



REGISTRAR MOVES TO SUPPORT COMMUNITY

The Registrar of Indigenous Corporations, Anthony Beven, has today placed the Ngallagunda Aboriginal Corporation under special administration.

Established in 1989, the corporation is located in the small community of Ngallagunda, on the Gibb River Cattle Station, approximately 200 kilometres west of Kununurra in far north Western Australia. The corporation owns the Ngallagunda community store and the pastoral lease for the cattle station. Through these ventures the corporation provides services and employment opportunities to the local community.

In recent years there have been internal disputes within the membership of the corporation, largely regarding the operations of the community store and the cattle station.

The Registrar has been working with the corporation and its members over the last three years to address the internal disputes. Concerned that the corporation was unable to resolve the disputes internally, the Registrar commenced an independent examination of the corporation in February 2016 under the *Corporations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) Act 2006* (CATSI Act). The examiners were tasked with reviewing the books of the corporation and the matters at the centre of the disputes.

The examiners found numerous breaches of the CATSI Act and the corporation's rule book and raised concerns about a purported transfer of the ownership of the community store. They also found that there was significant conflict amongst the members of the corporation that was interfering with the proper conduct of the corporation's affairs. The conflict had also led to proceedings in the courts against the corporation and some of the members.

In July 2016 the Registrar asked the corporation to show cause why it should not be placed under special administration.

'I have decided to place the corporation under special administration as the disputes are escalating, not easing. In September 2016 the corporation faced the threat of further legal proceedings,' said Mr Beven. 'The corporation is unable to address its governance issues by itself and it is now time to call in some external assistance.'

The Registrar has appointed Mr Stuart Reid and Mr Austin Taylor from the Darwin-based firm, Meertens Chartered Accountants, as special administrators until 8 May 2017.

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Special administrators

Stuart Reid (08) 8941 3122
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Meertens Chartered Accountants