

NIT

NATIONAL INDIGENOUS TIMES

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LOCKED IN TO A LIFE OF CRIME

Teens as young as 14 face life in prison

DECHLAN BRENNAN
& GIOVANNI TORRE

Proposed legal changes which could lead to Victorian children as young as 14 facing life in prison for certain offences have drawn widespread condemnation from justice experts, Indigenous leaders, and human rights advocates, who argue the measures will do nothing to divert children away from crime.

Under the "Adult Time for Violent Crime" plan, children aged 14 and over charged with violent crimes such as armed robbery and machete attacks face up to 25 years in custody, whilst those found guilty of aggravated home invasion and carjacking face life in prison.

It was announced the same week members of the First Peoples' Assembly were signing the historic Treaty bill, something the Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service chief executive, Nerita Waight, noted when she condemned the move. Ms Waight said the sentencing was equivalent to that for murder and argued Premier Jacinta Allan "wants to sign kids' lives away who make a mistake".

"Shame on this Government, shame on the Premier and shame on this Cabinet for allowing your leader to push this agenda on our kids," she said.

"Victoria is a cruel and unforgiving State where children cannot make a mistake. Punishing trauma is not the answer."

Ms Allan defended the laws, which have yet to be introduced in Parliament, arguing: "We want the courts to treat these violent children like adults, so



Far left: 2024 NAIDOC person of the year Muriel Bamblett, and left, ALS CEO Nerita Waight.



jail is more likely and sentences are longer. "Adult time for violent crime will mean more violent youth offenders going to jail, facing serious consequences," she said.

Critics argue the reforms represent a retreat from rehabilitation towards incarceration and disproportionately target young Indigenous people. The policy echoes Queensland's controversial Adult Crime, Adult Time laws, which allow children as young as 10 to face life imprisonment.

First Peoples' Assembly Co-chair, Wamba Wamba, Yorta

Yorta, Dja Dja Wurrung and Dhudhuroa woman Ngarra Murray, said the assembly was deeply disappointed by the Government's announcement.

"Our peoples are already overpoliced and over-represented in prison populations," she said.

"Aboriginal communities will again bear the brunt of the Government's proposed changes, which will result in Aboriginal children being locked up in prison and kept away from their families for longer. Rather than setting children on the right path, this risks push-

ing them into a lifetime of offending."

2024 NAIDOC Person of the Year Muriel Bamblett said the laws would "do nothing to divert children from crime", arguing instead they will only "ensure they are trapped in the justice system for life".

"I am horrified by the idea of a 14-year-old being sentenced to life in prison. What do we lose as a society when a 14-year-old could spend their life behind bars?" she asked.

Ms Bamblett, chief executive of the Victorian Aboriginal Child and Community Agency

emphasised the importance of early intervention programs.

"What we need are trauma-informed, culturally safe services for our children and communities," she said.

"The proposed reforms to try children as adults will do nothing to divert children from crime, but instead ensure they are trapped in the justice system for life."

Independent senator Lidia Thorpe called on the Federal Government to intervene, warning Victoria's laws under-

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Call for answers on death

EXCLUSIVE NATASHA CLARK

Janet Till was taken to Fitzroy Crossing Hospital last Wednesday morning with a fever. The 59-year-old was discharged that afternoon. By the next morning, she was dead.

On Wednesday morning, Ms Till was at her home in Kurnangki, a small community about five kilometres outside the town of Fitzroy Crossing, in WA's Kimberley region.

The Gooniyandi and Walmarjari woman had been playing with her niece Rose Shaw's children that morning.

Ms Shaw, 34, said a NDIS support worker noticed Ms Till wasn't feeling well at around 10.30am.

Ms Till told her niece, "I'm not feeling good," and was shivering under a blanket.

She had suffered a stroke a couple of years ago, which left her paralysed on the right side and in a wheelchair. Her medical

needs meant she had been a frequent visitor to Fitzroy Crossing Hospital.

At 11am, Ms Shaw called an ambulance, which took her aunt to the hospital for treatment.

Ms Shaw said she was stunned when paramedics drove her aunt back to the Kurnangki home at about 4pm that afternoon.

"I thought they was going to keep her, because of how she was shivering," she said.

Instead, paramedics gave Ms Shaw antibiotics to give to her aunt but offered no diagnosis or explanation for the medication.

"They never told me what fever she had, or what was going on," Ms Shaw said.

"They gave me some antibiotics. They said that she needed to take the antibiotics.

"They had one for evening and one for morning. It's just half a tablet."

That evening Ms Till ate dinner with her family and spent

time with Ms Shaw's children. Her maternal instincts were widely known in Kurnangki, with Ms Shaw saying she "raised lots of children".

Ms Till went to bed after being given her evening dose of antibiotics.

Around 6am the next morning, Ms Shaw was outside the kitchen, as her cousin Christine was cooking breakfast.

When family members went to wake Ms Till, she was unresponsive.

"She was cold," Ms Shaw said.

She immediately called an ambulance. Paramedics told her to perform CPR, but it was too late.

In the wake of the tragedy, Ms Shaw is questioning the medical care her aunt received at Fitzroy Crossing Hospital.

"They should have done their job properly," she said.

She said Ms Till had been kept in hospital longer on previous visits when unwell.

A WA Country Health Service spokesperson, which oversees Fitzroy Crossing Hospital, offered condolences but did not outline what medical treatment Ms Till received prior to her death.

"The loss of a local community member is felt deeply, and we extend our sincere condolences to family and loved ones at this difficult time," the spokesperson said.

The agency said it was launching a review into Ms Till's death, which occurred in under 24 hours after her discharge from Fitzroy Crossing hospital.

"To gain a detailed understanding of the circumstances, WA Country Health Service has commenced a clinical review of the care provided to the patient, who sadly passed away.

"While this process is undertaken, and out of respect to the family, it is inappropriate to comment further at this time."

WA Minister for Health Mere-

dith Hammat expressed condolences for the loss.

"My thoughts are with family, friends and the wider community as they grieve their sudden and tragic loss," Ms Hammat said.

"I'm advised a clinical review is already under way, so we can ensure family receives the answers they need as soon as possible."

Minister for the Kimberley Stephen Dawson said his "sincere condolences go out to family and friends along with the Fitzroy Crossing community".

"I have been advised from the WA Country Health Service that a clinical review is under way to assist the family in receiving answers on what took place," Mr Dawson said.

Reflecting on her aunt's life, Ms Shaw struggled to capture the full scope of her positive impact on the community.

"She was everything," she said.

Expert pinpoints barriers to true economic empowerment

GIOVANNI TORRE

Economic empowerment of Indigenous communities, much touted by the Federal Government, is hindered by the absence of constitutional recognition and constitutionally protected rights for First Nations people in Australia, Professor Megan Davis warns.

The UNSW Scientia professor, who holds the Balnaves Chair in Constitutional Law, the Whitlam Fraser Harvard Chair in Australian Studies at Harvard University and the Bok Global Professor at the University of Pennsylvania Carey Law School told National Indigenous Times that while there is a tendency to look at the economic power of First Peoples in the USA and Canada, "Australia (is) so different to every other common law country in terms of the way we were dispossessed and in terms of how rights have unfolded since 1788".

"When we're looking at the economic developments in Canada or in the US, we're applying that experience ... without nuance to this new economic empowerment agenda (in Australia).

"The bulk of what people are talking about is not achievable in Australia, because most of those economic opportunities have arisen because of constitutional recognition, that their rights are very strongly and firmly embedded in the constitutional order."

Professor Davis said her time at Harvard has given her space to think about Australia's constitutional future and the international context in which



Professor Megan Davis
Picture: Uluru Dialogue

Indigenous rights develop. "Nations that have constitutionally recognised their Indigenous peoples have built enduring frameworks for wealth, participation and accountability. It's reminded me how far behind we are in embedding those foundations in our own legal system," she said.

Professor Davis noted the continuity requirement established in the Yorta Yorta case made it particularly difficult for Indigenous people who had been driven from their land to gain native title.

"You have a geography that

sets up winners and losers in dispossession, or a hierarchy of dispossession. Paul Keating set up a redress package for those people who were dispossessed by acts of colonisation...

"Nobody wants to talk about the fact that the displaced and dispossessed were by and large excluded from that redress package," she said.

"Who's talking up for and representing the interests of those whose lands were dispossessed through acts of colonisation? There are important conversations that need to be had."

While "gaps" exist between

the Indigenous and non-Indigenous populations in the US, Canada and Aotearoa, the gap in Australia is markedly more severe, and constitutional recognition is a key factor.

"In the 20 years I've worked with the United Nations as a global expert and human rights lawyer and looked around the world, Indigenous populations flourish better in countries where they're recognised and acknowledged by the state," Professor Davis said.

"It makes a huge difference... And that's something that we've never done in this country ... (it) creates a completely different legal and political framework. The substantive rights that are required to allow or to have our people at the table aren't there. In the absence of that... we risk being left behind," she said.

Professor Davis said it was a smart strategy on the part of Aboriginal communities to pursue accountability mechanisms.

"The Victorian Treaty legislation uses the word answerability which I think is a better word than accountability ... I watched all of the most recent Senate estimates... and there's no answerability ... There's a lot of buck-passing to the States and Territories," she said.

Davis said in the wake of defeat of the Voice at the October 2023 referendum, the Federal Government "has decided there's not a lot of political currency in Indigenous affairs".

"They've reverted to the status quo, which they inherited from the Morrison government. The hallmark of Closing The Gap version two is to push

everything back to the States and Territories. So, the blame for any failure ... is ... shifted back to the States and Territories and to Aboriginal organisations and the Coalition of Peaks.

"The biggest issue is, we've got a Closing The Gap agreement with all these commitments to achieve all these things up until 2032. But some of the States and Territories are explicitly disavowing the role they need to play and things like bringing down youth incarceration, for example."

The governments of the Northern Territory and Queensland, where a series of measures have driven up incarceration, particularly of youth, have expressly stated that closing the gap in the justice system is not a priority.

"The Commonwealth has the power to take some leadership role and they're choosing not to ... I think that's where people are rapidly losing faith with the closing the gap agenda, which unfortunately has become the sole agenda that the Commonwealth is focusing on. Everyone can see it's not working."

With an eye to the future and the question of political power, Professor Davis noted that more and more voters are moving away from both Labor and the Coalition.

"You can see the voting patterns ... Australians have lost faith in the major parties. That is a certain trend. That is something that people need to think about and it's an opportunity for our people."

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

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Family speaks out as cops haul teen off bus at gunpoint

Fury at child's treatment

DECHLAN BRENNAN

Independent Senator Lidia Thorpe says allegations ACT Police pointed a gun at an Aboriginal child during a case of mistaken identity amount to “racist police profiling” and a direct breach of the young person’s human rights.

Last Thursday morning the 17-year-old boy’s family gathered outside the ACT Legislative Assembly demanding action after he was removed from a bus by officers with weapons drawn and searched, despite having committed no offence.

Police say they were searching for a person who had allegedly robbed a shop in Woden and was reportedly armed with a knife, with further reports of carjackings in the area.

The family say the boy was travelling to visit relatives when police stopped the bus.

Officers boarded with weapons drawn and, without asking his name or giving an explanation, removed him from the bus.

The family insist the incident “was not a misunderstanding” but a “gross violation of a child’s human rights”. They say their nephew did not match the description of the suspect and was unarmed.

“Your officers pointed a gun at him,” they said.

“Your officers dragged him off a bus. Your officers slammed him on to the ground.

“Your officers pinned him down with their knees. And even after realising they had the wrong boy, they still searched him; a terrified child who kept saying, ‘I didn’t do anything’.”

Senator Thorpe called the events “horrific”.

“Racial profiling is how our people become over-represented in police interactions, in charges, in courts, in prisons, and in deaths in custody,” she said. “It starts with moments like this, where we are treated as a threat instead of human beings.

“Our families carry fear every day about being targeted.

“Mothers tell me constantly



The family of an Aboriginal boy speak to the media after ACT Police pointed a gun at the child on a bus. Picture: Mick Tsikas/AAP

that they worry their boys won’t come home, not because they’ve done something wrong, but because their skin is not white.”

The family say the boy was “treated like a criminal, treated like a threat, treated like he was less than human”.

Already coping with the loss of his father and the absence of his mother, they say he has been deeply affected, and he is now unable to leave the house, refuses to take a bus, and startles easily.

“He lives in fear of police . . . and that fear was created by your officers,” they said.

“He depends on the small circle of family he has left: his grandmother, aunties, uncles, siblings, and cousins who hold him up every day. He is a child who needed care, protection, and understanding, not guns, force, and terror.

“This trauma will not disappear. It has changed him.

“It has changed us.”

ACT Police said they were responding to reports of an offender with a knife and several attempted carjackings.

“During the response, information was received by police that a young person matching the physical and clothing description of the alleged offender was on a bus. That bus was stopped, and a young person was detained for a short period until it was confirmed he was not the alleged offender,” a spokesperson said.

“We acknowledge this would have been a very distressing incident for the young person and the other passengers on the bus, and we apologise for this.

“Given police were responding to multiple eyewitness reports of an active armed offender in a heavily populated part of Canberra, officers acted with the immediate aim of preventing a worst-case scenario from occurring — further harm to members of the public.”

Police say they have since

met with the boy and his family, as well as members of the ACT Indigenous community.

“We acknowledge these have been difficult discussions, and ACT Policing remains committed to continued engagement and two-way dialogue with the family and wider First Nations community,” a spokesperson said.

“A complaint from the community has been received in relation to ACT Policing’s actions, and that will be managed and reviewed through AFP’s Professional Standards Command, including in consultation with the ACT Ombudsman.”

The family is calling for a full investigation and full accountability, including release of body-worn camera footage, an apology, funding for trauma counselling, and for the officers involved to be stood down while the investigation takes place.

“Our family refuses to let this become another ‘internal

review’, another ‘training opportunity’, or another line in a report that gets buried and forgotten. We are not going away,” they said.

“What happened to our nephew was not an accident.

“It was a violent breach of duty, a failure of basic humanity, and a direct violation of his human rights.”

Senator Thorpe echoed the family’s demands, saying “our community stands with you”.

“We will not let this be swept aside,” she said.

“Hearing about this made me feel sick. I think about my nephews. I think about all the Black boys and young people in my life. Our people cannot feel safe when police see our children as threats before they see them as kids.

“This is not an isolated incident; it is a pattern. If the ACT Government is serious about eliminating institutional racism, it has to start right here, right now.”

Rights groups slam Victoria’s youth jail law plan

FROM PAGE 1

mine Closing The Gap commitments and children’s rights. Despite this, the Prime Minister has supported the plan.

Senator Thorpe described the laws as “unfathomably cruel and the most shameful attempt to cling to power”, adding the approach mirrors harmful policies in the Northern Territory and Queensland.

“While people in this country look with horror at the abuse happening to children in Queensland and the NT, Jacinta Allan sees a political lifeline. Allan is willing to destroy chil-

dren’s lives to stay in power,” she said.

Last month, Federal Minister for Indigenous Australians Malarndirri McCarthy condemned the “alarming” incarceration rates in the NT and Queensland, reaffirming her plan to introduce penalties for jurisdictions that fail to meet Closing The Gap targets.

Senator Thorpe noted this, arguing Senator McCarthy “must make good on that promise and pull the Premier into line immediately”.

“The Federal minister should be picking up the phone today to tell Premier Allan that Victo-

ria will face consequences for this,” she said.

The Victorian Government has faced mounting pressure from police and the media over rising crime, which has reached decade-high levels. Recent data shows children aged 17 and under were responsible for 60 per cent of robberies and nearly half of aggravated burglaries.

However, legal and youth experts have criticised the criminalisation approach, advocating instead for evidence-based rehabilitation programs.

The announcement has sparked one major resignation, with Victoria’s Commissioner

for Aboriginal Children and Young People, Meena Singh, stepping down after nearly four years in the role.

Ms Singh warned political decisions have profound impacts on children, arguing they “can mean the difference between a life recovered, or a child death inquiry, between a life of engagement and flourishing, or a prison cell”.

“The rights, voices and experiences of children and young people must be kept at the centre of these discussions and decisions, not sidelined,” she said. “Change is possible, but we must be courageous in our

challenging of systems and institutions, and sometimes ourselves as a community, if we are going to achieve the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people in Victoria.”

The Allan Government’s plan has also been condemned by the Human Rights Law Centre, VACCHO, Change The Record, the Greens, Shara Clarke Aboriginal Restorative Justice Services, 54 Reasons, the Commission For Children And Young People, Jesuit Social Services, and the National Network For Incarcerated And Former Incarcerated Women And Girls.

Advocate's focus is clear

DECHLAN BRENNAN

As incarceration and out-of-home care rates for Indigenous children continue to rise across the country, Australia's inaugural National Commissioner for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Young People says her role is clear: it's time to amplify children's voices in policymaking.

For the Commissioner, Sue-Anne Hunter, this is no symbolic appointment. It's a responsibility built on decades of frontline work and advocacy, and one she doesn't take lightly.

Speaking to National Indigenous Times this month, the Wurundjeri and Ngurai Illum Wurrung woman isn't shy about the difficulties of her role. Having recently finished up as commissioner and deputy chair of the landmark Yoorook Justice Commission — Australia's first official truth-telling body — she argues it's not a burden “our kids need to carry”.

“I'll carry that burden,” she says. “I want their voices to be heard, and ... in a really safe way.”

With a background in the family services sector — including having worked at the peak body for Indigenous children, SNAICC, as well as at the Victorian Aboriginal Child

Care Agency, and as a frontline social worker — Ms Hunter's appointment follows years of calls from Indigenous families and peak bodies for a dedicated advocate to hold governments accountable for outcomes affecting Indigenous children.

Despite the support from Labor for the new position, the mechanisms of government work slowly and the position is yet to be enshrined in legislation.

First Nations children are 27 times more likely to be in youth detention than their non-Indigenous peers, and 10 times more likely to be in out-of-home care.

The horrific stories of children as young as 10 being housed in detention across the country continue to cast a stain on Australia's international standing.

“We all know youth detention in the Northern Territory is bad,” Ms Hunter says. “What's happening is just horrible; it's a human rights violation.”

“I think it's everybody's responsibility (to close the gap)... I need to know where *my* legislation starts and finishes — where *I* can push. And then I really need to understand more of the levers from the Commonwealth, where *I* can push on and what *they* can do.”

Ms Hunter notes her office is

“We as adults need to encourage our mob kids that they can do more. And I think if we raise the expectations of them, that helps them grow.”

Commissioner Sue-Anne Hunter

already working out “where our push comes to shove is” and how to help the various State and Territory commissioners “push further on their own jurisdictions”.

But her agenda isn't just about naming what's broken. She's determined to highlight success stories and raise expectations for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.

“We as adults need to encourage our mob's kids — that they can do more. And I think if we raise the expectations of them,

that helps them grow. Part of our role is, ‘what are the good things that are happening, not just the doom and gloom, and who's doing it well? And what does that look like?’”

Still in the early stages of establishing her office, Commissioner Hunter says her focus right now is on building strong foundations — legislation, powers, and funding — in partnership with Social Services Minister Tanya Plibersek, whom she praises for her commitment.

“I love that in this role they talk about amplifying the children's voices,” she says. “I couldn't think of a better minister to work with. She's really for this. I think we're going to be in a good space.”

Ms Plibersek told National Indigenous Times the Government created the office of the Commissioner to “ensure the voices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are not just heard, but are amplified”.

“First Nations children and young people are the heirs to 65,000 years of continuous culture and heritage,” she said. “We must ensure they can grow up connected to their family, community, culture, and Country.”

Ms Hunter notes that holding government to account is a key

part — but just one part — of her role.

“I don't want to just hold them to account and say ‘you're not doing this.’ I want to hold them to account, saying ‘You're not doing this, and here's some options to move forward’.

“My job is to ask the questions of the minister. It's her job to say ‘yes or no,’ or her office to ‘say yes or no.’”

Rather than repeating the cycles of inquiry and neglect that have marked decades of policy, the Commissioner wants to use the commission to drive practical reform.

“I could get to this role and go out and do a listening tour, but I think we all have done enough commissions and inquiries to be able to pull them together over the years and say, ‘OK, these are all the recommendations, what's gone through, what hasn't, what are the barriers, how do we work forward?’

Ms Hunter's clarity leaves little room for interpretation. This isn't a ceremonial appointment; a person to say “yes, great job”.

Instead, it is about a structural challenge to a system that has long failed Indigenous children.

“The focus is, and always will be, on the children and youth,” she says.

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Home joy at last for pair left in limbo

EXCLUSIVE
DAVID PRESTIPINO

After an 18-month ordeal stranded in Phuket — with a premature newborn after a medical emergency led to immigration roadblocks back home to Australia — a young couple has returned to Australia with their baby, Maali.

Scared, stranded, broke and their case seemingly invisible to Thai and Australian immigration authorities for near on 18 months, Wanaruah man Glen Parkes was bewildered at ongoing refusals by Home Affairs and other authorities aware of the family's plight to return home to NSW.

His defacto partner Josephine White, a UK citizen, had to have an early emergency caesarean in Bangkok, disrupting the couple's last holiday before their impending return to Australia.

Glen and Josephine intended to be back home in NSW for Maali's birth, before complications before her due date demanded the emergency procedure.

Birth records from local doctors and the hospital to which Josephine and Maali were admitted were not enough for Home Affairs to officially deem the couple de facto — so Maali's visa application to enter Australia as a "citizen by descent" by

her Aboriginal father — was continually denied.

After the long and bewildering predicament, Glen was bursting with relief and joy once his bundle of joy Maali and love Jo were on home soil, safe and sound.

The Department of Immigration consistently told National Indigenous Times they could not comment on individual cases.

Legislative research and ministerial engagement became constants in Glen and Jo's lives over 12 months after Maali's birth, a long tunnel which seemingly led nowhere, until a stroke of luck for the Parkes family.

After more than a year of being denied entry to Australia — and living with just a few dollars to their name and shoddy roof over their newborn — the family found a way around the loopholes that left them stranded in Thailand, and finally returned home on November 7.

"We are so excited and still sort of in shock," Glen said.

The couple expressed their gratitude to Glen's parents, whose emotional support for them while they were stranded extended to their assistance financially to cover the hefty costs of passports for all three to legally enter Australia.

Glen and Josephine were also full of praise for Federal Immigration Minister Tony Burke



Maali, Glen and Josephine before their safe return home.

and his office, who — once aware of their dire situation — expedited their applications so they could leave Thailand together for home.

"Anyone who thinks people are just filling out a form and coming into our country are gravely mistaken," Glen said.

"I compliment the Australian immigration system for keeping our borders safe and Mr Burke

for his daily efforts for our country."

He thanked National Indigenous Times for assistance in communicating the family's complex situation to Federal authorities. The couple are thankful to be home and have spent the past week introducing young Maali to Glen's family and friends in NSW.

"The past week has been so

special, surreal; we just can't believe we are back home with Maali, who is doing great, and surrounded by our family and friends again," Glen said.

Intent on escaping the noise and stress the ordeal has had on his partner and newborn, Glen said they desired to head bush. After such a complex, long struggle, care, calm and Country awaits this trio.

More than 100 groups take a Stand against DV

JARRED CROSS

More than 100 groups have responded to calls to honour women lost to domestic violence in the Northern Territory, and make a commitment for change, over the past three months.

Aboriginal-led initiative No More launched its campaign The Stand in August, aiming to see 90 domestic violence action plans created by workplaces, businesses, sports clubs, and community groups in 90 days.

It is an effort to honour the more than 90 women who have died as a result of domestic and family violence in the NT since 2000.

"Their names may not be known to us all, but their lives mattered," No More said as the campaign was launched.

The response has gone and beyond the call to action, with more than 100 plans developed across the NT and by interstate groups. No More was founded



Pictured: No More founder Dr Charlie King, second from left.

in 2006 by sports commentator and family violence prevention advocate Dr Charlie King.

Working in partnership with CatholicCare NT, No More works with men, community and service providers to change behaviour and reduce the incidence of domestic and family violence in the Territory.

A key theme of its work is

placing the responsibility on men. A 2020 inquiry found 89 per cent of domestic and family victims in the NT were Aboriginal women.

While it disproportionately affects Aboriginal women and children in the NT, and as a result so does No More's focus in its work, the organisation extends its services to the

broader community. In its latest campaign, No More asked groups and organisations in all sectors and industries to make "a real commitment to change" by developing action plans.

"We set out to honour the women who lost their lives to violence by asking the community to take action in their memory," Dr King said this

month. "Every plan represents a commitment — a promise — that their deaths will not be in vain.

"This is a powerful act of remembrance and responsibility, led by Territorians who refuse to accept violence as normal." No More offered templates and resources for plans, and stated its support for new ideas to be put forward.

What makes a plan isn't strictly defined, with examples listed including DFV safety audits in workplaces, offering relevant training, and sports clubs raising awareness by hosting a No More round.

As of early last week, some 105 groups had their registered plans up on No More's website.

More than 10 plans were signed on day one of The Stand initiative.

In addition, more than 600 individual action pledges were made.

1800 RESPECT (1800 737 732)
13 YARN (13 92 76)

Indigenous leader welcomes 'first step to repair loss of trust'

DECHLAN BRENNAN

Overhauling an organisation with the “hallmarks of institutional racism” — while facing a government that denies such racism exists — is one of the “hardest jobs I’ve ever had to do”, says Northern Territory Police cultural reform command director Leanne Liddle.

This month, after years of criticism over racism within the force, the NT Police launched their first-ever anti-racism strategy.

Led by Ms Liddle, the initiative follows revelations of racism which emerged during the inquest into the 2019 death of 19-year-old Warlpiri-Luritja man Kumanjayi Walker.

Coroner Elisabeth Armitage found that Zachary Rolfe — who shot and killed Mr Walker and was found not guilty in a 2022 Supreme Court trial — was “racist” and that he “worked in and benefited from an organisation with the hallmarks of institutional racism”.

The Coroner found racist attitudes were entrenched within parts of the NT Police, identifying “grotesque” examples of racism within the specialist Territory Response Group.

Five senior officers told the court the so-called “C.n of the Year” award held no racist connotations. An investigation by the Office of the Indepen-

Police launch bid to tackle force's racism

dent Commissioner Against Corruption concluded “any person of reasonable intelligence” would recognise evident racism in the informal awards.

The NT Government has not formally responded to the findings, but Chief Minister Lia Finocchiaro said “the CLP has never supported the view that there is systemic racism within the Northern Territory police force” — a view she reiterated this month.

Speaking to ABC’s Stateline, Ms Liddle — a former police officer in South Australia — said there was no denying the problem. “Racism exists in our police force, and we need to fix it,” she said.

The Arrernte woman emphasised real change must come from the majority, noting it

“isn’t an Aboriginal issue, this is actually everybody’s issue”.

“The heavy lifting is going to have to come from the non-Aboriginal people both inside and outside of the police force because that’s where a lot of the power and the privilege sits and where the decisions are made,” she said.

Ms Liddle said the Anti-Racism Strategy is about accepting “racism has informed the structures that have shaped policing for generations”.

“This strategy is about confronting that reality, with honesty and courage. And the time for courageous conversations is now,” she said.

The North Australian Aboriginal Justice (NAAJA) welcomed the strategy, describing it as a crucial first step toward

rebuilding trust between police and Aboriginal communities, but argued it “must mark the beginning of meaningful and sustained change”.

Chair Theresa Roe said an increase in transparency and accountability in the police is good for everyone in the Territory.

“It is especially important for Aboriginal Territorians, because of the long-standing mistrust between police and many Aboriginal communities and families,” she said.

“This is the first step to repair the loss of trust that many Aboriginal people feel towards the NT Police.”

“We extend our thanks to those who have made this strategy a reality and acknowledge the hard work and dedica-

tion of Leanne Liddle in this process.”

The first stage of the strategy, to be rolled out by 2027, aims to tackle racism “in all its forms” and focuses on four key areas: serve and protect, eliminate racism, represent and reflect our Territory, and be accountable.

NAAJA also praised the strategy’s commitment to strengthening partnerships with Aboriginal communities. It highlighted successful community-led initiatives such as the ARDS Napungga’wuy mediation service and Groote Eylandt Peacemakers, which work to prevent conflict and reduce crime using culturally informed approaches.

Ms Roe argued while the strategy is a vital step, its success depends on proper implementation.

“That will require genuine engagement with Aboriginal communities, proper resourcing, transparent implementation, through a practical and staged approach,” she said.

NT Opposition leader Selena Uiibo has called on Ms Finocchiaro to take responsibility for the strategy and ensure it is adequately resourced.

“To date the CLP government has largely washed its hands of the challenges police are facing and shied away from the hard conversations that real change requires,” she said.



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Guardian concerned at issues in youth detention

DECHLAN BRENNAN

A focus on security over rehabilitation still dominates South Australia's youth detention system, according to the State's Guardian for Children and Young People, with children as young as 10 continuing to face rolling lockdowns, limited access to education, and inconsistent therapeutic support.

Shona Reid, who leads the independent oversight body for children in care and detention, also noted children in residential care often felt unsafe or exposed to violence, even after being removed from harmful home environments.

Speaking to National Indigenous Times following the release of her office's annual report this month, the Eastern Arrernte woman said the system remained "custodial" rather than rehabilitative.

"We've got a workforce that is focused around keeping the security of the centre in good working order," she said. "Access to education and therapeutic programs remains an inconsistent presence in children's lives."

Her report outlines ongoing systemic tension inside the Adelaide Youth Training Centre, where efforts to support young people are frequently overshadowed by "competing demands and priorities" that divert focus from rehabilitation.

Fourteen per cent of admissions to the centre involved children under 14 — some as young as 10.

Ms Reid called on the government to "reimagine" its service model to meet children's needs and prevent reoffending.

"We're going to continue to see inconsistent access to learning environments, inconsistent access to rehabilitative opportunities — whether that's anger management, whether that's drug and alcohol, whether that's mentoring ... or even cultural services," she said.

"They're too inconsistent for children to heal in a way that helps them when they're released."

She was also critical over the ongoing use of isolation in detention, describing it as a "convenient" practice that causes harm and is entirely avoidable.

"Isolation of children cannot be defended as practice."

Ms Reid's report also detailed issues within South Australia's residential care system, where children raised concerns about safety, instability, and exclusion from decisions about their lives.

Of 138 case files audited, more than half of the children were not invited to their own annual review, and only three in 10 had the opportunity to contribute to decisions about their care.

"We've got a lot of learning to do if we can't pull up our socks and provide a safer environment for children in out-of-home care," Ms Reid said. Of the Aboriginal children reviewed, only 17 per cent were placed with Aboriginal kin.

"We know that we can do better around scaffolding our families so they can be there and do its natural job, which is to look after our babies," Ms Reid said.



The claim area. Picture: National Native Title Tribunal

Native Title claim lodged in Victoria

DECHLAN BRENNAN

Victorian Traditional Owners lodged a Native Title claim this month covering much of Naarm (Melbourne) and its surrounding areas.

Brought by the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people, the claim — which will not affect the rights of Melbourne property owners — will bring the total number of Native Title applications before the Federal Court in Victoria to seven.

The claim extends across thousands of square kilometres, from the mouth of the Werribee River north to its headwaters in the Great Dividing Range, reaching east to Mt Baw Baw, south through Bunyip, and west to Mordialloc Creek.

Filed by 11 members of the group, the claim also includes the historic Coranderk mission — secured by Wurundjeri leader William Barak and still regarded as a cornerstone of Aboriginal self-determination

— and covers major sections of Victoria's key waterways, including parts of the Yarra, Plenty, and Maribyrnong rivers, as well as an area of Port Phillip Bay. If successful, it will be the third Native Title determination encompassing a capital city — following Boorloo (Perth) and Adelaide — and the eighth in Victoria.

Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Elder Perry Wandin told the ABC: "Wurundjeri people have fought for decades for recognition and respect and have been at the forefront of protecting culture and country in Melbourne and surrounds."

"We want the waterways, the land to be looked after."

In 2017, the Victorian Parliament recognised the Wurundjeri people's intrinsic connection to the Yarra by creating the Birrarung Council to advise the Government on river management. They are already recognised as the Traditional Owners of much of the area under Victorian law. A successful

claim would enhance the Wurundjeri's ability to apply traditional wildfire prevention practices, although much of the land in question is non-crown land and is therefore exempt from native title claims.

Freehold title extinguishes Native Title, as affirmed by the High Court. However, extensive areas of parks, reserves, and vacant crown land could give the Wurundjeri greater influence over land and water management.

Wurundjeri Elder Uncle Bill Nicholson told The Age increased authority over the Yarra (Birrarung in Woiwurrung) River's management was central to the claim.

"Part of our sovereign inheritance, handed down from our ancestors, is to care for Country, community and culture," he said. "The Birrarung, all its catchments and all the land associated with it, is part of that inheritance."

"If we get Native Title over the Birrarung and the Maribyr-

nong as well, our voice and understanding of what caring for Country is all about will hopefully be listened to."

The Federal Court filing is an early stage in a process that can take years. In Victoria, several determinations have already been granted, including to the Gunditjmara and Eastern Maar peoples.

After a decades-long fight for recognition, the Ngintait, Latji Latji, and Nyeri Nyeri peoples in north-west Victoria were granted Native Title in July.

In contrast, the Yorta Yorta's 1994 bid for Native Title was unsuccessful, with the Federal and High Courts ruling the community had not demonstrated a continuous connection to the land.

The Native Title Tribunal will review the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people's claim — which is supported by Slater and Gordon Lawyers — to determine whether it should be registered, and to notify any affected parties.

Redress scheme open for the Stolen Generations

GIOVANNI TORRE

Applications for the WA Stolen Generations Redress Scheme opened this month.

The scheme is available to Aboriginal people who were removed from their families as children in Western Australia before July 1, 1972.

Eligible applicants will receive a redress payment of \$85,000, and if they choose, a personal acknowledgement.

The WA Government said this presented an opportunity for people to share their stories and have their experiences formally recognised by a State representative.

"The redress scheme has been developed in partnership with Aboriginal organisations to ensure it is trauma-informed, culturally respectful, and responsive to the needs of those

affected," a joint ministerial statement said.

To support applicants, three Aboriginal organisations have been engaged to provide free, confidential assistance throughout the application process: Yokai — Healing our Spirit; Kimberley Stolen Generation Aboriginal Corporation; and Yorgum Healing Services.

In addition, a free financial

counselling service will be available to assist recipients of the redress payment.

Applications may also be made on behalf of people who died on or after 27 May 2025, the date the scheme was announced.

More information about redress in WA is available at wa.gov.au/stolen-generations-redress-scheme, or by phoning 08 6552 5050.



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**Fowler
inspires**
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Carrying the message on

K2 The B performs BARUNGA and, left, CJR.



JOSEPH GUENZLER

Marranungu hip-hop artists J-MILLA and Yung Milla have joined forces with rising Northern Territory talent K2 the B and CJR to create BARUNGA, a modern interpretation of the Barunga Statement told through a youth lens.

The collaboration was developed under a community wellbeing program using music to promote cultural pride and connection. It brings together established and emerging

voices to carry the message of the Barunga Statement into a new generation. J-MILLA said the project was about more than creating a song.

"Working with the Barunga community on this project was powerful. It wasn't just about making music, it was about carrying forward the strength of the Barunga Statement in a way that speaks to the next generation," he said.

Yung Milla said performing the song was a highlight. "Performing alongside Kia and Cyril and watching them shine

on stage was a huge highlight of the Barunga Festival for me," he said. "Through culture and creativity, we're showing our youth their voices matter, their stories matter, and that together we can build something strong for the future."

K2 the B, whose real name is Kia Bush-Gordon, is 14 and from Wugularr (Beswick).

She recently returned home from school in Darwin and hopes to pursue a music career.

CJR, or Cyril Joshua Rankin, is 20 and from Barunga,

balancing his love of music with playing Aussie rules for the Arnhem Crows.

The project was supported by Bagala Aboriginal Corporation, which earlier this year invited the Milla brothers to contribute to a project design conference in Darwin. The event focused on developing a \$4.4 million Men's Wellness Centres program to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men in Barunga and Wugularr (Beswick). One of the first outcomes of the program was the song BARUNGA, written in

collaboration with community members and inspired by the original Barunga Statement. The track was performed live at the 2025 Barunga Festival with local artists K2 the B and CJR.

Bagala Aboriginal Corporation CEO Steve Smith said the project connects the original message of the Barunga Statement with today's generation. "The Barunga Statement has always carried the voices of our Elders, and its message is just as vital for young people today," he said.

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Blak Out set to be dazzling

JOSEPH GUENZLER

Blak Out is set to return as the centrepiece of Sydney Festival's 50th anniversary program, marking the final curation by Aboriginal Creative Artist in Residence Jacob Nash.

Running from January 8-25, the Indigenous-led program will showcase a powerful line-up of First Nations artists across dance, music, and visual art, celebrating culture, identity, and connection.

Among the highlights is Garabari, a new large-scale participatory dance work by acclaimed Wiradjuri choreographer Joel Bray.

Performed under the stars on the Northern Broadwalk of the Sydney Opera House, the piece transforms the space into a dance floor, inviting families, friends and patrons to move together.

Created with Wiradjuri Elders and community in Wagga Wagga and the Riverina, the work shares the Story of the Making of the Murrumbidgee, gifted by the late Uncle James Ingram.

With ethereal costumes by Wiradjuri designer Denni Francisco of Ngali, music by Byron Scullin and projections by Katie Sfetkidis, Garabari blends ceremony and celebration in a joyful, inclusive performance.

At Barangaroo, Yuwaalaraay Wirringgaa artist Lucy Simpson will unveil HELD, a series of sculptural vessels honouring Country — earth, fire, sky and sea.

The installation will provide the setting for Vigil: Belong, the festival's closing ceremony on 25 January.

Led by musician and writer Nardi Simpson, with Uncle Matthew Doyle tending the fires, the event will bring



Garabari by Joel Bray will be among many powerful works in the Blak Out program.

generations together through song and sacred smoke in a reflection on belonging and ancestry.

The world premiere of Garrigarrang Badu by Jannawi Dance Clan will also feature at the Opera House.

Directed by Peta Strachan and performed by an all-female ensemble, the work celebrates Dharug Country and the role of women in carrying culture, continuing the company's legacy of cultural storytelling through movement.

Blak Out's musical program

includes Take Me to the River, a soulful performance by Emma Donovan at City Recital Hall, reimagining the classics that shaped her voice and career.

Also performing is Gooniyandi, Walmatjarri and Bunuba Elder Ms Kankawa Nagarra, known as the "Queen of the Bandaral Ngadu Delta".

The 80-year-old singer-songwriter, whose debut album Wirlmarni won the 2024 Australian Music Prize, will perform a solo show on 8 January and appear with American musician Lonnie

Holley on 10 January. Theatre works include Dear Son, adapted by Isaac Drandic and John Harvey from the writings of Kaurareg Aboriginal and Kalkalgal man Thomas Mayo, bringing to life reflections on fatherhood from Indigenous men including Stan Grant and Troy Cassar-Daley.

Other key events include Redfern Renaissance, curated by Wiradjuri Yuin actor Angeline Penrith, which revisits the legacy of the 1970s National Black Theatre through performance readings

and discussions, and The Bogong's Song: A Call to Country by Bangarra Dance Theatre, a children's production celebrating connection and healing.

Closing out the Blak Out program, Burarra artist Ursula Yovich will deliver a tribute to Nina Simone, while A Night of Rock & Roll with Bogan Villea, led by Iwaidja and Malak Malak performer Ben Graetz, will bring a high-energy blend of drag, rock and Blak pride to Sydney Theatre Company's Wharf 1 Theatre.

Musicians join forces and unite in harmony

REBEKAH RASMUSSEN

An intercultural collaboration featuring Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander, Samoan, Papua New Guinean and non-Indigenous artists premiered in Magandjin/Brisbane this month.

The Third Space — A Sacred Place brought together musicians from across the Pacific and Australia for a one-night-only performance at The Princess Theatre.

The event was produced by community-driven arts organisation Topology and Indigenous performing arts company Gaba Musik.

Samoan Talking High Chief and performer Taitu'uga Kitchener Wesche told National Indigenous Times that The Third Space — A Sacred Place was a spiritual concept grounded in connection and ancestry.

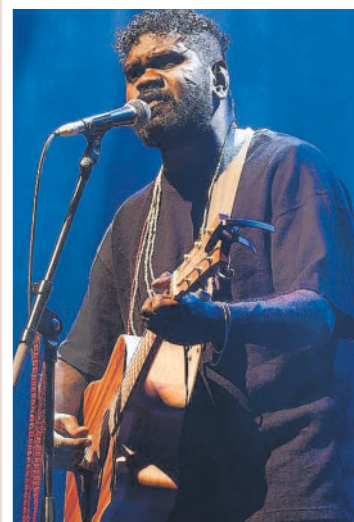
"The Third Space — A Sacred Place is going into that next realm of our ancestors, coming together with our songlines," he said.

The production featured performances by Topology comprising of Christa Powell, John Babbage, Therese Milanovic, Bernard Hoey and Robert Davidson, Deline Briscoe (Yalanji), Jungaji (Yalanji), Kristal West (Murray Island/Zenadth Kes), Yirmal (Yolngu), Airileke (Motu/PNG/Gabagaba), Taitu'uga Kitchener Wesche (Samoa), Kaylah Coghill (Yuggera) and Afour (Samoa), with a Welcome to Country by Yuggera Elder Gaja Kerry Charlton.

The 90-minute performance combined jazz, classical, soul, folk, country and roots with traditional sounds such as Samoan chants and Papua New Guinean log drumming. Gaba Musik co-director Deline Briscoe said the event represented deep cultural collaboration and unity through music.

"The Third Space — A Sacred Place is about bringing together different cultures, learning about each other and going to a third place together," she said.

"It's about trust and connection,



Yirmal. Pictures: Jade Ferguson

and we wanted audiences to feel that sense of belonging that comes from relationships built through creativity."

Topology's creative director Christa Powell said the collaboration had grown from a long-term partnership.

"In Topology we've always done cross-cultural collaboration, and we've talked about going to a third space," she said.

"There's a deeper meaning in First Nations of the third place being a sacred place."



Taitu'uga Kitchener Wesche performs with his sons.

Ms Powell elaborated on the concept of The Third Space — A Sacred Place as about creating something beyond a typical shared stage.

"It's really understanding the artistic and creative language of other artists and then together you go to this other place rather than just putting two bands or two people or two artists on stage, it's more like a double bill," she said.

"Being in that space and jamming and talking musically and culturally and learning about each other and

the long history of stories and then putting it on stage has been fantastic."

Mr Wesche said his involvement reflected his cultural responsibilities and family connections.

"I sit on both worlds, and as a father it's always important for me to make sure my kids walk culturally strong in both worlds," he said.

"I'm just trying to do the best to represent my sons' cultures being proud Samoan and proud Aboriginal."

Fashion photography Tracey Hayes



Mary's on the ball in inspiring women

PHOEBE BLOGG

Mary Boio Fowler took to the field in Australia's top soccer league as a 16-year-old and was soon in the spotlight for her talent and drive to succeed.

For club or country, her prophet-like ability to read the play, pinpoint passes, and her gift for finding time and space where neither seem available, have made her a star.

She has represented her country in the Olympics and at the FIFA Women's World Cup, and at age 22 has taken a leap of faith with two new projects.

Fowler was born in Cairns. Nido, her mother, hails from Kira Kira in Papua New Guinea, and her father Kevin is from Dublin, Ireland.

An influential figure on and off the field, Fowler has shown great courage in sharing her challenges and vulnerability in her new book, Bloom.

On her 17th birthday, she signed with French club Montpellier. In Bloom, she

opens up about struggles with mental health, self-harm and suicidal thoughts, and has spoken out about the blatant racism she dealt with early in her career.

Today, Fowler is a star and fan favourite at Manchester City, and a key member of Australia's highly successful Matildas side.

She hopes that by sharing her experiences she can be a part of normalising speaking up, asking for help and seeking support, particularly among young people.

In a celebration of women's empowerment, sisterhood and beauty, this year Fowler also further cemented her position in the fashion sphere, heading to France to make her Paris Fashion Week debut.

Fowler's appearance marked the first professional footballer, and first L'Oreal Paris brand ambassador in Australia and Aotearoa/New Zealand, to walk the Paris Fashion Week runway.

Her presence on the runway was another significant achievement for the Matildas star. Reflecting on her debut, Fowler said she was thrilled to have been provided with the opportunity.

"Stepping onto the runway was an exhilarating experience and different from anything I've experienced on the football pitch," she said. "To walk alongside such inspiring figures, representing L'Oreal Paris, reinforced my belief that beauty is about embracing who we truly are and the confidence that comes with it."

"I hope every young woman watching, especially back home in Australia, felt that sense of empowerment and is inspired to embrace their individuality and walk with pride, knowing they are worth it."

Fowler's role as brand ambassador and her participation on the runway was not only a reflection of greater diversity in the fashion world, but also a recognition of

her standing in sport and beyond.

Not her first fashion foray, Fowler has fronted the cover of Marie Claire magazine's Woman of the Year edition and even had a Barbie doll created in her likeness.

While she is currently recovering from a serious knee injury and is expected back in action in January ahead of the Asian Cup, Fowler's reputation off the field is growing.

She has been named in Forbes Australia 30 under 30 list, and more recently announced as one of CommBank's new brand ambassadors.

By showing that even those seemingly on top of the world can face personal struggles, Mary Fowler is working to create safe spaces for others to speak up and get the support they need. Her energy and dedication on and off the field is an inspiration to all.

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“I hope every young woman watching, especially back home in Australia, felt that sense of empowerment and is inspired to embrace their individuality and walk with pride, knowing they are worth it.”

Mary Fowler



Mary Fowler shoots for a goal during the Women's friendly match between Australia and South Korea in Newcastle, and celebrating the victory.
Pictures: Mark Evan





Barkaa during the the 2025 ARIA Awards at Hordern Pavilion in Sydney, and right, Thelma Plum makes a speech. Pictures: Sithixay Ditthavong



First Nations stars rock ARIAS

GIOVANNI TORRE

Indigenous artists Barkaa, Thelma Plum, The Kid Laroi, 3%, and the late Gurrumul were honoured with ARIA awards at Australian music's night of nights last Wednesday.

At the ceremony at Sydney's Hordern Pavilion, Plum's album *I'm Sorry, Now Say It*

Back was named the best pop release of 2025.

Plum, a proud Gamilaraay woman, told the crowd winning the major national music award felt like a "fever dream" after having worked in the industry for more than 13 years.

Barkindji star Barkaa won the award for best hip hop/rap release for *Big Tidda*.

Kamilaroi artist The Kid

Laroi won song of the year with *Girls*, and was a finalist for best solo artist for *How Does It Feel?*, alongside Barkaa with *Big Tidda*.

The best world music album award was won by Gurrumul's *Banbirngu — The Orchestral Sessions*.

The revered Yolngu artist died in 2017, leaving an extraordinary legacy of

powerful work that continues to move listeners around the world.

Hip-hop legends 3% took out the category of best use of an Australian recording in an advertisement.

Six-time ARIA winner and Yolngu artist Baker Boy performed on the night.

Barkaa's *Big Tidda Tour* was a finalist for best Australian

live act, and North-East Arnhem Land's King Stingray were finalists for best rock album with *For The Dreams*.

Yorta Yorta, Dja Dja Wurrung, Kalkadoon, and Yirendali artist Miss Kaninna's *Soul Has No Tempo* was a finalist in both the best hip hop/rap release and best independent release categories.

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Teenager's film wins AACTA's attention

JOSEPH GUENZLER

Fifteen-year-old Indigenous filmmaker Charli Fletcher is making waves with her supernatural short *Don't Ignore Me*, which has gained international acclaim.

The film recently won Best Film at the SmartFone Flick Fest (SF3) and has collected multiple awards in Australia and overseas, including at the Inner West Film Festival, Tuesday of Horror Festival (Germany), and the Inner West Youth Film Festival.

It has also earned prizes for Best Screenplay, Best Cinematography and Best Editing and screened at Flickerfest, Peninsula Film Festival, and events in Japan, New York, and San Diego.

Fletcher's work has now reached a new milestone with *Don't Ignore Me* nominated for the 2026 AACTA Awards, where she is one of the youngest directors in the short-film category and the only Indigenous filmmaker represented.

It also marks the first time in the AACTA Awards' 68-year history that a mobile-shot film has been recognised at this level.

"When I got told I was the first in 68 years that a short mobile film was in AACTA, I was like 'you're lying,'" Fletcher said.

"It does not feel real. It's crazy. It's rewarding and feels like I've actually done something — like I've made it somewhere."

Fletcher directed *Don't Ignore Me*, collaborating with a team of young creatives, including her 13-year-old sister Neave Fletcher, who plays Jody.

The film follows a young woman addicted to social media who becomes trapped inside her phone by a supernatural deity.

"The story came from wanting to explore how social media, especially for people our age, can become really encompassing," Charli Fletcher said.

"You can lose yourself in your phone scrolling for hours and hours, so we wanted to showcase that and put a dark twist on it."

She said she chose to shoot the film on an iPhone out of both practicality and creativity.

"As a 15-year-old, buying a big camera and all the attachments just wasn't possible," she said. "Using a phone made it easy and accessible, but it still gave us a similar effect to a real camera."

Voting opens December 6 on the AACTA website. "It'd be really nice if people would give us a vote and give it a watch," Fletcher said.

Museum adds a new dimension to portraits



The photographic exhibition runs until April. Picture: Louise Reilly

PHOEBE BLOGG

A groundbreaking First Nations photographic exhibition, *Unfinished Business*, has opened at the Australian Museum.

Sharing first-person experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living with disabilities in Australia, *Unfinished Business* features intimate images and stories told by 30 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability from remote, regional, and urban communities.

The exhibition was created by human rights documentary-maker Belinda Mason with Liam Knierim, and developed in collaboration with the First Peoples Disability Network.

Unfinished Business brings together 3D lenticular portraits (images that appear to move and shift as viewers walk past them) alongside a documentary film and a new installation to reveal the strength, resilience and diversity of First Nations people with disability.

Australian Museum director and chief executive Kim McKay said the exhibition marks an important milestone in accessibility, inclusion and representation.

"This is a profoundly important exhibition that speaks to inclusion and truth-telling. Each story is told on the participants' own

terms, with each selecting their own words, narrators and imagery, challenging perceptions and sparking conversations about disability, identity and community," she said. "For the first time, we are proud to present this exhibition in a more accessible format, ensuring even more visitors can experience these powerful First Nations stories in meaningful ways."

Working with Vision Australia and Expression Australia, the Australian Museum has embedded accessibility from the outset. The exhibition features tactile panels, audio descriptions, Auslan interpretation and large-print materials, ensuring people who are blind, have low vision, are deaf or hard of hearing can fully connect with the stories.

The Australian Museum's director, First Nations, Laura McBride, said accessibility was central to the design and presentation.

"It's critical to recognise that ableism and racism compound the experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living with disabilities. This intersection of oppression remains unfinished business," she said.

The exhibition was originally launched in September 2013 at the Palais des Nations in Geneva by Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, then director general of the United Nations Office in Geneva, and



Belinda Mason and Uncle John Baxter. Picture: Louise Reilly

Peter Woolcott, Australia's ambassador to the UN. Since then it has travelled globally, but this is the first time it has been presented in such an accessible format.

Mason said the exhibition reflects the strength and honesty of its participants.

"*Unfinished Business* amplifies the voices of First Nations people with disability who have too often been unheard. Each portrait and story comes directly from the person pictured," she said.

"The lenticular portraits bring these stories to life, creating a sense of movement and depth that mirrors the complexity of each individual experience."

The exhibition draws attention to one of Australia's most critical social justice issues. Research shows Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are nearly two times more likely to live with a disability or a long-term

health condition than non-Indigenous people, yet their stories are rarely seen or heard in mainstream spaces.

Presented with the support of The Balnaves Foundation, the exhibition raises the bar for inclusion and representation in museum practice.

Not Fit for Purpose, a powerful new installation developed for the exhibition by Uncle John Baxter, a respected Latja Latja and Narungga Elder and one of the 30 people featured in the exhibition, confronts visitors with the harsh reality of inadequate disability support systems.

The installation features old and outdated mobility equipment, highlighting the significant difficulty and prohibitive expense associated with obtaining modern equipment.

Unfinished Business will be at the Australian Museum until April 19 next year.

Rising artist honours stories in a modern way

PHOEBE BLOGG

Proud Gumbaynggirr/Bundjalung artist Otis Hope Carey is known for works exploring connection, movement and memory through a deep spiritual relationship with Country.

Carey's art has been exhibited nationally and internationally, and he continues to create powerful works that fuse contemporary expression with cultural continuity. "I've just started

brainstorming for my next solo exhibition, which will open at the end of next year. I want to go all out- create something unexpected, deeply connected, and full of heart," Carey told *Style Up*.

Carey said he is working on public art projects which are due for completion next year.

"My goal is to build a space where people can come together, feel safe, and connect through art and story," he said.

"Most of my inspiration comes from my spiritual

connection to Country. I use traditional symbols — but in a way that feels as if I become the symbols themselves, telling stories through energy and connection. Our culture is kinetic; it moves, flows, and lives in everything. I try to express that movement in a contemporary way that honours the old stories without changing their meaning."

One highlight from 2025 was working with a major international name in fashion.

"Hands down, my favourite

project this year has been my collaboration with Christian Louboutin. I'm still pinching myself," Carey said. "It was such an incredible opportunity to create something beautiful, strong, and timeless."

Carey is also the founder of his family-owned design house, Ngaarlu, launched earlier this month. "Our first project is a collection of seven blankets, made from 95 per cent cotton, 75 per cent is recycled, ethically sourced and loomed, each featuring one of my artworks."



Otis Hope Carey

Yung Milla a young achiever

JOSEPH GUENZLER

Marranunggu hip-hop artist Yung Milla was named this year's young achiever at the NT Performing Arts Awards this month.

He received the award for his impact in music and his work mentoring young people across the Northern Territory.

Yung Milla told National Indigenous Times the recognition showed the work he put in was landing where it mattered most.

"It's crazy . . . it's a blessing. It reminds me what I'm doing is the right thing, you know, and especially doing it for my people," he said.

"To be where I am today, you know it's a blessing, and . . . being recognised . . . it tells me I'm doing something right so it feels really good."

Much of his influence has come through his on-Country workshops, performances and school visits, mentoring young people through music and cultural pride. Yung Milla



Yung Milla Picture: Zealousyzo.

said connecting with kids across remote communities keeps him grounded.

"When I see these young kids out there, they just remind me of my little brothers, nephews, and so it's just like home for me," he said.

His work as a mentor was central to the creation of Barunga, a track inspired by the Barunga Statement.

Yung Milla and his brother, J-MILLA, travelled to Barunga and Wugularr (Beswick) ahead of this year's Barunga Festival, spending time with young people before selecting emerging artists K2 the B and CJR to collaborate on the track.

He said the process grew

naturally from spending time with the kids. "We just went down there, mingled in with the kids . . . we travelled out to Beswick and we made a dance circle, we got everyone dancing . . . having a laugh," he said.

"This girl named Kia stepped up . . . she sang a song and the first three words that she sang, I mean my brother looked at each other like 'This is the girl we're looking for'."

K2 the B and CJR performed Barunga with the Milla brothers at the festival. Yung Milla said he planned to keep expanding his work across remote communities.

"I just want to keep connecting to as many remote communities as I can, you know, branching out . . . giving them mob hope because it's so overlooked," he said.

He said the young achiever award strengthened his commitment to building pathways for Indigenous youth through culture and creativity.



Guests attending CIAF's 2025 fashion parade. Picture: Blueclick Photography

Fair play for art tops all

PHOEBE BLOGG

Cairns Indigenous Art Fair 2025 has been hailed a record-breaking success, drawing 14,909 spectators, generating almost \$700,000 in art sales, and stimulating the local economy by \$6.19 million across four vibrant days of art, culture, and connection.

Guided by the powerful theme Pay Attention!, the 16th edition was held at the Tanks Arts Centre, opening to a sell-out crowd and closing to a packed audience at the final ceremony.

After delivering his first CIAF, 2025 artistic director Teho Ropeyarn enjoyed time to reflect. "CIAF is not just a showcase, it is a platform with purpose — where creativity leads to self-determination, truth-telling and cultural pride," he said.

Chair Bianca Beetson said this year's results were a testament to the power of Ropeyarn's artistic vision.

"With record attendance, robust sales, and wide-reaching engagement, CIAF continues to show how culture drives not only creativity and connection, but also tangible outcomes for

artists, communities, and the wider economy," she said.

"It demonstrates that when First Nations voices lead, the results speak for themselves."

Findings from the latest independent IER evaluation reinforce these achievements, confirming CIAF's unique role in generating cultural and economic impact.

The report found 96 per cent of attendees rated the event as a great experience.

Sales from the Art Fair Showcase reached \$414,000, while the Artisans Showcase recorded \$281,602.88, for a combined total of nearly \$700,000. In addition, CIAF directed \$240,228.72 back to artists and performers as part of its program, including art awards. Indigenous businesses engaged through CIAF, including food vendors, received a further \$71,912.35.

Now in its ninth year, the CIAF Art Awards awarded \$60,000 across six categories. The Premier's Award for Excellence went to Bernard Singleton (Yakal Creatives) for his wood carving Offering (2025), while the People's Choice Award went to Dylan Sarra for Native Police Spears.

CIAF's Talks program added

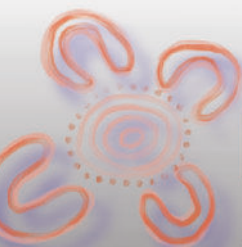
another dimension of engagement, with more than 20 artist talks and guided tours attracting close to 250 attendees. The program connected audiences with stories behind the works, reinforcing CIAF's role as both marketplace and meeting place.

CIAF's digital presence also progressively soared in 2025, with more than 1.8 million views and 30,000 followers across platforms.

The inaugural Ambassador Program, led by cultural content creator Talicia Minniecon, brought roving interviews, behind-the-scenes content, and community voices to a global audience.

CIAF has unveiled its 2026 curatorial theme, reclamation and regeneration, and date, July 9-12 at the Tanks Arts Centre. "Reclamation is a powerful act of cultural resurgence . . . regeneration breathes new life into it — a dynamic force rooted in ancestral knowledge yet reaching boldly into the future," Ropeyarn said.

The First Nations-led art fair and cultural celebration is held annually on Gimuy Walubara Yidinji Country in Gimuy/Cairns, Queensland.



AUSTRALIAN MUSEUM

Head of Collections & Engagement
(Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander)

First Nations (Identified)

\$149,739 - \$173,174 | full-time | Clerk
Grade 11/12

ABOUT YOU

This is a First Nations identified role
authorised under section 14(d) of the Anti-Discrimination Act 1977 (NSW).

- Experience leading diverse teams.
- Deep understanding of First Nations culture.
- Established networks with Elders and knowledge holders.
- Ability to incorporate culturally aware practices and Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property into the organisation.
- Strong communication skills.
- Willing to travel within NSW and hold a valid NSW Driver's Licence.

Applications open for art festival

PHOEBE BLOGG

The Darwin Aboriginal Art Fair returns to Larrakia Country at the Darwin Convention Centre from August 6-9 in 2026, and has announced expressions of interest for next year's public program are officially open.

Established and emerging artists, performers, dancers and

other creatives are encouraged to apply online. Expressions of interest close on December 15, 2025, at 5pm ACST.

The Fair's Public Program is a unique platform designed to share participants' craft, culture and stories.

From artist talks and material demonstrations, to masterclass workshops, children's activities and

cultural performances — there are many ways to take part.

DAAF Foundation executive director, Claire Summers, said that the 2025 fair had a "sense of community in the air".

"There was a joy that our First Nations creatives felt in coming together for this national celebration of culture and art," she said.

Country provides hope at COP30

GIOVANNI TORRE

An Indigenous Desert Alliance delegation stood tall at the 30th United Nations Climate Change Conference in Belem, Brazil, this month.

The IDA COP30 team hosted a panel session in the Australian Pavilion at the conference under the title Cultural Resilience = Climate Resilience, a facilitated conversation with Indigenous Desert Alliance chief executive Sam Murray and staff to showcase the desert climate story as it relates to Indigenous perspectives, including impacts on culture, community and Country, and how investing in cultural resilience is key to supporting climate resilience.

Alongside Ms Murray, the IDA team included Indigenous Desert Alliance people and cultural officer Jade Bromilow, regional support officer Kevin Tromp, and partnerships manager Jon Hodgetts.

Ms Murray told National Indigenous Times it was important for Australian Indigenous people to be “heard on an international scale”.

“It elevates the stories from back home... elevating desert rangers’ voices is really super-important,” she said.

“On a global scale, it means you get that awareness out there about rangers and the good work they do ... and desert communities ... recognised for what they contribute to the environmental work we should all be doing caring Country.”

“We do this naturally because of who we are, but we can actually teach people, share with

people to connect with Country and to love it.”

Ms Murray noted that First Nations people have been caring for Country for a very long time.

“We love Country because we believe that we belong to Country and that we come from that,” she said. “That love for the environment, for Country, for special places and stories is shared. We can teach other Australians and other people around the world about how to come to love the places that they are living on, and to think more deeply about this country and environment.”

Ms Murray said Indigenous people know the damage climate change is doing to Country and are dedicated to protecting it.

“We’re committed to that job of caring for Country till the day we die and speaking up for Country and carrying culture. There’s a sense of resilience and positivity, knowing that this is our job. We’re always going to do it ... we love doing it and it’s who we are,” she said.

“I think in the world where there’s a lot of doom and gloom ... about climate change impacts, looking at First Nations Australians and how they’re still committed, rangers are still rocking up every day and looking after the environment ... I think that’s something we can teach all Australians about; that there’s a commitment and a resilience and a passion and a positivity about caring for the environment, even if at times it feels like it’s too overwhelming.”

Ms Murray said the need for urgent action to tackle the climate crisis is “critical”.

“We look at things like the



Indigenous Desert Alliance chief executive officer Sam Murray at COP30 in Belem, Brazil.



The Indigenous Desert Alliance COP30 delegation.

opportunity to heal Country to what it was before, or to heal Country to make the damages less, and the opportunity to do that is diminishing rapidly,” she said. “The window is closing on the ability to not only stop or lessen the impacts ... but also to heal the Country to the extent that we need it to be. It’s a two-

fold thing in terms of that window getting smaller. It’s stopping and slowing the impacts, and the ability to then regenerate, restore and heal.”

Ms Murray encouraged the public to “look to First Nations people and the allies that are out there working hard”.

“Climate change impacts

aren’t a new trending thing. Caring for the environment and conservation isn’t just something that’s new and become popular. People like First Nations people are really experienced and passionate, committed, and non-Indigenous allies that work alongside us like ranger coordinators and ecologists and the like. They’ve been doing it for a long time,” she said.

“Look what’s been done, what’s working ... See what First Nations groups are doing, especially rangers, get behind them, support what they’re doing and elevate that work. If you feel like you don’t know what you can do, look around. There are a lot of people who are trying to care for the environment, care for Country, especially First Nations people ... approach them... say, ‘Hey, I want to help. I think you guys are doing great work, what can I do to get behind it?’”

First Peoples unite to address education barriers

JARRED CROSS

Foundations for “transformative inter-generational outcomes” for Indigenous education around the world were laid this month as knowledge and aspirations were shared amongst thousands at the World Indigenous Peoples’ Conference on Education.

WIPCE returned to Aotearoa/NZ for the first time in two decades from November 16-20, with close to 4,000 leaders and educators attending in Tamaki Makaurau (Auckland).

30 per cent of delegates headed to the gathering travelled from Australia, with representatives Canada, Yukon, Green-



Professor Meihana Durie.

land, Guam, Botswana, Hawaii and the host nation, among others, also joining.

Following celebratory greetings and cultural expression on day one, three days of presentation and discussion examined

education systems and practices, health and wellbeing, the environment and climate, politics, self-determination, decolonisation, science and technology and youth — all driven by global First Peoples’ knowledge.

Maori traditional practice was central to programming.

Te Wananga Aronui o Tamaki Makaurau — Auckland University of Technology (AUT) hosted WIPCE in 2025, the largest academic conference ever held in Aotearoa.

Tarntanya (Adelaide) hosted the conference in 2022.

Conference co-chair Professor Meihana Durie said the conference is principally about

the future and how Indigenous people around the world navigate it.

“Although it is clear that Indigenous rights remain under immense threat, this gathering unites Indigenous educators, scholars and champions from across the world,” Professor Durie said.

“Amplifying Indigenous voices and aspirations to transcend barriers that limit our collective potential, and more importantly, to achieve transformative inter-generational outcomes for Indigenous education worldwide.”

Keynote speakers included distinguished Maori voices in education, creative fields, poli-

tics and decolonisation, and language, as well as international expertise in health and the environment.

WIPCE was founded 37 years ago in Canada/northern Turtle Island by respected scholar and champion of Indigenous education and culture Verna Kirkess, of the Fisher River Cree Nation.

Ms Kirkess celebrated her 90th birthday at the conference.

WIPCE 2025 co-chairs Dr Noe Noe Wong-Wilson, Dr Bentham Ohia, Professor Damon Salesa and Professor Durie welcomed manuhiri (guests) to Tamaki Makaurau for the conference — the city home to the largest number of Pacific people in the world.

Don't look away from hate

LIDIA THORPE

In August, a gang of neo-nazis armed with poles stormed Camp Sovereignty, a sacred site of ceremony, resistance and healing for First Peoples.

They punched and kicked community members, targeted women, and trampled the Aboriginal flag, desecrating a place where our Ancestors rest.

They walked away without real consequence.

For First Peoples, this was a hate crime and act of terror; a deliberate attempt to intimidate and instil fear. When racism festers, it becomes violence, and when violence is directed at us, the authorities look away.

Camp Sovereignty sits on what the coloniser calls Kings Domain. For thousands of years, this has been a gathering ground for our nations, a place of ceremony and connection. Today it is the burial site for the remains of our people returned

from overseas. It was set up in 2006 by my Uncle Robbie Thorpe and the Black GST, in response to the “Stolenwealth Games”, to highlight the plight of our people in this country on the international stage.

It is a peaceful camp, a place of healing and connection, where everyone is welcome to visit and hear the truth of this country. But the August attack showed hate is growing faster than healing. My community has told me kids were too scared to go to school after seeing the footage.

Yet the institutions meant to protect us refuse to call this what it is: a racially motivated act of hate and terror.

Victoria Police failed to intervene as the nazis marched to the camp, did not pursue them as they fled, and have refused to investigate this as the hate crime it clearly was.

Even the Prime Minister, when asked on national

television, had little to say.

He insisted there were “some good people” marching alongside neo-nazis at racist anti-immigration rallies that same day.

The contrast in how this system treats our people is stark. First Peoples are jailed at higher rates than Black South Africans during apartheid.

Our kids are taken, our families criminalised, and our communities are over-policed and under-protected.

When a neo-nazi leader like Thomas Sewell, a man with a long, documented history of violent extremism, is arrested and charged for leading an attack on Aboriginal people, he gets bail.

I will always defend the right to bail, as punitive bail laws are killing our people. But the double standard is impossible to ignore. Elders, mums fleeing violence, and young people with no record are denied bail every

day. A neo-nazi charged with violence walks free.

More than 400,000 people have signed a petition calling for this attack to be investigated as a hate crime. Twenty-one members of the Federal crossbench have joined me in demanding action from the Albanese Government, Victoria Police, AFP, and public prosecutors. We are calling for hate crime and terrorism laws — designed to protect communities from acts exactly like this — to be applied when First Peoples are the victims.

If a church, synagogue or mosque had been attacked, there would have been no hesitation. The Prime Minister would have held a press conference within the hour. But when it is First Peoples, on our own Country, in our own place of worship, we are treated as lesser. That is the truth of this colony.

The fire at Camp Sovereignty

will continue to burn. We will keep calling for this sacred place to be returned to Traditional Custodians as a centre for ceremony, truth-telling, education, and healing. The Melbourne City Council and State Government should work with Traditional Owners and Camp Sovereignty to create a permanent structure where community can come to heal, listen, and learn.

To everyone reading: don't look away. Stand with us. Demand accountability. Demand safety for our communities. Demand that hate crimes against First Peoples be treated as seriously as hate crimes against anyone else. If this country is ever going to heal, the truth must be faced, and justice must finally be done.

Senator Lidia Thorpe is a Gunnai, Gunditjmara and Djab Wurrung woman and independent senator for Victoria.

Anger at UN COP over lack of help to care for Country

HANNAH MCGLADE

This year's COP30 in Belem, Brazil, attracted a strong Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander presence, perhaps the largest yet in COP history, as the impacts of climate change on people across the continent, and including the Torres Strait Islands, have been devastating.

From rising waters to floods and fires, temperatures, and heat at dangerous even toxic levels. Too many of our rivers are drying up and incredible biodiversity at risk from climate change.

Indigenous people throughout the wider Pacific are fighting climate change and calling for recognition and support that is critically needed to combat these devastating impacts. Still, we know that Indigenous peoples, dispossessed by colonisation, face a bleak future as governments, including in Australia, do not address fossil fuel emissions and allow the big polluters, the coal, oil and gas industry, to continue.

Australia bid unsuccessfully to host the next COP31 in Australia — promoting its relationship with Indigenous peoples as part of its bid. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander delegates to COP30 that I spoke with were supportive of Australia's bid to host COP31 in Adelaide; seeing this as an opportunity to bring attention and build momentum in our country and region on the impacts of climate change and the critical role Indigenous peoples play in caring for Country.

And of course, we want our government to uphold its global commitments and

support a Just Transition towards renewables and critical minerals, as well as adaption and mitigation, that respects and includes Indigenous peoples and our inherent rights.

Here in Belem, we heard directly from the Indigenous peoples of the region, in particular the Yanomani of the Amazon fighting incursions including illegal mining and deforestation on their traditional lands. The Indigenous protest at COP30 gained international attention and led to increased security and military presence at COP30 and also highlighted the urgency of the situation for the Indigenous peoples of the Amazon and elsewhere who are being killed as defenders of their lands. The Amazon also holds global significance acting as a critical “carbon sink” that must be protected at all costs.

As Indigenous peoples in the Amazon protect their traditional lands, so do many in our country, caring for land and waters, day in day out. As well as phasing out fossil fuels, support for Traditional Owners caring for country is the most important commitment our government can make as we face this global challenge. Are we really doing enough?

The Indigenous Ranger Program funded by the Federal Government has been successful in key areas. It has helped meet Closing the Gap targets through Indigenous employment as well as protecting biodiversity and reducing carbon emissions. Some programs in northern Australia have succeeded in



At COP 30 in Brazil, people demonstrate for the rights of Indigenous communities. Picture: Fraga Alves

generating income through carbon credit units through early dry season-controlled fire burning.

However, the funding has not been distributed evenly and many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander groups, particularly in southern Australia often don't get any financial support for ranger programs. The funding when delivered mainly targets areas of Australia where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples hold exclusive possession native title and where there are no significant competing land uses, such as mining and high value agriculture.

The late Banjima Elder Maitland Parker was one of the first Aboriginal people in WA to benefit from ranger programs run by what was then the Department of Conservation and Land Management. He was selected

by his Elders and trained by the department, and looked after his traditional country including the Karijini National Park. He lived in the park for more than 30 years tirelessly working to protect his country both as a ranger and a Banjima Elder. The movie Yurlu Country recently released, which Mr Parker co-produced, documents the end of his life, cut short by mesothelioma contracted as a child from playing near the Wittenoom asbestos mine.

Yurlu also brings to life the devastation of Bajima peoples country caused by the iron ore mines which drive the Australia economy as well as the Wittenoom mine, which although closed in the 1960s remains today the largest contaminated site in the southern hemisphere. Mining has generated significant wealth for this country, but Banjima people still cannot

return to and care for their Country. Where is the commitment from State and Federal Governments to ensure that mining revenues are set aside for restoring Country which has supported the Australian economy for the last half-century?

If COP30 should teach us anything it is this, Indigenous peoples should not have to bang down the doors of the United Nations for their voices to be heard. Caring for lands in the face of climate change and unsustainable land use that risks our planet's very future, the future lies with Indigenous peoples. We have the answers to our shared future, and governments, including Australia must listen before it's too late.

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

New chair of tourism body keen on growth

JARRED CROSS

WA's peak Indigenous tourism body has a new chair, looking to build its capacity to go from strength to strength and take its partners with it.

Nhanda Yamaji man Darren "Capes" Capewell, pictured, owner and operator of Wula Gura Nyinda Eco Cultural Adventures in Gathaagudu (Shark Bay) in the State's mid-west, stepped up into the role at WAITOC (WA Indigenous Tourism Operators Council) this month after years as vice-chair.

Meaning "you come this way", Wula Gura Nyinda is an award-winning experience provider.

Indigenous tourism is recognised as one of seven "pillars" to the State's broader tourism sector, which brought a collective \$14 billion in spending by visitors in 2022, per WA's 2023-2033 10-year strategy.

After the height of the pandemic, domestic visitors who once flocked to tourism opportunities, including Aboriginal tours and experiences, haven't returned in the same numbers, WAITOC chief executive Robert Taylor told National Indigenous Times at 2024's Australian Indigenous Tourism Conference in Naarm.

"International visitation is really the strongest at the moment. If we could turn domestic tourism around the businesses be more successful than ever," Mr Taylor said.

Mr Capewell has an eye on securing more financial support from the State Government and building on the foundations laid out by those before him at the council.

"We'll certainly look to make our mark over the next 12 months, for the next five years, and really consolidate our brand and our position within the tourism space," he said.

Walter McGuire was recognised for his service as chair, now outgoing, and WAITOC's growth during his time.



Kardan Construction co-founder Frank Mitchell, seventh from the right, with colleagues.

Local hero changes lives a job at a time

GIOVANNI TORRE

Whadjuk-Yued Noongar businessperson Frank Mitchell has been honoured with the WA Australian of the Year Local Hero Award.

Mr Mitchell, the co-director of Wilco Electrical and co-founder/director, of Kardan Construction, Baldja and Bilyaa in the trades and construction industry, received the award at a ceremony in Boorloo on November 13.

Prior to the event, Kardan described Mr Mitchell as "a proud Whadjuk-Yued Noongar man, father, and inspiring leader" whose "story is one of resilience, grit, responsibility and reciprocity".

"Frank's life experiences inspired him to pay it forward and to empower others. Through Kardan and his other ventures, Frank realised his vision," the company said.

In November 2016, alongside business partners Tim Bidstrup and Dwayne Rowland, Mr Mitchell set an ambitious goal: "20 Aboriginal apprentices by 2020."



Frank Mitchell collects his award from WA Premier Roger Cook. Picture: Leanne Doyle

"We were a team of eight. But I knew if we could change one life, we'd have succeeded," he recently told The Indigenous Business Review.

By 2020, they created 23 Aboriginal positions, including 14

electrical apprenticeships. Wilco Electrical now turns over \$8 million with 35 staff.

Kardan Construction was established in 2019, spun out of Wilco's project management arm.

"We called it Kardan — the Noongar word for Marri tree — because we wanted it to represent shelter and strength," Mr Mitchell said.

Starting with three staff, Kardan has grown to 97 staff and \$28 million turnover last financial year.

"It's been a massive journey," he said.

Mr Mitchell's achievements in the construction industry include: more than 70 Aboriginal upskilling positions; over \$11million awarded to Aboriginal subcontractors; more than \$35,000 given in sponsorships for Aboriginal sportspeople and Aboriginal-managed football clubs; over 20 upskilling positions for women in construction; and 11 upskilling positions for people over the age of 55.

Kardan said Mr Mitchell has changed many lives through employment, mentoring, housing and medical support, or helping his community return home to Country for family and cultural responsibilities: "To them, Frank is already a local hero. He certainly is to us."

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Young people from Gabon who are taking part in the training partnership. Picture: Ramiro Largaia

Gabon students skill up

Young people from Gabon are gaining specialist skills and experience in Australia through a new training partnership between Fortescue, Ivindo Iron, and the Gabonese Government, supported by delivery partners Curtin University and Carey Training.

The We Train for Gabon — Destination Australia program supports Gabon's vision to diversify its economy, positioning mining as a key driver for growth. It provides young Gabonese professionals, university

graduates and high school graduates with training and development opportunities across three pathways — academic, professional and vocational.

Participants study and train through postgraduate studies at the WA School of Mines, internships with Fortescue, and a tailored Foundation of Entrepreneurship course developed and delivered by Carey Training, part of the 100 per cent First Nations-owned Carey Group.

Fortescue's director approvals, community and services,

Rosli Wheelock, said the partnership demonstrates how collaboration and cultural exchange can deliver lasting impact.

"We're proud to work with Ivindo Iron and Carey Training to support the development of Gabon's future leaders," he said.

"When people connect across cultures and share experiences, they build skills, confidence and a stronger sense of purpose."

Carey Training's Foundation of Entrepreneurship program focuses on leadership, business

management and community development, drawing on the Carey Group's experience as a First Nations mining, civil and training enterprise.

During a visit to Fortescue's Cloudbreak site, participants saw Carey's operations in action and learnt how First Nations-led businesses can drive employment, training and community outcomes.

Carey training general manager, Ms Raphael Poole, said sharing Carey's story had been a highlight. "It's been a privilege

to share our story with Gabonese participants and demonstrate how First Nations-led businesses create opportunities through training, employment and cultural strength."

WA School of Mines head of school, Professor Mark Buntine, said Curtin University was proud to play a role in empowering Gabon's emerging mining professionals through access to world-class education and research expertise.

This story was produced with the support of Fortescue.



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Historic solar deal signed

GIOVANNI TORRE

Traditional Owners, SunCable and the Northern Land Council have reached a historic multi-generational 70-year agreement to build a 12,000-hectare solar farm — the biggest solar farm in Australia — on Powell Creek Station, Northern Territory.

The Northern Land Council said the multi-million-dollar agreement would bring multi-generational wealth to Traditional Owners, who hold native title over the earmarked area.

NLC chair Matthew Ryan said the Land Council was proud to have negotiated the deal with SunCable on behalf of the Traditional Owners of Janigirulu, Bamayu and Walanyipirri.

"This demonstrates that Aboriginal Territorians are leading the way by participating in genuine engagement with big business," he said.

"This is about strengthening self-determination, building sustainable communities, and contributing to the long-term economic viability of the Northern Territory."

"Over the years the NLC has facilitated a number of successful business ventures with



Minister for Indigenous Australians Malarndirri McCarthy, left, at the SunCable ILUA signing ceremony.

Traditional Owners in the Barkly and we look forward to promoting more opportunities towards creating a prosperous future for everyone in the Northern Territory."

The Land Council said the agreement would deliver "major economic benefits" through jobs, training and local business opportunities, and that "stringent environmental protection and cultural heritage preservation" would ensure "cultural knowledge and connections to land will be protected and will continue to be passed down through generations".

SunCable first approached the

Northern Land Council in 2019, and soon after engaged with Traditional Owners about its interests in parts of Powell Creek Station.

In 2022, SunCable identified the land area it wanted to use, and negotiations began with Traditional Owners about options for a land use agreement.

It has been a lengthy process of negotiations between SunCable and more than 200 Traditional Owners over the past three years. The agreement has also been a significant logistical effort from NLC, undertaking over 70 consultations to meet

and bring together many families across Darwin, Katherine, Elliott, Tennant Creek and other remote locations.

Walanyipirri Traditional Owner Peter Henderson said "culture and Country is really important to us".

"This deal shows how strong our Native Title is," he said.

"We hope other TOs can also stand together and negotiate agreements to bring business on their country, just like us."

Bamayu Traditional Owner Linda Benson said: "We hope this deal can help to improve Elliott, so our families can live and work on Country."

The Land Council said the deal was an example of how large-scale energy projects could be developed in partnership with Aboriginal communities "who want to shape their economic future while continuing to live and work on Country".

SunCable chief executive Ryan Willemsen-Bell said the signing of the Indigenous Land Use Agreement marked "the beginning of an enduring partnership between SunCable, the Northern Land Council and the Powell Creek Native Title Holders to develop this transformative renewable energy project in the Northern Territory".

"This agreement is a symbol of partnership, of shared vision, and of mutual respect," he said.

"The ILUA is the result of years of dialogue, negotiation and trust-building. It ensures that the voices of Native Title Holders are not only heard but are central to the development of this project. Throughout the years, SunCable has listened carefully to shape a comprehensive agreement that recognises the importance of Native Title rights and interest that will deliver long term benefits."

Tributes paid to 'Mr Kimberley'

GIOVANNI TORRE

This report contains the name and image of someone who has died.

Sam Lovell, a trailblazer in Indigenous tourism and a respected Kimberley figure, died on November 15, aged 92.

Mr Lovell, known as "Mr Kimberley" and often regarded as the "father of Aboriginal tourism in Western Australia", dedicated his life to opening doors for Aboriginal people in the tourism industry.

In the face of systemic and widespread racism, Mr Lovell's life's work made a profound impact in establishing Aboriginal tourism, advancing community development, and preserving cultural heritage.

The Nyikina Elder's work inspired generations, highlighting the significance of Aboriginal knowledge, storytelling, and connection to Country in shaping Australia's tourism landscape.

The Shire of Derby West Kimberley flew its flags at half-mast as a sign of respect for the late Mr Lovell. Shire President Peter McCumstie said Mr Lovell was "a man who will be very, very sorely missed by not only the people in Derby but across the whole Kimberley, the State, and I would even go so far as to say the country".

Mr Lovell and his wife Rosita founded Kimberley Safari Tours in 1981. His work across a range of endeavours was recognised with an Order of Australia Medal in 2003. His many honours included the Sir David Brand Award for Tourism.

From 1995, he served as an Aboriginal tourism project officer

with Aboriginal Economic Development, Department of Industry and Resources, providing support to Aboriginal tourism operators across WA.

The WA Indigenous Tourism Operators Council (WAITOC) established the Sam and Rosita Lovell Tourism Award, which recognises individuals for their commitment and contribution to Aboriginal tourism in WA.

WAITOC chair Darren Capewell said Mr Lovell was "a pathfinder... He carved the first tracks for Aboriginal tourism in the State, long before anyone else imagined what could be possible".

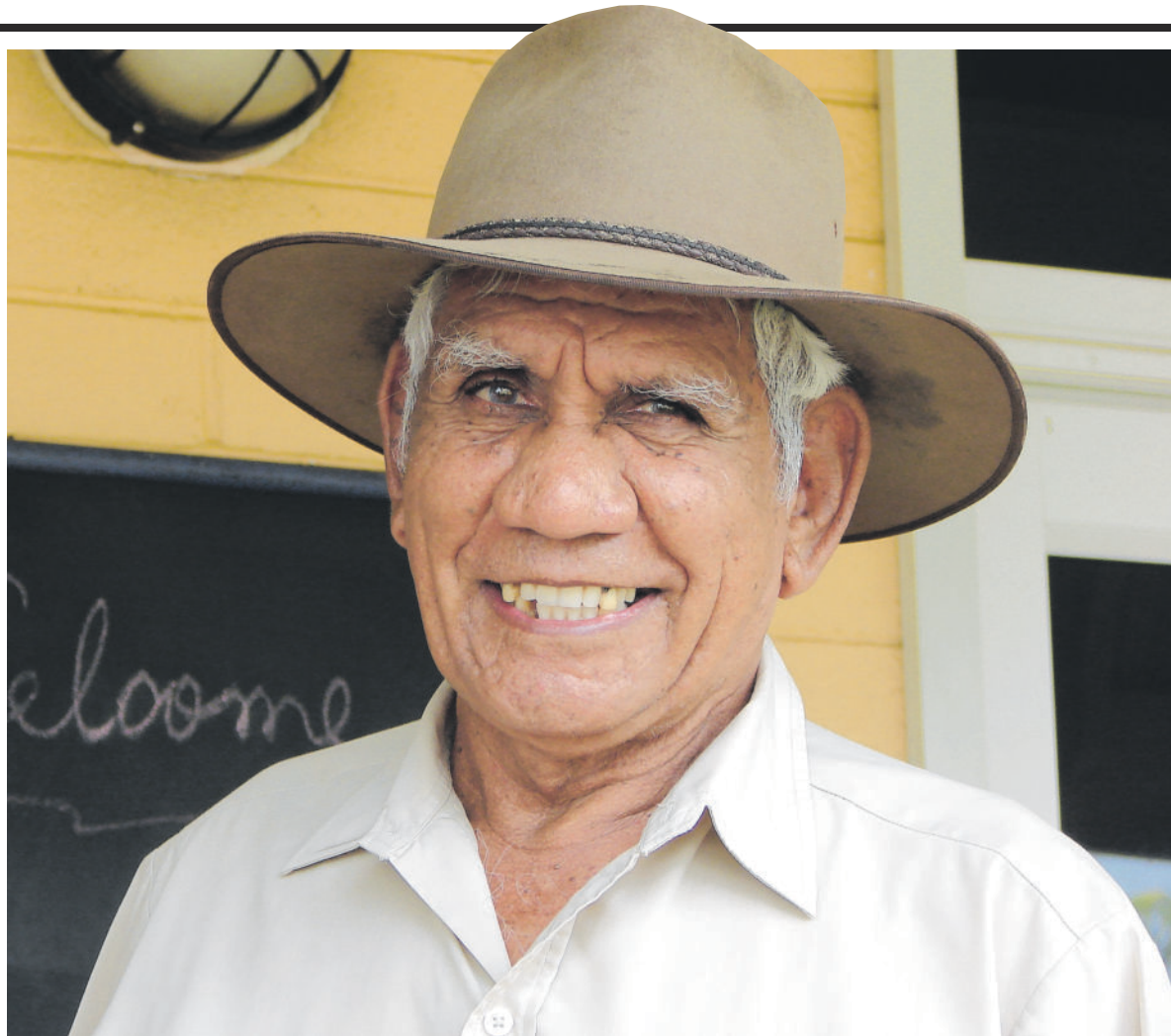
State Library of Western Australia chief executive and State Librarian Catherine Clark said the significance of Mr Lovell's photographic and documentary collection "and his rich contributions to the State cannot be overstated".

"Sam was one of two Aboriginal people that we know of who had a box brownie camera in Western Australia from the 1950s onwards. He was able to document his life from a young age and provide a unique lens and perspective on life in the North West," she said.

Bart Pigram, who co-curated the Hello, this is Sam Lovell exhibition this year, said: "Sam and Rosita's tourism initiative exceeded industry and cultural barriers through Kimberley Safari Tours."

"To be able to break into the tourism industry, excel in the industry, and to also maintain cultural and environmental integrity across most of the Kimberley region pretty much set the standard for all operators that followed."

Mr Lovell was born in 1933 in



Sam Lovell worked as a stockman before devoting his life to Aboriginal tourism in WA. Pictures: WAITOC

Calwinyardah. As a very young child he was forcibly removed from his family and sent to Moola Bulla, a government-run station west of Halls Creek. He never saw his parents again.

Mr Lovell's early days included working as a stockman in remote areas of WA. His passion for storytelling was instrumental in preserving Indigenous heritage.

His legacy extends far beyond his business ventures; he also worked tirelessly to mentor and support emerging Indigenous tourism operators, helping them establish sustainable businesses that celebrate Aboriginal culture.



Business hub wins funds

CALLAN MORSE

The future of Tasmania's Palawa Business Hub has been secured with a four-year funding commitment from the State's government.

Tasmania's first Aboriginal-led, one-stop shop designed to empower Aboriginal business owners and Indigenous people to connect, grow, and succeed in business, the Hub says is it is dedicated to improving economic opportunities for Aboriginal people and supporting the

growth of Aboriginal businesses across the state.

Since its establishment last year, the Hub has strengthened Aboriginal economic participation in Tasmania by connecting Aboriginal businesses with government, industry, and support services, provided culturally grounded business advice and mentoring, and promoted business visibility through state-wide events, workshops, and showcases.

Coinciding with Aboriginal Business Month, The Hub's

Aboriginal Business Showcase was held in Hobart in October, where co-founder Leah Cameron (Brown) told National Indigenous Times that Indigenous businesses needed the support of the Hub "because we're not generally part of the national dialogue".

"We don't have an Indigenous procurement policy here, there's no existing chamber, there's no set spends for State government," she said.

"So, for me, it's like, hang on, putting our hand up, we need

this, we need to be part of this journey, because it is having this huge impact.

"I just thought (there's) so many opportunities. Lutruwita/Tasmania is incredibly popular. We need to start riding this wave. We don't want to be left behind."

Ms Cameron (Brown) said the announcement marks a significant step forward for Aboriginal economic empowerment in Tasmania.

"This funding gives us the foundation we need to keep building opportunities for our

mob in business, from start-ups and emerging entrepreneurs to established Aboriginal-owned enterprises," she said.

"The Palawa Business Hub exists to strengthen self-determination through economic independence, and this support from the Tasmanian Government recognises the vital role Aboriginal businesses play in Tasmania's economy and community."

The funding commitment will support the Hub to expand its programs and services.



GOVERNMENT OF
WESTERN AUSTRALIA

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

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

Tenement Type	No.	Applicant	Area*	Locality	Centroid	Shire
Exploration Licence	08/3597	OD4 ROCKLEA PTY LTD	70BL.	69.8km SE'ly of Onslow	Lat: 22° 3' S Long: 115° 37' E	ASHBURTON SHIRE
Exploration Licence	08/3598	OD4 ROCKLEA PTY LTD	70BL.	70km SE'ly of Onslow	Lat: 22° 13' S Long: 115° 22' E	ASHBURTON SHIRE
Exploration Licence	08/3599	OD4 ROCKLEA PTY LTD	70BL.	75km SE'ly of Onslow	Lat: 22° 12' S Long: 115° 29' E	ASHBURTON SHIRE
Exploration Licence	20/1098	ARMSTRONG INDUSTRIES (WA) PTY LTD	2BL.	41.4km NE'ly of Cue	Lat: 27° 16' S Long: 118° 15' E	CUE SHIRE
Exploration Licence	36/1125	NORTHERN GOLDFIELDS RESOURCES PTY LTD	20BL.	26.3km E'ly of Peak Hill	Lat: 27° 58' S Long: 120° 57' E	LEONORA SHIRE
Exploration Licence	38/4032	WESTAR GRAPHITE PTY LTD	66BL.	162.7km N'ly of Laverton	Lat: 27° 9' S Long: 122° 32' E	LAVERTON SHIRE
Exploration Licence	45/6506	HEDLAND EXPLORATION PTY LTD	70BL.	18.8km SE'ly of Port Hedland	Lat: 20° 26' S Long: 118° 43' E	PORT HEDLAND TOWN
Exploration Licence	52/4397	CATALYST (PLUTONIC) PTY LTD	60BL.	54.9km E'ly of Peak Hill	Lat: 25° 34' S Long: 119° 15' E	MEEKATHARRA SHIRE
Exploration Licence	52/4398	CATALYST (PLUTONIC) PTY LTD	53BL.	42.2km E'ly of Peak Hill	Lat: 25° 39' S Long: 119° 8' E	MEEKATHARRA SHIRE
Exploration Licence	77/3315	EMC URANIUM PTY LTD	4BL.	60.4km NE'ly of Mukinbudin	Lat: 30° 32' S Long: 118° 39' E	WESTONIA SHIRE
Exploration Licence	77/3317	NIMY PTY LTD	4BL.	123km NE'ly of Mukinbudin	Lat: 29° 55' S Long: 118° 46' E	YILGARN SHIRE
Exploration Licence	77/3318	NIMY PTY LTD	59BL.	122.7km NE'ly of Mukinbudin	Lat: 30° 3' S Long: 119° 1' E	YILGARN SHIRE
Exploration Licence	77/3319	NIMY PTY LTD	40BL.	106.9km NE'ly of Mukinbudin	Lat: 30° 14' S Long: 119° 0' E	YILGARN SHIRE
Exploration Licence	77/3333	FLEET STREET HOLDINGS PTY LTD	20BL.	96.6km NE'ly of Mukinbudin	Lat: 30° 20' S Long: 118° 58' E	YILGARN SHIRE
Prospecting Licence	16/3554	BRADLEY, Joseph Robert	198.85HA.	37.3km NW'ly of Coolgardie	Lat: 30° 42' S Long: 120° 53' E	COOLGARDIE SHIRE
Prospecting Licence	16/3555	BRADLEY, Joseph Robert	189.29HA.	37.1km NW'ly of Coolgardie	Lat: 30° 43' S Long: 120° 52' E	COOLGARDIE SHIRE
Prospecting Licence	16/3556	BRADLEY, Joseph Robert	189.49HA.	38.2km NW'ly of Coolgardie	Lat: 30° 43' S Long: 120° 52' E	COOLGARDIE SHIRE
Prospecting Licence	16/3558	FLEMING, Leo Glenn	148.96HA.	21.6km S'ly of Ora Banda	Lat: 30° 33' S Long: 121° 3' E	COOLGARDIE SHIRE
Prospecting Licence	16/3559	FLEMING, Leo Glenn	120.97HA.	29km N'ly of Coolgardie	Lat: 30° 42' S Long: 121° 4' E	COOLGARDIE SHIRE
Prospecting Licence	24/5908	FLEMING, Leo Glenn	177.67HA.	6km SE'ly of Ora Banda	Lat: 30° 24' S Long: 121° 6' E	KALGOORLIE-BOULDER CITY
Prospecting Licence	24/5909	NORTON GOLD FIELDS PTY LTD	196.21HA.	10.2km S'ly of Broad Arrow	Lat: 30° 32' S Long: 121° 20' E	KALGOORLIE-BOULDER CITY
Prospecting Licence	24/5910	NORTON GOLD FIELDS PTY LTD	199.46HA.	11.9km S'ly of Broad Arrow	Lat: 30° 33' S Long: 121° 20' E	KALGOORLIE-BOULDER CITY
Prospecting Licence	24/5912-S	STONE, Graeme John	9.96HA.	6.9km NW'ly of Broad Arrow	Lat: 30° 24' S Long: 121° 16' E	KALGOORLIE-BOULDER CITY
Prospecting Licence	24/5913	FLEMING, Leo Glenn	190.43HA.	21.1km N'ly of Broad Arrow	Lat: 30° 15' S Long: 121° 18' E	KALGOORLIE-BOULDER CITY
Prospecting Licence	24/5914	FLEMING, Leo Glenn	194.60HA.	20.2km N'ly of Broad Arrow	Lat: 30° 15' S Long: 121° 18' E	KALGOORLIE-BOULDER CITY
Prospecting Licence	24/5915	FLEMING, Leo Glenn	99.16HA.	19.5km N'ly of Broad Arrow	Lat: 30° 16' S Long: 121° 18' E	KALGOORLIE-BOULDER CITY
Prospecting Licence	24/5916	FLEMING, Leo Glenn	195.61HA.	18.7km N'ly of Broad Arrow	Lat: 30° 16' S Long: 121° 18' E	KALGOORLIE-BOULDER CITY
Prospecting Licence	24/5917	FLEMING, Leo Glenn	180.85HA.	17.7km N'ly of Broad Arrow	Lat: 30° 17' S Long: 121° 18' E	KALGOORLIE-BOULDER CITY
Prospecting Licence	26/4847	DEGRUSSA, Kevin Ronald	175.48HA.	27.7km SE'ly of Kalgoorlie	Lat: 30° 53' S Long: 121° 42' E	KALGOORLIE-BOULDER CITY
Prospecting Licence	77/4697	GEKO EXPLORE PTY LTD	8.42HA.	1.5km N'ly of Marvel Loch	Lat: 31° 27' S Long: 119° 29' E	YILGARN SHIRE
Prospecting Licence	77/4702	NICHOLSON, Patrick	50.98HA.	41km NE'ly of Merredin	Lat: 31° 17' S Long: 118° 39' E	WESTONIA SHIRE

Nature of the act: Grant of prospecting licences which authorises the applicant to prospect for minerals for a term of 4 years from date of grant. Grant of Special Prospecting Licences, which authorises the applicant to prospect for minerals for a term up to 4 years from the date of grant. Grant of exploration licences, which authorises the applicant to explore for minerals for a term of 5 years from the date of grant. **Notification day: 19 November 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 **19 February 2026**. Any person who is, or becomes a native title party, is entitled to the negotiation and/or procedural rights provided in Part 2 Division 3 Subdivision P of *Native Title Act 1993 (Cth)*. Enquiries in relation to filing a native title determination application to become a native title party should be directed to the Federal Court of Australia, 1 Victoria Avenue, Perth WA 6000, telephone (08) 9268 7100. **Expedited procedure:** The State of Western Australia considers that these acts are acts attracting the expedited procedure. Each Licence may be granted unless, within the period of 4 months after the notification day (**i.e. 19 March 2026**), a native title party lodges an objection with the National Native Title Tribunal against the inclusion of the statement that the State considers the grant of the Licence is an act attracting the expedited procedure. Enquiries in relation to lodging an objection should be directed to the National Native Title Tribunal, Level 5, 1 Victoria Avenue, Perth, or GPO Box 9973, Perth, WA 6848, telephone (08) 9425 1000. For further information about the act (including extracts of plans showing the boundaries of the applications), contact the Department of Mines, Petroleum and Exploration, 100 Plain Street, East Perth WA 6004, or telephone (08) 9222 3518. ****Please note – Not all Intention to Grant notifications are published in the National Indigenous Times. For more information, please contact the Department above.**

* – 1 Graticular Block = 2.8 km²



GOVERNMENT OF
WESTERN AUSTRALIA

NOTICE OF PROPOSAL TO RENEW MINING LEASE
NATIVE TITLE ACT 1993 (CTH) SECTION 29

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

Mining No.	Renewal of Term No.	Applicant	Area	Locality	Centroid	Shire
M 16/9	734480	SIMMONDS, Paul John BOULDER INVESTMENTS GROUP PTY LTD	6.99HA	34.9km SW'ly of Ora Banda	Lat 30° 37' 58" S Long 120° 51' 41" E	LAVERTON SHIRE
M 24/20	744538	PADDINGTON GOLD PTY LIMITED	533.78HA	5.6km SE'ly of Broad Arrow	Lat 30° 29' 26" S Long 121° 20' 55" E	KALGOORLIE-BOULDER CITY
M 77/7	735778	BARTO GOLD MINING PTY LTD	1.68HA	0.5km NE'ly of Marvel Loch	Lat 31° 27' 55" S Long 119° 29' 41" E	YILGARN SHIRE
M 77/8	735792	BARTO GOLD MINING PTY LTD	5.08HA	0.9km N'ly of Marvel Loch	Lat 31° 27' 37" S Long 119° 29' 32" E	YILGARN SHIRE
M 77/10	740826	BARTO GOLD MINING PTY LTD	61.26HA	0.6km E'ly of Marvel Loch	Lat 31° 28' 8" S Long 119° 29' 50" E	YILGARN SHIRE

Nature of the act: The renewal of mining lease, which authorises the applicant to mine for minerals for a term of up to 21 years. **Notification day: 19 November 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 **19 February 2026**. Any person who is, or becomes a native title party, is entitled to the negotiation and/or procedural rights provided in Part 2 Division 3 Subdivision P of *Native Title Act 1993 (Cth)*. Enquiries in relation to filing a native title determination application to become a native title party should be directed to the Federal Court of Australia, 1 Victoria Avenue, Perth WA 6000, telephone (08) 9268 7100. The mining tenements may be granted if, by the end of the period of 4 months after the notification day (**i.e. 19 March 2026**), there is no native title party under section 30 of the *Native Title Act 1993 (Cth)* in relation to the area of the mining tenements. For further information about the act (including extracts of plans showing the boundaries of the applications), contact the Department of Mines, Petroleum and Exploration, 100 Plain Street, East Perth WA 6004, or telephone (08) 9222 3518. ****Please note – Not all Intention to Grant notifications are published in the National Indigenous Times. For more information, please contact the Department above.**



GOVERNMENT OF
WESTERN AUSTRALIA

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

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

Tenement Type	No.	Applicant	Area*	Locality	Centroid	Shire
Exploration Licence	38/3964	DUKETON GOLD PROJECT PTY LTD	57BL.	151.7km N'ly of Laverton	Lat: 27° 15' S Long: 122° 17' E	COOLGARDIE SHIRE
Exploration Licence	45/6984	RED METAL LIMITED	38BL.	50.2km SE'ly of Telfer	Lat: 22° 5' S Long: 122° 29' E	EAST PILBARA SHIRE
Mining Lease	24/1022	WARRIEDAR MINING PTY LTD	375.13HA.	14.6km NW'ly of Broad Arrow	Lat: 30° 19' S Long: 121° 15' E	KALGOORLIE-BOULDER CITY
Mining Lease	29/454	AURENNE MIT PTY LTD	2748.94HA.	74.3km NW'ly of Menzies	Lat: 29° 13' S Long: 120° 28' E	MENZIES SHIRE
Mining Lease	57/676	LEGENDRE, Bruce Robert REDSCOPE ENTERPRISES PTY LTD	1033.29HA.	85.9km SW'ly of Sandstone	Lat: 28° 36' S Long: 118° 46' E	SANDSTONE SHIRE
Mining Lease	80/653	HORROCKS ENTERPRISES PTY LTD	0.23HA.	20.4km SE'ly of Halls Creek	Lat: 18° 20' S Long: 127° 49' E	HALLS CREEK SHIRE
Mining Lease	80/654	HORROCKS ENTERPRISES PTY LTD	6.26HA.	20.8km SE'ly of Halls Creek	Lat: 18° 20' S Long: 127° 49' E	HALLS CREEK 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. 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: 19 November 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 **19 February 2026**. Any person who is, or becomes a native title party, is entitled to the negotiation and/or procedural rights provided in Part 2 Division 3 Subdivision P of *Native Title Act 1993 (Cth)*. Enquiries in relation to filing a native title determination application to become a native title party should be directed to the Federal Court of Australia, 1 Victoria Avenue, Perth WA 6000, telephone (08) 9268 7100. The mining tenements may be granted if, by the end of the period of 4 months after the notification day (**i.e. 19 March 2026**), there is no native title party under section 30 of the *Native Title Act 1993 (Cth)* in relation to the area of the mining tenements. For further information about the act (including extracts of plans showing the boundaries of the applications), contact the Department of Mines, Petroleum and Exploration, 100 Plain Street, East Perth WA 6004, or telephone (08) 9222 3518. ****Please note – Not all Intention to Grant notifications are published in the National Indigenous Times. For more information, please contact the Department above.**

* – 1 Graticular Block = 2.8 km²

Awards showcase strength of Indigenous talent across many fields

JARRED CROSS

A globally recognised trailblazer, current star dominating in their craft, and a recently retired champion headlined honours at the annual awards celebrating Indigenous excellence in sport.

Brought back to life in 2023 after a two decades hiatus, the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Sports Awards handed out this year's honours in Magandjin/Brisbane this month.

Female athletes were at the forefront of top gongs.

After writing history in taking home her second Dally M medal as the NRLW's best, en route to steering the Broncos to the premiership, Barada woman Tamika Upton was awarded National Sportsper-son of the Year.

Upton was the first woman to be named the league's best on two occasions.

The Brisbane, Queensland and Australian fullback piled success on top of success in 2025 — only soured by a 2-1 Origin series defeat, most recently helping the Jillaroos to 40-6 win over New Zealand in Pacific Championships final.

Fourteen-time grand slam winner (seven singles titles, seven doubles titles) and Inter-national Tennis Hall of Fame member Evonne Goolagong Cawley was recognised with the Lifetime Achievement award

Women shine at sport gongs



Soccer player Lydia Williams at the 2025 awards.

on Saturday night. Since retire-ment, much of Goolagong Caw-ley's work has been committed to strengthening the pathway for future First Nations tennis champions.

In 2025 a scholarship in her name was established to fur-ther assist these efforts.

"I've always believed that with support and opportunity, every young person can achieve

something extraordinary. This scholarship is about opening doors; helping young First Nations players to dream big and chase those dreams," Goo-lagong Cawley said in June.

The annual Evonne Goola-gong Cawley Day celebrates Indigenous culture and engage-ment in the Australian Open each January; the event where she lifted the trophy on four

occasions throughout her career. A Matildas icon was also acknowledged on the night. After 104 caps in the national side and career spanning close to two decades, Lydia Williams called time on a trailblazing leg-acy left in football — recognised as such at the awards.

Speaking at the Awards, Wil-liams said it was not why you play, but was "honoured" to be named Trailblazer of the Year.

"I actually consider it an accountability marker and the highest recognition that my hard work is paying off," Wil-liams said.

"Being a trailblazer means clearing the branches and breaking barriers so the ones coming through next have one less hurdle," she said, NITV reports.

Williams retired in August. National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Sports Awards were first held in 1986; established by the late Charles Perkins.

2025 NATIONAL ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER SPORTS AWARDS

National sportsperson of the year: Tamika Upton

Lifetime Achievement award: Evonne Goolagong Cawley

Trailblazer of the year: Lydia Williams

Junior sportsperson of the year: Landen Smales (Surfing)

Sportsperson with a disability of the year: Katelyn Smith (ParaMatildas)

Team of the year: Fitzroy Stars (Australian Rules)

Official of the year: James Dean (Tennis umpire)

Coach of the year: David Williams (Football)

Sports Media: Charlie King (Broadcasting)

Volunteer of the year: April Le Seur (Rumbalara Football Netball Club)

Senior Elder of the year: Biirrinba Coastal Emus (2025 Elders Olympics winners)

Sporting Organisation of the year: Arrernte Community Boxing Academy

Competition of the year: Murri Carnival (Rugby League, Queensland)

Supporting strong First Nations outcomes. Challenge accepted.

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

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

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

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



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

Australia's leading energy company



SPORT

Duo's role in huge win

JARRED CROSS

Scott Boland and Brendan Doggett made history in the first Ashes Test with nine wickets between them as Australia secured a remarkable win inside two days.

A match-turning spell from Boland, a Gulidjan man, helped put Australia 1-0 ahead, with the advantage pressed home by Travis Head's quickfire century late on Saturday.

The first two Indigenous Australians to play together in nearly 150 years of Test cricket, Boland and debutante Doggett took seven scalps between them in England's second dig, with the more experienced of the pair leading the second-innings tally with 4-33.

"I'm quite close with Scotty ... and to have that Indigenous background with all three of us (including former Test bowler and Kamilaroi man Jason Gillespie), that had a special touch," Doggett said on Saturday morning regarding his baggy green presentation a day earlier. "That's something I'm really proud of as well, to be the third Indigenous (man) to wear the baggy green."

Before Head reached triple figures in 69 balls, Boland and Doggett, a Worimi man, helped keep the required chase down to 205, taking the bulk of nine English wickets to fall in the middle session in Perth.

Head (123) and Marnus Labuschagne (51 not out) guided Australia to an eight-wicket victory on day two.

England looked to be building an insurmountable total in a contest dominated by the ball before a devastating three wickets inside two Boland overs kicked off a dramatic second session on Saturday.

Boland added to his reputation for taking over in his second innings with the ball; taking three wickets in 11 balls straight after lunch.



Scott Boland celebrates the wicket of England's Ollie Pope on day two. Picture: Gary Day/AP

England had worked their way to 1-65 after Zac Crawley was removed for his second duck of the match by Mitchell Starc.

Boland's rapid removal of Ben Duckett (28), Ollie Pope (33) and Harry Brook for a duck on return from the main break started a collapse of nine English wickets for less than 100 runs.

The Boland burst left England reeling at 4-76.

He had a fourth, caught by Doggett in the deep, to usher in

the tea break with England all out for 164.

Australia had fallen 40 runs short of par with their first innings at the start of the day.

"I know it's one of those days where you don't feel great at the crease, but put that behind me last night," Boland said after his 4-33.

"I did want to start a bit fuller yesterday (Friday) with the new ball, but I think I found my length, my natural length, today. And that worked."

Doggett's Test career got off

to a good start with 2-27 in the first innings. He took another three wickets, for 51, in the second.

He broke a 50-run eighth-wicket partnership between Brydon Carse and Gus Atkinson, clipping Carse's glove.

Doggett the removed the dangerous Jamie Smith — the decision sent upstairs after being given not out on field when Head pushed for another look at it.

Steve Smith held on at mid-wicket when Jofra Archer

mistimed a pull shot off length.

Doggett, ultimately finishing with match figures of 5-78 on debut, admitted he was nervous standing at the top of his mark before his first delivery.

"The moment I started running in, I thought 'well, there's no backing out now', so let's just see what happens. And fortunately, my first ball was all right," he said.

Starc, whose consistent fast bowling unsettled England, took 10 wickets for the match.

Barty champions First 5 Forever initiative for children

JOSEPH GUENZLER

Ngarigo woman and tennis champion Ash Barty joined families in Ipswich on World Children's Day to promote Queensland's First 5 Forever initiative last week.

First 5 Forever was launched in 2015 and is delivered through 325 public libraries and Indigenous Knowledge Centres across the State.

Ms Barty said the program offered an important way for families to support early development.

"First 5 Forever is such an important way for children to be able to learn and grow up and develop their skills," she said.

"And as parents, you are the child's first teacher."

She said simple daily activities made a significant difference.

"It's understanding that you can really help develop your child in those first five years with some really simple basic things that you do at home every day," she said.

"Whether it's talking, it's singing, it's playing... different ways of being able to challenge your child and create a really fun environment where they have the curiosity to learn."

Ms Barty said she used these ideas with her own son.

She said First 5 Forever sessions also helped parents connect with each other and noted literacy and



Ash Barty, Ipswich Mayor Teresa Harding and Matilda.

culture remain important for mob and their children.

"It's about appreciating and understanding where you come from," Ms Barty said.

"It's about appreciating culture and understanding that cultures are different. They need to be

respected. They need to be honoured and celebrated. And certainly for our culture, for me, it's something that is to be celebrated every single day."

Ms Barty said connecting with community was a vital part of her work now.

"I just try and be me... each and every day I try and be the very best version of myself," she said.

"And now my job and career, I suppose, and purpose has shifted a little bit.

"I get to spend more time with people and hear about their stories and connect with them and share my own experiences. It's something that I love to do."

Ms Barty has also become a

successful author following her retirement from tennis.

Her memoir *My Dream Time: A Memoir of Tennis & Teamwork* has become one of Australia's top-selling sports autobiographies.

Her Little Ash series of children's books — including titles such as *Perfect Match*, *Tennis Rush* and *Friendship Fix-it* — is inspired by her own childhood and family. Her picture book *My Dream Holiday* shares the adventures of her family trips to Minjerribah.

State Librarian Vicki McDonald, said the First 5 Forever program prioritised support for young children and gave caregivers simple ways to help their kids learn through play.