

# Aboriginal Peak Organisations Northern Territory

An alliance of the CLC, NLC, CAALAS, NAAJA and AMSANT

## *Katherine Governance & Management workshop*

17th July 2014



-- Report for participants --

*Our Decisions, Our Actions, Our Future*

# *Katherine Governance & Management Workshop*

## **Where, when & what?**

On the 17<sup>th</sup> July, representatives from Aboriginal organisations across the Katherine region gathered at Godinymayin Yijard Rivers Arts & Culture Centre for a workshop on **Governance and Management**. The workshop was organised and facilitated by Aboriginal Peak Organisations Northern Territory (APO NT) as part of their Aboriginal Governance and Management Program (AGMP). The workshop program is attached to this report.



In foreground: Gary Manbulloo Snr, Natasha Bronghur and Pauline Marapunya, Wurli Wurlinjang Health Service



Group discussions

***Our Decisions, Our Actions, Our Future***

## Who came?

Thirty-two people came to the workshop, representing at least five different Aboriginal organisations. Representatives came from around Katherine, and from as far away as Ngukurr, and brought with them a wealth of governance and management experience and enthusiasm. Many young staff were also in attendance, sending a clear message that young people want to be involved and have a lot to contribute to organisational governance and management.



Marion Scrymgour, Natasha Bronghur and Gary Manbulloo Snr, Wurli Wurlinjang Health Service



Arnold George, Salome Harris, Betty Roberts and Daniel Wilfred, Ngukurr Language Centre Aboriginal Corporation



Anne Manfong and Ruby Stanley, North Australian Aboriginal Justice Agency

*"Strong leadership needs to start with directors. We need to be there to represent the whole community. Strong leadership starts with us. A strong board means committed directors that are there at every meeting. If we need to do business then we need to do it seriously"*

May Rosas, Wurli Wurlinjang Health Service

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## Who presented?



Deanna Kennedy

**Deanna Kennedy** gave a memorable presentation on youth leadership, sharing her story on how she has achieved her successes and become a strong role model for young people in Beswick.

Deanna's career started in the Beswick store and since then her drive and ambition has seen her successfully progress into different roles with the Local Government Council, Sunrise Health Service and now the Australian Government.

Deanna has participated in a number of youth and leadership programs including the Young Endeavour Youth Scheme Voyage which saw her sailing the high seas! The voyage taught Deanna skills in teamwork, leadership, communication and confidence.

Deanna now works as an Indigenous Engagement Officer for the Australian Government, a position usually held by much older people.

Deanna's story reminds us of the need to empower young people to follow their dreams.

The AGMP team thanks Deanna for her inspiring presentation. We wish her well in reaching all her future goals!

*"The advice I would give young people is to take opportunities that come to them"*

Deanna Kennedy

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## Youth leadership

Around a third of people at the workshop were young adults, under the age of 30. They brought enthusiasm and lots of bright ideas about how Aboriginal organisations can strengthen their governance and management, including ways of encouraging young people to get involved. Inspired by Deanna's presentation, Angelina Joshua from Ngukurr Language Centre spoke passionately about her personal journey and aspirations for the future.

*"I had a lot of encouragement from my father. He said, 'don't let them knock you down, overcome your barriers.' He pulled my socks up. Told me to go to work. It was really good. I enjoyed it"*

Angelina Joshua, Ngukurr Language Centre AC.



*"I won't be around forever, so we need to pass on our knowledge"*

Francis Hayes



Natasha Bronghur, Deanna Kennedy and Joni Wilson



Group work

*"Us older ones need to smooth the ground so that the younger ones can sail through. We need our young people. They are our future. But they need guidance too. Cultural guidance".*

May Rosas, Wurli Wurlinjang Health Service

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## Directors Roles & Responsibilities

The session commenced with a discussion amongst participants about what they saw as important roles and responsibilities of directors. These were written up on a whiteboard:

- Ⓢ Observing conflicts of interest
- Ⓢ Communicate with members/community
- Ⓢ Separation of powers
- Ⓢ Confidentiality
- Ⓢ Decision-making
- Ⓢ CEO recruitment
- Ⓢ Delegation of powers
- Ⓢ CEO performance appraisal

The following information on the four key responsibility areas of directors was then provided and discussed.

<i>Lead</i>	Represent all members, create vision, and promote self-determination.
<i>Plan</i>	Set direction, goals and values.
<i>Organise</i>	Develop policies, communicate and work together with management and members.
<i>Control</i>	Make sure the organisation is accountable and financially stable. Hire, support and monitor the performance of the top manager.

Good communication, having strong boards and developing young people to be the future leaders of organisations were some of the main discussion points in this session.



Francis Hayes, North Australian Aboriginal Justice Agency,  
and Betty Roberts, Ngukurr Language Centre Aboriginal  
Corporation



Small group discussion

## **Strengths of Katherine Region organisations identified at the workshop**



- Ⓢ **Strong boards** with wide knowledge and experience
- Ⓢ **Shared use of board members** across organisations – creates strong working relationships
- Ⓢ **Committed and experienced CEOs and managers**
- Ⓢ **Strong communication** - between the board, staff and community
- Ⓢ **Broad community representation on board** – making sure everyone has a voice
- Ⓢ **Succession planning** – having an organisational structure which helps young people to join the organisation and learn their roles and responsibilities and take on leadership opportunities
- Ⓢ **Good management systems** in place including HR support

*"The elders at the Ngukurr Language Centre are awesome. They are my mentors. They are my idols. They are the leaders. They teach me"*

Angelina Joshua, Ngukurr Language Centre AC

*"Any service always works better when it is community-driven. If our people are involved in the service, in the development of the service then it is going to work a whole lot better than someone from the outside coming in"*

Rodney Hoffman, Sunrise Health Service AC

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## Areas to strengthen identified at the workshop



- Ⓢ **Seek outside support** to work with the board, including possibly engaging independent, qualified directors
- Ⓢ **Networks and partnerships** - organisations working together rather than trying to work alone
- Ⓢ **Better recruitment processes** – using external agencies for senior management positions
- Ⓢ **Conflict of Interest** – understanding what it means and how to deal with it
- Ⓢ **Improved communication between management, the executive board and members** so that everyone knows what the organisation is doing
- Ⓢ **Youth development** – building confidence, self-esteem, commitment and trust among future leaders
- Ⓢ **Youth Incentives** – providing cultural and language training; supporting attendance at youth conferences and roundtables; workshops in schools

*"We have to stop being afraid to look at organisational culture that needs to shift"*  
Marion Scrymgour, Wurli Wurlinjang Health Service

*"To look at governance and management we need to look at structures which support young people in getting jobs with Aboriginal orgs"*  
Eric Thomas, Wurli Wurlinjang Health Service

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## Some governance and management *ideas, tools and resources* shared at the workshop to strengthen your organisation

- 🕒 **Mentors for young people** to gain leadership experience and skills.
- 🕒 **The Governance Toolkit** on the Australian Indigenous Governance Institute website is a useful, free online resource for Aboriginal organisations:  
<http://www.aigi.com.au/toolkit-resources/link-to-toolkit/>
- 🕒 **Invite independent directors onto your board** – ensure that it is someone that can bring needed skills or experience to the board.
- 🕒 **The Australian Indigenous Leadership Centre** leadership and governance courses.



Rodney Hoffman, Sunrise Health Service AC



May Rosas, Wurli Wurlinjang Health Service

*"It's good to listen to other people and organisations and sharing how they get around to doing things, and we provide our way of doing things and they provide their way, so it's a learning and sharing process".*

Francis Hayes, North Australian Aboriginal Justice Agency

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## Aboriginal Governance & Management Program (AGMP) – A snapshot

### How did the program come about?

APO NT held the Strong Aboriginal Governance Summit in April 2013. Held in Tennant Creek, the forum was attended by some 300 Aboriginal people from Aboriginal organisations across the NT.

The AGMP builds on recommendations and outcomes from the summit – mainly that Aboriginal organisations need ongoing governance and management training and support.

### How is it funded?

APO NT acknowledges and welcomes Commonwealth Government funding that has made an initial three years of the program possible.

### Where is the program?

The program is territory-wide, with program staff based in Darwin and Alice Springs.

### How is the program governed?

AGMP is guided by a Steering Committee, made up of senior APO NT and Commonwealth Government staff, as well as Governance experts, including Aboriginal people with local community knowledge.

### What is the approach?

The program has an *action research* approach. This means researching and learning while supporting NT Aboriginal organisations.

### What are some of the key aspects of the program?

- Ⓢ **Research information on NT Aboriginal organisations** – AMGP completed a survey on the strengths and needs of NT Aboriginal organisations earlier this year. A report was completed (and distributed at the workshop) on the first 30 responses. AGMP has also commissioned research on organisational best practice, models and networks.
- Ⓢ **Hold regional governance and management workshops** - The Katherine workshop was the fourth of five workshops scheduled across the NT for 2014.
- Ⓢ **Facilitate Board/CEO network** – This is a way for senior representatives of NT Aboriginal organisations to share information and advice about governance and management, and to learn from each other. Meetings will be held mostly by phone.
- Ⓢ **Demonstration sites** – The AGMP will provide close governance and management support to several organisations chosen as demonstration sites by the Steering Committee. AGMP staff will also collect information there as authorised by the organisation, to help demonstrate strong ways of working.
- Ⓢ **Respond to governance and management needs and requests from NT Aboriginal organisations** – AGMP can assist NT Aboriginal organisations by:
  - Giving advice and referring on to suitable support providers
  - Providing corporate policy templates
  - Sharing governance and management resources and best practice

*For further information about the program or how your organisation can be involved, please contact program staff*

## Reminders

Please contact AGMP staff members if:

- 🕒 You would like to join or to find out more about the AGMP's **CEO/Board network**.
- 🕒 You would like electronic copies of the **corporate templates developed by the AGMP** and given out at the workshop.
- 🕒 You have any further **feedback** on the workshop or the AGMP, or would like some governance and management **assistance**, we would love to hear from you!

## Aboriginal Governance & Management Program Staff

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*"Governance and management need to work together. Two legs that need to be travelling at the same pace. Can't have one without the other"*

Wes Miller, AGMP Project Officer

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## Acknowledgements

APO NT would like to **thank**:

- 🕒 **Dr Marion Scrymgour**, CEO of Wurli Wurlinjang Health Service, for co-facilitating the workshop.
- 🕒 **Deanna Kennedy**, youth leader from Beswick, for her memorable presentation.
- 🕒 **The Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet** for funding the APO NT Aboriginal Governance and Management Program including this workshop.
- 🕒 The following Aboriginal organisations for sending representatives to the workshop:
  - Ngukurr Language Centre Aboriginal Corporation
  - North Australian Aboriginal Justice Agency
  - Northern Land Council
  - Sunrise Health Service Aboriginal Corporation
  - Wurli Wurlinjang Health Service
- 🕒 Finally... a special thanks to **Harry** the security guard



# Governance & Management Workshop

*Godinymayin Yijard Rivers Arts & Culture Centre  
17<sup>th</sup> July 2014*

## -- Program --

8:45 – 9:00	Registration
9:00 – 9:45	Welcome & Introductions
9:45 – 10:00	Aboriginal Governance & Management Program (AGMP)
10:00 – 10:25	Governance & Management Concepts - with group reflection
<b>10:25 - 10:40</b>	<b>MORNING TEA</b>
10:40 – 11:00	AGMP research
11:00 – 11:30	Directors roles & responsibilities
11:30 – 12:30	Building on Strengths - Small discussion groups
<b>12:30 - 1:15</b>	<b>LUNCH</b>
1:15 – 1:45	Reporting back on strengths
1:45 - 2:15	Case Study – Youth Leadership – Deanna Kennedy
2:15 – 3:15	Youth leadership in Aboriginal organisations - Small discussion groups & reporting back
<b>3:15 - 3:30</b>	<b>AFTERNOON TEA</b>
3:30 – 3:50	Open Forum
3:50 – 4:00	Final Wrap Up
<b>4:00</b>	<b>WORKSHOP CLOSES</b>