

ORIC

YEARBOOK

2019-20

**STRONG CORPORATIONS,
STRONG PEOPLE,
STRONG COMMUNITIES**



Australian Government
Office of the Registrar of
Indigenous Corporations



Australian Government

**Office of the Registrar of
Indigenous Corporations**

ORIC YEARBOOK 2019-20

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Please be aware that this publication may contain the names and images of deceased people. The Registrar strives to treat Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and beliefs with respect. We acknowledge that for some communities, it is distressing to show images of people who have passed away.

COVER IMAGE

Jasmine Bolt, Galambila Aboriginal Health Service COVID concierge,
keeping Aboriginal people COVID-safe on Gumbaynggirr country

Courtesy of Galambila Aboriginal Corporation

CONTENTS

ABOUT THE REGISTRAR	1
ABOUT THE YEARBOOK	1
HIGHLIGHTS	2
REGISTRAR'S YEAR IN REVIEW	4
ABOUT ORIC	7
Vision	7
Budget	7
Organisational structure	8
Office locations	9
Staff	10
PERFORMANCE REPORTING	11
Establishing	12
Conduct research	12
Understand sector risks and issues	13
Engage stakeholders	14
Amend legislation and regulations	20
Registering	21
Provide pre-registration service	21
Draft rule books	21
Register corporations	21
Register documents and changes	24
Provide access to public registers	30

Supporting	31
Provide corporate governance training	31
Publish guidance	40
Provide information and advice	41
Provide support services	42

Monitoring	46
Promote timely lodgement of annual reports	46
Assess complaints	49
Manage disputes	51
Conduct examinations	52
Conduct investigations	56

Seeking remedy and deterring	57
Call corporation meetings	57
Issue compliance notices	57
Commence special administrations	57
Seek criminal and civil penalties	62

ACCOUNTABILITY	64
Freedom of information	64
Complaints about ORIC	64
Legal services expenditure	65

About the registrar

The Registrar of Indigenous Corporations (the registrar) is an independent statutory office holder who administers the *Corporations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) Act 2006* (CATSI Act). The CATSI Act has some unique features:

- Registered corporations must be **owned and controlled by Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people**—a majority of both members and directors must be Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people.
- The registrar has **special powers**, for example to appoint examiners and special administrators.
- The Office of the Registrar of Indigenous Corporations (ORIC) provides **support** to corporations to strengthen their corporate governance and conducts **research**.

ORIC **supports** corporations by:

- **advising** on how to incorporate
- **training** directors, members and key staff in good corporate governance
- ensuring compliance with the law
- **intervening** when needed.

About the yearbook

Although not required by legislation to produce an annual report, the registrar believes it is appropriate and good practice to publish a yearbook to inform all clients and stakeholders about the work of ORIC.

ORIC has also contributed to the 2019–20 annual report of National Indigenous Australians Agency, available via niaa.gov.au.

Highlights



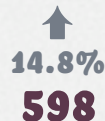
Training was concentrated in Queensland and Northern Territory. Both had **12 workshops** with **138 participants** in total. Queensland had the most corporations involved in training (**78**).



There were **30 deregistrations** this year, compared with **44** corporations that were deregistered in 2018–19—a decrease of **31.8 per cent**.



This year there were **56 registrar-initiated changes to registered information for corporations** as opposed to **5** in the previous year. That's a **1020 per cent** increase, attributable to the special rules and flexible adoption process made available during the Covid-19 pandemic.



In 2019–20 ORIC processed **598 applications for exemptions** from various provisions of the CATSI Act, up **14.8 per cent** from the previous year (521). Largely, this increase was due to the number of requests for exemptions in relation to meetings, which rose from **302 to 391**.

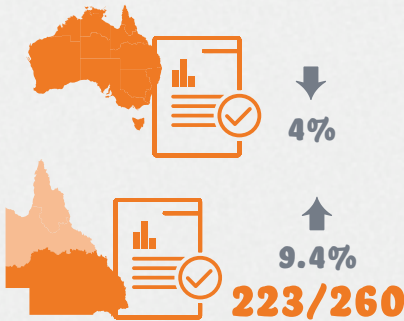
Highlights



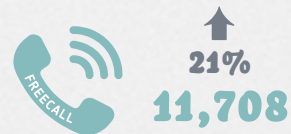
Number of **registered corporations** grew **5%** from 3108 to **3357**



226 corporations are RNTBCs. Last year there were 202 so this is an **11.9% increase**.



Nationally, **reporting compliance** dropped by **4%**—but **southern Queensland** corporations' reporting compliance **rose 9.4%**, from 76.4% of 233 corporations required to report, to 85.8% of 260.



Calls to the free call number **rose by 21%** from 9613 to **11,708**. ORIC staff responded to a record number of phone inquiries: **4665, up 51.8%** from 3074.



The number of files downloaded from the ORIC website **grew by 33%** from 18,496 to **24,589**.



The **most popular fact sheet** this year was 'A corporation's rule book: what you need to know'; its **downloads rose 127%** from 448 to **1018**.

REGISTRAR'S YEAR IN REVIEW



SELWYN BUTTON, REGISTRAR

In my first ‘year in review’ I described that year as ‘intense’. Sadly it seems intense is the new normal. The horrific fires of last summer, followed soon after by the Covid-19 pandemic, made 2019–20 one of the most challenging ever, for each of us personally, for ORIC as an organisation and for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander corporations that we regulate and support.

The year was undoubtedly chaotic. But it also gave my staff and I an opportunity to test our mettle as administrators of a ‘special measure’ under the *Racial Discrimination Act 1975*, to show that we can adapt quickly to support corporations to carry on despite sudden (and scary) changes in their circumstances. More on that later.

The year started out about as orderly as you can get. On 1 July 2019 the Governor-General’s executive order to establish the National Indigenous Australians Agency (NIAA) took effect. So this yearbook reports on the first full year of ORIC’s operation under a new parent agency.

In September and October 2019 we piloted a new one-day training program focused on a priority area for corporations in terms of both operations and good governance: understanding finances. It’s a clear risk, if boards lack the skill and confidence to properly interrogate financial statements. And many directors had said they wanted dedicated training in managing the money story. The jury is still out as to whether we develop this training into a dedicated workshop, or beef up the finance module in all the other training workshops in our suite. But either way we’re committed to demystifying this important aspect of corporations’ accountability. And that’s just one way in which we are adapting in response to corporations’ needs and preferences.

During consultations we hosted as part of our review of the CATSI Act during 2018 we heard (loud and clear) that corporations objected to their members’ addresses being included by default in the public face of the Register of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Corporations. In October 2019 we revised the database to ensure that members’ addresses were no longer published—and removed all previously-published addresses.

On 10 January 2020, while our Canberra office was cloaked in a haze of hazardous smoke, we initiated a bulk exemption for the 160 corporations in fire-affected areas that had not yet lodged their 2018–19 annual reports, to extend their reporting deadline to 31 March.

Then came Covid-19.

Because the pandemic presents particular risks for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, we took several significant steps to reduce the risk of transmission and especially the risk of the virus reaching remote communities. The obvious first move was to cancel all scheduled training and in-person fieldwork for the remainder of the year. Next, we considered how we might use the in-built flexibility of the CATSI Act to support corporations to pivot more easily to adopt a temporary set of good governance rules, allowing them to continue to meet their corporate obligations.

That thinking led firstly to a set of special rules to allow corporations to meet online instead of in person, so they could continue to hold members' and directors' meetings and carry on with their governance and operations, and the flexibility to postpone a meeting after it's been called.

To change a corporation's rules normally requires members to pass a special resolution. Well, we had a solution for that too. We allowed the board of a corporation to request the registrar use his powers to amend the rule book. To ensure the usual decision-making authority in this process was not undermined, the board had to say what measures they would take to maintain transparency for members during the special rules period, and the rules had an end date.

As part of this support, we also produced a set of guidance for corporations stepping into the world of virtual meetings for the first time.

Ultimately, 50 corporations adopted the special rules.

Secondly, we gave an automatic extension of time to lodge annual reports to those corporations whose reports are normally due by 30 June—and a second extension for the bushfire-affected corporations. Both groups were given until 31 August. Finally, we granted all new corporations an extra 6 months to hold their first AGM—and offered an extension to corporations that would otherwise have had to hold their AGM by 31 May.

My congratulations to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, corporations and communities for their remarkable effort to stay safe in the face of Covid-19.

Meanwhile, we continued working hard on the technology to replace the existing Register of Aboriginal and Torres Strait

Islander Corporations and its sibling interfaces: the portal for online lodgement and the public-access register. Two aspects of that work are worth mentioning, as part of my will to be a supportive and empathetic regulator.

At various points during the development process, we have paused to ask whether what we're building makes sense to corporation representatives, and accords with their preferences—or at least the preferences of the majority. I won't go so far as to claim that we have co-designed the forthcoming interfaces with corporations. And I am conscious that many of our constituents suffer from consultation fatigue. But wherever we regarded it as important to do so, we have sought and received input and feedback. And in every instance it has yielded valuable intel—so for that we are truly grateful to our respondents.

I am very much looking forward to sharing the much-improved public register. We know from user research that it's a trusted source of reliable information about the sector. Its role as an authoritative source of information is one reason we will continue to encourage, nudge and push corporations to comply with their reporting obligations.

The forthcoming public register will present a map showing all registered corporations around the country, and enable people to browse and explore the sector through a range of filters. We are excited by the prospect of new insights into the sector becoming available once it goes live. As part of this new public register, each corporation will have a public profile they can self-manage. For many small corporations, it will be their first online presence; they will be *on the map*.

Simultaneous with all this work is the legislative reform happening both with the Native Title Act and the CATSI Act. On 11 December 2019 the Minister for Indigenous Australians announced a new, comprehensive review of the CATSI Act to be managed through National Indigenous Australians Agency (NIAA). In parallel, the Native Title Act is being reformed, with the main aim being to improve workability and efficiency of the native title system. We are accustomed to continuous flux...

Selwyn Button
DECEMBER 2020

ABOUT ORIC

Vision

Strong corporations, strong people, strong communities

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 of well-governed corporations that inspire trust in the sector and provide high-value services and benefits to members and communities.

To achieve that vision, ORIC staff operate within a framework that covers:

- our regulatory approach
- the risks we identify
- how we categorise and prioritise cases
- how we measure our performance.

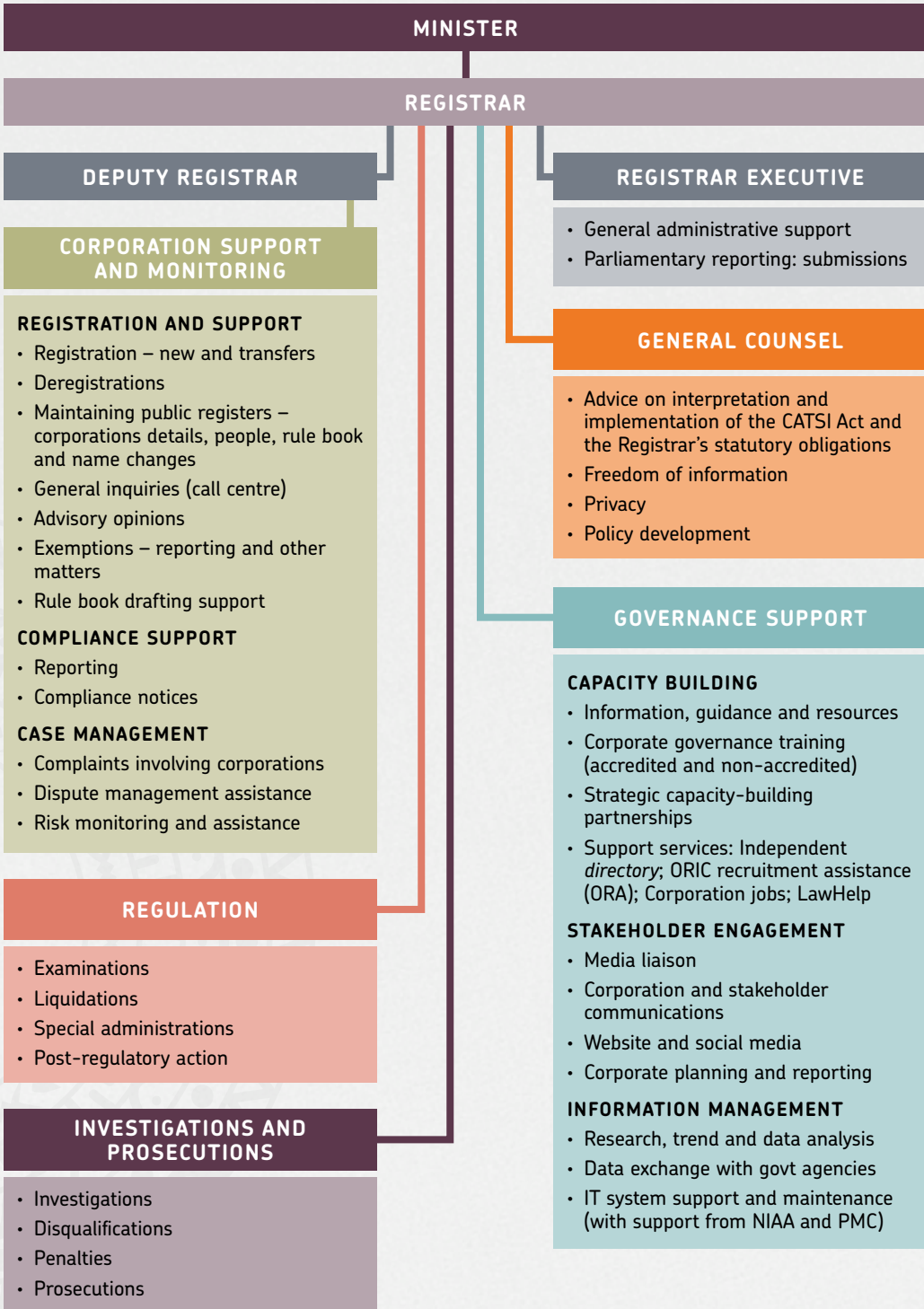
Our work is also directed by our strategic plan and corporate plan. The current versions cover the period 2017–20. Our corporate documents are available online at oric.gov.au/about-us.

Budget

The registrar's budget allocation for 2019–20 was \$8.259 million from departmental funding. We also received \$1 million from administered funds—the third annual allocation of the \$4 million over 4 years that then Minister for Indigenous Affairs, Nigel Scullion, announced on 5 July 2017. From that allocation ORIC expended \$8.158 million and \$0.998 million.

The departmental allocation for 2019–20 was \$63 thousand more than the previous year's allocation of \$8.259 million; and the administered allocation was the same as the previous year's allocation of \$1 million. ORIC's total budget was \$9.259 million—which was \$63 thousand more than the previous year.

Organisational structure



Office locations



Staff

Excluding four contractors (employed indirectly on finite projects) and four casual staff (employed to assist with peak periods), as at 30 June 2020, ORIC had 40 employees or 39.6 full-time equivalent (FTE) staff.:

- 19 people were based in the Canberra office
- 20 were working from a regional office
- 23 staff—57.5 per cent—identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander
- 21 staff—52.5 per cent—were women
- 2 staff—0.05 per cent—were part-time.

SENIOR MANAGEMENT

Senior managers as at 30 June 2020:

- Selwyn Button, Registrar
- Gerrit Wanganeen, Deputy Registrar
- Angus Hudson, General Counsel
- Lisa Hugg, Manager, Governance
- Catherine Turtle, Manager, Southern Hub
- Hannah Roe, Manager, Northern Hub
- Trish Mu, Manager, Investigations and Prosecutions
- Kevin Vu, Manager, Regulation

PERFORMANCE REPORTING

ORIC continues to measure its performance by output, which helps us to understand the efficiency of our operations. We are also building capability to measure our impact on good governance and trust in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander sector—our outcomes. We're building a new database and interfaces for the registers to better serve corporations, and as part of that, we are establishing new mechanisms for tracking the longer-term impact of training and regulatory action.

ESTABLISHING

The registrar is responsible for administering the CATSI Act. This involves creating a sustainable regulatory framework to give effect to the legislation.

Conduct research

This yearbook presents aggregated data, with minimal interpretation, on the full range of functions of the registrar.

STATISTICAL REPORTS

In 2019–20 the registrar published the following statistical reports:

- an annual report on corporations entering external administration—including special administrations, voluntary administrations and creditors' voluntary wind-ups
- bi-annual reports on complaints involving corporations, their nature (by category), their frequency and complexity, and their concentration within each state and territory.

In 2019–20 the majority of the external administration appointments occurred in the Northern Territory, and the sector with the most corporations entering external administration was registered native title bodies corporate, all of which reported their work covered multiple industries. The main reason for the appointment of an external administrator was to protect the interests of the public, members or creditors. But in 42 per cent of all cases, an administrator was also appointed due to:

- inadequate record keeping
- failure to properly appoint and/or remove directors and/or members
- poor financial management
- alleged breaches of directors' duties
- poor management of business.

Most external administrations were special administrations under the CATSI Act, which restructured corporations and returned them to member control.

TABLE 1. EXTERNAL ADMINISTRATIONS BY TYPE, FOR THE PAST 5 YEARS

APPOINTMENT TYPE	2015–16	2016–17	2017–18	2018–19	2019–20
Special administration	10	8	6	7	9
Receiver appointed	0	0	0	0	2
Deed of company arrangement	0	0	0	0	1
Voluntary administration	1	0	0	2	0
Provisional wind-up	0	0	0	0	0
Members' voluntary wind-up	0	0	1	1	0
Creditors' wind-up	2	0	1	0	0
Court wind-up	0	0	1	0	1
Total	13	8	9	10	12

In 2019–20 Queensland corporations were subject to the highest proportion of all complaints—35 per cent. Somewhat mitigating that figure is the fact that Queensland has a high number of corporations: 825, or 24.6 per cent of all corporations. Western Australia had the second highest proportion with 21 per cent of all complaints involving corporations from there. Also not surprising with a population of 886 corporations or 25.4 per cent of all corporations.

Relative to their own state/territory population, Tasmanian corporations were subject to the highest number of complaints—29 per cent—although this figure is high, Tasmania has the fewest corporations of any jurisdiction (just 17, or 0.5% of all corporations). Nationally, 1.5 per cent of all complaints were about Tasmanian corporations. South Australia ranked second with 22 per cent of its corporations involved in complaints—there are 147 corporations in South Australia, representing 8.5 per cent of all corporations. In Queensland 13.9 per cent of its corporations were involved in complaints; and in Western Australia it was 7.8 per cent.

Understand sector risks and issues

In 2017 ORIC formalised its internal process for identifying and mitigating the risks associated with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander corporations. In accordance with ORIC's strategic risk framework, we have a risk working group that collects information staff receive in the course of their daily work and—periodically—plans a response.

The issues identified by the risk working group are referred to our annual planning process where we plan responses to

address those risks. This guides our regulatory activities, training, prioritisation of disputes and complaints assistance, general information and communication activities.

As part of the redevelopment of the technology underlying the Register of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Corporations, senior managers of ORIC reviewed the method for rating risks to corporations' viability. The new risk rating will be built in to the forthcoming system.

Engage stakeholders

As part of ongoing business we engage and consult with government and industry stakeholders. We also engage with other national, state and territory regulators and enforcement bodies. We use the opportunity to gather their feedback on our services and regulatory activities, as well as issues relevant to the sector and regulation. This information is also used to inform our annual planning.

ORIC helps to inform the broader community about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander corporations and ORIC's regulatory activity through a range of communication activities and consultation.

ORIC.GOV.AU

The ORIC website at oric.gov.au has a range of information and resources for and about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander corporations. Interested people can:

- download corporations' public documents
- access statistical reports
- find a list of prosecution outcomes
- sign up for news and media releases.

It's also a portal through which, for example, corporations can:

- lodge their documents
- advertise job vacancies
- register for training.

In 2019–20 ORIC estimates 109,809 people used the ORIC website in 226,101 sessions. This estimate is based on actual figures of 79,425 users in 163,536 sessions and an estimate for the period 7 August to 17 November 2019 when the tracking of website data was inactive due to a changeover in hosting arrangements.

Of those, 128,652 sessions (56.9%) involved a search of the public register. On average users viewed 2 pages per session.



MEDIA RELEASES

BROOKE BONEY

The registrar issues regular media releases on significant developments or events affecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander corporations.

In 2019–20 the registrar issued 17 [media releases](#), all of which are available on the ORIC website.

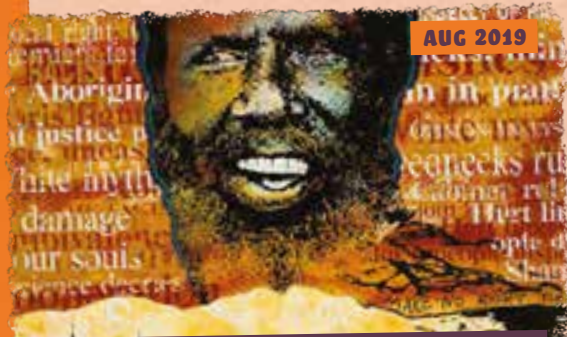
SOCIAL MEDIA

For a few years now, ORIC has shared news and stories through the [indigenous.gov.au](https://www.indigenous.gov.au) social media accounts on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. Throughout the 2019–20 year we posted occasional tweets for the registrar at [@RegIndig](#). In December 2019 we took control of ORIC's LinkedIn page as well, to share news and job vacancies in both ORIC and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander corporations. In our first 6 months of posting to LinkedIn, we shared 10 posts and gained 144 followers.

This year we also produced a series of 30 micro-videos with Brooke Boney speaking direct to camera, presenting a range of tips on good governance, resources and services available to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander corporations. The videos are available directly at vimeo.com/oric and in various locations on the [ORIC website](#) and social media channels.

SPOTLIGHT ON...

We publish a monthly news story—with a focus on good governance—about an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander corporation working to benefit its members and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities. For the featured corporation, it's an affirmation of their efforts and achievements. For the broader public it's a way to learn more about this vibrant, diverse sector.



AUG 2019

HONOURING MABO: MERIAM BUAI TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER CORPORATION CAIRNS



OCT 2019

ONLY YOLŪU MAKE DECISIONS FOR THIS LAND: DHIMURRU ABORIGINAL CORPORATION



NOV 2019

USHERING IN A NEW DAWN: YINDJIBARNDI ABORIGINAL CORPORATION RNTBC



DEC 2019

AQUACULTURAL PIONEERS: EMAMA NGUDA ABORIGINAL CORPORATION



JAN 2020

HEROIC PEACE: COOTA GIRLS ABORIGINAL CORPORATION



FEB 2020

**RIGHT-WAY GENOME SCIENCE:
YALU MARŃGITHINYARAW
INDIGENOUS CORPORATION**



MAR 2020

**STANDING UP TALL FOR NOONGAR:
YIRRA YAAKIN ABORIGINAL CORPORATION**



APR 2020

**INCORPORATING ABORIGINAL LAW:
PATTA ABORIGINAL CORPORATION RNTBC**



MAY 2020

**WASHING, WORK AND WELLNESS:
BAGALA ABORIGINAL CORPORATION**



JUN 2020

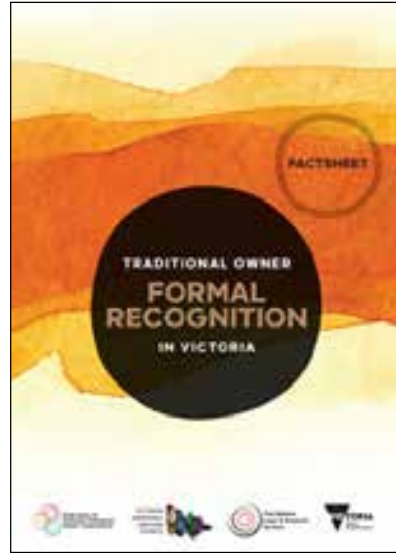
**CHAMPION PUBLISHER: MACABALA BOOKS
(ABORIGINAL CORPORATION)**

PERFORMANCE REPORTING



LEFT: REGISTRAR SELWYN BUTTON WITH FELLOW BOARD MEMBERS (RIGHT TO LEFT) PAT ANDERSON, JUNE OSCAR, PETER BUCKSKIN AND FORMER CEO, ROMLIE MOKAK.

RIGHT: VICTORIAN GOVERNMENT FACT SHEET FOR TRADITIONAL OWNERS.



EVENTS AND COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES

ORIC participates in and organises a range of events and community activities to engage with the general community and improve our understanding of their interests and concerns. We also use these opportunities to share information about the CATSI Act and good governance, data on the sector and news about corporation achievements.

The registrar, Selwyn Button, continues his directorship of the national institute for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health research, the Lowitja Institute.

ORIC contributed to a Victorian government fact sheet for traditional owners about various ways of gaining recognition of their rights and interests.

Community and culture

Once a year ORIC aims to gather all staff together for face-to-face training, reflection and planning. In December 2019 we visited Parliament House for a tour of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artwork in the collection.

ORIC staff may take up to 3 days' paid leave per year to participate in cultural or ceremonial activities and/or 2 months' leave without pay for cultural activities. In 2019–20, ORIC staff used one day of leave for 'cultural and ceremonial' reasons plus 12.5 days of leave for NAIDOC Week.

As part of the 'Footprints' cultural consciousness-raising initiative of ORIC's parent agency, NIAA, several ORIC staff hosted seminars to facilitate a conversation around an aspect of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture, politics, history or art.

Partnerships

ORIC maintains partnerships with a range of organisations for different purposes. As at 30 June 2019 we had current [memorandums of understanding](#) (available on our website) with the following organisations:

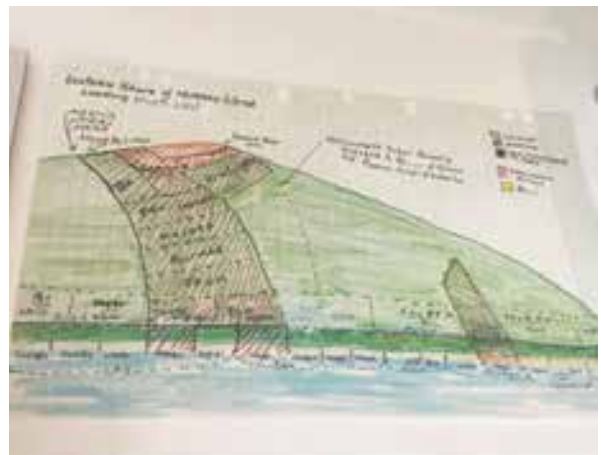
- Australian Securities and Investments Commission
- Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission
- National Native Title Tribunal and Torres Strait Regional Authority
- Australian Taxation Office.

To provide our pro bono legal assistance service, LawHelp, in 2018–19 we worked with 14 of Australia’s leading law firms:

- Allens
- Ashurst
- Australian Government Solicitor
- Baker & McKenzie
- Bradley Allen Love Lawyers
- Castledine Gregory Law & Mediation
- Clayton Utz
- DLA Piper Australia
- Herbert Smith Freehills
- Holding Redlich
- HWL Ebsworth Lawyers
- Jackson McDonald
- Minter Ellison
- Taylor David Lawyers.

LEFT: ORIC STAFF TOUR OF PARLIAMENT HOUSE PORTRAITS OF ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER MEMBERS AND SENATORS.

RIGHT: EDDIE MABO’S HAND-DRAWN MAP OF MER LAND AND SEA, ON DISPLAY IN PARLIAMENT HOUSE.



Amend legislation and regulations

To operate effectively and efficiently as a regulator, the registrar and ORIC need the driving legislation—the CATSI Act—to be clear, robust and appropriate to meet the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander corporations, people and communities.

As reported last year, the Corporations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) Amendment (Strengthening Governance and Transparency) Bill 2018 was introduced into parliament in December 2018, and the senate committee to which it was referred recommended its passage. The bill lapsed on 11 April 2019 when parliament was prorogued in advance of the election.

On 11 December 2019 Minister Wyatt announced a new, comprehensive review of the CATSI Act, to be coordinated by NIAA. By mid-February the agency had sought and received feedback (60 survey responses and 8 submissions) on the scope of the review. The responses were accommodated in a draft report published on 31 July 2020 on the agency website. The report then triggered a second round of consultations (mostly virtual, due to Covid-19).

Additionally, the Native Title Legislation Amendment Bill 2020, currently before parliament, has implications for the Registrar of Indigenous Corporations and ORIC staff. The bill includes proposed amendments to the CATSI Act specifically in relation to the proposed amendments to registered native title body corporates (RNTBCs), including:

- to require the rule books of RNTBCs to include dispute resolution pathways for people who claim to be common law holders
- to limit the grounds for cancelling membership and to remove the discretion of directors to refuse certain membership applications
- a new power for the registrar to request a copy of an RNTBC's native title decision record and determine whether it complies with the native title regulations—so native title holders could ask ORIC for an opinion rather than their only recourse being Federal Court
- a new ground for special administration, where an RNTBC has failed to comply with its native title obligations.

The bill was introduced to the House of Representatives on 17 October 2019 and the Senate on 12 November 2020.

REGISTERING

Provide pre-registration service

PRE-REGISTRATION MEETINGS WITH GROUPS

ORIC staff often field queries from groups of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who are thinking about incorporating, and wanting more information about their options. Some conversations occur over the phone; in other cases, an ORIC officer will meet with the group to discuss options and determine whether registering under the CATSI Act is appropriate in their circumstances. This pre-registration service is also available to groups that are already incorporated under alternative legislation, and considering transferring their registration to the CATSI Act.

PRE-REGISTRATION WORKSHOPS WITH GROUPS

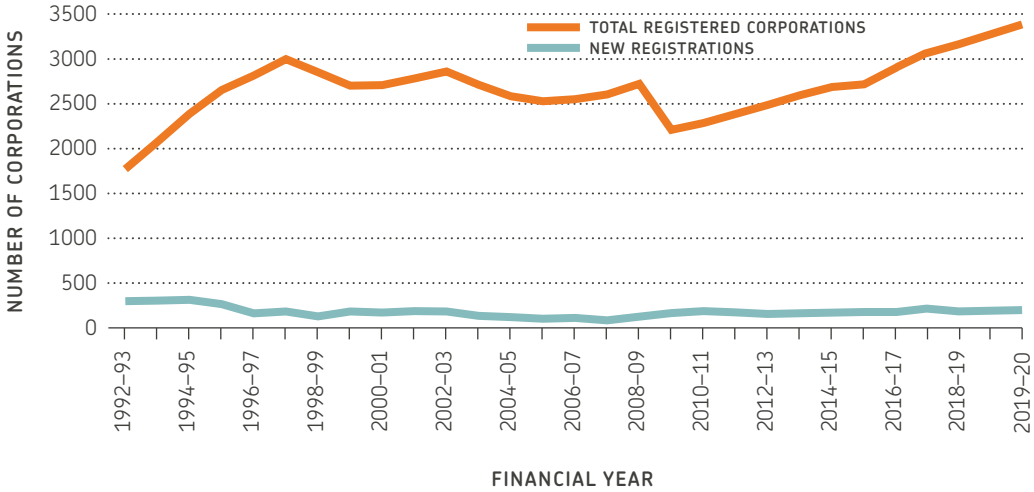
A portion of the corporation-specific training that we run is to assist groups who are planning to incorporate for the first time, transfer their existing registration or amalgamate with another organisation. We provide information on the requirements and process, and help develop a constitution (rule book) that is consistent with the CATSI Act.

Draft rule books

ORIC recommends that corporations regularly review their rules to make sure directors and members can understand them, and the rules work well for their corporation's changing circumstances. ORIC provides a number of model rule books on its website, and offers assistance to corporations to create or revise their rule book. In many cases this service is combined with a pre-registration workshop mentioned above.

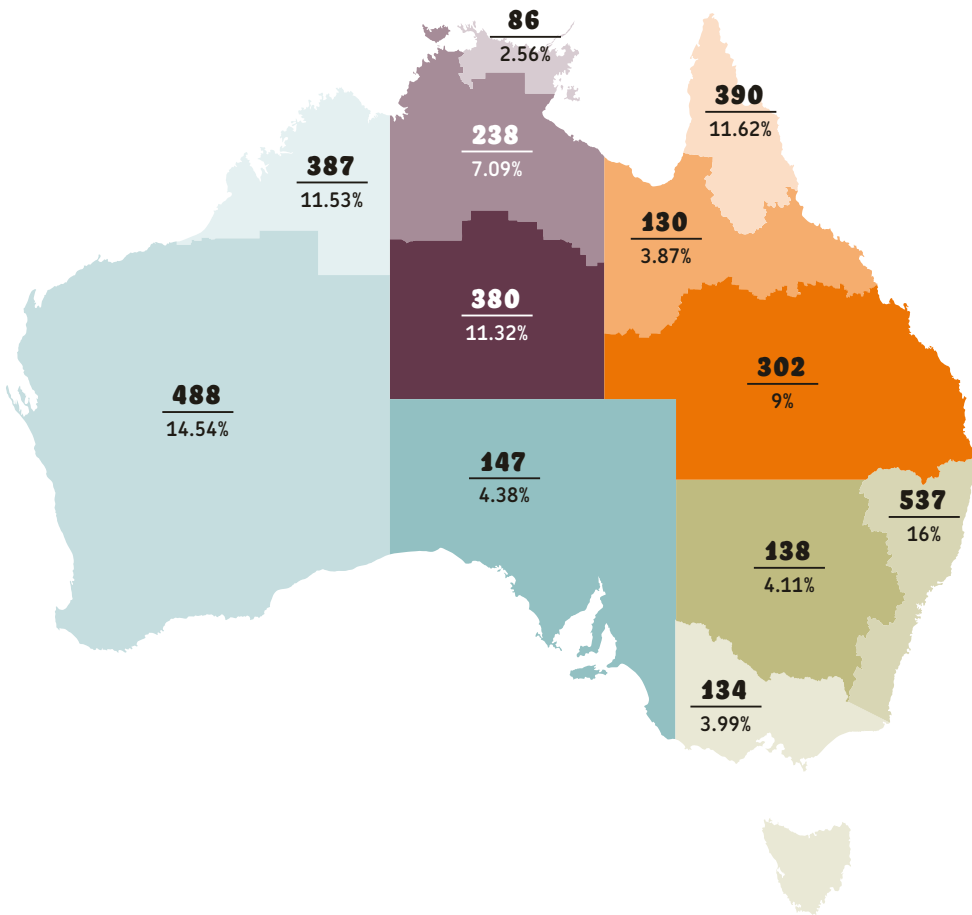
Register corporations

At 30 June 2020 there were 3357 corporations registered under the CATSI Act. The year before there were 3198. That's a net increase of 159 corporations (taking into account new incorporations, reinstatements and deregistrations); and roughly sustains the previous year's growth of 5 per cent. Of those 3357, 218 (6.49 per cent) are registered native title bodies corporate (RNTBCs).

PERFORMANCE
REPORTING**FIGURE 1.** REGISTERED AND NEW CORPORATIONS FROM 1992-93 TO 2019-20**TABLE 2.** NUMBER OF REGISTERED CORPORATIONS BY REGION AS AT 30 JUNE 2020

	NO. OF CORPS	% OF TOTAL
Eastern NSW	537	16.00%
Greater Western Australia	488	14.54%
Far North Queensland	390	11.62%
Kimberley	387	11.53%
Central Australia	380	11.32%
South Queensland	302	9.00%
Top End & Tiwi Islands	238	7.09%
South Australia	147	4.38%
Western NSW	138	4.11%
Victoria & Tasmania	134	3.99%
Gulf & North Queensland	130	3.87%
Arnhem Land & Groote Eylandt	86	2.56%
Grand Total	3357	100%

FIGURE 2. NUMBER OF REGISTERED CORPORATIONS BY REGION AS AT 30 JUNE 2020



NEW REGISTRATIONS

During 2019–20 there were 189 new registrations—4 fewer than the previous year. This includes 7 transfers of incorporation to the CATSI Act from other incorporation legislation and zero reinstatements. The year before, 14 of the 193 registrations were transfers and 2 were reinstatements.

Requests to register a corporation were processed in an average of 33.3 days.

TABLE 3. REQUESTS TO INCORPORATE

REQUESTS TO INCORPORATE	15–16	16–17	17–18	18–19	19–20
Received	184	210	205	235	231
Actioned:	186	215	209	223	220
—approved	177	177	183	193	189
—refused	8	27	12	6	12
—lapsed/withdrawn	1	11	15	24	20

Note: the figures above include applications for reinstatement. In 2019–20 4 applications for reinstatement were received, and zero corporations were reinstated.

DEREGISTRATIONS

There were 30 deregistrations this year, compared with 44 corporations that were deregistered in 2018–19—a decrease of 31.8 per cent.

Register documents and changes

ORIC receives a range of information, forms and reports that need to be added to the Register of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Corporations. This year ORIC processed 5642 registration jobs (5698 including registrar-initiated jobs).

The range of jobs requiring changes to the register includes:

- change corporation name
- change corporation address and/or other contact details
- change directors, contact persons or secretaries
- change rule book
- lodge updated membership list
- change native title status
- lodge general, financial and directors' reports.

TABLE 4. SAMPLE OF REGISTRATION ACTIVITY IN THE LAST 5 YEARS

	15–16	16–17	17–18	18–19	19–20
REQUESTS TO CHANGE RULE BOOK					
Received	207	268	235	232	218
Finalised:	209	264	237	215	221
— approved	190	249	218	201	167
— refused	19	15	19	13	54
Average processing time in days			20.97	23.52	30.72
REQUESTS TO CHANGE NAME					
Received	12	17	24	26	28
Finalised:	13	16	25	25	28
— approved	12	16	22	23	22
— refused	1	0	3	2	6
Average processing time in days			34.8	15.64	26.68
REQUESTS TO CHANGE A CORPORATION'S CONTACT DETAILS OR DETAILS OF DIRECTORS, CONTACT PERSON OR SECRETARY					
Received	1036	1308	1328	1323	1312
Finalised	1044	1317	1325	1303	1317
Changes applied to the public register	1031	1284	1289	1280	1273
Average processing time in days			1.8	2.8	3.8

Notes:

- Some requests received during 2019–20 were carried over into the next year.
- Where a request to change details for a contact person or other officer is not approved, usually the reason is that the person making the request is not authorised to change those details.

FIGURE 3. REQUESTS TO CHANGE RULE BOOK

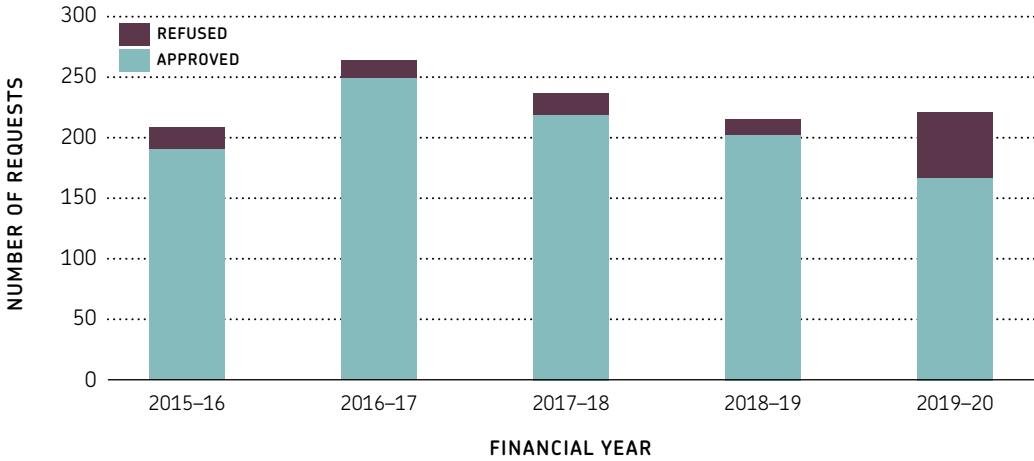


FIGURE 4. REQUESTS TO CHANGE NAME

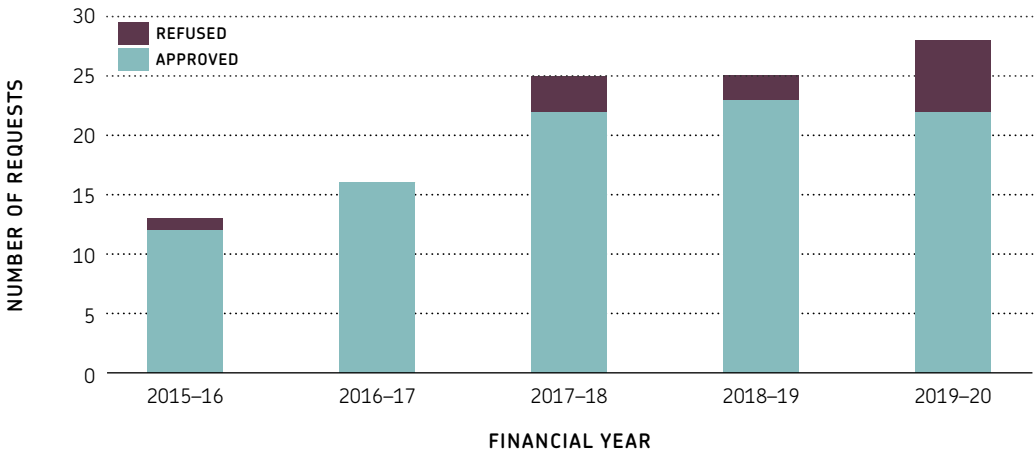
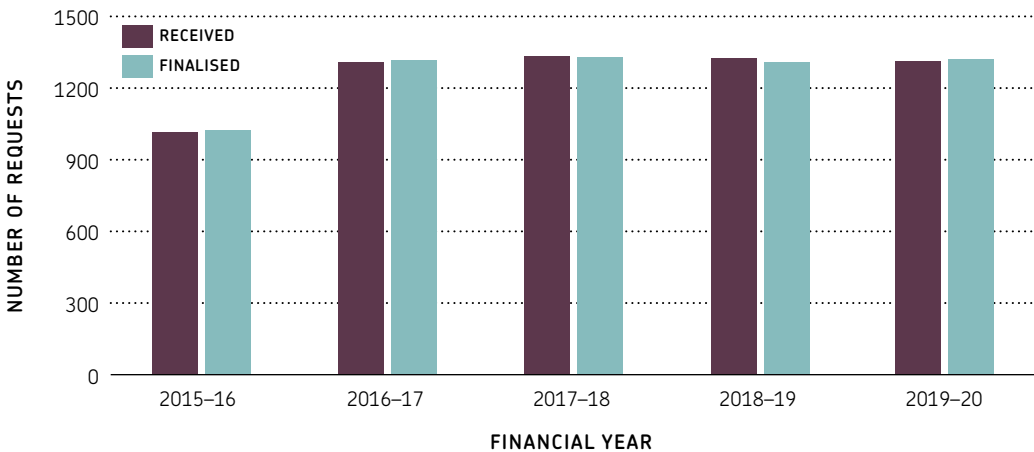


FIGURE 5. REQUESTS TO CHANGE CORPORATION CONTACT DETAILS OR DETAILS OF CONTACT PERSON, SECRETARY OR DIRECTOR/S



Depending on the type of changes required to the register, the time to process them varies.

TABLE 5. AVERAGE PROCESSING TIME FOR EACH KIND OF CHANGE REQUEST

TYPE OF CHANGE REQUEST	AVERAGE PROCESSING TIME IN DAYS
Rule book	30.72
Corporation name	26.68
Contact details for corporation or officers	3.8
Member list	1.86
Native title status	9.42

REGISTRAR-INITIATED RULE BOOK CHANGES

In late March 2020, in recognition that Covid-19 poses serious risk to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, and that some corporations would be unable to travel or meet at all, ORIC introduced a set of special rules corporations could easily adopt for a temporary period to enable them to continue to make decisions during the pandemic. The rules allowed corporations to:

- postpone or cancel a meeting after it's been called
- more easily pass resolutions without meeting
- meet virtually.

Corporations wanting to adopt the special rules could simply reply to the email offer, providing evidence that a majority of the directors agreed; and setting out what measures the corporation would implement to ensure transparency to members while the special rules were active. (For example, we suggested they might share reports with members in an online forum open to all members, where members could ask directors questions, and directors would answer, and both questions and answers were visible to all members.)

Between 1 April and 29 June 2020, ORIC received 50 requests to adopt the special rules. All were approved.

EXEMPTIONS

The registrar has the power to grant exemptions in relation to particular sections of the CATSI Act. The power enables the registrar to adapt the legislation to meet the individual circumstances of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander corporations. The registrar's policy statement [PS-07: Exemptions](#) provides more detail.

PERFORMANCE
REPORTING

In 2019–20 ORIC processed 598 applications for exemptions from various provisions of the CATSI Act, up 15 per cent from the previous year. On average, applications for exemptions were processed in 8.1 days, up from 6.9 days.

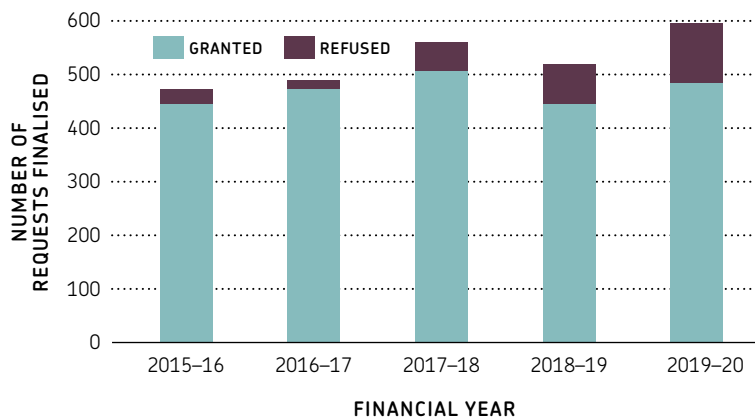
TABLE 6. REQUESTS BY EXEMPTION TYPE, 2019–20

EXEMPTION TYPE	REQUESTED	GRANTED	REFUSED	UNPROCESSED
Extension of time to hold AGM	341	283	3855	3
Exemption in relation to record keeping and reporting requirement	193	149	41	4
Exemption in relation to meetings	55	38	815	2
Exemption in relation to directors	11	9	2	0
Exemption in relation to members	5	5	0	0
Exemption in relation to member approval for related party benefit	1	1	0	0
TOTAL	606	485	113	9

TABLE 7. EXEMPTIONS REQUESTED, GRANTED AND REFUSED IN THE LAST 4 YEARS

EXEMPTIONS	2015–16	2016–17	2017–18	2018–19	2019–20
Received	469	485	563	521	606
Finalised:	468	488	562	520	598
—granted	438	467	506	444	485
—refused	30	21	56	76	113

FIGURE 6. EXEMPTIONS



LODGEMENT OF FORMS AND REPORTS ONLINE

ORIC provides forms for corporations to register and meet their reporting and other obligations under the CATSI Act. To optimise accuracy of the information and efficiency of the process, we encourage corporations to use ORIC’s secure system for online lodgement at online.oric.gov.au. When a corporation needs to lodge a report or update their details, they can log in and their corporation’s registered information will pre-populate the relevant form. In that way they can easily revise their information and instantly lodge it with the registrar. To ensure access for all, we still provide PDF versions of our forms, which corporations can download, print, complete, scan and return.

For 10 years we saw a steady increase in the percentage of forms and reports submitted through the registrar’s online lodgement system. This year:

- 67 per cent of all forms were submitted online. That’s the same as last year.
- 81.8 per cent of general reports were submitted online— a 2 per cent decrease from last year.

The rate of corporations’ compliance with their annual reporting obligations will be addressed later in this document. See ‘Promote timely lodgement of annual reports’.

FIGURE 7. FORMS AND REPORTS LODGED ONLINE FROM 2009–10 TO 2019–20

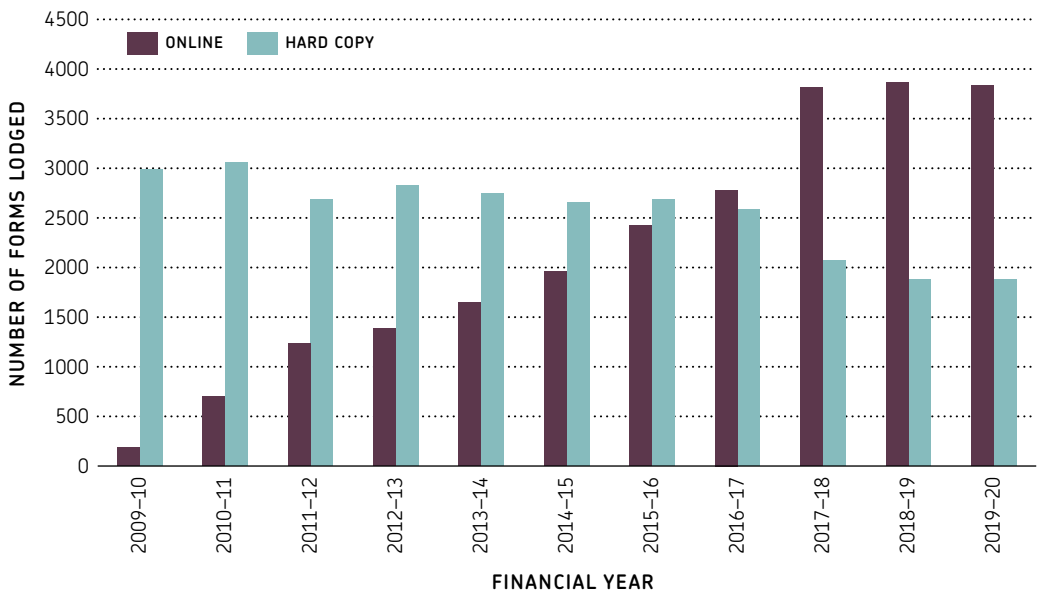
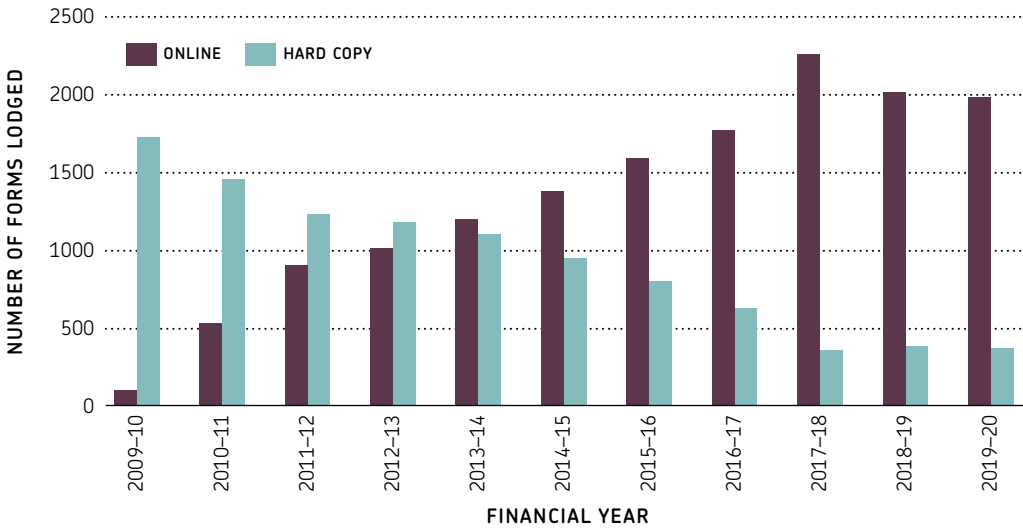


FIGURE 8. GENERAL REPORTS LODGED ONLINE COMPARED TO HARD COPY FROM 2009–10 TO 2019–20

Provide access to public registers

ORIC manages the Register of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Corporations and makes part of it—contact details and certain documents about each corporation such as financial reports and regulatory actions by ORIC—publicly accessible on the web. We also manage and publish online the Register of Disqualified Officers. Maintaining and providing access to these information resources is a highly valued service provided by ORIC.

In 2019–20 there were:

- 128,652 website visits to search the public register—which is 15.2 per cent more than the previous year (111,677 sessions). Around 57 per cent of all visitors to the ORIC website end up on a corporation search result page.
- 446 visits to the Register of Disqualified Officers.

	15–16	16–17	17–18	18–19	19–20
Public Register	87,271	91,180	103,588	111,677	128,652
Register of Disqualified Officers		599	436	424	446

Note: the 2019–20 figures are extrapolated to compensate for a blackout in tracking of web traffic from 7 August to 17 November 2019.

SUPPORTING

The registrar's functions include supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander corporations to succeed and promoting good governance.

Provide corporate governance training

ORIC delivers corporate governance training to corporations that are either registered under the CATSI Act or planning to be. The training supports good governance and works to:

- build knowledge and skills among the directors, staff and members who participate in the programs
- increase the efficiency and accountability of the directors and staff of corporations
- ultimately, strengthen Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

Training is delivered by ORIC staff and external contractors, most of whom are Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Scheduled courses are listed on the ORIC website at oric.gov.au/training with an online form to apply to participate. Customised training, adapted to the individual needs of corporations, is also available on request. The registrar encourages directors, members and staff of corporations to apply for corporate governance training. The range of courses on offer this year was:

- Introduction to Corporate Governance (ICG)—a 3-day workshop
- 2-day Governance Workshop—a compressed form of the ICG
- Certificate IV in Business (Governance)—delivered in 4 one-week blocks
- corporation-specific training (CST)—tailored to the particular needs and circumstances of corporations that request training
- Understanding Finances—a pilot one-day program developed to meet the significant demand for training about managing and reporting on corporation finances.

ORIC also offers a Diploma of Business (Governance) but it was not offered this year.

In March 2020, ORIC's training program was halted due to the unacceptable risk of spreading Covid-19, and resources were diverted to supporting corporations to hold online meetings and to early-stage development of online learning materials.

In 2019–20 we delivered training to 513 participants from 224 corporations. There were 44 workshops in total (2 Certificate IV; 3 Introduction to Corporate Governance workshops; 8 2-day Governance Workshops, 23 corporation-specific workshops and 8 Understanding Finances workshops). Eighty per cent of participants reported a significant increase in their understanding of corporate governance.

TABLE 8. PARTICIPATION IN TRAINING—5 YEARS

	TARGET	2015–16	2016–17	2017–18	2018–19	2019–20
Number of participants	1000	865	943	1058	880	513
Number of corporations	162	208	260	254	276	224
Participants that reported a significant or very significant increase in corporate governance knowledge	90%	88.15%	92.1%	97.42%	84%	80%

FIGURE 9. PARTICIPATION IN ALL TRAINING—5 YEARS

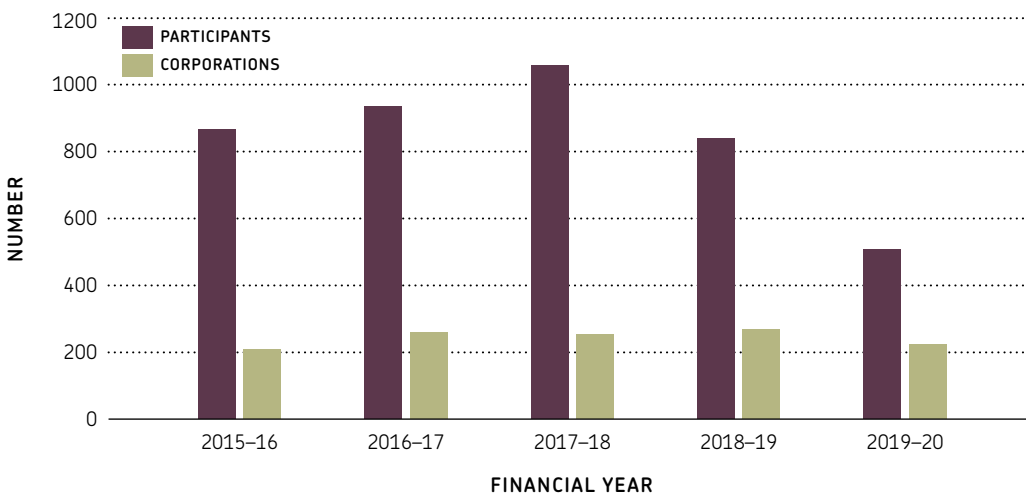
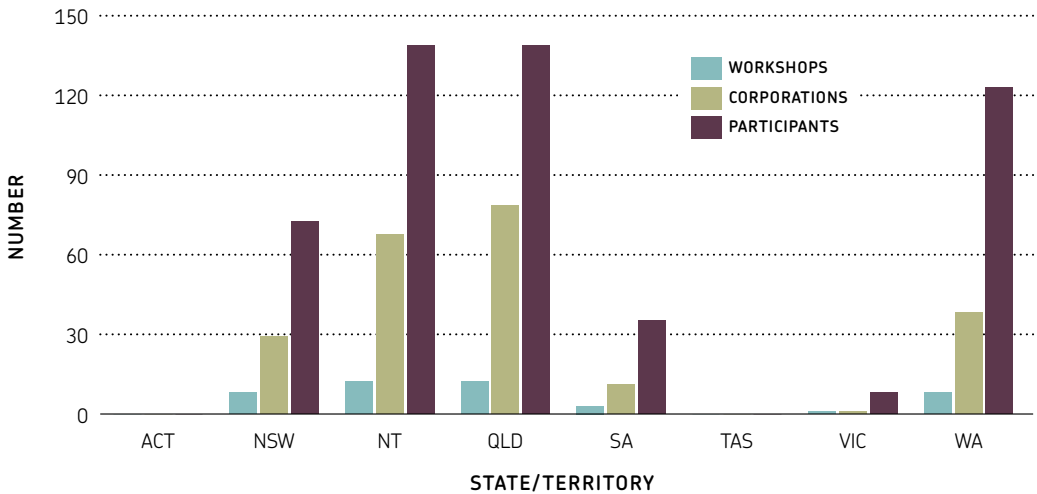


FIGURE 10. ALL TRAINING COURSES BY STATE AND TERRITORY



TRAINING LOCATIONS

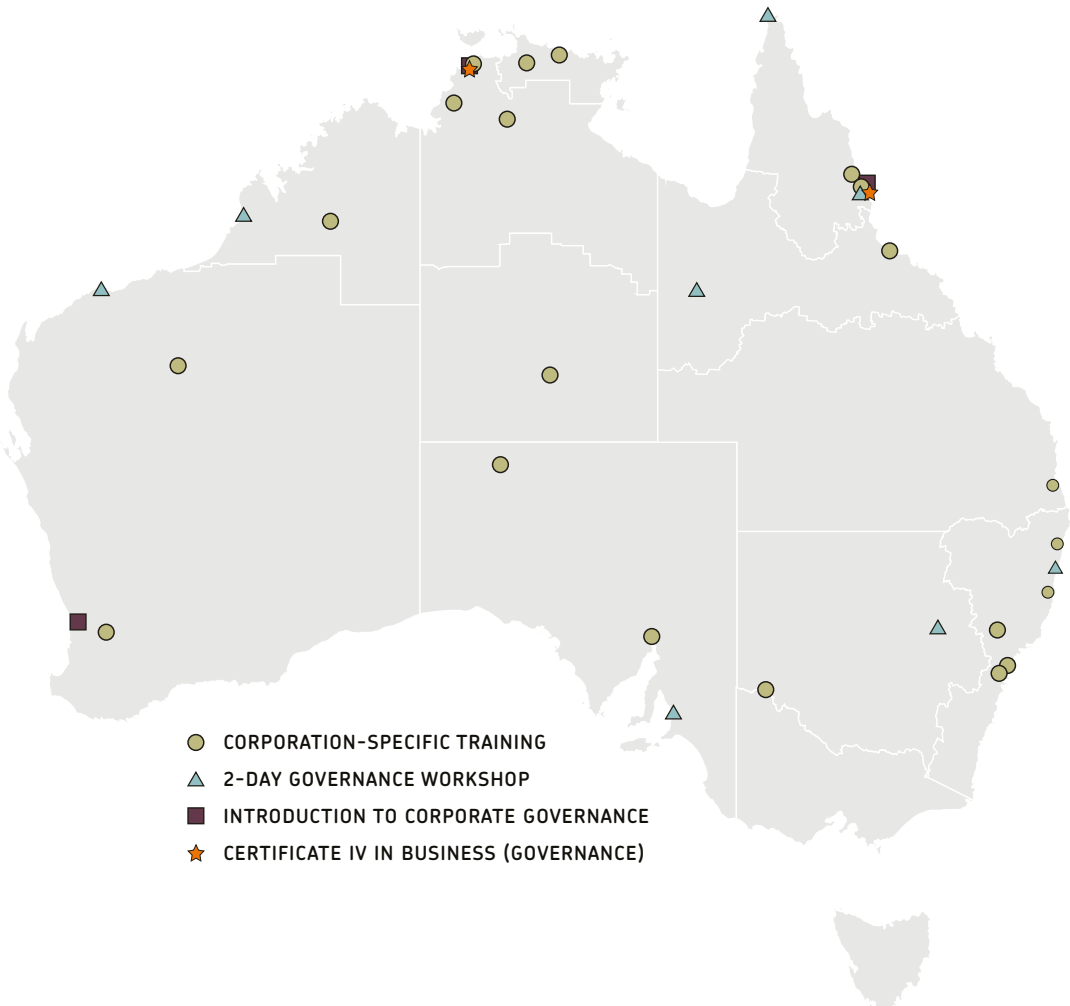
Every year as part of our annual planning for training activities we analyse a range of factors including:

- attendance and retention rates for previous training workshops
- cost-effectiveness
- demand/requests for training
- emerging regulatory risks, priorities and issues.

This year, ORIC continued its focused delivery of Introduction to Corporate Governance workshops in major urban locations and 2-day Governance Workshops in regional and remote locations.

Training was concentrated in Queensland and Northern Territory. They both had the most workshops (12) and the most participants (138). Queensland had the most corporations involved in training (78).

PARTICIPANTS IN GOVERNANCE TRAINING FOR DELEGATES AT A FIRST NATIONS MEDIA CONFERENCE, 'CONVERGE', IN ALICE SPRINGS, 27 NOVEMBER 2019

FIGURE 11. LOCATIONS OF ALL TRAINING PROVIDED

INTRODUCTION TO CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

The Introduction to Corporate Governance (ICG) workshop opens a clear pathway to best-practice corporate governance. It introduces key concepts and principles and invites participants to apply the ideas and practices to their own corporations. The ICG is the pre-requisite for the Certificate IV in Business (Governance).

ORIC delivered 3 ICG workshops across Australia in 2019–20. A total of 78 people, representing 49 corporations, participated.

TABLE 9. ICG WORKSHOPS

DATE	LOCATION	STATE/ TERRITORY	NO. OF CORPORATIONS	NO. OF PARTICIPANTS
20–22 August	Perth	WA	15	27
3–5 September	Darwin	NT	16	22
17–19 March	Cairns	Qld	18	29
TOTAL			49	78

2-DAY GOVERNANCE WORKSHOP

We developed the 2-day Governance Workshop for corporations in remote regions, as well as members who are unable to leave home for an extended period. The program is a condensed form of the ICG. Generally, the workshops take place in community locations and are run by ORIC’s regional officers, with sensitivity to cultural protocols and ways of learning.

In 2019–20 ORIC delivered 2-day Governance Workshops in 8 regional and remote locations, as listed in the table below. A total of 130 people, representing 67 corporations, participated.

TABLE 10. 2-DAY GOVERNANCE WORKSHOPS

DATE	LOCATION	STATE/ TERRITORY	NO. OF CORPORATIONS	NO. OF PARTICIPANTS
14–15 August	Dubbo	NSW	4	8
17–18 September	Karratha	WA	3	16
24–25 September	Adelaide	SA	9	27
9–10 October	Mount Isa	Qld	11	16
15–16 October	Cairns	Qld	10	17
22–23 October	Broome	WA	3	9
6–7 November	Coffs Harbour	NSW	12	19
26–27 November	Thursday Island	Qld	15	18
TOTAL			67	130

ACCREDITED TRAINING

To cater for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who want to extend their corporate governance knowledge and management skills, in 2019–20 ORIC ran 2 accredited training courses in business governance. Both were the Certificate IV, in Darwin and Cairns.

Students from 4 states (Queensland, Northern Territory, South Australia and Western Australia) travelled to Darwin for the 4 blocks of training and in September, 12 students from 11 corporations were awarded a Certificate IV in Business (Governance).

Students from Queensland and New South Wales travelled to Cairns for the 4 blocks of training and in October, 14 students from 12 corporations were awarded a Certificate IV in Business (Governance).

GRADUATES CELEBRATING
THE CERT IV IN BUSINESS
GOVERNANCE, CAIRNS.



CORPORATION-SPECIFIC TRAINING

Corporation-specific training (CST) workshops are usually held at a corporation's premises or a central venue within a community. The training is conducted over one or 2 days and is adapted to meet a corporation's needs. The standard workshops are:

- rule book design and re-design
- corporation/post-administration governance training
- corporation support and mentoring.

In 2019–20 ORIC delivered 23 CST workshops for:

- 40 corporations
- 194 participants.

TABLE 11. CST WORKSHOPS

DATE	LOCATION	STATE	NUMBER OF CORPORATIONS	NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS
13 July	Cairns	Qld	1	3
25 July	Woodcupildiya	NT	1	6
30 July	Katherine	NT	4	9
17 September	Maningrida	NT	2	12
1 October	Kempsey	NSW	1	5
17 October	Brisbane	QLD	3	9
30 October	Fitzroy Crossing	WA	1	34
30 October	Kariong	NSW	1	5
21 November	Gunbalanya	NT	1	13
27 November	Alice Springs	NT	9	16
28 January	Musswellbrook	NSW	1	4
31 January	Maclean	NSW	1	2
11 February	Maningrida	NT	1	12
11 February	Ropes Crossing	NSW	1	9
11 February	Kaltijiti (Fregon)	SA	1	4
15 February	Townsville	QLD	1	10
18 February	Newman	WA	1	9
27 February	Malak	NT	1	3
6 March	Mildura	VIC	1	8
10 March	Mossman	QLD	1	6
11 March	Port Augusta	SA	1	4
11 March	Brookton	WA	2	5
14 March	Cairns	QLD	2	5
TOTAL			40	194

UNDERSTANDING FINANCES

Understanding Finances workshop:

- introduces participants to the duties and responsibilities of directors and other key people involved in financial management
- takes participants through several financial statements, how to read and understand them

PERFORMANCE
REPORTING

- invites participants to consider the process of developing a budget, and what is involved in reviewing and approving a budget
- describes and raises questions about financial reporting to the board of directors.

In 2019–20 ORIC delivered 8 workshops in 6 locations, to 84 people from 45 corporations.

TABLE 12. UNDERSTANDING FINANCES WORKSHOPS

DATE	LOCATION	STATE/ TERRITORY	NO. OF CORPORATIONS	NO. OF PARTICIPANTS
10 September	Cairns	Qld	3	7
10 September	Darwin	NT	9	14
12 September	Cairns	Qld	1	4
12 September	Darwin	NT	6	11
17 September	Alice Springs	NT	5	6
19 September	Port Macquarie	NSW	8	20
24 September	Perth	WA	7	9
26 September	Broome	WA	6	13
TOTAL			45	84

PARTICIPANTS IN GOVERNANCE TRAINING FOR DELEGATES AT A FIRST NATIONS MEDIA CONFERENCE, 'CONVERGE', IN ALICE SPRINGS, 27 NOVEMBER 2019



THE VALUE OF TRAINING IN CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

At the end of each training workshop we seek feedback from the participants, which we then use to improve the program and maintain its relevance to the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. One of the questions we ask is: What did you like best? Here's a selection of the responses from this year.

TWO-DAY GOVERNANCE WORKSHOP

The pace and capacity to ask questions, but with firm accountability to purpose of training. PARTICIPANT IN WA

Sharing, listening and working together. Sticking to the topic until satisfied. PARTICIPANT IN WA

Great participation, sharing, fun and real activities. Wonderful people and hospitality extended. Very suitable venue; attentive staff. PARTICIPANT IN NSW

INTRODUCTION TO CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

Getting an understanding of what we can expect PBC directors to know from completing this training. Great materials! PARTICIPANT IN WA

The financial information was covered well and helped me to better understand how to interpret reports, what reports directors should be requesting and where can look for red flags. PARTICIPANT IN NT

CORPORATION-SPECIFIC TRAINING

A lot of information delivered in an easy to absorb manner PARTICIPANT IN QLD

Clear and concise diagrams and meaningful activities PARTICIPANT IN NSW

The friendly nature of the trainer and the people's willingness to share PARTICIPANT IN NSW

The way it was done—delivered like a 'yarning' session—excellent PARTICIPANT IN WA

UNDERSTANDING FINANCES

Enjoyed workshop and a better understanding about finance, budget and reports PARTICIPANT IN WA

Great course, learned a lot PARTICIPANT IN NT

Publish guidance

ORIC provides corporations and other interested people with a wealth of guidance on the CATSI Act and good governance, including:

- information on starting and running a corporation
- fact sheets
- guides to legislation and reporting
- newsletters
- templates for:
 - rule books
 - a register of members
 - application forms for members and directors
 - meeting notices, minutes and resolutions.

The guidance offers practical advice and tips on various topics. Materials are developed or revised throughout the year in response to trends and issues in the sector identified through complaints about corporations, inquiries, examinations, training activities, local officer engagement, and common issues with lodgement of forms and other information. Guidance is provided in both digital and printed formats.

As a general indicator of demand for general information and guidance, we estimate that during 2019–20, 109,809 people visited the website 226,101 times. We estimate there were over 40,000 downloads of information documents and templates during the year. The figure recorded was 38,342 however that does not include downloads that occurred from 9 August to 17 November 2019 when there was a blackout on data analytics on the site. The most popular file downloaded was the template Word document *The rule book condensed* which was downloaded 1865 times. The next most popular resource was the template for a register of members and former members—975 downloads.

FACT SHEETS

This year ORIC split one fact sheet, ‘Complaints involving corporations’ into two: ‘Making a complaint about a corporation’ and ‘Handling complaints’, so we now have 21 titles in our core fact sheet series. We also provide a range of other information sheets that offer guidance on specific matters such as rules required for gift funds. This year, the most downloaded fact sheet was ‘A corporation's rule book: what you need to know’.

TABLE 13. MOST DOWNLOADED FACT SHEETS FROM ORIC.GOV.AU

FACT SHEET TITLE	TOTAL DOWNLOADS	UNIQUE DOWNLOADS
A corporation's rule book: what you need to know	1018	813
Duties of directors and other officers	873	698
Becoming a corporation member	551	443
Complaints involving corporations*	479	362
The CATSI Act and the Corporations Act—some differences	378	315

***Note:** This fact sheet was replaced in June 2020 with two others.

POLICY STATEMENTS

ORIC publishes policy statements to provide guidance on the registrar's interpretation of or clarity on certain aspects of the CATSI Act.

In 2019–20 ORIC revised the following policy statements:

- PS-12: Registers and use and disclosure of information held by the registrar (18 October 2019)
- PS-15: Privacy (13 January 2020)
- PS-11: The Indigeneity requirement (21 February 2020)

Provide information and advice

CALL CENTRE AND OTHER INQUIRIES

ORIC operates a call centre offering information and advice to corporations and others interested in the governance and regulation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander corporations. Calls are free from fixed line phones. ORIC aims to immediately answer all calls recognising that many callers in remote or very remote regions have limited telephone access or mobile phone coverage and long wait times or a call back are not viable options.

In 2019–20, 11,708 calls were made to ORIC's freecall number, 1800 622 431, an increase of 21.8 per cent relative to the previous year.

PERFORMANCE REPORTING

TABLE 14. CALLS TO 1800 622 431

MEASURE	2016–17	2017–18	2018–19	2019–20
Total calls presented	8702	8497	11407	11708
Less calls re-presented to a more active phone line	274	596	1434	n/a
Total unique calls presented	8428	7901	9613	11708
—Calls answered by an ORIC officer	8261	7605	8567	8332
—Calls referred to voice mail during business hours	38	185	311	2463
—Calls presented but caller hung up before speaking	67	52	236	825
—Calls received after hours	62	59	499	88

In 2018–19, ORIC finalised 4134 inquiries from corporations and the public including requests for information, support and referrals.

TABLE 15. INQUIRIES FINALISED BY METHOD OF INQUIRY—5 YEARS

INQUIRY METHOD	2015–16	2016–17	2017–18	2018–19	2019–20
By phone	3051	3364	3224	3074	4665
In writing	1797	1892	989	1028	1023
In person	26	105	40	32	24
TOTAL	4874	5361	4253	4134	5712

Provide support services

LAWHELP

ORIC created LawHelp to provide access to pro bono legal assistance to:

- not-for-profit Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander corporations
- other entities seeking to transfer their registration to the CATSI Act.

Corporations can access a wide variety of legal assistance, such as tax issues, employment contracts and intellectual property rights.

When we receive an application for LawHelp, we review it for eligibility, then forward it to the independent LawHelp assessment

panel for action. In 2019–20, ORIC received 16 LawHelp applications, and:

- 4 were withdrawn or rejected by the assessment panel
- 1 was accepted but ultimately not referred to a law firm
- 11 were successfully referred to a law firm
- none were ongoing at 30 June.

FIGURE 12. NUMBER OF LAWHHELP APPLICATIONS RECEIVED BY STATE/TERRITORY—5 YEARS

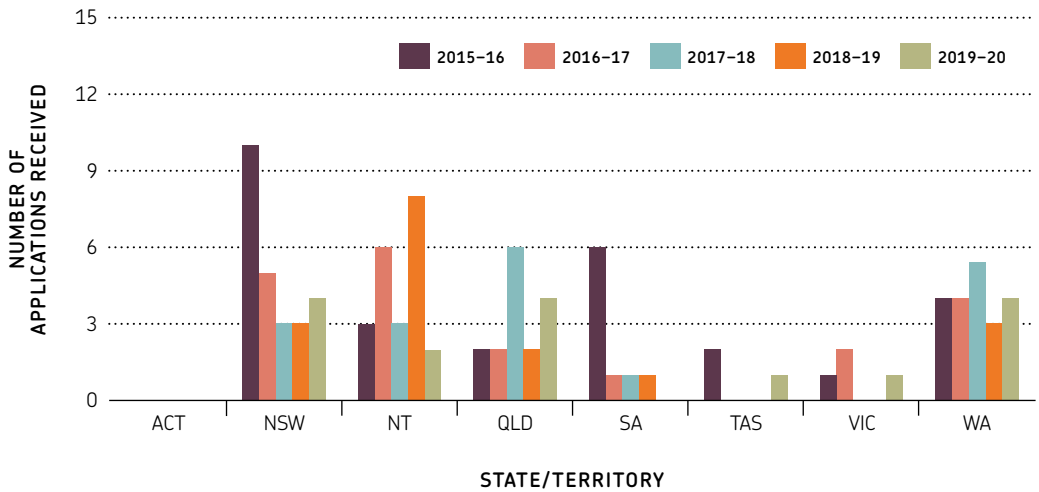
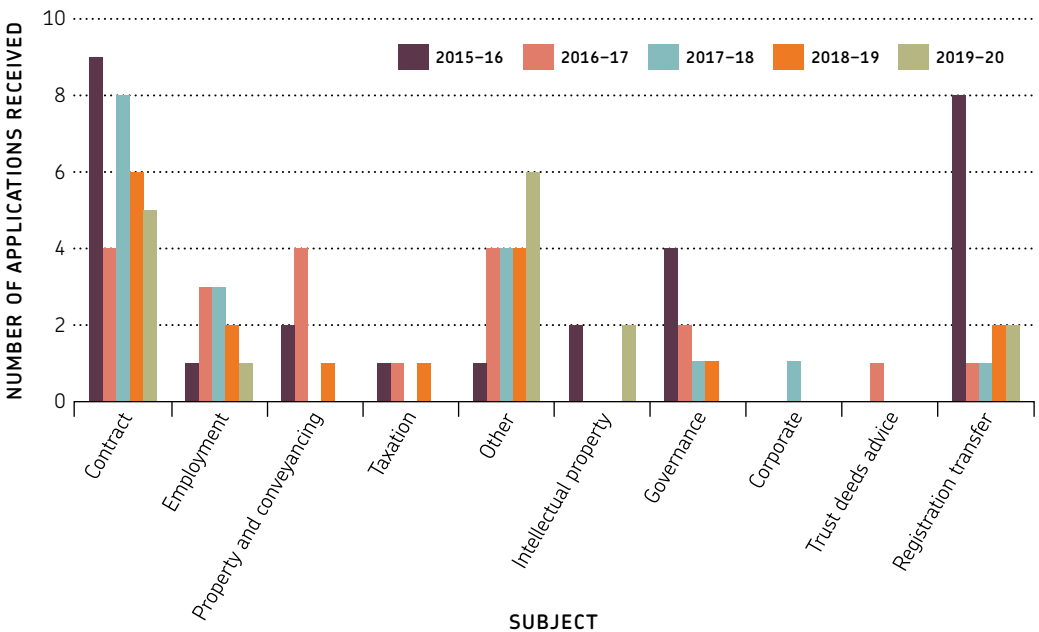


FIGURE 13. NUMBER OF LAWHHELP APPLICATIONS RECEIVED BY SUBJECT—5 YEARS



ORIC RECRUITMENT ASSISTANCE

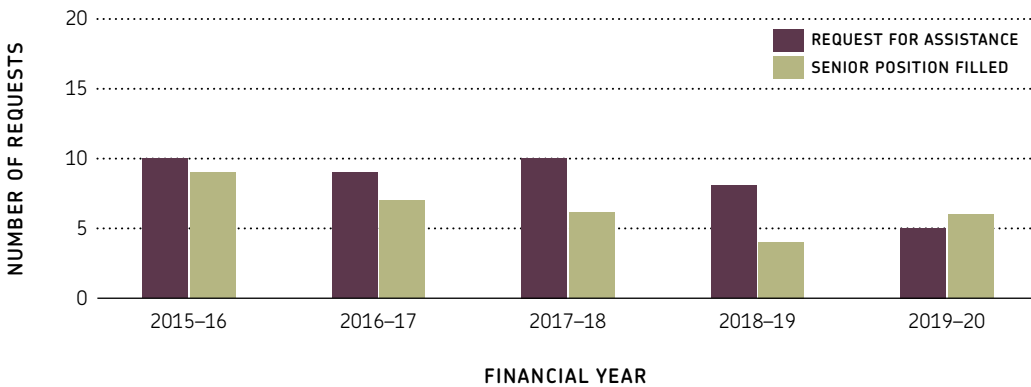
ORIC recruitment assistance (ORA) provides help and guidance through the process of recruiting to corporations to fill their senior positions. It encourages best practice—and helps build capacity—by supporting corporations to follow a clearly defined process with established guidelines.

The service is free to corporations (although they must meet their own advertising costs). Corporations also remain responsible for all decisions, including selecting the successful candidate and negotiating a suitable salary package.

In 2019–20 ORIC received a total of 5 requests through ORA, and carried forward 4 from the previous year. Six senior staff positions were filled in this period. Note that:

- In the case of 3 positions filled, the recruitment assistance was requested in the previous year
- 1 of the previous year's requests was withdrawn.
- 2 recruitment processes remained in progress at 30 June.

FIGURE 14. NUMBER OF JOB ASSISTANCE REQUESTS ACCEPTED THROUGH ORA AND SENIOR POSITIONS FILLED IN THE LAST 5 YEARS



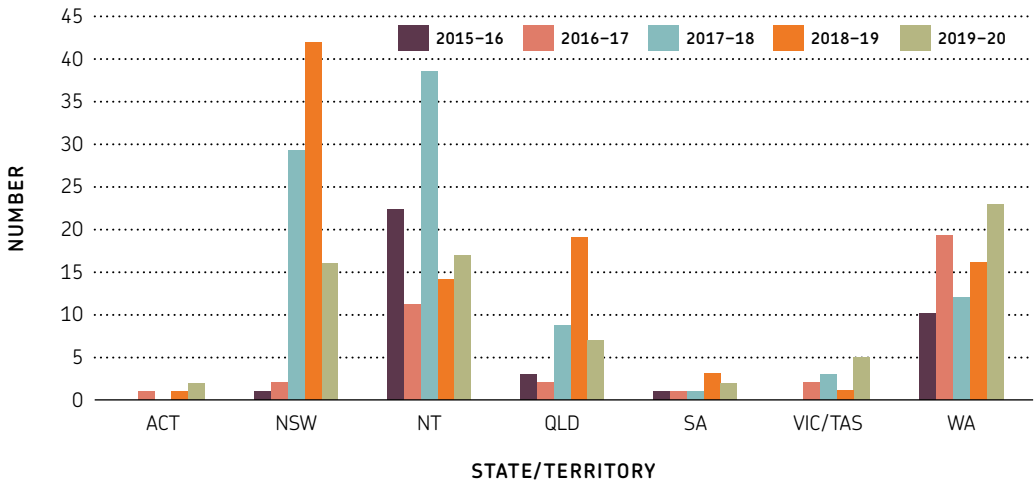
Note: The outcome of requests for recruitment activities is not always the position being filled—for example, some corporations withdraw from the recruitment activity part way through and some determine that there were no suitable applicants.

CORPORATION JOBS

From 2009 ORIC has offered corporations the chance to advertise their employment vacancies free of charge on the ORIC website. Since then, 661 corporation jobs have been advertised.

In 2019–20, Corporation jobs advertised 72 job vacancies.

FIGURE 15. CORPORATION JOBS ADVERTISED ON THE ORIC WEBSITE BY STATE/TERRITORY, IN THE LAST 5 YEARS



INDEPENDENT DIRECTORY

Independentdirectory continues to have modest uptake. During 2019–20:

- no individuals registered as candidates for directorship positions
- 1 more corporation set up an account to advertise a directorship or other position
- 31 directorships have been advertised through the site (since its inception) to 30 June 2020.

MONITORING

Promote timely lodgement of annual reports

The CATSI Act emphasises the importance of compliance and reporting as a mechanism to improve transparency and accountability. Not only is access to corporation information important, that information needs to be timely so that members, communities, creditors and government agencies are confident that the public Register of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Corporations is accurate and up-to-date. This is why ORIC has a strong focus on maintaining high compliance rates with reporting obligations.

Reporting requirements vary according to the registered size of a corporation—large, medium or small—and its income. Unless they are granted an exemption (either from reporting at all or for an extension of time), corporations are required under the CATSI Act to lodge their annual reports with the registrar within 6 months of the end of the financial year; 2018–19 reports were due on 31 December 2019.

REPORTING COMPLIANCE, NATIONAL

The number of corporations required to prepare and lodge 2018–19 reports between 1 July and 31 December 2019 was 3058. This number is different to the total number of registered corporations (3357 as at 30 June 2020) as it's based on corporations registered at 31 December 2018 and excludes corporations under liquidation or being deregistered.

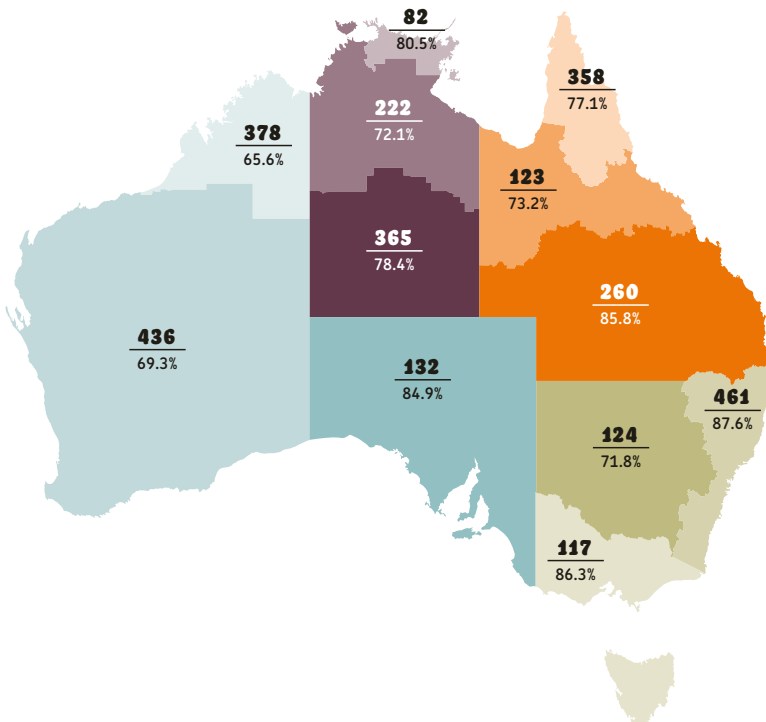
Of the 3058 corporations required to lodge reports for the 2018–19 reporting period, 2357 met the requirements.

REPORTING COMPLIANCE BY REGION

TABLE 16. REPORTING COMPLIANCE BY REGION AS AT 30 JUNE

REGION	NUMBER REQUIRED TO REPORT	COMPLIANT	% COMPLIANT
Eastern New South Wales	461	404	87.6%
Victoria & Tasmania	117	101	86.3%
South Queensland	260	223	85.8%
South Australia	132	112	84.9%
Arnhem Land & Groote Eylandt	82	66	80.5%
Central Australia	365	286	78.4%
Far North Queensland	358	276	77.1%
Gulf & North Queensland	123	90	73.2%
Top End & Tiwi Islands	222	160	72.1%
Western NSW	124	89	71.8%
Greater Western Australia	436	302	69.3%
Kimberley	378	248	65.6%
Total	3058	2357	77.1%

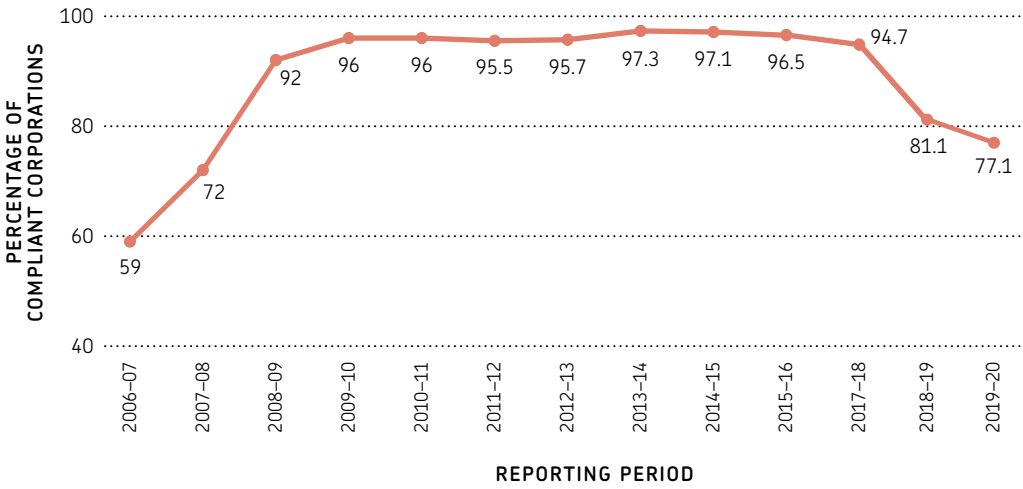
FIGURE 16. REPORTING COMPLIANCE BY REGION AS AT 30 JUNE



HISTORY OF REPORTING COMPLIANCE

For the first 10 years of the operation of the CATSI Act, reporting compliance rose from 59 per cent to a peak of 97.3 per cent for the 2013–14 year. The compliance rate for the last 2 reporting periods has slipped back, this year to 77.1 per cent.

FIGURE 17. REPORTING COMPLIANCE FOR ALL CORPORATIONS



The registrar devotes considerable resources to optimising corporations' compliance with their reporting obligations:

- **periodic reminders** and offers of guidance, by email, letter or telephone and through notices and messages on the registrar's website
- **follow-up of key groups and specific sectors**, such as RNTBCs and corporations helped by bigger corporations operating in remote regions
- **face-to-face visits** by ORIC's regional officers, particularly to corporations in remote locations and outside metropolitan areas—regional officers helped to complete reports as well as to build capacity for the future
- **telephone reminders to newly registered corporations** reporting for the first time and to corporations that were late to lodge in the previous year
- **telephone outreach to corporations in breach**—ORIC staff identified corporations that for whatever reason did not submit their annual reports by the due date and, where appropriate, assisted them to complete
- **formal warning notices** were sent to corporations that were in breach and that failed to respond to reminders.

Assess complaints

Under the CATSI Act one of the functions of the registrar is to deal with complaints involving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander corporations. Complaints serve a very useful and important purpose. A complaint can be made by phone, email, fax or in person, and it is often the first indication of disharmony at a corporation and therefore the first sign that something may be starting to go wrong.

The registrar publishes on the ORIC website a statistical overview of complaints involving corporations every 6 months.

TABLE 17. COMPLAINTS INVOLVING CORPORATIONS—5 YEARS

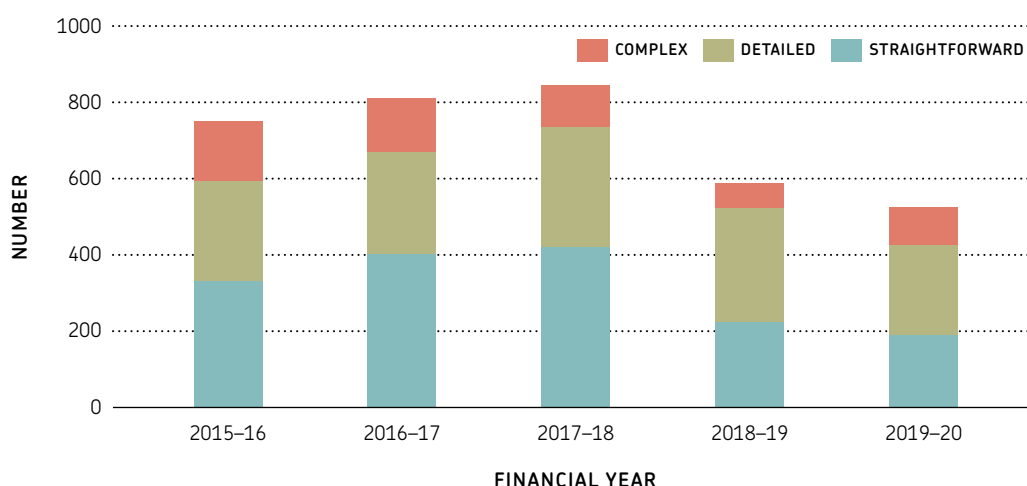
YEAR	NUMBER OF COMPLAINTS RECEIVED	PERCENTAGE INCREASE/ DECREASE IN COMPLAINTS RECEIVED OVER PREVIOUS YEAR	NUMBER OF COMPLAINTS FINALISED*
2015–16	751	-9.8%	748
2016–17	810	8.7%	827
2017–18	831	2.6%	823
2018–19	588	-29.24%	557
2019–20	523	-11.1%	556

***Note:** this figure includes complaints carried over from the previous year.

Of the complaints received during 2019–20 the top area of concern has persisted since 2016: the conduct of directors or breaches of directors, officers or employees' duties.

TABLE 18. NUMBER OF COMPLAINTS RECEIVED BY COMPLEXITY—5 YEARS

TYPE	2015–16	2016–17	2017–18	2018–19	2019–20
Straightforward	331	403	409	222	191
Detailed	261	266	291	299	235
Complex	159	141	131	67	97
Total	751	810	831	588	523

FIGURE 18. NUMBER OF COMPLAINTS RECEIVED BY COMPLEXITY—5 YEARS

This year, 36.5 per cent of the complaints ORIC received about corporations were ‘straightforward’. In many cases, this means that the person contacting ORIC simply wants an explanation of the rules, and some information about how they can resolve their concerns through the use of good governance practices. This is usually information on the use of the dispute resolution rule, or the rules setting out members’ rights to request a meeting, to replace directors, or to attend, speak and vote at general meetings. It may also be about a matter outside the registrar’s jurisdiction.

Where possible and appropriate, as part of its complaints-handling process ORIC also assists the subjects of complaints by providing:

- information about good corporate governance
- guidance on what constitutes a breach of the CATSI Act or a corporation’s rule book, and how to rectify the breach
- options that may help to resolve concerns raised in a complaint
- information to corporation members and directors on rights and responsibilities under a corporation’s rule book.

This year ORIC split one fact sheet, *Complaints involving corporations* into two: *Making a complaint about a corporation*, to assist people wanting to make a complaint, and *Handling complaints*, to help corporations make the best use possible of incoming information as well as manage complaints effectively. The registrar's policy statement, *PS-02: Complaints involving corporations*, is also a helpful document. All are available on the ORIC website.

Sometimes complainants allege fraud or misappropriation of funds at a corporation. Such allegations are taken very seriously but ORIC will always ask for evidence to support the claims. This is crucial—no case can be built or action taken if there is insufficient supporting evidence. Hearsay and suspicion alone is insufficient.

Manage disputes

The registrar treats all disputes sensitively and takes into consideration the culture and traditions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. With early intervention and careful management, a dispute can often be resolved and the damage minimised. A well-managed dispute can improve a corporation's resilience. As well as consulting with all parties involved and taking care to tailor responses to suit a corporation's particular needs, ORIC helps corporations build capacity to prevent disputes from flaring up.

In 2019–20 ORIC helped to resolve 7 disputes—compared to 15 in the previous year. Two were carried over from the previous year. Disputes by nature are complex. Three of the 7 disputes we helped to manage were within RNTBCs. Because they have the potential to cross into native title matters, which are outside the jurisdiction of ORIC, disputes within RNTBCs tend to be even more complex. The shortest case was just one day and the longest ran for 463 days. The average resolution time for disputes in 2019–20 was 110 days, up from the 13.6 days of the previous year.

Corporations are often very appreciative of the assistance ORIC staff provide during a dispute. ORIC responds to disputes in accordance with its *Case categorisation and prioritisation model*. Relevant circumstances include whether:

- the corporation receives Australian Government funding, holds land or native title, has a large number of members or has stopped functioning
- an Australian Government agency has requested help
- essential community services are at risk
- there is a broader public interest in resolving the dispute.

ORIC supports corporations in dispute by:

- listening and providing information—by telephone, email or face-to-face
- offering advisory opinions—a formal letter from the registrar giving an opinion about how the CATSI Act and the corporation’s rule book applies to the matter
- facilitating small group problem-solving sessions and workshops to manage the dispute
- calling, attending and chairing general or directors’ meetings
- recommending rule book amendments to reduce the likelihood of disputes and to provide an effective dispute resolution process.

See also the fact sheet, [Dispute resolution](#), and the policy statement, [PS-22: Disputes involving corporations](#).

Conduct examinations

In 2019–20 ORIC started the year with 22 examinations carried over from 2018–19 and started a further 30. As at 30 June 2020 43 examinations had been finalised, leaving 9 on hand.

The registrar has the power under the CATSI Act to prompt an examination of a corporation’s books and records. The purpose of examinations is to assess the standards of corporations’ governance and the health of their finances. An examination may include checks that a corporation is:

- operating in accordance with the CATSI Act and its rule book
- keeping up-to-date financial records and managing its finances in line with its policies, procedures and delegations
- properly managing any conflicts of interest and benefits to related parties.

Each year the registrar conducts a routine program of examinations. Additional examinations are initiated by the registrar in response to potential governance issues raised about a corporation.

Examinations are an element of the CATSI Act, designed to proactively protect the interests of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities. They perform an important function in detecting early signs of trouble.

An examination can confirm that a corporation is managing its corporation’s affairs effectively, and the governance of the corporation is to a high standard.

In a small number of cases, an examination is undertaken for the specific purpose of financial analysis and solvency assessment. In those cases, the outcome is usually a report to the corporation.

For more information see the policy statement [PS-25: Examinations](#) on the ORIC website.

During 2019–20 the registrar started 30 examinations and completed 43. Twenty-two of those completed were carried over from 2018–19. As at 30 June 2020 there were 9 examinations still in progress.

TABLE 19. EXAMINATIONS COMPLETED BY STATE/TERRITORY

STATE/TERRITORY	CORPORATIONS
Australian Capital Territory	0
New South Wales	6
Northern Territory	14
Queensland	8
South Australia	5
Tasmania	0
Victoria	4
Western Australia	6
Total	43

In 2019–20, examinations were concentrated as follows:

- 30 per cent were of corporations in health services and health-related programs
- 21 per cent were of corporations that manage land, operate as an RNTBC or provide native title services
- 19 per cent were of corporations in the housing sector.

TABLE 20. EXAMINATIONS COMPLETED IN 2019–20, BY ACTIVITIES

ACTIVITIES OF CORPORATIONS	EXAMINATIONS
Health services and programs	13
Housing	8
Education, employment and training, child care	7
Community services	5
Community stores and retail shops	5
RNTBCs	5
Land management, cultural heritage and native title services	4
Communications (radio, broadcasting and languages)	2
Royalties	2
Art and cultural centres	1
Drug and alcohol rehabilitation services	1
Family violence and legal services	1
Mine site work and grant administration	1
Sport and recreation	1
Youth and community centre	1

Note: The total number of examinations in this table is higher than the total number of examinations finalised in the year because 11 examined corporations operate in multiple sectors.

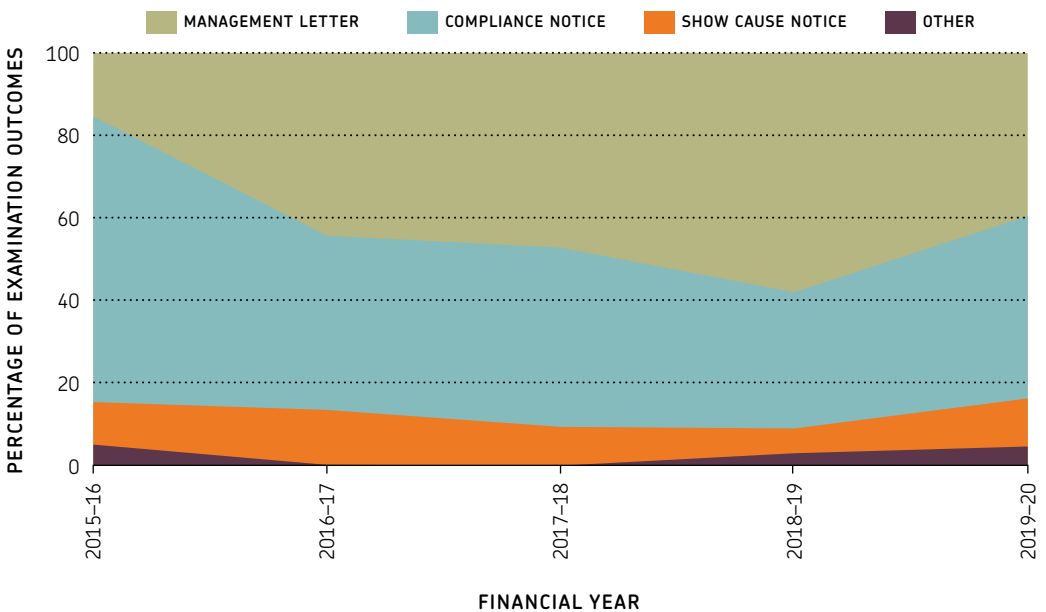
Of the 45 corporations where examinations were completed during 2019–20:

- 17 corporations (39.5 per cent) were found to be operating well so a management letter was issued and no further action was required
- 19 corporations (42.2 per cent) needed to address matters set out in a compliance notice under section 439-20 of the CATSI Act
- 5 corporations (11.1 per cent) were found to have serious issues, and referred for a show cause process to explain why they should not be placed under special administration
- 1 corporation (2.2 per cent) was referred to the Investigations and Prosecutions section for further review
- 1 corporation (2.2 per cent) was issued a report as the result of a financial analysis and solvency assessment.

TABLE 21. OUTCOME OF EXAMINATIONS FOR THE PAST 5 YEARS

EXAMINATION OUTCOME	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
Management letter	6	19	25	38	17
Compliance notice	27	19	23	22	19
Show cause notice	4	6	5	4	5
Other	2	1	0	2	2
Total	39	45	53	66	43

FIGURE 19. OUTCOMES OF EXAMINATIONS AS A PERCENTAGE OF ALL EXAMINATIONS



Conduct investigations

Potential breaches of the law, including the CATSI Act, are brought to the registrar’s attention in a number of ways, including from:

- complaints or inquiries from members of the public
- referrals from funding agencies (including other government departments), other regulators or the police
- statutory reports from examiners, auditors and external administrators (liquidators, special administrators, voluntary administrators and receivers)
- the registrar’s staff.

The registrar carefully considers how to respond to all potential breaches of the law, but does not undertake a formal investigation of every complaint or matter that is brought to our attention.

In deciding whether or not to conduct a formal investigation, the registrar considers resources, the available evidence, the public interest, and how recently the alleged breach occurred. This is referred to as an assessment. If the available information suggests a breach that is serious, ongoing, and provable, the registrar may investigate.

A formal investigation is the first step toward initiating (or ruling out) prosecution.

The year started with 8 investigations in progress from the previous year. During 2019–20 a further 5 investigations began. By the end of the year, ORIC had concluded 5 investigations, 4 of which resulted in the referral of a brief of evidence to the Commonwealth Director of Public Prosecutions (CDPP). Of those, 3 were for corporations in breach of their annual reporting obligations. In the 5th case, no further action was recommended.

As at 30 June 2020, 8 investigations remained in progress.

SEEKING REMEDY AND DETTERRING

Call corporation meetings

Under Part 10-2 of the CATSI Act, the registrar may convene a meeting to discuss a matter affecting a corporation, or call a general meeting or an annual general meeting. This kind of action may be in response to a request by members of the corporation, or because a scheduled meeting was not held, or for some other reason that the registrar believes warrants it. In such cases the registrar would either chair the meeting or authorise another person to be the chair.

In 2019–20 there were 3 registrar-initiated general meetings. In all 3 cases the purpose was to elect directors. In 2 cases the corporation's funding was at stake.

Issue compliance notices

When the registrar suspects that a corporation has some governance or financial issues, and often as a result of an examination, the registrar may send the corporation a compliance notice. The notice sets out the reasons for the suspected non-compliance, and directs the corporation to take action, within a specified timeframe. It provides valuable information to the corporation's members and other stakeholders (such as funding agencies and creditors) about the standards of corporate governance and financial management within a corporation at a given point in time.

Each notice is made available on the public Register of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Corporations.

In 2019–20 we issued 21 compliance notices and finalised 28. New notices all arose from an examination. Eleven were carried over from the previous year, and 33 were ongoing as at 30 June 2020.

Commence special administrations

Special administrations are a form of external administration unique to the CATSI Act. They allow the registrar to provide proactive regulatory assistance to corporations experiencing financial or governance difficulties. The special administrator works in the best interests of the corporation and its members.

Special administrations are different to receiverships, liquidations or voluntary administrations under the *Corporations Act 2001*, as the latter are usually driven by the interests of creditors.

The grounds on which the registrar can decide to place a corporation under special administration are outlined in section 487-5(1) of the CATSI Act. The grounds are not restricted to insolvency or the inability to pay a debt.

The registrar appoints an independent, suitably qualified person (the special administrator) to work with a corporation to remedy any issues and to restore it to good corporate health as soon as possible. At the end of their appointment, the special administrator returns full control of the corporation to its members.

For more information, see the registrar's policy statement, [PS-20: Special administrations](#).

In 2019–20:

- 6 special administrations **continued** from the previous year
- 9 special administrations **started**
- 6 special administrations **completed**, with 5 handed back to members' control and 1 placed into liquidation
- 9 special administrations remained **in progress** as at 30 June 2020.

One of the 9 new special administrations in 2019–20 was started after the directors wrote to the registrar asking for the appointment of a special administrator.

Before any corporation is placed under special administration, the registrar accords a period of natural justice. The corporation is issued a notice to show cause as to why it should not be put into special administration. The corporation is given a reasonable time to respond to the notice.

In 2019–20, 7 corporations were required to show cause why a special administrator should not be appointed to manage the corporation. The activity leading to a show cause notice being issued is not always an examination:

- 5 of the 7 notices issued during 2019–20 were based on examination findings
- 1 was issued after directors wrote to the registrar asking for the appointment of a special administrator, and
- 1 was issued as a result of solvency concerns within the corporation.

Of the 7 corporations asked to show cause, 6 were ultimately placed under special administration.

The aim of a special administration is usually to achieve one or both of the following:

- restoration of **good operational order**—usually after a corporation has not complied with the CATSI Act or its rule book, has experienced financial difficulties or there has been a dispute
- a **restructure**—usually after the directors or members have asked the registrar to intervene to improve governance standards or organisational structures.

Six special administrations ended during 2019–20. Of these:

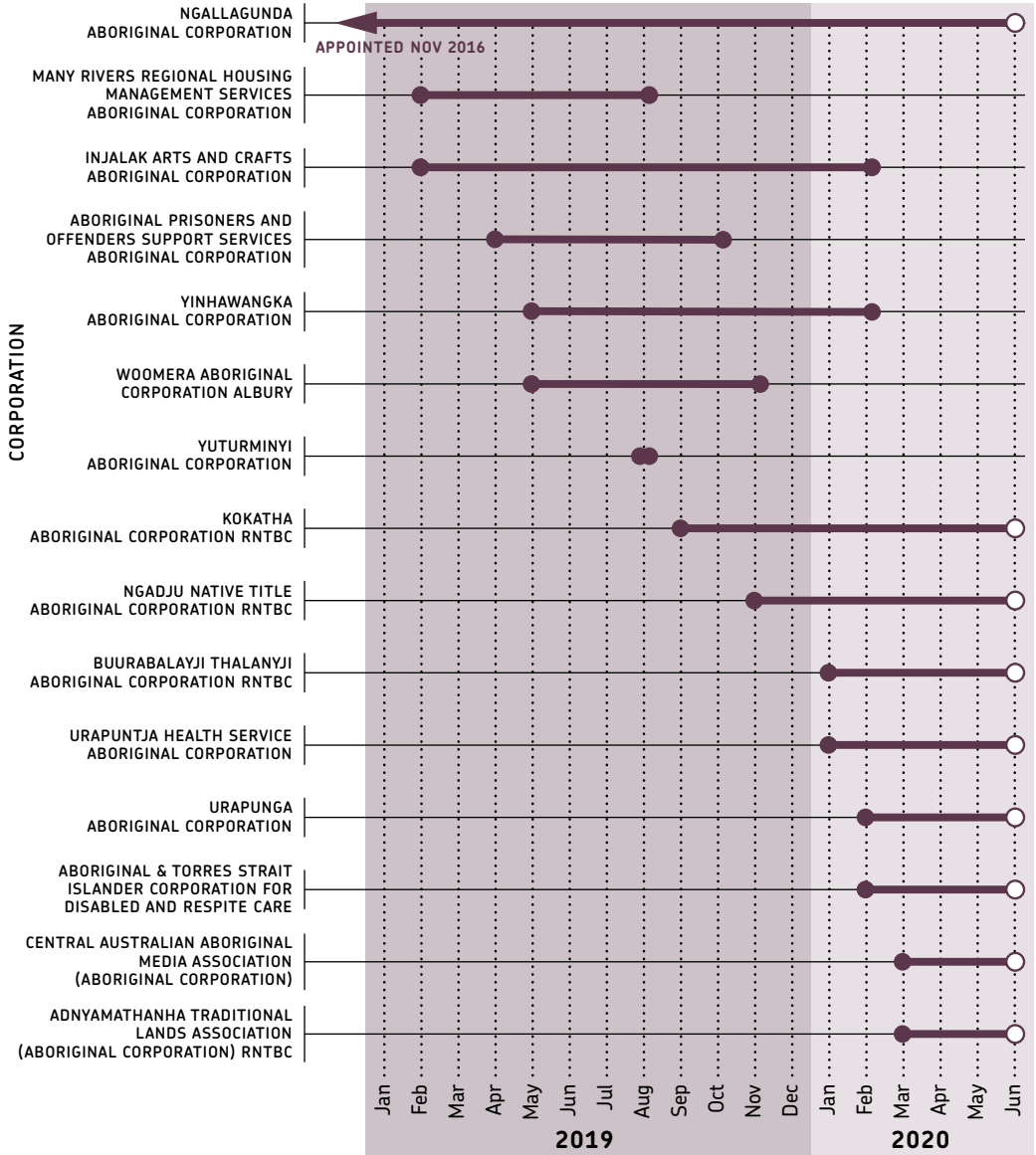
- 5 were completed within 6 months, in line with ORIC’s key performance indicator
- the average time for completion was 6 months and 15 days
- in 5 cases a successful business turnaround was achieved that is, the corporation was handed back to members’ control
- in 1 case a liquidator was appointed.

As at 30 June 2019, 9 special administrations remained in progress.

PERFORMANCE
REPORTING**TABLE 22.** CORPORATIONS UNDER SPECIAL ADMINISTRATION IN 2019–20

DATE APPOINTED	CORPORATION, SPECIAL ADMINISTRATOR(S)	STATUS AS AT 30/6/2020	DATE ENDED OR DUE
8 Nov 2016	Ngallagunda Aboriginal Corporation, Stuart Reid	In progress	Due to end 31 Jul 2020
11 Feb 2019	Many Rivers Regional Housing Management Services Aboriginal Corporation, Peter McQuoid	Ended	9 Aug 2019
21 Feb 2019	Injalak Arts and Crafts Aboriginal Corporation, Jack James and Paula Smith	Ended	19 Feb 2020
5 Apr 2019	Aboriginal Prisoners and Offenders Support Services Aboriginal Corporation, Jack James and Paula Smith	Ended	2 Oct 2019
16 May 2019	Yinhawangka Aboriginal Corporation, Michael Shanahan and Rob Brauer	Ended	21 Feb 2020
27 May 2019	Woomera Aboriginal Corporation Albury, Andrew Boucher	Ended	29 Nov 2019
8 Aug 2019	Yuturminy Aboriginal Corporation, Dayna Lister	Ended	9 Aug 2019
23 Sep 2019	Kokatha Aboriginal Corporation RNTBC, Peter McQuoid	In progress	Due to end 10 Jul 2020
11 Nov 2019	Ngadju Native Title Aboriginal Corporation RNTBC, Jack James and Paula Smith	In progress	Due to end 31 Jul 2020
13 Jan 2020	Buurabalayji Thalanyji Aboriginal Corporation RNTBC, Peter Saunders	In progress	Due to end 17 Jul 2020
28 Jan 2020	Urapuntja Health Service Aboriginal Corporation, Thomas Cameron and Leah Cameron	In progress	Due to end 10 Jul 2020
3 Feb 2020	Urapunga Aboriginal Corporation, Andrew Bowcher and Tim Gumbleton	In progress	Due to end 7 Aug 2020
24 Feb 2020	Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Corporation for Disabled and Respite Care, Neil Michel and Mark O'Shea	In progress	Due to end 24 Jul 2020
9 Mar 2020	Central Australian Aboriginal Media Association (Aboriginal Corporation), Jack James and Paula Smith	In progress	Due to end 25 Sep 2020
25 Mar 2020	Adnyamathanha Traditional Lands Association (Aboriginal Corporation) RNTBC, Bevan Mailman and Brian Bero	In progress	Due to end 25 Sep 2020

FIGURE 20. SPECIAL ADMINISTRATIONS IN PROGRESS DURING 2019-20



COMMUNICATIONS WITH MEMBERS OF CORPORATIONS UNDER SPECIAL ADMINISTRATION

During the course of a special administration the registrar requires a special administrator to keep members and stakeholders informed. The special administrator needs to:

- explain the process of a special administration
- discuss necessary changes that must be made
- involve members in planning for the corporation's future.

To orchestrate the process, special administrators provide newsletters and hold community information meetings. They might also establish one or more advisory groups. ORIC supports the special administrator by checking the wording of notices, newsletters and nomination forms, and designing them in line with the corporation's own branding.

In 2019–20 ORIC helped produce 18 newsletters, 10 forms and 9 meeting notices.

Seek criminal and civil penalties

As part of its regulatory approach, ORIC may elect to commence civil proceedings for breaches of the CATSI Act. In appropriate cases ORIC will also prepare and refer a brief of evidence to the CDPP for consideration of criminal proceedings. The decision to prosecute alleged criminal offences under the CATSI Act is made by the CDPP in accordance with the *Prosecution Policy of the Commonwealth*.

ORIC publishes a summary of its [prosecution outcomes](#) on its website.

In 2019–20 the registrar referred 4 matters to the CDPP for possible criminal proceedings. Three were for minor regulatory prosecutions of corporations that failed to lodge reports for the 2017–18 year and one was for a major criminal prosecution. There were no referrals of briefs for civil action.

CRIMINAL MATTERS

Criminal matters finalised

Two minor criminal matters were finalised in 2019–20.

Prosecutions for failing to lodge reports

During 2019–20, the registrar finalised prosecutions against 2 corporations for failing to lodge their 2016–17 reports by the required time. Both cases were withdrawn.

Criminal matters in progress

As at 30 June 2020 there was one major criminal matter in progress.

**BRETT EVANS,
CEO OF MIRNDIYAN GUNUNA ABORIGINAL CORPORATION**

It is alleged that between 23 September 2011 and 25 September 2014, Mr Brett Iven Evans, former chief executive officer (CEO) of Mirndiyan Gununa Aboriginal Corporation (Mirndiyan), used his position as CEO to carry out misleading deals to sell Aboriginal artworks including those by preeminent artist, the late Sally Gabori. The deals ultimately benefited him personally.

Mirndiyan, formerly known as Woomera Aboriginal Corporation, was incorporated on 10 August 1983 under the *Aboriginal Councils and Associations Act, 1976* and later transferred to the CATSI Act.

Situated in the remote Gulf of Carpentaria in far north Queensland, the corporation operates an art centre often referred to as Mornington Island Art (MIArt) or the art centre. It is one of the best known and longest established art and cultural organisations in Australia. The art centre is fully owned and controlled by the corporation, runs programs for local Indigenous artists, and over the years has produced internationally acclaimed artwork.

On 21 May 2020, the CDPP filed 35 charges against Mr Evans in the Brisbane Magistrates Court for dishonestly using his position with the intention of directly gaining a personal advantage. Mr Evans first appeared in the Mornington Island Magistrates Court on 14 July 2020. The matter is next in court on 21 March 2021 for committal in the Mt Isa District Court.

CIVIL MATTERS

No civil prosecutions were referred or finalised in 2019–20.

REGISTER OF DISQUALIFIED OFFICERS

The registrar maintains a publicly available register of people disqualified from managing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander corporations. See the [Register of disqualified officers](#) on the ORIC website.

ACCOUNTABILITY

Freedom of information

In accordance with the Australian Government requirement for agencies to be open and transparent with regard to the functions they perform and the information they hold, the registrar's website includes an information publishing plan for ORIC and a freedom of information (FOI) disclosure log. In 2019–20:

- 22 FOI requests were made to the registrar, compared to 21 in the previous year
- 34 FOI requests were finalised.

The Office of the Australian Information Commissioner (OAIC) advised ORIC of the receipt of one Information Commissioner review application, which was subsequently withdrawn.

Complaints about ORIC

ORIC responds to complaints about its staff and contractors in accordance with policy statement [PS-03: Complaints about the registrar's staff and contractors](#). During 2019–20, no complaints about staff were received, compared to one complaint received the year before.

In 2019–20 ORIC received 2 'section 8' notices from the Commonwealth Ombudsman that it was investigating complaints received in the Office of the Commonwealth Ombudsman (OCO). The registrar responded to all issues raised in the notices, and in one of the matters, the OCO advised that no further investigation was warranted. In the case of the other matter, the OCO's decision had not been received by 30 June 2020.

In 2019–20, ORIC also received one 'section 7A' notice, indicating that the Ombudsman was conducting a preliminary inquiry into a complaint received in the OCO. The registrar responded to the request for information set out in the notice. Following receipt of this information from ORIC, the OCO advised the Ombudsman had decided to not investigate and that no further action was required.

Legal services expenditure

The tables below are a statement of legal services expenditure by ORIC for 2019–20 and provided in order to comply with paragraph 11.1(ba) of the Commonwealth's *Legal Services Directions 2017*.

TABLE 23. EXPENDITURE ON LEGAL SERVICES AND LEGAL SERVICE PROVIDERS IN 2019–20

INTERNAL LEGAL SERVICES EXPENDITURE	\$ GST EXCLUSIVE
Total internal legal services expenditure	325,000.00
EXTERNAL LEGAL SERVICES EXPENDITURE	\$ GST INCLUSIVE
Professional fees:	
Minter Ellison	37,845.77
Total professional fees paid	37,845.77
Counsel briefs	nil
Other disbursements on external legal services	nil
Total external legal services expenditure	362,845.77

Note: Internal legal services expenditure was derived through estimates of the percentage of time spent by legally qualified staff on legal work. Expenditure was calculated using base salaries and overheads.



**STRONG CORPORATIONS,
STRONG PEOPLE,
STRONG COMMUNITIES**

Galambila Notices

We are currently operating under Covid-19 guidelines, please see the following for changes to our we are working:

- Patients now have the option of a face to face or telehealth consult.
- Unfortunately we are still not accepting walk in's.
- Masks are required at all times in clinic.

• Maximum of 14 patients in the wait room, and 2 patients per consult room.

• If you have any flu-like symptoms, you will be asked to wait outside or in your car and the doctor will come to you.

Due to extended wait times for GP appointments, we ask you please arrange your consult at least 1 week in advance for any script renewals or referrals. Thank you for your understanding.

— Regards, Galambila

