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NATIONAL INDIGENOUS TIMES



Demand for urgent action on poverty

DECLAN BRENNAN

The Coalition of Peaks has called for a more government-wide contribution to ending Indigenous disadvantage in the wake of this month's Federal election.

The national representative body for more than 80 Indigenous community-controlled peak bodies called on all ministers in the new cabinet to take responsibility in their portfolios for Closing The Gap.

Lead convenor Pat Turner congratulated Senator Malarndirri McCarthy on being re-appointed as Minister for Indigenous Australians, but noted that Closing The Gap was not the responsibility of her portfolio alone.

"The Coalition of Peaks have a great working relationship with Senator McCarthy, and since coming into the role last year, she has re-energised the government's Closing The Gap commitments," Ms Turner said.

"Under the National Agreement on Closing The Gap, the Government committed to doing things differently – to share decision-making with our people and work in partnership. From ministers to frontline services, all parts of government must be actively improving the way they work with our people."

In assessing Labor's election victory, she said the result showed the nation had chosen "progress and inclusion over division".

"As the Prime Minister said in his victory speech, we will be a stronger nation when we close the gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians," Ms Turner said.

"Closing The Gap is not just about our people, but all Australians – and everyone has a role to play."

Indigenous groups largely supported the Government's plan to close the gap through Indigenous-led responses, as outlined by the Productivity Commission last year. In

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SEVEN SUICIDE ATTEMPTS IN TWO MONTHS

HELL AT JAIL 'WILL GET WORSE'

DECLAN 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. It also includes the names of First Nations people who have died.

Victoria's largest women's prison has seen multiple suicide attempts, a lack of cultural safety, and rolling lockdowns in the past few months, with experts arguing it will only get worse with the State's new bail laws coming into effect.

The Dame Phyllis Frost Centre is the State's only women's maximum-security facility.

At the beginning of this month, National Indigenous Times was made aware of at least seven women – more than half of them First Nations – who had attempted to take their own lives in the preceding two months in the facility.

Experts told this publication that lockdowns – women kept in their cells for extended periods beyond regular times – have become a regular occurrence at DPFC. As a result, inmates are often unable to attend sessions with counsellors, drug and alcohol support workers and Aboriginal Wellbeing Officers.

A sexual assault counselling service told National Indigenous Times that during lockdowns, inmates "experience unprecedented periods of prolonged isolation, a stripping back or, in some cases, complete removal of supportive services".

With the new bail laws likely to see an explosion of female prisoners, in line with what happened the last time they



Dame Phyllis Frost Centre Picture: Jarred Cross

were strengthened, people have said another inmate dying isn't a case of if, but when.

In January 2020, Gunditjmarra, Dja Dja Wurrung, Wiradjuri, and Yorta Yorta woman Veronica Nelson died in the centre as a result of complications from Wilkie syndrome, an "uncommon but well-recognised" disorder which causes pain, nausea and vomiting and can be life-threatening, after receiving inadequate care.

This month former prisoners, who spoke on condition of anonymity, detailed a lack of support services. At times, they said the only acting AWO –

a guard can perform this duty under those guidelines.

It is understood DPFC is actively looking to recruit for three AWO positions. However, a spokesperson for the Department of Justice and Community Safety did not directly address questions from National Indigenous Times regarding how many AWOs and ASOs are currently working at DPFC.

Last year, a report by Victoria's Ombudsman found Indigenous prisoners were dealing with deeply confronting and distressing conditions, arguing a lack of input by First Nations people into health-related policy in jails has a devastating impact.

"We heard about a yearning for cultural connection," then-ombudsman Deborah Glass said.

"About the devastating impact a lack of cultural and family connection in prison can have, and what a huge difference it makes when they do receive cultural support with their healthcare needs."

Even the officials who "help" do so with a robotic stillness, a former inmate says.

"There's no empathy," they said. "I don't understand why prisons employ these people."

Inmates detailed having "dinner" at 3.30pm, eating or getting food in less than 10 minutes, before being confined to their cells for the rest of the evening.

One expert who is in regular contact with prisoners in DPFC told National Indigenous Times: "Essentially, people are being kept in solitary confinement." There is now a petition

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known as an Aboriginal Services Officer – was a white male, who is also a guard.

According to a DPFC handbook, an ASO does not need to be Indigenous, but "must always ensure they work in a trauma-informed manner when supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women".

"This involves ensuring the women feel culturally safe and supported, are collaborated with and where possible and safe to do so, are given choice to support a sense of empowerment."

There remain questions how

Youth lead way for the Uluru Statement

GIOVANNI TORRE

Eight years on from the issuing of the Uluru Statement from the Heart, young Indigenous leaders Bridget Cama and Allira Davis are continuing the work of the Uluru Dialogue, championing First Nations rights and leadership.

With Monday marking the eighth anniversary of the Statement, the co-chairs of the Uluru Youth Dialogue represent the resilience of the movement to put recognition and political participation through structural reform at the centre of Australia's national conversation.

Monday was also National Sorry Day, 28 years since the release of the Bringing Them Home report.

Ms Davis, a Cobble Cobble woman from the Barrungum and Birrigubba Nations, told National Indigenous Times she and Ms Cama had been working together since meeting in early 2019. They decided to build "a platform and an opportunity for First Nations youth to have a say in the matters that affected them, and a say in the matters that affected them, and a say in the Uluru Statement from the Heart journey".

This led to the creation of the Uluru Youth Dialogue, which held a summit in 2019 in Cairns, bringing together First Nations young people from across the country who "wanted to come on the journey of structural reform and substantial change".

Ms Cama, a Wiradjuri and Indigenous Fijian woman, told National Indigenous Times education was "a key part" of the work they wanted to do.

"We jumped straight back into community following the Uluru

Youth Dialogue summit . . . We ran workshops for our youth so they could get across all the information, and we always were hoping our young people would be that messenger and take that information back into their own communities. And that's exactly what they did," she said.

"It was amazing to see our young people go from that first meeting in Cairns to being young leaders in their own communities and driving the change they wanted to see."

Ms Davis said she had always been passionate about helping community, and this inspired her to pursue a leadership role.

"The No vote was very challenging, but we are still here, and we're still wanting to make a change . . . substantial change to our communities," she said.

She said community involvement remained "super-important". "The Uluru Statement from the Heart was a gift to the Australian people; an invitation to walk with us for a better future," Ms Davis said.

"And it was led by grassroots communities and leaders. It was never about having that kind of a leader status, but always about ensuring people on the ground, communities . . . had a say in the matters that affected them. And it is still all about community and how you get involved."

She said she felt "super-privileged" as a young person to see older leaders "open that space up for you".

"I want to shout out to our leaders, particularly Aunty Pat Anderson and Professor Megan Davis, who created the space for . . . young mob to play a part in the Uluru movement, and allow our voices to be heard. We came



Young Indigenous leaders Bridget Cama and Allira Davis.

with all these different ideas they hadn't thought of before, and they had the opportunity to give us constructive feedback where needed. Most importantly, they always supported us and valued our input."

Ms Davis said it was important for young leaders to listen to Elders "and the people that have walked before us" and respect their knowledge.

"I think we have a lot of deadly young people who want to make change and who want to see justice, who want to see self-determination in their community . . . We do have a lot of people from the Uluru Youth Dialogue, who are still committed to the Uluru Statement and what it calls for now," she said.

Ms Cama said it was "really disappointing" to see the Uluru Statement from the Heart, which said "we want to walk together for a better future", being "turned into this divisive issue, and that was really hurtful . . . all the politicisation that came with it".

"Instead of being an issue that was of national significance,

that we should have had the opportunity to have education about and mature conversations about, we saw this political point-scoring, which turned into a really toxic debate," she said.

Ms Cama said despite the defeat of the Voice referendum, the movement learnt much and sparked the growth of a group of committed advocates.

"Now we have this core group of staunch, strong, smart, passionate, energetic young leaders who were brought together because of the Uluru Statement from the Heart and the reforms it calls for. Every Friday night we're on a call . . . giving each other updates about what's happening in our communities . . . these are now young people who are leading that next phase of the work," she said.

"They were hard times and challenging times during the referendum, and these young people really stood up, and I think we have made a significant impact as well with non-Indigenous youth."

In terms of what needs to happen next, Ms Davis said "it's a

complex question, because there's so much going on".

"From our point of view, we're mainly focusing on finding another way for structural reform and substantial change in terms of having some sort of voice," she said.

"We've dealt with the impacts and the consequences of the No vote; We're still in the status quo.

"We're having . . . really bad results with closing the gap, and the targets aren't being met."

Ms Cama said it was disappointing to see the Federal Government walking back from its promise to implement the Uluru Statement in full, given the referendum was on one specific proposal — a constitutionally enshrined Voice — and not on the whole statement.

"Over 80 per cent of mob did support the Yes vote . . . At the end of the day, I think that gives us the strength and the inspiration to keep moving forward, knowing that our mob, over 80 per cent will . . . continue the journey," she said.

For the full version of this story, go to www.nit.com.au.

Mental health focus of film

GIOVANNI TORRE

This report contains sensitive content, including references to suicide and those who have passed away.

Leading Aboriginal voices, creatives and mental health professionals came together last week to launch an awareness initiative focused on the devastating rate of suicide in First Nation communities.

A short film, *Change Direction*, directed by Kaytetye filmmaker Warwick Thornton with support from advertising agency Apparent and production company Photoplay, explores the role culture can play in re-

versing the crisis. "You want this conversation to get to the breakfast table, to happen at a bar, amongst friends and strangers. To talk about what's going on with the younger generation of Indigenous people. That's what this project will do," Mr Thornton said.

The Westerman Jilya Institute for Indigenous Mental Health, founded by Nyamal psychologist Dr Tracy Westerman AM, partnered with Indigenous creatives including Thornton, poet Dakota Feirer, actor Pedrea Jackson, and songman Fred Leone to develop a campaign aimed at the hearts and minds of all Australians. "The

broken mental health system in this country has been built by the privileged; to favour the healing methods of the most privileged, but delivers its services to the least privileged of us," Dr Westerman said.

"It's time to rebuild it from the ground up, with Aboriginal excellence leading the way."

The campaign, aims to point to Jilya's solution: more Aboriginal psychologists to improve screening and suicide prevention in Aboriginal communities.

The institute funds scholarships for Indigenous people in high-risk communities to become psychologists in places



The new campaign aims to bring about change.

that desperately need them.

The campaign will also seek donations to help fund the scholarships at ChangeDirection.com.au.

The short film and associated

campaign will be shared across a range of media, including print news, online and in cinemas.

**Lifeline 13 11 14
13YARN — 13 92 76**

Nyul Nyul legacy lives on

GIOVANNI TORRE

Nyul Nyul Traditional Owners and the Kimberley Land Council proudly announced the declaration of the Nyul Nyul Indigenous Protected Area this month, marking a major milestone in the protection and management of Country on the Dampier Peninsula which was celebrated with a ceremony on May 15.

Covering 144,493ha of culturally and ecologically rich land, the new IPA will protect freshwater spring Country, monsoon vine thickets, threatened species like the greater bilby and short-nosed sea snake, and stretches of sea Country. The Nyul Nyul IPA not only safeguards these landscapes but also provides a nationally recognised framework for Aboriginal-led conservation and land management.

Kimberley Land Council Land and Sea Unit manager Daniel Oades said the Nyul Nyul PBC Aboriginal Corporation and Rangers should be “very proud” of their work in achieving the milestone.

“IPA recognition does not happen every day, and this hard-won milestone ensures that Nyul Nyul can assert authority over their Country and shape land management according to the vision of the Nyul Nyul people,” he said.

Mr Oades acknowledged the work of the Nyul Nyul Rangers, who have been caring for Nyul Nyul Country since 2008.

“This IPA recognises 15 years of proactive land management, led by the Nyul Nyul Rangers and guided by the PBC,” he said.

“Their efforts in raising the profile of their important freshwater spring Country, conducting prescribed burning, biodiversity monitoring, caring for sea Country, working with the school in an award-winning two-way science program has already made a significant impact on the health of Country and community.

“The IPA now provides national recognition and a stronger



Traditional Owners celebrate the establishment of the Nyul Nyul Indigenous Protected Area. Picture: Kimberley Land Council

foundation for future work.”

The IPA joins with Bardi Jawi Country in the north and paves the way for further IPAs by neighbouring Traditional Owner groups, including the Jabbirr Jabbirr and Nimanburr, who are developing their own management plans.

Nyul Nyul ranger co-ordinator Preston Cox said the establishment of the IPA was “a great thing for Nyul Nyul Country and people”.

“We have been looking for-

ward to this moment for a very long time,” he said.

“This is about more than just land — it’s about continuing stories, knowledge and connection.

“We’ve passed this knowledge down from generation to generation, and with this recognition all the young people at the ceremony today will be able to do that.”

Nyul Nyul PBC director Fiona Smith shared the pride she felt watching the celebration.

“We are carrying on the lega-

cy of our old people. I’m doing this work for my mum who is no longer with us — I continued this work for her because I want to see Nyul Nyul Country protected now and into the future. My Liyan felt good today,” she said.

Federal Minister for Indigenous Australians Malarndirri McCarthy congratulated Nyul Nyul Traditional Owners on a “remarkable achievement in the long journey of caring for Country”. “We also acknowledge the

hard work in encouraging the next generation to follow in your footsteps,” she said.

Senator McCarthy said the Federal Government was “proud to support Traditional Owners and First Nations communities to manage land and sea Country through our Indigenous Protected Areas and Indigenous Rangers programs, delivering positive outcomes for the environment as well as employment and economic development opportunities”.

Yoorrook expects Government to take final report seriously

DECLAN BRENNAN

The country’s first truth-telling body is expected to make more than 100 recommendations when it delivers its final report next month, with the body expecting the Victorian Government to be “serious about implementing the work”.

The Yoorrook Justice Commission will hand down its final report by June 30 after more than two years of hearings.

Yoorrook chair Professor Eleanor Bourke AM said the report was likely to encompass “significant reforms to broken systems,” and a “range of practical solutions” the Victorian Government could, and should, implement.

“In our final recommendations, we’re going to be wanting the Government to be serious about implementing the work, because otherwise we’ll be back like we have been with the . . . (1991 royal commission into Aboriginal deaths

in custody) report,” Professor Bourke said this month.

“Every decision not to act has the added effect of maintaining the status quo.”

A “disappointing” 15 per cent of the recommendations from the commission’s interim report have been implemented in full to date.

Professor Bourke cited Labor’s backtrack on bail reforms, noting there was a history of “governments going back on their word when it comes to implementing meaningful and enduring changes to improve First Peoples’ lives”.

Last year, Victorian Premier Jacinta Allan told Yoorrook she was prepared to apologise to First Nations people for the injustices suffered because of government policies.

“The Premier hasn’t done that yet,” Professor Bourke said.

“We’re still waiting for that.

“So, there’ll be some nudges going along . . . we wait and see.

“We hope so.” Despite the proposed apology and the government’s negotiations in the Treaty process, decisions such as a reversal of bail laws in March have caused consternation.

Professor Bourke said the overturning of the bail laws, which were “the culmination of decades of relentless advocacy, coronial inquests and Aboriginal deaths in custody”, was a blow.

“As adults, our people are 14 times more likely to be imprisoned than other Victorians, and our children are at least 10 times more likely to be in detention,” she said.

Despite changes since the 1970s, the number of children removed from their families each year in Victoria continues to grow, with the State recording the highest rate of Indigenous children in out-of-home care in the country.

Professor Bourke said while laws had changed, “the practice of removing children remains”.

The final report will detail the “real” history of colonisation in Victoria.

Professor Bourke said this was “not a gesture; not a box-tick,” but a “defining moment for Victoria”.

“We have never wanted other people to feel guilty; never encouraged shame or guilt,” she said.

“We want people to know the true story of the settlement . . . to listen, learn, open your heart and your mind to our story by our First Peoples, and learn more about where you live.”

It comes after more than two years of hearings, which brought 16 apologies from ministers and department heads, and saw evidence of billion of dollars earned by the Government from the land and water which has not been passed down to First Peoples.

Having overseen the vast swathes of evidence from First Peoples across the State, Professor

Bourke said it showed “that our own people want to tell their story further”.

“We heard from people in prison and Premiers; from descendants of those who took the land; descendants of those whose land was taken; from those who wrote the laws and those broken by those very rules,” the Wergaia/Wamba Wamba Elder told the Melbourne Press Club earlier this month.

“We listened to Elders who buried their grandchildren taken by the State, and sat with mothers criminalised for being poor. We heard about Aboriginal babies being marked for removal by child protection before they were born.

“We’ve listened to communities fighting for access to their own Country, and to men whose lives were swallowed by prisons before they ever had a chance.

“These are not stories from the distant past, these are stories from now.”

Child protection probe in works

DECLAN BRENNAN

The Queensland Government announced this month an inquiry into the State's child protection system after a new report found alarming rates of abuse and neglect.

The Government said on May 18 former Federal Court judge Paul Anastassiou KC will lead the 17-month inquiry.

It argued it would take steps "others have been afraid to take, because it is the right thing to do".

Indigenous children and young people are placed in out-of-home care in Queensland at 9.3 times the rate of their non-Indigenous counterparts, and there have been multiple reports of sexual exploitation in residential care facilities.

A 2024 census of children in care found 11 per cent had been sexually abused, 46 per cent had been physically abused, and more than two-thirds had been exposed to domestic violence and had experi-

enced three or more types of abuse.

Eighty-three per cent had suffered emotional abuse, and 88 per cent had been neglected.

Despite his Government introducing laws experts say punish children with vulnerable needs by placing them in adult prison facilities, Queensland Premier David Crisafulli said the inquiry was vital to reform the system for the sake of the whole community. "There is no coincidence that we have a broken child safety system and a youth crime crisis in this State, and we are determined to take action on both," he said.

Of the 12,497 children in OOHC, 6112 are placed in kinship care, or with someone related or known to the family; 4173 live with foster carers; and 2212 are in residential care.

Child Safety Minister Amanda Camm said the "extraordinary step of calling a commission of inquiry was necessary to unpack the mess left by the former Labor govern-

ment". "This is about a generation of children that I believe through the information that I have uncovered has been failed by a broken child safety system," she said.

Abolitionist group the National Network of Formerly Incarcerated Women and Girls welcomed the inquiry, but called on it not to make the same mistakes as previous investigations.

"For decades, investigations, reviews and parliamentary committees have exposed how so-called 'child protection' tears children — especially Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children — from family, Country and culture, funnels them into residential care, and too often pipelines them straight into children's prisons," member Tabitha Lean said.

"Another inquiry that stops at recommendations without re-imagining the entire architecture of 'family policing' would be a moral failure."

1800 RESPECT (1800 737 732)



David Crisafulli
Picture: AAP

Victoria Police pay out \$46.5m in settlements

DECLAN BRENNAN

Victoria Police paid out \$46.5 million in civil litigation financial settlements between 2020 and April this year, data obtained by National Indigenous Times revealed this month, as several organisations have complained of over-policing and alleged misconduct and the State Government has moved to increase police powers.

The figures, which Victoria Police provided on request, include no comment or reasoning behind the individual payouts.

It is understood the figures include settlements and court-awarded costs, and come after police successfully pursued a pay deal with the State Government earlier this year, with staff to receive at least an 18 per cent pay rise over four years, and frontline officers to get a 20 per cent rise.

A barrister who works with First Nations clients told National Indigenous Times on condition of anonymity the payout figures suggested Victoria Police members were "conducting themselves in ways that are unlawful, improper, and which, ultimately, expose the organisation to civil liability".

In a statement, a Victoria Police spokesperson said litiga-

tion incidents were "rare compared with the thousands of interactions our members have with the public every day".

"Financial settlements can fluctuate each year depending on the number of matters and when they were resolved, with some substantive cases running over several years before reaching a conclusion," the spokesperson said.

"Individual settlement amounts are generally not disclosed at the agreement of the parties involved."

Critics say Victoria Police regularly use disproportionate and illegal force against people, including minority groups, often without adequate oversight. National Indigenous Times has been advised by Indigenous organisations and individuals of their often negative experiences with police, including allegations of profiling and over-policing.

The Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission has found high rates of bias and conflicts of interest when police investigate complaints made by Aboriginal people.

Earlier this year, the Victorian Government passed legislation giving police "almost unlimited powers" to stop-and-frisk people in designated areas, despite accusations of racial profiling from research

groups. The new laws will allow the Police Commissioner to declare a location a "designated search area", giving police the power to search people for weapons without a warrant, for up to six months, instead of 12 hours, as previously.

Senior lawyer at the Human Rights Law Centre Sohini Mehta told National Indigenous Times: "While Victoria Police are paying out millions of dollars for misconduct, the Allan Government has rewarded them with excessive, sweeping and unchecked powers — like stop-and-search powers passed just this year."

Data from the Centre Against Racial Profiling found Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people were 11 times more likely to be searched by Victoria Police than people perceived as Caucasian.

"We know that excessive police powers are disproportionately wielded against First Nations people," Ms Mehta said.

"The Allan Government needs to stop handing carte blanche powers to police, and properly resource a new, effective and independent oversight body to hold police to account."

Furthermore, tens of thousands of Victorians had no weapon on them but were searched regardless in "designated areas", data released



Police use capsicum spray against demonstrators in Melbourne.
Picture: Michael Currie/SOPA Images

under freedom of information to civil rights organisation Liberty Victoria found, with weapons seized in one per cent of all searches without a warrant or reasonable suspicion.

Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service chief executive Nerita Waight told The Age earlier this year any community-led program would be de-funded if it operated at a one per cent success rate.

In 2023 then-police chief commissioner Shane Patton acknowledged historical structural racism by Victorian police towards Indigenous people when appearing before the Yoorrook Justice Commission, while Minister for Police Anthony Carabines accepted the current police accountability system was "not fit for purpose".

The hearings heard evidence

from a number of Indigenous people about their experiences of police misconduct.

Gunditjmarra woman Aunty Doreen Lovett told of her teenage son being assaulted by police after being arrested for a crime he didn't commit, only withdrawing the complaint for excessive force when they discovered the investigators worked at the same station as the officers involved.

Indigenous man Eathan Cruse told the hearings about his house being raided for a crime he did not commit.

Both he and his father, David, alleged they were racially and physically abused by Victorian and Federal police officers in cases in the Victorian Supreme Court.

Eathan was awarded \$400,000 and David settled confidentially.

'Vow to consult' ignored

GIOVANNI TORRE

The NT Government passed changes to the Territory's Sacred Sites Act this month without consulting Traditional Owners or the general public.

Before the passage of the amendments late on May 15, Central Land Council chair Warren Williams wrote to the NT Minister for Lands, Planning and Environment, Joshua Burgoyne, urging a suite of reforms to the Sacred Sites laws, and noting an earlier letter had received no response.

"I strongly encourage you to talk with the four Land Councils before you bring the Amendment Bill back to Parliament," he wrote on May 14.

"If you keep talking with us like you promised our Council at the meeting in April, the Central Land Council will be able to help you co-design comprehensive reform to the Northern Territory Aboriginal Sacred Sites Act that will benefit everyone.

"The CLC has asked for a long time for its sacred site clearance certificates to be recognised under the Sacred Sites Act. That process is trusted and often preferred by both Traditional Owners and proponents. It would streamline the process of development approval and reduce unnecessary costs."

Mr Williams urged the minister to pursue reforms including: ensure developers who follow the conditions of a CLC sacred site clearance certificate or an Aboriginal Areas Protection Authority certificate are protected from prosecution; give custodians the right to request a review if they don't believe an AAPA certificate properly protects a site; remove the power to override a decision of AAPA and issue a minister's certificate; and declare "legacy" AAPA certificates issued more than 10 years



CLC chair Warren Williams Picture: Aaron Bunch/AAP

ago void and require certificate holders to reapply.

The Central Land Council chair also said AAPA (or land councils) should be given the ability to retract or amend certificates where new information has become available which is relevant to the certificate. He said the system should include increased penalties for damage or destruction of sites and provide compensation for custodians; make sure AAPA is funded well enough to allow for proper processing of authority certificates with no legal timeframe imposed; and allow Land

Councils to simply nominate the AAPA board members for their region and allow a longer period for nominations.

Mr Williams it was critical the NT Government did not make amendments to the Sacred Sites Act without first obtaining the explicit consent of the AAPA board and the four Territory Land Councils.

"Not talking with us about genuine reforms like these is missing the chance to make the Sacred Sites Act stronger for everyone, including developers and custodians alike," he wrote.

The NT Government passed the laws within 36 hours of receiving Mr Williams' letter, in which he had urged the minister "to talk with us properly before you bring the Amendment Bill back to Parliament".

Mr Williams noted that while the minister had previously said certificates would only be transferred for "the exact same work" as the previous certificate, the Amendment Bill does not make that provision, and that an earlier promise that Traditional Owners "would be the ones who decide about enforceable undertakings" was

not reflected in the Amendment Bill, which indeed "does not even say AAPA must consult Traditional Owners about that decision".

Mr Williams also said there is nothing in the amendments with regards to Traditional Owners receiving compensation for damage to significant sites.

Aboriginal Areas Protection Authority chair Bobby Nungumajbarr raised concerns about the legislation's consultation process, which it said has not been adequate, after the amendments passed. "The Sacred Sites Act is meant to protect Aboriginal sacred sites, but Aboriginal people and their representative organisations have not been consulted on these changes," he told AAP.

"I am also disappointed that industry and the wider public have not been consulted."

Mr Nungumajbarr said the Authority wants laws that provide developers with a clear framework, while giving certainty to the community that sacred sites will be protected.

"The fact is, the board is worried that the amendments do not have Aboriginal consultation at their heart," he said.

"These changes have been quickly drafted without a good understanding of the importance of sacred sites to the NT community, and they increase the potential for disputes and legal challenges."

Mr Burgoyne said the reforms "ensured the legislation reflected modern regulatory standards while continuing to strengthen protection of sacred sites". "The cultural authority of custodians remains central, and the amendments will provide much needed clarity and simpler, streamlined approval processes, while ensuring the protection of sacred sites remains paramount," he said. **with AAP**

Warning over women's jail conditions

FROM PAGE 1

under way calling for an end to lockdowns in the Phyllis Frost Centre.

It states: "Women incarcerated at Dame Phyllis Frost Centre are subjected to excessive hours of isolation as a result of additional 'lockdowns'.

"The women are already locked alone in their cells from 7.30pm to 8.30am every night.

"However, they are also locked in their cells for many additional hours each week due mainly to insufficient staffing at the facility.

"There are times that they are locked down in solitary confinement for entire days. This not only impacts their physical health but also takes an immense toll on their mental health."

A DJCS spokesperson said they had made "changes at DPFC to ensure everyone receives the health care they need".

"This includes transitioning to a public healthcare provider and introducing the Aboriginal Healing Unit to provide culturally safe rehabilitation supports for Aboriginal women in custody."



The Dame Phyllis Frost Centre. Picture: Pedavoli Architects

The spokesperson said across Victoria, prisoners' "out-of-cell hours" are above the national average, noting "we regularly review operational guidelines to make sure they continue to keep staff and people in custody safe".

A letter seen by this publication showed that staffing at WestCASA, a community-based not-for-profit sexual assault counselling service, had been cut in April last year due to staff shortages. This had "greatly" impacted their ability to take on new clients, the letter to DPFC inmates said.

WestCASA told National Indig-

enous Times after a "period of pause and review" they recommenced operating in DPFC "under a new contract, under which a model of care for Specialist Trauma Service has been developed" from July 1, 2024.

"WestCASA will continue to work closely to support clients in the journey they are on at Dame Phyllis Frost to address the unexpected impacts of lockdown in accessing the tools they need to self-support," they said.

Corrections data at the end of March showed DPFC had 283 inmates, whilst the State's only other prison, the minimum-security Tarrengower Prison, has 48. It is a far cry from 2019, when more than 600 women were behind bars.

But, with the State implementing bail laws similar to the ones from that period, which saw an explosion of women being incarcerated for low-level offences, there is a fear the numbers will explode again, and women behind bars will only suffer further with a lack of services and supplies.

13 YARN - 13 92 76
Lifeline - 13 11 14

Labor urged to tackle poverty

FROM PAGE 1

contrast, the commitment by then-Opposition leader Peter Dutton to not stand in front of the Indigenous flag if he was elected, and Jacinta Nampijinpa Price's calls for an audit of all Indigenous organisations, were seen as divisive and unpopular amongst First Nations groups.

Ms Turner said although Government's 10-year, \$4 billion housing agreement in partnership with the NT Government – designed to halve overcrowding in Aboriginal communities and will see up to 270 homes built each year – showed progress and concern for housing in remote regions, it remained one of the "most urgent needs" in communities.

"The Federal funding boost for remote housing in the Northern Territory last year was a welcome move, but we're concerned our people aren't being given a real say in how it's being implemented," Ms Turner said. "It's important the Federal Government stay closely engaged."

After congratulating all the ministers, Ms Turner said the Coalition of Peaks' message was clear: "Closing the Gap is not the sole responsibility of the Indigenous Affairs portfolio.

"We all have a vital role to play, and by working together in genuine partnership with First Nations people and organisations, we can make a real difference and make the next three years count," she said.

Solid Rock video calls back to big moment

DECHLAN BRENNAN

Wednesday, May 28, marks 25 years since the historic walk for reconciliation across the Sydney Harbour Bridge, in which more than 250,000 people walked across the landmark for reconciliation.

Lasting nearly six hours, it was the largest political demonstration ever held in Australia.

In the lead-up to the anniversary, and National Reconciliation Week, a video of Goanna's 1982 hit song Solid Rock, being performed at the summit of the Sydney Harbour Bridge, has been released.

Launched by Reconciliation Australia last week, the video sees Goanna's songwriter, Shane Howard, joined by the Sydney choir Barayagal and its leader, Gamilaraay songwriter

Nardi Simpson, performing Solid Rock in celebration of reconciliation and justice for Indigenous people across the country.

With the theme of this year's National Reconciliation Week being Bridging Now to Next, Reconciliation Australia chief executive Karen Mundine said while "we have come a long way", there was still a long way to go.

"Since the year 2000, there is now far greater awareness amongst Australians of the complexity and magnitude of First Nations' histories, cultures, and social systems and what we must do to reach a just, equitable and reconciled country," the Bundjalung woman said.

"This year is the third year of our NRW Voices for Reconciliation project, with more than 500 Australian choirs coming to-



The walk for reconciliation on the Sydney Harbour Bridge on May 28, 2000. Picture: AAP

gether to perform Solid Rock across Australia."

Monday was National Sorry Day, marking 28 years since the release of the Bringing Them Home report.

Described as "a damning indictment of the European invasion of Australia", Solid Rock challenges the official narrative of peaceful colonisation, and appeared on Goanna's debut studio album, Spirit of Place.

In an interview with Goldmine in May 2002, Howard described his feelings after a visit to Uluru, which led him to

write the song. "I realised that this country that I grew up in, that I thought was my country, it wasn't," he said.

"I had to reassess my whole relationship with the land and the landscape, and understand that we had come from somewhere else, and we had disempowered a whole race of people when we arrived."

As part of Triple M's "Ozzest 100", celebrating the "most Australian" songs of all time in 2018, Solid Rock was ranked 13.

Howard said he was honoured to have the song performed by

the Voices for Reconciliation choirs in National Reconciliation Week, and offered some advice to the singers.

"Sing it with gusto, sing it like you mean it, sing it like it matters, because it does," he said.

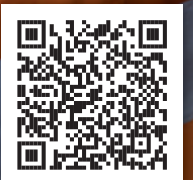
"Sing it like we are on a journey to somewhere much better because we are. It's all in the song, and we still haven't faced up as a nation and proclaimed: 'Let us tell the truth, let us get on with the business of truth-telling, and then let's get on with the treaty business. Let's turn our anger into action.'"

BHP

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Deaths haven't come to an end

ANALYSIS

HANNAH MCGLADE
& PAT DUDGEON

Since the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody (1987-1991), Aboriginal deaths in custody have continued to grow.

According to the Australian Institute of Criminology, in 2023-2024, 24 First Nations people died in custody, including one in youth detention. Seven were the result of self-harm.

In part, this is the story of the over-incarceration of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Despite a Closing the Gap target to reduce the incarceration rate, the Indigenous prison population nationally has grown by 21 per cent since 2019, while imprisonment of non-Indigenous people has slowly declining.

In WA in 2024, four out of every 100 Aboriginal adults were in prison. The youth detention rate also increased in 2024 Australia-wide due to higher rates in Queensland and the Northern Territory. In March, Indigenous experts Associate Professor Hannah McGlade and Professor Megan Davis lodged an Early Warning Urgent Action communication to the UN Committee on the Elimination of Race Discrimination outlining serious breaches of international human rights law directly causing the loss of Aboriginal children's lives.

This is also a story of inappropriate custodial health and safety. There have been many calls from community leaders and academics for reforms to custodial safety regulations since the royal commission, and we are still waiting for the implementation

of many of these in WA prisons.

The Coroner's Court of WA found Ricky-Lee Cound, a young Noongar man who died in Hakea Prison, was fatally injured in a cell which had not been fully ligature-minimised, despite his request to be moved to a safe cell that day. The Royal Commission recommended — 34 years ago — elimination and/or reduction of potentially dangerous items including hanging points (Recommendation 165) in prisons. As of September 2022, only 3.9 per cent of cells at Hakea Prison had been fully ligature point-minimised, according to evidence at the Coroner's Court, while 39.1 per cent weren't minimised at all.

The lack of culturally safe care in the justice system is often a contributing factor to deaths in custody. In prison, detention, and police custody, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are at higher risk of experiencing poor physical and mental health.

The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare found 43 per cent of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in prison had a history of a mental health condition, and 14 per cent reported their mental health had worsened on entering prison. The royal commission recommended the involvement of Aboriginal health services in the provision of health and medical advice, assistance and care with respect to Aboriginal detainees (Recommendation 127). Just last year, the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare reported only 26 per cent of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people released from prison reported having received treatment or consultation from an Aboriginal

community controlled health organisation or an Aboriginal medical service.

The lack of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff who can speak up for our people's needs in prison is important because First Nations people are often subject to overt racism or unconscious bias.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff can recognise and challenge these attitudes and connect with people in a more meaningful way. The recent efforts of WA's Acacia Prison to appoint Aboriginal auxiliary staff is a notable exception.

It is disappointing many issues the royal commission raised more than 30 years ago remain largely unaddressed.

Recent reports like the Pathways to Justice Report from 2018 also offer recommendations to address over-incarceration of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, such as establishment of an independent national justice reinvestment body to promote reinvestment of resources to community-led initiatives addressing the drivers of crime and incarceration; and improving access to community-based sentencing options and diversion programs.

We reference the royal commission each time we provide expert advice for a coronial inquest into a death in custody. These reforms are shouted from the hearts of those who have experienced a loss in custody, yet little has changed.

The Centre of Best Practice in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Suicide Prevention has published recommendations on best practice to prevent or reduce Aboriginal deaths in custody, such as ensuring prisoners have access to



Associate Professor Hannah McGlade.

culturally safe mental health support services, and increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation in healthcare and support services in prisons.

Through its project Coronial Responses to Suicides of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People, the Centre has also made recommendations to reform coronial practices.

A key recommendation is to ensure accountability to respond to coronial findings and to take action to prevent further deaths.

The community-controlled post-vention service, Thirrili, has also developed a deadly resource, The Coroner's Toolkits, to help guide Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and communities going through the coronial process. But these initiatives are a small consolation to people who have

experienced the loss, often completely preventable, of a loved one in prison, and more change is needed. We are comforted and strengthened by the people — both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous — who work together in the fight against suicide.

Together, we will work for a future in which Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people will live strong and fulfilling lives and the terrible injustice of suicides in custody will end.

Lifeline 13 11 14
13YARN 13 92 76

Associate Professor Hannah McGlade is a human rights law expert and a member of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. Professor Pat Dudgeon is a psychologist, fellow of the Australian Psychological Society and a research professor.

Human Rights Act will 'safeguard' rights of kids

DECLAN BRENNAN

The South Australian Government has been urged by a new report to legislate a Human Rights Act.

The report, tabled by the Social Development Committee of the South Australian Parliament following a 16-month review, calls for the Government to transition the Equal Opportunities Commission to a Human Rights Commission, as well as consolidating "various rights and protections afforded to citizens in the many legislative instruments" into one Human Rights Act.

It also recommended the State Government conduct a

"comprehensive consultation" with the community on the model of the Human Rights Act to be adopted.

The committee said the review found South Australia has "not kept up" with other States and Territories, nor with "the majority of other OECD countries and advanced democracies" in the "progression of human rights and the modernisation of discrimination law".

"Many submissions agreed a Human Rights Act for South Australia should, as a starting point, contain the rights already identified in the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) and the seven UN Human Rights

Treaties, to which Australia is a signatory, including the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR)," the committee said.

SNAICC — National Voice for our Children, the peak body representing the rights and interests of Indigenous children, said they welcomed the committee's recommendation.

"This is a vital step toward embedding human rights into public policy — helping to safeguard the rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people,"

SNAICC said in a statement.

"We urge the South Australian Government to act on these recommendations and deliver meaningful protections for our children and communities."

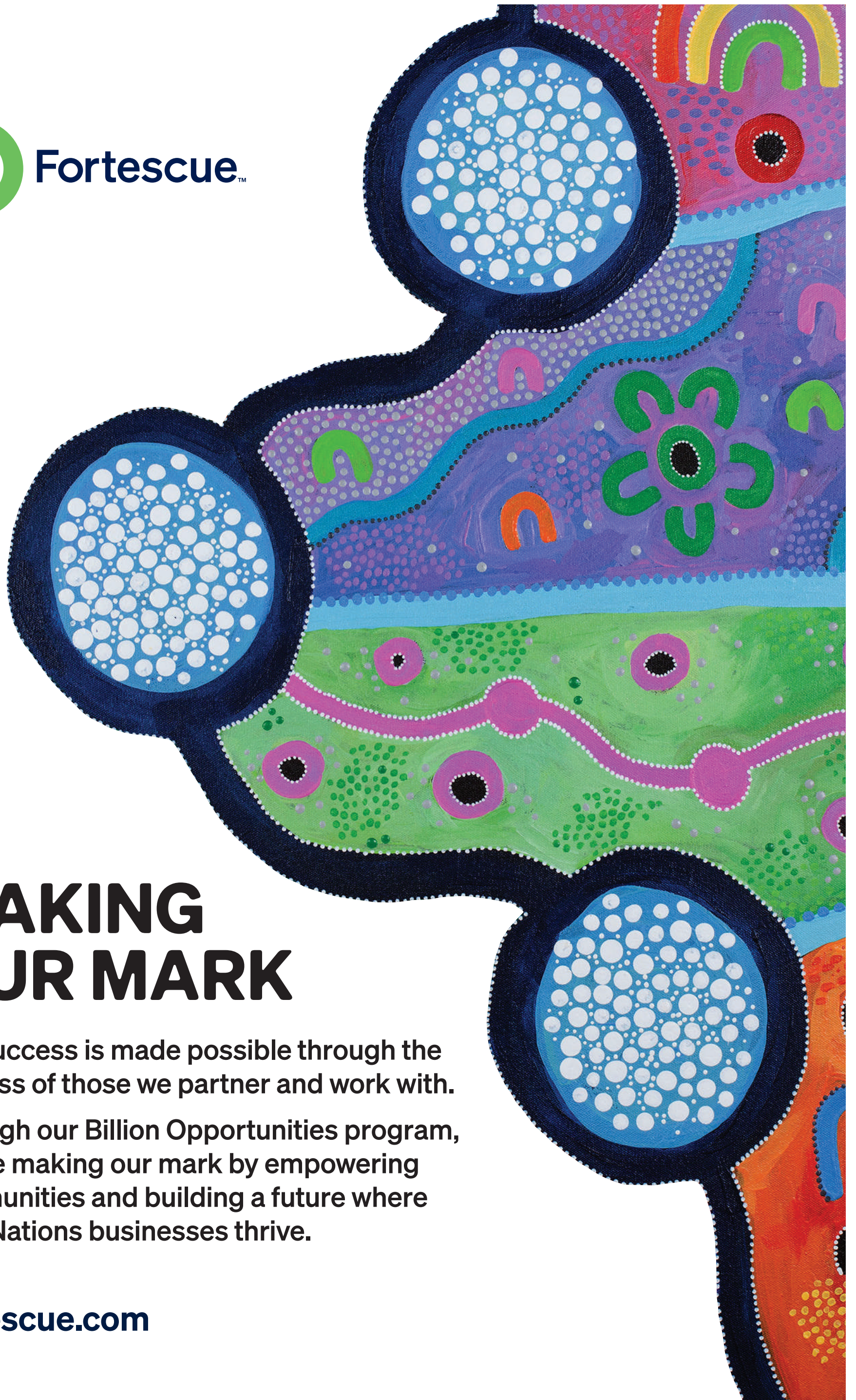
The Aboriginal Health Council of South Australia (AHCSA) submission advised the committee that the current "fragmented" approach to human rights "fails to effectively prevent or shield people from harm or rights violations".

The State's Guardian for Children and Young People, Shona Reid, submitted that while undertaking her role, she observed a "consistent and alarming lack of responsive-

ness in South Australia towards protecting, respecting, and fulfilling the human rights of children and young people in care and detention".

She said "considerable work is required to refocus relevant laws and policies towards treating children and young people, first and foremost, as rights holders".

Ashum Owen from Wakwakurna Kanyini, the State's peak body for Indigenous children, advised the committee that South Australia has the highest rate of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in residential care and on long-term orders, with the lowest rate of family reunification.



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STYLEUP

FASHION,
BEAUTY &
LIFESTYLE

First Nations stars shine

Focus on Australian Fashion Week
P10-11, 12, 14

ALSO INSIDE

Hip-hop collaborators give voice to the struggle **P13**

Artist follows in her father's footsteps **P13**

Liandra on the runway. Picture: Lucas Dawson/Australian Fashion Week

Miimi & Jiinda
Picture: Lucas
Dawson;
Australian
Fashion Week



Joseph & James. Picture:
Lucas Dawson;
AFW



First Nations designers and models make the

PHOEBE BLOGG

Profiling emerging and established First Nations designers, Australian Fashion Week once again shone the spotlight on the industry's frontrunners in 2025.

With the Australian Fashion Council — with funding support from Destination NSW and Shark Beauty — leading the week's curation and execution, the high-profile event boasted a streamlined but high-impact five-day program.

From May 12-16, AFW showcased the work of the country's leading Indigenous designers, celebrating creativity, innovation and culture.

Each exhibiting their own unique skill set, designers featured in this year's runway were selected not only for their brand's growing status, but also their connection to country and their commitment to creating something that fuses culture and craft with contemporary mediums.

Liandra, Ngali, Miimi & Jiinda, Joseph & James, and Buluuy Mirrii, were this year's selected Indigenous labels to show at AFW, with both Joseph & James and Liandra hosting their own solo runways.

With 2025 marking the brand's first time participating on the AFW catwalk, Joseph & James founder, proud Gooreng and South Sea Islander woman Juanita Page, shared her excitement about the achievement.

"It's a massive milestone," she said.

"Joseph & James launched just a few years ago, and to now be debuting our first solo runway at AFW feels both surreal and affirming.

"This isn't just about the clothes — it's about taking up space in a part of the industry where menswear, especially from First Nations designers, is still emerging.

"We originally applied to be part of a group showcase, but Australian Fashion Council offered us the opportunity to present a solo runway as part of the official schedule — which is a huge honour."

While it was certainly not her first time on the AFW runway, designer Denni Francisco was thrilled to showcase her brand, Ngali, at the internationally recognised event.

Bringing Ngali's signature fusion of artistry, storytelling, and sophistication to the runway, this year the brand's newest collection, The Yawa: Journey Collection debuted as a continuation of the brand's mission to celebrate the gifts of Indigenous artistic expression and storytelling.

"With The Yawa: Journey Collection, we continue our mission to celebrate the strength and beauty of Indigenous storytelling through wearable art. This collection is deeply personal — it speaks to the



Designer Liandra Gaykamangu, centre. Picture: Lucas Dawson; AFW

paths we walk individually and together, and the spirit of guidance we receive from our ancestors and the land," Francisco said.

"In this collection, we've created pieces that honour culture, Country, and community.

"It's about walking in unity, being seen, and sharing stories that transcend time through fabric and form."

When it came to the talented creatives who walked the runway, First Nations-owned

and operated agency, Blaklist, stepped up to the plate.

Representing a range of First Nations creatives including models, designers, dancers, performers, actors, hosts, graphic artists and storytellers, Blaklist assisted with the event's Indigenous representation on the runway.

Joining forces with AFW saw Blaklist Agency founder Teagan Cowlshaw work with the Australian Fashion Council and designer Jordan Gogos to create opportunities for Blaklist-

esigns & heir mark



Blaklist models wearing Miimi & Jiinda and Ngali.
Picture: Marley Morgan



Liandra Picture:
Mike Tarr;
Australian
Fashion Week

represented creatives and Next Gen models including Hayley Mulardy, Calli-Rose Woods, Tre Turner Stone, Tynga Williams, Javier Jones, Nelson Baker, Christopher Saunders, Tiah Rotumah and Ieesha Caton.

“It means a lot to me to be able to represent culture, represent my mob and represent Blaklist. To be able to show that there is beauty in diversity. I feel really honoured to have been a part of that with Blaklist as well,” Caton said.

“I want mob to be able to know that they can represent their culture and feel confident.

“I would love in future years for mob to be around and to have that inclusivity.”

Cowlishaw said seeing the Next Gen models grow was a highlight of the week.

“Connections — bond on stage to the performance — their individual character building and growing from the start to after the show, the confidence and all the training I have provided from runway, to editorial to media training, to AI

mapping to networking to events,” she said.

“From three participants in 2024, to now 15 total of Next Gen at AFW in 2025 — look out 2026.”

Also joining the team on the runway was seasoned AFW favourite and leading First Nations powerhouse and model Elaine George.

Continuing to play a large part in the agency’s success since being brought on as one of Blaklist’s mentors and members, George confidently walked the runway alongside the emerging Blaklist models.

Despite global sports, fashion, events, and media conglomerate IMG departing as the event’s sponsor last year, the Australian Fashion Council executed the event in the same distinguished, high-fashion manner as usual.

While there is always room for greater representation of First Nations creatives and communities, 2025’s Australian Fashion Week demonstrated Indigenous designers are going from strength to strength.

Ngali's Journey hits the runway

PHOEBE BLOGG

Wiradjuri designer Denni Francisco showcased Ngali's newest release, The Yawa: Journey Collection, on the Australian Fashion Week runway this month.

The collection brought the brand's signature fusion of artistry, storytelling, and sophistication to the country's most influential fashion stage.

The collection weaves together the powerful translated works of First Nations art with a photographic essay by Francisco.

"With The Yawa: Journey Collection, we continue our mission to celebrate the strength and beauty of Indigenous storytelling through wearable art," she said. "This collection is deeply personal — it speaks to the paths we walk individually and together, and the spirit of guidance we receive from our ancestors and the land.

"In this collection we've created pieces that honour culture, Country, and community. It's about walking in unity, being seen, and sharing stories that transcend



time through fabric and form."

Francisco stayed true to her roots and used hues of Country — the ochres of the land, the shifting blues and soft rusts of the sky, and the deep, flowing tones of waterways.

With Ngali typically creating garments that fuse functionality with fluidity and comfort, The Yawa: Journey Collection offered a variety of garments that effortlessly fell against the models' bodies, with the prints as the heroes of the pieces.

Ngali's collections are shaped by continuity — now seven

years in the making, each layer adding to what has gone before.

This slow, deliberate rhythm reflects First Nations ways of being: grounded, enduring, and always in relationship with land and community.

The Yawa: Journey Collection is a continuation of this story, a celebration of connection, and a journey shared.

Ngali showcased a solo collection at Australian Fashion Week in 2023, and Milan and Jakarta Fashion Weeks in 2022, and has featured in group runway shows at Melbourne Fashion Week.



Ngali models on the runway. Pictures: Australian Fashion Week

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We All Know is a hip-hop track about Indigenous identity, struggle, and staying true to self through music.

Track lays bare the expressive struggle

JOSEPH GUENZLER

Maori artist TEHIIRI and Noongar-Wongi and Pitjantjatjara rapper JJ Vacant have teamed up on We All Know, a new track out this month that blends sharp lyricism with deep cultural resonance.

The single opens with the line "Struggle's a cousin that we all know", setting the tone for a track that tackles identity, self-expression and the ongoing influence of struggle within hip-hop.

TEHIIRI, of the Ngai Te Rangī, Ngati Ranginui, Ngati Pakenga, Waitaha, and Ngati Wai iwis, said the idea began during a conversation with

producer Iamsolo about how much hip-hop had shifted over the years.

"When we were young, hip-hop wasn't as accessible as it is now," he told Style Up.

"When I was younger, it was something we had to do . . . it was our way of making sense of everything.

"When I say 'struggle is a cousin that we all know' it's something we all understand, but not everyone is related to that cousin.

"That struggle refers to the struggle of being able to express ourselves."

Rather than planning every move, TEHIIRI said their studio process was about creating a comfortable space

and letting the music come naturally.

"Having the right environment and right people around is so important," he said.

"Once you have that space, dope music can always come out of it — we just have to speak."

TEHIIRI said hesitation and rigid methods could hold artists back.

"One thing that can be detrimental to artists is being too hesitant or being too formulaic with their approach," he said.

"Me and JJ are different — the cream rises to the top."

For JJ Vacant, the collaboration builds on a

journey that began when he was 13, making music with family.

"In my verse, this song is taking me places I never thought I'd go," he said.

"It's about breaking the chains, rapping for me and being content with the stuff I'm putting out there.

"The music can take me places I want to go but it always comes back home.

"Jumping in the studio with TEHIIRI without having deadlines and letting things flow is like therapy for me."

We All Know is available on all streaming platforms now, with a music video set to drop soon.



St Joseph's Catholic College in Katherine celebrates.

Literacy program hits major milestone

PHOEBE BLOGG

The Indigenous Literacy Foundation proudly announced a remarkable milestone this month, with one million books having been delivered to remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities through the its Book Supply program.

The ILF's longest-running initiative has provided free and culturally relevant books to more than 495 remote communities across Australia, allowing young readers to see themselves in stories.

Book Supply manager Brad Gambetta said the program was a great success.

"Recently there was a remote school sharing the story about kids being excited to read their new books that reflect their culture and language," he said.

"It absolutely made me smile and think about the impact and importance a book — especially a book that reflects who you are — can have."

The ILF celebrated the milestone in Katherine in the Northern Territory.

Former Book Supply co-ordinator and current publishing projects editor Cindy Manfong said it was rewarding to see the program benefit communities.

"Since I started with the ILF in 2016, Katherine has always been the central hub of the region. Communities all around it would have to get their packs sent to the local post office and then filtered out to their communities," she said.

"I have seen first-hand how kids and adults in communities react to seeing these packs, and it's always a lot of smiles and pride."

Artist follows in footsteps of her inspirational father

JARRED CROSS

Wiradjuri artist Lauren Freestone's father's house was once like "his own little gallery".

She didn't envisage herself going down a similar path, though.

In her business Freestone Art, inspired by her coastal homes and ties to Wiradjuri Country, she creates one-off original works, canvas pieces, prints and collaborations with other brands.

Textured mediums such as sands, ceramics and limestone are a favourite, as Freestone says they bring something extra with depth, and let things "evolve" on canvas.

Freestone is based at Emerald Beach in Gumbaynggirr Country on

the NSW north coast. She grew up an hour south in Scotts Head.

"In 2016 I started an Instagram account, and I couldn't really keep up with the constant messages asking where to buy my artworks from, so in 2018 I finally bit the bullet and started a website," she told Style Up.

Investing in herself and following a lifelong passion doesn't come easy. After losing her visual merchandising job with a homewares store during the COVID-19 pandemic, "self-doubt and what-ifs" were set aside.

"I always had a little feeling that it could work," Freestone said.

As the world spent more time inside and online, orders increased.



Artist Lauren Freestone with some of her work.

Rather than look for a new job, "I just thought it was now or never," Freestone said.

"Thankfully I have been able to paint for the last four years."

She also credits her husband for being a supportive partner.

As a child, Freestone picked up influences at home, absorbing her dad Lee Freestone's creative passions and the landscapes which surrounded her, spending most of her time around the beach and outdoors.

Her dad, who is described as her creative lead, moved up the coast from Sydney in his teens and never looked back.

"Dad has always been creative — he would paint up all his mud crab shells, carve little wooden fish, snakes, dogs and boomerangs. He always had something going on and I was naturally drawn to art through his creativity," Freestone said.

"Dad's house was like his own little gallery. Every wall had art

hanging and shelves full of his other creations." Freestone Art's website says she draws inspiration from her great-grandparents' Country and the saltwater country of Gumbaynggirr, where she grew up.

"My work is inspired by the natural world around me, where I live, where I grew up and Wiradjuri Country where our mob is from," Freestone told Style Up.

When it comes to culture and art, "You can't really have one without the other," Freestone said.

"My work would hold no meaning without it. The importance of art in culture for me is expression. It's how I express my thoughts, feelings and experiences. It's a way for me to tell my story."

New works debuted at AFW show

PHOEBE BLOGG

Liandra returned to the Australian Fashion Week runway this month, showcasing a new collection inspired by the coral of life and ancestral connection.

Founded by designer and proud Yolngu woman Liandra Gaykamangu, Liandra's garments seamlessly blend contemporary design with deep cultural storytelling.

Since debuting her first resort wear line on the DHL Next Gen runway in 2023, Gaykamangu has grown her ready-to-wear offering far beyond beach attire.

This year the talented designer's new collection introduced two new exclusive hand-drawn prints: Coral of Life, inspired by the dynamic beauty of a reef ecosystem; and Seascape, evoking golden-hour summer tones and balmy coastal evenings.

Drawing from Yolngu culture, the new collection speaks to a

living ecosystem of tradition and community where each element supports the other.

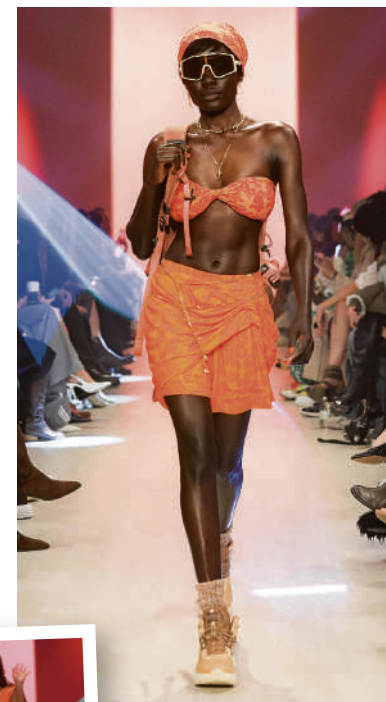
Like coral, the connection continues to grow and evolve over time, symbolising the richness, resilience, and spiritual continuity of culture through generations.

Similar to other collections, Liandra has used ACETEX swim fabrics, embracing innovation said to enhance performance and sustainability.

Crafted with a focus on quality and durability, ACETEX fabrics offer superior stretch, shape retention, and resistance to chlorine, saltwater, and UV rays.

Liandra also prioritises working with sustainable fabrics such as the bamboo satin blend, a core part of the Coral of Life fabric.

For the runway's music, the showcase used the work of Rona Ngamperle, a proud Anmatyerr woman and rising artist whose music is rooted in



Liandra designs on the runway, and inset, Liandra Gaykamangu acknowledges the crowd. Pictures: Australian Fashion Week

First Nations identity, storytelling, and strength.

Her sound blends ancestral echoes with contemporary expression, making her the perfect match for Liandra, whose collections are deeply embedded in Yolngu culture, legacy, and connection to Country.

Striving to create a runway which resembled the freedom, joy, and collective celebration of the brand's garments, Liandra's Australian Fashion

Week runway was upbeat in music, tempo, vibrant colourways and bold accessories — including cowboy hats, oversized sunglasses, and trendy sneakers.

One of the industry's top-performing First Nations designers, Gaykamangu's 2025 presentation at Australian Fashion Week has further cemented the designer's ongoing success and status.

Always striving to use the

runway as a platform to honour her heritage and amplify conversations around Indigenous knowledge systems, slow fashion, and ethical production, this year's Liandra showcase was no different.

While revealing two new prints from the brand, Gaykamangu focused on highlighting Liandra's distinct colourways, striking prints, meaningful motifs, beachside aesthetic, and ongoing commitment to sustainability.

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Can't afford to be silent

HANNAH MCGLADE

The ALP's decimation of the Liberal / National parties and the will-they-won't-they break-up of the Coalition partnership should signal a turning point in Indigenous affairs.

Labor has long stood with Aboriginal people, supporting land rights, constitutional recognition and the right to self-determination. Under prime minister Kevin Rudd, Labor reversed a decision of the former Coalition government to oppose the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and made a historic apology to the Stolen Generations. Change was on the horizon.

Yet concerningly, there is no indication the Albanese Government will act courageously or decisively to continue to support Indigenous rights, the Uluru Statement from the Heart, and Voice, Treaty and Truth.

The UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples also requires urgent implementation, but we're not seeing progress towards the national action plan urged by the Senate inquiry of 2023.

Instead, we have commitments to "practical reforms" and "practical reconciliation". If you have a sense of déjà vu, it's because we've been here before. This approach is Liberal Party policy from the early 2000s. The language encompasses the

Divisive war on culture is rejected by voters

REECE HARLEY

Peter Dutton and the Coalition tried to fight the Federal election on flags and ceremonies — and the Australian people weren't having it.

In the final weeks of the campaign, Mr Dutton ramped up a culture war targeting Welcome To Country ceremonies and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags. He sought to reignite bitterness over the Voice referendum.

The strategy failed spectacularly. In the clearest repudiation of all, the Opposition Leader lost his own seat of Dickson. He and many of his Liberal colleagues — including a number of frontbenchers — were ejected from Parliament in an historic defeat. Labor easily formed a majority government.

The Liberal and National parties have since detonated their Coalition agreement, though they may yet reunite. This turn of events is a national rejection of a divisive Coalition

Closing The Gap arrangements and economic empowerment.

Business and wealth creation for a few is being prioritised over Indigenous people's rights, with no evidence to show that increasing Aboriginal businesses' wealth alone will Close The Gap on Indigenous disadvantage. There is no evidence that supporting economic empowerment for a minority will address the severity of Aboriginal incarceration, child removals, suicides, and violence against Aboriginal women which continue to rise under the current policies.

The "nation-building" theories imported into Australia from the US and Canada are founded on the inspiring achievements of Indigenous-owned enterprises in North America. But these enterprises thrive due to stronger Indigenous rights and recognition — and even these relatively wealthy North American Indigenous Nations struggle with poverty, disadvantage and violence.

Minister for Indigenous Australians Malarndirri McCarthy should be calling a national summit with

Indigenous leaders for an honest conversation about this Government's commitment to political participation, agreement-making, a more inclusive Australian history as set down in the Uluru Statement From The Heart, and Indigenous rights under international law. This is the standard process I witnessed in British Columbia, Canada — a First Nations Crown summit.

The state of Federal Indigenous affairs as I recently witnessed at the UN Permanent Forum For Indigenous Issues in New York is disheartening. The Australian delegation of government representatives proceeded to tell the world that Australia is making great progress in Indigenous affairs, citing investments but failing to acknowledge that we are failing to engage in systemic reforms and rights that are essential.

As an expert member for the forum, I intervened and spoke of the serious issues with which we are confronted, including the current Early Warning Urgent Action communication to the UN Committee On The Elimination for Race Discrimination about the serious violation of child

rights across the country. We are seeing increasing attempts by government to employ and fund Aboriginal people to promote a positive image of Australia and silence critical Aboriginal voices.

The UN Declaration is very clear that we have the right to our own institutions and representative bodies and to choose our own representatives: Articles 18 and 19.

The colonial tactic of "divide and conquer" is very much the playbook of modern Australia politics. Aboriginal people are being kept busy fighting each other as our rights agenda, and our future, is steadily eroded.

Yet, we have a sacred responsibility to continue a proud struggle for justice in our own country. The situation is especially severe now for Aboriginal children experiencing systemic race discrimination and human rights abuse across the country under regressive crime laws.

These laws are being passed at the same time as the Justice Policy Partnership, which is clearly failing. Consequently, the UN is now taking Australia to task over shocking breaches

of binding international human rights law. As the Uluru Statement From The Heart said: "Our children are alienated from their families at unprecedented rates. This cannot be because we have no love for them. And our youth languish in detention in obscene numbers. They should be our hope for the future."

It's time we prioritise the children, and legitimate systems reforms, over questionable policies aimed exclusively at creating individual wealth.

This is a matter of human rights for our children who deserve nothing less.

“There is no indication the Albanese Government will act courageously or decisively to continue to support Indigenous rights.

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



Exit stage right: Peter Dutton after conceding defeat on May 3. Picture: AP

campaign that ignored the real issues facing Australians — especially Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

While Mr Dutton fixated on flags and welcomes, the Coalition failed to lead on jobs, housing, health care, infrastructure, education, and community safety.

Over the past three years, instead of presenting a serious policy agenda, the Liberals spent their energy tearing down the Voice without offering a comprehensive plan to address the issues on which communities are crying out for action. As the election approached, our newsroom prepared to analyse detailed policy proposals: responses to overcrowded housing, youth detention, the shortage of health

professionals in remote areas, and the crisis in family and domestic violence. But those policies never arrived. We reached out to the Opposition for comment. More often than not, we received no response. They had little to say.

Post-election, Senator Jacinta Nampijinpa Price blamed "media mudslinging" for the result and admitted the Coalition "may not have effectively communicated" its message. But it's not a communications failure — it's a policy vacuum. It's a refusal to engage seriously with the structural issues facing First Nations communities.

Senator Price admitted her campaign had focused on "fighting the narrative of Indigenous disadvantage" — a

revealing comment that underscores the gap between the Coalition's ideological focus and the lived experience of so many in our communities.

Mr Dutton doubled down on his refusal to stand in front of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags if elected prime minister. "We unite under one flag," he said — dismissing decades of formal recognition of those flags as symbols of our shared national story. And it got worse after Anzac Day, when he chose to validate fringe voices who booed a Welcome to Country ceremony. Rather than defend respect and inclusion, he gave oxygen to their outrage, saying: "The majority view would be that they don't want it on that day."

For three years, the Coalition

“Mr Dutton and his party treated Indigenous issues as political bait — to divide, to distract, to exploit.

had the opportunity to lead. What did they do? Where was their plan to close the education gap? To reduce suicide rates? To invest in housing and justice reinvestment? To support First Nations women and children escaping violence? Nowhere to be seen.

Instead, Mr Dutton and his party treated Indigenous issues as political bait — to divide, to distract, to exploit. They pushed culture wars when what we needed were policies. They offered wedge politics when communities needed real solutions. The 2025 election result was a direct response to that failure. Voters saw through the empty slogans. They rejected a party that had nothing to offer Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people but blame, denial and silence.

If the Coalition wants to be relevant again, it must abandon its obsession with division and start doing the real work — work that improves lives, not just grabs headlines.

Reece Harley is managing director of the National Indigenous Times.

ILSC unveils initiatives

DAVID PRESTIPINO

Two major initiatives were launched this month to further support First Nations communities building sustainable economic futures.

The Indigenous Land and Sea Corporation's new Sector Leadership Strategy and Future Industries Grant Program, designed to open new opportunities for Traditional Owners in emerging sectors such as renewables, carbon and environmental markets, inland water management, and fisheries and aquaculture, launched on May 14.

The Sector Leadership Strategy reflects the insights of Indigenous leaders and Country managers, and builds on the ILSC's National Indigenous Land and Sea Strategy 2023-2028, which identified land and water sectors with strong economic potential and provided a roadmap for building skills, securing investment, and strengthening First Nations lea-

dership across the emerging industries.

The Future Industries Grant Program offers funding of up to \$50,000 to Indigenous corporations for expert advice on sector opportunities.

The ILSC will roll out strategy initiatives in the next three to four years that support community-led economic development on Country, bolster First Nations leadership capacity, and remove financial and structural barriers Indigenous landholders face in these markets.

First Nations Country managers have already been leading climate action, combining cultural knowledge with modern practice to protect land and water.

Their influence is only set to grow, with Net Zero Australia modelling showing 43 per cent of the renewable energy infrastructure required to reach net zero targets will be on formally recognised Indigenous land.

The new strategy en-

ures Traditional Owners are at the centre of decision-making and can share in investment on their lands and waters.

ILSC chair Ian Hamm said each industry offered real potential for growth, employment, and long-term wealth creation on Country.

"The Sector Leadership Strategy and Future Industries Grant Program present opportunities for Indigenous Country managers to take advantage of immediate market trends operating in the domestic and international context," he said.

"The business of nature repair and environmental management is one close to Indigenous peoples' culture and ways of living.

"By promoting and expanding the economic opportunities for our people to stay on Country and look after Country, we are contributing to intergenerational wealth-building, as well as positive impacts on Country for future generations."



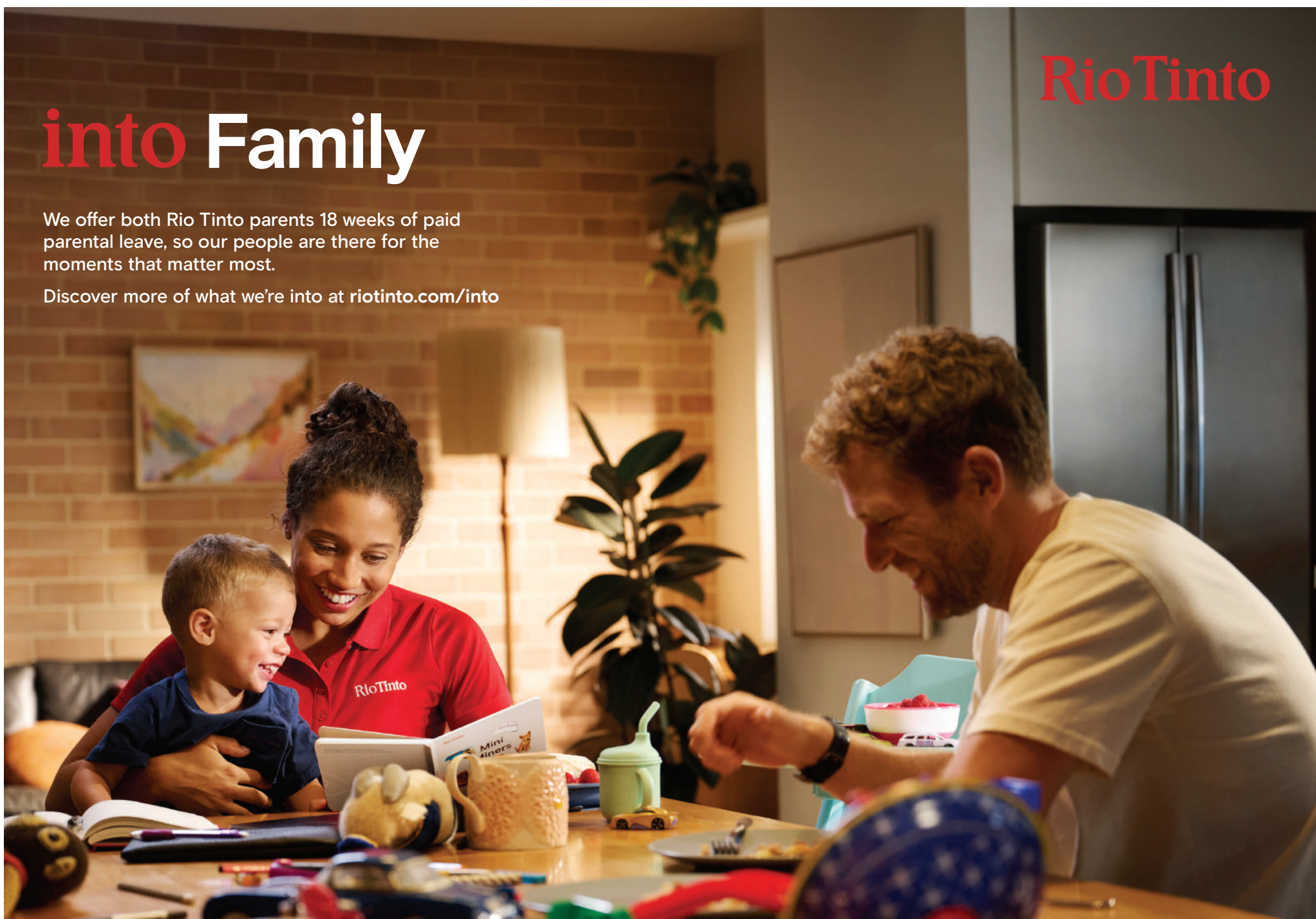
ILSC chair Ian Hamm. Pic: AAP

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KAPCO beef on shelves

GIOVANNI TORRE

The Indigenous-owned Kimberley Agriculture and Pastoral Company launched its line of beef in Fitzroy Crossing this month.

KAPCO chair Wayne Bergmann said the company was “extremely proud” of its achievements, having come from “humble beginnings”.

KAPCO, established in 2015, started operations with about 5000 head of cattle and now has a strong herd of 40,000.

“We focused first on building our infrastructure, water and fencing and genetic quality of our cattle,” Mr Bergmann said.

“We have had some very tough times with low rainfall, low cattle prices and COVID.

“These challenges only made us stronger.

“We are proud of the belief Indigenous Business Australia, the Commonwealth Bank and Marra Worra Worra Aboriginal Corporation had in us, and the risk they took to back us against the odds. We are in a stronger position because of this support and commitment to local regional business.

“We are an agriculture business that is 100 per cent Indigenous-owned and managed.

“This is 140 years in the making. Our ancestors worked in the pastoral industry for flour and tobacco, and it has been an intergenerational endeavour to develop this enterprise from the ground up to what it is today... This is over a century in the making — over a century of aspirations of many Aboriginal leaders.”

Mr Bergmann, a co-owner of National Indigenous Times, said KAPCO was “very proud to have such a strong Indigenous team and management and staff who... have been able to achieve this through thick and thin”.

“KAPCO has survived the challenges, the peaks and troughs of the pastoral industry, and the ebbs and flows of the market. Our directors are Traditional Owners of the land on which we work,” he said.

“We have gone from exclusively a primary producer to producing from paddock to



Wayne Bergmann and Kandula Herat, Leedal chief operations officer at the Fitzroy Crossing IGA and below, KAPCO cattle. Pictures: KAPCO

plate, and today, we have launched a line of box meat.”

Mr Bergmann noted the meat was halal-certified and registered for exports.

“Our partnership with Rum Jungle abattoir has made this possible. The quality control and professionalism of the team at Rum Jungle is second to none,” he said.

“What we have done is brought a line of cattle grown and managed in the Kimberley on grass and nature pasture, and transported and processed and boxed ourselves, and we are selling it in the local community-owned IGA in Fitzroy Crossing, and serving it in the restaurants at the Fitzroy River Lodge.

“This run of cattle has been grass-fed on Bohemia Downs station, and it is a testament to Indigenous pastoral management, the KAPCO team, that quality we have been able to achieve.

“Despite the challenges, it

has been an incredible journey.

“One of the challenges has been the cost and efficiencies of slaughtering cattle, and it worked out more effective to truck our stock to the Northern Territory and bring it back in boxes to sell in the Kimberley.

“We have done this off our own back.

“It would have been better if there was greater support for pastoral stations to produce locally and supply locally, as we make a great social impact on our local communities.”

Mr Bergmann said KAPCO’s Indigenous employment rate of more than 70 per cent Aboriginal workers had been “no small achievement”.

“We have a very hands-on crew and produce a high-quality local product,” he said.

“Now the biggest challenge is to make sure we have a steady market.

“We are strong believers in making our own way and standing on our own feet. We are



seeking support from supermarkets and supply chains who want a high-quality beef product, believe in the social impact of our business, believe in the employment of local people, and the supply of quality meat at affordable prices.

“First contact in our region

happened in the 1880s, and Aboriginal people have been the backbone of the pastoral industry here since then.

“We are proud to have moved to the next level and of being able to manage our cattle right through the supply chain at the highest possible standard.”

NT body speaks out against obstacles in Budget

DAVID PRESTIPINO

The peak body representing Indigenous businesses in the Northern Territory has expressed disappointment at obstacles to Aboriginal economic participation after the NT Government released its 2025-26 Budget this month.

The Northern Territory Indigenous Business Network said while the Budget allocated significant funds to justice investment and other initiatives to enhance community safety, there was little emphasis on investing in Indigenous-led economic initiatives.

Limited access to funding,

government contracts favouring large non-Indigenous companies, and the absence of specific strategies to support Aboriginal businesses were just some of the barriers the industry faced, it said.

“We recognise the investments outlined in housing, health, education, and infrastructure as essential to improving the overall wellbeing of our people and communities,” CEO Naomi Anstess said.

“However... the Budget once again falls short of delivering a bold and transformational commitment to growing the Aboriginal economy, as a key economic pillar of the NT’s

future.” Ms Anstess said there was a notable absence of dedicated, long-term and scalable investment in Aboriginal-led economic development, procurement reform, and Indigenous business capability building.

“Aboriginal businesses in the Territory are not charity or social programs — we are employers, service providers, manufacturers, exporters, and investors,” Ms Anstess said.

“We generate real jobs, contribute to economic growth, and reinvest in our communities.

“Yet the structural barriers to Aboriginal economic partici-

pation remain, including limited access to capital, government procurement practices that favour large non-Indigenous contractors, and a lack of targeted industry development strategies for Aboriginal enterprises.”

Ms Anstess also lamented the NT Government’s introduction on May 15 of the Sacred Sites Bill to Parliament, saying it was done without genuine consultation or proper consideration of Aboriginal Territorians as rightful land and sea custodians.

“These actions make it undeniably clear that the government is actively undermining

real economic opportunities for Aboriginal people,” she told National Indigenous Times.

Ms Anstess said the move only further dismantled Aboriginal self-determination.

The NTIBN called on the NT government to commit to a whole-of-government Aboriginal economic development strategy with measurable targets, led by Aboriginal people, for Aboriginal people.

It also wants to expand and enforce Aboriginal procurement policy targets across all agencies, ensuring not just contract awards, but real engagement with Aboriginal businesses in delivery.

SIXT strikes Pilbara deal

JARRED CROSS

From June, majority Aboriginal-owned vehicle hire business Waru will expand its operations in WA's Pilbara region in collaboration with an international sector heavy-weight.

Waru delivers tailored vehicle hire solutions to industries in the region, including mining, defence, private and government sectors.

Last year it won the Aboriginal Enterprises In Mining

Partnership with vehicle hire business Waru

Energy and Exploration award for Indigenous new business of the year.

Waru's new partnership with SIXT launches next month with branches in Karratha, Port Hedland and Newman, and bookings are already available.

Local Traditional Owner Shakira Grasso owns Waru, which last November donated a bus to Baynton West Primary School for its Waja Guma Aboriginal

Early Learning Centre. Providing passenger vehicles, four-wheel-drives, minibuses, fit-outs and GPS tracking resources, the SIXT partnership is Waru's next step.

"I knew right away that our values and visions aligned, both with a drive to succeed and create sustainable opportunities for our community and future generations," Ms Grasso said.

"SIXT's global reputation and

dedication to premium customer service and Waru's deep local roots and commitment to community impact in the Pilbara, our home, is a strong partnership. It opens up possibilities for us to grow our business, enhance our capabilities and better serve our customers.

"I'm incredibly proud of this alliance, confident in our collective ability to make a meaningful difference in the Pilbara.

"We are extremely proud to partner with a business of this calibre."

SIXT Australia chief executive Matthew Beattie said the company was excited to expand into the Pilbara, something that "unlocks opportunities to significantly expand our reach and strengthen our ability to better serve our local and international customers".

SIXT's car hire operations stretch across more than 160 locations and more than 16,000 vehicles nationally.



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

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

Tenement Type	No.	Applicant	Area*	Locality	Centroid	Shire
Exploration Licence	08/3785	A.C.N. 629 923 753 PTY LTD	20BL	36.9km SE'ly of Onslow	Lat: 21° 48' S Long: 115° 25' E	ASHBURTON SHIRE
Exploration Licence	15/2044	FORRESTANIA RESOURCES LIMITED	9BL	36.1km W'ly of Coolgardie	Lat: 30° 57' S Long: 120° 47' E	COOLGARDIE SHIRE
Exploration Licence	15/2101	XIAO, Zhiqiang	1BL	12.5km N'ly of Coolgardie	Lat: 30° 50' S Long: 121° 8' E	COOLGARDIE SHIRE
Exploration Licence	29/1289	VIKING MINES LIMITED	16BL	31.4km NW'ly of Menzies	Lat: 29° 28' S Long: 120° 48' E	MENZIES SHIRE
Exploration Licence	30/588	BOX, Brodie Hamilton	42BL	134.9km W'ly of Menzies	Lat: 29° 19' S Long: 119° 42' E	MENZIES SHIRE
Exploration Licence	51/2275	YERRIDA CO PTY LTD	51BL	61km SE'ly of Peak Hill	Lat: 26° 6' S Long: 119° 1' E	MEEKATHARRA SHIRE
Exploration Licence	57/1460	BULGA MINERALS PTY LTD	70BL	45.8km SE'ly of Sandstone	Lat: 28° 12' S Long: 119° 41' E	SANDSTONE SHIRE
Exploration Licence	57/1463	GUM CREEK GOLD MINES PTY LTD	43BL	66.5km N'ly of Sandstone	Lat: 27° 24' S Long: 119° 29' E	SANDSTONE SHIRE
Exploration Licence	69/4281	EDE NATURAL RESOURCES AUSTRALIA PTY LTD	63BL	201.3km NE'ly of Balladonia	Lat: 31° 22' S Long: 125° 34' E	DUNDAS SHIRE, KALGOORLIE-BOULDER CITY
Exploration Licence	77/3181	POLARIS METALS PTY LTD	296.70751BL	120.1km N'ly of Southern Cross	Lat: 30° 9' S Long: 119° 7' E	YILGARN SHIRE
Exploration Licence	77/3182	POLARIS METALS PTY LTD	1,187.37287BL	122.7km NE'ly of Mukinbudin	Lat: 30° 6' S Long: 119° 5' E	YILGARN SHIRE
Exploration Licence	77/3183	POLARIS METALS PTY LTD	2,376.43457BL	129.1km NE'ly of Mukinbudin	Lat: 30° 2' S Long: 119° 5' E	YILGARN SHIRE
Exploration Licence	77/3184	POLARIS METALS PTY LTD	5,947.34302BL	143km NE'ly of Mukinbudin	Lat: 29° 56' S Long: 119° 10' E	YILGARN SHIRE
Exploration Licence	77/3185	POLARIS METALS PTY LTD	2,079.37943BL	129.7km N'ly of Southern Cross	Lat: 30° 3' S Long: 119° 17' E	YILGARN SHIRE
Exploration Licence	77/3190	POLARIS METALS PTY LTD	296.45454BL	106km N'ly of Southern Cross	Lat: 30° 16' S Long: 119° 25' E	YILGARN SHIRE
Exploration Licence	77/3191	POLARIS METALS PTY LTD	1,185.67562BL	104.6km N'ly of Southern Cross	Lat: 30° 17' S Long: 119° 28' E	YILGARN SHIRE
Exploration Licence	77/3271	FLEET STREET HOLDINGS PTY LTD	21BL	29.8km NE'ly of Southern Cross	Lat: 31° 2' S Long: 119° 33' E	YILGARN SHIRE
Prospecting Licence	15/6952	NORTHERN STAR (SOUTH KALGOORLIE) PTY LTD	198.04HA	18.2km E'ly of Coolgardie	Lat: 30° 53' S Long: 121° 20' E	COOLGARDIE SHIRE
Prospecting Licence	24/5841	BORROMEI, Rino	110.45HA	8.3km N'ly of Broad Arrow	Lat: 30° 22' S Long: 121° 19' E	KALGOORLIE-BOULDER CITY
Prospecting Licence	24/5845	FLEMING, Leo Glenn	9.79HA	4.3km SE'ly of Broad Arrow	Lat: 30° 27' S Long: 121° 21' E	KALGOORLIE-BOULDER CITY
Prospecting Licence	24/5847	NORTON GOLD FIELDS PTY LTD	5.06HA	7.8km NE'ly of Broad Arrow	Lat: 30° 24' S Long: 121° 23' E	KALGOORLIE-BOULDER CITY
Prospecting Licence	24/5848	NORTON GOLD FIELDS PTY LTD	26.22HA	13.3km SE'ly of Ora Banda	Lat: 30° 27' S Long: 121° 9' E	KALGOORLIE-BOULDER CITY
Prospecting Licence	24/5850	GOLDTIMERS PROSPECTING PTY LTD	105.23HA	9.1km S'ly of Ora Banda	Lat: 30° 26' S Long: 121° 5' E	KALGOORLIE-BOULDER CITY
Prospecting Licence	24/5851	RAMSAY, Paul Brian	9.82HA	17.2km N'ly of Broad Arrow	Lat: 30° 17' S Long: 121° 16' E	KALGOORLIE-BOULDER CITY
Prospecting Licence	24/5852	RAMSAY, Paul Brian	9.89HA	17km N'ly of Broad Arrow	Lat: 30° 17' S Long: 121° 16' E	KALGOORLIE-BOULDER CITY
Prospecting Licence	24/5854	RAMSAY, Paul Brian	9.95HA	20.2km N'ly of Ora Banda	Lat: 30° 15' S Long: 121° 13' E	KALGOORLIE-BOULDER CITY
Prospecting Licence	24/5855	RAMSAY, Paul Brian	4.52HA	8.4km NW'ly of Broad Arrow	Lat: 30° 23' S Long: 121° 15' E	KALGOORLIE-BOULDER CITY
Prospecting Licence	25/2870	COSTANZO, Patrick Natale	121.19HA	36.7km E'ly of Kalgoorlie	Lat: 30° 42' S Long: 121° 50' E	KALGOORLIE-BOULDER CITY
Prospecting Licence	25/2871	COSTANZO, Patrick Natale	104.48HA	36.9km E'ly of Kalgoorlie	Lat: 30° 44' S Long: 121° 51' E	KALGOORLIE-BOULDER CITY
Prospecting Licence	26/4830	SMART, Benjamin Wayne	74.00HA	29.4km NE'ly of Kambalda	Lat: 30° 59' S Long: 121° 51' E	KALGOORLIE-BOULDER CITY
Prospecting Licence	26/4831	SCATTINI, Darren Shane	86.54HA	13km E'ly of Kalgoorlie	Lat: 30° 45' S Long: 121° 36' E	KALGOORLIE-BOULDER CITY
Prospecting Licence	26/4832	SCATTINI, Darren Shane	31.16HA	13km E'ly of Kalgoorlie	Lat: 30° 45' S Long: 121° 36' E	KALGOORLIE-BOULDER CITY
Prospecting Licence	30/1170	ADMIRAL GOLD PTY LTD	15.81HA	53.3km W'ly of Menzies	Lat: 29° 48' S Long: 120° 30' E	MENZIES SHIRE
Prospecting Licence	30/1171	GIANNI, Leon Peter	4.85HA	46.5km W'ly of Menzies	Lat: 29° 38' S Long: 120° 33' 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: 21 May 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 **21 August 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. **21 September 2025**), a native title party lodges an objection with the National Native Title Tribunal against the inclusion of the statement that the State considers the grant of the licence is an act attracting the expedited procedure. Enquiries in relation to lodging an objection should be directed to the National Native Title Tribunal, Level 5, 1 Victoria Avenue, Perth, or GPO Box 9973, Perth, WA 6848, telephone (08) 9425 1000. For further information about the act (including extracts of plans showing the boundaries of the applications), contact the Department of Energy, Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety, 100 Plain Street, East Perth WA 6004, or telephone (08) 9222 3518. Please note – Not all Intention to Grant notifications are published in the National Indigenous Times. For more information please contact the Department above.

* – 1 Graticular Block = 2.8 km²



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

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

Exploration No.	Applicant	Amalg. No.	Area	Locality	Centroid	Shire
16/583	OWEN, Tristan David	728152	178.85HA	32.5km SW'ly of Ora Banda	Lat: 30° 35' S Long: 120° 50' E	COOLGARDIE SHIRE
20/938	NORTHERN DRILLING PTY LTD	732100	19.52HA	49.2km NE'ly of Cue	Lat: 27° 10' S Long: 118° 17' E	CUE SHIRE

Nature of the act: Grant of amalgamation applications which authorises the applicant to explore for minerals. **Notification day: 21 May 2025. Native title parties:** Under Section 30 of the *Native Title Act 1993* (Cth), persons have until 3 months after the notification day to take certain steps to become native title parties in relation to the applications. The 3 month period closes on **21 August 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 amalgamation application may be granted unless, within the period of 4 months after the notification day (i.e. **21 September 2025**), a native title party lodges an objection with the National Native Title Tribunal against the inclusion of the statement that the State considers the grant of the licence is an act attracting the expedited procedure. Enquiries in relation to lodging an objection should be directed to the National Native Title Tribunal, Level 5, 1 Victoria Avenue, Perth, or GPO Box 9973, Perth, WA 6848, telephone (08) 9425 1000. For further information about the act (including extracts of plans showing the boundaries of the applications), contact the Department of Energy, Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety, 100 Plain Street, East Perth WA 6004, or telephone (08) 9222 3518. Please note – Not all Intention to Grant notifications are published in the National Indigenous Times. For more information please contact the Department above.



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

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

Tenement Type	No.	Applicant	Area	Locality	Centroid	Shire
Mining Lease	15/1921	MACPHERSONS REWARD PTY LTD	28.59HA	8.8km S'ly of Coolgardie	Lat: 31° 1' S Long: 121° 11' E	COOLGARDIE SHIRE
Mining Lease	15/1922	FOCUS MINERALS LTD	89.30HA	23.3km SW'ly of Coolgardie	Lat: 31° 3' S Long: 120° 57' E	COOLGARDIE SHIRE
Mining Lease	25/387	BLACK CAT (KAL EAST) PTY LTD	168.86HA	29.7km E'ly of Kalgoorlie	Lat: 30° 42' S Long: 121° 46' E	KALGOORLIE-BOULDER CITY
Mining Lease	26/874	NORTHERN STAR (KLV) PTY LTD, NORTHERN STAR (SARACEN KALGOORLIE) PTY LTD	238.70HA	14.4km E'ly of Kalgoorlie	Lat: 30° 46' S Long: 121° 37' E	KALGOORLIE-BOULDER CITY
Mining Lease	29/448	HAWTHORN RESOURCES LIMITED, LEGACY IRON ORE LTD, HANCOCK MAGNETITE HOLDINGS PTY LTD	17632.11HA	98.6km W'ly of Leonora	Lat: 28° 59' S Long: 120° 19' E	MENZIES SHIRE

Nature of the act: Grant of mining leases, which authorises the applicant to mine for minerals for a term of 21 years from notification of grant and a right of renewal for 21 years. **Notification day: 21 May 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 **21 August 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. **21 September 2025**), there is no native title party under section 30 of the *Native Title Act 1993* (Cth) in relation to the area of the mining tenements. For further information about the act (including extracts of plans showing the boundaries of the applications), contact the Department of Energy, Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety, 100 Plain Street, East Perth WA 6004, or telephone (08) 9222 3518. Please note – Not all Intention to Grant notifications are published in the National Indigenous Times. For more information please contact the Department above.

Ecotourism centre rolls out new EVs

JOSEPH GUENZLER

Mossman Gorge Cultural Centre launched two fully electric shuttle buses last week in a major step forward for sustainable transport at one of Australia's leading ecotourism destinations.

MGCC general manager Rachael Hodges, a Goreng Goreng, Girramay and Gungandji woman, said the buses reflected the centre's commitment to culture and innovation.

"This business was always built to provide opportunities for Aboriginal and Islander people," she said.

Named Kurranji (Cassowary) and Kurriyala (Carpet Snake), the 9m HDrive electric vehicles feature disabled access and are believed to be the first of their kind in Australia.

The vehicles are part of MGCC's goal to transition 50 per cent of its fleet to zero-emission vehicles within a year.

Kuku Yalanji Elder Roy Gibson founded Dreamtime Walks in 1987 and later established the MGCC.

"Roy's dream was to make sure that for future generations we had the ability to tap into that 500,000 people going to Mossman Gorge every year," Ms Hodges said.

"Over 30 per cent of my 65 per cent Indigenous staff are actually in our management and team leader positions, so the idea is to upskill and train our people up into jobs and suc-



Yalangda describes the many uses of the boomerang in the Daintree. Pictures: Joseph Guenzler

cessful careers such as one day becoming a general manager."

The new EVs are expected to improve the visitor experience for more than 300,000 guests a year while helping protect the World Heritage-listed Daintree Rainforest.

The fleet renewal is supported by solar power, free EV charging for guests, and rainwater harvesting.

Voyages Indigenous Tourism

Australia CEO Matt Cameron-Smith said the new vehicles supported broader environmental goals.

"These electric buses are a big step forward in our efforts to reduce our carbon footprint, aligning with Queensland's sustainability goals and significantly enhancing the guest experience at Mossman Gorge," he said.

Visitors last Tuesday were among the first to ride on the new vehicles on the second day of a hosted ecotourism experience in the Port Douglas-Daintree region.

Guests travelled to scenic spots aboard the buses and later joined the Ngadiku Dreamtime Walk, guided by a Traditional Owner, on culturally significant rainforest tracks.

Kuku Yalanji man Yalangda, also known as Uncle Skip, said the Dreamtime Walk keeps traditional knowledge alive.

"The walk that we went on is all based around the plants and the animals," he said.

"It's basically about keeping the knowledge of our people

about the foods that we can eat and some of the medicines that we use as well.

Later, visitors had a two-hour river rafting experience with Back Country Bliss guided by a two former National Indigenous Training Academy graduates.

Yalangda said sharing culture with visitors still drove him after 27 years.

"I enjoy showing my culture to people," he said.

"I like getting into the history of other cultures as well.

"Because I believe a lot of people — when they come up north here — they really want to know about our people."

MGCC is also planning to construct a high-voltage microgrid in partnership with Ergon Energy to boost power resilience in the region.

The system will support the centre's operations and nearby communities during extreme weather events, and is expected to be completed by 2026.

National Indigenous Times was a guest of Voyages Indigenous Tourism Australia.

Chance to win at exporter awards

DIANNE BORTOLETTO

Applications are open for a new category — First Nations exporter award — at the 63rd Australian Export Awards.

Sobah Beverages founder Clinton Schultz said there had been significant growth in Indigenous businesses and entrepreneurship in the past decade.

"I believe it's important that we recognise First Nations businesses in the Export Awards," Dr Schultz said this month.

The Sobah Beverages range of non-alcoholic craft beers is flavoured with native ingredients including finger lime, Davidson plum, strawberry gum and lemon aspen.

"The Export Awards is a great way to get a profile on First Nations business," Dr Schultz said.

Sobah, has won several awards, including the First Nations category of the 2024 Premier of Queensland's Export Awards, and was recognised with the 2024 Brisbane NAIDOC innovation award.

Established in 2017 on Kumbumerri Country, the Gold Coast, Sobah has built a reputation for raising positive awareness of First Nations culture while breaking down stigmas around socialising sober.

The First Nations exporter award category is open to Indigenous-owned businesses in any industry and of any size that have been exporting for three years or more.

Businesses that have been exporting for less than three years can apply for the emerging exporter award.

First Nation businesses are also encouraged to apply in the 13 established award categories.

Entries close on June 13.



Matt Cameron-Smith, Telma Cordeiro and Roy Gibson.

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SPORT

Legend is still a leader

JARRED CROSS

WAFU great Stephen Michael's career in football speaks for itself, so much so the Noongar man is the 2025 Sir Doug Nicholls Round honouree.

Across 243 games for South Fremantle, Michael collected two Sandover Medals, five best and fairests and a flag alongside 17 appearances for his State, ending with a Simpson Medal as State of Origin's best player in 1983 — the same year he was named captain of the All Australian side, without ever crossing to Victoria.

Still, his proudest achievement is outside the game.

Growing up about 250km south-east of Perth in Kojonup, Michael was "a big boy in the country," playing junior football "and I'm a big boy now," he told National Indigenous Times.

In South Fremantle's zone, the dominant ruck and future Bulldogs, WA Football and Australian Football Hall of Famer and Indigenous Team of the Century member arrived at the club as an 18-year-old, playing 200-plus consecutive games from 1975.

"I wouldn't say it was easy (the transition). The first part was very, very sad. Because you leave your family at home and you've got to put your own roots out for where you're going to be and where you're going to go in life," Michael said. "I was very fortunate with the footy club, they supported me 110 per cent."

Being a phone call or a two-

hour drive from Kojonup was some reprieve from homesickness.

It was also the key factor in why Michael never headed to any of the Victorian clubs who showed great interest in the star.

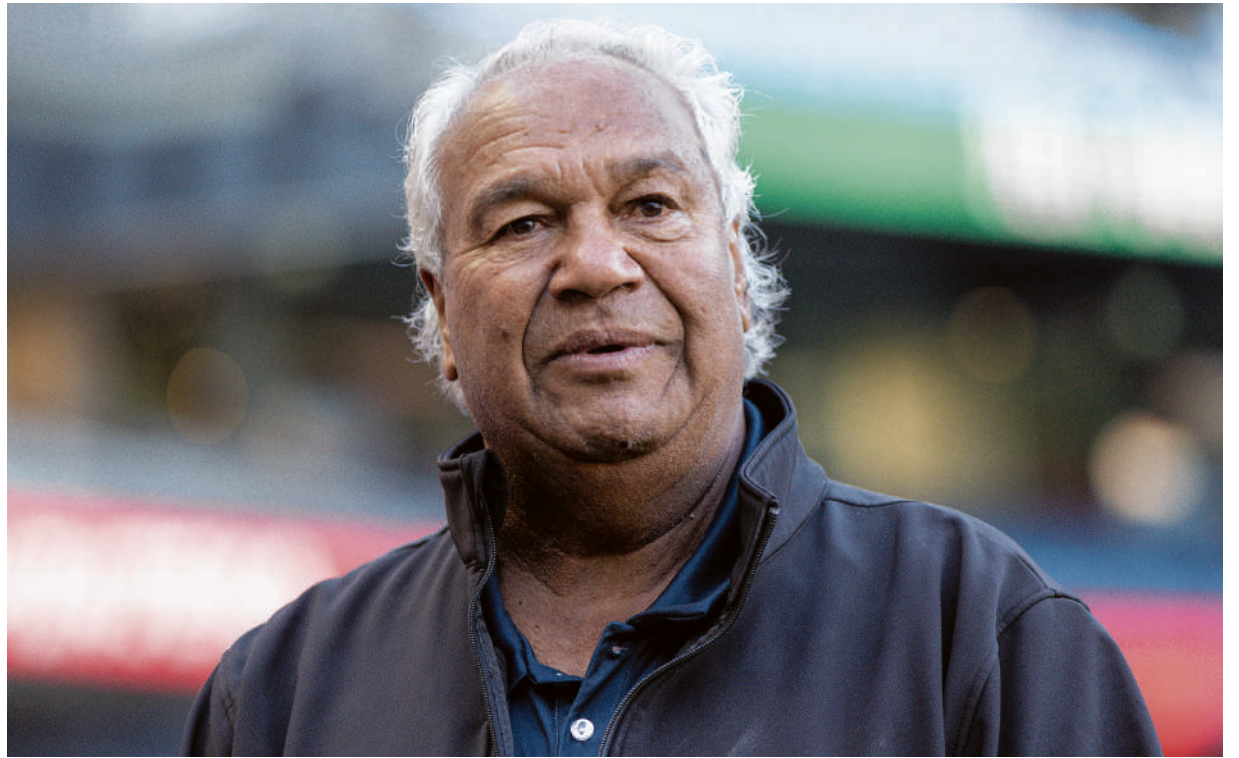
Often regarded as one of the best footballers never to play in the VFL, rumours of big money offers have persisted. He feels for kids today who make the big move after being drafted to chase their AFL dream.

"I owe a lot to my parents," he said. "At the end of the day, my parents drove us miles to play junior football, even senior football, and they support you. I'm just returning a favour with accolades I achieve ... this pays the debt to them."

He holds no regrets for staying closer to home in WA, and what he achieved at South Fremantle and across State games in yellow and black. "I wouldn't change it for the world," he said.

At the Bulldogs, Michael shared the field with fellow icons and Indigenous players who "set the world on fire" with the likes of Basil Campbell, Benny Vigna, William Roe, Nicky Winmar and Sebastian and Maurice Rioli. Phil Narkle and Jim and Phil Krakouer were others playing across the State competition, and would later become nationwide names, among some of Michael's teammates, after crossing to the VFL/AFL.

They were young men, mostly from the country and interstate, "playing with so much drive to



Sir Doug Nicholls Round honouree and South Fremantle legend Stephen Michael. Picture: AAP

do very well for their club and they set a legacy for their family".

Michael's son, Clem, followed in his footsteps playing in a WAFL premiership at the Bulldogs before joining the then-newly-introduced Dockers at AFL level. Post-career, the Stephen Michael Foundation has engaged with thousands of young people across the State, of all backgrounds, delivering programs to empower them.

After team success and all the

personal accolades in football, Michael's proudest achievement is those he holds closest.

"I'm proudest of my seven kids, 27 grandkids and two great-grandkids. And still having my mum alive," Michael said.

His fondest memories of football and South Fremantle are the "good people" he met along the way and the legacy he carved out for kids, not just his own, to inspire their own ambitions.

It's an overwhelming and humbling opportunity to join

names Graham 'Polly' Farmer, Michael Long, Syd Jackson, Bill Dempsey, Glenn James and Sonny Morey as honouree to Sir Doug Nicholls Round, he said.

"Some of these kids look up to it and say, 'Right, I want to do that. I want to achieve that. I want to know how to go about it and do it,' Michael said of its impact each year.

"It's a great game, our game. And I think the more it's promoted to young people the better off they're going to be."

Plaque marks start of historic contest

JARRED CROSS

The history and legacy of the Koori Knockout was officially memorialised this month where the tournament began in Sydney's inner-west.

Blue Plaques, a NSW Heritage initiative commemorating individuals and moments in history which have helped shape the State's identity, unveiled its latest installation at the site of the first Knockout played in 1971, Camdenville Park in St Peters, on May 17.

More than half a century ago, Koorie United, Redfern All Blacks, Kempsey, La Perouse, Walgett, Cowra and a Mt Druitt-South Coast combined side competed in the first carnival then called the NSW Aboriginal Rugby League Knockout.

Its founders; Victor Wright, Bob Smith, Bob Morgan, Bill Kennedy, Danny Rose and the late George Jackson had earlier conceived the idea at Redfern's Clifton Hotel.

Now, tens of thousands come to watch hundreds of players compete year on year across the men's,

women's, boys and girls brackets during the October long weekend.

The Knockout is often recognised as one of the biggest annual gatherings of Aboriginal people in Australia, and also a "modern day Corroboree". After 54 years, the unveiling brought back some old memories for Uncle Bob Morgan, including one he said recognised a "very important historical event".

It was an emotional day for himself and fellow co-founders Victor Wright and Bill Kennedy, Uncle Bob told National Indigenous Times. "I'd be lying if I said we knew that it would grow to what it is today. We had no idea, but we're so proud of the fact that it has," he said. Uncle Bob was living at the Clifton Hotel at the time of those early conversations. The founding members were all in their early 20s at the time, he said.

Among the six of them, with their ties to communities around the State and by utilising grassroots advertising — even cardboard signage posted up around Redfern — the inaugural carnival came together in a couple of months,



The 1972 Koori United football team. Picture: Wright family collection. RIGHT: Uncle Bob Morgan, Uncle Charles 'Chicka' Madden, Uncle Victor Wright, Carlo Svagelli and Uncle Bill Kennedy with the plaque.

largely through word of mouth, Uncle Bob said.

"One day I talked to the boys and said, 'Look, wouldn't it be great if we could have a carnival where our blokes could come along and play, and we could invite the talent scouts and see if some of these blokes can, you know, get a contract?'. That's how it virtually started," he said.

"There were three of us from Walgett — one of the founding teams, two from Kempsey that was another founding team — and then we knew blokes in Sydney ... and of course Redfern All Blacks and La Perouse (and) Cowra. We were all connected with political movements at the time."

The founders each allocated

themselves responsibilities to get the tournament up and running.

Alongside the football, what became the Knockout came out of a motivation to organise a gathering "where our people could demonstrate that we're as capable as any other race of people on this planet, when given the opportunity". "We weren't given those opportunities in those days," Uncle Bob said. Uncle Bob noted the first Knockout was just four years after the 1967 referendum.

"It's a time when we come together. When we decided that it wasn't just about football. It was about community, Country and kin.

"We wanted to ensure that our people came together and celebrated the fact that we are the

oldest surviving culture on this planet," Uncle Bob said on Saturday. "We wanted to incorporate all of that into what has eventually become the largest gathering of Indigenous people in the Southern Hemisphere."

The men and women who had a hand in early Knockouts and have since passed were acknowledged by Uncle Bob at the ceremony.

These days the Knockout joins past, future and current NRL and NRLW stars — Dally M winners, State of Origin and international representatives between them, with local footballers from communities across the State both on the field and in the crowd.

■ The full version of this report is available on www.nit.com.au.

