



**Aboriginal Areas
Protection Authority**

**Aboriginal Areas
Protection Authority
Annual Report
2014–2015**

Disclaimer

The Aboriginal Areas Protection Authority has taken due care in ensuring information contained in this annual report was true and correct at the time of publication, however changes in circumstances after the time of publication may impact on its accuracy. The Authority disclaim all liability associated with the use of this information by others in contexts not approved by the Authority.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island readers and viewers should be aware that this material may contain images or names of deceased persons.

© Aboriginal Areas Protection Authority

Aboriginal Areas Protection Authority
GPO Box 1890
Darwin NT 0801

www.aapant.org.au

Published November 2015 by the Aboriginal Areas Protection Authority, a statutory authority of the Northern Territory Government.

ISSN 2205-5177 (Online)

Contact Details

Office hours are 8.00am to 4.21pm Monday to Friday and our offices are located in Darwin and Alice Springs.

Darwin

4th Floor
RCG Centre
47 Mitchell Street
Darwin NT 0800

Telephone: (08) 8999 4332

Facsimile: (08) 8999 4334

Alice Springs

Ground Floor
Belvedere House
Cnr Bath and Parsons Streets
Alice Springs NT 0870

Telephone: (08) 8951 5023

Facsimile: (08) 8952 2824

Postal Address

GPO Box 1890
Darwin NT 0801

Internet and Email

www.aapant.org.au
enquiries.aapa@nt.gov.au

Table of Contents

Introduction	2	Governance	32
Chairman’s Report	5	Authority Board	34
Chief Executive Officer’s Report.....	6	Authority Operations.....	37
Deputy Chairman’s Report	7	Legislation and Policy	39
Highlights for 2014–2015	8	Human Resources - Managing our People.....	40
Strategic Priorities 2015–2016	9	The Staff of the Authority	42
Our Organisation.....	10	Equity and Diversity	43
Role and Function.....	12	Workplace Policies	44
Mission Statement	12	Employment Assistance Program	44
Vision.....	12	Staff Training and Development	44
Key services provided by the Authority.....	13	Financial Report	46
Our Stakeholders	13	Financial Statement Overview.....	48
Initiatives and Projects in 2014–2015	14	Financial Report 2014–2015	49
Notable Authority Certificates.....	16	Certification of the Financial Statements	51
Working Relationships	17	Insurance Report	74
Special Projects	18		
Performance Report 2014–2015.....	20		
Authority Certificates	23		
Requests for Information	28		
Register of Sacred Sites	30		
Damage to Sacred Sites	31		

- 1. Introduction**
2. Our Organisation
3. Initiatives and Projects 2014–2015
4. Performance Report 2014–2015
5. Governance
6. Human Resources
7. Financial Report
8. Insurance Report





View from helicopter during fieldwork between Cox Peninsula and Channel Point

The Hon Bess Price MLA
Minister for Local Government and Community Services
DARWIN NT 0800

30 September 2015

Dear Minister

I have the pleasure to submit to you, in accordance with the provisions of Section 14(1) of the *Northern Territory Aboriginal Sacred Sites Act 1989*, the Annual Report for the Aboriginal Areas Protection Authority for the financial period 1 July 2014 to 30 June 2015.

The Report refers to the twenty-sixth year of operation of the Aboriginal Areas Protection Authority.

Yours sincerely



Bernard Abbott
Chairman

The Hon Bess Price MLA
Minister for Local Government and Community Services
DARWIN NT 0800

30 September 2015

Dear Minister

I have the pleasure to submit to you, in accordance with the provisions of Section 14(1) of the *Northern Territory Aboriginal Sacred Sites Act 1989*, the Annual Report for the Aboriginal Areas Protection Authority for the financial period 1 July 2014 to 30 June 2015.

The Report refers to the twenty-sixth year of operation of the Aboriginal Areas Protection Authority and to the best of my knowledge and belief as Accountable Officer, pursuant to section 13 of the *Financial Management Act*; the system of internal control and audit provides reasonable assurance that:

- a) proper records of all transactions affecting the agency are kept and that the department's employees observe the provisions of the *Financial Management Act*, the Financial Management Regulations and Treasurer's Directions;
- b) Authority procedures provide proper internal control and a current description of those procedures is recorded in the Accounting and Property Manual, which has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the *Financial Management Act*;
- c) no indication of fraud, malpractice, major breach of legislation or delegation, major error in or omission from the accounts and records exists;
- d) in accordance with the requirements of section 15 of the *Financial Management Act*, the internal audit capacity available to the Authority is adequate and the results of internal audits have been reported to me; and
- e) the financial statements in this annual report have been prepared from proper accounts and records and are in accordance with the Treasurer's Directions.

Yours sincerely



Dr Benedict Scamary
Chief Executive Officer

Chairman's Report



The Northern Territory Aboriginal Sacred Sites Act brings together Aboriginal law and Northern Territory legislation to help protect sacred sites across the Territory. Since the Act was introduced in 1989 the Board, with support from the Aboriginal Areas Protection Authority, has sought to promote an understanding of sacred sites as important places for Aboriginal custodians and as a valuable part of this nation's heritage.

The Board is passionate about the work it does in protecting sacred sites. The job of the Board is often challenging and requires its members to make difficult decisions about how to best protect sacred sites and balance the needs of others. Over the last 12 months the collective knowledge and experience of the Board

has helped it successfully navigate various challenges and achieve positive outcomes for sacred sites as well as facilitate development and land use.

In the 2014–15 financial year the Authority issued 177 Authority Certificates for a wide range of projects across the Territory including: roadwork construction and maintenance projects, infrastructure and development including development on Aboriginal communities, mining and exploration as well as tourism related projects.

The Board values opportunities to meet various stakeholders at its regular meetings as a way of providing information about sacred sites and fostering a greater appreciation of each other's work. In addition the Board met with a number of key people including The Honorable Bess Price, MLA, Minister for Local Government and Community Services and The Honorable Adam Giles, MLA, Chief Minister. Arising from these discussions the Board welcomed the commencement of a review of the Sacred Sites Act aimed at strengthening protection for sacred sites in the Northern Territory. The review will be conducted in the 2015–16 financial year.

Under the Act the Board is also responsible for dealing with damage to sacred sites. Over the last year cases of site damage were investigated in numerous locations but was particularly high in the Darwin region. In 2014–15 the Board directed the Authority to take legal action against the Department of Infrastructure (DoI) for damage to a sacred site at Coomalie Creek located south of Darwin for breaching section 34 (work on a sacred site) of the Act. The Authority was successful in its prosecution and the Board hopes that the learning lessons from this case will help DoI in preventing future similar incidents.

During the last 12 months a number of custodians who have worked closely with the Authority sadly passed away. I acknowledge the passing of these custodians including Jawoyn people Ms Maureen Smith and Mr Rodney Nelson. In addition the Board attended the funeral of Arrente men Mr Tracker Tilmouth, and Mr Bookie. Both men were important spokesmen for Aboriginal people who achieved high status and an enormous amount in their lives. On a personal note I mourn the passing of my brother Mr Abbott who was a senior Western Arrente man. Our thoughts are with the families of these custodians.

A number of positions on the Authority Board are due for renewal. The Authority has enjoyed stable membership of the Board over many years. A number of Board members have decided not to continue on the Board due to health factors. I wish to thank Ms Lena Pula (member for 16 years), Mr Captain Woditj (member for 9 years) and Mr Robert Tipungwuti (member for 9 years) for their outstanding service and representation.

Finally I thank the Authority's Chief Executive Officer Dr Ben Scambary and his staff for the support and dedication they have provided the Board in 2014–15.

Bernard Abbott

Chairman

30 September 2015

Chief Executive Officer's Report



The Authority, while small, plays a central role in much of the development that occurs in the Northern Territory. Under the Northern Territory Aboriginal Sacred Sites Act the Authority works to achieve balance between the protection of sacred sites and development.

Since the Act was introduced in 1989 the Authority has negotiated and issued around 5000 Authority Certificates for a vast range of small and large projects across the Territory including infrastructure, roadworks, mining and exploration, agriculture, aquaculture, housing and tourism.

In 2014–15 the Authority issued 177 Authority Certificates which supported and facilitated various projects. Of these 38 per cent were issued for infrastructure related projects, 26 per cent for projects relating road works, 12 per cent were for exploration and mining projects, 6 per cent for

environmental and rehabilitation programs, 8 per cent for tourism and National Parks related, 9 per cent for communications infrastructure and 1 per cent for pastoral and agricultural projects.

The Authority is keenly aware of the changes and developments that have occurred in legal, economic and social contexts since the Act was introduced and is constantly looking at ways to improve its services and alignment to Government's priorities whilst still protecting sacred sites and the cultural values that lie at the core of the organisation. Identifying and implementing ways to cut red tape to improve how we do our work and how we best serve our stakeholders has been an important undertaking for the Authority in 2014–15.

One initiative that has been in development for a number of years is the enhancement of our database management system. Scheduled to be launched in 2016 the system will enable users to submit, manage and track their applications online, and help improve the turnaround on jobs through streamlined processes. A second initiative the Authority has pursued this year is the drafting of amendments to the Act to help strengthen its capacity to protect sacred sites as well as create better efficiencies in its administration.

The Authority also continues to proactively take steps to work with stakeholders early in their planning processes including the Department of Infrastructure and Parks and Wildlife Commission of the Northern Territory to achieve positive collaborations and a greater appreciation and understanding of each other's processes and priorities.

Key projects that the Authority has helped support through successful negotiation and issuing of Authority Certificates including the Department of Defence's biennial Exercise Talisman Sabre 2015 which took place in several locations

in the Territory. The Authority facilitated highly positive engagement between Aboriginal custodians and personnel from both the Australian and US forces to complete the first of three Authority Certificates for this large exercise. Another key project was the Environmental Monitoring in Bynoe Harbour which involved the Authority in conjunction with the Kenbi Rangers carrying out extensive fieldwork to record and map marine and terrestrial sacred sites to facilitate environmental monitoring requirements for the Inpex project.

The Authority also worked on the large National Broadband Network (NBN) project which involved the Authority completing the issuing of Authority Certificates for the townships of Alice Springs, Katherine, Tennant Creek, Nhulunbuy and parts of Darwin.

Sadly this year our long serving chairman Bernard Abbott spent some time away from the Board for personal reasons. I cannot thank Bernard enough for the guidance and support he has provided to myself and the Authority over the years. Lastly I thank the Board and staff for their hard work and commitment in 2014–2015.

Dr Benedict Scambary
Chief Executive Officer
30 September 2015

Deputy Chairman's Report



It has been an honour to serve again as Deputy Chairman of the Board. The Board has worked hard this year to protect sacred sites and help teach others about their importance to Aboriginal people.

Through the Authority's key services as well as engagement with stakeholders including Government, business and developers we hope to promote a better understanding and appreciation of Aboriginal sacred sites.

One way that the Authority helps inform others about sacred sites is through the site registration process. For custodians this process provides a sound level of sacred sites protection and for others it provides practical information about sacred sites such as its location and features.

This year the Authority registered 28 sacred sites throughout the Territory including the regions of Darwin, Arnhem Land, Katherine, Barkly, Central Australia, Alice Springs and Victoria River.

The Board meets four times a year to discuss the business of the Authority and pressing issues of the day. The makeup of the Board is unique because it is made up an equal number of male and female members. This equal division of gender on the Board is essential to enable Board to consider gender specific business including women's sites. Women's sites form an important part of the work that the female Board members and I carry out at our regular Board meetings.

Engagement of our youth in sacred site matters has been a key concern of the Board. The Board is keen to promote increased participation of young Indigenous people in the work of the Authority and through its meetings this year we have recommended that there be an increased involvement of young people in the consultative processes of the Authority. In particular we believe that on country visits, a school engagement program and the establishment of a youth council would assist in preserving our culture

and highlighting the important work of the Authority. Unfortunately, key resources for the implementation of these strategies are not currently available and we have instructed the CEO to explore mechanisms for addressing this important area.

Finally I thank the Board and Authority for their hard work this year. I also wish to make special thanks to our Chairman Bernard Abbott for his leadership. Under his guidance the Authority has strived to become a leader in sacred site protection and he has consistently provided a strong presence and wise advice for us all.

Banduk Marika

Deputy Chairman

30 September 2015

Highlights for 2014–2015

Statistics at a Glance

- In 2014–15, the Authority issued 177 Authority Certificates, taking an average of 126 days to complete. The majority of these were for the Darwin and Alice Springs regions.
- Government (NT Government, Commonwealth and Other Government and Local Government) was the largest client group for Authority Certificates requesting 76 per cent of requesting applicants.
- The second largest user group was by private individuals/companies representing 12 per cent of requesting applicants.
- In 2014–15, the Authority completed 513 formal requests for information from its publically available Registers.
- Infrastructure related projects (planning and infrastructure, housing development, power, water and sewage) represented 38 per cent of Authority Certificates issued in 2014–15.
- Projects related to roadworks were the second largest project type representing 26 per cent of issued Certificates.

Sacred Site Protection

- The Aboriginal Areas Protection Authority celebrated its 26th Anniversary in 2014–15 and 36 years of sacred site protection in the Northern Territory.
- 28 sacred sites were registered in 2014–15, with 119 new sacred sites recorded and 17 requested for registration.
- In 2014–15 the Authority completed one court case in relation to site damage at Coomalie Creek on Batchelor Road in Darwin's rural area. The Authority was successful in its prosecution against the Northern Territory of Australia for breaching Section 34 (work on a sacred site) of the Sacred Sites Act.

Development Projects the Authority has issued Authority Certificates for included

- Road work corridors, including Litchfield Park Road in the Darwin Hinterland, Plenty Highway road upgrade in the Plenty River Basin and Buchanan Highway road upgrade in the Victoria River Basin region.
- The completion of National Broadband Network applications covering the entire towns of Katherine, Nhulunbuy, Tennant Creek, Alice Springs and parts of Darwin.
- The issuing of the first Authority Certificate on Finnis River and Native Point in the Darwin Hinterland region for the biennial combined Australia and United States (US) training activity Exercise Talisman Sabre 2015.

- The issuing of an Authority Certificate for Stage 3 of the Ord Development Project which opened up 1800 hectares of land for agricultural development.
- The issuing of an Authority Certificate for a residential subdivision and development south of Monospar Road in Ti Tree.

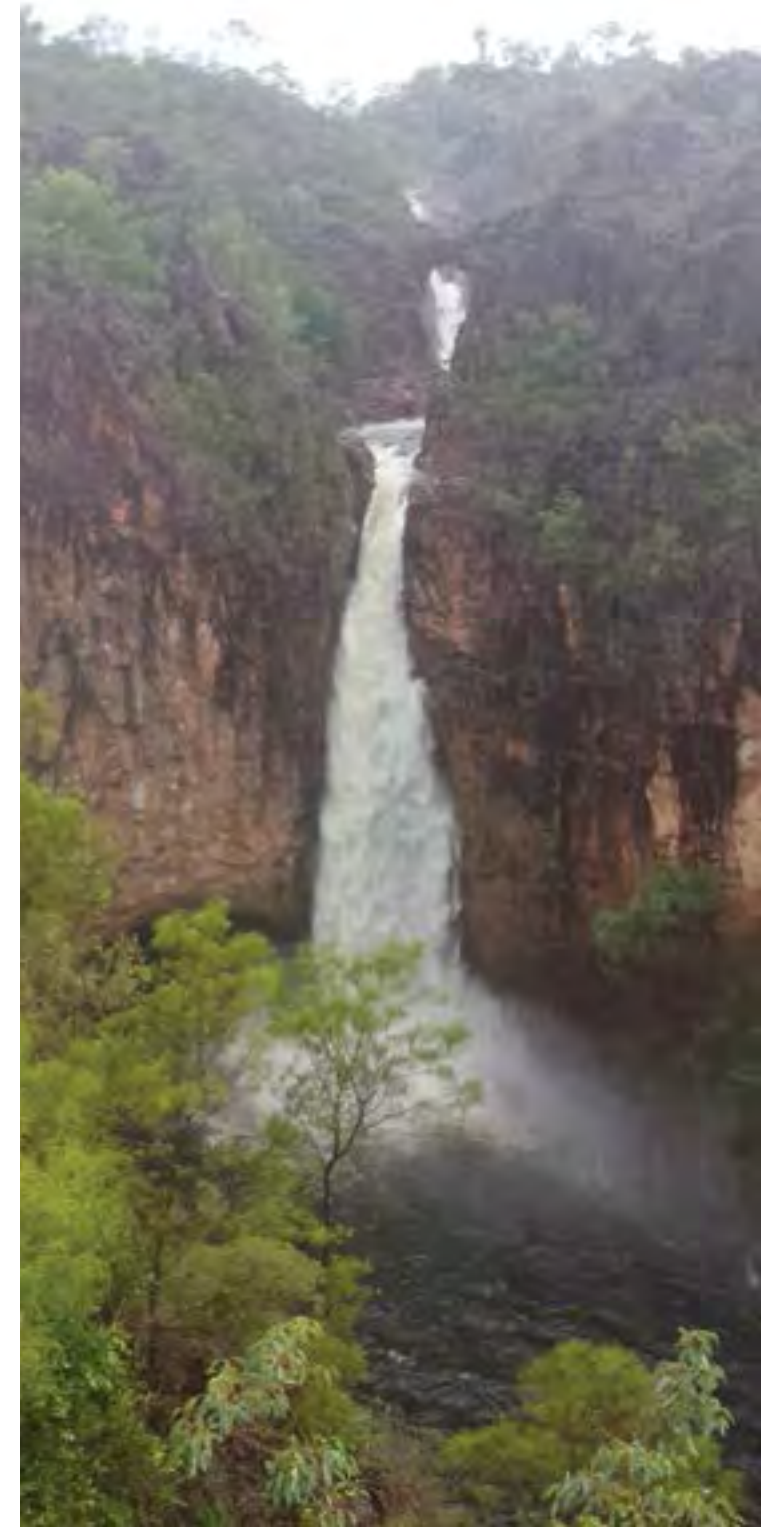
Special Projects

- Providing specialist advice to Kakadu National Park management on sacred sites.
- Launch of the new Authority website.
- Providing compliance training for land and sea rangers in the NT.

Strategic Priorities 2015–2016

Strategic Directions	Business Priorities
<p>1. Protection of Sacred Sites in the Northern Territory</p> <p><i>Ensuring the protection of Aboriginal Sacred Sites whilst supporting economic development and reflecting the ongoing development of the Northern Territory</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure the Act evolves to reflect cultural, legal, political and environmental changes in the Northern Territory • Ensure the Authority and its staff are equipped to administer the Act's legal and deliver its functions • Maintain cross-government communication and provide high level advice to Ministers and parliament • Ensure strategic communication is maintained with all stakeholders across the Territory
<p>2. Quality Research</p> <p><i>Providing timely detailed and up to date research around Sacred Site issues based on ongoing relationships with Custodians and Traditional Owner and reflecting the latest developments in Anthropological Research</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertake professional anthropological field research in order to collect, store and report on information relating to sacred sites and their protection • Ensure AAPA research methodology and principles are consistent and meets the needs of the Authority
<p>3. Information management</p> <p><i>Information management meets evolving requirements of AAPA and stakeholders</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain existing information management systems to ensure functionality and viability • Develop new information systems to reflect changes in technology and new functionality
<p>4. Our People</p> <p><i>Ensure AAPA has the most appropriate staff with up-to-date tools and resources to fulfil their work roles</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide leadership to ensure all staff are able to actively contribute to developing AAPA priorities • Build capabilities of AAPA staff • Maintain AAPA indigenous Employment Strategy
<p>5. Financial Resources</p> <p><i>Financial compliance and controls meet best practice guidelines</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure financial management complies with wider Northern Territory Government Treasury Directions, Appropriation Requirements and Australian Accounting Standards • Financial management processes meet operational requirements of the Authority

1. Introduction
- 2. Our Organisation**
3. Initiatives and Projects 2014–2015
4. Performance Report 2014–2015
5. Governance
6. Human Resources
7. Financial Report
8. Insurance Report





Tolmer Falls, Litchfield National Park

Role and Function

The Aboriginal Areas Protection Authority ('Authority') is a statutory authority established under the *Northern Territory Aboriginal Sacred Sites Act* ('Sacred Sites Act') to administer sacred site protection in the Northern Territory. The functions of the Authority are set out in Section 10 of the Sacred Sites Act. The protection of Aboriginal sacred sites is recognised by the Northern Territory Government and the broader Territory community as an important element in the preservation of the Territory's cultural heritage for the benefit of all Territorians. The Authority seeks to strike a balance between the protection of sacred sites and development in the Northern Territory.

Mission Statement

To protect sacred sites in the Northern Territory by recognising and respecting the interests of custodians of sacred sites, landowners, and developers for the benefit of all Territorians.

Vision

- Achieve practical outcomes by recognising and respecting the interests of Aboriginal sacred site custodians, landowners and developers.
- Minimise controversy over the existence of sacred sites.
- Provide sound and timely protection of sacred sites in the Northern Territory.
- Foster understanding and enhance relations between Aboriginal custodians and other Territorians about sacred sites.
- Provide clear and practical instructions for the protection of sacred sites.

Key Services provided by the Authority

The Authority provides the means by which Aboriginal sacred sites are protected through:

- Sacred site avoidance surveys and the issuing of Authority Certificates for any proposals of development;
- The provision of information to the public about existing sacred sites data through abstracts of Authority records and access to the Registers maintained by the Authority; and
- The registration of Aboriginal sacred sites.

Authority Certificates

Anyone proposing to use or work on land in the Northern Territory may apply to the Authority for an **Authority Certificate** to cover their proposed activities. Such Certificates are based on consultations with custodians and provide clear instructions on what can and cannot be done in and around sacred sites. An Authority Certificate provides a statutory indemnity against prosecution in relation to the works or uses covered by the Certificate, provided the applicant complies with any conditions imposed to protect sacred sites. Certificates are voluntary and provide an effective risk management tool for developers and act as site protection measures for custodians.

Requests for Information

Members of the public may seek advice on registered sacred sites by requesting access to the Register of Sacred Sites. The Authority provides **abstracts of information** to advise the public where sacred sites are known to exist so that they are not inadvertently damaged and provide advice where sacred sites are likely to be at risk if works were to be carried out without more detailed information being sought first. The Authority may advise that they should not carry out works on these sacred sites without an Authority Certificate and that any development proposals take into account their existence.

The Registration of Aboriginal Sacred Sites

Custodians of sacred sites may apply to have their sites **registered** under Part III Division 2 of the Sacred Sites Act. The Authority will then conduct research into the site to determine the location, extent and significance of the site. In accordance with the Sacred Sites Act, the Authority ensures that sufficiently detailed documentation about specific sacred sites is recorded to warrant their inclusion by the Board and that landowners are given an opportunity to comment.

Our Stakeholders

The Authority serves a diverse range of stakeholders, including Territory and National Government agencies, Aboriginal custodians and traditional owners, Industry groups, including the mining and pastoral industries, and a range of private and non-government organisations who use land across the Territory. The Authority strives to meet the needs of all stakeholders in order to protect sacred sites.

For more information, visit our website at <http://www.aapant.org.au>

1. Introduction
2. Our Organisation
- 3. Initiatives and
Projects 2014–2015**
4. Performance
Report 2014–2015
5. Governance
6. Human Resources
7. Financial Report
8. Insurance Report





Timber Creek sunset

Notable Authority Certificates

The Authority continues to work with the Northern Territory Government, industry groups and private and public organisations to protect sacred sites and raise the profile of sacred site protection in the Northern Territory. Our unique role and experience means the Authority is ideally placed to support these priorities through its work in protecting sacred sites while assisting in facilitating development projects across the Territory, particularly in the context of current Federal and Territory Government priorities to develop the north and deliver major projects in the Territory.

Over the past twelve months, the Authority has worked with proponents of major developments in the Northern Territory to achieve significant outcomes in sacred site protection.

National Broadband Network (NBN)

Since 2012 the Authority has been working with the National Broadband Network Company to provide sacred site clearance for NBN infrastructure in the towns and regions in the Northern Territory. In 2014–2015 the Authority completed the issuing of Authority Certificates for the NBN Project over the townships of Alice Springs, Katherine, Tennant Creek, Nhulunbuy and parts of Darwin.

Throughout the year Authority staff met regularly with NBNCo to provide general sacred site advice and discuss in detail Certificate conditions to ensure that all parties involved were aligned in their understanding and interpretation of Certificates. This resulted in a successful working collaboration between the Authority and NBNCo. The research work undertaken for the NBN rollout has also enabled the Authority to bring its records in these areas up to date and providing an ongoing benefit to the Authority for future projects in town locations.

Exercise Talisman Sabre 2015

Exercise Talisman Sabre 2015 was a combined Australian and United States (US) defence forces biennial training activity which involved up to 30,000 personnel. As part of this major Exercise, the combined defence forces carried out several training exercises in various locations in the NT. In April 2015 the Authority issued a Authority Certificate to the Department of Defence for military training on Finniss River Station and Native Point in the Darwin Hinterland region. Authority Certificates for Lee Point in Darwin and the Bradshaw Training Area west of Katherine are expected to be completed in early 2015–16. The Authority has facilitated highly positive engagement between Aboriginal custodians and personnel from both the Australian and US forces via the Authority Certificate process and associated meetings.

Ord Development Project – Stage 3a

The Ord–East Kimberley Expansion Project, Stages 2 and 3 is an important agricultural development scheme for Western Australia and the Northern Territory. Stage 3 of the Ord Development Project is a major agricultural development project for the NT Department of Primary Industry and Fisheries. In December 2014 the Authority issued to the Department an Authority Certificate for the Ord River Stage 3a area, known as the Knox Creek Plain, opening up 1800 hectares of land for agricultural development.

Environmental Monitoring in Bynoe Harbour – Inpex

During 2013–14, a series of Authority Certificates were issued to Inpex in relation to environmental monitoring activities in Bynoe Harbour, west of Darwin Harbour. Numerous meetings were held with Larrakia custodians (in Darwin and at Belyuen) and Inpex representatives in an effort to resolve complicated site protection measures across both Darwin and Bynoe harbours. In 2014–15 extensive marine fieldwork was carried out by the Authority in conjunction with the Kenbi Rangers to record and map marine and terrestrial sacred sites to facilitate environmental monitoring requirements for the Inpex project.

Working Relationships

Parks and Wildlife Commission of the Northern Territory

Over the last 12 months the Authority worked with the Parks and Wildlife Commission on multiple applications, including multiple jobs in Central Australia on works to upgrade existing Mountain Bike Tracks within Alice Springs Telegraph Station Historical Reserve, sections of the West MacDonnell National Park, and the Alice Springs Desert Park. The Authority Certificates issued by the Authority on these projects provides clear advice for works for improved visitor experience and access. The Authority also arranged on site meetings with Parks staff and custodians to discuss specific aspects of projects during the on-site consultation process. Other applications for Authority Certificates have focussed on the ongoing maintenance of parks facilities at a number of tourist visitor centres and associated campgrounds in Central Australia.

Department of Infrastructure (DoI)

The Authority continues to build upon its successful working relationship with DoI. In the past 12 months the Authority has received significant numbers of Authority Certificate applications covering large parts of the Northern Territory for road upgrade and maintenance works, gravel pits and associated roads infrastructure. New guidelines implemented last year for road work certificates have helped create a more efficient and timely Authority Certificate process. The Authority also continues to hold joint workshops and field trips to ensure that a thorough working knowledge of road works are obtained by Authority field staff and management. DoI have also seconded an officer to the Authority to assist in progressing priority applications.

Alice Springs Town Council

The Authority continues to work closely with Alice Springs Town Council to achieve positive outcomes for the protection of sacred sites in the context of various developments, tourism and rehabilitation works in the region.

For example, Authority Certificates issued last year for both routine tree trimming and emergency tree trimming within the Alice Springs town boundary on land managed by the Council, has in 2014–15 provided the Alice Springs Town Council with certainty with regard to tree management. An ongoing communication protocol exists in relation to tree trimming. These whole of municipality Authority Certificates have reduced the Alice Springs Town Council's need to apply for multiple certificates to work on specific trees or streets in the town, providing for far more effective future town planning and ongoing maintenance of trees. This has also helped the Council save time and money in relation to tree trimming works. Next year the Authority expects to work alongside Alice Springs Town Council and other organisations on developing ways to enhance tourist visitor experiences for the Alice Springs Region through forums such as Connecting Alice Springs.

Digital Data Exchange

The Authority maintains a sophisticated Oracle database as its central Enterprise Data Management System (EDMS). Through the exchange of digital data the Authority has maintained key strategic relationships with the Department of Housing, the Department of Land Planning and Environment, the Power and Water Corporation and the Northern Territory Geological Survey to enable streamlined access to Sacred Site protection services. Digital data partnerships such as these contribute to increased inter agency efficiency and ultimately reduce costs and timeframes associated with the processes of sacred site protection.

Special Projects

Information Technology and Database Review

In the mid 1990's the Authority developed and implemented as one of the first Northern Territory Government agencies a state-of-the-art Oracle database to manage its ever growing records of sacred sites information. Over the years this database has served the Authority well. It has continuously evolved and responded to new demands such as spatial mapping, changed workflows to create greater efficiencies in the processing of Authority Certificate applications and automating various functions.

In recent years the software used for the interface has ceased to be supported by its developer and no new upgrades have been released while the Oracle database has continued to be upgraded at regular intervals. This is a risk for the Authority as it is possible that in the future the database and interface will no longer be able to communicate rendering this critical business system inoperable.

A review process of the Authority's database and future needs was launched in August 2010 and in 2013–14 the Authority commenced the planning phase for the re-development of its data management system. The new system will be implemented in early 2015–16 and will enable applicants for Authority Certificates to lodge and track their applications online. Another exciting feature of the new system will enable proponents to lodge and view requests for information online.

The Authority believes the new system will positively impact timeframes and foster better engagement in the processes of the Sacred Sites Act by stakeholders.

Authority Website

In April 2015 the Authority launched its new public website which was designed to be more user friendly and provide practical information about the services and functions of the Authority. The website will also act as a future portal for applicants to lodge and view applications online.

Kakadu National Park

The Authority was approached by Kakadu National Park in 2012–13 to provide specialist advice on sacred sites that would contribute to the Park's development of a Jim Jim/Twin Falls Precinct Plan. The Authority undertook research and fieldwork on behalf of Kakadu National Park and Kakadu Aboriginal custodians during 2013–14. This is part of an ongoing and growing cooperative relationship between the agencies where Kakadu management is seeking advice and information on sacred sites in relation to a range of management issues including district planning, infrastructure and bushwalking. The Authority is also meeting requests from Aboriginal custodians of the region to register sacred sites and to investigate complaints under the Sacred Sites Act.

In 2014–15 further fieldwork was conducted in the Jim Jim – Twin Falls area. The process of recording and registering sacred sites in this spectacular and highly visited area is ongoing and will inform and enhance Park management as well as contribute to the maintenance and intergenerational transfer of cultural knowledge in the region.

Sea and Land Ranger Training

In late 2014 the Authority's Compliance Officer carried on site training for Djelk Sea Rangers at Maningrida.

This training focussed on evidence gathering and investigation techniques. In early 2015 the Authority's Compliance Officer was invited by NT Fisheries Australian Maritime Training College to provide sacred site training for 28 Rangers representing land and sea ranger groups as part of a Certificate III Fisheries Compliance Training at the NT Police College in Darwin. The Authority Compliance Officer also taught these rangers investigation techniques and evidence gathering for sacred site protection.

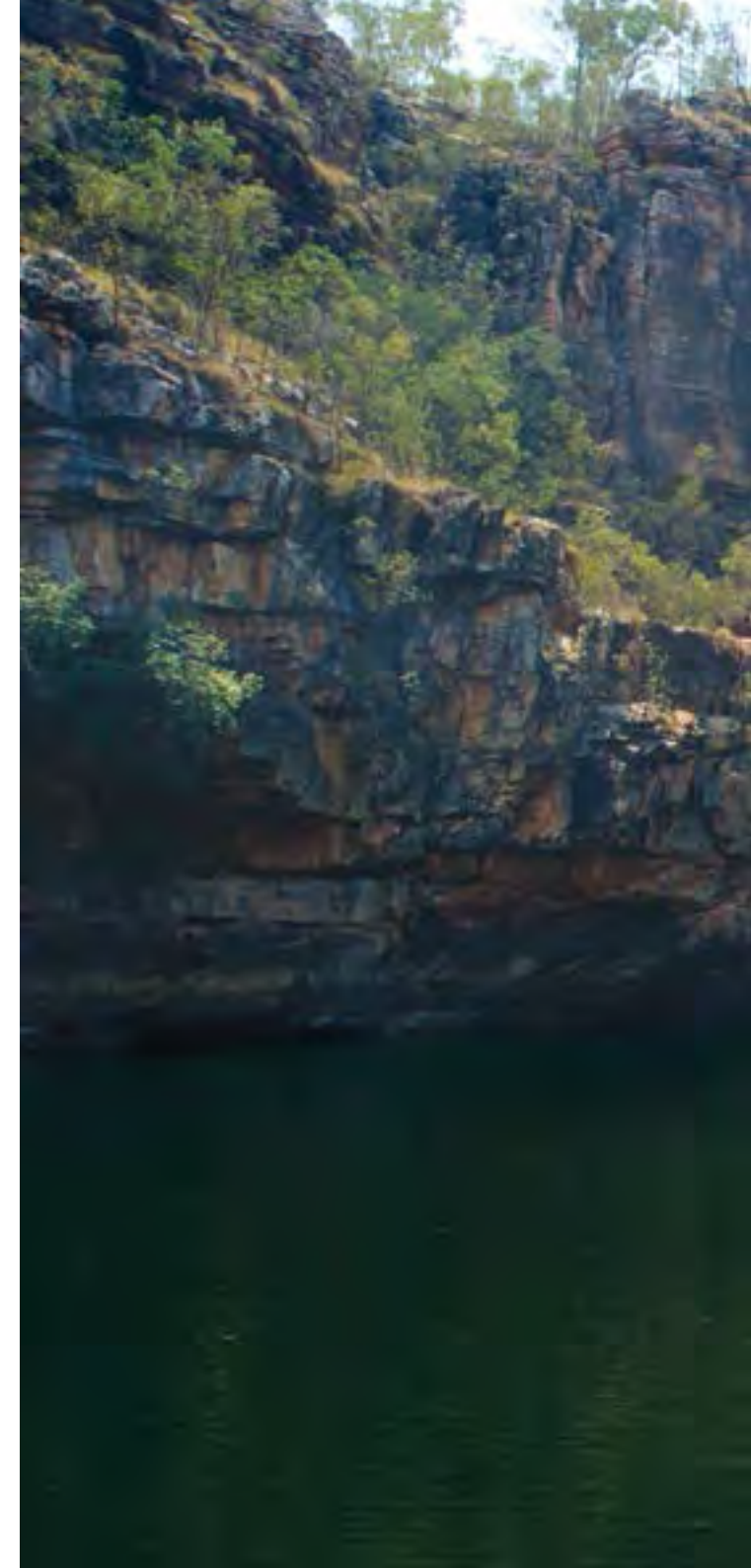
The Authority's teaching contribution has helped build the sea and land rangers' capacity to protect sacred sites that has helped in successful prosecutions of offences under the Act in recent years. However, ranger training typically emphasises a proactive and preventative approach to sacred site protection.

Alice Springs Self-Guided Sacred Sites Walk

Aboriginal custodians of Alice Springs identified the lack of information about sacred sites in Alice Springs as an issue for the town. Consultations focussed on the issue that locals and visitors to Alice Springs are also seeking greater engagement with sacred sites in the town. Whilst not all sacred sites are to be signposted due to cultural sensitivities, custodians agreed that there are many sacred sites which are regularly visited and which could benefit from the protection afforded by greater public education about their cultural significance to Mparntwe custodians. Custodians identified a number of sacred sites within the town that are already marked with sacred site signs as key areas that could be identified on a visitor map to act as a form of education about the significance of sacred sites in the town. The Authority is developing this project based on the advice provided.



1. Introduction
2. Our Organisation
3. Initiatives and Projects 2014–2015
- 4. Performance Report 2014–2015**
5. Governance
6. Human Resources
7. Financial Report
8. Insurance Report





The role of the Authority is to protect sacred sites through the administration of the Sacred Sites Act. The Act provides for the protection of sacred sites through the provision of sacred sites information and responding to requests from stakeholders and the registration of sites. Importantly, in consultations with custodians, the Authority develops sacred site protection procedures through Authority Certificates, relating to the use and development of land in the Northern Territory.

Overall performance in a financial year is quantified by the requests for information (registers and other archives) and the number of Authority Certificate applications completed.

Timeliness is assessed as the average/mean number of days between acceptance of Authority Certificate applications and completion of Authority Certificates and the average/mean response time to requests for information from the Register and archives of the Authority.

Quality is reflected in the number of statutory appeals on Authority decisions under Part III Division 3 of the Sacred Sites Act or Section 9 of the *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Heritage Protection Act 1984* (Cth).

Output Group: Protection of Sacred Sites

Outcome: Enhance relations between Aboriginal custodians and the wider Territory community by increasing the level of certainty when identifying constraints, if any, on land and sea use proposals from the existence of sacred sites.

The Authority reports against agreed performance measures as part of its output performance. These performance measures provide an indication of the current workload and performance of the Authority.

Performance measures		Target 2013-14	Actual 2013-14	Target 2014-15	Actual 2014-15
Quantity	Authority Certificates issued	250	208	240	177
	Requests for information completed	500	555	500	513
Timeliness	Average time between receiving Authority Certificate applications and completing service	125 days	138 days	125 days	126 days
	Average time between receiving request for information and completing service	8 days	3.9 days	3.9 days	2.9
Quality	Statutory appeals	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%

The Authority also reports on the Output Group – Corporate Services. Information on Corporate Services can be found at note 3 of the Financial Report.

For administrative purposes the Authority divides the Territory into 21 regions.

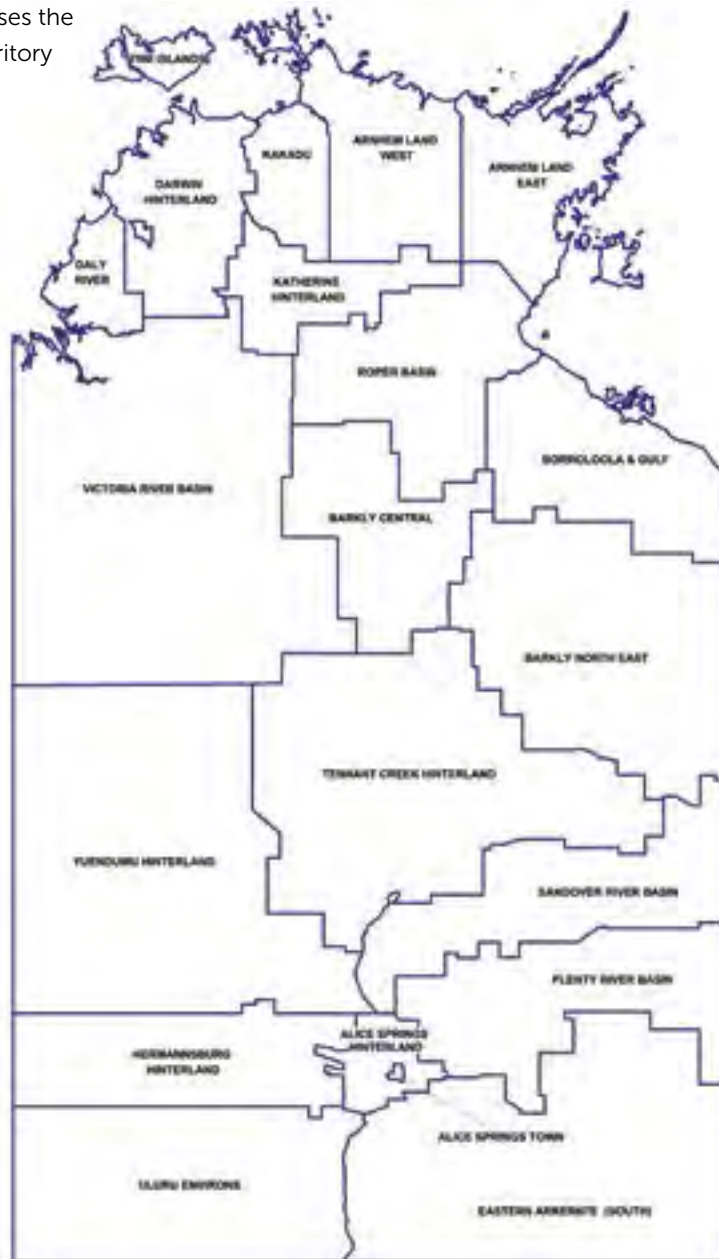


Figure 1: Map of the Authority's regions

Authority Certificates

Quantity

In any financial year the number of applications and the number of Authority Certificates issued are likely to differ because of the time elapsing between the application date and the date of issue. In 2014–15 there were 281 applications for Authority Certificates received.

The Authority's services and outputs are demand driven. As noted in the graph below the demand for Authority Certificates peaked around the reporting periods 2008–09 and 2009–10 and can be directly attributed to the then Federal Governments Indigenous policies which created a need for large scale site clearance surveys across Aboriginal communities throughout the Northern Territory. Since then the demand for Authority Certificates has declined in recent years and this is consistent with general economic factors and also indicates a return to a normal demand level post the Northern Territory Emergency Response.

It is anticipated that recent infrastructure announcements in Federal and Territory budgets will motivate greater demand for the Authority Certificates in coming years.

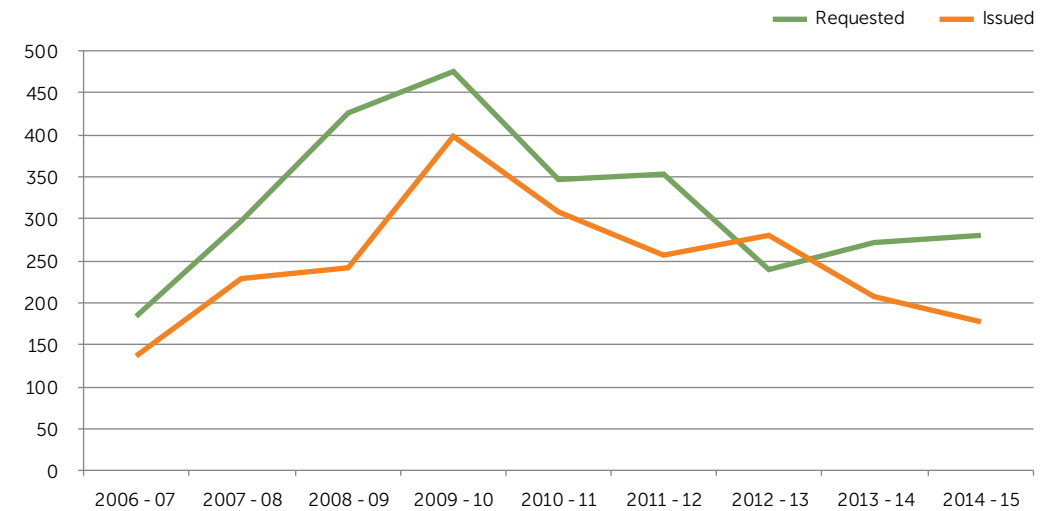


Figure 2: Authority Certificates requested and issued between 1 July 2006 and 30 June 2015

In 2014–15, the Authority issued 177 Authority Certificates, which is a decrease on the previous year’s number of 208 issued Certificates. All completed Authority Certificates had successfully negotiated outcomes and no Authority Certificates were refused. In 2014–15, 63 applications were withdrawn which is an increase from 2013–14 of 49 withdrawals.

The lower output of issued Authority Certificates in 2014–15 reflects in part the general reduction in demand for Authority Certificates and also a reduced capacity of the Authority due to higher than usual rates of staff turnover and higher than usual vacancies in key positions. However, the Authority expects an increase in the output of Authority Certificates in the near future due partly to recent infrastructure announcements which will motivate a higher demand for Certificates, as well as stabilising of its workforce.

Out of a total of 281 received Authority Certificate in 2014–15 reporting period, 63 applications were withdrawn by the applicant. Applications were withdrawn at varying stages of the application process and frequently incurred staff time (i.e. through fieldwork) and organisational resources which were recovered by the Authority through full cost recovery. Reasons for applicants withdrawing their applications included: withdrawing an application as it was a duplication of an existing application, changes to the scope of proposed projects, postponing of works due to budgetary constraints, and cost estimates not accepted by applicant. In some instances there was evidence of applicants choosing to rely on an abstract of records for their risk management in lieu of the more expensive Authority Certificate process.

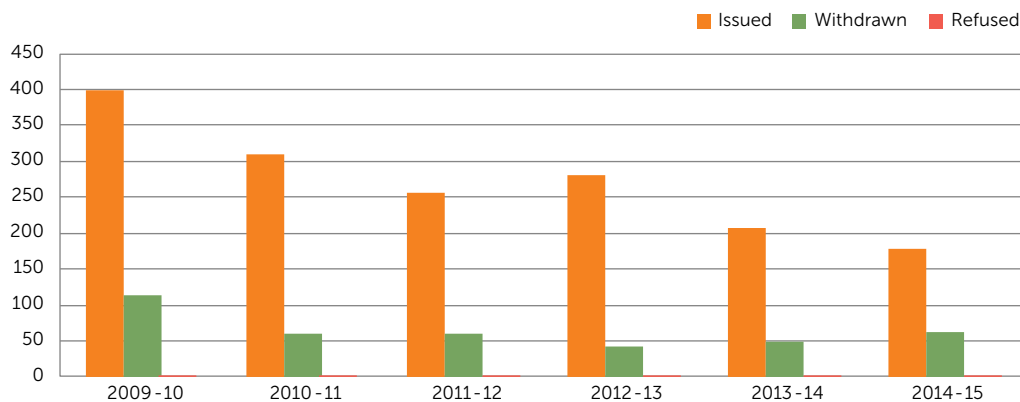


Figure 3: Authority Certificates issued, withdrawn or refused between 1 July 2009 and 30 June 2015

Regional Picture

There continues to be high levels of demand for Authority Certificates in the major population centres of Darwin Hinterland (including Darwin itself) and Alice Springs.

From the previous reporting period, there has also been a slight increase in the number of Authority Certificates issued for the Kakadu region and the Arnhem Land West region. In the region of Arnhem Land West this is due mostly to Northern Territory Government initiatives, including housing, infrastructure, power, water and sewerage for Aboriginal communities, as well as road works. In Kakadu this is due to roadworks by the Northern Territory Government.

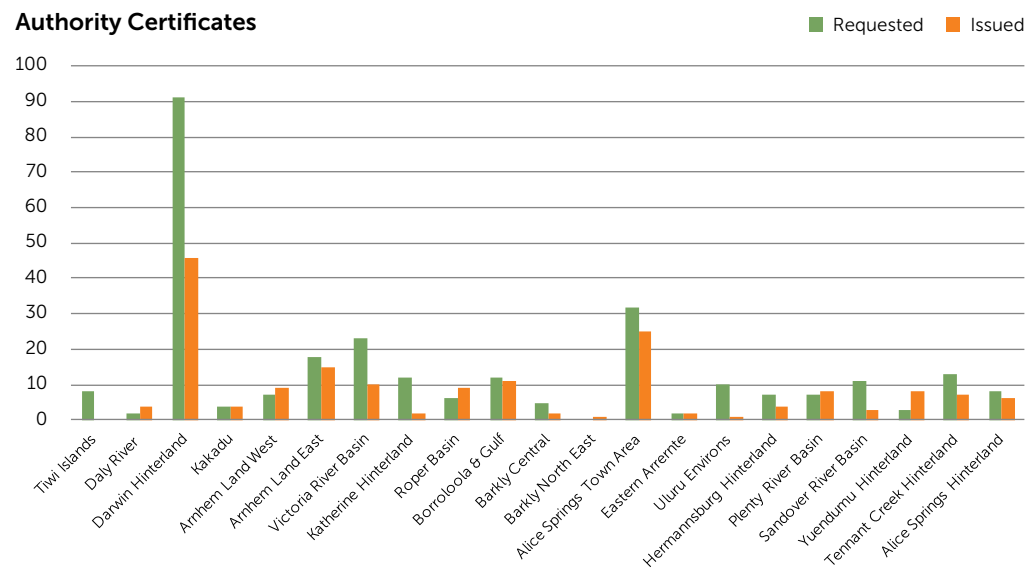


Figure 4: Authority Certificates requested and issued and requested by region in 2014–15

Service Users and Project Types

Collectively the Territory, Commonwealth and Local Government formed the largest group of Authority Certificate users (76%), with the construction and maintenance of public infrastructure and roadworks representing the largest categories of projects.

Who used the Authority Certificate process in 2014-15?

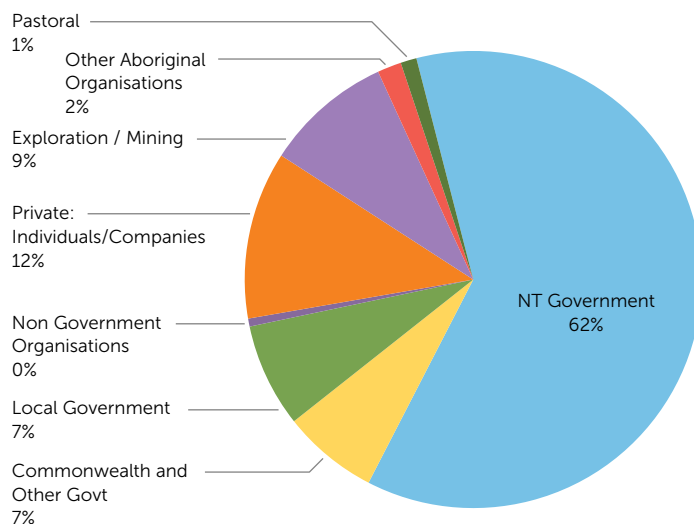


Figure 5: Users of Authority Certificates in 2014–15

The second largest client for Authority Certificates in 2014–15 was the private sector (12%). The level of demand for Authority Certificates for this sector has remained relatively stable over 2013–14 and 2014–15 reporting periods as indicated in Figure 6. In 2014–15 there was a marked drop in the demand of Authority Certificates from the exploration and mining sector (9%) compared to last the reporting period. The level of demand for Authority Certificates for other users of Authority Certificates remained relatively stable over the 2013–14 and 2014–15 reporting periods, as indicated in the graph below.

Stakeholders and utilisation of the Authority Certificate process

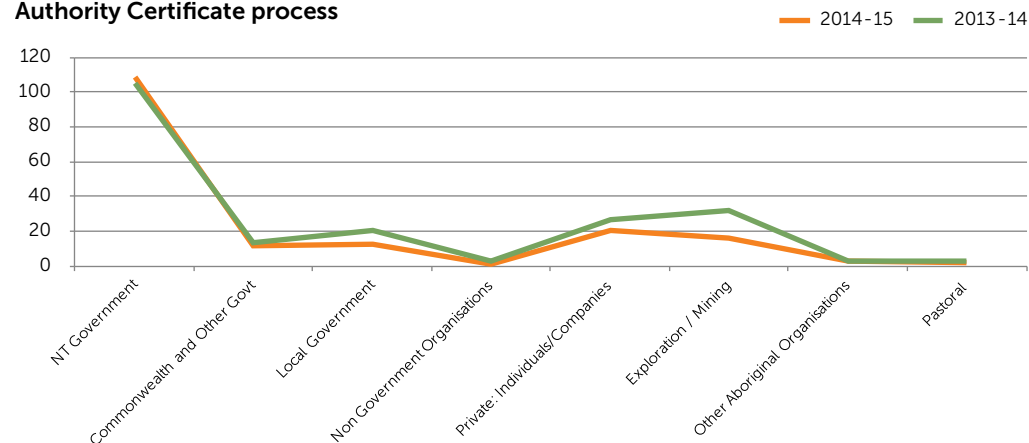


Figure 6: User groups of Authority Certificates in 2013–14 and 2014–15

Of the 177 Authority Certificates issued in 2014-15, 38 per cent were issued for infrastructure related projects (planning and infrastructure, housing development and power, water and sewage). 26 per cent were issued for projects relating road works, 12 per cent were for exploration and mining projects, 9 per cent for communications infrastructure, 6 per cent for environmental and rehabilitation programs, 8 per cent for tourism and National Parks related projects, and 1 per cent for pastoral and agricultural projects.

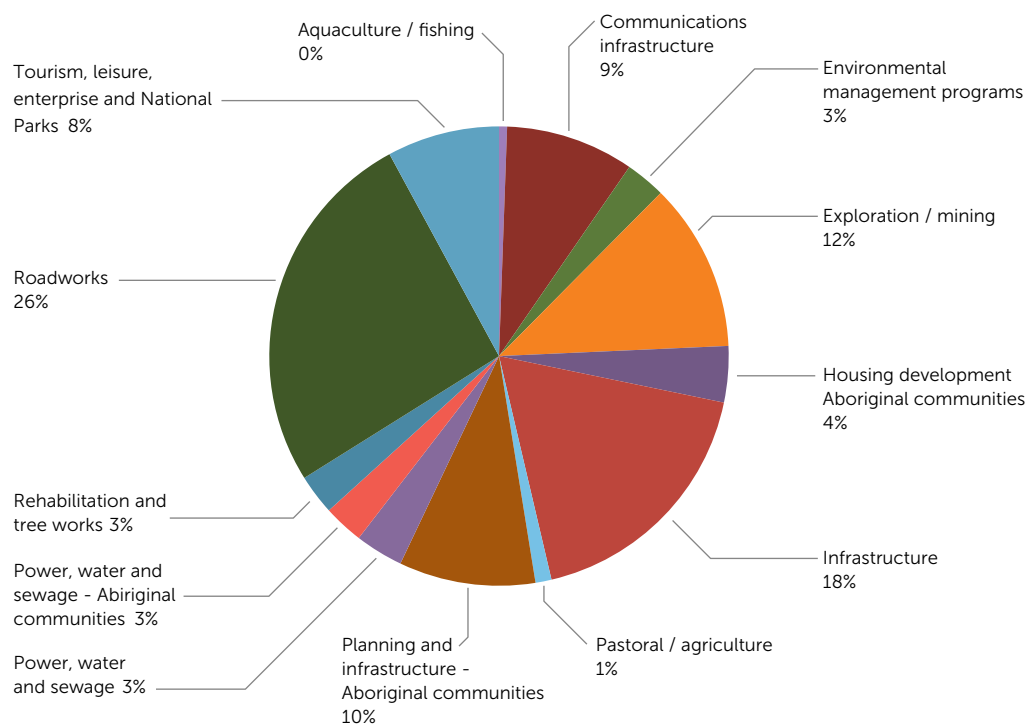


Figure 7: Types of projects for which Authority Certificates have been issued in 2014–15

Timeliness

Timeliness remains an important performance measure for the Authority. Timeframes for the issuing of Authority Certificates are largely affected by staff resources and completing consultations with Aboriginal custodians. This continues to be impacted by factors such as:

- The increased complexity of project proposals;
- Changes to traditional land tenure due to cultural transitions that result from custodian generational change;
- The increased mobility of Indigenous custodians; and
- The remoteness of application areas and the associated access due to the weather.

The Authority continues to proactively engage with large user groups of Authority Certificates such as the Department of Infrastructure and the Parks and Wildlife Commission of the Northern Territory. This has helped maintain productive working relationships where staff of the Authority have increased their understanding of the types of works performed by these client groups, opened effective communication channels and allowed for improved translation of custodian instructions into sacred site protection measures that are easily understandable to applicants.

In 2014–15, the completion of Authority Certificates took an average of 126 days, in comparison to the 2013–14 average of 138 days and the 2012–2013 average in 148 days. Long term timeframe trends for the issuing of Authority Certificates remain consistent as can be seen in Figure 8 below. The improved working relationships with large client groups of Authority Certificates has had a beneficial impact upon timeframes for the issuing of Authority Certificates. In addition to this the Authority's work on improving a range of internal efficiency measures associated with reducing red tape has also positively impacted on timeframes.

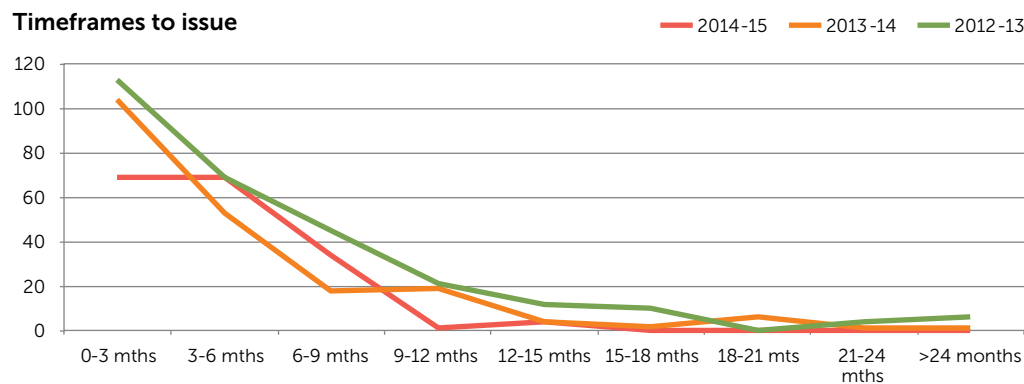


Figure 8: Authority Certificate timeframes to issue between 1 July 2012 and 30 June 2015

In 2014–15, 43 per cent of Authority Certificates were issued within 100 days or less. This represents a decrease from the last reporting period in 2013–14 where 53 per cent were issued within 100 days and an improvement from 2011–12 where 50 per cent of applications were issued within 118 days. In the 2014–15 reporting period 78 per cent (138) of Authority Certificates were issued within 6 months. The type of project influences the time required to issue an Authority Certificate.

Timeframes by project type in 2014-15

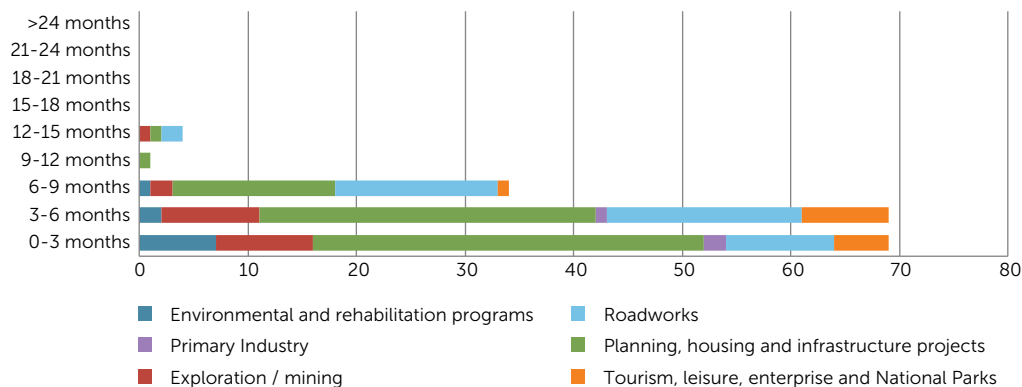


Figure 9: Timeframes to issue Authority Certificates by project type in 2014–15

Typically, Authority Certificates relating to road works and exploration and mining projects take the most amount of time, due to the complexity, remoteness and large areas of land involved for the proposed works. In 2014–15 the majority of road works (62 per cent), mining and exploration projects (86 per cent) were resolved within 6 months. Only 5 per cent of Authority Certificates for road works, construction and maintenance projects took 12-15 months to resolve and 5 per cent of mining and exploration projects took 15-18 months to resolve.

Timeframes for issuing of Certificates in 2014-15: Road construction and maintenance projects

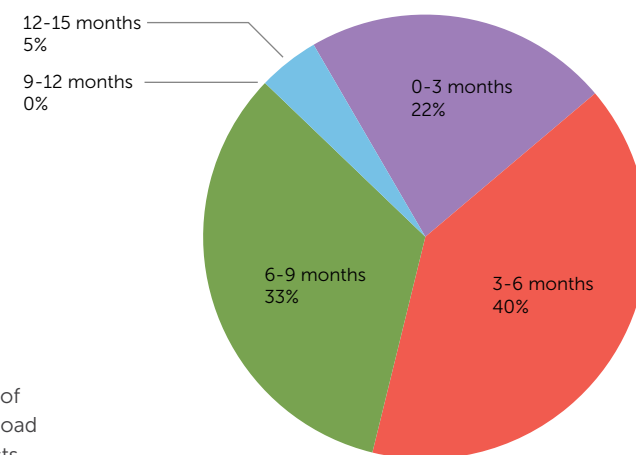


Figure 10: Timeframes for the issuing of Authority Certificates in 2014–15 for road construction and maintenance projects

Timeframes for issuing of Certificates in 2014-15: Exploration and mining projects

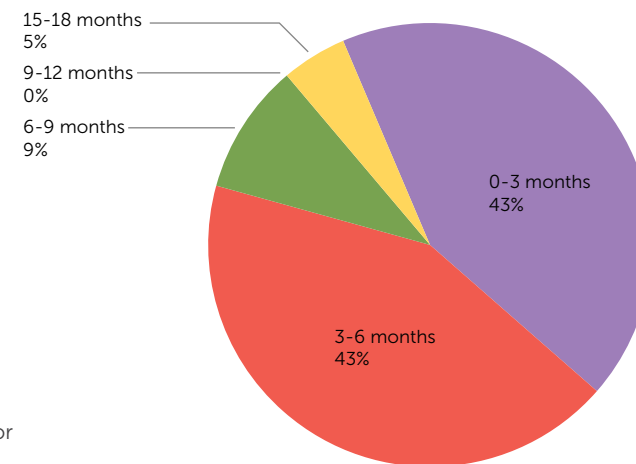


Figure 11: Timeframes for the issuing of Authority Certificates in 2014–15 for exploration and mining projects

Average days to issue

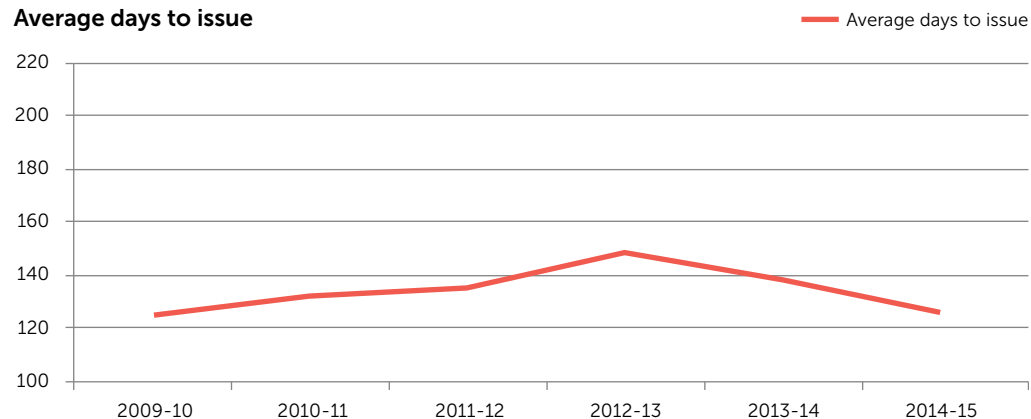


Figure 12: Average number of days to issue Authority Certificates from 2009 through to 2015

After steady increases in the average time taken to issue Authority Certificates since 2009–2010 the average time is decreasing again. This is a result of the hard work occurring within the Authority on improving internal mechanisms to coordinate applications across the Northern Territory to reduce timeframes and the working relationships that the Authority has fostered with large client groups. Improvements in streamlining the processing of Authority Certificates in urban areas, as part of a range of red tape reduction initiatives, has also helped in reducing timelines.

Requests for Information

Quantity

In 2014–15, the Authority responded to 513 formal requests for information from the Register of Sacred Sites, a decrease of 42 requests from the previous year.

The majority of requests (471) take the form of Abstract of Records. Other requests that the Authority receives include digital data requests, inspections of the Authority Certificate Register, inspections of Authority records and inspections of the Sacred Sites Register.

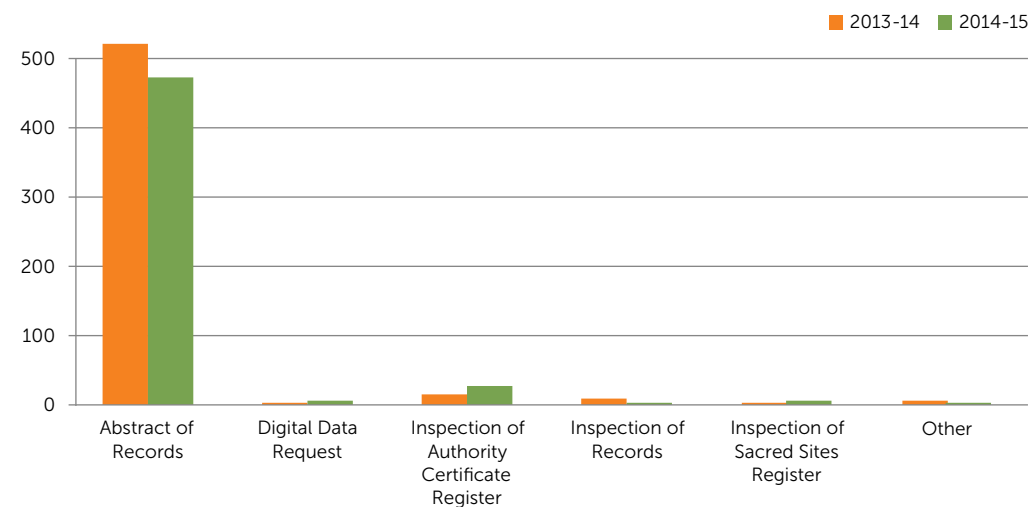


Figure 13: Quantity of requests for information by type in 2013–14 and 2014–15

Regional Picture

Requests for information were highest in the Darwin hinterland region (215). Alice Springs Town Area is the next highest (63), followed by Tennant Creek Hinterland (40). The volume of requests for information exceeds the number of applications for Authority Certificates considerably.

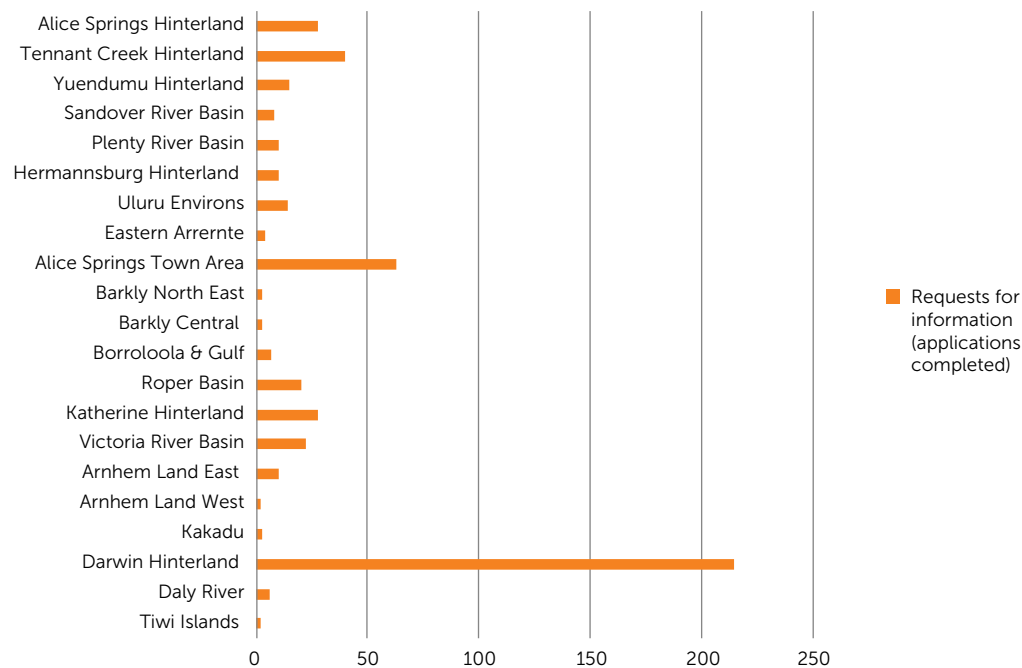


Figure 14: Regional areas and quantity of requests for information

Service Users and Project Types

Figure 15 displays the applicant groups who request information, with the top three groups in being: private individuals and companies, exploration and mining, and the NT Government. In 2014–15 there was a marked decrease in requests for information from the mining and exploration sector compared to 2013–14. The decrease in demand from mining and exploration in 2014–15 is consistent with a decrease in demand from this sector for Authority Certificates.

The demand from the other users for requests for information remained relatively stable for this reporting period, as illustrated in the below graph.

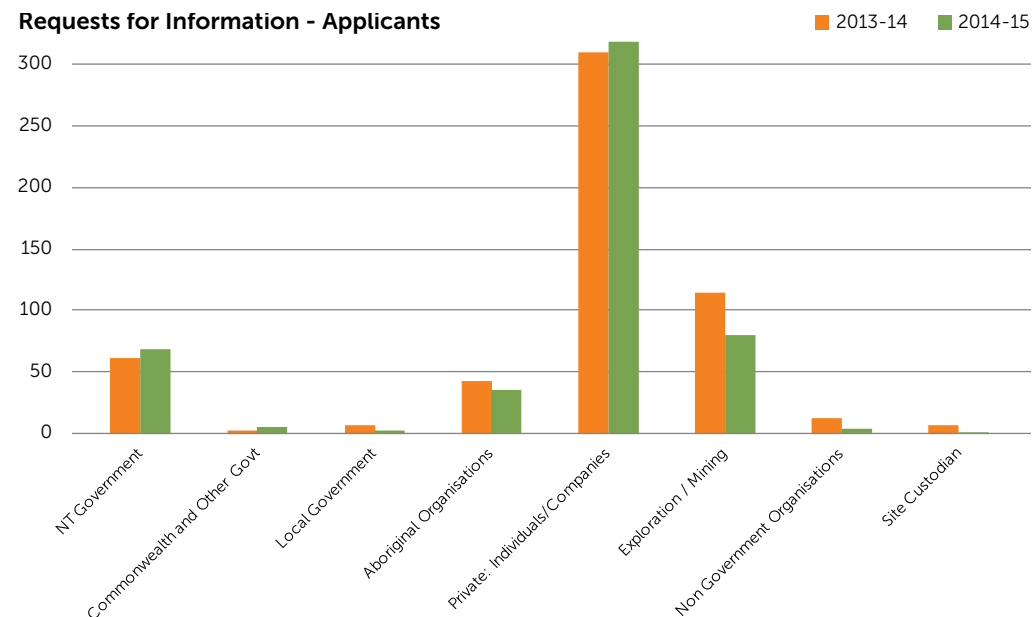


Figure 15: User groups of requests for information in 2013–14 and 2014–15

Timeliness

The average time in 2014–15 taken to complete requests for information was 2.9 days, a decrease from 3.9 days in 2013–14. A current project to redevelop the Authority's database will render the Authority's public records more readily available in an online environment and is expected to have a positive impact upon timeframes in the near future.

Requests for Information - Number of requests and timeliness

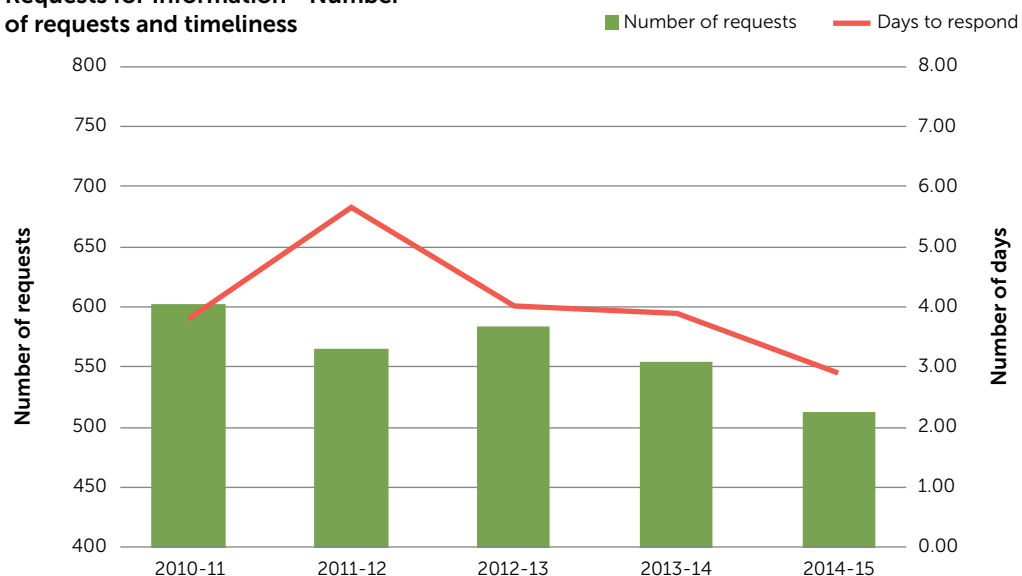


Figure 16: Quantity of requests for information and days to respond between July 2010 and 30 June 2015

Register of Sacred Sites

Quantity

The registration of sacred sites is the highest level of protection that can be afforded to a site. Registration of a site also enables users of land to have the best possible information regarding the site's location and extent. For Aboriginal custodians, registration of a sacred site means that it will be accepted by a court as *prima facie* evidence that a place is a sacred site.

There were 28 sites registered by the Authority in 2014–15, up from 12 sites registered in 2013–14.

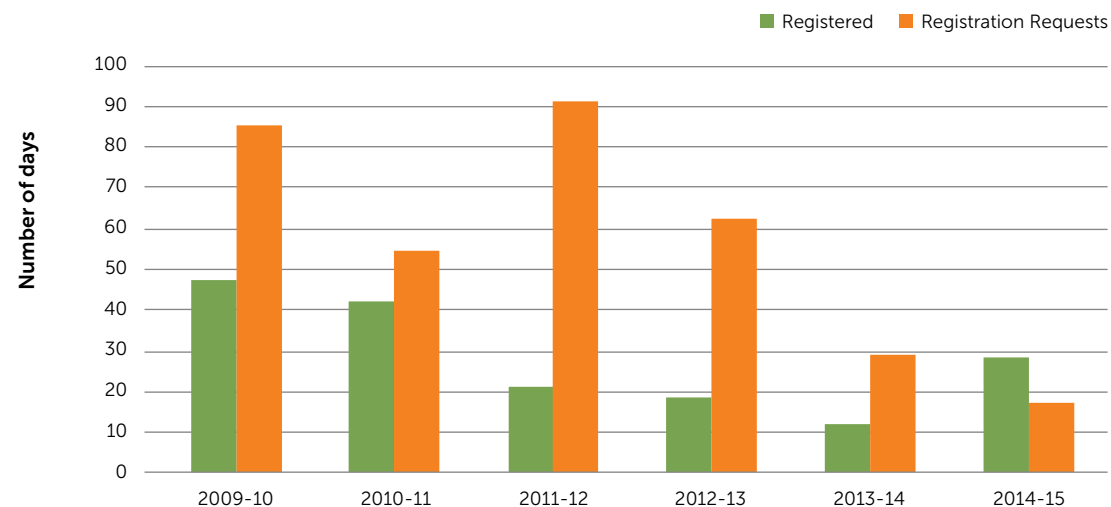


Figure 17: Quantity of sacred sites of registered and requests for registration from 2009 through to 2015

In total 17 sites were requested for registration in 2014–15 which is a decrease compared to 29 for the 2013–14 reporting period.

A total of 119 sacred sites were recorded and identified in the course of consultations for Authority Certificates and entered into the database of the Authority during 2014–15. The Authority has 2031 registered and 10 622 recorded sacred sites in its database, bringing the total number to 12 653 sacred sites currently documented in the Northern Territory.

Timeliness

There remains a significant backlog of registration requests for sacred sites. Generally, this registration research work can only be addressed on an *ad hoc* basis when field work is being carried out near to a site requested for registration or in the conduct of work for current Authority Certificate applications. The Authority has established priorities for addressing registration requests. Urgent requests are based around threats of damage or desecration. Some prioritised requests arise from senior custodian concerns that knowledge held about a sacred site is in danger of being lost should something happen to them.

Damage to Sacred Sites

Under the Sacred Sites Act it is an offence to enter and remain on a sacred site or carry out work on or desecrate a sacred site. In recent years the Authority has responded to a number of potential breaches of the offence provisions of the Act and has undertaken investigations for each report.

In 2014–15 there were 4 site damage matters carried over from the previous reporting periods. During 2014–14 there were 9 new reports of alleged damage. In total 18 reported cases were closed during 2014–15 and 7 remained open at the end of the reporting period.

Cases of reported site damage were investigated in numerous locations but was particularly high in the Darwin region.

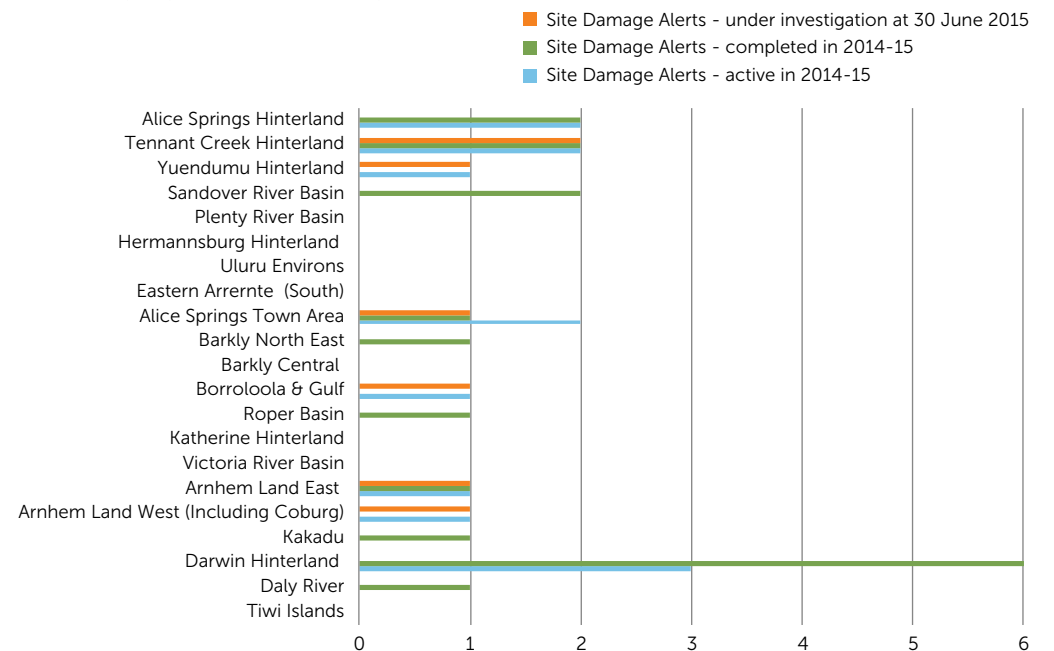


Figure 18: Quantity of sacred sites damage cases active and completed in 2014–15 as well as sites still under investigation as at 30 June 2015.

The report of site damage at Coomalie Creek south of Darwin was also resolved in 2014–2015. The Authority charged the Northern Territory of Australia for an offence committed by the Department of Infrastructure against the Sacred Sites Act under Section 34 (work on a sacred site). In March 2015 the defendant pleaded guilty to actions contrary to Section 34 and fined.

1. Introduction
2. Our Organisation
3. Initiatives and Projects 2014–2015
4. Performance Report 2014–2015
- 5. Governance**
6. Human Resources
7. Financial Report
8. Insurance Report





Sunset at Yuendumu

Authority Board

Membership and meetings

The Authority Board comprises twelve members, ten of whom are nominated by Northern Territory Land Councils in equal numbers (five) of males and females, and two of whom are nominated by the Minister for Local Government and Community Services as Government representatives. To fill vacancies for Aboriginal custodian members, the Land Councils are requested to nominate a panel of twice the number of custodians of the relevant gender. The Administrator of the Northern Territory appoints members by notice in the *Northern Territory Government Gazette*. Board members of the Authority are sacred site custodians who have been appointed from different regions of the Territory to provide a geographically representative balance for the Authority. To fill the two vacancies for Government representatives the Minister for Local Government and Community Services nominates representatives who provide sound administrative experience.

The Administrator also appoints Aboriginal members as the Chairman and Deputy Chairman, who must be of opposite gender, based on nominations from the Authority.

Authority Board Meetings

The Authority meets four times each calendar year.

In 2014–15 the Chairman called the following meetings:

102nd Board Meeting: 27–28 August 2014, Darwin

103rd Board Meeting: 26–27 November 2014, Darwin

104th Board Meeting: 11–12 March 2015, Darwin

105th Board Meeting: 20–21 May 2015, Darwin

The Board achieved its required four meetings during the 2014 calendar year.

Appointments

The term for two Board members (Ms Lynette Granites and Ms Carol Christophersen) expired on 6 February 2015. After 6 years of dedicated service Ms Christophersen retired from the Board after the expiration of her membership and Ms Granites was reappointed on 14 April 2015. Mr Robert Tipuntwuti also retired from the Board in 2015 after nine years of decided service.

The Authority welcomed its new Board member Mr Michael Tennant on 12 May 2015. Mr Tennant is one of the two Government appointments on the Board.

In 2014–15 the members of the Authority were:



Mr Bernard Abbott
Chairman

Nominated by:
Central Land Council

Date appointed / re-appointed:
31 July 2012

First appointed in: 1995

Meetings attended in 2014–15: 3

Mr Abbott is an Arrernte man from Wallace Rockhole, west of Alice Springs. He is currently a member of the Central Land Council. Mr Abbott has been a member of the Aboriginal Areas Protection Authority since 1995 and has taken an active role on the Authority Board.



Ms Banduk Marika
Deputy Chairman

Nominated by:
Northern Land Council

Date appointed / re-appointed:
31 July 2012

First appointed in: 2006

Meetings attended in 2014–15: 3

Ms Marika is a Rirratjingu woman from Yirrkala. Her country is located in the Port Bradshaw area of North East Arnhem Land. Ms Marika is an accomplished artist and a senior woman in her community and a well-known advocate for land care and site protection.

**Mr Captain Woditj**

Nominated by:
Northern Land Council

Date appointed / re-appointed:
31 July 2012

First appointed in: 2006

Meetings attended in 2014–15: 1

Mr Woditj lives at Peppimenarti on the Daly River Land Trust, some 40km east of Wadeye. Mr Woditj is a senior custodian for lands reaching from Palumpa down to the Fitzmaurice River. He is well respected for his cultural knowledge and involvement in associated activities.

**Ms Lena Pula**

Nominated by:
Central Land Council

Date appointed / re-appointed:
31 July 2012

First appointed in: 1999

Meetings attended in 2014–15: 3

Ms Pula is a senior woman from Utopia northeast of Alice Springs. She is a renowned artist who took up painting in the mid-1990s and has been on a number of Government Boards. She is regarded by other female Board members as an authority on women's site issues.

**Mr Robert Tipungwuti**

Nominated by:
Tiwi Land Council

Date of appointment: 31 July 2012 – 14 April 2015

First appointed in: 2006

Meetings attended in 2014–15: 2

Mr Tipungwuti is a senior Tiwi man who lives at Wurankuwu on Bathurst Island. He has held many representative and political roles at a local, regional, Territory and national level over the past 30 years, including with the former Department of Aboriginal Affairs, the Aboriginal Development Corporation, as an ATSIC Commissioner, and more recently as President of the Wurankuwu Aboriginal Corporation. Mr Tipungwuti retired from the Board in early 2015.

**Ms Lynette Granites**

Nominated by:
Central Land Council

Date appointed / re-appointed:
14 April 2015

First appointed in: 2005

Meetings attended in 2014–15: 4

Ms Granites, who lives at Yuendumu, is a highly respected senior Walpiri woman, well known for her knowledge in women's law and culture. Ms Granites is also a health worker and artist in her community.

**Mr Pepy Simpson**

Nominated by:
Central Land Council

Date appointed / re-appointed:
31 July 2012

First appointed in: 1999

Meetings attended in 2014–15: 2

Mr Simpson is a Warramungu man from Tennant Creek. He is currently a member of the Manungurra Aboriginal Corporation Board and the Anyinginyi Health Aboriginal Corporation Board. Mr Simpson has been a member of the Aboriginal Areas Protection Authority since 1999 and has taken an active role on the Authority Board.

**Ms Jenny Inmulugulu**

Nominated by:
Northern Land Council

Date appointed / re-appointed:
31 July 2012

First appointed in: 2006

Meetings attended in 2014–15: 3

Ms Inmulugulu is from Goulburn Island. She is a senior woman for her clan and a strong advocate for her community and actively involved in youth engagement initiatives at Goulburn Island.

**Mr Thomas Amagula**

Nominated by:
Anindilyakwa Land Council

Date appointed / re-appointed:
31 July 2012

First appointed in: 2009

Meetings attended in 2014–15: 3

Mr Amagula is from Groote Eylandt. He is an advocate for the people of Groote Eylandt and is a respected member of the community. Among his many achievements, Mr Amagula has successfully negotiated the repatriation of ancestral remains from Washington and more recently from the Czech Republic. He currently works for the Dhimurru Aboriginal Corporation based in Nhulunbuy.

**Mr John Rawnsley**

Nominated by:
Government

Date appointed / re-appointed:
31 July 2012

First appointed in: 2012

Meetings attended in 2014–15: 3

Mr Rawnsley is a descendant of the Larrakia and Anmatjerre people and has lived in many Northern Territory locations. Mr Rawnsley holds a Bachelor of Laws and Bachelor of Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Studies and a Graduate Diploma in Legal Practice. His many achievements include serving as an alderman on the Alice Springs Town Council (2008–12) and as Deputy Mayor of Alice Springs (2009).

**Mr Michael Tennant**

Nominated by:
Government

Date appointed / re-appointed:
12 May 2015

First appointed in: 2015

Meetings attended in 2014–15: 1

Mr Tennant has been the Chief Executive Officer of the Department of Business since October 2014. Prior to this role Mr Tennant was the Deputy Chief Executive Officer of the NT Department of the Chief Minister; also having worked in the Queensland Public Service in a range of senior executive leadership roles across a range of public sector agencies. He is an experienced public sector administration professional and has his tertiary qualifications in law and economics.

**Ms Nancy McDinny**

Nominated by: Northern Land Council

Date appointed / re-appointed:
31 July 2012

First appointed in: 2009

Meetings attended in 2014–15: 3

Ms McDinny is a Garrwa/Yanyuwa traditional owner who now lives at Sandridge Outstation near Borroloola. She is an advocate for women's roles and issues within the Borroloola region. She plays a key role in ceremonial dance and language activity in the region, and since 2002 she has become a nationally recognized artist.

**Ms Carol Christophersen**

Nominated by:
Government

Date of appointment: 6 February 2012–6 February 2015

First appointed in: 2009

Meetings attended in 2014–15: 1

Ms Christophersen is a member of the Murran and Bunidj clans in Western Arnhem land and Kakadu National Park. She holds a Bachelor of Arts degree majoring in Anthropology and is currently an Anthropologist at the Northern Land Council. During 2011–12 Ms Christophersen undertook a Fellowship at the London Natural History Museum and worked on the repatriation of human remains to Australia. Ms Christophersen's term with the Board expired as at 6 February 2015.

Authority Operations

Principles of Governance

The Authority's governance framework aims to ensure that the Authority carries out its functions in an effective and efficient manner in accordance with its responsibilities under the Sacred Sites Act. This includes:

- Effective human resources management practices;
- Quality control for data and outputs;
- Development of risk management strategies; and
- Planning and development of a strategic plan.

How the Authority is Governed

The primary policy and decision-making body is the Authority (the Board) established under Section 5 of the Sacred Sites Act. Section 15 of the Act requires that 'The Administrator shall appoint a Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Authority who shall be charged with carrying out the decisions of the Authority.' All other staff of the Authority are employed directly by the Authority, under Section 17 of the Sacred Sites Act.

Section 19 provides for the Authority to delegate certain powers or functions. The CEO holds various such delegations and is responsible for the overall operation of the Authority. The CEO also exercises responsibilities under the *Financial Management Act* and complies with the principles of the *Public Sector Employment and Management Act*, though the Authority is not deemed an 'Agency' under this Act.

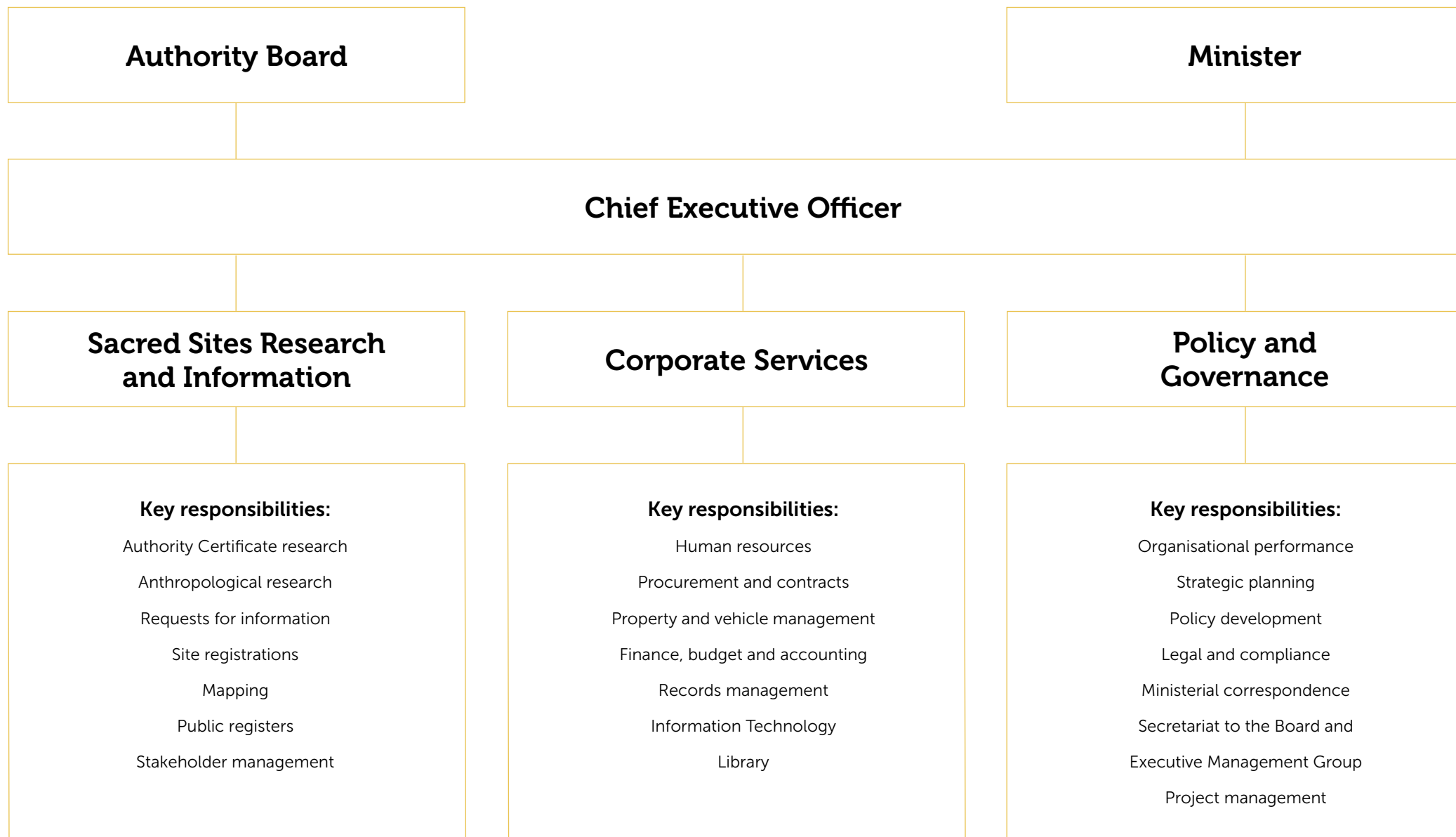
How the Authority is Managed

The CEO maintains overall responsibility for the day to day operation of the Authority.

To ensure the smooth functioning of the office, the CEO chairs weekly Executive Management Group meetings with senior managers of the Authority's operational groups. Each operational group also meets regularly to ensure an effective flow of information.

The Authority's operational groups comprise: Sacred Sites Research and Information, Corporate Services and Policy and Governance.

The Authority's Internal Audit Committee functions as an advisory body to the CEO, assisting the CEO in monitoring internal control systems and advises on how such systems may be improved.



Legislation and Policy

Aboriginal Sacred Site Protection in the Northern Territory

Aboriginal sacred sites are recognised and protected as an integral part of Northern Territory and Australian cultural heritage under both The Commonwealth's *Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act 1976* (Land Rights Act) and the *Northern Territory Aboriginal Sacred Sites Act 1989*. Both of these Acts define a sacred site as:

...a site that is sacred to Aboriginals or is otherwise of significance according to Aboriginal tradition...

Commonwealth and Northern Territory Laws

The establishment of the Sacred Sites Act by the Northern Territory Government was enabled by Section 73 of the Land Rights Act which gives the Northern Territory Legislative Assembly power to enact laws for:

73(1)(a) laws providing for the protection of, and the prevention of the desecration of, sacred sites in the Northern Territory, including sacred sites on Aboriginal land, and, in particular, laws regulating or authorizing the entry of persons on those sites, but so that any such laws shall provide for the right of Aboriginals to have access to those sites in accordance with Aboriginal tradition and shall take into account the wishes of Aboriginals relating to the extent to which those sites should be protected;

The Sacred Sites Act was passed under this power to establish procedures for the protection and registration of sacred sites and the avoidance of sacred sites in the development and use of land.

The protection of sacred sites in the Territory is furthermore aided by Section 69 of the Land Rights Act which broadly prohibits entry and remaining on any land in the Northern Territory that is a sacred site, unless a law of the Northern Territory specifies otherwise.

Landowners and Developers

The Authority strives to achieve practical outcomes in its operations by balancing the interests of site custodians, landowners and developers. Often custodians, landowners and developers have divergent interests in land. There is usually substantial overlap between these interests. In most cases, the Authority's challenge is to accommodate new uses and development of land with the need to protect sacred sites, thus preserving and enhancing Aboriginal tradition in a changing social, economic and cultural environment.

Landowners and developers are afforded certain rights under the Sacred Sites Act.

- Section 28 provides the opportunity for landowners to make representations on the prospective registration of a sacred site.
- Section 44 of the Sacred Sites Act explicitly deals with landowners' rights to use land comprised in a sacred site consistent with the protection of sacred sites. Authority Certificates provide a legal instrument to accommodate such land-use.

- Under Section 48A, if the application of the Sacred Sites Act in a particular case would result in an acquisition of property other than on just terms, then the person affected is entitled to such compensation as a court may decide.

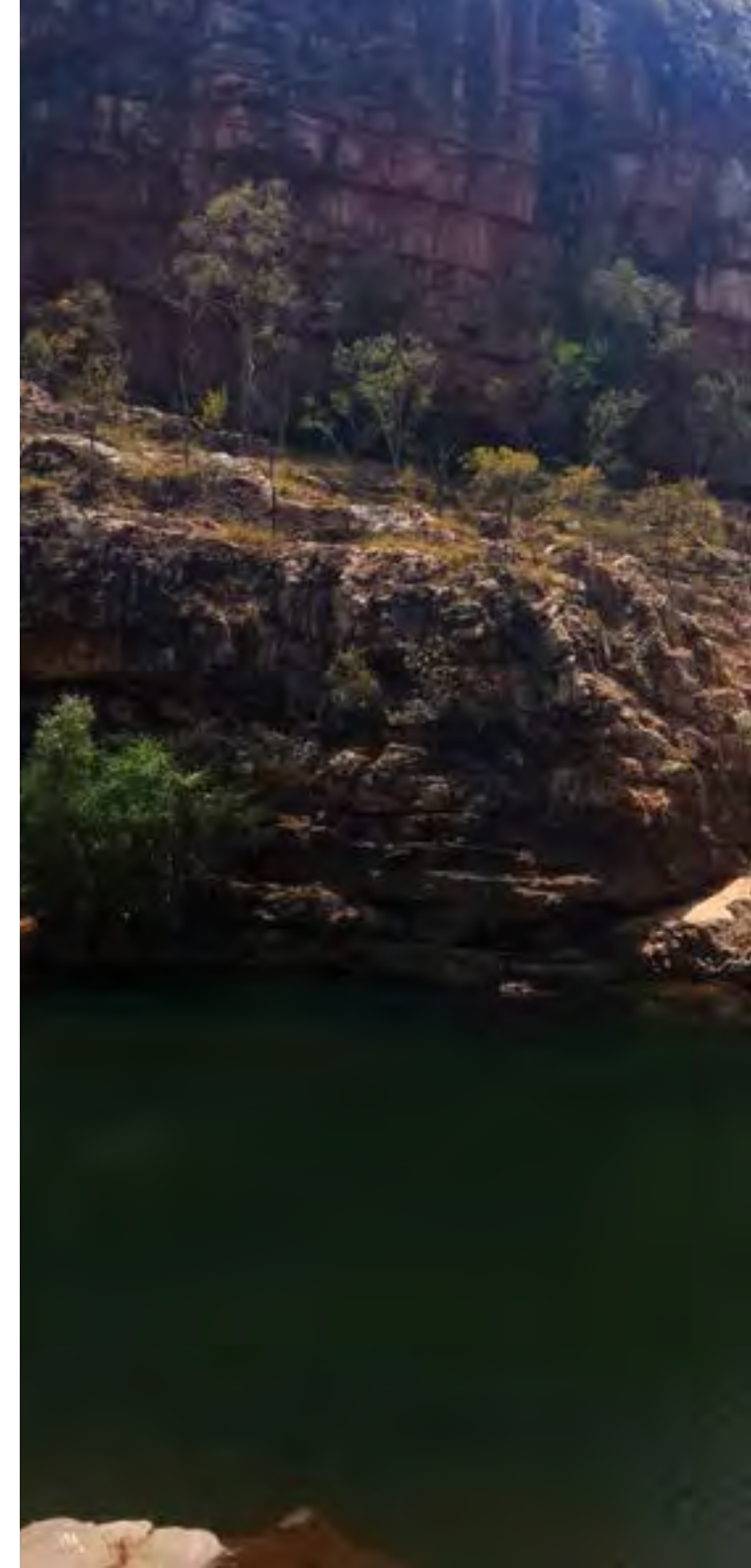
As well as protecting the fabric of sacred sites in the context of land ownership and development, the Sacred Sites Act provides for Aboriginal people to have access to sacred sites 'in accordance with Aboriginal tradition.'

In accordance with the Sacred Sites Act all sacred sites are protected regardless of underlying land title, registration status or whether or not they are known to the Authority. The specific sections of the Sacred Sites Act relevant to the protection of sacred sites are Sections 33 (unauthorised entry), 34 (unauthorised works or uses) and 35 (desecration), which set out the various offences in relation to sacred sites.

Responsibilities under Northern Territory Heritage Legislation

Section 128 (2)(b) of the *Heritage Act* states that the Authority must have a representative on the Heritage Advisory Council.

1. Introduction
2. Our Organisation
3. Initiatives and Projects 2014–2015
4. Performance Report 2014–2015
5. Governance
- 6. Human Resources**
7. Financial Report
8. Insurance Report





The principles of human resource management contained in the *Public Sector Employment and Management Act* inform the human resource management policy and procedures of the Authority although the Authority is not an 'agency' under the Act. The Authority complies with provisions of anti-discrimination legislation, in particular, the Northern Territory's *Anti-Discrimination Act*. The Authority provides a safe and healthy working environment and safe plant and equipment by maintaining a work, health and safety program. All employees are actively encouraged to participate in this program to ensure compliance with the Northern Territory's *Work Health and Safety (National Uniform Legislation) Act*.

The Staff of the Authority

The Authority employs staff under the relevant provisions of the *Sacred Sites Act*. As a consequence, the Authority is not a prescribed agency within the meaning of the *Public Sector Employment and Management Act*. The Commissioner for Public Employment approved terms and conditions for staff employed by the Authority in line with the provisions of the *Sacred Sites Act* on 5 May 2004.

The Authority has experienced declining resources which has resulted in higher than usual rates of staff turnover and higher than usual vacancies in key positions. These changes have created challenges for the organisation. As at End of Financial Year (EOFY) for 2014–15 being 17 June 2015 there were 31.97 full time equivalent employees (FTE) within the Authority. This is an increase from the same time the year before where the Authority had 26.70 FTE. While there has been some ongoing internal restructuring within the Authority during 2014–15 to meet changing demands the overall number of staff has not changed significantly. The change in FTE is due to an increased number of staff transitioning back to full-time along with a number of staff on extended leave, which has resulted in AAPA recruiting additional staff to backfill these positions.

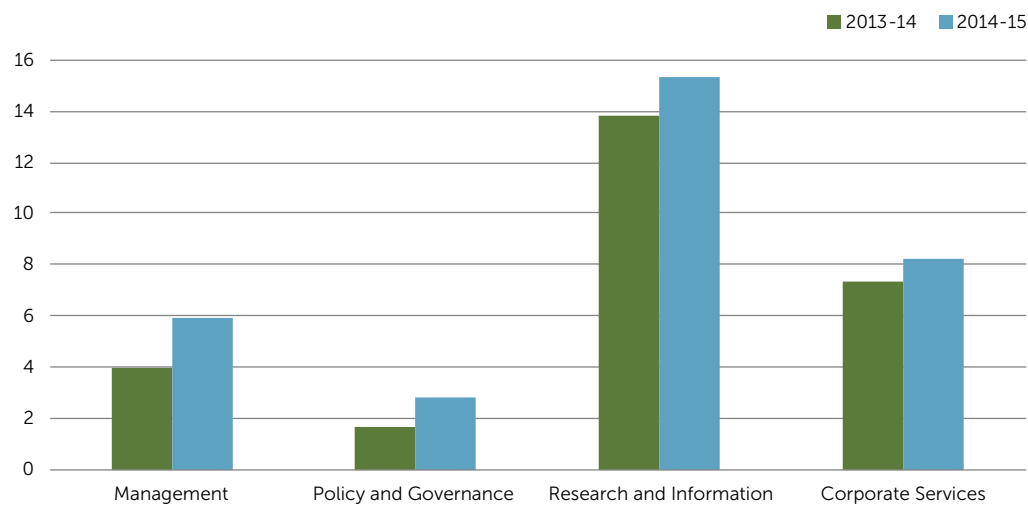


Figure 19: Full time employment by work area in 2013–14 and 2014–15

Equity and Diversity

Everyone has the right to be treated equally in the workplace and their differences respected and valued. The same rights need to be given to all people – men, women, people with disability, mature aged people, Indigenous Australians, young people and people from culturally diverse backgrounds.

The Authority is committed to giving all employees access to training opportunities, fair working conditions and opportunities for promotion.

The Authority aims to ensure that everyone has an equal opportunity to make the most of their talents and abilities in the workplace and are able to fully and equally:

- Develop their abilities and potential;
- Contribute to the success of the Authority’s objectives; and
- Share in the benefits of employment according to their contribution.

In 2014–15 a total of 18 per cent of employees identifying as Indigenous and 82 per cent as non-Indigenous. Board members are not counted in the FTE category.

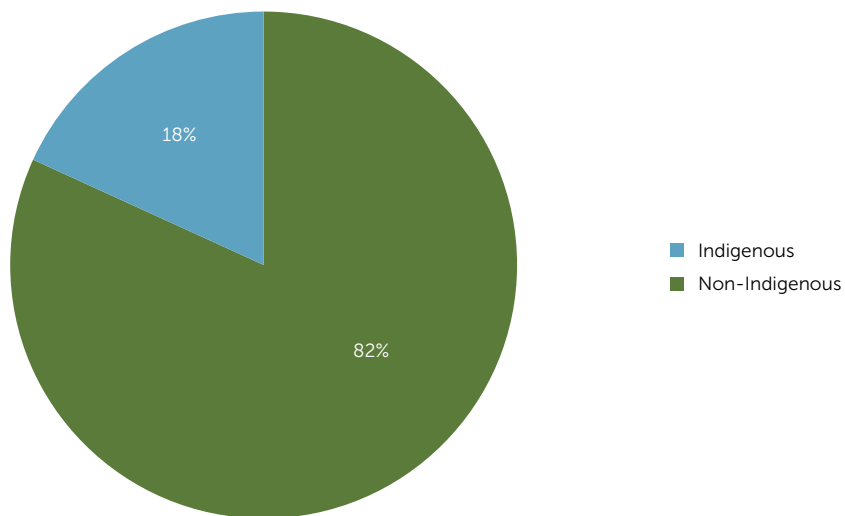


Figure 20: Indigenous and non-Indigenous employees (excluding Board members)

The gender distribution of the staff of the Authority at 17 June 2015 was 53 per cent female and 47 per cent male. A total of 9 staff fell into the 21-30 age group, 10 into the 31-40 age group, 9 into the 41-50 year group, 4 in the 51-60 year-old group, 1 in the 61-70 group and 1 in the above 70 age group. Board members were not included in the gender distribution of the Authority.

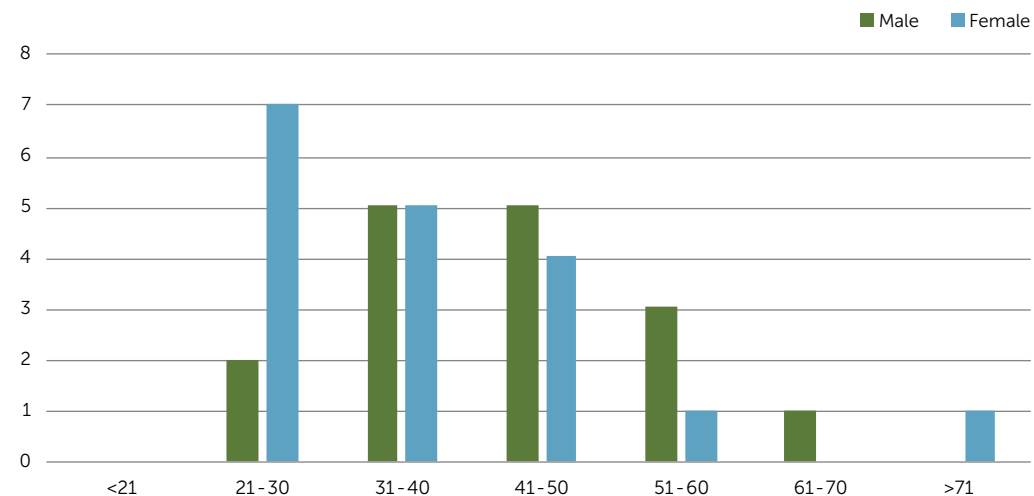


Figure 21: Authority staff (excluding Board members), gender and age groups

Workplace Policies

In ensuring that the Authority remains a healthy work place for its staff the Authority provides a process for resolving any staff grievances as well as specific mechanisms for dealing with incidents of workplace harassment.

The Authority's resolution procedures for internal grievances emphasise conciliation. The procedures were adopted after extensive consultation with stakeholders including staff, Unions, Commissioner for Public Employment and the Office of Anti-Discrimination. One formal grievance was processed by the Authority with assistance from the Commissioner for Public Employment in 2014–15.

The Authority also has a policy to provide guidance for employees on the prevention and elimination of any form of harassment of employees within the Authority. It includes procedures for the resolution of both formal and informal complaints. Staff members with managerial responsibilities are made aware of the Authority's obligations under the *Anti-Discrimination Act* and the principles of equity and merit that underpin the Authority's Equal Employment Opportunity objectives.

There were no allegations of workplace harassment made within the period of the report.

The Authority continues to be committed to providing a safe workplace for all its employees and consultants. The Authority encourages the participation of every staff member in achieving a healthy and safe working environment.

This commitment is demonstrated by its high emphasis on fieldwork safety and training at both the Darwin and Alice Springs offices. Members of staff are encouraged to raise any issues with the nominated Work Health and Safety Officer and are assured of a prompt response.

There were no workers compensation claims made within the period of the report.

The Authority strives to create a harmonious working environment and in 2014–15 this was encouraged through a number of initiatives including supporting the ongoing function of a staff social club and an all staff workshop to build greater collaboration and appreciation across work units.

Employee Assistance Program

The Authority's Employee Assistance Program is an external program providing professional and confidential counselling for all employees and their immediate family members.

Throughout 2014–15 the Authority continued to support and value its staff by:

- Continuing the support of staff and their immediate family who wished to access the Employee Assistance Program through four local service providers; and
- Accommodating those staff who wished to access the "Flexible working arrangements" whilst considering the operational requirements of the Authority.

Staff Training and Development

Training and development focuses on providing the skills and competencies necessary for staff to perform the tasks involved in achieving the desired outcomes of the Authority. The Authority recognises that training is a continuous process integrated with and running parallel to work.

The Authority values its staff as its greatest resource and is committed to providing support for formal education as a learning opportunity enabling staff to progress in their careers and increase the Authority's overall skill base.

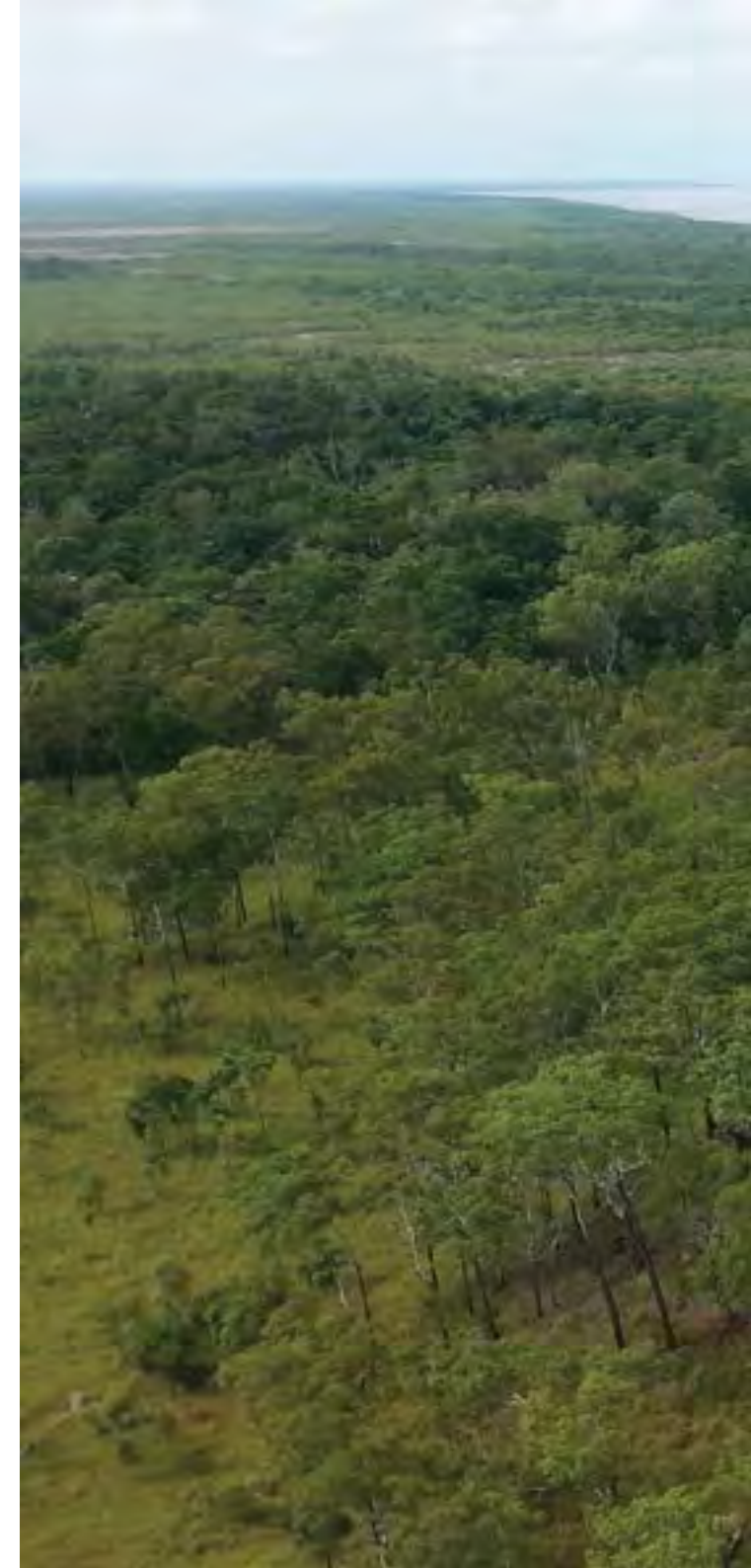
During 2014–15 various courses were undertaken by individual staff members to assist them in performing their roles and all staff went through cross cultural awareness training. The Authority spent \$27 048 (approximately 1% of personnel expenditure) on training programs and associated expenses during this reporting period.

A Staff Development Framework continues to be in place to provide a process for staff throughout the organisation to:

- Understand their role and contribution within the organisation;
- Realise their potential within the context of their work roles;
- Ensure they have the appropriate skills to undertake their existing and future work requirements;
- Consider their long-term work needs within the Authority; and
- Give and receive feedback about themselves and their managers.



1. Introduction
2. Our Organisation
3. Initiatives and Projects 2014–2015
4. Performance Report 2014–2015
5. Governance
6. Human Resources
- 7. Financial Report**
8. Insurance Report





View from helicopter during fieldwork between Cox Peninsula and Channel Point

Financial Statement Overview

For the Year Ended 30 June 2015

The 2014–15 financial statements of the Aboriginal Areas Protection Authority (the Authority) have been prepared on an accrual basis in accordance with the Northern Territory's financial management framework and the Australian Accounting Standards. The Authority's financial results for 2014–15 and comparative financial information for 2013–14 are reported in the four standardised statements below.

Key results for the Authority were: -

- Net surplus of \$291K exceeded budget of \$125K by \$166K. The predominant reason for the improved result was due to savings in employee expenses.
- Reduction in receivables by 14% (\$51K).
- Reduction in total liabilities by 33% (\$257K).
- \$175K of work in progress towards the Authorities \$322K IT enhancement project (due for completion September 2015).
- Increase in cash at bank by \$47K from the beginning of the year.

Details of the Authority's performance by output group are provided at Note 3 of the financial statements.

Summary of Financial Performance

The below table summarises total actual income and expenditure against budget for the 2014–15 and 2013–14 financial years.

	Actual		Final Budget*		Budget V Actual Variation	
	2015	2014	2015	2014	2015	2014
Income	5,386	5,898	5,243	5,404	143	494
Expenditure	5,095	5,560	5,118	5,407	-23	153
Surplus/deficit	291	338	125	-3	166	341
Other Comprehensive Income	-	5	-	-	-	5
Comprehensive result	291	343	125	-3	166	346

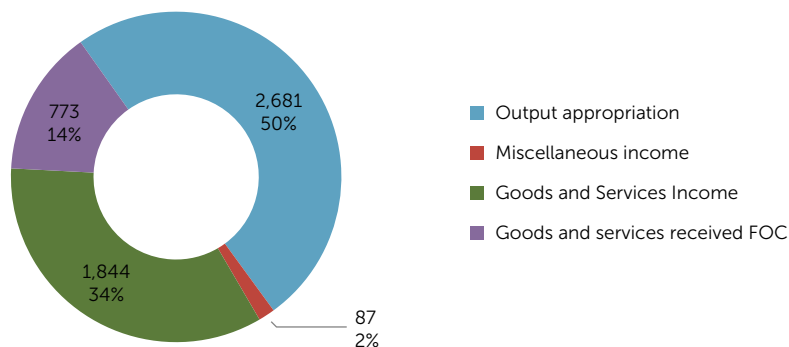
*Note budget figures used in this overview are the last approved figures for the financial years and not those used in the 2014 Budget Paper 3 published by the Department of Treasury and Finance (May 2014).

Financial Report 2014–2015

Income

The Authority is funded by a combination of NT Government appropriation, goods and services income, notional income derived from goods and services provided by the Department of Corporate and Information Services free of charge and some miscellaneous income. The graph below illustrates the relative value of each Income category.

Income Category in \$'000

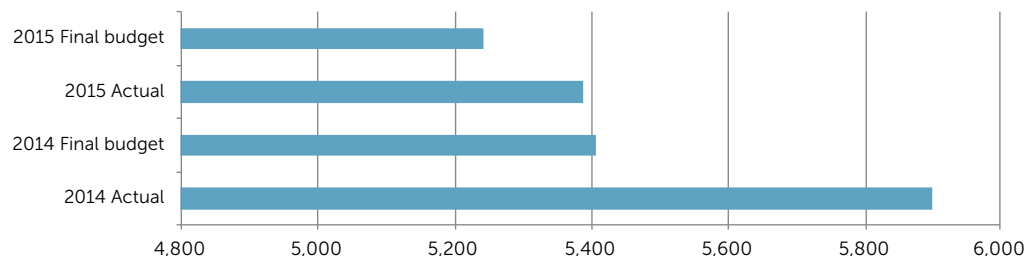


Total income is approximately \$143K (or 2.6%) more than budget. Output appropriation and goods and services income were in line with budget. However, Income from goods and services received free of charge and miscellaneous income were slightly higher than expected.

Total income is \$512K (or 8.7%) lower than last year's result (30 June 2014). The predominant reasons are that output appropriation is down by \$150K and goods and services revenue is down by \$422K. The reduction in goods and services revenue is predominantly due to decreases in requests for Authority Certificates and the National Broadband Network project entering its final stages.

The graph below illustrates the relationship between the 2014–15 and 2013–14 results against approved budgets.

Income \$'000

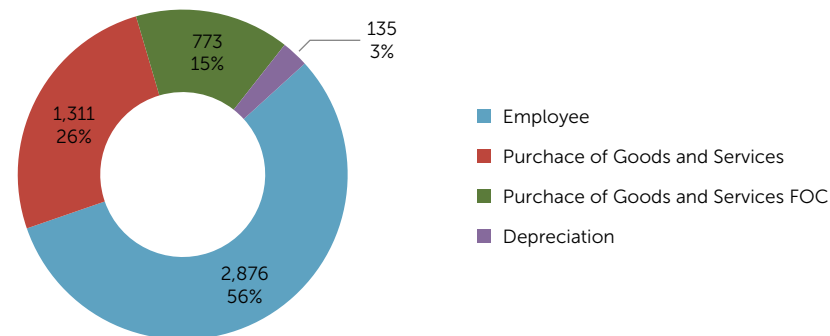


Expenditure

Total Expenditure is made up of four broad categories: - Employee, Purchase of goods and services, depreciation and the notional expenditure of purchase of goods and services received free of charge. The graph below illustrates the relative value of each expenditure category.

Total expenditure at \$5.1M was slightly under budget by \$23K. The result was also \$466K less than the previous year.

Expenditure Category in \$'000



Employees

Employee expenditure is under budget by \$127K predominantly due to two positions not being filled for part of the year. Employee expenditure has also resulted in \$300K less being spent than the last financial year.

Purchase of Goods and Services

Total expenditure for goods and services at \$1.3M was slightly over budget by \$11K and \$170K more than the last financial year. The variable expenditure ratio of goods and services expenditure to income has remained the same as the previous year.

Depreciation

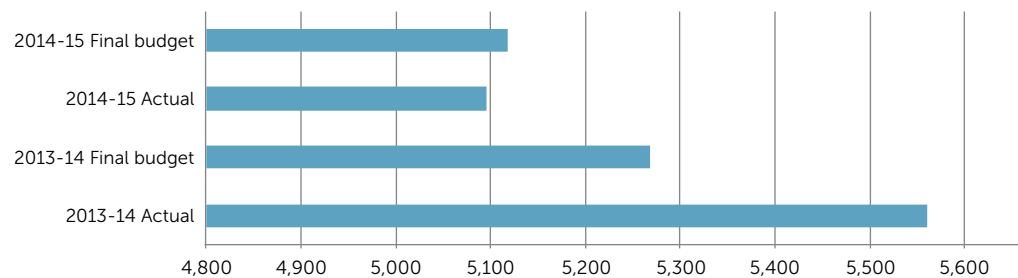
Depreciation was in line with both budget and the previous financial year.

Goods and Services Received free of Charge

Goods and Services Received free of charge (notional expense) at \$773K is \$93K higher than budget and \$8K higher than the previous year. Notional expenditure is offset by notional income of the same value, thus having no effect on the comprehensive result of the Authority.

The graph below illustrates the relationship between the 2014–15 and 2013–14 results against approved budgets.

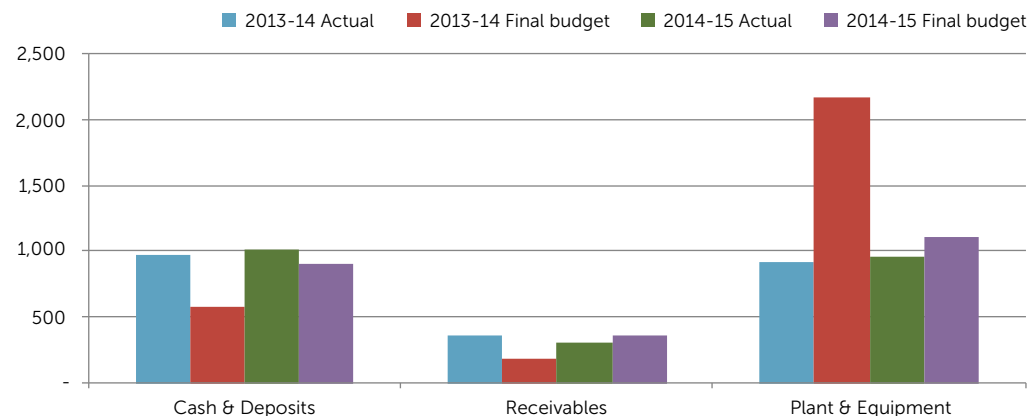
Expenditure \$'000



Balance Sheet

Assets

Total Assets are made up of three main categories: - cash and deposits, receivables and fixed assets. Total Assets have increased by \$34K to \$2.29M since the previous financial year. Cash and deposits has increased by \$47K. Receivables have decreased by \$51K and fixed assets have decreased by \$40K. Work in progress on the new IT enhancement project increased the value of fixed assets by \$175K however; the increase has been offset by depreciation of \$135K.

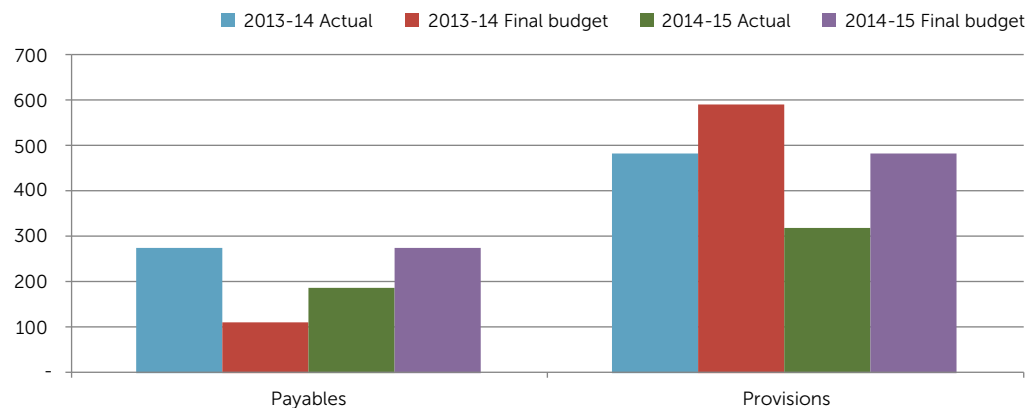


Liabilities

Total Liabilities are made up of two main categories: - Payables and Provisions. Total Liabilities have decreased by \$257K from the last reporting period (from \$770K to \$503K). Payables have decreased by \$80K and Provisions (which are predominantly employee provisions) by \$168K.

Equity

The increases in Assets, together with the decrease in Liabilities, have resulted in a much improved financial position for the Authority. Total Equity has increased by \$291K to \$1.78M.



Statement of Changes In Equity

The statement of changes in equity presents the Authorities profit for the reporting period, items of income and expense recognised in other comprehensive income for the period, the effects of changes in accounting policies and corrections of errors recognised in the period. The statement of changes in equity below (at page 55) shows the movement in equity from the previous financial year.

Cash Flow Statement

The cash flow statement, details how changes in balance sheet and income affect cash held. The statement captures both the current operating results and the accompanying changes in the balance sheet and focuses on the sources and uses of cash through operating, investing and financing activities.

Net cash from Operating Activities.

\$172K less cash was used in operating activities compared to the previous reporting period from \$395K to \$223K.

Net Cash from Investing Activities

\$175K was utilised for cash payments towards the IT enhancement project.

Net Effect

The net effect of cash flow activities for the financial year, lead to an increase in cash at bank by \$47K to \$1.02M.

Certification of the Financial Statements

We certify that the attached financial statements for the Aboriginal Areas Protection Authority have been prepared from proper accounts and records in accordance with the prescribed format, the *Financial Management Act* and Treasurer's Directions.

We further state that the information set out in the Comprehensive Operating Statement, Balance Sheet, Statement of Changes in Equity, Cash Flow Statement, and notes to and forming part of the financial statements, presents fairly the financial performance and cash flows for the year ended 30 June 2015 and the financial position on that date.

At the time of signing, we are not aware of any circumstances that would render the particulars included in the financial statements misleading or inaccurate.

Dr. Benedict Scambary
Chief Executive Officer
24 August 2015

Mr. Maurice Sacilotto
Director Corporate Services / CFO
24 August 2015

Comprehensive Operating Statement

For the year ended 30 June 2015

	Note	2015 \$000	2014 \$000
INCOME			
Output appropriation		2 681	2 831
Sales of goods and services		1 844	2 266
Goods and services received free of charge	4	773	765
Other income		87	36
TOTAL INCOME	3	5 385	5 898
EXPENSES			
Employee expenses		2 876	3 176
Administrative expenses			
Purchases of goods and services	5	1 244	1 445
Repairs and maintenance		4	2
Depreciation and amortisation	8,9	135	139
Goods and services received free of charge expense		773	765
Other administrative expenses		62	33
TOTAL EXPENSES	3	5 094	5 560
NET SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)		291	338
OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME			
Transfer from Reserves		-	5
TOTAL OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME		-	5
COMPREHENSIVE RESULT		291	343

The Comprehensive Operating Statement is to be read in conjunction with the notes to the financial statementsAs at

Balance Sheet

As at 30 June 2015

	Note	2015 \$000	2014 \$000
ASSETS			
Current Assets			
Cash and deposits	6	1 017	970
Receivables	7	315	366
Prepayments		4	6
Total Current Assets		1 336	1 342
Non-Current Assets			
Property, plant and equipment	8,9	783	918
Software (work in progress)		175	-
Total Non-Current Assets		958	918
TOTAL ASSETS		2 294	2 260
LIABILITIES			
Current Liabilities			
Payables	10	196	276
Provisions	11	270	403
Other liabilities	12	-	9
Total Current Liabilities		466	688
Non-Current Liabilities			
Provisions	11	47	82
Total Non-Current Liabilities		47	82
TOTAL LIABILITIES		513	770
NET ASSETS		1 781	1 490
EQUITY			
Capital		1 621	1 621
Accumulated funds		160	(131)
TOTAL EQUITY		1 781	1 490

The Balance Sheet is to be read in conjunction with the notes to the financial statements.

Statement of Changes In Equity

For the year ended 30 June 2015

	Note	Equity at 1 July \$000	Comprehensive result \$000	Transactions with owners in their capacity as owners \$000	Equity at 30 June \$000
2014–15					
Accumulated Funds					
Accumulated Funds		136	(291)	-	(155)
Transfers from Reserves		(5)	-	-	(5)
		131	(291)	-	(160)
Capital – Transactions with Owners					
Equity injections					
Capital appropriation		(564)	-	-	(564)
Equity transfers in		(1 195)	-	-	(1 195)
Other equity injections		(57)	-	-	(57)
		(1 816)	-	-	(1 816)
Equity withdrawals					
Capital withdrawal		195	-	-	195
		195	-	-	195
Total Equity at End of Financial Year		(1 490)	(291)	-	(1 781)
2013–14					
Accumulated Funds					
Accumulated Funds		474	(338)	-	136
Transfers from Reserves		-	(5)	-	(5)
		474	(343)	-	131
Capital – Transactions with Owners					
Equity injections					
Capital appropriation		(564)	-	-	(564)
Equity transfers in		(1 195)	-	-	(1 195)
Other equity injections		(57)	-	-	(57)
		(1 816)	-	-	(1 816)
Equity withdrawals					
Capital withdrawal (d)		195	-	-	195
		195	-	-	195
Total Equity at End of Financial Year		(1 147)	(343)	-	(1 490)

The Statement of Changes in Equity is to be read in conjunction with the notes to the financial statements.

Cash Flow Statement

For the year ended 30 June 2015

	Note	2015 \$000	2014 \$000
CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES			
Operating Receipts			
Output appropriation		2 681	2 831
Receipts from sales of goods and services		2 038	2 182
Total Operating Receipts		4 719	5 013
Operating Payments			
Payments to employees		(3 017)	(3 187)
Payments for goods and services		(1 480)	(1 431)
Total Operating Payments		(4 497)	(4 618)
Net Cash From/(Used in) Operating Activities	13	222	395
CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES			
Investing Payments			
Purchases of assets		(175)	-
Total Investing Payments		(175)	-
Net Cash From/(Used in) Investing Activities		(175)	-
Net increase/(decrease) in cash held		47	395
Cash at beginning of financial year		970	574
CASH AT END OF FINANCIAL YEAR	6	1 017	970

The Cash Flow Statement is to be read in conjunction with the notes to the financial statements.

Index of Notes To The Financial Statements

Note

1. Objectives and Funding
 2. Statement of Significant Accounting Policies
 3. Comprehensive Operating Statement by Output Group
- INCOME**
4. Goods and Services Received Free of Charge
- EXPENSES**
5. Purchases of Goods and Services
- ASSETS**
6. Cash and Deposits
 7. Receivables
 8. Property, Plant and Equipment
 9. Fair Value Measurement of Non-Financial Assets
- LIABILITIES**
10. Payables
 11. Borrowings and Advances
 12. Provisions
 13. Other Liabilities
- EQUITY**
14. Reserves
- OTHER DISCLOSURES**
15. Notes to the Cash Flow Statement
 16. Financial Instruments
 17. Commitments
 18. Contingent Liabilities and Contingent Assets
 19. Events Subsequent to Balance Date
 20. Accountable Officer's Trust Account
 21. Write-offs, Postponements, Waivers, Gifts and Ex Gratia Payments
 22. Schedule of Administered Territory Items
 23. Budgetary Information

1. Objectives and Funding

The Aboriginal Areas Protection Authority's mission is to protect sacred sites in the Northern Territory by recognising and respecting the interests of custodians of sacred sites, landowners, and developers for the benefit of all Territorians.

Additional information in relation to the Aboriginal Areas Protection Authority's and its principal activities may be found in the introduction of the Annual Report.

The Authority is funded by, and is dependent on, the receipt of Parliamentary appropriations and goods and services revenue. The financial statements encompass all funds through which the agency controls resources to carry on its functions and deliver outputs. For reporting purposes, outputs delivered by the agency are summarised into several output groups. Note 3 provides summary financial information in the form of a Comprehensive Operating Statement by output group.

2. Statement of Significant Accounting Policies

a) Basis of Accounting

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the *Financial Management Act* and related Treasurer's Directions. The *Financial Management Act* requires the Aboriginal Areas Protection Authority's to prepare financial statements for the year ended 30 June based on the form determined by the Treasurer. The form of agency financial statements is to include:

- (i) a Certification of the Financial Statements;
- (ii) a Comprehensive Operating Statement;
- (iii) a Balance Sheet;
- (iv) a Statement of Changes in Equity;
- (v) a Cash Flow Statement; and
- (vi) applicable explanatory notes to the financial statements.

The financial statements have been prepared using the accrual basis of accounting, which recognises the effect of financial transactions and events when they occur, rather than when cash is paid out or received. As part of the preparation of the financial statements, all intra agency transactions and balances have been eliminated.

Except where stated, the financial statements have also been prepared in accordance with the historical cost convention.

The form of the agency financial statements is also consistent with the requirements of Australian Accounting Standards. The effects of all relevant new and revised Standards and Interpretations issued by the Australian Accounting Standards Board (AASB) that are effective for the current annual reporting period have been evaluated. The Standards and Interpretations and their impacts are:

AASB 1031 Materiality (2013), AASB 2013-9 Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards – Conceptual Framework, Materiality and Financial Instruments, AASB 2014-1 Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards (Part C – Materiality)

Revised AASB 1031 is an interim standard that cross-references to other standards and the *Framework for the Preparation and Presentation of Financial Statements* that contain guidance on materiality. The standard does not impact the financial statements.

AASB 1055 Budgetary Reporting

AASB 1055 sets out budgetary reporting requirements for not-for-profit entities within the General Government Sector. The required disclosures comprise a separate note accompanying the financial statements.

b) Australian Accounting Standards and Interpretations Issued but not yet Effective

At the date of authorisation of the financial statements, the Standards and Interpretations listed below were in issue but not yet effective

Standard/Interpretation	Summary	Effective for annual reporting periods beginning on or after	Impact on financial statements
AASB 9 <i>Financial Instruments (Dec 2014)</i> , AASB 2014-1 <i>Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards (Part E – Financial Instruments)</i> , AASB 2014-7 <i>Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards arising from AASB 9 (Dec 2014)</i>	The final version of AASB 9 brings together the classification and measurement, impairment and hedge accounting phases of the IASB's project to replace AASB 139 <i>Financial Instruments: Recognition and Measurement</i> . This version adds a new expected loss impairment model and limited amendments to classification and measurement for financial assets.	1 Jan 2018	No impact foreseen on financial statements.
AASB 2014-4 <i>Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards – Clarification of Acceptable Methods of Depreciation and Amortisation [AASB 116 & 138]</i>	Amends AASB 116 <i>Property, Plant and Equipment</i> and AASB 138 <i>Intangible Assets</i> to provide additional guidance on how the depreciation or amortisation of property, plant and equipment and intangible assets should be calculated.	1 Jan 2016	No impact foreseen on financial statements.
AASB 2015-1 <i>Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards – Annual Improvements to Australian Accounting Standards 2012–2014 Cycle [AASB 1, 2, 3, 5, 7, 11, 110, 119, 121, 133, 134, 137 & 140]</i>	Amends a number of pronouncements as a result of the IASB's 2012–2014 annual improvements cycle.	1 Jan 2016	No impact foreseen on financial statements.
AASB 2015-2 <i>Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards – Disclosure Initiative: Amendments to AASB 101 [AASB 7, 101, 134 & 1049]</i>	Includes narrow-focus amendments to address concerns about existing presentation and disclosure requirements, and to ensure entities are able to use judgement when applying a standard in determining what information to disclose.	1 Jan 2016	No impact foreseen on financial statements.

c) Agency and Territory Items

The financial statements of the Aboriginal Areas Protection Authority include income, expenses, assets, liabilities and equity over which the Aboriginal Areas Protection Authority has control (Agency items). Certain items, while managed by the agency, are controlled and recorded by the Territory rather than the agency (Territory items). Territory items are recognised and recorded in the Central Holding Authority as discussed below.

Central Holding Authority

The Central Holding Authority is the 'parent body' that represents the Government's ownership interest in Government-controlled entities.

The Central Holding Authority also records all Territory items, such as income, expenses, assets and liabilities controlled by the Government and managed by agencies on behalf of the Government. The main Territory item is Territory income, which includes taxation and royalty revenue, Commonwealth general purpose funding (such as GST revenue), fines, and statutory fees and charges.

The Central Holding Authority also holds certain Territory assets not assigned to agencies as well as certain Territory liabilities that are not practical or effective to assign to individual agencies such as unfunded superannuation and long service leave.

The Central Holding Authority recognises and records all Territory items, and as such, these items are not included in the agency's financial statements. However, as the agency is accountable for certain Territory items managed on behalf of Government, these items have been separately disclosed in Note 19 – Schedule of Administered Territory Items.

d) Comparatives

Where necessary, comparative information for the 2013–14 financial year has been reclassified to provide consistency with current year disclosures.

e) Presentation and Rounding of Amounts

Amounts in the financial statements and notes to the financial statements are presented in Australian dollars and have been rounded to the nearest thousand dollars, with amounts of \$500 or less being rounded down to zero.

f) Changes in Accounting Policies

There have been no changes to accounting policies adopted in 2014–15 as a result of management decisions.

g) Accounting Judgments and Estimates

The preparation of the financial report requires the making of judgments and estimates that affect the recognised amounts of assets, liabilities, revenues and expenses and the disclosure of contingent liabilities. The estimates and associated assumptions are based on historical experience and various other factors that are believed to be reasonable under the circumstances, the results of which form the basis for making judgments about the carrying values of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. Actual results may differ from these estimates.

The estimates and underlying assumptions are reviewed on an ongoing basis. Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised if the revision affects only that period, or in the period of the revision and future periods if the revision affects both current and future periods.

Judgments and estimates that have significant effects on the financial statements are disclosed in the relevant notes to the financial statements. Notes that include significant judgments and estimates are:

- Employee Benefits – Note 2(v) and Note 11: Non-current liabilities in respect of employee benefits are measured as the present value of estimated future cash outflows based on the appropriate Government bond rate, estimates of future salary and wage levels and employee periods of service.
- Allowance for Impairment Losses – Note 2(o), Note 7: Receivables and Note 14: Financial Instruments. The allowance represents debts that are likely to be uncollectible and are considered doubtful. Debtors are grouped according to their aging profile and history of previous financial difficulties.
- Depreciation and Amortisation – Note 2(k), Note 8: Property, Plant and Equipment, and Note 9.

h) Goods and Services Tax

Income, expenses and assets are recognised net of the amount of Goods and Services Tax (GST), except where the amount of GST incurred on a purchase of goods and services is not recoverable from the Australian Tax Office (ATO). In these circumstances the GST is recognised as part of the cost of acquisition of the asset or as part of the expense.

Receivables and payables are stated with the amount of GST included. The net amount of GST recoverable from, or payable to, the ATO is included as part of receivables or payables in the Balance Sheet.

Cash flows are included in the Cash Flow Statement on a gross basis. The GST components of cash flows arising from investing and financing activities, which are recoverable from, or payable to, the ATO are classified as operating cash flows. Commitments and contingencies are disclosed net of the amount of GST recoverable or payable unless otherwise specified.

i) Income Recognition

Income encompasses both revenue and gains.

Income is recognised at the fair value of the consideration received, exclusive of the amount of GST.

Appropriation

Output appropriation is the operating payment to each agency for the outputs they provide and is calculated as the net cost of agency outputs after taking into account funding from agency income. It does not include any allowance for major non-cash costs such as depreciation.

Commonwealth appropriation follows from the Intergovernmental Agreement on Federal Financial Relations, resulting in Specific Purpose Payments (SPPs) and National Partnership (NP) payments being made by the Commonwealth Treasury to state treasuries, in a manner similar to arrangements for GST payments. These payments are received by the Department of Treasury and Finance on behalf of the Central Holding Authority and then on passed to the relevant agencies as Commonwealth appropriation.

Revenue in respect of appropriations is recognised in the period in which the agency gains control of the funds.

Sale of Goods

Revenue from the sale of goods is recognised (net of returns, discounts and allowances) when:

- the significant risks and rewards of ownership of the goods have transferred to the buyer;
- the agency retains neither continuing managerial involvement to the degree usually associated with ownership nor effective control over the goods sold;
- the amount of revenue can be reliably measured;
- it is probable that the economic benefits associated with the transaction will flow to the agency; and
- the costs incurred or to be incurred in respect of the transaction can be measured reliably.

Rendering of Services

Revenue from rendering services is recognised by reference to the stage of completion of the contract. The revenue is recognised when:

- the amount of revenue, stage of completion and transaction costs incurred can be reliably measured; and
- it is probable that the economic benefits associated with the transaction will flow to the entity.

Interest Revenue

Interest revenue is recognised as it accrues, taking into account the effective yield on the financial asset.

Goods and Services Received Free of Charge

Goods and services received free of charge are recognised as revenue when a fair value can be reliably determined and the resource would have been purchased if it had not been donated. Use of the resource is recognised as an expense.

Disposal of Assets

A gain or loss on disposal of assets is included as a gain or loss on the date control of the asset passes to the buyer, usually when an unconditional contract of sale is signed. The gain or loss on disposal is calculated as the difference between the carrying amount of the asset at the time of disposal and the net proceeds on disposal.

Contributions of Assets

Contributions of assets and contributions to assist in the acquisition of assets, being non reciprocal transfers, are recognised, unless otherwise determined by Government, as gains when the agency obtains control of the asset or contribution. Contributions are recognised at the fair value received or receivable.

j) Repairs and Maintenance Expense

Funding is received for repairs and maintenance works associated with agency assets as part of output revenue. Costs associated with repairs and maintenance works on agency assets are expensed as incurred.

k) Depreciation and Amortisation Expense

Items of property, plant and equipment, including buildings but excluding land, have limited useful lives and are depreciated or amortised using the straight-line method over their estimated useful lives.

Amortisation applies in relation to intangible non-current assets with limited useful lives and is calculated and accounted for in a similar manner to depreciation.

The estimated useful lives for each class of asset are in accordance with the Treasurer's Directions and are determined as follows:

	2015	2014
Buildings	10 years	10 years
Plant and Equipment	2-5 years	2-5 years
Computer Software	5 years	5 years

Assets are depreciated or amortised from the date of acquisition or from the time an asset is completed and held ready for use.

l) Interest Expense

Interest expenses include interest and finance lease charges. Interest expenses are expensed in the period in which they are incurred.

m) Cash and Deposits

For the purposes of the Balance Sheet and the Cash Flow Statement, cash includes cash on hand, cash at bank and cash equivalents. Cash equivalents are highly liquid short-term investments that are readily convertible to cash.

n) Receivables

Receivables include accounts receivable and other receivables and are recognised at fair value less any allowance for impairment losses.

The allowance for impairment losses represents the amount of receivables the agency estimates are likely to be uncollectible and are considered doubtful. Analyses of the age of the receivables that are past due as at the reporting date are disclosed in an aging schedule under credit risk in Note 14 Financial Instruments. Reconciliation of changes in the allowance accounts is also presented.

Accounts receivable are generally settled within 30 days and other receivables within 30 days.

o) Property, Plant and Equipment

Acquisitions

All items of property, plant and equipment with a cost, or other value, equal to or greater than \$10 000 are recognised in the year of acquisition and depreciated as outlined below. Items of property, plant and equipment below the \$10 000 threshold are expensed in the year of acquisition.

The construction cost of property, plant and equipment includes the cost of materials and direct labour, and an appropriate proportion of fixed and variable overheads.

Complex Assets

Major items of plant and equipment comprising a number of components that have different useful lives, are accounted for as separate assets. The components may be replaced during the useful life of the complex asset.

Subsequent Additional Costs

Costs incurred on property, plant and equipment subsequent to initial acquisition are capitalised when it is probable that future economic benefits in excess of the originally assessed performance of the asset will flow to the agency in future years. Where these costs represent separate components of a complex asset, they are accounted for as separate assets and are separately depreciated over their expected useful lives.

Construction (Work in Progress)

As part of the financial management framework, the Department of Infrastructure is responsible for managing general government capital works projects on a whole of Government basis. Therefore appropriation for capital works is provided directly to the Department of Infrastructure and the cost of construction work in progress is recognised as an asset of that Department. Once completed, capital works assets are transferred to the agency.

p) Revaluations and Impairment

Revaluation of Assets

Subsequent to initial recognition, assets belonging to the following classes of non-current assets are revalued with sufficient regularity to ensure that the carrying amount of these assets does not differ materially from their fair value at reporting date:

- land;
- buildings;
- infrastructure assets;

Plant and equipment are stated at historical cost less depreciation, which is deemed to equate to fair value.

Impairment of Assets

An asset is said to be impaired when the asset's carrying amount exceeds its recoverable amount.

Non-current physical and intangible agency assets are assessed for indicators of impairment on an annual basis. If an indicator of impairment exists, the agency determines the asset's recoverable amount. The asset's recoverable amount is determined as the higher of the asset's depreciated replacement cost and fair value less costs to sell. Any amount by which the asset's carrying amount exceeds the recoverable amount is recorded as an impairment loss.

Impairment losses are recognised in the Comprehensive Operating Statement. They are disclosed as an expense unless the asset is carried at a revalued amount. Where the asset is measured at a revalued amount, the impairment loss is offset against the asset revaluation surplus for that class of asset to the extent that an available balance exists in the asset revaluation surplus.

In certain situations, an impairment loss may subsequently be reversed. Where an impairment loss is subsequently reversed, the carrying amount of the asset is increased to the revised estimate of its recoverable amount. A reversal of an impairment loss is recognised in the Comprehensive Operating Statement as income, unless the asset is carried at a revalued amount, in which case the impairment reversal results in an increase in the asset revaluation surplus. Note 8,9 provides additional information in relation to the asset revaluation surplus.

q) Assets Held for Sale

Assets held for sale consist of those assets that management has determined are available for immediate sale in their present condition, and their sale is highly probably within the next twelve months.

These assets are measured at the lower of the asset's carrying amount and fair value less costs to sell. These assets are not depreciated. Non-current assets held for sale have been recognised on the face of the financial statements as current assets.

r) Leased Assets

Leases under which the agency assumes substantially all the risks and rewards of ownership of an asset are classified as finance leases. Other leases are classified as operating leases.

Finance Leases

Finance leases are capitalised. A lease asset and lease liability equal to the lower of the fair value of the leased property and present value of the minimum lease payments, each determined at the inception of the lease, are recognised.

Lease payments are allocated between the principal component of the lease liability and the interest expense.

Operating Leases

Operating lease payments made at regular intervals throughout the term are expensed when the payments are due, except where an alternative basis is more representative of the pattern of benefits to be derived from the leased property. Lease incentives under an operating lease of a building or office space is recognised as an integral part of the consideration for the use of the leased asset. Lease incentives are to be recognised as a deduction of the lease expenses over the term of the lease.

s) Payables

Liabilities for accounts payable and other amounts payable are carried at cost, which is the fair value of the consideration to be paid in the future for goods and services received, whether or not billed to the agency. Accounts payable are normally settled within 30 days.

t) Employee Benefits

Provision is made for employee benefits accumulated as a result of employees rendering services up to the reporting date. These benefits include wages and salaries and recreation leave. Liabilities arising in respect of wages and salaries, recreation leave and other employee benefit liabilities that fall due within twelve months of reporting date are classified as current liabilities and are measured at amounts expected to be paid. Non-current employee benefit liabilities that fall due after twelve months of the reporting date are measured at present value, calculated using the Government long-term bond rate.

No provision is made for sick leave, which is non-vesting, as the anticipated pattern of future sick leave to be taken is less than the entitlement accruing in each reporting period.

Employee benefit expenses are recognised on a net basis in respect of the following categories:

- wages and salaries, non-monetary benefits, recreation leave, sick leave and other leave entitlements; and
- other types of employee benefits.

As part of the financial management framework, the Central Holding Authority assumes the long service leave liabilities of Government agencies, including the Aboriginal Areas Protection Authority and as such no long service leave liability is recognised in agency financial statements.

u) Superannuation

Employees' superannuation entitlements are provided through the:

- Northern Territory Government and Public Authorities Superannuation Scheme (NTGPASS);
- Commonwealth Superannuation Scheme (CSS); or
- non-government employee-nominated schemes for those employees commencing on or after 10 August 1999.

The agency makes superannuation contributions on behalf of its employees to the Central Holding Authority or non-government employee-nominated schemes. Superannuation liabilities related to government superannuation schemes are held by the Central Holding Authority and as such are not recognised in agency financial statements.

v) Contributions by and Distributions to Government

The agency may receive contributions from Government where the Government is acting as owner of the agency. Conversely, the agency may make distributions to Government. In accordance with the *Financial Management Act* and Treasurer's Directions, certain types of contributions and distributions, including those relating to administrative restructures, have been designated as contributions by, and distributions to, Government. These designated contributions and distributions are treated by the agency as adjustments to equity.

The Statement of Changes in Equity provides additional information in relation to contributions by, and distributions to, Government.

w) Commitments

Disclosures in relation to capital and other commitments, including lease commitments are shown at Note 15.

Commitments are those contracted as at 30 June where the amount of the future commitment can be reliably measured.

x) Financial Instruments

A financial instrument is a contract that gives rise to a financial asset of one entity and a financial liability or equity instrument of another entity. Financial assets and liabilities are recognised on the Balance Sheet when the agency becomes a party to the contractual provisions of the financial instrument. The agency's financial instruments include cash and deposits; receivables and payables.

Exposure to interest rate risk, foreign exchange risk, credit risk, price risk and liquidity risk arise in the normal course of activities.

Classification of Financial Instruments

AASB 7 Financial Instruments: Disclosures requires financial instruments to be classified and disclosed within specific categories depending on their nature and purpose.

Financial assets are classified into the following categories:

- financial assets at fair value through profit or loss;
- held-to-maturity investments;
- loans and receivables; and
- available-for-sale financial assets.

Financial liabilities are classified into the following categories:

- financial liabilities at fair value through profit or loss (FVTPL); and
- financial liabilities at amortised cost.

Financial Assets or Financial Liabilities at Fair Value through Profit or Loss

Financial instruments are classified as at FVTPL when the instrument is either held for trading or is designated as at FVTPL.

An instrument is classified as held for trading if it is:

- acquired or incurred principally for the purpose of selling or repurchasing it in the near term with an intention of making a profit; or
 - part of a portfolio of identified financial instruments that are managed together and for which there is evidence of a recent actual pattern of short-term profit-taking; or
 - a derivative that is not a financial guarantee contract or a designated and effective hedging instrument.
- A financial instrument may be designated as at FVTPL upon initial recognition if:
- such designation eliminates or significantly reduces a measurement or recognition inconsistency that would otherwise arise; or
 - the instrument forms part of a group of financial instruments, which is managed and its performance is evaluated on a fair value basis, in accordance with a documented risk management or investment strategy, and information about the grouping is provided internally on that basis; or
 - it forms part of a contract containing one or more embedded derivatives, and AASB 139 Financial Instruments: Recognition and Measurement permits the contract to be designated as at FVTPL.

y) Fair Value Measurement

Fair value is the price that would be received to sell an asset or paid to transfer a liability in an orderly transaction between market participants at the measurement date.

Fair value measurement of a non-financial asset takes into account a market participant's ability to generate economic benefits by using the asset in its highest and best use or by selling it to another market participant that would use the asset in its highest and best use. The highest and best use takes into account the use of the asset that is physically possible, legally permissible and financially feasible.

When measuring fair value, the valuation techniques used maximise the use of relevant observable inputs and minimise the use of unobservable inputs. Unobservable inputs are used to the extent that sufficient relevant and reliable observable inputs are not available for similar assets/liabilities.

Observable inputs are publicly available data that are relevant to the characteristics of the assets/liabilities being valued. Observable inputs used by the agency include, but are not limited to, published sales data for land and general office buildings.

Unobservable inputs are data, assumptions and judgments that are not available publicly, but are relevant to the characteristics of the assets/liabilities being valued. Such inputs include internal agency adjustments to observable data to take account of particular and potentially unique characteristics/functionality of assets/liabilities and assessments of physical condition and remaining useful life.

All assets and liabilities for which fair value is measured or disclosed in the financial statements are categorised within the following fair value hierarchy based on the inputs used:

Level 1 – inputs are quoted prices in active markets for identical assets or liabilities;

Level 2 – inputs are inputs other than quoted prices included within Level 1 that are observable for the asset or liability, either directly or indirectly; and

Level 3 – inputs are unobservable.

3. Comprehensive Operating Statement by Output Group

	Note	Protection of Sacred Sites		Corporate Support		Total	
		2015 \$000	2014 \$000	2015 \$000	2014 \$000	2015 \$000	2014 \$000
INCOME							
Appropriation							
Output		1 990	2 101	691	730	2 681	2 831
Sales of goods and services		1 818	1 680	26	586	1 844	2 266
Goods and services received free of charge	4	574	568	199	197	773	765
Other income		47	36	40	-	87	36
TOTAL INCOME		4 429	4 385	956	1 513	5 385	5 898
EXPENSES							
Employee expenses		1 786	2 357	1 090	819	2 877	3 176
Administrative expenses							
Purchases of goods and services	5	681	1 072	563	373	1 245	1 445
Repairs and maintenance		-	2	4	-	4	2
Depreciation and amortisation	8,9	100	103	35	36	135	139
Goods and services received free of charge		574	568	199	197	773	
Other administrative expenses ¹		62	33	-	-	62	798
TOTAL EXPENSES		3 203	4 135	1 891	1 425	5 096	5 560
NET SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)		1 226	250	(935)	88	291	338
OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME							
Items that will not be reclassified to net surplus/deficit							
Transfer from reserves		-	5	-	-	-	5
TOTAL OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME		-	5	-	-	-	5
COMPREHENSIVE RESULT		1 226	255	(935)	88	291	343

¹ Includes DCIS service charges.

This Comprehensive Operating Statement by output group is to be read in conjunction with the notes to the financial statements.

4. Goods and Services Received Free Of Charge

	2015	2014
	\$000	\$000
Corporate and information services	773	765
	773	765

5. Purchases of Goods and Services

The net surplus has been arrived at after charging the following expenses:

	2015	2014
	\$000	\$000
Goods and services expenses:		
Consultants ⁽¹⁾	418	436
Advertising ⁽²⁾	3	-
Marketing and promotion ⁽³⁾	1	2
Document production	10	8
Legal expenses ⁽⁴⁾	17	62
Recruitment ⁽⁵⁾	12	22
Training and study	27	45
Official duty fares	36	57
Travelling allowance	21	23
	545	655

⁽¹⁾ Includes marketing, promotion and IT consultants.

⁽²⁾ Does not include recruitment, advertising or marketing and promotion advertising.

⁽³⁾ Includes advertising for marketing and promotion but excludes marketing and promotion consultants' expenses, which are incorporated in the consultants' category.

⁽⁴⁾ Includes legal fees, claim and settlement costs.

⁽⁵⁾ Includes recruitment-related advertising costs.

6. Cash and Deposits

	2015	2014
	\$000	\$000
Cash on hand	1	1
Cash at bank	1 016	969
	1 017	970

7. Receivables

	2015	2014
	\$000	\$000
Current		
Accounts receivable	334	367
Less: Allowance for impairment losses	(19)	(5)
	315	362
GST receivables	-	4
Total Receivables	315	366

8. Property, Plant and Equipment

	2015	2014
	\$000	\$000
Construction (Work in Progress)		
At capitalised cost	175	-
Plant and Equipment		
At fair value	1 374	1 374
Less: Accumulated depreciation	(591)	(456)
	783	918
Total Property, Plant and Equipment	958	918

Impairment of Property, Plant and Equipment

Agency property, plant and equipment assets were assessed for impairment as at 30 June 2015. No impairment adjustments were required as a result of this review.

8. Continued...

	Buildings	Plant and Equipment	Construction (Work in Progress)	Computer Software	Computer Hardware	Total
	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000
Carrying Amount as at 1 July 2014	-	918	-	-	-	918
Additions	-	-	175	-	-	175
Depreciation	-	(135)	-	-	-	(135)
Additions/(Disposals) from administrative restructuring	-	-	-	-	-	-
Additions/(Disposals) from asset transfers	-	-	-	-	-	-
Carrying Amount as at 30 June 2015	-	783	175	-	-	958

	Buildings	Plant and Equipment	Construction (Work in Progress)	Computer Software	Computer Hardware	Total
	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000
Carrying Amount as at 1 July 2013	1 051	1	-	-	-	1 052
Depreciation	-	(134)	-	-	(5)	(139)
Additions/(Disposals) from administrative restructuring	-	-	-	-	5	5
Additions/(Disposals) from asset transfers	(1 040)	1 051	-	(16)	-	(5)
Revaluation increments/ (decrements)	(11)	-	-	16	-	5
Carrying Amount as at 30 June 2014	-	918	-	-	-	918

9. Fair Value Measurement of Non-Financial Assets

a) Fair Value Hierarchy

Fair values of non-financial assets categorised by levels of inputs used to compute fair value are:

	Level 3	Total Fair Value
	\$000	\$000
2014–15		
Asset Classes		
Plant and Equipment (Note 9)	783	783
Construction (WIP) (Note 9)	175	175
Total	958	958
2013–14		
Asset Classes		
Plant and Equipment (Note 9)	918	918
Construction (WIP) (Note 9)	-	-
Total	918	918

There were no transfers between Level 1 and Levels 2 or 3 during 2014–15.

b) Valuation Techniques and Inputs

Valuation techniques used to measure fair value in 2014–15 are:

	Level 3 Techniques
Asset Classes	
Plant and Equipment	Cost Approach
Construction (WIP)	Cost Approach

There were no changes in valuation techniques from 2013–14 to 2014–15.

c) Additional Information for Level 3 Fair Value Measurements

(i) Reconciliation of Recurring Level 3 Fair Value Measurements

	Buildings	Plant and Equipment	Construction (Work in Progress)	Computer Software	Computer Hardware	Total
	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000
2014–15						
Fair value as at 1 July 2014	-	918	-	-	-	-
Additions	-	-	175	-	-	-
Depreciation	-	(135)	-	-	-	-
Fair value as at 30 June 2015	-	783	175	-	-	958
2013–14						
Fair value as at 1 July 2013	1 051	1	-	-	-	1 052
Additions	273	1 051	-	-	(5)	1 319
Disposals	(1 313)	-	-	(16)	5	(1 324)
Gains/losses recognised in other comprehensive income	(11)	-	-	16	-	5
Depreciation	-	(134)	-	-	-	(134)
Fair value as at 30 June 2014	-	918	-	-	-	918

(ii) Sensitivity analysis

Plant and Equipment and Construction (WIP) are stated at historical cost less depreciation, which is deemed to equate to fair value

10. Payables

	2015	2014
	\$000	\$000
Accounts payable	4	110
Accrued Salaries	95	65
Accrued expenses	87	101
GST Payable	10	-
Total Payables	196	276

11. Provisions

	2015	2014
	\$000	\$000
Current		
Employee benefits		
Recreation leave	169	173
Leave loading	48	43
Recreation Leave Fares	4	34
Other current provisions		
Other employee provisions	43	149
Provision for FBT	7	4
	270	403
Non-Current		
Employee benefits		
Recreation leave	47	82
	47	82
Total Provisions	317	485

The Agency employed 32 employees as at 30 June 2015 (27 employees as at 30 June 2014).

12. Other Liabilities

	2015	2014
	\$000	\$000
Current		
Other liabilities	-	9
Total Other Liabilities	-	9

13. Notes to the Cash Flow Statement

	2015	2014
	\$000	\$000
Reconciliation of Cash		
The total of agency 'Cash and deposits' of \$1 016 886 recorded in the Balance Sheet is consistent with that recorded as 'Cash' in the Cash Flow Statement.		
Reconciliation of Net Surplus/(Deficit) to Net Cash from Operating Activities		
Net Surplus/(Deficit)	291	338
Non-cash items:		
Depreciation and amortisation	135	139
Changes in assets and liabilities:		
Decrease/(Increase) in receivables	60	(173)
Decrease/(Increase) in prepayments	4	23
(Decrease)/Increase in payables	(90)	167
(Decrease)/Increase in provision for employee benefits	(65)	(57)
(Decrease)/Increase in other provisions	(104)	45
(Decrease)/Increase in other liabilities	(9)	(85)
Net Cash from Operating Activities	222	395

14. Financial Instruments

A financial instrument is a contract that gives rise to a financial asset of one entity and a financial liability or equity instrument of another entity. Financial instruments held by the Aboriginal Areas Protection Authority include cash and deposits, receivables, payables and finance leases. The Aboriginal Areas Protection Authority has limited exposure to financial risks as discussed below.

a) Categorisation of Financial Instruments

The carrying amounts of the agency's financial assets and liabilities by category are disclosed in the table below.

	2015	2014
	\$000	\$000
Financial Assets		
Cash and deposits	1 017	970
Receivables	305	366
Financial Liabilities		
Payables	186	276

b) Credit Risk

The agency has limited credit risk exposure (risk of default). In respect of any dealings with organisations external to Government, the agency has adopted a policy of only dealing with credit worthy organisations and obtaining sufficient collateral or other security where appropriate, as a means of mitigating the risk of financial loss from defaults.

The carrying amount of financial assets recorded in the financial statements, net of any allowances for losses, represents the agency's maximum exposure to credit risk without taking account of the value of any collateral or other security obtained.

Receivables

Receivable balances are monitored on an ongoing basis to ensure that exposure to bad debts is not significant. A reconciliation and aging analysis of receivables is presented below.

Internal Receivables	Aging of	Aging of Impaired	Net Receivables
	Receivables	Receivables	
	\$000	\$000	\$000
2014–15			
Not overdue	100	-	100
Overdue for less than 30 days	-	-	-
Overdue for 30 to 60 days	-	-	-
Overdue for more than 60 days	40	-	40
Total	140	-	140
2013–14			
Not overdue	98	-	98
Overdue for less than 30 days	39	-	39
Overdue for 30 to 60 days	50	-	50
Overdue for more than 60 days	1	-	1
Total	188	-	188
External Receivables			
2014–15			
Not overdue	107	-	107
Overdue for less than 30 days	-	-	-
Overdue for 30 to 60 days	-	-	-
Overdue for more than 60 days	87	19	68
Total	194	19	175
Reconciliation of the Allowance for Impairment Losses			
Opening		0	
Increase/(Decrease) in allowance recognised in profit or loss		19	
Total		19	
External Receivables			
2013–14			
Not overdue	42	-	42
Overdue for less than 30 days	11	-	11
Overdue for 30 to 60 days	14	-	14
Overdue for more than 60 days	110	-	110
Total	177	-	177

c) Liquidity Risk

Liquidity risk is the risk that the agency will not be able to meet its financial obligations as they fall due. The agency's approach to managing liquidity is to ensure that it will always have sufficient liquidity to meet its liabilities when they fall due.

2015 Maturity analysis for financial assets and liabilities

	Variable Interest Rate			Fixed Interest Rate			Non Interest Bearing	Total	Weighted Average
	Less than a Year	1 to 5 Years	More than 5 Years	Less than a Year	1 to 5 Years	More than 5 Years			
	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000			
Assets									
Cash and deposits	-	-	-	-	-	-	1 017	1 017	
Receivables	-	-	-	-	-	-	315	315	
Total Financial Assets	-	-	-	-	-	-	1 332	1 332	
Liabilities									
Payables	-	-	-	-	-	-	196	196	
Total Financial Liabilities	-	-	-	-	-	-	196	196	

2014 Maturity analysis for financial assets and liabilities

	Variable Interest Rate			Fixed Interest Rate			Non Interest Bearing	Total	Weighted Average
	Less than a Year	1 to 5 Years	More than 5 Years	Less than a Year	1 to 5 Years	More than 5 Years			
	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000			
Assets									
Cash and deposits	-	-	-	-	-	-	970	970	
Receivables	-	-	-	-	-	-	366	336	
Total Financial Assets	-	-	-	-	-	-	1 336	1 336	
Liabilities									
Payables	-	-	-	-	-	-	276	276	
Total Financial Liabilities	-	-	-	-	-	-	276	276	

d) Market Risk

Market risk is the risk that the fair value of future cash flows of a financial instrument will fluctuate because of changes in market prices. It comprises interest rate risk, price risk and currency risk.

e) Interest Rate Risk

The Aboriginal Areas Protection Authority is not exposed to interest rate risk as agency financial assets and financial liabilities are non interest bearing.

f) Price Risk

The Aboriginal Areas Protection Authority is not exposed to price risk as the agency does not hold units in unit trusts.

g) Currency Risk

The Aboriginal Areas Protection Authority is not exposed to currency risk as the agency does not hold borrowings denominated in foreign currencies or transactional currency exposures arising from purchases in a foreign currency.

h) Net Fair Value

The fair value of financial instruments is determined on the following basis:

- the fair value of cash, receivables and payables approximates their carrying amount, which is also their amortised cost;

For financial instruments measured and disclosed at fair value, the following table groups the instruments based on the level of inputs used.

	Total Carrying Amount	Net Fair Value Level 1	Net Fair Value Level 2	Net Fair Value Level 3	Net Fair Value Total
	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000
2015					
Financial Assets					
Cash and deposits	1 017	1 017	-	-	1 017
Receivables	315	315	-	-	315
Total Financial Assets	1 332	1 332	-	-	1 332
Financial Liabilities					
Payables	196	196	-	-	196
Total Financial Liabilities	196	196	-	-	196
2014					
Financial Assets					
Cash and deposits	970	970	-	-	970
Receivables	366	366	-	-	366
Total Financial Assets	1 336	1 336	-	-	1 336
Financial Liabilities					
Payables	276	276	-	-	276
Total Financial Liabilities	276	276	-	-	276

The net fair value of the financial instruments above are based on level 1 method, the carrying amount of these financial instruments recorded in the financial statements approximates their respective net fair values. Where differences exist, these are not material. There were no changes in valuation techniques during the period.

15. Commitments

The Aboriginal Areas Protection Authority did not have any capital expenditure, operating leases or any other future commitments.

16. Contingent Liabilities and Contingent Assets

The Aboriginal Areas Protection Authority had no contingent liabilities or contingent assets as at 30 June 2015 or 30 June 2014.

17. Events Subsequent to Balance Date

No events have arisen between the end of the financial year and the date of this report that require adjustment to, or disclosure in these financial statements.

18. Write-Offs, Postponements, Waivers, Gifts and Ex Gratia Payments

	2015		2014	
	\$000	No. of Trans	\$000	No. of Trans
Write-offs, Postponements and Waivers Authorised Under Other Legislation	19	4	20	5

The Aboriginal Areas Protection Authority did not have any write-offs, postponements, gifts or ex gratia payments in 2014–15 and 2013–14. The above waivers were sought and granted under the *Northern Territory Aboriginal Sacred Sites Act*.

19. Schedule of Administered Territory Items

The following Territory items are managed by the Aboriginal Areas Protection Authority on behalf of the Government and are recorded in the Central Holding Authority (refer Note 2(c)).

	2015	2014
	\$000	\$000
TERRITORY INCOME AND EXPENSES		
Income		
Fees from regulatory services	43	33
Total Income	43	33
Expenses		
Central Holding Authority income transferred	43	33
Total Expenses	43	33
Territory Income less Expenses	0	0

20. Budgetary Information

Comprehensive Operating Statement

	2014–15 Actual	2014–15 Original Budget	Variance	Note
	\$000	\$000	\$000	
INCOME				
Appropriation				
Output	2 681	2 681		
Sales of goods and services	1 844	1 882	(38)	
Goods and services received free of charge	773	680	93	1
Other income	87	-	87	2
TOTAL INCOME	5 385	5 243		
EXPENSES				
Employee expenses	2 876	3 003	(127)	3
Administrative expenses				
Purchases of goods and services	1 244	1 556	(312)	4
Repairs and maintenance	4	4	-	
Depreciation and amortisation	135	-	135	5
Goods and services received free of charge	773	680	93	6
Other administrative expenses	62	-	62	7
TOTAL EXPENSES	5 094	5 243		
NET SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)	291	-		
COMPREHENSIVE RESULT	291	-		

Notes:

The following note descriptions relate to variances greater than 10 per cent or \$50,000.00, or where multiple significant variances have occurred.

1. Unexpected increases in ICT and lease accommodation received free of charge.
2. Predominantly due to reimbursement of costs associated by employing a staff member under the Employ Ability strategy and unexpected increase in revenue received for requests for information and Authority Certificate applications (Territory money raised on behalf of the Central Holding Authority (CHA)).
3. Higher than expected reduction in employee provisions.
4. Increased savings found across a number of expense categories.
5. Depreciation on office fit out not initially recognised.
6. Reversal as per note 1 above.
7. Amount paid to the CHA (see note 2 above) higher than expected and an increase in doubtful debts not expected.

*Budget used is that published by the Department of Treasury and Finance in May 2014 and not the latest approved budget

Balance Sheet

	2014–15 Actual	2014–15 Original Budget	Variance	Note
	\$000	\$000	\$000	
ASSETS				
Current assets				
Cash and deposits	1 017	575	442	1
Receivables	315	192	123	2
Prepayments	4	29	(25)	
Total current assets	1 336	796		
Non-current assets				
Property, plant and equipment	958	2 163	1 204	3
Total non-current assets	958	2 163		
TOTAL ASSETS	2 294	2 959		
LIABILITIES				
Current liabilities				
Payables	196	109	87	4
Provisions	270	423	(153)	5
Other liabilities	-	94	(94)	6
Total current liabilities	466	626		
Non-current liabilities				
Provisions	47	74	(27)	5
Total non-current liabilities	47	74		
TOTAL LIABILITIES	513	700		
NET ASSETS	1 781	2 259		
EQUITY				
Capital	1 621	2 736	(1 115)	
Accumulated funds	160	(477)	638	
TOTAL EQUITY	1 781	2 259		

Notes:

The following note descriptions relate to variances greater than 10 per cent or \$50,000.00, or where multiple significant variances have occurred.

1. The predominant reason for the reduced budget was that there was an expectation to use cash balances for improvements to the IT management information system (ARMS).
2. Receivables were higher than expected by the end of the reporting period.
3. Budgeted error due to roll over of actuals and change in classification of asset.
4. Higher than expected level of accrued expenses at year end.
5. Employee provisions were reduced more than was expected.
6. There was an expectation of higher value of other provisions than actuals at year end.

*Budget used is that published by the Department of Treasury and Finance in May 2014 and not the latest approved budget

Cash Flow Statement

	2014–15 Actual	2014–15 Original Budget	Variance	Note
	\$000	\$000	\$000	
CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES				
Operating receipts				
Appropriation				
Output	2 681	2 681	-	
Receipts from sales of goods and services	2 038	1 882	156	1
Total operating receipts	4 719	4 563	156	
Operating payments				
Payments to employees	(3 017)	(3 003)	(14)	
Payments for goods and services	(1 480)	(1 560)	80	2
Total operating payments	(4 497)	(4 563)	67	
Net cash from/(used in) operating activities	222	-	223	
CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES				
Investing payments				
Purchases of assets	(175)	-	(175)	3
Total investing payments	(175)	-	(175)	
Net cash from/(used in) investing activities	(175)	-	(175)	
Net increase/(decrease) in cash held	47	-	47	
Cash at beginning of financial year	970	575	395	
CASH AT END OF FINANCIAL YEAR	1 017	575	442	

*Budget used is that published by the Department of Treasury and Finance in May 2014 and not the latest approved budget

Notes:

The following note descriptions relate to variances greater than 10 per cent or \$50,000.00, or where multiple significant variances have occurred.

1. Predominantly due to lower value of receivables than expected (Higher level of cash received).
2. Predominantly due to increased level of payables expected at year end.
3. Cash payments towards Work in progress of IT enhancement project (Asset to be capitalised at a later date).

Administered Territory Items

	2014–15 Actual	2014–15 Original Budget	Variance	Note
	\$000	\$000	\$000	
TERRITORY INCOME AND EXPENSES				
Income				
Fees from regulatory services	43	26	17	1
Total income	43	26	17	
Expenses				
Central Holding Authority income transferred	43	26	(17)	2
Total expenses	43	26	(17)	
Territory income less expenses	-	-	-	

*Budget used is that published by the Department of Treasury and Finance in May 2014 and not the latest approved budget

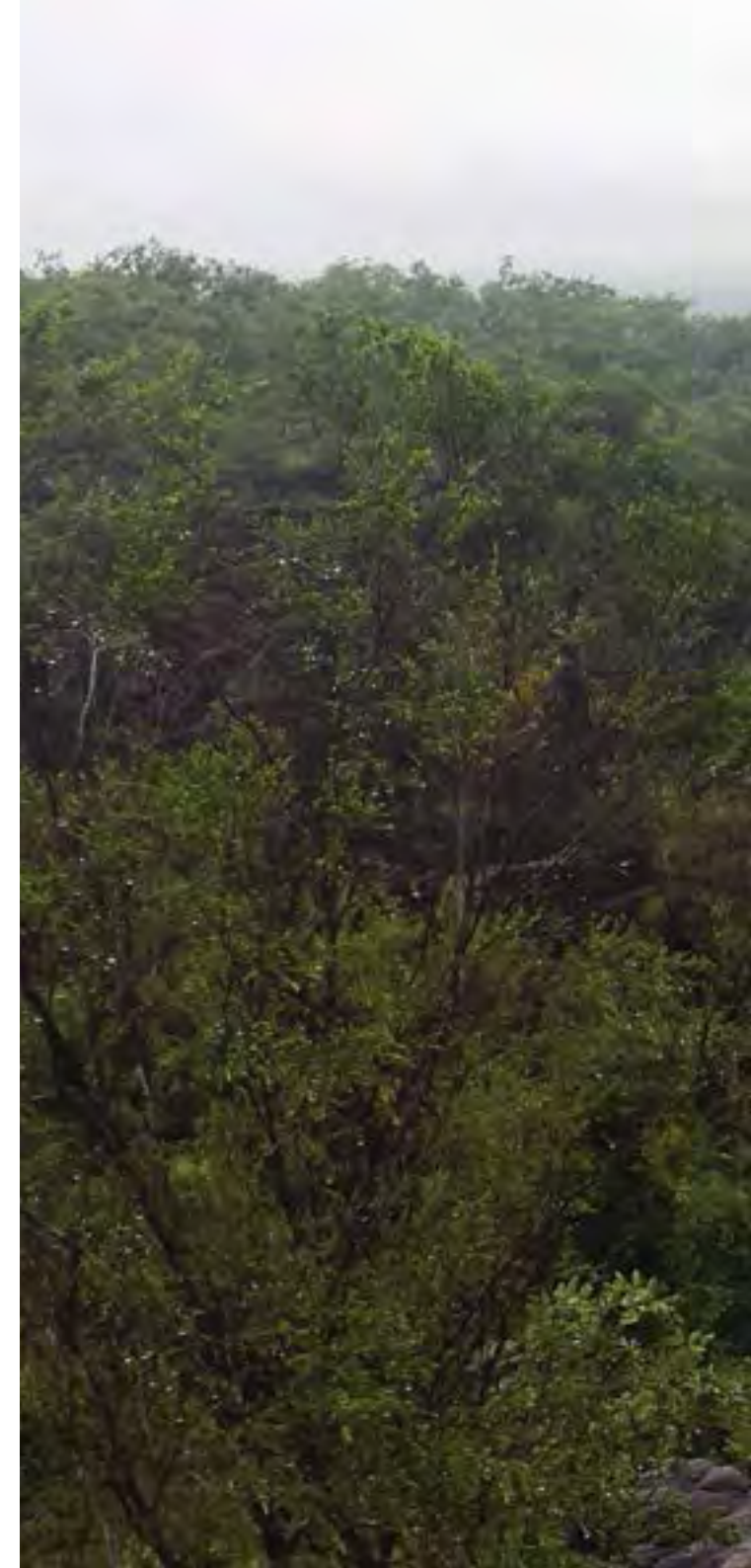
Notes:

The following note descriptions relate to variances greater than 10 per cent or \$10,000, or where multiple significant variances have occurred.

1. Higher volume in requests for information and applications for Authority certificates than was expected.
2. As per 1 above (corresponding value of funds transferred to the Central Holding Authority).



1. Introduction
2. Our Organisation
3. Initiatives and Projects 2014–2015
4. Performance Report 2014–2015
5. Governance
6. Human Resources
7. Financial Report
- 8. Insurance Report**





Future custodians near Tolmer Falls, Litchfield National Park

Insurance Report

Under the Treasurer's Direction M2.1 Insurance Arrangements, agencies are required to detail the mitigation strategies and processes they have in place to reduce the likelihood or severity of their insurable risks.

The Authority is excluded from self-insurance provisions. Accordingly, the Authority purchases commercial insurance for protection against potential liabilities under the categories of workers' compensation, motor vehicles, property and assets, public liability and indemnities.

The Authority has a number of mitigation strategies, processes and training in place to reduce the likelihood or severity of its insurable risk. Some of these strategies include:

Insurable risk category	Mitigation strategies
Public Liability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Programmed repairs and maintenance on fire and security systems. Signage for direction of public. Ochre cards for research staff.
Workers compensation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Induction training for all new staff. Work- life balance strategies. Flexible working arrangements. Employee Assistance Program available to all staff. First aid training. Remote areas first aid training for research staff. Research 4wd vehicles optioned for remote travel including satellite tracking devices.
Assets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Asset registers maintained for all fixed and attractive and portable items. Vehicles regularly serviced and maintained. Remote.
Indemnities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Risk assessments completed for all new arrangements.

There have been no workers compensation or combined (Public liability/Business) insurance claims in the last three financial years. The table below outlines premiums and value of claims.

Motor Vehicles

Year	Premium	Value of claims	Number of vehicles	Average cost of claims
2012–13	\$10,580	\$871	9	\$436
2013–14	\$18,374	\$3,841	9	\$640
2014–15	\$13,201	\$58,831	8	\$7,354

Workers Compensation

Year	Premium	Value of claims	Number of vehicles	Average cost of claims
2012–13	\$34,727	0	0	0
2013–14	\$39,252	0	0	0
2014–15	\$43,450	0	0	0

Combined

Year	Premium	Value of claims	Number of vehicles	Average cost of claims
2012–13	\$4,235	0	0	0
2013–14	\$3,140	0	0	0
2014–15	\$3,474	0	0	0

