



# Annual Report

## 2023-2024

WARNING: While the North Queensland Land Council Native Title Representative Body Aboriginal Corporation (NQLC) has made every effort to ensure this Annual Report does not contain material of a culturally sensitive nature, Aboriginal people should be aware that there could be images of deceased people.

Preparation of this report is funded by the National Indigenous Australians Agency.

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# Cover Art



## 'On Country'

GAYLEE DE BREE

### Story:

'On Country we develop a strong Cultural and Spiritual connection.

On Country we share knowledge & wisdom passed down through generations after generations.

On Country we go back to basics and learn to share, bond and really feel the true meaning of Bama.

On Country we learn the importance of our Lands and waterways and how to survive as our ancestors did.'



### About the Artist:

Gaylee is a proud Kuku Yalanji woman and Indigenous artist from Far North Queensland. Painting has been a significant part of her life for as long as she can remember, though she set it aside while raising her children. As they grew older, she returned to her art, which became a powerful means of healing and deepened her emotional connection to her culture and country.

Drawing on the knowledge and stories passed down from her Elders and family, Gaylee blends her cultural heritage with a unique personal style. Her vibrant, bold colors stand in contrast to traditional earthy tones, and she often incorporates whimsical animals like dragonflies, butterflies, and seahorses into her work.

Her journey as an artist reflects growth, learning, and accomplishment, and she embraces her role as a proud Indigenous woman, at peace with where she stands today. Through her work, she invites others to join her on a fascinating artistic adventure where tradition meets personal expression.



Connect with Gaylee:

 [artbygaylee.com](http://artbygaylee.com)

 [Art By Gaylee](#)

 [artbygaylee@hotmail.com](mailto:artbygaylee@hotmail.com)

Scan the QR code to visit her website.

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# 1 OUR ORGANISATION



The NQLC receives its funding from the National Indigenous Australians Agency (NIAA).

The NQLC representative area extends from the Daintree and 4km north west of the Bloomfield Rivers in the east to just south-east of Ilbilbie and just west of Hayden and east to include the waters that are within the Exclusive Economic Zone of Australia. The land and waters of the NQLC is approximately 943,300 km<sup>2</sup>, with approximately 411,164 km<sup>2</sup> of this being land (see Figure 1).

The region includes the local government authorities of Burdekin Shire Council, Cairns Regional Council, Cassowary Coast Regional Council, Charters Towers Regional Council,

Croydon Shire Council, Douglas Shire Council, Etheridge Shire Council, Flinders Shire Council, Hinchinbrook Shire Council, Isaac Regional Council, Mackay Regional Council, Mareeba Shire Council, McKinlay Shire Council, Palm Island Aboriginal Shire Council, Richmond Shire Council, Tablelands Regional Council, Townsville City Council, Whitsundays Shire Council and Yarrabah Aboriginal Shire Council.

The region is as diverse in its landscapes as it is in its culture, from the marine environment of the Great Barrier Reef to the coast and upland to the western areas which covers seven bioregions on land. These bioregions include the Central Queensland Coast, Brigalow Belt and Wet Tropics of the coastal and upland areas, then the Einasleigh Uplands and Desert Uplands to out west to the Mitchell Grass Downs and the Savannah Gulf Plains.

There is a major concentration of Indigenous population on the coast that becomes less dense as you move westwards. The region contains two large Deed of Grant in Trust (DOGIT) communities governed by Yarrabah and Palm Island Aboriginal Shire Councils. There are also major Indigenous populations in Townsville/Thuringowa, Cairns, Mackay, Innisfail, Mareeba, Burdekin, Charters Towers, Mossman, Bowen, Atherton, Sarina, Ingham, Tully, Cardwell, Richmond, Nebo/Mirani, Herberton, Ravenshoe, Kuranda, Mount Garnet, Croydon, and the Jumbun Community.

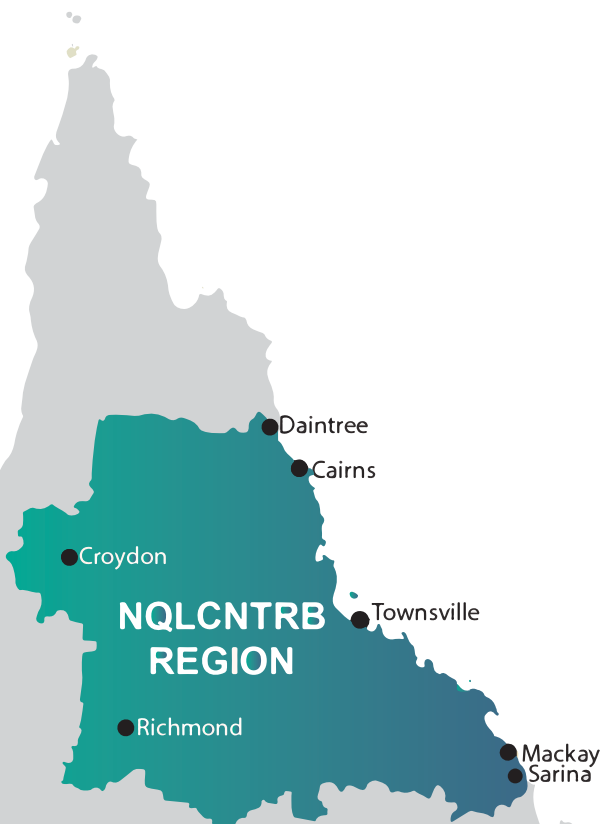


FIGURE 1:  
The Area of Responsibility of the NQLC Native Title Representative Body

# 1.1 Roles & Functions

## 1.1.1 Legislation

The primary legislation which the NQLC is concerned with is the Commonwealth Native Title Act (1993) which defines the statutory functions of an NTRB. The NQLC, in the context of representing native title claims also deals with the Native Title (Queensland) Act (1993) and other relevant Federal and State legislation.

The NQLC was incorporated on 28 March 1994 under the then Aboriginal Councils and Associations Act 1976 and is now registered under the Corporations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) Act 2006 (CATSI Act). The NQLC is required to comply with various conditions of the CATSI Act and Corporations Law which cover such matters as the setting up and functioning of the corporate

governance of the organisation, holding of the Annual General Meetings (AGM) and the provision of the yearly financial statements.

The NQLC, like all other organisations is subject to a raft of general legislation, examples being:

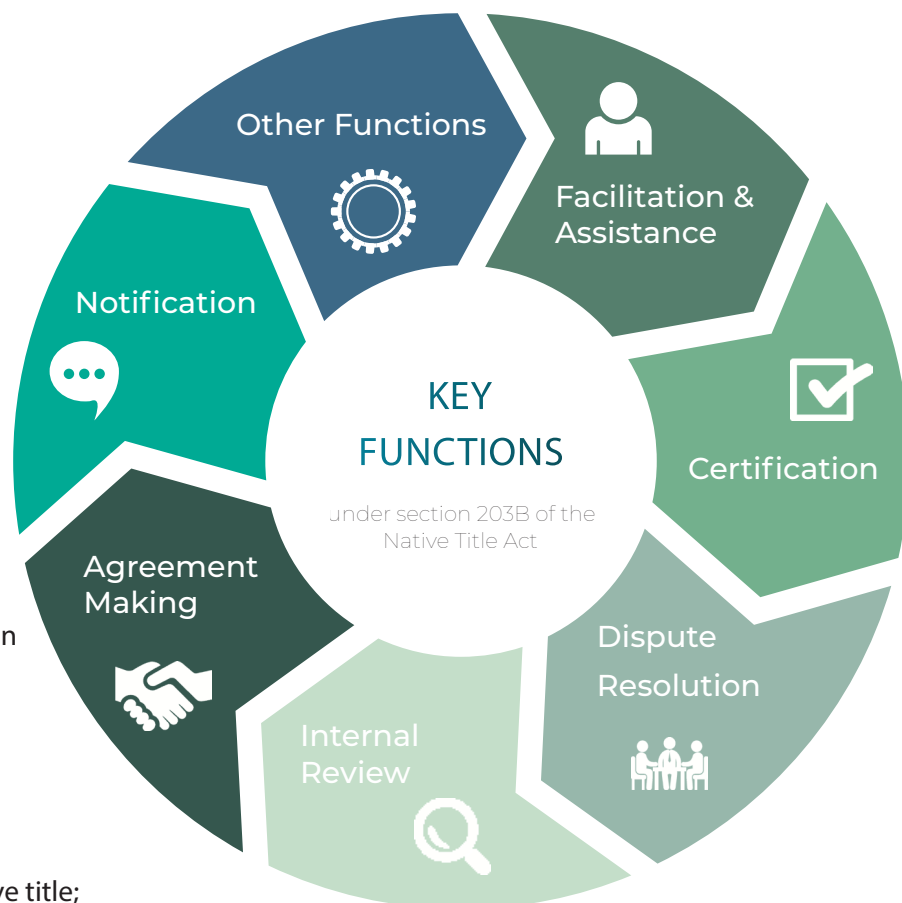
- Commonwealth Authorities and Companies Act 1997;
- Taxation and Superannuation Laws; and
- Industrial Relations and Workplace Legislation.

The North Queensland Land Council (NQLC) is a proactive Aboriginal Corporation recognised as a Native Title Representative Body (NTRB) under Section (s) 203AD of the Native Title Act 1993 (Cth) to preserve, protect and promote the recognition of native title in the North Queensland representative region. We strive to achieve the resolution of native title claims and support the ongoing aspirations of recognised native title holders.



## 1.1.2 Legislative Functions

As a recognised NTRB, the NQLC has the following statutory functions under section 203B of the NTA:



Other functions arising out of section 203BJ of the NTA:

- Enter written arrangements with neighbouring NTRBs regarding facilitation and assistance functions;
- Identification of native title holders;
- Promotion of understanding of native title;
- Informing native title holders and bodies corporate of matters impacting native title;
- Consult with Aboriginal communities; and
- Cooperate with other NTRBs to maximise efficiencies. In recent years the number of registered Native Title Bodies Corporate (PBCs) has increased due to the number of determinations achieved by the NQLC. To support this demand, NQLC has increased its support for PBCs through approved funding and in the supply of training and support for corporations.

## 1.1.3 Corporate Governance Policies

The function of the Board of Directors (Board) is to set the broad policies and directions of the organisation. The rules provide for a separation of powers which keeps the Board at arm's length from the

day to day management of the corporation, which is the responsibility of the Chief Executive Officer (CEO). For more details see the Corporate Governance section of this report.



## 1.2 Operational Plan

The annual Operational Plan, approved by both the Board and NIAA, outlines the activities that the NQLC intend to undertake (native title claims and special projects) over the following year.

## 1.3 Outcome and Output Structure

The NQLC has detailed objectives and outcome statements along with key performance indicators to measure outcome targets in its Strategic Plan. The NQLC has continued to implement the output groups reporting structure, including the development of electronic record keeping and reporting on output groups. The NQLC provides performance and financial reports to NIAA biannually.

The NQLC has continued to utilise appropriate internal systems to record achievements against the output group structure. These include outcomes database, meetings database and a modification of our accounting system to record financial transactions in the various output groups.

The NQLC continues to achieve and deliver a high standard of service provided to native title holders. The NQLC aims to have at least four meetings per year for each native title working group. In priority claims and intensive negotiations (for example to settle the claim, develop ILUAs or negotiate mining agreements) there are often many more meetings than the minimum requirement. This ensures that native title holders are informed about progress and developments in the negotiation of their claims, as well as providing the maximum opportunity for traditional owners to make a direct contribution towards the conduct of their claims.

## OUR VALUES



Cultural sensitivity, including the respect for traditional lore and customs of native title groups.



Quality, professional service in accordance with the functions identified in the NTA.



Fair, transparent, accountable, responsible and just operations and processes.



Leadership and excellence in corporate governance practice.



Honesty, professionalism and accountability to traditional owners in the delivery of our services.



Optimum distribution of resources to achieve native title and other outcomes.



Maximum participation of, and collaboration with, traditional owners and other stakeholders in native title processes.



Responsiveness to the changing operating environment of NTRBs.

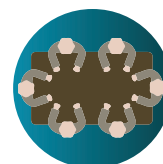


Maintenance of a harmonious and productive workplace conducive to the achievement of native title and other outcomes.



Encouragement and promotion of employment, training and professional development of Aboriginal people within the region.

# 2 Board of DIRECTORS



Members of the Board are elected on a ward system, which is designed to ensure that there is representation across the geographic area covered by the NQLC. In most cases, members elected have a term of two years, holding office from the end of one Annual General Meeting (AGM) until the AGM following in two years.

## Ward Meetings (Elections)

No ward elections took place in this reporting period. In accordance with the NQLC rule book, elections will take place in the NQLC's 10 representative wards in the second half of 2023, to elect the directors for the 2023-2025 term.

## 2023 Annual General Meeting

NQLC's 2023 Annual General Meeting was held on 4th November 2023 in Townsville. Please refer to the Chairperson's Report for more information.

NQLC REPRESENTATIVE WARDS	DIRECTORS AS AT 30/06/2023	DIRECTORS AS AT 30/06/2024
CAIRNS WARD	Sarah Addo Warren Martens	Sarah Addo Warren Martens
CHARTERS TOWERS / HUGHENDEN WARD	Richard Hoolihan	Richard Hoolihan
INNISFAIL WARD	Rona Hart	Rona Hart
MACKAY/ PROSERPINE WARD	Gary Mooney	Ross Sauney <sup>1</sup> Gary Mooney <sup>2</sup>
MT GARNET WARD	Danny Hooligan	<b>Danny Hooligan - Resigned 12th April 2024</b>
PALM ISLAND WARD	Delena Foster	Alf Lacey
TABLELAND WARD	Kaylene Malthouse Joann Schmider	Joann Schmider <b>Tracey Joseph - Resigned 26th March 2024</b>
TULLY WARD	Nicole Huxley	<b>Nicole Huxley - Resigned 15th April 2024</b>
TOWNSVILLE / AYR WARD	Angie Akee	Angie Akee

TABLE 1: NQLC Representative Wards and their Directors

OFFICE BEARERS	2023	2024
CHAIR	Richard Hoolihan	Angie Akee
DEPUTY CHAIR	Angie Akee	Sarah Addo
TREASURER	Nicole Huxley	Alf Lacey
CORRESPONDENCE SECRETARY	Sarah Addo	Errol Neal

TABLE 2: NQLC Office Bearers

<sup>1</sup>At the NQLC Ward Elections on 21st October 2023, Mr Ross Sauney was elected as a Director by members to represent the Mackay/ Proserpine Ward. Mr Sauney resigned from that position on 14th February 2024.

<sup>2</sup>A NQLC Board Meeting was held on the 15th April 2024, to fill the Mackay/ Proserpine Ward vacancy created by Mr Sauney's resignation. The Board endorsed Mr Gary Mooney as the Director for the Mackey/ Proserpine Ward.

# Our Directors

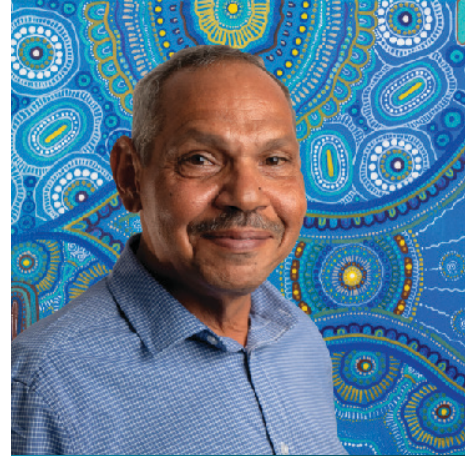
as at 30 June 2024



**Angie Akee - Chair**  
Townsville/Ayr Ward



**Sarah Addo - Dep Chair**  
Cairns Ward



**Alf Lacey - Treasurer**  
Palm Island Ward



**Errol Neal - Corr. Secretary**  
Yarrabah Ward



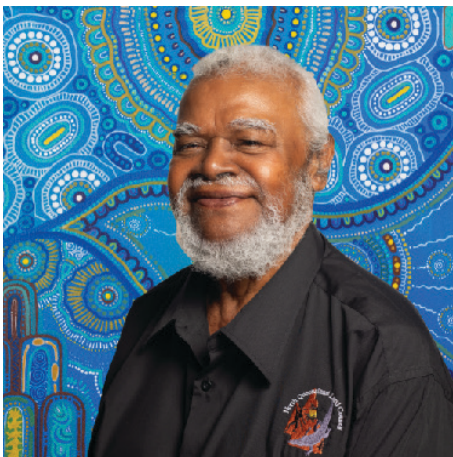
**Warren Martens - Director**  
Cairns Ward



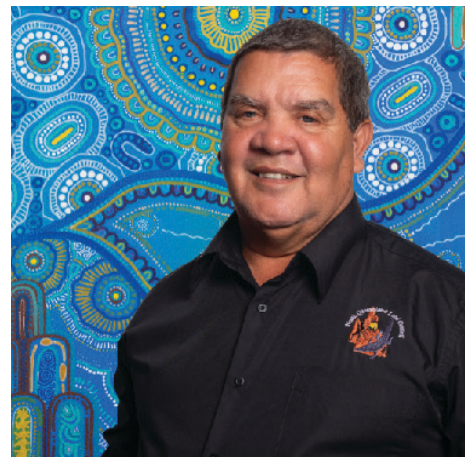
**Rona Hart - Director**  
Innisfail Ward



**Joann Schmider - Director**  
Tablelands Ward



**Gary Mooney - Director**  
Mackay/Proserpine Ward



**Richard Hoolihan - Director**  
Charters Towers / Hughenden Ward

- Tablelands Ward - Vacant from 27th March 2024
- Mt Garnet Ward - Vacant from 13th April 2024
- Tully Ward - Vacant from 16th April 2024



**Our Vision** is for a region in which the native title rights and interests of every native title holder has been legally recognised and in which Aboriginal people benefit culturally, socially and economically from the secure possession of their traditional lands and waters. To ensure the continuance of an organisation with good governance as a fundamental and which gives traditional owners a representative board through the ward election process.



# 3 Chairperson REPORT

I take a moment to recognise our Traditional Owners, who continue to thrive on country throughout the North Queensland Land Council region. We acknowledge our enduring connection to our unceded lands, the sustainable use of our waters, and the strength of our rich culture.

Respect is extended to all Elders—past, present, and emerging. Their leadership through the various Native Title determination process is commended. This is a complex undertaking and securing agreement through consent can be challenging – given the trauma and dispossession that has occurred in the past. I take the time to acknowledge the year as the 31st year since the Mabo decision. For NQLC our history goes back further to the early 1970's – we are working to confirm our original birth date and hold a celebration commemorate our origins.

As the Chairperson I am responsible for setting the tone around the board table and confirming the vision to secure positive outcomes for first nations people. I lead the strategy development for NQLC, to guide the operational planning and service implementation. For all who are actively involved in the Native Title space we extend thanks and praise for the dedication commitment shown – this most often is voluntary work but vital to securing native title rights and interest whilst maintaining your culture and identify as traditional peoples of the land. In lieu of a better alternative, we remain

committed to completing the task of securing Native Title recognition within the North Queensland Land Council footprint and ensuring Native Title recognition is a priority considering in all future development plans on country.

As the leader of NQLC governing council, I acknowledge my fellow directors, who represent the ten wards in our region – your representatives. Each director serves their ward outside of meetings, in our meetings they bring their unique perspectives and combine this into corporate decisions. During this reporting period, directors performed the following subcommittee roles:

- Executive Subcommittee – Chairperson, Deputy Chairperson, Treasurer, Secretary:
- Finance, Audit, Risk Management, Information Technology subcommittee (FARMIT) – Treasurer and 2 directors
- Building Indigenous Economic Independence in North Queensland project subcommittee (BIENQ) – Chairperson and 2 directors
- Nominations subcommittee - Secretary and 2 directors

All subcommittees have recommendation powers only. All recommendations are forwarded to the full board for ratification at the next board meeting. Each director has made a declaration to serve in the role as a director and safeguard the board from risk. As a team we are working to support the strategic goals of the organization and secure the future of NQLC.

Our dedicated staff continue to demonstrate their skills, knowledge and abilities. Through the CEO and his executive management team, their leadership is well regarded in the sector and amongst their peers. As we work together to navigate the complexities of native title, staff continue to work diligently to apply the legal and administrative processes fairly.

Working with the CEO we aim to demonstrate stability and strength. Around the board table we respect the roles and responsibilities entrusted in us. Our commitment to servitude is evident. As a passionate representative of my people, I am committed to ensuring that the native title rights and interests of every Traditional Owner in our region are legally recognised, the process for engagement is inclusive and we help our members to identify issues the resolve matters efficiently. Together, we are striving to implement the requirement for “Free

Prior and Informed Consent” (FPIC) to be reflected in every agreement. With the current state of play, NQLC recognises the evolving nature of the landscape and our challenge secure our rights and interests.

Guided by our good governance framework, the NQLC board of directors remains focused on:

- Advocating for native title rights and interests - “Free, Prior and Informed Consent”
- Securing determinations through the claims process
- Supporting Traditional Owner groups
- Collaborating with stakeholders to identify social and economic opportunities
- Promoting NQLC as a leader in the Native Title sector
- Empowering our employees to do their best work

We are dedicated to developing plans that align with the cultural, social, and economic aspirations of our traditional owners on their traditional lands and waters.

NQLC continues to pursue its service aspirations in line with our operational goals and strategic plans.

On behalf of the Board, I am proud to commend this as the NQLC’s 2023–2024 Annual Report.

## TRUTH TELLING & MOVING FORWARD

The momentum for Truth Telling has been enlivened for Queensland.

As a Queensland State Government initiative, NQLC will seek to actively engage as a key stakeholder representing the North Queensland Region.

To properly move forward, Queensland Government has been gifted an opportunity to engage its First Peoples in this healing process. This process of truth-telling is essential for acknowledging the historical injustices and harsh treatment thrust upon our people by past governments. The mechanism will

pave the way for genuine engagement and progress toward reconciliation.

Truth-telling serves to shed light on the harmful impacts past historical acts has had on us the first people of the land. What this involves is direct engagement between the government and community members and particularly shared stories from our elders who have lived experience and witnessed the past acts. The impacts of colonisation have profoundly affected our people, through acts of injustice which include (but not limited to) the forced



removal of individuals to reserves, dispossession, erosion of culture, indentured labor and stolen wages – all under past government legislation to expand the colony (the Protection Act).

The outcome will include options for the state government and movement toward a treaty. The truth telling is separate process to the consent determination contained in the Native Title Act.

We appreciate our members will have an opinion about NQLC as having a part in the process – in this regard, NQLC as a stakeholder will participate in the Truth Telling process and to share information to our members. This however is a community process which PBC's as recognised entities can coordinate especially for our elders. It will require everyone to be active participants, and we encourage all members who have lived experience to be involved and have your voices heard.

It is imperative that we recognise and honor the experiences of our people, this is part of the healing process and setting a certain future for all first peoples in Queensland.

Our truth-telling is our stories of our people, grounded by our culture and our connection to country. The truth in this narrative is critical for ensuring history is accurately told, accounts captured and understood. Only by acknowledging and disclosing the truth can we begin to heal.

Through truth-telling, we not only honor the past, we also empower ourselves to create a future that reflects our aspirations and rights as first peoples of the land. As we navigate this journey, we remain committed to ensuring that our voices are heard, and our stories continue to be told.

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## WARD ELECTIONS AND ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The 2023-2024 reporting period, captured the bi-annual ward elections and accounts of the Annual General Meeting.

At the conclusion of the ward election process, there were notable changes to three ward representatives on the Board of Directors:

- Ross Sauney for Mackay and Sarina Ward;
- Alf Lacey for the Palm Island Ward; and
- Tracey Joseph for the Tableland Ward.

NQLC held its 2023 Annual General Meeting on 4th November 2023 in Townsville. At the AGM, Chairperson and Chief Executive Officer reports were presented by then Chairperson Richard Hoolihan and CEO Leon Yeatman and accepted by the members.

The Annual Financial Report for the year ending 30 June 2023 was tabled by Helen Wilkes, Auditor and Partner at Grant Thornton Australia Limited, and accepted by the membership. Continuing our history of strong financial performance, NQLC received an unqualified audit report once again the reporting period. In 2024 NQLC continued to demonstrate sound financial management, risk management and accounting procedures to again record a positive audit result.

Grant Thornton was also retained as NQLC's auditors for the reporting period ending 30 June 2024. The Annual Financial Report for the year ending 30 June 2024 will be presented at the 2024 Annual General Meeting.

The selection of the Executive Committee of the board occurred at the ordinary board meeting held on 30th November 2023. The new Executive Committee was as follows:

Chairperson – Director Angie Akee;

Deputy Chairperson – Director Sarah Addo;

Treasurer – Director Alf Lacey;

Correspondence Secretary – Director Errol Neal.

The board thanked the outgoing directors and the board transitioned to the new Executive Committee.

## BOARD MEETINGS

During the 2023 - 2024 reporting period the board met its obligation to hold a minimum of four meeting (minimum - once every three months). In total there were eight Board of Director Meetings held in person and virtually.

Technical issues associated with the devices supplied to directors affected director participation and was being addressed as part NQLC's IT device management process. NQLC is committed to holding paperless meetings and demonstrating cost effectiveness in our board expenditure.

Meeting	In Person	Virtual	Total
Board	5	1	6
WARD REPRESENTATIVE ATTENDANCE			
Ward	In Person	Virtual	Total
Atherton 1	2	3	5
Atherton 2	1	1	2
Cairns 1	4	1	5
Cairns 2	4	2	6
Mt Garnett	2	-	2
Yarrabah	3	1	4
Innisfail	1	1	2
Tully	1	-	1
Palm Island	3	-	3
Ayr / Townsville	5	1	6
Hughenden / Charters Towers	5	-	5
Mackay / Proserpine	5	-	5

TABLE 3: WARD REPRESENTATIVE ATTENDANCE

The following is a summary of the subcommittee\* meetings held during the reporting period:

Meeting	In person	Virtual
Executive Subcommittee	2	
Finance, Audit, Risk Management, Information Technology subcommittee (FARMIT)	1	
Building Indigenous Economic Independence in North Queensland project subcommittee (BIENQ)	2	
Nominations subcommittee	0	

TABLE 4: SUBCOMMITTEE MEETINGS

\*all matters addressed at subcommittee meetings are considered to be tabled and all recommendations arising from this forum is the forward to the next board meeting for ratification.



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## WHERE TO IN THE NEXT 12 MONTHS

North Queensland Land Council will continue to look forward with certainty and pride.

As the Chairperson, I will focus on engaging with political leaders following the 2024 Queensland election. I will work with QRBA members to identify key issues and actively pursue opportunities for engagement with meaningful outputs involved.

As a team, I intend to work with my fellow directors to foster a stronger working relationship and promote teamwork with our Board Members.

For our members and stakeholders I intend to engage in my ward and advocate strongly in our sector. I will reach out to our RNTBC's and discuss a leadership forum of RNTBC Chairpersons – to open up the communication channels, promote a new era of engagement and chart a new course into the future. Our presence at community events is limited. I will work with the CEO to improve NQLC service representation in community events. Planning is underway to hold a Youth event to engage and inspire the next generation – details will be communicated when final approvals are confirmed.

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I want to acknowledge the continued and valuable partnership between NQLC Native Title Representative Body and

- the Office of the Registrar of Indigenous Corporations (ORIC).
- the National Indigenous Australians Agency (NIAA),

Our service arrangement is underpinned by service agreement, demonstrated good governance, sound financial management and compliance. We remain committed to serving our clients and helping to secure Native Title rights and interest, creating social and economic opportunities, and representing the Traditional Owners in our region.

Over the past year, we have made great strides in advancing native title rights, supporting our communities, and upholding our strong governance practices. Although the road ahead will present new challenges, I am confident that, through truth-telling, collaboration, and the preservation of our rich culture, we will continue to grow.

On behalf of the North Queensland Land Council, I extend my sincere gratitude for your ongoing support and trust in our work.

Together, we will walk the path set for us, honouring the past, embracing the present, and building a future that we can proudly recognise as ours.

**Angie Akee**  
Chairperson





NQLC Board of Directors and CEO. Back row left to right: Director Warren Martens, Director Gary Mooney, CEO Leon Yeatman, Director Richard Hoolihan, Ex-Director Danny Hooligan. Front row left to right: EX-Director Kaylene Malthouse, Director Joann Schmdier, Chair Angie Akee, Ex-Director Delena Foster, Director Rona Hart. (Missing: Director Alf Lacey, Director Sarah Addo and Director Errol Mala Neal)

# 4 CEO REPORT

Wanjirra bama, Ngadjin bama Leon Yeatman bulmba Gunggandji - Yarrabah.

Hello people, I am Leon Yeatman my home is Gunggandji Country – Yarrabah.

I acknowledge our traditional custodians across North Queensland, the first peoples of our lands and waters. I pay respects to our elder’s past, acknowledging the role they played in maintaining culture and framing the agenda. I acknowledge the cohort of current leaders who continue to stand up and being counted. The quest for social justice, native title recognition and securing a better future for our people is a long game requiring vision, resilience and

robust energy. As we continue forward on the path to progress, we are reminded to ‘know where we come from – to know where we are going’.

Wow! Another year has come and gone. As I pause to reflect, this year did not disappoint. Overall, it was another positive reporting period for our business. Issues encountered were addressed with empathy and inclusion, crucially NQLC continued to show up and be part of the solution. Our interactions and engagement with our stakeholders are always professional, productive and with focus on progress toward achieving our goals.

## NQLC’S PERFORMANCE & SUCCESSFUL OUTCOMES

NQLC continues to stand tall, and our key goal to secure re-recognition as a Representative Body was successful, including funding for three years. Our client engagement continued to be constructive in all aspects of our work – we acknowledge we cannot please everyone, but when invited, we show up to help find a way forward. NQLC is

committed to customer service, recognising all complaints or criticism as constructive and applying a continuous improvement mindset. Our complaints management process records all complaints, with responses provided in a timely manner.

The board changed during the year, and I acknowledge the directors who performed in the Chairperson role – directors Richard Hoolihan and Angie Akee respectively. NQLC boasts experienced and capable leaders who show up, speak up and

perform the role honourably. Our board met regularly and fulfilled their duties as directors, with both face-to-face and online meetings. The board also used the sub-committee structure to progress agenda items.

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## STRATEGIC DOCUMENT REVIEW & MEMBER CONSULTATION

A key activity for the year was the Strategic Document review, facilitated by consulting firm Grant Thornton. The review included a look at the Rulebook (consolidated in 2017), the Strategic Plan 2016-2019, and Corporate Policies. The process started in August 2023 and was completed in May 2024.

The review identified the need for a phased approach for member consultation on the Proposed Rulebook:

- Phase One: Conduct a series of meetings in each of the 10 wards in our service region.
- Phase Two: Edit the Proposed Rulebook and incorporate amendments and suggestions from ORIC and NIAA, followed by member consultation in Cairns and Townsville.
- Phase Three: Organise a general meeting for member endorsement, before being sent to the Registrar at ORIC for approval.

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## COMMITMENT TO EMPLOYMENT & TEAM EFFORTS

NQLC is proud to offer a safe work environment, and our commitment as an equal employment opportunity provider continues. As an Indigenous organisation, we are always on the lookout for Indigenous talent. We continue to focus on attracting and retaining First Nations candidates for role vacancies. Our recruitment actions are talent- and merit-based, and we aspire to make NQLC an employer of choice.

A few key positional vacancies existed during the year, and the workload in most instances was shared within teams. I commend the efforts of our team members who shouldered the additional burden to maintain service standards and strong performance. As the vacancies were filled, the workload was dispersed, and full attention was redirected to work plans.

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## MILESTONES & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The year continued to register a number of firsts for me – my first round of ward elections, my first AGM, and first board change. As part of our core role to secure Native Title Determination, I was honoured to attend my first determination ceremony, the Wakkaman #3, #4 & #5 consent determination held in August 2023 in Chillagoe. Thanks to the staff, the event was well-coordinated, and the ceremony was well-attended. As with all ceremonies on country, the occasion was marked by the High Court hearing held on country. Country men and women came from far and wide to mark this momentous occasion for Wakkaman people in their country.

Our presence in the community remained focused on Native Title representation. Staff were encouraged to increase participation and involvement in community events. This didn't require significant changes, just showing up. Hopefully, these small steps will help improve our visibility. As CEO, I have engaged with other Indigenous CEOs in Cairns through informal chats and meetings. I have also authorised information sharing and promotion via our social media platform. We share a responsibility to represent our region, and engaging with our service partners helps promote unity, resilience, camaraderie, and sharing. The plan is to shape our narrative and enhance our social dialogue.

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## COMMUNITY HISTORY & THE FUTURE OF NQLC

Something closer to heart, during the year, I had a chance meeting in our Cairns office with a community member who, on a hot sunny day, had dropped in for a cool spell and a cup of water. She shared with me her family history, which included NQLC in the 1970s, and she asked, "Where are all the old photos?"

For members who have not visited our Cairns office, we have banners in our waiting area celebrating past events and images of participants. The board

was informed about this question and asked me to investigate our history – to identify key milestones and, particularly, our origin story. For Cairns members and families involved in NQLC, we seek your support to share any images from the past – your story is our story, and we need to showcase this history. We are planning a project to commemorate our 30th year in Native Title and to recognise our 50th year operating as the North Queensland Land Council.

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## NQLC'S ROLE ON A NATIONAL & STATE STAGE

In 2024, NQLC is recognised as one of the 14 Native Title Representative Bodies and Service Providers in Australia and one of five in Queensland. Our standing in the sector is highly regarded, and NQLC continues to lead and promote solidarity. On the national stage, we attend national conferences and contribute to the national agenda.

During the past 12 months, NQLC continued to actively participate at national and state arenas. The board approved Chairperson and CEO participation in National Native Title Council (NNTC) activities. As NQLC's representative, I have been an active member

of the NNTC Leadership Working Group, Steering Committee, Sea Country Alliance meetings, and I was honoured to co-chair the Cultural Heritage Alliance.

The national agenda continues to focus on policies and issues involving the Federal Government via the Native Title Act 1993. The complexities of state-based issues make these conversations very interesting, and I am happy to report that the rapport and respect around the national table has led to constructive engagement and strong relationships. NQLC interactions will continue to be proactive, supportive, engaging, with actions reflecting strong leadership and collaboration.

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## THE FUTURE & CHALLENGES AHEAD

The aspirations signalled in the previous Annual Report about the Northern Australia Alliance experienced a significant blow with the sad passing of Northern Land Council Chairperson Bush-Blanasi. Members remain optimistic, but for this period, the momentum has stalled. Once the situation settles, we anticipate collaboration and activities to recommence between our partners across northern Australia.

The state agenda was re-energised via the Queensland Representative Body Alliance, and NQLC hosted a meeting at our Cairns office to inject positive energy into this space. Members recognise room for improvement, and each of the alliance member CEOs is working on a plan to operationalise strategies, improve interagency dialogue, and engage with the state.



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## STAFFING & ENTERPRISE AGREEMENT PROGRESS

NQLC boasts a very proud organisational culture that continues to thrive. We have solid foundations, clearly defined structures, safe work conditions, functional equipment, a code of conduct, and operational policies aligned to the business. We continued to enjoy stability; however, as opportunities arise for individuals to move on, the change is viewed positively and seen as an opportunity. For those who left during the year, NQLC thanks you for your services and wishes you all the very best in your future endeavours.

The NQLC Enterprise Agreement (EA) negotiation commenced in 2024, with the existing EA concluding in 2021. On 28/05/2024, the NQLC CEO released a Notice of Employee Representational Rights (NERR) to staff, signalling our intention to begin the negotiation process. The process is active, and bargaining representatives are working with the NQLC Executive team headed by the CEO to negotiate a new Enterprise Agreement that balances business sustainability with employee needs.

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## THE FUTURE OF DATA & NATIVE TITLE SERVICES

NQLC is privileged to be a safe-keeping place for information and data collected over the past 30 years. We are considering how current policies will shape the management of stored data, how we can secure sovereignty, and help our PBC or stakeholders harness the power of data for our mob.

The complexity in our work cannot be understated. We are a legal service, providing niche services to clients who must demonstrate to the courts the strength of their connections to country, that members consent to the information presented, and then post-determination help create governance structures for the Registered Native Title Prescribed Body Corporate.

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NQLC is and will continue to be 'your way forward' for Native Title recognition.

Garru, nyun-du wawal (see you later).

### Leon Yeatman

Chief Executive Officer  
North Queensland Land Council



# 5 STRATEGIC PLAN

The following is a status report on the key priorities as contained in the Strategic Plan 2023—2029. The key goal is to ‘maximise stakeholder value and realise strategic ambition.’

## 1. Maintain status recognition as a Native Title Representative Body

Maintain NQLC’s recognition as an NTRB under the NTA

Item	Status	Comment
Introduce continuous improvement in service delivery and address matters identified in external reviews	Active	Commitment reflected in our internal and external audit processes, as well as in our actions to address issues arising from external reviews or complaints.
Maintain positive relationship with stakeholders and funding bodies.	Active	Chairperson, CEO and representatives are actively engaged with members, stakeholders and funding bodies – promoting the service and advocating for First Nations Rights and Interests

## 2. Finalisation outstanding native title claims

Finalise outstanding claims and identify new claims

Item	Status	Comment
Finalise existing native title claims	Active	PLO and Claims team actively managing works.
Identify and prioritise new native title claims on unclaimed Country	Active	PLO and claims team manage this process which includes Anthropology team (research). <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. New claim areas</li> <li>2. Current Claims - disputed areas</li> <li>3. Court Ordered Actions</li> <li>4. Non-Claimant Applications</li> </ol>
Identify fresh and salt water native title claims, and develop united sea claim for NQLC region	Active	NQLC working to build on current water actions (fresh and salt water). Queensland Representative Body Alliance and National Native Title Council forums also discussing strategies.
Identify and prepare historical compensation test claim for traditional custodians.	Inactive	Item identified as part of broader discussion points at QRBA and NNTC meetings.

### 3. Develop role for NQLC in post-determination environment

Maintain NQLC's relevance to stakeholders

Item	Status	Comment
Empower traditional custodians in their cultural responsibilities for looking after Country and protecting cultural intellectual property rights and traditional knowledge	Active	Working with PBC's to support governance arrangements and offer support services through funding. RNTBC's supported to maintain cultural decision frameworks and associated obligations – two world approach.
Diversify NQLC income and funding, including fee for service options	Active	BIENQ project is exploring this in detail. Project due for completion November 2024. Current funding arrangements restricts NQLC capacity in this regard.
Identify growth opportunities for economic development and incorporate economic subsidiary	Active	BIENQ project is exploring this in detail. Project due for completion November 2024
Strengthen advocacy, self-sufficiency and self-determination for traditional custodians and RNTBCs.	Active	Working with PBC's to implement governance arrangements and support services through funding assistance. Actively promoting options to address personnel development, organizational planning and service growth.

### 4. Improve communication with traditional custodians

Improve communication with stakeholders

Item	Status	Comment
Explain prioritisation of claims and NQLC resource allocation	Active	PLO works with the CEO create the Claims works plan – incorporate processes involving claimants and courts.
Continue to publish the quarterly NQLC native title newsletter Message Stick	Active	Media Officer role has responsibility for publishing Newsletters, Social Media Feeds, Web content and Annual Report
Make presentations to public, community and school groups and our constituents about the rights and interests of native title holders of our region and positive stories	Active	Our scope incorporates member engagement activities, PBC engagement and sector forums. NQLC's ability to extend our reach is limited by funding, staffing and other constraints. Positive messages promoted regularly.
Produce accessible and informative annual reports	Active	We are on track to complete 2024 Annual Report
Utilise other educational materials and programs	Active	Education materials and programs are reviewed periodically to consider the effectiveness and functionality.
Develop stakeholder engagement strategy and new partnerships	Active	Strategy being reviewed.
Undertake membership drive to increase membership base to strengthen representation of traditional custodians.	Active	NQLC Membership process actively promoted. All applications must be on the approved form and submitted for assessment by the Nominations Subcommittee before referral to the board for endorsement.

## 5. Manage risk and regulation

### High quality risk management and effective compliance

Item	Status	Comment
Update risk and compliance management and internal audit framework	Active	Risks reviewed annually in accordance with Accounting and Risk Management standards. Operational Risks are managed via NQLC WPHS committee, Internal Audit process and responsive to issues arising.
Finance Audit Risk Management & IT subcommittee established to provide oversight.	Active	BIENQ project is exploring this in detail. Project due for completion November 2024. Current funding arrangements restricts NQLC capacity in this regard.
Maintain compliance with Corporations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) Act, Native Title Act and funding agreements	Active	NQLC has a rapport with the Office of the Registrar for Indigenous Corporations (CATSI) and National Indigenous Agency Australia (NTA and Program Funding Agreement).
Communication channels are open and regular dialogue legislation or related matters. NQLC is responsive to requests for information or questions about our service delivery standards.	Active	Working with PBC's to implement governance arrangements and support services through funding assistance. Actively promoting options to address personnel development, organisational planning and service growth.
Implement new rule book	Active	<p>Rulebook review completed and rulebook consultation initiated.</p> <p>Consultation process phases:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- First phase, in each ward.</li> <li>- Second phase, showcase edits in Cairns and Townsville.</li> <li>- Third phase, General Meeting and ORIC endorsement.</li> </ul> <p>Advice from ORIC –Strict adherence to processes. Recommend seeking advance comments from ORIC. The consolidated Rulebook remains, until new Rulebook approved by the Registrar.</p> <p>Advice from NIAA – understand the terms in Head Program Funding Agreement (PFA). Risk Mitigation contained and failure to meet the PFA terms will trigger notification process.</p>
Undertake three-year review of strategic plan in 2026	Active	First year operation (consideration required to accommodate annual AGM reporting and bi-annual election process).



## 6. Engage leadership and talent

### Engage and develop high quality leadership and talent

Item	Status	Comment
Continue to improve governance skills and capacity of directors	Active	ORIC provides free training covering the CATSI Act. Training information shared regularly using director email accounts.
NQLC IT devices managed by individual directors.	Active	BIENQ project is exploring this in detail. Project due for completion November 2024. Current funding arrangements restricts NQLC capacity in this regard.
Allocate portfolios for directors and improve participation and engagement of directors	Active	Roles of director identified in Rulebook and CATSI Act. Subcommittees active and chairs assigned by the board.
Maintain separation of powers	Active	This good governance principle is a key reference in the Consolidate Rulebook 2017.
Develop induction program for directors	Active	Induction uses ORIC (CATSI Act 2006) and NIAA content (conditions The Head Funding Agreement and Native Title Act 1993) and good governance practices.
Develop periodic evaluations of director and board performance	Active	Exploring options for Director evaluation.
Establish nominations committee to identify new directors	Active	Nominations committee established.
Identify training and development framework for directors and senior staff	Active	Process and planning to incorporate information from Board evaluation and Staff performance review recommendations.
Develop succession plan for directors and senior staff	Active	Succession plan to be reviewed and updated.
Recruit and retain traditional custodians	Active	NQLC is an Equal Employment Opportunity provider. Recruitment strategy to promote cultural values, career pathways and encourage Indigenous candidates to apply.



A tall waterfall cascading down a lush green cliffside. The water is white and frothy as it falls, surrounded by dense tropical vegetation. The scene is captured from a high angle, looking down the length of the waterfall.

# Our purpose

is to assist Aboriginal people in the NQLC region to maximise recognition of native title rights and interests and the benefits that flow from native title outcomes; to ensure that native title rights and interests are protected and maintained, and economic development opportunities are pursued.

# 5 Report on PERFORMANCE



## 5.1 Review of Performance relating to the Strategic and Operational Plans and by Functions

The NQLC's performance for the year ending 30 June 2024, as per its statutory functions, is summarised in Table 5.

In the 2023–2024 reporting period, there were no native title consent determinations until August. On 18 August 2023, Part A of the Wakaman #3, #4, and #5 claims was successfully determined.

One new claim was filed in the 2023-2024 reporting period:

1. Gia and Ngaro People

The total number of native title consent determinations within the region remains at 54. Work continues on active and proposed claims.

During the reporting period, two ILUAs were registered

in the region, and 585 Future Act Notifications were assessed and actioned. For further information, refer to section 5.2.2

# PERFORMANCE ACCORDING TO FUNCTIONS & OUTPUTS

## THE CLAIMS EXPERIENCE

Claimant Applications		
Active claims represented by NQLC at 1 July 2023		15
	Plus Claims filed 1 July 2023 - 30 June 2024 by the NQLC	1
	Less Claims Determined 1 July 2023- 30 June 2024	3
	Less Claims Dismissed 1 July 2023 - 30 June 2024	0
	Less Claims Withdrawn 1 July 2023 - 30 June 2024	0
	Less non native title outcome 1 July 2023 - 30 June 2024	0
Active Claims represented at 30 June 2024		13
	Number of these registered by NNTT (see note 1)	13
Claims in Development		Numerous
Non-Claimant Applications (as relevant)		4
Compensation Claims (as relevant)		0

## THE AGREEMENTS EXPERIENCE

Section 24 Future Act Notices (FANs) received		839
Response to Future Acts		2939
Section 29 Notices received		107
Notifications or grant/renewals, etc. received		134
Agreements:	Concluded	12
	In development	Numerous
Indigenous Land Use Agreements (ILUA):	Concluded and registered	4
	In development	Numerous
	Resolved	0
	Pending	Numerous

## COMPLAINTS AND DISPUTES

Complaints	Received	3
	Resolved	3
	Pending	0
Disputes relating to native title applications		3
Disputes relating to ILUAs, rights of access and other matters		0
Requests for Review of decisions not to assist	Received	1
	Completed	1

### Note 1

Previous Annual reports have accounted for one claim in the Wakaman proceedings, however they are three separate but interrelated matters and therefore have been accounted for as three matters.

### Note 2

The NQLC responds to FANs received by:

- Sending out copies of the notices to the persons appointed by each claim group for the receipt of FANs;
- Providing strategic advice to groups about the impact of Future Acts;
- Where instructed, formulating submissions on behalf of claimants to Future Acts; and
- Where a Future Act consists of a notification pursuant to the Mineral Resources Act 1989, that an Exploration Permit is intended for issue with the Native Title Protection Conditions attached, advising claimants about the effect of those Native Title Protection Conditions and post issue of the permit assisting groups to implement the Native Title Protection Conditions.
- Where appropriate, represent native title groups in their negotiations and drafting of future act agreements.
- The increase in the number of PBCs receiving the notices on behalf of the native title party rather than the individual applicants has seen a reduction in the required number of responses to FANs in the last three reporting periods.

## 5.2

# Actual Performance in relation to targets

## 5.2.1 Native title claims

### Bindal #2 (QUD503/2016)

- Alec Illin & Ors on behalf of the Bindal People #2 v State of Queensland & Ors

The State of Queensland has accepted connection and the matter is now listed for a Separate Question Hearing to be held on March/April 2025 in Townsville.

The Separate Question is in relation to an Indigenous Respondent asserting native title rights and interests in the Bindal #2 claim area.

### Djabugay Nation (formerly Cairns Regional Claim Group) (QUD692/2016)

- Bruce Banning & Ors on behalf of the Djabugay Nation and State of Queensland & Ors

This year has been a momentous year for the claim group which has seen the claim group authorise a combination of the existing Djabugay Nation claim with the Yirraganydji #1 and Yirraganydji #2 Claims. The merging of these claims reflects the will of the claim group and means that the combined claim can proceed towards

negotiating with the State and other parties towards a consent determination.

A final response from the State providing their assessment of connection is due at the end of 2024. Negotiations with Indigenous Respondent Parties will be addressed concurrently.

### Djungan #5 (QUD811/2018)

- Errol Neal & Ors on behalf of the Djungan People #5 v State Minister for the State of Queensland & Ors

Written submissions were provided to the State in February 2024, which resulted in connection being accepted by the State and respondent parties for the purposes of without prejudice negotiations towards a consent determination of native title. A timetable for progressing the claim to a consent determination

has been since agreed between the parties, with the tentative date for a determination hearing being August/September 2025. The Djungan #5 Applicant and the State of Queensland continue to engage in without prejudice negotiations to progress the matter.

### Eastern Kuku Yalanji #2 (QUD356/2022)

- Warren Ross-Kelly Kulka & Ors on behalf of the Eastern Kuku Yalanji People #2 v State Minister for the State of Queensland & Ors

The Eastern Kuku Yalanji People #2 native title claim (EKY#2 claim) was filed in the Federal Court in 2022. The EKY#2 claim covers an area of country in the north-east of NQLC's Representative Body region and includes the township of Mossman in the south and four National Parks, including the eastern most areas of the Daintree National Park.

There are nine respondent parties to the EKY#2 claim which include the State of Queensland (State), Telstra and Amplitel, Douglas and Mareeba Shire Council's,

three proprietary interest holders and one Indigenous respondent.

NQLC has engaged an expert anthropologist to undertake desktop and field research and produce a comprehensive connection report. The connection report is expected to be completed in mid-2025 and will be provided to the State on a confidential and without prejudice basis for assessment in accordance with the State's connection guidelines.

## GUGU BADHUN #3 (QUD777/2019)

- Ernest Michael Hoolihan & Ors on behalf of the Gugu Badhun People #3 v State Minister for the State of Queensland & Ors

The Gugu Badhun Applicant filed an Interlocutory Application to remove an Indigenous Respondent with the hearing held in June 2023. At the hearing the Federal Court Justice reserved the decision. In December 2023, the Federal Court handed down its

judgment resulting in the successful in the removal of the Indigenous Respondent Party. The State of Queensland in March 2024 accepted connection and negotiations are moving the matter towards a consent determination.

## GURAMBILBARRA WULGURUKABA (QUD623/2016)

- Virginia Wyles & Ors on behalf of the Gurambilbarra Wulgurukaba People v State of Queensland

In principle agreement on a consent determination of native title has been reached with all parties except for the Indigenous respondent party. Counsel has been engaged to progress the matter. A number of mediations were attempted however, no agreement could be

reached. Court orders have been made to progress the matter by addressing a separate question which is yet to be finalised. It is expected that the Separate Question will be heard at the end of March 2025; the delay being in part due to the Court's availability.

## GURAMBILBARRA WULGURUKABA MADA CLAIM (QUD176/2020)

- Virginia Wyles & Ors on behalf of the Gurambilbarra Wulgurukaba People v State of Queensland

Connection has been accepted by the State and Commonwealth. While it was anticipated that the determination for this would run parallel with the land claim, the separate question delay (in the land claim (QUD623/2016) means that a consent determination is now being progressed separately.

The parties have agreed on the terms of the consent determination, including negotiations as to public works. The final steps of this claim include the formal authorisation of the consent determination agreement and the making of orders by the Court

## GUDJALA PEOPLE #3 (QUD121/2023)

- Alice Fischer on behalf of the Gudjala People v State Minister for the State of Queensland & Ors

An authorisation meeting was held in November 2023 to confirm the NQLC as the legal representatives after the Applicant sought to engage other legal representation. The Applicant refused to follow the authorised directions of the native title claim group and did not engage with NQLC. NQLC ceased to act for the current Gudjala Applicant.

In April 2024, the Gudjala native title claimants called an authorisation meeting of Gudjala common law holders to confirm NQLC as their legal representatives and authorise a replacement applicant. An Interlocutory Application to remove the current Applicant was filed in May 2023. That application will be heard by the Federal Court in February 2025.

## JIRRBAL PEOPLE #4 (QUD983/2015)

- Angela Braun & Ors on behalf of the Jirrbal People #4 and State of Queensland & Ors

The Jirrbal People #4 native title claim (Jirrbal #4 claim) was administratively partitioned into Part A and Part B by orders of the Federal Court in March 2022. After several years of without prejudice negotiations with the State of Queensland and other respondent parties, parties agreed in principle to a determination for part of the Part A area. The terms of determination pursuant to NTA s87A were authorised by the claim group in April 2024 with the determination proposed to be made on the papers in September.

The remaining Part A areas are subject to ILUA negotiations, a hearing to resolve questions on tenure matters or further anthropological research concerning a neighboring group.

The Part B area was subject to Court ordered mediation between the Jirrbal #4 Applicant and two Indigenous respondents resulting in agreement. In February 2023, the Jirrbal #4 Applicant lodged an amended Form 1 native title determination

application (Form 1) to reduce the area of the Jirrbal #4 claim, then in May 2024, the Jirrbal #4 Applicant lodged a further amended Form 1 amending the

claim group description to include an additional apical ancestor.

## MANBARRA PEOPLE (QUD331/2022)

- Walter Palm Island & Ors on behalf of the Manbarra People v State Minister for the State of Queensland & Ors

Planning was commenced to collect lay evidence on country with Manbarra Elders, Counsel for the Manbarra People and NQLC staff. The evidence collection took place in September 2023 over a period of ten days. The evidence is now being finalised so it can be provided to the State of Queensland as proof

of ongoing connection. It is also anticipated there will be mediation with Indigenous Respondents towards the end of 2024 to discuss what, if any, rights and interests they may hold in the native title claim area.

## MULURIDJI PEOPLE #3 (QUD824/2018)

- Clancy Baker & Ors on behalf of the Muluridji People #3 and State of Queensland

After a lengthy negotiation, and substantial submissions from NQLC on behalf of the Applicant, the State finally accepted connection in relation to this matter. Although

at an early stage, the parties have agreed a timetable towards a consent determination, which should occur in the 2024-2025 year.

## WAKAMAN #3 (QUD746/2015); WAKAMAN #4 (QUD728/2017); AND WAKAMAN #5 (QUD178/2017)

- John Alvoen & Ors on behalf of the Wakaman People #5 and State Minister for the State of Queensland & Ors

The #3, #4, and #5 Part A claims were determined on 18 August 2023 by consent, and a judgment made by the Court.

Wakaman #5 Part B relates to a single parcel of land, which is being negotiated in confidence with the State as part of a broader tenure resolution ILUA.

## GIA AND NGARO PEOPLES (QUD228/2024)

- Colin Bowen & Ors on behalf of the Gia and Ngaro Peoples v State Minister for the State of Queensland

The Gia and Ngaro Peoples authorised a claim on 9 December 2023, following research and community meetings held by NQLC. The claim covers the Whitsunday area, and inland to the Don River, North to the boundary with Juru. The claim represents almost a decade of work for the claim group and should be registered by the end of July.

NQLC has commenced preparation of connection material, as instructed by the Applicant, to enter into negotiations with the State towards accepting connection.

This new claim covers the Davies non-claimant application, although NQLC continues to be a party to the application.

## Indigenous Respondent Parties

As part of performing its section 203BB facilitation and assistance functions, NQLC provides legal services or facilitates the external representation of a number of Indigenous respondent parties to native title claims in its region in appropriate cases that satisfy the conditions of the NQLC's Service Policy and Applications for Assistance Policy. The Indigenous

respondents who are assisted by the NQLC pursuant to this policy during the reporting year include Indigenous respondents to Jirrbal People #4, Jangga People #2, Bindal People #2, Gurambilbarra Wulgurkaba and Gimuy Walubara Yidinji.

## JANGGA PEOPLE #2 (QUD387/2018)

- Colin McLennan & Ors on behalf of the Jangga People #2 v State Minister for the State of Queensland

The NQLC represents an Indigenous Respondent in this matter. Another Indigenous Respondent in this matter sought to remove NQLC's client. An Interlocutory Application to address the removal of NQLC's client (the Indigenous Respondent) was heard on 24 November

2023, with the Federal Court Justice reserving the decision. In December 2023, the Federal Court handed down its decision where the NQLC was successful in representing our client and remains on the record. The other Indigenous Respondent was removed as a party to the proceedings. The matter continues to be litigated.

## WALLARA PEOPLES CLAIM

The Wallara Peoples Claim was brought by an individual asserting interests in an area near to Mareeba and overlapping the Djabugay Nation Claim. After failing the registration test, and not being accepted on review

twice, NQLC brought an application to have the claim dismissed. The Hearing of this application took place on 7 February 2024, and at the end of the financial year are still awaiting judgment.

## Non-Claimant Applications

- Harris v State Minister for the State of Queensland & Anor (QUD144/2015).
- The NQLC joined as a respondent party to the non-claimant application initiated by Scott Alexander Harris, the lessee of Strathmore Station.
- The NQLC took an active role in opposing a non-claimant application brought by Scott Alexander Harris covering Strathmore station in the North-West of our representative body area. The trial of this application was heard in April, and as of the end of June we are still awaiting an outcome.
- This is the first trial of its kind in which both a respondent and the applicant have led expert evidence. For this reason, the decision should shine new light on how the Court interprets the relevant sections of the Native Title Act 1993 (Cth). No matter how the Court decides this matter, given the ramifications for each party and for our representative body area, it is anticipated the decision will go to appeal.
- Gunther Family Holdings Pty Ltd v State Minister for the State of Queensland & Ors (QUD53/2023)
- The NQLC is a respondent party to this non-claimant application. The NQLC does not take an active role as there are two indigenous respondents asserting interests in the area who are being funded by NQLC to attend mediation with the non-claimant.
- Stuart John Propsting & Ors v State of Queensland (QUD153/2023)
- The Propsting non-claimant application (Propsting NCA) was filed in the Federal Court on 20 April 2023. The Non-Claimant Applicants are the lessees of a rolling term lease for pastoral purposes over 'Kalda', a property located in the Shires of Croydon and Richmond in the south-west of NQLC's RATSIB area. The Non-Claimant Applicants are seeking an Order of the Federal Court that native title does not exist in relation to Kalda.
- Two Indigenous respondents have been joined as parties to the Propsting NCA on the basis that they each assert for their respective groups that native title exists in relation to the property. NQLC is the legal representative of one of the Indigenous respondents and is facilitating the external representation of the other. On 14 February 2024, the Federal Court referred the Non-Claimant Applicants and the two Indigenous respondents to mediation before a Registrar pursuant to s.86B of the Native Title Act 1993 (Cth). The mediation is presently adjourned for further mention at a date to be advised.
- Clive Reginald Davies & Anor v State Minister for the State of Queensland (QUD320/2022)
- The NQLC is a respondent party to this matter. There are Court Orders in place for the non-claimant application area to run parallel with the Gia and Ngaro People's native title claim.



## Research Areas

The NQLC is currently undertaking research in the following areas:

- Northwest region: The northwest region is a large area of country in the far northwest corner of the NQLC RATSIB area. It is bounded in the north by the Cape York United #1 claim application (within the CYLC RATSIB area), Carpentaria Land Council's RATSIB area to the west, determinations for the Tagalaka, Ewamian and Wakaman people to the south, and Western Yalanji and Djungan people determinations to its east. . An independent expert anthropologist has been engaged by the NQLC to carry out research in the northwest region and will submit a preliminary research report in second quarter of 2024 - 2025. This research will inform a comprehensive consultation and engagement strategy in the northwest region to work with traditional owners to ascertain and respond to their native title aspirations. This engagement is scheduled to commence in the 2025 – 2026 financial year.
- Mulgrave River and Russell River region: The 'MRRR' region describes an area of country that generally follows the Mulgrave and Russell Rivers of Far North Queensland. The MRRR region is complex and is bounded by ten existing native title determinations and applications. If native title is pursued in the MRRR research area, these determinations and applications will frame how new native title applications are progressed in the region. Preliminary anthropological research was completed for the MRRR region in the reporting period. Based on this research, the NQLC has embarked on a comprehensive consultation and engagement plan with traditional owners in the MRRR region to ascertain their native title aspirations.
- Upper Burdekin River ('Hells Gate') area: Preliminary anthropological research has been completed and it is anticipated that consultation and engagement with traditional owners will commence in the 2025-2026 financial year.
- Gudjala southern area: see Jangga #2 update.

## 5.2.2 Future Acts, Mining & Exploration

### Notifications, Future Acts and Mining Agreements

Future act notifications fall into two primary categories under the Native Title Act (NTA):

- Section 24 notices where the 'right to comment' is the most common procedural right; and
- Section 29 notices where the 'right to negotiate' generally applies unless a matter is treated as applying the expedited procedure.

Processing future act notifications is the core work of the FAME Unit which involves receiving notifications of proposed activities; examining them for compliance with the NTA; assessing the procedural rights available to the affected native title party; notifying the affected native title party/ies and assisting the affected groups respond to notices.

Figures 1 and 2 show the breakdown of future act notifications by reference to sections of the NTA evidencing that most notifications are received with a right to comment for native title parties. The majority

of Section 24 notices (95%) are Section 24HA notices that relate to the management or regulation of water. The bulk of those notices are permits being issued by the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority or the Department of Environment and Science issuing permits for marine activities like tourism or for the collection of scientific data.

Since last reporting period there has been a continued trend from the 2022/2023 reporting period with a slight decrease of Section 24 notices, and a decrease in Section 29 notices which is detailed below. This has also been coupled with continued significant increase in the number of Indigenous Land Use Agreements (ILUAs), Section 31 Deeds, Ancillary Agreements and Cultural Heritage Management Agreements/ Plans for mining, renewable energies, carbon and other large-scale projects impacting on the human resources of the FAME Unit.

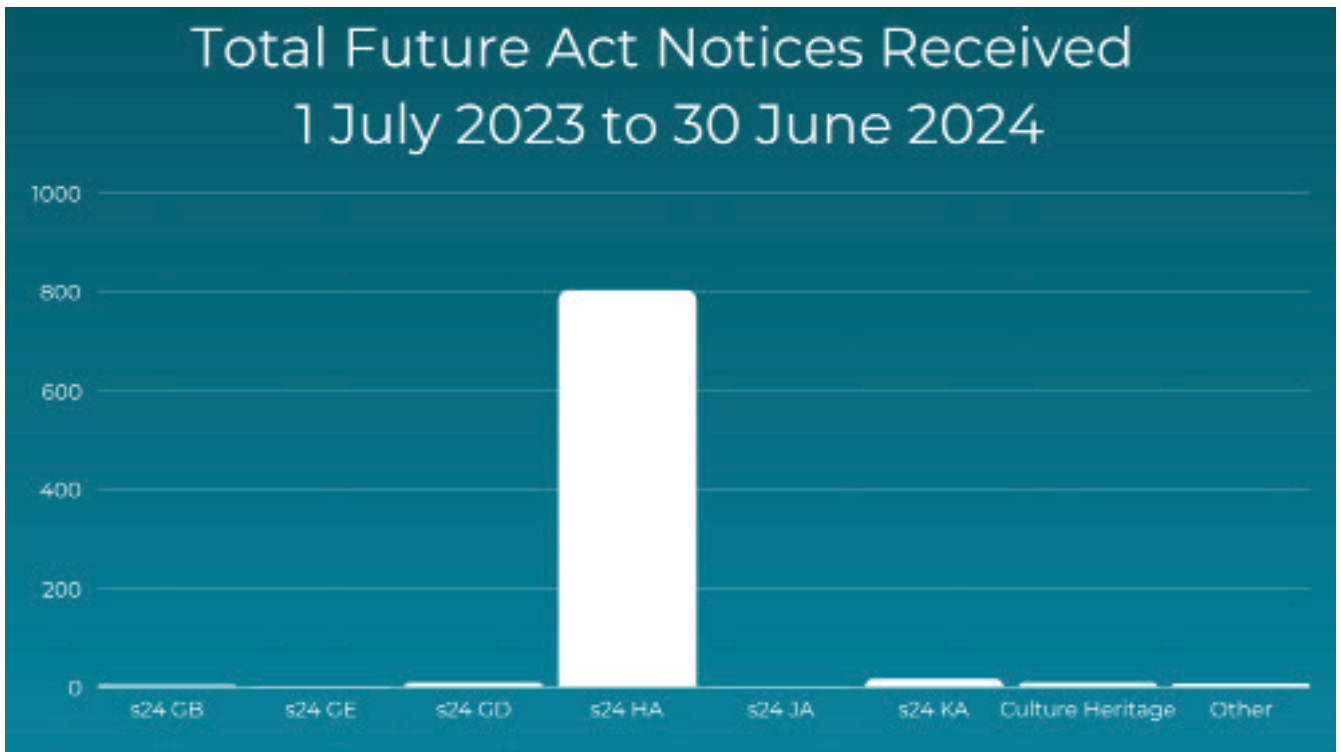


FIGURE 2: FAME - Total Future Act Notices Received

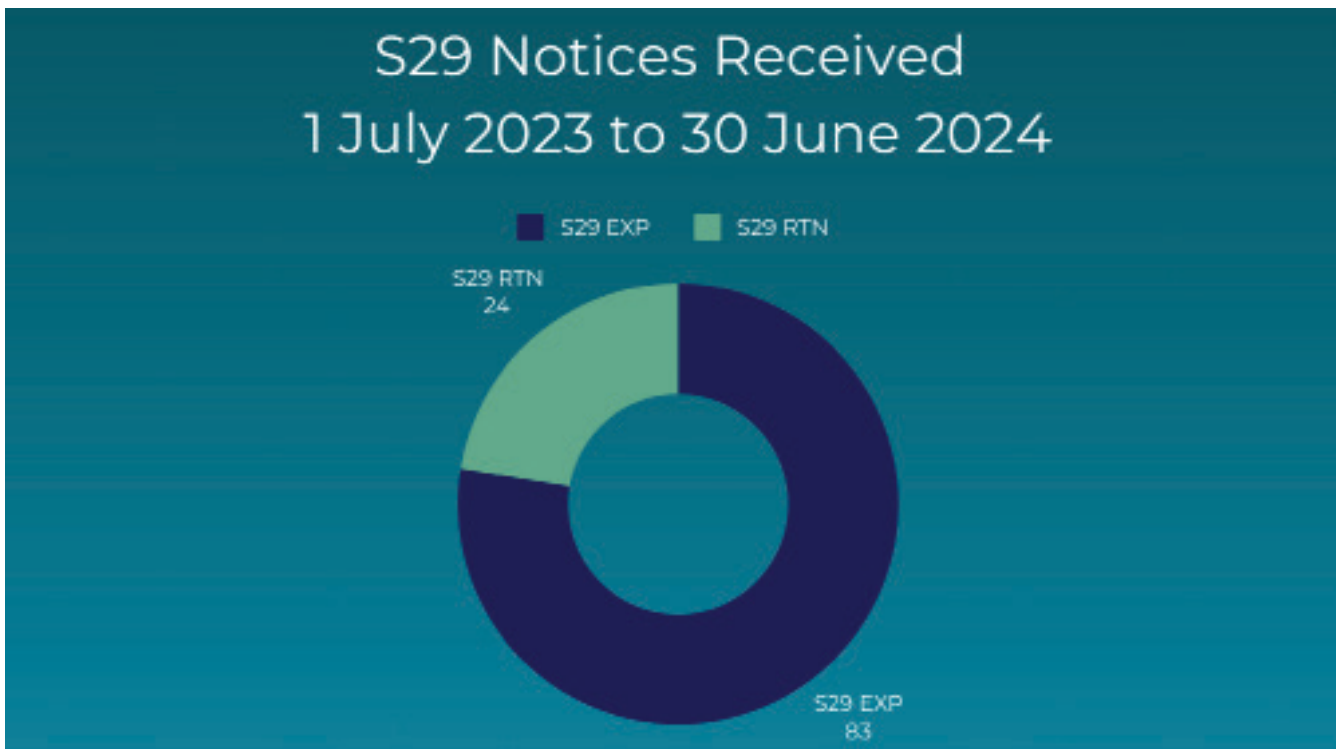


FIGURE 3: Total s29 Notices Received

Section 24 notices are subjected to scrutiny prior to issuing to the affected native title parties with advice related to each notice tailored to the specific circumstances. Through that process many notices are detected as having flaws, some fatal, and the FAME Unit is in constant contact with the various issuing agencies. Such scrutiny and advice has also seen an increase in requests to assist the native title party to respond to the proposed activity and in some circumstances has resulted in requests for negotiation or cultural heritage assistance.

In the 2023/2024 reporting period there has been a

slight decrease in Section 24 and other notices (future act and other notifications (including cultural heritage and Human Rights Act notices) receiving a total of 839, down from 939 in the last reporting period; and 2939 letters sent, up from 1162 in the last reporting period. With the increase between reporting periods over the last two reporting periods the increase in letters sent can also be attributable to many of the Section 24HA notices impacting large areas of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park and needing to notify multiple groups being all those who hold or may hold native title. As detailed in Figure 3 notices remained

# Future Act Notices Received and Sent per Month

## 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024

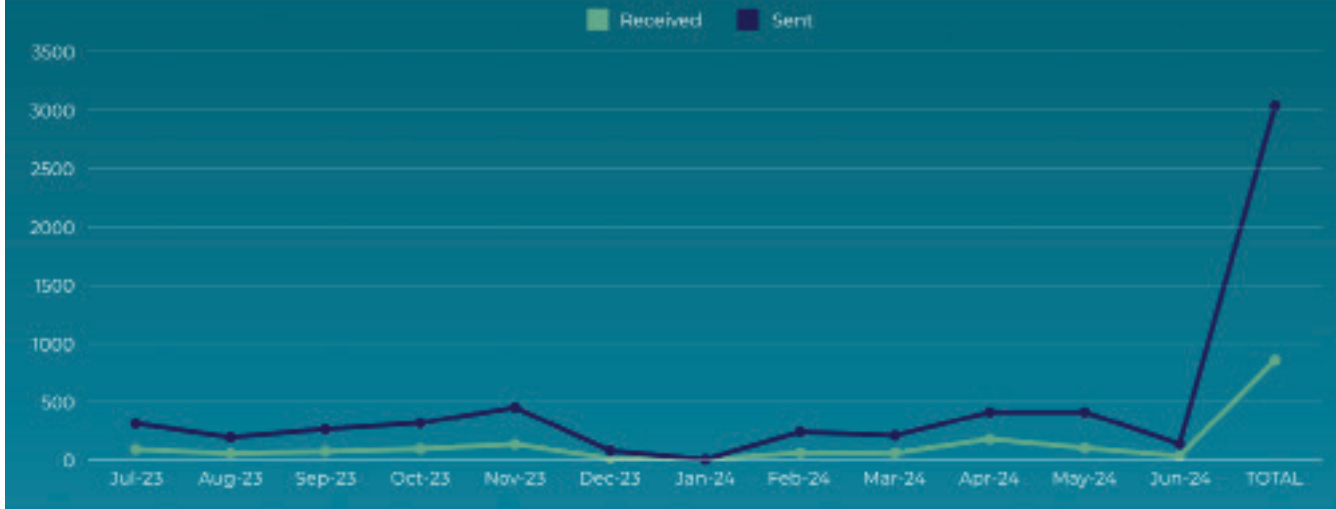


FIGURE 4: Future Acts Notices Received and sent per month.

constant throughout much of the year other than the last month of the reporting period.

Also, as PBCs increasingly monitor activity on their country, a number of future acts that are not 'notifiable' to NQLC under the NTA so are not being brought to our attention for examination and assistance. NQLC has a 'gentleman's agreement' with many agencies that they provide NQLC with future act notifications even where there is not a legal obligation under the NTA to do so where there is a PBC. However, feedback we are receiving from PBCs is that agencies are notifying NQLC less often post determination. This then means the individual PBC would need to contact NQLC directly for assistance and, where they do not, it impacts on our statistical reporting as NQLC may not be receiving all notices.

Where Section 29 future act notifications relate to exploration under the expedited procedure regime (where the 'right to negotiate' does not apply), the FAME Unit works closely with the native title parties to ensure that they are aware of and monitor compliance with the Native Title Protection Conditions (NTPCs). The NTPCs primarily provide for the protection of cultural heritage and an annual administration fee payable to the native title party. Assisting PBCs audit their future act records and pursuing outstanding fees is an ongoing support activity the FAME Unit provides. Throughout the

reporting period this service to PBCs has had another increase in developing procedures for outstanding fees to also be escalated within the PBCs and also where appropriate to the Department of Resources.

Notices issued under the expedited procedure regime in the reporting period decreased from last year's reporting period (107, down from 142 in the previous reporting period). These figures also do not include exploration and/or mining applications that have been managed through various ILUAs without triggering other sections of the future acts regime or matters which would otherwise have triggered the 'right to negotiate'. These are not received consistently as seen in Figure 4 which means during some months FAME Unit staff have needed to process these in large batches.



44 letters were sent to PBCs and Applicants including 93 tenements; a decrease from 63 letters in the previous reporting period due largely to the continuation of one letter being sent for multiple notifications to each PBC or Applicant group as part of this process. In total there were 46 granted right to negotiate and granted 88 expedited procedure notices notified under Section 29 of the NTA.

Other exploration and mining notifications may trigger the 'right to negotiate' provisions of the NTA and the FAME Unit actively represents a number of native title groups in such dealings. In the reporting period 107 Section 29 notices were received (down from 111) of which 24 were subject to the right to negotiate, of which all are being managed through various ancillary agreement negotiations which has been significantly impacting on the human resources of the FAME Unit in addition to those matters being managed under ILUAs. CHMAs and other Ancillary Agreements.

In addition to representing the native title groups in their negotiations, the FAME Unit has continued progressively working with our client groups to assist them implement the terms of the future act agreements that have been reached. The statistical

reporting does not adequately reflect the work involved in progressing these 'rights to negotiate' which are often protracted negotiations and can involve mediation of Future Act Determination Applications (see further detail below) with the National Native Title Tribunal, site visits and other meetings with the broader claim group or common law holders to seek instructions. Large-scale agreements also often involved NQLC working with PBCs to set up trusts or operational companies to be able to manage these agreements.

The benefits provided in an agreement between a native title group and a proponent are compensation to the native title party for their consent for a future act proceeding and the impact that the future act will have on the group's native title rights and interests. Implementation of agreements is critical to ensuring that the full benefit of the compensation terms flow to the native title group and it is an area of concern for both native title parties and the NQLC. The NQLC will continue to work with our clients to ensure implementation and compliance with the terms of agreements.

## Attending to statutory obligation to handle Future Acts Notification where there is no registered claim

When a 'right to comment' notice does not affect a registered or determined claim, the NQLC makes all reasonable efforts to identify which native title group/s may have an interest in the area and issue a copy of the notice to them. Although there are no procedural rights in these cases other than for NQLC to make comments in their own right, if a group has concerns about the future act affecting an area of significance, NQLC encourages the group to contact the State and request an inspection of the area to protect cultural heritage.

In circumstances where a section 29 notice is issued affecting lands not subject to a claim or determination, NQLC writes to the proponent

advising them of their obligations under the Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act 2003 (Qld) (ACHA), which requires persons to take all reasonable and practicable measures to ensure that the activity does not harm Aboriginal cultural heritage. Further, we encourage the proponent to contact the NQLC for assistance in identifying the relevant Aboriginal Party, being the person recognised in accordance with tradition or law as having responsibility for the area or object, as required by the ACHA.

## National Native Title Tribunal Arbitration of Future Act Determination Application

In most instances, the NTA does not provide for native title parties to say 'no' to future acts affecting their native title rights and interests but in the case of exploration or mining the 'right to negotiate' might apply. In these cases, the NTA says the native title party, proponent and State must negotiate in good faith to reach an agreement for the future act to go ahead. If the parties do not reach an agreement six months after the notification date, any party can file a Future Act Determination Application (FADA) for an arbitrated decision by the NNTT.

Last reporting period there were four (4) FADAs filed during this reporting period all of which were resolved with the proponent being found not to have

acted in good faith so those matters are now back in the right to negotiate. This reporting period NQLC has one matter in active mediation and no FADAs however there are some matters that may be lodged which will be addressed in the next reporting period.

There is also the provision to apply to the NNTT to object to a future act being treated under the expedited procedure regime. NQLC filed one objection applications in the 2023/2024 reporting period and this is still being managed through the NNTT.

## Implementation of ILUAs – Mining and Exploration

In relation to the ILUAs and other agreements related to mining and exploration, as noted above, a prevailing issue for native title groups is successful and ongoing implementation of the agreement to ensure that all negotiated terms are implemented to their fullest extent.

In the course of our ongoing work with native title groups to implement their agreements, a number of issues were identified as affecting most groups.

These included:

- administrative tools and resources required;
- proponent compliance issues in agreement implementation relating to outstanding compensation payments;
- better engagement with the State and

industry to maximise value;

- the benefits being implemented;
- the need for expansion of the PBCs to include trust structures and other operational arms to minimize risk;
- directing the benefits to meeting the needs and aspirations of the native title group for charitable purposes; and
- how/what were other groups are doing to get the best out of their agreements.

The FAME Unit has been working directly with a number of PBCs to address compliance issues related to non-payment of compensation payments and other environmental and trespass breaches.

## ILUA Implementation project

The ILUA Implementation Project (reported on in our last eight annual reports) is still progressing as FAME Unit work with a number of PBCs in the implementation, formal review and some renegotiation of ILUAs. The progression of this Project has continued to be impacted on by the large number of Section 29 Notices in the RTN and other large

ILUA agreements being negotiated in this reporting period, which have diverted our staffing resources to urgent negotiations to protect native title rights and interests. There has still been considerable work with this Project and is continuing to be prioritised with the individual PBC taking into account various factors, including:

- the need for immediate renegotiation or review required under the terms of the ILUAs themselves;
- implementation where there are outstanding action items or obligations of the PBCs where they are linked to other key strategic projects;
- the ranging capacities of PBCs in active implementation; and
- the need for broader planning, including strategic planning and land use planning of the PBCs.

Other matters arising through the implementation

### Other negotiated agreements

In the 2023/2024 reporting period the FAME Unit has seen a further increase in non-mining negotiations including negotiations for the development of Cultural Heritage Management Agreements or Plans, ILUAs and other agreements for large infrastructure projects as noted above. There were also ILUAs for tenure changes for the State, third party proponents and for PBCs themselves that will continue to be

of the Project has been the perpetual nature of some of the ILUAs where there is a reluctance on behalf of some agencies to commit to a review where it is not tied to a specific project or agenda.

negotiated into the 2024/2025 reporting year, which may result in higher numbers of reported agreements in future years. In the 2023/2024 reporting period there were 7 ILUAs registered, 4 Section 31 Deeds, 4 Ancillary Agreements and a further 5 Cultural Heritage Management Agreements represented in Figure 6.



FIGURE 7: Settled Agreements



Members of NQLC's Prescribed Bodies Corporate Support Unit (PBCSU) Left to right: Jameelia Bin Bo, PBC Support Administration Officer; Joanne Chapman, PBC Support Administration Officer; and David Jesudason, Senior Legal Officer–Coordinator, PBCSU

## 5.2.3 Prescribed Bodies Corporate Support Unit

The PBC Support Unit (PBCSU) provides establishment and ongoing capacity development support services to PBCs to assist them fulfill their rights and responsibilities to their members and common law holders and meet their legislative requirements. The PBCSU is also responsible for the administration of the auspiced PBC Support Funding available through National Indigenous Australians Agency (NIAA). During the reporting period, there were no further determinations and there are 32 PBCs in the NQLC region.

The PBC Support Funding is an annual grant program that is only available to Registered Native Title Bodies Corporate (RNTBCs – more commonly referred to as PBCs).

The purpose of the PBC Support Funding is limited to basic administration and compliance activities.. Basic administration and compliance activities include those activities that a corporation is legally required to do, such as, maintain a Document Access Address, hold an AGM and obtain and auditor. PBC Basic Support Funding may also include office rent

expenses; utilities; office furniture and equipment; insurances; reasonable costs incurred for the conduct of director / general / common law holder meetings; and administration officer wages (generally part time).

PBCSU is assisting PBCs to apply for Capacity Building grant funding to assist with building either long term economic development and capacity.

The NQLC will assist PBCs in making their application if the PBC's Board requests assistance from the PBCSU. All applications for PBC Support Funding in the NQLC region must be in the prescribed form and submitted to the NQLC PBC Support Unit for assessment. The PBCSU works closely with PBCs to meet their critical funding requirements as best we can with the limited funding available. This process remained the same in the 2023/2024 period after the change in the last reporting period to NQLC overseeing approvals and not NIAA. Funds are released to the PBC subject to the terms of the NQLC-PBC Support Funding Process Agreement, which includes six monthly acquittal requirements.



If new PBCs are determined part way through a relevant financial year, funding is always a daunting prospect however, it has always been a practice of NQLC currently administering the program to accept and consider PBC Support Funding applications. There were no newly determined PBC in the reporting period as noted above, however, we are preparing

## Capacity Development Activities

The PBCSU also provides capacity development services to support PBCs to develop and/or consolidate their corporate and governance skills, knowledge and systems, to manage the native title rights and interests of their native title holders and achieve their cultural and corporate obligations and aspirations.

Where requested the PBCSU will design and deliver tailored services directly to individual PBCs based on their specific needs and aspirations. Training and information workshops are provided including a series of webinars that were run in the 2023/2024 reporting period. Forums are also offered and all PBCs in the NQLC region are invited to attend.

The PBCSU's four platforms of support and services are:

1. Administration support: to support PBCs to develop systems and practices required to function as a small efficient business.

At the request of a PBC Board, the PBCSU will work closely with the nominated PBC representative to assist the PBC establish an office; review lease contracts; develop administrative tools, procedures and systems; and other general administration support that may be required. The PBCSU worked with several PBCs in this capacity in the reporting period including assisting directors to obtain Director Identification Numbers (DIN) which were a requirement for all Directors as of 30 November 2023.

2. Economic Development: The PBCSU is assisting three PBCs who have collectively decided to pool resources, work together and develop a for profit partnership corporation to pursue large commercial contracts through Supply Nation. PBCSU is working closely with the three PBCs and consultants

for the determination of three (3) new PBCs in the next reporting period.

Ultimately at years end, during the 2023/2024 financial year 24 PBCs applied, and were approved, for PBC Support Funding.

to have the partnership corporation established. The PBCSU is also working with PBCs to establish operational arms and trusts. PBCs entering commercial agreements and establishing programmes are looking for ways to minimise risk and grow corporate structures that can employ and train their own people. PBCSU is assisting PBCs to develop those corporate structures and engage suitable advisors and consultants who can provide high level technical advice to PBCs regarding complex corporate issues.

PBCSU has been working with the Building the Indigenous Economy in North Queensland (BIENQ) Subcommittee of the Board to identify the economic and business opportunities in the NQLC region and provide an organisational capability analysis required for a corporate structure to deliver the services to support PBCs to engage in economic and business ventures.

3. Governance support: to establish, embed and maintain the essential governance tools and strategies that are necessary for managing a PBC.

The need for PBCs to have policies and procedures to deal with operational and governance matters has long been recognised. The Engagement and Development Support Team (EDST) has responded by developing PBC specific policies and procedures over the years. In the 2023/2024 period, the PBCSU escalated the development of the policies and procedures into a comprehensive suite that can be modified to meet the needs of a PBC. Delivery of the comprehensive suite of governance instruments

continued throughout 2023/2024 and will continue into the next reporting period.

To assist PBCs to meet the requirements of the Native Title Amendment Act, NQLC produced a new amendable 'template rulebook' after consultation with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profit Commission (ACNC), Australian Taxation Office (ATO) and ORIC to ensure that the PBC's rulebook is flexible enough to allow a PBC to obtain charitable status, establish subsidiary companies and trusts.

The PBCSU has worked with 6 PBCs in this period to replace their rule books. This will continue into the next reporting period as human resource constraints of the PBCSU have meant that not all PBCs have been able to access assistance.

4. Sustainable financial positioning: support for PBCs to engage in enterprise development to realise social, cultural and economic benefits from native title and other opportunities.

PBCSU worked with several PBCs to develop tailored strategic, business and land use plans. These plans will provide PBCs with a focused and systematic approach to developing their assets. Additionally, such plans are critical to accessing future grant funding

opportunities. In short, these governance instruments form the foundation for pursuing economic and enterprise opportunities.

It should be noted that there are time-lags in the process of realising enterprises (identifying suitable opportunities, securing the requisite funding, developing the business, operating the business) and the NQLC is not necessarily involved throughout all the stages sufficiently to report on it.

5. Information/Training forums: all PBCs in NQLC's region are invited to attend PBCSU's regional forums, usually as a 'topic specific forum' for immediate learning but also providing the opportunity for networking. PBCSU forums were not held in the current reporting period as it was a request from PBCs to move to the webinar training. Feedback since is that forums are also an opportunity to network and PBCSU will go back to holding annual PBC forums in the next reporting period.

In response to PBC's request, the PBCSU is currently working on new education and training programs for directors and administration staff which will continue to be delivered in the 2024/2025 period.

PERFORMANCE ACCORDING TO FUNCTIONS AND OUTPUTS					
THE AGREEMENTS EXPERIENCE					
Section 24 Future Act Notices (FANs) received	839		Indigenous Land Use Agreements (ILUA):	Concluded & Registered	4
Response to Future Acts	2939			In development	Numerous
Section 29 Notices received	107			Resolved	0
Notifications or grant/renewals, etc. received	134			Pending	Numerous
Agreements:	Concluded	12	Disputes relating to ILUAs, rights of access and other matters	Numerous	
	In development	Numerous			
<p>Note 1 The NQLC responds to FANs received by:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 sending out copies of the notices to the persons appointed by each claim group or PBC for the receipt of FANs;</li> <li>2 providing strategic advice to groups about the impact of Future Acts;</li> <li>3 where instructed, formulating submissions on behalf of claimants or PBCs to Future Acts;</li> <li>4 where a Future Act consists of a notification pursuant to the Mineral Resources Act 1989, that an Exploration Permit is intended for issue with the Native Title Protection Conditions attached, advising claimants and PBCs about the effect of those Native Title Protection Conditions and post issue of the permit assisting groups to implement the Native Title Protection Conditions;</li> <li>5 where appropriate, represent native title groups or PBCs in their negotiations and drafting of future act agreements; and</li> <li>6 the increase in the number of PBCs receiving the notices on behalf of the native title party rather than the individual applicants has seen a reduction in the required number of responses to FANs in the last four reporting periods.</li> </ol>					

TABLE 6: AGREEMENT EXPERIENCE FOR PERFORMANCE ACCORDING TO FUNCTIONS AND OUTPUTS

## 5.3

# Discussion and Analysis of the NQLC's Financial Performance against Budget

As at the end of the financial year, some external legal and anthropological contracts, and specific grant commitments remained outstanding, however finalisation of these have been committed from the 2023-2024 grant funds.

The NQLC has achieved an 'unqualified audit opinion' from our auditors, Grant Thornton Audit Pty Ltd.

### 5.3.1 Discussion of any significant changes from the prior year or from budget

The NQLC was principally funded by NIAA during 2023-2024.

The Corporation has received recognition as the representative Aboriginal/Torres Strait Islander body (representative body) for the North Queensland area for a three-year period from 01 July 2023 to 30 June 2026.

In addition to its recognition period above, the Corporation was approved core operational and PBC Support funding for the three-year period from

01 July 2023 to 30 June 2026. The Corporation's Head Agreement and Project Schedule reflect the approved three-year funding allocation.

The NQLC obtained approval from NIAA to expend previous year surplus funds.

The NQLC, on behalf of traditional owner groups in the NQLC's region, engaged with various external proponents in negotiating indigenous land use agreements. These negotiations contributed to activity generated income.

## 5.4

# Developments since 30 June 2024 that have affected or may significantly affect NQLC's Future Operations

Since the end of the 2023-2024 financial year, no developments have occurred that may significantly affect the NQLC's future operations.

## BUDGETS/ACTUAL BY MAIN HEADS OF EXPENDITURE AND REVENUE

NTRB FUNCTIONS (Funds utilised under Native Title Funding Agreement)	Actual 2022-23 \$'000	Budget 2023-24 \$'000	Actual 2023-24 \$'000	VARIATION (actual minus budget)
<b>Expenditure</b>				
Capital	12,894	232,320	138,386	-93,934
Activities	7,868,544	13,751,688	8,929,654	-4,822,234
Corporate	2,579,711	3,050,030	2,582,777	-467,253
<b>Total</b>	<b>10,461,149</b>	<b>17,034,238</b>	<b>11,650,817</b>	<b>-5,383,421</b>
<b>Income</b>				
PMC Funding	11,800,882	12,086,020	12,086,020	0
Previous Year Unexpended Funds	1,892,999	4,946,218	2,973,571	-1,972,647
<b>Activity Generated Income</b>				
Administration Fees	40,472	0	10,547	10,547
Bank Interest	22,807	500	83,082	83,082
Meeting Contributions	2,500	0	2,122	2,122
Project Proponent Income	323,692	0	218,982	218,982
Provision of Services	20,011	0	6,073	6,073
Sale of Assets	846	0	23,682	23,682
Other Income	0	0	2,047	2,047
<b>Total</b>	<b>14,113,009</b>	<b>17,032,738</b>	<b>15,414,626</b>	<b>-1,618,112</b>

TABLE 7: BUDGETS/ACTUAL BY MAIN HEADS OF EXPENDITURE AND REVENUE

# 6 Corporate GOVERNANCE



## 6.1 Statement of the main corporate governance practices in place

Our main corporate governance practice starts with the clear statement in the NQLC Rule Book which provides for the roles of the Board of Directors and the Chief Executive Officer (CEO, or known also as the Executive Officer) in accordance with the 'separation of powers principle'. The formal adoption of this principle by the NQLC in 2001 set the platform for the continued good governance of the organisation over the ensuing years. Strong adherence to this principle has brought tangible benefits in the efficiency and capacity of the organisation to deliver native title services. Clause 15 (1) (i) of the Rule Book provides as per below.

The Board is responsible for:

- The setting of policy and of determining the priorities of the business or functions of the Corporation
- The setting of and approvals of budget plans
- Strategic planning
- Statutory functions
- Any functions required to be carried out by the Corporation in accordance with conditions attached to any grant of monies or the conditions set out in any PFA

- Appointment of auditors in accordance with the Rules
- Appointment of a CEO
- Setting, running and keeping records of all Annual General Meetings, all General Meetings and all Ward Meetings of the Corporation
- Appointment of a Public Officer or Secretary as required by the CATSI Act
- Representing the Corporation at political forums, seminars and meetings relevant to the functions or objects of the Corporation
- General planning for the carrying out of the objects and goals of the Corporation.

Clause 15 (1) (ii) of the NQLC Rules also provides that the function of the CEO is as follows:

The CEO appointed by the Board to manage the affairs of the Corporation is responsible for implementing the policies and general planning set by the Board and in conducting the day-to-day business of the Corporation.

The CEO is responsible for:

- The day to day management and administration of the NQLC in accordance with the Policy and Procedure Manuals;
- Implementing decisions of the Board;
- Managing the day-to-day financial resources of the organisation within NIAA guidelines and in accordance with the approved budget and variations;
- Managing the staff of the organisation including appointments, disciplinary and grievance procedures and performance review;
- Providing advice and assistance to the Board to facilitate effective decision making processes for the performance of the functions of the NTRB;
- Identifying funding sources and in kind support from Government and non-Government agencies;
- Ensuring that native title groups within the gazetted area of the NQLC are aware of the functions and framework of the organisation;
- Ensuring the operations of the organisation are integrated with and complimentary
- to the operation of other indigenous organisations within the region;
- Promoting the role of the NQLC at a local, regional and national level;
- Developing advocacy positions and submissions on behalf of the NQLC.

In addition, NQLC policy dictates that at all times the mode of communication between board members and the administration is via the CEO. Nothing in this clause shall prevent a staff member from communicating with an individual board member about a private or cultural matter.

## 6.2 Senior Management Committees and their Roles - Separation of Powers

NQLC's Separation of Powers principles are described in section 6.1 of this report.

The NQLC is controlled by a Board of Directors in accordance with the requirements of the Corporations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) Act 2006 (CATSI Act).

Members of the Board are elected on a Ward system which is designed to ensure that there is representation across the geographic area covered by the NQLC.

Members elected have a term of two years, holding office from the end of one Annual

General Meeting (AGM) until the second AGM following (usually in two years).

The Rules provide that the Board, from time to time and at their discretion, can create sub-committees to deal with matters as directed by the Board. During this reporting period, one sub-committee was carried over from the 2021-2022 reporting period. In the third quarter of the 2021-2022 reporting period, the CEO Recruitment Sub-committee was formed to undertake the process of securing a substantive chief executive officer for the NQLC. This sub-

committee concluded its activities in May 2023 after filling the CEO role. Another sub-committee, the Core Document Review Sub-committee, was established in the 2022-2023 reporting period to review and revise NQLC's key documents, including the rule book, strategic plan, and policy manual. This subcommittee's activities are ongoing.

In addition, the Rules provide as follows:

## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE & OTHER SUB COMMITTEES

1. There shall be a sub-committee known as the Executive Committee;
2. The Executive Committee shall be composed of those persons who from time to time hold the position of:-
  - Chairperson
  - Deputy Chairperson
  - Treasurer
  - Correspondence Secretary

and such other person or persons (if any) as the Board may from time to time determine.

3. The Executive Committee has the power to exercise the powers of the Board in the following circumstances:
  - (a) Where an urgent decision is required on a matter and there is either:-
    - (i) insufficient time to call a Board meeting for the purpose; or
    - (ii) the calling of a Board meeting would involve the incurring of expenses to the Corporation that in the reasonable opinion of the Chairperson is unwarranted in all the circumstances.
  - (b) In particular but without limiting the generality of sub rule (a) above,

the Executive Committee has the power to bind the Corporation to funding or other agreements which are, in the reasonable opinion of the Chairperson, necessary for the on-going business of the Corporation.

4. The Executive Committee has the power to apply the Common Seal to agreements or other documents requiring the same where the Executive Committee has used its powers for matters set out in rule 3 (a) above.
5. A quorum for a meeting of the Executive Committee shall be four (4) persons.
6. All actions of the Executive Committee shall be reported to the next Board meeting of the Corporation and all minutes of the Executive Committee meetings shall be supplied to the next Board meeting of the Corporation. The Board may choose to ratify any actions of the Executive Committee
7. (a) Meetings of the Executive Committee may be called by:-
  - (i) the Chairperson;
  - (ii) two (2) members of the Executive Committee
- (b) The amount of notice of an Executive Committee meeting shall be a reasonable amount taking into account the urgency of the need for a meeting but in any event, no less than 24 hours.
- (c) Notice of an Executive Committee meeting may be given by fax, email, telephone, mail or any other method that allows the recipient to actually receive the notice.
8. The Executive Committee shall have such other powers and responsibilities as the Board may from time to time determine.

9. The Board may at any time appoint other Sub Committees from its members and shall determine the responsibilities and powers of the Sub-Committee.
10. Unless otherwise decided by the Board, a Sub-Committee, other than the Executive Committee shall:-
  - (a) Have a quorum of three (3) at its meetings, unless the sub-committee resolves that a larger number shall be the quorum;
  - (b) Appoint one (1) of its members to be responsible for calling meetings of the sub- committee and inform the CEO of the name of the responsible person.
11. Meetings of the Executive Committee or of a sub-committee may be held at two or more venues using any technology that gives the members of the Committee the ability to participate and to have discussion with their fellow members and to come to a collective decision on a matter (for example: telephone conference).

## 6.3

# Corporate and Operational Planning and Associated Performance Reporting and Review

The Board aims to have a minimum of four meetings plus a planning meeting each year. The number of meetings may increase subject to any extraordinary events or circumstances which arise during the subject year that require the attention and determination of issues by the Board.

The Board receives reports from:

- the Chief Executive Officer (CEO);
- the Principal Legal Officer (PLO) (including claims report);
- the Chief Financial Officer (CFO) (Financial Statements); and

- the Manager, Engagement and Development Support Team (Future Acts, Mining and Exploration and PBC Support Units).

In accordance with NIAA requirements, the NQLC prepares an Operational Plan on a yearly basis for approval by NIAA and attends to changes to that Operational Plan during the financial year as required. Additionally, in accordance with NIAA requirements, the NQLC reports on its operational and financial performance twice a year.





NQLC Board of Directors and CEO. Back row: Ex-Director Nicole Huxley, Ex-Director Delena Foster, Director Warren Martens, Director Joann Schmider and Ex-Director Danny Hooligan. Front row: Director Gary Mooney, Chair Angie Akee, Director Richard Hoolihan and Director Rona Hart and CEO Leon Yeatman. (Missing directors: Director Errol (Mala) Neal, Deputy Chair Sarah Addo)

## Meetings attended by the NQLC Board of Directors during the 2023-2024 reporting period.

NUMBER	DESCRIPTION	DATES	ATTENDEES	LOCATION
<b>BOARD MEETINGS</b>				
1	Board Meeting	11th & 12th September 2023	7	Townsville & Microsoft TEAMS
2	Board Meeting	13th October 2023	9	Cairns, Townsville & Microsoft TEAMS
3	Board Meeting	30th November & 1st December 2023	10	Cairns
4	Board Meeting	15th April 2024	4 + 3 Invited NQLC Members CATSI ACT 246.20	Microsoft TEAMS
5	Board Meeting	26th & 27th April 2024	9	Townsville & Microsoft TEAMS
6	Board Meeting	23rd & 24th May 2024	7	Cairns & Microsoft TEAMS
<b>EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETINGS</b>				
1	Executive Meeting	16th January 2024	5 (Previous Chairperson attended for handover)	Cairns & Microsoft TEAMS

TABLE 8 - Meetings Attended by the NQLC Board of Directors during the 22-24 Reporting Period



## 6.4 Approach adopted to identifying areas of significant financial or operational risk and arrangements in place to manage risk

The NQLC, as per NIAA's Terms and Conditions Native Title Agreement, for agreements commencing on or after 1 July 2013, employs an in-house Certified Practising Accountant. The NQLC has external auditors who undertake its annual audit.

In so far as operational risk management is concerned, the NQLC has a long-standing policy of managing these types of risks by engaging in a number of internal processes. These include:

- Regular planning meetings;
- Internal strategic claim team meetings;
- The PLO and other lawyers maintaining a professional relationship with the Registrars of the Federal Court and when appropriate, discussing prioritisation needs; and
- 12 monthly overview and forward strategic planning meetings.

The NQLC has a fraud Prevention Policy in place which is designed to protect public funds and other assets, protect the integrity, security and reputation of NQLC and its employees and assist in maintaining high level of services to the community. NQLC is

committed to protecting its revenue, expenditure, assets and property from any attempt by anyone, to gain by deceit, financial or other benefits.

The NQLC requires its Board members and staff to maintain a high standard of ethical conduct in all activities, in particular with respect to resources, information and authority. Board members and staff are required to declare any conflicts of interest upon appointment and annually, and also advise of any changes as they arise.

Internal financial management reports and budget variance analysis reports are produced and analysed on a regular monthly basis. The NQLC maintains a secure record of all its financial transactions, and regular account reconciliations are performed.

## 6.5

# Policy and practices on the establishment and maintenance of appropriate ethical standards

The separation of powers has been incorporated in the NQLC's Rule Book and sets out clearly the delineation of the roles of the NQLC Board and Administration (see Section 6.1).

The Board has voluntarily adopted a Code of Conduct in relation to its meetings and processes.

The legal professional staff are subject to and adhere to the ethics of the legal profession in Queensland.

The NQLC adhere to the policies outlined in the NQLC Policy Manual. The NQLC Policy Manual includes:

- Separation of powers;
- Code of conduct;
- Conflict of Interest;
- Employment and financial decision making;
- Receiving of gifts, benefits and hospitality;
- Internal review process;
- Harassment in the workplace;
- Confidentiality; and

- Privacy.

The NQLC adhere to the procedures outlined in the NQLC Administrative Procedures Manual. The NQLC Administrative Procedures Manual includes:

- Complaints and grievances;
- Usage of telecommunications and social media;
- Workplace health and safety;
- Statutory obligations;
- Financial responsibilities including purchasing, procurement and the appointment of consultants; and
- Meeting processes including travel and payment of travel allowance.

## 6.6

# Nature and amount of remuneration for senior management and how it is determined

Subject to adequate funding from NIAA, the Board of Directors determines the salary of the CEO.

Remuneration for senior management is based on the salary scales contained in NQLC's Enterprise Agreement 2019-2021. Current salary rates are based on previously negotiated Enterprise Agreement conditions, together with market and industry analysis.

NQLC consults NIAA on all senior management appointments and remuneration as per the Terms and Conditions of the Program Funding Agreement.



Staff members of NQLC's Anthropology & Engagement and Development Support Unit. Left to right: CEO Leon Yeatman, Anthropologist - Research Unit Coordinator Kara Dunn, Senior Legal Officer/ Coordinator - FAME Unit John Cecchi, Paralegal Officer - FAME Unit Bujimulla Yanner & Legal Intern Mariah Mills.

# 7 External SCRUTINY



## 7.1 Significant Developments in External Scrutiny

There have been no developments in external scrutiny from previous years. The NQLC continues to have its finances audited in accordance with the requirements of the Terms and Conditions of the Native Title Agreement, and in accordance with Australian accounting standards.

NQLC is registered as a charity with the Australian

Charities and Not-for-profits Commission however our corporate regulator remains the Office of the Registrar of Indigenous Corporations (ORIC).

## 7.2 Judicial Decisions and Decisions of Administrative Tribunals

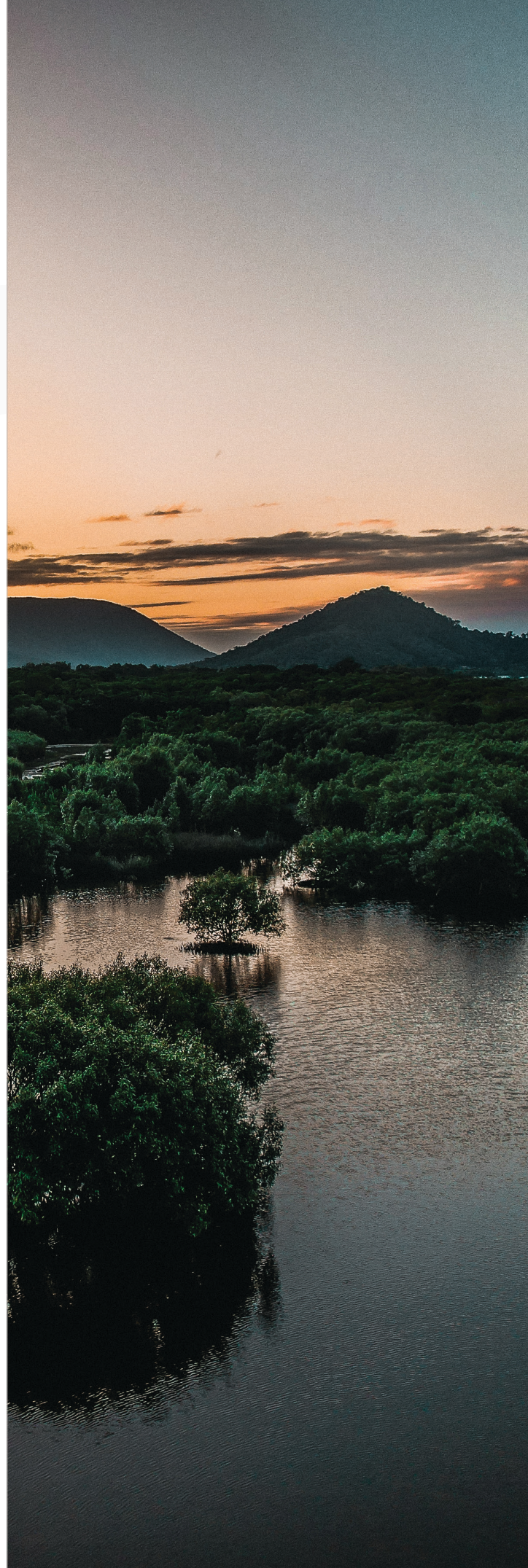
None of the actions or decisions of the NQLC have been subject to judicial review or review by administrative tribunals.

## 7.3 Evaluation and/or Audit Reports - Findings and Responses

The audit of the NQLC's finances was unqualified. See section 11 for our Annual Financial Report.

## 7.4 Other External Reviews

The NQLC is yet to receive its finalised Performance Review Report conducted by the NOUS Group in the 2022-2023 financial year. The National Indigenous Australians Agency (NIAA) engaged the NOUS Group to engage in a second round of performance reviews of native title representative bodies and service providers. The purpose of the NTRB/SP reviews is to assess individual and comparative organisational performance against Terms of Reference established by NIAA with the aim of measuring the efficiency and effectiveness of NTRBs/ SPs.





Left to Right: Richard Bing Jnr & NQLC CEO Leon Yeatman.

## 8 Consultants & Competitive TENDERING

### 8.1 Competitive Tendering and Contracting Practices

In addition to the services provided by NQLC professional staff, external consultants are engaged to provide further expert services and advice on a range of matters relating to NQLC's functions as an NTRB. These include legal opinion, anthropological research and other corporate matters.

The engagement of these consultants is undertaken within the procurement guidelines as set out in NIAA's Head Agreement and Project Schedule.

Where appropriate, the NQLC encourages a competitive process by advertising for expressions of

interest for the carrying out of new anthropological research. Often in relation to anthropological and other research consultants, it is necessary to retain the same consultant who has previously worked with the group in question or who has provided previous reports. In the interests of consistency, these persons are in the best position to provide further services.

## 8.2

# Number of Consultancy Services Contracts and Total Expenditure on Consultancy Services

External consultants providing anthropological services to the NQLC are provided with formal written contracts detailing terms and conditions of services, including reporting time frames, number of contract days, fee scales and fixed figure contracts.

Contracts for legal consultants tend to be written for two purposes. Firstly, for the provision of specific advice on specific issues such as obtaining the opinion of Counsel on legal issues. Usually, a fixed fee for such contracts can be negotiated, but on occasions the fee is based on an hourly rate. Secondly, contracts for legal consultants to act (generally on behalf of a claim group or in respect of an ongoing matter), tend to be written on the basis of payments in accordance with the relevant court scale of costs, or an agreed scale of costs, with the total value not to exceed an agreed cap. Contracts for corporate/general services include areas involving human resources, industrial relations, audit and accounting.

During the reporting period, the NQLC's expenditure from NIAA funds for these contract categories are listed in figure 8.

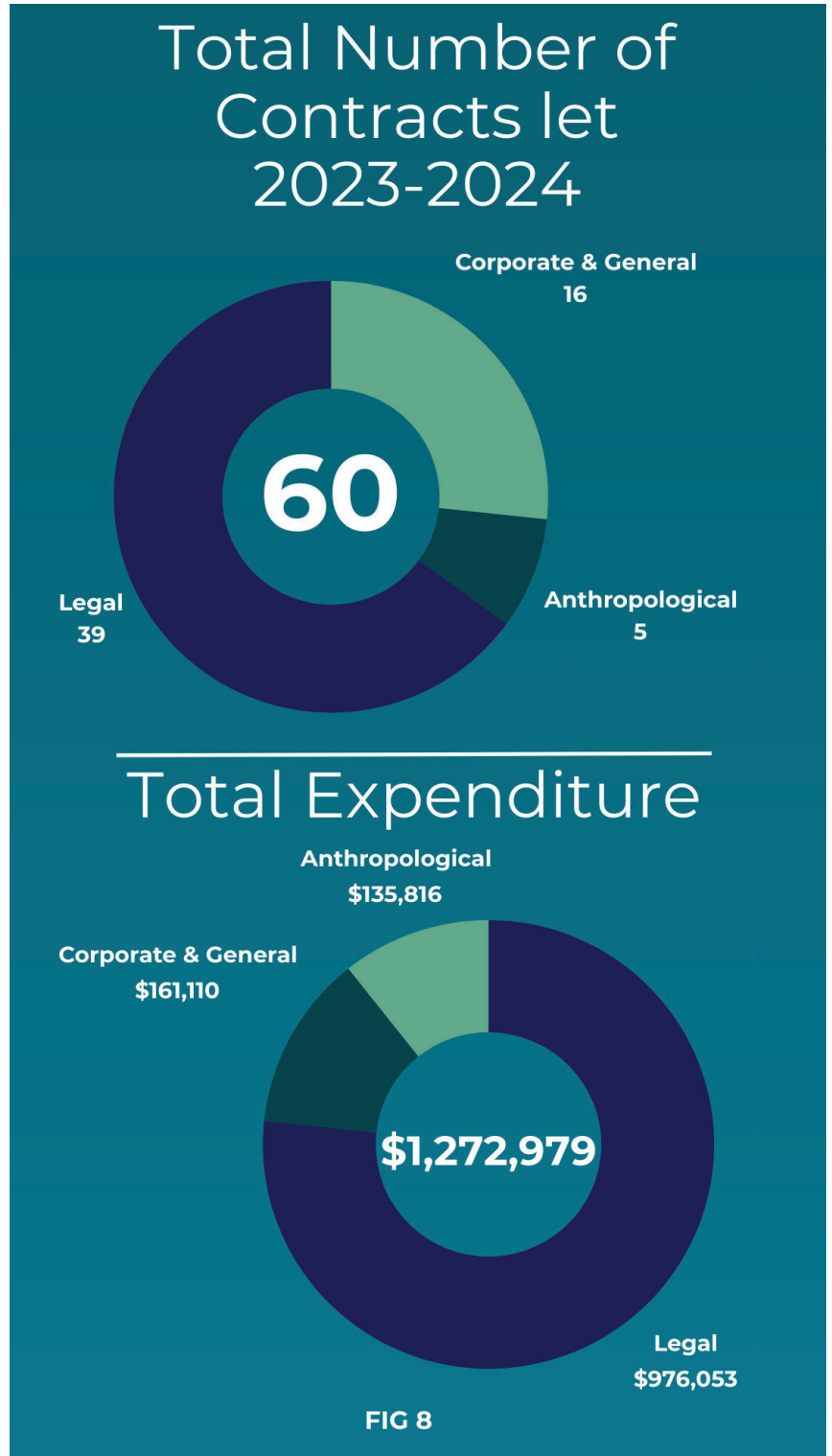


FIGURE 8 - Consultancy information 2023-2024 financial year



Wakaman Native Title Consent Determination (Left to Right): Traditional Owner John Alvion, Former NQLC Staff Chris Harriss, Former NQLC Staff Susan Walsh, Traditional Owner Robin Hooley, Anthropologist Luis Lopez, Barrister Dan O’Gorman SC.

# 9 Management of HUMAN RESOURCES



## 9.1 Workforce Planning, Staff Turnover and Retention

As at 30 June 2024 NQLC had 37 staff, of which 32.4% were Indigenous.

The Organisational Structure in section 9.3 provides

a detailed list of all positions.

During this reporting period there was a turnover of twelve staff, including two who were employed on



## 9.2 Training and Development Undertaken and its Impact

Throughout the year staff have attended various training seminars, workshops, forums, conferences and webinars. Professional staff attended training seminars and conferences in their field of expertise. These included various Legalwise seminars, Native Title Forums and Native Title Intensive webinars, AIATSIS Conference, Australian Anthropological Conference, Centre for Native Title Anthropology forums, taxation, payroll and FBT training, and HR conferences and workshops.

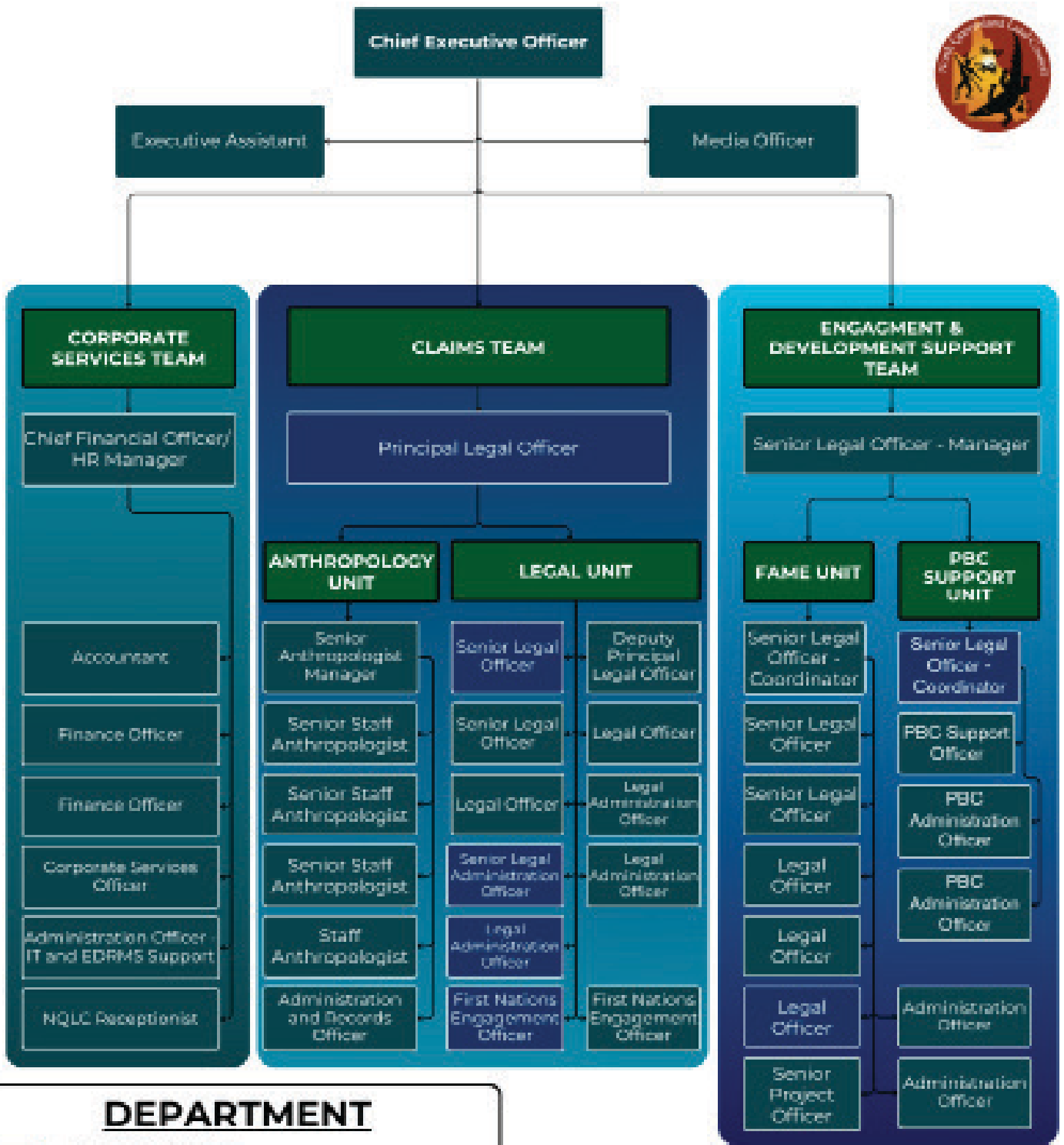
Other training throughout the year included First Aid training, CPR renewals, indigenous governance and PBC governance forums, organisational workshops and internal departmental team workshops.

Other meetings attended by staff included cultural heritage forums, critical minerals forum, native title representative body online forums and National Native Title Council meetings.



# 9.3

## Organisational Structure (as at 30 June 2024)



**DEPARTMENT**

- CORPORATE SERVICES TEAM
- CLAIMS TEAM
- ENGAGEMENT & DEVELOPMENT SUPPORT TEAM

**LOCATION**

- CAIRNS OFFICE
- TOWNSVILLE OFFICE

## 9.4 Impact and features of Enterprise Agreement

The nominal date of expiry for the 2019-2021 Enterprise Agreement was 01 July 2021. Negotiations for a new Enterprise Agreement were delayed during

the year. Negotiations are planned to commence in the new financial year.

## 9.5 Workplace Health and Safety Performance

The organisation upholds its commitment to WH&S obligations within the workplace.

The NQLC maintains appropriate Workers'

Compensation Insurance with WorkCover Queensland. The NQLC undertakes an annual audit of its first aid kits.

## 9.6 Indemnities and Insurance

The NQLC holds Professional Indemnity Insurance cover up to ten million dollars, at a premium of \$39,127 per annum. This insurance covers Directors

and Officers. During this period there have been no claims made under this policy.

POSITION	NO. OF STAFF 2022-23 (AS AT 30 JUNE 2023)	NO. OF STAFF 2023-24 (AS AT 30 JUNE 2024)
Chief Executive Officer	1	1
Principal Legal Officer	1	1
Chief Financial Officer	1	1
Lawyers	11	11
Paralegal	0	0
Anthropologists	5	4
Project Officers	2	2
Administration & Other Officers	20	17
<b>Total Number of Staff</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>37</b>

TABLE 9: Comparison on staffing numbers from 22-23 to 23-24



# 10 Summary of NATIVE TITLE CONSENT DETERMINATIONS

DATE	FEDERAL COURT NUMBER	CLAIM NAME	REGISTERED NATIVE TITLE BODY CORPORATE
26/03/2013	QUD208/2004	Tableland Yidinji People #3	Wadjanbarra Tableland Yidinji Aboriginal Corporation
14/12/2012	QUD6030/1999	Tableland Yidinji People	Wadjanbarra Tableland Yidinji Aboriginal Corporation
10/12/2012	QUD6109/1998	Tagalaka People	Tagalaka Aboriginal Corporation RNTBC
10/12/2012	QUD6020/2001	Tagalaka People #2	Tagalaka Aboriginal Corporation RNTBC
9/10/2012	QUD6230/1998	Jangga People	Bulganunna Aboriginal Corporation RNTBC
21/09/2012	QUD6016/2001	Combined Mandingalbay Yidinji - Gungandji	Gungandji-Mandingalbay Yidinji Peoples PBC Aboriginal Corporation RNTBC
2/08/2012	QUD208/1997	Djungan People #1	Ngudaboolgan Native Title Aboriginal Corporation RNTBC
2/08/2012	QUD6022/1998	Djungan People #2	Ngudaboolgan Native Title Aboriginal Corporation RNTBC
2/08/2012	QUD6116/1998	Djungan People #3	Ngudaboolgan Native Title Aboriginal Corporation RNTBC
2/08/2012	QUD6036/2001	Djungan People #4	Ngudaboolgan Native Title Aboriginal Corporation RNTBC
1/08/2012	QUD65/2005	Gugu Badhun People #2	Gugu Badhun Aboriginal Corporation RNTBC
19/12/2011	QUD6013/2001	Combined Gungandji	Gungandji PBC Aboriginal Corporation RNTBC
14/12/2011	QUD6035/2001	Muluridji People #2	Muluridji Tribal Aboriginal Corporation RNTBC
14/11/2011	QUD6208/1998	Muluridji People	Muluridji Tribal Aboriginal Corporation RNTBC
1/09/2011	QUD6003/2003	Djinu People #2	Djinu Warrangburna Aboriginal Corporation RNTBC
1/09/2011	QUD6006/2003	Djinu People #3	Djinu Warrangburna Aboriginal Corporation RNTBC
31/08/2011	QUD296/2008	Wanyun-Majay People	Wanyun-Majay Aboriginal Corporation RNTBC
26/07/2011	QUD6248/1998	Juru (Cape Upstart) People	Kyburna Munda Yalga Aboriginal Corporation RNTBC
08/10/2010	QUD6001/2003	Jirbal People #1	Wabubadda Aboriginal Corporation RNTBC
08/10/2010	QUD41/2004	Jirbal People #2	Wabubadda Aboriginal Corporation RNTBC
08/10/2010	QUD42/2004	Jirbal People #3	Wabubadda Aboriginal Corporation RNTBC
17/12/2009	QUD6012/2001	Combined Dulabad and Malanbarra Yidinji	Dulabad Malanbarra and Yidinji Aboriginal Corporation RNTBC
10/12/2009	QUD6240/1998	Ginamay People	Ginamay People Aboriginal Corporation RNTBC
12/12/2007	QUD6027/1999	Ngadjon Ji People	Onorechillum (Ngadjon Ji PBC) Aboriginal Corporation RNTBC
24/04/2006	QUD6016/1998	Mandingalbay Yidinji People	Mandingalbay Yidinji Aboriginal Corporation RNTBC
17/02/2006	QUD6089/1998	Western Yalanji People	Western Yalanji Aboriginal Corporation RNTBC
17/12/2004	QUD6002/1998	Djabugay People	Djabugay Native Title Aboriginal Corporation RNTBC
28/06/2001	QUD6322/1998	Bar-Barrum People	Bar-Barrum Aboriginal Corporation RNTBC
28/09/1998	QUD6002/1996	Western (Sunset) Yalanji	Western Yalanji Aboriginal Corporation RNTBC

TABLE 10: Summary of Native Title Consent Determinations

DATE	FEDERAL COURT NUMBER	CLAIM NAME	REGISTERED NATIVE TITLE BODY CORPORATE
18/08/2023	QUD746/2015	Wakaman People #3	Wakaman Kung Kung Aboriginal Corporation RNTBC
18/08/2023	QUD725/2017	Wakaman People #4	Wakaman Kung Kung Aboriginal Corporation RNTBC
18/08/2023	QUD178/2017	Wakaman People #5 Part A	Wakaman Kung Kung Aboriginal Corporation RNTBC
18/08/2021	QUD882/2015	Wangamay People	Wangamay Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation
25/02/2020	QUD12/2019	Yuwibara People	Yuwil Aboriginal Corporation
04/04/2019	QUD308/2014	Culingay People	Culingay Kinjufle Aboriginal Corporation
01/08/2018	QUD741/2015	Girramay People #2	Girramay People Aboriginal Corporation RNTBC
20/04/2018	QUD3148/2015	Nywaigi People	Warga Badda Nywaigi Aboriginal Corporation RNTBC
12/12/2017	QUD1076/2015	Bar Barnum #9	Mbaberam Aboriginal Corporation RNTBC
12/12/2017	QUD607/2016	Bar Barnum #10 (Rivers)	Mbaberam Aboriginal Corporation RNTBC
13/12/2016	QUD80/2005	Cudjala People (Part B)	Ngrragoonda Aboriginal Corporation RNTBC
13/12/2016	QUD147/2006	Cudjala People #2 (Part B)	Ngrragoonda Aboriginal Corporation RNTBC
05/12/2016	QUD6031/2001	Bar Barnum People #5	Mbaberam Aboriginal Corporation RNTBC
29/06/2016	QUD492/2013	Widi People Of The Nebo Estate #2	Cangali Nama Widi Aboriginal Corporation
29/06/2016	QUD380/2009 QUD492/2013	Barada Bama People And Widi People Of The Nebo Estate #2 Shared-Country	Cangali Nama Widi Aboriginal Corporation
10/06/2016	QUD6015/2001	Bar Barnum People #2	Mbaberam Aboriginal Corporation
10/06/2016	QUD6017/2001	Bar Barnum People #3	Mbaberam Aboriginal Corporation
10/06/2016	QUD6030/2001	Bar Barnum People #4	Mbaberam Aboriginal Corporation
10/06/2016	QUD6032/2001	Bar Barnum People #6	Mbaberam Aboriginal Corporation
22/06/2015	QUD 554/2010	Juru People (Part D)	Kyburra Munda Yalga Aboriginal Corporation
11/07/2014	QUD 554/210	Juru People (Part A)	Kyburra Munda Yalga Aboriginal Corporation
16/03/2014	QUD906/2005	Cudjala People	Ngrragoonda Aboriginal Corporation RNTBC
18/03/2014	QUD147/2006	Cudjala People #2	Ngrragoonda Aboriginal Corporation RNTBC
26/11/2013	QUD6009/1999	Ewamian People #2	Tatamaji Puranga Aboriginal Corporation RNTBC
26/11/2013	QUD6018/2001	Ewamian People #3	Tatamaji Puranga Aboriginal Corporation RNTBC
1/11/2013	QUD6014/2001	Mama People	Mama Aboriginal Corporation RNTBC
24/09/2013	QUD6008/1999	Western Yalanji #4	Western Yalanji Aboriginal Corporation RNTBC
24/09/2013	QUD6003/2001	Western Yalanji Combined #5 & #7	Western Yalanji Aboriginal Corporation RNTBC
23/09/2013	QUD111/2004	Warrungu People #2	Coondaloo Aboriginal Corporation RNTBC



Image: Astro Brim



**North Queensland Land Council  
Native Title Representative Body  
Aboriginal Corporation**

ABN 19 047 713 117  
ICN 1996

Annual financial report  
For the year ended 30 June 2024

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## Abbreviations

PBC                      Prescribed Body Corporate

## Directors' report

The directors present their report together with the financial statements of North Queensland Land Council Native Title Representative Body Aboriginal Corporation (the "Corporation") for the financial year ended 30 June 2024 and the auditor's report thereon.

### Operating and financial review

The net surplus/(deficit) from ordinary activities after income tax amounted to \$30,167 (2023: (\$219,863)).

### State of affairs

There were no significant changes in the Corporation's state of affairs during the financial year.

### Principal activities

The principal activity of the Corporation during the course of the financial year was to provide high quality Native Title services to traditional owner groupings throughout the North Queensland region.

There were no significant changes in the nature of the activities of the Corporation during the year.

### Events subsequent to reporting date

There has not arisen in the interval between the end of the financial year and the date of this report any matter or circumstance that has significantly affected or may significantly affect the operations of the Corporation, the results of those operations, or the state of affairs of the Corporation, in future financial years.

### Likely developments

The directors envisage that the Corporation will continue its existing operations, subject to the receipt of future funding from government and other sources.

### Environmental regulation

The Corporation's operations are not subject to any particular and significant environmental regulations under either Commonwealth or State legislation. However, the Board believes that the Corporation has adequate systems in place for the management of its environmental requirements and is not aware of any breach of those environmental requirements as they apply to the Corporation.

### Distributions

The Corporation's constitution precludes it from distributing any surpluses to members. Accordingly, no distributions were paid, recommended, or declared by the Corporation during the year.



## Directors

The directors of the Corporation at any time during or since the end of the financial year are:

<b>Angelina Akee</b>	<b>Chairperson and Director</b>
Experience	President of Townsville ABIS Community Housing Cooperative (MABO 30 year Celebration) Deputy Chair for Aboriginal TS Islander Housing Peak QLD Deputy Chair for Aboriginal TS Islander Health Service Advisory Council Member – Queensland Government Housing Outcome for Older Women 55 years & older Elder advisor and life member Garbutt Magpies Sporting Association
Ward	Townsville/Ayr
Traditional Owner	Bindal / Jara
<b>Sarah Adjo</b>	<b>Deputy Chairperson and Director</b>
Qualifications	Certificate III in Business Certificate III in Social Housing Certificate III in Primary Health Care Certificate IV in Justice Certificate 1, II and III in Community Sport and Recreation Studying Bachelor of Laws – Deakin University Studying Certificate IV in Youth and Family Intervention
Experience	Administration / Office Manager Regional Manager for the Indigenous Community Sport and Recreation Officer Program Events Manager / Coordinator of Community Carnivals, Activities, Programs and Projects Project Manager Community Support Worker, Lifestyle Coach and Community Capacity Builder Administrator for the Woomera Muralug Cooperative Society Native Title Consultant – Australian Federal Native Title Court Hearings Deputy Chairperson of the Wu Chopperen Medical Centre Tribal Consultant of the Kunggandji Kamoi-Yarraburra Tribal Elders Council
Ward	Cairns
Traditional Owner	Geemooburra-Yarraburra Kunggandji Gurubuna Peoples, traditional custodians of Cairns and Yarrabah and descends from the KoKo Bera Clan of Kowanyama
<b>All Lacey</b>	<b>Treasurer and Director – elected 21 October 2023</b>
Experience	Mayor of Palm Island Member of State & Commonwealth Advisory Boards
Ward	Palm Island
Traditional Owner	Ewamian
<b>Emol Neal</b>	<b>Correspondence Secretary and Director</b>
Qualifications	Certificate IV in Business Governance
Experience	Indigenous Cultural Educator and Performer Mayor of Yarrabah Aboriginal Shire Council Qld (2012 – 2016) 30 Years Activist on the issues of Social Justice and Land Rights Chairperson of NGLC Board (2012 – 2015)
Ward	Yarrabah
Traditional Owner	Gunggandji / Djungan
<b>Richard Hoolihan</b>	<b>Director</b>
Experience	Training Manager Trainer and assessor TAFE Teacher
Ward	Charters Towers/Hughenden
Traditional Owner	Gugu Badhur / Nadjorji

<b>Rona Hart</b>	<b>Director</b>
Qualifications	Corporate Governance & Financial Management Training & Attainment Various industry related tickets, licences and certificates
Experience	Member/Director Giringun Aboriginal Corporation Indigenous Member SISP (Terrain NRM) Volunteer, employee & board member for various organisations
Ward	Innisfail
Traditional Owner	Djju
<b>Joann Schmitter</b>	<b>Director</b>
Qualifications	Certificate IV in Governance; Indigenous Leadership; Community Culture; Local Government; Natural Disasters Resilience Leadership; and Training and Assessment DipT (Prior) and Bachelor of Education PhD Candidate – Cultural Knowledge & Tourism Graduate Certificate in Social Administration (Community Development), Indigenous Research and Research Methods
Experience	Graduate, Australian Institute of Company Directors Representative Mamu Native Title Claim Applicant, 2007-13 and member of the NT working group, IPA Cultural Advisor Previous director on two RNTBC's, one as an independent Currently a Director or Indigenous member on two local/subregional, two FNQ, one State and two national networks advocating Indigenous interests Chairperson and sub-committee member of one State level business entity Appointed life member of an FNQ culture and arts regional entity
Ward	Tablelands
Traditional Owner	Brooks apical family of the Waribama dialect and locality group of the Mamu native title holders of the Dyrbalngan language nation
<b>Warren Martens</b>	<b>Director</b>
Qualifications	Certificate III in Disability Support
Experience	Rail Safety Officer Customer Service Support Disability Support Worker
Ward	Cauma
Traditional Owner	Kunggandji Kamoi – Yarrabuma Gunabuna & Ko Bera
<b>Tracey Joseph</b>	<b>Director – elected 21 October 2023 and resigned 26 March 2024</b>
Ward	Tablelands
Traditional Owner	Tableland Yidinji
<b>Ross Sauney</b>	<b>Director – elected 21 October 2023 and resigned 14 February 2024</b>
Experience	Director for Wiri Community Limited for 8 years Director (interim) BKY Aboriginal Corporation for 15 months Participation in Cultural and Heritage surveys
Ward	Proserpine/Mackay
Traditional Owner	Connection to Wiri and Barda in Central Queensland and Wakka Wakka and Barrag in South East West Queensland
<b>Gary Mooney</b>	<b>Director – ceased 21 October 2023 and re-appointed 15 April 2024</b>
Qualifications	Certificate IV in Business Governance
Experience	19 years of involvement with Murri Watch 3.5 years as a Police Liaison Officer as well as experience in the Housing Co-operative
Ward	Proserpine/Mackay
Traditional Owner	Yuibera

<b>Delena Foster</b>	<b>Director – ceased 21 October 2023</b>
Experience	Coordinator / Manager Kootana Women's Centre (1985-2008) Founding Member Palm Island Vision Plan (1997-2005) Chairperson / Director Goodcoo Aboriginal Corporation for Day Care (1997-2009) Mayor Palm Island Aboriginal Shire Council(2007-2008) Manager Bwgoolman Management Services (2018-2021)
Ward	Palm Island
Traditional Owner	Bwgoolman, Kuku Yalanji, Kuku Imudji, Yidinji
<b>Kaylene Malthouse</b>	<b>Director – ceased 21 October 2023</b>
Qualifications	Certificate IV in Business Governance Certificate II in Indigenous Leadership AILC 2015 Certificate III in Indigenous Leadership AILC 2016
Experience	Past Representative for the Standing Independent Selection Panel Employed by the Department of Communities to April 2017 Co-Convenor for 2016/2017 Uluru Statement of the Heart Member South Tablelands Traditional Owners Alliance (STTOA) – advocacy around Housing, Health, Education, Employment and Social inclusion Chairperson 2016 – 2019 Gimingu Aboriginal Corporation and freelance consultant
Ward	Tablelands
Traditional Owner	Upper Malambarna / Yidinji / Madgon
<b>Danny Hooligan</b>	<b>Director – resigned 12 April 2024</b>
Experience	Former Police Liaison Officer of Mount Garnet Police Station Founding member of the North Queensland Land Council
Ward	Mount Garnet
Traditional Owner	Warrungu
<b>Nicole Huxley</b>	<b>Director – resigned 15 April 2024</b>
Qualifications	Certificate IV in Business
Experience	20 years Management/CEO/Community and Business Development 10 years Youth, Women and Domestic Violence Services
Ward	Tully
Traditional Owner	Gudjala

## Corporation Secretary

Mr Leon Yeatman was appointed to the position of Corporation Secretary on 1 July 2023 following the resignation of Ms Rhonda Jacobsen who held the position since 18 February 2022.

## Directors' meetings

The number of directors' meetings and number of meetings attended by each of the directors of the Corporation during the financial year are:

Director	No of board meetings attended	No of board meetings eligible to attend	No of executive meetings attended	No of executive meetings eligible to attend
Angelina Akee	6	6	2	2
Sarah Addo	5	6	2	2
Allied Lacey	3	4	2	2
Enol Neal	4	6	2	2
Richard Hoolihan	5	6	1	1
Rona Hart	2	6	-	-
Joann Schmeder	5	6	-	-
Warren Martens	6	6	-	-
Tracey Joseph	1	1	-	-
Ross Sauney	1	1	-	-
Gary Mooney	4	4	-	-
Dolena Foster	-	2	-	-
Kaylene Malthouse	1	2	-	-
Danny Hooligan	2	3	-	-
Nicole Huxley	1	3	-	-

At the Ward elections held 21 October 2023, directors were elected for each Ward for the 2023-2025 term.

The 2023 Corporation's Annual General Meeting was held in Townsville on 4 November 2023.

## Proceedings on behalf of the Corporation

During the year, no person has made application for leave in respect of the Corporation under section 169-5 of the Corporations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) Act 2006 (the "Act").

During the year, no person has brought or intervened in proceedings on behalf of the Corporation with leave under section 169-5 of the Act.

## Auditor's independence declaration

At no time during the financial year ended 30 June 2024 was an officer of the Corporation the auditor, a partner in the audit firm, or a director of the audit company that undertook the audit of the Corporation for that financial year.

The lead auditor's independence declaration is set out on the following page and forms part of the directors' report for the financial year ended 30 June 2024.

This report is made out in accordance with a resolution of the directors.

  
Director

  
Director

Dated at CAIENS this 28<sup>th</sup> day of September 2024

## Auditor's Independence Declaration to the directors of North Queensland Land Council Native Title Representative Body Aboriginal Corporation

In accordance with the requirements of section 339-50 of the *Corporations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) Act 2006*, as lead auditor for the audit of North Queensland Land Council Native Title Representative Body Aboriginal Corporation for the year ended 30 June 2024, I declare that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, there have been:

- a No contraventions of the auditor independence requirements as set out in the *Corporations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) Act 2006* in relation to the audit; and
- b No contraventions of any applicable code of professional conduct in relation to the audit.



Grant Thornton Audit Pty Ltd  
Chartered Accountants



H A Wilkes  
Partner – Audit & Assurance

Cairns, 23 September 2024

# Statement of comprehensive income

For the year ended 30 June 2024

	2024	2023
Notes	\$	\$
<b>Income</b>		
Revenue and income	7	11,685,458
Gain on sale of property, plant and equipment		25,729
		<u>10,464,832</u>
		<u>11,711,187</u>
<b>Expenses</b>		
Contractors and consultants	8	2,083,972
Director expenses		153,305
Motor vehicles		32,562
Travel and meetings		637,643
Employee expenses	9	5,302,038
Rent		4,905
Interest		18,699
Service expenses	10	2,685,431
Depreciation and amortisation expenses		
Property, plant and equipment		107,153
Intangible assets		55,548
Right-of-use assets		81,571
Other expenses	11	515,870
		<u>11,678,997</u>
		<u>10,683,453</u>
<b>Results from operating activities</b>		<u>32,190</u>
Finance costs		2,023
<b>Net finance costs</b>		<u>2,023</u>
<b>Net surplus (deficit) before tax</b>		<u>30,167</u>
Income tax expense	6.5	-
<b>Net surplus (deficit)</b>		<u>30,167</u>
Other comprehensive income		-
<b>Total comprehensive income (loss)</b>		<u>30,167</u>

This statement should be read in conjunction with the notes to the financial statements.

# Statement of financial position

As at 30 June 2024

	Note	2024 \$	2023 \$
<b>Assets</b>			
Cash and cash equivalents	12	7,421,447	6,912,089
Investments	6.8	25,300	25,300
Trade and other receivables	13	377,681	87,806
Prepayments	14	112,452	122,245
<b>Current assets</b>		<b>7,936,780</b>	<b>7,147,239</b>
Property, plant and equipment	15	1,528,858	1,488,306
Right-of-use assets	18	198,957	287,853
Intangible assets	17	80,436	115,084
<b>Non-current assets</b>		<b>1,787,651</b>	<b>1,882,142</b>
<b>Total assets</b>		<b>9,724,411</b>	<b>9,029,381</b>
<b>Liabilities</b>			
Trade and other payables	19	1,081,307	1,080,913
Contract liabilities	20	5,858,552	5,128,585
Employee benefits	21	588,584	508,810
Lease liabilities	22	83,338	74,558
<b>Current liabilities</b>		<b>7,581,781</b>	<b>6,771,806</b>
Employee benefits	21	69,936	149,600
Lease liabilities	22	132,128	204,518
<b>Non-current liabilities</b>		<b>199,064</b>	<b>354,118</b>
<b>Total liabilities</b>		<b>7,790,845</b>	<b>7,125,924</b>
<b>Net assets</b>		<b>1,933,566</b>	<b>1,903,357</b>
<b>Equity</b>			
Retained surplus		1,933,566	1,903,357
<b>Total equity</b>		<b>1,933,566</b>	<b>1,903,357</b>

This statement should be read in conjunction with the notes to the financial statements.



## Statement of changes in equity

For the year ended 30 June 2024

### Retained surplus

	2024 \$	2023 \$
Balance at 1 July	1,903,399	2,123,252
<b>Total comprehensive income</b>		
Net surplus (deficit)	30,167	(219,853)
Total other comprehensive income	-	-
<b>Total comprehensive income</b>	<b>1,933,566</b>	<b>1,903,399</b>
<b>Balance at 30 June</b>	<b>1,933,566</b>	<b>1,903,399</b>

This statement should be read in conjunction with the notes to the financial statements.

## Statement of cash flows

For the year ended 30 June 2024

	Note	2024 \$	2023 \$
<b>Cash flows from operating activities</b>			
Receipts from government grants		13,322,924	11,800,882
Payments to suppliers and employees		(12,784,414)	(10,020,922)
Cash generated from operating activities		558,510	1,779,960
Interest received		63,582	22,807
Other receipts		74,805	365,475
<b>Net cash from operating activities</b>	20	<b>716,897</b>	<b>2,198,242</b>
<b>Cash flows from investing activities</b>			
Proceeds from sale of property, plant and equipment		2,048	845
Acquisition of property, plant and equipment		(114,704)	(344,503)
Acquisition of intangibles		-	-
Acquisition of investments		-	(25,300)
<b>Net cash (used in)/from investing activities</b>		<b>(112,656)</b>	<b>(368,958)</b>
<b>Cash flows from financing activities</b>			
Payment of lease liabilities		(84,681)	181,050
<b>Net cash from/ (used in) financing activities</b>		<b>(84,681)</b>	<b>181,050</b>
<b>Net increase in cash and cash equivalents</b>		<b>509,560</b>	<b>2,010,334</b>
Cash and cash equivalents at 1 July	12	6,912,089	4,901,755
<b>Cash and cash equivalents at 30 June</b>	12	<b>7,421,649</b>	<b>6,912,089</b>

This statement should be read in conjunction with the notes to the financial statements.

# Notes to the financial statements

## 1 Reporting entity

North Queensland Land Council Native Title Representative Body Aboriginal Corporation (the "Corporation") is an Aboriginal Corporation domiciled in Australia. The Corporation's registered office is at 81 Anderson Street, Cairns QLD 4870. The Corporation is a not-for-profit entity and is primarily involved in Native Title Services.

## 2 Basis of accounting

### Statement of compliance

The financial statements are general purpose financial statements which have been prepared in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards – Simplified Disclosures adopted by the Australian Accounting Standards Board ("AASB") and the *Corporations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) Act 2006*. The financial statements do not comply with International Financial Reporting Standards ("IFRSs") adopted by the International Accounting Standards Board.

The financial statements were authorised for issue by the Board of Directors on the date shown on the directors' declaration.

### Basis of measurement

The financial statements have been prepared on the historical cost basis.

### Economic dependency and going concern

The financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis, which contemplates continuity of normal business activities and the realisation of assets and settlement of liabilities in the ordinary course of business.

The Corporation is a not-for-profit entity and is reliant on government funding in order to continue its operations.

The Corporation, on 26 June 2023, received recognition as the representative Aboriginal/Torres Strait Islander body (representative body) for the North Queensland area for a further three-year period from 01 July 2023 to 30 June 2026.

In addition to its recognition period above, the Corporation was approved core operational and PBC Support funding for the three-year period from 01 July 2023 to 30 June 2026. The Corporation's Head Agreement and Project Schedule reflect the approved three-year funding allocation.

The Corporation's priorities over the coming years are: the conduct of research in those areas that are not yet determined; the prosecution of current claims to secure recognition of native title rights and interests; lodgement of future native title applications pursuant to the research findings; on-going support for established PBC's and support for new PBC's as they are determined; and, pursuit of compensation claims where native title rights and interests have been impacted and compensation arises.

## 3 Functional and presentation currency

These financial statements are presented in Australian dollars, which is the Corporation's functional currency.

## 4 Use of judgements and estimates

In preparing these financial statements, management has made judgements, estimates and assumptions that affect the application of the Corporation's accounting policies and the reported amounts of assets, liabilities, income and expenses. The estimates and associated assumptions are based on historical experience and other various factors that are believed to be reasonable under the circumstances, the results of which form the basis of making the judgments. Actual results may differ from these estimates.

Estimates and underlying assumptions are reviewed on an ongoing basis. Revisions to estimates are recognised prospectively.

### Judgements

The Corporation entered into a contract to rent office space as disclosed in Note 22. Management has determined that the contract conveys the right to control the use of an identified asset for a period of time in exchange for consideration, and has therefore determined the contract contains a lease.

### Assumptions and estimation uncertainties

Management is not aware of any assumptions and estimation uncertainties that have a significant risk of resulting in a material adjustment within the next financial year.

## 5 Changes to standards and material accounting policies

### Standards issued but not yet effective

Any newer amended Accounting Standards or Interpretations that are not yet mandatory have not been early adopted. A number of new standards and amendments to standards are effective for annual periods beginning on or after 1 July 2024, and have not been applied in preparing these financial statements. These are not expected to have a significant impact on the financial statements.

### New and amended standards adopted

The Corporation has adopted all the amendments to Australian Accounting Standards issued by the AASB which are relevant to, and effective for, the Corporation's financial statements for the annual period beginning 1 July 2023. The Corporation also adopted AASB 2021-6 Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards – Disclosures of Accounting Policies: Tier 2 and Other Australian Accounting Standards from 1 July 2023. Although the amendments did not result in any changes to the accounting policies themselves, they impacted the accounting policy information disclosed in the financial statements. The amendments require the disclosure of 'material', rather than 'significant', accounting policies. The amendments also provide guidance on the application of materiality to disclosure of accounting policies, assisting entities to provide useful, entity-specific accounting policy information that users need to understand other information in the financial statements. Management reviewed the accounting policies and made updates to the information disclosed in Note 6 Material accounting policies (2023: Significant accounting policies) in certain instances in line with the amendments.

## 6 Material accounting policies

### 6.1 Revenue recognition

Revenue from contracts with customers is recognised by reference to each distinct performance obligation in the contract with the customer. Revenue from contracts with customers is measured at its transaction price, being the amount of consideration which the Corporation expects to be entitled to in exchange for transferring promised goods or services to a customer, net of goods and services tax, returns, rebates and discounts. The transaction price is allocated to each performance obligation on the basis of the relevant standalone selling price of each distinct good or service promised in the contract. Depending on the substance of the contract, revenue is recognised when the performance obligation is satisfied, which may be at a point in time or over time.

The Corporation recognises other revenue when the amount of revenue can be reliably measured, it is probable that future economic benefits will flow to the Corporation and specific criteria have been met for each of the Corporation's activities. The Corporation bases its estimates on historical results, taking into consideration the type of customer, the type of transaction and the specifics of each arrangement.

Revenue is recognised for the major business activities using the methods outlined below.

#### Fee income

Revenue arising from fees is recognised at a point in time when the performance obligations is completed and the customer receives the benefit of the services being provided.

The performance obligation relates to the specific services provided to the customer.

As amounts are billed to the customer upfront, these are recognised as a contract liability until after the meeting has taken place and the Corporation has a right to payment.

#### Contract balances

Contract assets are recognised when the Corporation has transferred goods or services to the customer but where the Corporation is yet to establish an unconditional right to consideration. Contract assets are treated as financial assets for impairment purposes.

Contract liabilities represent the Corporation's obligation to transfer goods or services to a customer and are recognised when a customer pays consideration, or when the Corporation recognises a receivable to reflect its unconditional right to consideration (whichever is earlier) before the Corporation has transferred the goods or services to the customer.

## 6.2 Grants and other contributions

#### Grants under AASB 15

Grants (other than certain capital grants) are accounted for under AASB 15 where the grant income arises from an agreement which is enforceable and contains sufficiently specific performance obligations. As such, the revenue is recognised when each performance obligation is satisfied.

#### Grants under AASB 1058

Other grants, including certain capital grants, are generally accounted for under AASB 1058.

The timing of income recognition under AASB 1058 is dependent upon whether the transaction gives rise to a liability or other performance obligation at the time of receipt. Income under the standard is recognised where:

- an asset is received in a transaction, such as by way of grant, bequest or donation;
- there has either been no consideration transferred, or the consideration paid is significantly less than the asset's fair value; and
- the intention is to principally enable the entity to further its objectives.

Assets arising from grants in the scope of AASB 1058 are recognised at the assets' fair values when the assets are received. Any related liability or equity items associated with the asset are recognised in accordance with the relevant accounting standard. Once the asset and any related liability or equity items have been recognised, then income is recognised for any remaining asset value at the time the asset is received.

For transfers of financial assets (usually cash and/or a receivable) to the Corporation which enable it to acquire or construct a recognisable non-financial asset, a liability is recognised for the excess of the fair value of the transfer received over any related amounts recognised. Related amounts recognised may relate to contributions by owners, AASB 15 revenue or contract liability recognised, lease liabilities in accordance with AASB 16, financial instruments in accordance with AASB 9, or provisions in accordance with AASB 137. The liability is brought to account as income over the period in which the Corporation satisfies its performance obligation.

## 6.3 Finance income and finance costs

Finance income and finance costs include interest income and interest expense. Interest income or expense is recognised using the effective interest method.

## 6.4 Employee benefits

#### Short-term benefits

Short-term employee benefits are expensed as the related service is provided. A liability is recognised for the amount expected to be paid if the Corporation has a present legal or constructive obligation to pay this amount as a result of past service provided by the employee and the obligation can be estimated reliably.

### Superannuation contributions

Obligations for contributions to superannuation are expensed as the related service is provided. The contributions made by the Corporation for the year ended 30 June 2024 were \$671,873 (2023: \$668,504).

### Other long-term employee benefits

The Corporation's net obligation in respect of long-term employee benefits is the amount of future benefit that employees have earned in return for their service in the current and prior periods. That benefit is discounted to determine its present value. Remeasurements are recognised in income or expense in the period in which they arise.

### Termination benefits

Termination benefits are expensed at the earlier of when the Corporation can no longer withdraw the offer of those benefits and when the Corporation recognises costs of restructuring. If the benefits are not expected to be settled wholly within 12 months at the end of the reporting period, then they are discounted.

## 6.5 Income tax

The Corporation is exempt from income tax under Division 50 of the *Income Tax Assessment Act 1997*.

## 6.6 Intangible assets

### Recognition and measurement

#### Acquired intangible assets

Acquired computer software licences are capitalised based on the costs incurred to acquire and install the specific software.

#### Internally developed software

Expenditure on the research phase of projects to develop new customised software is recognised as an expense as incurred.

Costs that are directly attributable to a project's development phase are recognised as intangible assets, provided they meet the following recognition requirements:

- the development costs can be measured reliably
- the project is technically and commercially feasible
- the organisation intends to and has sufficient resources to complete the project
- the organisation has the ability to use or sell the software; and
- the software will generate probable future economic benefits

Development costs not meeting these criteria for capitalisation are expensed as incurred.

### Subsequent measurement

All intangible assets, including internally developed software, are accounted for using the cost model whereby capitalised costs are amortised on a straight-line basis over their estimated useful lives, as these assets are considered finite. Residual values and useful lives are reviewed at each reporting date and adjusted if appropriate. The following useful lives are applied:

- Software 3 – 5 years

Remaining amortisation period:

- Document management system 1 – 3 years
- Other software 0 years

Subsequent expenditure on the maintenance of computer software is expensed as incurred.

## 6.7 Property, plant and equipment

### Recognition and measurement

Items of property, plant and equipment are measured at cost less accumulated depreciation and any accumulated impairment losses. Items with a cost or other value equal to, or in excess of \$5,000 are recognised for financial reporting purposes in the year of acquisition. Items with a lesser value are expensed in the year of acquisition.

If significant parts of an item of property, plant and equipment have different useful lives, then they are accounted for as separate items (major components) of property, plant and equipment.

Any gain or loss on disposal of an item of property, plant and equipment is recognised in income or expense.

### Subsequent expenditure

Subsequent expenditure is capitalised only when it is probable that the future economic benefits associated with the expenditure will flow to the Corporation.

### Depreciation

Depreciation is calculated to write off the cost of property, plant and equipment less their estimated residual values using the straight-line basis over their estimated useful lives. Land is not depreciated.

The depreciation rates used for each class of depreciable asset are as follows:

- Buildings 2.5% - 5%
- Furniture, fixtures and fittings 4% - 25%
- Motor vehicles 12.5%
- Office equipment 10% - 33.33%
- Leasehold improvements 23.26% - 28.57%

Depreciation methods, useful lives and residual values are reviewed at each reporting date and adjusted if appropriate.

## 6.8 Rental bond

The Corporation has guaranteed, as part of their operating lease, the payment of rentals in accordance with the signed agreement for the specified lease term. The terms of the lease agreement required the Corporation to secure a bank guarantee of \$25,800 as minimum compensation payments to the lessor in the event of default. The directors considered no liability is required to be recognised in respect of this guarantee as the Corporation is in compliance with the lease agreement. A term deposit to secure the bank guarantee has been established.

## 6.9 Financial instruments

### Recognition, initial measurement and derecognition

Trade receivables are initially recognised when they are originated. All other financial assets and financial liabilities are initially recognised when the Corporation becomes a party to the contractual provisions of the instrument.

A financial asset, unless it is a trade receivable without a significant financing component, or a financial liability is initially measured at fair value plus, for an item not at fair value through profit or loss, transaction costs that are directly attributable to its acquisition or issue. A trade receivable without a significant financing component is initially measured at the transaction price.

A financial asset is derecognised when the contractual rights to the cash flows from the financial asset expire, or when the financial asset and all substantial risks and rewards of ownership are transferred.

A financial liability is derecognised when its contractual obligations are discharged, cancelled or expire.

## Classification and subsequent measurement

### Financial assets

For the purpose of subsequent measurement, financial assets are classified into the following categories upon initial recognition:

- amortised cost
- fair value through profit or loss
- equity instruments at fair value through other comprehensive income
- debt instruments at fair value through other comprehensive income

Classifications are determined by both:

- the Corporation's business model for managing the financial asset
- the contractual cash flow characteristics of the financial asset

All income and expenses relating to financial assets that are recognised in profit or loss are presented within finance income, finance costs or other financial items, except for impairment of trade receivables which is presented within other expenses.

### Financial assets at amortised cost

A financial asset is measured at amortised cost if it meets both of the following conditions and is not designated as at fair value through profit or loss:

- it is held within a business model whose objective is to hold assets to collect contractual cash flows, and
- its contractual terms give rise on specified dates to cash flows that are solely payments of principal and interest on the principal amount outstanding

After initial recognition, these are measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method. Discounting is omitted where the effect of discounting is immaterial. The Corporation has determined that all of its financial assets fall within the amortised cost category.

### Financial liabilities

For the purpose of subsequent measurement, financial liabilities are classified as measured at amortised cost or fair value through profit or loss. A financial liability is classified as fair value through profit or loss if it is held-for-trading. Other financial liabilities are subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

The Corporation has only financial liabilities classified as measured at amortised cost.

## 6.10 Impairment

### Non-derivative financial assets

#### Financial assets and contract assets

The Corporation uses forward looking information to recognise expected credit losses – the 'expected credit losses (ECL) model'. Instruments within the scope of these requirements include loans and trade receivables.

The Corporation considers a broad range of information when assessing credit risk and measuring expected credit losses, including past events, current conditions, reasonable and supportable forecasts that affect the expected collectability of the future cash flows of the instrument.

In applying this forward-looking approach, a distinction is made between:

- financial assets that have not deteriorated significantly in credit quality since initial recognition or that have low credit risk ('Stage 1') and



- financial assets that have deteriorated significantly in credit quality since initial recognition and whose credit risk is not low ('Stage 2').

'Stage 3' would cover financial assets that have objective evidence of impairment at the reporting date.

'12-month expected credit losses' are recognised for the first category while 'lifetime expected credit losses' are recognised for the second category.

Measurement of the expected credit losses is determined by a probability-weighted estimate of credit losses over the expected life of the financial asset.

#### Trade and other receivables and contract assets

The Corporation makes use of a simplified approach in accounting for trade and other receivables as well as contract assets and records the loss allowance at the amount equal to the expected lifetime credit losses. In using this practical expedient, the Corporation uses its historical experience, external indicators and forward-looking information to calculate the expected credit losses using a provision matrix.

The Corporation assesses impairment of trade receivables on a collective basis as they possess credit risk characteristics based on the days past due. The Corporation does not allow for write off from Government grants as default has never occurred. The Corporation has assessed trade receivables at 30 June 2024 and has determined that no impairment is required at that date.

#### Non-financial assets

At each reporting date, the Corporation reviews the carrying amounts of its non-financial assets to determine whether there is any indication of impairment. If any such indication exists, then the asset's recoverable amount is estimated.

The recoverable amount of an asset is the greater of its value in use and its fair value less costs to sell. As the Corporation is a not-for-profit entity, value in use is the written down current replacement cost of an asset as the future economic benefits of the asset are not primarily dependent on the asset's ability to generate net cash inflows and as the entity would, if deprived of the asset, replace its remaining future economic benefits.

An impairment loss is recognised if the carrying amount of an asset exceeds its recoverable amount.

Impairment losses are recognised in expenses.

An impairment loss is reversed only to the extent that the asset's carrying amount does not exceed the carrying amount that would have been determined, net of depreciation or amortisation, if no impairment loss had been recognised.

### 6.11 Provisions

Provisions are determined by discounting the expected future cash flows at a pre-tax rate that reflects current market assessments of the time value of money and the risks specific to the liability. The unwinding of the discount is recognised as finance costs.

### 6.12 Leases

At inception of a contract, the Corporation assesses whether the contract is, or contains, a lease. A contract is, or contains a lease if the contract conveys the right to control the use of an identified asset for a period of time in exchange for consideration. To assess whether a contract conveys the right to control the use of an identified asset, the Corporation uses the definition of a lease in AASB 16.

#### As a lessee

At commencement or on modification of a contract that contains a lease component, the Corporation allocates the consideration in the contract to each lease component on the basis of its relative stand-alone price. Non-lease components included in the lease agreement have been separated and are recognised as an expense as incurred.

The Corporation recognises a right-of-use asset and a lease liability at the lease commencement date. The right-of-use asset is initially measured at cost, which comprises the initial amount of the lease liability adjusted for any lease payments made at or before the commencement date, plus any initial direct costs incurred and an estimate of costs to

dismantle and remove the underlying asset or to restore the underlying asset or the site on which it is located, less any lease incentives received.

The right-of-use asset is subsequently depreciated using the straight-line method from the commencement date to the end of the lease term, unless the lease transfers ownership of the underlying asset to the Corporation by the end of the lease term or the cost of the right-of-use asset reflects that the Corporation will exercise a purchase option. In that case, the right-of-use asset will be depreciated over the useful life of the underlying asset, which is determined on the same basis as those of property, plant and equipment. In addition, the right-of-use asset is periodically reduced by impairment losses, if any, and adjusted for certain re-measurements of the lease liability.

The lease liability is initially measured at the present value of the lease payments that are not paid at the commencement date, discounted using the interest rate implicit in the lease or, if that rate cannot be readily determined, the Corporation's incremental borrowing rate. Generally, the Corporation uses its incremental borrowing rate as the discount rate.

The Corporation determines its incremental borrowing rate by obtaining interest rates from various external financing sources and makes certain adjustments to reflect the terms of the lease and type of the asset leased.

Lease payments included in the measurement of the lease liability comprise the following where applicable:

- fixed payments, including in-substance fixed payments;
- variable lease payments that depend on an index or a rate, initially measured using the index or rate as at the commencement date;
- amounts expected to be payable under a residual value guarantee; and
- the exercise price under a purchase option that the Corporation is reasonably certain to exercise, lease payments in an optional renewal period if the Corporation is reasonably certain to exercise an extension option, and penalties for early termination of a lease unless the Corporation is reasonably certain not to terminate early.

The lease liability is measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method. It is re-measured when there is a change in future lease payments arising from a change in an index or rate, if there is a change in the Corporation's estimate of the amount expected to be payable under a residual value guarantee, if the Corporation changes its assessment of whether it will exercise a purchase, extension or termination option or if there is a revised in-substance fixed lease payment.

When the lease liability is re-measured in this way, a corresponding adjustment is made to the carrying amount of the right-of-use asset, or is recorded in profit or loss if the carrying amount of the right-of-use asset has been reduced to nil.

The Corporation presents right-of-use assets as a separate line item and lease liabilities within "loans and borrowings" in the statement of financial position.

The Corporation has elected not to recognise right-of-use assets and lease liabilities for leases of low-value assets and short-term leases. The Corporation recognises the lease payments associated with these leases as an expense on a straight-line basis over the lease term.

## 7 Revenue and Income

### Revenue streams

	2024 \$	2023 \$
Revenue from contracts with customers		
Grants received (under AASB 15)	12,090,020	11,800,992
Grant balances at 1 July	4,940,219	3,191,098
Grant balances at 30 June	<u>(5,678,086)</u>	<u>(4,046,218)</u>
	11,352,152	10,945,870
Fee income	<u>245,724</u>	<u>395,475</u>
	11,601,876	10,441,325
Other revenue		
Grants and donations (under AASB 1056)	-	-
Interest	63,502	22,607
Sundry	-	-
	<u>11,685,458</u>	<u>10,464,632</u>

### Performance obligations and revenue recognition policies

Revenue from contracts with customers is measured based on the consideration specified in the contracts. Revenue is recognised when control over a good or service is transferred to a customer.

The following provides information about the nature and timing of the satisfaction of performance obligations in contracts with customers, including significant payment terms and the related revenue recognition policies.

#### Grant income

Grants (other than certain capital grants) are accounted for under AASB15 where grant income arises from an agreement which is enforceable and contains sufficiently specific performance obligations. As such, the revenue is recognised when each performance obligation is satisfied.

Each performance obligation is considered to ensure that the recognition of revenue reflects the transfer of control and within funding agreements, there may be some performance obligation where control transfers at a point in time and others which have continuous transfer of control over the life of the contract.

Where control is transferred over time, generally the input methods, being either costs or time incurred, are considered the most appropriate methods to reflect the transfer of benefits.

#### Fee income

Revenue arising from fees is recognised at a point in time when the performance obligation is completed, and the customer receives the benefit of the services being provided.

The performance obligation relates to the specific services provided to the customer.

As amounts are billed to the customer upfront, these are recognised as a contract liability until after the meeting has taken place and the Corporation has a right to payment.

## 8 Contractors and consultants

	2024	2023
	\$	\$
Accounting and auditing	43,329	39,731
Anthropological	342,182	369,806
Legal	1,330,445	919,708
IT	6,488	14,000
Other	361,528	295,716
	<u>2,083,972</u>	<u>1,638,961</u>

## 9 Employee expenses

	2024	2023
	\$	\$
Wages, salaries	4,526,239	4,425,267
Leave and other entitlements	(25,719)	137,176
Superannuation	671,673	696,594
Professional development and training	110,671	46,987
Fringe benefits tax	4,789	-
Other employee expenses	14,375	12,581
	<u>5,302,038</u>	<u>5,288,627</u>

## 10 Service expenses

	2024	2023
	\$	\$
Administration	344,275	358,468
Communications	295,884	247,499
PBC support	1,848,160	1,597,680
Repairs and maintenance	28,419	35,294
Supplies and consumables	81,461	87,317
Other	79,292	58,625
	<u>2,685,431</u>	<u>2,380,863</u>

## 11 Other expenses

	2024	2023
	\$	\$
Bad debts	-	2,173
Managed grant expenses	298,889	93,000
Proponent expenses	218,981	523,693
	<u>515,870</u>	<u>618,866</u>

## 12 Cash and cash equivalents

	2024 \$	2023 \$
Cash on hand	3,259	3,804
Cash at bank	7,418,188	6,908,285
Cash and cash equivalents in the statement of cash flows	<u>7,421,447</u>	<u>6,912,089</u>

## 13 Trade and other receivables

	2024 \$	2023 \$
<b>Current</b>		
Trade receivables	242,168	49,578
Less: Allowance for impairment losses	-	-
	<u>242,168</u>	<u>49,578</u>
Deposits	2,380	180
GST receivable	133,013	37,847
	<u>377,561</u>	<u>87,605</u>

### Expected credit loss assessment for customers at 30 June 2024

The Corporation applies the AASB 9 simplified model of recognising lifetime expected credit losses for all trade receivables as these items do not have a significant financing component.

In measuring the expected credit losses, the trade receivables have been assessed on a collective basis as they possess shared credit risk characteristics. They have been grouped based on the days past due and, also according to debtor type.

The Corporation does not allow for write off from Government grants receivable, as default has never occurred.

The expected loss rates are based on the payment profile for sales over the past 12 months before 30 June 2024 as well as the corresponding historical credit losses during that period. The historical rates are adjusted to reflect current and forward-looking macroeconomic factors affecting the customer's ability to settle the amount outstanding.

The Corporation has identified age of customer relationship and type of debtor to be the most relevant factors and accordingly adjusts historical loss rates for expected changes in these factors. However, given the short period exposed to credit risk, the impact of these macroeconomic factors has not been considered significant within the reporting period.

Trade receivables are written off (i.e. derecognised) when there is no reasonable expectation of recovery. Failure to make payment within 180 days from the invoice date and failure to engage with the Corporation on alternative payment arrangements amongst others are considered indicators of no reasonable expectation of recovery.

On the above basis the expected credit loss for trade receivables as at 30 June 2024 is nil.

## 14 Prepayments

	2024 \$	2023 \$
Insurance	82,890	81,333
Rent	8,217	7,817
Other	21,345	33,095
	<u>112,452</u>	<u>122,245</u>

## 15 Property, plant and equipment

### Reconciliation of carrying amount

	Land	Buildings	Furniture, Fixtures and fittings	Motor Vehicles	Office Equipment	Leasehold Improvements	Capital Works in Progress	Total
<b>Cost</b>	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Balance at 1 July 2022	290,000	1,547,004	60,156	314,602	421,203	15,564	-	2,648,529
Additions	-	-	-	-	-	12,894	-	12,894
Disposals	-	-	-	-	(40,614)	-	-	(40,614)
Transfers	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Balance at 30 June 2023	290,000	1,547,004	60,156	314,602	377,589	28,458	-	2,617,809
Balance at 1 July 2023	290,000	1,547,004	60,158	314,602	377,589	28,458	-	2,617,809
Additions	-	-	-	117,964	20,402	-	-	138,366
Disposals	-	-	-	(72,496)	(33,990)	(28,459)	-	(134,945)
Transfers	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Balance at 30 June 2024	290,000	1,547,004	60,156	360,070	364,131	-	-	2,621,361
<b>Depreciation and impairment</b>								
Balance at 1 July 2022	-	(450,396)	(40,636)	(156,525)	(338,439)	(12,361)	-	(1,008,357)
Additions	-	(48,016)	(1,158)	(30,806)	(28,184)	(16,077)	-	(124,741)
Disposals	-	-	-	-	43,614	-	-	43,614
Balance at 30 June 2023	-	(498,412)	(41,794)	(219,331)	(323,009)	(28,438)	-	(1,119,984)
Balance at 1 July 2023	-	(498,412)	(41,794)	(219,331)	(323,009)	(28,438)	-	(1,119,984)
Additions	-	(47,593)	(1,159)	(30,891)	(27,890)	-	-	(107,153)
Disposals	-	-	-	72,498	33,193	28,458	-	134,153
Balance at 30 June 2024	-	(546,465)	(50,053)	(177,425)	(317,696)	-	-	(1,092,639)
<b>Carrying amounts</b>								
At 1 July 2022	290,000	1,096,608	11,020	126,077	82,764	3,183	-	1,610,152
At 30 June 2023	290,000	1,048,592	18,362	95,271	54,590	-	-	1,406,805
At 30 June 2024	290,000	1,000,539	9,203	182,644	46,472	-	-	1,520,858

## 16 Right-of-use assets

### Reconciliation of carrying amount

	Property \$	Total \$
<b>Cost</b>		
Balance at 1 July 2022	388,185	388,185
Addition – Walker Street	307,826	307,826
Addition – Stanley Street (remeasurement)	23,684	23,684
Disposals	(412,878)	(412,878)
Balance at 30 June 2023	<u>307,826</u>	<u>307,826</u>
Balance at 1 July 2023	307,826	307,826
Addition – Walker Street (remeasurement)	12,075	12,075
Disposals	-	-
Balance at 30 June 2024	<u>320,001</u>	<u>320,001</u>
<b>Depreciation and impairment</b>		
Balance at 1 July 2022	(333,508)	(333,508)
Depreciation for the year	(119,358)	(119,358)
Disposals	412,879	412,879
Balance at 30 June 2023	<u>(40,073)</u>	<u>(40,073)</u>
Balance at 1 July 2023	(40,073)	(40,073)
Depreciation for the year	(81,571)	(81,571)
Disposals	-	-
Balance at 30 June 2024	<u>(121,644)</u>	<u>(121,644)</u>
<b>Carrying amounts</b>		
At 30 June 2023	<u>267,853</u>	<u>267,853</u>
At 30 June 2024	<u>198,357</u>	<u>198,357</u>

The Corporation leases office space at 122 Walker Street for its Townsville office under a lease agreement of 4 years ending 1 December 2025 with an option to extend for 4 years. The lease contains an annual pricing mechanism based on movements in the CPI at each anniversary date.

## 17 Intangible assets

### Reconciliation of carrying amount

	Document Management System \$	Other software \$	Total \$
<b>Cost</b>			
Balance at 1 July 2022	391,696	29,269	420,965
Additions	-	-	-
Disposals	-	(9,064)	(9,064)
Balance at 30 June 2023	391,696	20,195	411,891
Balance at 1 July 2023	391,696	20,195	411,891
Additions	-	-	-
Disposals	-	-	-
Balance at 30 June 2024	391,696	20,195	411,891
<b>Depreciation and impairment</b>			
Balance at 1 July 2022	(207,665)	(12,620)	(220,285)
Depreciation for the year	(75,340)	(5,746)	(81,086)
Disposals	-	9,064	9,064
Balance at 30 June 2023	(289,305)	(9,602)	(298,907)
Balance at 1 July 2023	(289,305)	(9,602)	(298,907)
Depreciation for the year	(49,802)	(5,748)	(55,548)
Disposals	-	-	-
Balance at 30 June 2024	(339,107)	(15,349)	(354,456)
<b>Carrying amounts</b>			
At 30 June 2023	105,391	10,593	115,984
At 30 June 2024	55,589	4,847	60,436

## 18 Financial instruments – fair values

### Accounting classifications and fair values

The following table shows the carrying amounts of financial assets and financial liabilities. Since all financial assets and financial liabilities are not measured at fair value, i.e. they are measured at amortised cost, the carrying amounts are reasonable approximations of fair value.

	Carrying amount	
	2024 \$	2023 \$
<b>Financial assets measured at amortised cost</b>		
Cash and cash equivalents	7,421,447	6,912,089
Other investment – term deposits	25,300	25,300
Trade and other receivables	377,561	87,605
	<u>7,824,308</u>	<u>7,024,994</u>
<b>Financial liabilities measured at amortised cost</b>		
Trade and other payables	338,461	295,739
Lease liabilities	215,467	279,074
Contract liabilities	5,868,562	5,129,585
	<u>6,412,490</u>	<u>5,704,398</u>



## 19 Trade and other payables

	2024 \$	2023 \$
Trade payables	338,461	295,738
Liability for annual leave	400,868	484,455
PAYG payable	216	248
Payroll liabilities	242,762	280,471
	<u>1,081,307</u>	<u>1,060,913</u>

## 20 Contract liabilities

	2024 \$	2023 \$
Grants under AASE 15	5,678,086	4,948,218
Amounts received in advance (proponent funds)	183,466	183,987
	<u>5,861,552</u>	<u>5,132,205</u>

## 21 Employee benefits

	2024 \$	2023 \$
<b>Current</b>		
Long service leave	<u>588,584</u>	<u>508,810</u>
<b>Non-current</b>		
Long service leave	<u>66,936</u>	<u>149,900</u>
Balance at 1 July	668,410	545,404
Provision made during the year	88,134	132,053
Provisions used during the year	(119,024)	(21,137)
Balance at 30 June	<u>637,520</u>	<u>656,320</u>

### Long service leave

The provision for long service leave represents the Corporation's best estimate of the future benefit that employees have earned. The amount and timing of the associated outflows is uncertain and dependent on employees attaining the required years of service. Where the Corporation no longer has the ability to defer settlement of the obligation beyond 12 months from the reporting date, liabilities are presented as current. This would usually occur when employees are expected to reach the required years of service in the 12 months from reporting date. The discount rate used to determine the present value of future benefits at 30 June 2024 was determined by reference to market yields at the end of the reporting period on high quality corporate bonds that have maturity dates that approximate the timing of the estimated future cash outflows.

## 22 Leases

### Leases as lessee

The Corporation leases its Townsville office at 122 Walker Street. The Corporation has a rental bond over these premises. The lease is for a period of 4 years with an option to renew the lease after that date. Lease payments are reviewed each year, based on CPI, and does not include a contingent rental.

<b>Leases under AASB 16</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>2023</b>
	\$	\$
Interest on lease liabilities	15,999	26,040
<b>Lease liabilities</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>2023</b>
	\$	\$
<b>Current</b>		
Lease liabilities	83,338	74,558
<b>Non-current</b>		
Lease liabilities	132,128	204,516

### Maturity analysis of future lease payments

Lease liabilities are payable as follows:

	2024	2024	2024
	\$	\$	\$
	Future minimum lease payments	Interest	Present value of minimum lease payments
Less than one year	98,805	13,467	83,338
Between one and five years	143,110	10,992	132,128
More than five years	-	-	-
	<u>239,915</u>	<u>24,459</u>	<u>215,466</u>

## 23 Reconciliation of cash flows from operating activities

	2024 \$	2023 \$
Net surplus	30,167	(219,803)
Adjustments for:		
Depreciation – property, plant and equipment	107,153	124,742
Amortisation – intangibles	55,549	84,085
Depreciation – right-of-use asset	81,571	110,356
Gain on sale of property, plant and equipment	690	-
Loss on sale of property, plant and equipment	(25,729)	(845)
	<u>249,390</u>	<u>107,485</u>
Changes in:		
Trade and other receivables	(269,956)	129,629
Prepayments	9,799	(13,028)
Trade and other payables	20,393	114,259
Contract liabilities	728,988	1,722,899
Provisions and employee benefits	(20,890)	110,218
	<u>15,699</u>	<u>26,040</u>
Interest expense	15,699	26,040
Net cash from operating activities	<u>716,697</u>	<u>2,198,242</u>

## 24 Related parties

The Corporation's main related parties are the key management personnel and their related parties.

Transactions between related parties are on normal commercial terms and conditions no more favourable than those available to other parties unless otherwise stated.

### Transactions with key management personnel

#### Key management personnel compensation

The key management personnel compensation comprised the following:

	2024 \$	2023 \$
Short-term employee benefits	633,641	678,972
Post-employment benefits	67,144	62,586
Other long-term benefits	1,863	11,536
Termination benefits	-	-
	<u>722,448</u>	<u>753,106</u>

Compensation of the Corporation's key management personnel include salaries, non-cash benefits and contributions to a post-employment superannuation accumulation account.

#### Loans to key management personnel

No loans have been made to key management personnel during the year (2023: \$Nil).

### Key management personnel and director transactions

A number of key management personnel, or their related parties, hold positions in other entities that result in them having control or significant influence over these entities.

A number of these entities transacted with the Corporation during the year. The terms and conditions of the transactions were no more favourable than those available, or which might reasonably be expected to be available, in similar transactions with non-director related entities on an arm's length basis.

The aggregate value of transactions and outstanding balance relating to directors and entities over which they have control or significant influence were as follows:

		Transactions values for the year ended 30 June		Balance outstanding as at 30 June	
		2024	2023	2024	2023
		\$	\$	\$	\$
Murrigoonda Aboriginal Corporation	Sale of meeting expenses	-	726	-	726

From time-to-time directors of the Corporation, or their related entities, may buy goods for the Corporation. These purchases are on the same terms and conditions as those entered into by other Corporation employees or customers.

## 25 Expenditure commitments

The Corporation has expenditure commitments totalling \$1,714,334 at reporting date, but not provided for in the financial statements, which relate to corporate consultancy, contested litigation, anthropological fees, unspent PBC auspice funds and unspent IAS grants.

## 26 Subsequent events

No matters or circumstances have arisen since the end of the financial year which significantly affected or may significantly affect the operations of the Corporation, the results of those operations or the state of affairs of the Corporation in future financial years.

## 27 Auditor's remuneration

	2024 \$	2023 \$
<b>Audit services</b>		
Auditors of the Corporation – Grant Thornton		
Audit of financial statements	37,000	35,000
Other regulatory audit services	6,328	4,731
	<u>43,328</u>	<u>39,731</u>

## Directors' declaration

In the opinion of the directors of North Queensland Land Council Native Title Representative Body Aboriginal Corporation (the 'Corporation'):

- a. the financial statements and notes are in accordance with the *Corporations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) Regulations 2017*, including:
  - i. giving a true and fair view of the Corporation's financial position as at 30 June 2024 and of its performance for the financial year ended on that date; and
  - ii. complying with *Australian Accounting Standards – Simplified Disclosure Requirements* and the *Corporations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) Regulations 2017* and any applicable determinations made by the Registrar of Aboriginal Corporations under Division 326 of the *Corporations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) Act 2006*; and
- b. there are reasonable grounds to believe that the Corporation will be able to pay its debts as and when they become due and payable.

Signed in accordance with a resolution of the directors:

  
Director

23<sup>rd</sup> September 2024  
Date

## Independent Auditor's Report

### To the members of North Queensland Land Council Native Title Representative Body Aboriginal Corporation

#### Report on the audit of the financial report

##### Opinion

We have audited the financial report of North Queensland Land Council Native Title Representative Body Aboriginal Corporation (the Corporation), which comprises the statement of financial position as at 30 June 2024, the statement of comprehensive income, statement of changes in equity and statement of cash flows for the year then ended, and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of material accounting policies, and the Directors' declaration.

In our opinion, the accompanying financial report of the Corporation is in accordance with the Corporations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) Act 2006, including:

- a giving a true and fair view of the Corporation's financial position as at 30 June 2024 and of its performance for the year ended on that date; and
- b complying with Australian Accounting Standards – AASB 1060 General Purpose Financial Statements – Simplified Disclosures for For-Profit and Not-for-Profit Tier 2 Entities and the Corporations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) Regulations 2007 and any applicable determinations made by the Registrar of Aboriginal Corporations under Division 336 of the Act.

##### Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report section of our report. We are independent of the Corporation in accordance with the auditor independence requirements of the Corporations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) Act 2006 and the ethical requirements of the Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's APES 110 Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants (including Independence Standards) (the Code) that are relevant to our audit of the financial report in Australia. We have also fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the Code.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

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#### Information other than the financial report and auditor's report thereon

The directors are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the Corporation's annual report for the year ended 30 June 2024, but does not include the financial report and our auditor's report thereon.

Our opinion on the financial report does not cover the other information and accordingly we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial report, our responsibility is to read the other information available at the date of this report and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial report or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated.

If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact. We have nothing to report in this regard.

#### Responsibilities of the directors' for the financial report

The directors of the Corporation are responsible for the preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards and the *Corporations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) Act 2006* and for such internal control as the directors determine is necessary to enable the preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view and is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial report, the directors are responsible for assessing the Corporation's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the directors either intend to liquidate the Corporation or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

#### Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial report

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial report as a whole is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of this financial report.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial report is located at the Auditing and Assurance Standards Board website at: [https://www.auasb.gov.au/auditors\\_responsibilities/ar4.pdf](https://www.auasb.gov.au/auditors_responsibilities/ar4.pdf). This description forms part of our auditor's report.

Grant Thornton Audit Pty Ltd  
Chartered Accountants

H A Wilkes  
Partner – Audit & Assurance

Caïms, 23 September 2024

# 12 GLOSSARY AND ACRONYMS

ACHA	Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act 2003 (Qld)
ADJR Act	Administrative Decisions (Judicial Review) Act 1977
AgForce	AgForce Queensland
AGI	Activity Generated Income
AGM	Annual General Meeting
AIATSIS	Aboriginal Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies
ALA	Aboriginal Land Act 1991
ATSLIP	Aboriginal Torres Strait Islander Implementation Program
Aurora	Aurora Project was established following the Report into professional development needs of the Native Title Representative Body lawyers in April 2005. They have a number of programs that work with Australia's Indigenous communities and organisations to facilitate prosperity through capacity building.
AWAs	Australian Workplace Agreements
the Board	The Board of Directors of NQLC
CATSI Act	Corporations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) Act 2006
Chairperson	Chairperson (of NQLC)
the Court	The Federal Court of Australia
Cth	The Commonwealth of Australia
CQLCAC	Central Queensland Land Council Aboriginal Corporation
DERM	Department of Environment and Resource Management
DOGIT	Deed of Grant in Trust
EO	Executive Officer (of NQLC)
EDST	Engagement and Development Support Team (within NQLC)
Ergon	Ergon Energy Corporation Limited
FaHCSIA	Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs
FADA	Future Act Determination Application
FAME	Future Act, Mining and Exploration (FAME) Unit (of NQLC, part of EDST)
FANs	Future Act Notices
FCA	Federal Court of Australia
Hon.	Honourable
IAS	Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet's Indigenous Advancement Strategy
ILUA	Indigenous Land Use Agreement
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MP	Minister of Parliament
NNTT	National Native Title Tribunal
NQLC	North Queensland Land Council Native Title Representative Body Aboriginal Corporation
NQMA	North Queensland Miners Association
NTA	Native Title Act 1993
NIAA	National Indigenous Australians Agency
NTPC	Native Title Protection Conditions
NTRB	Native Title Representative Body
NTSP	Native Title Service Providers
PFA	Programme Funding Agreement
PBC	Prescribed Body Corporate
PBCSU	Prescribed Body Corporate Support Unit (of NQLC, part of EDST)
PM&C	Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet
RNTBC	Registered Native Title Body Corporate
RNTRB	Registered Native Title Representative Body
s.	section of an Act
SP	Service Provider
SSM	Small Scale Mining
the State	The State Government of Queensland
USL	Unallocated State land











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