

YMAC NEWS

News from
Yamatji
Marlpa
Aboriginal
Corporation

ISSUE 47 | June 2023



Save the dates!

Native Title Forums
27 & 29 June

Yule River On-Country
Bush Meeting
12-13 July

Yamatji On-Country
20-21 September



Yamatji Marlpa
ABORIGINAL CORPORATION



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Cover photo: YMAC Co-Chairs
Miss Natalie Parker and
Mr Peter Windie at a meeting with
Federal Indigenous Australians Minister
Linda Burney in Canberra.

Please be advised this publication may
contain images, voices and names of
deceased people. We sincerely apologise
for any distress this may cause.

Hello and welcome to issue 47 of YMAC News



Miss Natalie Parker,
Co-Chairperson – Pilbara Region



Mr Peter Windie,
Co-Chairperson – Yamatji Region

In this edition, we:

- Delve into the Voice to Parliament and referendum, highlighting what you need to know with links to information that can help you – and why YMAC is supporting the “yes” vote.
- Preview the upcoming Yule River On-Country Bush Meeting – the first since 2021 – and provide details on the pre-event workshop.
- Look at important changes ahead with the scheduled introduction of the *Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act 2021* on 1 July.

YMAC posts regular updates on current news and issues affecting Native Title and Traditional Owners.

Visit ymac.org.au to stay up-to-date or subscribe to email updates by visiting the website, clicking on ‘Media & Publications’ and then ‘Subscribe’ on the pulldown menu. You can also scan the QR code.



You can also follow us on LinkedIn via tinyurl.com/ymaclinkedin.

We are always on the lookout for interesting and informative news. If you have stories or photos you would like to share, please reach out to us by emailing editor@ymac.org.au.

News from the CEO

Welcome to the latest edition of YMAC News.

I am pleased to let you know the YMAC Board has officially endorsed the “yes” vote for the upcoming referendum on an Indigenous Voice to Parliament. It was a unanimous decision following the Annual Joint Committees Meeting in Karratha on Ngarluma Country, where Mr Thomas Mayo gave an in-depth presentation to YMAC’s two Regional Committees and Board of Directors. Read more on pages 10-12.

Since our last issue, I have also had the opportunity to accompany YMAC Co-Chairs Miss Natalie Parker and Mr Peter Windie to a meeting in Canberra with Federal Indigenous Australians Minister Linda Burney (as seen on this issue’s front page). Several important topics were discussed, including the need for clear communications in relation to the Voice referendum. Of critical importance was making sure everyone can understand what they are being asked to vote on, how to vote, and what will happen following the referendum, if successful. Also discussed was the need for people to visit local communities so locals could hear more and ask questions.

We invited Minister Burney to attend the Yule River meeting on 13 July and Yamatji On-Country on 21 September and look forward to her confirming her availability. Learn more about Yamatji On-Country and Yule River in this issue on pages 4 and 6.

Our Board has recently endorsed a new corporate structure and can confirm YMAC’s Research Manager role is expanding to become part of YMAC’s Executive Management Team, taking on responsibility for our Heritage and Land and Sea Management teams, along with Research. This will form the new Research, Country and Cultural Services directorate.

In March, some of our senior management, staff and Directors visited Queensland for a study trip, visiting our counterparts at the North Queensland Land Council and Queensland South Native Title Services. This proved to be a wonderful opportunity to discuss the common challenges and opportunities facing Traditional Owners in our respective regions.

Finally, I was recently advised by Federal Climate Change and Energy Minister Chris Bowen of my appointment as an advisory member of the First Nations Clean Energy and Emissions Reduction Advisory Committee. The committee has been established to provide guidance and advice to the Federal Government on the development of a First Nations Clean Energy Strategy. I’m pleased to be able to assist with this once-in-a-generation opportunity to establish the highest standards for First Nations peoples’ engagement, alongside genuine respect for Country and cultural heritage.

We have plenty of other stories and updates in this issue, so please take the time to read and enjoy.



**Simon Hawkins,
YMAC Chief Executive Officer**

Yamatji region news



The total solar eclipse in April. Picture: Jack Flynn and The Event Mill

Eclipsing expectations

Exmouth came alive as day turned to night when a total solar eclipse blackened the sky on 20 April.

Massive crowds turned out to witness it first-hand in Exmouth with millions more watching around the world. Large crowds in Onslow and Coral Bay experienced about 99 per cent darkness while Carnarvon had 95 per cent.



Watch a time-lapse video of the eclipse at tinyurl.com/aprileclipse or scan the QR code.

Middamia claim update

The Middamia native title claim, which covers part of Middalya Station, was accepted for registration by the National Native Title Tribunal (NNTT) on 22 November 2022.

This means the claim group now has procedural rights under the *Native Title Act 1993* (Cth), such as the right to be notified and the right to negotiate with proponents when it comes to certain activities that are to occur on Country.

Once the notification period finishes on 21 June, the Federal Court will list the claim for the first case management conference.



Dodd family near Middalya Station homestead (the Middamia claim covers part of the station). Picture: Radhika Kayarat (shared with permission from the Dodd family)



Yamatji On-Country

Annual Meeting 2023

at the Bundiyarra Aboriginal Community Aboriginal Corporation

56 Eastward Road, Geraldton

Featuring information stalls from a variety of local organisations.

have your
say on issues
important to
your community!

SAVE THE DATES!

Day One

WEDNESDAY 20 SEPTEMBER

9.00am : Community Day

5.30pm : Evening Entertainment

Join us for an evening of bushtucker and entertainment featuring local artists.

Day Two

THURSDAY 21 SEPTEMBER

8.00am : Breakfast

9.00am : Government Decision Makers join the conversation

Click on the QR Code to visit ymac.org.au for event information and updates.

For further enquiries, please contact Ken Capewell by phone: 08 9965 6222 or email: kcapewell@ymac.org.au



Lunch provided both days • Alcohol and Drug Free Event



Yamatji Marlpaa
ABORIGINAL CORPORATION



**YMAC IS UNABLE TO PAY
TRAVEL ALLOWANCE**

Pilbara region news

New YMAC Board member

Following the most recent Pilbara Regional Committee meeting in May, Jururru Traditional Owner Mr Ivan Smirke was elected to YMAC's Board of Directors to fill the existing vacancy.

He was elected to the Pilbara Regional Committee in 2014 and was previously elected to the Board in 2021.



Pre-event workshop for Yule River

YMAC's Pilbara Regional Committee invited organisations across the Pilbara to nominate Elders and Emerging Leaders to come together in April, after YMAC invited organisations across the Pilbara to nominate participants for a facilitated pre-event planning workshop for the Annual On-Country Bush Meeting at the Yule River Meeting Place.

The purpose was to prepare a community-driven, DRAFT Call-to-Action statement/community plan that could be presented for further discussion with the broader Aboriginal community on day one of the Yule River event.

Several key issues were identified and these topics – along with the Voice referendum – will inform the basis of the agenda for the eighth Annual Yule River Annual On-Country Bush Meeting on 12 and 13 July (see page 6).



The pre-event workshop for Yule River. Picture: Tash Gillespie

Clean energy roundtable in Pilbara

The first of several roundtables feeding into the co-design of the Federal Government's First Nations Clean Energy Strategy was held in late March in Port Hedland.

Key learnings included:

- Households and communities need affordable energy security and access to grants and subsidies.
- Co-designed, small-scale and community-led and owned projects are preferred.
- Access to information helps with informed decision-making.
- Education, training and community capacity-building is critical going forward.
- Genuine partnerships must be built with industry and government.
- First Nations peoples and organisations need resourcing to realise opportunities and co-benefits.
- Project negotiations must be on a fair playing field, with rights protected, including free prior and informed consent (FPIC).

Read more at tinyurl.com/FNCEN2023 or scan the QR code.



YMAC is also working towards a complementary renewable energy publication for Traditional Owners and proponents, specific to working within our representative regions.

Take me to the river: Yule be right!

The Annual On-Country Bush Meeting at Yule River is back again in 2023, after its cancellation last year due to COVID concerns.

To be held on Kariyarra Country at the Yule River Meeting Place, 55km south of Port Hedland on 12 and 13 July, the event is an initiative of YMAC's Pilbara Regional Committee to support vital discussions between First Nations peoples from across the Pilbara with government representatives.

At the committee's instruction, YMAC acts as the event organiser and provides project management and administrative support, such as hiring equipment, setting up facilities, designing and printing posters, sending invitations, and organising catering.

As mentioned on page 5, the Pilbara Regional Committee decided to trial a new format this year with a pre-event planning workshop in South Hedland. More than 35 Elders and Emerging Leaders discussed existing issues in the region and shared ideas for change, providing input for a draft call-to-action statement that reflects their voices, viewpoints, lived experiences and industry insights.



The last Annual On-Country Bush Meeting at Yule River was held in 2021 and focused on heritage protection. Picture: José Kalpers

From these discussions, workshop participants nominated a working group – Donny Wilson, Danny Brown, Henry Lockyer, Patricia Mason, Doris Eaton, Terry Jaffrey, Alana Lockyer, Linda Dridi, Raylene Button, Ashley Councillor, Ethan Tittums and Maureen Kelly – to further develop and refine the statement with the wider community.

YMAC is also pleased to be welcoming Mr Thomas Mayo to Yule River. As a member of the Federal Government's Referendum Working Group and Referendum Engagement Groups, he will be on hand to present and discuss details of the coming Voice referendum (also see page 10)..

What to expect...

Wednesday, 12 July:

for First Nations community members only – further discussion and finalisation of the draft call-to-action statement, presentation and discussion on the Voice referendum, information stalls.

Wednesday, 12 July (evening):

from 6pm, enjoy dinner and live music.

Thursday, 13 July:

welcomes government representatives, and decision-makers from across government agencies/departments, to hear and discuss Community position statements arising from Day 1, community and government information stalls.

For the latest on Yule River, visit tinyurl.com/yule2023 or scan the QR code.



Note: this is an alcohol and drug-free event.

YMAC Native Title Forums 2023

The YMAC Native Title Forums are an opportunity for Traditional Owners and PBC staff in YMAC's Yamatji and Marlpa regions to ask questions and voice concerns about native title.

These forums will provide an opportunity to discuss and learn more about the native title system and its related processes, including the different roles and functions of YMAC, PBCs and the Office of the Registrar of Indigenous Corporations (ORIC).

Other topics likely to be covered will focus on non-claim specific matters, recent sector developments, and related work YMAC is currently undertaking.

2023 Yamatji Native Title Forum

TUESDAY 27 JUNE 2023

Gwoonwardu Mia
146 Robinson Street
Carnarvon WA 6701
9am – 3pm

Yamatji Native Title Forum QR Booking Code



2023 Marlpa Native Title Forum

THURSDAY 29 JUNE 2023

Walkabout Hotel
945 Great Northern Highway
Port Hedland WA 6722
9am – 3pm

Marlpa Native Title Forum QR Booking Code



Get involved!

To book your attendance, click on the QR Codes above to register.

You can also book by calling 1800 270 709 or
via email at: communications@ymac.org.au

Attendance is **FREE**. Morning tea and lunch will be provided

YMAC is unable to pay travel allowance for this event



Yamatji Marlpa
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ymac.org.au

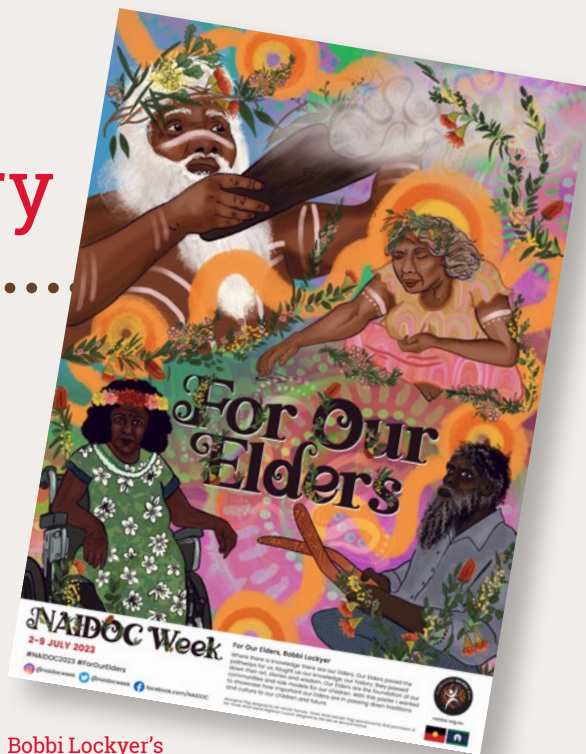
Deadly design winner from Kariyarra Country

Bobbi Lockyer – a proud Ngarluma, Kariyarra, Nyulnyul and Yawuru artist, born and based on Kariyarra Country in Port Hedland – is the winner of this year's National NAIDOC Week poster competition.

Embracing this year's NAIDOC Week theme "For our Elders", Bobbi won \$10,000 for her poster design and will travel to Meanjin (Brisbane) on 1 July for the 2023 National NAIDOC Awards Ceremony.

"With this year's poster design, I really just wanted to honour all our Elders and I started sketching straight away thinking who could I put on this poster, but then I realised I didn't want to just put a specific Elder because all our Elders are equally important and are integral to our lives," Bobbi said.

"Where there is knowledge there are our Elders. Our Elders paved the pathways for us, taught us our knowledge, our history, they passed down their art, stories and wisdom. Our Elders are the foundation of our communities and role models for our children. With this poster I wanted to showcase how important our Elders are in passing down traditions and culture to our children and future."



Bobbi Lockyer's winning poster design.

National NAIDOC Week runs from 2 to 9 July. Download a copy of the poster at tinyurl.com/2023poster or scan the QR code.



Elders morning tea in Carnarvon

YMAC is excited to be involved in NAIDOC Week again in 2023 with staff participating in several events in Geraldton, Port Hedland and Carnarvon.

We will also be taking part in the NAIDOC Family Day in Carnarvon on 6 July, plus YMAC's Carnarvon office at 4 Francis Street will host an Elders morning tea from 10.30am to midday on the same day.

Join us for a selection of sandwiches, fruit platters, cakes, assorted bush tucker bites and damper, along with prizes and gift bags.

Please RSVP to Rhodda Capewell on (08) 9965 6222 for catering purposes – numbers are limited.





Cyber Resilience Outreach Clinics

Do you have questions about online scams, cybercrime and identity theft? Then join us in Meekatharra, Yule River or Carnarvon for our free clinics to learn more!

In partnership with IDCARE, YMAC will be hosting three Cyber Resilience Outreach Clinics (CROCs) in July (details to the right).

Learn about staying safe from scams, cybercrime and identity theft, and also hear about data breaches and what they mean for you.

Take away resources on how to stay safe from scams and practical steps to navigate safely online.

No bookings required – turn up at any time between the hours listed to find out more.



Meekatharra

Tuesday, 11 July (9.30am – 11.30am)

Outside the Community Resource Centre
(55 Main Street)

Yule River

Thursday, 13 July (9am – 3pm)

at the Annual On-Country
Bush Meeting

Carnarvon

Tuesday, 18 July (9am – 11.30am)

Outside YMAC's office
(4 Francis Street)

And it's a "yes" from YMAC!

YMAC has officially endorsed the "yes" vote in relation to the referendum question on an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Voice. It comes after a previous YMAC commitment to supporting the Uluru Statement from the Heart, which called for a Voice to Parliament as one of its actions.

The resounding yes endorsement follows YMAC's Board and Yamatji and Pilbara Regional Committee members meeting in Karratha in May on Ngarluma Country with Mr Thomas Mayo, a member of the Federal Government's Referendum Working Group and Referendum Engagement Groups, to discuss details of the referendum.

Mr Mayo gave a detailed presentation covering the long history of First Nations Australians' fight for recognition, details and reasons behind the referendum question and wording of the constitutional amendment, and principles identified by the Referendum Working Group to guide implementation, if the referendum is successful.

"It comes down to two simple questions," Mr Mayo said. "Do we want recognition as the first peoples, and our continuing connection to our Country, and do we want a right to have a say about the decisions being made about us?"

"We have reached a point as a people where we can have confidence in ourselves that we can deal with issues such as representation. With a Voice – and time – we can make a difference and improve things as time goes on. The important thing now is to get it in the Constitution."



Thomas Mayo, centre, with YMAC Deputy Co-Chairperson – Yamatji Region, Deborah Oakley and Co-Chairperson – Yamatji Region, Mr Peter Windie. Picture: Marg Bertling

YMAC Co-Chairperson – Yamatji Region, Mr Peter Windie, said recognising Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the Constitution and creating a Voice to Parliament was a vitally important step to move forward.

"Those who say there are already Indigenous voices in Parliament are wrong – they are only there while they remain elected and there's always a possibility, after each election, there won't be any Indigenous representatives at all."

YMAC Co-Chairperson – Pilbara Region, Miss Natalie Parker, added: "We need to be involved in the decisions about us to ensure our concerns and ideas – and potential solutions – are heard by government," she said. "No one understands the issues better than us, as we are the people having the lived experience."

YMAC has also been in discussions with the Aboriginal Family Legal Service of WA about their Indigenous language radio packages, currently in development, which will broadcast information about the referendum to more isolated communities, in their first language. For more details, visit afls.org.au.

Visit ymac.org.au for a variety of links and information in relation to the Voice.

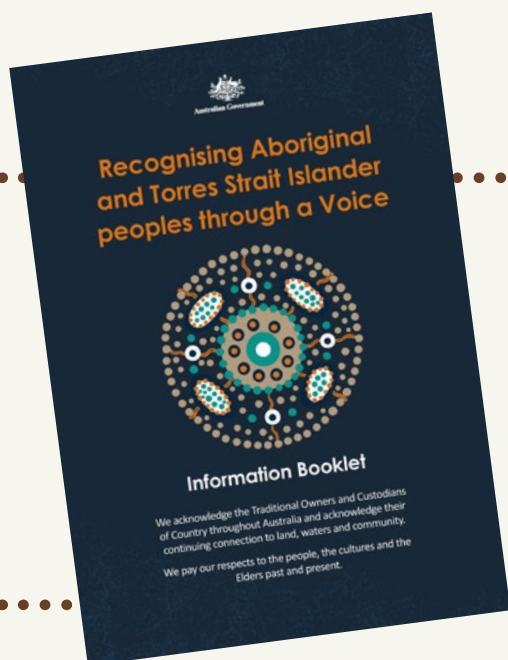
Voice design principles: what it will and won't do

The First Nations Referendum Working Group has developed a set of principles, endorsed by the Federal Government, to guide the creation of a First Nations Voice to Parliament.

According to the National Indigenous Australians Agency's website and information booklet on the referendum, the principles will:

- give independent advice to the Parliament and Government.
- be chosen by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people based on the wishes of local communities.
- be representative of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, gender balanced and include youth.
- be empowering, community-led, inclusive, respectful and culturally informed.
- be accountable and transparent.
- work alongside existing organisations and traditional structures.
- not have a program delivery function.
- not have veto power.

If the referendum is a success, a process with First Nations communities, Parliament and the broader public will then determine the Voice design.



What happens if the referendum passes?

Did you know? If the referendum passes, the Voice won't exist until legislation is enacted. There would be a process to consult on and finalise the Voice with the steps outlined below.



Referendum

In late 2023, Australians will have their say in a referendum on whether to recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the First Peoples of Australia in the Constitution through an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Voice.



Consultation

If the referendum passes, there will be a process with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and the broader public to design the Voice.



Introduce Voice establishment legislation to Parliament

A bill will then be developed to establish the Voice. This would be introduced to Parliament and may be referred to a parliamentary committee to suggest ways to improve it. Parliament decides if it becomes law.



Implementation

Once Parliament approves the legislation to establish the Voice, the legislation comes into effect and the work to set up the Voice begins.

Download The Voice Booklet



The Federal Government has an information booklet you can download from the Voice website at tinyurl.com/voicebook2023 or scan the QR code.

Voting in the Voice referendum

OUR VOTE.
OUR FUTURE.



Unsure about how you will vote?

Check out the following to help you make your decision:

- voice.gov.au
- aec.gov.au/referendums
- tinyurl.com/ANUvoiceinfo

Also take a look at social media:

- facebook.com/indigenous.gov.au
 - [@indigenous_gov](https://twitter.com/indigenous_gov)
-



The referendum on the Voice will be held between October and December this year – and people will be asked to vote by writing the words ‘yes’ or ‘no’ on the ballot paper in response to the following question:

“A proposed law to alter the Constitution to recognise the First Peoples of Australia by establishing an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Voice. Do you approve of this proposed alteration?”

You must be enrolled to vote to take part: check your details at check.aec.gov.au. You can enrol at aec.gov.au/enrol, call **13 23 26** for help or scan the QR code. Make sure you have a driver's licence, Australian passport number, Australian Citizenship certificate, Medicare card or someone already enrolled who can confirm who you are (18+ and proof-of-age cards are not accepted).

YMAC is inviting the Electoral Commission to host a stall at the Yule River and Yamatji On-Country meetings so people can enrol to vote. Make sure you bring ID to these events so you can sign up on the day and be ready for the referendum.

Learn more at ymac.org.au.



Local Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Services (LACHS)

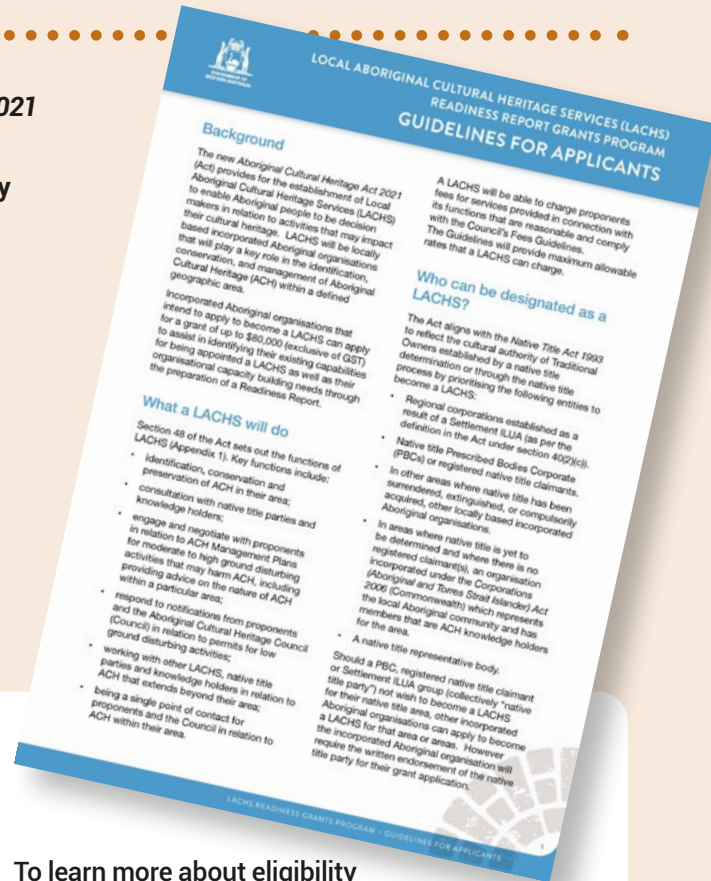
The State Government's new *Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act 2021* (ACH Act) will come into effect from 1 July 2023 – and the Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage (DPLH) is currently progressing its implementation.

YMAC and many PBCs and Aboriginal corporations within our regions have been participating in DPLH processes over the past 12 months, which includes the development of associated regulations, statutory guidelines and operational policies during the ACH Act transition phase.

Under the ACH Act, there is an opportunity to apply to be a Local Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Service (LACHS) for your area. Many PBCs and Aboriginal corporations have already received notifications about the role and processes of setting up the LACHS.

As part of this process, incorporated Aboriginal organisations can apply for a readiness grant (tinyurl.com/readinessgrants) of up to \$80,000 to identify their existing capabilities and make an application to become a LACHS. Applications close 8 December 2023 and are assessed as they are received. DPLH may extend the grant program beyond 2023, depending on the need and interest of potential applicants.

Once designated as a LACHS, a further \$200,000 is available for capacity-building. LACHS will then be funded up to \$300,000 each year to meet the anticipated service level requirements from proponents, Traditional Owners, Aboriginal communities and individuals.



To learn more about eligibility and guidelines – and to download an application form – visit tinyurl.com/LACHSguide or scan the QR code.

You can also email ACHimplementation@dplh.wa.gov.au to request further information and a presentation.



ACH Act education workshops

DPLH is holding education workshops around Western Australia to provide an overview of the new ACH Act, along with guidelines and regulations, and opportunities for people to ask questions. Sessions are being held in Karratha (7 June), Port Hedland (9 June), Geraldton (14 June) and Carnarvon (28 June).

Visit tinyurl.com/ACHActworkshops for locations and to register your attendance or scan the QR code. All workshops run from 10am to 1.30pm with lunch provided at the end of each session.



Working to ensure all Country is recognised

YMAC has undertaken more than 50 consultations for different unclaimed areas over the past year with staff often spending large amounts of time in the Yamatji and Pilbara regions to ensure this work progresses.

Research and legal assistance for unclaimed areas falls under YMAC's obligations as a Native Title Representative Body (NTRB), outlined in sections 203BB and 203BJ of the *Native Title Act 1993* (Cth). It is also a key part of the YMAC Strategic Plan 2021–2025 that states, under Strategic Priority 1: "Ensure all Country is recognised".

YMAC staff work with Traditional Owners who have knowledge of Country to ensure the right information is collected – and that anyone who may hold native title has been consulted.

In its almost 30-year history, YMAC has – through a collaborative but highly resource-intensive process – helped Traditional Owners in its NTRB regions achieve many positive native title determinations and a successful alternative settlement involving multiple claims.

With these determined areas of Country now being managed by their Prescribed Bodies Corporate (PBC), the YMAC Legal and Research Teams can focus on continuing to progress research and lodging claims in the unclaimed areas of our regions.

The two teams have been working on several identified priority areas to ensure traction is maintained for these significant areas of Country and that research work is completed ahead of key information and family meetings, fieldwork and the authorisation of new claims.

For questions about unclaimed areas or the process itself, contact the Research Team in the Perth office on (08) 9268 7000.



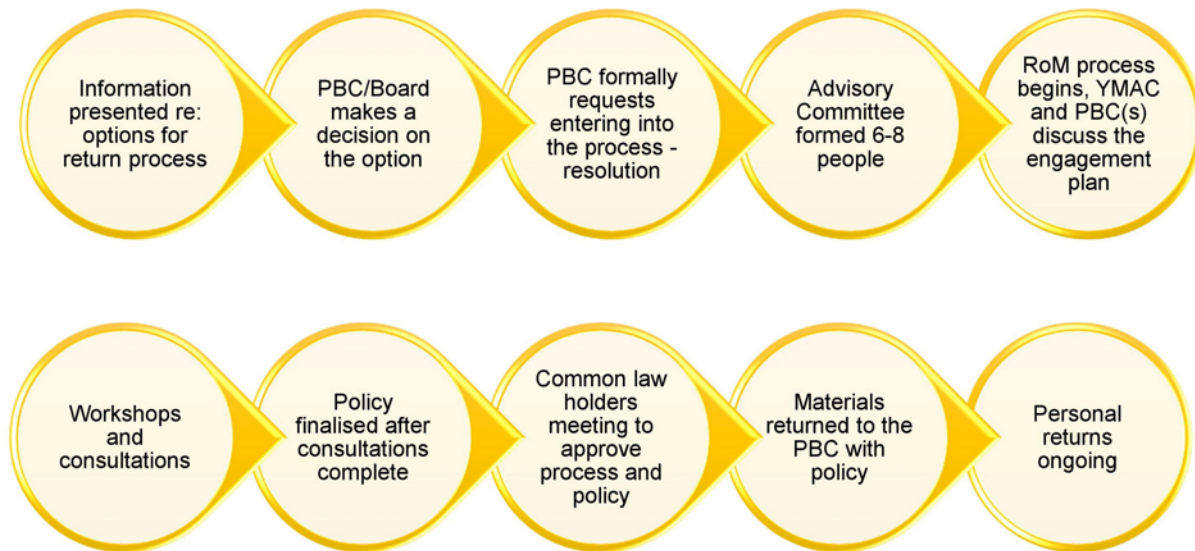
DID YOU KNOW?

Since 1994, YMAC has assisted native title groups across our regions achieve 37 positive native title determinations.

There remains more than 30 unclaimed areas across YMAC's NTRB regions.

The unclaimed Mallina area in the Pilbara.
Picture: Amy Usher

Return of research materials for Jurruru Aboriginal Corporation



A breakdown of the Model A RoM Process

YMAC's return of research materials (RoM) process is the return of research information to a Registered Native Title Body Corporate (RNTBC), following a native title determination.

This material includes information about Country, culture and connection provided to YMAC during the native title claim process for a particular claim. It includes information recorded by anthropologists and consultants for connection and expert reports, maps, spatial data, photos and films taken out on Country.

The Jurruru Aboriginal Corporation (JAC) began their return of research project with YMAC in 2021 using the Model A RoM process, which involves workshops to co-design a fit-for-purpose return policy that enables JAC to:

- safely and securely hold their materials
- access their materials in a way that is legally, confidentially and culturally safe
- use their materials in ways that will suit their needs into the future.

Since the beginning of the project, the workshops have centred on identifying the Jurruru research materials YMAC has in its possession and talking through how JAC wishes to manage and access the material when it is returned.

The next workshop will focus on developing a return policy with the cultural advisory committee elected by JAC's Board. YMAC's goal is to finalise the policy by the end of the year, so JAC can access and use the materials to help educate their young people.

If you, or a member of your family, have provided personal information to YMAC for a native title claim, you may request that information back via a personal return of material form.

Please contact the YMAC Perth office on (08) 9268 7000 for more details.

Proposed law for Traditional Knowledge of native plants and animals

The State Government is proposing a *Biodiscovery Bill* for Western Australia – and part of it will ensure First Nations peoples receive benefits when Traditional Knowledge of native plants and animals is used in research that makes money.

The Bill will follow the Nagoya Protocol, an international agreement on how benefits from the biodiscovery of native plants and animals should be shared in a fair way:

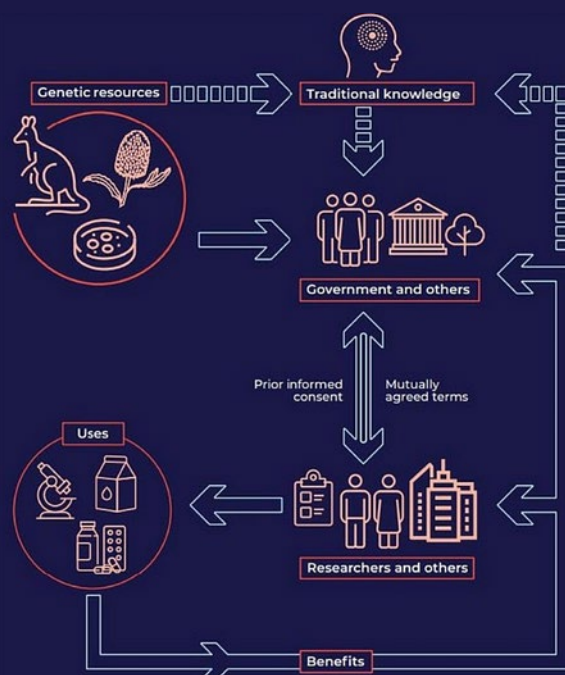
- **Authorised access** – researchers must have the right approval to access and take native plants and animals. In some cases, First Nations peoples will give access.
- **Mutually agreed terms** – researchers and the State Government will need to sign an agreement on how native plants and animals can be collected and used. Researchers and First Nations peoples will need to agree on how any Traditional Knowledge shared with the researcher can be utilised. Researchers must follow the agreements they have with the State Government and First Nations peoples.
- **Benefit-sharing** – any benefits that come from using native plants and animals must be shared in a fair way. Benefits might be money or other things such as education and training. These benefits will be in the agreement on how native plants and animals (and Traditional Knowledge, if it has been shared) can be used.
- **Recognition and protection of Traditional Knowledge** – researchers must acknowledge if any Traditional Knowledge has been shared with them. If researchers use this Traditional Knowledge and their research makes money, they must share the benefits with the Traditional Knowledge Holders.

Information and consultation workshops were held last November and in May to hear what First Nations peoples and organisations think about the bill. YMAC has also made a submission, which can be viewed at tinyurl.com/YMACbiodiscovery.

Visit the State Government website (tinyurl.com/biodiscoverybill) to find out more or scan the QR code.



A flowchart explaining how the Biodiscovery Bill will work.





YMAC anthropologists and consultant in a training session. Picture: Amy Usher

Anthropologists granted funding boost

YMAC has again been successful in gaining a Federal grant through the Attorney-General Department's Native Title Anthropologist Grant Program in the 2022-2025 round of funding.

YMAC has received the highly competitive grant continuously every three years since 2013 and was one of three organisations to receive the grant in this round (Australian National University's Centre for Native Title Anthropology and Jamukurnu Yopalikurnu Aboriginal Corporation were the other two).

The grant focuses on developing the professional skills of anthropologists working in native title and allows for a variety of training opportunities in YMAC's Research and Heritage Teams.

Where possible, training is opened up across WA and Australia to anthropologists working more broadly in the native title sector. These training opportunities are often also offered to other YMAC staff working on native title matters, such as those in the Legal and Land and Sea Management Teams.

Combined training across YMAC departments allows for cohesion when working on complicated native title matters and allows cross-disciplinary experiences to be shared and learned from.

Key training areas in the latest round of funding focus on:

- Resolving unclaimed areas
- The post-determination space and supporting Prescribed Bodies Corporate (PBCs)
- Native title compensation

The training opportunities allow for all levels of anthropological staff at YMAC to have access to high quality and experienced consultants and educational materials while providing an opportunity to network within the native title community.

During June, YMAC will focus on revisiting some foundational aspects of native title – from both anthropological and legal perspectives – at the first training workshop to be held as part of the latest round of funding.

Burn, baby, burn – fire in the sky

Fire management and training has been keeping the Nyangumarta ranger team busy in recent months.

In the Great Sandy Desert, what's known as "right way fire" involves the lighting of fires in targeted areas and took place during the early dry season between March and July.

In March, rangers took to the skies for aerial burning across the vast Nyangumarta Indigenous Protected Area, flying out near the Sandfire roadhouse between Port Hedland and Broome. Ranger Ronald Yanawana navigated the flight path while Terrence Yanawana operated a Raindance machine – the most widely used aerial incendiary device in the world.

The system drops capsules from the air, starting fire-burns in targeted locations. This practice of prescribed burning mitigates the severity of wildfires by reducing the build-up of flammable vegetation.

Large tracts of six-year-old spinifex were targeted in the March aerial burn, deemed a success due to the number of resulting fire scars (visibly blackened land after fire has burnt through the region).

This method of prescribed burning reduces the severity of out-of-control fires from lightning strikes, protecting important cultural sites, infrastructure and threatened species of fauna and flora.



A view of the aerial burning above part of the Nyangumarta IPA. Picture: Jacob Loughridge

Ground-burning was also conducted out on the old Emu Bore Track by walking and lighting fires with a drip-torch. This finer scale burning results in a mosaic of different age spinifex/habitat and further protects the landscape from fire.

Burning in the early dry, fires burn slowly and reduce fuel loads while creating firebreaks. Not all of the area is burnt and the result is a mix of burnt and unburnt Country, replicating the way traditional burning was done in the past.

Several Nyangumarta rangers also took part in incendiary machine operating training at Broome TAFE, learning about the different areas and parts on fixed-wing aircraft and helicopters, safely working within and around aircraft and how to operate the R2 and R3 Raindance machines, taking turns as the pilot, navigator and bombardier.

The Nyangumarta rangers program operates with support from YMAC's Land and Sea Management unit and funding from the National Indigenous Australians Agency.

Cardabia Station delivers major celebration

'Twas the night before a total solar eclipse – and Cardabia Station in Ningaloo Marine Park came alive on 19 April with a free cultural music festival and drone light show, attracting 1500 people.

Organised by the Baiyungu Aboriginal Corporation, Jamba Nyinayi (Sit for a Little While) focused on First Nations culture and people and was repeated at Exmouth Town Beach the following night, drawing a crowd of 6000.

The original curated program interpreted the Baiyungu cultural story of the eclipse, as told by Traditional Owner Hazel Walgar. Songwriting and dance choreography was prepared by experienced professionals David Hyams, Gary Lang and Janine Oxenham.

Traditional dance was performed by the Pilbara's Peedamulla Dance Group and local dancers from Carnarvon while local musicians included Raymond Edney and Wes Mongoo with Trazielle Kelly on didgeridoo. Other high-profile First Nations artists included Kankawa Nagarra, Walmatjarri Elder and international blues singer-songwriter Olive Knight, Bidyadanga John Bennett and Red Ochre from Geraldton.

As part of the grant and sponsorship funding provided, BAC also:

- undertook related infrastructure upgrades at Cardabia Station to support festival operations, as part of tourism ventures being considered for the venue.
- employed six First Nations jobseekers in partnership with Real Futures and TAFE to help with infrastructure and festival ground preparation, providing training and employment leading to a Certificate II in Construction.

The key objective of Jamba Nyinayi was to maximise First Nations engagement and participation across the performances and festival preparation, while allowing for personal development beyond the event. The aim is for Jamba Nyinayi to be held annually, as an ongoing cultural tourism attraction.

A drone show illuminated the crowd with an interpretation of the eclipse. Picture: Blue Media Exmouth



Country, Culture, People, Future

About us

YMAC News is produced by Yamatji Marlpa Aboriginal Corporation.

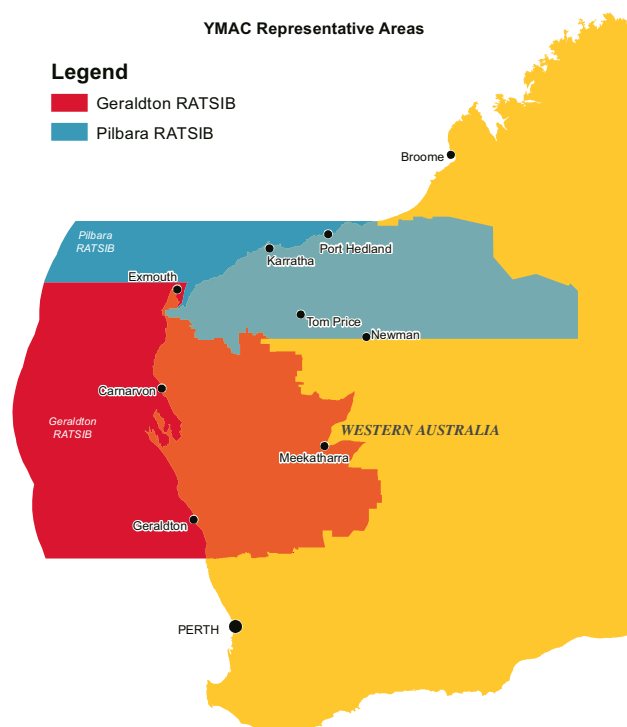
We are an Aboriginal Corporation and the Native Title Representative Body for the Mid West, Murchison, Gascoyne and Pilbara regions of Western Australia.

YMAC Vision 2021–2025:

Through connection to Country, Aboriginal people pursue and achieve economic, social and cultural goals and aspirations with strength and confidence.

Our mission:

For current and future generations, we work with and for Australian Aboriginal people to protect rights and manage Country and opportunities.



Contact us: Send your questions, ideas, letters and photos to editor@ymac.org.au

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