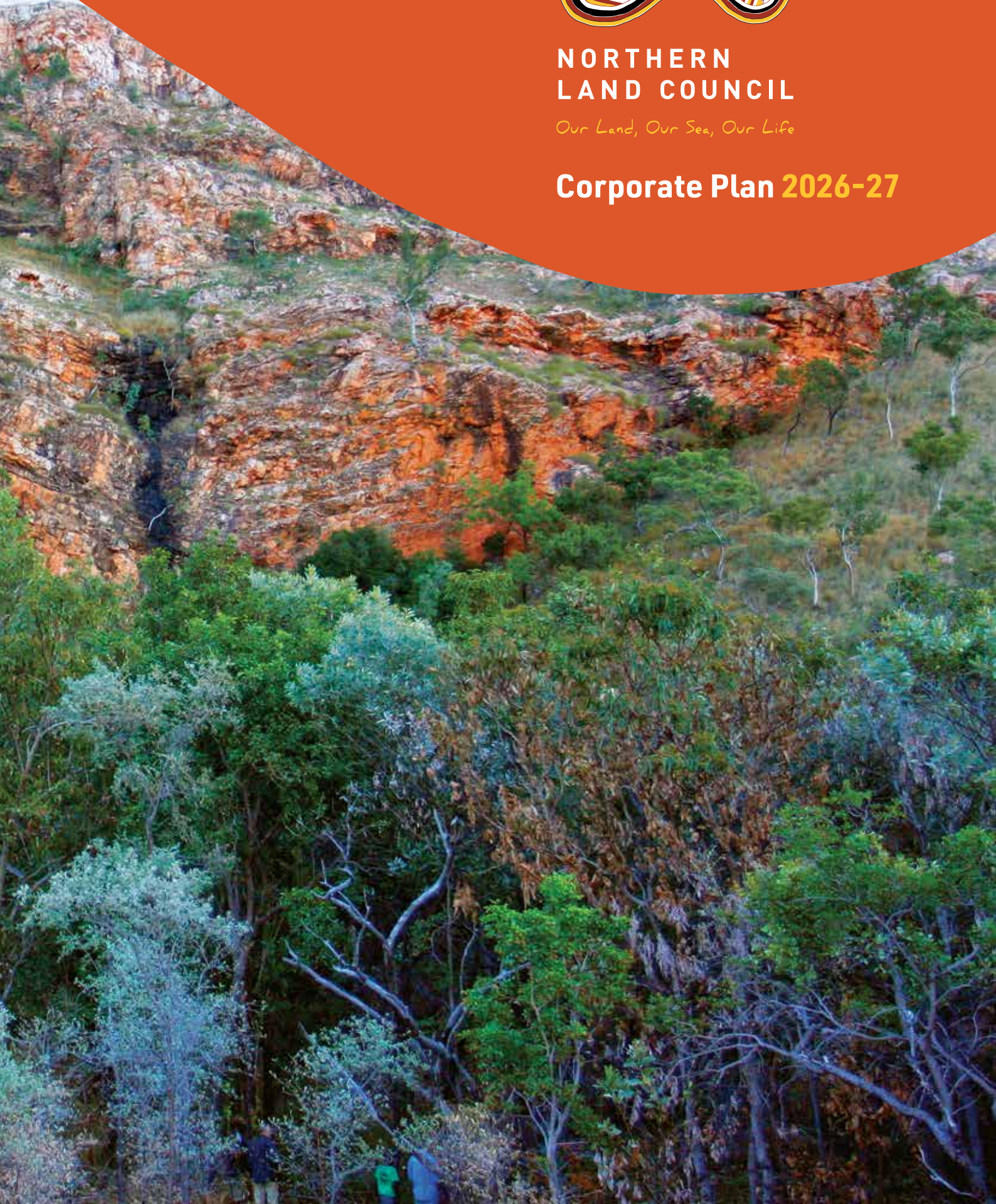


**NORTHERN
LAND COUNCIL**

Our Land, Our Sea, Our Life

Corporate Plan 2026-27





STATEMENT OF PREPARATION

We, as the Accountable Authority of the Northern Land Council (NLC), present the NLC Corporate Plan 2026-27, which covers the periods of 2026-27 to 2029-30, as required under section 35(1)(b) of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (the PGPA Act).

Note: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people should be aware that this document may contain the images of people who have passed away in photographs and printed material.

ACCOUNTABLE AUTHORITY (CHAIR AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER)

As the Accountable Authority of the Northern Land Council (NLC) under the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (Cth) (PGPA Act), we are pleased to present the NLC Corporate Plan 2026-27.

This corporate plan sets out the strategies and key activities the NLC will implement in the 2026–27 year to effectively deliver our statutory functions and support Traditional Owners across the seven regions.

We are now six months into the new Full Council term which commenced in November 2025. This is the first council nominated under the new method of choice resulting in a significant increase in the number of council members and the highest number of women on an NLC Council. We look forward to working with the new Council as we shape the strategic vision and outlook of the NLC for the coming years.

In November 2025, Mr Matthew Ryan, a Barabarra, Wurrpann and Gurindji man was re-elected as Chair of the NLC for the next three-year term and Ms Lorraine Jones, a Ngaliwurru/Nungali woman was elected Deputy Chair, making NLC history as the second woman to hold this position.

This year marks the 50th anniversary of the *Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act 1976* (Cth) (Land Rights Act).

The Land Rights Act, which commenced in 1976, was a landmark moment for Aboriginal rights and has fundamentally changed the way our land and sea Country is respected, used and developed in the Northern Territory. The Land Rights Act is critical to our constituents, now more than ever, enabling self-determination over Aboriginal Land and establishing the legal environment to benefit economically, socially and culturally from land rights.

Over the next 12 months we look forward to celebrating all that has been achieved by the Land Rights movement while also being mindful of the many challenges faced by Aboriginal people across our seven regions.



NLC CHAIR
MATTHEW RYAN



NLC CEO
YUSEPH DEEN

The NLC stands strong as a voice for Aboriginal people who have felt targeted by legislative reforms that negatively impact Traditional Owners. The Northern Territory Government has pursued changes to laws about sacred sites, child protection and the justice system without proper consultation or regard to the views of the people that the changes will impact most. Aboriginal people have the solutions; it is the role of government to listen and be responsive to the needs of the community.

Uncertainty about the next wet season is causing serious concerns amongst NLC constituents. Not enough has been done to prevent a repeat of the devastating human impact from last year's floods and cyclones. Calls to address communication issues, establish local evacuation centres and review the quality of conditions in temporary accommodation have not been acted upon. The NLC will continue to advocate and work with government to ensure services are appropriately delivered throughout our region and that planning for disaster relief is a priority.

The prolonged wet season has also impacted our ability to access some parts of the community for consultation meetings. This has meant that more meetings are being scheduled in a condensed period of time, presenting numerous logistical challenges for our operations teams.

Concurrently, the NLC continues to strengthen service delivery processes, with a particular focus over the next twelve months to deliver a more efficient Section 19 application experience. Traditional Owners are always front-of-mind when it comes to any proposed activity on Aboriginal Land. The NLC's role is to ensure that Traditional Owners can make informed decisions about their land. The NLC seeks to provide an effective and timely process while maintaining high standards of consultation in-line with the principles of seeking the free prior and informed consent of decision makers.

Regionalisation remains a priority for the NLC, to strengthen our regional presence and capacity, enabling the organisation to better support Traditional Owners and communities. We are prioritising the ongoing development of infrastructure for our regional offices, improving accessibility to NLC services, and ensuring that staff are equipped to respond to local needs and opportunities.

We have an exciting and ambitious twelve months ahead of us and we look forward to working alongside our staff, Traditional Owners and other stakeholders.

Regionalisation remains a priority for the NLC, to strengthen our regional presence and capacity, enabling the organisation to better support Traditional Owners and communities.





The NLC advocates for, consults with and supports Aboriginal people to exercise their rights and make informed decisions about their lands, waters, seas, culture and economic opportunities.

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ABOUT US

PURPOSE

The Northern Land Council's (NLC) role is defined by its statutory powers, functions and responsibilities under the *Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act 1976* (Cth) (the Land Rights Act) and the *Native Title Act 1993* (Cth) (the Native Title Act). The NLC's purpose is to assist Aboriginal people within the Top End of the Northern Territory to acquire and manage their lands, waters and seas.

As a representative body for Traditional Owners and Native Title Holders across the seven regions of Borroloola/Barkly; Darwin/Daly/Wagait; East Arnhem; Katherine; South East Arnhem; Victoria River District; and West Arnhem, the NLC advocates for, consults with and supports Aboriginal people to exercise their rights and make informed decisions about their lands, waters, seas, culture and economic opportunities. The NLC's purpose is achieved through the delivery of statutory functions, including land and sea management, protection of Sacred sites and culture, land claim and Native Title processes, consultation and decision-making support, land administration, permits and compliance activities, and assistance to Traditional Owners to pursue economic, social and cultural outcomes from their rights and interests.

The NLC is a corporate Commonwealth entity created to carry out the functions specified by the Land Rights Act. It commenced operation in 1973. The NLC is also a Native Title Representative Body (NTRB) under the Native Title Act. In addition to those functions, the NLC performs functions prescribed by Commonwealth and Northern Territory legislation, including the *Aboriginal Land Act 1978* (NT).

Under section 23 of the Land Rights Act, the NLC undertakes the following:

- Consult with and act on Traditional Owners instruction as to the management of Aboriginal land to protect their interests.
- Assistance in the protection of Sacred sites.
- Consult with Traditional Owners and affected Aboriginal people regarding proposals relating to lands and seas of the seven regions the NLC represents, and take and act on Traditional Owner instructions.
- Negotiate on behalf of Traditional Owners with people interested using Aboriginal land.
- Assist Aboriginal people with commercial activities and economic development on Aboriginal land.
- Where the NLC holds in escrow a deed of grant made to a Land Trust, negotiate on behalf of Traditional Owners with people having estates or interests in land with a view to acquiring those estates or interests by the Land Trust. Until acquired, negotiate with a view to the use of the land by Traditional Owners.
- Supervision and administration of Land Trusts.
- Control of visits by all non-Aboriginal people through monitoring and permits.
- Protection and preservation of culture, including intellectual property and copyright, and the reproduction of cultural products and safeguards against illegal or improper use of research, digital images, designs, stories, biocultural information, artefacts and art.

The NLC is a recognised NTRB under the Native Title Act. The functions of NTRBs are set out in Part 11, Division 3 of the Native Title Act and are conferred in addition to, and not instead of, any functions conferred by any other law. These functions include:

- facilitating the research and preparation of applications by individuals or groups for determinations of Native Title or compensation for acts affecting Native Title
- assisting in the resolution of disagreements among individuals or groups about the making of such applications

- assisting individuals or groups by representing them, if requested to do so, in negotiations and proceedings relating to:
 - the doing of acts affecting Native Title
 - the provision of compensation in relation to such acts
 - Aboriginal land use agreements or other agreements in relation to Native Title rights of access conferred under the act or other acts
 - any other matter relevant to the operation of the act.
- issuing notifications to Aboriginal people who hold or may hold Native Title of matters of that relate to land or waters wholly or partly within the NLC boundary
- certifying written applications for determinations of Native Title and applications for registration of Aboriginal land use agreements relating to areas of land wholly or partly within the region of the representative body.
- becoming a party to Aboriginal land use agreements after consultation with the Native Title Holders of the land or waters, subject to the agreement.
- providing a process for internal review function for decisions or actions taken by NLC (in its role as NTRB) for Native Title Holders and Native Title Body Corporates.

Functions under the Native Title Act are funded through a separate budget appropriation from the Australian Government. The NLC ceased to control Aboriginal Investment NT and its controlled entities on 1 July 2022 through a mutually agreed divestment process with the Aboriginal Investment Group. The NLC does not have any subsidiaries.

The key activities, capabilities, partnerships and risk-management approaches outlined throughout this Corporate Plan demonstrate how the NLC will achieve its purpose over the reporting period and continue to support the aspirations of Traditional Owners and Aboriginal communities across the NLC region.



VISION, MISSION, VALUES

OUR VISION

For the rights and responsibilities of every Traditional Owner in the NLC region to be recognised and respected. For Aboriginal people to benefit economically, socially and culturally from the secure possession of their lands, seas, waters and intellectual property rights.

OUR MISSION

To ensure Aboriginal people in the seven regions of the NLC acquire and manage their traditional lands, seas and waters through strong leadership, advocacy and management.

OUR APPROACH

Using the principles of free, prior and informed consent inscribed in article 19 of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, the NLC assists Aboriginal people in obtaining and securing their interests in land and sea country. In doing this, we consult, advocate and represent the views of Aboriginal people within our region to deliver effective land administration and management.

Aboriginal people increasingly seek equity partnerships and participation in proposed development activities. The NLC is responsible for ensuring that social, economic and cultural benefits flow to Aboriginal people from these developments.

OUR VALUES

Our values guide the way that NLC staff and members conduct themselves. Therefore, these core values must be present in everything we do and our interactions with the community



CONSULT

- With Traditional Owners.
- Present and explain options to Traditional Owners to enable them to make decisions and choices with free, prior and informed consent.
- Engage in two-way communication to actively listen and explain meaning.



RESPECT

- Aboriginal law, culture and tradition.
- Our stakeholders and those who we work with.
- Act with integrity, honesty and fairness.
- Act in a manner that is appropriate and sensitive to cultural differences.



BE RESPONSIVE

- To Aboriginal people's needs and effectively advocate for their rights and interests.
- Provide effective services to the people we represent and other stakeholders.
- Complete actions and tasks promptly and be accountable to the people we represent.



SOCIAL JUSTICE

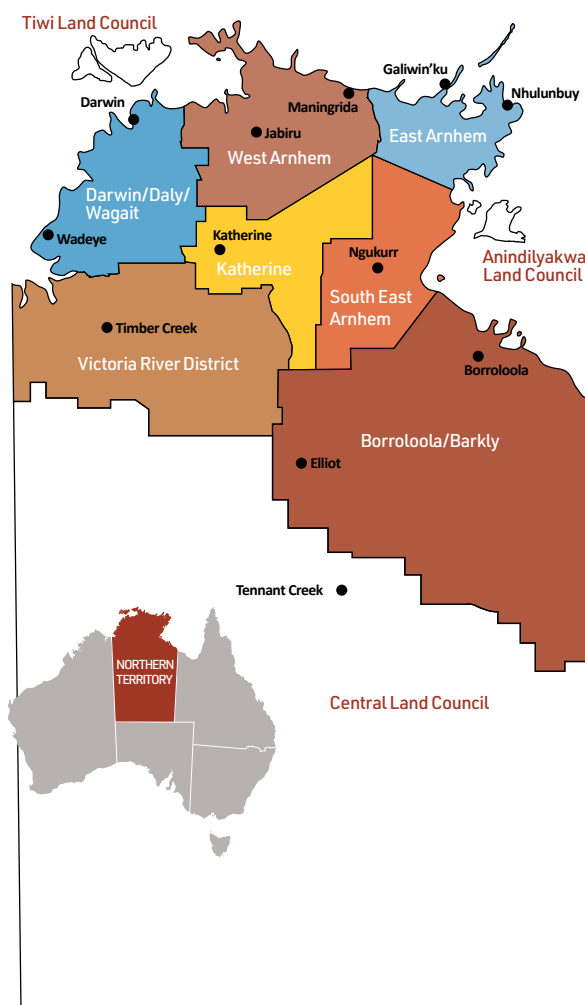
- Promote the rights and participation of Aboriginal people to achieve equity, fairness and opportunities.
- Demonstrate strong leadership and advocacy on behalf of Traditional Owners.

THE NORTHERN LAND COUNCIL

The NLC Full Council provides leadership and cultural integrity, comprising 111 nominated and up to five co-opted women members.

Membership of the Full Council is determined by a nomination process, known as the method of choice, which occurs every three years. In line with section 29 of the Land Rights Act, the 2025 method of choice was endorsed by the Full Council and approved by Senator the Hon Katy Gallagher, Minister for Finance, Minister for Women, Minister for Public Service and Minister for Government Services. At the first meeting of new Full Council for the 2025–28 term, the NLC Chair and Deputy Chair were elected along with two members from each region to sit on the NLC's Executive Council (total of 14 members).

NLC REGIONS AND REGIONAL OFFICES



The Chair can appoint five co-opted women, on advice from the Executive and Regional Council members, to improve female representation.

The Full Council is responsible for setting the strategic direction of the NLC with advice from the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and senior management. The Full Council can delegate some powers to the Executive and Regional Councils and staff. The CEO and senior management team are responsible for the NLC's day-to-day operations, implementing Full Council decisions and reporting to the Full, Executive and Regional Councils.

The NLC Chair and CEO jointly act as the NLC's Accountable Authority within the PGPA Act requirements.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

The NLC Executive Council appoints the Chief Executive Officer (CEO). The CEO is accountable for driving, promoting and protecting the NLC's commitment to serve the Traditional Owners within the NLC's jurisdiction through effective and culturally responsible leadership, balancing and driving a Traditional Owner-centric model for our constituents and people-centred model for our staff.

The CEO is responsible for ensuring statutory compliance with all relevant legislation affecting the operations of the NLC, the functions and responsibilities of the NLC as primarily set out in the Land Rights Act and the Native Title Act.

The CEO, in conjunction with the NLC Chair, jointly acts as the NLC's Accountable Authority under the PGPA Act. The CEO is responsible for implementing the NLC's strategic and corporate plans effectively and efficiently.

Council Services

Council Services is a function within the Office of the CEO and is responsible for the strategic relationship management with Council members. This includes coordination and administration of NLC Council meetings.

Land Rights Act Committees

Committees established under the Land Rights Act:

- Executive Council
- Regional Councils

Committees established under the PGPA Act:

- NLC Audit and Risk Committee

Other

- **Women's Subcommittee**
 - The Women's Subcommittee is made up of female members of the Full Council. The group meets prior to Full Council meetings to discuss women's business and other matters affecting women in the NLC region.
- **Housing and Homelands Committee**
 - The NLC Housing and Homelands Committee was established in September 2023 and is made up of two members from each region. The purpose of the committee is to provide strategic policy direction regarding remote housing and homelands matters in the NLC region.
- **Water Committee**
 - The NLC Water Committee was established in November 2022 and is made up of two members from each region. The purpose of the water committee is to provide strategic direction on NLC water policy, provide direction to the NLC on water matters in the NLC region and to develop a policy position on water rights and issues.
- The Full Council of the Northern Land Council nominates members to the boards of the below entities (they are not committees of the NLC):
 - Aboriginal Investment NT (two positions)
 - Aboriginal Sea Company (three positions)
 - Aboriginal Areas Protection Authority (four positions subject to Ministerial discretion).

LAND AND LAW

Land and Law comprises the Legal, Anthropology, and Resources and Energy service areas. This group identifies and consults with Traditional Owners to secure and protect their rights and interests in land and sea. The group provides specialised legal, anthropological and Resources and Energy advisory and project management services to the NLC and Traditional Owners, and undertakes land rights and Native Title claims, land use agreement negotiations to meet the NLC's statutory obligations under the Land Rights Act and the Native Title Act.

LAND AND SEA MANAGEMENT

Land and Sea Management supports Traditional Owners to care for and sustainably manage the Northern Territory's culturally significant and ecologically intact land and sea country. Its work spans Caring for Country, Sea Country, Learning on Country, Partnerships and Enterprise Development, and Community Planning and Development.

Caring for Country provides operational, administrative and policy support to 14 ranger groups and four Indigenous Protected Areas. Rangers are active in fire management, invasive species control, compliance, site protection and cultural knowledge transfer. Also supported is the Gamba Eradication and Biodiversity Conservation Project, partnering with landholders to eliminate gamba grass from the Northern Territory's designated eradication zone.

Sea Country leads the implementation of Aboriginal Sea Rights by working with Traditional Owners on access, use and management arrangements for Aboriginal Waters, while advancing policy, access negotiations, governance, compliance, land claims and economic opportunities for Aboriginal people.

Learning on Country connects ranger groups with schools across remote communities, delivering field-based programs that integrate cultural and Western knowledge, strengthen student engagement, support attendance and pathways, and build pride, skills and confidence to succeed in both worlds.

Community Planning and Development supports Aboriginal landowners to direct land use benefits into community-led projects that deliver lasting outcomes, while strengthening planning, governance, decision-making, and long-term sustainability.

Partnerships and Enterprise Development leads the NLC's National Parks joint management statutory functions and fosters environmental and natural resource partnerships.

REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Regional Development provide our regional and remote constituents access to NLC services and supports, including receipt and processing of funding assistance applications for funerals and ceremonies within the NLC regions. These services and supports are facilitated by the Regional Development sub-groups; Regional Network and Regional Operations.

Regional Network manages the majority of logistics planning to effectively facilitate NLC meetings and engagements. In accordance with section 19 of the Land Rights Act, Regional Operations receive and assess applications received proposing use of and activities on Aboriginal land. Within Regional Operations, the Land Use Management section review and assess land use proposals received spanning across all seven NLC regions.

The Regionalisation Strategy has been designed to build the NLC's regional capacity to achieve operational objectives and key organisation goals more quickly. The service area also leads several major government projects across the seven regions.

CORPORATE SERVICES

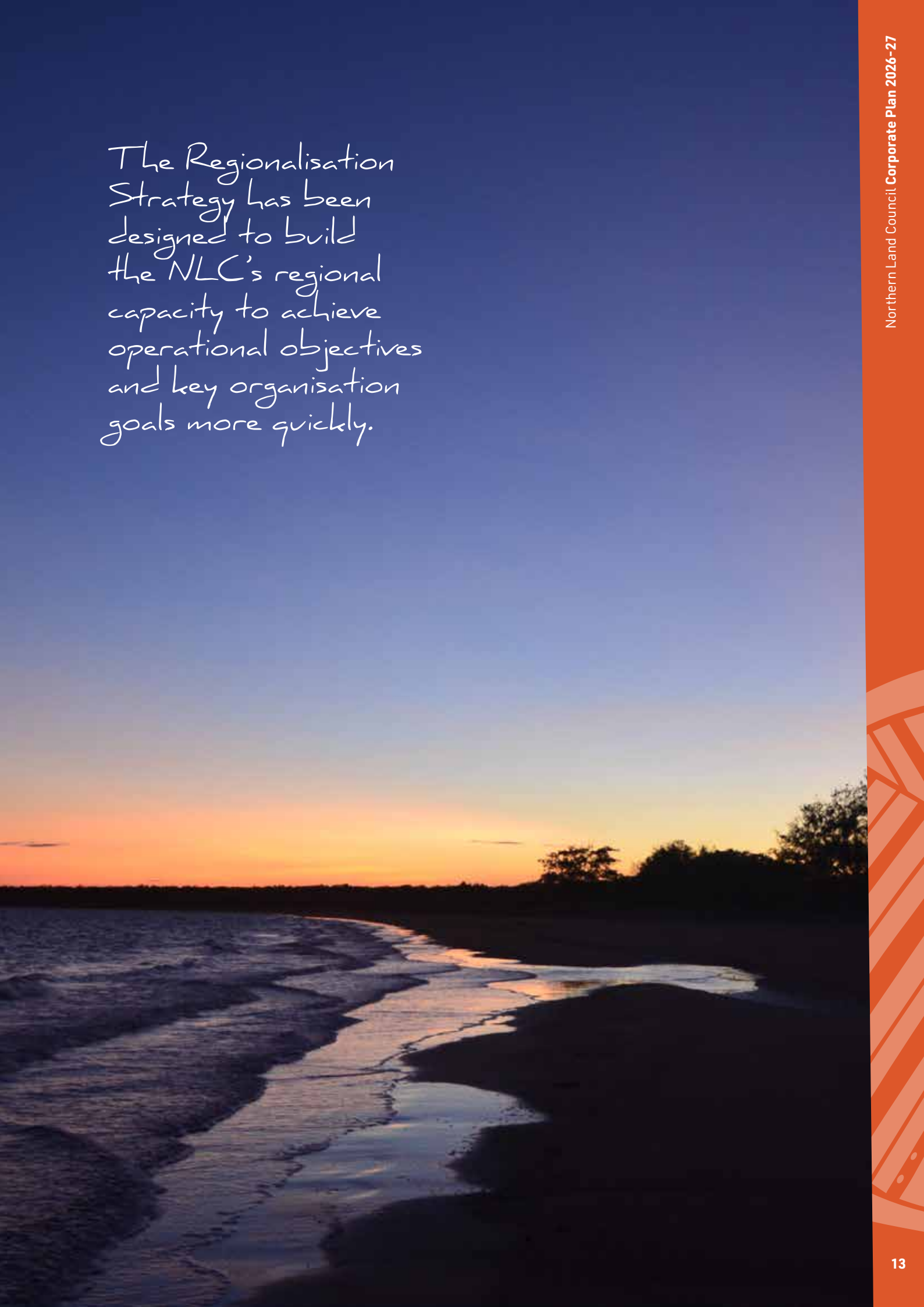
Corporate Services delivers essential, professional and accountable services that support the NLC to achieve its strategic objectives and meet its statutory responsibilities. The group provides strategic advice, financial stewardship and operational support that underpin the NLC's day-to-day operations, strengthen organisational capability and support informed decision-making.

The group includes Financial Management, Benefit Distribution, People and Culture, Wellbeing, Health and Safety, Learning and Development, and Property and Assets. Together, these functions provide the financial, people and operational services that support NLC staff and workplaces and help the organisation deliver outcomes for Traditional Owners and Aboriginal communities.

Through a focus on continuous improvement, accountability and customer service, Corporate Services strengthens organisational capability, supports informed decision-making, and enables the NLC to deliver its strategic priorities effectively and efficiently.

GOVERNANCE, STRATEGY AND COMMUNICATIONS

Governance, Strategy and Communications delivers several core functions, including permits, governance, compliance and risk, strategy and advocacy, and media and communications. The group ensure that the NLC is an effective voice for Aboriginal people in our region through strong advocacy on critical policy issues and by holding governments accountable for their commitments. A key priority for this group is to advocate for and implement reforms that address longstanding issues with water, permit and s19 agreement compliance across our seven regions. The group is also responsible for strengthening and monitoring governance, compliance and risk-management practices throughout the organisation.



The Regionalisation Strategy has been designed to build the NLC's regional capacity to achieve operational objectives and key organisation goals more quickly.

A person is seen from behind, wearing a dark blue jacket and carrying a large orange and white STIHL BR 700 chainsaw. They are in a field of tall grass, and a fire is burning in the background, with thick smoke rising. The chainsaw has 'STIHL' and 'BR 700' printed on it. On the left side of the image, there are several white, stylized, overlapping shapes that resemble a traditional Indigenous Australian pattern.

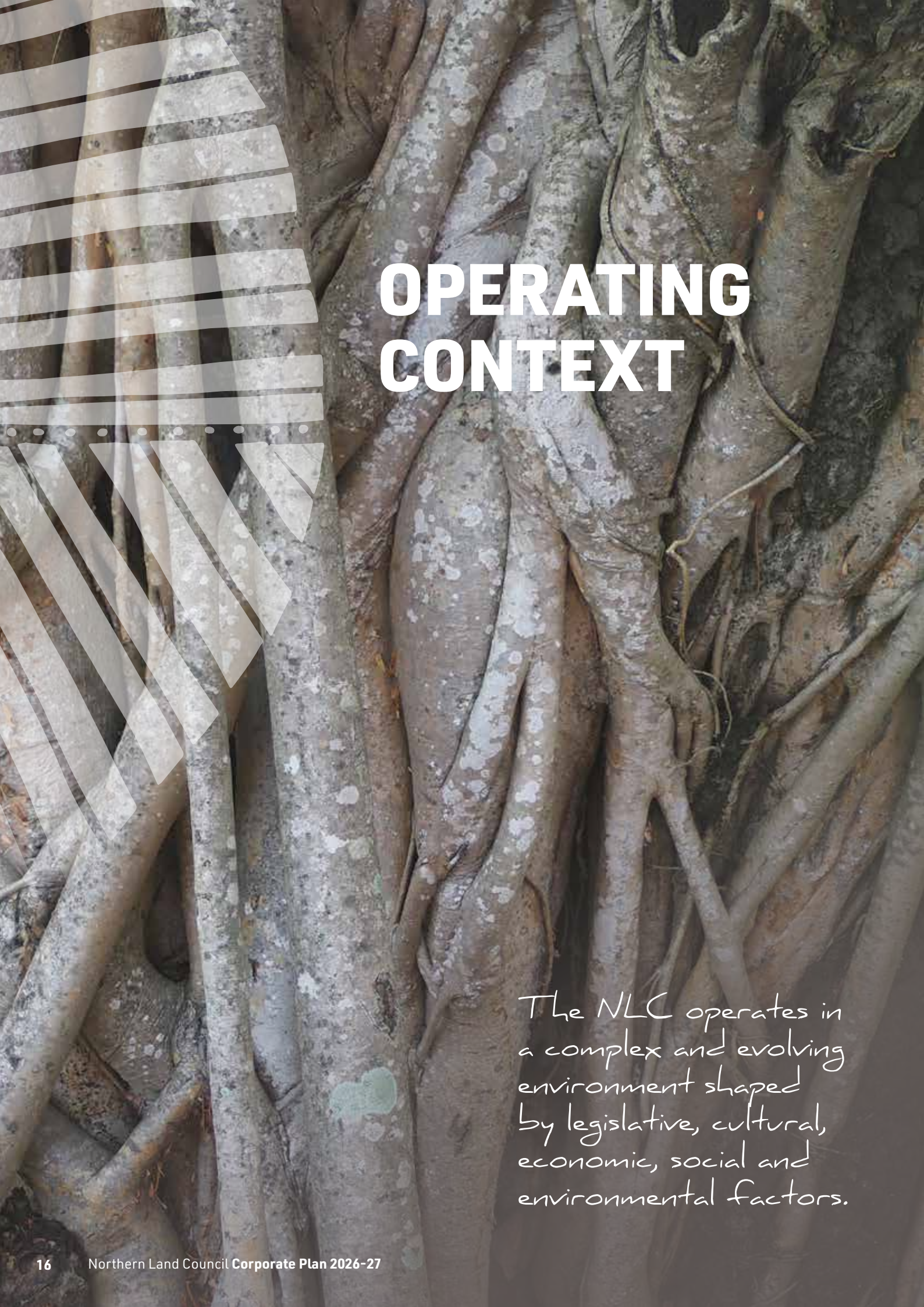
STRATEGIC GOALS AND KEY ACTIVITIES

The key activities outlined in this Corporate Plan align with the NLC's strategic priorities and set out the principal activities the organisation will undertake during the reporting period. These activities provide a clear link between the NLC's purpose, strategic direction and performance measures, demonstrating how progress will be assessed in delivering outcomes for Traditional Owners and Aboriginal communities.

STRATEGIC GOALS AND PRIORITIES [KEY ACTIVITIES] OF THE NLC

The NLC Strategic Plan 2022–27 establishes the organisation’s long-term direction and identifies the strategic goals and priorities that guide the delivery of its purpose and statutory responsibilities.

Strategic Goals	Strategic Priorities/Key Activities
STRATEGIC GOAL 1: Proactively manage country Acquire, manage and protect traditional lands and waters in accordance with statutory functions	1. Give strong support to Traditional Owners by maximising resources and benefits from land and sea management, ensuring strict compliance with agreements and developing long-term plans with Traditional Owners’ free, prior and informed consent. 2. Enforce and advocate for better protection of heritage areas, Sacred sites and permits for access to Aboriginal land, water and sea country.
STRATEGIC GOAL 2: Opportunity and empower Create real opportunities for Aboriginal people and Traditional Owners	3. Activate land rights by harnessing pride and strength in Aboriginal culture, innovation, creativity, skills, employment, intellectual property, economic development and entrepreneurship. 4. Create opportunities for self-determination through Traditional Owner decision-making, community consultations, ranger programs, Learning on Country, Aboriginal-led township leasing, planning and development.
STRATEGIC GOAL 3: A strong NLC Be a culturally rich and trusted organisation that gets things done and our community can be proud of	5. Create stronger NLC regions with more NLC staff and more support for Aboriginal people by implementing our Regionalisation Strategy, ‘Building the Bush’. 6. Build on improvements already made in NLC governance, leadership, communications and support systems for Council members and staff.
STRATEGIC GOAL 4: Advocate Be a voice for Aboriginal people	7. Raise issues and influence policy in critical areas of interest including agriculture, pastoral, mining, tourism, carbon economy, homelands and essential services, water rights and security, remote housing, and infrastructure such as roads, bridges and communications. 8. Be a strong voice for the next generation, tomorrow’s leaders, constitutional recognition and the Voice to Parliament, implementation of the Uluru Statement of the Heart in Full and the Northern Territory Treaty process.

The background of the page is a close-up photograph of thick, gnarled tree roots. On the left side, there is a stylized logo consisting of several horizontal bars of varying lengths, some of which are white and others are grey, creating a geometric, abstract shape.

OPERATING CONTEXT

The NLC operates in a complex and evolving environment shaped by legislative, cultural, economic, social and environmental factors.

OPERATING ENVIRONMENT

The NLC operates in a complex and evolving environment shaped by legislative, cultural, economic, social and environmental factors. These facts present both opportunities and challenges that may affect the NLC's ability to achieve its purpose of assisting Aboriginal people to acquire, protect, manage and benefit from their lands, waters and seas. The NLC actively monitors changes in its operating environment and implements strategies to respond to emerging risks, opportunities and stakeholder expectations.

GOOD GOVERNANCE

The NLC is a corporate Commonwealth entity within the governance, performance, accountability and risk-management framework established under the PGPA Act. The NLC's operating environment is shaped by legislative obligations, government policy settings, stakeholder expectations and the need for strong governance, transparency and accountability.

Maintaining effective governance arrangements is essential to ensuring the NLC remains responsive to changing priorities, manages risk effectively and delivers its purpose. The NLC will continue to operate within a robust governance framework that supports informed decision-making, compliance with legislative requirements, performance improvement and accountability to Traditional Owners, stakeholders and government.

REMOTENESS, REGIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY AND STAKEHOLDER EXPECTATIONS

The NLC operates across a geographically diverse and remote region where stakeholder expectations continue to evolve. Traditional Owners, Native Title Holders and Aboriginal communities expect services that are accessible, timely, transparent and responsive to local priorities. Delivering consistent, high-quality services across remote regions while supporting meaningful participation in decisions affecting lands, waters and seas remains fundamental to achieving the NLC's purpose. The NLC's network of regional offices and staff on the ground supports local relationships, community participation and access to services across its regions.

The operating environment is shaped by the challenges of delivering services in remote locations, including workforce attraction and retention, limited availability of suitable housing, infrastructure constraints and the high costs associated with operating in regional and remote communities. These factors can impact the NLC's ability to maintain a consistent workforce presence and expand services closer to communities.

Over the plan period, the NLC will strengthen stakeholder engagement, improve service accessibility and responsiveness, and enhance systems and processes that support effective consultation, transparent decision-making and free, prior and informed consent. The NLC will continue to build organisational capability to meet increasing stakeholder expectations and deliver services that support the rights, interests and aspirations of Traditional Owners and Aboriginal communities across the Northern Territory.

Ensuring regional facilities, accommodation and workforce capacity remain fit for purpose is an ongoing requirement. The NLC will continue to manage these challenges to support effective regional operations and maintain accessible, culturally responsive services for Traditional Owners and Aboriginal communities.

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT AND EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES ON COUNTRY

Activating land rights is more than just creating pathways to employment. Traditional Owners are increasingly seeking to establish, own, and operate their own businesses on country. Aboriginal Corporations, community controlled organisations and Aboriginal business enterprises are seeking to exercise their land and sea rights through economic development opportunities. The NLC will continue to assist groups in their journey and seek to influence policy settings to reduce barriers to entry and make their aspiration a reality.

Employment on country is an external factor for the NLC and recognised as an important pathway to supporting self-determination, sustaining cultural knowledge and improving social and economic outcomes in remote communities.



Traditional Owners expect development and investment to deliver meaningful local employment, strengthen community capability and support the intergenerational transfer of cultural knowledge. This operating environment requires the NLC to maintain the capability to support opportunities that align economic participation with cultural responsibilities, the sustainable management of Country, and the aspirations of Traditional Owners and Aboriginal communities.

CULTURE, COUNTRY AND FUTURE GENERATIONS

The NLC operates in an environment where protecting Aboriginal culture, cultural heritage and connection to Country remains fundamental to Traditional Owners. Increasing development activity, changing land use, environmental pressures and the ageing of knowledge holders present ongoing challenges to safeguarding cultural values and ensuring the intergenerational transfer of language, cultural knowledge, customary practices and responsibilities.

Traditional Owners expect cultural values and knowledge systems to be recognised and incorporated into decisions affecting land, waters and seas. At the same time, there is growing recognition of the importance of supporting young Aboriginal people to maintain cultural identity, strengthen leadership and continue caring for Country in a changing social, environmental and economic landscape.

These factors require the NLC to maintain the capability to support the protection of cultural heritage, Sacred sites and Aboriginal knowledge, facilitate informed decision-making, and promote approaches that enable culture, Country and Aboriginal leadership to be sustained for future generations.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

The NLC operates in an environment where Traditional Owners aspire to realise the full social, cultural and economic potential of their land, sea and Native Title rights. The activation of hard-won land and sea rights represents an economic opportunity for Traditional Owners. Growth in renewable energy, critical minerals, carbon markets, conservation, infrastructure and other land-based investment is creating new opportunities for Aboriginal communities, while increasing the complexity of negotiations, decision-making and stakeholder engagement. Maintaining support for and expanding on-country land use and land management programs and services is equally as critical to Aboriginal economic development.

Economic opportunities vary significantly across the NLC's seven regions, reflecting diverse geographic, cultural and economic circumstances. Traditional Owners and Aboriginal corporations require timely information, effective governance arrangements and proactive support to assess opportunities, negotiate agreements and make informed decisions that align with their aspirations.

Benefits arising from land-use agreements and Traditional Owner-led economic development 'initiatives' will contribute to long-term community priorities and sustainable outcomes. This operating environment requires the NLC to maintain the capability to support free, prior and informed consent, facilitate complex negotiations, and respond to emerging economic opportunities while protecting the rights and interests of Traditional Owners.

CAPABILITY

To achieve its purpose and deliver its key statutory functions, the NLC must maintain the organisational capability required to meet current and future needs. This includes developing a skilled and capable workforce, strengthening governance and leadership, maintaining effective systems and infrastructure, and ensuring resources are aligned to strategic priorities. The strategies and plans outlined below describe how the NLC will build and sustain these capabilities to support effective service delivery, organisational performance and continuous improvement.

WORKFORCE AND ORGANISATIONAL CAPABILITY

The NLC's ability to deliver its statutory functions relies on attracting, developing and retaining a capable workforce. As the organisation responds to changing legislative, economic and community expectations, strengthening workforce capability remains a strategic priority.

During 2026–27, the NLC will continue implementing initiatives that build workforce capability, modernise workforce frameworks, strengthen attraction and retention, and create clearer career opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. A key focus will be the continued implementation of the Learning and Development Strategy 2025–28, ensuring the NLC has the skills, knowledge and leadership capability required to deliver its legislated responsibilities, strategic objectives and future workforce needs.

To achieve this, the following workforce and capability priorities have been identified for 2026–27:

1. Implement the Learning and Development Strategy 2025–28 to build workforce capability and ensure the NLC has the skills, knowledge and leadership required to deliver its legislated responsibilities and strategic objectives.
2. Review talent attraction, recruitment and retention policies and practices to ensure they are contemporary, culturally appropriate and support the NLC's future workforce needs.
3. Evaluate and strengthen early career and employment pathway programs to increase opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to join the NLC and grow the Aboriginal workforce.

4. Commence implementation of internal career pathways and mobility initiatives that support the NLC's 'grow our own' approach by developing internal talent and creating greater career progression opportunities, with a focus on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees.

INFRASTRUCTURE

The NLC manages a diverse portfolio of assets across its seven regions that underpins the delivery of its statutory functions and services. The portfolio includes offices, staff housing, motor vehicles, boats and other operational assets that enable the NLC to effectively meet its legislative responsibilities and organisational objectives.

The NLC will continue to strengthen its asset management capability through the implementation of Asset Management Plans for key asset classes. These plans will support a consistent, whole-of-life approach to asset management, ensuring assets are acquired, maintained, utilised, renewed and disposed of in a timely, cost-effective and sustainable manner.

The NLC will further enhance its asset management framework by improving asset data and reporting, implementing planned maintenance programs, optimising asset utilisation, and strengthening long-term capital investment and replacement planning. Together, these initiatives will support informed decision-making, regulatory compliance, operational resilience and effective risk management, while ensuring the NLC's assets remain fit for purpose and continue to deliver value for Traditional Owners and the organisation.

WORK HEALTH SAFETY AND WELLBEING

NLC is committed to strengthening its risk-based Work Health and Safety (WHS) framework to support organisational growth and increasing operational complexity. The focus is on psychosocial risk management; to maintain high levels of awareness, engagement, and reporting demonstrate a proactive culture of identifying and addressing workplace wellbeing risks.

The WHS management system seeks to enhance risk-based reporting culture and transparency, enhanced psychosocial risk management, employee support and targeted early intervention initiatives. This includes



regionally focused WHS engagement through face-to-face visits to ranger stations and regional workplaces, providing practical training, mentoring, and support which strengthens local capability and ownership of risk management. Ongoing commitment to legislative compliance is maintained through inspection and assurance programs for electrical, fire, first aid and, ergonomic systems, ensuring safe and compliant workplaces across the organisation.

REGIONALISATION STRATEGY

The NLC's Regional Network group is critical to the effective engagement, service delivery and relationship building with Traditional Owners, Aboriginal communities and stakeholders across the seven regions. The NLC maintains regional offices to provide the foundation for accessible and culturally appropriate services and to support local participation in decisions affecting Aboriginal rights and interests.

The NLC's capability to operate effectively in remote locations is dependent on maintaining fit-for-purpose facilities, attracting and retaining a skilled workforce, strengthening Aboriginal employment pathways and ensuring staff have the resources required to support communities. Workforce accommodation, regional infrastructure and operational support remain important enablers of effective regional service delivery for the NLC.

The NLC will continue to strengthen its regional capability to ensure its workforce, systems and facilities support responsive, accountable and sustainable delivery of services aligned with its statutory functions and purpose.

ICT REQUIREMENTS

Information and Communications Technology (ICT) and Information Management (IM) are essential to delivering NLC services across Darwin, regional offices and remote locations. They provide secure and reliable access to systems, records, information, data and digital services that support the NLC's statutory responsibilities, operations and strategic priorities.

The ICT Strategy and Roadmap 2026–31 builds on achievements in cloud migration, cybersecurity, system centralisation, platform consolidation and the removal of ageing infrastructure. It will focus on optimising these investments, strengthening information governance, improving system integration and data quality, and delivering accessible, intelligent and user-focused services.

Key goals and priorities are to:

- deliver secure, reliable, resilient and sustainable ICT and IM services.
- improve customer experience and regional and remote technology access.
- strengthen ICT governance, enterprise architecture, project delivery and business alignment.
- continue transitioning legacy and bespoke systems to modern cloud and software as a service platforms.
- improve cybersecurity, privacy, identity management and information protection.
- establish trusted data, integrated systems and reliable reporting.
- digitise and automate manual processes where appropriate.
- support responsible artificial intelligence (AI), automation and intelligent search.
- strengthen records management, knowledge management and self-service.
- build staff digital capability and a sustainable ICT and IM workforce.

RISK OVERSIGHT AND MANAGEMENT

Effective risk oversight and management support the NLC's ability to achieve its purpose. The NLC identifies, monitors and manages risks that may affect the delivery of key activities, fulfilment of statutory functions and achievement of planned outcomes for Traditional Owners and Aboriginal communities.

ENTERPRISE RISK-MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

The NLC operates in a unique and complex environment across the Top End and broader Northern Territory, requiring a strong understanding of its seven regions and the needs of Traditional Owners. The NLC's enterprise risk-management framework supports this by providing a structured approach to identifying, assessing and managing risks and opportunities across all business groups and service areas on an ongoing basis.

The framework aligns with the three lines of accountability model. Under the first line, all NLC workers take ownership of the daily management of their operational risks. This includes identifying and assessing existing and emerging risks and developing appropriate operating procedures. The second line is provided by the Governance, Compliance and Risk service area, which supports and oversees risk-management activities, facilitates risk assessments, monitors controls and treatment plans, and prepares risk reports for management, the Audit Committee, and Council. The third line provides independent assurance through an internal audit or an external service provider to measure the effectiveness of controls and governance processes.

The NLC's Accountable Authority (Chair and CEO) oversee the framework and promotes a proactive approach to managing risks. Quarterly reviews of elements of the framework including risks, mitigating controls and treatment plans to ensure it is fit for purpose and reactive to changes in the operating environment.

BENCHMARKING TO THE COMMONWEALTH MODEL

The NLC's enterprise risk-management framework is aligned to the Commonwealth Risk Management Policy as a matter of better practice. The NLC is supported by Commonwealth resources to underpin the risk governance and meet our obligations to Commonwealth legislative requirements. Relevant legislative standards include, but are not limited to:

- the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (Cth)
- the Commonwealth Fraud and Corruption Control Framework 2024
- the *National Anti-Corruption Commission Act 2022*
- the *Public Interest Disclosure Act 2013*
- International Standard ISO 31000:2018 Risk Management
- Commonwealth Risk Management Policy

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

The NLC's enterprise risk-management framework is designed to accommodate ongoing improvements through refining risk identification and treatment methodology. The Audit and Risk Committee provides independent assurance to the Accountable Authority on the system of risk controls through assessment, challenge and testing based on their knowledge and expertise. The Executive Council provides input into effective risk management for the Accountable Authority, including seeking clarity on the results of risk reporting to increase interactivity and real-time risk treatment.

Furthermore, risk-management training is made for all NLC workers to enhance risk culture at the NLC. This includes additional specific risk training for managers and people leaders, who are responsible for embedding controls and risk treatment plans on a day-to-day basis and are critical to the governance of risk within the NLC.

NLC KEY RISKS

The NLC is managing eight enterprise risks, which are managed by controls and mitigation plans for identified key strategic risk, that may prevent its ability to achieve strategic goals. This list is regularly reviewed and continuously monitored under the Enterprise Risk Management Framework. These risks are prone to change over time in response to addressing emerging risks, improving mitigation strategies and changes in the broader operating environment.

Work health safety and wellbeing	
Key strategic risks	Control and mitigation plan
[ERR 66] Failure to implement compliance measures across fleet, vehicle, property and assets	• NLC will continuously review the effectiveness of the NLC Travel Policy and Procedure • NLC will conduct vehicle safety equipment training for all eligible drivers • NLC will conduct compliance checks on journey management plans and mandatory check-in/check-out protocol
[ERR 338] Disruptions to NLC operations when worker(s) suffers from injury during work	• NLC reviews internal Work Health and Safety (WHS) policy and procedures every two years • NLC promotes implementation of WHS policy and procedure to all NLC workers • NLC will monitor workers' understanding and implementation of WHS policy and procedures • NLC will conduct risk assessment and equipment checks • NLC will report incidents as required and maintain the incident register

Land access and Land Use Agreement management and compliance	
Key strategic risks	Control and mitigation plan
[ERR 117] Inability to correctly identify and map Sacred sites and non-consent areas	• NLC will ensure that proper protocols of identifying Sacred sites and non-consent areas is embedded into land use agreements • NLC will encourage the participation of Traditional Owners in land use negotiations and consultations • NLC will increase planning, coordination and implementation of Sacred site surveys through its available resources
[ERR 280] Untimely processing of funds in accordance with Traditional Owner instructions within legislative or reasonable timeframe	• NLC will ask Traditional Owners to give standing instructions for the distribution of all known future land use agreement payments to ensure payment within six months of receipt • NLC will ask Traditional Owners to sign agreements with Traditional Owners who are unable to reach agreement on distribution and want the NLC to hold their monies in accordance with section 35(9) of the Land Rights Act • NLC will create and maintain a separate account for all s35(9) funds • NLC will obtain royalty distribution instructions at all land use agreement decision-making meetings to ensure land use payments can be distributed within six months • NLC will utilise technology to map existing agreements to estate boundaries so that group land shares of future revenue can be calculated

Delivering services to stakeholders	
Key strategic risks	Control and mitigation plan
[ERR 217] Inability by the NLC to promote land use proposals and programs effectively with key stakeholders	• NLC will review communications with government and other land councils on a regular basis • NLC will promote public and community awareness of NLC's functions under relevant legislation (Land Rights Act, Native Title Act, PGPA Act) • NLC will produce submissions that seek to influence government policy and programs that benefit and impact on Aboriginal people and their interests • NLC will acknowledge in strategic decisions that the loss of community trust is a key risk. Managing reputational opportunities and risks is critical to our ability to meaningfully support Traditional Owners.
[ERR 161] Disruptions or inability to facilitate NLC consults	• NLC will conduct annual scheduling of meetings with all service areas and monitor the resources required to facilitate meetings • NLC will have dedicated logistics section to manage meetings • NLC will develop guidelines for prioritising activities during the scheduling sessions • NLC will ensure Traditional Owners are consulted when cultural events need to be observed
[ERR153] Disruptions to NLC service sites in regional areas	• NLC will continue to prioritise its regionalisation strategy by ensuring that adequate and skilled resources are available at all its regional office
[ERR 226] Non-execution of Traditional Owners' Native Title and land rights	• NLC will monitor the contractual obligations of all parties to Native Title and land use agreements • NLC will seek expert advice on contractual terms as required • NLC will take all relevant steps to protect Traditional Owners interests, protect sacred sites and secure benefits on their behalf
[ERR 328] Disruptions to NLC operations from land use agreement mismanagement	• NLC will monitor the contractual obligations of all parties to joint management agreements • NLC will ensure proper escalation mechanisms are put in place to address the mismanagement of land use agreements • NLC will enforce the renegotiation and renewal of agreements to prevent potential disputes

IT, cybersecurity and records management	
Key strategic risks	Control and mitigation plan
[ERR 292] Disruptions to NLC operations from major breach in cybersecurity resulting in data loss	• NLC will maintain an appropriate level of qualified and trained staff • NLC will maintain adequate policies and processes regarding ICT, cyber security and records management • NLC will promote record-keeping obligations to staff and report on compliance with these obligations to management • NLC will comply with requirements of the National Archives of Australia Information Management Standards and ensure appropriate retention and destruction of records • NLC will ensure antivirus and endpoint protections are up to date and maintained • NLC ICT staff will deliver core service in line with policy and procedure • NLC will ensure all hardware is installed with the latest patch and updates to protect against malware
[ERR 288] Organisational failure to keep or access records effectively	• NLC has in place centralised records management systems • NLC has governing controls in place for records management • NLC will develop a response plan to address and correct gaps in record-keeping identified during audits • NLC will initiate an immediate records recovery process to reconstruct lost or incomplete records from backups
[ERR 296] IT Business Continuity Risk	• NLC will ensure that records are backed up in a secure location to protect against the loss of key documents in the event of disaster recovery or business continuity • NLC will maintain and implement a comprehensive business continuity plan (BCP) • NLC will conduct business impact analysis (BIA) on an annual basis • NLC will prepare a backup site for critical systems • NLC will identify critical employees to attend backup sites and/or be able to work remotely if required • NLC will train staff on BCP procedures • NLC will utilise cloud services for information security and recovery in the event of a disaster or unforeseen shutdown
[ERR 294] Failure to provide effective Information and Communication Technology services to the NLC	• NLC will maintain adequate policies and processes regarding staff hardware and software practices • NLC will ensure all hardware is regularly updated by the ICT service area to minimise potential system downtime and security issues • NLC will resource the ICT service area to ensure that it is readily contactable, and all business requirements are responded to in a timely and effective manner
[ERR 348] Inappropriate or uncontrolled use of Artificial Intelligence (AI)	• NLC will develop a fit-for-purpose AI governance framework in response to AI adoption risks in the workplace, provide staff guidance and training; establish oversight and appropriate use

Project specific	
Key strategic risks	Control and mitigation plan
[ERR 266] Failure to successfully secure Native Title and land claims and failure to assist Traditional Owners to exercise their rights	• NLC will prepare and file Native Title applications as required • NLC will assist to finalise all outstanding land claims and work with Traditional Owners and detriment interest holders to progress the grant of Aboriginal land • NLC will notify, facilitate and assist negotiations and seek free, prior and informed consent from Traditional Owners for all exploration and mining applications and non-mining land use and development proposals (including non-pastoral use permits, land-clearing permits and water extraction licences) • NLC will consult with Native Title Holders about the application of the expedited procedure to exploration licence applications that pose a particularly high risk to Sacred sites and cultural heritage and lodge/prosecute objections if instructed • NLC will seek expert advice on contractual terms as required • NLC will take relevant steps to protect Traditional Owners' interests, pursue available remedies, protect Sacred sites and cultural heritage, and secure benefits on their behalf, if instructed
[ERR 33] Under-resourced Caring for Country (CFC) Program	• NLC will ensure relevant NLC staff are trained in cross-cultural communication • NLC will implement cross-cultural training for relevant staff • NLC will engage interpreters to develop audio-visual material in the main language groups where required
[ERR 250] Unable to maintain an effective regional office network for remote regional Aboriginal people	• NLC will maintain an appropriately staffed regional office network, enabled through appropriate infrastructure (offices, facilities and staff housing) that is purchased or leased. • NLC will own and maintain land and property for the purpose of staff housing
[ERR 273] Cut-backs and delays in funding for Caring for Country projects	• NLC will monitor financial progress and performance • NLC will monitor and assess revenue grants and project plans accordingly • NLC will ensure the proper management and keep a centralised administration of funding for CFC projects until project completion • NLC will ensure timely acquittals is provided to funding agencies • NLC will ensure grants reporting is conducted regularly or as and when required under the agreements
[ERR 280] Untimely processing of funds in accordance with Traditional Owner instructions within legislative or reasonable timeframe	• NLC will ensure that funds are processed in accordance with established procedures and guidelines • NLC will communicate transparently with Traditional Owners about delays and expected resolution timelines • NLC will perform a review of any benefits delayed by six months to document reasons and learning, to be implemented in NLC policies and procedures

Financial ERR55	
Key strategic risks	Control and mitigation plan
[ERR 55] Change in government funding priorities cuts NLC's budgets	• NLC will monitor financial progress and performance • NLC will monitor and assess all grants and project plans accordingly • NLC will liaise with government officials and the Minister to secure funding arrangements for NLC programs and activities • NLC will rally on support from Traditional Owner groups on the benefits realised from government funded projects at NLC

Governance	
Key strategic risks	Control and mitigation plan
[ERR 308] Major breach in regulatory laws and regulations including PGPA Act requirements	• NLC will maintain a Compliance Register for all its obligations under key regulatory legislations • NLC will continuously review policies and procedures and develop new ones as required in response to new laws and regulations • NLC will liaise with Australian National Audit Office (ANAO) as required • NLC will ensure all staff complete and regularly update their conflict of interest declarations • NLC will ensure staff receive training on their duties as officials under the PGPA Act • NLC will resource the Audit and Risk Committee meeting regularly • NLC will prepare its corporate plan and annual report in a timely manner
[ERR137] Invalid councillor membership selection and participation	• NLC will provide induction governance training and regular refresher governance sessions for all members • NLC will provide company directors training to all incoming Executive Council members • NLC will review and update the NLC Meeting Rules regularly • NLC will facilitate the attendance of councillors at all Council and committee meetings • NLC will ensure meetings, minutes and action registers align with best-practice meeting procedures

People, culture and capability	
Key strategic risks	Control and mitigation plan
[ERR 83] Shortage of specialised talent and skills in technical areas of NLC operations	- NLC will embed human resources strategies to ensure clear and appropriate processes are in place for learning and development, recruitment and staff engagement throughout the organisation - NLC will ensure all workers have clearly defined roles and responsibilities, and managers who will routinely discuss strategic and operational goals to support a high-performing workforce. - NLC will continue to actively review staff engagement levels to ensure survey outcomes are actioned and contribute towards improving workforce engagement levels
[ERR 74] Inadequate succession planning	- NLC will ensure leadership pathways are available to all workers to promote internal development of staff - NLC managers will identify roles with specialised expertise and develop succession plans to mitigate potential leadership and skillset gaps
[ERR 288] Misalignment of training and development needs with organisational priorities	- NLC continuously training needs for all staffs in line with organizational priorities - NLC will review its Learning and Development strategy to develop training needs for addressing skill gaps in key areas of operations



COOPERATION

The NLC works in close collaboration with Traditional Owner groups and a range of stakeholder including organisations, governments, and strategic partners. These cooperative relationships make a significant contribution to the achievement of the NLC's purpose by supporting the delivery of key activities and improving outcomes for Aboriginal people across the region.

Successful delivery of this corporate plan relies on having a good understanding of the operating context as well as establishing and maintaining strong relationships

with NLC stakeholders. As a member organisation of the Aboriginal Peak Organisation Northern Territory (APO NT), NLC works in close collaboration with other member organisations of APO NT.

The NLC continues to establish new relationships with key stakeholders and improve existing ones to maximise the outcomes for Traditional Owners. This is achieved by working collaboratively with Traditional Owners, affected people, Aboriginal organisations, and government and non-government partners.

Level	Stakeholders
Other	Aboriginal people Aboriginal corporations Community organisations Proponents
Australian Government	Minister for Indigenous Australians National Indigenous Australians Agency (NIAA) Department of Finance (DoF) Indigenous Land and Sea Corporation (ILSC) Aboriginal Investment NT
Aboriginal Peak Organisation Northern Territory (APO NT)	Central Land Council (CLC) Anindilyakwa Land Council (ALC) Tiwi Land Council (TLC) Aboriginal Housing Northern Territory (AHNT) Aboriginal Medical Services Alliance Northern Territory (AMSANT) Northern Australian Aboriginal Justice Agency (NAAJA) Northern Territory Indigenous Business Network (NTIBN)
Territory	Northern Territory Government (including relevant agencies)
Regional	Municipal and regional councils



PERFORMANCE



PERFORMANCE METRIC AND NON-METRIC MEASURES

This section outlines how the NLC's performance in achieving its purpose will be measured and assessed over the reporting period. The key activities and performance measures are aligned with the NLC's strategic priorities and provide a framework for assessing the effectiveness of the organisation in delivering its statutory functions and supporting the rights, interests and aspirations of Traditional Owners and Aboriginal people across the NLC region.

The NLC uses a combination of quantitative and qualitative performance measures to provide a balanced assessment of performance. Quantitative measures (metrics) assess performance through numerical data and measurable results, while qualitative measures (non-metrics) assess performance through indicators of effectiveness, outcomes, stakeholder experiences and organisational achievements. Together, these measures provide meaningful information about the NLC's progress towards achieving its purpose and delivering on the commitments outlined in this Corporate Plan.

Key Activity 1:

Give strong support to Traditional Owners by maximising resources and benefits from land and sea management, ensuring strict compliance with agreements and developing long-term plans with Traditional Owners' free, prior and informed consent.

Reference no.	Performance measures	Target			
		2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30
1.01 2025-26 was 2.01a	Provide Native Title Act notifications to Traditional Owners and Aboriginal constituents in compliance with legislative timeframes.	75%	75%	75%	75%
Methodology	Native Title Act notifications issued within three months Future Acts Notifications: Achieve 75% of Native Title Act notifications issued within legislative timeframes of receipt each quarter. Record each notification received and the date it is issued. Calculate the percentage of notifications issued within 90 days, using only notifications received in the current quarter. Exclude withdrawn or invalid cases. % of Timely Notifications = (Number of notifications issued within 90 days ÷ Total number of notifications received) × 100				
Rationale	Issuing Native Title Act notifications within three months demonstrates NLC's commitment to meeting its statutory responsibilities in a timely and efficient manner. Timely notification supports Traditional Owners and affected parties to participate effectively in Native Title processes and provides certainty for proponents and stakeholders. Measuring this performance also contributes to the PGPA Act requirement to assess the effectiveness, efficiency and timeliness of NLC's delivery against its legislative functions and strategic objectives.				
1.02 2025-26 was 2.01b	Provide notification to Traditional Owners and Aboriginal constituents for consultations and engagements at least 21 calendar days prior to meeting	50%	55%	60%	65%
Methodology	Meeting notices delivered within 21 days prior to date of meeting Meeting notice timeliness: Ensure at least 50% of meeting notices are delivered a minimum of 21 days prior to the meeting date. Track and report on the delivery of meeting notices against scheduled meeting dates. Measure the proportion of notices issued at least 21 days in advance. Performance is calculated as the percentage of timely notices out of the total issued for the reporting period. % of Timely Meeting Notices = (Notices delivered ≤ 21 days ÷ Total notices issued) × 100.				
Rationale	Providing timely meeting notices before a meeting gives Traditional Owners and Aboriginal constituents reasonable time to consider the matters to be discussed, make arrangements to attend, and participate in decision-making. Timely notice supports procedural fairness, transparency, and informed participation, while improving the effectiveness and integrity of consultation and governance processes.				

Reference no.	Performance measures	Target			
		2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30
1.03 2025-26 was 2.06a	Distribute income in accordance with section 35 of the Land Rights Act within six months from receipt.	100%	100%	100%	100%
Methodology	Distribute income in accordance with section 35 of the Land Rights Act within six months Land Rights Act Income Distribution Timeliness: Achieve 100% distribution of income received under Land Rights Act within six months of receipt. Calculate the total value of Land Rights Act income received from 1 July 2022 (BDU Transition Date). Then identify the proportion of that income that has been disbursed within six months of receipt. This measure reflects the percentage of timely disbursements against total income received since the baseline date. % Land Rights Act Income Disbursed on Time = $(\text{Amount disbursed within 6 months} \div \text{Total Land Rights Act income received from baseline 1 July 2022}) \times 100$ Disclaimer: This is a non-cumulative, point-in-time measure. As income is tracked against a rolling six-month deadline from the date of receipt, some funds may be in-progress but still within their allowable disbursement window. Quarterly results may fluctuate due to this lag.				
Rationale	This measure satisfies section 35(2), (3) and (4) of the Land Rights Act. It is specified that monies paid to Land Councils must be paid within six months of its receipt.				
1.04 2025-26 was 2.06c	Distribute income associated with Native Title Act within 12 months of receipt.	100%	100%	100%	100%
Methodology	Achieve 100% distribution of income received under the Native Title Act within 12 months of receipt Native Title Income Distribution Timeliness: Calculate the total value of Native Title income received from 1 July 2022 (BDU Transition Date). Then identify the proportion of that income that has been disbursed within 12 months of receipt. This measure reflects the percentage of timely disbursements against total income received since the baseline date. % Native Title Income Disbursed Within 12 Months = $(\text{Amount disbursed within 12 months} \div \text{Total Native Title income received from baseline 01/07/2022}) \times 100$ Disclaimer: This is a non-cumulative, point-in-time measure. Disbursements are tracked against a rolling 12-month deadline from the date of receipt. Income still within that window is excluded from this measure.				
Rationale	This measure satisfies the legal framework of PGPA Act and functions of Land Councils under the Native Title Act				
1.05 2025-26 was 1.03b	All Land Rights Act land use applications and expressions of interest applications prepared and ready within 120 calendar days for Traditional Owner consultation and decision-making.	60%	60%	60%	60%
Methodology	Track proposals at the consultation-ready milestone. Exclude all proposals On Hold. On Hold being defined as a proposal that cannot progress because a required action is outside of NLC control and causes delay. Calculate: $(\text{Number progressed within 120 calendar days} \div \text{total eligible proposals}) \times 100$.				
Rationale	Continually improve internal processes associated with progressing all Land Rights Act Land Use applications.				

Reference no.	Performance measures	Target			
		2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30
1.06 2025-26 was 1.06a	Land Rights Act applications consented to by Traditional Owners and progressed to Executive Council within three months from final agreement instruction date.	70%	70%	70%	70%
Methodology	Percentage of all Land Rights Act land use agreements consented to by Traditional Owners at consultation and were presented to Executive Council for approval within three months of Traditional Owner instruction date. Calculate: (Number of agreements presented to Executive Council ÷ Number of proposals presented at consultation) x 100.				
Rationale	Continually improve internal processes associated with progressing all Land Rights Act land use agreements as consented by Traditional Owners.				

Key Activity 2:

Enforce and advocate for better protection of heritage areas, Sacred sites and permits for access to Aboriginal land, water and sea country.

Reference no.	Performance measures	Target			
		2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30
2.01 2025-26 was 1.01a	Effectively manage access permits on Aboriginal land, seas and water.	95%	95%	95%	95%
Methodology	Process permit applications within 10 working days Permit Processing (Standard Permits): Achieve 95% of standard permit applications processed within 10 working days of receipt. Review permit system data each quarter. Exclude withdrawn or incomplete applications. Calculate the percentage of standard permits processed within 10 working days of receipt. % Processed On Time = (Number of permits processed within 10 days ÷ Total number of permits received) x 100.				
Rationale	This measure demonstrates that the NLC is administering the permit system efficiently, protecting Traditional Owner's rights, meeting stakeholder expectations and delivering on its legislative and organisational responsibilities.				
2.02 2025-26 was 1.01b	Effectively manage special access permits on Aboriginal land, seas and water.	80%	80%	80%	80%
Methodology	Process special access (research and media) permit applications in less than 20 working days Permit Processing (Special Access Permits): Achieve 80% of special access permits (research and media) processed within 20 business days of receipt. Filter permit system data by permit type. Exclude withdrawn or incomplete applications. Calculate the percentage of special access permits processed (approved or declined) within 20 business days. % Processed On Time = (Number of permits processed within 20 days ÷ Total number of permits received) x 100				
Rationale	This measure demonstrates that the NLC is administering the special access permit system effectively, protecting Traditional Owner's rights, meeting stakeholder expectations and delivering on its legislative and organisational responsibilities.				

Key Activity 3:

Activate land rights by harnessing pride and strength in Aboriginal culture, innovation, creativity, skills, employment, intellectual property, economic development and entrepreneurship.

Reference no.	Performance measures	Target			
		2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30
3.01 2025-26 was 2.02a	Increase the number of Aboriginal groups planning and delivering sustainable projects using their own resources, to deliver against the Community Planning and Development Program	25%	10%	15%	N/A
Methodology	Proactively engage with Aboriginal groups to improve engagement with Community Planning and Development % of Increase in Aboriginal Groups engaged with Community Planning and Development Program = (Number of groups engaged in new financial year ÷ Number of groups engaged as a 30 June in previous financial year) × 100				
Rationale	This measure supports NLC's commitment to strengthening community-led decision-making and self-determination. Increasing the number of Aboriginal groups that plan and deliver sustainable projects using their own resources demonstrates growing local capacity, leadership and long-term resilience. Measuring progress against this outcome ensures the Community Planning and Development Program is effectively supporting communities to achieve the priorities and aspirations set out in its Strategic Plan.				
3.02 New	Implement the Community Planning and Development 2026–30 Framework.	50%	75%	100%	N/A
Methodology	1. % of Key Priorities Progressed = (Number of priorities with verified progress in 2026–27 ÷ 5) × 100 = X 2. Reviewing each priority area using Results Based Accountability Performance measures to quantify - How much did we do? (e.g. # of groups, #number of projects;) How well did we do it? (e.g. Group satisfaction, % of projects that have progressed;) and is anyone better off? (e.g. % of groups with improved skills, % of groups with strengthened governance;)				
Rationale	The NLC's Community Planning and Development Program supports Aboriginal people and communities to lead their own development through a community-led, rights-based and asset-based approach. We walk alongside communities to support them to achieve their own aspirations. Our role is to: • Support Traditional Owners and communities to lead their own development • Strengthen governance, capability, and decision-making authority • Enable long-term social, cultural, and economic outcomes • Connect communities to opportunities, partnerships, and systems Community Planning and Development Program's annual monitoring and evaluation report will reflect further information and case studies that share the story of the complexity and impact of the work.				
3.03 2025-26 was 3.13a	Process funeral and ceremony fund applications within five working days of date of application	80%	80%	80%	80%
Methodology	Funeral and ceremony applications processed within five working days Funeral and Ceremony Fund Processing Time: Process at least 80% of funeral and ceremony fund applications within five working days. Compare the application received date to the processing date for all submitted applications. Calculate the percentage of applications processed within 5 working days. % Processed on Time = (Applications processed ≤ 5 working days ÷ Total applications received) × 100				
Rationale	Processing funeral and ceremony fund applications in a timely manner ensures timely support is provided to Aboriginal people and communities for culturally significant events. This measure demonstrates a commitment to efficient, fair, and responsive administration, promotes equitable access to available funding, and strengthens accountability by ensuring funding decisions are made consistently and without unnecessary delay.				

Key Activity 4:

Create opportunities for self-determination through Traditional Owner decision-making, community consultations, ranger programs, Learning on Country, Aboriginal-led township leasing, planning and development.

Reference no.	Performance measures	Target			
		2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30
4.01 2025-26 was 2.09a	Deliver against the six key pillars in the Caring for Country Strategic Plan 2024–29 as per the agreed time frames.	90%	90%	90%	90%
Methodology	Progress towards achieving six key priorities in the Caring for Country Strategic Plan. Caring for Country Strategic Plan Delivery: Achieve 90% progress toward delivery of the six key priorities under the Caring for Country Strategic Plan 2024–29 by end of 2025–26. Review funding reports and related implementation documentation. Verify milestone achievements against the six agreed key priorities for the reporting period only. % of Key Priorities Progressed = $\left(\frac{\text{Number of priorities with verified progress in reporting period}}{6} \right) \times 100$				
Rationale	The Caring for Country Strategic Plan underpins the work of our 14 Regional Ranger Groups and 4 Indigenous Protected Areas (IPAs). It aims to ensure that our ranger teams are effectively governed and financially and operationally equipped to deliver meaningful outcomes that maintain connections to culture, provide sustainable employment on Country, and preserve and strengthen traditional knowledge. By integrating traditional knowledge with modern science, the plan continues to build the capacity of our rangers to protect, manage, and conserve our unique land and sea Country. Measuring progress against the six Strategic Priorities ensures that the Caring for Country Ranger teams continue to transition established ranger programs from planning through to delivery and into business-as-usual operations, in alignment with the Strategic Plan phases. The exception is the addition of two new ranger groups, Kulumindini and Alawa, which are currently in the initial planning phase and progressing towards full program implementation.				



Reference no.	Performance measures	Target			
		2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30
4.02 2025-26 was 1.09a	Support Aboriginal rangers and other organisations to actively manage gamba grass, reducing its impact across the NT by delivering the Gamba Eradication and Biodiversity Conservation Project.	75%	100%	N/A	N/A
Methodology	Progress towards stage 1 and 2 of the Gamba Eradication and Biodiversity Conservation Project to meet objectives by 2027 Gamba Eradication Project: Achieve 75% completion of Stage 1 and 2 milestones under the Gamba Eradication and Biodiversity Conservation Project by end of reporting period, with the aim for completion (100%) in 2027. Monitor and report milestone progress against the Eradication and Biodiversity Conservation (GEBC) Project Plan. Use project reports, engagement logs, and survey outcomes. Only count milestones that are verified as completed during the reporting period. % of Milestones Achieved = (Number of completed Stage 1 and 2 milestones ÷ Total number of scheduled Stage 1 and 2 milestones for the year) × 100				
Rationale	The GEBC Project is guided by a comprehensive Project Plan and supported by the technical, cultural, and scientific expertise represented on the GEBC Steering Committee. Gamba grass is recognised by all levels of government and through national and state/territory legislation as a significant invasive weed with serious environmental, cultural, social, and economic impacts. The GEBC Project Plan reflects these concerns and aligns its priorities with key policy and strategic frameworks, including the Threat Abatement Plan to Reduce the Impacts on Northern Australia's Biodiversity by the Five Listed Grasses, the Gamba Grass Weed Management Plan 2020–30, and the Threatened Species Action Plan. Recognising the significant threat that the uncontrolled spread of gamba grass poses to the Indigenous estate and high biodiversity regions across the Top End, and the important role that Caring for Country and independent Indigenous Ranger groups could play in protecting Country from gamba grass establishment and invasion, the NLC successfully secured the majority of funding from the Australian Government's \$9.8 million investment in gamba grass management announced in 2022. Between 2024 and 2026, the project not only met but exceeded its original objectives, achieving outstanding results in the eradication of gamba grass across high-priority areas within the Northern Territory Gamba Grass Eradication Zone. Building on this success, the NLC submitted a successful proposal to the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water in late 2025, securing an additional year of project operations. The extended 2026–27 control season will enable the project to consolidate previous gains, target remaining priority infestations, and further expand its achievements. This additional work is expected to deliver outcomes that surpass the original funding proposal and contribute significantly to the long-term protection of biodiversity, cultural values, and Indigenous land management aspirations across the region.				
4.03 2025-26 was 2.08a	Implement the Learning on Country (LoC) Strategic Plan 2025–26	85%	85%	100%	N/A
Methodology	Progress towards achieving the nine Learning on Country priorities Learning on Country Progress: Achieve 85% progress toward delivery of the nine Learning on Country priorities by end of 2026–27 and complete 100% by 2027–28. Review site-level Monitoring and Evaluation reports from the 14 Learning on Country Project sites. Identify which of the 9 strategic priorities have progressed. Only count progress that is verifiable in reports. % of LoC Priorities Progressed = (Number of LoC priorities with verifiable progress ÷ 9 total priorities) × 100				
Rationale	The Learning on Country program (LoC) is supported by a well-established and nationally recognised Indigenous Governance Framework which enables high levels of community involvement in the LoC program operations. The actions and outcomes related to the nine LoC priorities are all on track to be completed by 2027–2028. The LoC Strategic Plan is in place, and its priorities are well aligned with the Caring for Country and many of the of the NLC strategic priorities. Where the work being done by the LoC aligns, the LoC is very placed to assist CFC/Land and Sea Management and the NLC achieve or make progress towards its stated strategic goals. The Indigenous governance model which incorporates a purpose built, culturally appropriate Monitoring and Evaluation framework enables the LoC to monitor, report and review progress against the nine LoC priorities, at both the Site and program levels.				

Reference no.	Performance measures	Target			
		2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30
4.04 2025-26 was 2.10a	Implement the Caring for Country Women's Engagement Framework and Women's Engagement Strategy.	30%	75%	50%	90%
Methodology	Implement Caring for Country (CFC) Women's Ranger Strategy. Women's Ranger Strategy Implementation: Achieve 30% implementation of the Caring for Country (CFC) Women's Engagement Strategy by end of 2026-27. Commence engagements between Women's Engagement team and Women Rangers across CFC groups. Record Council endorsement of the new Framework. Track delivery of implementation activities commenced or completed during 2026-27. % of Strategy Implementation = (Number of implementation actions progressed ÷ Total planned actions for 2026-27) × 100				
Rationale	The Women's Ranger Strategy is a key pillar of the overarching Caring for Country Strategic Plan, particularly goal five striving for gender-equal employment pathways. The Women's Ranger Strategy 2026-30 will be launched formally in 2026, alongside the implementation of the new Women's Ranger Engagement Unit. Across the NLC region, our NLC women rangers care for Country every day. They protect women's Sacred sites, keep culture strong and pass on knowledge to younger generations. This work is essential – it sustains Country, strengthens culture, supports communities and secures the future for generations to come. Measuring progress against the Women's Ranger Strategy ensures that Caring for Country ranger programs are prioritising actions to strengthen Aboriginal women's leadership, participation, safety, wellbeing and future pathways for our women rangers.				
4.05 2025-26 was 1.11a	Implement the Savanna Fire Management (carbon abatement) Program involving NLC ranger groups.	100%	100%	100%	100%
Methodology	Coordinate the delivery of four Indigenous Land and Sea Corporation (ILSC) Savanna Fire Management projects in the NLC region Savanna Fire Management Projects: Achieve 100% delivery of four x ILSC Savanna Fire Management Projects annually across the NLC region. Track the delivery of four ILSC-funded fire projects. Use project site reports and satellite or burn data to verify completion. Only count projects that have completed delivery in the reporting year. % of Projects Delivered = (Number of projects delivered ÷ 4) × 100				
Rationale	Savanna Fire Management (carbon abatement) programs provide the opportunity to transfer carbon credits between those who reduce carbon emissions and those who create emissions. Projects under savanna fire management methods can earn Australian carbon credit units (ACCUs) by reintroducing controlled fire burning during the early dry season, reducing the frequency and severity of fires in the late dry season. The NLC has contractual obligations to undertake operational fire management activities as part of these programs, whereby NLC Rangers work closely with Traditional Owners to implement culturally appropriate burning on Aboriginal Land Trust areas.				

Reference no.	Performance measures	Target			
		2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30
4.06 2025-26 was 3.14a	Requests for dispute assistance, ready for consultation within six months of receiving request	50%	50%	50%	50%
Methodology	Capture number of requests for assistance work through, dispute requests for support. Excludes request that are not relate to Land Rights Act or Native Title Act matters and those where critical information is missing, NLC will proactively work to obtain all critical information in a timely manner. Dispute support requests: Progress at least 50% of dispute to be consult ready within six months. Track all request to be captured in the disputes register. Identify the total number of requests received, assess the number of requests that relate to Land Rights Act and Native Title Act matters and the number that are consult ready in six months. Follow NLC processes to assist with conflict through consultation and or mediation. Dispute resolution: Support resolution or prevention of disputes through engagement and facilitation Verify dispute requests that are consult ready from date when all critical information was provided and covered by Land Rights Act and Native Title Act as tracked in Disputes Register. % Consult ready = (Dispute assistance consult ready within six months ÷ Total dispute requests received that relate to Land Rights Act and Native Title Act) × 100				
Rationale	Supporting Aboriginal groups, with their consent, to work through disputes strengthens respectful decision-making, governance and community cohesion. Effective dispute resolution enables communities to make informed decisions, maintain productive relationships and progress matters affecting their rights, interests and aspirations. Measuring this activity demonstrates NLC's effectiveness in delivering services that contribute to its legislative functions and strategic objectives, consistent with the performance and accountability requirements of the Land Rights Act, Native Title Act and PGPA Act.				

Key Activity 5:

Create stronger NLC regions with more NLC staff and more support for Aboriginal people by implementing our Regionalisation Strategy, 'Building the Bush'.

Reference no.	Performance measures	Target			
		2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30
5.01 2025-26 was 2.03b	Increase the number of available regional staff housing to drive the Regionalisation Strategy.	5%	5%	5%	5%
Methodology	Increase regional staff housing. Regional Staff Housing Growth: Achieve a 5% annual increase in regional staff housing stock, including new builds, upgrades, and leased properties. Track number of staff housing units available and functional in regional areas. Include new builds, returned stock from maintenance, or upgraded assets. Use Property and Assets data. Compare current quarter to Q1 baseline. Do not carry cumulative totals across years. % of Regional Housing Stock Growth Achieved = $\left(\frac{\text{Number of eligible regional housing units this quarter}}{\text{Number of eligible regional housing units at Q1 baseline}} \right) \times 100.$				
Rationale	In accordance with the endorsed NLC Regionalisation Strategy, the organisation is required to strengthen our ability to assist constituents across the NLC's seven regions and expand our presence and 'footprint' in broader geographic locations outside of those existing. This requires increased numbers of staff living and based out in the regions to ensure the NLC remains accessible and responsive to the needs of our people.				
5.02 2025-26 was 2.04a	Implement effective project management to progress the NLC Regionalisation Strategy.	50%	75%	100%	N/A
Methodology	Effective completion of projects to progress the NLC Regionalisation Strategy. Regional Infrastructure Projects: Achieve 100% completion of identified regional infrastructure and service improvement projects under the Building the Bush strategy by 2029. Track progress of infrastructure and service upgrade projects listed in the NLC's 'Building the Bush Strategy'. Count projects marked as practically complete. Use Property and Assets or program management records. Only include projects explicitly listed or endorsed in the strategy. % of Regionalisation Projects Completed = $\left(\frac{\text{Number of completed regionalisation projects}}{\text{Total number of identified regionalisation projects}} \right) \times 100.$				
Rationale	In accordance with the endorsed NLC Regionalisation Strategy, the organisation is required to strengthen our ability to assist constituents across the NLC's seven regions and expand our presence and 'footprint' in broader geographic locations outside of those existing. This requires increased numbers of staff living and based out in the regions to ensure the NLC remains accessible and responsive to the needs of our people.				
5.03 2025-26 was 2.03a	Increase the number of staff working in remote locations to drive the Regionalisation Strategy.	5%	5%	5%	
Methodology	Increase staff living and based in regions. Regional Staff Growth: Achieve a 5% annual increase in the number of staff living and based in regional areas. Identify all staff with regional classification in the pay scale. Cross-check with Property and Assets data to confirm regional housing is occupied. Verify as required through employee records or manager confirmation. Count only staff currently living and working in-region. Do not carry over prior year changes — this is a point-in-time measure. % of Regionalisation Growth Achieved = $\left(\frac{\text{Number of regional staff this quarter} - \text{Number of regional staff last quarter}}{\text{Number of regional staff last quarter}} \right) \times 100.$				
Rationale	In accordance with the endorsed NLC Regionalisation Strategy, the organisation is required to strengthen our ability to assist constituents across the NLC's seven regions and expand our presence and 'footprint' in broader geographic locations outside of those existing. This requires increased numbers of staff living and based out in the regions to ensure the NLC remains accessible and responsive to the needs of our people.				

Key Activity 6:

Build on improvements already made in NLC governance, leadership, communications and support systems for Council members and staff.

Reference no.	Performance measures	Target			
		2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30
6.01 2025-26 was 1.07a	Provide timely anthropological advice to the NLC	80%	80%	80%	80%
Methodology	Percentage of land interest reference requests completed within agreed timeframe LIR Requests: Achieve 80% of land interest reference (LIR) requests completed within agreed timeframe. Track LIRs received and completed. Compare actual completion dates to agreed timeframe. % of LIRs Completed on Time = (Number of LIRs completed within agreed timeframe ÷ Total number of LIRs received) × 100				
Rationale	Timely anthropological advice is a critical capability that supports the NLC to fulfil its statutory functions and make informed decisions relating to Aboriginal rights, interests, culture and Country. This KPI ensures specialist advice is responsive, accurate and supports effective consultation, negotiations and decision-making for Traditional Owners and Aboriginal communities. It provides assurance that the NLC's capability is aligned with its purpose, strategic priorities and accountability obligations under the PGPA framework.				
6.02 2025-26 was 3.11a	Improve response times to customer feedback by increasing the percentage of responses within 30 business days	50%	60%	55%	65%
Methodology	Increase the percentage of external complaints response within 30 days External Complaint Response Rate: Achieve 50% closure rate to external complaints within 30 working days. Calculate the number of external complaints responded to within 30 days as a percentage of total external complaints received during the financial year. Note: The target is to meet or exceed the 50% benchmark for all applicable complaints. % of Timely Complaint Responses = (Complaints responded to ≤ 30 business days ÷ Total external complaints received) × 100				
Rationale	To ensure good governance, the NLC is working towards ensuring that the targets set in the Corporate Plan and reported on in the Annual Report are SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-based). Moving to SMART targets in any organisation impacts performance in the short term. This process takes time as it involves improving systems and reporting, refining measures, establishing reliable baselines, and testing targets set in the NLC's Corporate Plan. The NLC is committed to continuous improvement in achieving targets.				
6.03 2025-26 was 4.05a	Facilitate Council meetings as scheduled.	80%	80%	80%	80%
Methodology	Achieve at least 80% of all scheduled Council meetings Scheduled vs Held: Track and report number of meetings actually held throughout year compared to number scheduled. % Scheduled vs Held = (Total meetings held ÷ Total meetings scheduled) × 100				
Rationale	Good Council member attendance at Council meetings supports better engagement and participation in strategic discussions and allows for well-informed decision-making.				

Reference no.	Performance measures	Target			
		2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30
6.04 2025-26 was 3.15d	Strengthen workforce composition, planning and engagement to support a skilled, inclusive and committed workforce.	50%	50%	50%	50%
Methodology	Improve Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Representation: Maintain Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce representation at 50% or higher Assess the percentage of employees identifying as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander against the total workforce headcount. Compare to the baseline recorded at the start of the year. % Representation = $\left(\frac{\text{Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Headcount}}{\text{Total Workforce Headcount}} \right) \times 100$				
Rationale	Increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment is fundamental to the NLC's purpose, values and commitment to supporting the aspirations of Traditional Owners and Aboriginal communities across the Northern Territory. As an Aboriginal representative body, the NLC recognises that building a strong Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce strengthens its capacity to deliver culturally informed, community-focused and effective services. By increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment, the NLC demonstrates its commitment to reconciliation, self-determination and workforce equity. This measure supports the organisation's strategic objective of building a diverse, culturally strong and representative workforce that is well positioned to deliver on its Corporate Plan and achieve positive outcomes for Traditional Owners, communities and stakeholders.				



Key Activity 7:

Raise issues and influence policy in critical areas of interest including agriculture, pastoral, mining, tourism, carbon economy, homelands and essential services, water rights and security, remote housing, and infrastructure such as roads, bridges and communications.

Reference no.	Performance measures	Target			
		2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30
7.01 2025-26 was 4.03a	Delivery advocacy activities across six NLC Priority Policy areas during financial year	100%	100%	100%	100%
Methodology	This measure monitors NLC advocacy efforts across the six policy priority areas identified by the Full Council. Confirm that advocacy activities have been undertaken across all policy priority areas in line with the policy positions and views of council. Advocacy activities include submissions, correspondence, meetings, media, participation in working groups or public hearings, engagements with stakeholders and community. Achievement is calculated as the percentage of priority areas of which advocacy has occurred. Number of topics advocated for divided by number of policy priority areas x 100.				
Rationale	This measure demonstrates NLC's commitment to advocating for the priorities identified by the Full Council and ensuring that Council's policy positions and views are represented across all six priority areas. Tracking advocacy activities provides evidence of NLC's engagement with government, stakeholders and communities and demonstrates that the organisation is actively progressing matters that are important to Aboriginal people and communities. Reporting the percentage of priority areas where advocacy has occurred provides a clear and transparent measure of NLC's performance against the priorities set by Council.				

Key Activity 8:

Be a strong voice for the next generation, tomorrow's leaders, constitutional recognition and the Voice to Parliament, implementation of the Uluru Statement of the Heart in Full and the Northern Territory Treaty process.

Reference no.	Performance measures	Target			
		2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30
8.01 2025-26 was 4.04a	Advocate for Treaty and truth telling in accordance with the principles of the Uluru Statement from the Heart, through planned advocacy activities during financial year.	100%	100%	100%	100%
Methodology	Confirm that advocacy activities have been undertaken to promote Council's position in support of Treaty and truth telling.				
Rationale	This measure demonstrates NLC's commitment to promoting Council's position on Treaty and truth-telling, consistent with the principles of the Uluru Statement from the Heart, including Voice, Treaty and Truth. It provides evidence that NLC is advocating for Aboriginal peoples' rights, recognition, self-determination and meaningful participation in decisions that affect them, while ensuring Council's views are represented consistently through engagement with government, stakeholders and communities.				

Reference no.	Performance measures	Target			
		2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30
8.01 2025-26 was 3.09a	Deliver culturally rich and trusted communications through media platforms.	20%	20%	20%	20%
Methodology	Grow audience size across media platforms 2026–27 Facebook and Instagram: 20% increase in engagement each quarter 2027–28 as for 2026–27 and; YouTube channel achieves an average of 500 views per annum per video; LinkedIn achieves an increase of 20% post impressions. 2028–29 2026–27 and; YouTube channel achieves an average of 500 views per annum per video; LinkedIn achieves an increase of 20% post impression 2029–30 2026–27 and; YouTube channel achieves an average of 700 views per annum per video; LinkedIn achieves an increase of 20% post impression Performance will be measured by tracking engagement as measured on the Meta interface. This measure combines public interactions and passive attention signals across Facebook and Instagram. YouTube growth will be measured by views and for LinkedIn, the measure will be based on impressions.				
Rationale	Engagement is the leading best-practice measure of success across digital and social media platforms, reflecting how effectively an organisation connects with and influences its audience. For the NLC, strong engagement demonstrates its ability to be a trusted and influential voice for Traditional Owners, while building meaningful connections with the next generation of Aboriginal leaders.				
8.02 2025-26 was 3.09b	Deliver culturally rich and trusted communications through news publications.	100%	100%	100%	100%
Methodology	Publish Land Rights News quarterly Progress is measured by tracking the number of editions of Land Rights News published each quarter and reviewing the number of copies that are left after each print run. % of Land Rights News Editions Published = (Number of editions published ÷ 4) × 100 3,000 copies printed = 3,000 copies distributed.				
Rationale	<i>Land Rights News</i> is the trusted voice of Aboriginal across the Top End showcasing regional news, land rights and Native title issues, community events, ranger programs, arts, culture and essential support services. Through powerful storytelling, the publication celebrates achievements, amplifies community voices, and profiles both emerging and established leaders shaping the future. As a respected platform for the NLC and its constituents, Land Rights News informs, connects and empowers communities while strengthening awareness and understanding of the issues that matter most.				

MEASURING AND ASSESSING PERFORMANCE

Under the PGPA Act, the Accountable Authority is responsible for measuring, assessing and reporting on the NLC's performance in achieving its purposes.

To meet this requirement, NLC has established a set of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) that measure performance across its core functions and strategic objectives. These performance measures are aligned to the organisation's key activities and are linked to the relevant strategic priorities.

Where appropriate, NLC has adopted SMART targets that are Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-bound. SMART targets provide a clear basis for monitoring progress, assessing performance and supporting continuous improvement.

In some areas, it is not appropriate to set a target because results are influenced by external demand, legislative requirements or other factors outside NLC's control. Where this occurs, the reason will be explained alongside the relevant performance measure.

The NLC will monitor its performance throughout the year and report the results in its Annual Report. The Annual Report will include an Annual Performance Statement that evaluates the NLC's achievement against its performance measures and SMART targets, demonstrating how effectively the organisation has delivered on its purposes under the PGPA Act.

OTHER REPORTING FRAMEWORKS

The NLC operates within a complex reporting environment, with multiple performance measurement and reporting obligations. In addition to reporting against the goals, objectives and key activities outlined in this Corporate Plan, the NLC is required to meet reporting obligations associated with other funding arrangements and regulatory frameworks, including Aboriginals Benefit Account (ABA) funding requirements and NTRB responsibilities.

The NLC recognises the importance of effective and meaningful reporting frameworks that support transparency, accountability and the demonstration of outcomes. While existing reporting frameworks provide an important basis for measuring performance, some elements may require ongoing review to ensure they remain aligned with the contemporary functions, activities and outcomes delivered by Aboriginal organisations.

GLOSSARY

Aboriginal land	As defined in the <i>Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act 1976</i> (Cth), Aboriginal land means: (a) land held by a Land Trust for an estate in fee simple; or (b) land the subject of a deed of grant held in escrow by a Land Council.
Accountable Authority	NLC Chair and Chief Executive Officer
AI	Artificial intelligence
BDU	Benefits Distribution Service Area
Council	The NLC's 111-member governing Full Council and optional five co-opted woman
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CFC	Caring for Country
ERR	Enterprise risk register
Executive Council	The 14 members elected to Executive Council to by the NLC's Full Council
GEBC	Gamba Eradication and Biodiversity Conservation
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
ILSC	Indigenous Land and Sea Corporation
IM	Information Management
KPI	Key performance indicator, or performance measure
Land council	An Aboriginal Land Council in the Northern Territory established by or under the <i>Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act 1976</i> (Cth) to represent Aboriginal people.
Land Rights Act	<i>Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act 1976</i> (Cth)
LoC	Learning on Country program
Native Title Act	<i>Native Title Act 1993</i> (Cth)
Native Title Holders	As defined under section 224 of the <i>Native Title Act 1993</i> (Cth) (a) if a prescribed body corporate is registered on the National Native Title Register as holding the native title rights and interests on trust—the prescribed body corporate; or (b) in any other case—the person or persons who hold the native title.
NLC	Northern Land Council
NTRB	Native Title Representative Body
Outcomes	Desired results, impacts or consequences for Aboriginal peoples
PBC	Prescribed Body Corporate
PGPA Act	<i>Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013</i> (Cth)
Sacred site	A site that is sacred to Aboriginal people or is otherwise of significance according to Aboriginal tradition
SMART Target	Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-bound targets
Traditional Owners	In relation to land, means a local descent group of Aboriginal people who have common spiritual affiliations to a site on the land, being affiliations that place the group under a primary spiritual responsibility for that site and for the land; and are entitled by Aboriginal tradition to forage as a right over that land.
WHS	Work Health and Safety



**NORTHERN
LAND COUNCIL**

Our Land, Our Sea, Our Life

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