



Council NEWS



Delegates listen to Douglas Multa as they brave the heat at the Alpururulam meeting.

November 2014

85 delegates came to a hot and windy Central Land Council meeting at Alpururulam (Lake Nash) on 4 and 5 November, more than any other Council meeting this year. They got a lot of work done. A few delegates sent apologies because they represented the CLC and the Gurindji at Mr Whitlam's memorial service in Sydney. The Minister for Indigenous Affairs, Senator Scullion, was also at the memorial service.

Attack on land rights and Forrest Review

The delegates heard that one of Mr Whitlam's greatest achievements – land rights for Aboriginal people - is again under threat like never before.

There are three main ways governments are trying to weaken land rights: through township (99 year) leasing, giving land council powers to smaller corporations, and a push by the NT government for control of the Australian government's land rights act.

Strong support for the attack on land rights also comes from billionaire miner Andrew Forrest's review of Aboriginal employment and training – the Forrest Review.

The CLC made a submission about the review. The Abbott government is deciding which of Mr Forrest's recommendations will become government policy, for example:

- turning collectively owned Aboriginal land into privately owned land,
- a nationwide "Healthy Welfare Card" (similar to the BasicCard in the NT),
- more support for early childhood programs,
- more private home ownership in remote communities, and
- more people to leave their communities to find work.

Some delegates reacted strongly:

"If we don't stand up strong this report is going to hit us, just like the intervention."

"His words are tough. We need to have voice." "We need to act." "This is our land and our law. Don't take it away from us." "People from here are different to coastal mob." "This bloke is getting into some of our personal culture." "He's got no shame."

Mr Forrest's recommendation that ceremony should only happen after hours and during holidays got a lot of laughs: "Ceremony has no time. If we ready we ready, if we finished we finished."

Delegates asked to invite Mr Forrest, Minister Scullion and his adviser Warren Mundine to the next Council meeting. They also want to join forces with the other NT land councils and the chair asked for special time to discuss these policy issues at the next Council meeting.

Finke Gorge community development projects

Council approved almost \$97,000 for Tangentyere Constructions to fence West Waterhouse outstation and almost \$33,000 for the Centre of Appropriate Technology to install mobile phone hot spots at Old Station and Red Sand Hill outstations.



Delegation of Council functions

Council refreshed the decisions it last made in 2006 about giving (delegating) some of its functions and powers to the Executive and the director, for example to sign contracts, supervise staff and manage the CLC administration.

This is needed because the old Commonwealth Authorities and Companies (CAC) Act has been replaced by a new law - the Public Governance and Public Accountability (PGPA) Act.

Fracking

Delegates took part in an information session about a new way to drill for natural gas that is known as "fracking". The CLC made a submission to the NT government's fracking enquiry. The CLC's main concerns are about protecting community water supplies and better regulation of the booming industry.

The fracking submission is at www.clc.org.au/publications/content/central-land-council-submission-to-the-hydraulic-fracturing/

No Mining in Watarrka

Mr Breaden told the delegates that traditional owners are opposed to all mining, including fracking, in Watarrka National Park. They have written to the NT government but have no power to stop it because the park is not on Aboriginal land. They have asked the CLC to speak up for them.

For more information go to www.clc.org.au/media-releases/article/kings-canyon.



Funeral and Ceremony Support

Minister Scullion originally gave the CLC six months worth of funding for funeral and ceremony support. After he got a letter from the CLC chair and discussions with the director he has now approved another payment for six months. Each region will again get \$10,000 for ceremony.

Some delegates said spending money for funerals is more urgent, so that bodies in morgues can finally be buried. Others wanted their leasing money and royalties to be used for funerals. Mr Ross said where groups decide to use their money for funerals he will make sure this happens. He said he would also talk to the funeral

people about bodies left in morgues. Delegates and regional co-ordinators met in nine groups to discuss how to use the funeral and ceremony money.

Harry Nelson talks about ceremony in the Tanami region.



Region	Delegate feedback about the funeral and ceremony money
1. Alice Springs (Nigel Lockyer)	To fund ceremony themselves, as they used to do. Use the funeral money to support families to provide proper burials for those still in the morgue.
2. South West (Gordon Williams)	Ceremony has already started. Ceremony funds seem to go to certain areas and then there is not enough left for others. There were a lot of funerals but money from other sources helped.
3. North West (Rob Roy)	Nothing reported.
4. Tanami (Otto Sims)	Harry Nelson will find out which families are going to be involved in ceremony. Senior men chosen as contact people.
5. Western (Robbie Kopp)	Talked about needing more money for funerals.
6. Tennant Creek (Darryl Fitz)	To run ceremony like last year and to improve communication with communities.
7. Eastern Sandover (Jared Swan)	Old fellas to sort this out themselves.
8. Eastern Plenty (Richard Dodd)	Mainly help with funerals and reallocate money amongst the communities.
9. Central (Lawrie Liddle)	Senior men chosen to make decisions about ceremony money.

Nuclear Waste Dump Site

Delegates talked about the CLC's consultations with the traditional owners and with affected communities about a proposed site for a radioactive waste facility in the Tanami.

The CLC met with the traditional owners, neighbouring land owners, government representatives and a radiation health expert at the old Tanami Mine in September.

During those consultations traditional owners said they were not happy about the lack of details, for example about the transport of the waste and the government's compensation offer.

Delegates heard that during a public meeting with government representatives in Lajamanu residents and traditional owners of the proposed site said they

were against a nuclear waste facility in the Tanami.

Council also considered written and public statements from traditional owners and residents of affected communities who oppose a nuclear waste dump in the Tanami.

This opposition means that there is no site "free from dispute" – one of the conditions of Industry Minister Ian Macfarlane for the nomination of a nuclear waste dump site.

For the CLC media release about this is please go to:

<http://www.clc.org.au/media-releases/article/no-nuclear-waste-dump-site-nominated/>

National Indigenous Cultural Centre

Harold Furber and Scott McConnell asked Council to support a proposed national Indigenous cultural centre in Alice Springs, to be run by Aboriginal people. More discussions, especially with traditional owners, are still needed and it is not clear who will fund it. Council resolved to strongly support the proposal, to take part in consultations and to help make it a reality.

Centrecorp

Mr Ross gave a presentation about Centrecorp, a private Aboriginal investment company of which he is a director.



Centrecorp, which is not owned by the CLC, administers a charitable trust that funds the Centrecorp Foundation. The foundation benefits Aboriginal people in the CLC region. For more information go to www.centrecorp.com.au.



Traditional owners and neighbours of a site in the Tanami at the CLC's nuclear waste dump consultation meeting at the old Tanami Mine in September.



Willie Johnson from Lajamanu speaks up.

NEXT COUNCIL MEETING: Ross River 28-30 April 2015