



Australian Government
Office of Township Leasing

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF TOWNSHIP LEASING

Annual Report 2022-2023



Executive Director of Township Leasing Annual Report 2022-23

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Images

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The Executive Director respects Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and culture. Readers should be aware that this report contains references and images to members of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community who have passed.

Wurrumiyanga Sunrise





Australian Government
Office of Township Leasing

The Hon Linda Burney MP
Minister for Indigenous Australians
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Minister,

I am pleased to present to you the Annual Report of the Executive Director of Township Leasing for the financial year 2022-23, for your presentation to Parliament in accordance with subsection 20R⁽¹⁾ of the *Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act 1976*.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading 'Pennie Talbot'.

Pennie Talbot

Executive Director of Township Leasing
March 2024



ABOUT TOWNSHIP LEASING

The arrangements under Section 19A of the Aboriginal Land Rights Act (Northern Territory) 1976 (ALRA), provide the mechanism to establish secure, tradeable land tenure for Townships established on Aboriginal held land while maintaining the underlying Aboriginal land title. This is the Township Leasing Model.

The Township Leasing Model offers certainty of tenure, the reliability of long term rental income streams and an enabling foundation for Township development. This foundation results in Traditional Owners building capability within their organisations, establishing sound cultural decision making and articulating and implementing their vision and aspirations for their communities. The Model places Traditional Owners at the heart of the decision making for their traditional lands.

Residents of Townships in the Northern Territory established on land held in communal Aboriginal title have a right to experience the same opportunities, services and facilities that are available to residents in other Australian towns and cities. Secure land tenure supported through sound land administration is the foundation upon which this right can be realised.



OUR VISION Enabling Choices Through Empowered Partnerships



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***"I want to empower my people
by providing choices, choices
that we in the bush have never
had before."***

Mantiupwi Traditional Owner
Mr Walter Kerinaia



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR — STATEMENT

Vision directs action. Mr Walter Kerinauia was a visionary leader for the Mantiupwi family and it was his foresight and drive that created the first Township Lease over Wurrumiyanga 16 years ago. Mr Kerinauia's vision was for his children and grandchildren to have the same choices available to all Australians. In 2022-23 we continue to be inspired by Mr Kerinauia and build on his legacy through our Vision; Enabling Choices through Empowered Partnerships.

This vision is exemplified by a first for Township Leasing that occurred during the year that demonstrates how the Township Leasing Model adapts to the changing needs and aspirations of Traditional Owners; the transition of the Groote Eylandt Township Lease to the community-controlled Anindilyakwa Royalties Aboriginal Corporation (ARAC). This is the first time a Township Lease held in partnership by the Executive Director (on behalf of the Commonwealth) has been transferred to Traditional Owners, and represents an important achievement for all involved.

This milestone illustrates how the Township Leasing Model is maturing, demonstrating the transformative benefits of secure land tenure teamed with the Office of Township Leasing's focus on empowered partnerships, supporting Traditional Owners to realise their aspirations for their communities.

This could not have been achieved without the trusted relationships the Office built in partnership with the Warnindilyakwa Traditional Owners over the 13 years of Township Leasing preceding the transition, nor the hard work of my current and past team, in partnership with the Traditional Owners and working closely with the Anindilyakwa Land Council and the National Indigenous Australians Agency to ensure all of the legal, operational and technical aspects of this complex transaction were successfully completed. I would also like to acknowledge the support and guidance we received from the Minister for Indigenous Australians, the Hon. Linda Burney.

Importantly, our partnership with the Warnindilyakwa Traditional Owners has not ended despite this transfer of responsibilities. The Office continues to partner with and support ARAC as required. This is largely technical support in the form of access to our specialised land tenure management system, to assist in the consistent, accurate and transparent management of documentation and decision making on land tenure matters. This not only supports ARAC in successfully administering the Township Lease, but provides a level of comfort in the systems and processes in place for all stakeholders operating in these Townships.

The Office's business as usual continued throughout the year, with the team picking up where we left off prior to the disruption of COVID. We held 13 Consultative Forum Meetings (CFM) across all of our Townships. These meetings are supported by extensive field work and engagement by staff in the months and weeks prior to each meeting.

The CFMs are a culmination of our specialised engagement work, where we maintain constant contact with our CFM Members, informing them of existing and future development activities in the Township. CFM's are a demonstration of the Office's early, genuine engagement which provides the information they require to make free, prior and informed decisions about their communities.

As you will see in this report, there was a lot of activity in all Townships, with important decisions made at the CFMs regarding key developments. I am proud of how the OTL team is able to present often complex, technical information to our Traditional Owner partners in a way which enables them to make decisions according to what is best for not just them and their families, but for all Township residents.

One particular innovation I would like to highlight, and which represents the culmination of years of experience in evaluating development opportunities in Township Lease communities; the creation of our Engagement Principles. These Principles inform developers as to the expectations of Traditional Owners and the OTL with regard to the type of information that will be required to properly inform the CFM, and receive their views as to whether or not the Executive Director should grant a sublease or provide any other approvals required to be obtained under the Township Lease in relation to a development. The Engagement Principles are intended to assist in exploring the potential for a mutually beneficial long-term relationship between a prospective land developer and the Traditional Owners through open and transparent communications and negotiations. This includes engaging technical experts where necessary to work with Traditional Owners to ensure they understand the proposed development in full, including risks, benefits and any long term impacts it may have on them and their country.

The year finished with another major event for Township Leasing, when the Office hosted a session at the 2023 AIATSIS Summit in Perth. The Office supported 10 Traditional Owners from the Tiwi Islands and Wadeye to present their experiences of the benefits and challenges of the Township Leasing Model. The session was a great success with a standing room only audience captivated by the stories of self-determination and empowered partnership. The session ran well over the allocated 30 minutes due to interest, with the majority of people even choosing to stay and listen instead of getting afternoon tea! Despite the drastic change in temperature – from a sunny Northern Territory dry season to one of the wettest winters in Perth – everyone had a great time, with Traditional Owners expressing an interest in further opportunities to present.

After being involved in the Township Leasing journey from the start (over fifteen years ago), I am immensely proud of how the Model has evolved to become a positive story capable of inspiring others to seek similar outcomes for their communities.

These three examples demonstrate how the Office continues to be committed to implementing the Township Leasing Framework. Each of these activities provided an opportunity to develop important aspects of the Framework;

- establishing agreed Capability Benchmarks (see the section in this report on Alice Springs Living Areas page 39 to see how this approach is now helping the next transition to community control) to inform decision makers and participants where support is best provided to ensure sustainable transitions to community control,
- ensuring Traditional Owners are appropriately informed and supported to make decisions on complex development projects
- providing opportunities for Traditional Owners to learn from the experiences of others from across the country and empowering them through knowledge and experience to make decisions for their Townships.

The outlook for next year shows no sign of slowing down, with continued interest in the Township Leasing Model from Traditional Owners across the Northern Territory. We will continue to empower our Traditional Owner partners to make free, prior and informed decisions and achieve their aspirations for the improvement of their Townships.



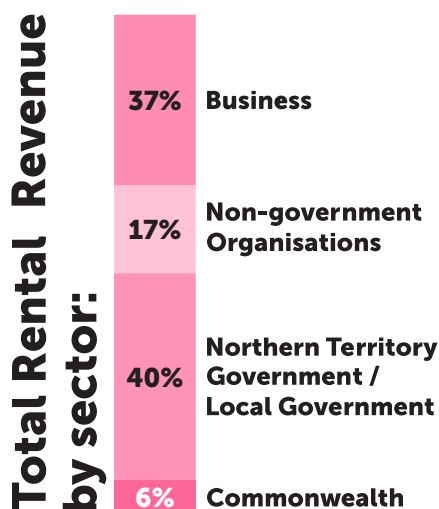


OTL BY THE NUMBERS

5
**Township
Leases**


67
**Commonwealth
Assets**
(Childcare Centres, Offices,
Safe Houses, etc.)


26
Housing leases across
26 Townships




22 New
subleases / underleases
entered into


23
**Building &
development
applications
received**


47
OTL visits
to Townships and
Communities considering
Township Leases



38%
of OTL Staff are
Indigenous*



\$2,147,598
Rental Revenue
2022-23



\$26,344,728
in Total
Rental Revenue
since 2007



\$479,779
(GST inc.)
Capital Works
Investment



\$1,396,868
(GST inc.)
Indigenous
Procurement
Spend



\$381,545
(GST inc.)
Invested in
Traditional Owner
Capability
Development



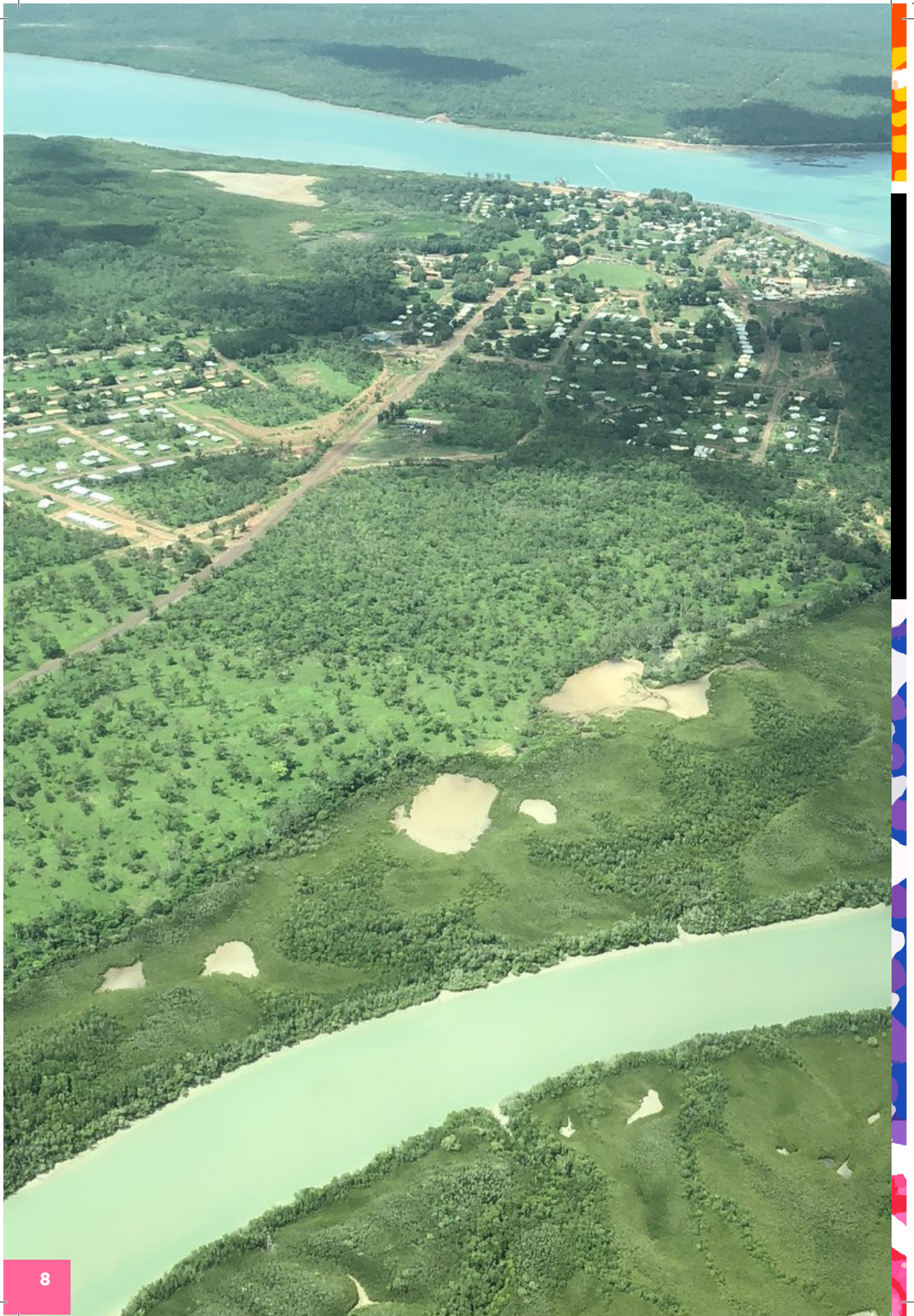
13
Consultative
Forums Held



over **400**
Consultative
Forum Attendees



11 
Township Leasing
information sessions
provided to
Traditional Owners





TOWNSHIP LEASING HIGHLIGHTS

2022-23



TIWI ISLANDS – WURRUMIYANGA

Population: 1,668

Traditional Owner Family: Mantiyupwi

Year Township Lease Signed: 2007

Term: 99 Years

Annual Rental Revenue: \$1,020,386

Empowered Partnerships

Sadly, this year is the 10th anniversary of the passing of Mr Walter Pirliamanyirra Kerinaiaua, the inspirational Mantiyupwi leader who drove the development of the Township Leasing Model. As the interest in Township Leasing spreads across the Northern Territory, the role of Wurrumiyanga and the Mantiyupwi Traditional Owners as advocates for the Model is becoming more pronounced. In recognition of this, the Executive Director sought continued permission from the Kerinaiaua family to continue to use the inspirational words of Mr Kerinaiaua to build understanding and guide the implementation of the Township Leasing Model across the Territory for generations to come. Mr Kerinaiaua's family graciously agreed to this request.

As a result, you can see how this inspirational leader, the 'Grandfather of Township Leasing' continues to lead the way for others to open dialogue and explore whether the Model is right for them and their communities.





1. Annette Murtagh at Wurrumiyanga Field Visit in May 2023 2. Departing Wurrumiyanga from the air 3. Wurrumiyanga Fish Trap

TIWI ISLANDS – WURRUMIYANGA

Enabling Choice

Over 15 years on from signing the first Township Lease, the Mantiupwi Traditional Owners continue to make choices in relation to the social and economic development of their Township. This was a year of consolidation, with land tenure developments and proposals improving facilities and services within the Township such as;

- Progressing the new terminal and airport boundary to improve access and passenger amenity at the Island's longest airstrip.
- new staff housing for government and non-government workers,
- the development and reopening of the Family and Children's Centre on a site of significance,
- the identification of a future workers' camp site,
- Aged Care Services expanding their facility.

There were also projects which focussed on improving the cultural life in the Township including;

- Establishing a traditional fish trap,
- The construction of a Community Bike Pump Track
- The development of a Carving Shed to provide a space for local artists to work in

These and many other matters were discussed at Consultative Forum Meetings which had over 100 members attend. It was heartening to see the strong attendance at this year's CFMs. This attendance has been building through the years and shows the level of interest and participation from all Consultative Forum members in the development of their Township. The Office will continue to encourage this high level of participation, as it results in better outcomes across the community.





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1. Pennie Talbot at Wurrumiyanga Visit in May 2023 2. Jennifer Clancy, Marie Clancy and Crystal Love Wurrumiyanga CFM May 2023 3. OTL's Craig Singleton and Annette Murtagh at the Wurrumiyanga CFM May 2023 4. Gibson Illortaminni Farmer at the Wurrumiyanga CFM May 2023

TIWI ISLANDS – MILIKAPITI

Population: 486

Traditional Owner Family: Wulirankuwu

Year Township Lease Signed: 2011

Term: 99 Years

Annual Rental Revenue: \$329,695

Empowered Partnerships

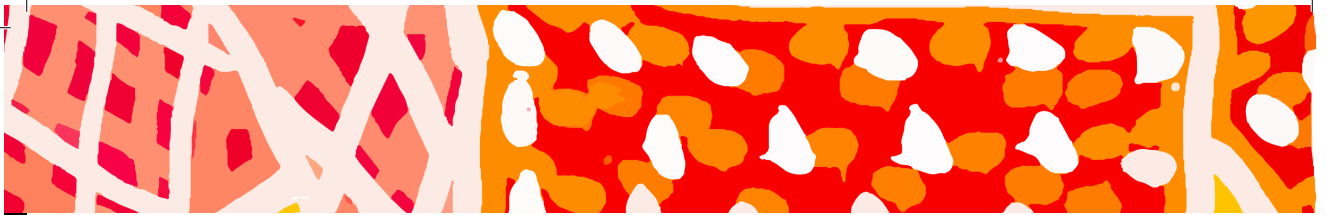
The Office continues to work to support the aspirations of Wulirankuwu Traditional Owners to develop the social and economic opportunities in Milikapiti. This has included the handover of 7 new sites to the Northern Territory Government for future housing, expanding the police station, a cyclone shelter and the development of a water park and sports oval.

Continuing on from the successful takeover of the Milikapiti fishing Lodge, the business is going from strength to strength. With good management and staff, a strong business model and the ongoing support of Traditional Owners, they are booked out 2 years in advance. This success story shows what can be achieved through working together to realise the Traditional Owner's visions for their Townships

Enabling Choice

This year saw the opening of the Wulirankuwu Motel, which provides 6 new rooms to accommodate visitors to Milikapiti. This business, owned and operated by the Wulirankuwu Traditional Owners business arm, also provides a much-needed car hire service. Providing this accommodation enables greater service provision in the community as visiting staff and stakeholders can remain in community for longer.





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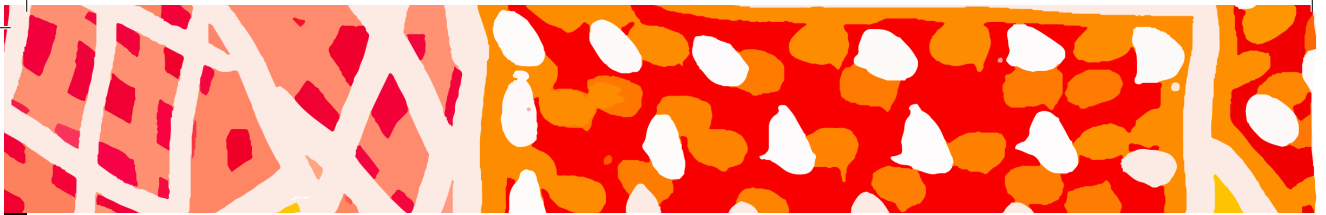
1. Welcome to Milikapiti Airport 2. OTL Staff Narelle Rowell and Hayley Burgess 3. Milikapiti Coastline 4. OTL Staff at Milikapiti – Aug 2022 5. Official Ceremony of Milikapiti Fishing Lodge August 2022



TIWI ISLANDS – MILIKAPITI



6. Preparing for Milikapiti Fishing Lodge Ceremony 7. Official Ceremony of Milikapiti Fishing Lodge



8. Milikapiti Fishing Lodge 9. Milikapiti Barge Landing 10. Preparing for Milikapiti Fishing Lodge Ceremony

TIWI ISLANDS – WURANKUWU (RANKU)

Population: 80

Traditional Owner Family: Portaminni

Year Township Lease Signed: 2011

Term: 99 Years

Annual Rental Revenue: \$18,872

Empowered Partnerships

Despite a challenging year with heavy rains damaging the roads to the Ranku Township, meaning limited access for residents to return to community, the Office continued to work with the Portaminni Traditional Owners on some key projects. One of these was the land tenure application for a prawn farming trial, which it is hoped will provide income and employment for Ranku residents.



1. Wurankuwu CFM Members 8th May 2023
2. Discussing the Money Story at the Wurankuwu CFM 8th May 2023
3. Wurankuwu Aerial View



4. Flying to the Tiwi Islands





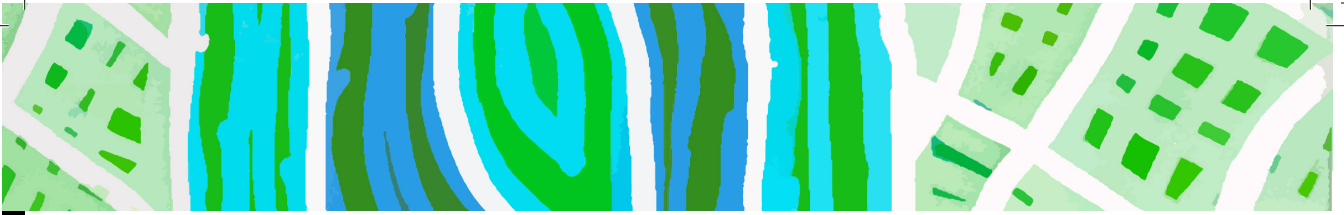
TIWI ISLANDS – WURANKUWU (RANKU)

Enabling Choice

The Catholic Primary School has recommenced classes, providing a vital service to Township residents. This is an important step forward in having the necessary services and amenities available in Ranku to allow residents to reside there throughout the year. This will reduce pressure on infrastructure and services in Wurrumiyanga and allow Portaminni Traditional Owners to live on their traditional lands.

The work done throughout the year has prepared the groundwork for what shapes to be a busy coming year or two in Ranku Township. We can expect the construction of new housing, essential service infrastructure including new bores and the potential reopening of the Ranku Store, will all contribute to re-establishing the Township as a year round place for the Portaminni family and other residents to live and thrive.





1. Wurankuwu Water Tower 2. Wurankuwu Store 3. Wurankuwu Community Basketball Court



TIWI ISLANDS – PIRLANGIMPI

Population: 372
Traditional Owner Family: Munupi
Year Township Lease Signed: 2011
Term: 99 Years
Annual Rental Revenue: \$353,265



Empowered Partnerships

This year, the partnership between the Office and the Munupi Traditional Owners proved invaluable when a vital piece of Township economic infrastructure experienced some financial difficulty. The ongoing operation of Port Melville, a deep sea port in the Aspley Strait which separates Melville and Bathurst Islands, became vulnerable to closure as a result of the Port operator being placed in corporate administration.

The Office has worked closely with the Administrators (Deloitte), Port owners (Port Melville Pty Ltd, which is wholly owned by the Tiwi clan groups), Tiwi Plantations Corporation (a major customer of the Port) and NIAA, to ensure the ongoing operations of the Port while a sale process is undertaken.

This included securing a bridging loan from the Aboriginals Benefit Account to cover the operational costs of the Port. This enabled vital access to markets for Tiwi Plantations to remain in place, supporting the many jobs this industry provides to Tiwi Islanders.



1. Pirlangimpi Barge 2. Aerial View of new Pirlangimpi Housing Subdivision 3. Port Melville Wharf 1



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TIWI ISLANDS – PIRLANGIMPI



1. New Houses in Pirlangimpi 2. Departing Pirlangimpi 3. Munupi Money Story at the Pirlangimpi CFM Oct 2022



Enabling Choice

The Pirlangimpi Traditional Owners have had a busy year with the proposed Provaris green hydrogen project requiring close attention. This project, which has received major project status from the Northern Territory Government, incorporates the establishment of a large solar power farm providing renewable energy for a hydrogen production plant close to the Port.

This innovative project presents a significant economic opportunity to the Munupi Traditional Owners. However, this opportunity does not come without risk. To assist the Traditional Owners negotiate this complex project, the Office of Township Leasing developed a set of Engagement Principles, based on years of experience, to inform the EDTL partnered approach with Traditional Owners with the intent of enabling fully the exploration and evaluation, against Traditional Owner values and aspirations for the Land, the social and economic benefits as well as the risks associated with the Project; and informing the negotiation of any land tenure which may be granted by the EDTL to a Proponent of a Proposed Project.

The aim of these Principles is to level the playing field between Traditional Owners and developers. Setting clear expectations for developers of early, genuine engagement with land owners ensures that the principles of free, prior and informed consent are adhered to.



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4. Aerial View of Tiwi Plantations Pirlangimpi May 2023

5. Pirlangimpi CFM October 2022

6. OTL's Penny Brown at Pirlangimpi CFM –

CENTRAL AUSTRALIA – MUTITJULU

Population: 348

Traditional Owner Family: Anangu

Year Township Lease Signed: 2017

Term: 67 Years

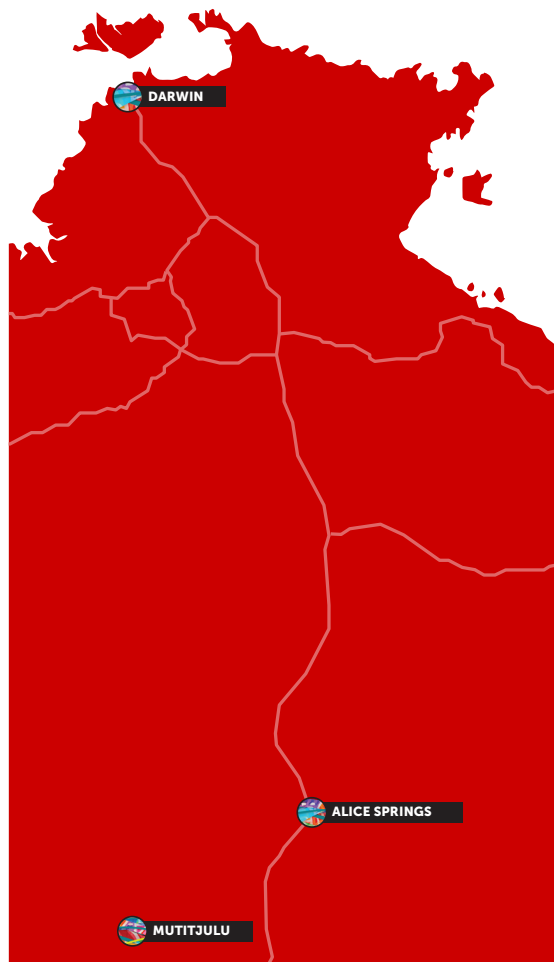
Annual Rental Revenue: \$183,157

Empowered Partnerships

On signing the Township Sublease for Mutitjulu, Traditional Owners received \$2 million of stimulus funding to establish a business hub. This would provide an office for the Mutitjulu Community Aboriginal Corporation (MCAC) and much needed additional office and meeting space for other service providers to rent on a short or long term basis.

Unfortunately, the project was delayed due to a number of reasons and, when designs were finalised in 2022, construction costs had risen dramatically leaving a substantial shortfall in funding. The Office worked with MCAC and the NIAA to secure additional equity funding to ensure this commitment made when negotiating the Sublease could be fulfilled.

CFM members have endorsed a design for the Business Centre and construction is expected to commence by the end of 2023.





1. Mutitjulu CFM July 2022 2. Mutitjulu AFL President Craig Woods with Pennie Talbot 3. Yuka (Judy) Trigger speaking with Pennie Talbot and Marita and Bridget Perdjert from Kardu Diminin at Mutitjulu 4. Mutitjulu CFM July 2022 5. Minister Burney Visit to Mutitjulu

CENTRAL AUSTRALIA – MUTITJULU

Enabling Choice

We continue to progress sublease and development applications, as well as support Traditional Owner organisations with strategic planning and project support.

These included an assessment of the heritage listed Adult Education Centre, which has been disused for a number of years. The assessment will allow the Consultative Forum Members to consider alternative uses for this landmark building in the community.

Traditional Owner accommodation, to be managed by Maruku Arts, has been established. This provides a place for visiting Traditional Owners to stay when Consultative Forums or other important meetings are on, as well as for visiting artists outside of those times.



1



1. Sturt Desert Pea – Mutitjulu July 2023 2. Walking the desert sands near Mutitjulu March 2023 3. Mutitjulu CFM March 2023
4. Interpreter Tapaya Edwards, Rene Kulitja and OTL's Narelle Rowell 5. Visit to Alice Springs with Mutitjulu Traditional Owners
March 2023

GROOTE EYLANDT & BICKERTON ISLAND –

Population: 1653 (combined)

Traditional Owner Family: Warnindilyakwa

Year Township Lease Signed: 2008

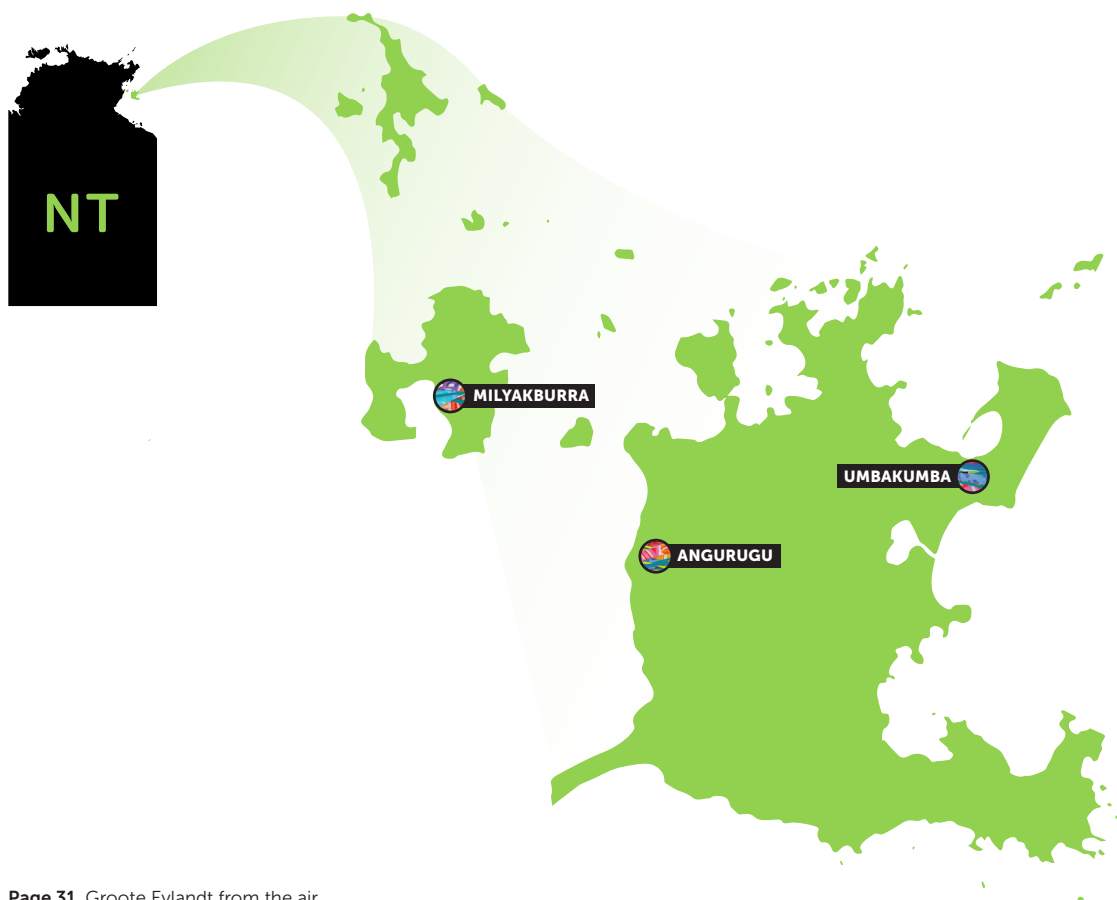
Year Township Lease Transferred to Community Entity: 2022

Term: 80 Years

Annual Rental Revenue: \$242,223 (combined to 30 September 2022)

Empowered Partnerships

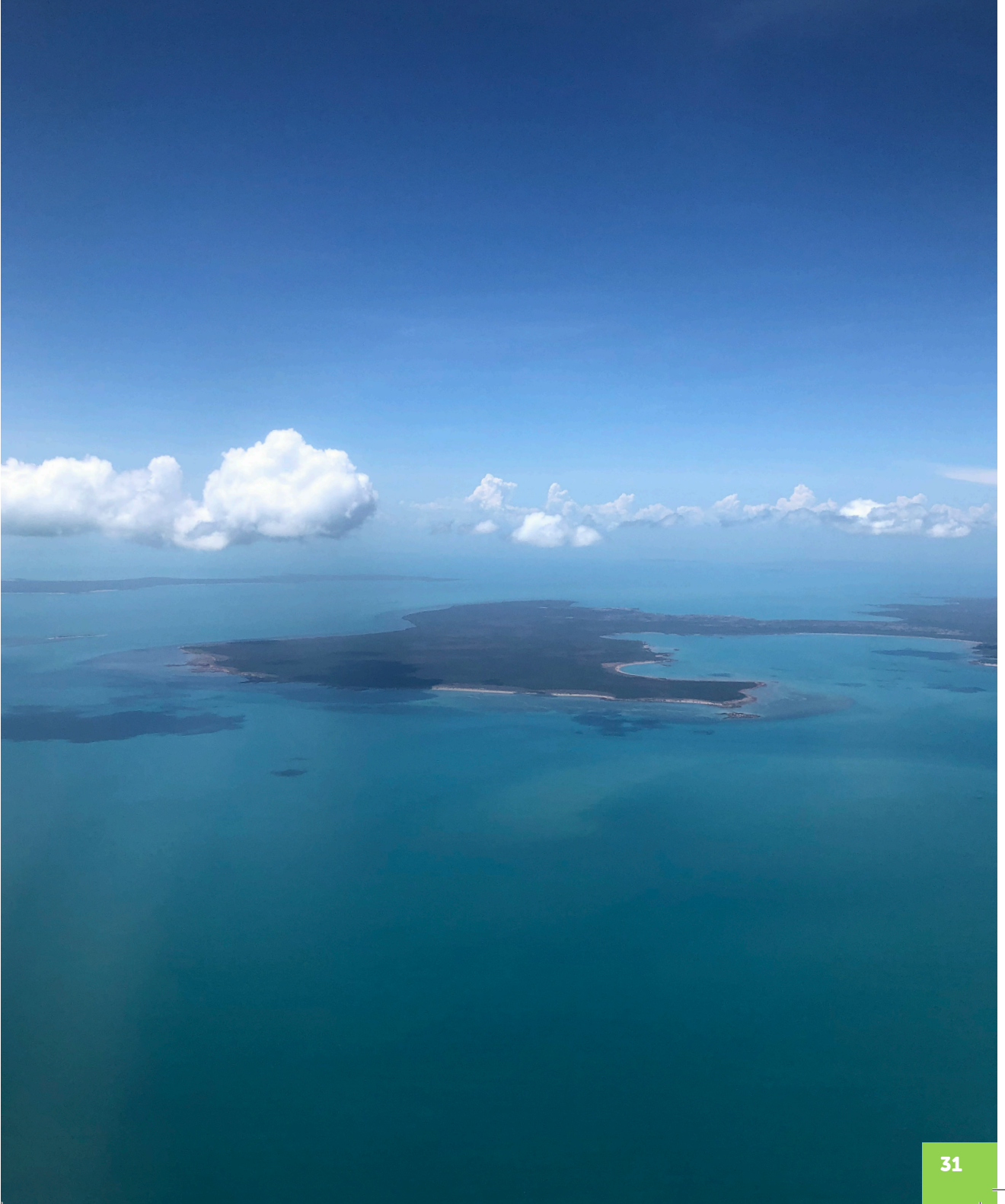
The Groote Eylandt Township Lease was transferred to the community controlled Anindilyakwa Royalties Aboriginal Corporation on 1 October 2023. Aside from this significant event, there was limited activity and involvement from the Office in developments in the Groote and Bickerton Island Townships during the reporting year. See the separate story on page 33 for more details of the transition of the lease to a community entity.



Page 31. Groote Eylandt from the air



ANGURUGU, UMBAKUMBA & MILYAKBURRA





First Transition of Township Lease

On 1 October 2023, the Groote Eylandt Township Lease transitioned to a community controlled entity. This was celebrated at an event on 14 November in Angurugu attended by both the Minister and Assistant Minister for Indigenous Australians.

The transfer was the culmination of years of work, based on the stated aspirations of Traditional Owners across the 3 Townships of Angurugu, Umbakumba and Milyakburra.

At the event, the Anindilyakwa Land Council Chairman, Mr Tony Wurramarrba AO said;

'This is a very important day for the Anindilyakwa Land Council and Traditional Owners. After 14 years of the Executive Director working with Groote communities to manage land use in our communities, now Anindilyakwa Traditional Owners are ready to take over this role.'

The transfer could not have been achieved without the dedication and collaboration between the Office of Township Leasing, the Anindilyakwa Land Council and the Anindilyakwa Royalties

Aboriginal Corporation. The trust that had been built between the Office and our Traditional Owner partners created the environment where the complexity of the transaction was managed without major delay.

Minister Burney, in celebrating the milestone achievement noted;

'Township leasing in the Northern Territory is an important vehicle that drives Aboriginal decision-making in communities and provides an opportunity for whole-of-community management over economic activity on Aboriginal land. This historic transfer reminds the country of the strength of existing leadership structures in First Nations communities.'



Page 32. Sunset on Groote Eylandt 2. Lease Handover – Groote Eylandt November 2022 3. Pennie Talbot, Tony Wurramarrba and Elma Maminymanja at Groote Lease Handover Nov 2022 4. Tony Wurramarrba – Groote Lease Handover

First Transition of Township Lease

By focusing on a partnership approach, the Office was able to support Traditional Owners in their vision to establish secure tenure and take responsibility for its administration. The Office continues to provide support to ARAC in the form of access to a standalone 'clone' of the OTL proprietary database. This has enabled the community entity to continue to administer and establish leases with minimal disruption and provides consistency for developers and tenants. This support demonstrates how the Township Leasing Model is able to support Traditional Owners to realise their aspirations across a range of scenarios, without compromising tenure security.

The Executive Director, speaking during the handover event said;

'As the first Township Lease to transition to a Traditional Owner controlled entity, the Anindilyakwa people have set a path for others to follow, encouraging other Traditional Owners to consider Township Leasing as a mechanism to achieve their aspirations. I am confident the work we have accomplished in partnership with the Anindilyakwa Traditional Owners over the last 14 years will put them and ARAC in a strong position to continue realising their future aspirations across the Groote Archipelago.'

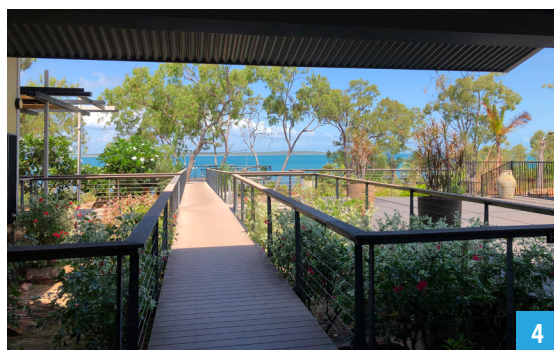




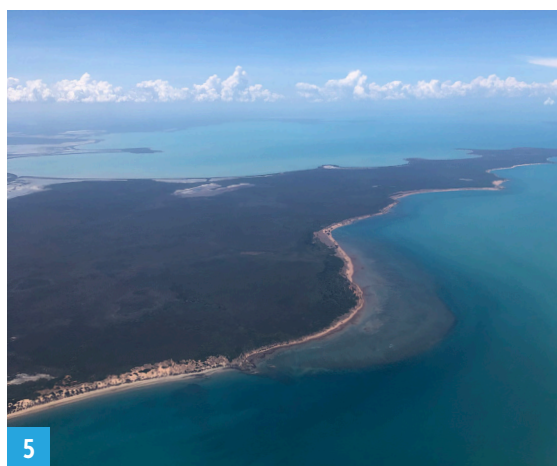
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1. Ken Davies, Pennie Talbot, Mark Hewitt 2. Sunset on Groote Eylandt 3. Groote Eylandt Lease Handover – Nov 2022
4. Groote Eylandt Sea View 5. Groote Eylandt Archipelago from the air 6. Groote Eylandt Lease Handover – Nov 2022

Empowered Partnerships - Supporting the growing interest in the Township Leasing Model

With the economic and social development opportunities created by the Township Leasing Model becoming increasingly evident, the Executive Director has been approached by a number of Traditional Owner groups expressing an interest in whether the Model is a good choice for their Townships.

This year, the Office of Township Leasing has provided information sessions to Traditional Owners from five communities who are considering a Township Lease. The Office works in partnership with Traditional Owners to ensure they have access to the information they need to make free, prior and informed decisions about the Township Leasing Model. This involves providing information and materials in a format that meets their needs, to enable Traditional Owners to identify their aspirations and vision for their community, and whether this will be enabled by a Township Lease.

WADEYE

The Office continues to engage closely with the Kardu Diminin Traditional Owners and wider Wadeye community to assist them to understand the Township Leasing Model and make an informed decisions about whether it is something they want to pursue. We recognise that these decisions are significant and intergenerational given the timeframe of up to 99 years for the Township Lease. As such we do not rush these discussions, providing time and space for Traditional Owners to properly consider the implications for their land, communities and future generations.

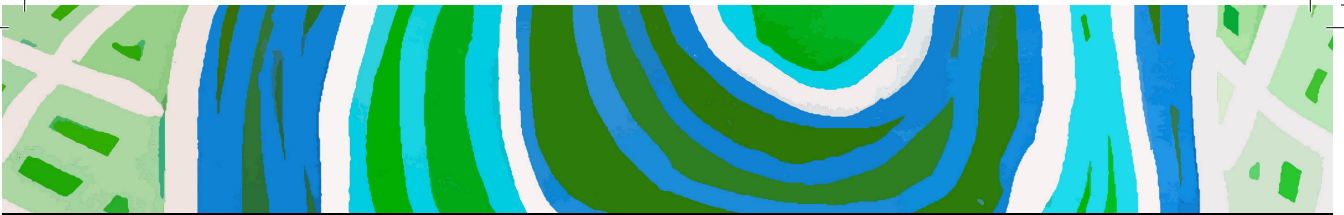
To provide opportunities to gain information, ask questions and engage more fully with the whole Wadeye community, the Executive Director and the Office committed to an engagement strategy guided by the Kardu Diminin and which included monthly visits to Wadeye. The frequency and consistency of these visits make it easier for the community to prepare, ensures that opportunities to engage are maximised and trust and connectivity developed. This has included participating in community events such as the Yidiyi Music, Sport and Wellbeing Concert held in June 2023, which was a follow up from the initial concert in November 2022. This activity is a clear demonstration of the Office's commitment to early, genuine engagement delivering strong, empowered partnerships.

During the next reporting period it is expected that the Kardu Diminin will continue to explore the Township Leasing Model and may make a decision about whether to enter into a Township Lease. The Office is committed to support the Traditional Owners in this journey and in their decision making, regardless of what direction that may take.



1. Wadeye representatives visit to OTL 2. Township Lease discussions Wadeye 3. Group Meetings at Wadeye Page 37. Yidiyi Music, Sport and Wellbeing Ceremony at Wadeye





1



2

Empowered Partnerships - Supporting the growing interest in the Township Leasing Model

ALICE SPRINGS LIVING AREAS

In 2020, the Tangentyere Council Aboriginal Corporation (TCAC) the representative body of the Alice Springs Town Camps Housing Associations, signed a Local Decision Making Agreement with the Northern Territory Government. As part of this agreement was a commitment to transfer the Underleases held by the CEO Housing over 17 Alice Springs Living Areas (also known as Town Camps) to Tangentyere Council Aboriginal Corporation (TCAC). This transfer would allow the implementation of a community housing model developed by TCAC and their subsidiary Community Housing Provider, Community Housing Central Australia (CHCA) to manage housing and infrastructure on the Town Camps.

The Office of Township Leasing is working closely with TCAC, CHCA and the Northern Territory Government to ensure the transfer is sustainable. The transfer was originally expected to occur on 30 June 2023, however due the complexity of funding and contractual arrangements the transfer is now expected to occur in 2024. The Office will continue to support Tangentyere to meet the aspirations of the Town Camp residents to regain control of the housing and other assets on the Town Camps within a suitably capable, culturally appropriate structure.



1. Township Lease meeting at Wadeye 2. Yidiyi Music, Sport and Wellbeing Ceremony at Wadeye 3. Innovative presentation by Stephen Bunduck – Wadeye

AIATSIS SUMMIT

In June, a delegation of Township Leasing staff and Traditional Owners from each of the Tiwi Townships and Wadeye attended the AIATSIS summit held on Noongar Boodja in Perth. This was a significant event for the Office, being the first time we had presented the story of the Township Leasing Model to a national forum.

It was important for the Office to demonstrate how we place our Traditional Owner partners at the centre of what we do and to do this not through our words, but through our actions. We were privileged to have our invitation to attend the Summit accepted by important elders from our partnerships. Of course, the invitation was not only to attend, but also to present, in their own words, their experience of Township Leasing.

We were provided a half hour slot on a packed conference program, just before afternoon tea. The Executive Director had prepared a short introductory speech to be followed by each of the Traditional Owners telling their story. Everyone was very nervous, and somewhat relieved when, as the presentation began there was only a small crowd in attendance. However, it wasn't long before the doors started to open and people started to flood into the room. It seemed many of the conference attendees were interested in the Township Leasing story. Before long, it was standing room only and a crowd of well over 100 were listening intently.

Wesley Kerinauia, the late Mr. Kerinauia's son, was the first of the Traditional Owners to speak, giving the audience an insight into the Wurrumiyanga Township and highlighting how the partnership with the Office of Township Leasing had helped the Mantiyupwi family build businesses and take control of their Township. He was followed by the other Traditional Owners, each giving their unique perspective on how the Township Leasing Model worked in their communities. It was clear from the reception each speaker got from the crowd that these insights were resonating with the audience.





1. AIATSIS Summit Delegation, Perth WA 2. Welcome to the AIATSIS Summit – Perth WA 3. AIATSIS Delegation Group Photo
4. Stephen Bunduck impromptu performance at AIATSIS Summit 5. Wesley Kerinaia presenting at AIATSIS Summit

AIATSIS SUMMIT

Just prior to the end of the session, Wesley Kerinaiaua took to the microphone again to give a final message about the Model. He said;

'Leasing land is not about giving land away, it is about setting up structures on the land, you still have the power. It is not about giving anything away because Tiwi is always going to be Tiwi.'

The presentation concluded with a traditional song of farewell from the Wadeye Traditional Owners. This was the perfect end, providing a demonstration of how the Township Leasing Model incorporates traditional cultural practices into its everyday operation.

The reception the presentation received demonstrates the interest in both the impact secure tenure can have on outcomes for Traditional Owners and the empowered partnerships created by the Office's commitment to early, genuine and sustained engagement in the communities it works alongside.





1. Bridget and Margaret Perdjert, Caroline Farnan and Wendy Miller at the AIATSIS Summit – Perth WA 2. Weaving workshop – AIATSIS Summit 3. AIATSIS Summit Delegation, Perth WA 4. AIATSIS opening ceremony 5. Margaret Perdjert, Kardu Diminin at the AIATSIS Summit – Perth WA 6. Wesley Kerinauia presenting at AIATSIS Summit 7. Delegates presenting at AIATSIS



Report of the Executive Director of Township

Subsection 20R(1) of the Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act 1976 provides that the Executive Director must act as soon as practicable after the end of each financial year to prepare and give to the Minister for presentation to the Parliament a report on the operations of the Executive Director for the year.

ESTABLISHMENT OF THE OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF TOWNSHIP LEASING

The position of the Executive Director of Township Leasing is established pursuant to section 20B of the Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act 1976 (the Land Rights Act). The position is an independent statutory office holder that sits within the portfolio responsibility of the Minister for Indigenous Australians.

The Executive Director holds and administers leases on behalf of the Commonwealth in the Northern Territory. The Executive Director cannot own freehold title land. The National Indigenous Australians Agency (NIAA) is responsible for conducting negotiations on behalf of the Commonwealth. On 27 September 2018, Ms Pennie Talbot was appointed to the position of Executive Director for a term of three years by the Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia, General the Honourable Sir Peter Cosgrove AK MC (Ret'd). On 30 September 2021, Ms Pennie Talbot was reappointed to the position for a period of five years by the Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia, General the Honourable David Hurley AC DSC (Rtd).

OFFICE OF TOWNSHIP LEASING

The Office of Township Leasing is the administrative Office of the Executive Director. Its primary role is to work alongside the local Consultative Forums to empower Traditional Owners to advance economic and social participation and administer leases on behalf of the Executive Director.

ADMINISTRATIVE ARRANGEMENTS

In 2022-23, the Executive Director operated from offices in Darwin. The Office of Township Leasing is located in Darwin city. At the end of the reporting period the Office had 13 staff of which 38 per cent identified as First Nations.

Office of Township Leasing staff are Commonwealth public servants engaged under the Public Service Act 1999 and employed by the National Indigenous Australians Agency (the Agency). As set out in subsection 64 (4A) of the Land Rights Act, the Office is subject to separate budget provisions to the Agency and is funded by an appropriation from the Aboriginals Benefit Account.

TOWNSHIP LEASES HELD BY THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR 2022-23

Section 19A of the Land Rights Act allows Aboriginal Land Trusts to grant a Township Lease over a community on Aboriginal Land to the Executive Director. All current Township Leases have been signed under section 19A of the Land Rights Act, except the Township Sublease covering Mutitjulu, which is undersigned pursuant to section 20CA.

In the 2022-23 Financial Year, the Executive Director held five township leases covering eight communities. See Table A for details.

SECTION 19 LEASES HELD BY THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR 2022-23

Under section 19(3), of the Land Rights Act (s19), an Aboriginal Land Trust may grant an estate or interest in land to the Commonwealth for any public purpose.

The Executive Director, with the approval of the Minister for Indigenous Australians, enters into s19 leases over community housing and other government assets on behalf of the Commonwealth. See Table B for further details.



Public Leasing: year ended 30 June 2023

SECTION 19 HOUSING PRECINCT LEASES

It is current Government policy that any significant Commonwealth investment in assets located on Aboriginal Land must be secured by a long-term tenure arrangement such as a lease.

In the Northern Territory, Section 19 Housing Precinct Leases are held either directly by the Northern Territory Government or by the Executive Director on behalf of the Commonwealth. Unlike a Township Lease, a Housing Lease only covers the lots used for public housing within a community.

The Executive Director does not provide tenancy management services to communities. Where the Executive Director holds the Housing Leases, the Executive Director subleases the community housing to the Northern Territory to allow Territory Housing access to maintain and build new houses and enter into tenancy agreements with occupants. The Northern Territory Government consults with the community through Local Housing Reference Groups. See Table B for further details.

AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT (COMMONWEALTH) ASSET LEASES

The Executive Director has direct management of Australian Government asset leases located in the Central Land Council and Northern Land Council regions. The Office, however, also manages several other leases in the Northern Land Council region on behalf of the National Indigenous Australians Agency and the Department of Education and Training. The arrangement simplifies the administration of leases and helps to ensure that these assets are maintained.

In 2022-23 the Executive Director administered Commonwealth Asset leases that secured assets such as early childhood centres, safe houses, Government Engagement Coordinator complexes, offices and residential accommodation. See Table C for further details.

ALICE SPRINGS LIVING AREAS HELD BY THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR 2022-23

The Alice Springs Living Areas (also referred to as the Alice Springs Town Camps) are 17 distinct communities situated in and around the fringes of Alice Springs. Fifteen separate Housing Associations hold leases over the Town Camps they manage housing for. These leases have been issued either under the Special Purposes Leases Act (NT) or the Crown Lands Act (NT).

It has been 13 years since the Executive Director, on behalf of the Australian Government, entered into 40-year leases with the Housing Associations. The Executive Director simultaneously granted an underlease in the form of a Housing Management Agreement to the Northern Territory Government.

Under these agreements, the Northern Territory Government assumes responsibility for all areas located within the Town Camp boundary and captures all infrastructure, including housing, open spaces, roads, parks and community centres. The current Housing Management Agreements commenced on 1 July 2018 for a term of five years. Refer to Table D for further details.



Services provided by other bodies

In 2022-23 the Executive Director engaged service providers and contractors (both government and non-government) for:

- An audited trust account
- Repairs and maintenance
- Capital works
- Consultative Forum Meeting support
- Office of Township Leasing database support
- Alice Springs Towns Camp housing association administration
- Strategic and business planning services
- Translation services
- Governance and Leadership Training
- Community Housing Modelling
- Cultural awareness

During the year under review the Executive Director also engaged the following contractors:

- Bathurst Island Housing Authority
- Tangentyere Council Aboriginal Corporation
- Elephant in the Room Consulting
- Colliers International NT
- Saltwater People
- Kardu Diminin Corporation Limited
- Tiwi Training and Employment
- PWC Indigenous Consulting (PIC)
- Mutitjulu Community Aboriginal Corporation
- Larkin Byrne
- Tanyah Nasir Consulting
- Tenbagsfull
- Tiwi Resources
- Tiwi Enterprises
- BDO



Expenditure Statement

Under subsection 64(4A) of the Land Rights Act, the activities of the Executive Director are funded from the Aboriginals Benefit Account. Full financial details of the Aboriginals Benefit Account are in the financial statements of the National Indigenous Australians Agency, submitted to the Minister under subsections 63(2) and 70(2) of the Public Service Act 1999, and to the Finance Minister under section 42 of the Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013. The statements are subject to scrutiny through the Senate Estimates Committee process.

A summary of expenditure and revenue arising from the activities of the Executive Director of Township Leasing for the year ended 30 June 2023 are provided below.

The total Township Lease Revenue received is also included below. This is updated annually and demonstrates the cumulative benefit secure tenure arrangements generate for Traditional Owners and their Townships.

Expenditure Statement

2022-23 Expenditure	(\$ exclusive of GST)
Employee expenses	2,178,317
Travel-related expenses	397,344
Contractor Services	1,554,203
General administrative expenses	584,933
Total Expenditure	4,714,796

2022-23 Township Lease Revenue	(\$ exclusive of GST)
Wurrumiyanga Township Lease	1,020,386
Groote Township Lease*	242,223
Milikapiti Township Lease	329,695
Wurankuwu Township Lease	18,872
Pirlangimpi Township Lease	353,265
Mutitjulu Township Lease	183,157
Total Expenditure	2,147,598

* Note: Groote Township Lease transferred to Anindilyakwa Royalties Aboriginal Corporation on 1 October 2023

Total Township Lease Revenue (since Headlease implemented)	(\$ exclusive of GST)
Wurrumiyanga Township Lease (2007)	11,486,834
Groote Township Lease (2008) *	9,507,333
Milikapiti Township Lease (2011)	2,882,042
Wurankuwu Township Lease (2011)	166,216
Pirlangimpi Township Lease (2017)	1,637,843
Mutitjulu Township Lease (2017)	664,551
Total Expenditure	26,344,728

* Note: Groote Township Lease transferred to Anindilyakwa Royalties Aboriginal Corporation on 1 October 2023

TABLE A —

**Communities covered by Township Leases held by the Executive Director
of Township Leasing in 2022-23**

Community		Location	Date of Execution	Term
1	Wurrumiyanga (Nguiu)	Bathurst Island	30 August 2007	99 years
2	Angurugu*	Groote Eylandt	4 December 2008	80 years
3	Umbakumba*	Groote Eylandt	4 December 2008	80 years
4	Milyakburra*	Bickerton Island	4 December 2008	80 years
5	Milikapiti (Snake Bay)	Melville Island	22 November 2011	99 years
6	Wurankuwu (Ranku)	Bathurst Island	22 November 2011	99 years
7	Mutitjulu	Central Australia	16 March 2017	67 years
8	Pirlangimpi	Melville Island	26 June 2017	99 years
Total 8				

** Note: Groote Township Lease transferred to Anindilyakwa Royalties Aboriginal Corporation on 1 October 2023*

TABLE B —

S19 Housing Precinct Leases held by the Executive Director of Township Leasing in 2022-23

S19 Housing Precinct Leases

Community		Region	Executed	NT under-lease date of effect	Tenure
1	Lajamanu	CLC	29.06.2011	29.06.2011*	Aboriginal Land
2	Hermannsburg	CLC	29.06.2011	29.06.2011*	Aboriginal Land
3	Yuendumu	CLC	11.04.2013	11.04.2013*	Aboriginal Land
4	Areyonga	CLC	23.10.2012	01.07.2018	Aboriginal Land
5	Kaltukatjara	CLC	23.10.2012	01.07.2018	Aboriginal Land
6	Kintore	CLC	30.05.2013	01.07.2018	Aboriginal Land
7	Mt Liebig	CLC	23.10.2012	01.07.2018	Aboriginal Land
8	Nturiya	CLC	23.10.2012	01.07.2018	Aboriginal Land
9	Papunya	CLC	23.10.2012	01.07.2018	Aboriginal Land
10	Pmara Jutunta	CLC	23.10.2012	01.07.2018	Aboriginal Land
11	Willowra	CLC	30.05.2013	01.07.2018	Aboriginal Land
12	Ali Curung	CLC	01.07.2013	01.07.2018	Aboriginal Land
13	Nyirripi	CLC	01.07.2013	01.07.2018	Aboriginal Land
14	Ampilatawatja	CLC	18.07.2013	01.07.2018	Aboriginal Land
15	Imanpa	CLC	25.09.2013	01.07.2018	CLA
16	Wutunugurra	CLC	25.09.2013	01.07.2018	CLA
17	Imangara	CLC	25.09.2013	01.07.2018	CLA
18	Wilora	CLC	08.10.2013	01.07.2018	CLA
19	Tara	CLC	08.10.2013	01.07.2018	CLA
20	Titjikala	CLC	08.11.2013	01.07.2018	CLA
21	Alpururulam	CLC	30.04.2014	01.07.2018	CLA
22	Atitjere	CLC	18.07.2014	01.07.2018	CLA
23	Laramba	CLC	18.07.2014	01.07.2018	CLA
24	Santa Teresa	CLC	21.9.2015	01.07.2018	CLA
25	Engawala	CLC	17.06.2016	01.07.2018	CLA
26	Binjari	NLC	08.03.2017	01.07.2018	CLA
Total: 26					



**TABLE C –
Commonwealth Asset Leases Administered by the Executive Director of Township Leasing
or Office of Township Leasing 2022-23**

Commonwealth asset leases held by the Executive Director

- Total: 36

Community		Lot	Region	Executed	Tenure
Government Engagement Coordinator (GEC) Complexes (20)					
1	Ali Curung	248	CLC	25.07.2012	Aboriginal Land
2	Ali Curung	249	CLC	25.07.2012	Aboriginal Land
3	Areyonga	48	CLC	25.07.2012	Aboriginal Land
4	Atitjere	80	CLC	10.08.2015	CLA
5	Haasts Bluff	75	CLC	12.03.2014	Aboriginal Land
6	Lajamanu	420	CLC	01.05.2013	Aboriginal Land
7	Numbulwar	23	NLC	14.06.2018	Aboriginal Land
8	Hermannsburg	192	CLC	25.07.2012	Aboriginal Land
9	Kaltukatjara	96	CLC	25.07.2012	Aboriginal Land
10	Papunya	262	CLC	25.07.2012	Aboriginal Land
11	Yuelamu	86	CLC	25.07.2012	Aboriginal Land
12	Willowra	136	CLC	03.05.2013	Aboriginal Land
13	Mt. Liebig	43	CLC	29.10.2014	Aboriginal Land
14	Engawala	67	CLC	17.06.2015	Aboriginal Land
15	Imanpa	91	CLC	17.06.2015	CLA
16	Yuendumu	633	CLC	10.08.2015	Aboriginal Land
17	Kintore	156	CLC	07.05.2016	Aboriginal Land
18	Santa Teresa	321	CLC	07.05.2016	Aboriginal Land
19	Alpurrurulam	169	CLC	20.01.2017	CLA
20	Gapuwiyak	159	NLC	5.02.2019	Aboriginal Land



Community		Lot	Region	Executed	Tenure
Child Care Centres (16)					
21	Yuelamu	98	CLC	03.05.2013	Aboriginal Land
22	Lajamanu	322	CLC	23.07.2012	Aboriginal Land
23	Santa Teresa	335	CLC	06.08.2013	Aboriginal Land
24	Areyonga	83	CLC	05.07.2013	Aboriginal Land
25	Kintore	128	CLC	05.07.2013	Aboriginal Land
26	Atitjere	335	CLC	18.07.2013	CLA
27	Haasts Bluff	81	CLC	05.07.2013	Aboriginal Land
28	Kaltukatjara	237	CLC	30.07.2014	Aboriginal Land
29	Mount Liebig	22	CLC	01.07.2015	Aboriginal Land
30	Nyirripi	54	CLC	16.09.2015	Aboriginal Land
31	Titjikala	13	CLC	07.05.2016	CLA
32	Laramba	93	CLC	02.06.2016	Aboriginal Land
33	Yarralin	116	NLC	25.11.2017	CLA
34	Robinson River	33	NLC	23.03.2018	Aboriginal Land
35	Ali Curung	80	CLC	14.06.2018	Aboriginal Land
36	Minyerri	71	NLC	07.09.2018	Aboriginal Land

Commonwealth Asset Leases Administered by The Office Of Township Leasing

- Total: 31

Community		Lot	Region	Executed	Tenure
Government Engagement Coordinator (GEC) Complexes (16)					
37	Bulman	81	NLC	17.08.2012	Aboriginal Land
38	Galiwinku	321	NLC	17.08.2012	Aboriginal Land
39	Gapuwiyak	171	NLC	17.08.2012	Aboriginal Land
40	Maningrida	700	NLC	17.08.2012	Aboriginal Land
41	Milingimbi	235	NLC	16.08.2012	Aboriginal Land
42	Ngukurr	409	NLC	16.08.2012	Aboriginal Land
43	Ramingining	259	NLC	17.08.2012	Aboriginal Land
44	Ramingining	260	NLC	17.08.2012	Aboriginal Land
45	Peppimenarti	54	NLC	17.08.2012	Aboriginal Land
46	Minyerri	92	NLC	01.07.2013	Aboriginal Land
47	Palumpa	105	NLC	16.08.2012	Aboriginal Land
48	Wugularr (Beswick)	183	NLC	17.08.2012	Aboriginal Land
49	Wadeye	608	NLC	17.08.2012	Aboriginal Land
50	Robinson River	87	NLC	01.07.2013	Aboriginal Land
51	Robinson River	89	NLC	01.07.2013	Aboriginal Land
52	Yirrkala	243	NLC	17/08/2012	Aboriginal Land



Community		Lot	Region	Executed	Tenure
Safe Houses (5)					
53	Maningrida	717	NLC	17.08.2012	Aboriginal Land
54	Ngukurr	424	NLC	17.08.2012	Aboriginal Land
55	Ramingining	265	NLC	17.08.2012	Aboriginal Land
56	Wugularr (Beswick)	188	NLC	17.08.2012	Aboriginal Land
57	Peppimenarti	25	NLC	17.08.2012	Aboriginal Land
Child Care Centres (10)					
58	Peppimenarti	91	NLC	18.08.2012	Aboriginal Land
59	Wadeye	650	NLC	18.08.2012	Aboriginal Land
60	Wadeye	375	NLC	18.08.2012	Aboriginal Land
61	Waruwi	48	NLC	21.10.2014	Aboriginal Land
62	Minjilang	223, 224adj	NLC	17.8.2012	Aboriginal Land
63	Manyallaluk	28	NLC	17.08.2012	Aboriginal Land
64	Emu Point	14adj	NLC	01.07.2013	Aboriginal Land
65	Jilkminggan	82	NLC	13.02.2014	CLA
66	Aputula	7	CLC	05.07.2012	CLA
67	Wugularr	193	NLC	15.09.2016	Aboriginal Land

TABLE D –
Alice Springs Living Areas (Town Camps) subleases held by the Executive Director
of Township Leasing in 2022-23

	Housing Association	Town Camp	Tenure
1	Mpwetyerre Aboriginal Corporation	Abbotts Camp	Special Purpose lease
2	Ilparpa Aboriginal Corporation	Ilparpa	Special Purpose lease
3	Karnte Aboriginal Corporation	Karnte	Crown lease
4	Anthelk-Ewlpaye Aboriginal Corporation and Hoppys Camp	Hoppys	Special Purpose lease
5	Anthelk-Ewlpaye Aboriginal Corporation	Charles Creek	Special Purpose lease
6	Anthelk-Ewlpaye Aboriginal Corporation	Kunoth	Special Purpose lease
7	Akngwertnarre Association Incorporated	Morris Soak	Special Purpose lease
8	Anthepe Housing Association Incorporated	Drive In	Special Purpose lease
9	Aper Alwerrkng Association Incorporated and Palmers Camp	Palmers	Special Purpose lease
10	Ewyenper–Atwatye Association Incorporated	Hidden Valley	Special Purpose lease
11	Ilperle Tyathe Association Incorporated	Warlpiri	Special Purpose lease
12	Ilyperenye Association Incorporated	Old Timers	Special Purpose lease
13	Inarlange Community Incorporated	Little Sisters	Crown lease
14	Mount Nancy Association Incorporated	Mount Nancy	Special Purpose lease
15	Mount Nancy Association Incorporated	Basso's Farm	Special Purpose lease
16	Yarrenyty Arltere Association Incorporated	Larapinta Valley	Special Purpose lease
17	Nyewente Association Incorporated	Trucking Yards	Special Purpose lease
Total 17			





Australian Government
Office of Township Leasing

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF
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A vibrant Aboriginal artwork in the bottom half of the page. It features a large central sun with concentric circles of red, orange, and pink. To the left and right are two stylized kangaroos in red and white. The background is filled with various geometric and organic shapes in blue, orange, red, and green, all outlined in white.