

ANNUAL REPORT

2017–18



**Aboriginal Areas
Protection Authority**
protecting sacred sites across the territory

DISCLAIMER

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ABORIGINAL AREAS PROTECTION AUTHORITY

GPO Box 1890
Darwin NT 0801
www.aapant.org.au

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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

Internet:
www.aapant.org.au

Email:
enquiries.aapa@nt.gov.au

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	4	INITIATIVES AND PROJECTS	30
Purpose of the annual report	4	Notable authority certificates	32
Target audience	5	Community outreach	32
Chairman's report	6	Special projects	33
Chief Executive Officer's report	7		
Deputy Chairman's report	8	PERFORMANCE REPORT	34
		Protection of sacred sites and performance	36
OUR ORGANISATION	10	Authority certificates	38
Mission statement	12	Requests for information	46
Values	12	Register of Sacred Sites	49
Strategic Plan and Business Plan (2017–2021)	13	Damage to Sacred Sites	49
Role and function	15		
Our history	15	OUR PEOPLE	50
Our services	16	2017–18 Snapshot	52
Our stakeholders	16	Workforce profile	53
Highlights in 2017–18	17	Developing our workplace capacity and capability	57
		Wellbeing and support programs	58
GOVERNANCE	18	Workplace health and safety	59
Authority board	18	Staffing milestones	59
Authority operations	24	Remembering Shawn Smith	60
Organisational chart	25		
Legislation and policy	26	SUSTAINABILITY	62
Executive Management Group	27		
Committees	27	FINANCIAL REPORT	64

The Hon. Eva Lawler MLA
Minister for Environment and Natural Resources
DARWIN NT 0800

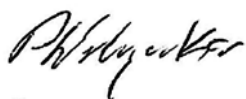
30 September 2018

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 2017 to 30 June 2018.

The report refers to the twenty-ninth year of operation of the Aboriginal Areas Protection Authority.

Yours sincerely



PHILIP WILYUKA
Chairman

The Hon. Eva Lawler MLA
Minister for Environment and Natural Resources
DARWIN NT 0800

30 September 2018

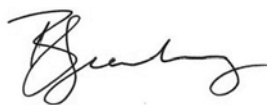
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The report refers to the twenty-ninth year of operation of the Aboriginal Areas Protection Authority. To the best of my knowledge and belief as Accountable Officer, pursuant to section 13 of the *Financial Management Act*, the system of internal control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

- a) proper records of all transactions affecting the agency are kept and employees under my control observe the provisions of the *Financial Management Act*, the Financial Management Regulations and Treasurer's Directions
- b) procedures within the agency afford proper internal control, and a current description of such 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 agency is adequate, and the results of internal audits have been reported to me
- e) the financial statements included in the annual report have been prepared from proper accounts and records and are in accordance with Treasurer's Directions
- f) the agency is working in compliance with the *Information Act*.

Yours sincerely



DR BENEDICT SCAMBARY
Chief Executive Officer

INTRODUCTION

4	Purpose of the annual report
5	Target audience
6	Chairman's report
7	Chief Executive Officer's report
8	Deputy Chairman's report

PURPOSE OF THE ANNUAL REPORT

This is an annual report on the administration and operation of the Aboriginal Areas Protection Authority (the Authority) for the 2017–18 financial year.

It includes the Authority's financial statements and shows compliance with standards of internal control in accordance with the reporting requirements of the *Financial Management Act*, the Treasurer's Directions and the policies of the Northern Territory Government.

The annual report also provides the Northern Territory Legislative Assembly and the public with an account of the Authority's performance, responsibilities, activities and business direction for the year ahead.



TARGET AUDIENCE

This annual report is for our diverse range of stakeholders: the Northern Territory Legislative Assembly, government agencies, Aboriginal custodians, the Northern Territory public and land users across the Territory.

Custodian at Buntine Highway



Philip Wilyuka

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The Aboriginal Areas Protection Authority brings together two laws—Aboriginal law and law passed by Parliament—to help protect Aboriginal sacred sites.

The Authority has existed since the late 1970s, initially through the *Aboriginal Sacred Sites Act (NT) 1978* and later through the *Northern Territory Aboriginal Sacred Sites Act 1989*. In all that time, the Authority has balanced the cultural interests of Aboriginal custodians with the development interests of the Northern Territory.

We work directly with Aboriginal custodians to maintain the integrity of sacred sites in the Northern Territory. Over the years, those custodians have generously shared important information with us about sacred sites and custodianship across the Northern Territory.

We draw on this valuable body of cultural knowledge to protect sacred sites and provide advice and certainty to people who wish to carry out work on the land.

The Authority is increasingly receiving requests from descendants of people who have been consulted about sacred sites in the past. Next year, the Board and I hope to be able to work actively with communities to share, where possible and appropriate, the cultural knowledge we have collected over the years. We see this as an important way to support communities in teaching young people about sacred sites and their culture.

“ In 2017–18, the board continued its work in engaging and building good relationships with custodians and organisations to raise awareness of the Authority's role and the importance of sacred sites. ”

It has been a privilege once again to chair and lead the Authority board. This year we welcomed Mr Andrew Cowan, who brings a wealth of experience and knowledge in government administration, and Dagoman custodian Ms Elaine Watts, who brings her traditional knowledge and extensive experience working with women rangers.

In 2017–18, the board continued its work in engaging and building good relationships with custodians and organisations to raise awareness of the Authority's role and the importance of sacred sites. During the year, the Board met with the Minister for Environment and Natural Resources, the Heavitree Gap Planning Committee, Ms Jo Best from Troppo Architects and Mr Keith Saalfield, Director of the Aboriginal Grants Program.

Sadly, a number of custodians who have worked closely with the Authority passed away during the year. On behalf of staff and the board, I would like to acknowledge these custodians for their important contribution to the protection of sacred sites.

The board and staff are also greatly saddened by the passing of our friend and colleague Mr Shawn Smith. Shawn was the Authority's Senior Land Information Officer for eight years and was greatly respected for his professionalism, generosity and kindness. He is deeply missed.

I thank the Chief Executive Officer and the staff of the Authority for their commitment and hard work during the year.

PHILIP WILYUKA
Chairman

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT

2018 marks 40 years of sacred site protection and 40 years of self-government in the Northern Territory.

After the Northern Territory was granted self-government on 1 July 1978, one of the first pieces of legislation to be passed by the Northern Territory Government was the *Aboriginal Sacred Sites Act (NT) 1978*, (the predecessor to today's *Northern Territory Aboriginal Sacred Sites Act*).

In 2017–18, the Authority held a staff workshop for all employees in both regional offices. The workshop agenda involved developing the five-year Aboriginal Areas Protection Authority Strategic Plan and Business Plan (2017–21). The plan highlights the Authority's values in relation to the values of custodians and clients, and it describes our work achieving a practical balance between the continued protection of sacred sites and our critical role in supporting the Territory's economic development.

During the financial year, the Authority received 165 authority certificate applications and issued 107 authority certificates. We issued certificates for major projects including continued upgrades of the Arnhem Highway, major road upgrades to the Buntine and Tablelands highways, and the Tanami gas pipeline.

We also issued certificates for important community infrastructure projects such as the construction of a health clinic at Ampilatwatja, township development work at Mutitjulu, a new solar facility at Batchelor and upgrades and construction in Alice Springs for the Motor Vehicle Registry and hospital.

To support government and private sector tourism projects, the Authority also issued a number of certificates that protected multiple sacred sites while allowing for works to improve the visitor experience. These projects included ongoing work at Howard Springs Nature Park, upgrade and maintenance work for the four-wheel-drive tracks at Nitmiluk National Park, the Alice Springs Telegraph Station and tourist access to the Henbury Meteorites Conservation Reserve.

A highlight for the Authority in 2017–18 was issuing an authority certificate to Project Sea Dragon in September 2017. The issuing of this certificate helped provide certainty for the \$2 billion project, which will lead to significant economic benefits for the Territory. The certificate also gives certainty for custodians around the protection of sacred sites, which the authority comprehensively assessed before negotiating an Indigenous Land Use Agreement between the proponent and custodians. This innovative approach saw a memorandum of understanding developed between the authority, the Northern Land Council and the proponent, which will inform how future major projects are conducted in the Northern Territory.

Another highlight for 2017–18 was the official launch of AAPA Online, a web-based system that allows custodians and stakeholders to access our services quickly and easily. Developing and launching the project was a huge undertaking for the Authority and represents just one of the ways we are embracing digital technologies to meet our stakeholders' needs. We hope to redevelop our sacred sites database in future.



Dr Benedict Scamبارy

Looking ahead, our focus in 2018–19 will be on progressing the recommendations of the 2016 review of the *Northern Territory Aboriginal Sacred Sites Act* in conjunction with the NT Government.

I would like to thank the board and the staff of the Authority for their hard work and dedication. For a small organisation, we have achieved so much over the last 12 months.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge the passing of a number of custodians who have worked closely with the Authority sharing their knowledge of sacred sites and allowing us to record this information for future generations. They will be sadly missed.

DR BENEDICT SCAMBARY
Chief Executive Officer



Valerie Martin

DEPUTY CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

My appointment as Deputy Chair to the Authority board during a milestone year marking 40 years of site protection is an honour and a privilege. I am committed to ensuring that the board's legacy is preserved and all the hard work of my predecessors is continued into the future.

The Authority board proudly registered 33 sacred sites throughout the Northern Territory in 2017–18 after being presented with site history, stories, cultural significance and information on family groups. This is an increase from the 26 registered in 2016–17.

We registered nine of those sacred sites in the Kakadu region in June 2018 after a presentation by the country's traditional owner, Mr Jeffrey Lee. The sacred sites were recorded after a joint project with the Aboriginal Areas Protection Authority and Parks Australia. This registration meeting was momentous for all and a significant milestone for Mr Lee being the sole custodian of these sites.

Registering sacred sites is an important function of the Authority's board. It highlights our role in recording knowledge for future generations and helping current custodians protect their sacred sites.

I, along with the other members of the board, look forward to continually strengthening relationships, protecting and registering more sites, and helping our culture stay strong.

VALERIE MARTIN

Deputy Chair

“ Registering sacred sites is an important function of the Authority's board. ”



Robinson River crossing

OUR ORGANISATION

12	Mission statement
12	Values
13	Strategic Plan and Business Plan (2017–2021)
15	Role and function
15	Our history
16	Our services
16	Our stakeholders
17	Highlights in 2017–18



Custodian at Maningrida

MISSION STATEMENT

To protect sacred sites in the Northern Territory.

VALUES

CUSTODIAN
VALUES

AUTHORITY
GUIDING
VALUES

CLIENT
VALUES

Two laws

Northern
Territory
Aboriginal
Sacred Sites Act

Traditional law

Independence

Legal certainty

Knowledge

Integrity

Advice

Birds flying over Katherine Borefields



Aboriginal Areas Protection Authority

protecting sacred sites across the territory

STRATEGIC PLAN

CUSTODIAN VALUES

- Traditional Law
- Knowledge

AUTHORITY GUIDING VALUES

- Two Laws
- Northern Territory Aboriginal Sacred Sites Act
- Independence
- Integrity

CLIENT VALUES

- Legal Certainty
- Advice

Strategies to Protect Sacred Sites in the NT

1. Promote the Value of Sacred Sites in the Northern Territory
2. Adopt a Risk Management Approach to Corporate Governance
3. Advance High Quality Research and Land Information
4. Advance Technology and Information Management
5. Ensure Compliance with the *Northern Territory Aboriginal Sacred Sites Act*
6. Staff Committed to the Values of a High Performing Organisation
7. Streamlined Financial Management Systems

MISSION STATEMENT:

To protect Sacred Sites in the Northern Territory



Aboriginal Areas Protection Authority

protecting sacred sites across the territory

BUSINESS PLAN 2021

PRIORITIES	PROJECTS	SECTION
1.1 Amend the <i>Northern Territory Aboriginal Sacred Sites Act</i>	1.1.1 Develop and progress a package of legislative amendments	Policy and Governance
1.2 Progress inter-agency collaborations for Sacred Site messaging	1.2.1 Develop a communications strategy	
2.1 Develop a risk management framework	2.1.1 Risk Framework 2.1.2 Audit Plan	Policy and Governance
3.1 Explore research advancement using new technologies	3.1.1 Develop an enhanced database for Research	Research and Land Information
3.2 Utilise new technologies for information management and access	3.2.1 Develop innovative multi-media solutions for site recording and reporting 3.2.2 Explore new client products	
3.3 Uphold professional and quality control standards in research and land information	3.2.3 Ranger Group collaboration in Site Registration and protection 3.2.4 Digitise the Research and Land Information Induction Manual 3.3.1 Data Integrity Project	
4.1 Coordinate and deliver a digital workplace strategy	4.1.1 Conduct business process reviews 4.1.2 Information and date review 4.1.3 Enhance digital Communication 4.1.4 Improve website communication	Corporate Services
5.1 Improve compliance management	5.1.1 Develop an improved compliance management process	Chief Executive Officer Compliance
6.1 Leadership aligned with Values	6.1.1 Build the capabilities of Authority staff	Corporate Services
7.1 Develop a new revenue strategy	7.1.1 Provide financial information to increase revenue and control costs	Corporate Services

MISSION STATEMENT:

To protect Sacred Sites in the Northern Territory

ROLE AND FUNCTION

The Aboriginal Areas Protection Authority is a statutory authority that was established under the *Northern Territory Aboriginal Sacred Sites Act 1989* (Sacred Sites Act) to administer sacred site protection in the Northern Territory.

The Authority's functions are set out in Section 10 of the *Sacred Sites Act*. The Northern Territory Government and the broader Territory community recognises protecting Aboriginal sacred sites as an important element in preserving the Territory's cultural heritage for the benefit of all Territorians. We seek to strike a balance between the protection of sacred sites and development in the Northern Territory.

OUR HISTORY

The Authority has existed in one form or another for the past 40 years. Our history is entwined with that of the *Aboriginal Land Rights (NT) Act 1976*—the legislation that gives the Northern Territory the power to pass laws for the protection of sacred sites. That Act also gave rise to the *Northern Territory Aboriginal Sacred Sites Act 1989*.

That Act's predecessor, the *Aboriginal Sacred Sites Act (NT) 1978*, was one of the first pieces of legislation the Northern Territory Government passed after self-government was granted in 1978. The new law was significant in its recognition of Aboriginal culture by empowering Aboriginal people to protect their sites of cultural significance and allowing their sites to be recorded, registered and protected in the context of development.



Custodians at Plenty Highway

Under the new law, it became an offence to enter, remain on, carry out works on or desecrate sacred sites anywhere in the Northern Territory. Other parts of today's legal protection were also established at that point, including a board largely made up of Aboriginal custodians who are nominated by land councils, and a clear definition of what a sacred site is.

The early years brought some controversy between the Authority, the government and developers. The notion of sacred sites and their meaning and importance to Aboriginal people were poorly understood by the wider community. However, under the strong leadership of senior Aboriginal Chairmen, including Mr Raphael Aputimi OAM and Mr Wenten Rubuntja AM, the Authority worked hard to bridge this gap by engaging with government and developers to negotiate workable solutions.

Throughout the 1980s, there were numerous proposals to amend the *Aboriginal Sacred Sites Act (NT) 1978*. In 1988 due to concerns around the Act, the Northern Territory Government introduced the Aboriginal Areas Protection Bill (NT) in an attempt to strike a more effective balance between protecting sacred sites and the development of the Territory.

The government continued negotiations with the Authority and land councils over amendments to the sacred sites legislation, which led to the current *Northern Territory Aboriginal Sacred Sites Act 1989* and the establishment of the current Aboriginal Areas Protection Authority.

Since 1989, the *Northern Territory Aboriginal Sacred Sites Act* has established a framework for sacred site protection based on voluntary engagement. While authority certificates aren't mandatory, they give developers, businesses and individuals certainty about where sacred sites are and what can and can't be done around them.

The current *Sacred Sites Act* has only had minor changes since it was introduced. In late 2015, the Northern Territory Government announced an independent review of the Act. The Sacred Sites Processes and Outcomes Review was published in July 2016 and contained 39 recommendations for changes to improve the legislative framework and the day-to-day operations of the Authority.

In conjunction with the government, we are working on progressing the recommendations from the review.



Custodians at Anningie outstation camp

OUR SERVICES

The Authority manages the protection of Aboriginal sacred sites through:

- sacred site avoidance surveys and issuing authority certificates for any development proposals
- giving the public information about existing sacred sites through abstracts of Authority records and access to the registers we maintain
- registering 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.

We issue these certificates based on consultations with custodians, and the certificates include clear instructions on what can and can't 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 authority certificate as long as the applicant complies with any conditions imposed to protect sacred sites.

While authority certificates are voluntary, they are an effective risk management tool for developers because they indicate where sacred sites are and how to work in and around them, minimising risk of damage to the site, which can lead to project delays and extra cost.

REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION

Members of the public can seek advice on registered sacred sites by requesting access to the Register of Sacred Sites.

We provide **abstracts of records** on where sacred sites are known to exist so they are not inadvertently damaged.

These abstracts give information on the sites that are likely to be at risk if works are carried out without seeking more detailed information first. We might advise that works should not be carried out on these sacred sites without an authority certificate and that any development proposals take into account the site's existence.

THE REGISTRATION OF ABORIGINAL SACRED SITES

Custodians of Aboriginal sacred sites may apply to have their sites **registered** under Part III, Division 2 of the *Sacred Sites Act*.

We will then conduct research into the site to determine the location, boundaries and significance of the site. In accordance with the Act, we then present a report of that information to the board for registration approval. Landowners are also given an opportunity to comment on the proposed registration.

OUR STAKEHOLDERS

The Authority serves a diverse range of stakeholders:

- Northern Territory and Australian Government agencies
- Aboriginal custodians and traditional owners
- industry groups (including the oil, gas and mining, and pastoral industries)
- the Defence Force
- land councils
- local governments and shires
- communication network companies
- food producers
- tourism operators
- environmental managers (including Indigenous rangers)
- home owners
- real estate agents
- private and non-government organisations who use land across the Territory.

The Authority strives to meet the needs of all stakeholders in protecting sacred sites.

HIGHLIGHTS IN 2017–18

Organisation highlights

- developed new strategic and business plan 2017–21
- launched AAPA Online, increasing efficiency for stakeholders

Authority certificate highlights

- issued an authority certificate for Project Sea Dragon which used an innovative methodology for sacred site protection in the context of major projects
- issued the Tanami Gas Pipeline authority certificate
- issued the Buntine, Kintore and Tablelands highways authority certificates in support of the development of the NT road network.

Sacred site protection highlights

- 40 years of sacred site protection in the NT
- 33 sacred sites registered.

Performance highlights

- 107 authority certificates issued for projects across the Territory, including infrastructure, roadworks, mining and exploration, and tourism
- 65% of authority certificates were issued within three months
- 789 requests for information from the Authority's records were completed.

Staffing highlights

- in 2017, Barry Renshaw, the Sacred Site Project Officer, was recognised for his milestone achievement of 35 years in the NT Government with the Aboriginal Areas Protection Authority
- Yvonne Forrest, the Authority's librarian, celebrated 35 years with the Authority
- Dr Ben Scambary achieved 10 years as the Authority's CEO
- Peter Madden achieved 10 years as an Alice Springs Research Officer.

Savannah Way landscape

18	Authority board
24	Authority operations
25	Organisational chart
26	Legislation and policy
27	Executive Management Group
27	Committees

AUTHORITY BOARD

The Aboriginal Areas Protection Authority Board comprises 12 members.

Ten of those members are custodians nominated by Northern Territory land councils in equal numbers: five males and five females. The other two members are nominated by the NT Minister for Environment and Natural Resources.

To fill vacancies for Aboriginal custodian members of the board, 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*.

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



Howard Springs landscape



Katherine Borefields

AUTHORITY BOARD MEETINGS

Under the *Sacred Sites Act*, the Authority meets four times each calendar year.

In 2017–18, the Chairman called the following meetings:

114 th board meeting	13–14 September 2017	Darwin
115 th board meeting	22–23 November 2017	Darwin
116 th board meeting	14–15 March 2018	Alice Springs
117 th board meeting	27–28 June 2018	Darwin

APPOINTMENTS

The term of two member appointments commenced in 2017–18:

Mr Andrew Cowan
Ms Elaine Watts

The term of one member appointment expired in 2017–18:

Ms Lynette Granites

ABORIGINAL AREAS PROTECTION AUTHORITY BOARD



MR PHILIP WILYUKA – CHAIRPERSON

Region:
Eastern Arnernte South

Date appointed:
14 December 2015

Mr Wilyuka is a Pitjantjatjara /Yankunytjatjara man from the community of Titjikala. Mr Wilyuka works as a Lutheran pastor at Titjikala and has been involved with the Central Land Council (CLC) for many years. In 2012–13, he served as Chair of the CLC and has also been a CLC member for the Alice Springs region. In April 2016, Mr Wilyuka was elected by the CLC for the Aboriginal Benefit Account (ABA) Advisory Committee. On 20 September 2016, Mr Wilyuka was nominated as the Chairperson for the Board of the Authority.



MS VALERIE MARTIN – DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON

Region:
Yuendumu Hinterland

Date appointed:
2 August 2016

Ms Martin is a Warlpiri woman from Yuendumu. Ms Martin is a member of the board of the Warlpiri Youth Development Aboriginal Corporation and is also a member of the Central Land Council's Aboriginal Benefit Account Advisory Committee. On 20 September 2016, Ms Martin was elected as Deputy Chairperson for the Board of the Authority.



MS JENNY INMULUGULU

Region:
Arnhem Land West

First appointed in: 2006

Date reappointed:
29 September 2015

Ms Inmulugulu is a traditional owner of Warruwi Community on South Goulburn Island. She has been a member of the Aboriginal Areas Protection Authority since 2006 and served as Deputy Chair on the board from 2008 to 2012. Ms Inmulugulu is a member of the Northern Land Council. As a senior woman for her clan, she is a strong advocate for her community, with a focus on youth engagement and business enterprises.



MS LEAH CLIFFORD

Region:
Darwin

Date appointed:
1 August 2015

Ms Clifford is the Deputy Chief Executive at the Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Logistics. Ms Clifford has previously held senior positions within the NT Government including in the Department of Lands, Planning and the Environment and the Department of Housing. She brings specialist professional skills in the area of land policy and administration to the Authority board membership.



MS VERONICA LYNCH

Region:
Alice Springs Hinterland

Date appointed:
14 December 2015

Ms Lynch is from Black Tank Community Outstation and was a founding member of the Indigenous tourism venture Black Tank Tour Experiences, which gives guests insight into local Arrernte culture. She has also been involved with the Central Land Council for a number of years and was a member of the CLC representing Ingkerreke Outstation from 2013 to 2016. During this period, she also held a position on the Aboriginals Benefit Account (ABA) Advisory Committee and provided advice to the Minister for Indigenous Affairs on ABA grant applications.



MR WALTER KERINAUIA JUNIOR

Region:
Tiwi Islands

Date appointed:
31 August 2015

Mr Kerinauia Junior is one of the senior 'culture men' on the Tiwi Islands. He is a past member of the Tiwi Islands Regional Council/Tiwi Islands Land Council. He has been the long-time Trustee of the Mantiyupwi land-owning group, which takes in southern parts of both Bathurst and Melville islands. He is also a past Director of Mantiyupwi Pty Ltd.



MS LYNETTE GRANITES

Region:
Yuendumu Hinterland

First appointed in: 2005

Date reappointed:
14 April 2015

Ms Granites is a highly respected senior Warlpiri woman from Yuendumu. She has been a member of the Aboriginal Areas Protection Authority Board since 2005. Ms Granites is well known for her knowledge in women's law and culture and has worked closely with the authority on many sacred site registrations and authority certificate consultations. She has worked as a health worker for many years and is a renowned artist in her community.



MR JACK GREEN

Region:
Borrooloola and Gulf

Date appointed:
29 September 2015

Mr Green is from Borrooloola. He is a Senior Cultural Advisor to the Garawa and Waanyi/Garawa ranger programs in the Gulf region of the Northern Territory. He is a member of the Borrooloola Aboriginal Peoples and has contributed significantly to Aboriginal community-based development programs in remote regions of Australia. Mr Green is a strong supporter of the maintenance of Aboriginal connection to the land.



MR PHILLIP MAMARIKA

Region:
Arnhem Land East

Date appointed:
31 August 2015

Mr Mamarika is a respected elder of the Mamarika clan of Umbakumba on Groote Eylandt. He works as a Senior Ranger with the Anindilyakwa Land and Sea Rangers, providing on-the-ground leadership and mentoring to 10 staff concerning traditional land and sea country. Mr Mamarika represents the Anindilyakwa Land and Sea Rangers at the Anindilyakwa Indigenous Protected Area Advisory Committee and the Learning on Country Steering Committee. His role also extends to general community liaison, and he is a strong conduit between the land and sea rangers and the Anindilyakwa Land Council head office.



MR BOBBY NUNGGUMAJBARR

Region:
South-East Arnhem Land

Date appointed:
29 September 2015

Mr Nunggumajbarr is a senior Nunggubuyu man from Numbulwar in south-east Arnhem Land. He has had a long and distinguished career in public administration in the region as Town Clerk of Angurugu on Groote Eylandt. He has held various positions on the Yugul Mangi Community Government Council in Ngukurr and more recently the Roper Gulf Shire. Mr Nunggumajbarr is widely respected for his knowledge and authority across south-east and central Arnhem Land. Mr Nunggumajbarr had also been the Senior Project Officer in charge of the Northern Land Council's Ngukurr office for 15 years and more recently as a Director for Arnhem Frontier and Civil Construction.



MR ANDREW COWAN

Region:
Darwin

Date appointed:
5 July 2017

Mr Cowan is the Deputy Chief Executive of the Department of the Chief Minister and has previously held various senior positions within the NT Government. Mr Cowan is in charge of the NT Government's Indigenous Development Strategy and has a strong understanding of the NT Government's Aboriginal affairs and development priorities.



MS ELAINE WATTS

Region:
Katherine Hinterland

Date appointed:
23 May 2018

Ms Watts is a traditional owner from the Katherine region and a long-serving member of the Northern Land Council (NLC), standing as a full council member from 2013 to 2016. Ms Watts has extensive knowledge of land and management practices, having worked in various Aboriginal land and sea management positions, which include the Sea Ranger NLC Facilitator and Timber Creek Ranger Group facilitator. Ms Watts has also served as the Timber Creek/Victoria River representative on the Katherine Regional Advisory Committee, where she helped look after sacred sites and improved management of the country by increasing skills and work opportunities through training and work experience.



Mindil Beach

AUTHORITY OPERATIONS

PRINCIPLES OF GOVERNANCE

The authority's governance framework aims to ensure the authority carries out its functions effectively, efficiently and in line 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
- 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 *Sacred Sites 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 Authority staff 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 some of these 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*.

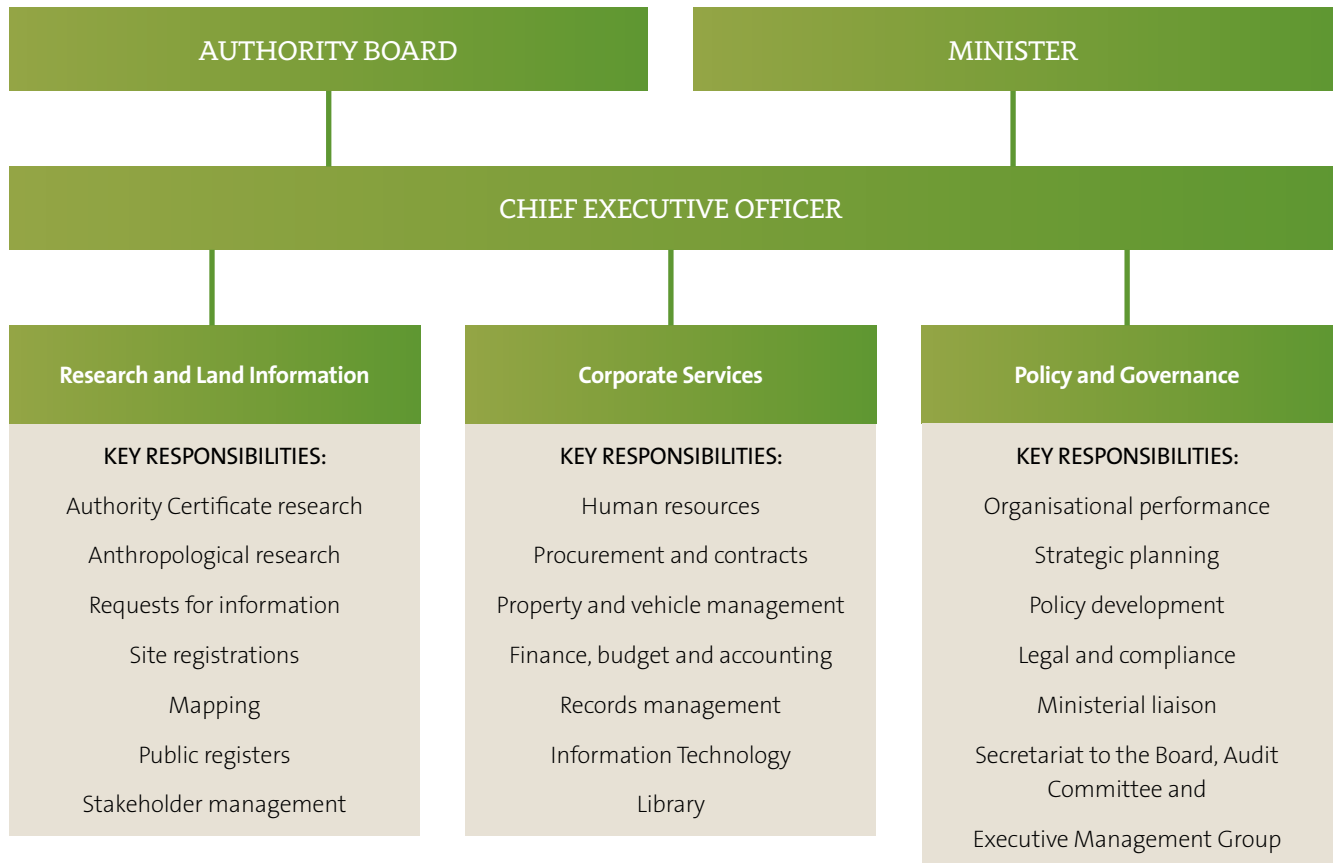
HOW THE AUTHORITY IS MANAGED

The CEO maintains overall responsibility for the Authority's day-to-day operation.

To ensure the smooth functioning of the office, the CEO chairs weekly Executive Management Group meetings and fortnightly staff meetings. Each operational group also meets regularly to ensure an effective flow of information.

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

ORGANISATIONAL CHART





Cattle on the Tablelands Highway

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 (NT) 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 authorising 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.

Occasionally, custodians, landowners and developers will have divergent interests in land, but there is usually 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, which preserves and enhances Aboriginal tradition in a changing social, economic and cultural environment.

Landowners and developers have 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 2011* states that the Authority must have a representative on the Heritage Advisory Council.

EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT GROUP (EMG)

The Authority's Executive Management Group comprises senior managers from the organisation's operational areas and is chaired by the CEO.

The purpose of the Executive Management Group is to provide the CEO with advice and support about a range of strategic and operational matters. The group's key functions include monitoring the organisation's performance, setting the Authority's strategic direction and priorities, implementing the strategic plan and addressing critical issues facing the organisation.

The EMG members are:

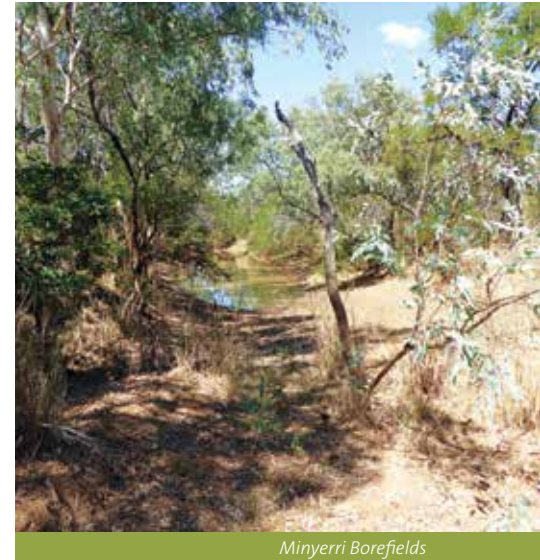
- Dr Ben Scambray, Chief Executive Officer
- Mr Alan Buckingham, Director, Corporate Services
- Mr Che Walsh, Director, Policy and Governance
- Dr Sophie Creighton, Director, Research and Land Information.

COMMITTEES

RISK MANAGEMENT AND RISK AUDIT COMMITTEE

In accordance with section 13(2) of the *Financial Management Act*, the CEO must ensure appropriate internal control procedures are in place. As such, the Authority Risk Management and Audit Committee exists to provide advice to the CEO on matters associated with risk management, internal controls, reviews and audits within the Authority. These matters may include:

- endorse and monitor the Risk Management Plan (RMP) for the Authority
- review and maintain the Authority's risk register
- monitor external audit program outcomes and the implementation of audit recommendations
- monitor the development of review programs and internal audit
- review progress and findings of process reviews and monitor the implementation of findings
- consider the adequacy of the internal control environment, including the effectiveness of internal controls on key risks, such as fraud, information and communications technology (ICT) governance and systems for ensuring compliance with legal and regulatory requirements
- consider financial reports of the Authority, particularly the narrative summaries and statements included in the annual report, with respect to risk management and internal controls
- within the context of the committee's primary purpose, undertake other functions and



Minyerri Borefields

activities as determined from time to time by the CEO

- undertake internal audits.

The committee is made up of an independent chair from the Northern Territory Public Service and senior Authority staff.

During 2016–17, an external review was done for the Authority's Audit and Risk framework. The recommended changes to the process will be implemented in 2018–19.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY GROUP (RMG)

The purpose of this committee is to consider complex issues on matters affecting sacred sites and, where appropriate, develop and update policies and procedures or provide advice to EMG.

The committee is made up of members from the Sacred Site Research and Information Unit and Compliance and is chaired by the Director, Sacred Site Research and Information Unit.

All policies and procedures the committee develops are presented to EMG for approval and publishing.



Flight view of Bullo River

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE (ICT)

The role of this committee is to oversee the Authority's information management and information and communications technology practices to ensure our priorities are met. The committee's responsibilities include:

- review of business cases and project plans for ICT initiatives and investment decisions in preparation for submission to EMG for review and approval
- oversight of the delivery of ICT initiatives and performance review of project delivery
- software upgrades and management of impact to Authority users
- reporting any virus attacks or network intrusions
- oversight of internet usage, ICT charges and billing.

LIBRARIES COMMITTEE

The purpose of this committee is to maintain a collection of materials that are relevant to protecting the cultural heritage of the Aboriginal people of the Northern Territory and for the benefit of all Territorians.

The committee looks for ways to make the library collection more relevant and easily accessible to Authority staff and our stakeholders.



Litchfield landscape

INITIATIVES AND PROJECTS

32 Notable authority certificates

32 Community outreach

33 Special projects

Through its administration of the Act, the Authority is involved in the planning stages of most major projects in the Northern Territory. Our aim is to balance the interests of custodians, landowners and developers.

In the past 12 months, the Authority has worked with proponents of major developments in the Northern Territory to achieve significant outcomes in sacred site protection.



Custodian at Buntine Highway

NOTABLE AUTHORITY CERTIFICATES

TOURISM AND VISITOR EXPERIENCE PROJECTS

Supported government and private sector tourism projects by issuing authority certificates that protected multiple sacred sites while allowing for works to improve visitor experience for locals and tourists, including:

- ongoing work at Howard Springs Nature Park
- upgrade and maintenance works for the four-wheel-drive tracks in Nitmiluk National Park
- upgrades to the Alice Springs Telegraph Station
- construction of a sporting complex in Alice Springs
- construction and maintenance of a mountain bike track in Alice Springs.

AQUACULTURE

The Authority issued two authority certificates for the large-scale aquaculture project being developed in northern Australia. These certificates provide certainty for this \$2 billion dollar project, which will lead to significant economic benefits to the Territory in future.

INFRASTRUCTURE

The Authority supported the Northern Territory and Australian governments' infrastructure and investment priorities by issuing certificates for infrastructure projects and major roadworks including:

- township planning and development work at Arlparra
- development of a solar facility at Batchelor
- Larrakeyah Barracks redevelopment project
- construction and upgrades at the Alice Springs Hospital
- major road upgrades, repairs and maintenance of Kintore/Kiwirrkurra Road
- major upgrades, repairs and maintenance of the Tablelands Highway.

MINING AND EXPLORATION

The Authority issued numerous authority certificates to provide certainty around the location and extent of sacred sites for mineral exploration, geological mapping and survey work throughout the Territory. We also provided instructions for the sites' protection.

One major example of this is the certificate issued for the Tanami Gas Pipeline.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

FORUM WITH THE NORTHERN TERRITORY CATTLEMEN'S ASSOCIATION

In June 2018, Dr Sophie Creighton, Director of Research and Land Information, presented to Darwin, Katherine, Tennant Creek and Alice Springs members groups of the Northern Territory Cattlemen's Association (NTCA).

During these talks, Dr Creighton spoke on a range of themes relevant to the NTCA's work such as land access and protecting and registering sacred sites in the context of pastoral activities.

We hope these talks will help NTCA members understand how the Authority can support the work they do and our role in the protection of sacred sites on pastoral properties.

BARUNGA

In June 2018, the Authority's CEO and Director of Policy and Governance gave a presentation on the work of the Authority to a joint land council meeting at the annual Barunga Festival.

At the meeting, the Authority and joint land councils talked about the 2016 Sacred Sites Review and key recommendations, including the development of a memorandum of understanding between the NLC and the Authority to enable both organisations to collaborate on anthropological research for the protection of sacred sites in the context of land use, development projects and land management activities.

SPECIAL PROJECTS

LAUNCH OF AAPA ONLINE

In March 2018, we launched AAPA Online, which has streamlined the Authority's services for stakeholders. Stakeholders can now lodge applications for authority certificates and requests for information through this web-based service, which they can then print from their secure client portal.

KAKADU NATIONAL PARK REPORT

Since 2012–13, the Authority has worked in partnership with Kakadu National Park conducting field work research with Aboriginal custodians and providing specialist advice on sacred sites in the iconic Jim Jim–Twin Falls precinct.

The project arose in response to the park developing planning initiatives and bushwalking strategies in the area. The project anthropologist worked closely with Aboriginal custodians to document sacred sites and provide comprehensive management advice to Parks Australia.

In 2017, the final report was presented to the Kakadu National Park Board of Management and then to Parks Australia. Following from this work, the Authority registered nine sacred sites, including Jim Jim Falls and Twin Falls, at our June 2018 board meeting.



Buntine Highway

PERFORMANCE REPORT

36	Protection of sacred sites and performance
38	Authority certificates
46	Requests for information
49	Register of sacred sites
49	Damage to sacred sites



Stakeholder consultations at Gove

PROTECTION OF SACRED SITES AND PERFORMANCE

The Authority's role is to protect sacred sites through the administration of the *Sacred Sites Act*. The *Sacred Sites Act* provides for the protection for sacred sites through the provision of sacred sites information, 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, which specifically relate 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, size and complexity of authority certificate applications completed.

Timeliness is assessed as the average number of days between accepting authority certificate applications and completing the authority certificates and the average response time for requests for information from the Authority's register and archives.

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)*.

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

Output group: Protection of Sacred Sites

Provide statutory services for the protection and registration of sacred sites and the avoidance of sacred sites in the development and use of land.

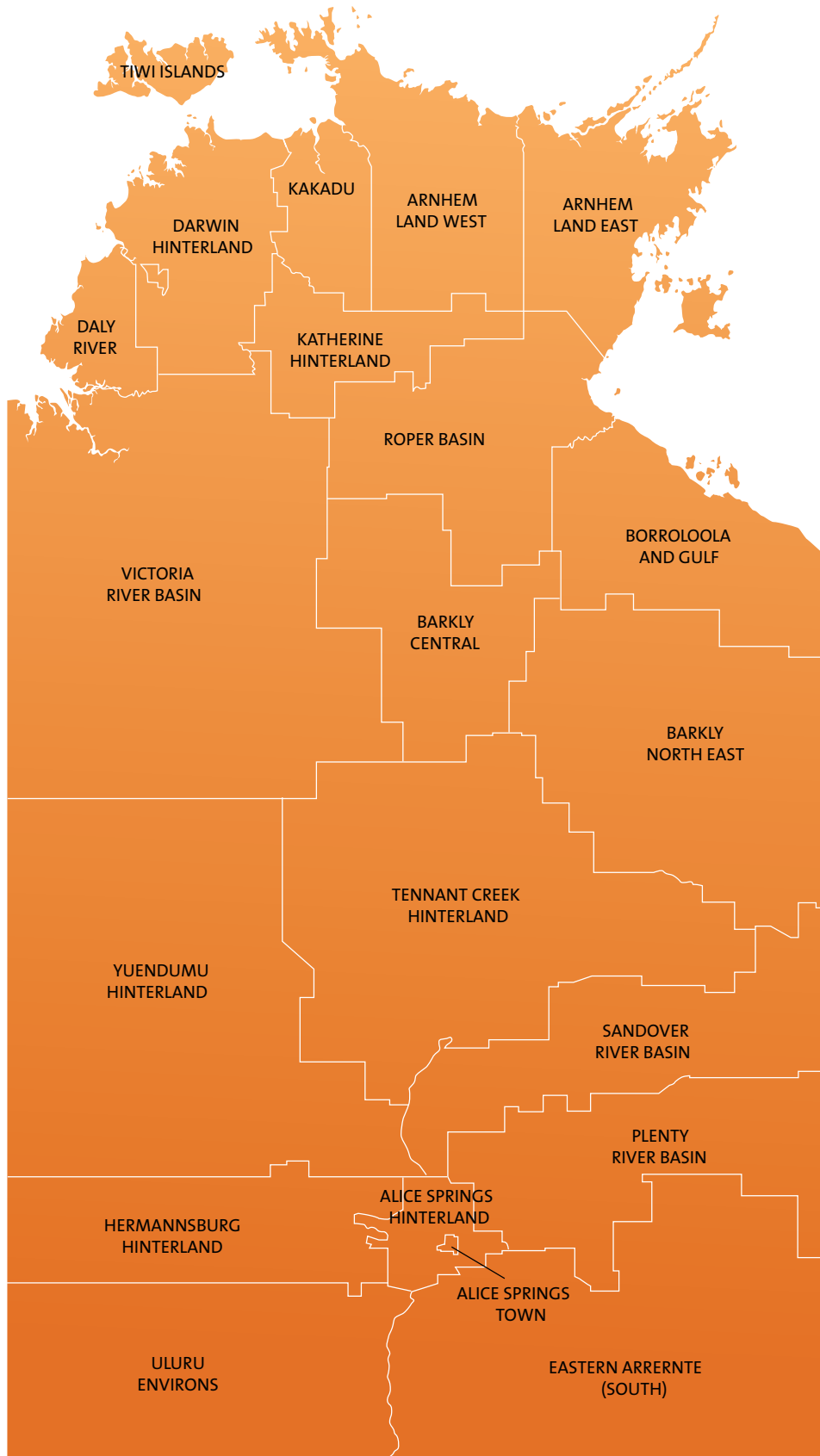
Outcome: Enhanced relations between Aboriginal custodians and the wider Territory community through timely identification of sacred site related constraints, if any, on land and sea use proposals.

Performance measures		Actual 2013–14	Actual 2014–15	Actual 2015–16	Actual 2016–17	Target 2017–18	Actual 2017–18
Quantity	Authority certificates issued	208	177	242	157	200	107
	Requests for information completed	555	513	636	579	550	789
Timeliness	Average time between receiving authority certificates application and completing service (days)	138 days	126 days	114 days	90 days	120 days	93 days
	Average time between receiving requests for information and completing service (days)	3.9 days	2.9 days	4.6 days	1.1 Days	7 days	1.5 days
Quality	Statutory appeals	<1%	<1%	<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 2017–18, the Authority received 161 authority certificate requests and issued 107 authority certificates for a range of projects across the Territory such as infrastructure, roadworks, mining/exploration, tourism and communications.

A total of 58 authority certificates were withdrawn. Of these applications, 16 were withdrawn by the NT Government, and a further 15 withdrawn applications related to exploration and mining. The remaining certificates were withdrawn by local government and the Commonwealth (12), other Aboriginal organisations (3) and private/individual companies (12).

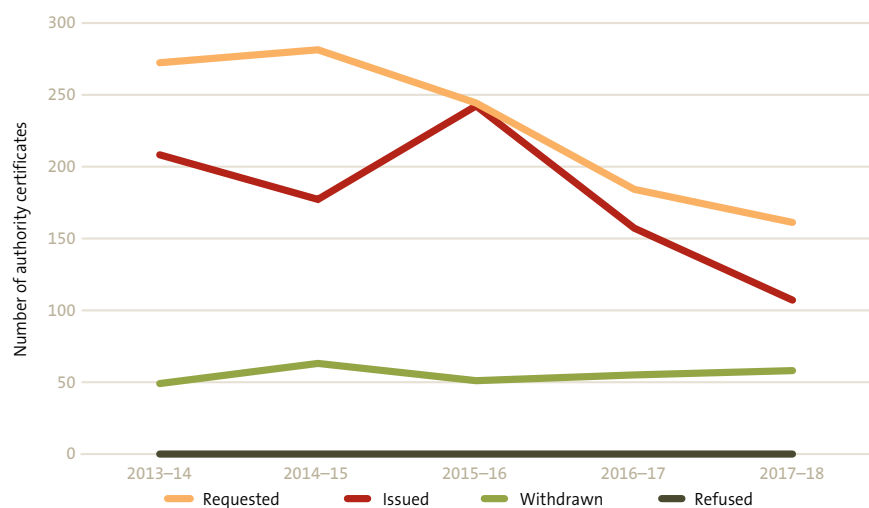
Figure 2 shows a decreasing trend in the number of authority certificates received and issued in the last five years. However, this trend is offset by a significant increase in requests for information in the form of abstracts of records. This indicates to the Authority that proponents may be seeking to minimise outlay costs on authority certificates. This trend is a concern to the Authority because it increases the risk of damage to sacred sites.

While the number of authority certificates we issued declined in 2017–18, the Authority worked on several large-scale applications (such as major upgrades to Wologorang Road and Project Sea Dragon) that required significant human and organisational resources to deliver. The size and complexity of 2017–18 authority certificates is reflected in the revenue collected on a cost-recovery basis, which has not declined proportionately with the reduction in the number of authority certificates issued.



Custodians at a Tennant Creek mine site

FIGURE 2: AUTHORITY CERTIFICATES REQUESTED, ISSUED, WITHDRAWN AND REFUSED BETWEEN 1 JULY 2013 AND 30 JUNE 2018



REGIONAL PICTURE

During 2017–18, the highest demand for authority certificates was in the major population areas of Darwin Hinterland including Darwin (total of 29) and Alice Springs (total of 14). Most of the Darwin authority certificates covered NT Government works for planning and infrastructure projects and roadworks, including remediation works at Stokes Hill in Darwin city and major upgrades to Gunn Point Road.

In Alice Springs, most of the issued authority certificates covered work for NT Government planning and infrastructure projects, including upgrades and maintenance of the Alice Springs Motor Vehicle Registry and development of a sporting facility and ancillary building.

After Darwin and Alice Springs, the Tennant Creek Hinterland area was the third-highest area in demand for authority certificates (total of 9), which were issued mostly to the NT Government for roadworks and planning and infrastructure projects, such as repair and maintenance of the Ti Tree Aerodrome and gravel extraction for several roadworks in the area.

FIGURE 3: REGIONAL TREND OF REQUESTED AND ISSUED AUTHORITY CERTIFICATES IN 2017–2018

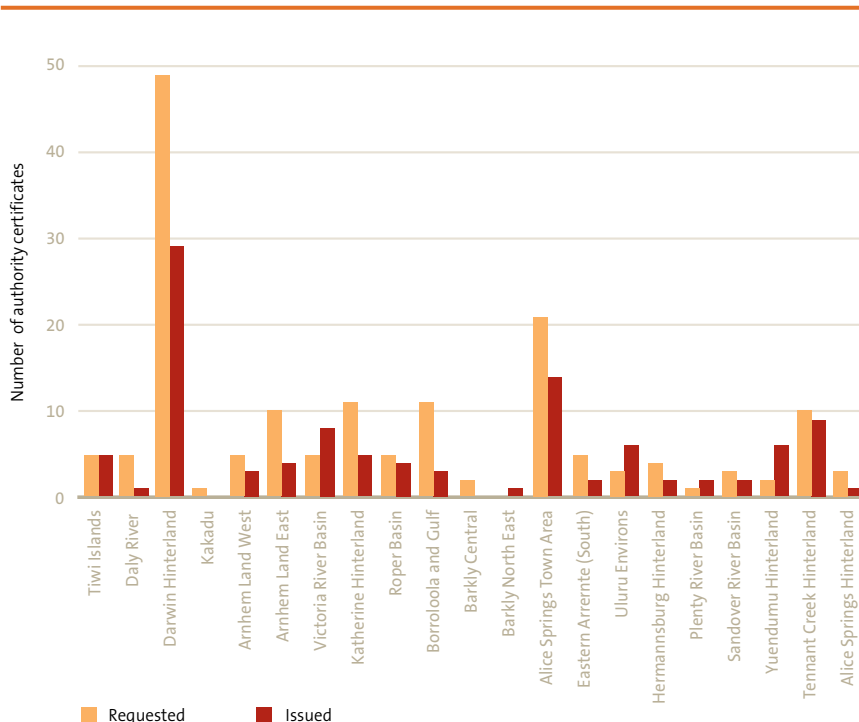
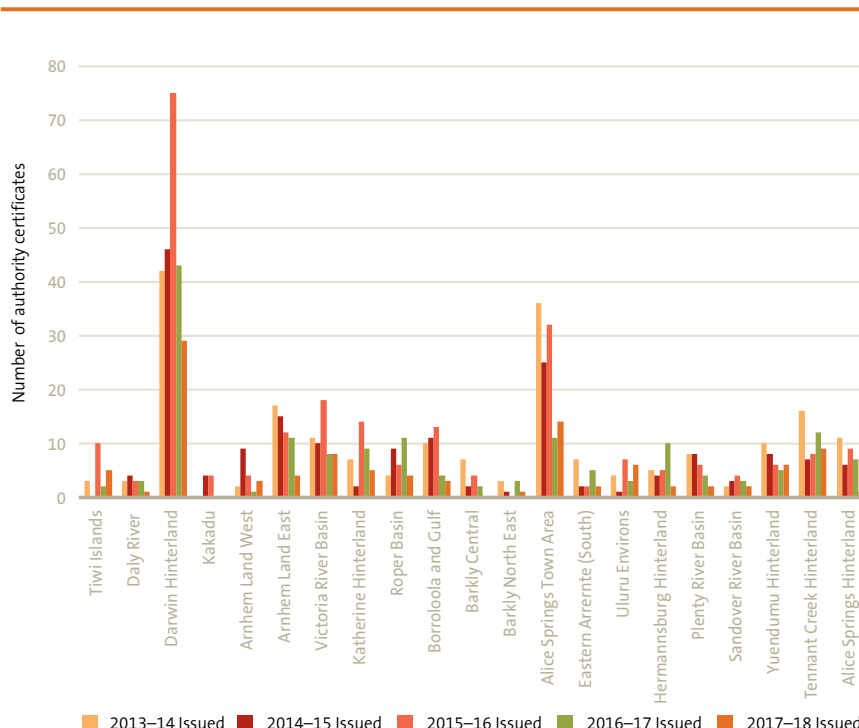


Figure 4 shows a concentration of issued authority certificates in the Darwin Hinterland and Alice Springs town area over the five-year period. The number of authority certificates issued for other regions varied from year to year, and there was no clear pattern or trend.

FIGURE 4: REGIONAL TREND FOR ISSUED AUTHORITY CERTIFICATES BETWEEN 1 JULY 2013 AND 30 JUNE 2018





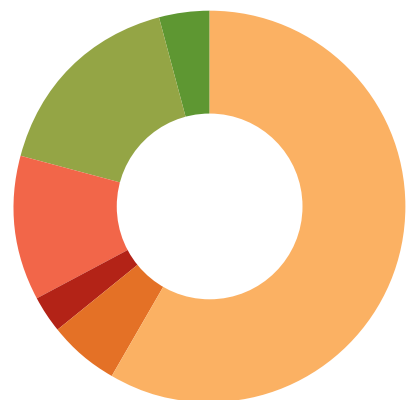
Arnhem Highway landscape

SERVICE USERS AND PROJECT TYPES

The NT Government is the largest group of authority certificate users at 59%. The government's public works included roadworks, power, water and sewage, planning and infrastructure, primary industry, tourism and natural resource management.

The Authority's second-largest client is the mining and exploration sector, at 17%. Other users of authority certificates are the private sector (12%), Commonwealth and other government (5%), Aboriginal organisations (4%) and local government (3%).

FIGURE 5: USERS OF AUTHORITY CERTIFICATES IN 2017-18



- NT Government 59%
- Commonwealth and other government 6%
- Local government 3%
- Private sector 12%
- Exploration/mining 17%
- Other Aboriginal organisations 4%

Of the 107 authority certificates issued in 2017–18, 28% were issued for roadworks projects and 17% for mining and exploration.

FIGURE 6: TYPES OF PROJECTS AUTHORITY CERTIFICATES WERE ISSUED FOR IN 2017–18



- Communications infrastructure 5%
- Natural resource management, rehabilitation and tree works 6%
- Exploration/mining 17%
- Planning and infrastructure 16%
- Planning and infrastructure - Aboriginal communities 13%
- Power, water and sewerage 3%
- Power, water and sewerage - Aboriginal communities 4%
- Roadworks 28%
- Tourism/leisure enterprise and National Parks 7%
- Aquaculture/fishing 2%

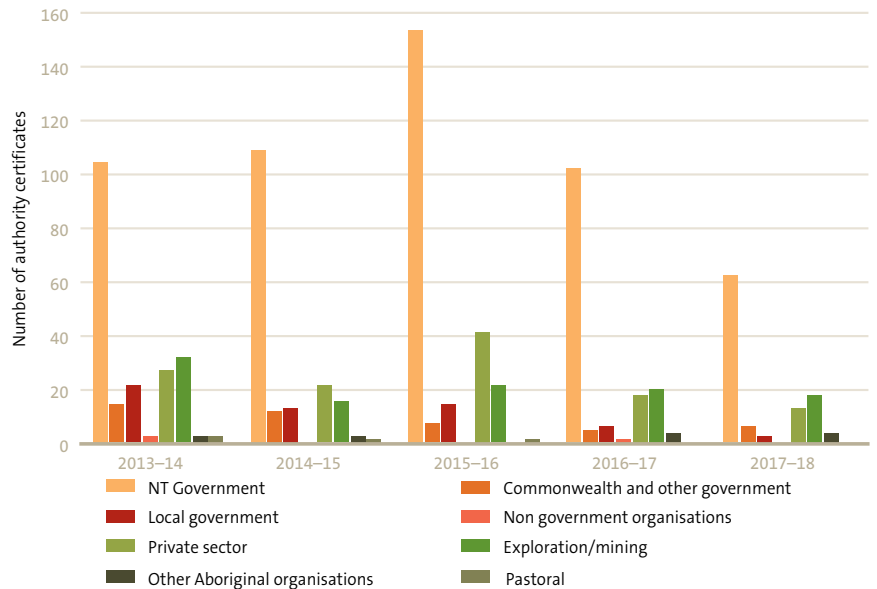
The trend of the last five years shows the NT Government maintaining its position as the Authority’s biggest client; however, the demand from the government in this reporting period is the lowest it has been since 2013–14 (see Figure 7).

For the second year in a row, the mining and exploration sector maintained its position as the second-largest client. This sector’s demand for authority certificates has remained consistent since 2014–15.



Flight view of Bullo River station

FIGURE 7: USER GROUPS OF AUTHORITY CERTIFICATES BETWEEN 1 JULY 2013 AND 30 JUNE 2018





Litchfield landscape

TIMELINESS

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

- the increased complexity of project proposals
- changes to traditional land tenure due to cultural transitions that result from the generational changes of custodians
- the increased mobility of Aboriginal custodians
- the remoteness of application areas and the associated access due to the weather.

We continue to engage positively with large user groups of authority certificates, including the NT Department of Planning, Infrastructure and Logistics, Power and Water Corporation, Defence, the mining and exploration sector, and the private sector.

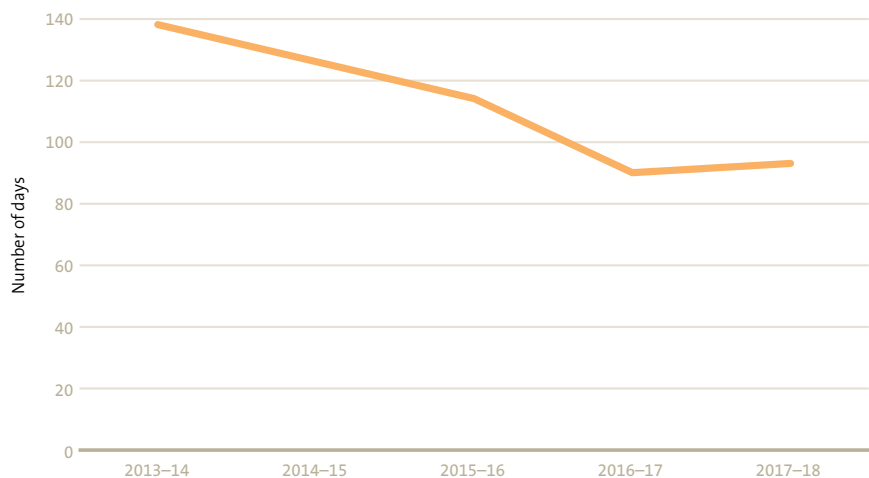
Our proactive engagement has helped us maintain positive and productive working relationships with these stakeholders and provide a greater understanding about the type of works our clients do and the processes we must follow to issue authority certificates.

This collaboration has had a positive impact on timeframes for issuing certificates because clients' greater understanding of projects and sacred site constraints reduces the number of consultations required for projects.

We also continued to work with land councils to consult with and, where appropriate, share information to issue authority certificates in accordance with section 22.1(b) of the *Sacred Sites Act*.

In 2017–18, the completion of authority certificates took an average of 93 days, a slight increase from the previous year's average of 90 days.

FIGURE 8: AVERAGE DAYS TO ISSUE AN AUTHORITY CERTIFICATE BETWEEN 1 JULY 2013 AND 30 JUNE 2018

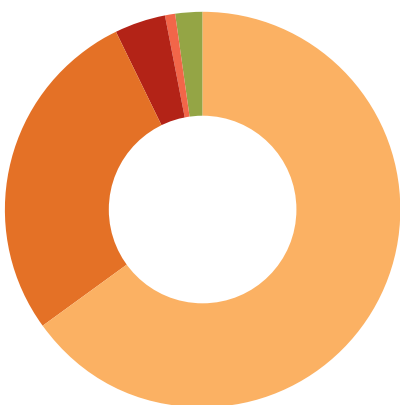




Robinson River landscape

In 2017–18, 65% of authority certificates were issued within three months, and 28% were completed between three and six months.

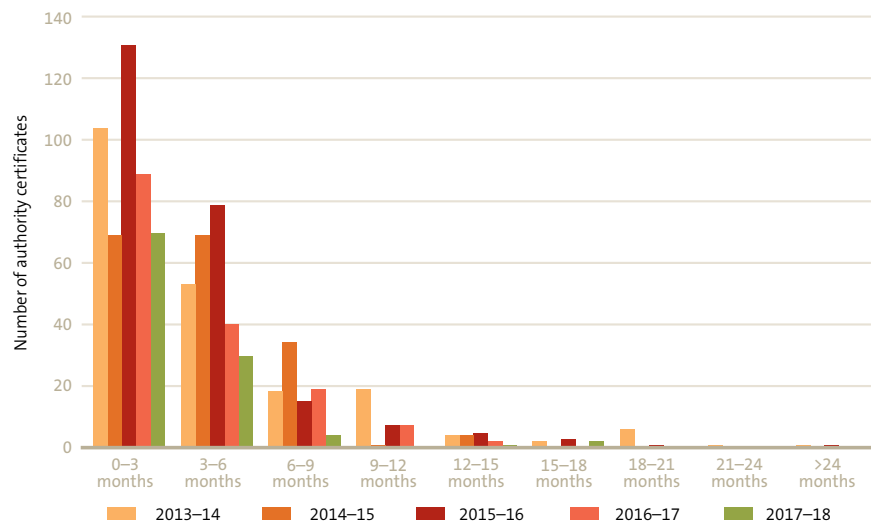
FIGURE 9: TIMEFRAMES TO ISSUE AUTHORITY CERTIFICATES IN 2017–18



- 0–3 months 65%
- 3–6 months 28%
- 6–9 months 4%
- 12–15 months 1%
- 15–18 months 2%

Over the last five years the majority of authority certificates were issued within 6 months. In 2017–18, 93% of authority certificates were issued within 6 months, 82% in 2016–17, 87% in 2015–16, 79% in 2014–15 and 75% in 2013–14.

FIGURE 10: TIMEFRAMES TO ISSUE AUTHORITY CERTIFICATES BETWEEN 1 JULY 2013 AND 30 JUNE 2018

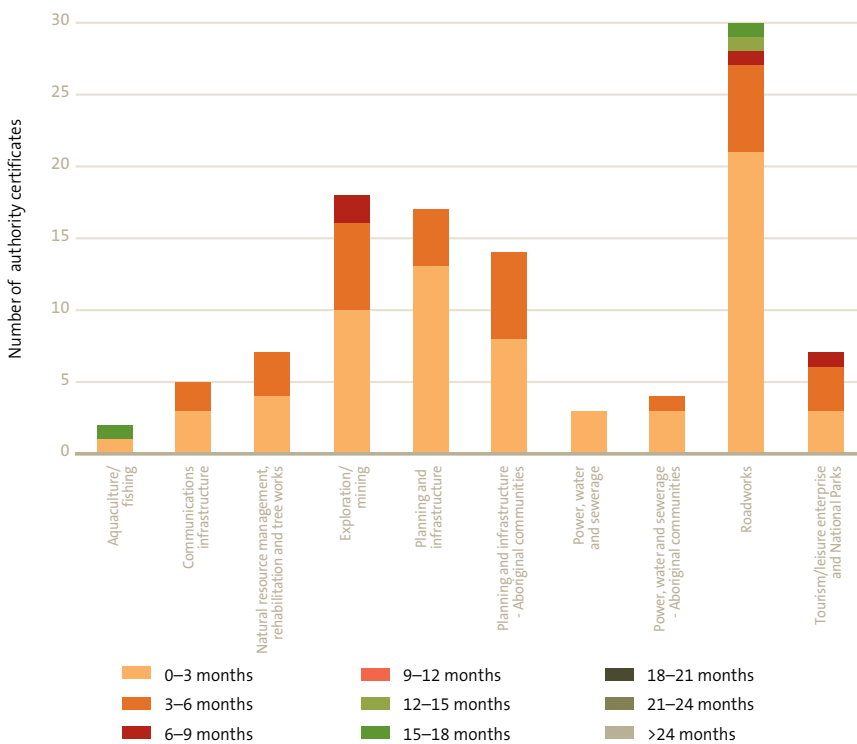


In 2017–18 the Authority worked on a wide range of projects including aquaculture, infrastructure, mining and exploration, roadworks and tourism (see Figure 11). This included a number of large-scale projects in the regions (such as major upgrades to the Buntine Highway and roadworks to support Project Sea Dragon). These types of projects required significant human and organisational resources to deliver and took more than six months to complete due to their complexity and the large-scale areas of land involved for the proposed works.



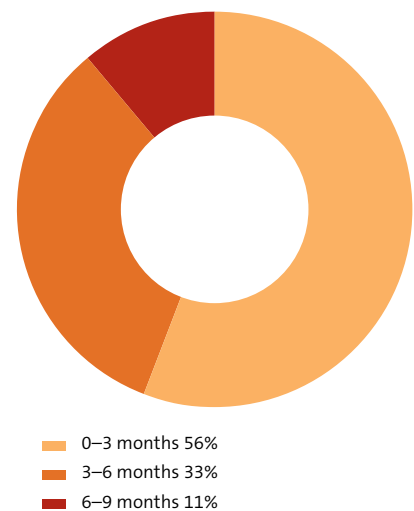
Authority staff with stakeholders at the Robinson River crossing

FIGURE 11: TIMEFRAMES TO ISSUE AUTHORITY CERTIFICATES BY PROJECT TYPE IN 2017–18



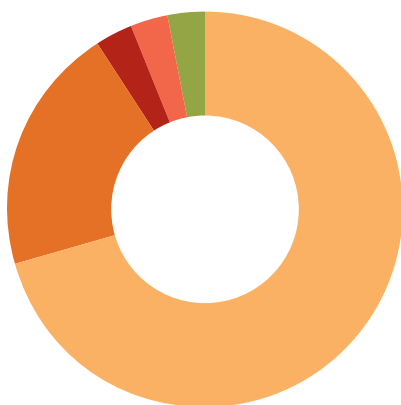
Mining and exploration projects were the second largest project type the Authority issued authority certificates for in 2017–18. In total 56% of authority certificates were issued within three months, 33% in three to six months, and the remaining 11% in six to nine months.

FIGURE 12: TIMEFRAMES TO ISSUE AUTHORITY CERTIFICATES FOR MINING/EXPLORATION PROJECTS IN 2017–18



Roadworks were the largest type of project we issued authority certificates for in 2017–18. In total, 70% of authority certificates were issued within three months, 20% in three to six months, 4% in six to nine months, 3% in 12–15 months and 3% in 15–18 months.

FIGURE 13: TIMEFRAMES TO ISSUE AUTHORITY CERTIFICATES FOR ROADWORKS IN 2017–18



- 0–3 months 70%
- 3–6 months 20%
- 6–9 months 3%
- 12–15 months 3%
- 15–18 months 3%



Goanna at Howard Springs

REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION

QUANTITY

In 2017–18, we received and responded to 789 formal requests for information from the Register of Sacred Sites, an increase from 579 in 2016–17 (see Figure 14).

Most requests (90%) take the form of an abstract of records. Other requests are digital data requests, for inspections of the Authority Certificate Register, for inspections of authority records and for inspections of the Sacred Sites Register (see Figure 15).

The increased number of requests for information represents significant additional demand for this service—the highest number in the last five years. This demand is in direct contrast to the low number of authority certificates issued in 2017–18.

It is possible that due to the current economic climate, an increasing number of proponents are opting to use requests for information to gauge the work rather than seek an authority certificate, which is more expensive but provides an indemnity against prosecution and clear conditions about works covered in an area. This trend represents an increased risk to the protection of sacred sites in the Northern Territory.

FIGURE 14: TOTAL NUMBER OF REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION BETWEEN 1 JULY 2013 AND 30 JUNE 2018

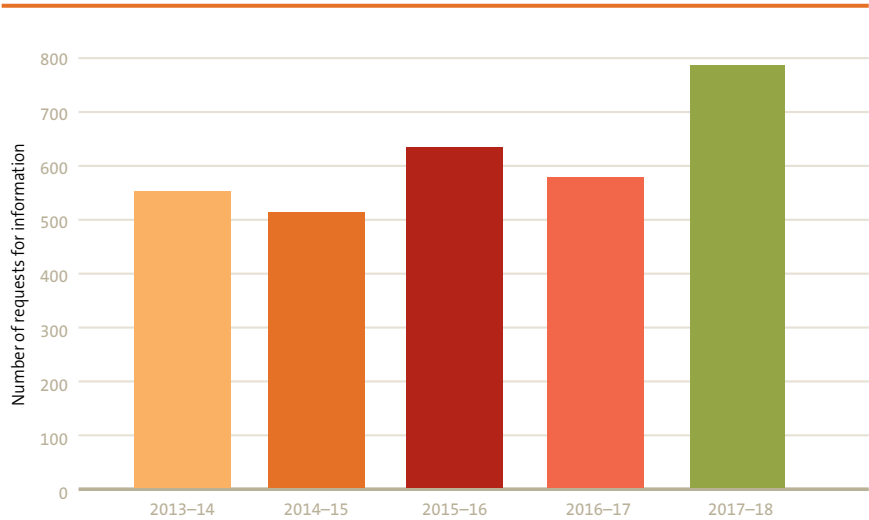
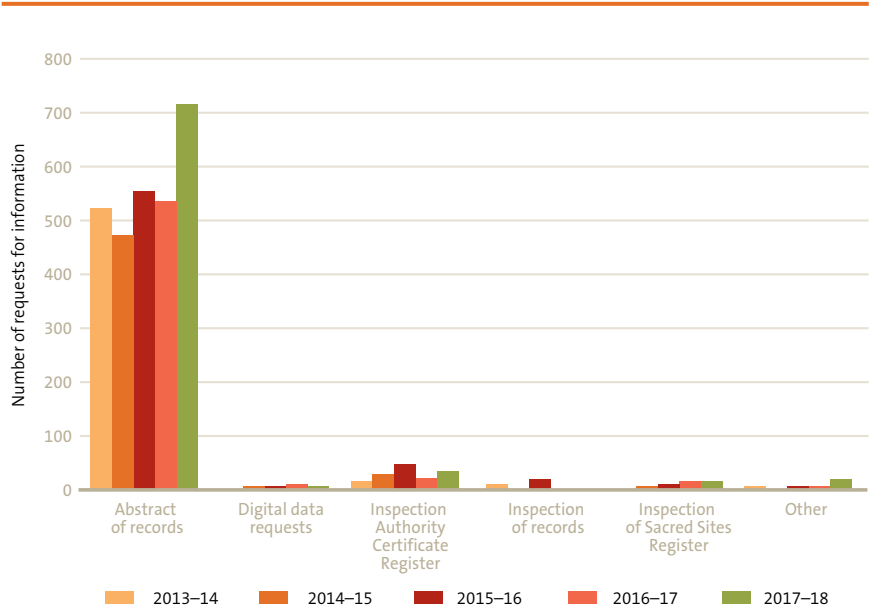


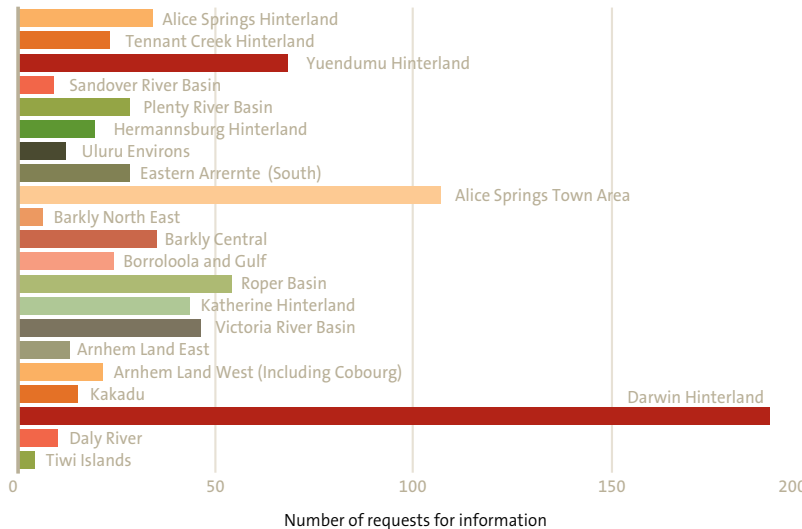
FIGURE 15: TYPES OF REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION BETWEEN 1 JULY 2013 AND 30 JUNE 2018



REGIONAL PICTURE

Requests for information were highest in the Darwin Hinterland region (190) in 2017–18. Consistent with previous years, the Alice Springs town area (107) was the next highest, followed by Tennant Creek Hinterland (68), Roper Basin region (54) and the Victoria River Basin region (46).

FIGURE 16: NUMBER OF REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION PER REGION IN 2017–18

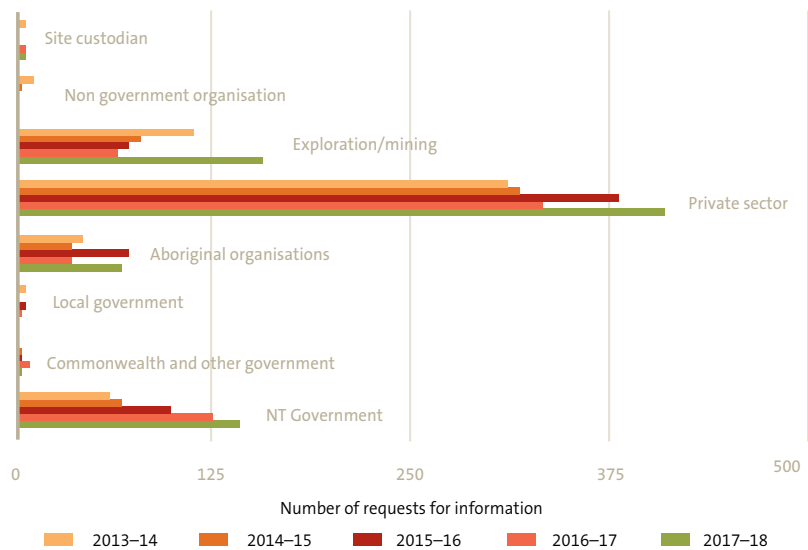


SERVICE USERS AND PROJECT TYPES

Figure 17 displays the user groups that requested information in 2017–18. The top three groups are: private sector, NT Government and exploration/mining companies.

The demand from the private sector increased from 332 in 2016–17 to 409 in 2017–18 and there was also an increase of 92 information requests from exploration/mining companies. A large proportion of private sector requests for information came from conveyancing work and telecommunications.

FIGURE 17: NUMBER OF REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION PER USER GROUP BETWEEN 1 JULY 2013 AND 30 JUNE 2018



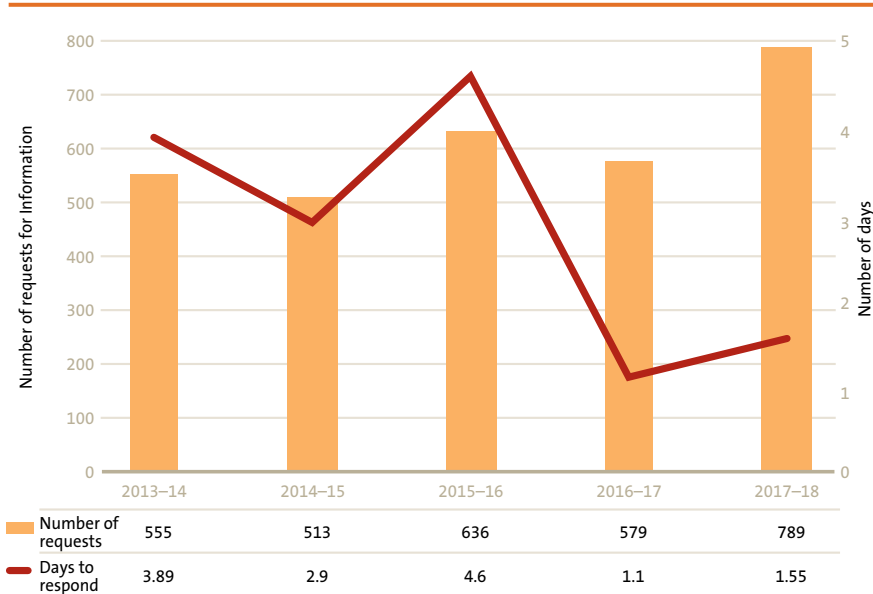


Golden forty mine site at Tennant Creek

TIMELINESS

There has been a slight increase in the average time taken to complete all types of requests for information, from 1.1 days in 2016–17 to 1.5 days in 2017–18. The increase in timeframes was due to 210 more requests for information received and completed in 2017–18 than in the previous year.

FIGURE 18: NUMBER OF REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION BETWEEN 1 JULY 2013 AND 30 JUNE 2018 AND DAYS TAKEN TO RESPOND



While the average of all requests for information was 1.5 days, a total average for each type of request varied.

Abstract of records, which represented 90% of requests received, took on average 1.06 days to complete, while 'other' requests took an average of 3.7 days. Inspections of the Sacred Sites Register were completed on average within 0.7 of a day. The more complex requests, such as inspections of authority certificates, took an average of 2.3 days, and digital data requests, which require the negotiation of agreements, including conditions specific to each situation, took on average 40 days for completion.

FIGURE 19: AVERAGE NUMBER OF DAYS TO COMPLETE EACH TYPE OF REQUEST FOR INFORMATION IN 2017-18



REGISTER OF SACRED SITES

Registering a sacred site is the highest level of protection a site can be given. Registration also gives users of land the best possible information about the sacred site. For Aboriginal custodians, registration of a sacred site means that the site will be accepted by a court as *prima facie* evidence that a place is a sacred site. The Authority maintains records of all sacred sites that it has identified in the Northern Territory. The sites listed in the Authority's records fall into two main categories:

REGISTERED SITES

These are sacred sites that Aboriginal custodians have asked the Authority to protect and that have been comprehensively documented and evaluated by Authority and have been entered into the Register of Sacred Sites by the board of the Authority. The register makes information about the location, boundaries and custodians of a sacred site publicly available.

RECORDED SITES

These are sacred sites that have been made known to the Authority from a variety of sources. In many cases the Authority has not been able to assess the accuracy of its information regarding recorded sites, nor have these sites been fully mapped. These sites have not gone through the formal process of being registered with Authority. These sacred sites are still protected by the *Sacred Sites Act*.

QUANTITY

The Authority registered 33 sites in 2017–18, an increase from 26 sites registered in 2016–17.

In total the Authority received 35 site registration requests in 2017–18, a slight decrease from 37 requests in 2016–17.

The Authority recorded 124 new sacred sites through fieldwork in 2017–18, a decrease from 234 in 2016–17. This reflects the lower number of applications for authority certificates in 2017–18, which typically generate fieldwork and consultation that identifies previously unrecorded sacred sites.

In total, the Authority has 2104 registered sacred sites and 11 139 recorded sacred sites in its database, bringing the total number of documented sacred sites in the Northern Territory to 13 243.

TIMELINESS

There remains a backlog of registration requests for sacred sites. Generally, this registration research work is 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, based around threats of damage or desecration.

To help reduce the backlog of outstanding registration requests, the Authority has engaged interns through the Aurora Project to help identify and address gaps in current registration requests.

DAMAGE TO SACRED SITES

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

At the beginning of 2017–18, the Authority had nine alleged site damage matters carried over from the previous reporting period.

During 2017–18, the Authority:

- received six new alleged site damage reports
- closed seven cases.

By the end of 2017–18, eight matters remained active.

PROSECUTIONS

In 2017–18, the Authority commenced legal proceedings for two site damage matters.

LEGUNE STATION

The Authority commenced legal proceedings against Legune Land Pty Ltd in June 2017, and in November 2017, the company was convicted and fined \$5000 for working on a sacred site without an authority certificate.

BLYTH RIVER

The Authority commenced prosecutions against a commercial fisherman for breaching the *Sacred Sites Act* in the Blyth River. At year end, the matter was before the court.

OUR PEOPLE

52	2017–18 Snapshot
53	Workforce profile
57	Developing our workplace capacity and capability
58	Wellbeing and support programs
59	Workplace health and safety
59	Staffing milestones
60	Remembering Shawn Smith



Gapuwiyak landscape

2017–18 SNAPSHOT

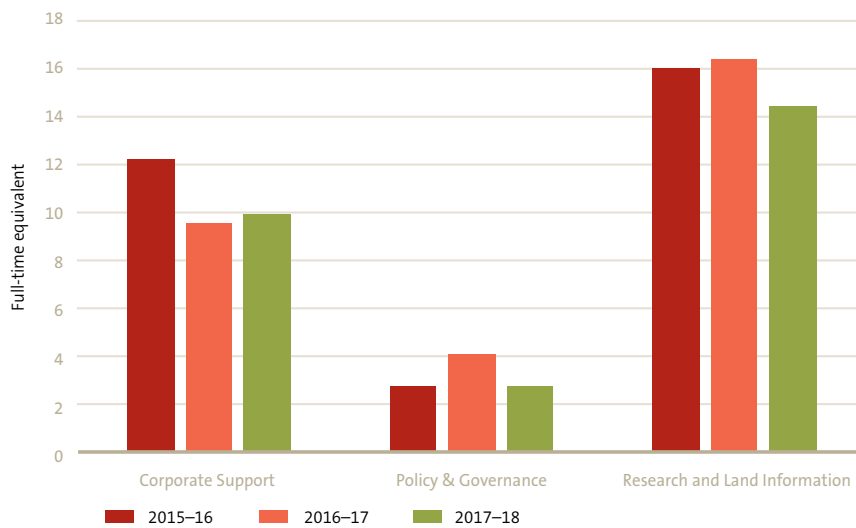
- Our full-time equivalent staff numbers were 26.96 in 2017–18 compared to 29.64 in 2016–17
- Our headcount of staff was 31 in 2017–18 compared to 34 in 2016–17
- 65% of the workforce were female in 2017–18 compared to 60% in 2016–17
- The average age of staff was 41 in 2017–18, which is the same for 2016–17
- 23% of our staff were over the age 50 in 2017–18 compared to 24% in 2016–17
- 41% of our staff were ongoing permanent employees in 2017–18 compared to 39% in 2016–17
- Research and Land Information is our largest unit, employing 52% of our staff
- 17% of our staff identified as Indigenous in 2017–18 compared to 15% in 2016–17
- 10% of our staff identified as being from a non-English speaking background in 2017–18 compared to 6% in 2016–17
- 3% of our staff identified as having a disability in 2017–18 compared to none in 2016–17
- 12% of the workforce had worked for the Authority for more than 10 years, and 6% had worked for the Authority for more than 35 years
- 39% of our staff were employed in the professional (32%) or technical streams (6%)
- 16% of our staff were employed part time
- 16% of our staff had flexible work agreements in place
- 6% of our staff were employed on a casual basis
- \$36 478 was spent on training and development for our staff
- \$10 618 was spent on providing 22 individual support services and one specific two-week in-house trauma counselling session for our staff and families.

Custodian at Litchfield

WORKFORCE PROFILE

The Authority's workforce in 2017–18 reduced by three people to 31, compared to 34 in 2016–17. This reduction in workforce was primarily due to resignations of staff moving interstate for either family reasons or for further studies.

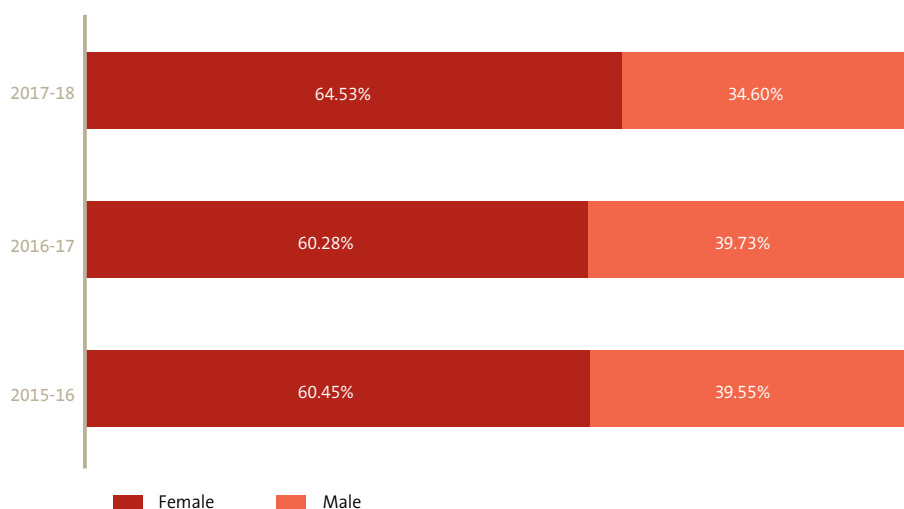
FIGURE 20: FULL-TIME EQUIVALENT (FTE) BY FINANCIAL YEAR (PAY 26)



GENDER COMPARISON

There was a slight rise in female employees in 2017–18 at 65% compared to 60% in 2016–17. Over the last three years, females made up more than 60% of the workforce.

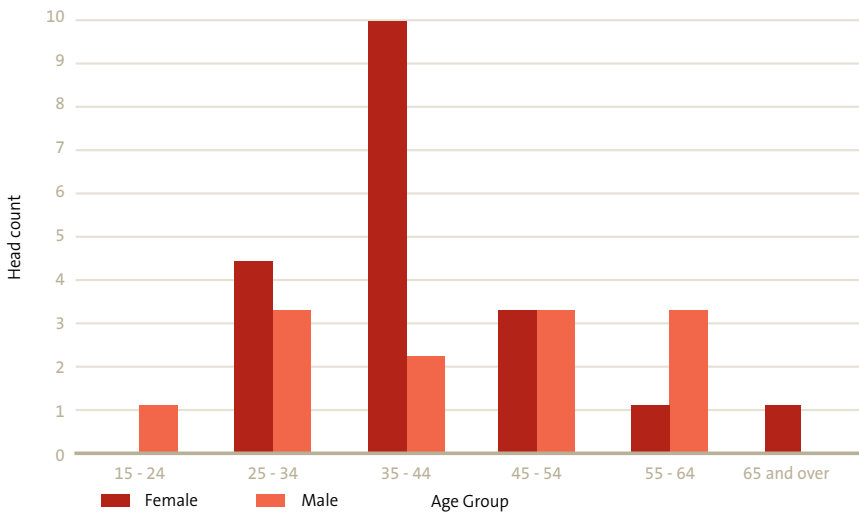
FIGURE 21: EMPLOYMENT BY GENDER BY FINANCIAL YEAR (EXCLUDING BOARD MEMBERS)



EMPLOYEES BY AGE AND GENDER

At 30 June 2018, 36.7% of the workforce was between 35 and 44 years of age, with the majority of the female workforce also in this age bracket. Male employees were evenly distributed across the age range of 25 to 64, with the majority of male to female ratio peak occurring in the 55 to 64 age range. The overall average age of staff remained at 41 in 2017–18, which is consistent with 2016–17. 2017–18 saw a decrease of our staff over the age 50, sitting at 23% compared to 24% in 2016–17.

FIGURE 22: STAFFING BY GENDER AND AGE GROUP (EXCLUDING BOARD MEMBERS)

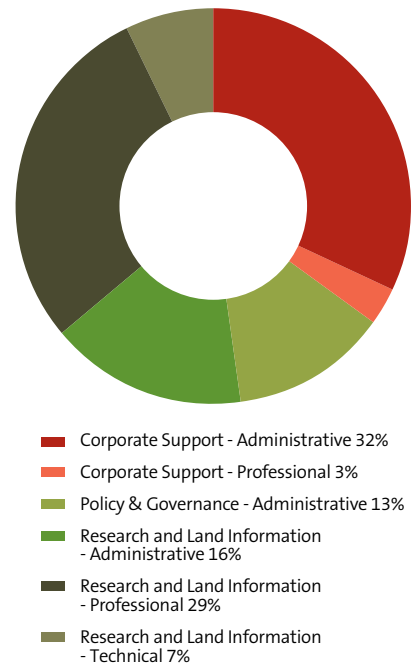


EMPLOYEES BY UNIT

Research and Land Information, which undertakes the anthropological and technical services for the Authority, was the largest unit, employing 52% of our staff in 2017–18. Of those, 56% were employed in the professional stream. This is an increase on 2016–17, when Research and Land Information employed 50% of the workforce, however, 71% were employed in the professional stream that year. The reduction in professional stream employees was due to three anthropologists resigning in 2017–18; this statistic should reverse in 2018–19 with recruitment actions.

Corporate Support Unit was the second-largest unit, with 32% of the workforce employed in finance, procurement, fleet, travel, office and business services, human resources, library services and information and system management and development.

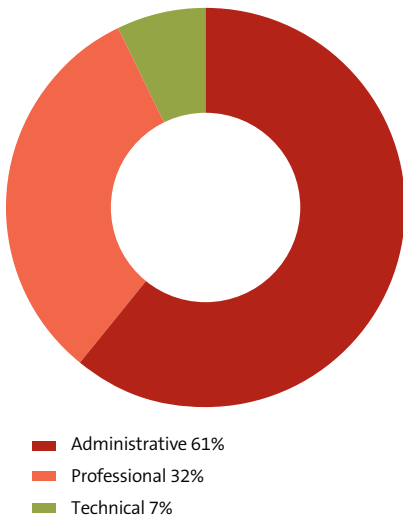
FIGURE 23: EMPLOYEE BY WORK UNIT AND BY STREAM 2017–18



EMPLOYEES BY STREAM

In 2017–18, the majority of the workforce was employed in the administrative stream at 61%, with 32% employed in the professional stream. Most of these professional stream staff members were anthropologists. There was an increase in the technical stream in 2017–18 due to the employment of a casual GIS Officer to assist with peak periods in mapping throughout the year.

FIGURE 24: EMPLOYMENT STREAM FOR 2017–18



RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

During 2017–18, five employees commenced employment with the Authority, and another two transferred to the Authority from NT Government agencies. Eight employees either resigned or their contracts ceased, and four staff transferred to NT Government agencies. This equates to a 61% movement in the workforce and is a slight increase on the previous year at 50%. That equates to two more people separating from the Authority from the previous year and is also reflective in the decrease of overall people employed by the Authority for 2017–18.

	2016–17	2017–18
Separations	5	8
Commencements	4	5
Transfers in	4	2
Transfers out	4	4
Summary in	8	7
Summary out	9	12
Total	17	19
MOVEMENT OVERALL	50%	61%

EMPLOYMENT TYPES

Overall, the workforce stabilised, and a major project for 2017–18 was to review all positions, redesign positions where required and transition from a contract-based employment structure to an ongoing employment structure. Nineteen positions were redesigned and established through a Job Evaluation process in 2017–18. In 2018–19, the focus will progress to establishing a permanent workforce through an open, transparent and meritorious recruitment process.

In 2017–18, the workforce consisted of 45% of staff in ongoing positions, which is a slight increase of 7% from 2016–17 where it was 38%, with the majority of temporary staff in Research and Land Information. The temporary employment arrangement reduced from 62% in 2016–17 to 48% in 2017–18 (excluding casual employment), and this represents a 14% transition from a temporary employment arrangement to ongoing employment arrangements. The permanent workforce project will be a priority area in 2018–19.

FIGURE 25: EMPLOYMENT TYPE BY YEAR

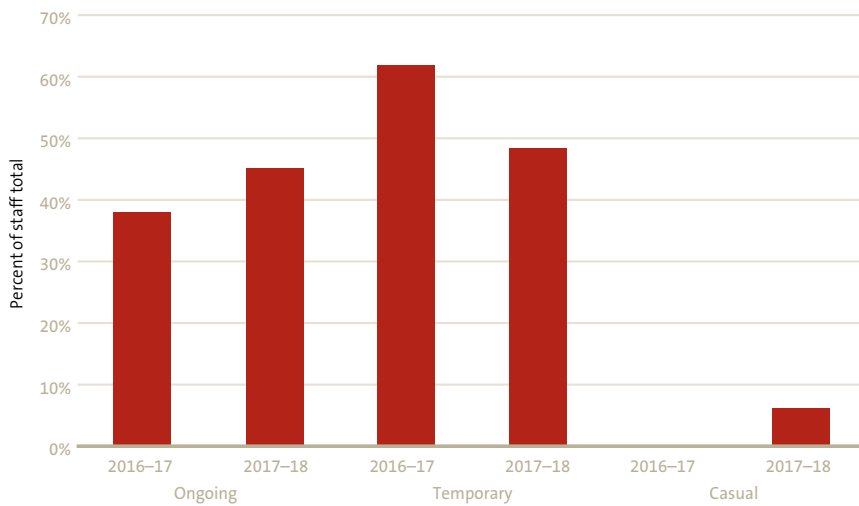
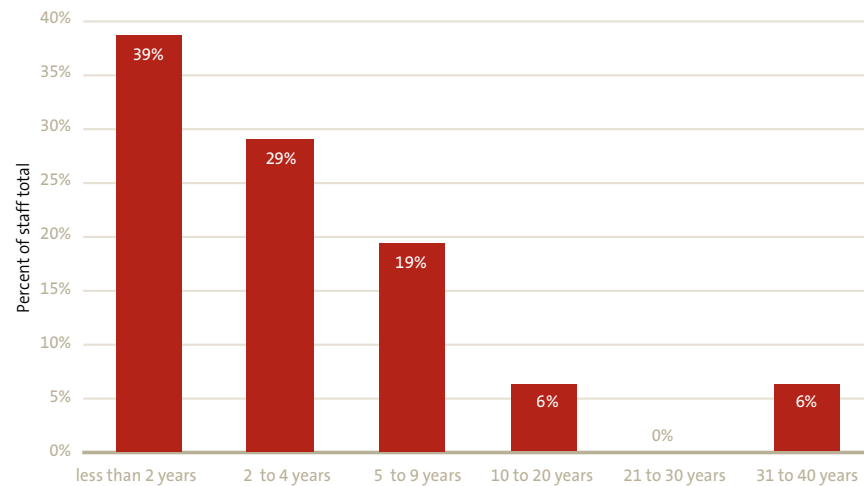


FIGURE 26: YEARS OF SERVICE



RECRUITMENT

In 2017–18, the Authority externally advertised nine positions (six ongoing positions and three temporary positions). Three of the temporary advertised positions failed to attract any qualified or appropriately skilled candidates for assessment by the panel. All seven permanent positions were successfully recruited to, and a temporary contract was also offered through an internal selection process using the Aboriginal Employment Program administered by DCIS.

RETENTION

In 2017–18, 12% of the workforce had been employed by the Authority for at least 10 years, and nearly 20% of the workforce had been employed for at least five years. The majority of staff employed by the Authority had been employed for less than five years. Two staff members had been employed by the Authority for 35 years or more.

DEVELOPING OUR WORKFORCE CAPACITY AND CAPABILITY

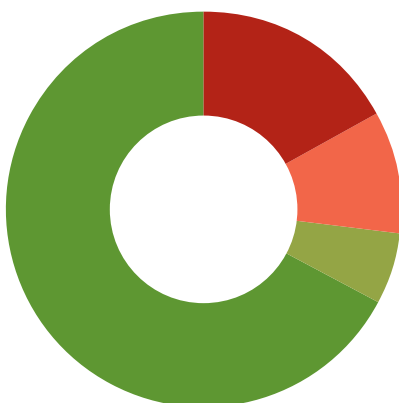
The Authority is placing greater emphasis on building a capable workforce through training and development and diversifying skills and experience. We use formal and informal programs to achieve goals, develop leadership styles and provide continuous feedback on performance to assist in professional and personal development.

In 2017–18, we drafted and developed a professional development framework to guide future capacity building and align the Authority's strategic plan and to the NT Government's Capability and Leadership Framework. This program will be implemented in 2018–19 as will a rolling training program encompassing programs such as facilitation, resilience and leadership development for all staff.

DIVERSITY

The Authority is committed to the principles of inclusion, equity and diversity. Overall, there was an increase in people identifying as Indigenous from 15% in 2016–17 to 17% in 2017–18. There was also an increase in people identifying as being from a non-English speaking background, from 6% in 2016–17 to 10% in 2017–18, and 3% of staff identified as having a disability, compared to 0% in 2016–17.

FIGURE 27: WORKFORCE DIVERSITY 2017–18



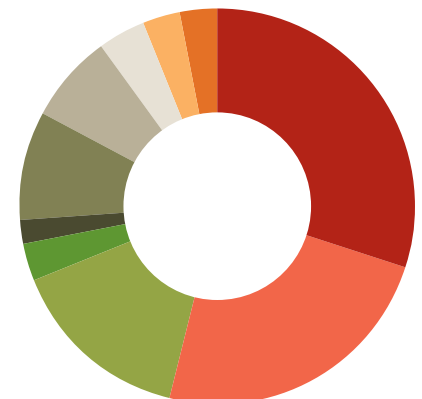
- Indigenous identified 17%
- non-English speaking identified 10%
- Disability identified 6%
- Non-identified 67%

TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

2017–18 saw a significant investment in training and development, with \$36 478 spent on all forms of training compared to \$20 761 in 2016–17. This 76% increase is due to two specific one-off workshops that were undertaken, which equates to 54% of the total funding for training and development in 2017–18.

One was a regional workshop for all Alice Springs staff and related to team building, emotional intelligence, complex problem solving, and conflict resolution. The second one-off training workshop was all Authority staff from Alice Springs and Darwin participating in a two-day strategic development workshop in Darwin that set the Authority's direction for the next five years.

FIGURE 28: TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT INVESTMENT



- All staff workshop 30%
- Regional team training 24%
- Research conference 15%
- Research training (language) 3%
- Research management coaching 2%
- Technical training 9%
- Study assistance 7%
- Legal training 4%
- WHS training 3%
- Corporate training 3%

AURORA PROJECT INTERNSHIPS

In 2017–18, the Authority hosted six internship placements through the Aurora Project. Four interns assisted the Alice Springs team and two assisted the Darwin team. The purpose of the internship program is to identify research gaps with existing site registration requests so they can be progressed for further fieldwork consultations and research reports completed. This is part of a long-term strategy to present sacred sites for consideration for entry into the Register of Sacred Sites by the Aboriginal Areas Protection Authority board.

In 2017–18 with the assistance of the six interns, 66 requests to register a sacred site identified for this project were reviewed, of which 19 were assessed by the Authority board and formally registered. At year end, the remaining 47 requests related to the 2017–18 internship allocation were in the process of being reviewed for further research and potential future presentation for official consideration for Registration in future Authority board meetings.

STUDY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM ACHIEVEMENTS

Ambre Philpott was accepted into a Diploma of Science in 2017, and the Authority is supporting her through the Study Assistance Program. In 2017–18, Ambre achieved three Distinctions and one High Distinction as well as a letter of excellence in her studies while working full time as the Registrar for the Authority. Ambre is in her final year of study, and the Study Assistance Program has continued to support her to achieve this tertiary qualification.

WELLBEING AND SUPPORT PROGRAMS

WORK LIFE BALANCE

The Authority has always maintained strong, flexible work arrangements for staff and recognises the benefits of providing a balanced working environment that supports a family and lifestyle where possible. The benefits not only support the Authority's productivity but promote a supportive work setting.

In 2017–18, five staff continued to be employed on a part-time arrangement due to family and lifestyle balance, and a further five staff, although working full time, continued to have a flexible workplace arrangement to vary their standard working hours. One staff member changed their employment arrangement from a part-time contract in 2016–17 to a casual employment contract in 2017–18 to provide flexible workplace arrangements that met their lifestyle requirements. This work life balance program equates to 38% of the Authority's workforce employed in a flexible working environment, whether that be part-time employment or a variation of the standard working hours.

EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

The Authority continued to support the promotion of the Employee Assistance Program and encouraged staff and family members to access the free and confidential counselling service through the whole-of-government contract.

In 2017–18, staff and family members participated in 22 individual sessions of confidential counselling services. In addition, the Authority provided two weeks of in-house trauma counselling services with a psychologist attending the Darwin office and support services were available for the Alice Springs team with the sudden passing of a long-term employee, Shawn Smith.

FLU VACCINATION PROGRAM

As in previous years, the Authority offered to reimburse all staff for flu vaccinations. In Darwin, an in-house service was provided and accessed by 11 staff members. Due to the small staffing numbers in Alice Springs, in-house services could not be provided; however, all staff were offered the reimbursement scheme.

CHRISTMAS CLOSEDOWN

In 2017–18, the Authority again closed down over the Christmas period, enabling staff to have a break from between Christmas and New Year. Staff accessed recreation leave during this period when the Authority was closed to the public.

WORKPLACE HEALTH AND SAFETY

The Authority is committed to ensuring the safety of all its staff, whether they are travelling remotely or in the office.

The Remote Travel Policy was reviewed and significantly amended in 2017–18 to cover all safety and welfare concerns, ensuring the safety of staff travelling remotely and having a network of people aware of their locations who could raise the alert if there was any loss of communication. 2017–18 saw the upgrade of all fleet vehicles in both the Alice Springs and Darwin offices, including upgrades to satellite phones and GPS vehicle tracking systems.

The Remote Time Off in Lieu Policy was also reviewed and significantly amended to ensure consistency and enabling staff, regardless of the length of employment, to access time off if they had done extensive remote overnight fieldwork.

In 2017–18, staff continued to undertake remote first aid, CPR, fire warden and four-wheel-drive defensive training to ensure they are properly equipped and trained for the environment they work in.

WORKPLACE INCIDENTS

There was only one minor workplace incident in 2017–18: a mild burn on the hand of a staff member due to a metallic cup being used in a microwave.

There were no new workers' compensation claims in 2017–18 and only one ongoing workers' compensation claim that has been active since August 2016.

STAFFING MILESTONES

10 YEARS AS CEO OF THE AUTHORITY

The Authority's CEO, Dr Ben Scambary, achieved 10 years of service in 2017–18. Ben commenced as the CEO on 4 February 2008, and in that time has led the direction of the Authority and implemented the instructions of the board.

10 YEARS AS AN ALICE SPRINGS RESEARCH OFFICER

Peter Madden commenced as a Research Officer in Alice Springs on 4 February 2008, and achieved 10 years of service in 2017–18. Peter continues to undertake anthropological research in Alice Springs and remote locations that span as wide as the Queensland, Western and South Australian borders and to the top of the Yuendumu and Tennant Creek hinterlands.

35 YEARS AS THE AUTHORITY LIBRARIAN

Yvonne Forrest commenced ongoing part-time employment with the Authority as the Librarian on 5 April 1983, and in 2017–18, Yvonne achieved 35 years of service. Yvonne continues to provide an essential service to Research and Land Information, particularly reference material she has purchased and collected over her years that are irreplaceable and document the intricate history and cultural diversity of the Aboriginal people of the Northern Territory.

36 YEARS AS THE AUTHORITY GURU

Barry Renshaw commenced with the Authority on 17 May 1982, and in October 2016 he attended the parliamentary function to recognise his 35 years of service. Barry is the local guru, ensurer of data integrity and a living reference encyclopaedia to all things related to the Authority and the Northern Territory history and landscape. Barry has undertaken a variety of roles during his time with the Authority, including as Registrar. Today he is responsible for the management of all requests for sacred site registration, including the review of research and ensuring all requirements under the *Sacred Sites Act* are adhered to in order to present the sacred sites to the Authority board for formal registration.

REMEMBERING SHAWN SMITH

Sadly, in 2018, we lost our friend and colleague, Shawn Smith.

Shawn joined the Authority in 2009 as the Senior Land Information Officer and was integral to the Authority's everyday operations.

He was greatly respected by everyone who worked with him.

During his time at the Authority, Shawn managed the Geographic Information System (GIS) and Global Positioning System (GPS) services, supervised and supported junior team members, and trained our anthropologists in spatial technologies.

Shawn was clever, gracious, kind and had a great laugh.

We remember him fondly for his keen interest in cricket and baseball and for keeping us updated about what was happening at the Railway Club. Shawn had a keen eye for a bargain and was the go-to person in his team about how to get the best deal on anything including gym memberships, frequent flyer points and eating out.

He had a wonderful enthusiasm for exploring new places and Shawn, together with his beloved wife, Debs, travelled widely and had many adventures. His passion for life was inspiring.

Shawn was extremely proud to work for the Authority and be a part of protecting sacred sites across the Northern Territory. He will be remembered with respect by the board and the staff at the Authority and will be deeply missed.



Picture of Shawn with his wife Debs in Central Australia



Tablelands Highway landscape

SUSTAINABILITY



Hodgson Downs landscape

SUSTAINABILITY

In our role to protect sacred sites, the Authority helps deliver positive social outcomes through our key services: authority certificates, requests for information and registering of sacred sites.

Through providing these services, we enhance relationships between Aboriginal custodians and the wider community by increasing the level of certainty when identifying the constraints, if any, on land use proposals arising from the existence of sacred sites.

- In 2017–18, the Authority conducted sacred site surveys and issued 107 authority certificates to protect sacred sites across the Northern Territory. The authority certificates provided protection to multiple sacred sites while facilitating development projects.
- The Authority issued 789 requests for information from its Register of Sacred Sites, providing the public with information about sacred sites known to the Authority and helping minimise the risk of inadvertent damage to the identified sites. It also identified where sacred sites are likely to be at risk if works were to be carried out without more detailed information being sought.
- The Authority registered 33 sacred sites in 2017–18, providing the sites with the maximum protection afforded under the Act.

THE AUTHORITY IN THE COMMUNITY

COMMUNITY SUPPORT

The Authority values the importance of giving back to the community by supporting small businesses, organisations and community activities. In 2017–18, we supported five applicants (including local government, small business, NGOs and cultural organisations) by giving them full or partial authority certificate waivers for their projects. The actual total cost of the five clearances was \$64 138.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT OVERVIEW

For the year ended 30 June 2018

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.

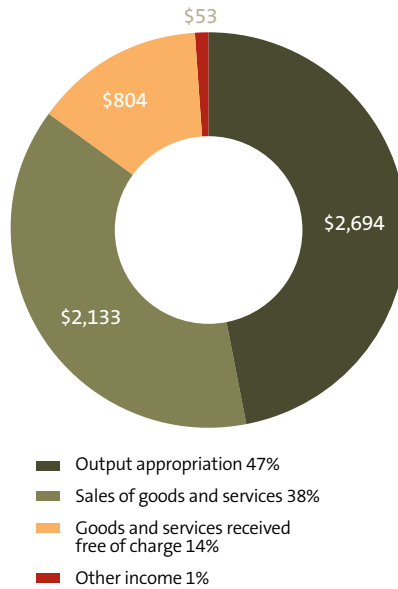
While the Authority receives a level of appropriation from the NT Government, it relies on income derived from providing anthropological services to clients in order to maintain its operations. The Authority has again managed a small surplus of \$248 000. A project to upgrade important internal software continues, and this project continues to be self-funded. During the year, \$106 000 was invested in this project. Employee expenses of \$3.2M were the major expense item, accounting for almost 60% of total expenditure.

FINANCIAL REPORT 2017–18

INCOME

The Authority is funded by a combination of NT Government appropriation, goods and services income and services provided free of charge by the Department of Corporate and Information Services (DCIS). The chart below illustrates the relative value of each income category. The income for 2017–18 was \$0.204M above the budgeted level of \$5.427M. Additional goods and services revenue of \$0.268M was slightly offset by a \$0.064M reduction of free services from DCIS.

FIGURE 29: INCOME RECEIVED (\$000)



EXPENDITURE

Total expenditure is made up of five broad categories: employee, purchase of goods and services, depreciation, repairs and maintenance and other administrative expenses (DCIS charges). The most significant of these expenses was personnel expenditure, which was \$0.129M below budget; goods and services revenue, which was \$0.152M above budget; and DCIS charges, which were \$0.064M below budget.

FIGURE 31: EXPENSES (\$000)

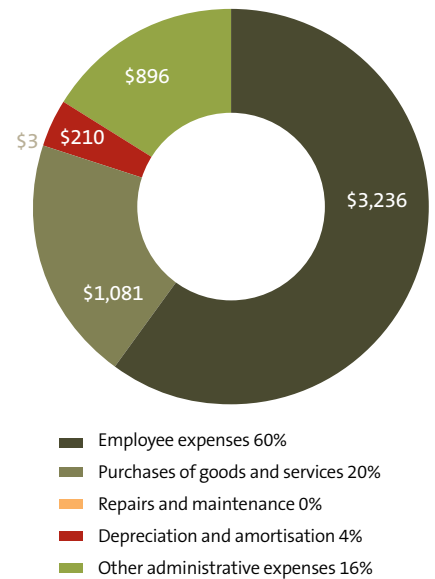
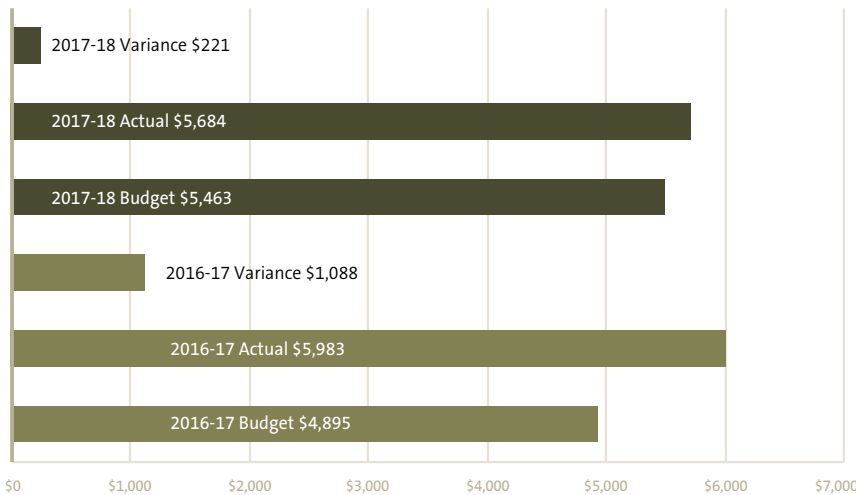


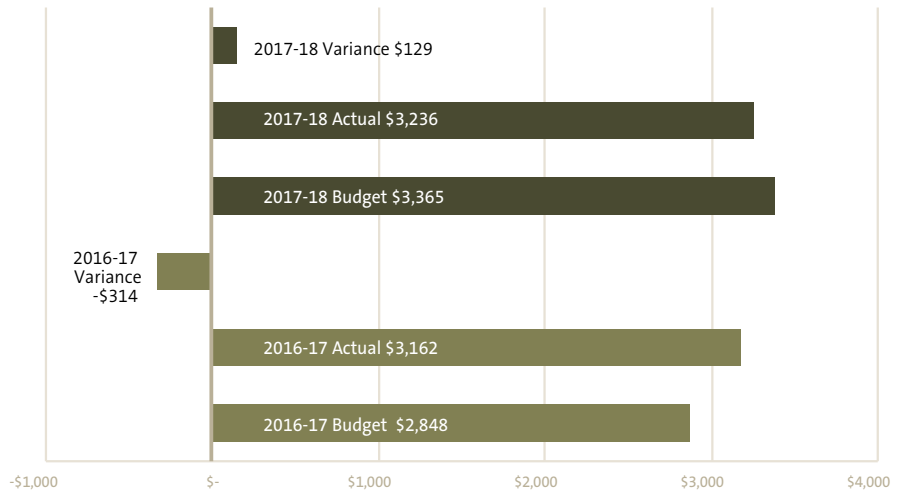
FIGURE 30: TOTAL INCOME - BUDGET VERSUS ACTUAL



EMPLOYEE EXPENSES

During 2017–18, there were a number of vacancies, which resulted in savings of personnel costs. This was offset to some degree by additional consultation costs, which are classified as goods and services costs to cover the additional anthropological work, which generated additional revenue.

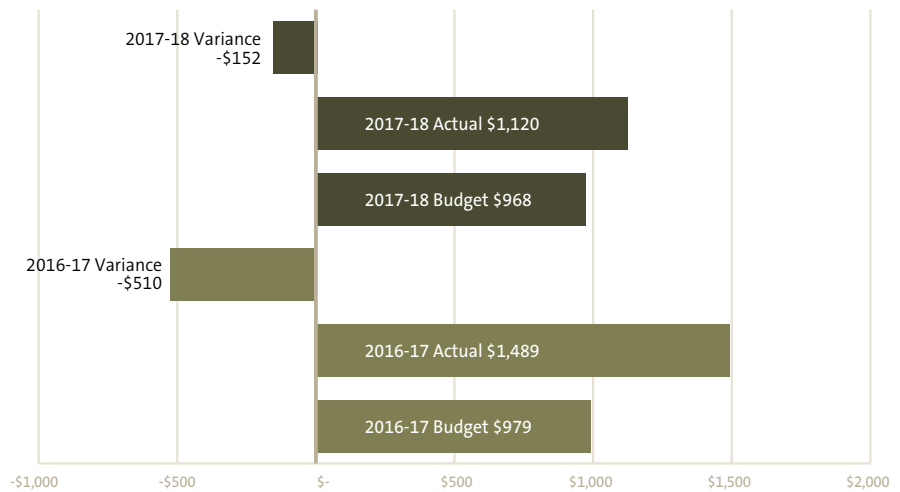
FIGURE 32: TOTAL EMPLOYEE - BUDGET VERSUS ACTUAL



PURCHASE OF GOODS AND SERVICES

Goods and services costs were over budget by \$152K due to additional board expenses of \$68K, additional motor vehicle costs of \$55K due to the fit-out of new fleet vehicles, and additional consultants’ fees of \$50K.

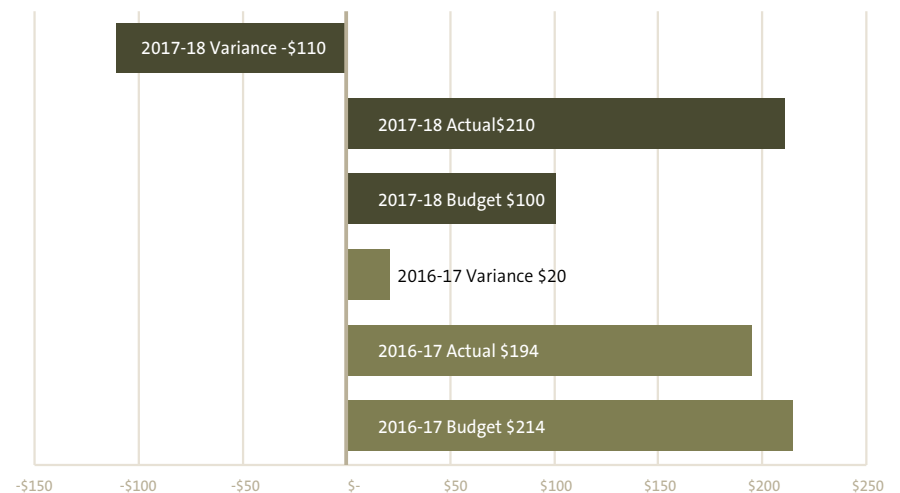
FIGURE 33: TOTAL PURCHASES OF GOODS AND SERVICES BUDGET VERSUS ACTUAL



DEPRECIATION

There were additional depreciation costs of \$110K due to the upgrade of internal software systems.

FIGURE 34: TOTAL DEPRECIATION AND AMORTISATION BUDGET VERSUS ACTUAL

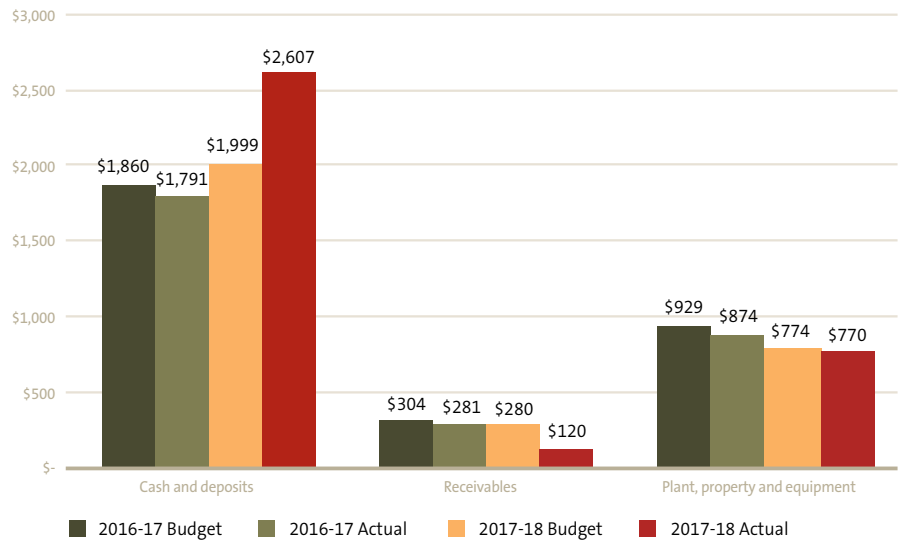


BALANCE SHEET

ASSETS

Total assets are made up of four main categories: cash and deposits; receivables; pre-paid expenses; and plant, property and equipment. Total assets increased by \$645K entirely due to an \$816K increase in cash, which was offset by declines in the other items.

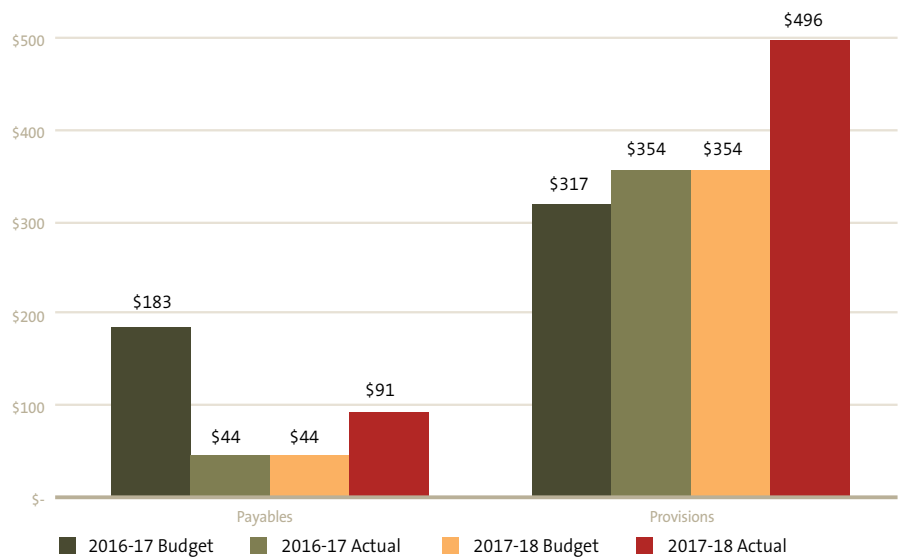
FIGURE 35: ASSETS - BUDGET VERSUS ACTUAL (\$'000)



LIABILITIES

Liabilities are made up of payables, accrued expenses, unearned revenue, provision for employee expenses and other provisions. Total liabilities of \$682K are dominated by provisions for employee entitlements (leave provisions) of \$397K. This rose by \$89K due to the transfer of new employees with outstanding balances and existing employees taking less leave during the year than they were entitled to.

FIGURE 36: LIABILITIES - BUDGET VERSUS ACTUAL (\$'000)



EQUITY

Equity has increased by \$258K due to the surplus attained during the financial year.

CASH FLOW STATEMENT

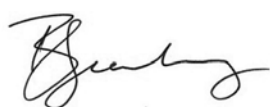
The cash flow statement details how changes in income and balance sheet movements affect the cash situation of the organisation. This indicates that the organisation is in a very sound financial situation.

CERTIFICATION OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

We certify that the attached financial statements for the Aboriginal Areas Protection Authority have been prepared based on 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 2018 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.



BEN SCAMBARY
Chief Executive Officer

31 August 2018



ALAN BUCKINGHAM
Chief Finance Officer

31 August 2018

COMPREHENSIVE OPERATING STATEMENT

For the year ended 30 June 2018

	Note	2018	2017
		\$'000	\$'000
INCOME			
Appropriation			
Output		2694	2716
Sales of goods and services		2133	2423
Goods and services received free of charge	4	804	798
TOTAL INCOME	3	5631	5937
EXPENSES			
Employee expenses		3236	3161
Administrative expenses			
Purchases of goods and services	5	1053	1428
Repairs and maintenance		3	5
Property Management		67	61
Depreciation and amortisation	8	210	194
Other administrative expenses ¹		804	798
TOTAL EXPENSES	3	5373	5647
NET SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)		258	291
COMPREHENSIVE RESULT		258	291

¹ Includes DCIS service charges.

The comprehensive operating statement is to be read in conjunction with the notes to the financial statements.

BALANCE SHEET

As at 30 June 2018

	Note	2018	2017
		\$'000	\$'000
ASSETS			
Current assets			
Cash and deposits	6	2607	1791
Receivables	7	120	281
Prepayments		-	10
Total current assets		2726	2081
Non-current assets			
Property, plant and equipment	8	770	874
Total non-current assets		770	874
TOTAL ASSETS		3496	2955
LIABILITIES			
Current liabilities			
Payables	9	91	44
Provisions	10	496	354
Other liabilities	11	95	-
Total current liabilities		682	399
TOTAL LIABILITIES		682	399
NET ASSETS		2814	2556
EQUITY			
Capital		1621	1621
Accumulated funds		1194	936
TOTAL EQUITY		2814	2556

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 2018

	Note	Equity at 1 July	Comprehensive result	Transactions with owners in their capacity as owners	Equity at 30 June
		\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
2017–18					
Accumulated funds		(930)	(258) ^(a)	-	(1188)
Transfers from reserves		(5)			(5)
Total Accumulated Funds ^(c)		(936)	(258)		(1194)
Capital – transactions with owners					
Equity injections					
Capital appropriation		(564)			(564)
Equity transfers in		(1195)			(1195)
Other equity injections		(57)			(57)
Equity withdrawals					
Capital withdrawal ^(d)		195			195
Total Capital – Transactions with Owners		(1621)			(1621)
Total equity at end of financial year		(2556)	(258)		(2814)
2016–17					
Accumulated funds		(638)	(292)		(930)
Transfers from reserves		(5)			(5)
Total Accumulated Funds		(644)	(292)		(936)
Capital – transactions with owners					
Equity injections					
Capital appropriation		(564)			(564)
Equity transfers in		(1195)			(1195)
Other equity injections		(57)			(57)
Capital withdrawal ^(d)		195			195
Total Capital – Transactions with Owners		(1621)			(1621)
Total equity at end of financial year		(2264)	(292)		(2556)

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 2018

	Note	2018	2017
		\$'000	\$'000
CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES			
Operating receipts			
Appropriation			
Output		2694	2716
Receipts from sales of goods and services		2457	2443
Total operating receipts		5151	5159
Operating payments			
Payments to employees		(3096)	(3129)
Payments for goods and services		(1132)	(1623)
Total operating payments		(4228)	(4752)
Net cash from/(used in) operating activities	12	922	407
CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES			
Investing payments			
Purchases of assets		(106)	(61)
Total investing payments		(106)	(61)
Net cash from/(used in) investing activities		(106)	(61)
Net increase/(decrease) in cash held		816	346
Cash at beginning of financial year		1791	1444
CASH AT END OF FINANCIAL YEAR	6	2607	1790

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

LIABILITIES

9. Payables
10. Provisions
11. Other liabilities

OTHER DISCLOSURES

12. Notes to the cash flow statement
13. Financial instruments
14. Related parties
15. Contingent liabilities and contingent assets
16. Events subsequent to balance date
17. Schedule of administered Territory items
18. Budgetary information
19. Budgetary information: administered Territory items.

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 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 good 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) Statement of compliance

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 Authority to prepare financial statements for the year ended 30 June based on the form determined by the Treasurer. The form of agency financial statements should 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
- (vi) applicable explanatory notes to the financial statements.

b) Basis of accounting

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.

Standards and interpretations effective from 2017–18

The following new and revised accounting standards and interpretations were effective for the first time in 2017–18:

AASB 2016-2 Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards – Disclosure Initiative: Amendments to AASB 107

This standard applies to the not-for-profit sector for the first time in 2016–17. The accounting amendment AASB 2016-2 requires the disclosure of information that enable users of financial statements to evaluate changes in liabilities arising from financing activities. This disclosure is illustrated in Note 37(b).

Several other amending standards and AASB interpretations have been issued that apply to the current reporting periods, but are considered to have no impact on public sector reporting.

Standards and Interpretations issued but not yet effective

On the date of authorisation of the financial statements, the following standards and interpretations were in issue but are not yet effective and are expected to have a potential impact on future reporting periods:

AASB 16 Leases

AASB 16 Leases is effective for annual reporting periods beginning on or after 1 January 2019 and will be reported in these financial statements for the first time in 2019–20. When the standard is effective it will supersede AASB 117 Leases and requires the majority of leases to be recognised on the balance sheet.

For lessees with operating leases, a right-of-use asset will now be included in the balance sheet together with a lease liability for all leases with a term of 12 months or more, unless the underlying assets are of low value. The comprehensive operating statement will no longer report operating lease rental payments. Instead a depreciation

expense will be recognised relating to the right-to-use asset and interest expense relating to the lease liability.

For lessors, the finance and operating lease distinction remains largely unchanged. For finance leases, the lessor recognises a receivable equal to the net investment in the lease. Lease receipts from operating leases are recognised as income either on a straight-line basis or another systematic basis where appropriate.

However this change is not expected to have a material impact on the Authority accounts in 2018–19.

AASB 1058 Income for not-for-profit entities and AASB 15 Revenue from Contracts with Customers

AASB 1058 Income for Not-for-Profit Entities and AASB 15 Revenue from Contracts with Customers are effective for annual reporting periods beginning on or after 1 January 2019 and will be reported in these financial statements for the first time in 2019–20.

Under the new AASB 1058 Income for Not-for-Profit Entities, revenue from grants and donations will be recognised when any associated performance obligation to provide goods or services is satisfied, and not immediately upon receipt as currently occurs. Consequently, more liabilities will be recognised in the balance sheet after adoption of this standard.

AASB 1058 clarifies and simplifies income-recognition requirements that apply to not-for-profit entities in conjunction with AASB 15 Revenue from Contracts with Customers.

While the full impacts are yet to be determined, potential impacts identified include:

- grants received to construct or acquire a non-financial asset will be recognised as a liability, and subsequently recognised as revenue as the performance obligations under the grant are satisfied. At present, such grants are recognised as revenue on receipt
- grants with an enforceable agreement and sufficiently specific performance obligations will be recognised as revenue progressively as the associated performance obligations are satisfied. At present, such grants are recognised as revenue on receipt
- grants that have an enforceable agreement but no specific performance obligations but have restrictions on the timing of expenditure will also continue to be recognised on receipt as time restriction on the use of funds is not sufficiently specific to create a performance obligation

- grants that are not enforceable and/or not sufficiently specific will not qualify for deferral, and continue to be recognised as revenue as soon as they are controlled.

AASB 1059 Service Concession Arrangements: Grantors

AASB 1059 Service Concession Arrangements: Grantors is effective for annual reporting periods beginning on or after 1 January 2019 and will be reported in these financial statements for the first time in 2019–20.

AASB 1059 addresses the accounting for arrangements that involve an operator providing public services related to a service concession asset on behalf of a public sector grantor for a specified period of time and managing at least some of those services.

Where a transaction meets the definition of a service concession arrangement, a service concession asset and liability will be recognised on the balance sheet and valued in accordance with the new standard.

The Territory's public-private partnership arrangements are currently under review to determine the applicability of AASB 1059 and the full impact of the new standard.

Several other amending standards and AASB interpretations have been issued that apply to future reporting periods, but are considered to have limited impact on future financial reporting.

c) Reporting entity

The financial statements cover the Authority as an individual reporting entity.

The Aboriginal Areas Protection Authority ("the Authority") is a Northern Territory department established under the *Interpretation Act Administrative Arrangements Order*.

The principal place of business of the Authority is:

4th Floor RCG Centre, 47 Mitchell St, Darwin, NT

d) Agency and territory items

The financial statements of the Authority include income, expenses, assets, liabilities and equity over which the 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 26 – schedule of administered Territory items.

e) Comparatives

Where necessary, comparative information for the 2016–17 financial year has been reclassified to provide consistency with current year disclosures.

f) 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. Figures in the financial statements and notes may not equate due to rounding.

g) Changes in accounting policies

There have been no changes to accounting policies adopted in 2017–18 as a result of management decisions.

h) 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.

i) 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.

j) 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.

3. COMPREHENSIVE OPERATING STATEMENT BY OUTPUT GROUP

	Note	Protection of Sacred Sites		Corporate Support		Total	
		2018	2017	2018	2017	2018	2017
		\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
INCOME							
Appropriation							
Output							
Commonwealth		2020	2037	674	674	2694	2716
Sales of goods and services		2133	2413			2133	2413
Goods and services received free of charge	4	603	599	201	199	804	798
TOTAL INCOME		4756	5049	875	873	5631	5937
EXPENSES							
Employee expenses		1911	1450	1325	1711	3236	3161
Purchases of goods and services	5	563	731	492	697	1056	1428
Property management				67	66	67	66
Depreciation and amortisation	8	158	146	52	48	210	194
Other administrative expenses ¹		603	599	201	199	804	798
TOTAL EXPENSES		3235	2926	2136	2721	5373	5647
NET SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)		1520	2123	(1262)	1848	258	290

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.

Income

Income encompasses both revenue and gains.

Income is recognised at the fair value of the consideration received, exclusive of the amount of GST. Goods and services income is recognised at the point in time when the service has been delivered and payment has been requested.

Grants and other contributions

Grants, donations, gifts and other non-reciprocal contributions are recognised as revenue when the agency obtains control over the assets comprising the contributions. Control is normally obtained upon receipt.

Contributions are recognised at their fair value. Contributions of services are only recognised when a fair value can be reliably determined and the services would be purchased if not donated.

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 passed on 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
- 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 work is substantially completed and all internal processes finalised.

	2018	2017
	\$'000	\$'000
4. GOODS AND SERVICES RECEIVED FREE OF CHARGE		
Corporate and information services	804	798
	804	798
5. PURCHASES OF GOODS AND SERVICES		
The net surplus/(deficit) has been arrived at after charging the following expenses:		
Goods and services expenses:		
Consultants	250	569
Advertising ⁽²⁾	2	-
Marketing and promotion ⁽³⁾	13	10
Document production	5	6
Legal expenses ⁽⁴⁾	32	53
Recruitment ⁽⁵⁾	6	1
Training and study	36	21
Official duty fares	25	93
Travelling allowance	24	23
Insurance	24	34
Board and committees	114	50
IT charges	180	181
	711	1088

⁽¹⁾ Includes anthropological and IT consultants. Note the decline in expenditure for 2018 was mainly due to a reduction in using external anthropological 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.

Repairs and maintenance expense

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

	2018	2017
	\$'000	\$'000
6. CASH AND DEPOSITS		
Cash on hand	1	1
Cash at bank	2606	1790
	2607	1791
For the purposes of the Balance Sheet and the Cash Flow Statement, cash includes cash on hand and cash at bank. Cash at bank includes monies held in the Accountable Officer's Trust Account (AOTA) that are ultimately payable to the beneficial owner.		
7. RECEIVABLES		
Current		
Accounts receivable	80	201
Less: allowance for impairment losses	(5)	(6)
GST receivables	7	(11)
Other receivables	38	97
Non-current		
Other receivables		
	120	281
Total 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 13 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.		
Prepayments		
Prepayments represent payments in advance of receipt of goods and services or that part of expenditure made in one accounting period covering a term extending beyond that period.		

	2018	2017
	\$'000	\$'000
8. PROPERTY, PLANT AND EQUIPMENT		
Computer software		
At capitalised cost	470	363
Less: accumulated depreciation	(143)	(65)
	326	297
Plant and equipment		
At fair value	1407	1407
Less: accumulated depreciation	(964)	(832)
	444	577
Total Property, Plant and Equipment	770	874

	Land	Buildings	Infrastructure	Computer Software	Plant and equipment	Leased property, plant and equipment	Total
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Carrying amount as at 1 July 2017				297	577		874
Additions				107			107
Disposals							
Depreciation				(78)	(133)		(211)
Carrying amount as at 30 June 2018				326	444		770

	Land	Buildings	Infrastructure	Computer Software	Plant and equipment	Leased property, plant and equipment	Total
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Carrying amount as at 1 July 2016				358	649		1007
Additions				61			61
Disposals							
Depreciation				(60)	(134)		(194)
Carrying amount as at 30 June 2017				359	515		874

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 the Authority capital works is provided directly to the Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Logistics, 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.

Valuation of assets

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

Impairment of assets

Agency property, plant and equipment assets were assessed for impairment as at 30 June 2018. No assets were considered to be impaired.

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:

	2018	2017
Computer software	5 years	5 years
Plant and equipment	10 years	10 years

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

	2018	2017
	\$'000	\$'000
9. PAYABLES		
Accounts payable	12	4
Accrued expenses	79	40
Total payables	91	44
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.		
10. PROVISIONS		
Current		
<i>Employee benefits</i>		
Recreation leave	346	253
Leave loading	43	50
<i>Other current provisions</i>		
Other employee benefits	8	4
Other provisions	99	47
Total Provisions	496	354

The Authority employed 26.96 employees as at 30 June 2018 (29.64 employees as at 30 June 2017).

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 12 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
- 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 Authority and as such no long service leave liability is recognised in agency financial statements.

	2018	2017
	\$'000	\$'000
11. OTHER LIABILITIES		
Current		
Client prepayments	95	-
Total other liabilities	95	-

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.

	2018	2017
	\$'000	\$'000
12. NOTES TO THE CASH FLOW STATEMENT		
a) Reconciliation of cash		
The total of agency 'cash and deposits' of \$2,607 is consistent with the 2018 closing balance recorded on the balance sheet.		
Reconciliation of net surplus/deficit to net cash from operating activities	258	291
Net surplus/deficit		
<i>Non-cash items:</i>		
Depreciation and amortisation	210	194
<i>Changes in assets and liabilities:</i>		
Decrease/(increase) in receivables	161	(79)
Decrease/(increase) in prepayments	10	(8)
Decrease/(increase) in payables	47	(11)
Decrease/(increase) in provisions	141	20
Decrease/(increase) in other liabilities	95	(1)
Net cash from operating activities	922	407

13. 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.

k) 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, advances, payables and advances received.

Due to the nature of operating activities, certain financial assets and financial liabilities arise under statutory obligations rather than a contract. Such financial assets and liabilities do not meet the definition of financial instruments as per AASB 132 Financial Instruments Presentation. These include statutory receivables arising from taxes including GST and penalties.

The Authority does not have any exposure to interest rate risk, foreign exchange risk, credit risk or price risk and liquidity risk is minimal in the normal course of activities. The agency is managed through the NTTC adopting strategies to minimise the risk.

a) Categorisation of financial instruments

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

2017–18 Categorisation of financial instruments

	Fair value through profit or loss						Total
	Held for trading	Designated at fair value	Held to maturity investments	Financial assets - loans and receivables	Financial assets - available for sale	Financial liabilities - amortised cost	
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	
Cash and deposits					2607		2607
Receivables ¹					120		120
Total financial assets					2726		2726
Payables ¹					91		91
Total financial liabilities					91		91

1. Total amounts disclosed here exclude statutory amounts

2016–17 Categorisation of financial instruments

	Fair value through profit or loss						Total
	Held for trading	Designated at fair value	Held to maturity investments	Financial assets - loans and receivables	Financial assets - available for sale	Financial liabilities - amortised cost	
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	
Cash and deposits					1791		1791
Receivables ¹					281		281
Total financial assets					2072		2072
Deposits held ¹					44		44
Payables ¹							
Total financial liabilities					44		44

1. Total amounts disclosed here exclude statutory amounts

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:

- receivables

a) 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 ageing analysis of receivables is presented below.

Internal receivables ^(a)	Ageing of receivables	Ageing of impaired receivables	Net receivables
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
2017–18			
Not overdue	20		20
Overdue for less than 30 days			
Overdue for 30 to 60 days			
Overdue for more than 60 days			
Total	20		20
Reconciliation of the allowance for impairment losses ^(b)			
Opening		0	
Written off during the year			
Recovered during the year			
Increase/decrease in allowance recognised in profit or loss			
Total		0	
2016–17			
Not overdue	111		111
Overdue for less than 30 days			
Overdue for 30 to 60 days			
Overdue for more than 60 days			
Total	111		111
Reconciliation of the allowance for impairment losses ^(b)			
Opening		0	
Written off during the year			
Recovered during the year			
Increase/decrease in allowance recognised in profit or loss			
Total		0	

External receivables ^(a)	Ageing of receivables	Ageing of impaired receivables	Net receivables
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
2017–18			
Not overdue	18		18
Overdue for less than 30 days			
Overdue for 30 to 60 days			
Overdue for more than 60 days	40		40
Total	58		58
Reconciliation of the allowance for impairment losses ^(b)			
Opening	5		5
Written off during the year			
Recovered during the year			
Increase/decrease in allowance recognised in profit or loss			
Total	5		5
2016–17	57		57
Not overdue			
Overdue for less than 30 days			
Overdue for 30 to 60 days			
Overdue for more than 60 days	37		37
Total	95		95
Reconciliation of the allowance for impairment losses ^(b)			
Opening			
Written off during the year	15		15
Recovered during the year			
Increase/decrease in allowance recognised in profit or loss			
Total	15		15

b) 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. The agency holds sufficient reserves to cover the minor cash flow fluctuations that may occur.

The following tables detail the agency's remaining contractual maturity for its financial assets and liabilities.

2018 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	\$'000	\$'000	%
Assets									
Cash and deposits							2607	2607	96
Receivables							120	120	4
Total Financial Assets							2726	2726	100
Liabilities									
Payables							91	91	49
Other liabilities							95	95	51
Total Financial Liabilities							186	186	100

2017 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							1791	1791	86
Receivables							281	281	14
Total Financial Assets							2081	2081	100
Liabilities									
Payables							44	44	100
Other liabilities							-	-	
Total Financial Liabilities							44	44	100

c) 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. This is not relevant to the Authority's activities.

d) Interest rate risk

The Authority is not exposed to interest rate risk as agency financial assets and financial liabilities are non interest bearing. Finance lease arrangements are established on a fixed interest rate and as such do not expose the Authority to interest rate risk.

e) Price risk

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

f) Currency risk

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

14. RELATED PARTIES

i) Related parties

The Authority is a government administrative entity and is wholly owned and controlled by the Territory Government. Related parties of the department include:

- the portfolio minister and key management personnel (KMP) because they have authority and responsibility for planning, directing and controlling the activities of the department directly
- spouses, children and dependents who are close family members of the portfolio minister or KMP
- all public sector entities that are controlled and consolidated into the whole of government financial statements
- any entities controlled or jointly controlled by KMP's or the portfolio minister or controlled or jointly controlled by their close family members.

ii) Key Management Personnel (KMP)

Key management personnel of the Authority are those persons having authority and responsibility for planning, directing and controlling the activities of the Authority. These include the minister, the Chief Executive Officer and the four members of the executive team, who are:

1. Dr Sophie Creighton, Director of Research and Land Information
2. Mr Alan Buckingham, Director Corporate Services /Chief Financial Officer
3. Mr Matthew Dean, Director Policy and Governance who resigned and was replaced in May 2018 by Mr Che Walsh
4. Mr Peter Russell, Compliance Manager from 1 July 2017–31 December 2018.

iii) Remuneration of Key Management Personnel

The aggregate compensation of key management personnel of the Authority for 2017–18 was \$749 000.

iv) Related party transactions:

Transactions with Northern Territory Government-controlled entities

The Authority Board consists of 10 Indigenous representatives and two government-nominated positions. The Indigenous representatives received Board sitting fees that totalled \$46 000, and a further \$11 000 was paid in travel allowance.

15. CONTINGENT LIABILITIES AND CONTINGENT ASSETS

The Authority had no contingent liabilities or contingent assets as at 30 June 2018 or 30 June 2017.

16. 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.

17. 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)).

	2018	2017
	\$'000	\$'000
TERRITORY INCOME AND EXPENSES		
Income		
Fees from regulatory services	53	45
Total income	53	45
Expenses		
Central Holding Authority income transferred	53	45
Total expenses	53	45
Territory income less expenses	0	0

18. BUDGETARY INFORMATION

Comprehensive Operating Statement	2017-18 Actual	2017-18 Original budget	Variance	Note
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	
INCOME				
Output	2694	2694		
Sales of goods and services	2133	1865	268	a
Goods and services received free of charge	804	868	(64)	
Gain on disposal of assets				
Other income				
TOTAL INCOME	5631	5427	204	
EXPENSES				
Employee expenses	3236	3365	(129)	
Administrative expenses				
Purchases of goods and services	1120	978	(142)	b
Repairs and maintenance	3	8	(5)	
Depreciation and amortisation	210	100	(110)	c
TOTAL EXPENSES	5373	5309	(64)	
NET SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)	258	108	150	
COMPREHENSIVE RESULT	258	108	150	

Notes:

<(a) Additional revenue earned from additional research activity.

<(b) Main additional goods and services expenditure due to consulting and Motor Vehicle costs which relate to the additional revenue as well as additional board expenses.

<(c) Depreciation increased due to increased investment in software

Balance Sheet	2017-18 Actual	2017-18 Original budget	Variance	Note
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	
ASSETS				
Current assets				
Cash and deposits	2607	1760	847	
Receivables	120	202	(82)	
Inventories				
Advances and investments				
Prepayments		2		
Other assets				
Total current assets	2727	1962	765	
Non-current assets				
Receivables				
Advances and investments				
Property, plant and equipment	770	794	(24)	
Intangibles				
Biological assets				
Heritage and cultural assets				
Prepayments				
Other assets				
Total non-current assets	770	794	(24)	
TOTAL ASSETS	3496	2758	741	
LIABILITIES				
Current liabilities				
Deposits held				
Payables	91	56	35	
Borrowings and advances				
Provisions	496	335	161	
Other liabilities	95	-	95	
Total current liabilities	682	391	291	
TOTAL LIABILITIES	682	391	291	
NET ASSETS	2814	2367	447	
EQUITY				
Capital	1621	1621		
Accumulated funds	1194	746	447	
TOTAL EQUITY	2814	2367	447	

Cash Flow Statement	2017–18 Actual	2017–18 Original budget	Variance	Note
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	
CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES				
Operating receipts				
Taxes received				
Grants and subsidies received				
Current				
Capital				
Appropriation				
Output	2694	2694	0	
Commonwealth				
Receipts from sales of goods and services	2457	1365	(1095)	
Interest received				
Total operating receipts	5151	4059	(1092)	
Operating payments				
Payments to employees	3096	2875	221	
Payments for goods and services	1132	976	156	
Grants and subsidies paid				
Current				
Capital				
Community service obligations				
Interest paid				
Total operating payments	4228	3851	377	
Net cash from/(used in) operating activities	922	208	714	
CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES				
Investing payments				
Purchases of assets	106		106	
Advances and investing payments				
Total investing payments	106		(106)	
Net cash from/(used in) investing activities				
Net increase/(decrease) in cash held	816	208	608	
Cash at beginning of financial year	1791	1552	239	
CASH AT END OF FINANCIAL YEAR	2607	1760	847	

19. BUDGETARY INFORMATION: ADMINISTERED TERRITORY ITEMS

In addition to the specific departmental operations included in the financial statements, the Authority administers or manages other activities and resources on behalf of the Territory, such as the collection of fees. The Authority does not gain control over assets arising from these collections; consequently, no income is recognised in the Authority's financial statements. The transactions relating to these activities are reported as administered items in this note.

Administered Territory Items	2017-18 Actual	2017-18 Original budget	Variance	Note
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	
TERRITORY INCOME AND EXPENSES				
Income				
Taxation revenue				
Grants and subsidies revenue				
Current				
Capital				
Fees from regulatory services	53	53	0	
Royalties and rents				
Other income				
Total income	53	53	0	
Expenses				
Central Holding Authority income transferred	53	53	0	
Doubtful debts				
Bad debts				
Other administrative expenses				
Total expenses	53	53	0	
Territory income less expenses	0	0	0	



**Aboriginal Areas
Protection Authority**
protecting sacred sites across the territory

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

Internet:
www.aapant.org.au

Email:
enquiries.aapa@nt.gov.au