

FREE

LAND RIGHTS NEWS

April 2024

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CENTRAL AUSTRALIA

EDUCATING OUR KIDS – OUR WAY



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EDITORIAL

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COVER



Kimberley Taylor, Colin Nipper, Josh Moneymoon (behind), David Moneymoon, photo by Rhett Hammerton. From *Atunymanama: Nganampa Walytja Uwankaraku* published by NPY Women's Council in 2023.

CLC MEETINGS

30 April – 2 May
Council
Tennant Creek

14 – 15 May
Executive
Alice Springs

18 – 19 June
Executive
Alice Springs

“Not going to let it go”: Singleton court



Singleton Station native title holders Dianne Curtis, Judith Swan, Valerie Curtis, Mervin Franey and Dawn Swan.

IT DID not take long for the native title holders of Singleton Station and their supporters to dust themselves off and decide to fight another day against the country's most controversial water licence.

Sandra Morrison was “not happy” when she heard that the Northern Territory Supreme Court rejected their legal challenge to the licence, allowing the station, south of Tennant Creek, to use up to 40 gigalitres each year to irrigate a large fruit farm.

The Central Land Council executive member and Tennant Creek resident had no doubt the native title holders would appeal the verdict.

“We’re going to keep on fighting for our rights and we’re not going to let it go,” she said.

So it turned out.

Three weeks after Justice Peter Barr handed down his decision, on 31 January 2024, a meeting of the native title holders’ Mpwerempwer Aboriginal Corporation voted to appeal to the full

bench of the NT Supreme Court.

“We want to keep on fighting for this water,” native title holder Heather Anderson, also from Tennant Creek, said.

“We have got to keep going until the end, until they leave us alone. Until we win.”

Native title holder Valerie Curtis, from the Wakurlpu outstation, said the government’s water licensing decisions “don’t fit with us culturally” and benefit only developers.

“Why do they need so much water? We are trying to conserve our water. They are trying to drag it all out from under us and leave us with nothing.

“Look what happened in other places, like the Murray Darling. We don’t want that happening to us.”

Ms Morrison said the appeal will benefit and inspire future generations.

“As Aboriginal people we know about our environment and how much water we need in our land. We know it by our heart because our ancestors used to live [there]

and know where to get water. So we’ve got to keep going. We’ve got to fight the fight.

“We’re not going to give up, because the next generation – we don’t want them to give up.”

The decision to appeal comes two years after Mpwerempwer asked the court to set aside an NT government decision to grant the licence for the largest amount of groundwater the NT has ever given away.

In February 2022 the native title holding corporation and the Arid Lands Environment Centre took court action against Minister Kate Worden’s decision to give Fortune Agribusiness the 30-year groundwater extraction licence – free of charge.

The native title holders and their supporters fear the licence could lower the water table, damaging groundwater-dependent trees, springs, soaks and swamps, and threaten sacred sites.

In its legal challenge on behalf of the native title holders the CLC argued that parts of the licence were invalid because

Why delay? CLC wants safe drinking water law before election

THE CENTRAL LAND COUNCIL has called on the Northern Territory government to bring in legally enforceable minimum standards for drinking water before the NT election in August.

Last June the government promised to deliver a Safe Drinking Water Act by this year, but not until after the NT election.

CLC chief executive Les Turner says that a delay until after the election risks that there will be no such law if Labor is not returned.

“Other states already have safe drinking water laws and they are long overdue here.

“The new law would be an opportunity for the NT government to ensure good drinking water for all Territorians now, wherever they live, and to treat safe drinking water as a basic human rights and public health issue,” he said.

The CLP has not promised a Safe Drinking Water Act, raising fears that it will not enact such a law if it wins the election.

“The right to safe drinking water should be enshrined in a stand-alone law before the NT election,” Mr Turner said.

“Labor needs to get cracking and table a bill in June or risk the plan being dumped by a future CLP government.”

He has written to CLP leader Lia Finocchiaro to ask if her party would enact a safe drinking water law during the first term of a CLP government.

The CLC believes the taste, smell and look of the drinking water – the government calls these ‘aesthetic’ standards – should also be covered by the law.

“Too many residents replace undrinkable tap water with unhealthy drinks. The water ruins people’s sinks,

taps and hot water systems and that makes health inequalities worse.”

But Kate Worden, the NT minister responsible for water security, said remote community residents can’t expect the same water quality standards as in towns because the water comes from different sources.

“Our water sources are different so they require different treatments,” Ms Worden told the ABC.

She said the water in “about three

communities across the NT” needed improvements “and that’s what we’re working [on] with the federal government”.

Kirsty Howey, from the Environment Centre NT, can’t see why remote communities should not enjoy the same minimum water standards.

“There is really no reason why we shouldn’t have the same standards applying across the Territory”.

“The new laws would be an opportunity for the NT government to ensure good drinking water for all Territorians now, wherever they live.”

“What you would need is not just these laws, but also huge investment in drinking water infrastructure, and also communities empowered to be able make decisions about how this infrastructure is allocated, triaged and the money spent,” she told the ABC.

The CLC welcomes the NT government’s use of national water grid funds for water infrastructure in one of its remote communities, but wants to see far more investment.

setback fires up traditional owners

the minister did not comply with the NT Water Act and ignored Aboriginal cultural values.

But Justice Barr ruled that she did follow the law when she gave the water licence to Fortune.

Fortune chair Peter Wood was relieved.

"It's been quite a protracted, lengthy process and it enables us now to get on with the next stage of the process," he told the ABC.

"It caused significant delay. That delay does include costs, and it also delayed the start of the project and the benefits that will accrue from the project."

He said he "still hoped to work with" the CLC and "to get really meaningful engagement" with the people it represents.

Thanks to the advocacy of the native title holders, Fortune will need to undergo a strict environmental impact assessment, before it can get on with the development.

This is expected to take until late next year at the earliest.

"There is a long way to go before

anything can happen on the ground. And we'll continue to fight," Arid Land Environment Centre chief executive Adrian Tomlinson told the ABC.

"Let's hope that we can finally get the right outcome and this water licence can be stopped."

Ms Morrison hopes the appeal will

**"Why do they need so much water?
We are trying to conserve our water.
They are trying to drag it all out from under us
and leave us with nothing while they get rich."**

"make us satisfied and the traditional owners for our country".

"We want to keep the country healthy for the next generation and to teach our next generation how to look after country. That is important for us: not to destroy our country but to look after our country," she said.

Government documents, such as the Western Davenport water allocation plan, are meant to protect country and culture.

They are also the only formal chance for the public to have input in decisions about water licences.

Justice Barr's ruling means the government does not have to follow its own plans when making water licensing decisions. It can ignore its own rules.

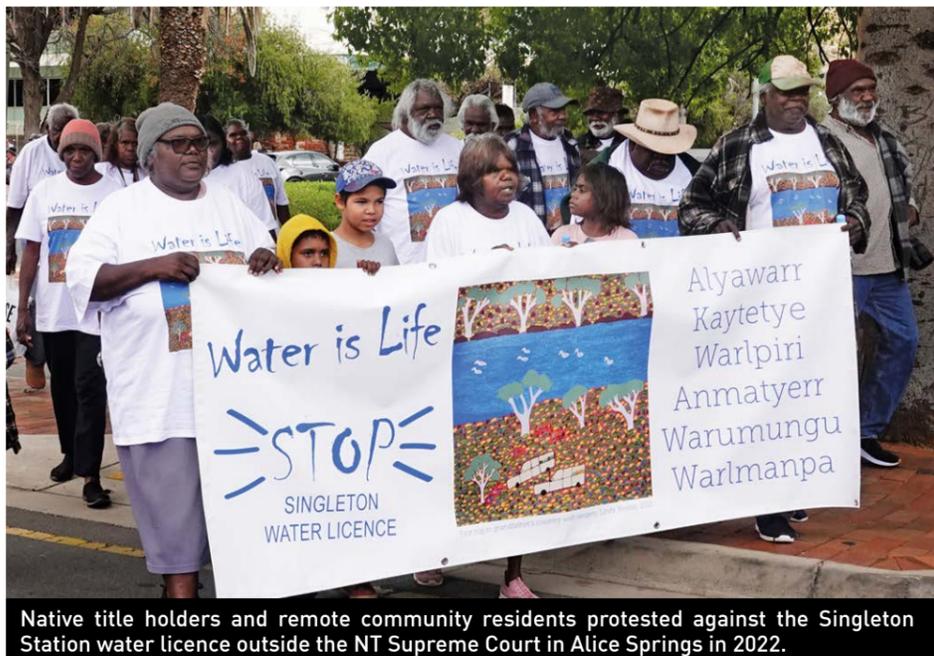
At the native title holder meeting about the appeal Dianne Curtis questioned the point of water allocation planning.

"How can those people not follow the rules that are already in place? What does this tell us about our government?"

Ask before you vote !

The NT election is in August. Make your vote count. Ask the politicians if they will

- bring in a safe drinking water law that sets standards for water quality, taste, look and smell before August 2025
- implement the Alpururulam drinking water project before August 2025
- stick closely to water allocation plans when making decisions
- ensure the plans identify and protect cultural values and are led by traditional owners and their land councils
- set up water advisory committees for all plans, with traditional owner membership facilitated by the land councils
- replace the water allocation planning framework with a cautious approach determined in direct consultation with affected Aboriginal people



Native title holders and remote community residents protested against the Singleton Station water licence outside the NT Supreme Court in Alice Springs in 2022.



"We want to keep on fighting for this water": native title holder Heather Anderson.

Ms Howey believes water projects need to be part of long-term planning, not just urgent or overdue fixes, such as in Laramba.

"What we tend to get in the Territory are ad hoc commitments. So you'll see a water treatment plant announced with funding from the federal government, but there needs to be a systematic approach to this that needs to go hand in hand with safe drinking water legislation," she said.

"People in Laramba and other communities should not have to fight for safe drinking water through the courts," Mr Turner said.

The CLC has advocated for safe, drinkable water in all remote communities for many years.

At the joint NT land councils meeting in Barunga in June 2023, all four councils called for laws ensuring safe drinking water for all Territorians, no matter where they live.

The government's Territory Water Plan, also released that month, promised a Safe Drinking Water Act by 2024.

Safe drinking water was the single most important issue residents raised during community consultation about the plan.



Residents at the 2023 launch of Laramba's water treatment plant that filters uranium out of the drinking water.

Homelands housing plan bears fruit



Central Land Council chief executive Les Turner wants the homelands housing and infrastructure program to keep going.

A HOMELANDS housing and infrastructure program has begun to deliver urgent improvements of Northern Territory government-funded outstations in the Central Land Council region.

Two years ago, the Australian government gave the NT \$100 million

for the most pressing repairs and upgrades of neglected outstation housing and infrastructure, to be delivered before the middle of this year.

Last financial year, the program paid for \$5.2 million worth of upgrades at six outstations around

Utopia and spent \$6.5 million on upgrades at three Western Desert outstations.

The CLC region is also benefiting from water, power and sanitation audits at all outstations.

The NT government has told the CLC that electricians and plumbers

will inspect houses, fix anything that is unsafe and get quotes for repairs that are less urgent.

It also said the NT Water Resources Division will inspect bores for water quantity and quality – and all this before the middle of the year.

The lion share of the program, almost \$22.7 million, remains to be spent this year, with improvements in 15 CLC region outstations starting in February.

The works are part of a plan by a joint government steering committee that includes the four NT land councils and the peak body of the community-controlled housing sector, Aboriginal Housing NT.

The CLC set up a reference group with one member from each of the council's nine sub-regions to choose the projects.

The land council meeting in October received a progress report and members commented on how long it takes for repairs to happen once funding has been allocated. They also noted how great the backlog for repairs and maintenance is.

CLC chief executive Les Turner said while the program was addressing the most urgent needs it was only a start.

According to a government report at least \$1.1 billion is required just to bring currently funded outstations up to scratch.

"We are talking with the NT and Australian governments about an agreement to continue the program," Mr Turner said.

Who does what on outstations and homelands?

The Aboriginal land trusts own the houses and permanent equipment (such as water tanks, solar set-ups and generators) at outstations on Aboriginal land.

The NT government funds outstation service providers to repair and maintain them on the homelands it funds.

The providers must make and implement service delivery plans with the residents.

Ask your service provider:

- what jobs they have done on your homeland
- how much money they have spent
- how much is left

For more information, compliment or complain about a service provider call the government's homelands services team on **1800 031 648**.

Four billion dollar housing partnership talks start

The Northern Territory land councils and Aboriginal Housing NT are negotiating a partnership agreement with the federal and NT governments that promises to deliver up to 270 new remote community houses a year for the next decade.

Central Land Council chief executive Les Turner welcomed the unprecedented investment as a "step towards significantly reducing overcrowding in our communities" and congratulated the prime minister "for investing in our people".

More than half of all Aboriginal houses in the NT are overcrowded. The CLC hopes a genuine partnership agreement will help reduce overcrowding towards the Closing the Gap target of 12 per cent by 2031.

"This investment goes beyond building much-needed houses," Mr Turner said.

"It has the potential to contribute towards closing the gap in health, education, employment and social outcomes as well."

“After years of neglect we need the government to take outstation funding seriously. We are also advocating for the government to change its rules against new houses on homelands.”

Meanwhile the NT land councils and Aboriginal Housing NT are negotiating a new, 10-year agreement on remote housing with the NT and Australian governments.

CLC members want the agreement to be in line with the national closing the gap agreement and protect the interests of remote communities, homelands and town camps in Central Australia.

The CLC’s council resolution covers housing quality, funding and decision-making processes designed to keep the agreement on track.

“After years of neglect we need the government to take outstation funding seriously. We are also advocating for the government to change its rules against new houses on homelands.”

Ask before you vote !

The NT election is in August. Make your vote count. Ask the politicians if they will

- develop a long-term plan to maintain, repair and upgrade houses and build new houses on registered homelands
- increase homelands grants for repairs and maintenance and support the registration of new homelands
- reduce overcrowding by matching federal government funds for a new 10-year remote housing agreement with the federal government and the NT land councils
- develop climate-friendly guidelines for houses built under the agreement so they are cool in summer and warm in winter
- raise the energy star rating for new houses from five to seven stars
- improve the energy efficiency of existing houses to reduce power costs



Court victory has Annie Young vow to fight on for better housing

IT TOOK seven years, but a major legal win by Ltyentye Apurte (Santa Teresa) has changed the relationship between tenants and landlords in the Territory and around Australia.

A High Court ruling about the community’s fight with its landlord, the NT government, has boosted the rights of renters everywhere.

The court ruled last November the government must pay tenants in the community southeast of Alice Springs compensation for the “distress and disappointment” they endured for years of living in substandard housing.

One tenant did not have a back door for more than five years and others waited years for basic repairs.

Community leader Annie Young is one of the tenants who launched a class action against the NT government in 2016 for not providing habitable homes.

“I have fought for this for so many years,” she said. “I feel really, really happy that we have won the case, and hopefully we get more good news.”

The ruling means that people in remote NT communities have a legal right to safe, habitable living conditions, and the government is liable if it fails to provide them.

“This is the real outcome that I’ve gotten for my community and I hope that it doesn’t stop here, that everything starts going smoothly until we have better housing in remote communities,” Ms Young said.

“Now I like to see the government start doing their jobs properly in communities, better houses, liveable good standard housing in remote communities.

“It’s a strong community where I come from and I’d like to express my feeling to other communities as well for better housing.”

Ms Young has helped to change the law for renters around the country.

While tenants everywhere can take heart from the example of Ltyentye Apurte, the High Court’s decision was specifically about the NT’s residential tenancies law.

Tenants outside the Territory who want to sue their landlords for compensation now need to test the



Ltyentye Apurte resident Annie Young helped to change the law for renters around the country.

ruling in the courts of their home states.

As tenancy laws across Australia are similar it seems likely the result would be similar as well, but that’s up to the courts to decide.

“We need to tackle the government for better housing in community, we are not just going to sit there and see what the government are going to offer us.”

For Ms Young the next step in her community’s fight for better housing is the “still bad” overcrowding.

She has to share a house with her married daughter and her teenage grandchildren, and she is not alone.

“There is married people still living with their parents today because there

isn’t enough houses in community.”

“I want to make sure that others in the community with kids get their proper housing first, that’s why I’m going to keep on fighting.

“I will continue to push myself and

and Kumanjayi Conway have left a legacy that inspires her to keep going.

“I have always supported deeply my old late aunt in that. I’m very proud of myself and all my family are too.

“I will keep fighting for better housing in my community and will also try and support other communities. I did it for my community, I can help other do it for theirs.

“I can go to other communities and put a fight to government. It’s good to have your say with the government.

“We need to tackle the government for better housing in community, we are not just going to sit there and see what the government are going to offer us.”

I will get help from others in the community which I’m encouraging to stand up and fight for their rights.”

The High Court ruling is a memorial to the two lead tenants who took on the NT government, but died before the judges handed down their decision.

Ms Young said Kumanjayi Young

Buffel grass: will tjanpi kura become a weed in the NT?

ITS SEEDS spread like wildfire. It makes bushfires worse. It makes the fire season in Central Australia longer. It takes over our national parks and drives native plants and animals to extinction.

That's why Anangu have dubbed buffel grass tjanpi kura (bad grass).

Former Central Land Council chair and cultural tourism entrepreneur Sammy Wilson told the CLC meeting near Uluru last October he wanted the Northern Territory to declare buffel a weed because it is killing country.

His fellow members agreed and resolved to call on NT environment minister Kate Worden to make the declaration.

to our country, our culture and our communities".

At the council meeting members also discussed the large bushfires burning around Central Australia which blanketed the region in smoke only a few weeks later, destroying an area five times the size of Tasmania by November. Many of the flames were fanned by tjanpi kura.

"The resolution shows how strongly our elected members feel about the extremely destructive cultural, health and environmental impacts of this introduced species," CLC general manager Josie Douglas said at the time.

"On some days the air quality in Alice Springs was on par with some of the

represent and to better protect country that is still intact."

Dr Douglas said investment in research and development, such as biological controls of the weed, is a matter of urgency.

The CLC wants the weed declaration to apply to all land tenures across the Territory. It is part of a working group that will advise the government about a weed declaration.

"We stand ready to develop a weed management plan with government agencies and the traditional owners we represent to better protect country that is still intact."

They are now waiting to hear if the NT election in August will open the ears of the NT government.

The council wants the NT to follow in the steps of South Australia, where buffel grass is already being managed as a weed.

Its resolution follows the unanimous support the Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara Warru Rangers received at the 2022 Indigenous Desert Alliance conference, where they called for "serious action to reduce this threat

most polluted cities in the world."

Rangers, traditional owners and remote community residents hope a weed declaration will release money for buffel management and stop pastoralists from spreading the seeds.

"A weed declaration would be a catalyst for action and help to attract resources for buffel grass control," said Dr Douglas.

"We stand ready to develop a weed management plan with government agencies and the traditional owners we



Tjakura rangers Glen Woods, Joyce Tjaljiri and Peter Norman removed tjanpi kura (bad grass) from the Katiti-Petermann IPA.

Ask before you vote !

The NT election is in August. Make your vote count. Ask the politicians if they will

- declare buffel grass a weed and manage it properly
- stop proposed changes to the *Livestock Act 2008 (NT)* and work with the land councils to make sure Aboriginal people can continue to visit their country



Native title holders could face fines for entering station land

PASTORALISTS could ask native title holders and community living area residents to check in with them every time they want to visit their country under legal changes opposed by the Central Land Council.

The Northern Territory government wants to change the *NT Livestock Act* to help stations to better protect cattle and plants from pests and diseases.

The CLC is worried that if the planned changes became law, pastoralists could enforce biosecurity rules that could make it harder for Aboriginal people to visit their sites and communities on station land, or risk fines if they do.

The changes would allow pastoralists to make up their own rules, also known as biosecurity management plans.

The laws would require the plans to be "reasonable", but pastoralists would not have to run their plans past the government.

CLC chief executive Les Turner said these rules could be very hard for Aboriginal people to follow.

"Many traditional owners use back roads and will miss or be unable to read biosecurity signs at the station gate, or don't have the means to alert station staff of their visit," Mr Turner said.

"In any case, they should not have to notify pastoral lease holders, and they certainly should not be fined if they don't."

Mr Turner said the proposed amendments to the *NT Livestock Act* were not in line with the federal *Aboriginal Land Rights Act* and the *Native Title Act*.

"What the NT government has planned is likely to end up in court because it does not comply with land rights laws. Biosecurity management plans are also likely to be invalid under native title laws," he said.

He said the amendments discriminate against Aboriginal people.

"It looks like the biosecurity plans would mostly affect Aboriginal people. That's racially discriminatory," he said.

"Station businesses should be able to manage real biosecurity risks, but traditional owners are not a threat to cattle.

"We have urged the government to work with us on amendments that preserve Aboriginal people's access to their country, before starting proper

"What the NT government has planned is likely to end up in court because it does not comply with land rights laws. Biosecurity management plans are also likely to be invalid under native title laws."

"The government should focus on threats from outside the Territory's borders and protect Aboriginal people's traditional and legal rights to access pastoral leases."

The CLC only learned about the planned changes last December, when the NT government gave the public four weeks to comment.

"Asking for feedback while most people attend ceremony or are on holiday smacks of contempt for Aboriginal people and of box-ticking," Mr Turner said.

consultations."

The government's planned changes would also allow pastoralists to enter Aboriginal land and muster cattle on that land without permission.

The CLC's submission is at clc.org.au.

CLC: stop NT education race to the bottom

AS FAR as cries for help go, a resolution issued by the Central Land Council's last council meeting could not have been more urgent.

Gathered at Uluru, the council called for the federal government to "act quickly and decisively to end the Northern Territory's remote education crisis".

"We need federal action to prevent a total collapse of the NT's remote government education system which is starved of funds and unable to support the needs of all children," CLC chief executive Les Turner said.

The Territory has starved remote schools by funding them based on attendance, rather than enrolment, since 2015.

This policy has the confusing name 'effective enrolment'.

Effective enrolment means some remote schools get less than half of what they would get if funded based on enrolments.

"Remote government schools currently cannot cope with additional students because they are not able to support them," Mr Turner said.

"The policy is fuelling a race to the bottom when it comes to attendance and student achievement."

The CLC has requested that the federal government top up the NT's education system with emergency funds until more permanent funding is negotiated.

The council urged the federal government to inject an "immediate emergency equity package that ensures our students are funded to the same level as students in the rest of the country from the start of next school year".

An extra \$175 million over two years would have pushed the NT government to fund schools based on enrolment from January 2024.

"We need federal action to prevent a total collapse of the NT's remote government education system which is starved of funds and unable to support the needs of all children."

While some extra money has since flowed to Central Australia, it doesn't give all schools in the region what they need.

A recent report by consultancy firm Deloitte about effective enrolment recommended scrapping the policy so that schools get the money they need.

The NT government agreed with the recommendations in this report, and promised to return to enrolment-based funding within two to five years.

But this is not quick enough for the CLC.

"We are worried about another generation of students at risk of falling through the gaps," Mr Turner said.

In March the federal government announced it would double its funding of NT public schools. The investment aims to fully fund them by 2029.

Meanwhile the NT government said things are improving.

It said "more than 212 Aboriginal students" – the Territory's highest number of Aboriginal students ever - graduated high school late last year.

The government said the \$12.9

million Families as First Teachers program has helped the graduates.

The 15-year-old program "has played a significant role in the education journey of the completers, with the program delivering quality early learning and parent support programs to young children and their families".

Last year was the program's "most successful year on record", according to the government, operating in more places and with "hundreds more children" taking part in the Central and Barkly regions alone.

But the latest Closing the Gap report tells a different story.

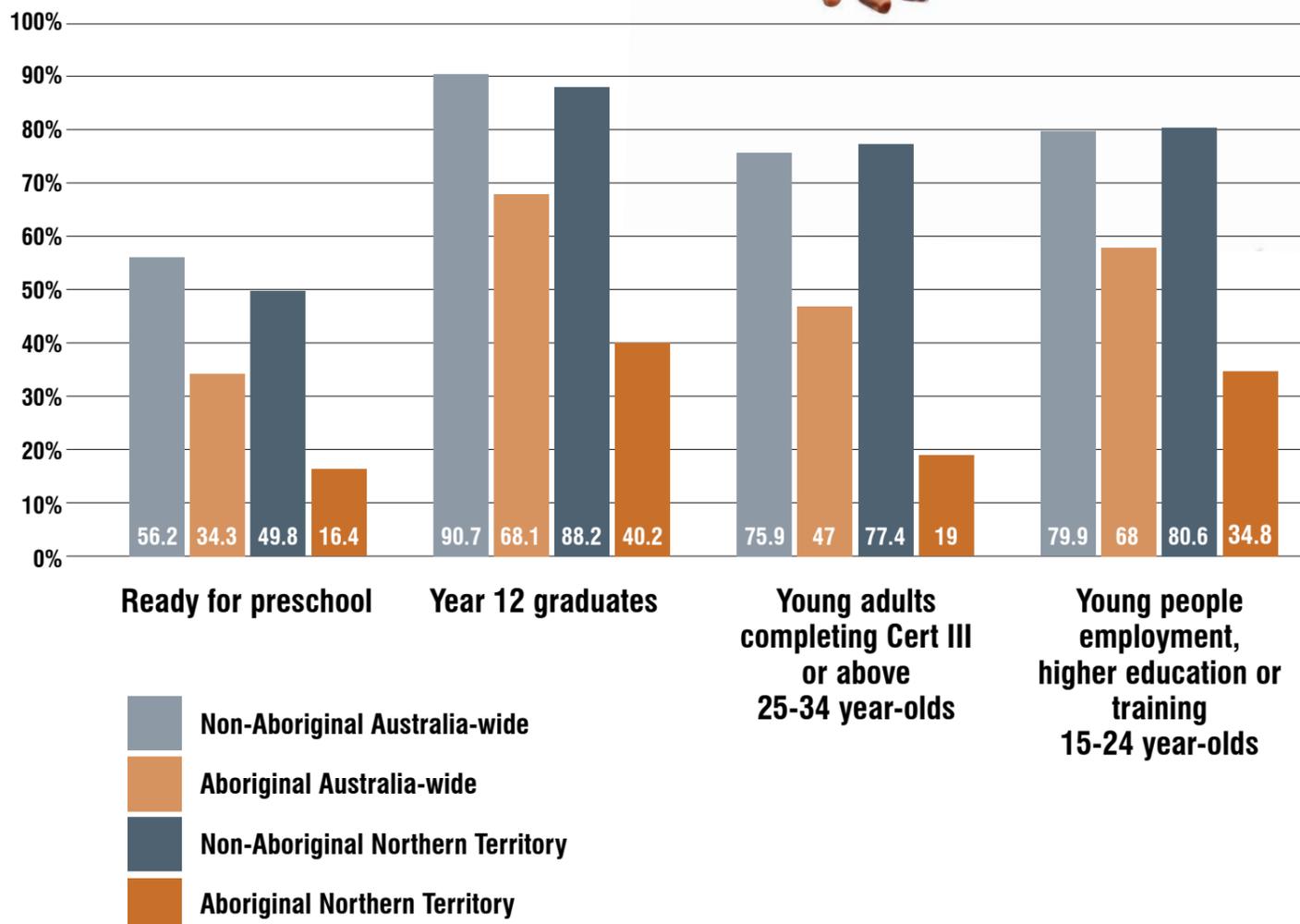
The report shows that educational outcomes for Aboriginal children and young people in the NT remain the worst in the country.

The education gap between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Territorians is already much larger than the education gap between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people in the rest of the nation, and it is getting worse in some areas.

"If we are serious about closing this gap we need our governments to start listening to voters in the bush", Mr Turner said.



NT EDUCATION GAP



Ask before you vote!

The NT election is in August. Make your vote count. Ask the politicians if they will

- fund all schools based on enrolments by the start of 2025
- introduce student re-engagement and effective attendance targets for all remote schools
- fund bilingual and community-designed on-country learning in all remote primary and secondary schools
- fund remote schools to educate students until at least Year 10
- fund the Remote Aboriginal Teacher Education program for at least five years
- employ at least 50 new qualified Aboriginal teachers by 2028



CLC cadet's triumph: Monique Chong graduates and sets her sights on doing a Master of Law degree



CENTRAL LAND COUNCIL cadet Monique Chong has recently graduated with a Bachelor of Arts and a Diploma of Languages.

For the past four years Ms Chong has studied at the University of Melbourne and spent much of her semester holidays working in the CLC's legal department.

It's all part of a program that supports Aboriginal students to improve their job prospects.

Indigenous cadets at the CLC get a salary and support with equipment and stationary.

In return, they work at the CLC for 12 weeks per year, typically for three years.

Ms Chong said the program helped her enjoy her time at uni.

"The support while I've been away from home and the support while I have been down here has been really great.

"I definitely think the financial aspect and feeling of security has been really reassuring.

It's allowed me to do all of the fun social things while I'm at uni."

While at the CLC she had the opportunity to attend meetings with lawyers in remote communities and take part in consultations.

Ms Chong valued this hands-on experience because it offered a fresh perspective and benefited her studies.

"The most valuable moments are going on bush trips. Being in the classrooms at university, then being able to go home to work in a different setting.

"They're both very beneficial learning environments. I enjoyed going on bush trips because I was always observing and learning from people," she said.

"I enjoyed going on bush trips because I was always observing and learning from people."

Ms Chong has enrolled in a Master of Law degree at the University of Melbourne this year.

For more information about the CLC's cadetship program email hr.training@clc.org.au

APO NT proposal inspires investment in real bush jobs

FAIR WORK and strong communities was always more than a slogan.

It's the title of a detailed proposal the Central Land Council and 33 other organisations around the country developed over six years to deliver real jobs out bush.

The alliance, including the Aboriginal Peak Organisations of the NT, never stopped pushing for reform of the failed work-for-the-dole scheme CDP, also known as the community development program.

Now their ideas are a big step closer to becoming reality.

In February, Prime Minister Anthony Albanese announced a \$707 million jobs program to deliver 3000 jobs in remote communities.

The plan for the program borrows heavily from *Fair work and strong communities*.

Indigenous Affairs Minister Linda Burney said the new program would be grounded in "self-determination" and let local communities decide what jobs would be created.

Gap targets designed to improve the lives of Aboriginal people out bush.

Target 7, which aims to increase the proportion of Aboriginal people in employment, education or training to 67 per cent by 2031, is not on track.

Target 8, which aims to increase the proportion of Aboriginal people aged 25-64 who have jobs to 62 per cent by 2031, is not on track in the Northern Territory (see also p.7).

Some 61 per cent of Aboriginal Territorians are not in the labour force.

A \$185 million community jobs and business fund will be part of the new program, and local and community-owned businesses in CDP regions across the country will be able to apply for money for equipment and capital.

CLC general manager Josie Douglas has been instrumental in advocating for a co-designed jobs program to replace the CDP and continued pushing for it after Labor won the 2022 election.

"We brought people together to have a shared view on better conditions for people out bush. The CLC led the way and funded the research about what the reform could look like."

"For too long, people in remote communities have missed out on economic opportunities and have been stuck in cycles of poverty," she said.

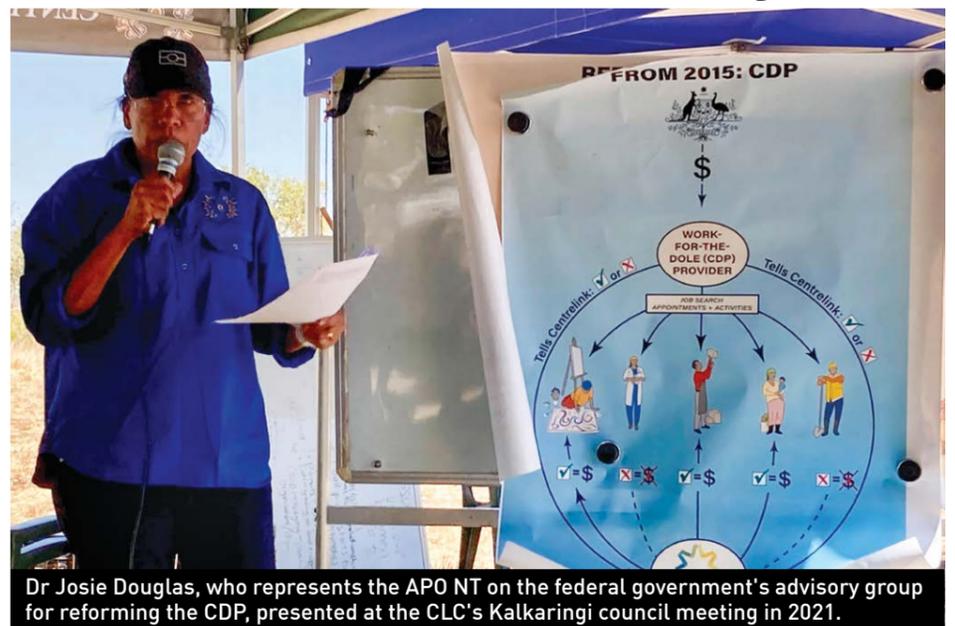
"This is about putting communities in the driver's seat to create local jobs and businesses."

The government hopes the program will help it to meet the 19 Closing the

"The APO NT model features what the prime minister announced: investment in real jobs, proper wages and decent conditions," she said.

Dr Douglas paid tribute to the members of the land councils and the alliance they helped to build.

"It's so exciting. Our council often tells us, 'hurry up, we need to get



Dr Josie Douglas, who represents the APO NT on the federal government's advisory group for reforming the CDP, presented at the CLC's Kalkaringi council meeting in 2021.

change happening'," she said.

"Finally, we have some good news for our executive and our council members: all of their resolutions, all of the times we spoke at council meetings, at combined land council meetings at Barunga, working with the other land councils, working with the members of APO NT, working with CDP providers. "We brought people together to have a shared view on the CDP, all for better conditions for people out bush.

"We did this over many years because we saw how the CDP was hurting Aboriginal people out bush."

She said the new program will improve on the old community development employment program (CDEP) that the Howard government scrapped.

"People are very nostalgic about the CDEP, but it was always a base wage with no super, no sick leave, no other leave entitlements."

The jobs on offer through the new program come with proper wages and conditions.

"Aboriginal organisations can apply for them. Communities can identify what jobs they want done, whether in the social services or the community sector."

An Aboriginal-led advisory group is working with the government on the implementation of the new program. Dr Douglas represented the APO NT at the group's first meeting with Minister Burney and Senator Malarndirri McCarthy in March.

She co-chaired the meeting with Matthew Clarke, the chief executive of New South Wales-based Aboriginal organisation Yilabara.

Treaty five years after Barunga – where is it at?



Former CLC deputy chair Sammy Butcher signed the 2018 Barunga Agreement.

PRIME MINISTER Anthony Albanese used his first major speech on Aboriginal justice since the defeat of the voice referendum to distance his government from a treaty.

Instead of committing to a time line to work towards treaty, he pointed to treaty processes already underway in the states.

“The work of treaty goes on at a state and territory level ... and we will respond to their progress while focusing on our immediate responsibilities – closing the gap, self-determination and tangible outcomes, particularly in jobs, housing, education, health and justice,” Mr Albanese said in February.

The two states showing most progress on treaty, Queensland and Victoria, also have the strongest opposition against treaty.

This leaves treaty processes in those states just one election loss away from failure.

The same is true for the Northern Territory where the Labor government hit pause on treaty in December 2022 and now faces a re-election battle in August.

The NT treaty process was on hold during the voice referendum. Labor quietly shelved the recommendations of the treaty commissioner's report and disbanded the treaty commission in December 2022.

Ahead of the NT election Labor wants to restart the process with conferences in Darwin and Alice Springs. The Alice Springs conference will be on 5 April.

While the Country Liberal Party is poised to reject the recommendations of the treaty commissioner, NT Attorney General Chansey Paech said he wants to sit down with the NT land councils to progress a treaty or treaties.

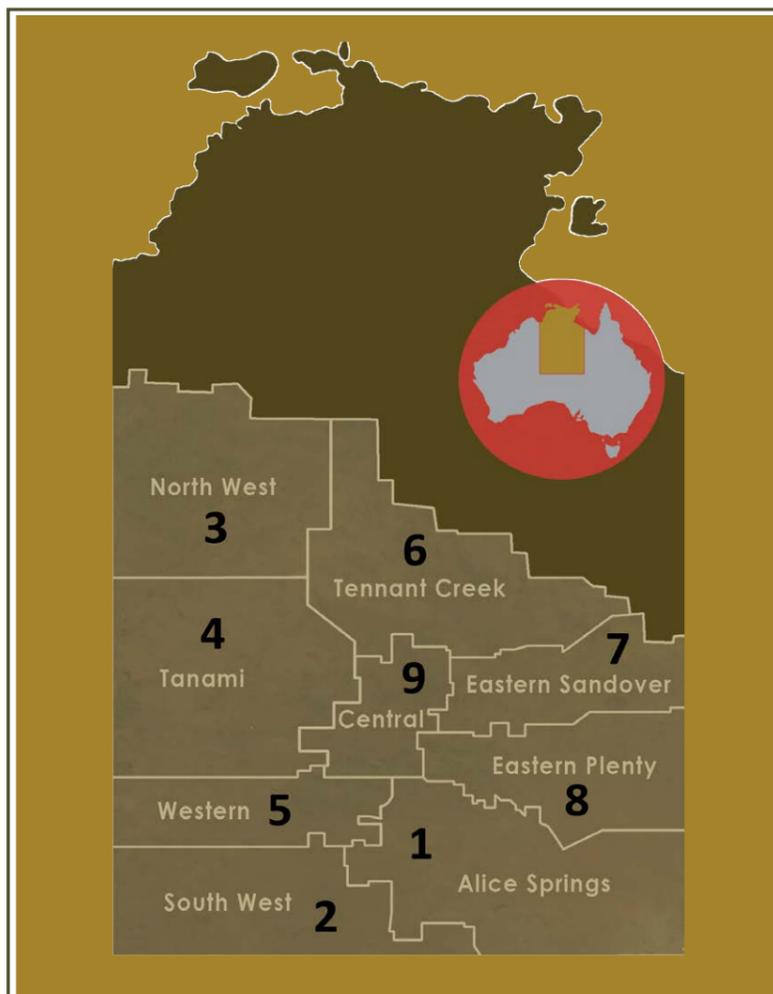
“We are reviving the treaty working group to develop and move forward on the principles and legislative underpinnings of a treaty making framework with the land councils and other first nations groups,” he said.

The Central Land Council, a signatory of the now-expired 2018 Barunga Agreement between the then Gunner Labor government and the NT land councils, wants a new agreement to get treaty back on track.

“We would like to work through the recommendations of the treaty commissioner with the other land councils and the government.”



Treaty commissioner Tony McAvoy delivered his report to the NT government in 2022.



Any questions about CLC business? Call your region's office	
	1. ALICE SPRINGS Vacant 8951 6255
	2. SOUTH WEST Shane Stirling 8951 0577
	6. TENNANT CREEK Darryl "Tiger" Fitz 8951 0541
	3. NORTH WEST Daniel Palmer 8951 0627
	7. EASTERN SANDOVER Edward Foster 8951 0606
	4. TANAMI Lazarus Gallagher 8951 0581
	8. EASTERN PLENTY Richard Dodd 8951 0622
	5. WEST Amos Egan 8951 0591
	9. CENTRAL Michael Turner 8951 6339

“We would like to work through the recommendations of the treaty commissioner with the other land councils and the government,” CLC chief executive Les Turner said.

He said the terms of reference for the new agreement need to be written in partnership with land councils, just like the 2018 Barunga Agreement was.

The Northern Land Council welcomed Mr Paech's announcement and said its members and constituents “have been eager to see this process move forward since it first began six years ago”.

“The NLC will support comprehensive engagement with Aboriginal people as we learn more about the government's plans,” former NLC chief executive officer, Joe Martin-Jard said.

Before the 2022 federal election, Labor said it would establish a Makarrata Commission with responsibility for treaty and truth-telling, two of the calls of the Uluru Statement.

Meanwhile senator for the NT, Malardirri McCarthy, confirmed that federal Labor is revisiting its commitment to treaty and truth in light of the referendum failure.

“The Australian people were firmly committed to no,” Ms McCarthy said.

“We have to go back to first nations people across the country and continue to discuss with them about treaty and truth telling”.

The National Indigenous Australians Agency said it hasn't spent any money on a Makarrata Commission so far.

Simon Gordon, manager of the NIAA strategy group, said that the \$607,066 confirmed to have been spent has been for “preparatory work to oversee the national process for national telling and agreement making”, and that \$21.9 million is still held in a reserve fund for a Makarrata Commission.

He said future activities and expenditure towards setting up such a commission would “depend on the work of government as they speak to communities and state and territory governments”.

Ask before you vote !

The NT election is in August. Make your vote count. Ask the politicians if they will

- quickly set up a treaty working group with the land councils to negotiate the terms of reference for a new treaty memorandum of understanding
- work with the group through the recommendations of the NT treaty commissioner



Rangers survey the Tanami

THE CENTRAL Land Council's Warlpiri Rangers and other traditional owners are protecting the Tanami Desert through plant and animal surveys.

More than 40 of them braved smoke haze and flames from large bush fires for two weeks to help collect information such as tracks, poo and burrows from 32 sites, three to five hours northwest of Alice Springs.

They combined Aboriginal knowledge with scientific survey techniques to trap and study 17 animal species, using peanut butter to bait Elliott traps (aluminium boxes with weight-sensitive triggers) and buckets (pitfall traps) to collect more than 100 animals.

“Looking at country is important so that we can pass on the knowledge to young people who don't go out bush much.”

“It was good to use the old ways of trapping using buckets and new ways of working on tablets [tablet computers],” kuyu pungu (master tracker) Christine Ellis Michaels, from Nyirripi, explained.

“Looking at country is important so that we can pass on the knowledge to young people who don't go out bush much.”

The Warlpiri Rangers worked around the Newmont gold mine during the first week of the Tanami Regional Biodiversity Monitoring program, while the North Tanami Ranger and Reading the Country teams surveyed around the Northern Star gold mine during week two.

Ms Ellis Michaels thinks biodiversity surveys are a good way to create jobs for young people and to stop new threats to country.”

“That was really good when we went out with the team to show the young TOs country. Teaching them how to measure animals, the difference in tracks, help them want to become rangers,” she said.

“If you are young Yapa trackers you need to stay with the knowledge.”

From early morning to sunset, Yapa were teaching Yapa how to trap and track animals. They also carried out bird and plant surveys with the scientists, led by Bill Low, Director of environmental survey business Low Ecological Services.

The rangers also practised new ways to teach and learn about looking after country, such as questioning and recounting (pina nyanjaku) and

repetition (pina walaparrinjaku).

They had learned these skills through the CLC's Reading the Country tracking project (see story p. 16).

The survey in October 2023 took years of planning by traditional owners, the CLC, scientists and Newmont. It had been 11 years since the last survey.

This time around, more traditional owners took part, tracking and telling stories of the songlines linking the survey sites.

More than half of the sites are in the Southern Tanami and Northern Tanami Indigenous Protected Areas, a combined 141,630 square kilometres of Aboriginal land where the federal government pays the traditional owners to protect native plants and animals and sacred sites.



Bronte Stray, Enid Gallagher, Lee Wayne, Cherylee Rose, Jordan O'Brien and Raed Alanzi took part in the survey across the Tanami Desert.



A fat-tailed dunnart was among the 17 animal species recorded during the survey.

The survey records the numbers of threatened species found late last year, such as the walpajirri (bilby), warrarna (great desert skink), jajina (mulgara), junginpa (dunnart) and the mala (rufous hare-wallaby).

The University of Sydney will analyse the data.

Over time the survey results will help everyone to better understand how well the native plants and animals of the Tanami are doing, and in particular if those near the gold mines are under greater threat than in the rest of the survey area.



Myra Herbert, Ricache Jigiti, Gloria Timms and Kim Webeck recorded data of a hopping mouse.

Aputula women rangers use bobcat skills to protect sacred tree

ELDERS from Aputula (Finke) are proud of the community's women rangers clearing rubbish from a sacred women's site with heavy machinery.

Household waste from Aputula's old tip had spread right up to a site known as the kungka tree.

"That tree is the dreaming [of] the women," Elder Audrey Braedon said.

Originally two kungka trees had stood together on the land, but one was chopped down to make way for the tip.

Female Aputula Rangers worked on a long-standing request from traditional owners to clean up around the tree.

"The old women wanted us younger women to clean it, so we can learn about it, and so we know it is there," ranger Elisha James said.

The four rangers worked together on the site for over two days last May, under the guidance of senior female elders.

After having completed a skid steer course at the tip in 2022, rangers Kitana Shaw and Elisha James used a bobcat to remove the rubbish from around the tree.

"I felt good about it. I felt happy learning from the old people about the story. It was keeping us busy, using the bobcat, raking, cleaning up," Ms James said.

Training as a ranger has given Kitana Shaw a greater sense of purpose and belief in herself.

"Being able to work out bush and learning how to control heavy machinery and look after country makes my fire burn brighter," she said.

The rangers used hand tools to clear smaller bits of rubbish away and prepare the area for fencing.

Rangers Lorraine Stuart and Pauline Coombe fenced off the sacred site to protect it from future damage, and put up 'no men' signs.

"It has been really good to clean the site to make it look tidy," Ms Stuart said. "I feel proud about it".

The rangers learnt stories about the site from the senior women while working at the site.

"The old ladies, the ones with the knowledge, feel proud about it too, and it makes the elders feel more connected to it. They feel really happy when it is tidy," Ms Stuart said.

Women can now safely visit the kungka tree at last.

"I'm happy that the tree is clean, and there is a fence", Ms Braedon said.



Aputula ranger Pauline Coombe and traditional owner Jennifer Doolan placed signs around the sacred site.



Rangers Lorraine Stuart, Elisha James, Kitana Shaw and Pauline Coombe cleaned up around the kungka tree.

"Being able to work out bush and learning how to control heavy machinery and look after country makes my fire burn brighter."

Elder Jennifer Doolan "was proud to see the young ones working, looking after the site".

"Elders really needed that tree to be cleaned. It's just like putting a smile on their face and their feelings all opened up.

"You can feel the elders, they are getting the connection back to them," Ms Stuart said.

Pauline Coombe had just started as a ranger when the work began in May.

"It was good to have the opportunity to work on our women's site, and to protect it, and to have the company of the elders there with us at sites like this. That's the only way we learn, from them," she said.

The kungka tree should now be safe from being swallowed up by rubbish because the old dump has been closed and a site for a new tip proposed near the community, three hours' drive southeast of Alice Springs.

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Crossing borders to study the campground business

REMOTE community residents from the Central Land Council region have been on a fact-finding tour of Aboriginal-owned-and-operated campgrounds in Western Australia.

The study tour visited three camping businesses in the Kimberley to learn what it takes to build and run a campground.

Aboriginal communities operate these campgrounds on their land, creating jobs on country and earning additional income through cultural tourism experiences and art sales.

Eight residents of Kintore, Yuendumu and the Alkngarrintja outstation near Ntaria (Hermannsburg) went on the road trip last August.

They were either already running, or in the early stages of developing, their own campgrounds.

The seven-day trip took them to the Violet Valley and Wuggubun campgrounds in the Kimberley, with a few stops along the way.

Milipingi, a proposed campground near Yuendumu, was the first stop.

One of the site's traditional owners, Lawrence Watson, showed the group the plans for the site.

He joined the tour because he was "trying to get some idea on what they do in WA".

Fred Williams, who would like to set up a campground at Thompsons Rockhole, also near Yuendumu, was looking for "some good ideas on some of these other camping grounds, especially in tourism. Hopefully, we'll go from there".

On day three, the group arrived at Violet Valley, 43 kilometres from Warmun (Turkey Creek) in the Kimberley.

Gija elder Shirley Purdie welcomed them to her country.

Campground manager and traditional owner for Violet Valley, Bruce Thomas, showed the visitors the site's hot showers, flushing toilets,

BBQs and multi-purpose kitchen. The group enjoyed a cultural tour of the campground visiting Kangaroo Rock and a cave with local rock art.

In the evening, local men and women performed a song in Gija and a dance depicting a dreaming from one of the elders.

The next stop was the Doon Doon campground and roadhouse, 110 kilometres south of Kununurra.

Traditional owner Johnny Cooper explained how he helped to build a covered camp kitchen with picnic tables in 2019.

The campground has toilets and showers for people with disabilities, as well as a laundry.

At the Wuggubun campground, three hours from Timber Creek, the last stop on the tour, Barry Trust told the group how he set up the business with his family and the challenges they faced along the way.

The place inspired Mr Williams.

"I really liked Wuggubun, with that big shed and shade structure; it was really great," he said.

"They had a kitchen, toilets, showers, everything."

Northern Land Council constituents and community development staff from Katherine joined the group for part of the day.

"The main thing we need to have is water. That's what I got out of it."

Yarns around the campsite fires were great ways for Aboriginal people from the Northern, Central and Kimberley land council regions to share stories and build relationships.

"From this trip, what I want to get out of it, is how they run their campgrounds. Get some ideas on what's right and how we can make it better," Giselle Barku said.

Ms Barku would like to start a campground business near her home community of Kintore.

"The main thing we need to have is water. That's what I got out of it."

Mildred Malbunka, a traditional owner of Alkngarrintja and Central Land Council delegate, loved the insights she gained from the Western Australian campground owners.

"The things that I heard were just brilliant. What I have seen here, they give me ideas.

"So when we get our business up and running, we'll do the same things that they were saying."

Her daughter, Hilda Malbunka, wants to invest in the next generation.

"The important thing is to save up funding money and start a business, get the community kids involved. Talk about the business. Talk about old stories."

She said visiting other campgrounds had allowed her to "go home and teach my younger ones and get them engaged. Thank you for the trip".



Fact-finding tour inspired Central Australian remote community residents to develop their own campground businesses.

Yuelamu doubles the fun with twin parks

YUELAMU children have safer places to play following recent upgrades to the community's two parks.

New swings, rockers and playground sets have replaced dangerous playground equipment, and new fences are stopping the kids from running on the road.

Yuelamu Granites Mine Affected Area Aboriginal Corporation director Cliffy Tommy said the old playgrounds, known as North Park and South Park, were putting kids at risk.

"Old parks were not safe. Wires were sticking out, and everything was broken. We needed a park on the south side too. Kids on both sides of the hill are happy now. It's nice to have two parks. They're playing on the south side now," he said.

The community has also added paths and shaded picnic benches. Mr Tommy hopes for further improvements of North Park. "There's still some empty space. That might be our next project,

to put in some more little parks here." GMAAAC committee member Melissa Morton lives on the south side of the hill in the centre of the community. "We wanted a park on this side. It's great for our kids; they don't need to go far. It's nice to see our kids closer," she said.

She likes the new half basketball court in South Park. "I'm happy about the basketball court and the table and chairs there are really nice, and the fence – it's more safe there too. I take the kids over for a walk and sit down there and let them play," said Ms Morton.

The upgrades, carried out in partnership with the Central Desert Regional Council and BC Constructions, were completed last July.

Yuelamu's GMAAAC committee spent almost \$730,000 on the project. An additional \$40,000 covers five years of inspections, repairs and maintenance.



Kids played at the upgraded North Park playground.

Ltyentye Apurte makes history with community-funded skate park



The Aboriginal flag is a special feature of the skatepark designed with Ltyentye Apurte's young people.

LTYENTYE APURTE (Santa Teresa) has become the first remote Aboriginal community in the Northern Territory to fund its very own outdoor concrete skate park.

Nicky Hayes, Eastern Arrernte man and Spinifex Skateboards founder, has been the driving force behind this project.

A keen skateboarder since the age of 11, he became one of the few Aboriginal skateboarders to compete professionally and is the NT's first Aboriginal qualified skateboard instructor.

His next goal was to bring the benefits of skate boarding to his community, 80 kilometres southeast of Alice Springs.

Ltyentye Apurte started out with a single skate ramp in 2017 and upgraded to a wooden double-storey skate course in the recreation hall.

It launched the outdoor skate park last September.

"This is my way of giving back to community," Mr Hayes said.

"Having an indoor park, and then from the indoor park to this outdoor park here right now."

"An outdoor skate park brings a bit more to the community, but also more to young people and families as well."

For the past four years he has run weekly skateboarding workshops at the recreation hall and the basketball court with the Atyenhenge Atherre Aboriginal Corporation and the youth program of the MacDonnell Regional Council.

"I wanted the skate park to improve the wellbeing of the kids in Ltyentye Apurte," Mr Hayes said.

"To ensure they stay active and to have an outdoor skate park where families can hang out and accommodate young people's needs of having fun within a safe space for skateboards, bikes and scooters."

The skate park near the store, footy oval and basketball court has become another place where residents socialise and enjoy sport.

Mr Hayes took his idea for the \$436,600 outdoor skate park to a community meeting two years ago.

A local working group that plans projects with the Central Land Council agreed to fund some of the project cost from Ltyentye Apurte's community

lease income and income from a trial of the CLC and the National Indigenous Australian Agency, on the condition that grant funding make up the balance.

Aboriginal flag also features prominently.

The community plans to put in a shelter and landscaping to soften the area and add shade.

"An outdoor skate park brings a bit more to the community, but also more to young people and families as well."

"The working group were happy to be part of something that is unique, to be the first community to have an outdoor skate park," Mr Hayes said.

The AAA Corporation and the CLC's community development team helped the working group to get the project done.

The CLC sourced a grant from the Aboriginals Benefit Account that made the park possible.

Construction started last August, with designers Eastbywest and builders Grind Projects working every day to complete the park in five weeks.

The local kids painted parts of it with their own designs. A painted

Some of the best skateboarders in the country came for the opening of the park to make Australian skateboarding history.

Mr Hayes hopes they will keep coming back.

"Bringing competitions here might be a great thing as well, down the track," he said.

For now he is just happy that the local kids visit the park every day until dark, spending less time on their screens.

"It has been tremendous to see all the kids in the community having fun and enjoying themselves each day."



Songline Skateboarding and Girls Skate Gold Coast shared the love and the merchandise at the opening celebration.



Nicky Hayes, founder of Spinifex Skateboards, has been the driving force behind the project.

Rangers celebrate new work space

AT THE OPENING of the Central Land Council's new ranger hub in Tennant Creek the pride the Muru-warinyi Ankkul Rangers felt about their new work place was plain to see.

"Rangers do a tough job working on country, looking after country as well as the people. So it's about time that rangers get that strong backbone and base that we can work from," ranger Kylie Sambo said in her opening speech.

The large, modern building in Brown Street has replaced the ranger group's old base, which was a hot and dusty shed with only basic amenities.

The rangers had to go to the local CLC office to use computers or undertake training.

Ms Sambo acknowledged the elders and former rangers in the audience. "All of this wouldn't be possible without them so we thank them for their work and their contribution to this organisation, and making it better for us to do our jobs now," Ms Sambo said.

Past and present rangers have clocked up many years of service with the Muru-warinyi Ankkul Rangers, who are also celebrating their 20th anniversary this year.

Joining the celebration was Jeffrey Foster, who retired only last year, after 10 years with the group.

He liked the bigger, better facilities for the rangers.

"The old shed was like an oven, it was so hot with hardly any air con in it. When I heard that they were going to build a new one up I was happy about that. It's really good, the set up that they have got in this shed right now," he said.

Executive member Sandra Morrison said the new building has lots of space for the team to grow.

"Coming to have a look at this new shed really brings joy to me and the Warumungu people. The rangers have achieved a lot from when they started," she said.

She hopes that the new facilities, complete with a large office and computers, will encourage more young people to come for "work experience to get a job as a ranger".

Ms Sambo believes the new hub makes working and training easier for her team.

"Now that we've got a bigger space and we've got more equipment then it's easier for us to get the job done."

"We had our welding training here



Ranger Kylie Sambo likes that the new shed has plenty of space for swags, tools and machinery.

in the first week that we had our shed. Doing theory work in the new airconditioned office was very good," she said.

The hub has enough room for heavy equipment that neighbouring ranger groups can also use.

"Now that we've got a bigger space and we've got more equipment then it's easier for us to get the job done."

CLC rangers based in Arlparra, Lajamanu, Daguragu, and Ti Tree can join training in the hub and no longer need to travel to Alice Springs.

When the CLC bought the Brown Street lot in December 2022, it already had an office, a sizable shed and a three-bedroom house.

Aboriginal-owned business Dynamic Solutions finished the renovations before Christmas, after consultations with the rangers and other staff.

The office underwent substantial improvements, including new power and data points for future growth,

air conditioning, a conference space and a new computer server room and laundry.

The house on the property received a new kitchen, bathroom and furnishings, ready to welcome visiting staff and trainers.

started to look after country around Tennant Creek they have a building that meets their needs and can grow with them as they continue to go from strength to strength. They deserve no less," he said.

Sitting in the cool of the airconditioned office, ranger Jeffrey Curtis was grateful for the relief when temperatures are in the 40s week after week.

"It was very hard working in the old shed during the hot weather. Now we're working in luxury in the cool shed," he said.

"Everybody is very happy to have a new work place, and we've got to look after it."

He has waited many years for a new ranger hub and hopes that it will help his team grow.

The hub is planning to run work experience programs to inspire the younger generation to become rangers.

"Get the young ones out from the school and get them to do work experience with us. And take them out bush to show them the work that we do," he said.

Solar panels have been added to make the hub more sustainable, as do water tanks and insulation. A new truck and tractor, funded by the Northern Territory government's Aboriginal Ranger Grants program, will soon be stationed at the hub.

The shed features a large fan, lockers, tool cage and welding benches inside, and a pressure cleaner and wash bay outside.

CLC chief executive Les Turner said the new facility does justice to the rangers' efforts.

"Twenty years after the rangers first



"Get the young ones out from the school to do work experience with us": Jeffrey Curtis.



Retired ranger Jeffrey Foster returned for the opening celebration.



Traditional owners John Duggie and Ronald Brown came to the opening of the new ranger hub in Tennant Creek.

Gladys Brown to celebrate her 10 year ranger anniversary in the new hub

THERE is perhaps no other woman whose name is as closely associated with the Muru-Warinyi Ankkul Rangers as Gladys Brown's.

This year the senior ranger and grandmother has two reasons to celebrate.

Her 10-year milestone as a ranger this August falls in the same year the group she leads turns 20.

Ms Brown remembers how the Muru-Warinyi Ankkul Rangers got started in 2003.

Back then the National Heritage Trust funded the Central Land Council's land management team to plan with the traditional owners of Phillip Creek Mission, Kunjarra and Jurnkurakurr how to manage these culturally significant areas of Aboriginal land north of Tennant Creek.

"We used to go out and work at my homeland with land management," she said.

The consultations identified lots of projects for a group of rangers who were then employed through the Julalikari Council's community development employment program.

For a few years the rangers cut their teeth on small environmental service contracts such as weed control around mining and heritage sites around Tennant Creek.

Thanks to funding from the Indigenous Land and Sea Corporation and the Aboriginals Benefit Account the group survived until 2008, when the rangers finally became CLC employees.

"I heard about the ranger group being started in Tennant Creek," Ms Brown said.

"They used to go out on surveys of bilbies and other animals. They used to pick me up as a traditional owner

and I used to go out with them, and that got me interested. I asked if there is a job available and they said yes."

Ms Brown has worked as a ranger ever since, except for 2014, when she took a year off. She quickly rose through the ranks.

"I started doing land management courses and got to certificate III. Whenever we had no co-ordinator I stepped in."

Supporting and developing more female rangers has been one of her passions.

"Some rangers are doing training, women and all. How to operate forklift and bobcat. Last year some of us women got involved in how to operate a grader. I felt so good! Some of us also did truck driving."

"All of us attended the Strong Women Healthy Country course [at Ross River in 2023]. We go there and share our stories with other rangers, and when we come back we speak to our young ones and share photos, and some are interested [in ranger work]."

**"Get involved.
We're all
traditional owners.
If we become rangers
we can go on country,
make a plan
to go out there."**

When Ms Brown and her team were not working out bush they divided their time between the CLC's main office on the Stuart Highway and an old shed that was boiling hot in summer.



Gladys Brown: "One of my granddaughters said 'we're proud of you doing this work'."

"We had a portable air con and all had to sit and work where we could all feel the cold. It was so hard. Sometimes we had to go back to our office to cool down," she said.

Not even doctor's orders to take it easy for a while could stop her from attending the launch of the new Tennant Creek ranger hub which is very appropriately located in Brown Street.

"I think it is a big highlight for us rangers here. Now we've got air con even in the shed."

There is now enough space for a male and a female ranger team to operate side by side.

"Now that we've got this space here we can do a lot here. Women rangers got a plan and the men plan their things," she said.

Being able to use heavy machinery means female rangers and elders

can look after their special places independently.

"Women rangers show the women and children what we do as rangers. If there is a women's site only women can go there."

At the ranger hub launch Ms Brown looked back with pride at how far the rangers have come in two decades.

"I feel so good and proud because I was there. One of my granddaughters said 'we're proud of you doing this work'."

Her message to the next generation: "Get involved. We're all traditional owners. If we become rangers we can go on country, make a plan to go out there".

New Yapa training program will spread tracking knowledge

EXPERT TRACKERS are ready to share their animal tracking knowledge with Aboriginal people across the desert.

The 'two-way' learning resources kuyu pungu (Warlpiri for expert trackers) developed with the Central Land Council use traditional and modern ways of teaching about native animals, their stories, songs and tracks.

Ready to be launched at the CLC's annual ranger camp in April, the Yitaki Mani (Reading the Country) project's bilingual teaching materials are the result of a three-year pilot that concluded last year.

With less time for tracking and fewer kuyu pungu to learn from, elders asked the CLC to help them record and pass on their ancient knowledge to future generations before it is too late.

One of the main contributors to Yitaki Mani is Jerry Jangala Patrick, one of the few Yapa who grew up living off the land.

The 83-year-old respected elder from Lajamanu developed the Jangala Method to fast-track learning and has been invited to demonstrate it at the ranger camp.

"Try to learn young people in a new way. Little bit new way, little bit old way, so they learn more," he said.

The Yitaki Mani materials consist of 11 activities and resources, such as work sheets, quizzes and 'mind maps'.

Tracking workshops with kuyu pungu are a crucial part of the teaching style.

The Newhaven Wildlife Sanctuary, a former cattle station 350 kilometres northwest of Alice Springs, has hosted these workshops twice.

Kuyu pungu say this country is really healthy since it was de-stocked and cleared of feral foxes, dogs and cats.

It is again home to native animals such as bettongs and mala (rufous-hare wallabies) which many elders haven't seen since they were young.

Mother-and-daughter kuyu pungu team from Nyirrpi, Alice Henwood and Christine Ellis Michaels hunted and killed feral cats both inside and outside the sanctuary's fenced enclosure.

Once the cats were gone, the sanctuary released endangered species like warlpatjirri (bilbies) and pakuru (golden bandicoots) inside.

Ms Ellis Michaels learned tracking from her parents when she was just eight years old.

She has been a ranger since she was 17 years old, working first with the Indigenous Desert Alliance and then the CLC's Warlpiri ranger team since 2007.

One of her favourite things is to go out bush and teach her own kids and other rangers to track.

"It's really important so we can pass it to those people so they can learn more about it," she said.

In August, elders and Walungurru Rangers from Kintore joined Ms Ellis Michaels and other Warlpiri Rangers at a workshop at Newhaven for the first time.

It was still cool when the group drove to the sanctuary for an early-morning tracking session.

Animal tracks criss-cross the sanctuary, making it an ideal place to learn.

Warrana (great desert skink) and jajina (mulgara) tracks and burrows are plentiful.

Mala and purdaya (burrowing bettong) aren't found anywhere else.

Listening carefully to Ms Henwood and Jangala, the rangers filled out work sheets.

They drew pictures of animal tracks and burrows, and answered questions about its food or kuna (poo).

The rangers learned to read when a track was made and to observe the country as well as the weather.



After removing the feral cats the rangers reintroduced endangered species such as this spinifex hopping mouse.

Knowing from where the wind has been blowing helps identify a track.

Young Walungurru ranger Moses Rowe smiled as he talked about seeing a mala track for the first time.

"I feel happy, real good, learn more about tracking. It's important for me to learn from elders," he said. "I want young people to work with us and learn more."

"They learn from us Warlpiri people and they have to take it back to Kintore," Ms Ellis Michaels said. "It makes me proud to pass on this knowledge."

Warlpiri ranger of 15 years, Nelson Tex from Yuendumu, has been part of the project from the beginning.

He has been tracking since he was a kid, and his favourite food is snake.

Even though he now teaches his own children to hunt goanna, bush turkey and kangaroo he still thinks of himself as a learner.

"The tracking program for me is really good. I want to keep on learning," he said.

"I teach my kids and the young rangers how to hunt, cook and share. All the young people and the kids. Some of the people here, they don't know how to hunt and cook. Look like they are lost."

"Bush food is better. It's free."

"This project is helping everybody, rangers and young people. Teaching us how to hunt, what to kill. Now the new generation are living on white man food. Need to go out bush tracking," he said.

One of the project's aims is to encourage medium-level trackers to learn the deep knowledge and become a kuyu pungu. Yapa teaching yapa.

After the tracking session, Jerry Jangala asked the rangers what they saw.



Nelson Tex listened as Jerry Jangala Patrick (seated), one of the few Yapa left who grew up living off the land, interpreted animal tracks at a workshop at the Newhaven Wildlife Sanctuary.



Traditional roots, modern routes: Alice Henwood and her daughter Christine Ellis Michaels have a two-way approach to tracking.

If they didn't answer with the animal's Warlpiri name, he asked them questions and gave clues.

Then he asked how the animal got its name in the jukurrpa (dreaming) and told its story or sang its song.

Jangala fears this ancient knowledge could be lost as young people live in both the Yapa and Kardiya (non-Aboriginal) worlds.

“I feel happy, real good, learn more about tracking. It’s important for me to learn from elders. I want young people to work with us and learn more.”

For it to survive Yitaki Mani’s teaching materials also need to be adapted and used by other people across the desert.

Warlpiri schools are already using the Warlpiri and English resources.

The Indigenous Desert Alliance, a major funder of the project, plans to share them with communities and ranger groups across the desert and help them to translate them into their own languages.

Kuyu pungu Enid Nangala Gallagher, also from Yuendumu, has also been part of the project from the start, “interpreting and talking to elders to be on the team, working with young rangers and talking to them about what work they do and teach them about tracking”.

Back at the campsite she guided the group to recall and repeat what they had learned “all together in one”.

“We want to keep on going, teaching our young people,” she said.

“We want to keep our culture strong.”



Myra Herbert and Agnes Donnelly studied the Yitaki Mani bilingual teaching materials.



Rangers Shane White and Helen Wilson learned the art of tracking from Tess Ross and Alice Henwood.

New protected area to be declared over the Haasts Bluff Aboriginal Land Trust

ANANGU are getting ready to launch a new protected area that will help traditional owners and Central Land Council rangers to better look after country within the Haasts Bluff Aboriginal Land Trust.

The almost 40,000 square kilometre Central Western Desert Indigenous Protected Area, to be declared later this year, features rich cultural landscapes which contain many sites important to Anangu.

These include sacred sites, old camps where Anangu lived, bush graves of their ancestors, rock art and petroglyph sites.

Its native plants and animals are bush foods and medicines of great cultural significance and many species are rare or endangered.

Over the past 20 years, nine threatened species have been found here.

The critically endangered central rock rat, for example, survives only in mountains in the east of the future IPA and the adjacent Tjoritja (West MacDonnell) National Park.

The new Central Western Desert IPA is the missing piece in the puzzle between the CLC-managed Southern Tanami, Northern Tanami, Angas Downs and Katiti Petermann IPAs.

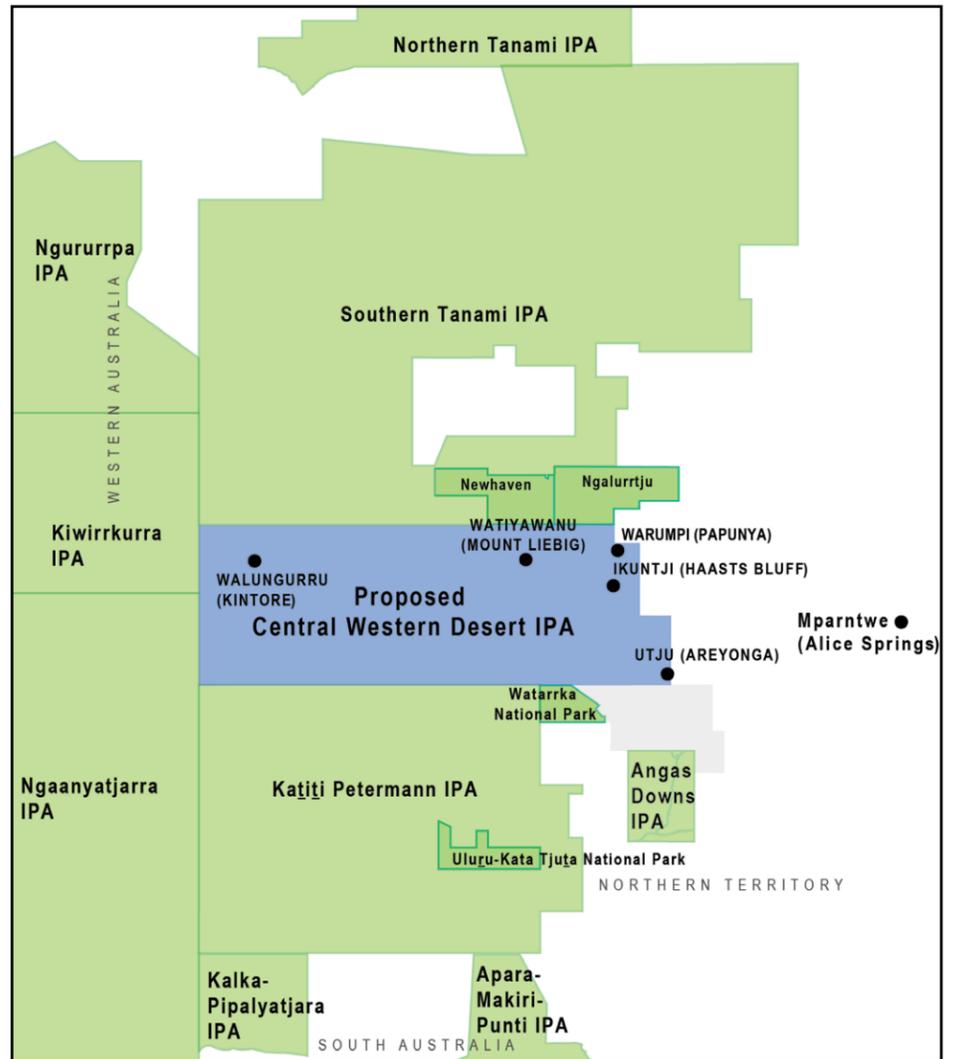
Taken together, these five protected areas will be bigger than Victoria and connect to a larger network of 10 more IPAs in Western Australia and South Australia.

The CLC's Papunya-based Anangu Luritjiku Rangers and its Walunguru Rangers in Kintore will manage this massive 435,000 square kilometre refuge under the guidance of its traditional owners.

"This IPA and the connection with other IPAs can help us share information about things like threatened animals that might only live in small areas now," Anangu Luritjiku Ranger Preston Kelly said.

The rangers will follow the detailed management plan they have developed together.

Making it all possible is a funding agreement between the CLC and the federal government's IPA program.



The new IPA will become part of a much larger network of protected areas in the cross-border region.

“This IPA and the connection with other IPAs can help us share information about things like threatened animals that might only live in small areas now.”

MEET OUR RANGERS



Geoffrey Stuart

What strengths do you bring to your ranger group?

I reckon I'm good at leading and organising, making sure everyone is ready for the trips and that we have everything ready to go.

What is the type of work you do as a ranger?

Heaps of welding training. We've been doing mostly a lot of fencing, putting them up, mapping out where they need to go and fixing them when they are broken. We go out on country and do burn-off when we need to.

What language(s) do you speak?

Yankunytjatjara and English.

What made you want to be a ranger?

I did it for my country, I wanted to look after it, and I knew of a couple of people that became rangers and I wanted to give it a shot.

Why is it important to work on your country?

Everything out on country is important. The work we do keeps country strong: fixing the fences, doing burn-off, and looking at how the animals are doing in the area. All of this goes towards making country healthy. Hopefully I can push the young mob to become rangers too, so they can help look after country.

What are some of the hard things?

The long drives. Having to sit in a car for hours just to get to a place to do a bit of work is really hard.

What would you say to a young person who wants to become a ranger?

I would say 'come on' to all the younger people. We need as many young mob as we can get. We need them to learn about their country and how to look after it.



Celebrating the art of Emily Kam Kngwarray



Emily Kam Kngwarray's family travelled to Canberra with the Utopia Art Centre for the opening of the exhibition. Photo by National Gallery of Australia

EMILY Kam Kngwarray is one of Australia's greatest artists, and her bold and innovative style challenged boundaries and opened up new understandings of Aboriginal art. She was born around 1914 in her country, Alhalker, and she grew up in the bush, at the time when very few whitefellers had made their way to her ancestral lands. A major exhibition of her artworks is currently on show at the National Gallery of Australia. It was curated by Kelli Cole and Hetti Perkins who worked closely with the Kngwarray's family and with the Utopia Art Centre. The exhibition includes paintings, batiks and works on paper from national and international collections and a short film made with Kngwarray's community. Last November 10 women from the Sandover and Utopia homelands travelled to Canberra to join the opening celebrations.

Kngwarray's path to becoming a world famous artist began in 1977 when the Utopia women began to try out various ways of dying cloth. First, they learnt to make tie-dye and print fabric with woodblocks. Later that year they learnt to make batik. Kngwarray was one of the oldest in this group of enthusiastic women who were keen to take on new artistic challenges.

Kngwarray made batik for 11 years before she changed over to painting with acrylic on canvas in 1988. In the following years she painted thousands of works and in 1997, a year after her death, her works represented Australia at the Venice Biennale alongside those of artists Judy Watson and Yvonne Koolmatie.

When Kngwarray talked about the inspiration for her paintings and batiks it always came back to Alhalker country and dreamings from there – anwerlarr (pencil yam), intekw (fan-flower), alyatywereng (woollybutt grass) and ankerr (emu). Kngwarray's name, Kam, is the Anmatyerr word for the seeds and seedpods of the pencil yam. This plant was of particular significance to Kngwarray, and it comes from Alhalker.

"Alhalker country is ours – so is the anwerlarr yam. I paint my plant, the one I am named after – those seeds I am named after. Kam is its name. Kam. I am named after the anwerlarr plant. I am Kam! The pencil yam grows in our country – it belongs to us – the anwerlarr yam. They are

found growing up along the creek banks. That's what I painted. I keep on painting the place that belongs to me – I never change from painting

that place. The seedpods of the pencil yam originated there. That's all," she once said.

Kngwarray was also a great singer and a ceremonial leader for the women's awely ceremonies for Alhalker and the neighbouring country, Anangker. In March 2023 the

voice made them proud. "This is our song. We are going to keep on singing it. We are going to learn to sing the way she did and keep on singing." A performance of this ceremony was the highlight of the opening of the Emily Kam Kngwarray exhibition in Canberra.

"I keep on painting the place that belongs to me – I never change from painting that place. The seedpods of the pencil yam originated there."

women took the exhibition curators to Alhalker and Anangker, painted up, sang and danced, accompanied by the sound of an old archival recording of Kngwarray's voice. As Jemma Kngwarray Purvis said, listening to her

The next stop for the exhibition is the Tate Modern Gallery in London in 2025.

By Jenny Green



Emily Kam Kngwarray, Utopia, 1978. Photo by J. Green

Old store becomes new home for artists

THE OLD store in Engawala has been given a new lease of life, opening as an arts centre. With few jobs in the community, Engawala's many talented artists now have a dedicated space to work and earn an income from arts and crafts sales.

Tourists often drop in on Engawala, 200 kilometres northeast of Alice Springs, because the community is next to the Alcoota fossil fields. Those visitors now have a proper place to view and buy the artists' work.

"The community are really supportive of the arts centre. Especially the board as well and Joy Turner, the elder for this community," arts centre manager and Engawala local Janine Tilmouth said.

"We did this project so that there was a chance for people to have work and also to have their own community-owned arts centre, instead of someone else coming in and running it," she said. They first talked about turning the old store into an arts centre four years ago.

The community allocated a total of \$145,000 to the renovation, which was made up of community lease money and matched funds. Four residents then met with the Central Land Council's community development team and Tangentyere Constructions to work out the details. "The workers gave the old store a good cleanout and got electricity, benches and drawers," resident artist Sharon Tilmouth said. They boarded up some doors and fixed broken windows to make the building safe.

"We had to wait a while to get the work done, but Tangentyere Constructions did a good job," Janine Tilmouth said. "They listened to the community and suggested what would be good, with the sink and putting the drawers in."

Tangentyere Constructions hired local residents Stewart Schaber and Leanne Dodd for some of the work and finished the job within six weeks. "I helped pull out the fridges and I was painting the wall and glazing the floor.



Engawala community gathered to celebrate opening of community-owned art centre.

It's the first time I've done this kind of work," Ms Dodd said.

"I liked getting to work on time and communicating with the other workers." She also helped Tangentyere's Aboriginal tradies Corey Coull and Adrian Shaw to coat the floor and install the benches and trolleys. Ms Dodds is a local artist and helped the other artists with the designs painted on the floor. The locals took over the centre ahead of the official launch in August.

communities, Taffy Denmark and Marella Pettinato were a big part of the project. They helped write a business plan and sourced a \$100,000 grant from the Aboriginals Benefit Account to paint the old store and build a shade structure. Now the artists can paint outside in good weather. The money also paid for an eco-toilet, art equipment, insurances, governance training and project management.

During a year-long construction delay staff took part in intensive

and 12 community members have enrolled with the Batchelor College to complete visual arts certificates.

"The ladies have been screen printing," Sharon Tilmouth said. "There was a workshop and one lady taught us. Lots of ladies have been using the arts centre and they're happy with it."

A \$400,000 grant from the Indigenous Visual Arts Industry Support program pays for a website, the wages of two local art workers for two years and covers the costs of attending interstate art fairs. Janine Tilmouth said the centre will build on sales through the art fairs and allow them to explore other markets.

"Maybe we can take our artworks to the cities, spread the word and add more to the website," she said. The Engawala art centre shows what can be achieved when Aboriginal people work with a lot of different people and organisations to drive their own development.

"Lots of ladies have been using the arts centre and they're happy with it."

"The arts centre looks good inside now. We've already started to work in the arts centre, doing paintings. I'm working at the shop now." Volunteers from Community First Development, a national organisation which connects skilled volunteers with Aboriginal

administration training. "I got a lot of training from the volunteer Marella, for admin and bookkeeping and getting work-ready for the auditor. It's a lot of work and I've learnt a lot," said Janine Tilmouth. Artists are also getting training from art professionals,

Four good reasons to visit Mparntwe's new AIATSIS office



CLC delegate Jimmy Frank with Theresa McCarthy at the AIATSIS office opening.

Next time you're in town check out the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies. In the old ANZ building in the Todd Mall you can:

1. talk with staff who can guide you to information about your stories and family histories

2. visit a welcoming and informative space that celebrates and honours our diverse heritage

3. see exhibitions about our rich cultural heritage from our region and across Australia

4. search a vast collection of photographs, books, digital audio and video



Atunymanama – fathering Anangu

FIFTEEN years after the Howard government's Intervention maligned a generation of Aboriginal men, *Atunymanama* tries to set the record straight about fatherhood in remote communities.

The title of the latest book by the Ngaanyatjarra Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara (NPY) Women's Council is no less than a commandment to "always look after" families and to keep them safe.

Dedicated to former CLC chair and youth worker Kunmanara Hoosan, it is the collective voice of male leaders from the cross-border region of the Northern Territory, South Australia and Western Australia.

"I'd like to send a message palula tjanalakutu (to them), to let them know how to carry on when I'm gone," starts Mr Hoosan's contribution. "To let them know kunpu nyinantjaku (be strong)."

The extensive use of the region's three languages leaves no doubt about the main audience of the book. Readers will enjoy the strong and tender family portraits by photographer Rhett Hammerton.

Atunymanama is a self-help manual

by Anangu men for Anangu men, a guide to the good life and a source of much pride.

"The book is really good," Mr Hoosan's son Ray said at the launch by the council's Uti Kulintjaku program in Alice Springs.

The Pitjantjatjara name of the program means 'to listen, think and understand clearly'.

"It is our turn. The young men and young women, the mothers and fathers, have to take responsibility for looking after their children."

As leaders of its watiku (men's) team, Kunmanara and his co-authors decided to write the book "to give teachings to the young people so that those teachings could be carried on to those peoples' young ones", according to Ray Hoosan.

Going to school and getting a good bilingual and bicultural education is what his father wanted for his grandchildren, he said.

"There are two education systems, the Anangu and the Piranpa

(non-Aboriginal people) sides. Sometimes it's really hard, when you have to live in two worlds. It can be really stressful."

In tough times the echo of his father's voice is a source of strength.

"He was very caring but he'd tell you things straight. I hope that as I grow older I'll gain the same confidence to talk up to Anangu and Piranpa as well."

An image of Kunmanara with three of his grandsons in his back yard at Ilyperenye town camp in Alice Springs stands out among the many large family portraits.

The photographs come with firm appeals to young parents not to leave the raising of the next generation to the grandparents.

"It is our turn. The young men and young women, the mothers and fathers, have to take responsibility for looking after their children," Richard Kanari,

from Pipalyatjara, wrote.

"They can't just let the grandparents do the caring. They have to teach their kids properly."

Lloyd Wilyuka, from Titjikala, wrote of his fond memories of growing up first with his grandmothers and later "my older father", the late former CLC chair Kunmanara Wilyuka.

"He raised me, he kept me happy, he taught me everything. And that's why I'm following in his footsteps. So I can be like him. He spoke up and left a strong voice behind for me."

Mr Wilyuka sends the eldest of his two sons, "strong little boys", to boarding school.

"That's what I want for them, to learn the whitefella things. Then, in the school holidays, come back and learn the Anangu things. You go bush, go camping, hear the Tjukurpa your grandparents tell you."

His message to his sons is "always be happy to look after all your families and keep them safe. If it's hard, get back on your feet and keep going. Stay firm to keep your home strong."

Speaking through an interpreter, co-author Stanley Windy agreed the book is an attempt to correct the hurtful picture the Intervention painted of Aboriginal men and influenced youngfellas who now have children and grandchildren of their own.

Most of all, the Amata resident wanted to contribute to a discussion about how to educate the next generation.

"It's important for men to reflect on the values the old people had and how they were raising their young, and how that kept them from harm, and how the things that they taught on country about their families gave them really strong values to live by, so they could be strong, healthy people," he said.

"How people taught their young people in the past was by taking them out and teaching them to hunt and live well in their country. I want people to look at this book, look what we've done and understand how to help us. We want to be able to take young people out, teach them in the bush about their country, the foods to hunt, and to be out in that bush environment.

"If people want to support us they can really help us to do more extended stays in the bush. Children in the bush have the potential for a really great, healthy life out on country.

"We want everybody to go 'yes, we want to do that, we want to give a really good future to our young people, to carry on this good way of being'."

The men launched *Atunymanama* last September, only weeks before the failure of the voice referendum revealed how little Piranpa know Anangu.

Their book's message of caring could not have come at a more poignant moment in the nation's history.

For Mr Windy it's an invitation to those in power to walk in his shoes.

"I want the government to understand that we have our own language, our own ways of being. They might be different from other people. We want the government to understand how it is for us and what we need. I want them to realise 'ah, this is how Anangu think'. This is our voice in this book. This is how we talk and think. This is how we are."



Eddie Dixon, Tydon Ratara, Jacob McKenzie, Jonathon Martin, Ashley Dixon and Delray Nelson. Photo by Rhett Hammerton



Lloyd Wilyuka and his son Cleon. Photo by Rhett Hammerton

David Wongway: family man and community leader



Mr Wongway was at the centre of last year's celebration of the Karinga Lakes native title determination.

DAVID Wongway is remembered as a strong leader and family man who cared deeply for his country and his community.

The final achievement of the Yankunytjatjara speaker and senior nguraritja (traditional owner) for Warltunta (Erlunda), Maratjura (Lyndavale), Wilbiya (Angas Downs Station, Imanpa) and the Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park was last year's native title determination over Karinga Lakes.

As one of the respected tjilpis (senior men) for the salt lakes, Mr Wongway fought for mining damage to the lakes to be widely known and for the right of his people to access this country to be recognised in Australian law.

He helped Central Land Council staff to document his life and connection to country during the seven-year land claim process.

"I would sit with him whenever he told stories about his life to CLC mob for the native title claim and explain it in proper English. He didn't speak English properly but he knew what to say, what to do. He was a man with smart thinking," his wife Kathleen Luckey said.

As nguraritja it was very important for him to see the right of Anangu to hunt and perform ceremonies on the land.

He wanted to teach future generations about country and tjukurpa (dreaming) and be consulted over its use.

When the Federal Court finally visited Imanpa in April 2023 for the native title determination, Mr Wongway welcomed the judge and other visitors.

Ms Luckey remembers how important it was to him that the 15 family groups got native title over Warltunta (Erlunda Station), Maratjura (Lyndavale Station) and Tjulu (Curtin Springs Station).

"He wanted to be a role model for his community. He worked hard on the native title claim. That was his best achievement, I think."

Mr Wongway was born at Palmer Valley Station, on 15th September 1957, while his family was travelling with its camel to Erlunda station.

He was the third child of Rosie and Johnnie Wongway, and brother to Nola, Ruby, Jennifer and Kathy.

He spent his early life travelling around country with his parents and sisters. He called himself 'the spinifex man' and often spoke about how he "was born in the bush, on the ground, with no bed".

He met his wife at Erlunda, where he worked as a young stockman.

"He was always working to earn money for the kids. He was a strong family man and a good friend to me," Ms Luckey said.

The couple raised their own children Gordon, Shane, Roslyn, Sonia and Dan at the station, as well as another four children.

For Ms Luckey it was her husband's bond with his family and his work ethic that stood out.

He was always "bringing young people in" and looking to "keep the family group together", she said.

The family moved to Aputula (Finke) so the children could go to school.

At Aputula he worked hard every day from dawn to dusk operating machinery, welding and building fences.

He made sure that his children understood the importance of work.

Gordon Wongway remembers his dad telling him and his siblings 'I'm a hardworking man. You can't be sitting around waiting for handouts. You gotta work'.

In his younger years Mr Wongway was a full-forward football player for the Finke Crows. He rode his motorbike in the Finke Desert Race in 1997, and when Gordon Wongway turned 18 the following year, they rode together.

Mr Wongway passed his love of horses onto his children.

"Dad bought all the horses for us and taught us how to break in horses and how to ride them too," said Gordon

Wongway. "He told us, 'don't get frightened of riding horses. Just jump back on'."

He remembers his dad borrowing an old footy truck to buy horses off John Stanes of Lyndavale Station in the 1990s. Gordon Wongway was just 13 at the time.

"We went there on the truck and picked up all the horses. Dad and John were then having a few beers, so then I had to drive back home to Finke. We still have horses out there."

Many years later Mr Wongway worked on the night patrol in Imanpa and then as an Aboriginal community police officer.

He also worked for the MacDonnell Regional Council in many different jobs and coached the local football team.

"He worked hard on the native title claim. That was his best achievement, I think."

As the CLC delegate for Imanpa from 2012 to 2021 Mr Wongway took charge of developing his community. He helped to set up the Imanpa store, fought for local housing and fulfilled his promise to build a church.

"Them old fellows, they used to have church under a tree, just in the shade. Old Tjuki Pumpjack came over for a cup of tea and said to us 'I want a church'," Ms Luckey remembers.

Mr Wongway helped the CLC get funding for the church and his youngest son Dan helped to build it.

"He was so proud of that church built in the memory of his old friend Tjuki Pumpjack," Mrs Luckey said. "He was so proud about getting a church in Imanpa."

"He made lots of good changes and worked alongside his good mate Jeffery Mumu."

In 2009, Mr Wongway also helped the CLC to develop the Angas Downs Indigenous Protected Area and a new ranger group to look after it - the Anangu Angas Downs Rangers.

He worked on Angas Downs for many years - first as a ranger and later as a member of the IPA steering committee and as a cultural advisor.

"Dad got his younger son Dan Wongway involved in being a ranger as well. He helped him learn all about horses, how to break them in and about country," Gordon Wongway said. "Dad knew all those countries around Karinga Lakes, Erlunda and also Angas Downs."

Mr Wongway's love of country was with him all his life, and he always had a lot of stories to share about his time growing up there and working on the stations.

He clocked up many hours in troopies and helicopters clearing sacred sites to make sure country was looked after and protected.

Mr Wongway barracked for the West Coast Eagles, and one of his great joys was to watch his grandson play football for Ltyentye Apurte (Santa Teresa) at Traeger Park. Never missing a match he would sit at the goal posts to get the best view of the goals that his grandson, also called David, kicked.

Later in life, Mr Wongway was diagnosed with kidney problems and had to move to Alice Springs for dialysis, but he often returned to his family in Imanpa. He passed away after a visit back home late last year, aged only 66.

Mr Wongway loved bush life. He will be remembered for his powerful, passionate voice and his direct approach to protecting country. His humour and compassion made him a treasured member of all the organisations he has worked with.

He is greatly missed by his family, friends, colleagues and the community he served.



CLC farewells Dr MK Turner OAM

The Central Land Council's tribute to Dr MK Turner OAM was delivered by Dr Josie Douglas.

"MK has rightly been described as a jewel.

Indeed, with her passing we have lost a treasure trove of wisdom and deep knowledge of language, country and culture.

We take comfort from the generosity with which she shared that wealth with us in all her publications and conversations.

I recall MK coming to a council meeting at Kintore many years back to talk about bushfoods and industry protocols. The members of the Central Land Council had such great affection, deep respect and love for MK. At the end of her presentation she found herself surrounded by our members – just like a rock star.

MK's immense knowledge of country and family made a material difference to the lives of so many.

It contributed to successful native title claims in the Harts Range region, two hours northeast of Alice Springs.

The most notable native title determination for which we owe her a debt of gratitude was over the Mount Riddock pastoral lease in 2017.

The Mount Riddock claim included MK's father's father's country, Akerte, and mother's father's country, Irrelirre.

More recently, MK helped us to research the native title claim over neighbouring Ambalindum and the Garden stations, which we lodged with the Federal Court on the 13th April 2021.

MK also helped others with their native title claims by interpreting, including for Alice Springs.

MK contributed to the CLC's oral history book, *Every Hill Got A Story*. *Every Hill Got a Story* is the first

comprehensive history of Central Australia's Aboriginal people as told in their own words and own languages.

Like a string of brightly polished jewels, MK's recollections of country, culture and her growing up times – sparkle in this oral history.

In the second chapter of this book she recalled the rich cultural life at Mount Riddock.

"They kept us to really strict laws about kinship and the respectful ways of relating to kin, and of living in the country," she said.

"MK's immense knowledge of country and family made a material difference to the lives of so many."

A great keeper and teacher of culture, MK soaked up the jokes, songs and ceremonies from her mother and her aunts.

She remembered her father singing the sick as well, and teaching his healing songs to others.

Songs remained a constant in MK's later life at the Santa Teresa Mission.

She told us, despite the challenges, people always managed to find ways to keep culture strong.

She developed her rich knowledge of women's songs from a young age – knowledge that she later contributed to CLC's songline projects, to keep this knowledge strong for future generations.

All the while she was certain that "all these songs were given to us by God".

Her faith in the dreaming never wavered.



It drove her determination to "hold on strongly to our cultural traditions", to "teach our children so that they will know", and to "translate all our church ways into Arrernte so that they can fit well – the religion and what it means to us."

Her beloved mother tongue was at the centre of all her work, she worked tirelessly to keep language and culture strong.

And for that we will be forever grateful to MK."

Arrernte language specialists pay tribute to Gavan Breen

GAVAN BREEN, a renowned linguist, passed away aged 88 in Mparntwe on October 5, 2023.

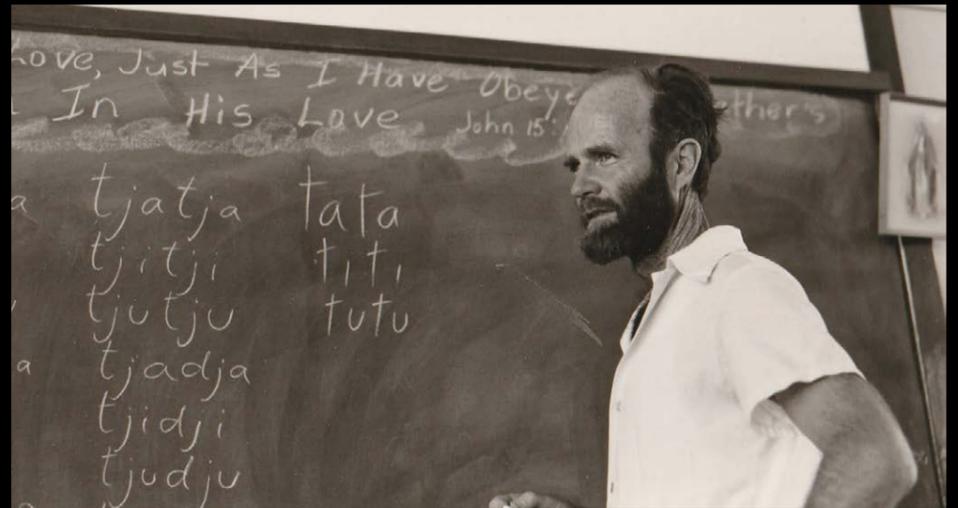
In the 1980s, Mr Breen moved to Central Australia, where he documented Central Australian languages, with a particular focus on the Arandic languages.

Mr Breen taught many Aboriginal people to read and write in their own languages, empowering them to become linguists, teachers, writers and advocates for their languages.

Veronica Perrurle Dobson, a senior Arrernte language specialist, and Sabella Kngwarraye Turner, an Arrernte teacher and language specialist, were among his earliest students. They allowed Land Rights News to publish their tributes to Mr Breen.

"Gavan Breen was highly respected amongst Aboriginal language speakers.

I first met Gavan when I was learning to write Arrernte, the classes were held at Yirara College back in the 1980s. In the class I went to, there were five different language groups all sitting in the same room, Gavan had five blackboards and would write up things for us to copy in Arrernte, Warlpiri, and other languages. We would have to copy the language we were learning and



translate them. He was a good teacher, teaching all these different languages at once. I learned the written language from Gavan, and this prepared me for my later work so I could work with other linguists like John Henderson to write the Central and Eastern Arrernte to English dictionary published in 1994."

Veronica Perrurle Dobson

"Gavan was a very generous man, was a great teacher, and a friend to us Arrernte mob. He would pick up family and take them to the Catholic Church, he did this for many years. I learned to write Arrernte from Gavan. I would sometimes argue with Gavan about the spelling, and he would tell me why things were the way they were. He was a good man. There are a lot of people who will miss him."

Sabella Kngwarraye Turner





Mason Young, Ezakiel Alice, Ralston Young and Zaneth Palmer ready to hop to victory in the sack race at Ltyentye Apurte races. Photo by David Jagger



Xavier Bird, Talissa Smith, Katasha Bird and Adriana Alice stepped out in their best cowhand outfits. Photo by David Jagger



Ernie Williams and Nicky Alice snagged a prime viewing spot to watch the race. Photo by David Jagger



Rodeo chic took centre stage as Britney Conway, Nicky Alice, Latarnie Anderson, Kayme Young, Tarkyn Rankine and Niara Tilmouth's showcased their outfits at the Ltyentye Apurte races. Photo by David Jagger



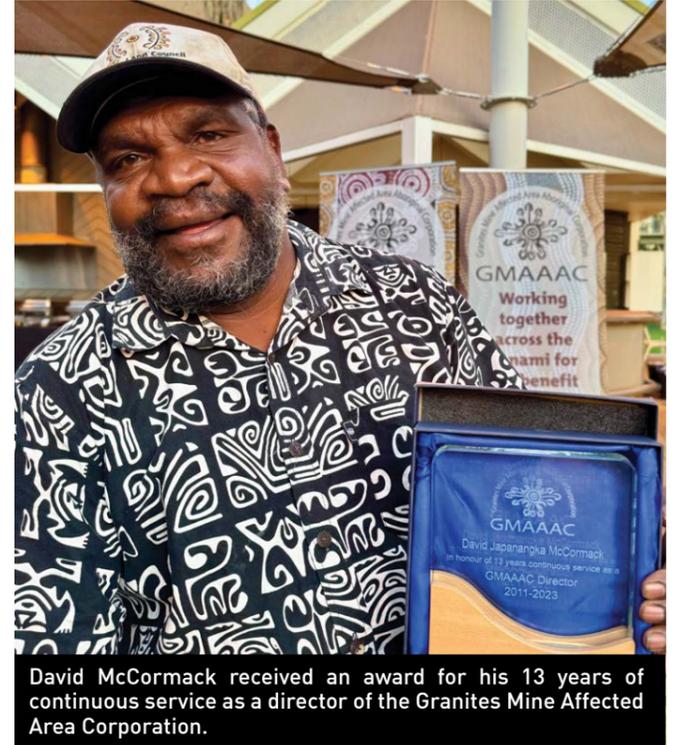
Shannon Ryder, Francis Conway, Paul Oliver and Damian Ryder buckled up for the best dressed competition in Ltyentye Apurte. Photo by David Jagger



Ezakiel Alice, Elton Wallace and Mason Young had all eyes on Mel Inkamala getting ready to hit the track. Photo by David Jagger



Central Land Council general manager Mischa Cartwright and Granites Mine Affected Area Corporation director Robyn Lawson at the GMAAAC awards night.



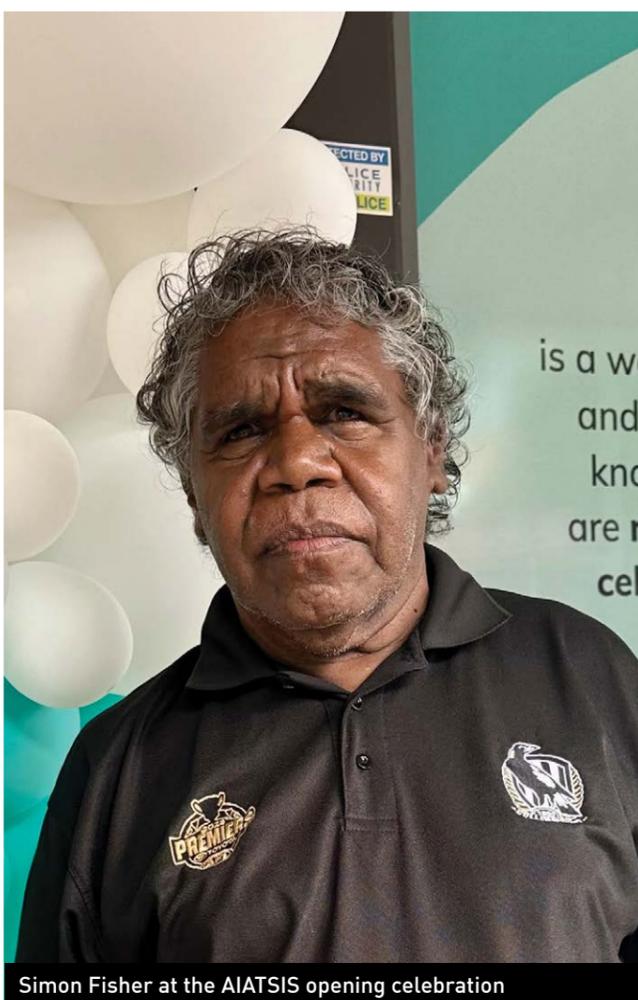
David McCormack received an award for his 13 years of continuous service as a director of the Granites Mine Affected Area Corporation.



Muru-warinyi Ankkul Rangers Gladys Brown and Jeffrey Curtis joined six other ranger groups for a mapping workshop.



The Central Land Council's Karina Menkhost and executive member Valerie Martin at the opening of the new AIATSIS centre in Mparntwe (Alice Springs).



Simon Fisher at the AIATSIS opening celebration



Lynch sisters Margie, Pamela and Veronica went to the AIATSIS opening together.



Directors of the Granites Mine Affected Area Aboriginal Corporation braved the rain for a group shot at their governance workshop.



Gladys Brown, Josephine Grant and Janey Dixon at a healthy country planning meeting near Elliot.



Central Land Council executive member Sandra Morrison spoke at the launch of the new ranger hub after Shalee James' welcome to country.

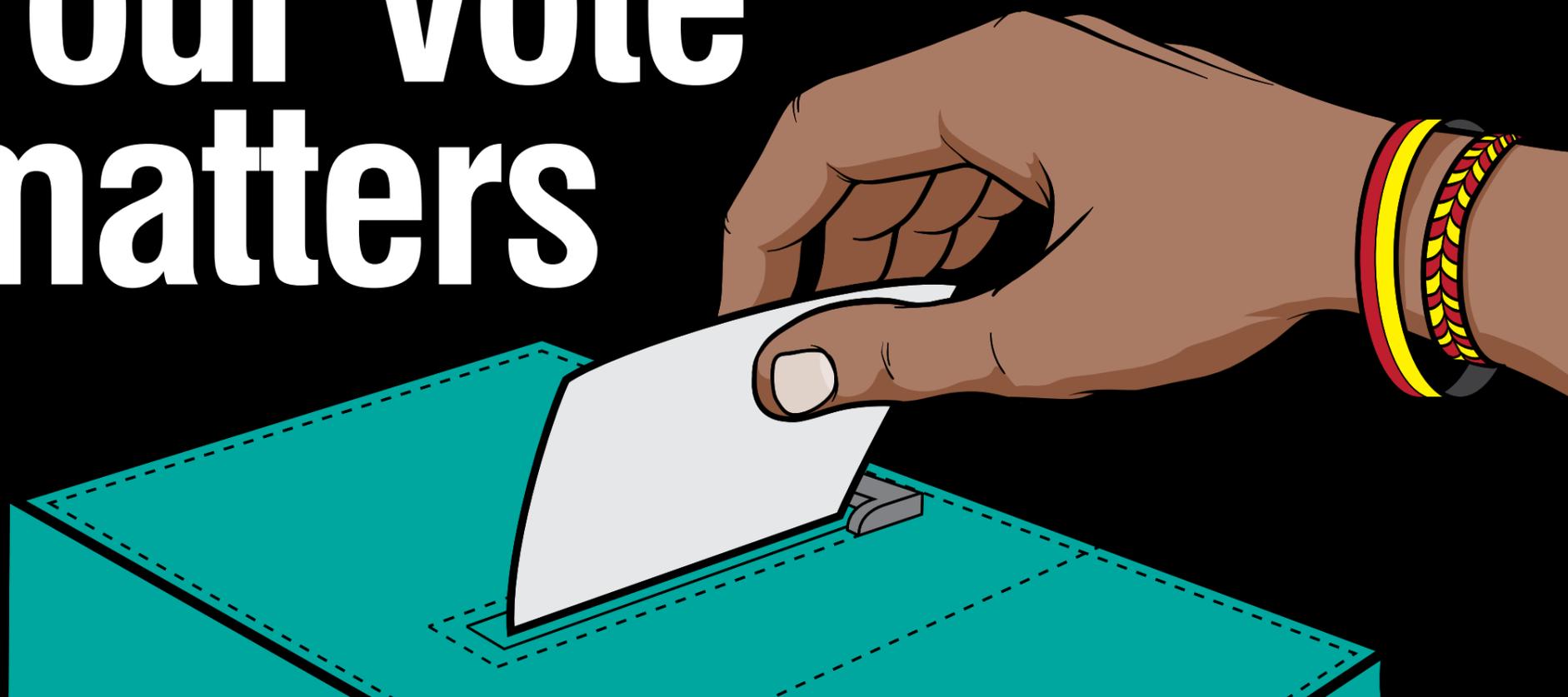


Penny Williams and Gladys Brown caught up at the opening of the new Muru-warinyi Ankkul Ranger hub.



Central Land Council deputy chair Warren Williams and Jodie Foster at the ranger hub opening celebration in Tennant Creek.

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