



Waanyi

NATIVE TITLE ABORIGINAL CORPORATION RNTBC

Newsletter 6

Welcome to our Latest Update

Dear members, traditional owners and other interested people,

With the appointment of a strong new Board and the end of Special Administration, Waanyi PBC is focused on building real opportunities for our people — starting with jobs and training.

We're kicking this off by hosting Training and Employment Engagement Days in Doomadgee, Gregory, and Mount Isa, to hear directly from the community about the types of work Waanyi people want to do and the support needed to get there. Our focus is clear: turning Native Title into practical benefits — through employment pathways supported by culturally aligned training. Engagement days will be occurring in the next few months.

We're proud to introduce our new Board

A strong team committed to cultural leadership and community-driven progress:

Waanyi Directors: Anthony Saltmere, Everyl Johnny, Hayley Iles, Kay Langtree and Warren Smith

Independent Directors: Brett Ingram and Sheryl Hedges

This is just the beginning of a new chapter for Waanyi.

Yours sincerely,

Michael "Mick" Miller

Chief Executive Officer
Waanyi PBC

End of Special Administration

We are pleased to confirm that the Special Administration of Waanyi Native Title Aboriginal Corporation officially ended at 11:59pm on Friday, 14 February 2025. This follows a 10-month period of oversight which began on 15 April 2024 and was extended through to February 2025 under the Corporations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) Act 2006 (CATSI Act).

Control of the Corporation has now been formally handed back to the newly appointed Board of Directors. ORIC has acknowledged the work completed under administration and will monitor the Corporation closely over the next 12 months to support a smooth transition. This marks a major milestone in returning to community-

led governance and continuing our work to strengthen the Corporation for all Waanyi people.

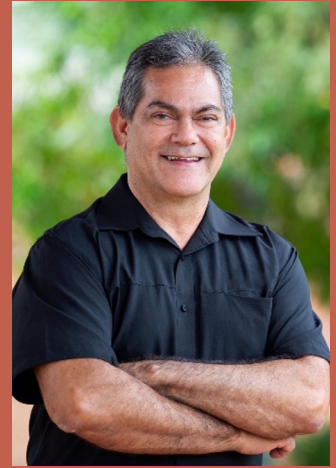
New Board

The Waanyi Board has officially commenced its new term following the end of Special Administration. The Board includes a strong mix of experienced and emerging leaders: Anthony Saltmere, Brett Ingram (Independent Director), Everyl Johnny, Hayley Iles, Kay Langtree, Sheryl Hedges (Independent Director), and Warren Smith. Together, they bring diverse perspectives, strong community ties, and a commitment to Waanyi cultural and economic priorities. There are three vacant positions for members to elect at the next Annual General Meeting to be held in late 2025.

New Chair Profile

Warren Smith has been appointed as the new Chairperson of the Waanyi PBC following a Board vote on 18 February 2025. Warren was selected after a thorough nomination and voting process and brings significant governance experience, deep cultural insight, and a strong commitment to community-led progress.

In his first remarks as Chair, Warren called for unity among Directors, emphasising the importance of working together under the newly adopted TRACS values: Trust, Respect, Accountability, Cultural Knowledge, and Strategic Outlook. His leadership style is inclusive and future-focused, and he is committed to ensuring that the voices of Waanyi people guide the work of the Corporation.



My Story & Vision for the Waanyi People

My name is Warren Smith, I am a Waanyi/Garawa man from the lower Gulf of Carpentaria, QLD. I was born on Gangalidda Country in Burketown and spent my childhood growing up in the Gulf region at Woods Lake, and Beamsbrook Station during the 1960s, 70s, and 80s.

After completing high school, I went on to train as a boilermaker and received my trade Qualification from Mount Isa Mines. I returned home to the gulf and commenced work for the Burke Shire Council before transitioning back to station life, where I worked in fencing, cattle handling, and bull catching.

Over the past 30 years, I have gained extensive experience working with Federal, State, and Territory Governments and Non-Government organisations that serve First Nations people and communities across Northern Australia — from Townsville in QLD to Derby in the West Kimberley of WA. My journey in life has now returned me to my home country, where I seek to use my knowledge and experience to help the Waanyi people build a strong and united future.

Rebuilding and Strengthening Waanyi PBC

Currently, we are in the process of rebuilding the Waanyi PBC after a challenging period of inexperienced leadership. Thanks to the hard work of Peter McQuoide, and the Corporation Advisory Group (CAG), the organisation is now debt-free and financially stable. With support and guidance from the CAG, Peter helped establish an office and recruit staff to improve the services we provide for our people.

Looking ahead, we must focus on long-term financial stability. The funding from Century Mine will run out in the coming years, so we need to explore new ways to

generate income. This means applying for government funding, securing contracts, and creating job and training opportunities for Waanyi people. My goal for the next decade is to expand our organisation to 50 employees and generate \$30 million in goods and services.

Just as importantly, we need to rebuild trust — both within our Waanyi community and with external partners. Our aim is for the Waanyi people to be seen as a strong, reliable, and professional organisation capable of conducting business and delivering real outcomes for our people.

A Bit About Me

Favourite Bush Tucker:

Turtle, goanna, black bream, crayfish, bush blackberry, conga berry, and gulgunga.

Favourite Aboriginal Songs:

- Nyuntu Nyaaltjirruku – Warumpi Band
- Bunuba Girl – Fitzroy Express
- We Won't Cry – Archie Roach
- Wiyathul – Gurrumul
- Tjamuku Ngurra – Tjinta Desert Band
- Changing Times – Tiddas
- The Hunter – Lonely Boys
- Bagi-la-m Bargan – Birdz
- ICU – A.B. Original & Thelma Plum
- This Land Is Mine (Live) – The Black Arm Band

The future of the Waanyi people is full of opportunities, and I am committed to ensuring that we move forward together — stronger than ever.

New CEO Profile

Michael "Mick" Miller

We're excited to welcome our new CEO, a proud Olkola man from central Cape York, who brings more than 25 years of experience working across government roles that have supported remote Indigenous communities. His connection to Waanyi Country began during his work in Doomadgee, where he built lasting relationships with local community members. "Once people knew I was Murri, they started to open up, and I heard stories about the Waanyi people that were so similar to the ones my Elders had told me growing up," he shared. "When I saw the CEO role advertised, I saw it as a chance to give back and use what I've learned to support a community I've really enjoyed working with."

His background is grounded in both community and governance. As a current Director of his own PBC for over 10 years, he's been instrumental in developing employment and economic opportunities for his people, all while caring for Country. He brings with him a wide range of skills in stakeholder engagement, contract management, governance (both cultural and mainstream), mentoring, employment and economic development, and advocacy for Indigenous

communities. His goal for Waanyi? "To work with the PBC to deliver the priorities in the strategic plan — and to boost opportunities for Waanyi people by building strong partnerships with both government and non-government stakeholders."

On a lighter note, he's proudly the stirrer in his family — supporting the Blues, the All Blacks, and Melbourne Storm. "My mob hate it, but hey, there's always one in the family — and that's me!"



Interest in the role

Throughout my career I have held various roles within Government that gave me the opportunity to work within the Doomadgee community. Throughout this time, I had met some great people who were willing to share their time and some stories once they knew I was Murri. Hearing about the history of the Waanyi people was just like the stories my elders had told me about what happened to us.

Over the last few years, I have really wanted to invest my time and use the skills I have learned along the way to help community, so when the Waanyi CEO position was advertised I thought it would be a great opportunity to work within a community I have enjoyed working.

My Background

I'm a proud Olkola man from the central part of Cape York. I'm a current Director of my PBC and have been for over 10 years. Over this time, I have worked closely with my mob to develop better employment and economic opportunities for us whilst caring for country. Additionally to this I have over 25 years' experience working for government in many roles servicing remote Indigenous communities. These roles have allowed me to work closely with communities around improving housing, health, education and employment and training opportunities.

Key Skills

Being Indigenous and growing up in community I believe I'm able to relate to and understand community issues from a grass roots level. Additionally I'm able to bring the following skillsets:

- Stakeholder engagement / networking
- Contract Management
- Governance - Cultural / Clan and Mainstream
- Mentoring
- Employment & Economic development
- Advocacy - Indigenous communities

Ambitions for Waanyi

Work with the PBC to achieve their key priorities outlined within their strategic plan. Additionally I want to improve the training, employment and economic opportunities for Waanyi people through building strong relationships with relevant stakeholders being both non-government and government departments.

Fun facts

I'm the stirrer in the family - I go to the Blues, All Black and Melbourne Storm. My mob hate it, but hey there is always one in the family and that's me.

Financial Update

Waanyi is in a sound and stable financial position. We have no outstanding debts, and all payables are being managed within agreed terms. Past financial issues have been resolved, including recovering funds owed to Waanyi and reaching practical agreements with several suppliers.

Strong financial controls are now in place, with two-person authorisation and sign-off required for every dollar received or spent. A previous ATO debt has been fully repaid. We've also engaged new accountants and financial advisers, and a full-year budget is now in operation and monitored monthly. These measures have laid a solid financial foundation, ensuring that Waanyi can responsibly manage its resources and deliver on community priorities.

Reminder: Cultural Payments Available

Waanyi PBC has a Cultural Payment Policy in place to support eligible Waanyi people with costs related to funerals, cultural business, and essential travel for health-related reasons. Members can apply for up to \$1,000 for funeral support per deceased person and up to \$300 for fuel and food related to medical treatment. Each type of support can be accessed once per year. Payments are made to organisations (such as funeral homes or service providers), not to individuals directly.

To apply, members must complete a 'Request for Funds' form and email it to admin@waanyipbc.org. If you're unable to complete the form yourself, you can contact the Waanyi office for assistance and apply verbally. Waanyi PBC kindly requests a minimum 1 week to process all payments. Payments are subject to available funding and approval by the CEO in line with the policy and Waanyi PBC Rule Book. A quarterly budget is set by the Board, and payments are reported monthly to ensure accountability. We encourage members to reach out and update their contact details so they stay informed about cultural support and other services available.

Membership Drive

The Waanyi PBC is putting out a strong call to all members: please take a moment to update your contact details. Right now, we're unable to reach over 50% of our members due to outdated phone numbers, postal addresses, or email information. This makes it hard to keep everyone informed and involved in important updates, decisions, and opportunities.

We're working hard to actively communicate with all Waanyi members and build a more inclusive approach. Updating your details is simple — it opens the door to

better engagement, clear communication. If you've moved house, changed numbers, or haven't heard from us in a while, now's the time to reconnect. Your voice matters, and we want to hear it.

Community Meeting

Community Meetings – Stay Involved and Informed

Waanyi PBC is planning to hold at least three community meetings in 2025, along with our Annual General Meeting (AGM) in mid to late November. These meetings are being proposed now to give members as much notice as possible and to ensure maximum attendance and participation.

- **6 June 2025 (location tbc - Gregory or Doomadgee):** General update on governance, financials, employment, and current projects and to provide an opportunity to hear from Century Mining and to hold an initial information briefing on future Century payments which will be determined at the following Community meeting.
- **August/September 2025 (tentative):** A key opportunity to discuss the Century Mining Payment agreement — including how the community would like to see funds managed going forward.
- **October/November 2025 (tentative):** Continued community engagement, including progress reports and program updates.
- **AGM (mid to late November 2025):** Official reporting, Board updates, and corporate governance matters.

Transport will be arranged to support member attendance at these important events. To ensure you receive notices, updates, and travel information, please make sure your contact details are current. If you've moved or changed numbers, contact the Waanyi office to update your information. Your participation is vital to Waanyi's future.

Park Reopening Update – Boodjamulla National Park

Waanyi PBC has received a proposed schedule for the staged reopening of Boodjamulla National Park (Aboriginal Land) starting from 1 July 2025, subject to safety conditions and final approvals. The schedule, developed in consultation with Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service (QPWS) and supported by the Capital Delivery Team, outlines a gradual return of visitor access across Boodjamulla National Park. Infrastructure works are on track, with construction works to commence on track rebuild and other infrastructure repairs from April/May 2025. While early access will build progressively

from July 2025, we're excited to announce plans for a major official reopening ceremony, tentatively scheduled for June 2026. This event is expected to coincide with further land handbacks to Waanyi, making it a deeply significant and historic moment for our people. More details will be shared closer to the date. In the meantime, Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service (QPWS) is seeking Waanyi PBC's endorsement of the proposed reopening schedule before the end of May 2025, after which the Boodjamulla CMC will formally consider the plan. We'll keep the community informed and involved every step of the way.

Upcoming Waanyi Drop-in Centres

Waanyi PBC is currently looking into establishing Drop-In Centres in Doomadgee, Mount Isa, and Gregory. These centres are proposed to be co-located with other community-based organisations, allowing for better access for Waanyi members to engage with the PBC and stay connected to important updates and services.

Once operational, the Drop-In Centres will provide support with updating membership details, submitting cultural payment requests, completing forms, and accessing employment or training opportunities. They will also serve as venues for informal community engagement, cultural connection, and the sharing of information relevant to Waanyi people. Further details regarding the proposed locations and timelines will be communicated in due course. Waanyi PBC remains committed to improving access and strengthening connection with members across all communities.

Engagement with Doomadgee and other Councils

Waanyi PBC has recently held several positive meetings with Doomadgee Aboriginal Shire Council, specifically with their Economic Development and Community Engagement teams. These meetings are focused on strengthening relationships and exploring how we can work more closely together to support outcomes that benefit Waanyi people and the broader Doomadgee community.

While specific opportunities are still being explored, the discussions have created a strong foundation for potential collaboration in areas such as cultural heritage, employment pathways, land management, and community-led development. This early engagement marks an important step toward building

lasting partnerships that reflect shared values and a commitment to working together on country and in community.

Waanyi PBC has also met with Burke Council and Mt Isa to increase collaboration between the organisations. Future Trainees.

Future Traineeships and Job Opportunities

Waanyi PBC is committed to creating meaningful employment pathways for our people, with a strong focus on traineeships and entry-level opportunities. A number of new positions are being explored across various areas including administration, land management, and cultural heritage support.

As part of this effort, we are aiming to place trainees within each of the proposed Drop-In Centres in Doomadgee, Mount Isa, and Gregory. These trainees will be mentored and supported through our co-located partnerships with community-based organisations, helping build real skills and confidence while delivering important services to our members. This model will not only provide hands-on experience but also strengthen community connection and leadership capacity. More details will be shared as these positions are finalised.

Riversleigh Renaming – Request to include Miyumba in the name of the World Heritage Area

The Waanyi PBC Board has endorsed a formal name change for the Riversleigh World Heritage Area to include Miyumba (Riversleigh) in the official name. This decision reflects Waanyi people's deep cultural connection to the area known as Miyumba, and it aligns with our ongoing efforts to see greater recognition of Waanyi language and heritage across Country.

The PBC has written to the Commonwealth Minister requesting the name change be progressed. If accepted, the name will be formally submitted to the UNESCO World Heritage Committee for consideration at its annual meeting in July 2025. This is an important milestone in cultural recognition and supports the priorities outlined in both the Waanyi Strategic Plan and the Boodjamulla National Park Management Plan. We look forward to sharing further updates with the community as the process continues.

Land Handback – Tranche 2 Targeted for July 2025

Waanyi PBC is continuing to make strong progress on the staged return of Boodjamulla National Park (Aboriginal Land) to Waanyi ownership under the Aboriginal Land Act. Following the successful Tranche 1 handback in 2023, the next stage — Tranche 2 — is now targeted for June/July 2025, and includes over 272,000 hectares across the middle and northern parts of the park, as well as surrounding reserves.

Final preparations are underway, including agreement on lease terms and formal acceptance of the land from the Department of Resources. Waanyi is also working closely with the Department of Environment, Tourism, Science and Innovation (DETSI) to engage with exploration permit holders in areas still under mining tenure, so those sections can also be handed back in future stages. Importantly, the staged reopening of Boodjamulla National Park is closely linked to the timing of these land handbacks, with future access and co-stewardship responsibilities expanding as each tranche is completed. An official celebration of this major milestone is being considered for June 2026.

Stakeholder Day – Strengthening Partnerships Ahead of 2025

Waanyi PBC held its 2025 Stakeholder Forum on Wednesday, 2 April in Brisbane. The event brought together representatives from Waanyi, exploration companies, and government agencies for open and constructive dialogue focused on improving facilitation processes across groups — particularly in preparation for a busy 2025 dry season of exploration, rebuilding, and recovery.

The forum featured four key sessions, including an introduction to Waanyi culture and history, updates on recent governance changes, a review of survey monitoring protocols, an employment roundtable, and a discussion on long-term training needs. The day served as a valuable opportunity to share knowledge, align expectations, and reaffirm the importance of collaboration on Waanyi Country.

