



CENTRAL
AUSTRALIAN
ABORIGINAL
CONGRESS
ABORIGINAL CORPORATION
ICN 7823

Board Communiqué

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BOARD MEETING WRAP

Werte!

The following topics were discussed at the last Congress Board of Director's Meeting, held on 20 August 2020:

- In Memoriam
- The Congress Board approves Central Land Council's draft housing plan
- The Congress Board approves Food Security position paper
- Town cultural protocol developed
- HR Report and Congress welcomes new safety manager
- 2019-2020 Finances are in a 'break even' position
- Three new Research applications approved
- Approval of amended Board Governance Charter
- Congratulations Director Peter O'Mara
- Congress AGM Save the Date

The next Congress Board of Director's Meeting will be held on
1 October 2020

In Memoriam

The Board Meeting was opened by the Chairperson acknowledging the passing of two people close to the community and the Congress family.

Thoughts are with Deputy Chair, Dorethea Randall for the sad passing of her brother. Condolences to the Randall family.

Along with this, a moment of silence was taken to acknowledge the recent passing of Mrs H Kantawara, the first ever female Chairperson of Congress.

Mrs Kantawara was the sort of unique person who was truly comfortable living in two worlds being bi-lingual and bi-cultural. This made her an invaluable leader in the Congress story. In more recent years she continued her involvement with Congress through the Western Aranda Health Aboriginal Corporation (WAHAC) board right up until she was too sick to continue. Her commitment to community controlled health care was unwavering, as was her commitment to family and community. Mrs Kantawara will be remembered as a strong leader and will be sadly missed by her family, friends and community.



The Congress Board approves Central Land Council's draft housing plan

The Board was presented with a draft plan for housing reform by a representative from Central Land Council (CLC). The plan details the development of a new Aboriginal Housing Model which proposes a radical change from the current structure of community housing as it proposes that control at each level sits under entities with Aboriginal Boards. The plan, which has also been accepted by all joint NT Land Councils aligns well with the Congress Board's previously published position on the importance of housing and health. The new structure would finance, build and maintain housing in Aboriginal communities, and provide tenancy support. It will also make provision for the support of Aboriginal construction and maintenance.

The Congress Board approves Food Security position paper

The Board of Directors was presented with a proposed position paper on food security, which outlines seven major policy actions that Congress has on this very important determinant of health and wellbeing. This paper, which was approved and adopted by the Board, comes ahead of a planned fresh food summit in 2021. The paper will be available shortly [on our website](#).

There have also been submissions made into political representation in the NT, submission to House of Representatives Standing Committee on Social Policy and Legal Affairs into family, domestic and sexual violence and submission into aged care inquiry. These are available [on our website](#).



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Town cultural protocol developed

Work has gone into the development of a town protocol document designed to guide visitors while working for Congress in Mparntwe to be aware of and maintain cultural safety while in the community. Key Arrernte people were approached as part of the consultations. The male health and women's health committee nominated key people who needed to be consulted and the Congress cultural lead was also consulted. The booklet goes through things like the context of what health means, what is appropriate dress, shaking hands, looking people in the eyes, sorry business, kinship, smoking, avoidance, gender. This document joins a number of cultural protocol documents developed in collaboration with remote community health boards. All staff will have access to these documents at induction and during their employment, which form an important step in creating a culturally safe environment for community and workers alike.

HR Report and Congress welcomes new safety manager

The Board was provided with an update by the Human Resources General Manager, including the introduction of Congress' new Safety Manager. The safety manager outlined his plans to move Congress toward the most up to date ISO standard, to ensure that we are continuing to provide all staff with a safe environment in which they do their jobs, in line with the most current safety standards.

An important strategic objective for Congress is the focus on employing and supporting Aboriginal staff, and to continue to increase the number and proportion of Aboriginal staff at all levels and in all roles. To expand on Congress' work in this area the HR report included a summary about new initiatives in place for further improving

Aboriginal employment. The recruitment team is working at trying to attract more Aboriginal applicants for roles across the organisation, including liaising with employment providers and other industry partners. The HR team is also working with Aboriginal staff to identify and advance in their career aspirations, through training and opportunity.

2019-2020 Finances in a 'break even' position

The Business Services Report was provided to the Board, which included a detailed summary of the end of year financials for the year 2019 – 2020. As a not for profit organisation, Congress aims to break even and we are glad to report that even after a difficult period through COVID-19, Congress is in a break even position and is operating at a solvency rate of 1.6.

Three new Research applications approved

The Board resolved to approve the following new research projects:

- » Vitamin D Supplementation to prevent respiratory infections among Indigenous children in the NT: a randomized controlled trial
- » Audit of the management of the pelvic inflammatory disease in a remote Central Australian Primary health care service
- » Improving access to primary health care and reducing hospitalisation by optimising telehealth for remote and rural Australians

Approval of amended Board Governance Charter

The Congress Board of Directors note the amended Board Governance Charter provided in their board papers. Amendments included aligning the

Proof of Aboriginality applications

Please be reminded that requests for Proof of Aboriginality are only able to be assessed by the Congress Board of Directors at our scheduled Board meetings.

Update your details

It is important that we have the right details recorded in our membership register so that we can contact you the right way, and for accountability.

These are separate to your clinical records at Congress. Because your privacy is important to us, we never access your medical records for membership business.

You can help us make sure your details are up to date by emailing membership@caac.org.au.

Remind your friends and family too!

policy with other key documents such as the strategic plan and the risk appetite statement. This important high-level document outlines the way that the board conducts its business while making strategic decisions about the organisation.

Congratulations Director Peter O'Mara

Recently, independent director primary health care, Peter O'Mara was recently promoted to Professor at the Faculty of Health and Medicine, University of Newcastle. Professor O'Mara has been providing an important contribution to the Congress Board since June 2017 and we congratulate him on his recent promotion.

Congress AGM Save the Date

The date has been set for the Congress Annual General Meeting, which will take place on the morning of 26 November. All members are encouraged to attend and participate in this important event. More details to follow.