



# CENTRAL LAND COUNCIL

CENTRAL LAND COUNCIL  
CORPORATE PLAN

**2025-2029**





## COVER ARTWORK

**My Father's Country** © Rita Pitjara Beasley

*"This is my Father's country. This place is our hunting place. I always go with my daughters and their children, I show them this place and teach them about the swampy country. We hunt for goannas, bush potato, bush tomato and after the big rain the bush medicine is picked and the roots are dug up to be used. It is important as my mother taught me this and now I teach my family."*

## ACCOUNTABLE AUTHORITY MESSAGE



Since 1976 the Central Land Council (CLC) has represented Aboriginal people in Central Australia, fighting for rights, helping to reclaim and manage land, protecting culture and heritage and pursuing the economic opportunities that come with the recognition of property rights.

We are a Council of 90 Aboriginal people elected by their communities to represent them. The region covers 777,000 square kilometres and is home to approximately 24,000 Aboriginal people and over 15 Aboriginal languages.

Our corporate plan sets out our strategic direction. It informs and guides the delivery of the CLC's statutory functions so that our work is directed towards the priorities and aspirations of Aboriginal people across the region.

In this corporate plan period, we continue to focus attention on recruitment and retention of skilled employees to ensure our capacity to effectively deliver our functions. We continue to strengthen our Aboriginal employment and leadership efforts to increase Aboriginal employment, development and career pathways.

Since the CLC's establishment there have been significant demographic shifts in our communities and member constituencies. In recent years we have lost many Aboriginal leaders who led the struggle and sustained advocacy for land rights, including people who informed the design of land rights legislation and participated in the first meetings of the CLC. It is timely for our organisation to focus on ensuring that we have relevant ways of connecting with communities, listening to our constituency and sharing information. This includes a focus on how the CLC can spend more time based in regional offices working with Aboriginal people.

As well as grass roots engagement, we continue to enhance forums and provide opportunities for the Council and Executive Committee to guide the strategic direction of the CLC, and to inform and update the administration on the issues and priorities of the communities that they represent. We also engage a working group to advise on cultural policies, including the repatriation of cultural materials and the effective management of cultural information. We are investing in the governance capacity development of our Council and Executive Committee, and increased member engagement for our activities to benefit further from their contribution to the CLC's governance.

In this corporate plan period, the CLC continues its focus on supporting Aboriginal people to protect and maintain their culture, reflecting Council members' concerns about the impacts of inter-generational change in communities, loss of senior cultural knowledge holders and trends of youth disempowerment in communities.

Water policy remains a significant priority for the CLC, including access to secure drinking water supplies for remote communities and improving Aboriginal engagement in water planning processes and proposed policy reforms. It is distressing that many of our communities do not have adequate infrastructure services and it is critical to ensure that all remote communities have safe, acceptable and secure water supply into the future. As well as sustaining life, water is also of great cultural significance and this must be respected. In addition, our people should not be excluded from the potential economic benefits of water management. The CLC will continue to strongly advocate to ensure that Aboriginal people in Central Australia achieve an equitable and sustainable share of the Northern Territory's water resources.

## ACCOUNTABLE AUTHORITY MESSAGE

The CLC is committed to ensuring that Traditional Owners are consulted and informed about proposed activities on their land, and are afforded processes for the giving or withholding of consent to ensure that they can protect sacred sites and water sources, amongst other interests. Unlike the *Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act 1976* (ALRA), which provides a mechanism for effective agreement making for access, use, and development on Aboriginal land, the *Native Title Act 1993* and Northern Territory legislation do not always allow for consultation and agreement making. For proponents, the ALRA process for the giving or withholding of consent delivers certainty for long-term investment, enables plans to be informed by and avoid harm to sacred sites, and provides a foundation for respectful relationships with Traditional Owners. The CLC will continue to actively pursue similar outcomes for Native Title Holders and advocate against legislative changes that reduce Aboriginal peoples' rights to be consulted and participate in decision-making affecting their lands and water.

We are confident that the CLC will continue to meet its statutory responsibilities, be a reliable and accountable representative body, and support Aboriginal people in Central Australia to maintain their cultures and look after their country.

***We, as the Accountable Authority of the Central Land Council, present the Central Land Council Corporate Plan 2025-2029, which covers the periods of 2025/26 to 2028/29, as required under paragraph 35(1)(b) of the Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013. The corporate plan has been prepared in accordance with the Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Rule 2014.***



**Warren Williams | Chair**  
14 August, 2025



**Les Turner | Chief Executive Officer**  
14 August, 2025

# CONTENTS

ACCOUNTABLE AUTHORITY MESSAGE	1
ABOUT THE CENTRAL LAND COUNCIL	4
WHAT IS A CORPORATE PLAN?	5
PURPOSE STATEMENT	6
GOALS OF THE CENTRAL LAND COUNCIL	7
KEY ACTIVITIES CONTRIBUTING TO THE GOALS	8
HOW THE CLC DOES ITS WORK (PRINCIPLES)	11
POLICY PRIORITIES FOR 2022-2025	12
ENVIRONMENT	14
COOPERATION	18
ORGANISATION CAPABILITY	19
RISK OVERSIGHT AND MANAGEMENT	24
PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK	26
PERFORMANCE MEASURES AND TARGETS	27
GLOSSARY	34
ANNEXURE - POWERS AND FUNCTIONS	35

## ABOUT THE CENTRAL LAND COUNCIL . . . . .

### **The CLC is a Council of 90 Aboriginal people elected by their communities to represent them.**

The CLC is an Australian corporate Commonwealth entity created to carry out functions specified in the *Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act 1976*, as amended (ALRA). Subsequent to the ALRA, the CLC was also made a Native Title Representative Body under the *Native Title Act 1993*. The CLC's activities also substantially increased with taking responsibility for the Ranger Program in its area, community development, and supporting Aboriginal people to benefit economically from land use opportunities.

Unlike most other Commonwealth entities, most of the CLC's budget is not determined by the annual Commonwealth budget. Rather, its allocation is from a Special Account determined by the Minister for Indigenous Australians by 30 June each year. The main source of funding is an allocation from the Aboriginals Benefit Account (ABA) under section 64 of the ALRA.

Section 63 of the ALRA establishes the legislative basis for funds provided to the ABA by requiring amounts to be periodically placed into the account equal to the amounts of any royalties received by the Australian or the Northern Territory Government in respect of a mining interest on Aboriginal land. The money is used for the benefit of Aboriginal people living in the Northern Territory, with its application outlined in the ALRA and including, amongst other initiatives, funding for the administration of the Northern Territory Land Councils; distribution to traditional land owners (Aboriginal Corporations) affected by mining operations on their land; and initiatives of benefit to Aboriginal people living in the Northern Territory (beneficial payments).

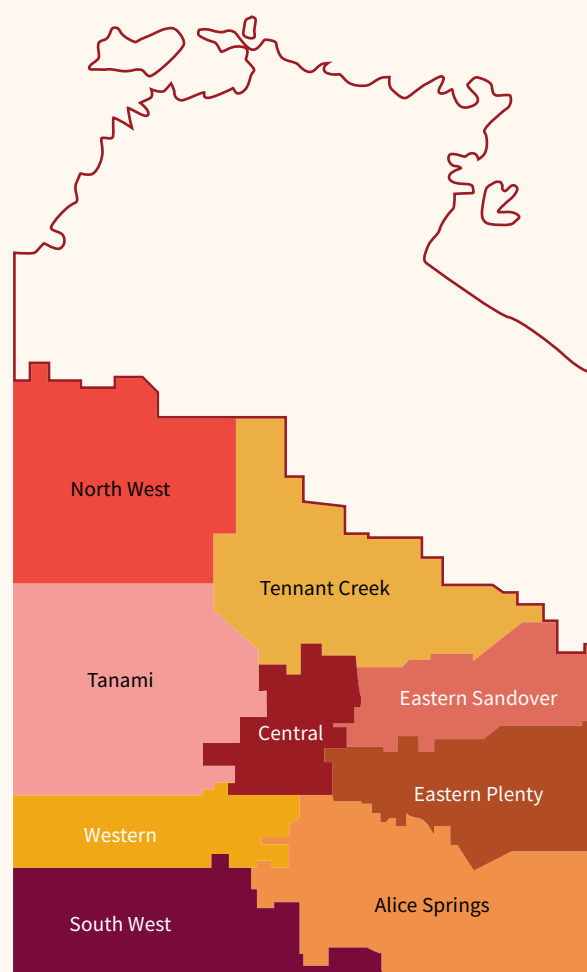
The Native Title Representative Body functions of the CLC are separately funded from the Australian Government budget. Special purpose grants are also received from various agencies.



The CLC does not have any subsidiaries. It is an establishing shareholder (with the Central Australian Aboriginal Congress and Tangentyere Council) of Centrecorp, which operates as trustee of two charitable trusts and provides benefits to Aboriginal people in Central Australia via Centrecorp Foundation. The Foundation's activities are disclosed on its website. For clarity, the Deeds of both charitable trusts exclude all shareholders from benefiting from the trusts.

The CLC is also a shareholder of Imparja Television Pty Ltd. The constitution of Imparja excludes all shareholders from benefiting from their shareholding.

### MAP OF THE CLC'S REGION



## WHAT IS A CORPORATE PLAN? . . . . .

This corporate plan is developed to meet requirements under the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (PGPA Act), determine the CLC's medium and long term priorities, and serve as the basis for resource allocation to achieve its goals. It looks at where the CLC wants to go for the next four years and how to do good work to get there. It tells CLC staff about what they should do to support the CLC to do a good job for the future.

The corporate plan maps the CLC's purpose, goals and key activities.

- The **purpose** is what the CLC must do. This is set out by the laws that say why the CLC started and what it should do for Aboriginal people. It includes Aboriginal law, the *Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act 1976*, the *Native Title Act 1993* and the PGPA Act.
- The **goals** are the direction the CLC wants to head in. They show the way and set the areas for work.
- The **key activities** are the main work that CLC staff will do to help the goals to happen.

Every three years, within its three year term, the CLC's elected Council reviews the goals and identifies any areas where they think the CLC needs to place more focus, taking into consideration the current environment. This review occurred in 2024.

The corporate plan is the foundation from which the CLC consults and negotiates with its Minister, the Minister for Indigenous Australians, on the resources provided from the ABA and as a Native Title Representative Body to achieve its purposes and goals.

Every year, in its annual report the CLC reports on the work it has done, to show how it is doing what it says it will do in the plan. Case studies on the CLC's website ([www.clc.org.au](http://www.clc.org.au)) and other CLC publications like Land Rights News ([www.clc.org.au/land-rights-news](http://www.clc.org.au/land-rights-news)) also show how the CLC delivers activities in its unique context.

### How CLC's purposes, goals and key activities link together





## PURPOSE STATEMENT . . . . .

**The purpose of the CLC is to protect the interests of its Aboriginal constituents, by exercising the powers, functions and responsibilities set out in the *Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act 1976 (ALRA)* and the *Native Title Act 1993 (Native Title Act)*.**

**The CLC's statutory purposes (functions) are largely outlined under section 23 of the ALRA and Part 11 Division 3 of the Native Title Act.**

These are summarised below. The annexure at the back of this plan provides a more comprehensive list of the powers and functions.

### THE ALRA:

A summary of the key statutory functions performed across the area of the CLC are:

- Determine the wishes and opinions of Aboriginal people as to the management of Aboriginal land and appropriate legislation in relation to land.
- Protect the interests of Traditional Owners and other Aboriginal people interested in Aboriginal land.
- Help Traditional Owners to manage and look after country.
- Protect Aboriginal culture and sacred sites, whether on Aboriginal land or not.
- Consult with Traditional Owners and affected Aboriginal people on land use proposals and take Traditional Owner instructions.
- Where the CLC holds in escrow a deed of grant made to a Land Trust, negotiate on behalf of Traditional Owners with people having estates or interests in land with a view to acquiring those estates or interests by the Land Trust. Until acquired, negotiate with a view to the use of the land by Traditional Owners.

- Negotiate on behalf of Traditional Owners with people interested in using Aboriginal land.
- Assist Aboriginal people with commercial activities on Aboriginal land.
- Assist Aboriginal people with traditional land claims.
- Negotiate and enter land access agreements.
- Represent Land Trusts to negotiate leases and other agreements.
- Supervise and assist Land Trusts and pay their administrative expenses.
- Help settle or prevent land disputes.
- Other functions as prescribed by regulations.

### NATIVE TITLE ACT:

The Minister for Indigenous Australians renewed the CLC as a Native Title Representative Body until June 2030. As an Native Title Representative Body, the CLC's purpose is to assist Aboriginal people with all aspects of native title claims, including the research and application process, court appearances on behalf of the claimants, responding to future act applications (e.g. mining operations), and negotiations for Indigenous Land Use Agreements. It also facilitates certification, dispute resolution, consultation and notification, and agreement making under the Native Title Act.

<sup>1</sup>Refer to [www.legislation.gov.au](https://www.legislation.gov.au) for full legislation (<https://www.legislation.gov.au/C2004A01620>; <https://www.legislation.gov.au/C2004A04665>)



## GOALS OF THE CENTRAL LAND COUNCIL . . . . .

The CLC has a proud history of protecting and advancing Aboriginal peoples' rights and interests and continues to act as a 'shield' for Aboriginal people in the region. In undertaking its purposes and statutory functions, the CLC's work is directed towards the following goals:

1

### RIGHTS AND INTERESTS

Aboriginal peoples' rights and interests are protected and represented

2

### LAND OWNERSHIP AND INTERESTS

Aboriginal land ownership and interests are protected and enhanced

3

### CULTURE

Aboriginal people protect and maintain their sacred sites, land, cultures and languages

4

### LOOKING AFTER COUNTRY

Aboriginal people are looking after their country

7

### GOVERNANCE

A strong Land Council: Governance and management meet constituent and legal requirements

6

### COMMUNITIES AND HOMELANDS

Aboriginal people control their communities and homelands

5

### ECONOMIC

Aboriginal people benefit from land use opportunities (income, training, jobs and businesses)

## KEY ACTIVITIES CONTRIBUTING TO THE GOALS

To achieve its purposes, the CLC undertakes the following key activities. These do not capture everything the CLC does, but are the main areas of work.

1

### RIGHTS AND INTERESTS

*Protect and represent Aboriginal peoples' rights and interests.*

- 1.1** Do the statutory functions (work) that the law says Land Councils must do
- 1.2** Work with Council and the Executive Committee to develop policy priorities and advocate those to government. Make sure governments listen and act on what Aboriginal people say when they make laws and policies. The Council's priorities are:
  - Having a say in how things are run (governance and control)
  - Keeping land rights and native title strong
  - Future of remote communities and homelands, including housing, essential services, cost of living, income and climate change
  - Replace the Australian Government's Community Development Program (CDP) with real jobs and better outcomes for Aboriginal people
  - Water rights, justice and policy reform
  - Education
  - Youth, law and justice
  - Respond to key government policy
- 1.3** Tell more people about the CLC's role and what it does and raise awareness about the rights of Aboriginal people
- 1.4** Support Aboriginal people in the CLC region to speak up about and be involved in what the CLC does

2

### LAND OWNERSHIP AND INTERESTS

*Protect and enhance Aboriginal land ownership and interests.*

- 2.1** Research who are the Traditional Owners for areas of land in the CLC region
- 2.2** Look into Traditional Ownership for country to prevent or manage disagreements about country
- 2.3** Work on native title claims and one remaining ALRA land claim
- 2.4** Support Native Title Holders to respond to other people's plans to do something on country that affects their native title rights (called 'future acts')
- 2.5** Support people to exercise their native title rights
- 2.6** Check and effectively deal with land use and development applications
- 2.7** Support Traditional Owner groups to make informed decisions about plans to use their land and make sure these instructions are carried out
- 2.8** Support Traditional Owner groups to take a lead role in deciding how water is used and protected
- 2.9** Negotiate leases, licenses and other land use agreements with applicants, consult with Traditional Owners about agreements, and consult with affected communities
- 2.10** Check that land use agreements are being followed and make sure everyone does what they promised, including meeting our commitments
- 2.11** Manage permits for people who want to visit or work on Aboriginal land
- 2.12** Make a plan for getting land (the land acquisition strategy) and for managing land owned by Aboriginal communities in the region (the regional Aboriginal estate strategy)
- 2.13** Support Prescribed Bodies Corporate (PBCs – native title holder bodies) to learn about their role and do their work

### 3

## CULTURE

*Support Aboriginal people to protect and maintain their sacred sites and cultures.*

- 3.1** Research and protect sacred sites and cultural heritage
- 3.2** Bring back Aboriginal objects (repatriation)
- 3.3** Keep recorded cultural knowledge in a safe way to make sure the wrong people do not see it
- 3.4** Make sure documented cultural knowledge is appropriately shared with Traditional Owners
- 3.5** With Traditional Owners, make plans to visit country so Aboriginal people can teach and learn their culture on their country
- 3.6** Help Aboriginal people in the CLC region with the costs of funerals and ceremony

### 4

## LOOKING AFTER COUNTRY

*Support Aboriginal people to look after their country.*

- 4.1** Support Aboriginal people to make informed decisions about their land and how it is used
- 4.2** Start and manage programs with Aboriginal people to look after their country, culture, plants and animals, including:
  - 4.2.1** Manage and grow the Ranger Program
  - 4.2.2** Support Aboriginal people to take care of Indigenous Protected Areas
  - 4.2.3** Work with Traditional Owners to make Joint Management meaningful and ensure Northern Territory and national park lease agreements are followed properly
- 4.3** Make plans and work with Aboriginal people to look after their country, culture, plants and animals, including:
  - 4.3.1** Fire management work
  - 4.3.2** Manage introduced plants and animals
  - 4.3.3** Water resource management
  - 4.3.4** Look after native plants and animals that Traditional Owners are worried about



## KEY ACTIVITIES CONTRIBUTING TO THE GOALS . . . . .

5

### ECONOMIC

*Support Aboriginal people to benefit from economic opportunities arising from land use and land interests (income, training, jobs and businesses).*

- 5.1 Support Aboriginal people to make good use of land use income (maximise benefit and minimise harm)

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- 5.2 Support Aboriginal Corporations that have land interests or land use income with their administration, meetings and governance

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- 5.3 Include strong conditions about training and employing local Aboriginal people in CLC agreements and contracts with third parties, monitor their implementation and advocate for effective approaches

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- 5.4 Provide business development support to:
  - PBCs – to look at opportunities where they can grow and do well, and
  - Traditional Owners – where business opportunities are funded by land use agreements

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- 5.5 Manage the ABA economic stimulus money for the benefit of Aboriginal people in the CLC region

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- 5.6 Support Aboriginal jobs, training and businesses that help Traditional Owners to look after country

6

### COMMUNITIES AND HOMELANDS

*Support Aboriginal people to drive their own community development.*

- 6.1 Speak up for and work with local Aboriginal organisations to support good community governance, local decision making and build community capacity

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- 6.2 Support Aboriginal people to use their knowledge and skills to drive their own community development (planning, funding and monitoring community-driven projects with their land use income)

7

### GOVERNANCE

*Ensure a strong Land Council through effective governance and management.*

- 7.1 Coordinate Council and Executive Committee meetings; run fair elections; support elected members to govern the CLC well

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- 7.2 Keep making the CLC work with its regions better, including having strong regional offices

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- 7.3 Increase Aboriginal staff and leaders (including through the Aboriginal leadership program)

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- 7.4 Take care of the business systems and keep information and records safe

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- 7.5 Take care of the CLC's performance: check how well we do our work (monitoring and evaluation) and manage risks

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- 7.6 Make sure that our activities are environmentally responsible and reduce organisational environmental impacts

## HOW THE CLC DOES ITS WORK (PRINCIPLES) . . . . .

The CLC delivers its activities through:

**Respect for country, culture and Aboriginal law**

**Respect for Aboriginal ways of doing business and making decisions**

**Representation and advocacy honouring self-determination**, responsive to people's needs and interests

**Effective communication**, sensitive to cultural and linguistic diversity

**Consultation** with Traditional Owners and affected Aboriginal people

**Informed consent by** Aboriginal decision-making groups

**Accountability and transparency** to the Aboriginal people we consult and represent

**Building capacity**, supporting participation and learning

**Respectful relationships** with stakeholders

## POLICY PRIORITIES FOR 2022-2025



Each newly elected Council reviews the CLC's policy priority areas. The last policy priority review occurred in August 2022 and confirmed the priorities set out on the next page. The next policy review is planned for later in 2025.

The Council recognises the need to promptly respond to government policies, legislative changes and reform as they arise, as well as the need to assert and advocate for their own policy priorities and agenda. Self-determination is at the heart of this policy development work within Council. For too long policies have been made by governments about Aboriginal people without their input or agreement. Their voices have not been heard. Aboriginal peoples in Central Australia want to articulate and progress their own aspirations, and devise their own solutions to complex issues.

The Council and the Executive Committee put forward their views and aspirations on the policy areas impacting their everyday lives and their rights and interests more generally. Staff work with the Council and Executive Committee to understand and analyse the policy environment and develop policy positions and solutions based on the views and feedback of members. These policy positions then guide the strategic advocacy work of the CLC and are the basis for negotiations with all levels of government. The CLC aims to ensure that the views of Aboriginal people in Central Australia are central to policy debates and policy development at all levels of government.



## Policy Priorities 2022-2025

### The CLC will play a lead role in policy and advocacy on:

<b>Governance and Control</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Voice, treaty and truth-telling</li><li>• Supporting Aboriginal Peak Organisations Northern Territory (APO NT)</li><li>• Closing the Gap</li></ul>
<b>Water</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Water rights, water justice and water law reform</li></ul>
<b>Future of Communities and Homelands</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Housing</li><li>• Homelands</li><li>• Essential service infrastructure</li><li>• Policies affecting communities (including remote jobs and CDP reform, income management)</li><li>• Climate change</li></ul>
<b>Keeping Land Rights Strong</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Aboriginal Land Rights Act</li><li>• Native Title Act</li><li>• Northern Territory Sacred Sites Act and Heritage laws</li></ul>

### The CLC will support policy and advocacy of others, including through membership of APO NT, on:

<b>Youth, Law and Justice</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Youth, law and justice legislative changes</li><li>• Remote youth issues</li></ul>
<b>Education</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Learning on Country</li><li>• Supporting new expert Indigenous education advisory group</li><li>• Electoral engagement</li></ul>

**The environment the CLC works in underpins its operating context and shapes how it will work to achieve its purposes over the next four years.**

### EXTERNAL FACTORS DRIVING DEMAND

A number of external factors continue to impact on the demand for the CLC's services.

- Payments from leases on Aboriginal land continue to drive high demand for Aboriginal Corporation management and community development support. Aboriginal governance groups continue to allocate a high volume of their land use income towards investment in their own communities through the CLC's community development program.
- The Australian Government has committed funding to the Ranger Program to 2028, and continues to see the CLC as a trusted vehicle to achieve objectives across Aboriginal employment, economic development, parks management and tourism. Sustainable outcomes in these areas will rely on ongoing engagement and collaboration by the Australian Government, Northern Territory Government and other stakeholders.
- Interest in mineral exploration in the Northern Territory continues to remain strong, driven by high commodity prices, particularly for gold and copper. This has placed greater demands on the CLC to facilitate informed Traditional Owner decision-making on new licence applications as well as administer existing agreements. Ongoing mining projects are also generating significant work across multiple CLC functions.
- Demand for CLC's services as a Native Title Representative Body continues to grow, including assisting native title holders with future acts and guiding PBCs to develop governance strategies, improve capacity and providing enterprise development support.
- High demand continues for anthropological services to provide sacred site clearances for private sector use of Aboriginal land, major road upgrades and developments and community infrastructure including housing.

- There is ongoing high priority need for meaningful involvement in water governance and ensuring informed Traditional Owner engagement and consent regarding land use proposals and water licensing.
- There is increased demand for Land Council representation on steering committees and reference groups.
- The Economic Stimulus Package, providing \$36.7 million of ABA funds requires contract management through to completion.

### GOOD GOVERNANCE

Land Councils operate in the overlapping space between corporate governance driven by laws including the ALRA, Native Title Act and PGPA Act, and cultural governance driven by Aboriginal laws. Effective governance in the CLC's context therefore requires adapting best practice approaches to be culturally appropriate, respect Aboriginal cultures and law and have cultural legitimacy.

The CLC's activities and ways of working are underpinned by this two-way governance foundation. This is reflected in the way the CLC conducts its activities and Executive Committee and Council members carry out their roles. The CLC facilitates innovative good governance initiatives to support capability in two-way governance and provide opportunities for constituents to share their two-way governance expertise across generations.

The CLC is committed to transparency, accountability and continuous improvement. It continues to focus on implementation of the recommendations from the Australian National Audit Office 2023 performance report. It has implemented 9 out of 11 recommendations and is making progress on the remaining recommendations.

### REMOTENESS AND ACCESS TO COUNTRY

The vast area and climate of Central Australia poses significant challenges for consulting with Aboriginal people in remote communities and locations. This includes logistical and safety factors and achieving best practice culturally appropriate consultation. Appropriate consultation, including effective decision making and informed consent, relies on understanding local and cultural context, co-planning, time and responsiveness. The CLC also works to ensure its activities are spread across the region in an equitable and transparent way.

People living in remote communities in the CLC's region often have limited access to reliable information about services, their rights and legislative changes. This impacts on the environment of trust. It also means that the CLC often facilitates information provision to constituents on issues affecting them.

A lack of services, service providers and organisational capacity in remote areas also limits the partnership opportunities available to further strengthen outcomes. It also affects the ability of the organisation to regionalise and retain its workforce, and contributes to higher costs of doing business.

### PROTECTING AND MAINTAINING CULTURE

Loss of cultural knowledge is a significant threat and a concern of Aboriginal people across the CLC region.

With inter-generational change in communities, loss of senior cultural knowledge holders, trends of youth disempowerment, the ongoing impacts of colonisation, and changes to legislation in the Northern Territory, Council members have reflected that the CLC is uniquely positioned to support Aboriginal people leading the protection and maintenance of culture.

The CLC is increasing this focus in its existing work, including through:

- finding more opportunities that enable knowledge transfer on country,
- collaborating to support repatriation and appropriate keeping places for cultural objects, and
- advocating for support for culturally-led mediation and community problem-solving

The ALRA functions assign the CLC an important role in supporting people to protect and maintain culture. The ALRA provides an effective mechanism for the achievement of land use agreements that protect cultural values, reach mutually beneficial terms on impacts and benefits, and include Land Council-facilitated consent processes that provide certainty to proponents. In addition, the ALRA assigns the CLC a statutory function to take measures to assist with the protection of sacred sites. The ongoing importance of this work is highlighted by recent changes to legal frameworks in the Northern Territory, which have seen rights for merits review of many government decisions

about land and water removed. This has the potential to impact negatively on a range of important consultation processes.

Aboriginal people in the CLC region continue to seek the appropriate return and protection of cultural artefacts. Additionally, the CLC must manage the protection and sharing of cultural information with Traditional Owners in a culturally authorised manner that requires considerable thought, care and time. The CLC working group of elected Council members provides guidance and advice on the appropriate return and protection of cultural artefacts and information. This strengthens systems to address evolving demands.

### WATER SECURITY

Remote Aboriginal communities and homelands face ongoing challenges in relation to the supply of adequate and safe drinking water. There is an unequal and fragmented regulatory regime that does not protect the rights of remote communities and homelands to good drinking water, as well as chronic under resourcing. As of 2025, 28 of the 32 remote communities in CLC's region are considered high to extreme for water insecurity. There is no such data for homelands.

There is also increasing pressure on waterways and country from extractive industries and government decision-making and planning. Water planning in the Northern Territory is characterised by a lack of transparency and regard for evidence-based decision-making, Aboriginal peoples' knowledge, rights, interests and cultural values. The Northern Territory Government regularly approves high-impact developments and associated licences without meaningfully engaging with Traditional Owners and adequately considering ecological and cultural impacts.

The CLC has advocated at the Northern Territory level for many years on behalf of our constituents seeking safe drinking water legislation, increased funding and capacity building for communities' and homelands' water needs, and evidence-based water planning that centres Aboriginal people in decision-making.

The CLC has also assisted native title holders to challenge the Singleton water licence decision in court and provided recommendations to governments to develop legislation that strengthens the regime in line with best practice.



At the Federal level, the CLC has been engaging to influence the development of the new national water agreement. The CLC is advocating for a strong agreement that protects Aboriginal rights and interests including native title rights, compels reform and ensures compliance with best practice water management and stakeholder engagement.

### OPPORTUNITIES FOR EMPLOYMENT ON COUNTRY

There continues to be a lack of meaningful work opportunities on country for Aboriginal people in the CLC's region. In areas where the CLC Ranger Program exists, it is part of the solution – providing employment and training on country that people are proud of, while achieving positive outcomes for culture and the environment. CLC ranger jobs, based in community and connecting to country, support Traditional Owner aspirations for their family members to be able to stay living in their remote community and take on responsibility for looking after country. Traditional Owners decide on ranger activities and are supported to get onto their country and help Aboriginal rangers to look after country the right way.

There remains the need for a considered expansion of the Ranger Program and other such meaningful work for people in remote communities. This informs the CLC's approach to the Ranger Program, including a focus on training, pathways, mentoring, equity for men and women, and infrastructure capacity.

The CLC also supports significant local Aboriginal employment opportunities on country and in communities when Aboriginal groups contract project partners to deliver projects through the CLC community development program. The CLC also continues to advocate to government for further funding for remote jobs through the Remote Jobs and Economic Development (RJED) program and through the development of a Remote Employment Service that is effective, flexible and accountable to people's needs.

### SWOT ANALYSIS

**The CLC assesses its high-level environmental context via a 'Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats' (SWOT) analysis. This is shown below. The CLC uses the SWOT analysis to consider the context in which its key activities are situated and to make decisions about changes to sub-activities and responses required at strategic and operational levels.**

<b>STRENGTHS (INTERNAL TO CLC)</b>
Self-determination is operationalised and embedded
Over 50 years of experience and well-maintained records
Strong reputation as a respected and highly regarded representative organisation
Council governance structures are representative of constituents
Council members and employees model strong Aboriginal leadership
Council's two way governance expertise and intergenerational knowledge transfer
Grounded in Aboriginal culture; foundations of Traditional Ownership and keeping culture and connection to land alive
Consultation and communication with constituents
Resilience and responsiveness to constituent needs
On-country meetings and activities
Technical expertise and experience
Organisational planning, co-ordination and collaboration
Quality financial control and compliance
High standard of work environment in Alice Springs and Tennant Creek offices
Ownership of properties

## WEAKNESSES

### (INTERNAL TO CLC)

Staff turnover, attraction, retention and succession planning

Growth management, especially accommodation

Regional operations need development and resourcing

Work health and safety - high inherent work risks

Limited capacity to deal with escalating constituent disputes

Funding reliance on the Aboriginals Benefit Account (ABA) and the Indigenous Advancement Strategy (IAS)

Regional office infrastructure and standards (improving with targeted development)

Loss of corporate knowledge

Business systems not addressing all organisational needs

Need to do more to strengthen constituent and other stakeholder understanding of the role of Land Councils, Aboriginal land rights and native title laws

## OPPORTUNITIES

### (EXTERNAL TO CLC)

Additional funding sources to deliver on functions, such as philanthropy

Interest in positive stories about Aboriginal self-determination and achievements; including constituent and Council members' voices

Communities of practice across representative bodies

Investor focus on social performance of mining companies encourages better agreement making and implementation

Some land use income entities have opportunity to choose to operate independently

Opportunities to collaboratively support more leadership, agency and youth development in communities

Unique activities that can provide opportunity for inter-generational transfer of cultural knowledge

Languages and culture are strong in many parts of the CLC's region

## THREATS

### (EXTERNAL TO CLC)

#### MACRO

Climate change, water security

Pandemics, economic threats and inflation, cyber security and data breaches

Legislative and policy change

Public perception of Alice Springs

Continuity of Aboriginal law, language and culture progressively eroded in some areas; loss of leaders

Limited public understanding of Land Councils' roles and broader trends of misinformation and disinformation

Viability of remote communities: Various threats to Aboriginal people being able to continue to live on or near their country (e.g. insufficient housing, education, employment, health and essential services, infrastructure and capable organisations)

#### CLC SPECIFIC

Demographic change may reduce constituent understanding of ALRA, Native Title Act, and Land Councils

Expectations to expand activities threaten core work (requires careful prioritisation within funding)

Some stakeholders do not understand that consulting on complex issues requires adequate time for robust Traditional Owner decision making

### **To achieve its purposes, the CLC has built relationships with a large range of stakeholders.**

First and foremost, in performing its functions the CLC works with, provides services to and represents Traditional Owners, Native Title Holders, and other Aboriginal people living in the CLC region. The CLC represents and services Aboriginal entities that hold rights and interests in land, and enters service agreements with PBCs and other Aboriginal Corporations that receive land use income to provide services.

The CLC works with many entities that share a common purpose of improving the lives of Aboriginal people. This includes Australian and Northern Territory government agencies, Aboriginal community-controlled organisations, non-government organisations, and 'partners' delivering contracted services such as community development projects. When instructed by Traditional Owners, the CLC also enters into land use and land access agreements with third parties, requiring ongoing monitoring and engagement.

Across stakeholder engagements, the CLC seeks mutual respect, authentic respect for Aboriginal rights and interests, and collaboration for positive outcomes valued by Aboriginal people. The 'How CLC does its work' section of this plan outlines the fundamental principles of CLC's engagement approach.

Collaboration is particularly important in the CLC's efforts to work towards Aboriginal peoples' economic success and their control of their communities and homelands (goals 5 and 6). In these areas, the CLC is one of many organisations working to influence outcomes where resources are finite. The CLC works in a targeted way to collaborate across the network of organisations delivering services to remote communities and homelands, including Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal organisations and businesses, regional councils and Northern Territory government agencies.







The CLC pursues the appointment of highly qualified Aboriginal professionals to senior leadership roles as part of its broader strategy to enhance diversity, representation and cultural leadership. Aboriginal staff in leadership roles currently include the Chief Executive Officer, two General Managers and several Managers.

The CLC is dedicated to fostering the professional growth of Aboriginal staff through initiatives such as the internal Aboriginal leadership program. This program supports the development of Aboriginal staff, building on their existing skills and capabilities and equipping them to advance their careers within the organisation.

The CLC also runs an undergraduate cadetship program that provides Aboriginal students with valuable work experience and financial assistance while they undertake their first university degree.

The CLC's new Enterprise Agreement came into effect on 30 April 2025. This agreement enhances the CLC's ability to attract and retain high-calibre talent in a competitive market while fostering a skilled and sustainable workforce; ensuring the CLC can continue to deliver strong performance and outcomes for constituents.

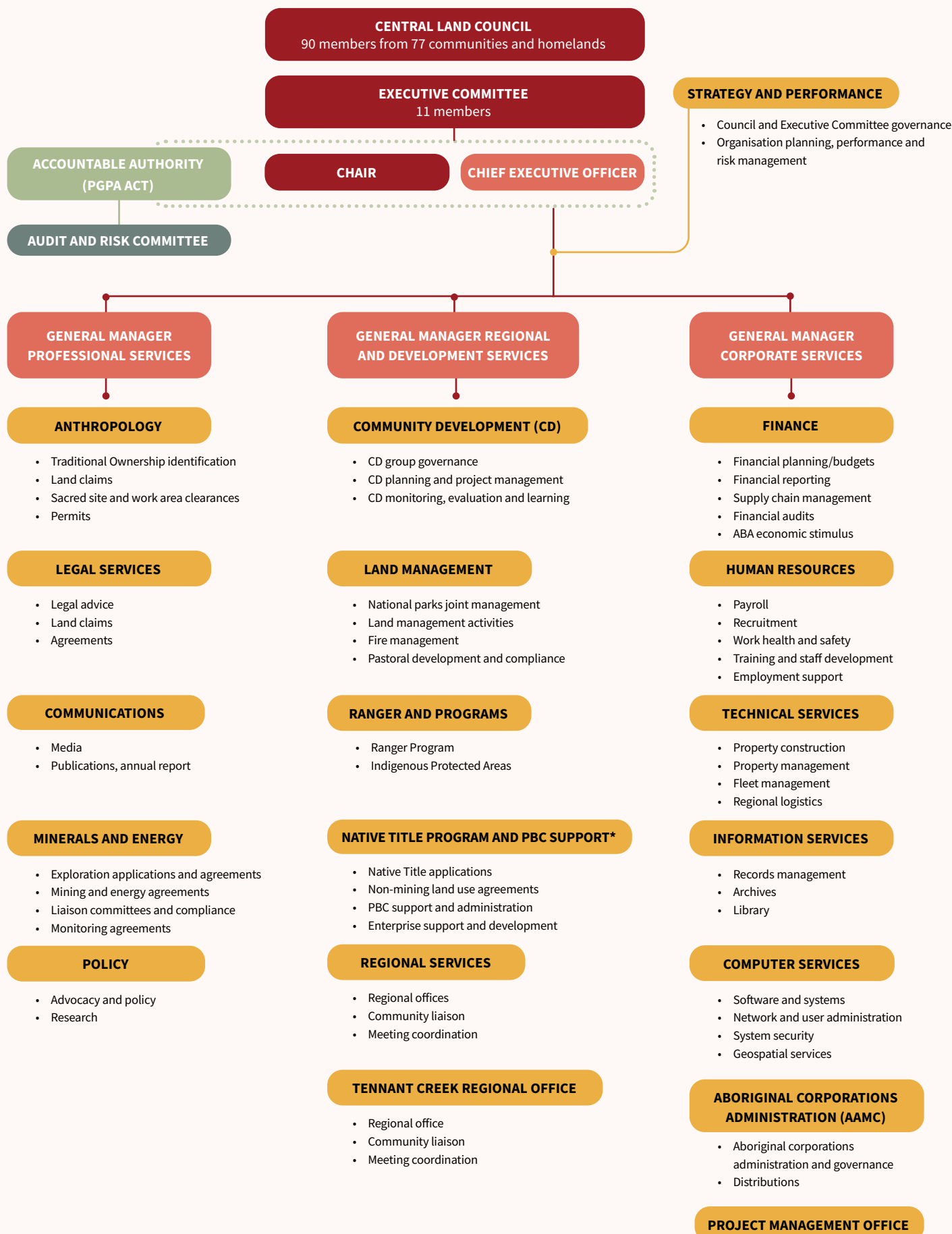
## ORGANISATION STRUCTURE

The CLC's organisation structure is shown on the next page. The **Council** is made up of 90 Aboriginal people elected by their communities in the CLC region. Together with the **Executive Committee and Chair**, they form the representative aspect of the CLC structure. The ALRA established the elected Council and the Council formed an elected Executive Committee.

The **Chief Executive Officer (CEO)** is responsible for operations and administration. The Council has formally delegated these responsibilities to the CEO. The CEO reports on activities to both the Executive Committee and the Council. The CEO makes decisions about the structure and staffing of the organisation and is supported by three **General Managers** responsible for specific functions.

The Chair and the CEO together form the **Accountable Authority**. Under the PGPA Act, the Accountable Authority is responsible for ensuring the good governance of the CLC.

As required under the PGPA Act, the CLC has an independent **Audit and Risk Committee** whose role is to provide independent assurance to the Accountable Authority in respect of financial reporting, performance reporting, risk oversight and management, internal control and compliance. The Audit and Risk Committee directs the CLC's internal audit functions and regularly engages with the Australian National Audit Office.



\*Native Title Representative Body work is integrated across the organisation.  
The Native Title Manager coordinates this work together with the responsible manager

## ORGANISATION CAPABILITY

### CAPITAL INVESTMENT PLANNING - TRANSPORT AND PROPERTIES

The CLC's key assets comprise a substantial fleet of vehicles and trailers specially equipped for remote travel as well as property that enable staff to operate in town, in remote communities and 'out bush' to carry out the organisation's statutory functions.

#### FLEET STRATEGY

Reliability, safety of staff and constituents and ability to perform in remote settings are the key fleet requirements to support the work of the organisation. Regular servicing, fitting additional features to meet requirements, GPS tracking, communication and duress systems are essential to ensure systems are in place to support staff travel.

#### BUILDING MANAGEMENT

The CLC's building network includes 7 offices, depots and staff accommodation properties in Alice Springs and 15 regional operational bases that support core business and Ranger groups. An additional Ranger office at Aputula (Finke) is nearing occupancy. Many properties are leased on Aboriginal land. Facility management is delivered through various panel contracts. The repairs and maintenance strategy for these buildings is scheduled to ensure safety, security and services.

The key building strategic objectives are to:

- Meet various legislative and building obligations
- Provide and monitor a defined level of service
- Sustainability performance and improvements suited to remote communities
- Review growth with direction from the regionalisation report, supporting organisational priorities and needs
- Identify, assess and appropriately control risks; and
- Link long-term financial planning to capital expenditure

### FORWARD PLANNING — BUILDINGS

The next four years will see continued focus on upgrading regional and remote offices and staff accommodation for remote-based and visiting staff.


The availability of office space for staff in Alice Springs remains a pressure point. The CLC has advanced the design of a new building delivering additional office space in Alice Springs to ensure that core functions can be delivered effectively.

The forward estimates capital program includes improvements to the CLC's remote and regional offices, including advancing the planning for Tennant Creek office upgrades, improvements for visiting staff, and Arlparra (Utopia) Ranger and regional office upgrades. There will be continued focus on upgrading offices, workspaces and staff accommodation across the region to support teams based remotely. The organisation's regionalisation priorities will assist to inform future priorities.

#### REMOTE LOGISTICS

Being able to effectively carry out meetings in remote locations is essential to the CLC's core business. The CLC's regional logistics and regional services functions support the planning, preparation and delivery of remote meetings that can range from days to weeks long. This capability involves planning and ordering food and consumables for the duration of the meeting, transport, setting up camp and meeting areas and running kitchen camps that adhere to food safety and hygiene procedures. These functions are improving the services they provide through ensuring equipment is fit for purpose and enhancing training and procedures.





## INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGIES (ICT) CAPABILITY

### ICT PHILOSOPHY

The CLC's systems are built to be robust and reliable for the demanding conditions of remote Central Australia, and effectively meet the diverse technology needs of staff. The CLC learns and adapts as technology changes, and focuses on practical tools and approaches aligned with the organisation's values and goals.

Current ICT improvement projects include:

- Ongoing migration to Microsoft 365
- Supporting the development and implementation of productivity platforms underway for anthropology, human resources, minerals and energy and finance functions
- Continued IT security improvements, including the implementation of a managed detection and response platform
- Expansion of systems access for CLC rangers.

A centralised Project Management Office function is being established to support a standard method of project management for all capital projects, in conjunction with the Microsoft 365 migration.

### CYBERSECURITY

In accordance with **cyber.gov.au** guidance, the CLC has assumed a 'defence in depth' posture, employing multiple security measures across endpoint devices, applications and networks. The CLC is working to improve its implementation of security controls recommended by the Essential Eight, ISO 27001 and Center for Internet Security, including:

- Filtered email and web traffic; DMARC compliant mail gateway
- Continual monitoring of network, identity and authorisation systems
- Subscriptions to security advisory services
- Staff security awareness training

## INFORMATION SERVICES

As an organisation that generates and handles a large volume of information relevant to constituents, the CLC's capabilities include archives, records, registry and preservation services. Our information services function preserves records and data, keeps them protected and makes them available for access within established governance arrangements.

The CLC also maintains an internal library service that supports staff to access to research resources, external collections and other relevant information that enhances the quality of their work.

The CLC's library catalogue and the Electronic Document and Records Management System (eDIS) are managed to meet organisational needs and comply with legislation, frameworks, policies, and standards. The CLC's preservation work includes digitising its paper-based and audiovisual materials, high use collections and corporate records to ensure continuous access.

The CLC manages its information assets (records, information, data) through relevant policies and strategies that are monitored by an internal Business Systems and Information Governance Committee. This promotes better organisational decision making and efficiency, enhances compliance and security and reduces risks.

# RISK OVERSIGHT AND MANAGEMENT . . . . .

## RISK OVERSIGHT AND MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

Section 16 of the PGPA Act requires the Accountable Authority to establish and maintain an appropriate system of risk oversight and management. The CLC's Risk Management Framework helps ensure that risks are identified, evaluated and managed consistently, appropriately and effectively. Key components of the CLC Risk Management Framework include:

- Risk Management Policy and procedures which detail the goals, process and responsibilities of risk management;
- Risk Appetite Statement which describes the amount and type of risks that the CLC is willing to engage with in achieving its goals; and
- Risk Management Profile detailing the key enterprise risks (summary in table below).

All CLC staff have responsibilities to contribute to risk management tasks with key responsibilities held by the Accountable Authority, Chief Executive Officer, General Managers, Strategy and Performance function, and the Audit and Risk Committee.

In developing the CLC's risk maturity, efforts will target embedding processes by which risk information is more accessible to inform senior management and all staff.

## OUR APPETITE FOR RISK

The CLC has a moderate appetite for risk. We are committed to taking actions to meet our purpose, functions and goals while ensuring risks are managed to an acceptable level.

At the CLC, **positive risks** are those actions that support the achievement of our goals, in particular the promotion of the rights and interests of Aboriginal people. **Negative risks** are those that are likely to lead to major or extreme negative consequences, put our staff or constituents' health at undue risk, involve non-compliance with laws, or are likely to lead to significant damage to our reputation, financial stability or ability to function.

## RISK ASSURANCE

Key enterprise-wide risk	How the risk is managed
1. <b>Failure to meet the CLC's purposes and goals</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Council members set the organisation's goals in line with statutory purposes and community aspirations; with regular updates provided on progress towards these goals.</li> <li>• Responsibilities for activities that deliver on statutory purposes are assigned to managers who maintain oversight of operating plans, policies and guidance to staff.</li> <li>• Managers establish monitoring and performance measures for activities to oversee delivery, take corrective action, or escalate matters as required.</li> <li>• Performance reporting includes half-yearly reporting to the Minister for Indigenous Australians, the annual report, grants reports, and performance dashboards; with review by senior management.</li> <li>• Internal audits review efficiency and effectiveness of business units.</li> <li>• Independent Audit and Risk Committee oversight and reporting.</li> <li>• Budgets align with achieving purposes, and financial expenditure is monitored.</li> </ul>
2. <b>Reputational damage resulting in inability to meet the CLC's purposes and goals</b>	<p>The CLC's organisational culture prioritises maintaining strong relationships valuing accountability and transparency. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community and constituent engagement is at the forefront of the CLC's work and is supported by the CLC Effective Engagement Strategy.</li> <li>• Communications strategies support positive public engagement.</li> <li>• Ministerial, Senate, and National Indigenous Australians Agency engagement and transparency.</li> </ul>

Key enterprise-wide risk	How the risk is managed
<b>3. Legal, regulatory or other action resulting in damage to the CLC</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Legal Services approve the advice for agreements.</li> <li>• Council or Executive Committee consent processes.</li> <li>• Instruments of delegations and authorisations provide clear guidance as to authorities and powers.</li> <li>• Ensuring appropriately qualified expertise through hiring processes, learning and development, and sourcing expert legal advice when required.</li> <li>• Policies and procedures providing guidance on internal controls.</li> <li>• Access to external specialists for advice.</li> <li>• Mitigating measures such as ensuring appropriate insurance.</li> </ul>
<b>4. Insufficient staff capacity and capability resulting in inability to deliver functions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A values-driven culture supports employee engagement, motivation and retention.</li> <li>• Learning and development strategies incorporate internal training programs, mandatory high risk training, training completion monitoring, and work related study agreements.</li> <li>• Recruitment and retention measures include promotion at universities, engaging external expertise to review packages to ensure market appropriate, salary packaging, transitional accommodation, flexible or hybrid working arrangements.</li> <li>• Performance management includes probationary and annual performance appraisal.</li> <li>• Learning from staff feedback through exit interviews and surveys.</li> <li>• Minimum safety capabilities driven by Work Health and Safety management plan.</li> <li>• Use of contractors when required and appropriate.</li> <li>• Internal audits review efficiency and effectiveness of business units.</li> </ul>
<b>5. Inability to deliver service in a timely manner</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Business Continuity Plan and related measures aim to mitigate against service disruption including from events outside the organisation's control.</li> <li>• The ability for large numbers of staff to work remotely in the case offices become inaccessible.</li> <li>• A Fleet Management Plan and system that supports efficient and effective allocation of vehicles for work needs.</li> <li>• Business continuity priorities statement supports efficient organisational preparation.</li> </ul>
<b>6. Harm caused to employees or community through CLC working environment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Oversight of the Work Health and Safety framework by the General Manager Corporate Services and the Human Resources Manager, with a cross-sectional Work Health and Safety Committee, and reporting to senior management.</li> <li>• Strategies to manage compliance and harm prevention across policies and procedures include: training completion monitoring; fleet management system and GPS tracking; personal protective equipment; first aid training; Work Health and Safety Incident reports, Work Health and Safety coordinator monitoring and supporting organisational learning; standard operating procedures and safe work method statement, access to mental health support; and measures to promote wellbeing.</li> </ul>
<b>7. Information systems are compromised</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preventative controls including multi-factor authentication, user education, penetration testing, network segmentation and firewalls.</li> <li>• Detective controls including virus scanning and network traffic monitoring.</li> <li>• Corrective controls including regular backups and an incident response plan.</li> </ul>
<b>8. Data is lost or damaged and not able to be recovered</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Access controls for both physical and digital records.</li> <li>• Regular backup of digital records.</li> <li>• Policies for collection, retention and destruction of data.</li> <li>• Strategic projects under way include a multi-year digitisation (preservation) project, development of a System Information Management Plan and an organisation-wide Information Asset Register.</li> <li>• Annual audit by the National Archives of Australia.</li> <li>• Controls are in place to mitigate loss of data, such as extensive backups, restricted access to systems, user access reviews, review of organisational information assets and disaster recovery planning.</li> </ul>
<b>9. External and Internal fraud</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The CLC's Fraud and Corruption Policy establishes strong principles for the prevention, detection and response to fraud and corruption.</li> <li>• Fraud risk assessments and fraud control plans identify key fraud and corruption risks and measures to control those risks.</li> <li>• A public interest disclosure policy and process.</li> <li>• Employee qualification checks, including when appropriate criminal history checks.</li> <li>• Multiple internal policies supporting integrity including those covering staff conduct, conflict of interest management, secondary employment, gifts and benefits and procurement.</li> </ul>

The CLC's annual report includes an annual performance statement with analysis of performance using these performance measures and targets.

Much of the organisation's performance cannot be assessed by metrics alone. To enhance performance information, the CLC publishes qualitative assessment case studies on its website (<https://www.clc.org.au/monitoring-evaluation/>).

Other CLC publications like Land Rights News ([www.clc.org.au/land-rights-news/](http://www.clc.org.au/land-rights-news/)) also show how the CLC delivers activities in its unique context.

The CLC is subject to competing demands for performance measurement and reporting. As well as reporting against the goals and key activities in this corporate plan, Land Councils in the Northern Territory also have reporting obligations for ABA funding and Native Title Representative Body requirements. The ABA Outcomes and Outputs framework is not fit for purpose. While the outcomes are sufficiently broad to remain relevant, the outputs are no longer entirely relevant to the activities and functions delivered. The need to reform the ABA reporting framework has been recognised for some time and the CLC will continue to advocate for this.



## PERFORMANCE MEASURES AND TARGETS • • • • •

### KEY ACTIVITY 1: PROTECT AND REPRESENT ABORIGINAL PEOPLES' RIGHTS AND INTERESTS

KPI #	SUB-ACTIVITY	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	TARGET	FORECAST			
			2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	
1	1.3	Publications produced for stakeholders and constituents regarding Aboriginal peoples' rights and interests and the CLC's work.	100	100	100	100	
<b>METHODOLOGY</b>		Includes publications by the CLC such as Land Rights News, Council News, Community Development News, newsletters, annual reports, booklets, posters, videos, podcasts, interactive features and reports and submissions to governments. It also includes submissions published by other organisations with significant CLC input.					
<b>RATIONALE</b>		<p>The CLC protects and represents the rights and interests of Aboriginal peoples. The CLC produces external publications that highlight these rights and the CLC's work in advocating for them. By spreading the word about the CLC's role and the rights of Aboriginal people through these publications, public awareness can be improved. This can lead to greater support for policies that protect Aboriginal rights and interests.</p> <p>CLC staff also respond to government inquiries and reviews, policy and legislative proposals. Staff are guided by the policy priorities identified by each new Council after they are elected and by subsequent Council decisions and resolutions. Submissions are an important way of ensuring that Aboriginal voices are heard by governments when they are making or changing policies and laws and of putting forward evidence about the impact of government decisions on Aboriginal people. That evidence can influence the government to change or replace harmful laws and policies.</p>					

### KEY ACTIVITY 2: PROTECT AND ENHANCE ABORIGINAL LAND OWNERSHIP AND INTERESTS

KPI #	SUB-ACTIVITY	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	TARGET	FORECAST			
			2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	
2	2.3	Traditional Owner 'ownership' (square kilometres) administered with rights and interests protected and represented under the ALRA.	423,389.8	423,389.8	423,389.8	423,389.8	
<b>METHODOLOGY</b>		Square kilometres of land in the CLC region that has Aboriginal freehold title granted and managed under the ALRA.					
<b>RATIONALE</b>		<p>The achievement of a land claim under the ALRA is a significant output resulting from the CLC working with Aboriginal people to provide sufficient evidence for their Traditional Ownership to be recognised. It is core to the CLC's purpose and an outcome valued by Aboriginal people – tangibly and intangibly. This measure also indicates the landmass over which the CLC is responsible for protecting and representing the rights and interests of Traditional Owners under the ALRA. The CLC does this by consulting and taking instructions from Traditional Owners, who are the decision-makers for proposed use of and access to their country. Independent from the CLC, Traditional Owners are also able to practice and maintain their culture on country.</p> <p>No new ALRA land claims are permitted under the legislation and only one claim remains in the CLC region. The CLC anticipates that the Frances Well Land Claim (area approximately 1.8 km<sup>2</sup>) will be finalised and handed back to Traditional Owners in 2025-26. Factors outside of the CLCs control that will affect whether that target is met include ongoing negotiations with third parties, surveying of land arranged by others and scheduling by the Commonwealth parliament of that area in the ALRA.</p>					
KPI #	SUB-ACTIVITY	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	TARGET	FORECAST			
			2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	
3	2.3	Native title claims for which consent determination has been handed down.	37	38	38	39	
<b>METHODOLOGY</b>		Number of consent determinations handed down in the CLC region by the Federal Court of Australia					
<b>RATIONALE</b>		<p>As a Native Title Representative Body, one of the CLC's core functions is to assist Aboriginal people to gain recognition of their native title rights and interests in their land. The CLC assists Aboriginal people with all aspects of native title claims, including the research and application process and representing claimants' interests during negotiations and court appearances. A native title determination recognises the traditional rights and interests of Aboriginal people in land and enables them to exercise those rights and interests for their benefit. This can include rights to hold ceremonies, look after sacred sites, hunt, gather foods, camp on country and the right to be consulted about future acts.</p> <p>The CLC currently has 5 applications before the Federal Court, 8 claims under research and additional future claims to be considered. The timing of native title determinations is difficult to predict due to external factors.</p>					

## PERFORMANCE MEASURES AND TARGETS

### KEY ACTIVITY 2: PROTECT AND ENHANCE ABORIGINAL LAND OWNERSHIP AND INTERESTS

KPI #	SUB-ACTIVITY	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	TARGET	FORECAST			
			2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	
4	2.1	Anthropological advice issued to determine relevant Traditional Owners for claims and interests.	135	Forecast not applicable			
METHODOLOGY		<p>Number of Traditional Owner identification advice and Native Title Holder identification advice produced by the Anthropology Section in response to requests from CLC staff that need to consult with Native Title Holders or obtain instructions from Traditional Owners.</p> <p>Note: This performance measure was revised in 2024-25 to only include formal Traditional Owner identification advice and Native Title Holder identification advice issued, in order to make the measure more specific. In previous years, this measure also included other types of anthropological advice.</p>					
RATIONALE		<p>To enable delivery of its statutory functions, the CLC undertakes research and consultation to determine Traditional Owner for claims and interests including native title claims, land use and development applications, land management activities and distribution of land use income. This advice ensures the right people are consulted to provide instructions to the CLC on matters affecting their country.</p> <p>The number of Traditional Owner and Native Title Holder identification advices issued is driven by demand from CLC sections, often in response to applications from external parties. The complexity of the research required to produce the advice also influences the number of advices produced each year. Therefore, any forecast beyond the current financial year is not considered useful.</p>					
KPI #	SUB-ACTIVITY	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	TARGET	FORECAST			
			2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	
5	2.6 - 2.10	Lots subject to leases and licences managed on behalf of Aboriginal Land Trusts and community living areas.	Targets not applicable				
METHODOLOGY		Number of lots subject to leases or licences on Aboriginal freehold land, including on Aboriginal Land Trusts, community living areas (CLAs) and similar tenure.					
RATIONALE		<p>The leasing and licensing of Aboriginal freehold land provides significant benefit to Traditional Owners, including by providing remuneration for the use of Aboriginal land. It is part of the CLC’s purpose and an outcome valued by Aboriginal people – tangibly and intangibly. This measure also indicates the number of leases and licences held by government, non-government, and private lessees and licensees on Aboriginal land that the CLC is responsible for administering in the interest of Traditional Owners under the ALRA and on community living areas, which under the ALRA the CLC has a function to assist with. The CLC does this by consulting and taking instructions from Traditional Owners, who are the decision-makers for proposed use of and access to their country, and land-holding bodies who are the decision-makers for community living areas.</p> <p>The CLC does not set targets for this measure because the number is often based on demand from third party applicants and the consent decision on any lease or licence application is a matter for traditional owners or CLA land-holding bodies. However, the measure is an indicator of the volume of work that the CLC does negotiating, consulting on, and administering leases and licences over Aboriginal land, and of Aboriginal people exercising their rights to consider leasing or licencing applications, negotiate benefits and decide whether to consent to these arrangements.</p>					
CHANGES TO MEASURE SINCE CORPORATE PLAN 2024-2028		The title of the measure has been changed from ‘Leases and licences managed on behalf of Aboriginal Land Trusts and community living areas’ to ‘Lots subject to leases and licences managed on behalf of Aboriginal Land Trusts and community living areas’ to be more specific about what the indicator measures. The CLC’s workload and the outcomes for Aboriginal people are more accurately reflected by ‘lots’ than ‘leases’, noting that one lease can comprise multiple lots with different land use or access purposes and different benefits to traditional owners or communities.					

## KEY ACTIVITY 2: PROTECT AND ENHANCE ABORIGINAL LAND OWNERSHIP AND INTERESTS

KPI #	SUB-ACTIVITY	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	TARGET	FORECAST			
			2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	
6	2.4 - 2.5	Native title non-mining Indigenous Land Use Agreements (ILUAs) managed on behalf of Native Title Holders.	74	75	76	76	
METHODOLOGY		The total number of Indigenous Land Use Agreements (ILUAs) relating to non-mining activities that are registered with the National Native Title Tribunal and are monitored by the CLC. Examples could include agreements for the development of government infrastructure, extensions to waste management facilities or the release of land to provide community housing.					
RATIONALE		As a Native Title Representative Body, one of the CLC’s core functions is to negotiate, enter into and monitor ILUAs. These agreements ensure that Native Title Holders’ rights and interests are protected and that they benefit from a future act activity. For example, agreements may include the protection of sacred sites, financial compensation and other benefits such as employment and training opportunities.  The number of ILUAs registered with the National Native Title Tribunal is driven by proponent interest in development on land where native title interests exist, negotiation factors, and Native Title Holder decision-making processes. The KPI reflects the significant workload associated with consulting Native Title Holders, negotiating an ILUA and the subsequent agreement monitoring and implementation.					

KPI #	SUB-ACTIVITY	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	TARGET	FORECAST			
			2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	
7	2.6 - 2.10	Exploration agreements (ELs and EPs) managed on behalf of Traditional Owners and Native Title Holders on land subject to the ALRA or native title.	79	Forecast not applicable			
8	2.6 - 2.10	Minerals and energy production agreements managed on behalf of Traditional Owners and Native Title Holders on land subject to the ALRA or native title.	23	Forecast not applicable			
METHODOLOGY		<b>KPI #7:</b> Number of executed and active exploration agreements (for both exploration licences and exploration permits) managed by the CLC on land subject to the ALRA or native title.  <b>KPI #8:</b> Number of minerals and energy production agreements managed by the CLC on land subject to the ALRA or native title.					
RATIONALE		The CLC has statutory obligations under Part IV of the ALRA and Division 3 of the Native Title Act to assist Aboriginal people so that land ownership and interests are protected and they benefit from any activity approved on their land. The CLC consults with Traditional Owners and Native Title Holders about exploration and mining proposals on their land. For proposals on Aboriginal land, the CLC ensures Traditional Owners are informed about the nature and purpose of the proposal before they make decisions. The CLC takes instructions from Traditional Owners and Native Title Holders on terms and conditions to be sought in an agreement, which could include the protection of sacred sites, financial compensation and other benefits such as employment and training opportunities. The CLC negotiates on behalf of Traditional Owners and Native Title Holders to achieve the best possible outcomes in accordance with their instructions, and only if there is informed group consent will then enter into agreements with proponents. The CLC then administers the agreements and ensures that contractual obligations are fulfilled.  The number of agreements being managed reflects that Traditional Owners have and continue to exercise their rights to speak for and make informed decisions about activities on their country. It also reflects the CLC’s ongoing work with Traditional Owners in agreement-related governance, protection of sacred sites and securing economic benefits. The number of exploration and production agreements is driven by proponent interest in development on Aboriginal or native title land, negotiation factors, and traditional owner and Native Title Holder decision-making processes. Due to the large number of variables, any forecast beyond the current financial year is not considered useful.					

## PERFORMANCE MEASURES AND TARGETS

### KEY ACTIVITY 3: SUPPORT ABORIGINAL PEOPLE TO PROTECT AND MAINTAIN THEIR SACRED SITES AND CULTURES

KPI #	SUB-ACTIVITY	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	TARGET	FORECAST			
			2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	
9	3.1	Sacred site clearance certificates and other advice issued.	205	Forecast not applicable			
METHODOLOGY		Number of sacred site clearance certificates or letters issued by the CLC Anthropology Section in response to sacred site clearance applications.					
RATIONALE		One of the CLC’s statutory functions is to protect Aboriginal culture and sacred sites. One of the ways the CLC does this is through issuing sacred site clearance certificates or letters to external parties proposing to undertake ground disturbing activities on Aboriginal land. Upon receiving a sacred site clearance application, the CLC researches records of previous activities in the area, then conducts consultation and country visits with Traditional Owners to explain the proposed works and take their instructions about the protection of sacred sites that might be impacted by the proposal. This process provides certainty that, if the conditions of the certificate are complied with, sacred sites will be protected.  The number of sacred site clearance certificates issued each year is impacted by demand from third parties, the scale of proposals and the complexity of the consultations required to obtain Traditional Owners’ instructions. Therefore, any forecast beyond the current financial year is not considered useful.					

KPI #	SUB-ACTIVITY	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	TARGET	FORECAST			
			2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	
10	3.5	Cultural heritage management and intergenerational Indigenous ecological knowledge (IEK) transfer projects supported.	50	50	50	50	
METHODOLOGY		Number of land management related activities that helped Traditional Owners look after an important place or pass on knowledge, with this being a primary reason an activity was organised. The numbers are the sum of such activities recorded in land management work registers during the period.					
RATIONALE		The CLC plays an important role in helping Traditional Owners maintain their cultural connections to country. Through the Ranger, Indigenous Protected Areas and other programs, the CLC works with Traditional Owners to identify priority country visits for land management purposes that also provide opportunity to protect culturally important places or transfer cultural knowledge. The CLC supports Traditional Owners to access remote areas that often require logistical support of the CLC, enabling maintenance of knowledge and culture where it is otherwise at risk of not being able to be transferred on country.  The number of such activities each year is driven by requests from Traditional Owners through formal meetings and forums, requests from external parties, or requests in response to specific needs or circumstances, such as a senior knowledge holder’s desire to pass on information to the next generation.					

### KEY ACTIVITY 4: SUPPORT ABORIGINAL PEOPLE TO LOOK AFTER THEIR COUNTRY

KPI #	SUB-ACTIVITY	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	TARGET	FORECAST			
			2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	
11	4.1, 4.2	Land management committee meetings and consultative forums with effective Traditional Owner representation.	70	70	70	70	
<b>METHODOLOGY</b>		Number of Joint Management (Parks), Indigenous Protected Area and Traditional Owner Ranger Advisory committee meetings held each year and other meetings at which the CLC represents Traditional Owner interests on land management related issues					
<b>RATIONALE</b>		<p>One of the CLC's statutory functions under the ALRA is to help Traditional Owners to manage and look after country. The CLC helps Traditional Owners have a strong voice in land management by facilitating Traditional Owner-led Joint Management (Parks), Indigenous Protected Area and Traditional Owner Ranger Advisory committees. These Traditional Owner management committees play an important role in making sure the right people are talking for country and that Rangers and other staff working in these programs are doing the work the committee approves. This helps maintain a cultural connection to land and provides opportunities for Traditional Owners to undertake cultural maintenance of sites or areas of interest and deploy their traditional and ecological knowledge. This provides a direct benefit to land and culture and many indirect benefits to the environment and Aboriginal peoples' wellbeing. The CLC also represents Traditional Owner interests at other forums such as regional bushfire, weeds advisory or feral animal management committees to ensure their views are taken into account.</p> <p>The number of such meetings held each year is determined by annual Ranger and Indigenous Protected Area management plans, funding agreements and other needs or opportunities to represent Traditional Owner interests that arise.</p>					



#### KEY ACTIVITY 4: SUPPORT ABORIGINAL PEOPLE TO LOOK AFTER THEIR COUNTRY

KPI #	SUB-ACTIVITY	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	TARGET	FORECAST			
			2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	
12	4.2	Rangers employed in the CLC Ranger Program – full-time equivalent (FTE).	83	83	83	83	
<b>METHODOLOGY</b>		This figure converts the hours worked by full-time, part-time and casual Rangers during the financial year into an equivalent amount of full-time employees. The actual number of people working as Rangers working is higher than this number because most Rangers work 4 days per week. Measuring it this way helps the measure to be consistent and comparable across years.					
<b>RATIONALE</b>		<p>One of the CLC's statutory functions under the ALRA is to help Traditional Owners to manage and look after country. The employment of Aboriginal people in Aboriginal-led Ranger programs deliver ecological, cultural, economic and social benefits. Ranger employment benefits Aboriginal communities through empowering Aboriginal people to preserve cultural and natural resources on Aboriginal land and by providing meaningful employment pathways for people in remote communities. This supports the viability of communities and people's ability to continue to live near and care for country. It also ensures Aboriginal people are at the forefront of leading and influencing land management across the CLC region.</p> <p>The target reflects the number of funded Ranger positions less 10 percent as an estimated vacancy rate that takes into account staff turnover.</p>					

#### KEY ACTIVITY 5: SUPPORT ABORIGINAL PEOPLE TO BENEFIT FROM ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES ARISING FROM LAND USE AND LAND INTERESTS (INCOME, TRAINING, JOBS AND BUSINESSES)

KPI #	SUB- ACTIVITY	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	TARGET	FORECAST			
			2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	
13	5.1	Distribution committee meetings held regarding land use income.	145	Forecast not applicable			
METHODOLOGY		Number of individual distribution meetings held by the CLC to distribute funds from third party use of their land via meetings of royalty receiving corporations and/or Traditional Owners, in accordance with the instructions of Traditional Owners.					
RATIONALE		<p>The CLC is responsible for distributing Aboriginal people's income from land use and access agreements. Income is received into the land use trust account and distributed in accordance with requirements of the relevant legislation, which includes distribution in accordance with the instructions of Aboriginal Traditional Owners and related resolution by the Council or Executive Committee. Legislation also sets some parameters for how certain funds are to be administered. For example, for some agreements under Part IV of the ALRA, funds must be paid to Aboriginal Corporations approved by certain Aboriginal decision-making groups (which could be Traditional Owners and/or the Council). In other cases, funds may be paid to, or for the benefit of, the Traditional Owners of the relevant land (such as for lease payments).</p> <p>The CLC Traditional Owner identification advice identifies the key decision makers for how funds should be distributed. The CLC then facilitates meetings with the respective Aboriginal group (corporation members or Traditional Owners) to take their instructions on the allocation of funds, supporting processes that enable Aboriginal people to receive income from their land and self-determine how it is shared.</p> <p>The KPI reflects the CLC's performance in administering and distributing income to fulfil obligations under relevant legislation. The targets are based on expected numbers of meetings required for timely distribution. Due to a large number of variables it is not useful to forecast beyond the current financial year.</p>					

## PERFORMANCE MEASURES AND TARGETS

### KEY ACTIVITY 5: SUPPORT ABORIGINAL PEOPLE TO BENEFIT FROM ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES ARISING FROM LAND USE AND LAND INTERESTS (INCOME, TRAINING, JOBS AND BUSINESSES)

KPI #	SUB-ACTIVITY	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	TARGET	FORECAST			
			2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	
14	5.2	Annual General Meetings (AGMs) and Special General Meetings (SGMs) facilitated for Aboriginal corporations with land holding or land use income, under service agreements - by AAMC and PBC teams.	64	73	68	64	
<b>METHODOLOGY</b>		Number of AGMs and SGMs held to support Aboriginal Corporations to meet their obligations under the <i>Corporations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) Act 2006</i> (CATSI Act). These corporations were created to 'hold' a land interest or native title rights, receive land income, or carry out a commercial land based activity.					
<b>RATIONALE</b>		<p>Under the ALRA and the Native Title Act the CLC has responsibilities for protecting the interests of Aboriginal people regarding interests in their land. Under service level agreements, the CLC assists Aboriginal corporations to meet their administrative, financial and statutory obligations under the CATSI Act. These corporations are required to hold meetings and lodge reports with the Office of the Registrar of Indigenous Corporations (ORIC). The CLC assists 67 land holding, 32 royalty receiving, 10 non-land holding, 33 Prescribed Bodies Corporate (PBCs) and 3 Aboriginal corporations that will become PBCs to undertake this activity. This supports Aboriginal people to ensure that their corporations are compliant and their interests are protected. It also provides a foundation to enable Aboriginal people to pursue economic interests through generating income and engaging in employment, training or business opportunities.</p> <p>The targets are reflective of the number of meetings that the CLC is required to undertake under its service level agreements with corporations to ensure they are compliant with the CATSI Act, taking into account that typically each year a small number of meetings need to be postponed due to weather events or reasons specific to those corporations (such as matters impacting director or member availability). Many corporations are only required to hold an AGM every three years, as ORIC has exempted them from meeting annually based on their level of activity.</p>					

### KEY ACTIVITY 6: SUPPORT ABORIGINAL PEOPLE TO DRIVE THEIR OWN COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

KPI #	SUB-ACTIVITY	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	TARGET	FORECAST			
			2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	
15	6.2	Community funded community benefit initiatives.	Targets not applicable				
16	6.2	Community development project expenditure (\$000).	Targets not applicable				
METHODOLOGY		<b>KPI #15:</b> Number of separate community benefit initiatives that Aboriginal governance groups have allocated funds in the period.					
		<b>KPI #16:</b> Value paid to project partners to implement community benefit initiatives funded by Aboriginal governance groups in the period.					
RATIONALE		One of the CLC's functions under the ALRA is to assist people with commercial activities on Aboriginal land and one of its goals is that Aboriginal people control their communities and homelands. The CLC supports Aboriginal people to use their land use income to drive their own community development.					
		Through the CLC community development program, the CLC works with Aboriginal people to establish Aboriginal governance groups that are then supported to plan, prioritise, fund and implement community benefit projects using their income. Through these processes, the Aboriginal governance groups build their governance, financial and project implementation capacity, which leads to greater capacity to control their communities and homelands. The implementation of community benefit projects controlled by the community itself also further contributes to community control of development.					
		The KPIs provide an indication of the volume of work done by Aboriginal governance groups with support from the CLC. The annual monitoring report on CLC Community Development reflects further on the complexity and impact of the work. There are no targets set for these KPIs as they are dependent on the priorities and decision-making of relevant Aboriginal governance groups and the availability of appropriate project partners.					

## KEY ACTIVITY 7: ENSURE A STRONG LAND COUNCIL THROUGH EFFECTIVE GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

KPI #	SUB-ACTIVITY	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	TARGET	FORECAST			
			2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	
17	7.1	Council meetings convened.	3	3	3	3	
<b>METHODOLOGY</b>		Number of CLC Council meetings held during the period.					
<b>RATIONALE</b>		<p>Established under the ALRA, the CLC is a Council of 90 elected Aboriginal members who represent their remote communities and homelands across the CLC's region. Council meetings run for several days and are often in remote locations. At Council meetings the elected members develop and review policy (see page 12-13 for more detail), set directions for and guide the CLC, check the organisation is being well managed and advocate for the rights and interests of Aboriginal people. These governance meetings also ensure ALRA and Native Title Act requirements are administered and provide Council members with regular cultural engagement opportunities.</p> <p>Meeting 3 times a year ensures that Council members have their voices heard, the Council fulfils its functions and there is sufficient time for policy matters to be directed by the Council.</p>					
KPI #	SUB-ACTIVITY	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	TARGET	FORECAST			
			2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	
18	7.1	Executive Committee meetings held.	8	8	8	8	
<b>METHODOLOGY</b>		Number of CLC Executive Committee meetings held during the period.					
<b>RATIONALE</b>		<p>The CLC's 11-member Executive Committee carries out the functions that the Council has delegated to it. The Committee is made up of one elected Council member from each of the 9 CLC administrative regions, plus the CLC Chair and the Deputy Chair. Executive Committee duties include endorsing Traditional Owner decisions, checking if staff have consulted the right people in the proper way, passing resolutions, and contributing to CLC's positions on government policy within the parameters set by the Council.</p> <p>The CLC aims to hold 8 Executive Committee meetings each year, adapting to meet organisational need. The enables the CLC to administer its ALRA and Native Title Act requirements and to effectively and efficiently manage business in between Council meetings.</p>					
KPI #	SUB-ACTIVITY	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	TARGET	FORECAST			
			2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	
19	7.3	Aboriginal staff as a percentage of workforce – full-time equivalent (FTE).	46.0%	48.5%	51%	53.5%	
<b>METHODOLOGY</b>		Based on full-time, part-time and casual staff hours worked during the financial year, expressed as a full-time equivalent.					
<b>RATIONALE</b>		<p>Having a high proportion of Aboriginal staff is an important component of being a strong Land Council. Employing and retaining Aboriginal staff ensures better services to constituents and organisational decision-making that benefits Aboriginal people. It also fosters opportunities for culturally appropriate and safe collaboration between staff and constituents.</p> <p>The CLC is working to increase numbers of Aboriginal staff and leaders by focusing recruitment efforts on Aboriginal candidates, employing special measures for priority hiring, applying targeted recruitment strategies to attract Aboriginal staff and implementing supportive workplace practices.</p>					

## GLOSSARY

<b>ABA</b>	Aboriginals Benefit Account
<b>Aboriginal land</b>	As defined in the <i>Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act 1976 (Cth)</i> , Aboriginal land means:  (a) land held by a Land Trust for an estate in fee simple; or  (b) land the subject of a deed of grant held in escrow by a Land Council.
<b>ALRA</b>	<i>Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act 1976 (Cth)</i>
<b>APO NT</b>	Aboriginal Peak Organisations Northern Territory
<b>Council</b>	The CLC's 90-member governing Council
<b>FTE</b>	Full Time Equivalent (staff)
<b>ILUA</b>	Indigenous Land Use Agreement
<b>IPA</b>	Indigenous Protected Area
<b>KPI</b>	Key performance indicator, or performance measure
<b>Land Council</b>	An Aboriginal Land Council in the Northern Territory established by or under the <i>Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act 1976</i> to represent Aboriginal people.
<b>NIAA</b>	National Indigenous Australians Agency
<b>Native Title Act</b>	<i>Native Title Act 1993 (Cth)</i>
<b>NTRB</b>	Native Title Representative Body
<b>Outcomes</b>	Desired results, impacts or consequences for Aboriginal peoples
<b>PBC</b>	Prescribed Body Corporate
<b>PGPA Act</b>	<i>Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013 (Cth)</i>
<b>Sacred site</b>	A site that is sacred to Aboriginal people or is otherwise of significance according to Aboriginal tradition
<b>Traditional Owners</b>	In relation to land, means a local descent group of Aboriginal people who have common spiritual affiliations to a site on the land, being affiliations that place the group under a primary spiritual responsibility for that site and for the land; and are entitled by Aboriginal tradition to forage as a right over that land.



## ANNEXURE - POWERS AND FUNCTIONS . . . . .

### ABORIGINAL LAND RIGHTS (NORTHERN TERRITORY) ACT 1976

#### POWERS

Section 27 of *Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act 1976* (ALRA) provides a broad power that:

**Subject to the ALRA, a Land Council may do all things necessary or convenient to be done for or in connexion with the performance of its functions and may:**

- Employ staff.
- Obtain the advice and assistance of persons who are **expert in any matter** with which the Council is concerned (including assistance in connection with the administration of the affairs of the Council).
- Give **lawful directions** to Land Trusts holding land in its area concerning the performance of their functions; and
- Receive moneys due and owing to Land Trusts holding, or established to hold, land in its area and give a valid discharge for those moneys.

A Land Council may, on the request of an Aboriginal corporation that has received an amount of money from the Council under this Act, provide administrative or other assistance to the corporation.

Where a Land Council employs a person as a staff member, the terms and conditions of the person's employment are such as are from time to time determined by the Land Council. Where a Land Council obtains the advice and assistance of a person the terms and conditions of the engagement of that person are such as are approved by the Land Council.

A Land Council shall not, without the approval of the Minister, enter into, or permit a Land Trust holding land in its area to enter into, a contract involving the payment or receipt of an amount exceeding **\$5,000,000**, or, if a higher amount is prescribed, that higher amount. The Minister shall not give an approval with respect to entering into a contract relating to Aboriginal land unless the Minister is satisfied that the Land Council concerned has, in taking the action that has resulted in the proposed contract, complied with any duty imposed on it by subsection 23(3) (Land Council functions).

The Land Council has delegated certain powers to an Executive Committee, the Chief Executive Officer and other senior staff.

#### FUNCTIONS

In carrying out its functions, with respect to any Aboriginal land in its area, a Land Council must have regard to the interests of, and shall consult with, the Traditional Aboriginal Owners (if any) of the land and any other Aboriginals interested in the land and, in particular, shall not take any action, including, but not limited to, the giving of consent or the withholding of consent, in any matter in **connexion** with land held by a Land Trust, **unless** the Land Council is satisfied that:

- The Traditional Aboriginal Owners (if any) of that land **understand the nature and purpose** of the proposed action and, as a group, consent to it.
- Any Aboriginal community or group that may be affected by the proposed action has been **consulted** and has had **adequate opportunity** to express its view to the Land Council.

#### Section 23 of the ALRA specifies the functions of a Land Council:

- To ascertain and **express the wishes and the opinion** of Aboriginals living in the area of the Land Council as to the **management of Aboriginal land** in that area and as to appropriate legislation concerning that land.
- To **protect the interests of Traditional Aboriginal Owners** of, and other Aboriginals interested in, Aboriginal land in the area of the Land Council.
- To assist Aboriginals in the taking of measures likely to assist in the **protection of sacred sites** on land (whether or not Aboriginal land) in the area of the Land Council.
- To **consult with Traditional Aboriginal Owners** of, and other Aboriginals interested in, Aboriginal land in the area of the Land Council with respect to any proposal relating to the **use of that land**.
- Where the CLC holds in escrow a deed of grant made to a Land Trust, to **negotiate with persons having estates or interests** in that land with a view to the **acquisition of those** estates or interests by the Land Trust; and until those estates or interests have been so acquired, to negotiate with those persons with a view to the use by Aboriginals of the land in such manner as may be agreed between the Land Council and those persons.

- To **negotiate with persons desiring to obtain an estate or interest in land** in the area of the Land Council (where the land is held by a Land Trust, on behalf of Traditional Aboriginal Owners (if any) of that land and of any other Aboriginals interested in the land, where the land is the subject of a land claim then on behalf of the Traditional Aboriginal Owners of that land or on behalf of any other Aboriginals interested in the land).
- To assist Aboriginals in the area of the Land Council to carry out **commercial activities** (including resource development, the provision of tourist facilities and agricultural activities), **in any manner that will not cause the Land Council to incur financial liability or enable it to receive financial benefit.**
- For land that is a **community living area** and in the area of the Land Council, to **assist** the owner of the land, if requested to do so, in relation to **any dealings** in the land (including assistance in negotiating leases of, or other grants of interests in, the land).
- To assist Aboriginals claiming to have a traditional land claim to an area of land within the area of the Land Council in pursuing the claim, in particular, by arranging for **legal assistance** for them at the expense of the Land Council.
- To **negotiate**, and enter into (access) agreements.
- To **compile and keep a register** recording the names of the members of the Land Council and a register recording the names of the members of the Land Trusts holding, or established to hold, Aboriginal land in its area and descriptions of each area of such Aboriginal land.
- To supervise, and provide administrative or other assistance for, **Land Trusts** holding, or established to hold, Aboriginal land in its area.
- Such **other functions** as are prescribed by regulations.

- With the approval of the Minister, perform any functions that may be conferred on it by **a law of the Northern Territory**, including:

- Protection of sacred sites
- Access to Aboriginal land
- Schemes for management of wildlife on Aboriginal land

The Land Council also has functions under Northern Territory legislation such as the *Burial and Cremation Act 2022* (NT), *Territory Parks and Wildlife Conservation Act 1976* (NT) and *Aboriginal Land Act 1978* (NT).

### NATIVE TITLE REPRESENTATIVE BODY UNDER THE NATIVE TITLE ACT

The main objectives of the *Native Title Act 1993* (Native Title Act) are:

- To provide for the recognition and protection of Native Title.
- To validate old dealings that were invalid because of native title, and establish ways in which future dealings affecting Native Title may proceed and to set standards for those dealings.
- To establish a mechanism for determining claims to Native Title.

The CLC has been recognised as a Native Title Representative Body under the Native Title Act. The functions of Native Title Representative Bodies are set out in Part 11 Division 3 of the Native Title Act and are conferred in addition to, and not instead of, any functions conferred by any other law. These functions include:

- **Facilitation and Assistance**
- **Certification**
- **Dispute Resolution**
- **Notification**
- **Agreement Making**
- **Internal Review**

**Funding:** These functions are funded by a separate budget appropriation from the Australian Government, currently administered by the National Indigenous Australians Agency. Core ongoing activities of the Native Title work program include responding to *Future Act*\* notifications and progressing native title claims.

### **Northern Territory Government process on expedited**

**procedure:** All Future Act applications for mineral exploration licenses within the Northern Territory include a statement from the Northern Territory Government that the grant attracts the “expedited procedure” as defined under s 32 of the Native Title Act. In the event that Native Title Holders have an objection to the license, the CLC has four months in which to file that objection.

**Prioritisation of claims:** New Native Title claims are discussed and initially prioritised (High/Medium/Low) at bi-annual planning sessions. Notwithstanding requests from claimant groups, final prioritisation and decisions are made having consideration for factors such as:

- *Future Act*\* ‘drivers’ (importance of securing people’s rights to negotiate);
- Concerns for protection of sites;
- Strength of available information (for anthropology reports);
- Success of Native Title/ALRA claims on abutting land;
- Spread across CLC region (equity); and
- Available resources (funds and personnel).

\*Future Acts are defined under s 233 of the Native Title Act

### **PRIORITIES**

Section 23AA of ALRA and subsection 203B(4) of the Native Title Act specifies that the Land Council must:

- From time to time **determine the priorities** it will give to performing its functions.
- **Allocate resources** in the way it thinks fit so as to be able to perform its functions efficiently.
- Give priority to the **protection of the interests** of Native Title Holders, Traditional Aboriginal Owners of, and other Aboriginals interested in, Aboriginal land in the area of the Council.

This corporate plan addresses these requirements. The priorities of the CLC are explained by a planning arrangement that comprises goals, key activities and performance measurement.

### **ACCOUNTABLE AUTHORITY (PGPA ACT)**

Rule 7A of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Rule 2024 (Cth)*, states that the Accountable Authority of the Central Land Council is “The group of persons made up of:

- a) the Chair of the Land Council; and
- b) the Chief Executive Officer of the Land Council.”

The Chief Executive Officer of the CLC is the most senior manager appointed by the Council. The Chair is elected by the Council, generally for a 3-year term, in accordance with ALRA.





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