



# Council NEWS



August 2016

Delegates of the Central and Northern land councils get ready for their joint meeting at Kalkaringi

This year marks the 40th anniversary of the *Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act 1976*, and the 50th anniversary of the Gurindji Walk Off. The CLC and the NLC celebrated these significant milestones at a joint historic meeting near Kalkaringi. The meeting honoured Vincent Lingiari and the Gurindji, Mudburra and Warlpiri stockmen and families who walked off Wave Hill Station

and started the national land rights campaign in 1966. The first joint land council meeting in almost 20 years led up to the Freedom Day Festival on Friday 19 August, hosted by the Gurindji Aboriginal Corporation. CLC delegates met on Tuesday 16 August and the two land councils came together on Wednesday 17 and Thursday 18 August.



## CLC meeting and art award vote

Regional groups met and reported back to the council. Many issues were the same in all nine groups:

- Delegates want more regional meetings, including one before each council meeting
- They are concerned about the lack of new houses and overcrowding
- They are angry about the treatment of young people in Don Dale and other NT detention centres and worry for them. They want greater support for local Aboriginal programs
- They strongly support the CLC ranger groups and want ranger

groups in more communities.

- They are frustrated about the poor condition of roads across the region

Tennant Creek delegates chose Michael Jones as their Executive member.

CLC delegates voted for the 'Central Land Council Delegates' Choice Award'. South Australian artist David Frank won. He had the most votes for his painting *Our Future*.

Hetti Perkins will choose the main winner of the \$15,000 Vincent Lingiari Art Award prize on 7th September at Tangentyere Artists Gallery in Alice Springs.



CLC members voted for the Delegates' Choice Award. Inset: David Frank's winning painting

## Joint CLC and NLC meeting



The NLC's Sammy Bush-Blanasi and the CLC's Francis Kelly chaired the meeting together



NLC CEO Joe Morrison and CLC Director David Ross

Members from the CLC and the NLC passed resolutions on:

- Aboriginal Benefits Account (ABA)
- Ranger programs
- NT youth justice and the Royal Commission
- Fracking
- Constitutional recognition and treaty
- Indigenous development

## Questioning the politicians

The meeting spent the last afternoon quizzing the following politicians:

- Indigenous Affairs Minister Nigel Scullion
- NT Chief Minister Adam Giles
- NT opposition leader Michael Gunner
- Senators Patrick Dodson and Malarndirri McCarthy



Senator Nigel Scullion fronts the CLC and NLC delegates

## Aboriginals Benefit Account

ABA funds come from mining on Aboriginal land. Decisions about ABA funds must be made by NT Aboriginal people alone. The Minister should play no role in this. The CLC and NLC will develop a detailed model that will achieve Aboriginal control of the ABA. They also opposed the Minister's proposed changes to the ABA Advisory Committee and welcomed his announcement not to reduce land council representation on the committee.

Council members want Aboriginal people out bush to get help with ABA applications and asked the Minister to extend the application period for the latest funding round.

## Ranger programs



CLC chair Francis Kelly called for more ranger jobs

Several ranger groups told the joint council meeting about their achievements and met strong support for their work. Many members asked Minister Scullion to ensure ongoing funding for ranger programs and to expand them into new areas. They wanted him to respect the role of the land councils in the success of the ranger programs.

The Minister said he agreed that ranger jobs are real jobs that should have ongoing funding like the police and defence force. He announced funding for the existing ranger jobs until 2020. This is a good start but he did not promise to increase ranger program funding. The land councils will keep speaking up for more ranger jobs.

## NT youth justice and the Royal Commission



CLC delegate Valerie Martin and Commissioner Mick Gooda

Members expressed their anger about the Four Corners program about the shocking treatment of Aboriginal detainees at Don Dale. Mick Gooda and Margaret White, the two commissioners heading up the Royal Commission,

explained how the Royal Commission works and will hear directly from Aboriginal people. Members told them about the experiences of their young people in jail and diversion activities that work. They also passed a resolution in support of successful community driven programs such as the *No More* family violence campaign and Tangentyere Family Safety Program,

## Constitutional recognition and treaties

Members discussed constitutional recognition and treaty with Rachel Perkins, Shireen Morris and Tanya Hoesch. The land councils agreed on a shared position on constitutional recognition and resolved to:

*"reaffirm their commitment to the principles set out in the Barunga and Kalkaringi statements. Constitutional reform must deliver meaningful and enduring benefit for our people. We are prepared to examine models for constitutional recognition that deliver such benefits. Indigenous constitutional forums must be held in the Northern Territory, involving people from the bush and progress towards constitutional recognition must not put in danger our rights to negotiate treaties to finally achieve self-determination."*

## Indigenous driven Northern development



Joe Morrison and Peter Yu talked about Northern development

Peter Yu from Western Australia and Joe Morrison from the NLC spoke about the North Australia agenda, and the lack of Indigenous involvement. The land councils said they

were disappointed that the Northern Australia White Paper (plan) did not support Indigenous led development. They called on the state, territory and Commonwealth governments to establish a comprehensive planning and implementation strategy for economic, ecological, social and cultural benefits to Indigenous people in Northern Australia with Indigenous peak organisations.

## Fracking forum



CLC delegates Jimmy Wave Hill and Barbara Shaw

The joint meeting explored fracking and heard from people with views or expertise in this area. The NT Government and the Environmental Defenders Office talked about the laws and controls around fracking, while Professor Damien Barrett spoke about the technology and the science. The joint meeting resolved to:

*"support the rights of traditional owners to make their own decisions about the use of their land and waters, free from outside influence. It is important to ensure that traditional owners have all the relevant information. The land councils will continue to make sure this happens."*

*We recognise that some Aboriginal people have concerns about hydraulic fracturing and do not want it to occur on their lands and waters. But our job is to support and respect the decisions of traditional owners for the area in question."*



Senators Malarndirri McCarthy (NT) and Patrick Dodson (WA)



CLC delegate Harry Nelson, Howard King and Willie Johnson



CLC delegate Michael Liddle



CLC delegate Ngarla Kunoth-Monks



CLC delegates Jeffrey Doolan, David Wongway and Philip Wilyuka



CLC delegate Diane Stokes, her husband and delegate Ronald Brown

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**NEXT COUNCIL MEETING**  
**ROSS RIVER**  
**8,9,10 November 2016**