



Australian Government
Office of the Registrar of Indigenous Corporations

Strategic plan

2017–20

Strong corporations, strong people, strong communities



About us

Who we are

The Registrar of Indigenous Corporations (Registrar) is an independent statutory office holder appointed by the Minister responsible for Indigenous affairs.

The Office of the Registrar of Indigenous Corporations (ORIC) supports the Registrar to regulate and deliver services to corporations registered under the *Corporations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) Act 2006* (CATSI Act).

The CATSI Act

The CATSI Act is the law that establishes the role of the Registrar and allows Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander groups to form corporations.

The CATSI Act delivers modern corporate governance standards but still provides measures to suit the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Examples of this are the requirements for the majority of directors and the majority of members to be Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. This means corporations will always be owned and controlled by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

The CATSI Act sets out the Registrar's functions and services, as well as what powers the Registrar has to enforce this law.

Our vision

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander corporations play an important role in the lives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and their communities, as well as in the broader Australian society. Our vision is well-governed corporations that inspire trust in the sector and provide high-value services and benefits to communities and members.

**Strong corporations,
strong people, strong communities**

Our aim

Our aim is to achieve high standards of corporate governance, and effective, efficient, sustainable and accountable Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander corporations. We do this by:

- administering the CATSI Act and related legislation in a way that eases the burden on corporations
- providing certainty:
 - for the members, officers and employees of corporations in their dealings with the corporation and each other
 - for people outside corporations in their dealings with those corporations
- taking Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander tradition and circumstances into consideration
- ensuring that public information about corporations is available on our public register
- identifying corporate wrongdoing and non-compliance, and taking appropriate action
- providing a range of support services.



Our values

Independence—the Registrar is independent.

Professionalism—we behave ethically and honestly and uphold confidentiality. We focus on results, work productively, and constantly build our expertise.

Respect—we acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as the first Australians and respect their cultures, traditions, views and ways of life. We are continually developing our understanding about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Commitment—we are committed to delivering high quality products and services that help Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people build self-determination and achieve results.

Accountability—we take responsibility for the decisions we make.

Innovation—we value what works, are receptive to fresh ideas and constantly look to improve efficiency and effectiveness.

How we work

We have a range of capabilities and powers we can use to support and educate corporations, ensure transparency of their operations, and intervene when required.

Building sustainability—we encourage corporations to adopt good practices in management and governance, to make the most of their resources and help them achieve their purpose.

Supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ownership and control—we recognise the benefits of community control in community development.

Promoting accountability—we raise awareness that it is good governance and business practice to be answerable to members and the community.

Managing disputes—we help corporations to resolve disputes and develop effective dispute resolution processes to deal with future challenges.

Fitting with culture—we make sure that incorporation models, processes and support services fit the specific culture of the community and locality, and that any dealings with corporations are appropriate and relevant.

Shaping our services—we tailor our information and services to the needs of our clients and make sure that they are easy to access and use.

Building capability—we equip corporations, their directors and members with the necessary skills and knowledge to build sustainable and vibrant corporations.

Our business

ORIC supports and regulates corporations according to the CATSI Act and the statement of expectations issued by the Minister responsible for Indigenous affairs.

Registering corporations

We:

- provide information and advice to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander groups wanting to incorporate
- help corporations design their own rules to support good governance
- register Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander corporations under the CATSI Act
- maintain the public Register of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Corporations.

Public education and information

We:

- provide corporate governance training
- provide advice, publications and resources on good corporate governance
- share information and good news stories, and promote best practice
- undertake research relevant to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander corporations.

Assessing disputes and complaints

We help corporations to resolve governance difficulties, disputes and complaints.

Policy

We contribute to policy development and identify best practice in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander corporate governance.

Assistance and support

We:

- identify and respond to the needs of corporations with a range of support services, such as our pro bono legal service, LawHelp; ORIC recruitment assistance (ORA); and Independent *directory*
- explore opportunities and new services to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander corporations.

Enforcing the law

As an active regulator, we:

- assess strategic and individual case level risk
- ensure that corporations follow the law
- assess the governance standards of corporations
- investigate poor conduct
- intervene and take action when appropriate.

Our strategic priorities

Over the next three years, the six strategic priorities or shifts that we want to make are:

Strategic prioritisation of risk—we will improve how we identify, assess and respond to risk.

An empowered workforce—we will undertake workforce development initiatives to support engaged, confident and capable staff.

Fit-for-purpose legislation—we will review the CATSI Act to ensure that it remains relevant and meets the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander corporations, people and communities.

Strengthened government relationships—we will increase the Registrar’s engagement with our government partners.

Fit-for-purpose IT systems—we will upgrade or replace our IT systems to improve how we work and to meet the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander corporations.

An enhanced service suite—we will develop additional, complementary support services to meet the needs of corporations.

Our strategic initiatives for 2017–20

Our strategic priorities will be addressed through the six strategic initiatives set out in our *Corporate plan 2017–20*.



Embed the strategic risk framework



Ensure a skilled workforce



Amend legislation



Engage government stakeholders



Replace IT systems



Build new services



Our reporting and accountability

We make information available about who we are, how we work and what we do:

- on our website and in the Registrar's yearbook and other publications
- in our portfolio agency's annual report
- through media releases
- in submissions to, and appearances before, parliamentary inquiries and committees.

How do I contact ORIC?

If you have an inquiry, need information or advice, or wish to make a complaint, you can contact us on:

Freecall: 1800 622 431

Email: info@oric.gov.au

Website: oric.gov.au

Address: PO Box 29
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