



REGISTRAR ASSISTS VICTORIAN NATIVE TITLE CORPORATION

The Registrar of Indigenous Corporations, Anthony Beven, has today placed the Gunaikurnai Land & Waters Aboriginal Corporation RNTBC (GLaWAC) under special administration.

GLaWAC is the registered native title body corporate (RNTBC) that manages native title rights and interests on behalf of the Gunaikurnai people. It is based near Lakes Entrance in Victoria and has over 600 members from five family clan groups.

In 1997 the Gunaikurnai people lodged a claim for their traditional lands in the Gippsland region of Victoria. In a consent determination on 22 October 2010 the Federal Court recognised the Gunaikurnai people as the traditional owners of 13,829 hectares of land.

On the same day as the consent determination the Victorian Government entered into an agreement with the Gunaikurnai people under the Victorian *Traditional Owner Settlement Act 2010*. The agreement provides for the joint management of 10 parks and reserves in the Gippsland and rights for Gunaikurnai people to conduct traditional activities on crown land.

‘In August 2016 my office conducted an examination of GLaWAC and found that the corporation had made a loss of almost \$500,000 in 2015–16,’ said Mr Beven. ‘The loss arose as a result of inadequate financial controls and strategies to address loss-making activities.’

‘Internal disputes had also distracted the directors and senior management from dealing with the key issues facing the corporation,’ Mr Beven added.

The directors of GLaWAC had written to the Registrar supporting the appointment of a special administrator.

‘RNTBCs are responsible for ensuring that native title holders, including future generations, benefit from their lands and any compensation they receive,’ Mr Beven said. ‘The special administration will provide an opportunity for the native title holders to work with the administrator to reform and restructure GLaWAC.’

The Registrar has appointed Mr Peter McQuoid of PDM Consultancy as the special administrator of GLaWAC for the next six months.

Media contact

Lisa Hugg
(02) 6146 4738
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