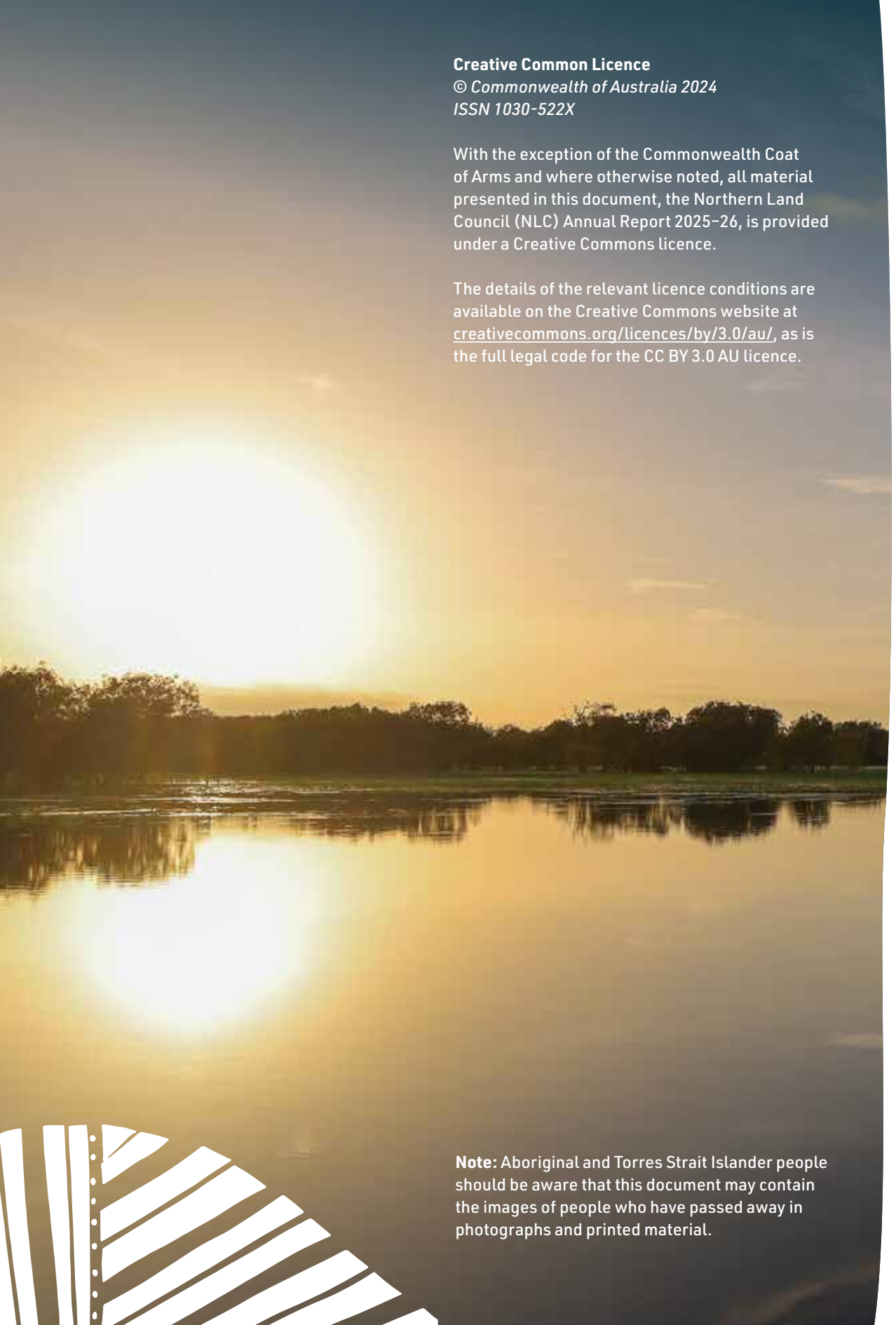
NORTHERN
LAND COUNCIL

Our Land, Our Sea, Our Life

ANNUAL REPORT 2025-26





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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.

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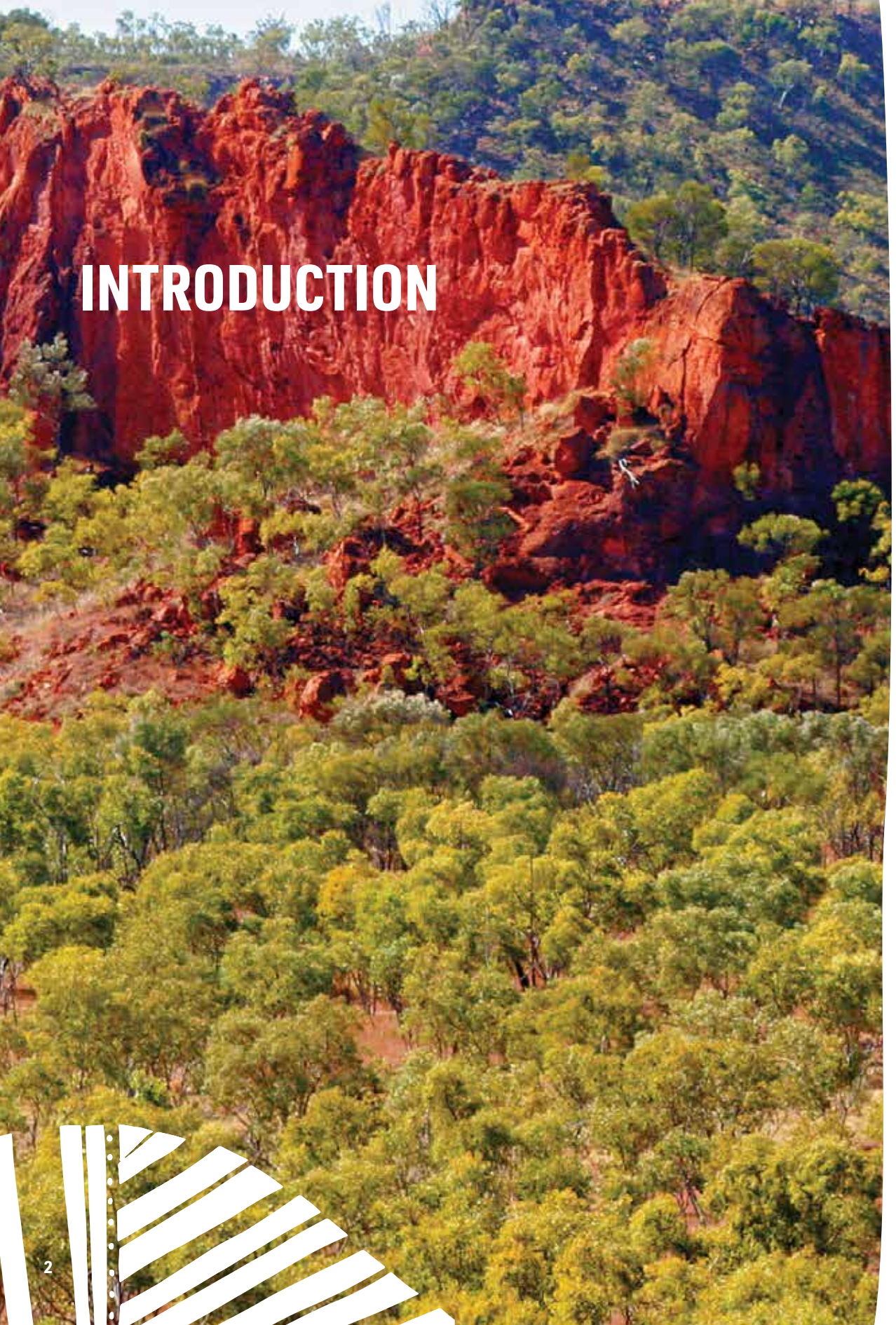

INTRODUCTION

OUR VISION, OUR MISSION, OUR 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.

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 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



BE RESPONSIVE

- To Aboriginal peoples' needs and effectively advocate for their rights and interests
- Provide effective services to the people we represent and other stakeholders
- Complete actions and tasks in a timely way, be accountable to the people we represent



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



SOCIAL JUSTICE

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



ABOUT THIS REPORT

The NLC's Annual Report 2025-26 provides a comprehensive account of its performance from 1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026 in accordance with its obligations under the *Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act 1976* (Cth), the *Native Title Act 1993* (Cth), the *Aboriginal Land Act 1978* (NT) and the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (Cth) (referred to throughout this document as the Land Rights Act, the Native Title Act, the Aboriginal Land Act and the PGPA Act, respectively).

THE ANNUAL REPORT 2025–26 IS DIVIDED INTO FIVE PARTS:

- **About Us:** Our Land, Our Sea, Our Life.
- **The Year in Review:** Our achievements and challenges for the reporting year.
- **Corporate Governance and Management.**
- **Financial Statements:** Details on income and expenses for the NLC as a corporate Commonwealth entity, its subsidiaries and as a Native Title Representative Body.
- **Appendices and references**.

The NLC submits this report to the Minister for Indigenous Australians for tabling in the Australian Parliament.

CONTACT US

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8.00 am – 4.30 pm (CST) weekdays

F: +61 (8) 8920 5255

www.nlc.org.au

Northern Land Council, GPO Box 1222, Darwin NT 0801

TABLE 1: NLC OFFICE CONTACT DETAILS

REGION	LOCATION	ADDRESS	PHONE
Darwin/Daly/Wagait	Darwin	29 Julius Street Berrimah NT 0828	(08) 8920 5100
	Wadeye	Lot 776 Murin Air Terminal Wadeye NT 0822	(08) 8980 1917
West Arnhem	Jabiru	3 Jabiru Government Building Flinders St/Tasman Circuit	(08) 8938 3000
	Maningrida	Lot 735 Maningrida NT 0822	(08) 8920 5170
East Arnhem	Nhulunbuy	Arnhem House S6/L1 85 Chesterfield Circuit Nhulunbuy NT 0880	(08) 8986 8500
	Galiwin'ku	Lot 78 Nurruwurrunhan Road Galiwin'ku NT 0822	(08) 8970 5025
Katherine	Katherine	13 Chardon Street Katherine NT 0850	(08) 8971 9899
South East Arnhem	Ngukurr	Lot 379 Balamurra Street Ngukurr NT 0852	(08) 8977 2500
Victoria River District	Timber Creek	35 Wilson Street Timber Creek NT 0852	(08) 8974 5600
Borroloola/Barkly	Borroloola	Lot 25 Mara Camp Via Robinson Road Borroloola NT 0854	(08) 8975 7500
	Tennant Creek	178 Paterson Street Tennant Creek NT 0860	(08) 8963 3500
	Elliott	25 Ijibarda Street Elliott NT 0862	(08) 8963 3555

*Note Kununurra location is no longer in use as at 2026-27

LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL

15 October 2026

The Minister for Indigenous Australians
Senator the Hon Malarndirri McCarthy
PO Box 6022
House of Representatives
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Minister

In accordance with the *Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act 1976* (Cth), the *Native Title Act 1993* (Cth) and the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (Cth), we are pleased to submit the Northern Land Council's 2025-26 Annual Report.

The Accountable Authority under section 46 of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* is responsible for the preparation and content of this report in accordance with the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Rule 2014*.

This report reviews the Northern Land Council's performance and illustrates the commitment and achievements of the Council and our staff throughout the year.

We commend the report to you for presentation to the House of Representatives, Parliament House.

Yours sincerely



Mr Matthew Ryan
Chair



Mr Yuseph Deen
Chief Executive Officer

NLC'S ACCOUNTABLE AUTHORITY



CHAIR
MATTHEW RYAN

In December 2025, Mr Matthew Ryan was re-elected as Chair of the Northern Land Council for a three-year term.

Mr Ryan is of Barabarra, Wurrpann and Gurindji descent and represents the West Arnhem region.

Mr Ryan is a strong advocate for his constituents and is frequently on the ground engaging across all seven of the NLC's regions. Mr Ryan is a prominent public figure calling for better outcomes for Aboriginal people across the Top End. He has advocated for improved conditions for community members evacuated from remote communities during the 2025-26 wet season, and has spoken out against legislative changes that harm Aboriginal people and communities.

Mr Ryan is passionate about increasing the regional presence of the NLC through the implementation of the NLC's regionalisation strategy.

Mr Ryan previously worked as an Aboriginal Community Police Officer in the Northern Territory Police Force and as a Djelk Community Ranger with Bawinanga Aboriginal Corporation (BAC). He was elected to the BAC board before serving as Chair for two terms. He has been a strong advocate for Aboriginal people in his region, serving as councillor for the West Arnhem Regional Council for many years before serving two terms as Mayor of West Arnhem Regional Council.



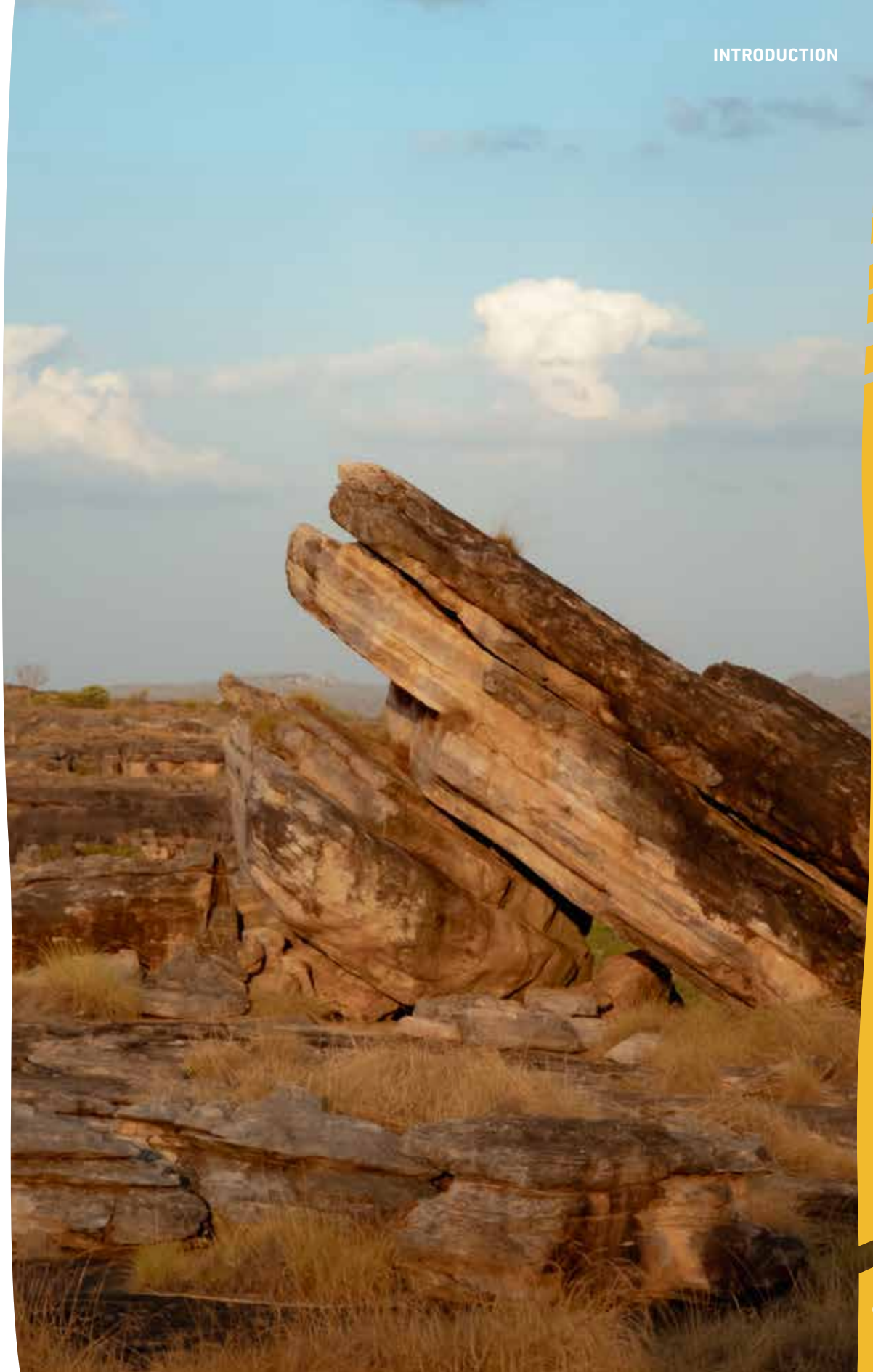
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER (CEO) YUSEPH DEEN

As a descendant of the Wuthathi peoples with connections to the Gunggandji and Torres Strait Islands, Mr Deen brings extensive experience and insight to the NLC.

Over the past 25 years, through his roles in Aboriginal governance, he has supported First Nations people to secure and protect rights, land, culture and heritage as well as natural resource management and community development. In addition to his leadership across the NSW Land Rights network, he has worked with the North Queensland Land Council, the Indigenous Land Corporation, Lumbu Indigenous Community Foundation and the Western Cape Communities Trust.

Mr Deen's commitment to social justice, cultural respect and community engagement aligns with the core values of the NLC: respect, integrity and empowerment.

As the CEO, his focus is on implementing the strategic objectives of the NLC, ensuring that Aboriginal people can acquire and manage their lands to their greatest benefit. He aims to foster an environment where the voices of our constituents are heard and their rights are upheld.



FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE SUMMARY

The NLC is primarily funded through the Aboriginals Benefit Account (ABA), an account into which the Commonwealth Government pays an amount of money equal to the royalties paid from mining on Aboriginal land. These payments are made based on yearly estimates and justification provided by the NLC just before the start of the year.

The NLC is also a Native Title Representative Body under the Native Title Act and receives funding for Native Title matters.

In addition to its core funding under the ABA and the Native Title Act, the NLC receives funding from government and non-government agencies under grant agreements.

The NLC is required to prepare audited financial statements in accordance with the PGPA Act, the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability (Financial Reporting) Rule 2015*, the Finance Minister's Orders, and Australian Accounting Standards and Interpretations – Simplified Disclosures issued by the Australian Accounting Standard Board that apply for the reporting period.

The NLC's auditor is the Australian National Audit Office (ANAO).

The full audited statements are reproduced in Part 4: Financial Statements.

EXTERNAL FUNDING

The NLC receives additional grant-based funding from several sources. The major external funding sources include:

- Indigenous Rangers – Jobs, Land and Economy Program – National Indigenous Australians Agency (NIAA)
- Real Jobs Program – Indigenous Land and Sea Corporation (ILSC)
- Indigenous Protected Areas – National Indigenous Australians Agency (NIAA).

COMPLIANCE SUMMARY

As a corporate Commonwealth entity, the NLC is subject to annual reporting orders issued by the Finance Minister under the PGPA Act, which stipulates that the NLC recovers costs for the provision of products or services where it is efficient to do so.

FEES

In accordance with section 37(2) of the Land Rights Act, fees received for services by the NLC, please refer to Part 5: Appendices, Compliance Index.

FINANCIAL SUMMARY 2025–26

Northern Land Council (NLC) recorded surplus in 2025-26 of $28M. In comparison, the surplus for 2024-25 was $50M. Primary reason for the decrease in surplus is the lesser amount of capitalization for the Darwin Head Office and Katherine Office projects.

In 2025-26 NLC had an actual surplus of $28M compared with a budgeted surplus of $27.5M. The variance between the actual and budgeted figures primarily arose due to recording of the unearned income. This is merely a timing difference as the funds were received in advance and the expenditure will be incurred in following year (originally budgeted for in 2025-26).

TABLE 2: COMPARISON TO PREVIOUS YEAR AND BUDGET

	ACTUAL 2025-26	ACTUAL 2024-25	VARIANCE	BUDGET 2025-26	VARIANCE
	$M	$M	$M	$M	$M
Income	136.1	150.5	-14.4	160.3	-24.2
Expenses	108.1	100.5	7.6	132.8	-24.7
Surplus/Deficit	28.0	50.0	-22.0	27.5	0.5

NET RESULT

INCOME

In 2025-26 there was an overall decrease in funding by $14.4M (10 %) compared with 2024-25. Funding can vary significantly from year to year depending on several factors such as the number of major projects being undertaken and the availability of funds in general from various sources. The primary decrease in funding is due to lesser funds received under ABA which also includes funds for the Darwin and the Katherine offices.

Figure 1 compares the change in income from 2024-25 with 2025-26 and the actual and budgeted results for 2025-26:

FIGURE 1: 2024-25 ACTUAL VS 2025-26 ACTUAL & BUDGET

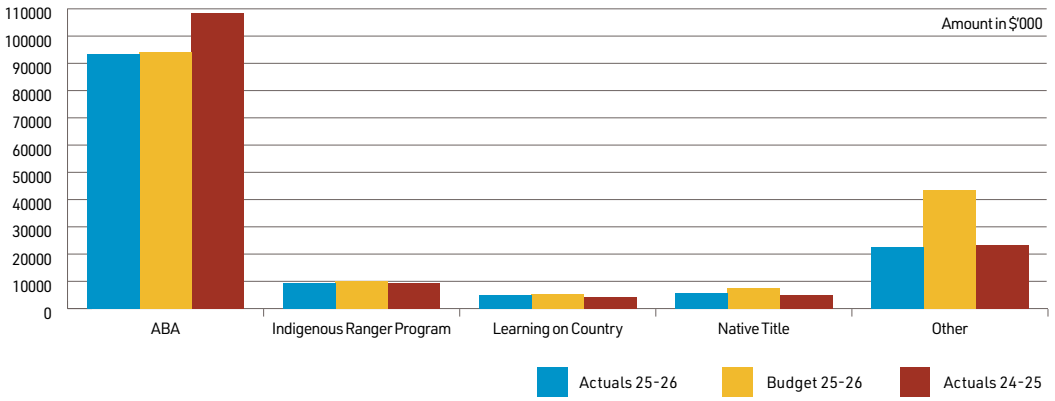
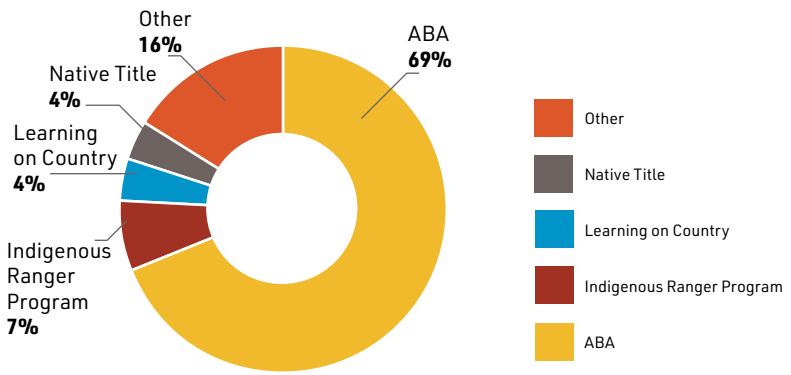


Figure 2 shows the sources of revenue in 2025-26 in percentage terms.

In 2025-26, 69% of NLC's income was from ABA funding (72% in 2024-25), 4% from Native Title (3% in 2024-25) and 7% from Indigenous Ranger Program (6% in 2024-25). The Learning on Country funding stream has increased to 4% (3% in 2024-25). Other funding (which include grants for numerous projects, recoverable works and minor sundry incomes) has remained static at 16% (16% in 2024-25).

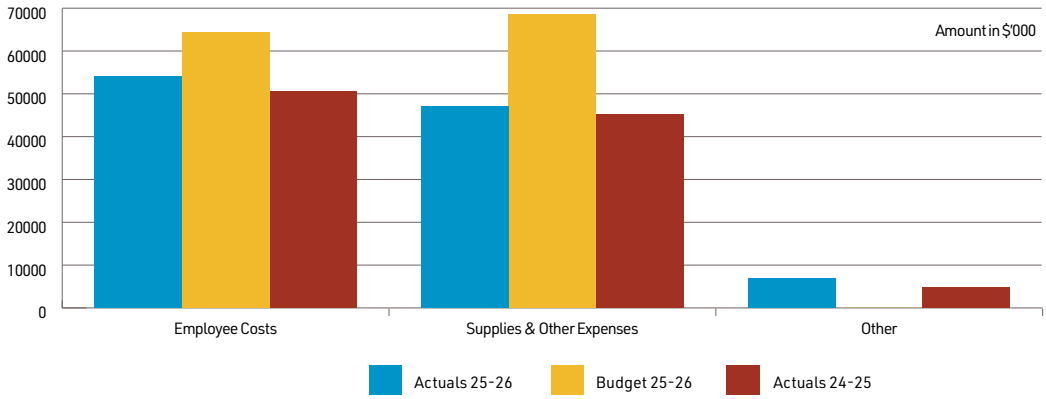
FIGURE 2: SOURCES OF REVENUE 2025-26



EXPENSES

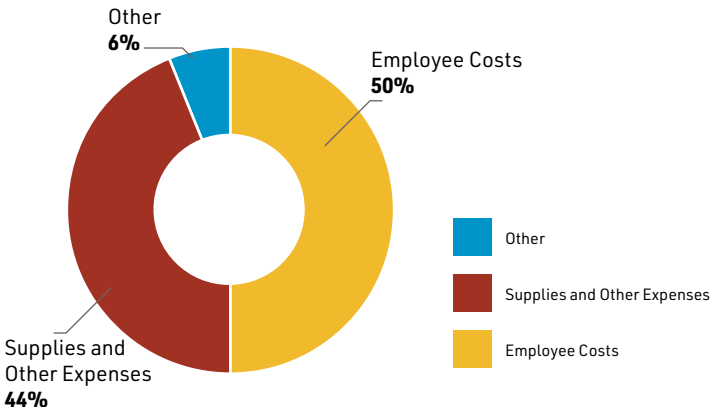
Total expenses increased by $7.6M in 2025-26 compared with 2024-25. Figure 3 shows the change in expenses from 2024-25 to 2025-26 and the actual and budgeted results for 2025-26 while Figure 4 shows the 2025-26 expenditure in percentage terms.

FIGURE 3: 2024-25 ACTUAL VS 2025-26 ACTUAL AND BUDGET



In 2025-26, NLC's employee costs accounted for 50% of total expenditure (50% in 2024-25). Supplier and other expenses decreased to 44% in 2025-26 (45% in the 2024-25) and other expenses (which includes depreciation and amortisation) have increased to 6% (5% in 2024-25).

FIGURE 4: EXPENDITURE BREAKDOWN 2025-26



ACCOUNTABLE AUTHORITY MESSAGE



FROM THE CHAIR MATTHEW RYAN

The past 2025-26 financial year has been characterised by a number of major legal, political, and climatic challenges across our region.

These challenges resulted in a show of strength from Aboriginal groups and the wider community as we speak up and navigate these challenges side by side.

I have spent a lot of time on the road this year, visiting communities, listening to and documenting the concerns of my people. We have continued to advocate for change and for improvements to the lives of our constituents.

At the end of 2025, we welcomed a new Full Council under the revised method of choice. We also welcomed Lorraine Jones, our new Deputy Chair, the second woman in the history of the Northern Land Council to hold this position.

The Northern Land Council is first and foremost committed to working with and advancing the rights of Traditional Owners, and over the year there have been some significant wins for Traditional Owners.

Following more than a decade of advocacy and court action by Gudanji, Yanyuwa and Yanyuwa-Marra peoples, the Federal Court handed down its decision on the McArthur River Mine Compensation Claim in March 2026.

This was a huge and long fought for achievement by Traditional Owner groups and is something that will and should inspire other groups right across the country.

We also saw Traditional Owners, SunCable and the Northern Land Council reach a historic multi-generational 70-year agreement to build a 12,000-hectare solar farm on Powell Creek Station. This deal, which was years in the making, came about through the hard work from Native Title Holders and the NLC. It will continue to benefit Aboriginal people in the Barkly region for generations to come.

Over the wet season, historic flooding hit several communities across the Top End, resulting in entire communities being evacuated and away from their homes for a number of months. These events exposed major gaps in the way governments respond and work with residents

of remote communities during disasters, and the NLC played an active role in advocating for communities during this incredibly difficult time.

As these major weather events become more frequent, it is important that we continue to advocate for improved disaster relief response with both Commonwealth and Northern Territory Governments to ensure that all Territorians are safe and secure during our wet season.

In June 2026, the four Land Councils gathered at historic Barunga to share and discuss issues we are facing on an individual and collective level.

As we mark 50 years since the passing of Aboriginal Land Rights Act, it's important that we come together and reflect on the journey so far, and the road ahead.

As the NT Government continues to ignore and overlook the expertise and advice of Aboriginal people in the Northern Territory, there has never been a more important time for us to stand united and call out the harmful policies that unfairly target Aboriginal people in our urban and remote areas.

The last 12 months have not been without their challenges. However, I am proud of the work the Northern Land Council has done and will continue to stand strong and amplify the voices, culture, language and rights of Traditional Owners across our seven regions.

I would like to thank our Councillors for their hard work and dedication in speaking up strong for their communities. I look forward to working towards many more positive outcomes in the next 12 months.



Matthew Ryan
Chair, Northern Land Council



FROM THE CEO YUSEPH DEEN

The last 12 months have been as productive as they have been challenging.

It truly is a testament to the council members, staff and constituents of the NLC, that despite the unprecedented natural disasters impacting so many regions, we are able to support one another through the tough times, deliver on our statutory functions and continue to celebrate major achievements throughout the region.

The unprecedented wet season impacted all seven regions and had a profound impact on constituents. Many were evacuated from their homelands, and local Aboriginal Corporations, strong community leaders and others stepped up to look after vulnerable families.

While many returned home soon after, community members in Nauiyu and Palumpa were away from their Country for a number of weeks or months, unsure of what they would return home to.

The NLC played an active role in providing support and advocating on behalf of residents displaced by the flooding. Standing alongside other Aboriginal groups, we have taken a leading role calling for better treatment of displaced community members, an overhaul of the way these disasters are managed, and for real investment into long-term community led solutions.

At the end of 2025 the revised method of choice was implemented. This saw over 60 members nominated onto the full council from recognised entities. I congratulate the NLC Chair Matthew Ryan on his re-election to the role and also congratulate Lorraine Jones as only the second female to be elected to the role of Deputy Chair.

Our members share their lived experiences as community leaders to better guide the NLC in our duties, and I have been working closely with the Chair, Deputy Chair and members of the Executive Council and Full Council to deliver on Council's vision for the NLC.

In June of this year, the Full Council endorsed the policy priorities – an important piece of work which will guide our advocacy work for the remainder of the council term.

Staff travel thousands of kilometres every year to meet and consult with Traditional Owners to talk about their country and discuss proposals for activity on their country. Across our seven regions,

there have been some major wins for groups that mean better management of country and a path towards economic self-determination.

In a win for Aboriginal-managed land, the Southeast Arnhem Land Indigenous Protected Area (SEAL IPA) officially acquired over 800,000 hectares of Sea Country, making it the largest marine area under Aboriginal management in the Northern Territory.

A dedication years in the making, this was thanks to the strength and determination of past and current SEAL IPA members, Traditional Owners and NLC staff.

The signing of an Indigenous Land Use Agreement between Native Title Holders and SunCable, Native Title Holders receiving $54 million compensation award for cultural and economic loss due to the McArthur River Mine, and the Lorella Springs litigation are just some of the other examples of strength from Traditional Owner groups.

This year, the NLC facilitated a number of Learning on Country and Ranger forums. These events bring community leaders, rangers, and stakeholders together to talk about best practice and continuous improvement in two core programs for the NLC.

I appreciate the work of those organizing the events and the critical role rangers play to proactively manage and protect Country. This year, we mark 50 years of the Aboriginal Land Rights Act. This pivotal piece of legislation has paved the way for major progress in Aboriginal self-determination across the Territory.

It's important to reflect during these milestone years on all the hard-fought wins, and the challenges that lie ahead of us.

I thank all involved with the NLC for 2025-26 and look forward to working closely with you all next year.



Yuseph Deen
CEO, Northern Land Council

PART 1
ABOUT US
Our land, Our Sea, Our Life



OUR JOURNEY

HISTORY

The NLC is a Corporate Commonwealth Entity, established pursuant to the *Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act 1976* (Cth) (the Land Rights Act), the Commonwealth legislation that marked a fundamental shift in the treatment of Aboriginal people's interests in land.

The NLC is a representative body under the *Native Title Act 1993* (Cth) (Native Title Act) and has responsibilities for assisting Native Title Holders in securing determinations over their lands and waters, representing them in litigation to protect Country, and facilitating negotiations to secure agreements with industry under that legislation (including the Tiwi Islands and Groote Eylandt).

Under the Land Rights Act, the NLC is responsible for assisting Aboriginal people in the Top End of the Northern Territory (NT) to acquire and manage their traditional lands, waters and seas.

Since the Land Rights Act was passed, more than half the land in the NT has become Aboriginal land, as has approximately 85% of the coastline following the High Court of Australia's decision in the Blue Mud Bay case. A large proportion of the remaining land and seas are subject to current or potential claims under the Land Rights Act and Native Title Act.

THE JOURNEY

1963

March – The Commonwealth Government excises over 390 km^2 of land from the Arnhem Land reserve, and Nabalco Pty Ltd begins work on a bauxite mine.

August – Yolŋu people from north-east Arnhem Land present the Commonwealth Parliament with a Bark Petition demanding that the excision be reversed and their land rights be respected.

October – A parliamentary committee of inquiry acknowledges the rights of the Yolŋu people and recommends the payment of compensation for loss of livelihood, the protection of sacred sites, and the ongoing monitoring of the mining project by a parliamentary committee.

1966

Aboriginal stock workers begin a series of strikes over wages, working conditions and land rights. Strikes occur at many stations including Newcastle Waters, Mount Sandford, Victoria River Downs and Wave Hill.

August – At Wave Hill Station, Mr Vincent Jurlama Lingiari leads a walk-off of more than 200 Gurindji, Ngarinyman, Mudburra, Bilinarra and Warlpiri people. They set up a camp at Wattie Creek and wait nine years before successfully obtaining title to their traditional lands.

1967
May – A constitutional referendum sees a record 91 % of Australians vote 'yes' to amend the Constitution, giving the Commonwealth Government constitutional power to make special laws in relation to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Voters also overwhelmingly support a 'full citizenship' referendum question, giving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people the right to be counted as part of the Australian population.

The Commonwealth Government establishes the Office of Aboriginal Affairs.

1968
The Yolŋu people seek an injunction against the Commonwealth in an attempt to stop the lease of their traditional lands to the Nabalco mine. The case, (Milirrpum v Nabalco Pty Ltd and the Commonwealth (1971) FLR 141), known as the Gove Land Rights Case, was Australia's first case based on customary rights to land, ongoing occupation and spiritual connection to land. NLC future Chair Dr Yunupingu acts as an interpreter for the Yolŋu elders during the case.

1971
Handing down his decision in *Milirrpum v Nabalco,* Justice Blackburn accepts the evidence that Yolŋu people had been living at Yirrkala for tens of thousands of years, and that their law was based on intricate relations to land, but finds these relations are religious rather than property rights. The case fails and the mine proceeds.

1972
January – A 'Tent Embassy' is established on the lawns outside Parliament House in Canberra to highlight Aboriginal land rights and other issues.

1973
The Whitlam Government sets up the Aboriginal Land Rights Commission and appoints Justice Edward Woodward to run the inquiry.

July – An interim report recommends that two land councils be established, one for central and the other for northern NT, to present the views of Aboriginal people.

September – The Northern Land Council (NLC) holds its first meeting in Darwin and subsequently makes detailed submissions to the Woodward Royal Commission.

1974
April – The second report produced of the Commission proposes land rights legislation and procedures for claiming land and conditions of tenure, including:

- Aboriginal land being granted as freehold title subject to special controls and procedures in the event of it being leased, mortgaged or disposed of in any way
- Aboriginal landowners being provided rights to control access to their lands and to veto mining and other unwanted development.

December – The Whitlam Government sets up the Aboriginal Land Fund for organisations to buy back traditional lands that were owned by private interests. The NLC becomes incorporated to receive funding.

1975
August – The Aboriginal Land Fund purchases land from Wave Hill Station, enabling the handover of the Daguragu Station lease to the Gurindji Traditional Owners.

Justice Woodward is appointed Interim Aboriginal Land Commissioner and begins hearing claims to land.

November – The Whitlam Government introduces the Aboriginal Land (Northern Territory) Bill 1975 into Parliament, based primarily on Justice Woodward's recommendations.

1976
The *Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act 1976* (Cth) (the Land Rights Act) is passed by the Parliament of Australia under Prime Minister Malcolm Fraser, with bipartisan support.

1977
January – The Land Rights Act comes into force. The Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Hon R I Viner, opens the first formal meeting of the NLC at Batchelor. Mr Silas Roberts is announced as Chair.

July – The Borroloola Land Claim is the first claim in the NLC area to be heard by the Land Commissioner.

1978
November – The Ranger Uranium Mining Agreement is signed. The first agreement negotiated by the NLC, it provides for environmental protection and the payment of mining royalties to Traditional Owners.

1982
August – The executives of the Central and Northern Land Councils hold their first joint meeting at Alekarenge (Ali Curung).

1988
June – Central Land Council (CLC) Chair Wenten Rubuntja and NLC Chair Dr Yunupingu present Prime Minister Bob Hawke with the Barunga Statement, a petition detailing the principles of self-determination and sovereignty that seeks government recognition of Aboriginal prior ownership of Australia and calls for a treaty.

1992
June – The High Court of Australia overturns the doctrine of terra nullius and recognises the existence of Native Title in the case of *Eddie Mabo and Ors v The State of Queensland*. It rules that the Meriam people were 'entitled as against the whole world to possession, occupation, use and enjoyment of (most of) the lands of the Murray Islands'.

December – Prime Minister Paul Keating launches International Year of Indigenous People with a speech in Redfern Park, Sydney, stating, "Mabo is an historic decision – we can make it an historic turning point, the basis of a new relationship between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australians."

1993
December – *The Native Title Act 1993* (Cth) is passed after months of intense lobbying and exhaustive debate by strong Aboriginal leaders, including NLC Chair Dr Yunupingu. The Act establishes a process for claiming and recognising Native Title over lands and waters in Australia.

1996
June – NLC women Council members meet in Darwin to discuss women's roles within the land council and to clarify and expand on their knowledge of the NLC's operations and the Land Rights Act.

2001
The High Court rules on *Yarmirr v Northern Territory* – a Native Title application led by the NLC's Ms Mary Yarmirr and Croker Island clan groups regarding seas and seabeds. The case, which established that Traditional Owners have Native Title of the sea and seabed with only non-exclusive Native Title over the sea, the decision is subject to appeals over the following years.

2008
July – Following appeals, the High Court rules that Traditional Owners of Aboriginal-owned Northern Territory coastline have exclusive access rights to the tidal waters overlying their land. This decision was widely seen as the most significant ruling for Aboriginal land rights since the Mabo decision.

2017
May – The first reading of the Uluru Statement from the Heart is given following the appointment of a Referendum Council and a period of extensive consultations in previous years. The statement calls for a constitutionally entrenched First Nations Voice to Parliament and a Makarrata Commission to oversee a process of treaty-making and truth-telling.

The Referendum Council hands down its final report to the Commonwealth Government, endorsing the Uluru Statement from the Heart and its call for Voice, Treaty and Truth.

2022
May – Prime Minister Anthony Albanese wins the federal election and commits the Labor Government to implementing the Uluru Statement from the Heart in full, including progressing a referendum to enshrine a Voice to Parliament in the Constitution.

August – The four Land Councils of the Northern Territory meet on Gurindji country and pass a combined resolution in support of a referendum for a First Nations Voice to Parliament in the current term of the Commonwealth Government.

2023
March – Prime Minister Anthony Albanese announces the proposed question Australians will be asked in the 2023 referendum, and the draft constitutional amendment that would enable a First Nations Voice to Parliament.

October – The NLC celebrates its 50th anniversary of the first meeting of the Full Council, with a ceremony at the original meeting place in Darwin, followed by a popular free public concert at State Square Parliament House.

Fifty years on from its establishment, the NLC remains a fundamentally important agency through which Aboriginal people of the Top End can have their voices heard on a range of issues impacting their lands, seas and communities.

The referendum to enshrine a First Nations Voice to Parliament in the Australian Constitution does not pass, although remote electorates with large Aboriginal populations voted 'yes' resoundingly.

2024
January – The first successful prosecutions of individuals caught fishing without NLC permits in Aboriginal waters are handed down.

February – The High Court delivers a landmark ruling in favour of Yanyuwa and Yanyuwa-Mara Native Title Holders, who appealed a proposal to grant a new mineral lease adjacent to Bing Bong Port on the McArthur River Pastoral Lease.

April – The High Court rules Parks Australia can be held criminally liable for alleged sacred site damage at Kakadu's Gunlom Falls.

October – The five-year battle over the Gunlom Falls case is concluded, with Parks Australia fined $200,000 for damaging a sacred site in the NT.

December – The historic Kenbi Land Claim, one of the longest-running land claims in Australia, has been finalised with the Commonwealth and Northern Territory governments handing back the final parcels of land on the Cox Peninsula to the Kenbi Land Trust and Larrakia Development Corporation.

2025
March – The High Court delivers a landmark decision on Native Title compensation in favour of Gumatj Native Title Holders confirming that Native Title is like any other property rights, recognising the rights of Native Title compensation claims over historic acts.

November
Traditional Owners, SunCable and the Northern Land Council sign a 70-year multi-generational agreement to build a 12,000 hectare solar farm on Powell Creek Station.

2026
March - The Federal Court awards the largest-ever award of compensation, for a claim to the Guandji, Yanyuwa and Yanyuwa-Marra people for damage caused by the McArthur River Mine.

OUR LOGO

The NLC logo is derived from a painting by deceased Kunwinjku artist Mr Curly Bardkadubbu who was born in 1924 into the Kamarrang subsection of the Naborn clan, of the Marrkolidjban estate on the Liverpool River. He passed away in 1987.

Bardkadubbu rose to prominence as a painter in the late 1970s. He was tutored by Yirawala in the early 1970s when they shared homelands at Table Hill and Marrkolidjban, which both men helped to establish. Later he moved to Namokardabu, also in the Liverpool River region.

The use of the painting as the NLC logo, and a small change in the design to make production easier were approved by the artist and a copyright fee was paid. The painting is a western Kunwinjku depiction of the Rainbow Serpent.

NORTHERN
LAND COUNCIL

OUR ROLE

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 under the PGPA Act, 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 functions:

- Consult with and act on Traditional Owners' instructions 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 Owners' instructions.
- Negotiate on behalf of Traditional Owners with people interested in 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 that relate to land or waters wholly or partly with in 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 an internal review function for decisions or actions taken by NLC (in its role as an 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 Commonwealth 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.

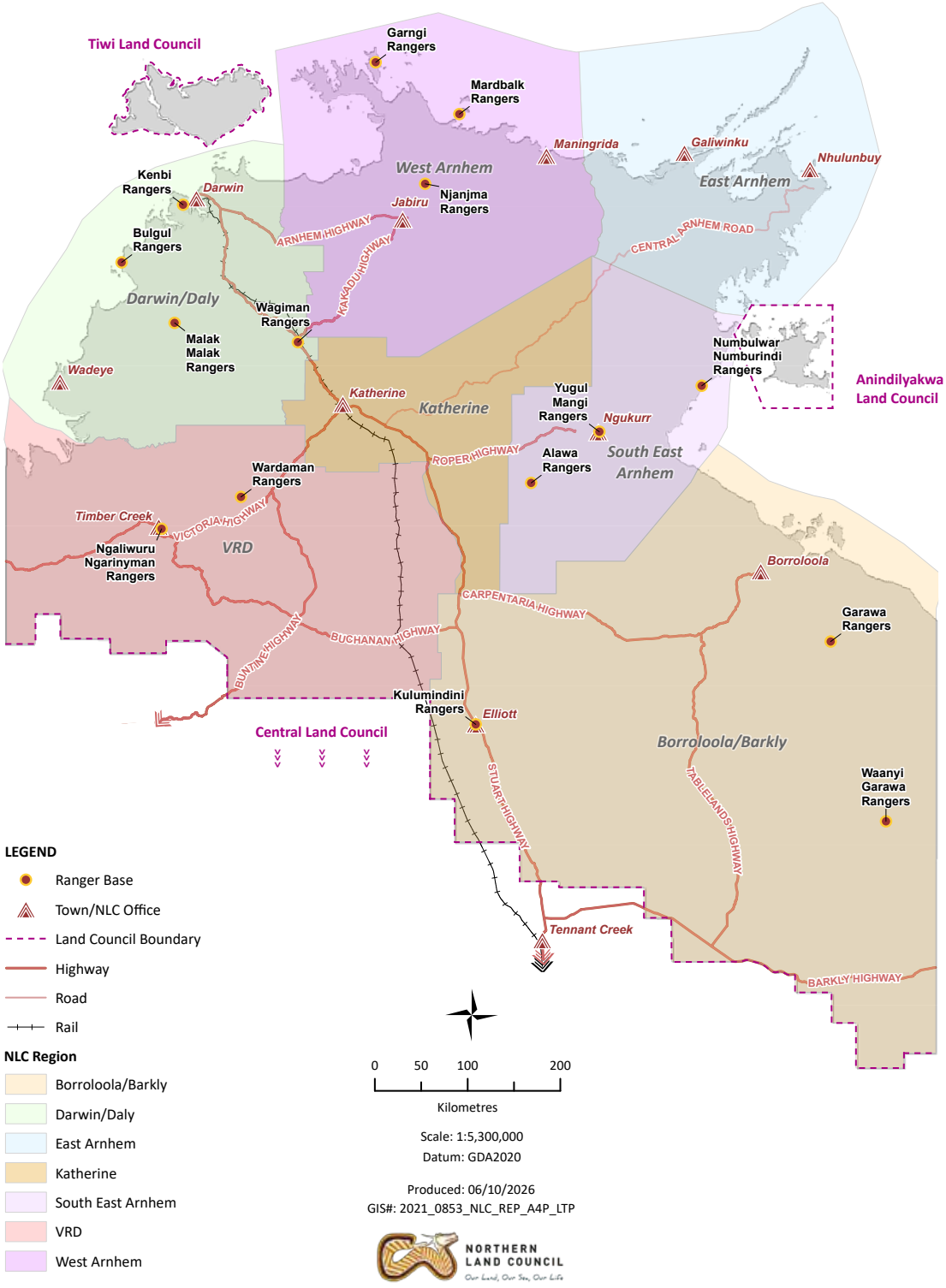
The NLC region is unique, and the organisation continues to focus on supporting and fostering new and innovative projects and developments that underpin prosperity in remote Aboriginal communities. The NLC's key activities, strategic thinking, partnerships and risk-management approaches demonstrate how the NLC continues to support the aspirations of Traditional Owners and Aboriginal communities across the NLC region.

NLC REGIONS

The NLC is made up of seven regions: Borroloola/ Barkly; Darwin/Daly/Wagait; East Arnhem; Katherine; South East Arnhem; Victoria River District; and West Arnhem, each represented by a Regional Council. Two members from each region are elected to sit on the NLC's Executive Council.

The NLC has 13 regional offices in total in 2025-26, located in Darwin (prior to the move to a new Head Office this included multiple locations for Gamba Project, Sea Country and fleet), Katherine, Jabiru, Nhulunbuy, Timber Creek, Tennant Creek, Ngukurr, Borroloola, Wadeye, Maningrida, Kununurra, Galiwin'ku and Elliott. Note: Kununurra office is no longer in use for 2026-27.

FIGURE 5: NLC REGIONS AND REGIONAL OFFICES



THE NLC'S RESPONSIBILITIES

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. A full explanation of our legislative obligations and how these are being addressed is provided in the NLC Corporate Plan 2026-27.

Visit the NLC's website at www.nlc.org.au

WHOM WE SERVE

The NLC has a rich history of standing up for land rights, fiercely supporting Aboriginal people and maintaining independence. The NLC will build on this solid basis, established over the past 50 years, as it moves from an era focused on the fight for land rights to one focused on enacting those hard-won rights and interests in land, freshwater and sea country.

The NLC provides services to more than 51,000 Aboriginal people across the NLC region. Constituents live in about 200 communities, ranging from small family groups to communities of 3,000 people. Since the passage of the Land Rights Act, 91.5 % of the coastline and 37.5 % of the land in the NLC region have been granted to Aboriginal people as freehold lands. Over 30.6 % of the area is under Native Title in the NLC region.

The NLC advocates for more substantial rights for Native Title Holders through legislative reform and other means. The NLC has statutory functions and powers under the Land Rights Act and the Native Title Act, which it carries out on a daily basis.

Many significant resource developments are taking place on Aboriginal and Native Title lands. These developments have included the construction of gas pipelines, Army training areas, national parks and pastoral activities. Mining and petroleum exploration and development projects continue to increase business opportunities. The NLC's challenge is to ensure that social, economic and cultural opportunities and benefits flow to Aboriginal people from these developments. Aboriginal people are keen to take part in planning and development activities while protecting their cultural integrity.

THE NORTHERN LAND COUNCIL

The NLC Full Council provides leadership and cultural integrity, comprising 111 nominated and up to five co-opted women members, bringing the total to 116 NLC Full Council 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.

The Chair can appoint five co-opted women from the female members of the Full Council on advice from the Executive and Regional Council members, to improve female representation. The Women's Advisory Group meets before Full Council meetings to discuss women's business and other matters affecting women in the NLC region.

At the first meeting of a 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 (a total of 14 members).

The Chair is a full-time public official and is one-half of the NLC's Accountable Authority.

The Deputy Chair is a part-time public official and a member of the Executive Council who can fulfil the duties in the Chair's absence.

Individual members have an important role in keeping the Full Council informed of the opinions and priorities of their Aboriginal constituents.

The Council membership and attendance registers for Full and Executive Council meetings are available in Part 5: Appendices, Council Meeting Attendance.

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 Executive Council meets at least six times a year and is responsible for managing business between Full Council meetings.

Full, Executive and Regional Council meetings receive operational and financial reports from the NLC's CEO and senior managers to provide updates on the progress of activities and projects. Governance inductions are provided to all new and returning Council members, with refresher training provided during Council meetings.

NLC EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MEMBERS

A new Executive Council was elected at the Full Council meeting in Katherine in December 2025. The members listed below served on the Executive Council during the reporting period.



CHAIR

Matthew Ryan
Chair | March 2024 – Present

At the 126th NLC Full Council meeting on 11 March 2024, Mr Matthew Ryan was elected as the ninth NLC Chair.

Of Barabarra, Wurrpann, and Gurindiji descent, Mr Ryan resides in Maningrida. He was first elected to the NLC in 2004 and had been serving his second non-consecutive term as a NLC Executive Council member (West Arnhem region) since 2022.

Through the Council and his various community leadership roles, Mr Ryan has called for improvements to education, telecommunications and health services. A staunch advocate for constitutional recognition, he has also consistently campaigned for greater electoral participation.

Mr Ryan previously worked as an Aboriginal Community Police Officer in the Northern Territory Police Force and as a Djelk Community Ranger with Bawinanga Aboriginal Corporation (BAC). He was elected to the board of BAC before serving as Chair for two terms. He is a long-serving councillor on the West Arnhem Regional Council and is currently serving his second term as Council Mayor. He also holds positions on the boards of the BAC and Homeland School Company.

Mr Ryan will lead the NLC as Chair until December 2025, when Aboriginal communities from across the Top End will once again appoint representatives to the Council.



DEPUTY CHAIR

Calvin Deveraux

Deputy Chair | December 2019 – December 2025
Executive Council Member | December 2019 – Present

Mr Calvin Deveraux is a Rak Mak Mak Marranungu man from the Finniss River area who lives at and manages Twin Hill Station. He was first elected to the NLC in 2005, serving consecutive terms until 2010. He returned in 2019 as the representative for the Darwin South West (Litchfield) ward. He is the current Chair of the Aboriginal Sea Company. This was Mr Deveraux's second time being elected as Deputy Chair of the NLC.



Lorraine Jones

Deputy Chair | December 2025 – Present
Executive Council Member | December 2022 – Present

Ms Lorraine Jones has Ngaliwurru/Nungali heritage and lives in Timber Creek. She was elected to the Full Council in 2019 and the Executive Council in 2022. Ms Jones spent a significant portion of her career as a Senior Aboriginal Community Police Officer and has been a board member of the Ngaliwurru-Wuli Association. She is the Chair of the Bradshaw Liaison Committee. As a member of the NLC, she wants to be a voice for her people and see them develop in health and economic wellbeing.



BORROLOOLA/BARKLY REGION

Christopher Neade

Executive Council Member | December 2022 – Present

Mr Christopher Neade is a Waanyi man from the Barkly Tablelands and lives in Elliott. He was elected to the Council in 2016. This is his third term as an NLC member representing the Elliott ward and his second term as an Executive Council member. Mr Neade studied in Mount Isa before starting work on cattle stations throughout the Barkly region. He joined the NLC to ensure that the concerns of his communities are taken seriously. Mr Neade is an advocate for development opportunities in the Barkly and to ensure Aboriginal people are treated with fairness and respect.



Joy Priest
Executive Council Member | December 2022 – Present

Ms Joy Priest is a Yanyuwa/Garrwa/Gurdanji/Wambaya woman from Corella Creek. This is her first term as an Executive Council member. Ms Priest is a passionate spokesperson for the north Barkly region and has spent significant time throughout her life working with young people to ensure they receive an education and are provided with opportunities. As a member of the NLC, Ms Priest is focused on developing homelands, allowing access to health services, and strengthening the next generation.



DARWIN/DALY/WAGAIT REGION

Willaim Danks
Executive Council Member | December 2022 – Present

Mr William Danks is a Larrakia man and lives in Darwin. He was first elected to the NLC in 1998, serving consecutive terms until 2013. In 2019, he returned to the NLC as a representative for the Darwin ward. Mr Danks is a passionate advocate for Larrakia people and was involved (with his family) in the Kenbi Land Claim, Australia's longest-running Aboriginal land claim. In his position as a Council member, Mr Danks wants to be a voice for Larrakia people and all Aboriginal people in the Darwin/Daly/Wagait region.



EAST ARNHEM REGION

Djawa Yunupingu
Executive Council Member | February 2019 – Present

Mr Djawa Yunupingu is a Gumatj man and is a respected community elder in the East Arnhem region. He joined the NLC in February 2019 and is serving his second term as an Executive Council member. Mr Yunupingu currently sits on the Gumatj Board and the Yothu Yindi Foundation Board. He was one of the founding members of the Dhimurru Land Corporation, which is responsible for looking after the land and seas environment of north-east Arnhem Land. Since 2008 Mr Yunupingu has led the work of Marngarr Resource Centre, which is a local resource agency that provides training, employment and work. Mr Yunupingu acts to represent the issues of his people and the East Arnhem region.



Yananymul Mununggurr
Executive Council Member | December 2022 – Present

Ms Yananymul Mununggurr is a member of the Djapu clan. She has been a NLC member since 2013 and a member of the NLC Executive Council since 2021. Ms Mununggurr is a passionate supporter of homelands across the Yolŋu lands of East Arnhem Land and has had a long-standing interest in Yolŋu affairs, particularly land-related issues, wellbeing, education, and law and culture. She wants to see the NLC help Yolŋu get greater control over their land and seas and to manage their own affairs.

KATHERINE REGION



John Daly Water
Executive Council Member | June 2025 – Present

Mr Dalywater is from the Bininj Buldjdjan clan, and lives in Bulman. He worked in the drug and alcohol sector studied Environmental Health at Bachelor University and worked in the field for many years. His other roles include Chair of Mimal Land Management, Director of the Karrkad Kanjdji Trust and an elected Roper Gulf Regional Councillor representing the Nyirranggulung Ward. He was elected to the Executive Council in June 2025.



Lisa Mumbin
Executive Council Member | June 2025 – December 2025

Ms Mumbin OAM is a member of the Jawoyn clan, and lives in Katherine. She was appointed to the Executive Council in June 2025. She has been the Chair of the Jawoyn Association since 1997 and is a strong advocate for the management, protection, control and development of Jawoyn lands.



Preston Lee
Executive Council Member | December 2025 – Present

Mr Preston Lee is an Executive member of the Northern Land Council representing the Katherine region, including the Barunga and Manyallaluk communities. He is from the Katherine region and Arnhem Land and has connections to the Jawoyn, Dalabon and Miali clans and people. Mr Lee also serves as a councillor on the Roper Gulf Regional Council and is a director of Warddeken Land Management, where he is involved in leading the organisation in fire management and other activities across his region. Inspired by the foundations established by his elders and his father, Mr Lee is committed to supporting the next generation. As an Executive Member, he wants to focus on economic development, with the aim of creating opportunities for Aboriginal communities to generate income and become more self-sufficient and independent.

SOUTH EAST ARNHEM (NGUKURR) REGION



Bobby Nunggumajbarr
Executive Council Member | October 2024 – Present

Mr Bobby Nunggumajbarr is a senior Nunggubuyu man from Numbulwar in southeastern Arnhem Land. He has had a long and distinguished career and has held various positions on the Yugul Mangi Community Government Council in South East Arnhem (Ngukurr) and Roper Gulf Regional Council, as well as Chairperson of the Aboriginal Areas Protection Authority. Mr Nunggumajbarr is widely respected for his knowledge and authority across southeastern and central Arnhem Land and is highly regarded as a community facilitator. He was appointed to the Executive Council in October 2024.



Virginia Nundhirribala
Executive Council Member | December 2022 – December 2025

Ms Virginia Nundhirribala is a Nundhirribala woman from Numbulwar. She was elected to the Full Council in 2011 and is serving her second non-consecutive term as an Executive Council member. Ms Nundhirribala has previously held positions with Numbulwar School and Roper Gulf Regional Council. She currently supports Caring for Country work as a cultural adviser. As a member of the NLC, Ms Nundhirribala wants to ensure that her community remains strong in culture and continues to develop.



Clifford Duncan
Executive Council Member | December 2025 – Present

Mr Clifford Duncan has been a member of the Northern Land Council since 2016 and was elected as an Executive Council representative for South East Arnhem (Ngukurr) in December 2025. He currently lives in the Urapunga community. Mr Duncan is passionate about education and has previously worked with the Jilkminggan School, the Northern Territory Education Department and Kormilda College. He also has experience working with local construction organisations. Mr Duncan is committed to strengthening access to cultural education for young people and ensuring the South East Arnhem (Ngukurr) region continues to align with the aspirations and priorities of the Northern Land Council.



VICTORIA RIVER DISTRICT

Raymond Hector
Executive Council Member | December 2013 – Present

Mr Raymond Hector is a Billarna man from Nitjpurru (Pigeon Hole). This is his second non-consecutive term as a member of the Executive Council. Mr Hector has previously held positions with the Katherine West Health Board and Territory Health Services. Mr Hector has also worked as a ringer throughout the VRD region. As a member of the NLC, Mr Hector wants to highlight his community's needs in health and education and be a role model for younger generations.



WEST ARNHEM REGION

Julius (Clint) Kernan
Executive Council Member | June 2021 – Present

Mr Julius Kernan is affiliated with the Manakarerrben clan and currently lives in Maningrida. He has been a member of the NLC since 2013 and was elected as an Executive Council representative for West Arnhem in 2021. He has extensive experience in management and leadership through his appointments to the Bawinanga Aboriginal Corporation, Aboriginal Housing Northern Territory, the Aboriginal Sea Company and the Maningrida Community Safety Patrol. Mr Kernan is passionate about representing the West Arnhem region to ensure the balanda system is flexible to the cultural obligations of countrymen and women, that Aboriginal people understand the two pathways of balanda and Aboriginal life, and advocates for more opportunities for homeland learning.

Dates of service for Executive Council members are based on previous annual report data.

NLC FULL COUNCIL MEMBERS

A new Full Council was elected at its Full Council meeting in Katherine in December 2022.

The members listed below served on the Full Council during the reporting period.

TABLE 3 BORROLOOLA / BARKLY REGION

BORROLOOLA / BARKLY REGION (2019-25 = 13 MEMBERS; 2025-28 20 MEMBERS)			
NAME	ROLE	WARD	SERVICE
Brian Limerick*	Full Council Member	Alexandria (Illuwurru)	December 2019 – December 2025
Vacant		Alexandria (Illuwurru)	
Frazer Baker	Full Council Member	Balbarini	December 2025 – Present
Archie Harvey	Full Council Member	Bauhinia	December 2025 – Present
David Harvey*	Full Council Member	Borroloola	December 2022 – December 2025
Maria Pyro*	Full Council Member	Borroloola – Outstation	December 2022 – December 2025
Shaun Evans*	Full Council Member	Borroloola and Outstations	December 2022 – Present
Warren Timothy	Full Council Member	Borroloola and Outstations	December 2025 – Present
Vacant		Borroloola and Outstations	
Vacant		Borroloola and Outstations	
Robert O'Keefe	Full Council Member	Brunette Downs	December 2025 – Present
Chris Neade*	Full Council Member Executive Council Member	Elliott	December 2016 – Present December 2022 – Present
Kieren Anderson	Full Council Member	Elliott	December 2025 – Present
Jason Bill*	Full Council Member	Muckaty	December 2013 – Present
Vacant		Muckaty	
Jeremy Jackson*	Full Council Member	Murranji	December 2022 – December 2025 June 2026 – Present
Gail Sandy	Full Council Member	Murranji	June 2026 – Present
Vacant		Nicholson River North (Nudjabarra)	

BORROLOOLA / BARKLY REGION (2019-25 = 13 MEMBERS; 2025-28 20 MEMBERS)			
NAME	ROLE	WARD	SERVICE
Maxine Wallace*	Full Council Member	Nicholson River South (Nudjabarra) (2022-25 Nicholson River)	December 2022 – December 2025 June 2026 - Present
Jack Green*	Full Council Member	North Barkly*	December 2022 – Present *Brunett Downs December 2022 – December 2025
Tony Jack*	Full Council Member	Robinson River	December 2022 – December 2025
Richard Dixon	Full Council Member	Robinson River	November 2013 – December 2022 December 2025 – Present
Gordon Noonan*	Full Council Member	Rockhampton Downs	December 2019 – Present
Joy Priest*	Full Council Member Executive Council Member	Wombaya (Lija Mukumparla)*	December 2019 – Present December 2022 – Present *North Barkly
John Finlay*	Full Council Member	Wombaya	December 2019 – December 2025

*Councillors for 2022-25 term

TABLE 4 DARWIN / DALY / WAGAIT REGION

DARWIN / DALY / WAGAIT REGION (2019-25 = 15 MEMBERS; 2025-28 =23 MEMBER)			
NAME	ROLE	WARD	SERVICE
James Parry	Full Council Member	Daly River	December 2025 – Present
Joy Cardona*	Full Council Member	Daly River	December 2022 – Present
Matthew Shields*	Full Council Member	Daly River North (Woolianna)	December 2019 – December 2025
Sheila White	Full Council Member	Daly River North (Woolianna)	December 2025 – Present
Norman Miller*	Full Council Member	Daly River South (Upper Daly)	December 2022 – December 2025
Lesley O'Brien	Full Council Member	Daly River South (Upper Daly)	December 2025 – Present
John Sullivan*	Full Council Member	Daly River West (Woodycupildiya)	December 2019 – December 2025

DARWIN / DALY / WAGAIT REGION (2019-25 = 15 MEMBERS; 2025-28 =23 MEMBER)			
NAME	ROLE	WARD	SERVICE
Joseph Parry	Full Council Member	Daly River West (Woodycupildiya)	December 2025 – Present
William Danks*	Full Council Member Executive Council Member	Darwin	December 2019 – Present December 2022 – Present
Bill Risk*	Full Council Member	Darwin	December 2022 – Present
Dedja Laughton	Full Council Member	Darwin	December 2025 – Present
Graham Kenyon*	Full Council Member	Darwin East (Humpty Doo)	December 2019 – Present
Zoe Singh	Full Council Member	Darwin North West (Belyuen)	December 2025 – Present
Phillip Goodman*	Full Council Member	Darwin South (Adelaide River)	December 2019 – Present
Margaret Daiyi	Full Council Member	Darwin South (Adelaide River)	December 2025 – Present
Calvin Deveraux*	Full Council Member Deputy Chair	Darwin South West (Litchfield)	December 2019 – Present December 2019 – November 2025
Ricky Cubillo	Full Council Member	Darwin West (Bulgul)	December 2025 – Present
Roger Wodidj*	Full Council Member	Palumpa (Nganmarriyanga)	December 2022 – December 2025
Warren Wodidj	Full Council Member	Palumpa (Nganmarriyanga)	March/April 2026 – Present
John Wilson*	Full Council Member	Peppimenarti	December 2022 – Present
Mona Liddy*	Full Council Member	Pine Creek	December 2022 – Present
Steven Pultchen*	Full Council Member	Wadeye	December 2022 – December 2025
Aloysius Nganbe	Full Council Member	Wadeye	December 2025 – Present
Margaret Perdjert	Full Council Member	Wadeye	December 2025 – Present
Mark Tunmuck-Smith*	Full Council Member	Wadeye (North)	December 2022 – Present
Bartholomew Narjic	Full Council Member	Wadeye Outstation 1	December 2025 – Present
David Hewitt	Full Council Member	Wadeye Outstations 2 (Deleye)	December 2025 – June 2026
Natalie Pangquee	Full Council Member	Wadeye Outstation 2 (Deleye)	June 2025 – Present

DARWIN / DALY / WAGAIT REGION (2019-25 = 15 MEMBERS; 2025-28 =23 MEMBER)			
NAME	ROLE	WARD	SERVICE
Rex Edmunds*	Full Council Member	Wadeye Outstation 3 (Anson Bay)	December 2022 – Present

*Councillors for 2022-25 term

TABLE 5 EAST ARNHEM REGION

EAST ARNHEM REGION (2019-25 =17 MEMBERS 2025-28 = 19 MEMBERS)			
NAME	ROLE	WARD	SERVICE
Makungun (Brendan) Marika*	Full Council Member	Blue Mud Bay – Outstations	December 2022 – December 2025
Napunda (Matthew) Marawili*	Full Council Member	Blue Mud Bay – Outstations	March 2025 – Present
Bandarr (Michael) Wirrpanda*	Full Council Member	Blue Mud Bay – Outstations	December 2022 – Present
Jason Guyula*	Full Council Member	Galiwin'ku	December 2019 – December 2025
Peter Yawunydjurr*	Full Council Member	Galiwin'ku	December 2022 – December 2025
Savannah Gondarra	Full Council Member	Galiwin'ku	December 2025 – Present
Vacant		Galiwin'ku	
David Ganambarr	Full Council Member	Galiwin'ku	December 2025 – Present
Kenny Guyula*	Full Council Member	Galiwinku – Outstations	December 2019 – December 2025
Rachel Dikul Baker*	Full Council Member	Galiwin'ku and Outstations	August 2024 – Present
Rhoda Golung Dhurrkay	Full Council Member	Galiwin'ku, Homelands	December 2025 – Present
Marcus Mungul Lacey	Full Council Member	Galiwin'ku and Outstations	December 2025 – Present

EAST ARNHEM REGION (2019-25 =17 MEMBERS 2025-28 = 19 MEMBERS)			
NAME	ROLE	WARD	SERVICE
Bobby Wunungmurr*	Full Council Member	Gapuwiyak	December 2022 – December 2025
Wesley Bandi Bandi*	Full Council Member	Gapuwiyak	December 2024 – Present
Vacant		Gapuwiyak	
Yananymul Mununggurr*	Full Council Member Executive Council Member	Laynhapuy Homelands *	December 2013 – Present December 2022 – Present *Yirrkala December 2013 – December 2025
Vacant		Laynhapuy Homelands	
Michael Ali*	Full Council Member	Milingimbi	December 2019 – December 2025
Wesley Dhurrkay	Full Council Member	Milingimbi	December 2025 – Present
George Milaypuma*	Full Council Member	Milingimbi	December 2019 – Present
Peter Gambung*	Full Council Member	Ramingining	December 2022 – Present
David Warraya*	Full Council Member	Ramingining	December 2019 – Present
Djawa Yunupingu*	Full Council Member Executive Council Member	Ski Beach (Gunyangarra)	February 2019 – Present February 2019 – Present
Djawa Murrmurrna Burarrwanga*	Full Council Member	Yirrkala	December 2022 – December 2025
Bonhula Yunupingu	Full Council Member	Yirrkala	December 2025 – Present
Ishmael Marika*	Full Council Member	Yirrkala	December 2022 – Present

*Councillors for 2022-25 term

TABLE 6 KATHERINE REGION

KATHERINE REGION (2019-25 =7 MEMBERS 2025-28 = 9 MEMBERS)			
NAME	ROLE	WARD	SERVICE
Charlene Bulumbara	Full Council Member Coopted Member*	Barunga/Manyallaluk	December 2025 – Present July 2023 – December 2025
Vacant*		Barunga/Manyallaluk	
Preston Lee	Full Council Member Executive Council Member	Barunga/Manyallaluk	December 2025 – Present

KATHERINE REGION (2019-25 =7 MEMBERS 2025-28 = 9 MEMBERS)			
NAME	ROLE	WARD	SERVICE
Irene Jungawanga*	Full Council Member	Bulman	December 2022 – December 2025
Desmond Lindsay	Full Council Member	Bulman	December 2025 – Present
Lisa Mumbin*	Full Council Member Executive Council Member	Katherine	December 2019 – Present June 2025 – Present
Vacant*		Katherine	
Lazarus Manbulloo	Full Council Member	Katherine	December 2025 – Present
Timothy Baker Jnr*	Full Council Member	Mataranka/Djembere (Jilkminggan)	December 2022 – Present
John Dalywater*	Full Council Member Executive Council Member	Weemol	1992 to 1998; and December 2010 – Present June 2025 – Present
Vacant*		Wugularr (Beswick)	
Deanne Kennedy	Full Council Member	Wugularr (Beswick)	December 2025 – Present
Khalia Bush	Full Council Member	Wugularr (Beswick)	December 2025 – Present

*Councillors for 2022-25 term

TABLE 7 SOUTH EAST ARNHEM

SOUTH EAST ARNHEM (NGUKURR) REGION (2022-25 =9 MEMBERS; 2025-28 = 13 MEMBERS)			
NAME	ROLE	WARD	SERVICE
Darryn Farrell*	Full Council Member	Minyerri	December 2022 – Present
Naomi Wilfred	Full Council Member	Minyerri	December 2025 – Present
Walter Rogers*	Full Council Member	Ngukurr – Outstations	December 2019 – December 2025
Dr Grace Daniels*	Full Council Member	Ngukurr – Outstations	December 2022 – December 2025
Sammy Ponto	Full Council Member	Ngukurr and Outstations	
Bobby Nunggumajbarr*	Full Council Member Executive Council Member	Ngukurr and Outstations	December 2019 – Present October 2024 – Present
Michelle Farrell	Full Council Member	Ngukurr and Outstations	

SOUTH EAST ARNHEM (NGUKURR) REGION (2022-25 =9 MEMBERS; 2025-28 = 13 MEMBERS)			
NAME	ROLE	WARD	SERVICE
Hubert (Rami) Nunggumajbarr*	Full Council Member	Numbulwar	December 2022 – December 2025
Virginia Nundhirribala*	Full Council Member Executive Council Member	Numbulwar	July 2019 – December 2025 December 2022 – December 2025
Vacant*		Numbulwar	
Hilda Ngaimi	Full Council Member	Numbulwar	April 2026 – Present
Reginald Numbulwar	Full Council Member	Numbulwar	April 2026 – Present
Darryl Numamurdirdi	Full Council Member	Numbulwar	December 2025 – Present
Elizabeth Joshua	Full Council Member	Numbulwar	December 2025 – Present
Peter Lansen*	Full Council Member	Nutwood/Cox River	December 2003 – December 2025
Judith Ward August	Full Council Member	Nutwood/Cox River	December 2025 – Present
Shyanne Ward	Full Council Member	Nutwood/Cox River	December 2025 – Present
Clifford Duncan*	Full Council Member Executive Member	Urapunga	December 2019 – Present December 2025 – Present

*Councillors for 2022-25 term

TABLE 8 VICTORIA RIVER DISTRICT

VICTORIA RIVER DISTRICT (2019-25 = 6 MEMBERS 2025-28 = 10 MEMBERS)			
NAME	ROLE	WARD	SERVICE
Anthea Anthony*	Full Council Member	Amanbidji	December 2022 – Present
Shadrack Retchford*	Full Council Member	Bulla	December 2019 – Present
Carissa Birch	Full Council Member	Keep River	December 2025 – Present
Leo Young	Full Council Member	Lingarra	December 2025 – Present
Billy Harney Jnr	Full Council Member	Menngen	December 2025 – Present
Raymond Hector*	Full Council Member Executive Council Member	Nitjpurru (Pigeon Hole)	December 2013 – Present December 2013 – Present
Victor Johns	Full Council Member	Timber Creek	December 2025 – Present
Lorraine Jones*	Full Council Member Executive Council Member	Timber Creek	December 2019 – Present December 2022 – Present

VICTORIA RIVER DISTRICT (2019-25 = 6 MEMBERS 2025-28 = 10 MEMBERS)			
NAME	ROLE	WARD	SERVICE
Wesley Campbell*	Full Council Member	Yarralin	December 2022 – December 2025
Sharatine Campbell	Full Council Member	Yarralin	2026 – Present
Shauna King*	Full Council Member	Yingawunari	December 2022 – December 2025
Dion King	Full Council Member	Yingawunari	December 2025 – Present

*Councillors for 2022-25 term

TABLE 9 WEST ARNHEM REGION

WEST ARNHEM REGION (2022-25 = 12 MEMBERS; 2025-28 = 17 MEMBERS)			
NAME	ROLE	WARD	SERVICE
June Fejo*	Full Council Member	Cobourg	December 2019 – Present
Otto Dann*	Full Council Member	Gunbalanya	December 2019 – December 2025
Ross Guymala	Full Council Member	Gunbalanya	December 2025 – Present
Connie Nayinggul	Full Council Member	Gunbalanya	December 2025 – Present
Kerry Manakgu	Full Council Member	Gunbalanya	December 2025 – Present
Timothy Nabegeyo*	Full Council Member	Gunbalanya – Outstations	December 2022 – December 2025
Wayne Wauchope*	Full Council Member	Gunbalanya – Outstations	December 2019 – Present
Jo-Ann Christophersen*	Full Council Member	Kakadu	December 2022 – Present
Corben Mudjandi	Full Council Member	Kakadu	December 2025 – Present
Julius (Clint) Kernan*	Full Council Member Executive Council Member	Maningrida – Outstations	December 2013 – Present June 2021 – Present
Matthew Ryan*	Full Council Member Executive Council Member NLC Chair	Maningrida – Homelands	December 2019 – Present December 2022 – March 2024 March 2024 – Present
Jacqueline Phillips*	Full Council Member	Maningrida	December 2022 – Present
Reggie Wuridjal*	Full Council Member	Maningrida	December 2022 – Present
Karen Wuridjal	Full Council Member	Maningrida	December 2025 – Present

WEST ARNHEM REGION (2022-25 = 12 MEMBERS; 2025-28 = 17 MEMBERS)			
NAME	ROLE	WARD	SERVICE
Shane Namanurki	Full Council Member	Maningrida	December 2025 – Present
Matthew Nagarlbin*	Full Council Member	Minjilang and Mainland Outstations	December 2019 – Present
Jess Yamirra	Full Council Member	Minjilang and Mainland Outstations	December 2025 – Present
Bunug Galaminda*	Full Council Member	Warruwi	December 2019 – Present
Jenny Inmulugulu*	Full Council Member	Warruwi – Outstations	December 2019 – Present

*Councillors for 2022-25 term

TABLE 10 COOPTED MEMBERS

COOPTED (5 MEMBERS)		
NAME	REGION	SERVICE
Caroline Dhamarandji*	East Arnhem	July 2023 – December 2025
Dela Mununggurr*	East Arnhem	July 2023 – December 2025
Judy Gapuwurawuy*	East Arnhem	July 2023 – December 2025
Charlane Bulumbara*	Katherine	July 2023 – December 2025 *Full Council Member December 2025 – Present
Melinda Thompson*	South East Arnhem	July 2023 – December 2025

*Councillors for 2022-25 term


BEACH
CLEAN UP

NLC ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

The Executive Council appoints the CEO, who has day-to-day responsibilities for the operations of the NLC. The CEO works closely with the Chair and the Executive Council and is responsible for the leadership and management of the organisation, with the delegated authority to manage workers, implement Council decisions, drive the NLC's strategic direction, set priorities and enforce sound corporate governance.

The NLC is structured to ensure that services are delivered efficiently across the NLC's our seven regions.

The CEO is supported by the following groups.

OFFICE OF THE CEO

The Office of the CEO provides leadership, strategic coordination, high-level advice and governance support to progress the organisation's vision, strategic priorities and commitments to Traditional Owners and other Aboriginal people across the seven regions of the Northern Land Council.

Working closely with the Chair, Executive Council, Chief Executive Officer, senior leadership and key stakeholders, the Office of the CEO drives strategic direction, coordinates whole-of-organisation priorities and provides high-level advice to support informed decision-making. This work strengthens partnerships and ensures the NLC operates in the best interests of Traditional Owner groups, creating meaningful social, cultural, and economic opportunities. The Council Services Unit coordinates and supports Full, Executive and Regional Councils.

The ICT Service Area comprises specialised sections that collectively deliver secure, reliable and strategically aligned technology and information services to support the NLC's operations and long-term objectives.

The ICT Service Management Unit delivers day-to-day technology services, including the Service Desk, hardware and software procurement, device management, regional support, and staff training. Following the cloud migration and implementation of the new operating model, ICT also manages and monitors the NLC's cloud environment, enabling early detection and proactive prevention of service issues.

The Project Management Unit plans, governs and delivers ICT projects aligned with the NLC's strategic priorities, enterprise architecture and governance requirements. It coordinates budgets, resources, risks, stakeholder engagement and organisational change.

The CRM and Permits Unit manages and enhances enterprise systems, automates business processes, improves system integration and data quality and supports efficient service delivery.

The Information Management Unit manages physical and digital records through Content Manager. It ensures records are securely captured, maintained, retained and disposed of in accordance with legislative requirements, National Archives of Australia standards and ISO 15489, while protecting sensitive and culturally restricted information.

Under the Chief Information Officer's governance, these sections collectively support digital transformation, responsible AI adoption, regulatory compliance, cyber security, operational efficiency and the achievement of the NLC's strategic goals.

CORPORATE SERVICES

Corporate Services delivers essential, professional and accountable services that support the NLC in achieving 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 comprise the Permits, Agreements and Compliance Team (PACT), Governance, Compliance and Risk, Strategy and Advocacy, and Media and Communications service areas. These teams drive compliance across the NLC, develop policy positions, and deliver professional communications services. The teams 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 implement reforms that address long-standing issues with water, permit and section 19 agreement compliance across our seven regions. We are also responsible for strengthening and monitoring governance, compliance and risk management practices throughout the organisation.

LAND AND LAW

Land and Law identifies and consults with Traditional Owners to secure and protect their rights and interests in land and sea. The teams provide legal advice to the NLC and Traditional Owners, conduct land rights and Native Title claims, negotiate agreements and pursue litigation where appropriate. They also provide advice and oversight of the NLC's obligations regarding mineral and petroleum exploration under the Land Rights Act and the Native Title Act.

LAND AND SEA MANAGEMENT

Land and Sea Management delivers services across five key areas: Caring for Country, Sea Country, Learning on Country, Community Planning and Development and Partnerships and Enterprise Development.

Caring for Country (CFC) supports 14 ranger groups and three Indigenous Protected Areas (IPA) across the NLC region. It provides operational, policy and administrative support, enabling Traditional Owners to lead grassroots land and sea management initiatives. Through partnerships and employment programs, CFC promotes two-way management across Aboriginal Land Trusts. The Gamba Eradication and Biodiversity Conservation (GEBC) Project plays a vital role in controlling this invasive weed and protecting ecologically significant landscapes threatened by gamba-fuelled fire.

Partnerships and Enterprise Development supports joint management of NT parks and reserves including Kakadu and explores carbon industry opportunities through improved fire management.

Sea Country focuses on resolving access and management issues and long-term planning for the NT's vast coastal and marine areas, ensuring Traditional Owners actively engage in fisheries governance and economic opportunities.

Learning on Country is a collaborative program between ranger groups and schools in 14 remote communities. It integrates 'both ways' learning into secondary education, helping Aboriginal students walk strong in two worlds. Programs are co-developed by school and ranger staff, with a focus on field-based learning that blends traditional and Western knowledge.

Community Planning and Development empowers Aboriginal landowners to use land-use agreement payments to drive self-determined development. The program builds governance, capacity and skills to deliver long-term community benefits from land, waters and seas.

REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Regional Development comprises the Regional Network Services that provide our regional and remote constituents access to NLC services, including funeral and ceremony assistance funding, and coordinates a high percentage of the planning and delivery of meeting logistics for on-country consultations. Regional Network Services manage the processing of permits, funeral and ceremony applications, as well as local regional stakeholder engagement activities.

Regional Operations includes the section 19 Land Use Management team that coordinates the proposal and assessment approval process across the regions. This service area also provides advice and support to Aboriginal applicants within the NLC region regarding Aboriginal Investment NT grant applications. In addition, the team manages Department of Defence projects and other economic development activities across the NLC regions and the consultation, deployment and progression of economic development options in line with Traditional Owners' decisions and consent.

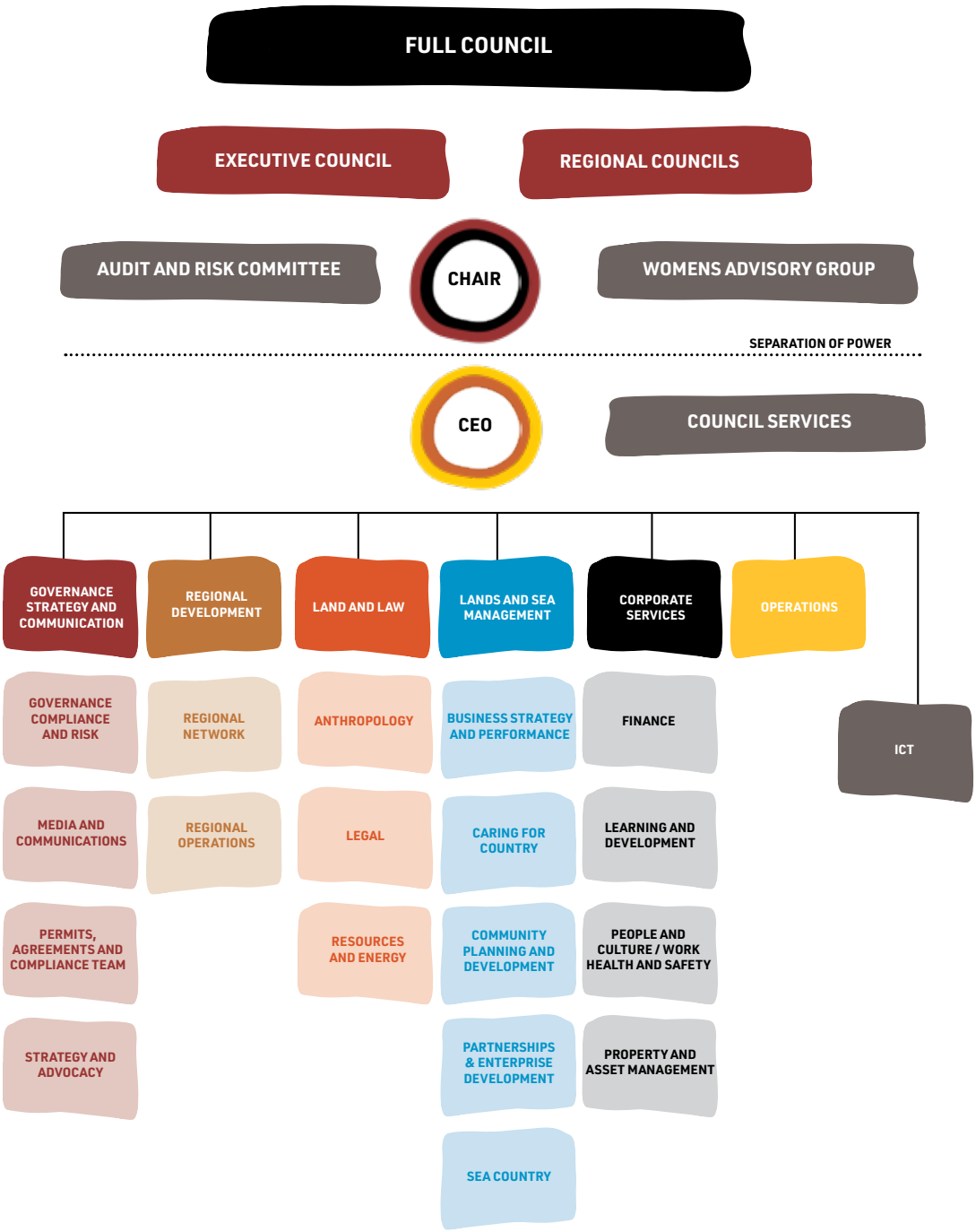
The Regionalisation Strategy has been designed to build the NLC's regional capacity to achieve operational objectives and key organisational goals more quickly. The service area also leads several priority projects across the seven regions.

NLC SUBSIDIARIES

The NLC no longer holds any subsidiaries.

NLC ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE CHART

FIGURE 6: NORTHERN LAND COUNCIL ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE AS OF 30 JUNE 2026





PART 2
PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

INTRODUCTION

This year has been another big year for the NLC, with significant events and achievements occurring throughout the NLC region. This section highlights several moments and programs from the past 12 months. Please refer to the News and Publications section of the NLC website for a full list of our work and stories from across the Top End.

A full assessment of the NLC's performance against our objectives is available in Part 3: Corporate Management and Reporting.



Native Title Holders from Elliot with Tamboran Resources Stakeholders at the turning on of the new Beetaloo Gas Pipeline

THE APPRAISAL GAS AGREEMENT WITH BEETALOO JOINT VENTURE

The NLC supported the Native Title Holders' decision to negotiate an appraisal agreement that allows the Beetaloo Joint Venture to sell up to 60 terajoules of gas per day over a period of three years from the proposed Shenandoah South Pilot Project.

Tamboran has announced that they are on track to deliver first gas sales to the Northern Territory Government in the third quarter of 2026. The Beetaloo Joint Venture is now focusing on securing a long-term production agreement with Native Title Holders.

Native Title Holders Pompey Raymond and Rosemary Raymond with Deputy Chair, Lorraine Jones



NLC's PACT officers checking permits at Cahills Crossing - June 2026



CAHILLS CROSSING PERMIT BLITZ'S

During June and July 2026, the Permits, Agreements and Compliance Team (PACT) conducted permit compliance checks on vehicles crossing Cahills Crossing and entering Aboriginal land. With the number of people accessing Aboriginal land without the appropriate permits increasing over the past 18 months, Traditional Owners, NLC Permit Officers and the Adjumarllarl and Njanjma Rangers, and NT Police worked together to ensure visitors held the correct permits.

During the compliance checks, 83 vehicles were stopped and permits were checked. Of these, 24 occupants did not have a permit to enter Aboriginal land. All persons were able to apply for a permit on the spot and continue their journey.

Commonwealth and Northern Territory legislation requires anyone entering Aboriginal land to hold a written permit. The NLC administers the permit system across the Top End in consultation with Traditional Owners. Permits are free and help uphold the rights and privacy of Aboriginal communities, protect the natural environment, and promote visitor safety.



NLC's PACT officers at Cahills Crossing - June 2026

Rangers out on Country



CARING FOR COUNTRY RANGER PROGRAM

The Caring for Country (CFC) Ranger Program had another strong year in 2025-26, delivering culturally led land and sea management across the Northern Territory.

Ranger groups carried out a wide range of environmental, cultural and conservation activities across their regions and the three Indigenous Protected Areas. Key activities included savanna fire management, weed control, water quality monitoring and the protection of threatened species such as freshwater sawfish, turtles, sea mammals, northern brushtail possums and white-throated grasswrens. Rangers also worked closely with cultural advisers and Traditional Owners to run community cultural learning camps, helping to pass on cultural knowledge and strengthen connections to Country.

In January 2026, CFC secured funding for five new projects through the National Indigenous Australians Agency (NIAA). These investments followed extensive consultation with Traditional Owners and the development of community-led Healthy Country Plans. As a result, two new ranger groups are in the process of being established at Minyerri (Alawa) and Elliott (Kulumindini). These new teams will increase local land management capacity, create employment opportunities and support Traditional Owner priorities on Country.

The program also secured funding for Sea Country ranger positions in the Southeast Arnhem Land (SEAL) region, encompassing the Numbulwar Numburindi and Yugul Mangi Ranger Groups. These positions will create local jobs, strengthen marine and coastal management and support the management of the soon-to-be dedicated Sea Country extension to the Southeast Arnhem Land Indigenous Protected Area.

Addressing needs identified through CFC consultation, funding was also secured to support workforce participation and development through new targeted women's and youth coordinator and mentor positions. These roles will help attract, develop and retain women and young people in ranger programs, creating stronger career pathways and helping to build a strong future ranger workforce.

The year also brought significant challenges, with severe wet season conditions and unprecedented major flooding affecting many communities. Ranger groups along the Katherine and Daly River systems were required to evacuate, causing major disruptions to their work programs. The Malak Malak Rangers, based at Woolianna, could not access their homes or ranger base for several months due to flooding. In the Gulf region, the Numbulwar Numburindi Rangers were also evacuated during Cyclone Narelle. Despite these challenges, ranger teams showed great resilience, adapting their work and continuing to support their communities throughout the response and recovery period.

Through strong partnerships with Traditional Owners, communities and funding agencies, the Caring for Country Program continues to create remote area employment opportunities and deliver positive environmental, cultural and social outcomes that support the long-term care and management of Country.



NLC Staff and Chair in Kalkarindji for the Freedom Day Festival March, 60-year anniversary of the Wave Hill Walk Off

KEWULYI FUTURE ACT DETERMINATION APPLICATION – A WIN IN THE NNTT

A decision by the National Native Title Tribunal in January 2026 in relation to a Future Act Determination Arbitration concerning a mineral lease application on the Namul Namul pastoral lease resulted in saw the Kewulyi group protect their culture and land.

While the Tribunal determined that part of the mineral lease may be granted, it imposed a condition prohibiting any mining activity near an important sacred site on Kewulyi country.

LANGUAGE FOR LAND RIGHTS

In West and East Arnhem land, mining and exploration proposal meetings on country, are now in language for the first time. Bininj Kunwok Regional Language and Culture Centre and Aboriginal Interpreter Services (AIS) translated materials used during meetings into Kunwok and Yolŋu Matha. Consultations about land rights are complex and can be difficult to understand even with translators, because legislation can use specific words and meanings not used in common conversation. Meetings can be long and involve many clans. The NLC's work is to help Traditional Owners understand what is being asked of their land, ensuring free prior and informed consent. The NLC spent nearly a year developing plain English presentation materials based on years of experience. Traditional Owners advised on what worked well with meetings and discussions.

These translations are now presentation resources in language, including audio recordings that NLC facilitators can use. As part of their land rights story, Traditional Owners have the option to hear about economic opportunities and make decisions about what they want and how they want things done on their Country.

These standardised tools ensure NLC staff who run meetings, can use audio recordings in language to explain the consultation process to Traditional Owners. The presentations are now being used in Kunwinjku and Yolŋu Matha. The NLC is now working to have resources translated into Garrwa, Murin Patha and Nungubuyu for Traditional Owners in Borroloola, Wadeye and Numbulwar.

Summit Attendees



LEARNING ON COUNTRY PROGRAM (LoCP)

The LoCP has established itself as a countrywide exemplar model for culturally grounded, on-Country education and is currently delivered across 14 remote communities in the NLC region. The LoCP has been funded by the Commonwealth Government since 2012, with the contract transferred from the NT Department of Education to the NLC in 2018.

The Program's success is a testament to the significant educational and employment pathway outcomes for remote Middle and Senior student participants, coupled with the determination and cultural authority of local stakeholders and communities that value and drive this two-way learning model.

THE LEARNING ON COUNTRY NORTHERN AUSTRALIAN SUMMIT

The inaugural Learning on Country Northern Australia Summit, which was held on 2 and 3 September 2025, brought together more than 120 Aboriginal leaders, land councils, schools, ranger groups, universities, government agencies and community organisations to strengthen a shared vision for community-led, culturally grounded two-way education. The Summit demonstrated that Learning on Country is a mature and evidence-based model that combines Indigenous knowledge systems with Western education, resulting in stronger student engagement, attendance, identity, educational achievement and employment pathways. The summit was a strategic response to support this established and highly successful two-way education model to support other organisations in the development and delivery of similar initiatives.



LoC Steering Committee co-Chair Cindy Jinmarabynana (right) providing support to new Bawinanga Djelk Rangers interns during their presentation to the Summit (September 2025)



Galiwin'ku local LoC Committee members, led by co-Chair Danny Dangadanga Garrawurra (far left) present at the Summit (September 2025)

LoC students



LoCP STUDENT AND STAKEHOLDER OUTCOMES

The LoCP is committed to closing the gap for remote Aboriginal students in education and employment pathways. The following data reflects these outcomes and successes for the NIAA reporting period of July-December 2025.

A total of 2,862 remote Aboriginal students participated in LoCP activities.

This included:

LoC Manager Shane Bailey presents to the Summit (September 2025)



1,020 MIDDLE AND SENIOR SECONDARY TARGET COHORT STUDENTS ENGAGED IN WEEKLY LOC ACTIVITIES (integrating SACE-based NTCET curriculum, VET-based training and employment pathways components).

264 REMOTE ABORIGINAL STUDENTS WERE ENROLLED IN VET-BASED TRAINING (specifically, Conservation Management, Maritime and First Aid), with 65 students completing certifications.

ACROSS THE 14 SITES, A TOTAL OF 676 DAYS OF LEARNING WERE UNDERTAKEN ON-COUNTRY under the direction of coordinators, teachers, rangers, cultural advisers, Traditional Owners and VET trainers, with on-Country learning returning to the classroom and being integrated into curriculum streams that increase numeracy and literacy skills.

During this period, **NIAA LOCP FUNDING DIRECTLY EMPLOYED 93 PEOPLE IN FULL-TIME, PART-TIME AND CASUAL ENGAGEMENTS.** Of these, 83 were Aboriginal, reflecting a 90% Aboriginal workforce in LoCP delivery.

OF THE TOTAL 15,904.75 HOURS WORKED DURING THIS PERIOD, 10,896.25 HOURS WERE WORKED BY ABORIGINAL STAKEHOLDERS. This equates to 68.50% of the total hours being worked by Aboriginal People.

OF THE TOTAL 15,904.75 HOURS WORKED DURING THIS PERIOD, 10,896.25 HOURS WERE WORKED BY INDIGENOUS STAKEHOLDERS. This equates to 68.50% of the total hours being worked by Indigenous peoples.

LoC students



When the student participation data is considered against the low attendance rates across Top End remote community schools, it becomes evident that the LoC Program is vital in continuing to engage and motivate students through an educational model that is relevant and highly valued by the schools, ranger groups and Indigenous stakeholders who drive and direct the Program at the local site level.



LoC students

Native Title Holders outside court – McArthur River Native Title Compensation Case – February 2026



MCARTHUR RIVER MINE DECISION

The McArthur River Mine compensation claim was first filed by the Northern Land Council on behalf of Gudanji, Yanyuwa and Yanyuwa-Marra Native Title Holders in December 2020.

The case sought compensation from the Northern Territory Government, arguing that the establishment of the McArthur River Mine in 1992 and subsequent open-cut mining at the site caused significant cultural, spiritual, economic and environmental damage to Country damage that persists today.

The decision represents the largest compensation award for impacts to culture and Country in Australia.

In 2023, the case went to trial in an on-Country hearing and at the Darwin Federal Court, where a number of Traditional Owner witnesses gave evidence of the damage to their native title rights caused by the McArthur River Project.

Almost six years on, this long-awaited decision is the result of hard-fought advocacy by the Gudanji, Yanyuwa and Yanyuwa-Marra peoples.

It sets an important precedent for Native Title holders who are owed compensations from Government or third-party organisations across the country.



130th NLC Full Council Meeting, held at Jabiru (December 2025)

NEW RULES FOR 2025-28 COUNCIL NOMINATIONS

Every three years, the NLC calls for Council nominations, in line with s29 of the Land Rights Act and the method of choice (MoC). The MoC sets out the rules that the NLC must follow when it calls for nominations from Aboriginal People. Since 2016, people can be nominated in two ways, either by community or an Aboriginal organisation known as a recognised entity under the MoC.

On 19 August 2025, Minister Katy Gallagher, Minister for Finance, Women and Public Service, approved the new MoC, increasing the number of nominated councillors from 78 across 54 wards to 111 across 66 wards. The 2025 MoC addresses the recommendations from the Australian National Audit Office Auditor-General Report No.1 of 2023-24, Governance of the NLC. This is the fifth time the MoC has been updated.

Council nominations were promoted using adverts in language on radio, social media posts, information in *Land Rights News*, posters and a dedicated 1800 number.

In 2025–26, the NLC facilitated 52 MoC community meetings across all seven regions and received 153 individual nominations. Of these, 60 % (92 nominations) were for the 50 community-nominated seats, with 12 nominations being invalid or withdrawn.

In November 2025, the Full Council met in Jabiru. During this meeting, Council held elections for a number of roles, including Chair and Deputy Chair, Executive Council, the Housing and Homelands Committee and the Water Committee, and nominated members for external boards, including Aboriginal Investment NT, Aboriginal Sea Company and the Aboriginal Areas Protection Authority.

METHOD OF CHOICE TIMELINE

The Northern Land Council elects members using a method of choice which sets out the means by which Aboriginal people within our region are nominated to become members of the Full Council.



1976	1977	1983	2001	2016	2025
Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act 1976	52 seats including Groote Eylandt & Tiwi Islands	80 seats including Groote Eylandt	78 seats	78 seats	111 seats

Above is the timeline of seat changes that we've had over the years.

From the beginning, NLC has grown and progress continues.

NORTHERN TERRITORY (NT) INDIGENOUS ECONOMIC STIMULUS PACKAGE REPORT: 2025–26

BACKGROUND

In November 2020, the former Minister for Indigenous Australians, Hon Ken Wyatt AM, MP, announced a $100 million Northern Territory (NT) Indigenous Economic Stimulus Package, developed in partnership with the four Northern Territory land councils to provide immediate support for Aboriginal businesses, jobs and economic development in the NT. The package was delivered over two financial years, with $60 million allocated in 2020–21 and $40 million in 2021–22.

The NLC was allocated $36.7 million, delivered over two financial years – $22 million in 2020–21 and $14.7 million in 2021–22. The funds were provided through the ABA for Aboriginal people in the NT to create and sustain jobs through capital injections into 'shovel-ready' economic, social and infrastructure projects. Money flowed through targeted investments connecting Aboriginal people to pastoral, tourism, gas and mining opportunities, and helping businesses prepare for an expected surge in domestic tourism over the coming period.

The funding package also provided opportunities to build skills and support employment opportunities through ranger programs, LoC activities and workplace experiences.

The Program also aimed to support activities in homeland communities, as well as invest in small-scale Aboriginal-owned infrastructure projects with short or no lead times that have had an immediate and lasting benefit for Aboriginal people living in the NLC regions.

DECISION-MAKING

Former Minister, Hon Ken Wyatt AM, MP, wrote to the four NT land councils in November 2020. The former Minister set a number of investment principles and stipulated that each land council had to develop an implementation plan for consideration by the National Indigenous Australians Agency (NIAA).

NIAA provided a guidance document.

The NLC's CEO is the delegate for decisions about funding under the NT Indigenous Economic Stimulus Package.

For Round One, 80 funding applications were shortlisted by the NLC from various Aboriginal businesses and homeland communities. One applicant subsequently withdrew their application.

For Round Two, the NLC received 116 applications requesting almost three times the available funding and, after assessment, the delegates approved $14.6 million as at 30 June 2026.

A total of $42.1 million was requested, compared to $14.7 million available – an oversubscription of 286%.

In a highly competitive field, the panel carefully considered needs and value for money consistent with the delegate's obligation as the Accountable Authority under the PGPA Act.

Homelands applications were generally able to demonstrate greater need (e.g. sanitation, water security, personal safety, physical amenity) than Aboriginal businesses.

Recommended outcomes showed that regions with the largest number of homelands applications, such as Borroloola, Barkly and East Arnhem, received comparatively stronger outcomes to regions such as West Arnhem and Darwin/Daly/Wagait.

Applicants that did not receive funding in Round 1 were prioritised over those who did.

Some applications that were not approved were suitable but required further planning. Applicants were encouraged to develop a plan and apply for funding in the ABA open round grant.

The funding targeted projects based on the following investment principles set by the former Minister:

1. Invest in existing Aboriginal community businesses so they can adapt and deliver.
2. Invest in Aboriginal-owned infrastructure to connect people to economic opportunities, including pastoral, tourism, gas and mining opportunities.
3. Invest in building the skills of men and women on Country through ranger programs, Learning on Country programs and workplace experiences.
4. Invest in small-scale infrastructure projects to create jobs and the improve potential of Aboriginal land, such as fencing, water infrastructure and homelands upgrades.
5. Maximise the ABA investment through co-investment and coordination with other government funding streams and corporate and philanthropic contributions.



SUMMARY – ROUND 1

The NLC received $22 million in 2020–21. As at 30 June 2026, 74 projects have been assessed across the NLC's seven regions. The total amount of funding approved for these projects is $21.8 million, of which $21.5 million has been paid.

Applications were assessed by NLC officers to ensure that all the applications met the principles set by the former Minister for Indigenous Australians, the Hon Ken Wyatt AM MP, and the criteria established by the NLC to ensure the viability of projects, including value for money, capacity to deliver, whole-of-life costs and measurable outcomes. The final decision was made by the NLC Accountable Authority.

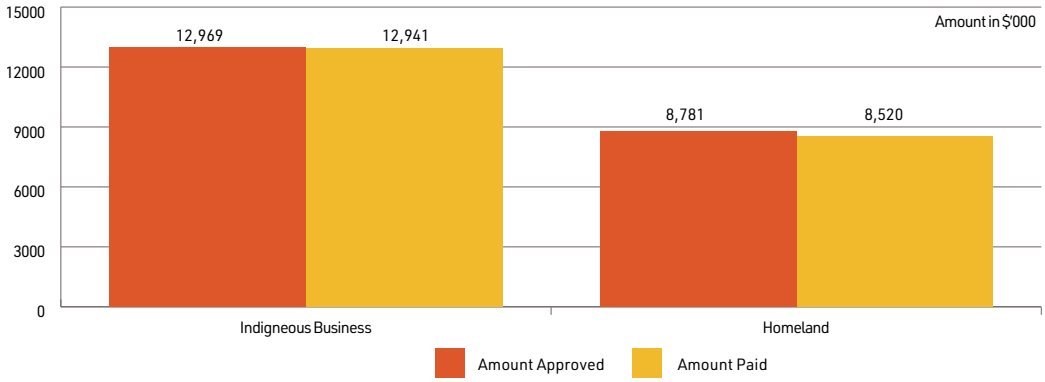
The following tables provide details of the number of applications received, approved and paid for each NLC region. The tables also provide a breakdown of the amounts approved and paid for Aboriginal businesses and homeland communities, and across key industry sectors and NLC regions.

TABLE 11: NUMBER OF APPLICATIONS RECEIVED, APPROVED AND PAID AS AT 30 JUNE 2026, BY REGION ($000)

REGION	APPLICATIONS RECEIVED		APPLICATIONS APPROVED		PAID
	COUNT	AMOUNT	COUNT	AMOUNT	AMOUNT
Borroloola/Barkly	3	2,459	3	2,459	2,450
Darwin/Daly/Wagait	28	7,081	26	4,548	4,537
East Arnhem	11	2,919	11	2,519	2,519
Katherine	10	4,814	10	4,797	4,797
Multi-regions	2	734	2	734	734
Ngukurr	4	935	4	695	695
Victoria River District	6	1,648	6	1,648	1,648
West Arnhem	16	5,673	12	4,350	4,081
TOTAL	**80**	**26,263**	**74**	**21,750**	**21,462**

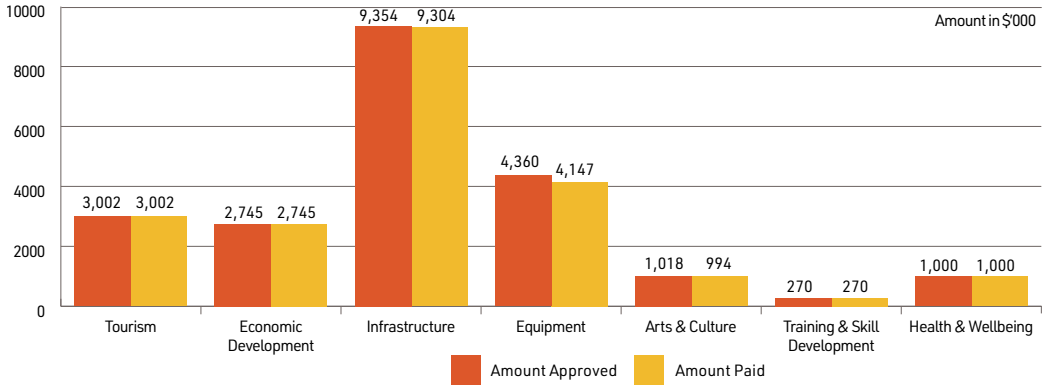
Amounts by category

FIGURE 7: TOTAL AMOUNT APPROVED AND PAID AS AT 30 JUNE 2026, BY CATEGORY



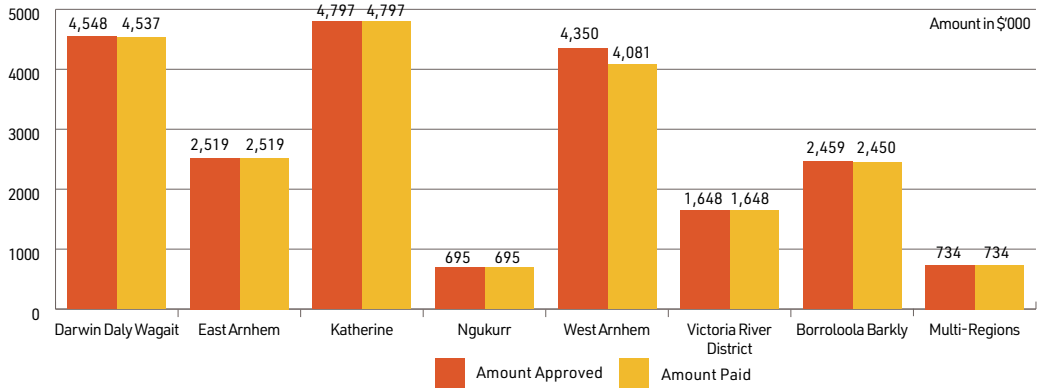
Amounts by industry

FIGURE 8: TOTAL AMOUNT APPROVED AND PAID AS AT 30 JUNE 2026, BY INDUSTRY



Amounts by region

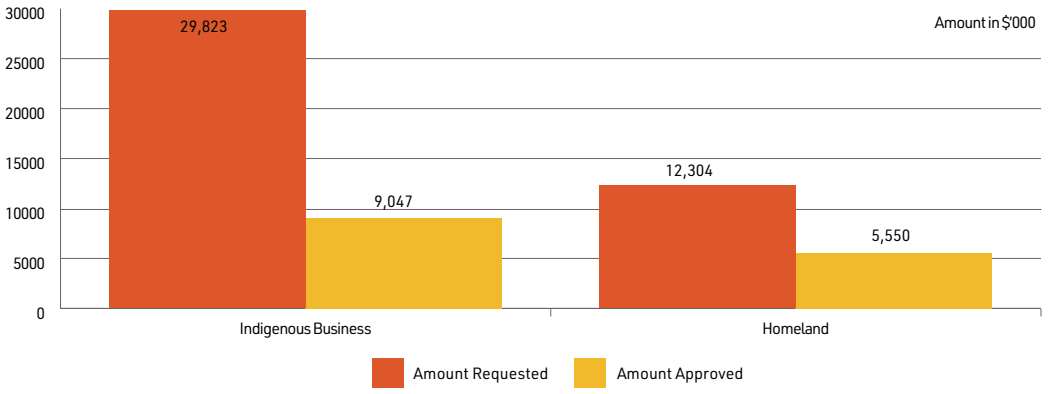
FIGURE 9: TOTAL AMOUNT APPROVED AND PAID AS AT 30 JUNE 2026, BY REGION



SUMMARY – ROUND 2

The NLC received $14.7 million in 2021–22. As at 30 June 2026, 116 applications, amounting to $42.1 million, were received by the NLC from different Aboriginal businesses and homeland communities. However, the amount approved by the delegate was $14.6 million.

FIGURE 10: TOTAL FUNDING REQUESTED AND TOTAL AMOUNT APPROVED AS AT 30 JUNE 2026, BY CATEGORY



The NLC CEO appointed an assessment panel to evaluate Round 2 applications. Applications were assessed by the panel to ensure that all the applications met the principles set by the Minister for Indigenous Australians and the following criteria established by the NLC:

1. **Investment Principles and Need** – how well the project aligns with the investment principles set by the Minister
2. **Value for Money** – the extent to which each application demonstrated how value for money has been sought
3. **Capacity to Deliver** – how the applicant will manage project delivery alongside ongoing business operations
4. **Whole-of-life Costs** – whether costs include ongoing maintenance and staffing and how these will be funded after the project ends
5. **Measurable Outcomes** – the specific goals of the project to be achieved by the end of the project.

TABLE 12: TOTAL NUMBER OF APPLICATIONS RECEIVED, APPROVED AND PAID AS AT 30 JUNE 2026, BY REGION ($000)

REGION	APPLICATIONS RECEIVED		APPLICATIONS APPROVED		PAID
	COUNT	AMOUNT	COUNT	AMOUNT	AMOUNT
Borroloola Barkly	24	11,079	17	4,301	3,913
Darwin Daly Wagait	32	11,777	18	2,364	2,070
East Arnhem	20	4,463	20	3,409	3,213
Katherine	11	5,300	5	696	696
Multi-regions	4	1,463	4	1,169	1,169
Ngukurr	1	209	1	209	209
Victoria River District	4	1,560	3	723	723
West Arnhem	20	6,276	10	1,726	1,719
TOTAL	**116**	**42,127**	**78**	**14,597**	**13,713**

FIGURE 11: TOTAL AMOUNT APPROVED AND PAID AS AT 30 JUNE 2026, BY INDUSTRY

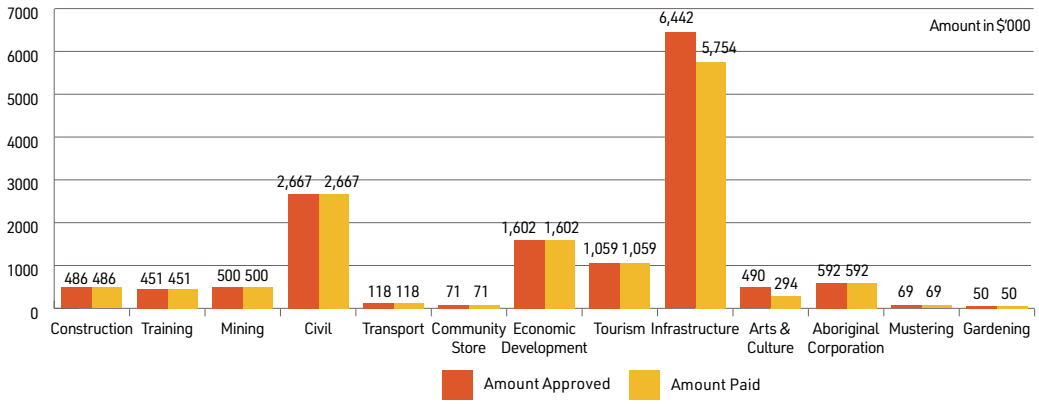


TABLE 13: TOTAL APPLICATIONS RECEIVED AND APPROVED AS AT 30 JUNE 2026, FOR INDIGENOUS BUSINESS ($000)

REGION	APPLICATIONS RECEIVED		APPLICATIONS APPROVED	
	COUNT	AMOUNT	COUNT	AMOUNT
Borroloola Barkly	10	5,889	6	833
Darwin Daly Wagait	24	9,165	15	2,108
East Arnhem	10	3,111	10	2,409
Katherine	9	4,902	4	451
Multi-regions	4	1,463	4	1,169
Ngukurr	0	-	0	-
Victoria River District	3	1,502	3	723
West Arnhem	11	3,791	7	1,354
TOTAL	71	29,823	49	9,047

TABLE 14: TOTAL APPLICATIONS RECEIVED AND APPROVED AS AT 30 JUNE 2026, FOR HOMELANDS ($000)

REGION	APPLICATIONS RECEIVED		APPLICATIONS APPROVED	
	COUNT	AMOUNT	COUNT	AMOUNT
Borroloola Barkly	14	5,189	11	3,468
Darwin Daly Wagait	8	2,612	3	255
East Arnhem	10	1,352	10	1,000
Katherine	2	398	1	245
Multi-regions	0	-	0	-
Ngukurr	1	209	1	209
Victoria River District	1	58	0	-
West Arnhem	9	2,485	3	372
TOTAL	45	12,304	29	5,550

STRENGTHENING THE NLC'S DIGITAL CAPABILITY

The ICT Service Area delivers secure, reliable and strategically aligned technology and information services that support the NLC's operations, workforce and long-term objectives. Its responsibilities span ICT service management, cloud and network operations, cybersecurity, project delivery, enterprise systems, information management, governance, procurement and staff support across Darwin and regional locations.

ICT continued to strengthen the organisation's digital capability following the successful migration of core systems to Microsoft Azure the implementation of a centralised, cloud-first operating model. This has improved system resilience, scalability, security monitoring, disaster recovery capability and access to services across the NLC.

The ICT Project team continued to enhance the CRM and Permit systems, improved management of corporate records through Content Manager, and progress priority business systems and integration initiatives. The ICT Service team also maintained reliable day-to-day support, device management, software licensing, regional assistance and technology procurement.

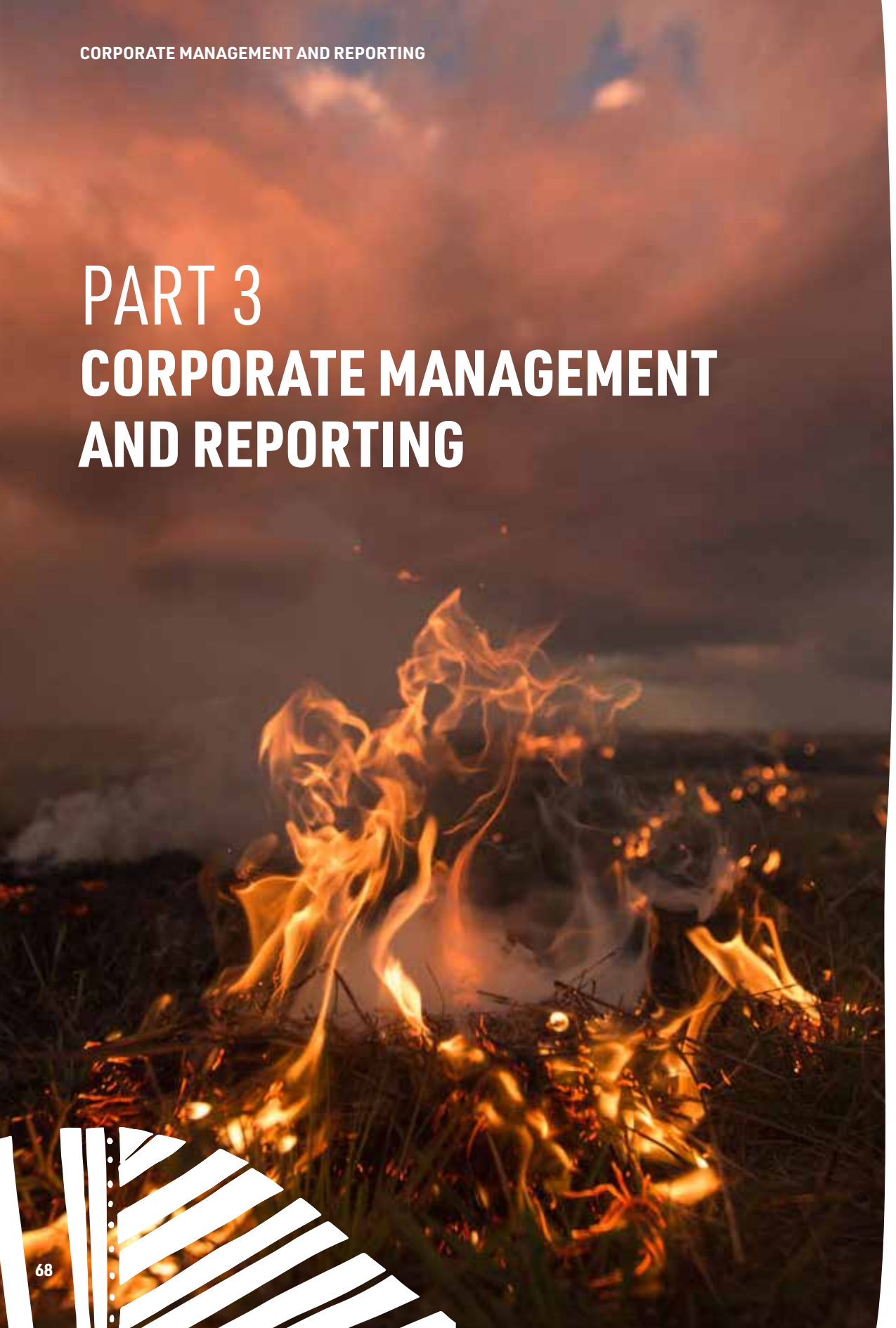
SUNCABLE

In late 2025, the Top End Prescribed Body Corporate (Top End PBC), on behalf of the Native Title Holders, entered into an Indigenous Land Use Agreement with AAPowerLink Australia Assets Pty Ltd (also referred to as SunCable), the NTG and the NLC in relation to the development of a Solar Generation Site on the Powell Creek pastoral lease, south of Elliott. This significant achievement was the culmination of three years of consultation and negotiation between the Native Title Holders and SunCable. The comprehensive Indigenous Land Use Agreement includes the protection of sacred sites, cultural heritage and the environment, business and job opportunities for Native Title Holders, as well as other compensation for the project.

NLC staff, Native Title Holders and Suncable representatives at the signing of the Powell Creek Solar Generation Site



PART 3
CORPORATE MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING



STRATEGIC THINKING

The enabling legislation of the NLC is the Land Rights Act. The responsible Minister for the 2025–26 reporting period was Senator the Hon Malarndirri McCarthy, Minister for Indigenous Australians.

The Minister gave no directions to the NLC during the reporting year.

The NLC's strategic direction considers the changing social, political, cultural, economic and environmental landscape of the region and the opportunities it presents. The NLC's planning framework incorporates:

- **Strategic Plan** – a high-level overview of our vision, goals, values and objectives.
- **Corporate Plan** – a four-year plan of our high-level initiatives to achieve our strategic goals and objectives.
- **Operational Plans** – annual plans that outline activities and actions in each group, service area or section of the NLC that will deliver our goals and objectives.

These plans are reviewed regularly and may be amended as required to reflect changing strategic priorities.

The planning framework enables the CEO, managers, Full, Executive and Regional Council members and workers to be regularly informed about progress and performance in achieving our strategic goals and objectives and, where necessary, take corrective action to ensure initiatives remain on track.

STRATEGIC PLAN 2022-27

The Full Council approved the NLC Strategic Plan in December 2022. The Corporate Plan is the vehicle for achieving the NLC's corporate mission: to have an experienced and capable organisation that effectively serves Aboriginal people's interests in the Northern Territory's land, waters and seas, and is focused and committed to achieving our strategic objectives.

The Corporate Plan details key activities, measures and targets describing how the NLC will achieve its goals and objectives over the next four years.

The NLC's strategic goals are:

- **Proactively Manage Country** – Acquire, manage and protect traditional lands and waters in accordance with statutory functions.
- **Opportunity and Empower** – Create real opportunities for Aboriginal people and Traditional Owners.
- **A Strong NLC** – Be a culturally rich and trusted organisation that gets things done and our community can be proud of.
- **Advocate** – Be a voice for Aboriginal people.

CORPORATE PLAN 2026–27 TO 2029–30

The Corporate Plan 2026–27 to 2029–30 presents the performance measures against each of the NLC's strategic goals and objectives for the next four years. The performance measures are based on the organisation's legislative responsibilities under the *Land Rights Act* and the *Native Title Act,* and our identified vision.

CONSULTANT EXPENDITURE

During the reporting period, the NLC engaged consultants to undertake work in relation to the Council's functions and exercise of powers under the Land Rights Act, as required under section 37(8) and the Native Title Act.

TABLE 15: CONSULTANTS EXPENDITURE GREATER THAN $25,000, 2025–26

CONSULTANTS EXPENDITURE GREATER THAN $25,000	TOTAL ($)
Ashurst Australia	1,026,406
Devers List Pty Ltd T/A Devers List	465,037
MPS Law Pty Ltd	332,297
Associated Advertising & Promotions Pty Ltd	208,515
Anthony Matthew Field	164,150
Frank Mckeown- Mckeown Ygoa & Associates Pty Ltd	161,000
Redgum Legal & Consulting Pty Ltd	152,740
James Cook University	144,032
ABS Scrofa (Aust) PTY LTD	133,910
Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO)	129,493
List A Barristers Pty Ltd	127,441
De Silva Hebron	118,694
BMC (NT) Pty Ltd TA Bowden Mccormack Lawyers	115,504
Nowhere Else Consulting Pty Ltd	107,500
Comhar Group Pty Limited	101,815
Katana1 Pty Ltd	99,601
Chapman'S List Barristers Pty Ltd (List C)	95,032
Marrawah Law Pty Ltd	90,745
Roe Legal Services (WA) Pty Ltd T/A Biyara Legal	90,022
Chalk & Behrendt Pty Ltd	87,888
Anthony Logan McAvoy	83,906
BMK Co Pty Ltd T/A Remote Heritage Services	79,578
Glenn James Consulting Pty Ltd	78,800
Martyn Swift Gray T/A Aurum Legal	74,978
Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu	74,500
Craig Elliott	74,200
Our Common Place Ltd	72,784
Gareth David James Lewis	71,525
Water Technology Pty Ltd	71,430
Andrew Cawthorn Consulting Pty Ltd	63,000
Extent Heritage Pty Limited	58,935
David S Trigger And Associates	56,400
Cozens Johansen Lawyers Pty Ltd	51,871

CONSULTANTS EXPENDITURE GREATER THAN $25,000	TOTAL ($)
Foley's List Pty Ltd	51,542
HCI Professional Services Pty Ltd	50,904
Bowden McCormack	50,897
NIC Gambold	50,490
Big Rivers Conservation & Land Management Pty Ltd	49,964
Enviro DNA Pty Ltd	48,280
The Trustee For The Melbourne Minute Trust (The Minute Taker)	47,579
Bininj Kunwok Regional Language Centre Ltd	45,839
Anthropos Consulting	45,000
Herron Todd White (Want) Pty Ltd	45,000
D.V Battams & Others T/A Hopgood Ganim	43,530
List G Barristers	43,301
Flinders University	42,698
Meaghan Rorrison Legal & Consulting	41,353
Christopher Joseph Brady	41,000
Anthony Watterson	40,500
Environmental & Cultural Services Pty Ltd	40,000
Frank Weisenberger	38,940
SLM Corporate Pty Ltd	34,035
Michael Alastair Cawthorn	32,400
Tanyah Somenah Nasir T/A Tanyah Nasir Consulting Service	30,000
Bentley Peter James	29,750
Piper Ellis Lawyers Pty Ltd Ta Piper Grimster Jones Lawyers	29,125
Philip Adgemis T/A Adgemis Anthropology	28,800
The East HWL Practice Trust & The Warat HWL - HWLE Lawyers	28,501
Sahul & Sunda Pty Ltd	28,000
Kendra Laverne Frew TA Employment Law Solutions	26,700
Chapman, Fogarty & Gray Advisory Pty Ltd	26,056
Stephen Paul Johnson	25,450
TOTAL	5,999,362

EXEMPTIONS GRANTED BY THE FINANCE MINISTER

No exemptions were granted by the Minister for Finance during the reporting period 2025–26..

FRAUD AND CORRUPTION

The NLC manages fraud and corruption in line with Commonwealth Fraud and Corruption Control Framework. The NLC undertook a comprehensive assessment of its fraud and corruption controls as required under the Commonwealth Fraud Rule. The Commonwealth Fraud Survey for FY2024-25 required fraud data was collected and reported using the fraud and corruption incident register, which is continually updated.

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

Aboriginal land councils and land trusts are listed in Part I of Schedule 2 of the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* (Cth). Pursuant to section 7, the NLC is not subject to freedom of information requests.

INSURANCE PREMIUMS FOR OFFICERS

No indemnity against liability has been given by agreement or other means to a current or former member of staff. Comcover provides a range of insurances that the NLC requires to perform its functions. Examples of these are 'general liability', 'motor vehicle', 'property' etc. Comcare provides a range of services to support NLC staff.

JUDICIAL DECISIONS AND REVIEWS BY OUTSIDE BODIES

There have been no applications sought for judicial review of any of the decisions of the NLC over the reporting period.

TOWNSHIP LEASE GRANTED OR TRANSFERRED TO AN APPROVED ENTITY

There were no leases granted or transferred to an approved entity under section 19A of the Land Rights Act during the reporting period.

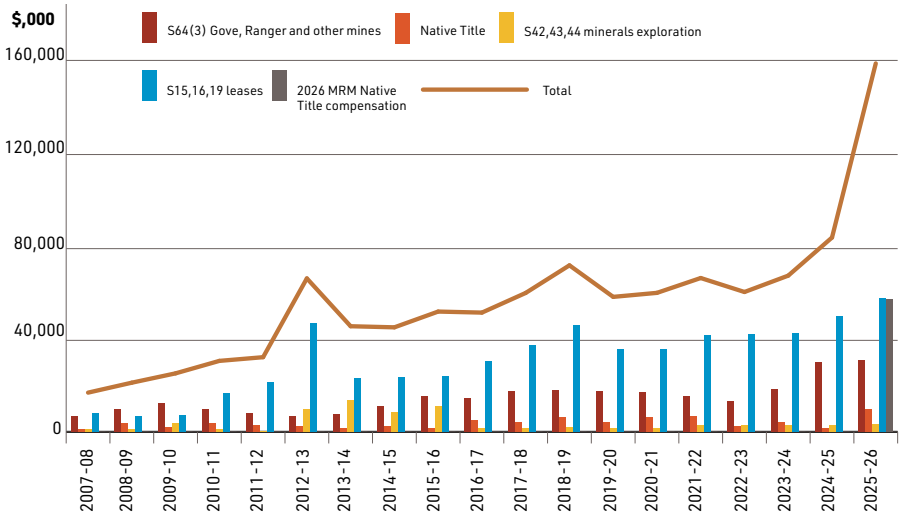
RELATED ENTITY TRANSACTIONS

Related entity transactions can be found at Note 12 of the Financial Statements.

ABORIGINAL LAND INCOME DISTRIBUTION

For many years the NLC has maintained a Royalty Trust Account, which receives mining royalty equivalents under section 64(3) of the Land Rights Act, but also increasing lease, contract and other kinds of Aboriginal land income.

FIGURE 12: ROYALTY TRUST ACCOUNT RECEIPTS 2007-26



The 2025-26 total receipts of $159.426 million includes $57.363 million McArthur River Mine Native Title compensation received in May 2026. Excluding this extraordinary receipt, total receipts for 2025-26 were $102.064 million, which is almost double the total for 2015-16, of $52.057 million.

The NLC has long-established arrangements to pay section 64(3) mining royalty equivalents to royalty-receiving associations.

Over time, lease and licence income from sections 15, 16 and 19 of the Land Rights Act lease and land use agreements has surpassed mining royalty equivalents. This reflects past and continuing economic development efforts. Distributing this expanding category of income has become the main focus of the 21-person Benefits Distribution Unit (BDU), which was established in December 2021.

The BDU has developed new ways to ascertain the interests of Traditional Owners. When consulting a Traditional Owner group about accumulated income for that group, the BDU also seeks a standing instruction from the group about how and when to pay all its expected future annual income from all sources for a three- to five-year period. This empowers the group to plan more effectively and reduces delays in payment because the NLC no longer needs to consult the group after a payment is received and can instead act on the standing instruction.

Many groups have already provided standing instructions. Seeking standing instructions from the remaining groups is an important BDU goal and performance indicator.

Outcome

Aboriginal land generated income of $92.435 million during the 2025–26 financial year. There were 8,252 payments of Aboriginal land income made during the same financial year, totalling $75,796,000. Total payments of lease, contract and other non-royalty equivalent income received pursuant to sections 15, 16 and 19 were $44,027,000.

ADMINISTERING ABORIGINAL LAND TRUST

Aboriginal land is inalienable freehold title vested in Aboriginal land trusts created under the Land Rights Act.

Land trusts in the NLC region can only act at the direction of the NLC. They cannot act independently and therefore do not have any functions or powers to hold meetings or conduct any other type of business.

When someone wants to use Aboriginal land for an activity such as a shop, mining or tourism, the NLC has a legal responsibility to:

- consult with and have regard to the interests of Traditional Owners
- ensure that Traditional Owners understand any proposal and, as a group, provide consent
- ensure that any affected Aboriginal community has expressed its views
- comply with traditional decision-making processes.

Members of a land trust are Aboriginal people living in the NLC's region, appointed by the Commonwealth Minister for Indigenous Australians upon nomination by the NLC. They hold office for up to five years and are eligible for re-appointment. Land trust members sign land use agreements that their land trust has been directed to execute by the NLC.

The NLC has statutory responsibilities for the administration of land trusts.

RISK MANAGEMENT AND ETHICS

In line with section 16 of the PGPA Act, the NLC remains firmly committed to maintaining a comprehensive system of risk oversight to enable the proactive identification, assessment and management of risks and their impact on the organisation's strategic objectives.

Section 16 of the PGPA Act requires the accountable authority of a Commonwealth Government entity to maintain a system of risk oversight and management.

The NLC remains firmly committed to maintaining a comprehensive system of risk oversight to enable the proactive identification, assessment and management of risks and their impact on the organisation's strategic objectives. The continuous oversight and enhancement of risk-management practices at the NLC are critical to ensuring that risk management is embedded into the NLC's priorities and operations.

The NLC's Enterprise Risk Management Framework provides a structured approach to identifying, assessing and managing risks and opportunities across the organisation on an ongoing basis. The enterprise risk register is periodically reviewed to ensure that risks are captured and monitored in response to the changing operating environment and in line with best practice.

To establish and maintain a standard of ethical behaviour for NLC workers and Council members, the NLC Code of Conduct and NLC Meeting Rules and Code of Conduct for Council Members are designed to clearly outline the standards and expectations required at a personal and professional level. All workers receive access to the Code of Conduct during induction and through annual mandatory training. Council members similarly receive induction training and a copy of the handbook to ensure a clear understanding of appropriate and acceptable Council member behaviour. These documents are central to the Council's organisational commitment to a culture of integrity and accountability across the NLC.

COMMITTEES

NLC AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE

The NLC established an Audit and Risk Committee (the Committee). In compliance with section 45 of the PGPA Act and under the PGPA Rule (section 179l), the Accountable Authority of the NLC has determined the Charter of the Committee.

The Committee provides independent advice and assistance to the Council.

The Charter sets out the Committee's role, authority, responsibilities, composition and tenure, reporting and administrative arrangements.

The NLC Audit and Risk Committee, governed by its Committee Charter, provides independent oversight of internal and external audit functions, including the Enterprise Risk Management Framework. The Committee advises on operational and financial management controls, reporting obligations and compliance with legal and regulatory standards. Each year, the Audit Committee reports to the Accountable Authority on the appropriateness of the NLC's systems of controls and provides assurance of the NLC's adherence to acceptable standards and legal requirements.

The Chief Financial Officer and the Governance, Compliance and Risk Manager attend Audit and Risk Committee meetings to provide financial insights and context but are not formal members of the Committee.

The Charter can be found on the NLC website at https://www.nlc.org.au/nlc-audit-committee-charter. Details of the Committee membership are shown in the table below.

AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE MEMBERS

TABLE 16: AUDIT COMMITTEE MEMBERS

MEMBER NAME	QUALIFICATIONS, KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS OR EXPERIENCE (INCLUDES FORMAL AND INFORMAL AS RELEVANT)	NUMBER OF MEETINGS ATTENDED/ TOTAL NUMBER OF MEETINGS	TOTAL ANNUAL REMUNERATION (GST INCL.)	ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
Aswin Kumar (Chair)	CA, CIA, CISA	3/3	$9,768	
Chandra Seneviratne	CPA	3/3	$4,893	
Danny Masters	BEc, LLB, MBA, FAICD	3/3	$4,893	Commenced on 12 September 2025

OTHER COMMITTEES

The Full Council of the NLC makes appointments to the boards of the entities below, as at the last Full Council meeting held in December 2025 (they are not committees of the NLC):

TABLE 17: ABORIGINAL INVESTMENT NT

ABORIGINAL INVESTMENT NT (2 POSITIONS)		
NAME	REGION	MEMBERSHIP STATUS
Joy Cardona	Darwin/Daly/Wagait	December 2022 – December 2025
Graham Kenyon	Darwin/Daly/Wagait	December 2022 – December 2025
Chris Neade*	Borroloola Barkly	December 2025 – Present
Wayne Wauchope*	West Arnhem	December 2025 – Present

* members for 2025-28 term

TABLE 18: ABORIGINAL SEA COMPANY

ABORIGINAL SEA COMPANY (3 POSITIONS)		
NAME	REGION	MEMBERSHIP STATUS
Calvin Deveraux*	Darwin/Daly/Wagait	December 2022 – Present
Julius (Clint) Kernan	West Arnhem	December 2022 – December 2025
Djawa Yunupingu	East Arnhem	December 2022 – December 2025
Rachel Dikul Baker*	East Arnhem	December 2025 – Present
Bunug Galaminda*	West Arnhem	December 2025 – Present

* members for 2025-28 term

TABLE 19: ABORIGINAL AREAS PROTECTION AUTHORITY

ABORIGINAL AREAS PROTECTION AUTHORITY (4 POSITIONS)		
NAME	REGION	MEMBERSHIP STATUS
Chris Neade	Borroloola Barkly	December 2025 – Present
Bobby Nunggumajbarr	South East Arnhem	December 2025 – Present
Elizabeth Joshua	South East Arnhem	December 2025 – Present
Lorraine Jones	Victoria River District	December 2025 – Present

WORK HEALTH SAFETY (WHS)

INITIATIVES AND OUTCOMES

Schedule 2 - Part 4 Work Health and Safety Act 2011 – (2)(a) and (b)

The WHS team continues to undertake site visits to ranger stations and regional offices to support workplace safety, consultation and continuous improvement. These visits include workplace inspections, discussions with workers and leaders, and the provision of reports outlining findings and opportunities for improvement. Engagement with Ranger Groups encourages workers to share local knowledge and contribute to practical, culturally appropriate safety solutions. Greater sharing of lessons learned and successful initiatives across locations would further strengthen organisational learning and improve consistency in risk management practices.

Following the People Leader Program, staff have strengthened their understanding of WHS responsibilities, legislative obligations and risk management principles. Building on this knowledge, the WHS team is working with ranger groups to develop practical systems for chemical management, Safe Work Instructions and the management of high-risk activities. Continued development of simplified documentation and consistent processes will improve usability, support compliance and ensure systems remain fit for purpose across Ranger operations.

Completion of the Wellbeing, Health & Safety @ Work for Supervisors program has enhanced leaders' capability to take a proactive and strategic approach to managing workplace risks. Ongoing engagement, guidance and professional development will support the continued integration of WHS into operational planning and decision-making, strengthening accountability and contributing to a positive safety culture.

The NLC recognises that workplace risks include both physical and psychosocial hazards. Training has been delivered to increase awareness of psychosocial risks and appropriate control measures. Psychosocial risk management remains a priority, with continued focus on education, psychologically safe workplaces, respectful behaviours, early intervention and worker wellbeing.

Emergency Management Plans for all NLC locations are also being reviewed to ensure they remain current and effective. Following implementation, emergency exercises, familiarisation activities and practical drills will help workers understand their roles and responsibilities while strengthening organisational preparedness and resilience.

NOTIFIABLE INCIDENTS

Schedule 2 - Part 4 Work Health and Safety Act 2011 – (2)(c)

No incidents requiring notification to the Regulator occurred during the reporting period, and there were no outstanding notifiable incidents at its conclusion. While this is a positive outcome, continued emphasis on hazard, incident and near-miss reporting remains important to identify emerging risks, strengthen preventative controls and support continuous improvement.

NOTICES UNDER PART 10 OF THE WORK HEALTH AND SAFETY ACT 2011

Schedule 2 - Part 4 Work Health and Safety Act 2011 – (2)(d)

No regulatory investigations were conducted and no notices relating to non-compliance were issued during the reporting period. Following Comcare's 2025 review and the identified opportunities for improvement in consultation, cooperation and coordination, the WHS team developed a structured methodology that supports legislative compliance while recognising the cultural and operational requirements of NLC workplaces. Implementation of this approach will strengthen engagement, consultation and shared responsibility for WHS outcomes.

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

1. The NLC's Wellbeing, Health and Safety @ Work Framework is approaching full implementation. The framework provides a practical, scalable and culturally appropriate approach to managing health, safety and wellbeing across the organisation's diverse operations. Together with the Consultation, Cooperation and Coordination methodology, it will support consistent governance while remaining responsive to local operational requirements.
2. Extensive consultation, engagement and practical training will continue during upcoming visits to NLC locations. These activities will support the rollout of revised systems, procedures and methodologies while ensuring workers, supervisors and managers understand their WHS responsibilities. Ongoing consultation will also provide opportunities to incorporate feedback into future improvements.
3. During the next reporting period, the WHS team will commence an evaluation of cloud-based Health, Safety and Environmental (HSE) management platforms. The objective is to identify a system capable of providing a single source of truth for WHS information, records and reporting. A suitable platform would support process standardisation, improve accessibility to information, strengthen contractor management and enhance the organisation's ability to demonstrate compliance.

As the NLC's WHS systems continue to mature, focus will remain on strengthening leadership capability, increasing worker participation and embedding proactive risk management practices. Through ongoing consultation, training and system improvements, the NLC will continue to enhance its approach to health, safety and wellbeing while supporting safe, healthy and sustainable workplaces across all areas of operation.

ENVIRONMENT REPORTING

Section 516A of the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (Cth) (EPBC) requires Commonwealth authorities to report on environmental matters. The principles of ecologically sustainable development are considered in the objectives of the NLC's corporate and strategic plans and are addressed throughout consultations and negotiations regarding land use proposals. In particular, economic, environmental, cultural and political impacts are considered during all decision-making processes. This includes consideration of the precautionary principle and monitoring and compliance of environmental impacts on natural and cultural resources of exploration and mining. The table below illustrates the NLC's performance against Commonwealth environmental measures.

TABLE 20: NLC'S PERFORMANCE AGAINST COMMONWEALTH ENVIRONMENTAL MEASURES[1]

THEME	INDICATORS	MEASURES	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
Energy efficient	Electricity purchased	$	266,868	294,714	350,254	341,951
	Electricity consumed	kWh	1,292,966	1,140,931	1,092,774	909,085
	Other fuels purchased/ consumed	L	475,566	373,951	461,100	439,081
	Fuels purchased	$	1,052,137		926,443	872,735
	Air travel distances	km	1,904,045	1,922,045	1,235,116	1,575,714
Greenhouse emission	Air travel (CO2)[2]	tonnes	19	246	139	199
	Electricity (CO2)[3]	tonnes	698	661	611	509
	Other fuels (CO2)[4]	tonnes	1,596	1,309	1,589	1,532
Energy use per employee	Electricity used	kWh	3,883	3,134		2,308
	Other fuels	L	1,428	220		1,115
Waste	Amount going to landfills	cubic metres	326.96	84	283.56	459.4
	Amount going to recycling facilities	cubic metres	67.44	84	69.18	147.36
	Amount of waste per employee	cubic metres	1.18	0.84		1.54
Water	Water consumption	kL	17,206	22,035	19,762	25,233
	Relative water consumption – water use	kL p/e	52	61		64

* Based on stated emissions data from Jacana Energy invoices and calculated at 800grams per kWh (diesel generation) from all other suppliers (mostly Power and Water Corporation).

1. 2025-26, annual report performance against Commonwealth environmental measures removed 2020-21 and 2021-22 data as the calculation methodology changed in 2022-23. Some data has been added or corrected which are listed under annual report corrections.
2. Scope 3 emission only
3. Scope 2 emissions only
4. Scope 1 and 3 emissions only

AUSTRALIAN PUBLIC SERVICE (APS) NET ZERO EMISSIONS REPORTING

In addition to EPBC reporting, the NLC is required to publicly report on the emissions from its operations within the organisation in line with Net Zero in Government Operations Strategy.

TABLE 21: 2025–26 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS INVENTORY – LOCATION-BASED METHOD

EMISSION SOURCE	SCOPE 1 T CO_2-E	SCOPE 2 T CO_2-E	SCOPE 3 T CO_2-E	TOTAL T CO_2-E
Electricity (location-based approach)	n/a	509.09	81.82	590.91
Natural Gas[1]	0.00	N/A	0.00	0.00
Solid Waste	0.00	N/A	88.37	88.37
Refrigerants[2]	0.00	N/A	N/A	0.00
Fleet and Other Vehicles	1,229.89	N/A	302.35	1,532.24
Domestic Commercial Flights[3]	N/A	N/A	145.55	145.55
Domestic Hire Car[4]	N/A	N/A	0.00	0.00
Domestic Travel Accommodation*	N/A	N/A	331.53	331.53
Other Energy	0.00	N/A	0.00	0.00
Total t CO_2-e	**1,229.89**	**509.09**	**949.62**	**2,688.60**

Note: The table above presents emissions related to electricity usage using the location-based accounting method. CO2-e = Carbon Dioxide Equivalent.
N/A = not applicable

1. Natural gas is not available within the NT.
2. Refrigerant data is not available as not a requirement within the NT.
3. Emissions from flights for 2025-26 may be underestimated or incomplete due to limitations in the robustness of data sourced from third-party providers. As emissions reporting processes continue to mature, the quality and completeness of this data is expected to improve over time.
4. Emissions from hire cars for 2025-26 may be incomplete due to a lack of robust data. The quality of data is expected to improve over time as emissions reporting matures.

TABLE 22: ELECTRICITY GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

EMISSION SOURCE	SCOPE 2 T CO_2-E	SCOPE 3 T CO_2-E	TOTAL T CO_2-E	ELECTRICITY KWH
Electricity (location-based approach)	509.09	81.82	590.91	909,085.20
Market-based electricity emissions	609.05	82.71	691.76	751,904.30
Total renewable electricity consumed	**N/A**	**N/A**	**N/A**	**157,180.83**
Renewable Power Percentage[1]	N/A	N/A	N/A	157,180.83
Jurisdictional Renewable Power[2]	N/A	N/A	N/A	-
GreenPower[3]	N/A	N/A	N/A	-
Large-scale generation certificates[3]	N/A	N/A	N/A	-
Behind-the-meter solar[4]	N/A	N/A	N/A	-
Total renewable electricity produced	**N/A**	**N/A**	**N/A**	**-**
Large-scale generation certificates[3]	N/A	N/A	N/A	-
Behind the meter solar[4]	N/A	N/A	N/A	-

Note: The table above presents emissions related to electricity usage using both the location-based and the market-based accounting methods. CO2-e = carbon dioxide equivalent.
N/A = not applicable.

1 Listed as Mandatory renewables in the 2025-26 Annual Report. The renewable power percentage (RPP) accounts for the portion of electricity used from the grid that falls within the Renewable Energy Target.
2 The Australian Capital Territory is currently the only state or territory with a jurisdictional renewable power percentage.
3 Listed as Voluntary renewables in the 2025-26 Annual Report.
4 Reporting behind-the-meter solar consumption and/or production is optional. The quality of data is expected to improve over time as emissions reporting matures.

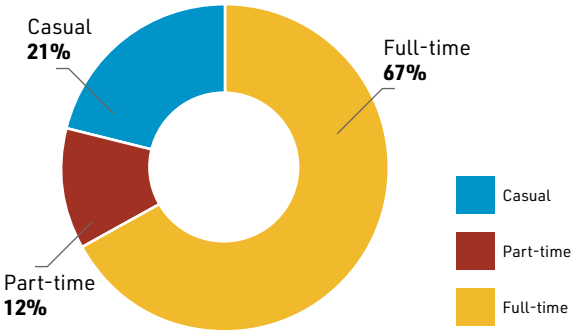
ABOUT OUR WORKFORCE

NLC EMPLOYEES' STATISTICS 2025-26

Throughout the 2025–26 reporting period the permanent workforce headcount ranged from 386 to 408 full-time and part-time employees. The average headcount across the reporting period was 343 permanent staff, with the end-of-June headcount reaching 408 (a 5.97% increase on last year's total).

The NLC continues to engage casuals as operational needs arise to maintain services, with casual numbers ranging from 107 to 126 during the reporting period. This represents an overall average headcount of 118 across the reporting period. In addition, we currently have 377 casually engaged Aboriginal Cultural Advisers (ACA).

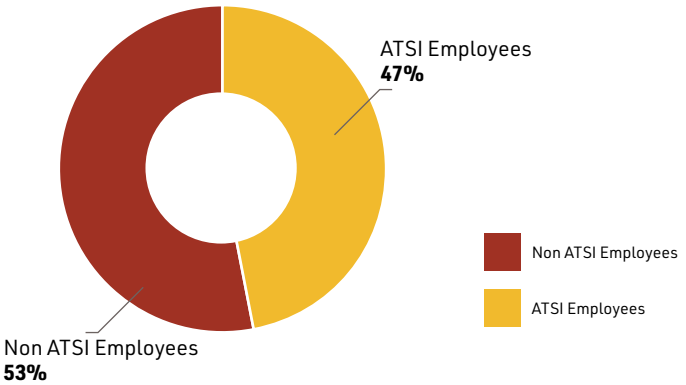
FIGURE 13: EMPLOYEE STATUS – HEADCOUNT 2025-2026 (EXCLUDING ACAS)



WORKFORCE DIVERSITY

A total of 47 % of the NLC workforce (excluding ACAs) identifies as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.

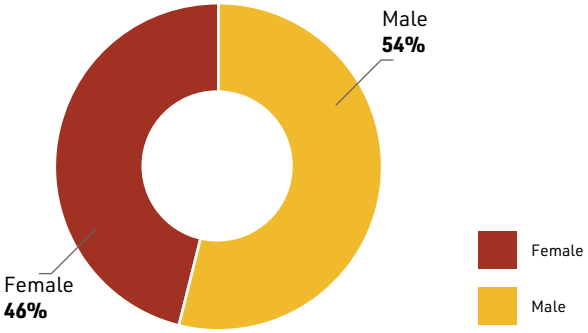
FIGURE 14: NLC EMPLOYEES – WORKFORCE DIVERSITY 2025–26 (EXCLUDING ACAS)



GENDER DIVERSITY

The NLC's gender composition across the total workforce (excluding ACA) remains relatively consistent with the previous year's results. There was a 3 % increase in female representation, from 43% to 46%.

FIGURE 15: NLC EMPLOYEES – GENDER DIVERSITY 2025–26 (EXCLUDING ACA)



Work is being undertaken to improve our gender equity in line with the ***Workplace Gender Equality Act 2012*** (Cth). The tables below have been produced from the Workplace Gender Equality Agency's Industry Benchmarking Report for the 2023 calendar year and indicate that the NLC is moving in the right direction.

TABLE 23: WORKFORCE GENDER COMPOSITION BY EMPLOYMENT STATUS

	FULL-TIME	PART-TIME	CASUAL
Women managers	93%	7%	0%
Men managers	100%	0%	0%
Women non-managers	81%	11%	8%
Men non-managers	72%	14%	14%

Note: Part-time and casual roles are often lower paid. An imbalance in the composition of employees in these roles can contribute to the gender pay gap.

WORKFORCE COMPOSITION BY LOCATION

TABLE 24: NLC TOTAL WORKFORCE COMPOSITION BY REGION 2025-26 (EXCLUDING ACA)

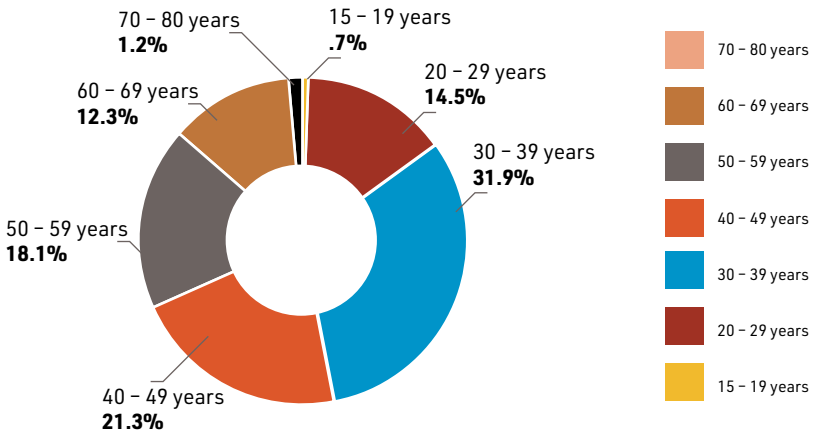
EMPLOYEE HEAD COUNT BY REGION	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
Darwin/Daly/Wagait	344	67%
Borroloola/Barkly	56	11%
West Arnhem	45	9%
East Arnhem	9	2%
Katherine	30	6%
South East Arnhem	25	5%
Victoria River District	6	1%
TOTAL	515	100%

Table figures include non-permanent staff (eg. Casual staff)

GENERATIONAL DIVERSITY

The NLC has a broad age range across permanent positions, with the bulk of the workforce (53 %) aged 30-49 years.

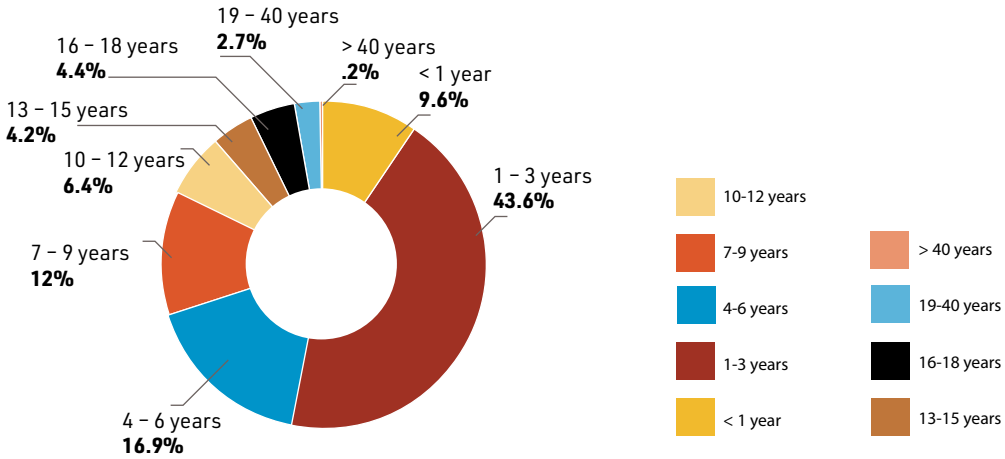
FIGURE 16: NLC EMPLOYEES – AGE OF WORKFORCE 2025-26 (PERMANENT ONLY)



EMPLOYEE LENGTH OF SERVICE

The NLC continues to have a mix of tenure with 43 % of our permanent workforce within the one to three years' service period and 17.4 % of the NLC's permanent workforce having 10 or more years of service.

FIGURE 17: NLC EMPLOYEES – LENGTH OF SERVICE 2025–26 (PERMANENT ONLY)



REMUNERATION

The NLC remunerates employees either in accordance with the NLC Enterprise Agreement 2018 (the Agreement) or via negotiated common law contracts. The Agreement wages were increased in early June 2026 by 3.8 % in accordance with the *Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act 1976* (subsection 27(2) Northern Land Council Non-SES Employees) Amendment Determination.

Common law contract employee salaries are reviewed in accordance with the Wage Price Index (WPI), with any increases applied based on performance. The maximum increase under the WPI for the reporting period was 3.3% (June 2025).

Information about remuneration for key management personnel

Except for the CEO, whose remuneration is covered in the information below, the positions of the NLC Chair and Executive Council members are all remunerated in accordance with the Remuneration Tribunal – full-time office holder and part-time office holder determinations. Information about determinations of the Remuneration Tribunal is available at www.remtribunal.gov.au

During the reporting period ending on 30 June 2026, the NLC had 17 executives who met the definition of key management personnel.

TABLE 25: REMUNERATION FOR KEY MANAGEMENT PERSONNEL 2025–26

NAME	POSITION TITLE	SHORT-TERM BENEFITS ($)			POST-EMPLOYMENT BENEFITS ($)	OTHER LONG-TERM BENEFITS ($)		TERMINATION BENEFITS ($)	TOTAL REMUNERATION ($)
		BASE SALARY	BONUSES	OTHER BENEFITS AND ALLOWANCES	SUPERANNUATION CONTRIBUTIONS	LONG SERVICE LEAVE	OTHER LONG-TERM BENEFITS		
Yuseph Deen	Chief Executive Officer	380,476	-	59,621	56,651	9,096	-	-	505,844
Matthew Ryan	Chair	226,592	-	17,567	27,218	6,805	-	-	278,181
Calvin Deveraux	Executive Member (DDW)	25,579	-	-	3,069	-	-	-	28,648
Bobby Nunggumajabarr	Executive Member (South East Arnhem)	10,081	-	-	1,210	-	-	-	11,290
Djawa Yunupingu	Executive Member (East Arnhem)	7,268	-	-	872	-	-	-	8,140
Yananymul Mununggurr	Executive Member (East Arnhem)	17,499	-	-	2,100	-	-	-	19,599
Lorraine Jones	Executive Member (VRD)	39,355	-	-	4,723	-	-	-	44,077

NAME	POSITION TITLE	SHORT-TERM BENEFITS ($)			POST-EMPLOYMENT BENEFITS ($)	OTHER LONG-TERM BENEFITS ($)		TERMINATION BENEFITS ($)	TOTAL REMUNERATION ($)
		BASE SALARY	BONUSES	OTHER BENEFITS AND ALLOWANCES	SUPERANNUATION CONTRIBUTIONS	LONG SERVICE LEAVE	OTHER LONG-TERM BENEFITS		
Raymond Hector	Executive Member (VRD)	24,144	-	-	2,897	-	-	-	27,041
John Dalywater	Executive Member (Katherine)	18,231	-	-	2,188	-	-	-	20,419
William (Bill) Danks	Executive Member (DDW)	25,579	-	-	3,069	-	-	-	28,648
Julius Kernan	Executive Member (West Arnhem)	18,863	-	-	2,264	-	-	-	21,126
Chris Neade	Executive Member (Borroloola/ Barkly)	34,763	-	-	4,602	-	-	-	39,365
Joy Priest	Executive Member (Borroloola/ Barkly)	17,163	-	-	2,060	-	-	-	19,222
Clifford Duncan	Executive Member (South East Arnhem)	18,631	-	-	2,236	-	-	-	20,867
Preston Lee	Executive Member (Katherine)	13,008	-	-	1,561	-	-	-	14,569
Virginia Nundhirribala	Executive Member (South East Arnhem)	12,456	-	-	1,495	-	-	-	13,950
Lisa Mumbin	Executive Member (Katherine)	5,857	-	-	703	-	-	-	6,560
Totals		**895,545**	**-**	**77,188**	**118,918**	**15,901**	**-**	**-**	**1,107,552**

1. Base salary is the total salary paid and includes annual leave plus annual leave movements.
2. Other benefits and allowances includes motor vehicle benefit and fringe benefit tax paid.
3. Superannuation contributions are the actual super paid.
4. Any annual leave and long service leave paid on termination are not included as per PGPA Rule.
5. Totals are calculated using non-rounded actuals.

Information about remuneration for other highly paid workers

The NLC has no other highly paid Workers to report in accordance with the PGPA Rule.

Information about remuneration for Senior Executive

The majority of the NLC workforce is engaged under the NLC Enterprise Agreement 2018, with the remaining workers engaged under negotiated common law contracts.

TABLE 26: REMUNERATION OF SENIOR EXECUTIVE 2025-26

REMUNERATION BAND	NUMBER OF SENIOR EXECUTIVES	SHORT-TERM BENEFITS ($)			POST-EMPLOYMENT BENEFITS ($)	OTHER LONG-TERM BENEFITS ($)		TERMINATION BENEFITS ($)	TOTAL REMUNERATION ($)
		AVERAGE BASE SALARY	AVERAGE BONUSES	AVERAGE OTHER BENEFITS AND ALLOWANCES	AVERAGE SUPERANNUATION CONTRIBUTIONS	AVERAGE LONG SERVICE LEAVE	AVERAGE OTHER LONG-TERM BENEFITS	AVERAGE TERMINATION BENEFITS	AVERAGE REMUNERATION
$0- $220,000	3	38,800	-	2,511	5,452	915	-	-	47,678
$220,001- $245,000	1	187,207	-	-	28,518	4,735	-	-	220,460
$245,001- $270,000	1	198,890	-	25,684	29,387	4,872	-	-	258,833
$270,001- $295,000	1	209,010	-	27,808	31,520	5,233	-	-	273,571
$295,001- $320,000	2	241,513	-	23,759	35,255	5,981	-	-	306,508
$420,001- $445,000	1	331,844	-	34,742	48,219	7,704	-	-	422,509

NLC ANNUAL PERFORMANCE STATEMENT 2025-26

INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT

We, Mr Matthew Ryan and Mr Yuseph Deen, as the Accountable Authority of the Northern Land Council, present the 2025–26 Annual Performance Statements of the Northern Land Council, as required under section 39(1)(a) of the PGPA Act. In our opinion, these Annual Performance Statements are based on properly maintained records, accurately reflect the performance of the entity and comply with section 39(2) of the PGPA Act.

ANALYSIS OF PERFORMANCE

This section summarises the NLC's performance during the reporting period.

Strategic direction

The NLC is committed to strong governance, accountability and the efficient, effective, economical and ethical use of public resources. Our work supports our core purpose of advancing Aboriginal land rights and supporting Traditional Owners to realise the social, cultural and economic potential of their lands and seas.

In 2023, Full Council endorsed a Change Management Implementation Plan in response to the Activating Land and Sea Rights project, guiding the organisation's transition through to 2027 from progressing land claims to supporting Traditional Owners to realise the benefits of their land rights.

Since 2023–24, we have strengthened performance management through SMART, metric-driven targets. Embedding consistent measures, reliable data and performance reporting across the organisation takes time and requires ongoing refinement. The NLC has made significant progress and will continue to strengthen these practices to improve accountability, decision-making, efficiency and outcomes for Traditional Owners and Aboriginal communities.

The NLC issued 26,576 permits during 2025–26, of which 93.5% were processed within 10 business days.

Regionalisation

In 2025-26, the NLC continued to deliver services to assist constituents across the NLC's seven regions. The NLC remains accessible and responsive to the needs of our people, with regional offices in Wadeye, Katherine, Nhulunbuy, Maningrida, Ngukurr, Timber Creek, Borroloola, Galiwinku, Jabiru and Tennant Creek.



Matthew Ryan
Chair
15 October 2026



Mr Yuseph Deen
Chief Executive Officer
15 October 2026

ASSESSMENT OF PERFORMANCE

The NLC Corporate Plan 2025–26 outlined priorities and measures of success for the 2025–26 financial year. This section assesses the NLC's performance in achieving its objectives throughout the reporting period.

NLC ANNUAL PERFORMANCE STATEMENT 2025–26

METRIC PERFORMANCE

TABLE 27: GOAL 1

GOAL 1: ACQUIRE, MANAGE AND PROTECT TRADITIONAL LANDS AND WATERS IN ACCORDANCE WITH STATUTORY FUNCTIONS				
KEY ACTIVITY REFERENCE	MEASURES	TARGET	OUTCOMES 2025–26	CP REF PP
1.01a	Process permit applications within 10 days	100%	93.5%	31
1.01b	Process special access (research and media) permit applications 20 plus days	80%	91.75%	31
1.03a	All applications are received and registered within two days under section 19, Part IV and Native Title land use agreements	80%	86.9%	31
1.03b	Applications are quality checked and progressed for consideration (including expressions of interest and future acts) within 30 days	10%	53.6%	31
1.04a	Applications for exploration and mining assessed against section 41(6) of the Land Rights Act within 30 days of receipt	25%	0%[1]	31
1.05a	Percentage of consultations associated with commercial land use applications (section 19, Part IV and Native Title)	85%	30%[2]	31
1.05b	Total number of consultations for contract management	10%	34%[3]	31
1.06a	Percentage of land use agreements signed within three months of consent	100%	27.5%[4]	31

1 Only two applications were received during the financial year.
2 This is the first year the organisation has reported against this SMART target. The initial reporting process has identified opportunities to further strengthen data collection, measurement and reporting
3 This is the first year the organisation has reported against this SMART target. The initial reporting process has identified opportunities to further strengthen data collection, measurement and reporting.
4 A total of 51 agreements were approved during the 2025-26 FY. 14 agreements were signed within 90 days.

1.07a	Percentage of land interest reference requests completed within agreed timeframe	80%	62%[1]	31
1.09a	Progress towards stage 1 and 2 of the Gamba Eradication and Biodiversity Conservation Project to meet objectives by 2027	50%	80%	31
1.11a	Coordinate the delivery of four Indigenous Land and Sea Corporation (ILSC) Savanna Fire Management projects in the NLC region	100%	100%	31

TABLE 28: GOAL 2

GOAL 2: CREATE REAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR ABORIGINAL PEOPLE AND TRADITIONAL OWNERS				
KEY ACTIVITY REFERENCE	MEASURES	TARGET	OUTCOMES 2025-26	CP REF PP
2.01a	Future acts notifications issued within three months	75%	75%[2]	32
2.02a	Achieve eight initiatives listed in the Community Planning and Development Strategic Plan	90%	100%	32
2.03a	Increase staff living and based in regions	5%	44%[3]	32
2.03b	Increase regional staff housing	5%	27%	32
2.04a	Effective completion of projects to progress the NLC Regionalisation Strategy	25%	25%[4]	32
2.05a	Income generated from all NLC land and sea use agreements received	95%	95.71%	32
2.06a	Distribute income in accordance with section 35 of the Land Rights Act within six months	100%	86.21%	32
2.06b	Achieve 60% of disbursements made via standing instructions	60%	62.52%	32
2.06c	Achieve 100% distribution of income received under Native Title Act within 12 months of receipt	100%	55.3%	32

1 In 2025-26, 52 % of requests were submitted later than scheduled, limiting the ability to complete land interest requests and quality assurance within the agreed timeframes. Between 2021-22 and 2025-26 there has been an 85 % increase in number of land interest reference requests, in 2025-26 there was a 9.2 % increase.
2 Methodology amended to reflect alignment with legislative timeframes.
3 15.5 % increase in full time and part time staff and 73 % increase in casual staff.
4 Darwin and Katherine offices

GOAL 2: CREATE REAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR ABORIGINAL PEOPLE AND TRADITIONAL OWNERS				
KEY ACTIVITY REFERENCE	MEASURES	TARGET	OUTCOMES 2025-26	CP REF PP
2.07a	Proactive advocacy for positive outcomes in the water policy space	100%	100%	32
2.08a	Progress towards achieving the nine Learning on Country priorities	50%	50%	32
2.09a	Progress towards achieving six key priorities in the Caring for Country Strategic Plan	60%	60%	32
2.10a	Implement Caring for Country (CFC) Women's Engagement Strategy	50%	80%	32
2.11a	Facilitate two meetings per year for the NLC Water Committee	100%	100%	32
2.12a	Progress towards delivery of the measurable KPIs within the four key strategic areas for Sea Country	100%	50%	32

TABLE 29: GOAL 3

GOAL 3: BE A CULTURALLY RICH AND TRUSTED ORGANISATION THAT GETS THINGS DONE AND OUR COMMUNITY CAN BE PROUD OF				
KEY ACTIVITY REFERENCE	MEASURES	TARGET	OUTCOMES 2025-26	CP REF PP
3.01a	No adverse findings reported during the financial year	100%	During the 2025-26 audit ANAO reported one Category C finding relating to Governance and Monitoring of aged Royalty trust balances.	33
3.02a	Continue to deliver a suite of governance sessions at each Council meeting	100%	100%	33
3.02b	Deliver regular governance, compliance and risk dashboard reporting to Council and NLC management	100%	100%	33
3.03a	All staff complete governance training	70%	58.64%[1]	33
3.05a	All staff complete mandatory training requirements	95%	57.18%[2]	33
3.06a	All staff in compliance with WHS training	100%	51.11%[3]	33

1 Improved mandatory reporting has been achieved, although some targets remain unmet due to workforce capacity, staff turnover and limited system access for some staff. Work is continuing to address these constraints and strengthen reporting performance.
2 Improved mandatory reporting has been achieved, although some targets remain unmet due to workforce capacity, staff turnover and limited system access for some staff. Work is continuing to address these constraints and strengthen reporting performance.
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GOAL 3: BE A CULTURALLY RICH AND TRUSTED ORGANISATION THAT GETS THINGS DONE AND OUR COMMUNITY CAN BE PROUD OF				
KEY ACTIVITY REFERENCE	MEASURES	TARGET	OUTCOMES 2025-26	CP REF PP
3.08a	Ensure assets, fleet, property and survey boats are compliant and available for NLC use	95%	95% of all property available. As at 30 June 2026 assets, fleet and boats were compliant and available for use.	33
3.09a	Grow audience size across media platforms	100%	26.93%[1]	33
3.09b	Publish Land Rights News quarterly	100%	100%	33
3.10a	Meeting notices delivered within 21 days prior to date of meeting[2]	90%	15%[3]	33
3.11a	Increase the percentage of external complaints response within 30 days	80%	16%[4]	33
3.12a	Issue 95% or greater invoices within five business days of the completion of deliverables, or in accordance with contractually agreed timeframes	95%	91%	33
3.13a	Funeral and ceremony applications processed within five working days	80%	68%[5]	33
3.14a	Number of requests for assistance to complete a mediation process	75%	Nil applications received	33
3.15a	Decrease the average vacancy rate	50%	Vacancy rate increased by 2.6% points[6]	33
3.15b	Decrease average time to recruit to vacancy from job close date	50%	20.7%[7]	33
3.15c	Decrease full time equivalent (FTE) turnover rate	50%	Turnover rate 14.26%[8]	33
3.15d	Improve Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island (ATSI) employment	50%	47%	33

1 Social media growth targets were not met due to changes in audience engagement, content capacity and competing priorities. The organisation continues to strengthen its digital engagement approach and review targets to ensure they are realistic and measurable.
2 Methodology has been amended to 14 days notices inline with policies and procedures.
3 This is the first year the organisation has reported against this SMART target. The initial reporting process has identified opportunities to further strengthen data collection, measurement and reporting. Figures calculated on 14 days notice not 21 days.
4 Complaint targets were impacted by a 50 % increase in complaint volume during the reporting period.
5 In 2025-26, 100 % of all ceremony applications were processed within 5 days; 66 % of applications to support funeral applications were processed within five business days, 5per cent had not provided invoices, 9 % provided invoice either before or after application
6 Vacancy rate at June 2025 was 12.5 %, at June 2026 was 15.1 %
7 Average time to recruit to vacancy from date job closed at June 2025 41 days and at June 2026 32.5 days.
8 Australian Human Resources Institutes, Quarterly Australian Work Outlook June 2025, listed the March 2025 average turnover rate at 16 % and June 2025 average at 15 %. NLC's turnover rate at June 2025 was 3.68 % and at June 2026 was 14.26 %, below the Australian average.

GOAL 3: BE A CULTURALLY RICH AND TRUSTED ORGANISATION THAT GETS THINGS DONE AND OUR COMMUNITY CAN BE PROUD OF				
KEY ACTIVITY REFERENCE	MEASURES	TARGET	OUTCOMES 2025-26	CP REF PP
3.15e	Assess workforce engagement based on Staff Survey metrics	50%	Staff survey not conducted in 2025-26.	33
3.16a	Maintain recovery of 95% or greater of outstanding debt (corporate and trust) within 90 days	95%	96.19% - Trust 98.75% Corporate[1]	34
3.16b	Maintain doubtful debts at less than or equal to 5% of total accounts receivable	5%	2.81% - Trust 3.66% - Corporate	34

TABLE 30: GOAL 4

GOAL 4: BE A VOICE FOR ABORIGINAL PEOPLE				
KEY ACTIVITY REFERENCE	MEASURES	TARGET	OUTCOMES 2025-26	CP REF PP
4.05a	Achieve at least 80% attendance of Council members at Full and Executive Council meetings	80%	71%[2]	34

1 Separate figures provided due to separate accounting systems.
2 The target was not achieved due to a range of factors affecting participation, including availability constraints including ceremonial commitments. Includes Regional Council attendance.

NON-METRIC PERFORMANCE

TABLE 31: GOAL 1

GOAL 1: ACQUIRE, MANAGE AND PROTECT TRADITIONAL LANDS AND WATERS IN ACCORDANCE WITH STATUTORY FUNCTIONS			
KEY ACTIVITY REFERENCE	MEASURES	OUTCOMES 2025-26	CP REF PP
1.02a	Produce quarterly reports on contract compliance activities	Reports audits conducted on all land use contract through out the year,	35
1.08a	Develop a NLC strategy/position statement on heritage matters	The NLC has developed a draft strategy on heritage matters, this continues to strengthen capacity in relation to cultural heritage protection and management. A particular focus has been through the inclusion of heritage management provisions in agreement making and advocating for Native Title holders and Traditional Owners to be consulted and empowered to make decisions about their cultural heritage.	35
1.08b	Develop a NLC policy on repatriation of artefacts and management of archaeological heritage	NLC and CLC have developed 'A Guide to Transferring Materials to the Central and Northern Land Councils'. This is relating to repatriation of research materials from past staff and researchers, which includes archaeological, anthropological, historical, and other research materials relevant to the NLC and CLC. Note that Repatriation of Ancestors (Ancestral Remains) is not a function of the NLC, the NLC is supportive of repatriation of ancestors and is actively providing assistance where requested. This is a process being led by MAGNT who are spearheading the NT Working Group for the repatriation of ancestors.	35
1.10a	Deliver NLC's joint management functions on NT and Commonwealth parks	NLC has successfully delivered its functions from 2025-26.	35
1.12a	Develop NLC position on mine closure and legacy mines	Priority sites have been nominated and work is ongoing to finalise NLCs position.	35

TABLE 32: GOAL 2

GOAL 2: CREATE REAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR ABORIGINAL PEOPLE AND TRADITIONAL OWNERS			
KEY ACTIVITY REFERENCE	MEASURES	OUTCOMES 2025-26	CP REF PP
2.01b	Total number of consultations for commercial activities conducted by NLC	206	35
2.06d	Develop Royalty Trust Account Payments Procedure	New Benefits Distribution system has been successfully implemented at 22 May 2026	35

TABLE 33: GOAL 3

GOAL 3: BE A CULTURALLY RICH AND TRUSTED ORGANISATION THAT GETS THINGS DONE AND OUR COMMUNITY CAN BE PROUD OF			
KEY ACTIVITY REFERENCE	MEASURES	OUTCOMES 2025-26	CP REF PP
3.04a	Develop and implement a Performance Management Framework	Framework rolled out, information sessions now completed.	36
3.07a	Establish Project Approval Board, Change Advisory Board, and Enterprise Architecture Forum	The ICT Service Area is committed to operating in accordance with the ICT Governance Model, ensuring that technology investments, projects, systems and services are appropriately assessed, approved and aligned with the NLC's strategic priorities, enterprise architecture, cybersecurity requirements and business needs.	36
3.14b	Use best endeavours for the settlement or prevention of a dispute	Provide assistance in six of the eight matter requests received.	36
3.14c	Implement the NLC Engagement and Dispute Resolution Framework	The Engagement and Dispute Resolution framework has been drafted. The NLC continues to review procedures and engage with dispute resolution experts.	36
3. 15f	Identify strategies to balance workforce composition to achieve gender equity	Strategies identified and progressed.	36

TABLE 34: GOAL 4

GOAL 4: BE A VOICE FOR ABORIGINAL PEOPLE			
KEY ACTIVITY REFERENCE	MEASURES	OUTCOMES 2025-26	CP REF PP
4.01a	Monitor and inform the council about the implementation of the National Partnership Agreement on Remote Housing	Attended Joint Steering committee meetings for housing throughout the year and provided regular reports to Council.	36
4.02a	Monitor and inform the council about the implementation of the National Partnership Agreement on Closing the Gap	Attended working group meetings under the Closing the Gap instructions throughout the year and provided regular reports to Council.	36
4.03a	Fiercely advocate for positive policy outcomes on critical policy issues	Monitored legislative updates at both the Northern Territory and Commonwealth government level, identifying policy changes that may hold impacts for Traditional Owners and Aboriginal people. Provided updates to Council, discussed advocacy priorities of the NLC with the Council and determined key policy priorities.	36
4.04a	Advocate to advance the implementation of the Uluru Statement from the Heart and participate in negotiations	Monitored progress on truth-telling and treaty, two critical components of the Uluru Statement from the Heart. Discussed treaty and truth-telling with Regional and Executive Council in relation to related submissions and the NLC Policy Priorities.	36

ADDITIONAL DATA TABLES RELEVANT TO PERFORMANCE STATEMENTS

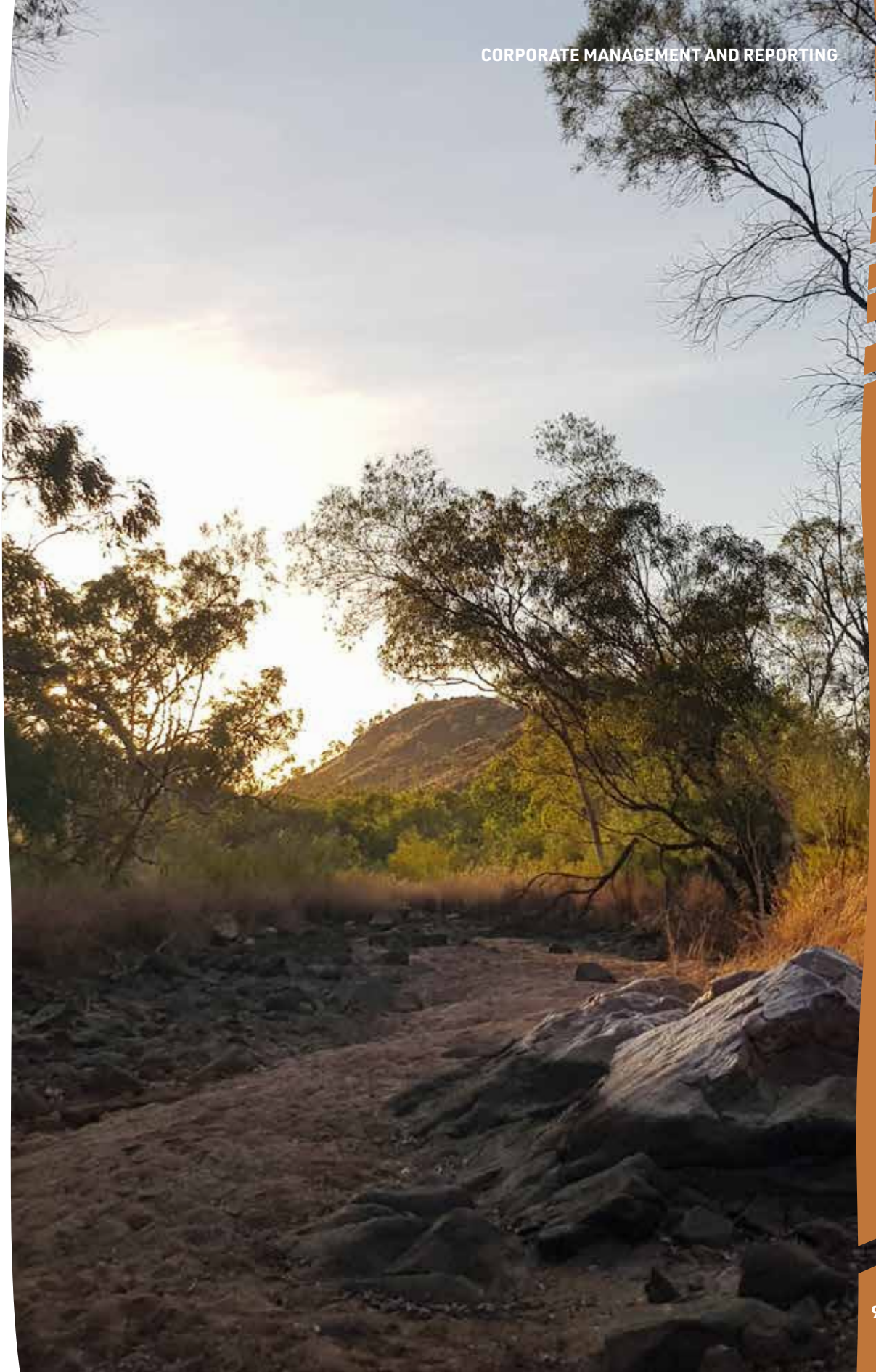
Key activity 1.01: Effectively manage access on Aboriginal land, seas and waters.

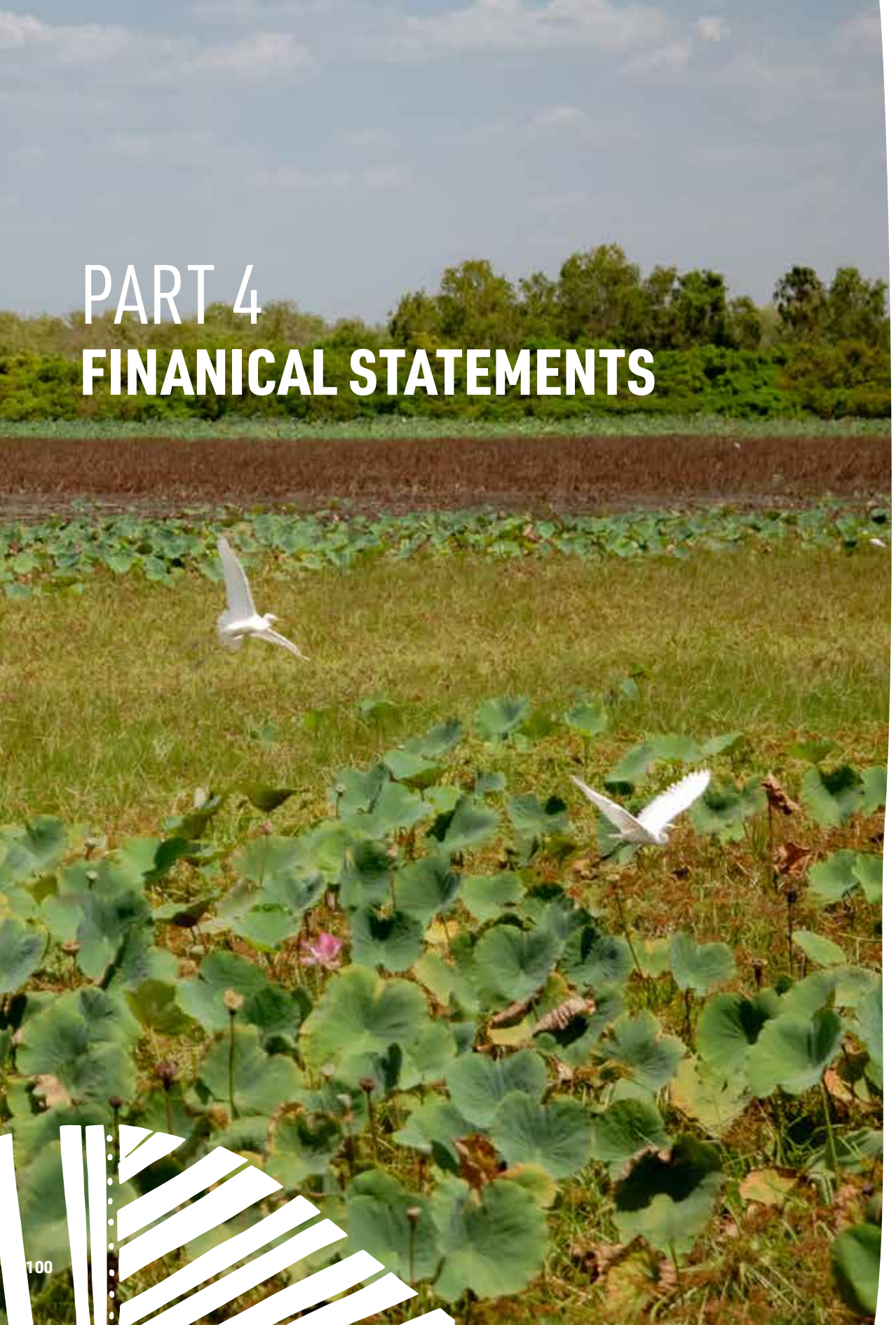
TABLE 35: PERMITS ISSUED BY REGION

PERMITS ISSUED BY REGION	
DESCRIPTION	NUMBER
Borroloola/Barkly	788
Darwin/Daly/Wagait	2,789
East Arnhem	4,468
Katherine	2,651
South East Arnhem (Ngukurr)	1,046
Victoria River District	183
West Arnhem	8,401
All Region (multi-regional, major and minor communities, unassigned)	6,250
Total	**26,576**

TABLE 36: PERMITS ISSUED BY TYPE

PERMITS ISSUED BY TYPE	
DESCRIPTION	NUMBER
Research	374
Media	294
Fishing/Blue Mud Bay	1,636
Recreation	1,772
Residential	785
Transit	3,092
Visitor	1,707
Work	16,916
Tourism	4,840
Mining	994
General	11,082
Total	**26,576**





PART 4
FINANICAL STATEMENTS

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INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

Australian National Audit Office

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

To the Minister for Indigenous Australians

Opinion

In my opinion, the financial statements of Northern Land Council (the Entity) for the year ended 30 June 2026:

(a) comply with Australian Accounting Standards – Simplified Disclosures and the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability (Financial Reporting) Rule 2015*; and

(b) present fairly the financial position of the Entity as at 30 June 2026 and its financial performance and cash flows for the year then ended.

The financial statements of the Entity, which I have audited, comprise the following as at 30 June 2026 and for the year then ended:

- Statement by the Accountable Authority and Chief Financial Officer;
- Statement of Comprehensive Income;
- Statement of Financial Position;
- Statement of Changes in Equity;
- Cash Flow Statement; and
- Notes to the financial statements, comprising material accounting policy information and other explanatory information.

Basis for opinion

I conducted my audit in accordance with the Australian National Audit Office Auditing Standards, which incorporate the Australian Auditing Standards. My responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements* section of my report. I am independent of the Entity in accordance with the relevant ethical requirements for financial statement audits conducted by the Auditor-General and their delegates. These include the relevant independence requirements of the Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's APES 110 *Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants (including Independence Standards)* (the Code) to the extent that they are not in conflict with the *Auditor-General Act 1997*. I have also fulfilled my other responsibilities in accordance with the Code. I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion.

Accountable Authority's responsibility for the financial statements

As the Accountable Authority of the Entity, the Chairman and Chief Executive Officer are responsible under the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (the Act) for the preparation and fair presentation of annual financial statements that comply with Australian Accounting Standards – Simplified Disclosures and the rules made under the Act. The Chairman and Chief Executive Officer are also responsible for such internal control as the Chairman and Chief Executive Officer determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the Chairman and Chief Executive Officer are responsible for assessing the ability of the Entity to continue as a going concern, taking into account whether the Entity's operations will cease as a result of an administrative restructure or for any other reason. The Chairman and Chief Executive Officer are also responsible for disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting, unless the assessment indicates that it is not appropriate.

GPO Box 707, Canberra ACT 2601
38 Sydney Avenue, Forrest ACT 2603
Phone (02) 6203 7300

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

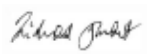
My objective is to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes my opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with the Australian National Audit Office Auditing Standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of the financial statements.

As part of an audit in accordance with the Australian National Audit Office Auditing Standards, I exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. I also:

- identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control;
- obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Entity's internal control;
- evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the Accountable Authority;
- conclude on the appropriateness of the Accountable Authority's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the Entity's ability to continue as a going concern. If I conclude that a material uncertainty exists, I am required to draw attention in my auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify my opinion. My conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of my auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the Entity to cease to continue as a going concern; and
- evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

I communicate with the Accountable Authority regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that I identify during my audit.

Australian National Audit Office



Richard Grant

Executive Director

Delegate of the Auditor-General

Canberra

21 September 2026

STATEMENT BY THE ACCOUNTABLE AUTHORITY AND CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER

In our opinion, the attached financial statements for the year ended 30 June 2026 comply withsubsection 42(2) of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (PGPA Act), and are based on properly maintained financial records as per subsection 41(2) of the PGPA Act.

In our opinion, at the date of this statement, there are reasonable grounds to believe that the Northern LandCouncil will be able to pay its debts as and when they fall due.

This statement is made in accordance with a resolution of the Executive Council.



Mr Matthew Ryan
Chair of the Northern Land Council
Date: 18 September 2026



Mr Yuseph Deen
Chief Executive Officer
Date: 18 September 2026



Mr Irfan Bhat
Chief Financial Officer
Date: 18 September 2026

STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2026

	NOTE	2026 $'000	2025 $'000
NET COST OF SERVICES			
Expenses			
Employee benefits	3A	54,041	50,654
Suppliers	3B	47,021	45,073
Depreciation and amortisation	3C	6,921	4,711
Finance costs		94	86
Impairment loss on financial instruments	3D	49	-
Total expenses		**108,126**	**100,524**
OWN-SOURCE INCOME			
Own-source revenue			
Revenue from contracts with customers	4A	9,500	11,121
Interest	4B	3,321	2,901
Total own-source revenue		**12,821**	**14,022**
GAINS			
Gains from sale of assets	4C	(330)	78
Reversals of write-downs and impairment	4D	-	1
Total gains		**(330)**	**79**
Total own-source income		**12,491**	**14,101**
NET COST OF SERVICES		95,635	86,423
Revenue from government	4E	123,653	136,424
Surplus on continuing operations		**28,018**	**50,001**
Surplus for the year		**28,018**	**50,001**
OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME			
Items not subject to subsequent reclassification to net cost of services			
Changes in asset revaluation reserve		-	5,987
Total comprehensive income		**28,018**	**55,988**

The above statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION
AS AT 30 JUNE 2026

	NOTE	2026 $'000	2025 $'000
ASSETS			
Financial assets			
Cash and cash equivalents	6A	76,973	67,624
Trade and other receivables	6B	2,285	7,491
Total financial assets		**79,258**	**75,115**
Non-financial assets			
Land, buildings and leasehold improvements^	7A	90,236	63,904
Motor vehicles and boats^	7A	11,670	15,564
Plant and equipment^	7A	3,137	1,262
Other non-financial assets	7B	1,073	2,429
Total non-financial assets		**106,116**	**83,159**
Total assets		**185,374**	**158,274**
LIABILITIES			
Payables			
Suppliers	8A	5,054	11,437
Other payables	8B	3,384	2,734
Total payables		**8,438**	**14,171**
Interest bearing liabilities			
Leases	8C	2,336	2,122
Total interest bearing liabilities		**2,336**	**2,122**
Unearned revenue			
Advanced payments	9	25,385	21,511
Total unearned revenue		**25,385**	**21,511**
Provisions			
Employee provisions	10	8,422	7,695
Total provisions		**8,422**	**7,695**
Total liabilities		44,581	45,499
Net assets		140,793	112,775
EQUITY			
Asset revaluation reserve		7,010	8,658
Retained surplus		133,783	104,117
Total equity		**140,793**	**112,775**

^ Right-of-use assets are included in land, buildings, leasehold improvements, motor vehicle and boats, and plant and equipment.
The distinction between current and non-current assets and liabilities is included in Note 16.
The above statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN EQUITY
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2026

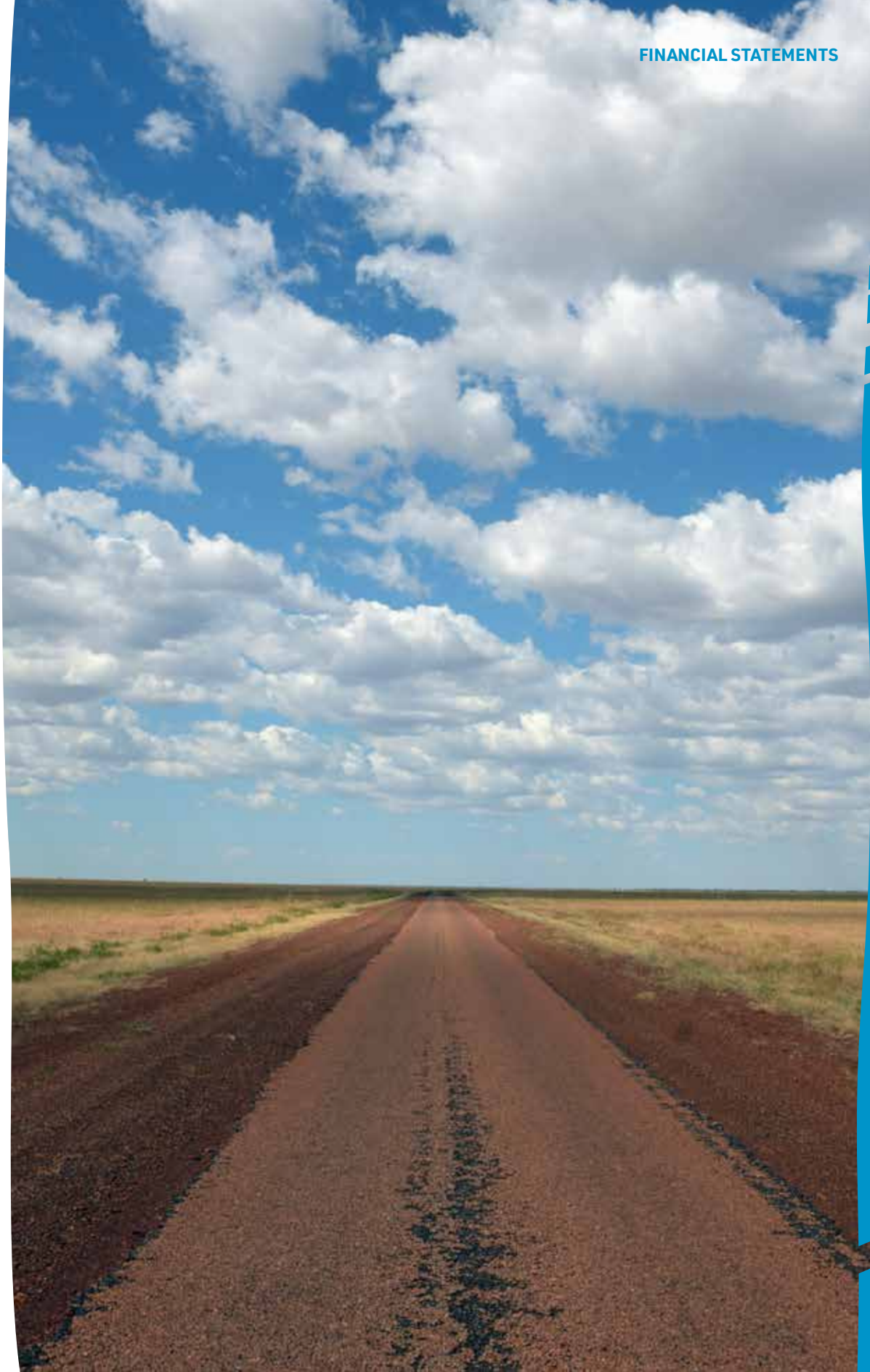
	RETAINED SURPLUS $'000	ASSET REVALUATION RESERVE $'000	TOTAL EQUITY $'000
Opening balance as at 1 July 2024	**53,426**	**3,361**	**56,787**
Other comprehensive income	-	5,987	5,987
Surplus for the year	50,001	-	50,001
Transfer of asset revaluation reserve on derecognition of assets	690	(690)	-
Balance at 30 June 2025	**104,117**	**8,658**	**112,775**
Other comprehensive income	-		-
Surplus for the year	28,018	-	28,018
Transfer of asset revaluation reserve on derecognition of assets	1,648	(1,648)	-
Closing balance as at 30 June 2026	**133,783**	**7,010**	**140,793**

The above statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

CASH FLOW STATEMENT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2026

	NOTE	2026 $'000	2025 $'000
OPERATING ACTIVITIES			
Cash received			
Receipts from government		128,744	139,615
Rendering of services		15,506	4,084
GST received		6,511	465
Interest		3,321	2,901
Total cash received		**154,082**	**147,065**
Cash used			
Employees		53,314	50,057
Suppliers		58,982	45,496
Interest payments on lease liabilities		94	86
Total cash used		**112,390**	**95,639**
Net cash from operating activities		**41,692**	**51,426**
INVESTING ACTIVITIES			
Cash received			
Proceeds from sale of property, plant and equipment		906	217
Total cash received		**906**	**217**
Cash used			
Purchase of property, plant and equipment		31,592	43,221
Total cash used		**31,592**	**43,221**
Net cash used by investing activities		**(30,686)**	**(43,004)**
FINANCING ACTIVITIES			
Cash used			
Principal payments of lease liabilities		1,657	2,035
Total cash used		**1,657**	**2,035**
Net cash used by financing activities		**(1,657)**	**(2,035)**
Net increase in cash held		**9,349**	**6,387**
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the reporting period		67,624	61,237
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the reporting period	6A	76,973	67,624
Non-cash financing and investing activities			
Acquisition of right-of-use assets	7A	878	887

The above statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.



NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2026





NOTE 1. SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

1.1. OVERVIEW

The Northern Land Council (NLC) is a not-for-profit corporate Commonwealth entity and a representative body with statutory authority under the *Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act 1976* (the Land Rights Act). It also has responsibilities under the *Native Title Act 1993* (the Native Title Act) and the *Pastoral Land Act 1992* . The NLC is domiciled in Australia and its registered address is at 29 Julius Street, Berrimah, NT 0828.

The financial statements were approved by the Executive Council on 16 September 2026 and authorised for issue on 18 September 2026.

The objectives of the NLC are to:

- **Proactively manage country** - acquire, manage and protect traditional lands and waters in accordance with statutory functions.
- **Opportunity and empower** - create real opportunities for Aboriginal people and Traditional Owners.
- **A strong NLC** - be a culturally rich and trusted organisation that gets things done and our community can be proud of.
- **Advocate** - be a voice for Aboriginal people.

The NLC is a statutory authority formed within the provision of section 21 of the Land Rights Act. The NLC receives funding from the Aboriginals Benefit Account (ABA) pursuant to ministerially approved estimates prepared in accordance with section 34 of the Land Rights Act and made available under section 64 of the Land Rights Act.

The NLC is structured to meet the following outcomes:

- **Outcome 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.
- **Outcome 2:** Enforce and advocate for better protection of heritage areas, sacred sites and permits for access to Aboriginal land, water and sea country.
- **Outcome 3**: Activate land rights by harnessing pride and strength in Aboriginal culture, innovation, creativity, skills, employment, intellectual property, economic development and entrepreneurship.
- **Outcome 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.
- **Outcome 5**: Create stronger NLC regions with more NLC staff and more support for Aboriginal people by implementing our Regionalisation Strategy 'Building the Bush'.
- **Outcome 6:** Build on improvements already made in NLC governance, leadership, communications and support systems for Council members and staff.
- **Outcome 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 like roads, bridges and communications.
- **Outcome 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 funding conditions of the NLC are laid down by the Land Rights Act, and any special purpose grant guidelines. Accounting for monies received from the ABA is subject to conditions approved by the Minister for Indigenous Australians.

The continued existence of the NLC in its present form with its present programs is dependent on government policy and on continuing funding by the Minister for Indigenous Australians for the NLC's administration and programs.

1.1.1. Surplus

The NLC recorded a surplus of $28,018,107 (2025: $50,001,104) for the financial year ended 30 June 2026. This surplus mainly resulted from income received and recognised during the year for the acquisition of property, plant and equipment.

During 2025–26 the NLC made additions by purchase to property, plant and equipment totalling $31,592,092, as detailed in **Note 7A**. Darwin and Katherine office building construction projects completed and assets were recognised in this year. These additions represent new investments made during the year.

1.2. BASIS OF PREPARATION OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

The financial statements are required by section 42 of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (PGPA Act).

The financial statements are the general purpose financial statements and have been prepared in accordance with:

a) *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability (Financial Reporting) Rule 2015* (FRR); and

b) Australian Accounting Standards and Interpretations - including simplified disclosures for Tier 2 entities under AASB 1060 issued by the Australian Accounting Standards Board (AASB) that apply for the reporting period.

The financial statements have been prepared on an accrual basis and in accordance with historical cost convention, except for certain assets and liabilities at fair value. Except where stated, no allowance is made for the effect of changing prices on the results or the financial position of the NLC.

The financial statements are presented in Australian dollars and values are rounded to the nearest thousand dollars unless otherwise specified in accordance with the *ASIC Corporations (Rounding in Financial/Directors' Reports) Instrument 2026/183*.

1.3. ACCOUNTING JUDGEMENTS AND KEY SOURCES OF ESTIMATION UNCERTAINTY

In the application of the NLC's accounting policies the directors are required to make judgements (other than those involving estimations) that have a significant impact on the amounts recognised and to make estimates and assumptions about the carrying amounts of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. The estimates and associated assumptions are based on historical experience and other factors that are considered to be relevant. Actual results may differ from these estimates.

The estimates and underlying assumptions are reviewed on an ongoing basis. Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised if the revision affects only that period, or in the period of the revision and future periods if the revision affects both current and future periods.

Judgements in applying the NLCs' accounting policies

The following are the critical judgements, apart from those involving estimations (which are presented separately below), that the directors have made in the process of applying the NLC's accounting policies and that have the most significant effect on the amounts recognised in financial statements.

The NLC has made the following judgements and estimates that have the most significant impact on the amounts recorded in the financial statements:

- An impairment loss expense of $48,972 (2025: $38,270 allowance balance) was recognised during the year in relation to doubtful debts.
- Lease term: when the NLC is reasonably certain to exercise extension options.
- Fair value measurement : a number of assets and liabilities included in the NLC's financial statements require measurement at, and/or disclosure of, fair value. The fair value measurement of the NLC's financial and non-financial assets and liabilities utilises market observable inputs and data as far as possible. Inputs used in determining fair value measurements are categorised into different levels based on how observable the inputs used in the valuation technique utilised are (the 'fair value hierarchy'):

  - Level 1: Quoted prices in active markets for identical items (unadjusted).
  - Level 2: Observable direct or indirect inputs other than Level 1 inputs.
  - Level 3: Unobservable inputs (i.e. not derived from market data).

The classification of an item into the above levels is based on the lowest level of the inputs used that has a significant effect on the fair value measurement of the item. Transfers of items between levels are recognised in the period they occur.

No other accounting assumptions or estimates have been identified that have a significant risk of causing a material adjustment to the carrying amounts of assets and liabilities within the next reporting period and neither have a significant impact on the NLC.

1.4. NEW ACCOUNTING STANDARDS

The NLC has adopted all of the new and revised Standards and Interpretations issued by the AASB that are relevant to its operations and effective for an accounting period that begins on or after 1 July 2025.

NOTE 2. EVENTS AFTER THE REPORTING PERIOD

There are no subsequent events that have the potential to significantly affect the ongoing structure and financial activities of the NLC.

NOTE 3. EXPENSES

	2026 $'000	2025 $'000
3A: EMPLOYEE BENEFITS		
Wages and salaries	45,647	42,599
Superannuation		
Defined contribution plans	6,623	6,431
Leave and other entitlements	1,771	1,624
Total employee benefits	**54,041**	50,654

Accounting Policy
Accounting policies for employee related expenses is contained in **Note 10**.

3B: SUPPLIERS		
Goods and services supplied or rendered		
Statutory audit - ANAO	81	76
Consultants	8,004	9,118
Stationery	873	682
Travel	7,734	6,950
Vehicle expenses	2,420	2,632
Office accommodation	1,544	1,324
IT/Communications	6,053	4,344
Meeting costs	2,446	2,436
Financial and legal services	2,058	2,712
Payment to grant partners#	8,459	7,769
Training costs	772	1,180
Funeral and ceremonial costs	1,411	1,263
Equipment hire and minor purchases	1,281	1,073
Others	1,042	1,116
Total goods and services supplied or rendered	**44,178**	42,675

	2026 $'000	2025 $'000
Goods supplied	8,207	6,099
Services rendered	35,971	36,576
	44,178	42,675
Other suppliers		
Lease rentals for short-term and low value leases*	2,385	1,770
Workers compensation expenses	458	628
Total other suppliers	**2,843**	2,398
Total suppliers	**47,021**	45,073

Includes expense of NT Economic Stimulus Packages to Indigenous organisations and to various schools under Learning on Country program. Expense is recognised when incurred.

*The NLC has short-term lease commitments of $643,145 as at 30 June 2026 (2025: $842,528).

The above lease disclosures should be read in conjunction with the accompanying **Notes 7** and **8C**.

Accounting Policy

Short-term leases and leases of low-value assets

The NLC has elected not to recognise right-of-use assets and lease liabilities for short-term leases of assets that have a lease term of twelve months or less and leases of low-value assets (less than $10,000 per asset). The NLC recognises the lease payments associated with these leases as an expense on a straight-line basis over the lease term.

	2026 $'000	2025 $'000
3C: DEPRECIATION AND AMORTISATION		
Motor vehicles and boats	4,233	2,941
Plant and equipment	779	389
Buildings and leasehold improvements	1,909	1,381
Total depreciation and amortisation	**6,921**	4,711

3D: IMPAIRMENT LOSS ON FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS		
Impairment on trade and other receivables	49	-
Total Impairment loss on financial instruments	**49**	-

	2026 $'000	2025 $'000

NOTE 4. OWN-SOURCE REVENUE AND GAINS

4A: REVENUE FROM CONTRACTS WITH CUSTOMERS

Rendering of services		
Government departments	1,770	2,344
External parties	7,730	8,777
	9,500	11,121

Disaggregation of revenue from contracts with customers		
Type of customers:		
Australian government entities	1,583	1,937
State and territory governments	187	407
Non-government entities	7,730	8,777
	9,500	11,121
Timing of transfer of goods and services:		
Over time	5,491	6,768
Point in time	4,009	5,043
	9,500	11,121

Accounting Policy

When a contract is within scope of AASB 15 (which is an enforceable contract, with sufficiently specific performance obligations) the NLC determines when these obligations have been satisfied.

The following is a description of principal activities from which the NLC generates revenue.

Revenue from rendering of services: the NLC receives grant funding to fulfil specific performance obligations per the underlying contract. For these specific contracts, revenue is either recognised over time as the costs are incurred for these contracts and the customer consumes the services over a period of time or at a point in time in accordance with the underlying contract when the performance obligations are satisfied in one specific moment.

The transaction price is the total amount of consideration to which the NLC expects to be entitled in exchange for transferring promised goods or services to a customer. The consideration promised in a contract with a customer may include fixed amounts, variable amounts, or both.

Receivables for goods and services, which have 30-day terms, are recognised at the nominal amounts

due less any impairment allowance account. Collectability of debts is reviewed as at the end of the reporting period. Allowances are made when collectability of the debt is no longer probable.

Project income is recognised under AASB 15 for not-for-profit entities when a contract includes enforceable rights and obligations as well as deliverables which are sufficiently specific. For a contract to include enforceable rights and obligations, the customer has the final authority over the use of the money, and whether it is required to be repaid or to be approved for alternate use.

Where funds are received in advance of the services being provided, these funds are recognised as a contract liability on receipt and the revenue is recognised over time as performance obligations are met.

Where funds are received after the services have been provided, a contract asset is recognised and the revenue is recognised as and when performance obligations are met.

The funding body simultaneously receives and consumes the benefits provided to them and they control the asset as it is being created. The NLC uses an input method in measuring progress of delivery of the economic development services because there is a direct relationship between the NLC's effort based on achievement of milestones and the transfer of service to the Funding Body.

The NLC recognises revenue on the basis of the costs incurred relating to the total expected costs incurred to complete the service.

	2026 $'000	2025 $'000
4B: INTEREST		
Deposits	3,321	2,901
Total interest	**3,321**	2,901

Accounting Policy
Interest revenue is recognised uing the effective interest method as set out in AASB 9 Financial Instruments.

	2026 $'000	2025 $'000
4C: GAINS FROM SALE OF ASSETS		
Proceeds from sale	906	217
Carrying value of assets disposed	(1,236)	(139)
Total gains from sale of assets	**(330)**	78

Accounting Policy
Gains and losses on disposal of assets are recognised when control of the asset passes to the buyer

	2026 $'000	2025 $'000
4D: REVERSALS OF WRITE-DOWNS AND IMPAIRMENT		
Reversal of impairment losses - trade debtors	-	1
Total reversals of write-downs and impairments	**-**	1

4E: REVENUE FROM GOVERNMENT		
National Indigenous Australians Agency (NIAA)		
Native Title Program	5,755	4,995
Aboriginals Benefit Account (ABA) s64(1)	93,370	108,292
Total NIAA	**99,125**	113,287
Special Purpose Grants		
NIAA	16,099	14,757
ALFA (NT) Limited	798	747
Bradshaw & Timber Creek Contracting & Resource Co Pty Ltd	-	25
Bush Heritage Australia	4	5
Charles Darwin University	-	(35)
Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation	-	39
Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry	3	84
Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water	3,920	2,832
Department of Defence	26	55
Department of Environment, Parks and Water Security (NTG)	49	1,318
Department of Industry, Tourism and Trade (NTG)	132	2
Department of Lands, Planning and Environment (NTG)	358	112
Director of National Parks (NTG)	420	334
Indigenous Land and Sea Corporation	2,663	2,662

	2026 $'000	2025 $'000
Mimal Land Management Aboriginal Corporation	39	34
North Australian Indigenous Land and Sea Management Alliance	17	126
Reconciliation Australia Ltd	-	20
World Wide Fund for Nature Australia	-	20
Total special purpose grants	**24,528**	23,137
Total revenue from government	**123,653**	136,424

Accounting Policy

Funding received in accordance with ABA s64(1) is assessed under AASB 15 and AASB 1058, with revenue recognised in accordance with the applicable standard based on the nature of the funding arrangement. Contracts with no specific performance obligations are recognised in accordance with AASB 1058.

NOTE 5. INCOME TAX EXPENSE

The NLC has been approved as a Public Benevolent Institution. The services of the NLC are provided on a not-for-profit basis. Therefore, the NLC is not subject to the Australian Government's Competitive Neutrality policy.

Accounting Policy

Taxation

The NLC is exempt from all forms of taxation except fringe benefits tax (FBT) and the goods and services tax (GST).

Revenues, expenses and assets are recognised net of the amount of the GST except:

a) where the amount of GST incurred is not recoverable from the Australian Taxation Office (ATO); and

b) for receivables and payables which are recognised inclusive of GST.

The net amount of GST recoverable from, or payable to, the taxation authority is included as part of receivables or payables.

Cash flows are included in the statement of cash flows on a gross basis. The GST component of cash flows arising from investing and financing activities which are recoverable from, or payable to, the taxation authority is classified as operating cash flows.

The NLC does not provide services on a for-profit basis. Therefore, the NLC is not required to make Australian Income Tax Equivalent payments to the government.

NOTE 6. FINANCIAL ASSETS

	2026 $'000	2025 $'000
6A: CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS		
Cash on hand or on deposit	76,973	67,624
Total cash and cash equivalents	**76,973**	67,624

Accounting Policy

Cash is recognised at its nominal amount. Cash and cash equivalents includes:

a) cash on hand; and

b) demand deposits in bank accounts with an original maturity of three months or less that are readily convertible to known amounts of cash and subject to insignificant risk of changes in value.

The closing balance of cash does not include amounts held in trust. Refer to **Note 19** 'Royalty Assets Held in Trust' for further information.

	2025 $'000	2024 $'000
6B: TRADE AND OTHER RECEIVABLES		
Goods and services receivables		
Goods and services	1,248	6,361
Total goods and services receivables	**1,248**	6,361
Grant receivables		
External parties	361	1,168
Government entities	763	-
Total grant receivables	**1,124**	1,168
Total trade and other receivables (gross)	**2,372**	7,529
Less impairment loss allowance		
Goods and services	(87)	(38)
Total impairment loss allowance	**(87)**	(38)
Total trade and other receivables (net)	**2,285**	7,491

Credit terms for goods and services were within 30 days (2025: 30 days).

Management provides for outstanding debts for more than 91 days.

Accounting Policy

Financial assets

Trade and other receivables that are held for the purpose of collecting the contractual cash flows where the cash flows are solely payments of principal and interest, that are not provided at below market interest rates, are subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method adjusted for any loss allowance.

The NLC uses the simplified approach from AASB 9 in calculating the loss allowances for trade and other receivables. This approach measures the loss allowance as the amount equal to the lifetime expected credit losses. All debtors are unsecured and the carrying value of the net receivable represents the amount exposed to credit risks

NOTE 7. NON-FINANCIAL ASSETS

NOTE 7A: RECONCILIATION OF THE OPENING AND CLOSING BALANCES OF LAND, BUILDINGS, LEASEHOLD IMPROVEMENTS, MOTOR VEHICLE AND BOATS, AND PLANT AND EQUIPMENT

	LAND $'000	BUILDINGS $'000	LEASEHOLD IMPROVEMENTS $'000	MOTOR VEHICLES AND BOATS $'000	PLANT AND EQUIPMENT $'000	TOTAL $'000
Balance as at 1 July 2025						
Gross book value	8,910	51,873	2,328	15,283	1,244	79,638
Accumulated depreciation, amortisation and impairment	-	-	(309)	(11)	(2)	(322)
Gross book value of right-of-use assets	-	7,175	-	568	67	7,810
Accumulated depreciation, amortisation and impairment of right-of-use assets	-	(6,073)	-	(276)	(47)	(6,396)
Total as at 1 July 2025	**8,910**	**52,975**	**2,019**	**15,564**	**1,262**	**80,730**
Additions by purchase	-	26,988 [1]	495	1,455	2,654	31,592
Addition by right-of-use assets	-	878	-		-	878
Depreciation and amortisation	-	(1,000)	(384)	(4,073)	(758)	(6,215)
Depreciation on right-of-use assets	-	(525)	-	(160)	(21)	(706)
Disposals - gross book value	-	(5,282)	(219)	(1,339)	(67)	(6,907)
Disposals - accumulated depreciation	-	5,282	99	223	67	5,671
Total as at 30 June 2026	**8,910**	**79,316**	**2,010**	**11,670**	**3,137**	**105,043**
Total as at 30 June 2026 represented by						

	LAND $'000	BUILDINGS $'000	LEASEHOLD IMPROVEMENTS $'000	MOTOR VEHICLES AND BOATS $'000	PLANT AND EQUIPMENT $'000	TOTAL $'000
Gross book value	8,910	78,862	2,605	15,570	3,897	109,844
Accumulated depreciation, amortisation and impairment	-	(1,000)	(595)	(4,031)	(760)	(6,386)
Gross book value of right-of-use assets	-	2,771	-	397	-	3,168
Accumulated depreciation, amortisation and impairment of right-of-use assets	-	(1,317)	-	(266)	-	(1,583)
Total as at 30 June 2026 represented by	**8,910**	**79,316**	**2,010**	**11,670**	**3,137**	**105,043**

[1] This largely relates to completion of Darwin and Katherine office projects.

Revaluation of non-financial assets

All land, buildings, leasehold improvements, motor vehicles and boats, plant and equipment of the NLC were subject to revaluation as per the NLC's accounting policy and were independently revalued by Herron Todd White in the financial year 2024-25 resulting in a revaluation increment of $5,987,157 credited to asset revaluation reserve (2022: $2,924,939). Herron Todd White is an independent valuer not related to the NLC. They have the appropriate qualifications and recent experience in the fair value measurement of properties in the relevant locations. The valuation conforms to International Valuation Standards and was based on recent market transactions, on arm's length terms, for the similar properties.

The most suitable approach was adopted based on the classification of assets as specialised or non-specialised and operational or non-operational.

Specialised operational assets, by their nature, lack market evidence on which to base a market value assessment and accordingly, these require a replacement cost valuation methodology. Consequently, such assets are sub-categorised as replacement cost-based assets and the market value is derived by using the Current Replacement Cost approach.

Operational assets are those which are utilised in the operation of the entity and are held for the continued use or service potential for the near future.

Non-operational assets are those which are not integral to the operation of the entity and are valued on a realisable value basis. That is, the amount that could be achieved if the assets were offered to the market separate to the operational assets of the entity.

A desktop valuation of land, buildings, leasehold improvements, motor vehicles and boats, and plant and equipment was conducted by Herron Todd White for the financial year ended 30 June 2026 which resulted in no significant revaluation gains or losses. Values for existing building assets remain essentially unchanged except for some depreciation which is considered appropriate. However the overall book value of buildings on the asset register has risen significantly due to the completion of buildings at Berrimah and Katherine.

The valuer considered the three main approaches to value (income, market and cost approaches) and the methods that comprise these approaches. Based on the nature of the assets and information available, the valuer concluded on the approaches that were most appropriate to value the subject assets.

The subject assets have been considered to be a combination of specialised operational and non-operational assets. As such, a combination of market and cost approach to value the subject assets were adopted.

The contractual commitments for the purchase of the land, buildings, leasehold improvements, motor vehicle and boats, and plant and equipment of the NLC is $451,053 in 2026 (2025: $30,067,889). The amounts are inclusive of GST.

No asset was held for sale at the year end.

Accounting Policy

Acquisition of Assets

Assets are recorded at cost on acquisition except as stated below.

Assets acquired at no cost, or for nominal consideration, are initially recognised as assets and income at their fair value at the date of acquisition, unless acquired as a consequence of restructuring of administrative arrangements. In the latter case, assets are initially recognised as contributions by owners at the amounts at which they were recognised in the transfer of the NLC's accounts immediately prior to the restructuring.

Asset Recognition Threshold

Purchases of land, buildings, leasehold improvements, motor vehicles and boats, and plant and equipment are recognised initially at cost in the statement of financial position, except for purchases below the capitalisation threshold, which are expensed in the year of acquisition (other than where they form part of similar items which are significant in total). The capitalisation thresholds values are:

Land	$1
Buildings	$25,000
Leasehold improvements	$10,000
Motor vehicles and boats	$10,000
Plant and equipment	$10,000

Revaluations
Fair values for each class of asset (except right-of-use assets) are determined as shown below:

Asset Class	Fair Value Measurement
Land	Market selling price
Buildings	Market selling price
Leasehold improvements	Current replacement cost
Motor vehicles and boats	Market selling price
Plant and equipment	Market selling price

Following initial recognition at cost, land, buildings, leasehold improvements, motor vehicles and boats, and plant and equipment (excluding right-of-use assets and work-in-progress) are carried at fair value. Valuations are conducted with sufficient frequency to ensure that the carrying amounts of assets do not differ materially from the assets' fair values as at the reporting date. The regularity of independent valuations depends upon the volatility of movements in market values for the relevant assets.

The fair value of the land, buildings, motor vehicles and boats, and plant and equipment was determined based on the market approach that reflects the active market for an asset. This approach primarily involves comparison of the asset with recent sales of other similar assets to ascertain the fair market value of the subject asset. Where appropriate, valuation techniques such as summation and capitalisation of net rental value have been used to refine this approach.

The fair value of the leasehold improvements was determined using the cost approach that reflects the cost to a market participant to construct assets of comparable utility and age, adjusted for obsolescence/other methods. This approach involves the identification of current reproduction or replacement cost estimates for the applicable assets using either a direct or indirect (trending) method.

Revaluation adjustments are made on a class basis. Any revaluation increment is credited to equity under the heading of asset revaluation reserve except to the extent that it reverses a previous revaluation decrement of the same asset class that was previously recognised in the surplus/deficit. Revaluation decrements for a class of assets are recognised directly in the surplus/deficit except to the extent that they reverse a previous revaluation increment for that class.

Any accumulated depreciation as at the revaluation date is eliminated against the gross carrying amount of the asset and the asset restated to the revalued amount.

Leased Right-of-Use (ROU) Assets
Leased ROU assets are capitalised at the commencement date of the lease and comprise of the initial lease liability amount and initial direct costs incurred when entering into the lease less any lease incentives received. These assets are accounted for by Commonwealth lessees as separate asset classes to corresponding assets owned outright but included in the same column as where the corresponding underlying assets would be presented if they were owned.

Subsequent to initial recognition, an impairment review is undertaken for any right-of-use lease asset that shows indicators of impairment and an impairment loss is recognised against any right-

of-use lease asset that is impaired. Leased right-of-use assets continue to be measured at cost after initial recognition in the financial statements.

Depreciation and Impairment
Depreciable buildings, leasehold improvements, motor vehicles and boats, and plant and equipment
Depreciable buildings, leasehold improvements, motor vehicles and boats, and plant and equipment are written-off to their estimated residual values over their estimated useful lives to the NLC using, in all cases, the straight-line method of depreciation.

Depreciation rates (useful lives), residual values and methods are reviewed at each reporting date and necessary adjustments are recognised in the current, or current and future reporting periods, as appropriate.

Depreciation rates applying to each class of depreciable asset are based on the following useful lives:

	2026	2025
Buildings on leasehold land	40 years	40 years
Leasehold improvements	Lease term	Lease term
Motor vehicles and boats	2-20 years	2-20 years
Plant and equipment	2-20 years	2-20 years

The depreciation rates for ROU assets are based on the commencement date to the earlier of the end of the useful life of the ROU asset or the end of the lease term.

All cash-generating assets and assets held at cost, including intangibles and ROU assets, were assessed for impairment at 30 June 2026. Where indications of impairment exist, the asset's recoverable amount is estimated and an impairment adjustment made if the asset's recoverable amount is less than its carrying amount. For non-cash generating assets held at fair value, the recoverable amount is expected to be materially the same as fair value at 30 June 2026.

Derecognition
An item of property, plant and equipment is derecognised upon disposal or when no further future economic benefits are expected from its use or disposal.

	2026 $'000	2025 $'000
7B: OTHER NON-FINANCIAL ASSETS		
Deposits - rental bonds	63	59
GST receivable from the ATO	311	1,172
Prepayments	699	1,198
Total other non-financial assets	**1,073**	2,429

Other non-financial assets to be recovered

All other non-financial assets are expected to be recovered in no more than 12 months.

No indicators of impairment were found for other non-financial assets.

NOTE 8. PAYABLES

8A: SUPPLIERS		
Trade creditors and accruals	5,054	11,437
Total suppliers	**5,054**	11,437

Suppliers expected to be settled

All suppliers are expected to be settled in no more than 12 months.

Settlement is usually made within 30 days (2025: 30 days).

8B: OTHER PAYABLES		
Salaries and wages	2,500	1,953
Superannuation	858	764
Others	26	17
Total other payables	**3,384**	2,734

Other payables expected to be settled

All other payables are expected to be settled in no more than 12 months.

Accounting Policy

Financial liabilities

Financial liabilities are initially measured at fair value, net of transaction costs. Other financial liabilities are subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method, with interest expense recognised on an effective yield basis.

The effective interest method is a method of calculating the amortised cost of a financial liability and of allocating interest expense over the relevant period. The effective interest rate is the rate that exactly discounts estimated future cash payments through the expected life of the financial liability, or (where appropriate) a shorter period, to the net carrying amount on initial recognition.

Derecognition of financial liabilities

The NLC derecognises financial liabilities when, and only when, the NLC's obligations are discharged, cancelled or they expire. The difference between the carrying amount of the financial liability derecognised and the consideration paid and payable is recognised in profit or loss.

	2026 $'000	2025 $'000
8C: LEASES		
Lease liability for buildings	2,192	1,718
Lease liability for motor vehicles and boats	144	358
Lease liability for plant and equipment	-	46
Total leases	**2,336**	2,122

Total cash outflow for leases for the year ended 30 June 2026 was $1,657,225 (2025: $2,035,243).

Maturity analysis - contractual undiscounted cash flows		
Within one year	1,643	1,573
One to five years	1,106	1,188
More than five years	199	-
Total leases	**2,948**	2,761

The above lease disclosures should be read in conjunction with the accompanying **Notes 3B** and **7**.

Accounting Policy

For all new contracts entered into, the NLC considers whether the contract is or contains a lease. A lease is defined as 'a contract, or part of a contract, that conveys the right to use an asset (the underlying asset) for a period of time in exchange for consideration'.

Once it has been determined that a contract is or contains a lease, the lease liability is initially measured at the present value of the lease payments unpaid at the commencement date, discounted using the NLC's incremental borrowing rate as at 1 July 2025.

Subsequent to initial measurement, the liability will be reduced for payments made and increased for interest. It is remeasured to reflect any reassessment or modification to the lease. When the lease liability is remeasured, the corresponding adjustment is reflected in the right-of-use asset or profit and loss depending on the nature of the reassessment or modification.

NOTE 9. UNEARNED REVENUE

	2026 $'000	2025 $'000
Advanced payments	25,385	21,511
Total unearned revenue	**25,385**	21,511
Australian government entities	14,606	10,732
State and territory governments	2,832	2,832
Non-government entities	7,947	7,947
Total unearned revenue	**25,385**	21,511

Unearned revenue expected to be settled

All unearned revenue is expected to be settled in no more than 12 months. Unearned revenue is made up of various special purpose grants and projects, which will be used as per grant agreements.

Revenue in relation to completed activities or achieved milestones as per underlying contract is recognised under AASB 15 as stated in Note 4.

NOTE 10. EMPLOYEE PROVISIONS

	2026 $'000	2025 $'000
Leave	8,422	7,695
Total employee provisions	**8,422**	7,695

Accounting Policy

Employee Benefits

Liabilities for short-term employee benefits (as defined in AASB 119 Employee Benefits) and termination benefits due within twelve months of the end-of-reporting period are measured at their nominal amounts.

The nominal amount is calculated with regard to the rates expected to be paid on settlement of the liability.

Leave

The liability for employee benefits includes provision for annual leave and long service leave. The leave liabilities are calculated on the basis of employees' remuneration at the estimated salary rates that will be applied at the time the leave is taken, including the NLC's employer superannuation contribution rates, to the extent that the leave is likely to be taken during service rather than paid out on termination.

Liabilities for employee benefits expected to be settled within twelve months of the end of reporting period are measured at their nominal amounts.

Long service leave liabilities are calculated using the shorthand method, which estimates the present value of the long service leave liability and takes into account attrition rates, pay increases, and discounts them to present value using government bond rates.

Termination benefits

A liability for a termination benefit is recognised at the earlier of when the NLC can no longer withdraw the offer of the termination benefit and when the NLC recognises any related restructuring costs.

Defined contribution plans

Contributions to defined contribution superannuation plans are recognised as an expense when employees have rendered service entitling them to the contributions. NLC staff can choose their own super fund, with most members being with Australian Super. The superannuation liability recognised as at 30 June 2026 represents outstanding contributions for the last month of the year.

NOTE 11. CONTINGENT LIABILITIES

CLAIMS FOR DAMAGES OR COSTS	2026 $'000	2025 $'000
Contingent Liabilities		
Balance from previous period	-	159
New contingent liabilities recognized	-	-
Obligations expired	-	(159)
Total contingent liabilities	**-**	-

Quantifiable contingencies

No contingent liabilities existed in respect to claims for damages/costs as at 30 June 2026.

Accounting Policy

Contingent liabilities and contingent assets are not recognised in the statement of financial position but are disclosed in notes. They may arise from uncertainty as to the existence of a liability or asset, or represent an asset or liability in respect of which the amount cannot be reliably measured. Contingent assets are disclosed when settlement is probable but not virtually certain, and contingent liabilities are disclosed when settlement is greater than remote.

NOTE 12. RELATED PARTY DISCLOSURES

The NLC is a statutory authority of the Commonwealth of Australia, under the Minister for Indigenous Australians. The NLC's supreme body is the Full Council, made up of 83 members – 78 members plus five co-opted women positions, elected once every three years from across seven NLC regions, with the next election scheduled to be held in December 2028. Full Council elections were last held on 9 December 2025.

The Minister approves the method of choosing members of the NLC. Section 29 of the Land Rights Act, states that an Aboriginal person who is a Traditional Owner or a resident living within the NLC region may nominate for membership of the NLC.

The Chair and the Deputy Chair are elected at the first meeting of the Full Council, along with members nominated from each of the NLC's seven regions as Executive Council members. The Chair and Deputy Chair form part of 14-member Executive Council.

Key management personnel of the NLC are considered related parties to the NLC.

Management assessed no material related party transactions, balances or commitments as per AASB 124 existed during the year.

The NLC Executive Council members who held office during and for the year ended 30 June 2026 were as follows:

NLC (EXECUTIVE COUNCIL)		
NAME	POSITION	TERM
Matthew Ryan	Chair	Full year
Lorraine Jones	Executive Member Deputy Chair	Full year Part year from 9 December 2025
Calvin Deveraux	Executive Member Deputy Chair	Full year Part year to 9 December 2025
Virginia Nundhirribala	Executive Member	Part year to 9 December 2025
Djawa Yunupingu	Executive Member	Full year
Yananymul Mununggurr	Executive Member	Full year
Raymond Hector	Executive Member	Full year
Lisa Mumbim	Executive Member	Part year to 9 December 2025
John Dalywater	Executive Member	Full year
William (Bill) Danks	Executive Member	Full year
Julius Kernan	Executive Member	Full year
Christopher Neade	Executive Member	Full year
Joy Priest	Executive Member	Full year
Bobby Nunggumajbarr	Executive Member	Full year
Preston Lee	Executive Member	Part year from 9 December 2025
Clifford Duncan	Executive Member	Part year from 9 December 2025

The NLC Chief Executive Officer who held office over the financial year 2025-26 was as follows:

NAME	TERM
Yuseph Deen	Full year

NOTE 13. KEY MANAGEMENT PERSONNEL REMUNERATION

Key management personnel (KMP) are those persons having authority and responsibility for planning, directing and controlling the activities of the NLC, directly or indirectly.

The NLC has determined the KMP to be the NLC Executive Council members and the Chief Executive Officer of the NLC.

The KMP remuneration is reported in the table below:

	2026 $'000	2025 $'000
Short-term employee benefits:		
Short-term employee benefits	973	962
Post-employment benefits	119	112
Other long-term employee benefits	16	14
Total key management personnel remuneration expenses	**1,108**	1,088

The total number of key management personnel that are included in the above table is 17 (2025: 19).

NOTE 14. REMUNERATION OF AUDITORS

	2025 $'000	2024 $'000
Remuneration of auditors for the reporting period are as follows:		
Australian National Audit Office (ANAO) - Statutory audit	81	76
BDO Australia - Grants Audits	18	16
Total remuneration to auditors	**99**	92

The audit fees above report the costs associated with auditing each financial year.

No other services were provided by the ANAO and BDO Australia.

NOTE 15. FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS

	2025 $'000	2024 $'000
15A: CATEGORIES OF FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS		
Financial assets at amortised cost		
Cash at bank	76,973	67,624
Trade and other receivables	2,285	7,491
Total financial assets at amortised cost	**79,258**	75,115

	2026 $'000	2025 $'000
Total financial assets	**79,258**	75,115
Financial Liabilities		
Financial liabilities measured at amortised cost		
Trade creditors	5,054	11,437
Lease liabilities	2,336	2,122
Total financial liabilities measured at amortised cost	**7,390**	13,559
Total financial liabilities	**7,390**	13,559

15B: NET GAINS OR LOSSES ON FINANCIAL ASSETS

Financial assets at amortised cost		
Interest revenue	3,321	2,901
Net gains on financial assets at amortised cost	**3,321**	2,901

Fair Value Measurement

The carrying amounts of cash, receivables and payables approximate fair value due to their short-term nature. The carrying amount of lease liabilities is considered a reasonable approximation of fair value as they are measured at the present value of future lease payments.

Accounting Policy

Financial assets

In accordance with AASB 9 *Financial Instruments*, the NLC classifies its financial assets at amortised cost.

The classification depends on the NLC's business model for managing the financial assets and contractual cash flow characteristics at the time of initial recognition. Financial assets are recognised when the NLC becomes a party to the contract and, as a consequence, has a legal right to receive or a legal obligation to pay cash; and derecognised when the contractual rights to the cash flows from the financial asset expire or are transferred upon trade date.

Financial Assets at Amortised Cost

Financial assets included in this category need to meet two criteria:

1. the financial asset is held in order to collect the contractual cash flows; and
2. the cash flows are solely payments of principal and interest (SPPI) on the principal outstanding amount.

Amortised cost is determined using the effective interest method.

Effective Interest Method

Interest is recognised on an effective interest rate basis for financial assets that are recognised at amortised cost.

Impairment of Financial Assets

The simplified approach for trade, contract and lease receivables is used. This approach always measures the loss allowance as the amount equal to the lifetime expected credit losses. A write-off constitutes a derecognition event where the write-off directly reduces the gross carrying amount of the financial asset.

Financial Liabilities

Financial liabilities are classified as other financial liabilities. Financial liabilities are recognised and derecognised upon 'trade date'.

Financial Liabilities at Amortised Cost

Financial liabilities, are initially measured at fair value, net of transaction costs. These liabilities are subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method, with interest expense recognised on an effective interest basis.

Suppliers and other payables are recognised at amortised cost. Liabilities are recognised to the extent that the goods or services have been received (and irrespective of having been invoiced).

NOTE 16. CURRENT/NON-CURRENT DISTINCTION FOR ASSETS AND LIABILITIES

	2026 $'000	2025 $'000
ASSETS EXPECTED TO BE RECOVERED IN:		
No more than 12 months		
Cash and cash equivalents	76,973	67,624
Trade and other receivables	2,285	7,491
Other non-financial assets	1,073	2,429
Total no more than 12 months	**80,331**	77,544
More than 12 months		
Land, buildings and leasehold improvements	90,236	63,904
Motor vehicles and boats	11,670	15,564
Plant and equipment	3,137	1,262
Total more than 12 months	**105,043**	80,730
Total assets	**185,374**	158,274
LIABILITIES EXPECTED TO BE SETTLED IN:		
No more than 12 months		
Suppliers	5,054	11,437
Other payables	3,384	2,734
Leases	733	1,573
Advanced payments	25,385	21,511
Employee provisions	6,180	5,604
Total no more than 12 months	**40,736**	42,859
More than 12 months		
Leases	1,603	549
Employee provisions	2,242	2,091
Total more than 12 months	**3,845**	2,640
Total liabilities	**44,581**	45,499

NOTE 17. S64(1) FUNDING

s64(1) Funding for COVID-19 Support

In April 2020 the Minister for Indigenous Australians approved a one-off payment of $4,000,000 under section 64(1) of the Land Rights Act to assist residents of Aboriginal communities impacted by restrictions to reduce the spread of COVID-19.

	2026 $'000	2025 $'000
INCOME:		
Grant income brought forward from previous year	**128**	128
Grant income	128	128
EXPENSES:		
Payment to grant partners	-	-
Total expenses	**-**	-
Surplus	**128**	128

The COVID-19 payment of $4,000,000 was recognised as income in accordance with AASB 1058 in the financial year 2019-20.

As at 30 June 2026, funds to the value of $127,819 remain unspent and is planned to be expended in financial year 2026-27.

s64(1) Funding for Northern Territory (NT) Indigenous Economic Stimulus Package
In November 2020 the Minister for Indigenous Australians announced a NT Indigenous Economic Stimulus Package to assist Indigenous businesses recover from the impact of COVID-19, with a focus on creating and sustaining jobs through economic, social and infrastructure projects.

	2026 $'000	2025 $'000
INCOME:		
Grant income brought forward from previous year	3,873	4,914
Grant income	**3,873**	4,914
EXPENSES:		
Stimulus packages to Indigenous business and homeland communities	2,347	1,041
Total expenses	**2,347**	1,041
Surplus	**1,526**	3,873

The NLC received $22,000,000 in 2020-21 and $14,700,000 in 2021-22 financial years. The amounts were recognised as income during the years ended 30 June 2021 and 30 June 2022 respectively.

However, the unspent funding brought forward of $1,525,629 (2025: $3,873,649) will be expended in the financial year 2026-27 with no corresponding income recognised in financial year 2026-27.

NOTE 18. NATIVE TITLE

The NLC is a Native Title Representative Body (NTRB) under the Native Title Act. Since being recognised as a NTRB, the NLC has performed the functions of the NTRB in association with other NLC functions.

In the financial year 2025-26, Native Title income and expenditure was audited and reported separately. From the financial year 2018-19, as per the new agreement between the Department of Finance and the NLC, a set of comprehensive financial statements is not required to acquit the NLC's NTRB program funding, and the note disclosure in the NLC's financial statements was considered appropriate.

	2026 APPROVED BUDGET	2026 ACTUAL	2026 ACTUAL VS BUDGET	
	$'000	$'000	$'000	%
INCOME				
Income 2024-25 brought forward	-	3,388	(3,388)	0%
National Indigenous Australians Agency funding - Operational	6,144	3,270	2,875	53%
Prescribed Bodies Corporate support funding	1,073	1,073	-	100%
ACCU Scheme Support	379	379	-	100%
Other income	1,055	1,053	2	100%
Interest income	210	213	(3)	101%
Total income	**8,862**	**9,376**	**514**	**106%**
CAPITAL EXPENDITURE				
Vehicles	106	-	106	0%
OPERATIONAL SALARIES				
Corporate staff (e.g. Accounting, admin)	420	418	2	100%
Project staff (e.g. Legal, anthropologists, field)	3,764	3,270	494	87%
SERVICES				
Accommodation	83	95	(12)	114%
Motor vehicles - corporate	122	82	40	67%
Consultants - attributable	2,202	1,619	583	74%
Communications, telephones, fax and information technology	240	227	13	95%

	2026 APPROVED BUDGET	2026 ACTUAL	2026 ACTUAL VS BUDGET	
	$'000	$'000	$'000	%
Insurance	49	26	23	53%
Energy and water	17	21	(4)	124%
TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT				
Staff	30	17	13	57%
MEETING EXPENSES				
Claimants	112	80	32	71%
TRAVEL AND ALLOWANCES				
Claimants	160	113	47	71%
Staff travel - corporate	71	70	1	99%
Staff travel - attributable	192	190	2	99%
SUPPLIES AND CONSUMABLES				
Office supplies and consumables - corporate	7	1	6	14%
OTHER OPERATIONAL				
Recruitment and relocation	15	9	6	60%
Transcripts and claim documents	-	1	(1)	0%
OTHER				
National Native Title Council contribution	-	5	(5)	0%
Prescribed Bodies Corporate support funding	1,272	778	494	61%
Total expenses	**8,862**	**7,022**	**1,840**	**79%**
Surplus	**-**	**2,354**	**(2,354)**	

NOTE 19. ROYALTY ASSETS HELD IN TRUST

Monetary Assets

The NLC maintains a Royalty Trust Account. The money in the account mainly comes from government agencies, mining and exploration companies and various commercial operators under agreements made pursuant to the Land Rights Act and Native Title Act. The NLC is required to distribute this money in accordance with the Land Rights Act and Native Title Act. These monies are not available for other purposes and are not recognised in the financial statements of the NLC.

Non-monetary Assets

The NLC had no non-monetary assets held in trust in either the current or prior reporting periods.

Royalty Trust Account - Monetary Asset

	2026 $'000	2025 $'000
Cash held at the beginning of the reporting period	55,761	58,301
RECEIPTS		
Land Rights Act section 64(3) royalty equivalents	31,067	29,986
Land Rights Act sections 15, 16 and 19 rental and lease monies	57,927	49,772
Land Rights Act sections 42, 43 and 44 mining exploration negotiated monies	3,441	2,818
Native Title*	66,992	1,511
Contract administration	359	434
Other monies	5,277	3,640
Total receipts	**165,063**	88,161
PAYMENTS		
Land Rights Act section 35(2) royalty equivalents	(31,067)	(30,003)
Land Rights Act section 35(3) mining exploration negotiated monies	(702)	(2,835)
Land Rights Act section 35(4) rental and lease monies	(44,027)	(50,335)
Native Title	(4,508)	(2,212)
Contract administration	(295)	(346)
Other monies	(1,209)	(1,294)
Total payments	**(81,808)**	(87,025)
GST paid to ATO	(4,616)	(3,676)
Total amount held at the end of the reporting period	**134,400**	55,761
Cash at bank	**134,400**	55,761

*During the financial year 2025-26 NLC received a one-off compensation payment of $57M for Native Title Groups.

The reporting requirements of the Land Rights Act are detailed in sections 37(3) to (5) and refer to the application of monies received by the NLC under various sections of the Land Rights Act, in particular under section 64(3).

Receipts Under Section 64(3), as Referred in Section 35(2):

	2026 $'000	2025 $'000
Opening balance	-	17
Funds received	31,067	29,986
Funds distributed to the following entities:		
Gumatj Aboriginal Corporation	(20,346)	(19,595)
Rirratjingu Aboriginal Corporation	(6,127)	(5,947)
Laynhapuy Homelands Aboriginal Corporation	(4,595)	(4,461)
Closing balance	**-**	-

Determination Pursuant to Section 35(2) of the *Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act 1976*
Gove Rio Alcan project royalty equivalents received pursuant to section 64(3).

The Full Council resolves that it determines pursuant to section 35(2) that for the next five years (subject to any further determination within that period) amounts equal to all monies received under section 64(3) with respect to the Rio Tinto Alcan Gove Bauxite Mining Project are to be apportioned and paid as follows:

Gumatj Aboriginal Corporation	65%
Rirratjingu Aboriginal Corporation	20%
Laynhapuy Homelands Aboriginal Corporation	15%

Resolution number: C130/4951
Date of Resolution:11/12/2025

Determination Pursuant to Section 35(2) *Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act 1976*
Gulkula bauxite mining project royalty equivalents received pursuant to Section 64(3).

The Full Council resolves that it determines pursuant to section 35(2) that for the next five years (subject to any further determination within that period) amounts equal to all monies received under section 64(3) with respect to the Gulkula bauxite mining project to Gumatj Aboriginal Corporation.

Resolution number: C130/4957
Date of Resolution: 11/12/2025

NOTE 20. COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT FUND

The NLC's Community Planning and Development (CP&D) program, endorsed by the NLC Full Council in November 2016 and commenced in the financial year 2017-18, supports groups of Aboriginal people to plan and implement projects that bring lasting community benefit (social, cultural, economic and environmental), using income that they receive from land use agreements. It is a voluntary, consent-based approach based on the principles of self-determination and participation, with Aboriginal people's control and decision-making at every step. Approved CP&D program designated funds are held on trust by the NLC for community benefit purposes and applied in accordance with the consultation and planning processes set out in the CP&D program. Where there is a decision by Traditional Owners to set aside monies from payments in respect of Aboriginal land for community development projects, the NLC and its CP&D program administer those funds in accordance with its obligations under the Land Rights Act.

	2026 $'000	2025 $'000
Cash held at the beginning of the reporting period	13,279	11,073
Receipts		
Budal Riley	-	79
Dhukurrdji	-	151
Fitzroy Station	50	-
Gapuwiyak	263	404
Gurrbijim	-	50
Guyal Ambulya	-	50
Katherine - Mangarrayi	105	-
Kneebone	-	450
Longmirr Family Group	250	51
Madjawarr Makinhkinh Khani	-	50
Malak Malak	331	504
Mambali Walangara	-	118
Matched Funds Program - funds transferred to other projects	(993)	52
Nabegeyo Mandillbarreng	-	50
Namultja Aboriginal Corporation	50	-
Ngukurr	-	445
Rak Papangal	250	-
SEAL IPA	21	
The Strong Women for Healthy Country Network	-	250
Uwynmil Traditional Owner Group	-	50

	2026 $'000	2025 $'000
Wubalawun ALT	63	-
Other (Bank Interest)	516	514
Total receipts	**906**	3,268
Payments		
Budal Riley	(42)	-
Dhukurrdji	(100)	(105)
Fitzroy Station	(16)	-
Galiwinku	(114)	(136)
Gapuwiyak	(215)	(71)
Gurrbijim	(18)	-
Guyal Ambulya	(9)	(34)
Katherine - Mangarrayi	(31)	-
Kneebone	(6)	(2)
Madjawarr Makinhkinh Khani	7	(7)
Malak Malak	-	(3)
Mambali Ngubayin (Johns)	(2)	(1)
Mambali Walangara		(24)
Nabegeyo Mandillbarreng	4	(4)
Ngukurr	(61)	(295)
PSD DjarraDjarrany	(15)	(4)
Rak Panngal	-	(32)
Seal IPA	(26)	-
The Strong Women for Healthy Country Network	-	(250)
Uwynmil Traditional Owner Group	(9)	(12)
Wadeye	(78)	(82)
Total payments	**(731)**	(1,062)
Total amount held at the end of the reporting period	**13,454**	13,279
Cash at bank	**13,454**	13,279



PART 5
APPENDICES

CORRECTIONS TO THE PREVIOUS ANNUAL REPORT

Figures in Table 20: NLC's performance against Commonwealth environmental measures on page 73 of the 2024-25 Annual Report have been revised and corrected. Two years have been removed 2020-21 and 2021-22 due changes in Commonwealth reporting requirements. In addition, the amendments have been made to the table for 2022-23; 2023-24 and 2024-25 in the following themes; energy efficient and greenhouse emissions. Corrected figures are shown in Table 20 of 2025-26 Annual Report.

GLOSSARY

TABLE 37: GLOSSARY

AASB	Australian Accounting Standards Board
ABA	Aboriginals Benefit Account
Aboriginal land	As per section 3 of the Land Rights Act: (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
ACA	Aboriginal Cultural Adviser
ALFA	Arnhem Land Fire Abatement
AM	Order of Australia
ANAO	Australian National Audit Office
ASIC	Australian Securities and Investment Commission
ATO	Australian Taxation Office
BAC	Bawinanga Aboriginal Corporation
BDO Australia	Binder Dijker Otte Australia - adviser to clients seeking audit, tax and advisory services
BDU	Benefits Distribution Unit
CA	Certified Accountant
CIA	Certified Internal Auditor
CISA	Certified Systems Internal Auditor
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CFC	Caring for Country
CIO	Chief Information Officer
CLC	Central Land Council
CO2-e	Carbon Dioxide Equivalent
CP&D	Community Planning and Development
CPA	Certified Public Accountant
CRM	Customer Relationship Management
CSIRO	Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation
Cth	Commonwealth
EPBC	*Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*
FBT	Fringe Benefits Tax
FRR	Financial Reporting Rule
GEBC	Gamba Eradication and Biodiversity Conservation
GST	Goods and Services Tax
HSE	Health, Safety and Environmental
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
ILSC	Indigenous Land and Sea Corporation

IPA	Indigenous Protected Areas
kL	Kilolitre
km	Kilometre
KMP	Key Management Personnel
kWh	Kilowatt-hour
L	Litre
Land Rights Act	*Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act 1976*
LoC	Learning on Country
M	Million
MoC	Method of Choice
Nabalco	North Australian Bauxite and Alumina Company
Native Title Act	*Native Title Act 1993*
NIAA	National Indigenous Australians Agency
NLC	Northern Land Council
NNTT	National Native Title Tribunal
NSW	New South Wales
NT	Northern Territory
NTG	Northern Territory Government
NTRB	Native Title Representative Body
PACT	Permits, Agreements and Compliance Team
Top End PBC	Prescribed Body Corporate
p/e	Price-to-earnings
PGPA Act	*Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013*
ROU Asset	Right-of-Use Asset
s19	section 19 (of the Land Rights Act)
SPPI	Solely Payments of Principal and Interest
VRD	Victoria River District
WHS	Work Health and Safety
WPI	Wage Price Index

COMPLIANCE INDEX

Compliance index of Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Rule 2014 (PGPA Rule) requirements for corporate Commonwealth entities.

TABLE 42: PGPA COMPLIANCE INDEX

PGPA RULE REFERENCE	PART OF REPORT	DESCRIPTION	REQUIREMENT
17BE	**Contents of annual report**		
17BE(a)	History	Details of the legislation establishing the body	Mandatory
17BE(b)(i)	Part 1 - About us: Our land, our sea, our life	A summary of the objects and functions of the entity as set out in legislation	Mandatory
17BE(b)(ii)	Corporate Plan 2025-26 to 2028-29	The purposes of the entity as included in the entity's corporate plan for the reporting period	Mandatory
17BE(c)	Strategic thinking	The names of the persons holding the position of responsible Minister or responsible Ministers during the reporting period, and the titles of those responsible Ministers	Mandatory
17BE(d)	Strategic thinking	Directions given to the entity by the Minister under an Act or instrument during the reporting period	If applicable, mandatory
17BE(e)	Strategic thinking	Any government policy order that applied in relation to the entity during the reporting period under section 22 of the Act	If applicable, mandatory
17BE(f)	Part 3 - Corporate management and reporting	Particulars of non-compliance with: (a) a direction given to the entity by the Minister under an Act or instrument during the reporting period; or (b) a government policy order that applied in relation to the entity during the reporting period under section 22 of the Act	If applicable, mandatory
17BE(g)	NLC Annual Performance Statement 2024-25	Annual performance statements in accordance with paragraph 39(1)(b) of the Act and section 16F of the rule	Mandatory
17BE(h), 17BE(i)	Financial performance summary	A statement of significant issues reported to the Minister under paragraph 19(1)(e) of the Act that relates to non-compliance with finance law and action taken to remedy non-compliance	If applicable, mandatory
17BE(j)	NLC's Accountable Authority	Information on the accountable authority, or each member of the accountable authority, of the entity during the reporting period	Mandatory

PGPA RULE REFERENCE	PART OF REPORT	DESCRIPTION	REQUIREMENT
17BE(k)	NLC organisational structure	Outline of the organisational structure of the entity (including any subsidiaries of the entity)	Mandatory
17BE(ka)	About our workforce	Statistics on the entity's employees on an ongoing and non-ongoing basis, including the following: (a) statistics on full-time employees; (b) statistics on part-time employees; (c) statistics on gender; (d) statistics on staff location	Mandatory
17BE(l)	Contact us	Outline of the location (whether or not in Australia) of major activities or facilities of the entity	Mandatory
17BE(m)	Part 3 - Corporate management and reporting	Information relating to the main corporate governance practices used by the entity during the reporting period	Mandatory
17BE(n), 17BE(o)	Consultant expenditure	For transactions with a related Commonwealth entity or related company where the value of the transaction, or if there is more than one transaction, the aggregate of those transactions, is more than $10,000 (inclusive of GST): (a) the decision-making process undertaken by the accountable authority to approve the entity paying for a good or service from, or providing a grant to, the related Commonwealth entity or related company; and (b) the value of the transaction, or if there is more than one transaction, the number of transactions and the aggregate of value of the transactions	If applicable, mandatory
17BE(p)	Accountable Authority Message	Any significant activities and changes that affected the operation or structure of the entity during the reporting period	If applicable, mandatory
17BE(q)	Judicial decisions and reviews by outside bodies	Particulars of judicial decisions or decisions of administrative tribunals that may have a significant effect on the operations of the entity	If applicable, mandatory
17BE(r)	Judicial decisions and reviews by outside bodies	Particulars of any reports on the entity given by: (a) the Auditor-General (other than a report under section 43 of the Act); or (b) a Parliamentary Committee; or (c) the Commonwealth Ombudsman; or (d) the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner	If applicable, mandatory

PGPA RULE REFERENCE	PART OF REPORT	DESCRIPTION	REQUIREMENT
17BE(s)	NLC subsidiaries	An explanation of information not obtained from a subsidiary of the entity and the effect of not having the information on the annual report	If applicable, mandatory
17BE(t)	Insurance premiums for officers	Details of any indemnity that applied during the reporting period to the accountable authority, any member of the accountable authority or officer of the entity against a liability (including premiums paid, or agreed to be paid, for insurance against the authority, member or officer's liability for legal costs)	If applicable, mandatory
17BE(taa)	Committees	The following information about the audit committee for the entity: (a) a direct electronic address of the charter determining the functions of the audit committee; (b) the name of each member of the audit committee; (c) the qualifications, knowledge skills or experience of each member of the audit committee; (d) information about each member's attendance at meetings of the audit committee; (e) the remuneration of each member of the audit committee	Mandatory
17BE(ta)	Remuneration	Information about executive remuneration	Mandatory
17BF	**Disclosure requirements for government business enterprises**		
17BF(1)(a)(i)	N/A	An assessment of significant changes in the entity's overall financial structure and financial conditions	If applicable, mandatory
17BF(1)(a)(ii)	N/A	An assessment of any events or risks that could cause financial information that is reported not to be indicative of future operations or financial conditions	If applicable, mandatory
17BF(1)(b)	N/A	Information on dividends paid or recommended	If applicable, mandatory
17BF(1)(c)	N/A	Details of any community service obligations the government business enterprise has including: (a) an outline of actions taken to fulfil those obligations; and (b) an assessment of the cost of fulfilling those obligations	If applicable, mandatory
17BF(2)	N/A	A statement regarding the exclusion of information on the grounds that the information is commercially sensitive and would be likely to result in unreasonable commercial prejudice to the government business enterprise	If applicable, mandatory

Requirements under the *Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act 1976*

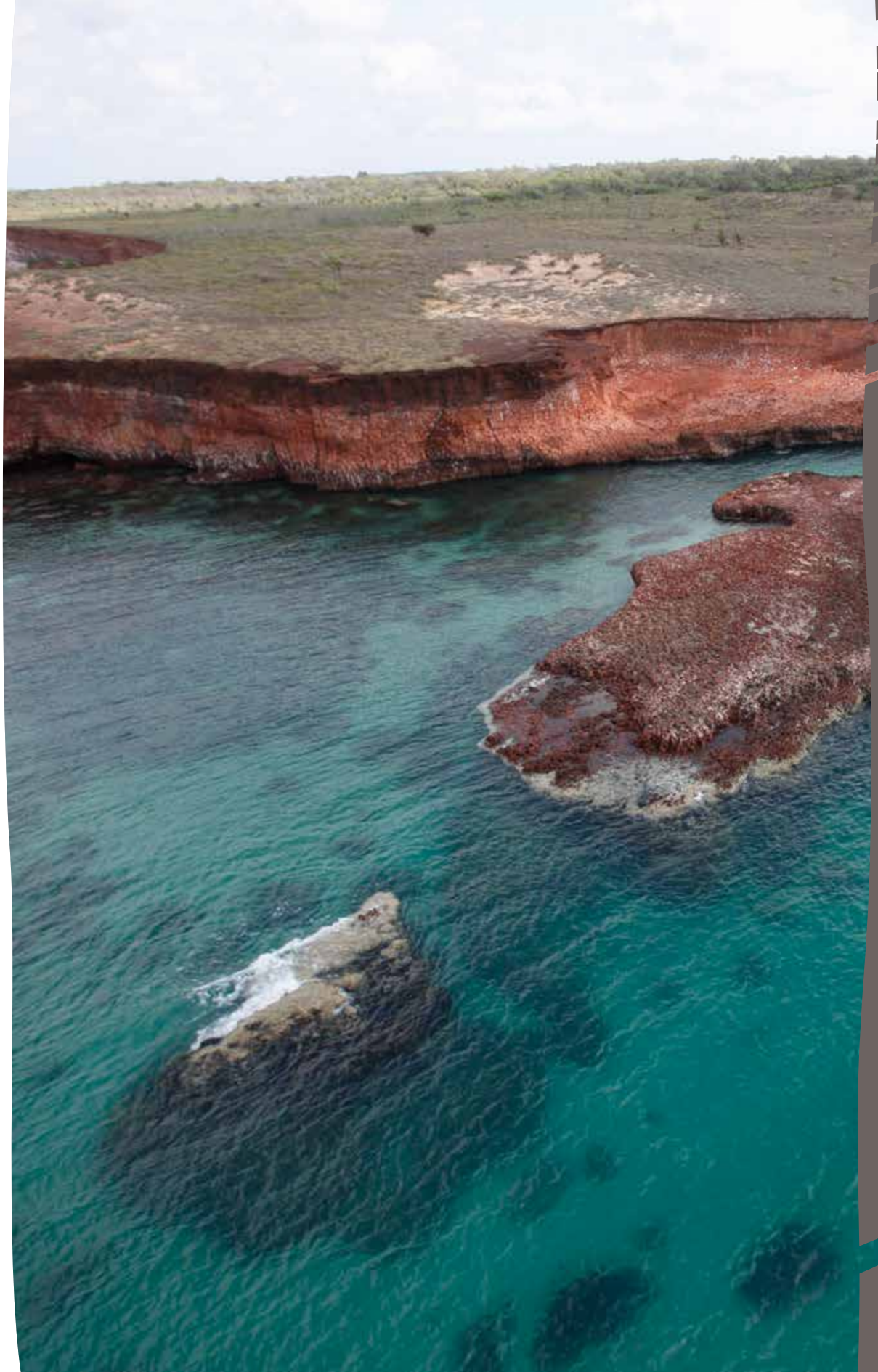
TABLE 43: LAND RIGHTS ACT COMPLIANCE INDEX

REQUIREMENT	LAND RIGHTS ACT SECTION	REFERENCE
FEES Specify the total fees received for services provided by the NLC: Under s33A of the Land Rights Act for services provided under Part IV (Mining); and Under s33A for services prescribed by the regulations that it provides in performing any of its functions, whether in the reporting year of the previous year. Specify total fees received under s33B (other fees charged to the Commonwealth).	s37(2), Part IV, s33A and s33B. No fee types prescribed under s33A and no fees were requested under s33B.	Note 4.
SECTIONS 35 DETERMINATIONS Include details of payments by the NLC under s35(2) or (3) and any determinations made by the Minister under s35(6) made during the reporting year. Details of payments made by determination or otherwise under s35(2), s35(6), s35(4), s35(4b), s35(11) and s67(b) must be provided and include, the recipient of the amount; the subsection under which the amount was paid; and the total of the amount paid.	s35	Note 20.
DETAILS OF AMOUNTS HELD IN TRUST Include details of payments by the NLC under s35(2) or (3) and any determination made by the Minister under s35(6) made during the reporting year. Details of payments made by determination or otherwise under s35(2), 35(4), 35(6), 35(4B), 35(11) and 67(B) must be provided and include, the recipient of the amount; the subsection under which the amount was paid; and the total of the amount paid.	s37(5)	Note 20.
DETAILS OF APPROVED ENTITIES Township lease granted or transferred to an approved entity under s19A.	S37(5A)	Township lease granted or transferred to an approved entity
COMMITTEES If a committee has been appointed under s29A to assist the NLC in relation to the performance of any of its functions or the exercise of any of its powers, detailed information of its activities must be included.	s37(7)	Committees
CONSULTANTS Specify consultants engaged by the NLC during the year and the amount paid to each consultant.	s37(8)	Consultants expenditure

Other reporting obligations

TABLE 44: REPORTING OBLIGATIONS

OTHER REPORTING OBLIGATIONS	LEGISLATION	REFERENCE
***Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (Cth)**	s516A	Environment reporting
Australian Public Sector (APS) Net Zero Emission Reporting	Net Zero in Government Operations Strategy	Environment reporting
***Work Health and Safety Act 2011* (Cth)**	Part 3 and 4 of Schedule 2	Work Health Safety
***Freedom of Information Act 1982* (Cth)**	Part 1 of Schedule 2 and 7	Freedom of informa tion



NORTHERN
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