

## **Dambimangari Aboriginal Corporation**

### **Chief Executive Officer**

### **Report to the Annual General Meeting 2017**

Welcome all of our corporation members to the 2017 AGM. It's always good to see everyone again.

Like previous years, 2017 has had its challenges – excitement, good news and bad news - but overall the corporation has strived to deliver timely services to all the members while constantly looking to provide employment and new business income for the organisation. As members are aware, the current Board has made a number of carefully considered changes to a number of policies and guidelines to ensure that all funding expenditure is monitored and distributed as fairly as possible to meet the needs of our large Traditional Owner membership.

A decision has been made to cease trading with the Maiya Nggadim Store due to continuing losses throughout 2017. Unfortunately, with the general downturn of the economy, difficulties with Centrepay arrangements, inability to recoup some Centrepay customer debts, labour costs and competing food outlets, this decision has become necessary to reduce impacts on Trust funds. On the upside, the store has provided employment and training for 12 local Indigenous people during its trading time and has catered for all our - and other Indigenous organisation - meetings and functions. The store will close its door on the 13<sup>th</sup> of October. While the land and building remain assets of the Trust, every effort will be made to attract other business interests, either Dambimangari or other interests.

The outlook moving into 2018 looks a lot more promising as far as mining royalty income and other interests under consideration are concerned. These include:

- Koolan Island Seawall reconstruction and an expected return to mine production in late 2018 or early 2019
- Development of tourism opportunities on the island through the Cultural Centre.
- Change of ownership and resolution of historic issues on Cockatoo Island.
- Other potential opportunities on Cockatoo Island that might come about through the development of oil and gas fields at Browse Basin.
- Purchase and completion of fit out of the new surveyed Ranger 9.3 metre vessel should be finalised at the end of October and once we receive it, will become operational almost immediately. This will provide for independent coastal monitoring of visitors, research and attention to cultural sites by our rangers, while also providing required sea time and training for Dambimangari.
- It is pleasing to note that the Commonwealth has confirmed that funding for Indigenous Protection Areas such as ours will continue for a further five years.
- Further good news on funding is that we have received \$200,000 from the Commonwealth to purchase and construct nine four-man safari tents at various strategy sites in

Dambimangari coastal country, greatly assisting us with monitoring and research – and establishing our Traditional Owner presence on Country.

- The work to resite these tents will begin in late October or early November 2017.
- After much discussion and consideration, the Board decided to take up a proposal from Australian Wildlife Conservancy (AWC) to develop a partnership to work on the Yampi Sound Training Area for the next two years and five by five year agreements. This package presents the best value for Dambimangari in addition to providing funds for additional works. It will also deliver employment, training and scholarship opportunities over the coming years.
- Our carbon services will remain with KLC for the next 12 months based on the same arrangements and costs as this year. To date, we have experienced lower than average wildfire impact on our country providing a reasonable return in carbon funds.
- The joint management Board for the three marine parks in Dambimangari Country has met several times out on country and is quickly getting up to speed with what is occurring in the parks and other parts of Dambimangari country. The Board is developing management tools and protocols to ensure that the flora, fauna and culture are protected and managed appropriately. We will be looking to work further with Traditional Owners in relation to establishing our own visitor management plan and laying the foundation for a Dambimangari Visitor Pass system that will link in with our neighbouring Traditional Owners. It is very important that we get this in place for the 2018 tourism season.
- In August this year, our corporation was audited as part of the Office of the Registrar of Indigenous Corporations (ORIC) process of rolling audits of Indigenous corporations. This involved a review of all of the corporation's financial and management. To date, we have not received the report on the outcomes of the audit. However, this will be passed on to all family signatories as information to members.
- Earlier this year, the Board and staff commenced a process of strategic review of the organisation, staff contracts, duties, roles and responsibilities. This included an audit of all staff performance and duty statements through independent HR review and implementation of induction manual, admin/staff manual and other required documentation of policies. This process is all but finalised with the documentation to be provided to the Board this month.
- As part of the strategic review, there will be a set of comprehensive governance courses which will include training in understanding of financial reports which we are hopeful we can bet started later this month. All Directors will be required to attend these courses.

### ***Staff movements***

Andrew Anderson, our asset manager and Amanda Anderson, our internal bookkeeper, will not be renewing their two-year contracts with DAC in December this year due to the need to return to Scotland to assist family who are ill.

Advertising for Andrew's position will commence before the end of October. Amanda's position will be advertised at the end of this year or early next year.

Interviews will commence this month for a suitably qualified person to fill the role of Marine Operations Manager whose core duties include skippering the new Ranger vessel, mentoring rangers during sea work and training rangers to achieve their coxswain and higher class marine qualifications.

I take this opportunity to thank those staff members who have worked exceptionally hard this year to maintain an efficient organisation over the past 12 months and look forward to working with you in the year ahead. I also thank the Board members for their assistance throughout the year.

Thank you

Peter McCumstie

CEO

Dambimangari Aboriginal Corporation