



## Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander corporations get to the heart of art

The Registrar of Indigenous Corporations, Anthony Beven, has today released a report giving a snapshot of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander corporations in the visual arts sector.

The report, *At the heart of art*, examines the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander visual arts sector over the past four financial years. It reveals information on corporate governance and administrative arrangements around corporations and the way they run art centres.

The 101 corporations analysed as part of the sample group are registered under the *Corporations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) Act 2006* (CATSI Act).

Key findings of the report include:

- A noticeable downturn in the sector since 2007 with a 52.1 per cent reduction in average art sales revenue generated per corporation and a 31.2 per cent reduction in average total assets owned by corporations.
- The global financial crisis (GFC) has had a major impact on the visual arts sector.
- Despite the downturn, paid employment in art centres has more than doubled.
- Women play the major role in the governance of art centres.
- Peak industry bodies play an important role in supporting art centres.
- Most art centres are registered charities.

‘Corporations in the visual arts sector face significant challenges, such as remoteness and market volatility. But the visual art industry also holds a significant potential for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to close the economic gap with non-Indigenous Australians,’ Mr Beven said.

‘Art centres registered under the CATSI Act are controlled and owned by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and nearly all are not-for-profits. Buying art from a CATSI Act art centre is therefore more likely to return a fair commission to artists and deliver broader benefits to their communities.’

The report is available to download from ORIC’s website at [www.oric.gov.au](http://www.oric.gov.au).

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