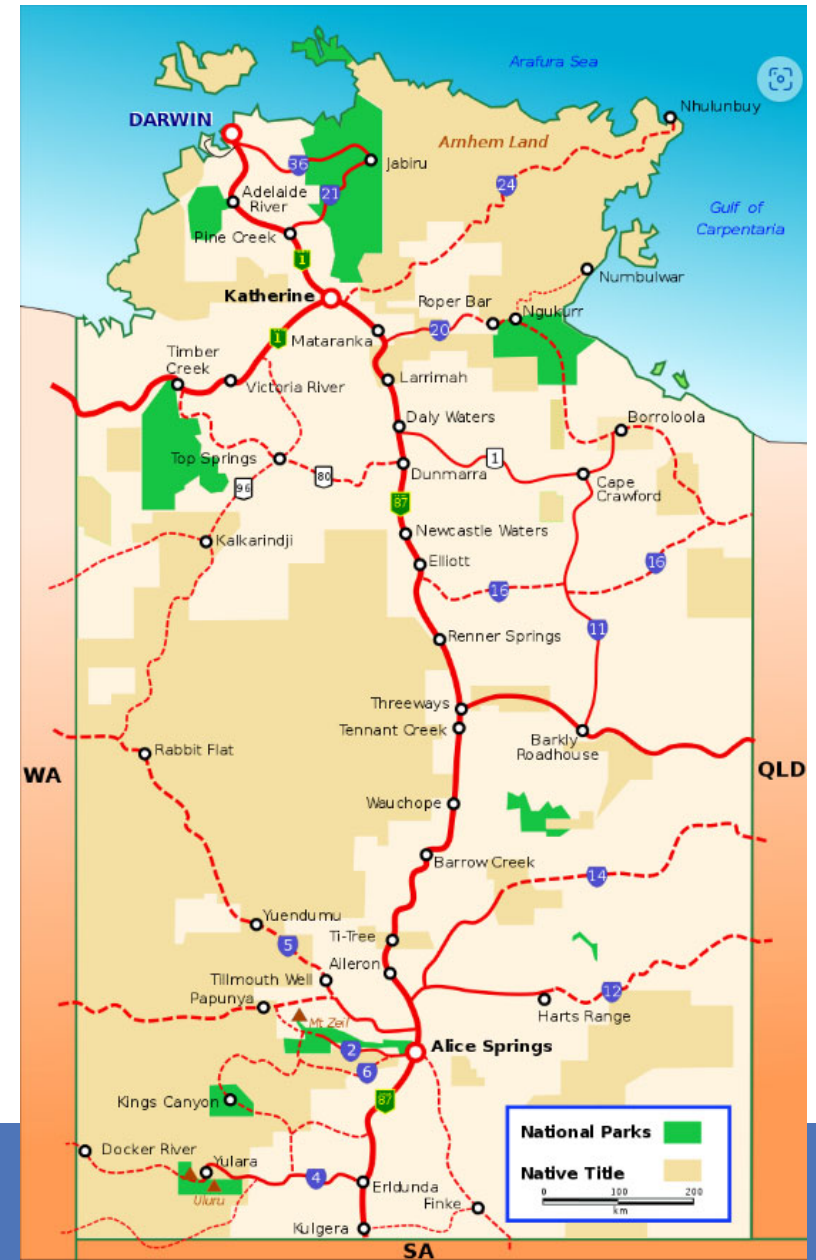


# First Nations peoples' involvement in audits of Indigenous land councils

Christine Chalmers  
Executive Director  
Performance Audit Services Group

# Northern Territory land councils

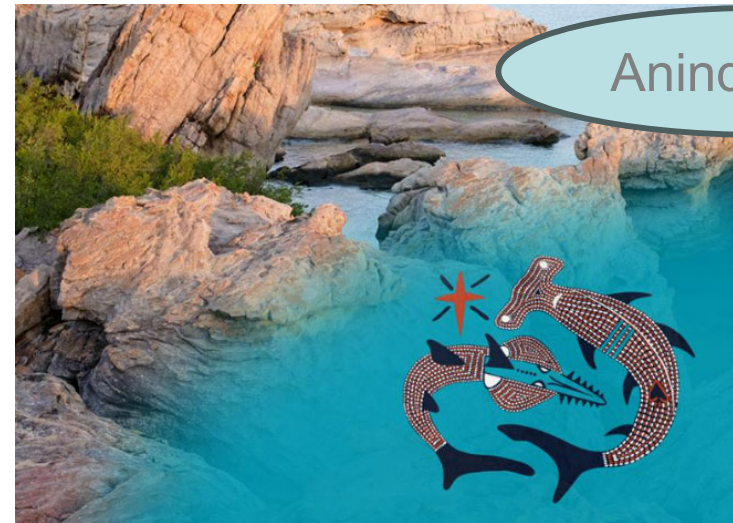


# Northern Territory land councils

Northern



Anindilyakwa



Central



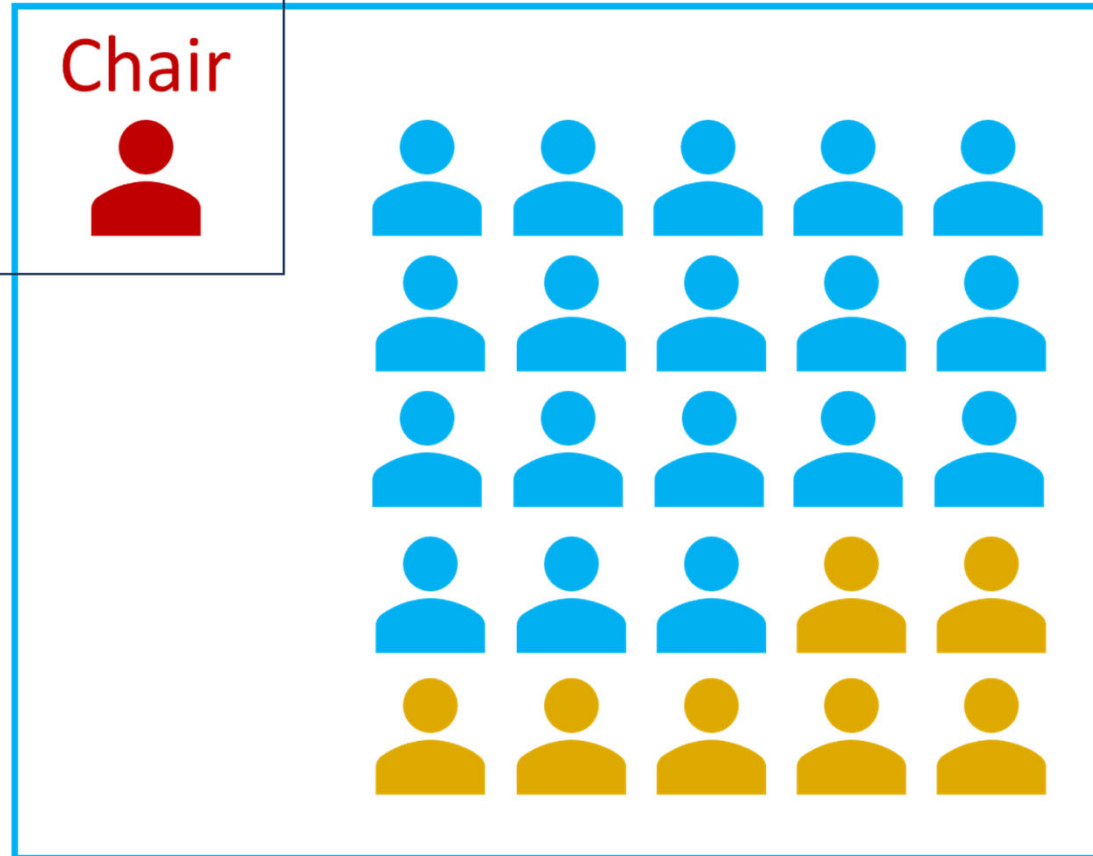
Tiwi



# Northern Territory land councils

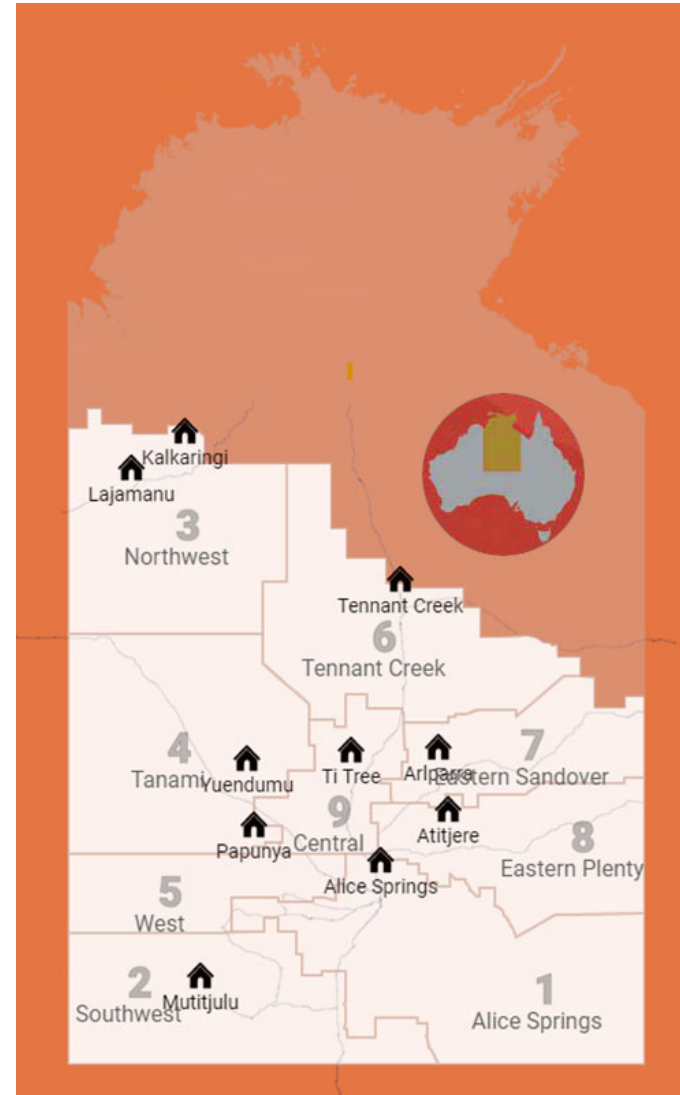
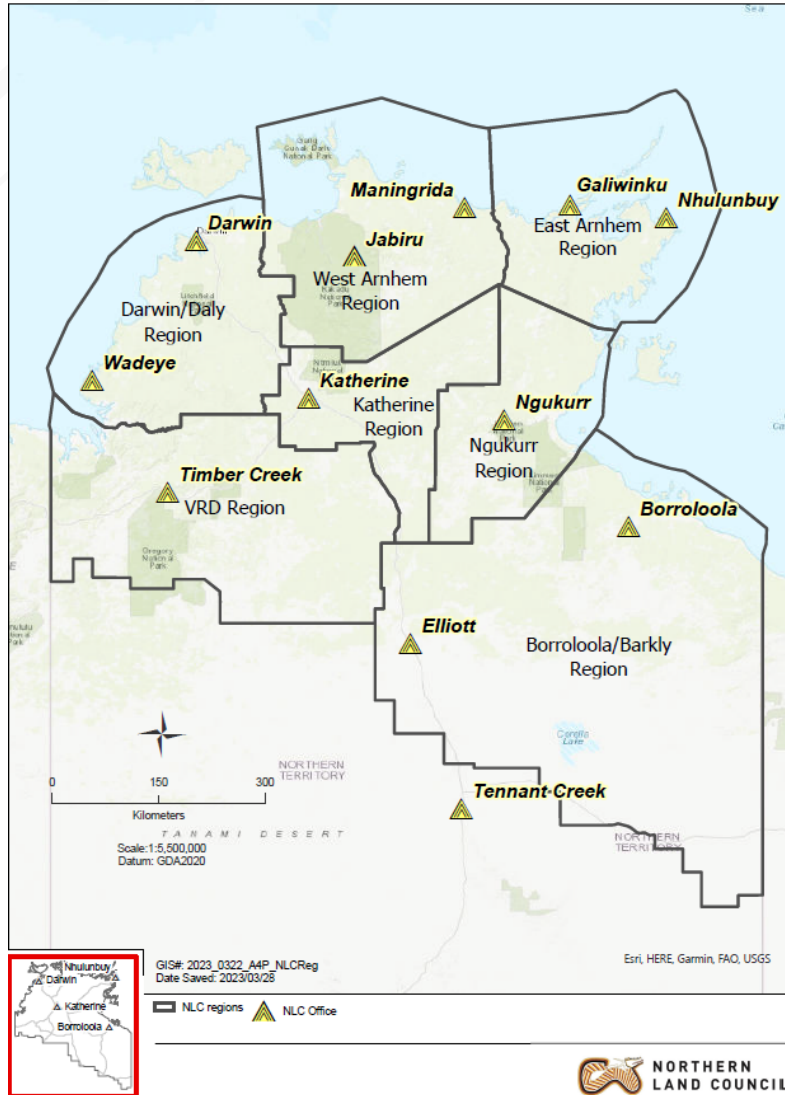
Accountable Authority

Council

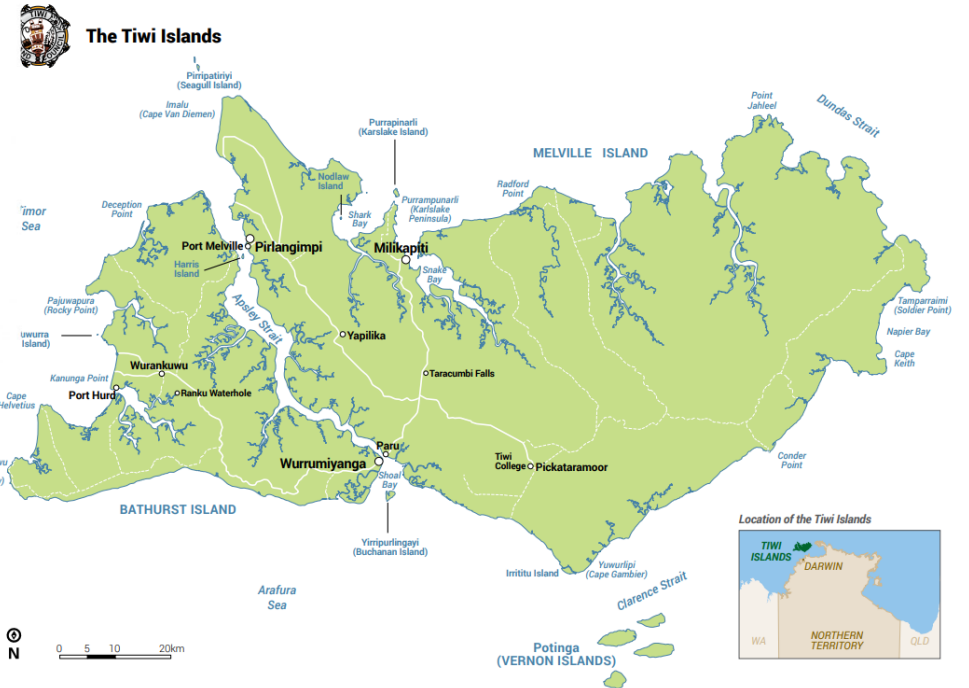
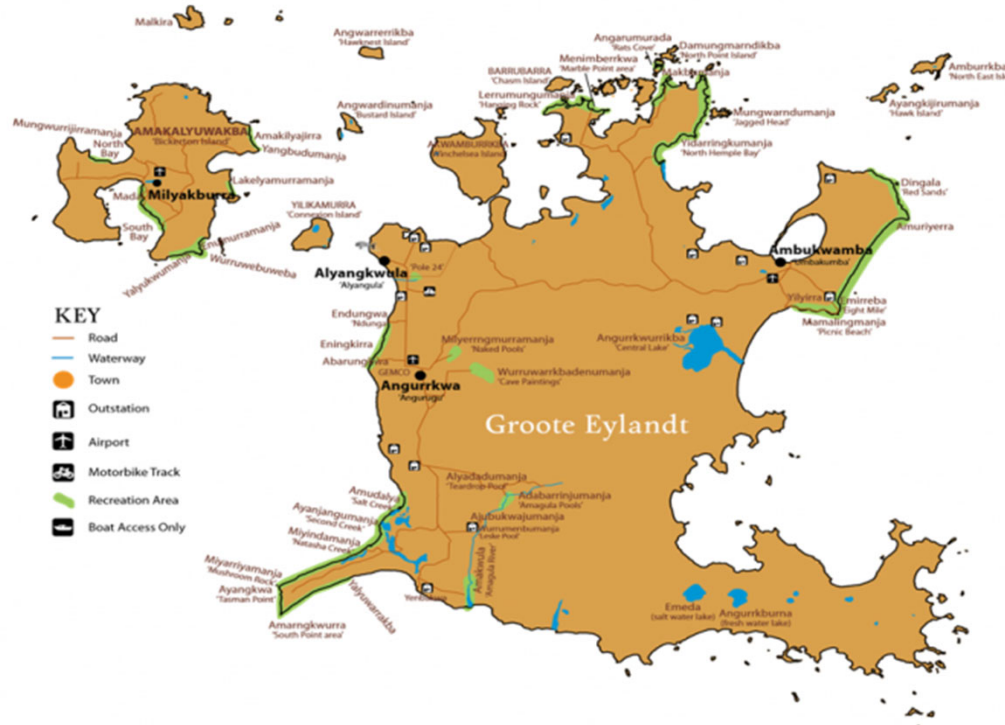


Finance  
Committee

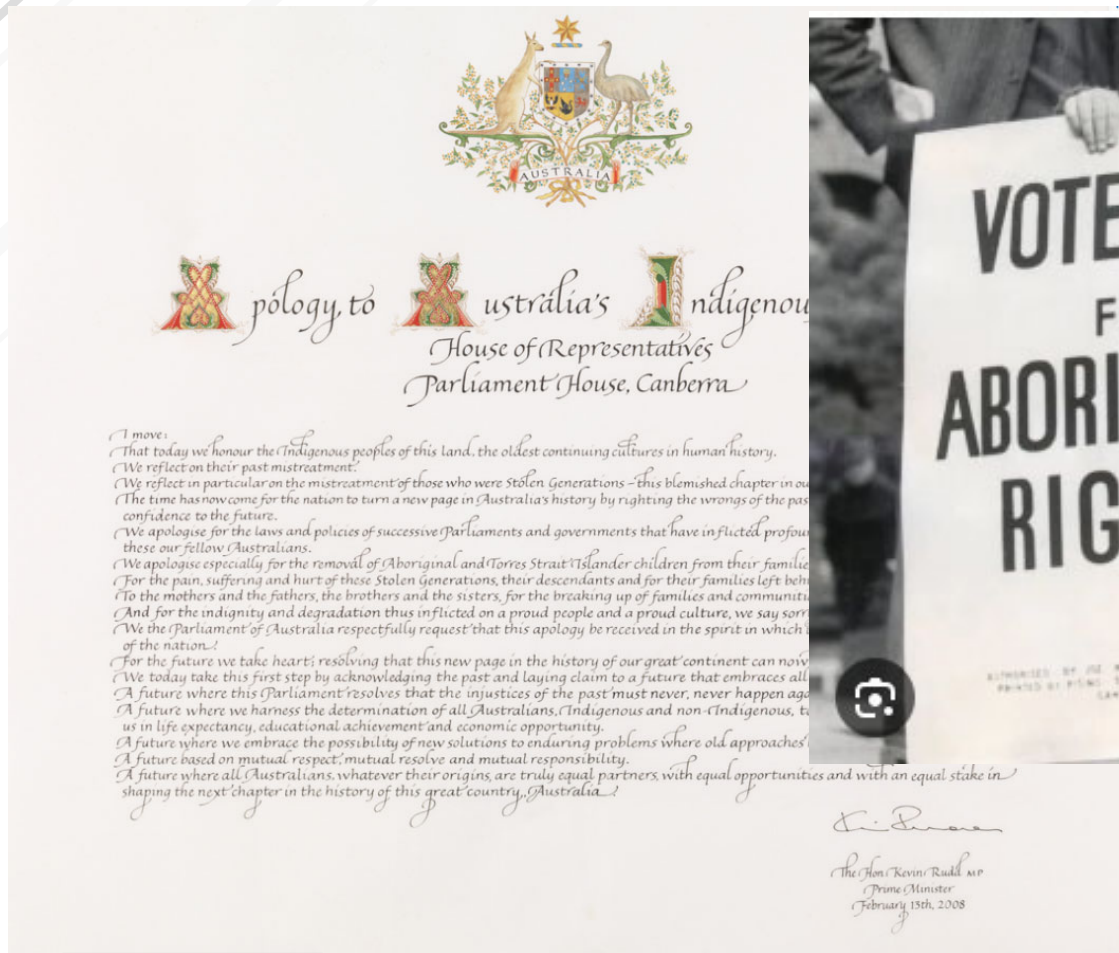
# Northern Territory land councils



# Northern Territory land councils



# Auditing challenges



2008



2023

## 2023 Referendum

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>Issue of writ</b>                               | Monday 11 September                                |
| <b>Postal voting applications open</b>             | Monday 11 September                                |
| <b>Close of rolls</b>                              | 8pm, Monday 18 September                           |
| <b>Start of remote voter services</b>              | Monday 25 September                                |
| <b>Start of early voting</b><br>NT, TAS, VIC & WA  | Monday 2 October<br>*Public holiday in some states |
| <b>Start of early voting</b><br>ACT, NSW, QLD & SA | Tuesday 3 October                                  |
| <b>Postal voting applications close</b>            | 6pm, Wednesday 11 October                          |
| <b>Voting day</b>                                  | Saturday 14 October                                |

Authorised by the Electoral Commissioner, Canberra.

# Auditing challenges

- Credibility and cultural competency of a Canberra-based team
- Historical lack of trust towards government entities
- Balancing quality fieldwork with budget and time constraints
- Balancing engagement and independence
- Combining Western and Indigenous laws and customs
- Format of English-language ANAO reports to Parliament




# NT Land Councils: Audit rationale



The audit was conducted to provide independent assurance to the Australian Parliament that the Land Councils' governance arrangements are effective in meeting legislative obligations under the *Aboriginal Land Rights Act*, the *Native Title Act* and the *Performance, Governance and Public Accountability Act*.

Land Councils play an important role in securing rights and realising benefits for Aboriginal constituents. Many external stakeholders, including government entities, non-government organisations, and Indigenous and non-Indigenous businesses, rely on the efficient and effective operation of the Land Councils.

# Citizen involvement



Australian National Audit Office (ANAO)

Home > Reports > Insights > Work program > Careers > About us

Home > [Work program](#) > Performance audits: open for contribution

## Performance audits: open for contribution

The performance audits listed below are currently in-progress and open for contribution. You can receive status updates about individual audits using the 'Subscribe to this audit' link against each audit.

### Filter by

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13 ITEMS FOUND

#### SECTOR

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- Treasury 1

#### PERFORMANCE AUDIT IN-PROGRESS



Due to table: April 2024

### Effectiveness of the Australian Public Service Commission's administration of standards relating to upholding high standards of ethical conduct in the Australian Public Service

The objective of this audit is to assess the effectiveness of the Australian Public Service Commission's (APSC) administration of standards relating to upholding high standards of integrity and ethical conduct in the Australian Public Service.

## Contribute to this audit

The ANAO welcomes members of the public contributing information for consideration when conducting performance audits. Performance audits involve the independent and objective assessment of the administration of an entity or body's programs, policies, projects or activities. They also examine how well administrative support systems operate.

The ANAO does not have a role in commenting on the merits of government policy but focuses on assessing the efficient and effective implementation of government programs, including the achievement of their intended benefits.

The audit you have selected is currently collecting audit evidence and is seeking input from members of the public. We particularly value information that deals with significant matters or insights into the administration of the subject of this audit. Information can be submitted either by uploading a file, or by entering your information into the comments box below.

While your contribution will be considered, and handled with care, you will not automatically receive feedback about your contribution. However, if you provide your contact details, you may be contacted regarding your contribution.

Please note that contributions are intermittently monitored. You will receive an email acknowledgement of your contribution if you provide a valid email address.

We anticipate accepting contributions to this audit until Thursday 29 February 2024.

### Your contribution information

### Or upload your file

Choose File No file chosen

One file only.  
8 MB limit.  
Allowed types: txt, pdf, doc, docx.

### Name

### Email address

### Contact number

SEND

# Pre-fieldwork engagement

contribution to serve and protect local families who take care of To ensure the upkeep and  
**Audit Office asks for community feedback on services**  
**Torres Shire Council**

THE Australian National Audit Office (ANAO) from Canberra has been in the Torres Strait for the past few weeks undertaking an audit of Australian Government agencies in the area, and is now looking to the community for feedback.

They include the TSRA, ABF, DFAT and other agencies.

ANAO supports the Auditor-General to carry out his role as an independent officer of the Australian Parliament, and is designed to drive accountability and transparency in the Australian Government sector.

The ANAO is currently reviewing how Australian Government agencies work together in the Torres Strait.

Since April 3, senior ANAO director Dr Isabelle Favre (above) and her colleagues have been

visiting Thursday Island and other islands of the Torres Strait to conduct interviews with government and non-government stakeholders.

They would also like to hear the views of the community on how Australian Government agencies work together to make sure:

- Illegal fishing is well controlled and fisheries are well managed.
- Animal/plant pests and diseases don't enter the Torres Strait.
- People living in the Torres Strait receive the services that they need; and
- Resources and assets are not wasted.

Dr Favre explained that the ANAO does not comment on the merits of government policy.

The role of the ANAO is to focus on assessing the efficient and effective implementation of government programs, including the achievement of their intended benefits.

She also stressed that any personal information provided is confidential – it will not be shared with anyone outside of the ANAO.

“Once we have finished collecting information, we will write a de-identified high-level report that will be presented to the Australian Parliament in January 2019. The report may contain recommendations to help improve the coordination arrangements of government agencies operating in the Torres Strait.”

In recent years, the ANAO has published two performance audit reports relating to the Torres Strait: Torres Strait Regional Authority — Service Delivery in December 2013 (Audit Report No. 10 of 2013-14); and Northern Australian Quarantine Strategy in June 2012 (Audit Report No. 46 of 2011-12).

Community members interested in providing feedback can go to: [anao.gov.au/tsa](http://anao.gov.au/tsa) until May 30, 2018.

Another SEN. CON. Chris Mosby, from Thursday Island from Boigu and towed them home.



# Pre-fieldwork engagement





## Tell us what you think of the Land Council

### When and where?

**Umbakumba Cultural Centre:**  
Monday 29 August 2022, 1–3pm

**Milyakburra Cultural Centre:**  
Wednesday 31 August 2022, 10am–12pm

**Angurugu Cultural Centre:**  
Thursday 1 September, 10am–12pm

**Men's Shed:**  
Thursday 1 September, 1–2pm

### Who?

Everyone is welcome! If you have any views on how well the Land Council does its job, we invite you to come and share them with us. An interpreter will also be there at the Cultural Centres.

### Why?

Help us give feedback to the Land Council so they can be even stronger for your community.



## What do you think about the Anindilyakwa Land Council?

We are the Australian National Audit Office (ANAO), an Australian government agency based in Canberra. **Our job is to make sure things are done the right way.**

**Right now, we are making sure that the Land Councils in the Northern Territory are doing things the proper way for their communities, according to the rules, cultures and laws.**

This is normal and part of our job.

**We would like to hear what you think about how the ALC works:**

- How it runs its business on behalf of the community
- How it talks with you about big decisions
- How it helps you look after country
- How it reports back to you – to let you know how things are going
- And anything else you'd like to tell us

### How?

Come to a meeting at the **Cultural Centre**, call us on 0407 206 313, email us at [alc@anao.gov.au](mailto:alc@anao.gov.au) or comment at [www.anao.gov.au/alc](http://www.anao.gov.au/alc). Please tell us before **30 September 2022**.

### What's next?

We will write a report for the Australian Parliament in March 2023. With your permission, we may use some of what you tell us to help the ALC be even stronger for your community.

**Anything you tell us is confidential. We won't share it outside the ANAO.**

*Alyangmarndukuna Ayakwa. Eningaba.*



# Site visits



# Site visits



Audit fieldwork in Wujal Wujal

Audit fieldwork in Santa Teresa (Ltyentye Apurte)



# Reporting back



Australian National Audit Office (ANAO)

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## Insights

Through *Insights* (formerly Audit Insights) publications, the ANAO aims to contribute to improved public sector performance

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- Audit practice 3
- Audit opinion 1

**YEAR PUBLISHED** ⊖

- 2023-24 3

**INSIGHTS: AUDIT LESSONS**

 Published: Tuesday 9 January 2024 PUBLISHED

### Risk Management

The aim of Insights: Audit Lessons is to communicate lessons from our audit work and to make it easier for people working within the Australian public sector to apply those lessons.

Expand ⊖

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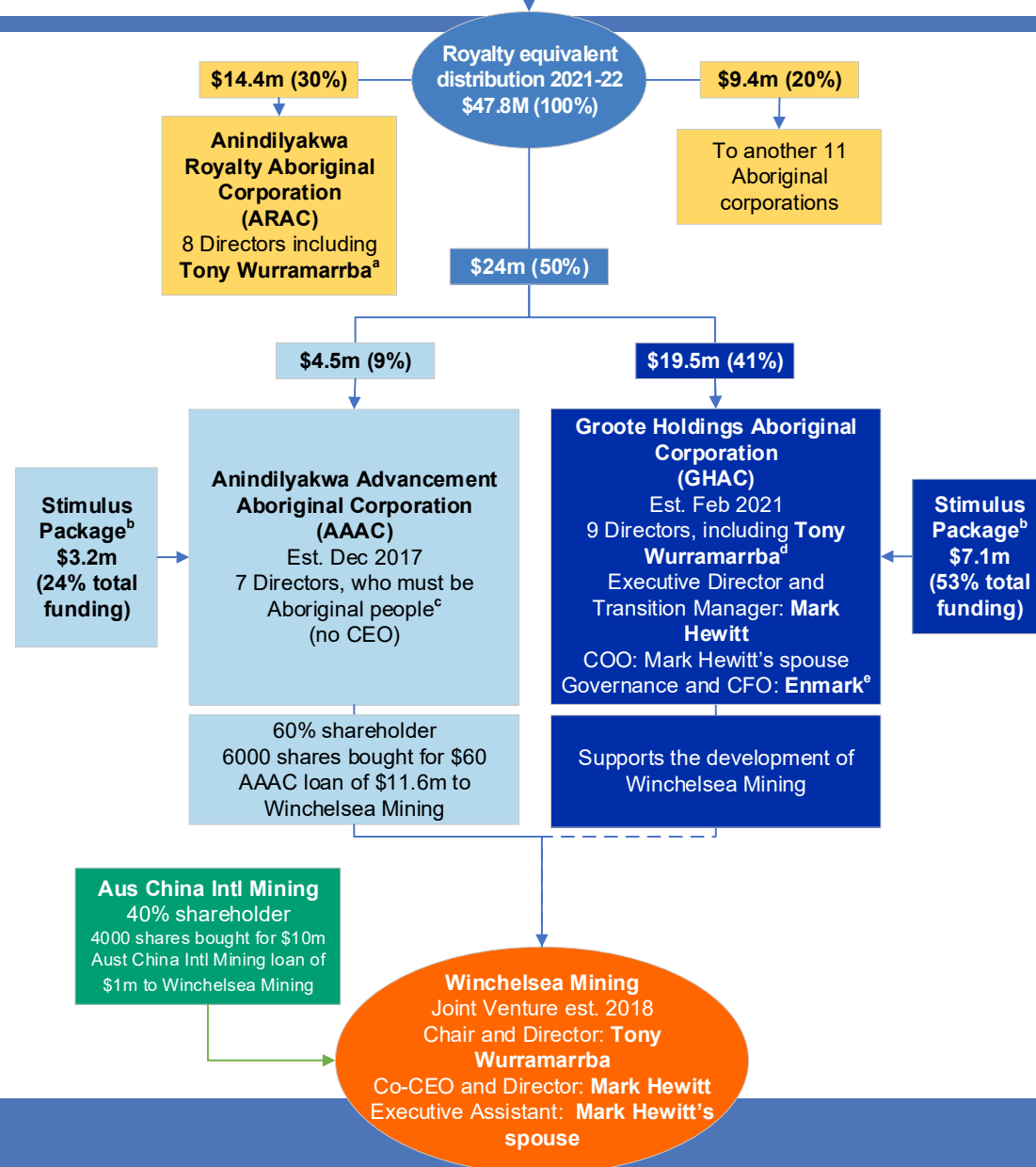


# Reporting back to the Groote Strong Women's Group



**ALC**  
Chair: **Tony Wurramarrba**  
CEO: **Mark Hewitt**  
Major Investment and Development Coordinator:  
**Mark Hewitt's spouse**

Figure 4.1: Relationships between ALC, AAAC, GHAC and Winchelsea Mining, 2021-22



Source: Auditor-General Report No. 29 of 2022-23

# Reporting back to the Groote Strong Women's Group

**Recommendation no. 10** The Anindilyakwa Land Council strengthen the royalty equivalents distribution process by:  
**Paragraph 3.87**

- (a) developing an assessment method that includes funding priorities;
- (b) communicating the assessment method to potential applicants and informing all applicants of outcomes;
- (c) applying the assessment method to all decisions; and
- (d) keeping adequate records of the basis for funding decisions.

**Anindilya**

## Recommendations to the Land Council

- Make a plan about how to decide who gets the money.
- Tell everybody about that plan.
- Follow the plan.
- Write down the reasons for each decision.

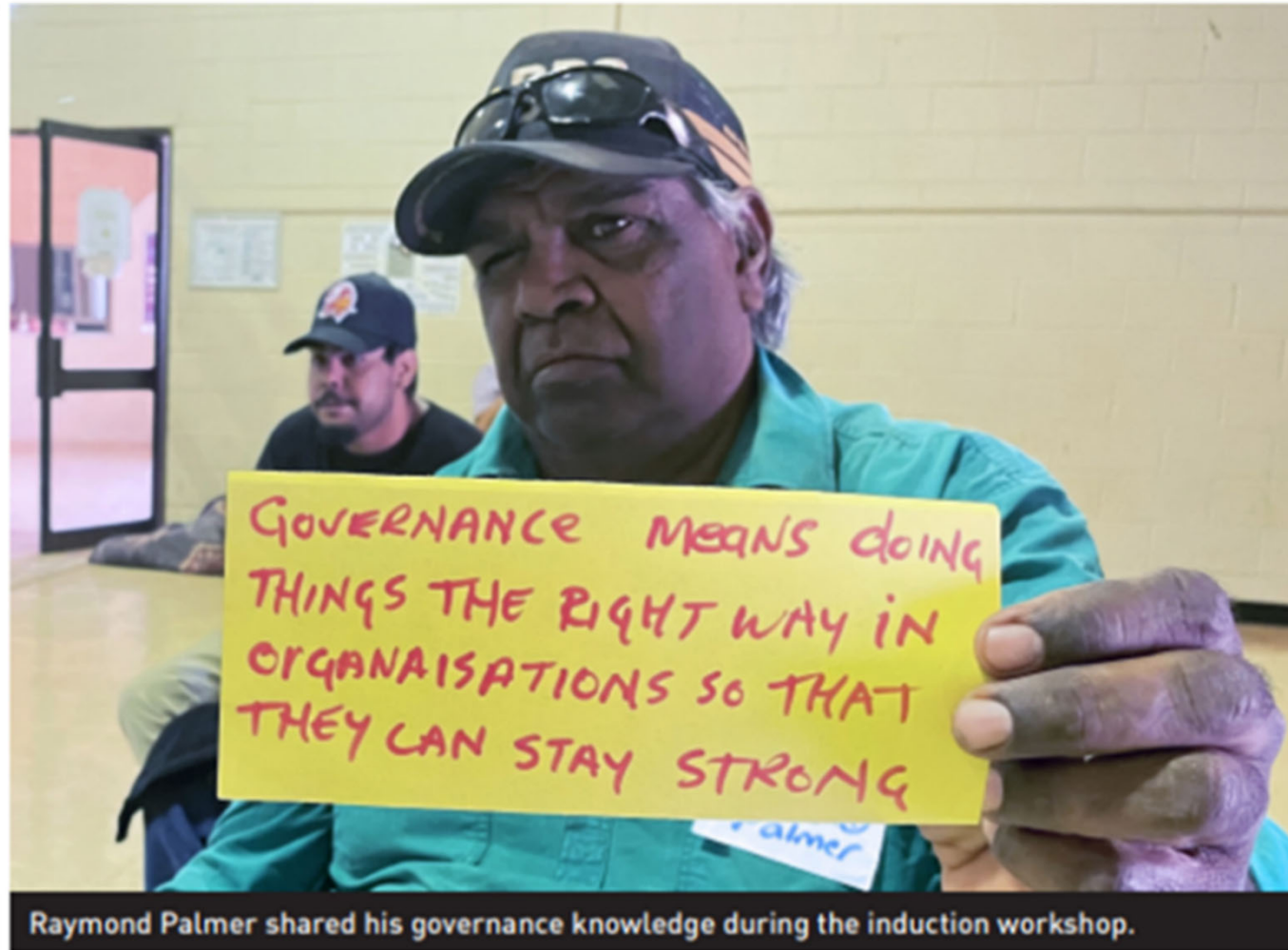
ALC disagreed.

# Managing the risks of citizen engagement

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- Managing expectations
- Setting the parameters of performance audit work
- Preserving independence, neutrality and objectivity

# Questions



Source: *CLC Council News*, April 2022.