



CENTRAL
AUSTRALIAN
ABORIGINAL
CONGRESS
ABORIGINAL CORPORATION
ICN 7823

Board Communiqué

ISSUE 44: NOVEMBER 2021

Werte!

The following topics were discussed at the last Congress Board of Director's Meeting, held on 14 October 2021:

- Thanks to Aunty Sabella Turner
- Northern Territory Treaty Commission
- AGM Reminder
- Annual Report and Financial Statements completed
- Human Resources report
- COVID-19 Update
- CEO's report to the Board
 - Children and Families Tripartite Forum
 - Education Review
 - Welcome to new General Manager, Josie Douglas

The next Congress Board of Director's Meeting will be held on Wednesday 24 November 2021

Thanks to Aunty Sabella Turner

The Board of Directors wanted to acknowledge the hard work and dedication of Aunty Sabella Turner in her work encouraging our community members to have their COVID-19 vaccines. Sabella has been tireless on screen, radio and in person talking with people about their fears and why the impact of COVID-19 would be very bad for our people. Thank you Aunty Sabella.



Memorial: Mr Furber

The Board and staff of Central Australian Aboriginal Congress offers its sincere condolences to the family of the late Arrernte leader Mr Furber.

Mr Furber was initially employed by Congress as a field officer in the Congress tent program from 1973 and then, in 1975 was elected to the Congress "cabinet" which was name used for the corporation's board of directors at the time.

He was an activist for the rights of Aboriginal people and one of his most memorable actions was when he joined other key Aboriginal leaders in November 1975 to block the road through the Gap to prevent the former Queensland Premier Jo Bjelke Petersen from coming into Alice Springs. This was done to highlight the issue of racism in Alice Springs at the time. They all got arrested for their efforts creating even greater publicity around this anti-racism action.

He is probably best known however for his lifelong commitment to justice for the Stolen Generations. He was removed from his family at the age of 5 and taken to Croker Island. Back on his beloved Arrernte country, he became a key leader of the Stolen Generations movement which led to the landmark "Bringing Them Home Report". His contribution was recognised when he was invited to be part of the official delegation in Canberra for the national apology from Prime Minister Kevin Rudd.

Finally, after decades of struggle, he was able to see his dream of just compensation for the NT Stolen Generations people realised only a few months ago.

Northern Territory Treaty Commission

Congress' submission in response to the Northern Territory Treaty Commission discussion paper is available now on our website. This is an important policy area for our people and the next steps taken have a real impact on the future of governance, including how health services are delivered.

This detailed and highly considered document is a valuable one to read as it affects all of us. The process of developing and reviewing the submission was actively engaged in by all Board members. Critically, Congress asks that going forward the Northern Territory Treaty Commission explicitly considers the evidence regarding the potential for improved health for Aboriginal people in the Northern Territory that may flow from the successful

negotiation of a Treaty through increased control of Aboriginal people over their own lives; and improved institutional arrangements for the provision of health and other services. We encourage members to [read more on our website.](#)

Human Resources Report

We are happy to inform that Congress is employing more Aboriginal people than ever before. There is a lower proportion of Aboriginal people in degree qualified roles than the Congress Board would like, and they have requested the General Manager Human Resources to put together a workforce plan to tackle this

Our Enterprise Bargaining Agreement negotiations are continuing ahead of the due date for the new Enterprise agreement in 2022.

In addition to the recruitment, safety, training and operations workload, human resources have been busy receiving proof of vaccinations from staff following the mandating of vaccinations for most workers in the Northern Territory, including all of our team at Congress.

Annual Report and Financial Statements completed

The Board is proud to commend to you the Congress' Annual Report for the financial year 2020-21.

This document is a great representation of the Corporations achievements for the year, including our financial statements. The Annual Report [is available now online](#) and will be available in hard copy at the Annual General Meeting on 25 November.

COVID-19 Update

Congress continues to work tirelessly in the mission to protect our community from COVID-19 through vaccination. After some success and learnings from our initial, self-resourced six-week intensive vaccine blitz, Congress gained further funding from the Commonwealth to bolster our efforts. We know that door to door, face to face community engagement helps people make the decision to be vaccinated, as does making it as easy as possible to get the vaccine. This funding allows us to provide more resources to do these things, including hiring a number of local Aboriginal community engagement officers who are out in the community right now talking with people about their worries about the vaccine and encouraging them not to wait but to get it now. We know that when COVID-19 comes it will be devastating to an unvaccinated community, and that vaccines are our shield against this.

CEO's Report to the Board

Children and Families Tripartite Forum

The key issue discussed at this forum was the draft 10-year Generational Strategy which has come following an extensive

period of consultation and is shaping up well. The development of this strategy was one of the key recommendations of the Royal Commission into the Protection and Detention of Children and Young People.

Recommendations were made that the strategy be strengthened and made more concrete with very specific and measurable KPIs. Another key issue was the need to ensure that the Children's Commissioner become and Aboriginal identified position. This is a compromise as the government will not create a second position but given that most of the children that the Office of the Children's Commissioner engages with are Aboriginal children it is an appropriate compromise. The meeting also discussed the draft Education Engagement Strategy which has been developed as part of the Education Department review.

Education Review

The new Chief Executive of Education NT has implemented a review into the Education Department with a focus on more effective engagement with Aboriginal people. There was a public call for submissions into the review and the Land Councils, APONT, NAAJA and Congress all made submissions. Our submission asked that the Northern Territory education system reflect deeply and critically about its own systemic

responsibility for this situation, and commit to properly resourced, culturally-responsive and evidence-informed reforms to the education system. You can read the full submission [on our website](#).

Welcome to new General Manager, Josie Douglas

Congress welcomes Josie Douglas, who has commenced work as the new General Manager Health Services Division. Congress was very pleased to be able to recruit Josie, a Wardaman (NT) woman who is a very experienced and capable Aboriginal manager from one of our sister organisations.

Josie was the first Aboriginal person in Central Australia to attain the highest level of tertiary qualification - a PHD. Her PHD examined indigenous ecological knowledge (IEK) and intergenerational acquisition and transmission of this knowledge and she received the Stanner Prize from AIATSIS for her work. She has an excellent understanding of all of the Aboriginal communities we work in and the social determinants of the health of Aboriginal people. She has maintained a very strong connection with women's law and culture over many years and is also very passionate about the need to ensure our people receive the highest quality services and programs.

NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING (AGM)

to be held on Thursday 25 November 2021 at 10.00am 32 Priest Street, Alice Springs

MEETING AGENDA

- Checking the register of members
- Welcome, attendees and apologies
- To receive and approve the minutes of the previous AGM
- Tabling of 2020/2021 Annual Report and other reports
- Auditor fees
- Appointment of Member Directors.
- Vote on two special resolutions
 - 1) Director Remuneration
 - 2) Adoption of a new rule book
- Any other business
 - COVID-19 update
 - Questions from members

Lunch is provided

All Congress members are invited to attend

THIS NOTICE HAS BEEN APPROVED BY THE COMPANY SECRETARY, ISOBEL MILNES.

