



Link - Up (Qld)

ABORIGINAL CORPORATION

ANNUAL REPORT 2009

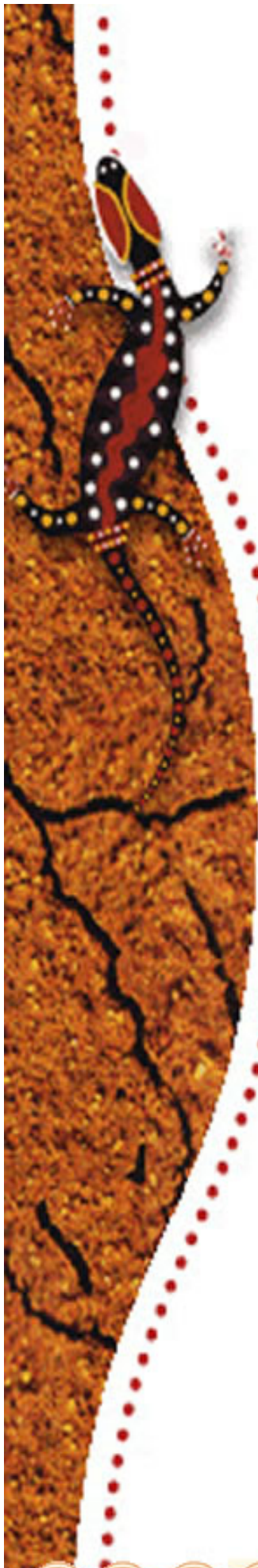




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Vision Statement



Link-Up (Qld) Aboriginal Corporation

VISION

Working together to provide a professional, confidential and culturally sensitive service in reuniting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who have endured enforced separation from their families and support them on their journey home.

AMBITION & CORE VALUES

Our ambition is to actively provide engagement and enhancement

- Operate in a sustainable manner
- Provide an advocacy service for our clients.

Our Core values are demonstrated through

- Integrity, respect and ethics
- Transparency and honesty
- Accountability
- Community engagement
- Professionalism
- Cultural Protocols

The aim of the Link-Up service is to provide support and guidance to address the issues of cultural identity, self-worth, community and family. This is conducted through qualified staff assisting clients with researching and locating their families, providing support for those reintegrating into the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. We foster and promote a sense of cultural identity and create public awareness of legislations and policies that have affected the client group.

Organisational Chart



BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Sam Watson



Lloyd K. Kyle



Kym Kilroy



Dr. Norm Sheehan



Willie Prince



CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER



Dr. Melissa Feeney

COMMUNICATIONS MANAGER



Mick Angeles

CASEWORKERS MANAGER



Brian Marshall

COUNSELLING SERVICES MANAGER



Helen Brnads

OFFICE MANAGER



Valerie Clarke

RESEARCH OFFICER



Ruth Loll

COUNSELLOR ROCKHAMPTON



Darcy Bolton

ADMIN OFFICERS



Katelyn Iselin



Kerriann Tomis

CASEWORKERS



Bernard Kelly-Edwards



Jody Jackson



Walter Waia



Pam Frith



Samuel W. Watson

CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD



“As we look back over these past twelve months and at everything that has happened, we are reminded again that as Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander people we define ourselves through two processes – country and family. Since the arrival of the first fleet in 1788 and the armed invasion of our sovereign lands, generations of our people have been pushed back further and further from our traditional and ancient roots and we have been forced to live on foreign land that had no spiritual meaning or significance to us. The colonial process of genocide began with guns and poison and imported diseases; but then escalated to the forced and systematic removals of our children across three centuries. So many of our little ones were bought up in hostile and alien environments that were administered by white strangers who were instructed to kill off our cultural memory and any residual sense of themselves as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people. Without elders and senior people to guide and protect these children as they grew and developed, generations of our children were robbed of that connection to Dreaming Lines that start at the very beginning of time and resonate within the hearts and spirits of every one of us. Our Stolen Children were raised in harsh and loveless dormitories and forced to become vulnerable and powerless carbon copies of a dominant society that has never seen them as human beings. By being denied the right to live and walk upon their ancestral lands, those children have also been cut off from those sacred Dreaming Lines that cry out for them. The land has also suffered. Without succeeding generations walking and caring for country, the spiritual heart of the land sickens and ultimately will perish. Therefore, it is our mission to not only reunite our clients with their bloodline families; but also to put them back onto the land of their mob. To walk the ancient soil and to drink in the winds that talk to them in their own language.”

SAM WATSON



Dr. Melisah Feeney

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER



This is my first CEO's report and I am writing this with the challenge of only having been appointed in September 2009. I recall asking to look at last year's annual report when I applied for the position in July and was told that there wasn't one. I made a mental note that if I got the job I would make sure we developed one! So despite this annual report being a little out of sync with when we would have ideally have produced it, I was committed that we ended the year with some chronicling of the organisations achievements and a benchmark of where we are at before moving forward into a new phase.

I have been fortunate to have time to reflect with board directors, staff, acting CEO and key agencies about the past year and I am impressed that despite some of the challenges the organisation has faced - changes in board directors, management team and staff – Link-Up (Qld) kept its doors open and continued providing services to members of the Stolen Generation and progressing positive initiatives. It is clear we are transiting toward higher levels of professionalism that will allow us to better serve our clients and honour our vision of "Reuniting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples who have endured forced separation from their families and supporting and counselling them on their journey home". Clearly we have a good foundation to build on, with a committed board and team to take things forward.

A big acknowledgement goes to the staff that kept forging ahead during a year of major transitions. Acting CEO Barry Jameson played an important role in the year to ensure the organisation was meeting its accountabilities and strengthened the focus on Link-Up (Qld) being more strategic how it does its business. A special mention goes to our long serving and committed Elder, Aunty Kay, for her help at community events, the Healing Camp and making people feel welcome when people come in to the office. Unfortunately she has had some health problems that mean we don't see her in the office as often but we hope she we be gracing us with her presence at key events in 2010.

A special acknowledgement to the casework and counselling staff who were able to progress some important family, community and graveside reunions and provide social and emotional well-being support for Link-Up clients.

Thanks to Helen Bnads, Jody Jackson and Ramona Smith who stretched their core responsibilities to step into leadership roles to help hold the fort until myself and Brian Marshall came on board in September; and to Katelyn Iselin who had to step up and move from reception duties into the finance administration role.

continued overleaf



Some highlights of 2008/2009 include increasing the membership base and holding a range of community education and promotion events. Mick Angeles worked hard to carve out some creative initiatives in this area to help lift the profile of Link-Up (Qld). One special event was the launching of *Idoligenous*, a talent quest which attracted some amazing musicians and singers. Staff were also in attendance at NAIDOC week and the Sorry Day / National Apology Anniversary celebrations around Brisbane. Caseworkers from the Kimberly Stolen Generation service joined with Link-Up Qld staff and went to the Dreaming Festival to promote Link Up services. Mick Angeles visited Borallon Prison for two days and three days at the Brisbane Youth Detention Centre, Wacol, informing inmates about the range of Link-Up services. Promotions man Mick also gave presentations to fledgling Police cadets, which was well received as further sessions have been requested for the next Police Cadet training program.

Another big highlight for the year was running a Healing Camp for clients at the Ewen Maddock Dam near Caloundra and then another one at Mudjimba, Sunshine Coast. Helen Bnads used her amazing talents to pull together a significant healing event the worked on multiple levels: body, mind and spirit. People gave positive feedback and came away very keen for more.

Moving into a new office premise that is much larger than the previous location was a significant step towards positioning the organisation for growth. An official opening was held on 28 November 2008 that was well attended.

We welcomed several new staff to the organisation during the past 12 months that continue today and are providing valuable services to help families reunite including family researcher Ruth Loli and caseworkers Walter Waia, Pamela Firth, Bernard Kelly-Edwards, Nicholas Thompson and Henrietta Hunter. We also strengthened the administrative capacity of the organisation appointing Valerie Clarke as an Office Manager and another administration officer Kerriann Toms who together are deadly and get things in shape around the office.

There are a lot of rich lessons to take forward into this next financial year and I am keen to reflect on the organisation's journey so far, to ensure the best of what has come before is included in the organisation's future. I am confident that on balance the organisation has more strengths and opportunities to work with in moving into its new phase than weaknesses and threats. My priority in moving forward in the current financial year (2009/2010) is to introduce quality systems and strengthen the client focus. Part of this will involve taking the organisation towards meeting accreditation standards. I look forward to reporting next year on progress in these areas.

Dr Melisah Feeney *B.Sc (Hons), PhD MAPS*



Brian Marshall

CASEWORKER MANAGER



Salutations,

This is my first year working for Link-Up Qld and it has been a fantastic insight into the dedication and commitment of the Caseworkers, Counsellors and the organisation. Personally, coming from an academic background which theoretically examined Australian society and my research on my father's experience as a Stolen Generations Member, having the opportunity to work for this organisation has enabled me to realistically strive to assist those Indigenous men and woman who were removed or dislocated from family and loved ones and subsequently have further suffered economically, socially and emotionally. Furthermore, the arduous task required for such a large geographical state has deeply enriched my sense of admiration for what many former and current Link-Up workers have previously undertaken. It is with a sense of trepidation that I enter a new path in my life that enables me to work at the 'grass roots' to assist and serve those Indigenous men and woman who still have faith in Link-Up Qld and demand that we make a difference.

Coming into the position as the Caseworker Manager has been a challenging process. My initial priority was to develop strategies to assist overburdened staff by enacting processes that dramatically alleviated work stressors and proudly acknowledging the successes they have achieved. That stated, during my three months tenure, the Team have risen to the challenges put forward and are building momentum and really pressing to help the community. During this short period, Caseworkers have managed to organise 6 successful Reunions. The Team has a sense of renewed energy and are currently busy tying up loose ends before the Christmas break. The Team have jumped in with both feet to tackle our 'backlog' and we anticipate that in the New Year the bulk of this will have been cleared. As a small team of five when I started in early October, we have now increased to eight. These additional three Caseworkers will be entering a new and exciting phase with the team, who have become a very close knit group and are extremely dedicated.

I am excited at the prospects and challenges that lay ahead.

B.J. Marshall



Helen Bnads

COUNSELLING SERVICES MANAGER



I have been employed as a Social, Emotional & Wellbeing Counsellor for Link-Up (QLD) since January 2008. Issues of social and emotional well being are interconnected, co exist & influence each other. There are a broad range of problems which can result from unresolved grief and loss issues, trauma and abuse, physical health problems, family breakdown, cultural dislocation, racism and discrimination and social disadvantage. Mental health issues form a distinctive subset which impacts on Link-Up clients.

Reflection on the past year also includes some activities from late 2008. In September 2008 the Link-Up (QLD) Healing Our Spirit Camp took place at the Ewen Maddock Dam Recreation Centre. It was a well attended Camp with Link-Up clients renewed & invigorated by the experience. In November 2008 the Link-Up Support Group meeting was held at Indig-N-Arts at West End. Twenty five people attended the event. The aim of the Group is to form an added emotional support network for the cultural, spiritual and social needs of the Link-Up clients.

In March 2009 Meeanjin Voices commenced under the leadership of a professional Choirmaster. Meeanjin Voices is a Link-Up client initiative. It is a community based choir of Aboriginal & non Aboriginal people who are committed to the principles, philosophy and practice of singing for healing and social, emotional wellbeing. I am the Coordinator of Meeanjin Voices. Rehearsals take place at Link-Up on a Saturday morning. This year Meeanjin Voices has performed publicly at ten Brisbane events including Sorry Day & NAIDOC activities.

In June 2009 I undertook the added responsibilities of Manager SEWB Counsellors and have played a part in the major re structure of Link-Up(QLD). The Brisbane based SEWB Counsellor had active involvement in 11 reunions – 3 last year and 8 in 2009. The Cairns based SEWB Counsellor participated in 2 reunions and the Rockhampton SEWB Counsellor in 2 reunions. There has been several graveside reunions that have taken place. Reunions are conducted all around Australia & sometimes in conjunction with other Link-Up services.

In 2009 there were two Link-Up Support Group meetings held in Brisbane. Both well attended in April and November. On the Sunshine Coast & Rockhampton support group meetings were held on a needs basis and sometimes in conjunction with other organizations.

The September 2009 annual Healing Camp was held at the Apex Camp Mudjimba Sunshine Coast. Over the three days 66 people used and visited the activities of the Healing Camp. Link-Up clients and their families were supported by 2 Link-Up SEWB Counsellors and a further 3 BTH Counsellors (Bringing Them Home Counsellors). The Healing Camp's program was specifically designed from a social, emotional well being perspective. The varied activities allowed reflection on the past, present & the future.

Helen Bnads



Mick Angeles COMMUNICATIONS MANAGER



FOREWORD

The Communications Section administers the IT, multimedia and promotional elements of Link-Up (Qld) Aboriginal Corporation. These areas involve promotion of LUQ through informative presentations to stakeholders, learning facilities, Indigenous and non Indigenous organisations; representations at festivals, events and functions through attendance and/or information stalls; generating & developing community events and functions; media interviews and newsletter articles; photography & video production, storage & archiving; Information Technology services including website development, upgrading and maintenance, graphic design, software application and general computer knowledge and also the maintenance, upkeep and supply of promotional materials and equipment.

SUMMARY

It has been a very busy and productive year for the Communications Section with a number of initiatives successfully compiled and completed. Representation was made at a number of festivals including The Dreaming Festival, NAIDOC Week celebrations and regional Health Check Days. The Communications Section also organized other events in addition to IDOLIGENOUS, the Sorry Day Family Day and The Apology Anniversary which were all favorably attended by the community.

Visits were made to detainees at the Borallon Correctional Centre and the Wacol Youth Detention Centre to promote Link Up services along with educational information programs delivered to Mt Nebo State School, Cavendish High School, Police recruits and University students from various campuses.

HIGHLIGHTS

NAIDOC Week is one of the busiest months of the year. Activities to celebrate NAIDOC start in early July and extend into August. LUQ attended functions and promotions throughout southeast Qld from Nambour to Brisbane. The high point being the Musgrave Park Family Day where all staff were in attendance to hand out promotional material and information to a very large enthusiastic crowd.

LUQ organised its second highly successful **IDOLIGENOUS** Talent Quest at Jagera Arts Centre with a smorgasbord of talented young and old performers. First Prize was taken out by the *Western Drummers*, a group of 11 school kids from Blackwater, who travelled for eleven hours in a micro bus with four teachers to vie in the competition.

The **Dreaming Festival** proved another successful outlet for promoting LUQ services not only locally but by also enlightening a diverse multi-cultural and international audience to the plight of the Stolen Generations in Australia.

Mick Angeles

Current & Potential Supporters of Link-Up QLD

Link-Up QLD receives the majority of its recurrent funding from the **Commonwealth Department Office of Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Health**. It also receives funding from **Queensland Department of Communities**. We thank these funding bodies for their ongoing support of the Stolen Generation members.

Virgin Blue Airlines generously provided sponsorship during 2008-2009 that allowed the organisation to fund the Indigenous talent quest events and they also supported Link-Up QLD in providing flights for family members who were being reunited.

It is a goal of the organisation to increase its self generated revenue during 2010 so that it can extend the provision of creative healing initiatives to Stolen Generation members.

Professional Services Link Offers

Link-Up QLD has a team of talented people able to provide the following services on a Fee for Service basis. All money raised goes into the organisation's mission of helping the Stolen Generation Members. Services available include:

- **Healing Camp Facilitation:** assistance in the design and delivery of group healing processes.
- **Passion Mapping:** an accredited four stage process culminating in the creation of an Individual or Work Team passion map that provides insight, generates energy and excitement, and creates a rich picture to clarify direction and generate creative action.
- **Team and Leadership Assessment:** using the Enneagram and Leadership Maturity Framework (LMF). The LMF offers a subtle and comprehensive developmental stage model for understanding how people and groups make different sense of world, their roles, opportunities and conflict situations depending on their level of development. It provides a proven and practical approach to designing development plans for individual and team effectiveness.
- **Cultural Awareness Training:** Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural safety and awareness training.
- **Facilitation:** facilitation of meetings, gatherings and forums.
- **Integral Coaching:** personal and professional coaching based on Integral Theory that ties together a person's: internal qualities, environmental factors, relationship domain, situation in the world with the actions they hope to take and the results they look for.

Gifts to Link-Up QLD are tax deductible

Link-Up QLD is a non-profit Public Benevolent Institution recognised by the Australian Taxation Office (ATO). As such, eligible donors (individual, company, trust or other tax payers) can receive income tax deductibility for gifts given to our organisation. To be tax deductible a gift must be money, (\$2 or more), property or shares (\$5000 or more). Examples of ways donors might assist Link-Up (QLD) include:

- **Cash Sponsorship:** for a specific purpose such as to fund a Healing Camp, Support Group or purchase art supplies for use in healing interventions or as an open contribution to the organisation's general revenue stream.
- **In Kind Contribution:** contribute non-monetary resources such as airfares to reunite families, specialist advice and consultancy services, staff to assist in priority areas.
- **Workplace Giving Program:** regular contributions made by employees to Link-Up QLD.

For more information see the *GiftPack* publication put out by the ATO (<http://www.ato.gov.au/content/downloads/SME18699nat3132.pdf>)

2009 Annual General Meeting Minutes Thursday, 22 October 2009

54-56 Peel St, West End Qld 4101

Members Present: Sam Watson (chairperson), Kym Kilroy (director), Teresa McIntosh, Allan Lui, Jody Jackson, Walter Waia, Rebecca Hollis, Prof. Norm Sheehan, and Katelyn Iselin.

Members by Phone: Lloyd Kyle (director), Darcy Bolton

Invitees: Dr Melisah Feeney (CEO), Barry Jameson (Returning Officer), Margaret Lawton, Pam Firth

Minutes: Dr Melisah Feeney

Meeting Started: 10.10am

1. **Welcome** by Chair, Sam Watson
2. **Apologies:** Willie Prince (director), Brian Marshall, Whitney Tatten, Jill Jenson, Rhonda Collard, Mick Angeles, Helen Bnads, Aunty Kay King.
3. **Confirmation of Minutes** of 2008 Annual General Meeting (AGM) was unable to proceed due to not having a copy of the minutes. These will be sent around to members for checking with the current AGM minutes.
4. **Receipt of Reports:**
 - **Chair** - gave a verbal update reflecting on the year just passed. Sam Watson talked about the wider changes in the landscape such as in the structure of the Aboriginal Corporation's Act and the positive recognition of community control in the new legal structures. He encouraged members to look at the website and learn about the new ORIC Act. Sam reflected on the organisation's move from Cordelia St, the election of a new board and their visit to KASH in Mt Isa. He talked about the previous year as a period of significant change and how the organisation has been able to maintain its funding, assets and stay solvent and be in a position to hand back the organisation to its members. He acknowledged the funding body's continued support and their interest to see the organisation succeed.
 - **Chief Executive Officer** – The new CEO Dr Melisah Feeney handed out a written report (see Attachment A) and spoke to the key points. Though she wasn't with the organisation during 2007/2008 she had reflected with key people, members, directors, staff, funding agencies and key partners about what the achievements of the year had been, what had worked well in the past and what needed to improve. The CEO report acknowledges the role various people have played during the previous year and their specific achievements.
 - **2009 Financial Report and Auditors' Report** – There was discussion that some members would like to have been sent a paper copy of the financial report prior to the meeting or at least copies made available on the day of the AGM. There was a response that the agenda had noted that the 2009 Financial Report is available on the corporation's website at www.qld.link-up.org.au and that the organisation was trying to be environmentally friendly by not sending out vast amounts of paperwork that many people would not be interested in reading. However to meet the needs of those who don't have computers and internet access it was agreed that next year the corporation would more clearly indicate that paper copies could be sent on upon request and that more than one copy would be available to view at the AGM.

Barry Jameson read out the key points regarding the financial statements and members were given a copy of the Audit Management letter to read.

Motion: Kym Kilroy moved that the above reports provided be accepted.

Seconded: Allan Lui

5. **Appointment of 2009/2010 Auditor:** Barry Jameson highlight that under the Act the appointment of an auditor is to continue for a period of 10 years so Link-Up (Qld) should continue with Pilot Partners next year as their Auditor. It was raised by Allan Lui the Auditor should be in attendance at the AGM to answer questions. Sam highlighted this is an extra cost to the organisation and Melisah responded that they were invited but are very busy at this time of the year so were unable to attend.

Motion: Link-Up (Qld) appoint Pilot Partners as next year's Auditor was moved by Sam Watson
Seconded: Kym Kilroy

6. Election of Directors

The Returning Officer declared the election of Directors in accordance with Rule 8.4 of the Corporation's Rulebook as follows:

- 1) Nominations were called for eligible members to be included in the 2009 election of directors in accordance with clause 8.4(a)(i). The Board consists of seven (7) director positions. Two (2) existing directors re-standing for election under the rotation rule 8.7 were automatically included.
- 2) Nominations were received in respect of three (3) directors, who duly passed the director eligibility criteria set out in clause 8.2.1.
- 3) The nominee duly completed a "Consent to Act as Director" as required by clause 8.2.3.
- 4) Two (2) director positions remain available to be filled in 2009/10 (as casual vacancies).
- 5) (a) Directors re-standing for office in 2009/10:
 - Kym Kilroy
 - Willie Prince
 - Sam Watson; and
 - Lloyd Kyle.
- b) Nominations:
 - Prof. Norm Sheehan
- 6) As there are five (5) eligible candidates standing to fill seven (7) available positions, no ballot is necessary to determine election, i.e. all candidates are deemed elected. Two (2) casual vacancies remain to be filled in 2009/10 year.
- 7) Under clause 8.4 (g), I hereby declare the following person elected director in accordance with Rule 8.7:
 - Sam Watson;
 - Lloyd Kyle;
 - Kym, Kilroy;
 - Willie Prince; and
 - Prof. Norm Sheehan.
- 8) The full Board of Directors for the 2009/10 year will therefore be:
 - Sam Watson (2 years – to be eligible for re-election in 2011);
 - Lloyd Kyle (2 years – to be eligible to be re-election in 2011);
 - Kym, Kilroy (1 year - to be eligible to be re-election in 2010);
 - Willie Prince (1 year –to be eligible to be re-election in 2010); and
 - Prof. Norm Sheehan (1 year - to be eligible to be re-election in 2010).
- There was a discussion that efforts should be made to get a Torres Strait Islander person on the board to fill the casual vacancy. Having a representative from Cairns and/or Rockhampton was also mentioned.

7. Special Resolution to amend the Corporation's Rule Book (Constitution) to permit Remuneration of Directors as per Notice of Special Resolution provided with the agenda

As outlined in the paper provided with the agenda, directors recommend members approve the following Special Resolutions to allow the company to remunerate directors for governance services. The resolution was read out and then discussed. Members highlighted the importance of this resolution to attract good

quality directors and to be equitable with other organisations that have the capacity to pay board members to compensate for at least some of their time and expertise they contribute and the costs involved in sitting on a board. Sitting fee payment for governance services needed to be distinguished with *per diem* payments for direct costs incurred in attending meetings such as payment for travel. People were in agreement that sitting fee money should only come from self generated income. It was felt that this resolution could serve to motivate directors to develop independent funding streams.

People were invited to vote for or against the resolution noting that 75% need to be in agreement for the resolution to be approved. The resolutions passed unanimously.

Special Resolution No. 1

To delete Rule 10.3(a) and replace it as follows:

“Directors may be paid remuneration for governance services, provided:

- i. Members in general meeting approve such remuneration in advance of its being paid:
- ii. The total of such remuneration paid or payable is not to exceed 2.5% of the total gross income of the company received in the immediate preceding financial year as confirmed in the audited annual financial statements; and
- iii. Such approved remuneration is to be divided equally amongst all directors in respect of that year, adjusted for a pro-rata component where a director serves for less than a full financial year.”

Moved: Sam Watson **Seconded:** Allan Lui Unanimously carried.

Special Resolution No. 2

“To delete Rule 10.3(d)(i) and to consequently re-number Rule 10.3(d)(ii)”

Moved: Sam Watson **Seconded:** Kym Kilroy Unanimously carried.

Special Resolution No. 3

To amend Rule 7.1.3 by adding new sub-section (d) and re-numbering the remaining sub-sections:

“(d) approval of remuneration of directors”.

Moved: Sam Watson **Seconded:** Prof. Norm Sheehan Unanimously carried.

8. General Business

- Acknowledgement was made of Sam’s efforts as chairperson over the year and also Allan Lui for his role in as director.
- There was discussion about the use of Facebook in tracing people and building up family tree information.
- Acknowledgement of the growth of Torres Strait Islander referrals due to Caseworker Walter Waia’s networks and Allan Lui’s previous presence on the board.
- A question was asked about the legal settlements of terminated and redundant staff. An update was given that there had been progress made to settle matters and that the details were confidential.

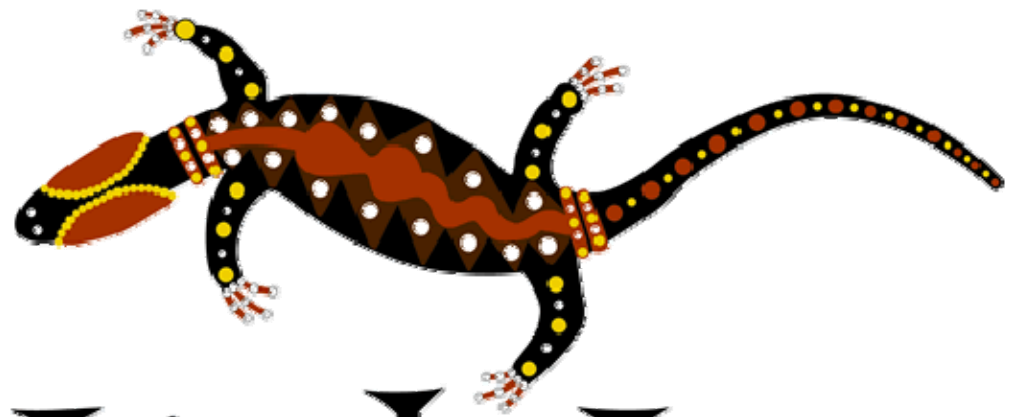
Sam Watson

Chairperson

Dated: 28 October 2009

Photographs





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