells. The EP will also cover installation and pre-commissioning of subsea infrastructure.

Environment that may be affected (EMBA)

The EMBA is the largest geographic area where unplanned events could potentially have an environmental consequence. The whole EMBA will not be affected.

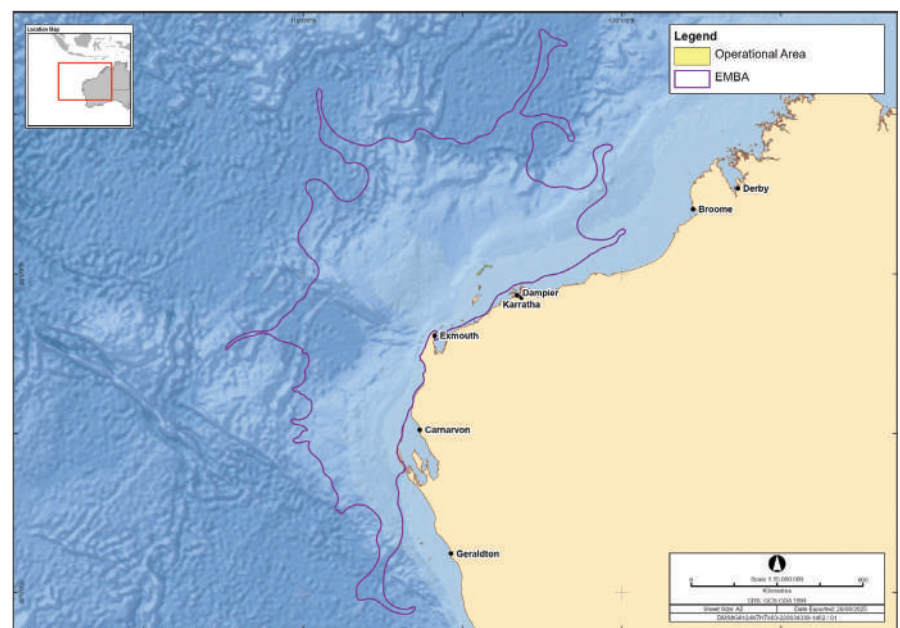
We would like to hear from you

If you are an individual, organisation or community group and believe your functions, interests or activities may be impacted by the activities under this Environment Plan, we want to hear from you by **27 August 2025**.

To find out more go to:

www.woodside.com/what-we-do/consultation-activities

You can also subscribe via our website to receive future information on upcoming activities.



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Rewiring the focus at UN

HANNAH MCGLADE

The Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples is an annual meeting at the United Nations headquarters in Geneva focusing on Indigenous people's rights under the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and other international treaties.

The forum provides Indigenous people globally with expert advice, delivered by Indigenous experts, appointed by the UN Human Rights Council. The EMRIP makes proposals at the conclusion of the meeting to the Human Rights Council for further consideration. This month I attended, invited by the UN to present on Aboriginal child removals, some years ago having authored a request for an in-country visit to WA hosted by the Noongar Family Safety Wellbeing Council to investigate this.

The EMRIP country visit is a new method in human rights that involves a dialogue approach with States and Indigenous peoples in response to violations of human rights. To conduct the visit, the member State needs to agree to

the dialogue. It was disappointing to advise EMRIP and the attendees that the situation has largely not improved since the country visit to WA and that Australian governments appeared to have lack of regard to its important recommendations.

EMRIP called for an Aboriginal Children's Commissioner be appointed by the WA Government, and noted the need for investment into culturally proper preventative responses and the responsibility for child welfare to be delegated to Aboriginal organisations. The new Aboriginal Representative Organisations are a step in the right direction but the decisions about Aboriginal children remain with the department and there is an ongoing issue about the lack of cultural lens in these decisions.

At a later meeting with the UN experts who led the in-country visit, I conveyed my concern the focus of Australia's participation at the meeting was economic empowerment and not human rights issues important to our people. The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade is focused on using

its international diplomacy to facilitate business and trade opportunities. While this is great for Indigenous businesses, it does little to address the dire situation facing Aboriginal children across the country. And whilst actively taking part in international forums, Australia has not made progress towards the implementation of the Declaration and across the continent, Australia is going backwards on criminal justice laws targeting Aboriginal kids.

This is the subject of an early warning urgent action request to the UN Committee on the Elimination of Race Discrimination highlighting systemic race discrimination inherent in the laws pushed under "tough on crime" rhetoric. The UNCERD, the Special Rapporteur on Torture, and the Special Rapporteur on Indigenous Peoples have all written to Australia seeking responses. As the Uluru Youth delegation made clear at EMRIP, Aboriginal people have been denied a national representative voice since the referendum was interpreted by the Albanese Government as a red light for Indigenous

peoples' rights. The First Nations Disability Alliance also advocated strongly on systemic discrimination, including in relation to criminal justice and incarceration.

The forum heard from the Australian Government represented by the Ambassador for First Nations people Justin Mohammed. In announcing the position, Foreign Affairs Minister Penny Wong said the ambassador and his office "will work in genuine partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to progress Indigenous rights globally, and help grow First Nations trade and investment", and this will mean Australia will have dedicated Indigenous representation in international engagement. But instead, we've found DFAT liaises less with Indigenous representatives and everything relating to Indigenous issues is now filtered through a single office.

The ambassador had not engaged substantively with the important EMRIP country visit engagement to Australia. His interventions promoted government policy such as the First Nations Clean Energy policy, which falls short of

legislative reform required to ensure Aboriginal people's equitable access to the opportunities that may arise out of this phase of climate adaptation. Indeed, it's striking that the research and stories told by Indigenous communities globally is noticeably more cautious and nuanced than the glowing accounts of clean energy opportunities in Australia.

At the closing I was happy to hear the meeting proposals included Indigenous peoples' rights and child welfare systems, as well as States engagement with EMRIP. Both important issues deserve the utmost international attention of EMRIP and the Human Rights Council, especially as we're seeing even more Aboriginal children removed — and incarcerated — and knowing that Closing the Gap policy commitments are a failure in this area and beyond, not that you would hear this from the Ambassador for First Nations People.

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

Welcome ceremony backlash sets back progress

RENAE ISAACS-GUTHRIDGE

The ongoing backlash against Acknowledgement of, and Welcome to Country ceremonies — most recently in early childhood education, and again in Parliament — reflects a deeper unease within Australian society about how we reckon with truth, history and identity.

Commentary criticising Possums' Corner Child Care Centre for including daily Acknowledgements is not just a difference of opinion about pedagogy. It's part of a broader, troubling trend where efforts to foster respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are framed as political indoctrination, "virtue signalling", or somehow harmful to children.

These ceremonies are not political slogans. They are acts of recognition and respect; simple, powerful acknowledgements that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are the first and ongoing custodians of this land. In early childhood education, where foundational values are shaped, incorporating Acknowledgement of Country helps young children



Opposition Leader Sussan Ley and PM Anthony Albanese at a Welcome to Country ceremony for the opening of Parliament. Picture: AAP

understand connection to place, care for land and respect for others. These are not just "cultural activities"; they are vital to building inclusive, compassionate citizens.

The Early Years Learning Framework, which guides curriculum nationally, calls for educators to "promote greater understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ways of knowing, being and doing". This is not a radical directive; it is recognition that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives are central to Australian identity and education. Those who claim these practices are "not

age-appropriate" overlook children's capacity for empathy and belonging. Children as young as three are not confused by these practices; they are often the ones who embrace them most naturally. To them, it is storytelling, music, care and community. What is damaging is when adults project discomfort, ignorance, or resentment on to children's learning. It is especially harmful when prominent media figures and politicians use their platforms to delegitimise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural protocols. One Nation senators turning their backs during an

Acknowledgment to Country in Parliament is not a harmless gesture; it is a calculated act of disrespect. It fuels division, emboldens racism and sends a message that the cultures and histories of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples of this continent are optional, inconvenient or unworthy of recognition. These actions undermine not only reconciliation but the very fabric of a united, respectful Australia.

Yes, Australia is a country for all of us. But a truly inclusive nation cannot exist without recognising those who came first. Acknowledging

Country does not diminish anyone's belonging; it strengthens it. It teaches all Australians that our shared future is built not by ignoring the past, but by facing it with honesty and respect.

To those who are uncomfortable with these acknowledgements, perhaps the discomfort is the lesson. True reconciliation requires a willingness to sit with discomfort, to listen deeply and to imagine a future where respect is not political; it's just who we are.

Renaë Isaacs-Guthridge is a Noongar and Yamatji Yorga with connections across Countries, including Wardandi Boodja.

Report highlights value and impact of Indigenous business

REECE HARLEY

Indigenous-owned businesses nationwide are generating \$42.6 billion in social value annually through their operations, according to a new report released on July 7 by Supply Nation.

The Sleeping Giant Rises report provides evidence of the economic and social impact of Indigenous businesses across the country.

It found that for every dollar in revenue generated, Indigenous businesses returned \$3.66 in measurable social and economic value, with benefits reaching deep into communities, households and future generations.

The report was launched at an event hosted by Business Sydney on Gadigal Land. Supply Nation CEO and proud Awabakal woman Kate Russell formally presented the report's findings, joined by a panel of speakers including Jason Ardler PSM, Jennifer Mar Young, Joshua Gilbert and Monica Barone.

"This report confirms what many in our communities already know," said Ms Russell.

"Indigenous businesses are not only creating jobs and building wealth, they are contributing to the wellbeing of families and communities in ways that align with Culture, Country and identity."

The study, led by Think Impact, is based on surveys of 147 Indigenous business owners, supported by interviews and a validation process.

It uses a social return on revenue model to assess value creation in three stakeholder groups: Indigenous business owners, their employees and members of their households.

This value is experienced through outcomes such as improved mental health, financial stability, cultural pride, control over life decisions and increased

aspirations. The findings exclude the effects of philanthropic programs or government subsidies; focusing solely on the results generated through business activity.

The research estimates 16 per cent of the Indigenous population in Australia is directly connected to the Indigenous business sector; including more than 29,000 business owners, about 65,700 Indigenous employees and about 61,300 people living in the households of business owners. The figures are based on ABS population data and survey responses.

Among business owners surveyed, 86 per cent reported they

“

I have now seen the life that my son lives, which I'm extremely grateful for, and I just want more mob to be able to break generational struggles.

Blake Allen

had more control over their lives as a result of owning a business.

Ninety-five per cent said they felt prouder of who they are, while 89 per cent said business ownership allowed them to more fully express their culture.

These themes were also reflected in responses about household wellbeing, with 77 per cent of owners agreeing they felt more positive about their family's future.

The report calculates business owners experience about \$14.9b in social value each year.

Indigenous employees benefit from about \$16.2b, and household members experience a further \$11.3b. The most significant contributor to these figures was a category defined as "expanded aspirations," which accounted for the majority of value across all groups.

Case studies throughout the report illustrate the outcomes.

Bundjalung woman Jenni Walke, founder of Elephant In The Room Consulting, left the corporate world to establish a business grounded in cultural identity.

"It is the best way for us to maintain our connection to Community and Culture and still be successful," she said.

Ms Walker's business has received numerous accolades, including the Indigenous Exporter of the Year at Supply Nation's 2024 Supplier Diversity Awards. She has also been recognised for her podcast, leadership and consulting achievements through the ROAR Awards and the Women Changing the World Awards.

BRC Cladding, founded in 2013 by Wiradjuri and Weilwan man Blake Allen, is now Australia's largest Aboriginal-owned roofing business and was the first Indigenous business in the sector to deliver a project valued over \$3 million in Sydney.

Mr Allen describes the growth of the business as deeply connected to his motivation to support his community.

"I have now seen the life that my son lives, which I'm extremely grateful for, and I just want more mob to be able to break generational struggles," he said.

Despite BRC Cladding's success, Mr Allen said industry resistance to Indigenous businesses acting as lead contractors remained a challenge.

"We can't keep doing the work and not getting the opportunity," he said. "I just need to be given a

fair opportunity to show what we can do on the biggest stage, because that's where we deserve to be and where we can make the biggest impact in Community."

The study found Indigenous businesses also made significant contributions to national policy goals.

Seventy-one per cent of business owners reported that young people in their families were more likely to complete Year 12 because of their business. Sixty-nine per cent said their children were more likely to undertake further education or training.

Sixty-three per cent believed their Indigenous employees were more likely to own their own home and 74 per cent said those employees were better able to manage their physical health due to secure employment.

In addition to value created for owners, employees and families, the report also estimates Indigenous businesses contribute about \$192m annually in financial and in-kind support to community initiatives.

The report concluded with a series of recommendations for government agencies, corporates and investors, including increasing investment in Indigenous-led funding models, revising procurement policies to reduce systemic barriers and involving Indigenous businesses in the development of Closing the Gap strategies.

The report also stressed the importance of maintaining majority Indigenous ownership in any investment partnership.

Ms Russell said the findings reflected not just economic outcomes but the lived reality of many Indigenous entrepreneurs.

"The value Indigenous businesses create is measurable, widespread and deeply connected to the wellbeing of our communities," she said.

Fortescue funds for STEAM at high school

Fortescue has pledged \$600,000 over three years to support Hedland Senior High School in delivering education and engagement programs aimed at empowering local youth, strengthening regional capability and deepening First Nations engagement.

The investment will fund a range of initiatives, including Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics (STEAM) programs for Years 7 to 12, enhancements to the school's technology hub, and culturally respectful initiatives celebrating First Nations identity and connection to Country.

Fortescue's director of approvals, communities and environment Warren Fish said the partnership reflected the mining company's commitment to nurturing local talent and building strong communities.

"We're proud to work alongside Hedland Senior High School to deliver lasting outcomes for students and families across the Pilbara," he said. "This partnership is about unlocking opportunities for all students to thrive – in the classroom and beyond. By supporting an inclusive and future-focused STEAM curriculum, we're investing in the next generation of innovators, leaders and change makers," he said.

The funding will support curriculum delivery, staff development and upgrades to infrastructure, including equipment and broader access to real-world STEAM experiences.

Hedland Senior High School principal Michael Ciccotosto said the school was fortunate to receive the support. "With Fortescue's assistance, we can realise our ambitions in STEAM programs, technology hub enhancements and Aboriginal engagement," he said.

"This has already greatly enhanced student engagement through an integrated approach to learning, creating high levels of student interest and innovation.

"Fortescue's support has helped us enrich our curriculum and scope of delivery while exposing our students to opportunities we would have had difficulty providing."

This report was produced with the support of Fortescue.

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Yarn'n goes coast to coast

JOSEPH GUENZLER

Indigenous-owned toilet paper company Yarn'n has partnered with Bunzl Australia and New Zealand in a new distribution deal that will make its sustainable product more accessible to businesses across the country.

The partnership will see Yarn'n's business-to-business Our Bunji range integrated into Bunzl's national distribution network.

The deal enables organisations across Australia and Aotearoa-New Zealand to purchase Yarn'n's FSC-certified, made from 100 per cent recycled paper product, which combines environmental responsibility with cultural storytelling.

Founded in 2023 by Wiradjuri man Lane Stockton and former Australian rugby player David "Crofty" Croft, Yarn'n donates 50 per cent of its profits to the Yalari Foundation. The not-for-profit provides boarding school scholarships to Indigenous students from regional and remote communities around the country.

Mr Stockton said the partnership with Bunzl marks a major milestone for the business.

"Partnering with Bunzl marks an exciting step forward for Yarn'n, and together we are driving meaningful change at scale," he said.

"Their dedication to Indigenous supplier diversity, reconciliation, and sustainability reflects our own commitment to creating meaningful community impact.

"With Bunzl's extensive distribution network spanning Australia, New Zealand, and beyond, this partnership enables us to amplify the reach of



Yarn'n partners with Bunzl to expand access to sustainable, purpose-driven toilet paper. Picture: supplied

First Nations businesses, foster cultural connection, and deliver ethical, environmentally responsible products to a broader audience."

The brand has grown rapidly since launching online, expanding into almost 1,000 Woolworths supermarkets in March 2025, while continuing to offer subscription and one-time purchases through its website.

The packaging and product design are intended to spark conversations around cultural connection in homes, workplaces, and public facilities.

Bunzl Australia and New Zealand Managing Director Mark Phelan welcomed the partnership, saying it reflects the company's commitment to supporting Indigenous suppliers. "We are delighted to

partner with Yarn'n; an Australian company driven by purpose, culture, connection, Country, and community impact," he said. "Yarn'n's commitment to empowering First Nations businesses aligns perfectly with Bunzl's ongoing efforts to support Indigenous supplier diversity, employment opportunities, and reconciliation. "Together, we are making

a tangible difference while upholding our shared values of sustainability and community empowerment."

The partnership adds further momentum to Yarn'n's growth as a social enterprise, helping to expand its reach while maintaining its focus on cultural education, ethical manufacturing, and community-led change.

Entrepreneurs are fuelling their own transformation

NICOLE BROWN
ANALYSIS

In the heart of the Northern Territory, a quiet revolution is unfolding. This shift isn't born from headlines or handouts; it's powered by purpose, driven by Aboriginal entrepreneurs building wealth, creating jobs, and shaping a future led by their own vision.

At the centre of this momentum is Aboriginal Investment NT, which recently injected \$3.7 million into 39 Aboriginal businesses through the first round of its Business Grants program.

More than just funding, it's fuel for transformation. Across the Territory, Aboriginal businesses – 95 per cent of which are small businesses – are rising to meet community needs with innovation, cultural integrity and economic ambition. The power of these investments is in their ripple effect. Each dollar granted becomes a seed, growing not only enterprises but also opportunities, employment and pride in communities.

Economic empowerment isn't just a buzzword. It's a strategy for self-determination. It's about more

than surviving, it's about thriving. When Aboriginal people are given the tools, trust and capital to lead their own enterprises, we don't just build stronger businesses – we build stronger futures. We replace cycles of disadvantage and dependence by with frameworks of equity, ownership and legacy.

Aboriginal Investment NT chief executive Nigel Browne understands this well.

"We want to support those businesses, not only so that business owners can achieve well-deserved economic success, but so that the Aboriginal communities in which they operate can also experience positive indirect and direct benefits such as increased employment, further economic development and sustainable wealth creation," he said. "We want to see real and lasting impacts across the Territory, which can only be done through empowering Aboriginal Territorians to lead and develop their own opportunities. We cannot wait to see the tangible effects that round one of Business Grants will have on the community and the wider NT economy."

The message is clear: real impact comes from investing *with* community, not just *into* community.

But empowerment doesn't stop at grants. It continues through mentorship, governance, leadership and collective action. Aboriginal Investment NT's holistic approach – from business and community grants to community-led project-based initiatives – proves that economic success and cultural integrity are not mutually exclusive. In fact, they are strongest when braided together.

The work being done is also about restoring what has long been denied; control. Control over how, where and why money flows. Control over what success looks like on Country. Control over intergenerational wealth that's not extracted but expanded.

As a proud First Nations woman, I've seen first-hand how wealth creation is more than a financial transaction. It's spiritual, cultural and communal. It means being able to employ young Indigenous people, support their education, bring services back to remote communities, or fund local



CEO Nigel Browne, left, with the Aboriginal Investment NT team. Picture: Aboriginal Investment NT

language projects through your profits. It means backing our vision, not just with belief, but with capital.

And we know that when First Nations people are in the driver's seat, the road leads somewhere different; somewhere better. It's led by cultural knowledge, grounded in responsibility to Country, and informed by generations of survival, innovation and adaptation.

We must continue to back Indigenous business, not as a gesture of goodwill, but as a strategy for national growth and

justice. Because investing in Indigenous businesses doesn't just benefit Aboriginal communities; it uplifts the entire Northern Territory economy, fosters inclusive growth, and builds a more resilient Australia.

This is how futures are built, grounded in Country, driven by purpose, and powered by Aboriginal excellence. Backing Indigenous business drives equity, fuels economic growth, and delivers lasting change led by community, for community.

NSW clean energy push

CALLAN MORSE

Unlocking the renewable energy potential of Aboriginal land across New South Wales could transform communities and accelerate the State's clean energy transition, a new report published this month found.

Developed through a joint research initiative between the University of New South Wales and the University of Technology Sydney (UTS), the report, Local Aboriginal Land Council Powershift, details a number of recommendations for the NSW Government to maximise the potential for Aboriginal land councils to host and own renewable energy projects on their own lands.

Drawing on case studies based in the regional towns of Brewarrina, Hay and Tibooburra, the report highlights how locally led energy projects can align with broader government priorities, such as enhancing regional grid reliability, accelerating renewable energy zones, and embedding First Nations outcomes in infrastructure planning.

UNSW Sydney Indigenous Land and Justice Research Group director and lead researcher Heidi Norman said land councils were well placed to develop renewable energy solutions.

"Aboriginal Land Councils manage extensive land holdings, many of which are ideally suited for renewable energy developments such as solar and wind," Professor Norman said.

"With the right policy frameworks and support, Aboriginal communities — organising through their land councils — can play a transformative role in Australia's energy transition."

Across New South Wales, local Aboriginal land councils manage 447sqkm of land, with a further 7438sqkm under claim. Despite this, the report indicated Aboriginal participation in renewable energy projects in the State so far had been minimal.

Saori Miyake from UTS Institute for Sustainable Futures



Brewarrina LALC staff and researchers from the Indigenous Land and Justice Research Group and UTS Institute of Sustainable Futures, along with actuaries from Finity Consulting, after last year's renewable energy summit. Picture: UNSW Sydney

said developing renewable energy projects on Aboriginal land across the State could result in clean energy production "larger than the capacity of the biggest renewable energy zone under development".

"Our spatial analysis found that activating the Aboriginal land estate could unlock over 11 gigawatts of solar energy or 1.6 gigawatts of wind energy ... and if outstanding land claims are resolved that potential increases nearly twentyfold," Dr Miyake said.

The report identifies key barriers that currently limit the participation of Aboriginal land councils in clean energy initiatives, including constrained resources, limited planning and governance networks and a lack of incentives for energy partners to engage with the Aboriginal land estate.

UNSW Sydney's Indigenous Land and Justice Research Group member and expert in

Aboriginal history and policy Therese Apolonio said when it came to renewable energy opportunities, Aboriginal land councils had "the land, the interest, and the vision".

"What they lack are the resources, partnerships and policy support to turn that vision into reality," Ms Apolonio said.

The report details how empowering land councils to develop renewable energy can help achieve the goals of the Federal First Nations Clean Energy Strategy, and the NSW Electricity Infrastructure Roadmap by transitioning from coal to renewable energy.

UTS Institute for Sustainable Futures energy program director Chris Briggs said "four key policy moves" were required to empower Aboriginal land councils to develop renewable energy projects.

"We need programs to build the capacity of Lands Councils

to participate in renewable energy projects, collaborations with Lands Councils on micro-grids in remote areas, pilot projects to develop renewable energy projects in partnership with developers on Lands Council sites and expediting lands claims to unlock renewable energy opportunities," Associate Professor Briggs said. "We've seen before that programs led by ARENA with government and industry participation can unlock renewable energy at scale — we need to see dedicated programs and funding to do the same for renewable energy on Aboriginal land."

The report suggests land councils can help NSW reach renewable energy targets by prioritising Aboriginal land for energy infrastructure siting, collaborating between planning agencies and Lands Councils to prepare sites for renewable energy develop-

ment, funding for ARENA to pilot mid and large-scale renewable projects on LALC land and expediting land claims and strengthening cultural heritage protections.

"These are practical, achievable steps," Professor Norman said. "But they require political will and a shift in how we think about land, power and partnership."

Ms Apolonio noted that in addition to economic benefits through employment and procurement, "the report charts pathways for Aboriginal ownership and equity through hosting renewable energy projects on Aboriginal land".

"The social impact of Aboriginal Land Councils engaging in renewable energy transition in this way will be powerful — generating wealth to reinvest in housing, education, health, land management and cultural programs as communities see fit."

Policies a barrier to First Nations people accessing super funds

DECHLAN BRENNAN

First Nations Australians are being systematically excluded from accessing their superannuation — in retirement, during hardship, and even after death — according to new research from Super Consumers Australia and Mob Strong Debt Help.

The report, which surveyed 99 First Nations consumers in the Eastern Arnhem region and consulted 19 financial counsellors nationwide, revealed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are twice as likely to have unclaimed or lost superannuation compared with the national average, often experiencing discriminatory policies which lock them out of their own money. It concluded Australia's

\$4 trillion super system is failing Indigenous people.

Mob Strong Debt Help's senior solicitor, Mark Holden, said super is intended to be "a retirement safety net for all Australians", but that's not the reality for many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

"Rigid ID verification rules, culturally unsafe customer service and a reliance on digital-only processes means it can take our mob months or even years to access their own money, if they are still alive," he said.

Barriers identified in the report include inflexible identity requirements, cultural insensitivity in customer service, and far slower processing times for death benefit claims made by Indigenous families. "It seems to be incredibly rare to

come across a superannuation service who has someone who speaks an Aboriginal language, and it's not often you encounter someone who understands some of the challenges of a member who is living in a remote Aboriginal community, having limited to no English or technology literacy, and limited access to services," the report states.

Indigenous Consumer Assistance Network financial counsellor Alex Price-Busch, said navigating the super system has real-life consequences for the people he supports.

"We spend hours on the phone to super funds or the Australian Taxation Office, trying to help clients who are struggling to access their super when they're doing it

tough," Mr Price-Busch said. "We see families fighting to claim death benefits while grieving. Many just give up because it's too hard."

According to figures cited in the report from the Association of Superannuation Funds of Australia, just 69 per cent of non-retired First Nations people had super in 2022, compared with 87 per cent of non-Indigenous Australians. The median super balance for First Nations people was \$22,000; barely a third of the national average.

More than half of the First Nations consumers surveyed said they were unable to reach their super fund, while 42 per cent said they didn't understand the information they were given. A First Nations counsellor

recounted helping an older client whose application was delayed due to discrepancies in his personal details. "English is his second or third language. The call centre person asks to speak to him to get his consent to proceed, but he can't understand them," the counsellor said. "The call centre person told me I can't say anything to this client, even though I was just trying to explain what the call centre person was asking him."

The report's recommendations include mandatory customer service standards for super funds, increasing funding for financial counselling and legal support for Indigenous clients, and requiring the ATO and super funds to provide culturally safe support services; particularly during ID verification.

Funeral group fined \$3.5m

DECHLAN BRENNAN

The Federal Court ordered ACBF Funeral Plans Pty Ltd to pay a further \$3.5 million in penalties this month for falsely claiming the company was Aboriginal-owned or managed.

The insurer, run by Youpla Group Pty Ltd, collapsed in 2022, leaving thousands of Aboriginal families without the funeral cover into which they had paid for decades. The group had marketed itself for more than 30 years as a First Nations business. The Australian Securities and Investments Commission took legal action against ACBF and Youpla, resulting in the \$3.5m fine, on July 10.

It followed a \$1.2m fine in 2023 for misleading consumers into believing they would receive a lump sum payment.

Justice Anthony Goodman said the “overwhelming message conveyed by the marketing material and the point-of-sale documentation deployed by ACBF was that ACBF was an Aboriginal company”.

ASIC Chair Joe Longo said the judgment sends a clear message.

“The penalty will act as a strong deterrent to anyone who tries to mislead Aboriginal consumers by falsely claiming Aboriginal ownership or management,” he said.

Bettina Cooper, a campaigner with the Save Sorry Business



Coalition, said while the ruling “doesn’t help the thousands of people who were deceived into thinking they were buying a funeral plan from an Aboriginal owned business . . . it very clearly warns other businesses if you claim or imply you are a First

Nations business in order to make money and (take) advantage of community, and you are not, you will be held to account”.

ASIC said many customers paid fortnightly premiums believing they were securing funeral costs for their families.

The Aboriginal Community Funeral Plan was the only funeral fund allowed to access Centrepay — a payment system introduced in 2001 that allowed automatic deductions from welfare payments for essential services such as rent or food.

ACBF was also known to use door-to-door sales tactics and misleading advertisements.

Last year the Federal Government announced a \$97m compensation package for affected policyholders who held an active plan on or after August 1, 2015.



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

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

Tenement Type	No.	Applicant	Area	Locality	Centroid	Shire
Exploration Licence	38/3996	DUKETON GOLD PROJECT PTY LTD	50BL	86.9km N'ly of Laverton	Lat: 27° 50' S Long: 122° 28' E	LAVERTON SHIRE
Exploration Licence	38/4001	DUNDAS MINERALS LIMITED	44BL	199.5km E'ly of Wiluna	Lat: 26° 41' S Long: 122° 13' E	WILUNA SHIRE
Exploration Licence	39/2558	MONUMENT EXPLORATION PTY LTD	70BL	38.8km W'ly of Laverton	Lat: 28° 30' S Long: 122° 1' E	LAVERTON SHIRE
Exploration Licence	39/2562	MONUMENT EXPLORATION PTY LTD	3BL	41.1km W'ly of Laverton	Lat: 28° 42' S Long: 121° 59' E	LAVERTON SHIRE
Exploration Licence	52/4463	CORE VALUE AUSTRALIA NL	6BL	87.9km E'ly of Peak Hill	Lat: 25° 39' S Long: 119° 36' E	MEEKATHARRA SHIRE
Exploration Licence	57/1376	PRUMM CORPORATION PTY LTD	24BL	38.7km SW'ly of Sandstone	Lat: 28° 15' S Long: 119° 3' E	SANDSTONE SHIRE
Exploration Licence	63/2403	MT MALCOLM GOLD HOLDINGS PTY LTD	26BL	105.1km SE'ly of Marvel Loch	Lat: 32° 2' S Long: 120° 22' E	DUNDAS SHIRE
Exploration Licence	77/3247	MEDALLION METALS LIMITED	70BL	44km SE'ly of Marvel Loch	Lat: 31° 43' S Long: 119° 50' E	YILGARN SHIRE
Exploration Licence	77/3248	MEDALLION METALS LIMITED	36BL	54.2km SE'ly of Marvel Loch	Lat: 31° 54' S Long: 119° 45' E	YILGARN SHIRE
Prospecting Licence	15/6974	KURRAWANG RESOURCES PTY LTD	168.81HA	18km SW'ly of Kalgoorlie	Lat: 30° 51' S Long: 121° 20' E	COOLGARDIE SHIRE
Prospecting Licence	15/6980	EASTERN COOLGARDIE GOLDFIELDS PTY LTD	120.23HA	7.1km S'ly of Coolgardie	Lat: 31° 0' S Long: 121° 10' E	COOLGARDIE SHIRE
Prospecting Licence	15/6981	EASTERN COOLGARDIE GOLDFIELDS PTY LTD	131.29HA	8.1km S'ly of Coolgardie	Lat: 31° 1' S Long: 121° 11' E	COOLGARDIE SHIRE
Prospecting Licence	15/6982	EASTERN COOLGARDIE GOLDFIELDS PTY LTD	121.38HA	8.6km S'ly of Coolgardie	Lat: 31° 1' S Long: 121° 10' E	COOLGARDIE SHIRE
Prospecting Licence	16/3527	DUNN, Christopher Raymond	70.01HA	35.4km S'ly of Ora Banda	Lat: 30° 39' S Long: 120° 55' E	COOLGARDIE SHIRE
Prospecting Licence	16/3531	DUFFUS, Mark Patrick	85.07HA	28.9km W'ly of Kalgoorlie	Lat: 30° 41' S Long: 121° 10' E	COOLGARDIE SHIRE
Prospecting Licence	24/5833	GOLDTIMERS PROSPECTING PTY LTD	185.43HA	13.8km NW'ly of Ora Banda	Lat: 30° 18' S Long: 120° 56' E	KALGOORLIE-BOULDER CITY
Prospecting Licence	26/4805	KURRAWANG RESOURCES PTY LTD	107.68HA	9.6km S'ly of Kalgoorlie	Lat: 30° 49' S Long: 121° 26' E	KALGOORLIE-BOULDER CITY
Prospecting Licence	26/4806	KURRAWANG RESOURCES PTY LTD	159.37HA	8.9km S'ly of Kalgoorlie	Lat: 30° 49' S Long: 121° 27' E	KALGOORLIE-BOULDER CITY
Prospecting Licence	26/4835	HANSON, Shane Ross	116.65HA	18.4km SE'ly of Kalgoorlie	Lat: 30° 49' S Long: 121° 38' E	KALGOORLIE-BOULDER CITY
Prospecting Licence	26/4839	FLEMING, Leo Glenn	60.39HA	9km S'ly of Kalgoorlie	Lat: 30° 49' S Long: 121° 26' E	KALGOORLIE-BOULDER CITY
Prospecting Licence	26/4842	FLEMING, Leo Glenn	198.07HA	9.1km N'ly of Kalgoorlie	Lat: 30° 40' S Long: 121° 26' E	KALGOORLIE-BOULDER CITY
Prospecting Licence	29/2712	GOLDTIMERS PROSPECTING PTY LTD	130.12HA	65.9km W'ly of Leonora	Lat: 28° 52' S Long: 120° 39' E	MENZIES SHIRE
Prospecting Licence	29/2713	GOLDTIMERS PROSPECTING PTY LTD	131.97HA	66.5km W'ly of Leonora	Lat: 28° 52' S Long: 120° 38' E	MENZIES 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 exploration licences, which authorises the applicant to explore for minerals for a term of 5 years from the date of grant. **Notification day: 30 July 2025. Native title parties:** Under section 30 of the *Native Title Act 1993* (Cth), persons have until 3 months after the notification day to take certain steps to become native title parties in relation to applications. The 3-month period closes on **30 October 2025**. Any person who is, or becomes a native title party, is entitled to the negotiation and/or procedural rights provided in Part 2 Division 3 Subdivision P of *Native Title Act 1993* (Cth). Enquiries in relation to filing a native title determination application to become a native title party should be directed to the Federal Court of Australia, 1 Victoria Avenue, Perth WA 6000, telephone (08) 9268 7100. **Expedited procedure:** The State of Western Australia considers that these acts are acts attracting the expedited procedure. Each licence may be granted unless, within the period of 4 months after the notification day (i.e. **30 November 2025**), a native title party lodges an objection with the National Native Title Tribunal against the inclusion of the statement that the State considers the grant of the licence is an act attracting the expedited procedure. Enquiries in relation to lodging an objection should be directed to the National Native Title Tribunal, Level 5, 1 Victoria Avenue, Perth, or GPO Box 9973, Perth, WA 6848, telephone (08) 9425 1000. For further information about the act (including extracts of plans showing the boundaries of the applications), contact the Department of 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 km²



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

The State of Western Australia HEREBY GIVES NOTICE that the Minister 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	15/1925	MACPHERSONS REWARD PTY LTD	9.71HA	6.7km S'ly of Coolgardie	Lat: 31° 0' S Long: 121° 11' E	COOLGARDIE SHIRE
Mining Lease	15/1929	BATES, Timothy Denis	143.50HA	19.8km N'ly of Coolgardie	Lat: 30° 46' S Long: 121° 8' E	COOLGARDIE SHIRE
Mining Lease	24/1019	DOWDING, Laurie	12.50HA	2.6km N'ly of Broad Arrow	Lat: 30° 25' S Long: 121° 20' E	KALGOORLIE-BOULDER CITY

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: 30 July 2025. Native title parties:** Under section 30 of the *Native Title Act 1993* (Cth), persons have until 3 months after the notification day to take certain steps to become native title parties in relation to applications. The 3-month period closes on **30 October 2025**. Any person who is, or becomes a native title party, is entitled to the negotiation and/or procedural rights provided in Part 2 Division 3 Subdivision P of *Native Title Act 1993* (Cth). Enquiries in relation to filing a native title determination application to become a native title party should be directed to the Federal Court of Australia, 1 Victoria Avenue, Perth WA 6000, telephone (08) 9268 7100. The mining tenements may be granted if, by the end of the period of 4 months after the notification day (i.e. **30 November 2025**), there is no native title party under section 30 of the *Native Title Act 1993* (Cth) in relation to the area of the mining tenements. For further information about the act (including extracts of plans showing the boundaries of the applications), contact the Department of 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.

SPORT



Sharman Williams, fourth from right, and the 2025 IMF squad, including Lance 'Buddy' Franklin and Johnathan Thurston. Picture: IMF

RUNNING BUDDIES

JARRED CROSS

A few months ago, a kilometre or two was about all Sharman Williams would clock up if she got out for a run.

In November, the 28-year-old will get into position at the start line of the New York City Marathon with 42km in front of her, and a couple of legendary Australian sportspeople by her side.

Williams is one of 12 Indigenous Marathon Foundation squad members joined on the team by IMF ambassadors AFL legend Lance Franklin and NRL champion Johnathan Thurston in 2025.

The Kalkadoon, Pitta Pitta, Bundjalung and Meriam woman and new entrant into the world

of long-distance running said she's doing it not just for herself, but also for the "ripple effect".

Williams heard about IMF from previous graduates. She saw it as an opportunity to inspire the boarders she works with at AFL Cape York Girls House in Cairns.

"It wasn't something that I thought I could do, just because I didn't have any running experience. But my cousin wanted me to do a trial with him, and so I went along," she told National Indigenous Times.

"I did two weeks of training before the trial. I've luckily made the squad."

The foundation helps the squad prepare for their US challenge with nutritionists, physio

and support while the runners get to work building their distance.

Williams was after a new challenge and "needing something more for myself" when she got involved.

"Once I joined, got selected, my life became bigger," she said.

"I wanted to learn more about leadership, stepping into those roles. And to do that I had to challenge myself, prove to myself that I can do hard things so then I can lead by example, for my community, my family.

"For others to think 'If she can do it, I can, too'. We need that visible strength in our communities."

It's particularly important for the girls she works with day

day. "I want them to look up to me, to be inspired, and to have that ripple effect."

The IMF was born in 2015 out of the Indigenous Marathon Project, which has led to 156 graduates completing major marathons around the world.

Founder and former world marathon champion and Commonwealth Games gold medal winner Robert de Castella says the impact the organisation can have extends well beyond running.

Newly appointed inaugural IMF Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander chief officer Charlie Maher became the first Indigenous athlete to complete the New York City Marathon in 2010.

It was an early success for what de Castella said was originally about identifying athletic talent, before things quickly changed to looking at a bigger picture. "We stopped looking for athletic talent and really looked for young emerging leaders, and the opportunity to take them on that journey, using running as a catalyst to improve physical and mental health and wellbeing," de Castella told National Indigenous Times.

For anyone thinking about giving it a crack next year, Williams has a message. "I started with no experience, and they give you all the tools and the support that you need to gain that experience and get better," she said.

Invitational team nearly causes upset against touring Lions

JARRED CROSS

The First Nations & Pasifika XV shocked rugby juggernaut the British and Irish Lions with the toughest 80 minutes of their Australian tour – prior to facing the Wallabies – to just fall short 24-19 in Naarm earlier this month.

With the line-up representing Indigenous Australian, Maori, Fijian, Samoan, Tongan and Cook Islands cultures, the invitational outfit staged two comebacks to pile pressure on the visitors in what

came close to being an historic upset. After giving up two early tries within the opening minutes, the First Nations and Pasifika XV rallied to tie things at 14-all at the main break – the first time the Lions hadn't led heading into the sheds across their seven matches prior to the game on July 22. The five-point margin was also the closest of the tour.

The First Nations and Pasifika XV took on the Lions, with less than a week together in camp and as a new initiative created out of the

gap left in the schedule by the now-defunct Melbourne Rebels. A late regather of possession almost gifted the home XV the lead at the change, without being able to capitalise. Eleven Test-capped players, including nine Wallabies, featured in the team.

Also in the group was 21-year-old emerging talent Jarrah McLeod. The Yuin centre, who is yet to debut in the first team at the Brumbies, came on after the break with a huge impact against a world-class defence. McLeod, who's played in

the ACT's premier local grade across this winter, was limited to gritty runs early before playing a hand in attacking threats as late attempts at a shock upset were mounted.

Barunggam full-back Andy Muirhead played general down back for the First Nations and Pasifika XV, kicking for advantage well with his team winning the line-out contest, and saving them from conceding further with a try-saving tackle under the posts. Neiafu and Vava'u Tongan man and Waratahs flanker Charlie Gamble was named

player of the match. "It's obviously been pretty special week for our group. You could see it out there. We were fighting hard for each other," Gamble said.

On his fourth Lions tour, and captain for the first time, English half Owen Farrell commended the First Nations and Pasifika outfit.

"I thought they made a mess of our breakdown at times, they got off their line really well, they caused some errors in what we did. But I'm thankful we got the job done in the end," Farrell said.