



APONT Aboriginal Governance & Management Program

Newsletter : December 2021



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Season's greetings from the Aboriginal Governance and Management Program

We have covered some miles in 2021 - working from the Top End to the Red Centre supporting strong Aboriginal leadership and governance. Through our work - we are privileged to work alongside many passionate and determined board members and inspiring community leaders. These people are the backbone of community-controlled organisations and are making self-determination happen. We acknowledge their good work particularly this year with all the challenges of COVID. We hope you enjoy putting your feet up and reading about some of our recent activity in this edition of our newsletter. You should also check out our new website www.aboriginalgovernance.org.au. Get in touch if you'd like to find out more.

Wes Miller, Program Manager



Telling our story through a new website and a new look!

We are excited to launch the new AGMP website - making access to governance and management help and information now so much easier. The old website was almost 10 years old and a lot has changed in that time!

The new website also features our eye-catching new artwork (above) thanks to design from Darwin-based Aboriginal designers - Moogie Down Productions. Here's the story of our beautiful new artwork...

"The AGMP logo sits amongst diverse artworks - representing the various people, places and language groups across the NT with whom AGMP work."

The two intertwining red and yellow ribbons show the two-way approach of AGMP's work - weaving both traditional and contemporary leadership and governance. The combined approach builds stronger, more resilient organisations."

AGMP's work is grounded in the strength and authority of traditional knowledge and decision-making."

They blend this with the skills required to meet corporate governance obligations and to ensure Aboriginal organisations are supported to operate and succeed in 'both worlds'."

Our Decisions | Our Actions | Our Future



Karungkarni Art and Culture



Karungkarni Art and Culture is a vitally important organisation to the people of Kalkaringi and Daguragu communities.



Governance and planning workshop with staff and members of Karungkarni Art and Culture in October

The organisation was set up 10 years ago to promote and facilitate the passing on of cultural knowledge from senior people to younger generations and to share the region's unique art and culture with the wider world. Today, the team at Karungkarni are achieving all this and so much more!

The Art Centre is the heart of the community. It's always a safe space for members to connect, feel welcome and find a friendly cup of tea. Karungkarni artists are proud and strong community leaders.

We were honoured to respond to the request from Karungkarni Art and Culture for a governance refresher and strategic planning workshop in October this year. Over three days we spent valuable time with members, young and old, reflecting on where the organisation has come from, in order to build a strong plan for the future.

Workshop participants showed enormous commitment and worked through 40 degree heat every day to better understand what good governance means for them. There was also deep discussion about ideas for linking their everyday activities with the strategic vision of the founding elders.

"I learnt about how things will be safe and strong in my workplace and in the community."

*Cassandra, worker & workshop participant
Karungkarni Art and Culture*

Angkerle Atwatye (Standley Chasm): family tourism enterprise reflects on good governance



Angkerle Atwatye (Standley Chasm) is a sacred site and private reserve – fully owned and operated by the Angkerle Aboriginal Corporation. The site sits within the Tjoritja / West MacDonnell National Park about 40 minutes' drive west of Alice Springs. The Angkerle Aboriginal Corporation are a motivated group of Western Arrernte leaders who run a successful family tourism enterprise – managing walking tracks, a cafe/kiosk and souvenir shop, group catering and cultural tours as well as camping and nature park facilities.

The Angkerle directors also know the importance of taking time out to reflect on healthy governance within their organisation. Over the last few months AGMP has supported Angkerle directors and management to undertake a governance 'health-check'. This is a great way to get a snapshot of how your organisation is travelling, and where things might need a tune-up. We are using the outcomes of the 'health-check' to design further training and support for the Angkerle directors over the coming months – building on their strengths and supporting them towards achieving their vision for the future.

"I've got a good understanding of what happens now, and where we want to go as an organisation."

Director, Angkerle Aboriginal Corporation

AGMP can provide a governance 'health-check' for any Aboriginal organisation in the NT. Give us a ring if you'd like a quick and easy way to reflect on different aspects of governance in your organisation.



AGMP Manager, Wes Miller, leads a governance 'health check' with Angkerle Aboriginal Corporation



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Building two-way leadership with the Lhere Artepe Aboriginal Corporation

We are excited to begin working with the Lhere Artepe Aboriginal Corporation, well known in Alice Springs as the representative body for Arrernte Native Title holders, and for their chain of local IGA supermarkets! We recently signed an agreement with the Lhere Artepe board which sets out a plan for how we will work together.

This involves helping directors build knowledge of their legal role and responsibilities as decision-makers for the organisation. We have begun by supporting directors to create a Lhere Artepe governance 'map'. This has helped everyone to better understand the structure of the organisation – including how the various estate groups and corporate business entities all fit together. Knowing the relationships between the different parts and activities of an organisation is key to accountability and good governance.



Making a governance 'map' helps understand the structure and relationships within an organisation

Using presentations, games, activities and scenarios, AGMP takes a two-way approach, recognising the important cultural authority of directors, whilst also building understanding of corporate compliance requirements.

"Talking about governance, two-ways, it's important. This is what we have been trying to tell people for so many years. It needs to be two-way... It's all of our responsibility."

Susan, Lhere Artepe Director

Helping Mimal Land Management to tell a better money story in caring for country work

We are thrilled to be working with Mimal Land Management. This exciting organisation is leading the way in traditional land management – caring for country in central Arnhem Land.

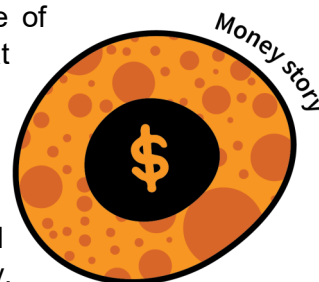
Mimal's dedicated 'two-way' approach means they are combining ancient cultural practice with a contemporary scientific approach to land management.



Developing tools with Mimal Land Management to help improve financial literacy and understanding of the Money Story

Similarly we are working to support Mimal's two-way approach to governance – blending traditional leadership and knowledge with the requirements of modern organisational compliance. As part of this work we are proud to be helping Mimal set up more transparent ways of sharing financial information with the board – to support more informed decision-making and accountability.

With the generous assistance of our expert friends at Macquarie Bank, AGMP is working with the team at Mimal to create tailored resources for directors and management to examine and communicate the Money Story.



This is an essential skill for the organisation to ensure it can fulfil its mission of protecting the precious flora, fauna and cultural heritage in this extraordinary region.



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Central Australian Joint Management Forum

It has been the wettest November ever recorded in Central Australia and we spent the wettest week out at the Ross River Homestead facilitating the Central Australian Joint Management Forum!

Organised by the Central Land Council, the Forum was attended by 40 Traditional Owners representing 15 different jointly-managed National Parks across the Red Centre and Barkly regions.

Traditional Owners came together to learn and share stories about how Joint Management works. In between storm showers we also found time to reflect on the Joint Management partnership with NT Parks.



Traditional Owners gathered feedback on different aspects of Joint Management for the NT Parks and Wildlife Commission

Traditional Owners worked hard gathering valuable feedback on their experience of the two-way approach to land management, jobs and economic development, plus governance and decision-making through Joint Management Committees. We are proud to have been a part of this unique Forum, helping enable Traditional Owners to speak up for country, culture and livelihoods.

Closing the Gap, AGMP and strengthening the Aboriginal-controlled sector



AGMP is proud to be a part of the APO NT alliance who speak up for Aboriginal people across the NT

AGMP is proud to be a part of the Aboriginal Peak Organisations Northern Territory (APO NT) alliance, who represent Aboriginal community-controlled peak bodies, organisations and Land Councils from across the Territory. This year APO NT have been busy working with Federal and NT Governments on Closing the Gap Implementation Plans.

One of the priorities for Closing the Gap is to build the Aboriginal community-controlled sector. AGMP was set up by APO NT back in 2014 because Aboriginal leaders recognised the need for local governance support for Aboriginal organisations. AGMP is now bringing our experience in good governance, leadership and strengthening Aboriginal organisations to these discussions. Through Closing the Gap we are working together to ensure Aboriginal organisations continue to get the support needed to develop and deliver important services for Aboriginal people across the Territory. We understand that strong Aboriginal organisations improve outcomes for all Aboriginal people and the communities in which they operate.

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