



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

**Annual
Report
2016-2017**

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Custodains discussing sacred sites during fieldwork.

The Hon Lauren Moss MLA
Minister for Environment and Natural Resources
DARWIN NT 0800

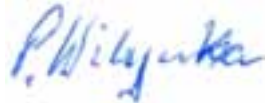
30 September 2017

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 2016 to 30 June 2017.

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

Yours sincerely



Philip Wilyuka
Chairman

The Hon Lauren Moss MLA
Minister for Environment and Natural Resources
DARWIN NT 0800

30 September 2017

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 2016 to 30 June 2017.

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

- a) proper records of all transactions affecting the Agency are kept and that employees under their 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; and
- f) the Agency is working in compliance with the *Information Act*.

Yours sincerely



Dr Benedict Scambary
Chief Executive Officer

1 Introduction



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AAPA chairman Philip Wilyuka

Purpose of the Report

This is a report on the administration and operation of the Aboriginal Areas Protection Authority (the Authority) for the 2016-17 financial year. This report 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 Treasures Directions and the policies of the Northern Territory Government.

It also provides the Northern Territory Legislative Assembly and the public with an account of the performance, responsibilities and activities of the Authority.

Target Audience

This report seeks to inform interested parties amongst our diverse range of stakeholders of Aboriginal custodians, government agencies and users of land across the Territory of our objectives and performance during the 2016-17 financial year, as well as our business direction for the year to come.



CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

I would like to thank the members of the Authority Board and Authority staff for the hard work and dedication to protecting sacred sites throughout the year. The Authority has provided protection of sacred sites within the Northern Territory for over 35 years; The Sacred Sites Authority was established in 1979 as a direct result of the introduction of the *Aboriginal Sacred Sites (NT) Bill 1978*. Since then the Authority and the Legislation behind it have grown and changed and in 1989, following negotiations with Land Councils, the Northern Territory Government introduced the current legislation, the *Northern Territory Aboriginal Sacred Sites Act 1989* and the established the current Aboriginal Areas Protection Authority.

The Authority, in conjunction with the Northern Territory Government, is currently considering how to proceed with the findings of an independent review of the *Northern Territory Aboriginal Sacred Sites Act*, published by Price Waterhouse Coopers in 2016. A total of 39 recommendations were made and they are a combination of legislative and administrative changes to the current Act. The Board supports the recommendations provided by the review of the *Northern Territory Aboriginal Sacred Sites Act 1989* and looks forward to the legislative and administrative review process being concluded, and providing the Board and Authority staff with a greater capacity to protect sacred sites and enable economic growth and development across the whole of the Northern Territory.

The Authority has been actively working on refining its processes and policies in relation to registering sacred sites within the Northern Territory. I am pleased to advise that site registration numbers are up significantly from last year. The improvements in the site registration process have provided a platform for cultivating and maintaining relationships with all stakeholders in the registration process. The Board is actively seeking to increase the number of sacred site registrations presented at each Board meeting. Site Registration is something that the Board is very passionate about, it provides greater protection to our sites and provides the next generation with a chance to learn more about the significance of these places to our culture.

One such organisation that is enabling the transfer of intergenerational knowledge of sacred sites is the Karrabing Collective. The Karrabing Collective is made up Kiyuk, Emmiyanggal, Wadjigyin and Menthayanggal

people from the Daly River area. The Karrabing Collective is using innovative and emerging technology to record sacred sites. The use of technology to record sites has provided an opportunity for intergenerational transmission of knowledge and engaging the next generation to participate in the projects and the protection of sacred sites. They have been invited all over the world to present their films and have presented one of their films at a recent Board meeting. Work undertaken in conjunction with the making of the film resulted in registration reports being produced; enabling the board to successfully register sacred sites they had recorded.

Throughout the last year, the Board has had a number of other organisations, such as Power and Water Corporation, Remote Housing, Local and Community Government and Hon. Justice Pepper from the Scientific Inquiry into Hydraulic Fracturing in the Northern Territory, attend meetings and provide the Board with presentations about current and future works occurring in both remote and urban communities. I wish to thank these organisations for providing the Board with informative presentations and providing continual feedback on issues raised by the Board. As a relatively new Board, we are keen to engage with organisations and provide feedback to our local communities when we return home.

As Chairman of the Board, I have attended numerous meetings with key stakeholders over the last twelve months; some of the highlights include presenting at Land Council meetings and meetings with mining companies. This provides the Board with a voice at these meetings and allows me to convey back to the Board the outcomes of such meetings.

I will continue to be a strong advocate for the Board and the protection of sacred sites across the Northern Territory.

As the membership of this Board has almost completely changed over the past 18 months, these new members have brought with them a wealth of new ideas. This brings forward discussions surrounding issues in our local community, both of cultural and social import. Finding the balance between social and economic progression and retaining the values and cultural backbone is of great import to the Board. Finding new ways to store, record and convey our knowledge through the various methods available, one valuable data storage facility is the Administration, Research and Management System (ARMS) used by the Authority. This program contains information pertaining to sacred sites, genealogies and other information of significance to Indigenous people.

Currently under way is a major project to redevelop the ARMS. At the completion of this project, the Authority will have a state of the art system with the capacity to store more information in a wide range of formats.

Philip Wilyuka

Chairman

30 September 2017



CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT

Sacred sites are an integral part of Indigenous people's social and cultural lives and the protection and maintenance of sacred sites is of the upmost importance to the maintenance of the social fabric of Indigenous people in the Northern Territory of Australia. The Aboriginal Areas Protection Authority (the Authority) was established in 1989 as a statutory body under the *Northern Territory Aboriginal Sacred Sites Act* (the Act) to assist in the protection of sacred sites in the NT. Through its administration of the Act the Authority continues to provide the vital regulatory function of preserving these important cultural values in the Northern Territory, all the while striving to maintain a balance with the economic and social aspirations of all Territorians.

Throughout the 2016/17 financial year the Authority has continued to document and advise on protective measures for sacred sites through its Authority Certificate process. The Authority issued 157 Authority Certificates for the 2016/2017 financial year with a reduction in the time taken to issue, down from 114 days in 2015/2016 to 90 days. In addition this year has seen a number of large and complex applications being consulted on by the Authority including, The Northern Gas pipeline, Project Sea Dragon, Keep River Plain soil, water and vegetation Investigations and applications relating to the McArthur River Mine near Borroloola. Of the 157 Authority Certificates issued, the Northern Territory Government was the Authority's biggest client, being issued 102 Authority Certificates which were primarily for road works and infrastructure projects. This year saw an increase by 8% in Authority Certificates issued for Mining and Exploration purposes.

In 2015 a review, of the *Northern Territory Aboriginal Sacred Sites Act* and the operations of the Authority, was commissioned. In 2016 the results were published, containing 39 administrative and legislative recommendations. The Government, in conjunction with the Authority, is considering how to proceed with taking the work of the Review forward.

Along with external reviews undertaken, the Authority has continued to refine its site registration process, which has resulted in a dramatic increase in the number of sacred sites being registered in the 2016/2017 reporting year. This has been as a result of an increased collaborative approach between desktop research and research undertaken in the field. Throughout this process the Authority has also focused on building successful working relationship with Pastoralists, Landowners and Northern Territory Government Departments to enable a swift resolution of detriment issues.

The Authority has also undertaken a review into its database requirements, enabling the process to be increasingly streamlined. This has tied in with the second phase of the IT project, the redesign and replacement of the Authority's central database, The Administrative Research Management System (ARMS). The Authority is working towards the development and implementation of a new internal system to carry the Authority forward into the future.

The Authority has worked not only on building stronger and more reliable systems internally but also on creating stronger external relationships resulting in successful collaborations with Land Councils on major economic projects across the Territory such as Jemena's Northern Gas pipeline and Seafarms Project SeaDragon. These projects saw the Authority and Land Councils actively participating in joint on the ground fieldwork and consultation with custodians, desktop research and the sharing of data to between organisations.

Throughout the 2016/2017 year the Authority has expanded our collaboration with Indigenous Ranger groups, providing sacred site data to enable these groups to assist in the registration and protection of sacred sites. The Authority has also provided education sessions, attended ranger conferences and assisted with the erection of signs and fences to aide in the protection of sacred sites.

Looking to the future in 2017/2018 the Authority's key focus will be on continuing to work with the Government on the recommendations from the review, continuing the development of the new internal IT system and the implementation of the new strategic plan. I look forward to leading the Authority into a new era.

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 twelve months. I would also like to thank the custodians, who work closely with the Authority to enable us to enact a practical balance between the continued protection of sacred sites and the economic and developmental advancement of the Territory. Lastly to our stakeholders whose continued support and belief in our work has enabled us to continue to be a strong advocate for sacred sites across the Territory.

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 enabling the Authority to record this information for future generations. They will be sadly missed.

Dr Benedict Scambary

Chief Executive Officer

30 September 2017



DEPUTY CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

My appointment as Deputy Chairman to the Authority Board is an honour and a privilege; I am committed to ensuring that the legacy of the Authority Board is preserved and all the hard work of my predecessors is continued on into the future.

The Board actively works towards not only protecting sacred sites but to keep our culture strong in our communities. Being strong leaders and ensuring the younger generation plays an active role in sacred site protection and ceremony.

The transmission of knowledge to the next generation and for future generations is something the board feels passionate about being able to record our history and traditions so that this knowledge is retained and accessible into the future. At the March meeting in Alice Springs, we were privileged to attend the Strehlow Research Centre at the Museum of Central Australia, which houses thousands of records relating to the Arrernte People from Central Australia, it was great to see part of our history is being kept alive.

The Board focuses on keeping our culture strong, sharing our stories and educating the Aboriginal youth about our traditional ways in conjunction with aiding progression and development within our communities. Throughout this year the Authority has collaborated with a number of Government agencies and organisations, including Indigenous ranger groups in the Top End in relation to sacred site protection in the context of economic and social development. Ranger groups have in recent times played an active role in the recording and registering of sacred sites and sacred site protection.

Sacred site protection is vital to keeping our culture strong, sadly there are times when sites get damaged or destroyed. When this occurs the effect is felt not only as a direct impact to the custodian of the site but to the wider Aboriginal community, these sites are part of us, the physical and emotional distress is substantial and leads to a loss of part of our culture which is irreplaceable. The Authority has investigated a number of complaints of site damage over the last twelve months, with one matter now before the courts. Preventing our sites from being damaged can be aided by working together with key stakeholders, which the Board is determined to continue to do going forward.

Collaboration with Non-Government organisations and Government agencies provides an opportunity for the Board and Authority staff to engage with representatives from these organisations. Throughout the year we have extended invitations to a number of agencies and organisations to present at Board meetings. This has provided an opportunity for members of the board to voice our concerns and seek information about upcoming improvements and work planned in our regions, allowing us to provide updates to our families and communities. Further to this, it provides the Board and Authority staff with the chance to provide information about the importance of sacred sites and what measures can be put in place to protect them.

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

Valerie Martin

Deputy Chairman
30 September 2017

2 Our Organisation



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Role and Function

The Aboriginal Areas Protection Authority is a statutory authority established under the *Northern Territory Aboriginal Sacred Sites Act 1989* to administer sacred site protection in the Northern Territory. The functions of the Authority are set out in Section 10 of the Sacred Sites Act. The protection of Aboriginal sacred sites is recognised by the Northern Territory Government and the broader Territory community as an important element in the preservation of the Territory's cultural heritage for the benefit of all Territorians. The Authority seeks to strike a balance between the protection of sacred sites and development in the Northern Territory.

Our History

The Authority has existed in one form or another for the past 36 years with the primary function of protecting sacred sites in the Northern Territory. Its history is entwined with that of the *Aboriginal Land Rights (NT) Act 1976*, the legislation that gave rise to the *Northern Territory Aboriginal Sacred Sites Act 1989*.

Its predecessor, the *Aboriginal Sacred Sites (NT) Act 1978*, was one of the first pieces of legislation passed by the Northern Territory Government after self-government was granted in 1978. The new law was significant in its recognition of Aboriginal culture by actively 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. Under the new law it became an offence to enter, remain, carry out works on or desecrate sacred sites anywhere in the Northern Territory. Other enduring aspects of today's legal protection were also established, including a Board largely made up of Aboriginal custodians, nominated by Land Councils, and a clear definition of a sacred site.

The early years brought some controversy between the Authority, the Government and proponents of development. 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 Apuatimi 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 (NT) Act 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 the protection of 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 the Aboriginal Areas Protection Authority.

For the past 27 years, the *Northern Territory Aboriginal Sacred Sites Act* has established a framework for sacred site protection based on voluntary engagement, and has emerged as a successful risk management tool for developers and custodians of sacred sites alike. The current Sacred Sites Act has been subject to only minor changes over that time. In late 2015 the Northern Territory Government announced an independent review of the *Sacred Sites Act*. The Sacred Sites Processes and Outcomes Review was published on July 2016 and contained 39 recommendations for changes to improve the legislative framework and the day to day operations of the Authority. The Authority is currently working through these recommendations and considering how best to take them forward.

Mission Statement

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

Vision

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

Key Services provided by the Authority

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

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

▲ Authority Certificates

Anyone proposing to use or work on land in the Northern Territory may apply to the Authority for an Authority Certificate to cover their proposed activities. Such Certificates are based on consultations with custodians and provide clear instructions on what can and 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, provided the applicant complies with any conditions imposed to protect sacred sites. Authority Certificates are voluntary and provide an effective risk management tool for developers as well as act as site protection measures for custodians.

▲ Requests for Information

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

▲ The Registration of Aboriginal Sacred Sites

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

Our Stakeholders

The Authority serves a diverse range of stakeholders, including Territory and Commonwealth 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 and a range of private and non-government organisations who use land across the Territory. The Authority strives to meet the needs of all stakeholders in order to protect sacred sites.

Highlights for 2016-2017

▲ Statistics at a Glance

- In 2016-17, the Authority issued 157 Authority Certificates, a decrease of 35% from the previous reporting period.
- The Authority reduced the average time-frame for Authority Certificates from 114 days in 2015-16 to 90 days in 2016-17.
- Governments (Northern Territory, Commonwealth, Local, and other) are the largest client group for Authority Certificates.
- Infrastructure related projects (planning and infrastructure, housing development, power, water and sewage) represented 36% (or 56) of Authority Certificates issued in 2016-17.
- In 2016-17, the Authority completed 579 formal requests for information from its publically available Registers.

▲ Sacred Site Protection

- The Aboriginal Areas Protection Authority celebrated its 27th Anniversary in 2016-17
- 26 sacred sites were registered in 2016-17.



Donald Thompson, John Duggie & Frank Holmes heading back to the vehicle on the Kurundi Road

Development Projects the Authority has issued Authority Certificates for included:

▲ Construction projects

- The Sea Dragon Hatchery, Breeding and Maturation Centres in Bynoe Harbour and at Charles Point.
- Nightcliff to Rapid Creek foreshore seawall stabilisation.
- Construction and ongoing maintenance to infrastructure at Alyangula Police Station.
- Construction at Darwin Waterfront Development of hotel and residential apartments.
- Upgrades and repairs to remote schools at Wooliana and Corella Creek.

▲ Essential services:

- Repairs and maintenance of the Beeboom Flood Warning Station along the Daly River.
- Upgrade and maintenance of Leanyer Sewerage Ponds.
- Construction of water tanks in Alice Springs.
- Water storage upgrades at Numbulwar.
- Water supply bores for Tennant Creek.
- Areyonga Bores.



Chopper arriving for fieldwork

▲ Major road upgrades

- Tjukaruru Road.
- Hodgson River Road – Northern Section.
- Woollogorang Road.
- Buntine Highway.
- Nutwood Downs access road.
- Major Road works on the Sandover Highway .
- Victoria Highway, Arapunya and Mount Swan Roads.
- Stuart Highway at Daly Waters.
- Pickataramoor Road, Paru Road and Milikapati Road on Melville Island.

▲ Tourism and visitor experience projects

- Works to boat ramps and nearby facilities at Dundee Beach and Shady Camp.
- Maintenance and upgrade works at Karlu Karlu Conservation Reserve.
- Alice Springs Township Travel Network Signage and Wayfinding Plan.
- Upgrade to the Surprise Creek Campground area within Litchfield National Park.
- Installation of helipad for Careflight access within Litchfield National Park.
- Repair, upgrade and maintenance to roads within Nitmiluk National Park.

Construction, development and upgrades of walking track, shelters, campgrounds and associated facilities within Judbarra/Gregory National Park.

Financial highlights

- The Authority's strong organisational performance during the year resulted in revenue exceeding budget by more than 22% to \$5.93M.
- This increased activity also impacted on expenditure which grew by 16%, mainly in personnel costs.
- The impact of this growth was a surplus of \$0.291M.



Morning on the Kintore road

Human Resources highlights

- The Authority had a total of 29.64 full-time equivalent (FTE) staff members in 2016–17, remaining similar to the previous year.
- 15% of employees identify as Indigenous and 85 % as non-Indigenous.
- The gender distribution of staff of the Authority is 60.28% female and 39.73% male, an increase in the employment of males from the previous year.
- The Authority spent 2% of its operational Budget on training programs and associated expenses.

3

Governance



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*AAPA Board member Veronica Lynch and
Deputy Chairman Valerie Martin*

Authority Board

▲ Membership and meetings

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

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

▲ Authority Board Meetings

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

In the 2016-17 financial year the Chairman called the following meetings:

109th Board Meeting	12-13 July 2016	Alice Springs
110th Board Meeting	20-21 September 2017	Darwin
111th Board Meeting	30 November – 1 December 2016	Darwin
112th Board Meeting	29-30 March 2017	Alice Springs
113th Board Meeting	7-8 June 2017	Darwin

The Board also has the capacity to create sub-committees to deal with any issues it deems necessary. Currently the Board has a women's subcommittee which meets as part of the regular board meetings

▲ Appointments

The terms of two Board Members ended in 2016-17 financial year.

Mr Michael Tennant
Ms Dora Griffiths

Board members during 2016/17



Region: Central Australia
Date appointed: 14 December 2015

Mr Philip Wilyuka – Chairperson

Mr Wilyuka is a Pitjanjatjara/Yankunytjatjara man from the community of Titjikala. Mr Wilyuka currently works as a Lutheran pastor at Titjikala and has been involved with the Central Land Council (CLC) for many years. In 2012–2013 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 20th September 2016 Mr Wilyuka was nominated as the Chairperson for the Board of the Authority.



Region: Northern Territory
Government Appointee
Date appointed: 1 August 2015

Ms Leah Clifford

Ms Clifford is currently the General Manager Lands and Planning Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Logistics. Ms Clifford has previously held senior positions within the Northern Territory Government including the Department of Lands, Planning and the Environment and Department of Housing. She brings specialist professional skills in the area of land policy and administration to the Authority Board membership.



Region: Central Australia
Date appointed: 02 August 2016

Ms Valerie Martin – Deputy Chairperson

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 Councils Aboriginal Benefit Account Advisory Committee. On 20 September 2016 Ms Martin was elected as Deputy Chairperson for the Board of the Authority.



Region: Central Australia
Date appointed: 14 December 2015

Ms Veronica Lynch

Ms Lynch is from Black Tank Community Outstation and was a founding member of the Indigenous tourism venture Black Tank Tour Experiences which provided guests with 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 2013-2016. 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.



Region: Top end
Date re-appointed: 29 September 2015
First appointed in: 2006

Ms Jenny Inmulugulu

Ms Inmulugulu is a traditional owner of Warruwi 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 2008–2012. Ms Inmulugulu is a senior woman for her clan and a strong advocate for her community and the Northern Land Council's regional council.



Region: Tiwi Islands
Date appointed: 31 August 2015

Mr Walter Kerinauia Junior

Mr Walter 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 Local Government. He has been the long-time Trustee of the Mantiupwi Land Owning Group which takes in southern parts of both Bathurst and Melville Islands. He is also a past Director of Mantiupwi Pty Ltd.



▲ Ms Lynette Granites

Ms Granites is a highly respected senior Walpiri 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.

Region:

Central Australia

Date re-appointed: 14 April 2015

First appointed in: 2005



▲ Mr Bobby Nunggumarjarr

Mr Bobby Nunggumarjarr 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, and has held various positions on the Yugul Mangi Community Government Council in Ngukurr and more recently the Roper Gulf Shire. Mr Nunggumarjarr is widely respected for his knowledge and authority across South-East and Central Arnhem Land. Mr Nunggumarjarr has also been the Senior Project Officer in charge of the Northern Land Council's Ngukurr office for the past 15 years, and more recently as a Director for Arnhem Frontier and Civil Construction.

Region:

Top End

Date appointed:

29 September 2015



▲ Mr Jack Green

Mr Jack Green is a Garrawa man living in Borroloola. He is a Senior Cultural Advisor to the Garawa and Waanyi/Garawa Ranger programs in the Gulf region of the Northern Territory. Mr Green has contributed significantly to Aboriginal community-based development programs in remote regions of Australia. Mr Green is a strong supporter and spokesman of the maintenance of Aboriginal culture and connection to the land.

Region: Top End

Date appointed:

29 September 2015



▲ Mr Michael Tennant

Mr Tennant has been the Chief Executive Officer of the Department of Business since October 2014. Prior to this role Mr Tennant was the Deputy Chief Executive Officer of the Northern Territory Department of the Chief Minister and also worked in the Queensland Public Service in a range of senior executive leadership roles across a range of public sector agencies. He is an experienced public sector administration professional and has his tertiary qualifications in law and economics. Mr Tennant tendered his resignation from the Board of the Authority on 04 January 2017.

Region:

Northern Territory
Government

Date appointed:

12 May 2015 – 4 January 2017



▲ Mr Phillip Mamarika

Mr Phillip Mamarika is a respected elder of the Mamarika Clan of Umbakumba on Groote Eylandt. He currently works as a Senior Ranger with the Anindilyakwa Land and Sea Rangers, providing on-the-ground leadership and mentoring to ten 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.

Region:

Groote Eylandt

Date appointed:

31 August 2015

▲ Ms Dora Griffiths

Ms Griffiths is a Mirriwoong, Narinyan traditional Owner. Her custodial responsibilities extend from Moolooloo, Timber Creek and the vast Mirriwoong country. Ms Griffiths has worked as a teachers Aid at St Joseph's School in Kununurra and secretary for the Mima Language Centre. Ms Griffiths currently works at Waringarri Arts at Kununurra as the artist support worker helping senior artists. Her work at Waringarri Arts has inspired her to take up painting, where she has in recent years established herself as a well-respected artist. Since 2012, Ms Griffiths has held Directorship and Chairperson positions with the Association of the Northern, Kimberley and Arnhem Aboriginal Artist (ANKAAA) and Waringarri Arts. On 29 June 2017 Ms Griffiths ceased being a Board member in June 2017.

Region:

Top End

Date appointed:

28 June 2016 – 29 June 2017

Authority Operations

Principles of Governance

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

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

How the Authority is Governed

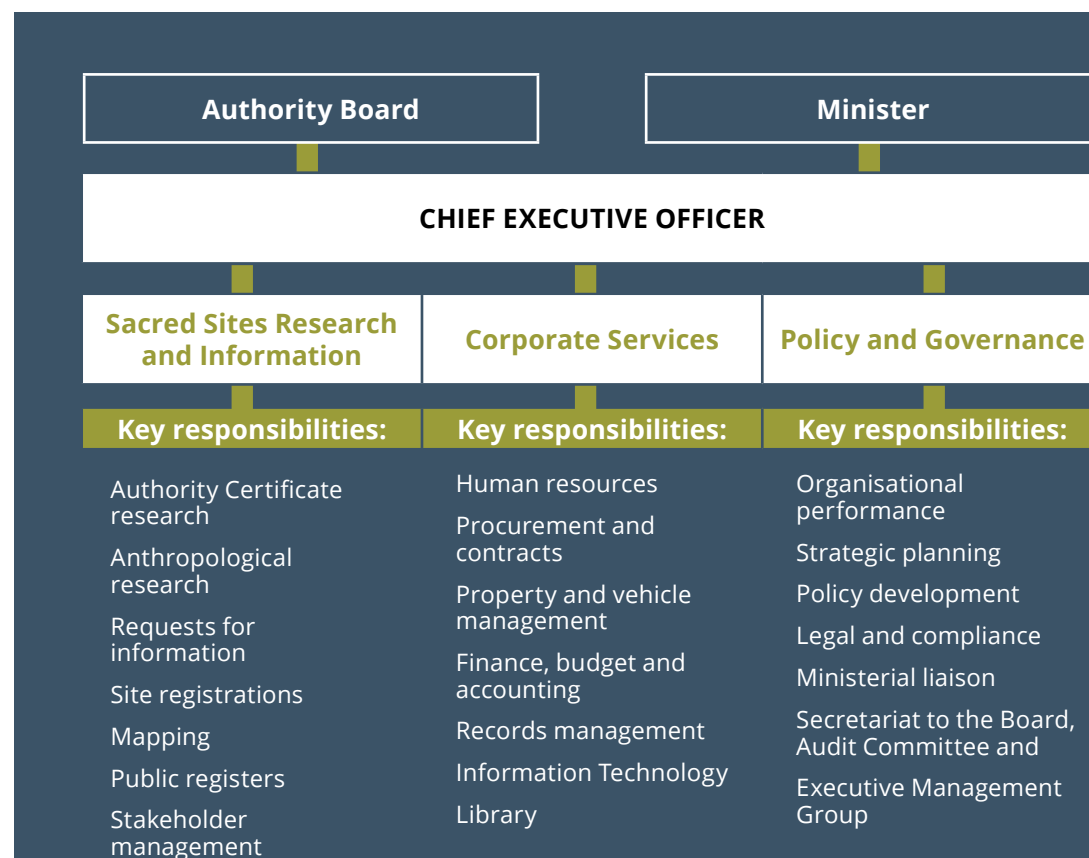
The primary policy and decision-making body is the Authority (the Board) established under Section 5 of the *Sacred Sites Act*. Section 15 of the *Sacred Sites Act* requires that "The Administrator shall appoint a Chief Executive Officer of the Authority who shall be charged with carrying out the decisions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

Section 19 provides for the Authority to delegate certain powers or functions. The Chief Executive Officer holds various such delegations and is responsible for the overall operation of the Authority. The CEO also exercises responsibilities under the *Financial Management Act*.

How the Authority is Managed

The Chief Executive Officer maintains overall responsibility for the day-to-day operations of the Authority. To ensure the smooth functioning of the office, the Chief Executive Officer chairs weekly Executive Management Group meetings. Each operational group also meets regularly to ensure an effective flow of information.

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



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, thus preserving and enhancing Aboriginal tradition in a changing social, economic and cultural environment. Landowners and developers are afforded certain rights under the *Sacred Sites Act*.

- Section 28 provides the opportunity for landowners to make representations on the prospective registration of a sacred site.
- Section 44 of the *Sacred Sites Act* explicitly deals with landowners' rights to use land comprised in a sacred site consistent with the protection of sacred sites. Authority Certificates provide a legal instrument to accommodate such land-use.
- Under Section 48A, if the application of the *Sacred Sites Act* in a particular case would result in an acquisition of property other than on just terms, then the person affected is entitled to such compensation as a court may decide.

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

In accordance with the *Sacred Sites Act*, all sacred sites are protected regardless of underlying land title, registration status or whether or not they are known to the Authority. The specific sections of the *Sacred Sites Act* relevant to the protection of sacred sites are:

Section 33 – unauthorised entry
 Section 34 – unauthorised works or uses
 Section 35 – desecration

Together these Sections 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 Chief Executive Officer.

The purpose of the Executive Management Group is to provide the Chief Executive Officer with advice and support in relation to 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, developing and implementing the Strategic Plan and addressing critical issues facing the organisation.

The EMG members are:

- Dr Ben Scambary, Chief Executive Officer.
- Mr Alan Buckingham, Director Corporate Services.
- Mr Matthew Dean, Director Policy and Governance.
- Dr Sophie Creighton, Director Research and Land Information
- Mr Peter Russell, Manager of Compliance.

Committees

▲ Risk Management and Risk Audit Committee

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

- Endorsing and monitor the Risk Management Plan (RMP) for the Authority.
- Monitoring 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,
- Considering 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,
- Considering 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, undertaking other functions and activities as determined from time to time by the Chief Executive Officer.

The Committee is made up of an Independent Chair from the Northern Territory Public Service as well as senior Authority staff.

During 2016–17 an external review has been conducted into the Authority's Audit and Risk framework and has made recommendations about changes to the process which will be implemented during 2017–18. The external review has set out a model for an expanded risk management and audit function for the authority which combines the following elements:

- An authority wide Risk Management Plan,
- A Risk Management and Audit Committee (RMAC).
- A Review and Audit Schedule (RAS),
- Procedures; policies; standards; and systems,
- Appropriate internal controls,
- Making decisions appropriately transparent,
- A governance framework,
- Special inquiries conducted for the CEO into any matter or activity affecting the interests and operating efficiency of the authority.

The Risk Management and Audit Committee (RMAC) will replace the existing Internal Audit Committee from 2017-18 onwards. It will meet at least three times per financial year and, like its predecessor, will be chaired by an external member from outside the Authority.

▲ Research Management 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 Research and Land Information, Compliance and Policy Units, and is chaired by the Director Research and Land Information. All policies and procedures developed by the Committee are presented to EMG for approval and publishing. The RMG meets fortnightly to undertake an ongoing work programme of issues to consider that have been identified by the EMG as priorities for work.

▲ 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 the agency's priorities are met. The committee meets monthly. The committee's responsibilities include but are not limited to the following:

- 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 agency users,
- Upgrade and refresh activity of the desktop computing environment,
- Reporting of any virus attacks or network intrusions, and
- Oversight of internet usage; and ICT charges and billing.

▲ Libraries Committee

The Purpose of this committee is to maintain a collection of materials which are relevant to the protection of the cultural heritage of the Aboriginal people of the Northern Territory and for the benefit of all Territorians. The Committee pursues ways of making the library collection more relevant and easily accessible to Authority staff as well as a range of stakeholders. The committee meets on a bi-monthly basis to determine the priorities for managing and expanding the Authorities collection.

4 Initiatives and Projects 2016-2017

Notable Authority Certificates	30
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The Authority continues to work with the Northern Territory Government, industry groups and private and public organisations to protect sacred sites and raise the profile of sacred site protection in the Northern Territory. Our unique role and experience means the Authority is ideally placed to support these priorities through its work while facilitating development projects across the Territory, particularly in the context of Commonwealth and Territory Government priorities to develop the north and deliver major projects in the Territory.

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

Notable Authority Certificates

▲ Jemena Northern Gas Pipeline

This major project was a successful coordination between the applicant Jemena, the Authority, the Northern Land Council (NLC) and the Central Land Council (CLC). This successful collaboration included data and information sharing and coordinated fieldwork arrangements to facilitate an efficient outcome. The CLC and NLC worked cooperatively to progress anthropological research on Aboriginal traditional land ownership and in identifying sacred sites that need protection from the proposed works. The Authority reviewed and assessed the data provided by the Land Councils and issued an Authority Certificate for the works to proceed that included protective measures for sacred sites.

▲ Alice Springs Township Travel Network Signage and Wayfinding Plan

An exciting tourism project in Alice Springs was the Travel Network Signage and Wayfinding Plan. The project included the installation of new signs and associated infrastructure along with repair and maintenance activities associated with existing signage within Alice Springs Township. Tourists and locals alike will benefit from the new and updated signs, providing the opportunity to explore more of the town and surrounding areas. The applicant was proactive in planning works, liaising with the Authority in the early stages of the project to ensure they would avoid impact on native trees and undisturbed land.

Working Relationships

▲ Alice Springs Town Council

The Authority has continued to work closely with the Alice Springs Town Council to achieve positive outcomes for the protection of sacred sites in the context of municipal works. Ongoing liaison with the Council has focused on emergency tree trimming and maintenance works. After recent significant storms the Town Council was able to respond quickly and appropriately using the Emergency Works Authority Certificate Authority Certificate issued to them.

▲ Power and Water

The Authority continues to build upon its close working relationship with the Power and Water Corporation (PWC). The ongoing successful collaboration between the two organisations has focussed on improving capacity to clarify issues with Power and Water Corporation staff being present onsite during the Authority's consultation process with Aboriginal custodians, to provide further information on proposed works. This has resulted in significant time being saved in the overall application process for Power and Water Corporation. In the last twelve months the Authority has issued Authority Certificate clearances for a wide range of projects including water exploration drilling, sewerage ponds, essential services works, and upgrade works to accommodate the need for additional resources ahead of the rollout of new houses in remote communities.



▲ MMG Exploration PTY LTD (MMG)

Over the past 12 months the Authority has worked closely with MMG on a range of mining projects to ensure that sacred sites are protected through the Authority Certificate process. Meetings held at the planning phase of their projects has allowed for timely and effective communication between the Authority and MMG regarding the location and protective measures for site within their application area.



AAPA Director Research Dr Sophie Creighton with PWC representatives Sean Carroll and Donna Masters - water tank replacement at Numbulwar.

Solar power panels at Arlparra community power-station.

Community Outreach

▲ Indigenous Ranger groups

Throughout the last twelve months the Authority proactively engaged with Indigenous Ranger groups throughout the Top End of the Northern Territory. The Authority has been invited to and attended numerous ranger forums for both land and sea rangers, with a specific focus on collaboration, compliance, and education around sacred sites and how they can be protected. Protective measures discussed at these forums included the erecting of sacred site signs and the registration of sacred sites.

The Authority has entered into data sharing agreements with ranger groups to assist them with land management and conservation programs they are running.

▲ Territory Natural Resource Management Forum

The Authority was invited to speak at the Territory Natural Resource Management Forum in Alice Springs in June. The Authority explained its role in guiding land management work through the Authority Certificate process while acknowledging landowners proprietary right to undertake weed management.



Special Projects

▲ Limmen National Park Rock Art

The Parks and Wildlife Commission of the Northern Territory (PWCNT) have implemented a rock art survey project throughout the Limmen National Park. The aim of this project is to produce a comprehensive inventory of rock art sites within the national park, with a view to increasing the standards of cooperation and building stronger and mutually respectful relationships between PWCNT staff and Aboriginal custodians. This enables the development of cultural management plans to help protect and preserve the rock art. The Authority supported this project through the provision of professional staff who guided activities in the field, and also through the provision of Authority Certificates to enable the exercise to proceed.

▲ The Aurora Project

The Aurora Project offers graduate Anthropologists vocational based experienced within the Indigenous sector. This year the Authority has hosted six interns in its Darwin and Alice Springs Offices. The Interns were tasked with undertaking a project to progress sacred sites registration applications, through desktop research, to enable them to be presented to the Authority Board for registration. The Authority plans to continue this project into the future.

This project required interns to review outstanding requests for registration of sacred sites, specifically to identify where there are gaps in research that need to be undertaken by Research Field Officers. The purpose was to progress as many site registrations as possible to the Aboriginal Areas Protection Authority Board for consideration in accordance with the Sacred Sites Act. To date 22 sites have been reviewed and of those 21 have been identified as requiring further research and one has been progressed to the Board for registration.



Henry Djuluba Numamurdirri and Peter Cooke discussing the rock art at one of the sites at West Lost City.

5 Performance Report 2016-2017



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The role of the Authority 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 of Authority Certificate applications completed.

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

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

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

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 by increasing the level of certainty when identifying constraints, if any, on land and sea use proposals in relation to the existence of sacred sites.

		2014-15		2015-16		2016-17	
Performance measures		Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Actual
Quantity	Authority Certificates issued	240	177	250	242	200	157
	Requests for information completed	500	513	530	636	550	579
Timeliness	Average time between receiving Authority Certificate applications and completing service	125 days	126 days	125 days	114 days	115 days	90 Days
	Average time between receiving request for information and completing service	3.9 days	2.9 days	4.6 days	4.6 days	7 days	1.1 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.

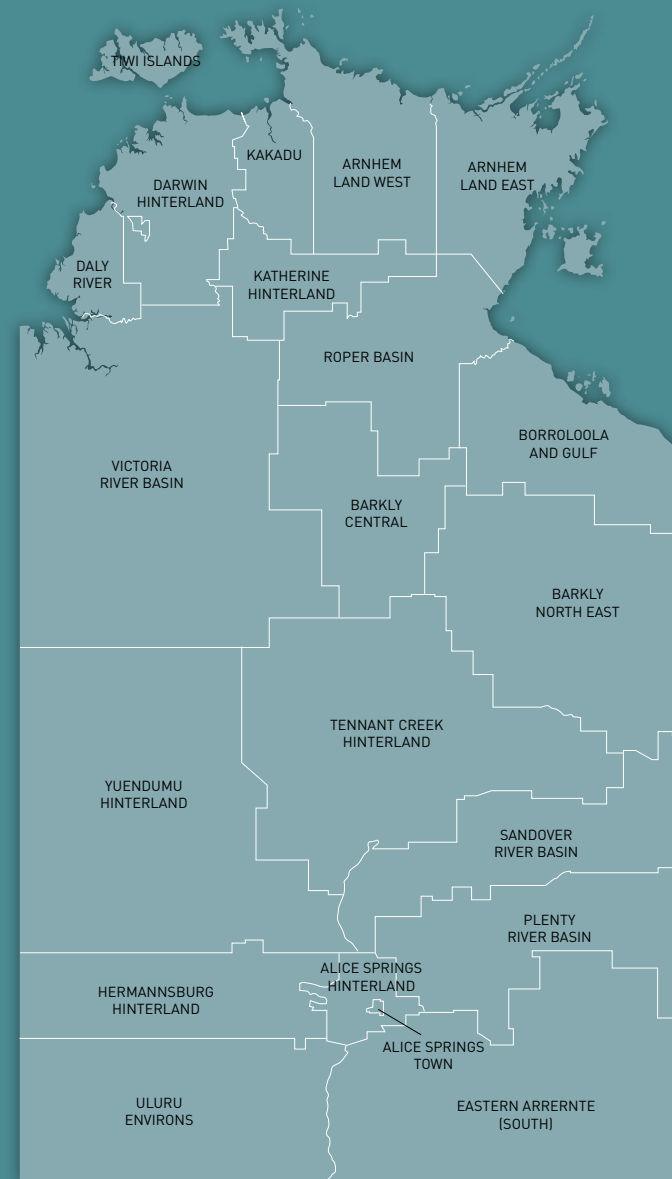


Figure 1: Map of the Authority's region

Authority Certificates

Quantity

In 2016-17 the Authority issued 157 Authority Certificates, which is a decrease from the previous year's total of 242 Certificates. The Authority received 184 requests for Authority Certificates, with 55 applications withdrawn. All completed applications had successfully negotiated outcomes and no Authority Certificates were refused.

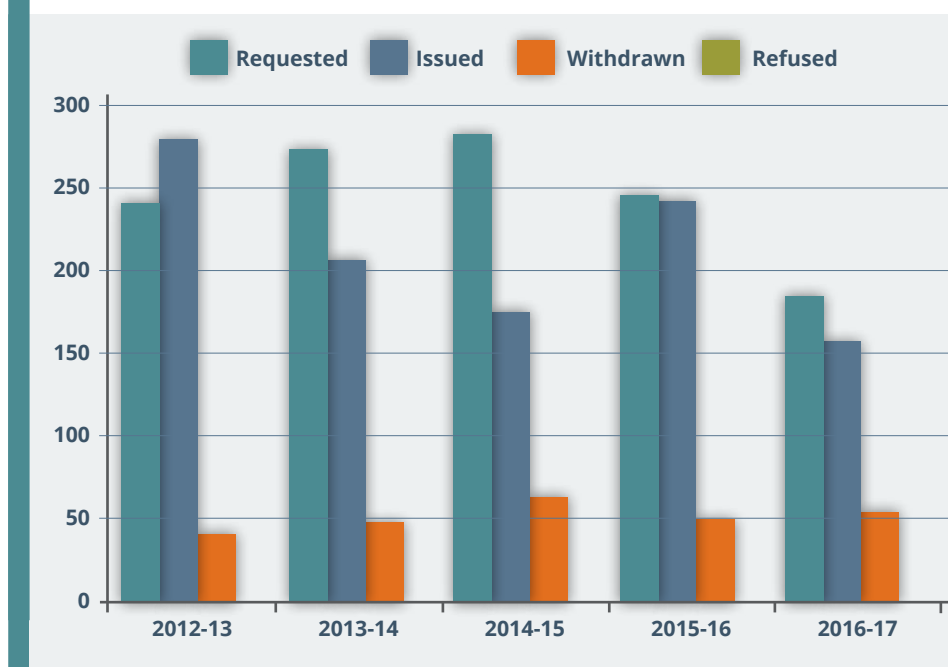


Figure 2: Authority Certificates issued, withdrawn or refused between 1 July 2012 and 30 June 2017

Increases and decreases in requests for the Authority's services fluctuate in line with the economic fluctuations both in the Northern Territory and the whole of Australia. The 2016-17 reporting year has seen a decrease in requests for services provided by the Authority, this is in line with current trends across the Northern Territory with a decrease in infrastructure projects.

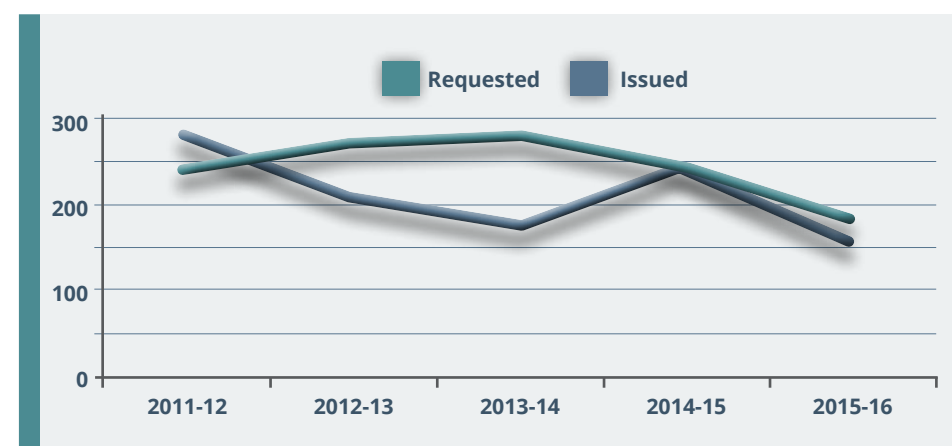


Figure 3: Authority Certificates requested and issued between 1 July 2012 and 30 June 2017

Regional Picture

Demand for Authority Certificates in the major population centres continued to dominate, with Darwin Hinterland region having the highest number of Authority Certificates issued; with the majority of these being issued to the Northern Territory Government. Increases in remote regions such as Arnhem Land East, Roper Basin and Hermannsburg Hinterland provide a snapshot of anticipated remote infrastructure and road projects. Requests for the Tennant Creek Hinterland have remained on par with last year.

Certificates issued for the Hermannsburg Hinterland were primarily related to Northern Territory Government roadworks projects, with the remainder being focused on community water programs. In the regions of Arnhem Land East and Roper Basin, Authority Certificates were issued for a range of Northern Territory Government related projects including road works, community development that included infrastructure and ongoing maintenance programs and power and water related works. Authority Certificates issued to private companies in these regions were primarily

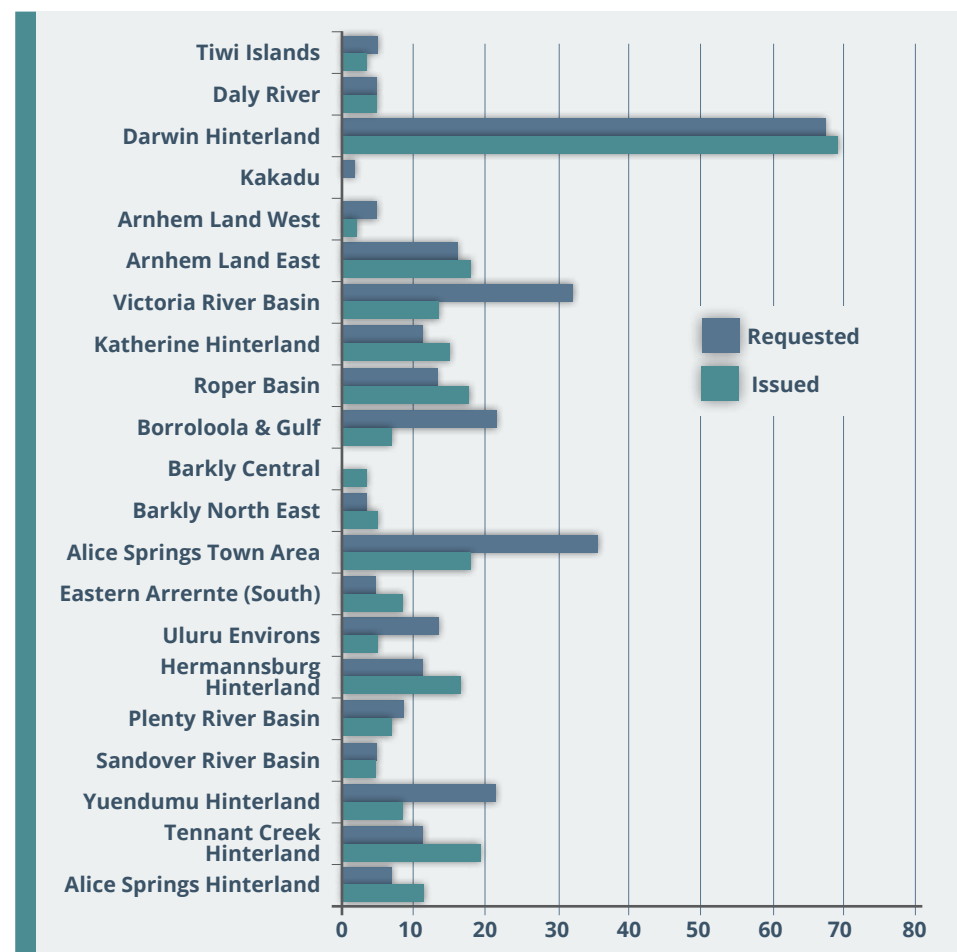


Figure 4: Authority Certificates requested and issued by region in 2016-17

issued for works associated with mining and exploration. In Tennant Creek, the majority of applications came from the Northern Territory Government projects including roadworks, environmental management programs and construction. Other applications came from local government for construction and maintenance works, and from mining and exploration companies. In the region of the Roper Basin, a number of applications were for Northern Territory Government projects including essential services, roadworks and maintenance; as well as applications from mining and exploration companies.

Services Users and Project Types

Collectively the Territory, Commonwealth and Local Governments form the largest group of users that are issued Authority Certificates, with construction and maintenance representing the largest categories of projects. Typically such projects included road works, housing, power, water and sewerage works.

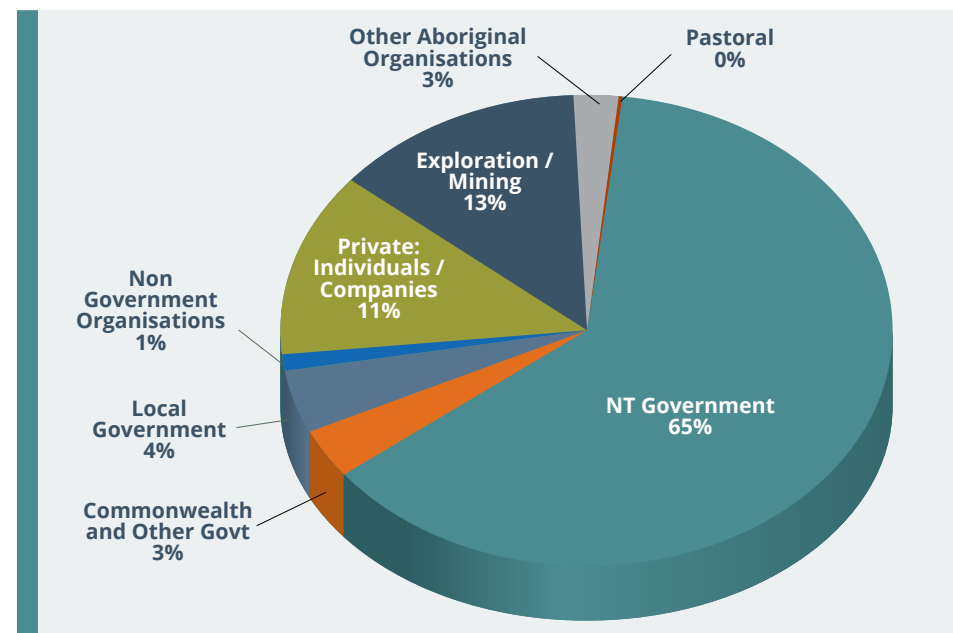


Figure 5: Users of Authority Certificates in 2016-17

There has been a growth in the number of Authority Certificates being issued to the Exploration and Mining sector in the last twelve months, during the year it was second only to the Northern Territory Government as the Authority's biggest client. Certificates issued to the Exploration and Mining sector covered a number of project types including exploration, mining and rehabilitation works. There has been a slight decline in Certificates being issued to the private sector and Local Government while the other areas remain relatively steady.

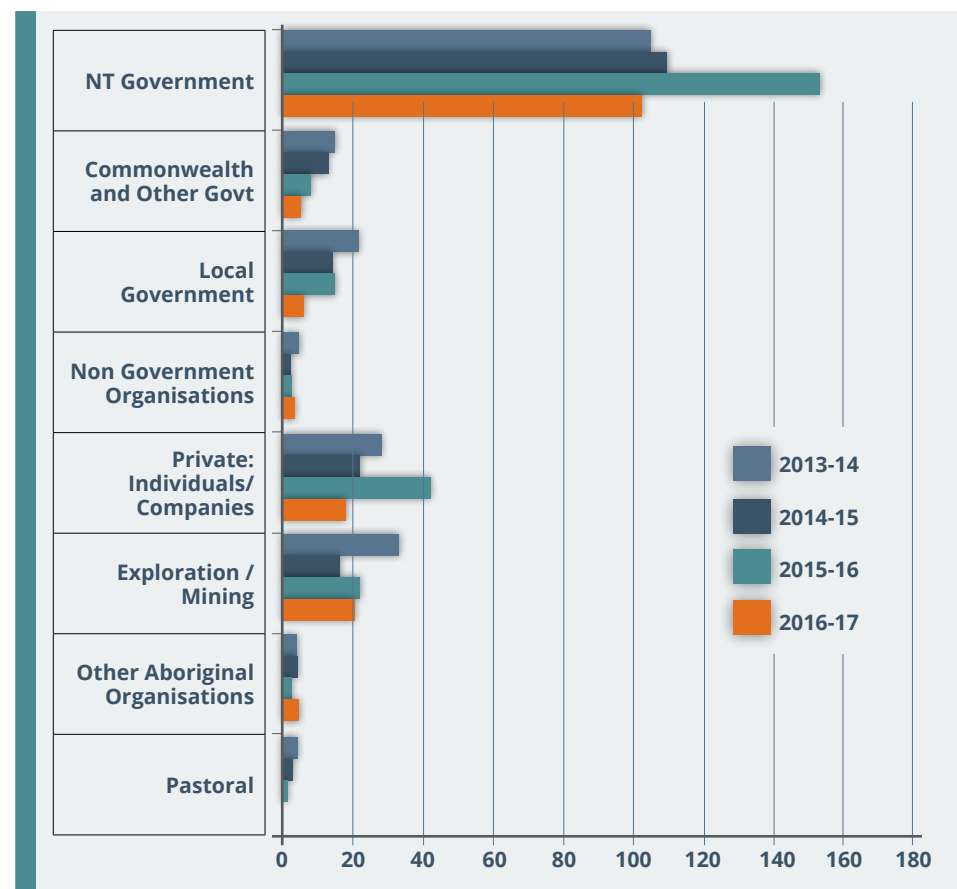


Figure 6: User groups of Authority Certificates in 2013-14, 2014-15 and 2016-17.

2016-17 saw increases in Authority Certificates issued for road works (30% up 7%); planning and infrastructure – Aboriginal Communities (8% up 4%); and exploration and mining (16% up 8%). There have been decreases in Authority Certificates issued Infrastructure, Power, water and sewerage – Aboriginal Communities and Tourism, Leisure and National Parks.

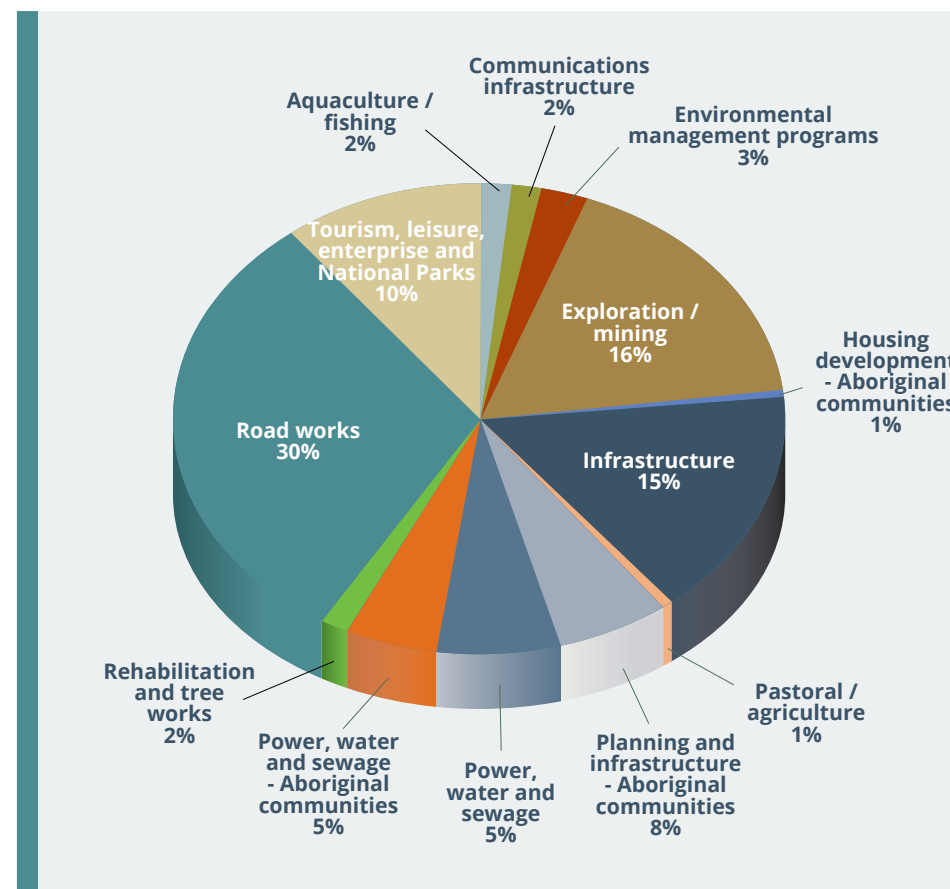


Figure 7: Types of projects for which Authority Certificates have been issued in 2016-17

▲ Timeliness

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

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

The Authority continues to engage positively with large user groups of Authority Certificates such as the Department of Infrastructure, Power and Water Corporation and Mining and Exploration companies. Our proactive engagement has enabled us to establish and maintain a positive and productive working relationship, providing a greater understanding for all parties in relation to the types of works undertaken by clients and the processes required by the Authority to undertake Authority Certificate work. This collaboration has impacted positively on timeframes for issuing certificates as increased understanding of projects and sacred site constraints reduces the number of consultations required for individual projects.

There has been an ongoing reduction in timeframes with 2016-17 seeing a reduction in the number of days it takes to issue an Authority Certificate. The reduction from 114 days to 90 days is substantially below the performance target of 115 days. This continues a trend decreasing the number of days the Authority takes to issue Authority Certificates. Reduced timeframes reflect the continued work of the Authority on refining internal processes and procedures, along with collaborative approaches with major Northern Territory Government agencies.

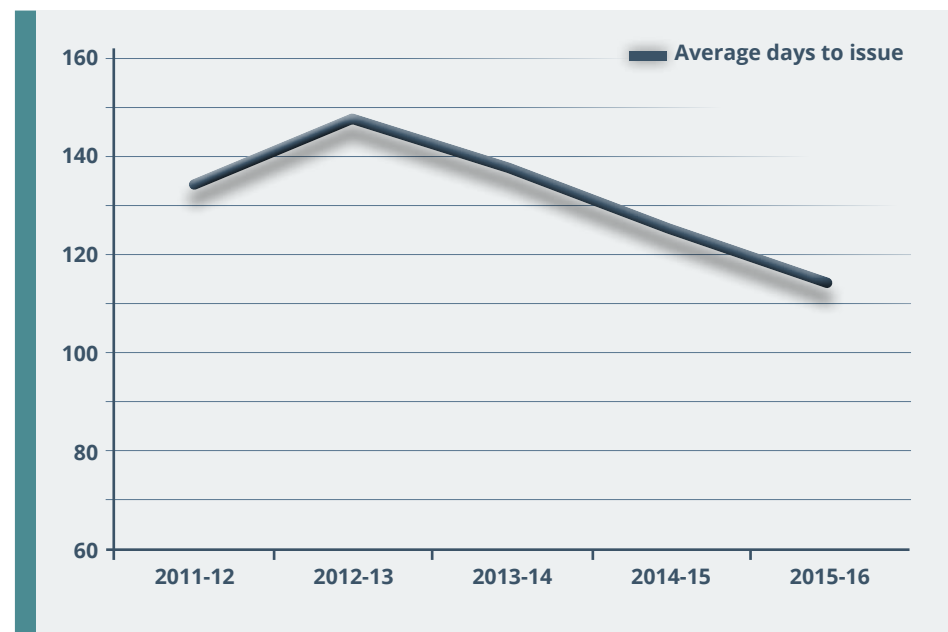


Figure 8: Average number of days to issue Authority Certificates from 2012 through to 2017

Whilst the number of overall Authority Certificates is lower than in previous years, in 2016-17 this was balanced by two large and complex projects; The Northern Gas Pipeline and Project Sea Dragon. Both these projects were undertaken collaboratively with Land Councils and in accordance with the agreement making provisions of S22(1)(B) of the Sacred Sites Act. In the case of the Northern Gas Pipeline the Authority issued a certificate on the basis of consultations undertaken by the Northern and Central Land Councils. Extensive cross checking of records was required and considerable collaboration between the Authority and the Land Councils to realise the final certificate. With Project Sea Dragon the Authority undertook all consultations for the protection of sacred sites, whilst negotiations for an Indigenous Land Use Agreement ran in parallel.

All sacred site information was provided to the proponent and the Northern Land Council to inform the agreement making process. Ultimately an Authority Certificate will be issued for this project that reflects the agreement between the Northern Land Council and the proponent and which satisfies the criterion of the Sacred Sites Act. This innovative method has proven to be a successful approach that can be applied to all major projects in the Northern Territory. In addition the approach addresses any perception of jurisdictional overlap between the Sacred Sites Act and the Land Rights Act. These complex projects are some of the largest requests the Authority has undertaken, covering vast areas of the Northern Territory and involving a large number of custodians. Through the timely and accurate provision of sacred site protection advice for projects such as these the Authority is supporting best practice outcomes for all stakeholders and supporting the development of the local economy.

In 2016-17, 57% of Authority Certificates were issued within 3 months, and 26% were issued between 3-6 months 83% of Authority Certificates issued in 2016-17 were issued within 6 months. These rates are consistent with previous years. A range of external factors typically impact the remaining 17% of Authority Certificates that take longer than 6 months including but not limited to: requests by applicants to stall progress of Authority Certificate applications; changes to proposed works and subject land areas; issues of access to subject areas arising from remoteness, scale, and wet season inundation; and cultural matters typically associated with the death of senior custodians.

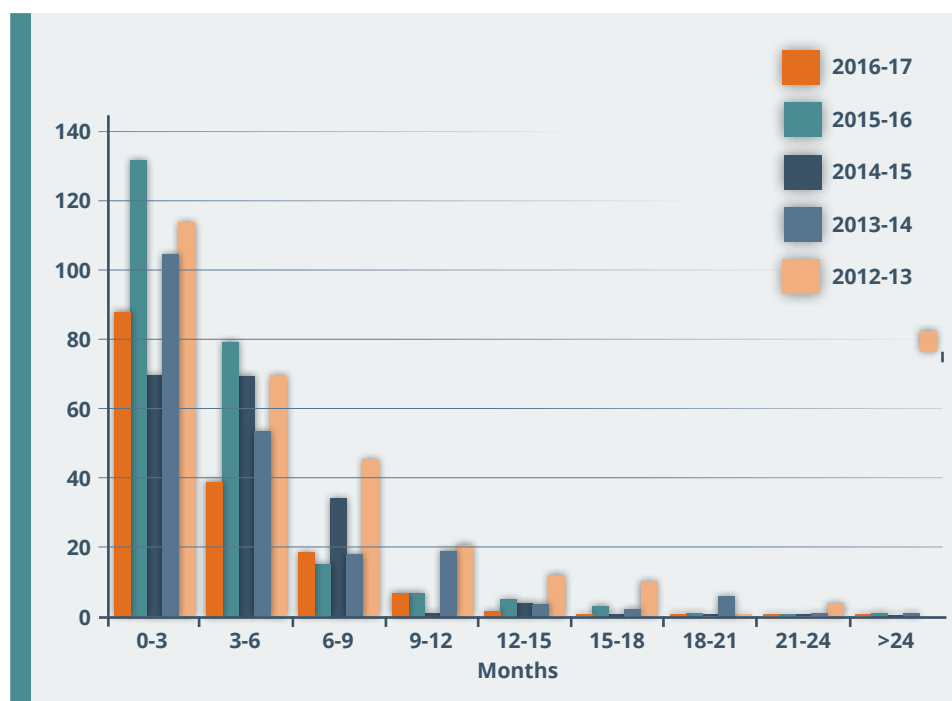


Figure 9: Authority Certificate timeframes to issue between 1 July 2012 and 30 June 2017

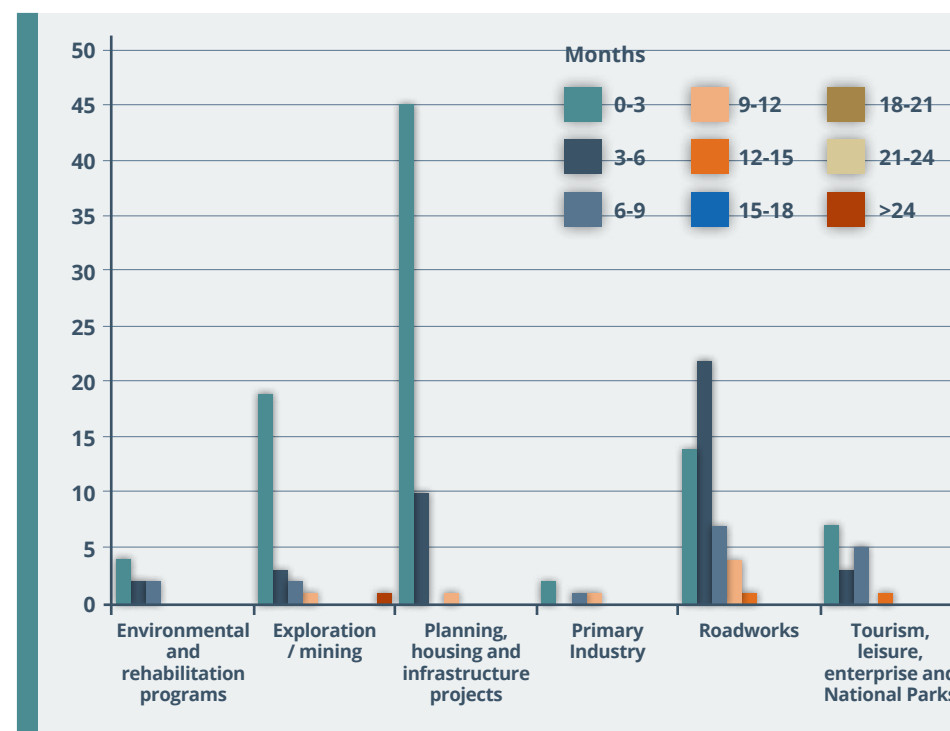
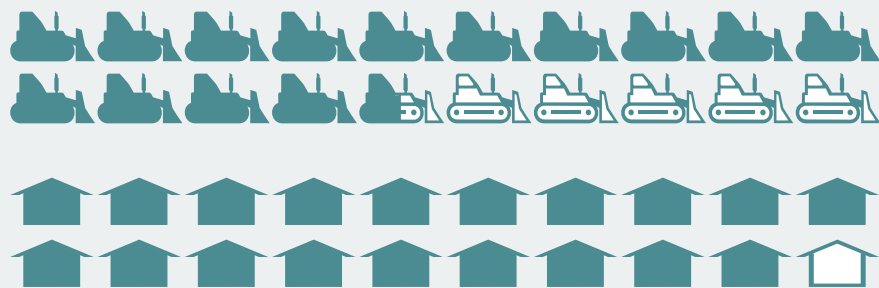


Figure 10: Timeframes to issue Authority Certificates by project type in 2016-17

In 2016-17, 76% of road works (36) and 98% of infrastructure projects (55) were resolved within 6 months.



Inspecting a sacred site (trees) immediately on the edge of the road through the Davenport Ranges

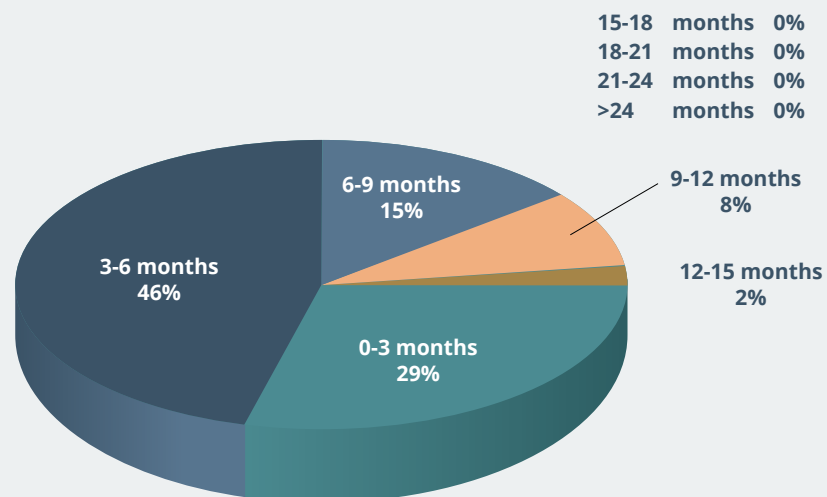


Figure 11: Timeframes for the issuing of Authority Certificates in 2016-17 for roadworks

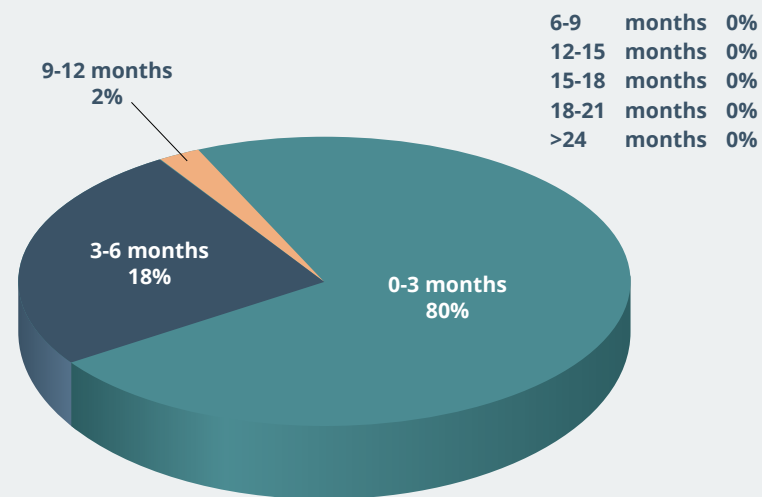


Figure 12: Timeframes for the issuing of Authority Certificates in 2015-16 for infrastructure projects

Requests for Information

Quantity

In 2016-17 the Authority received and responded to 579 formal requests for information from the Register of Sacred Sites, a decrease from 636 requests in 2015-16.

The majority of requests (92%) took the form of Abstract of Records. Other requests that the Authority received were digital data requests, inspections of the Authority Certificate Register, inspections of Authority records and inspections of the Sacred Sites Register.

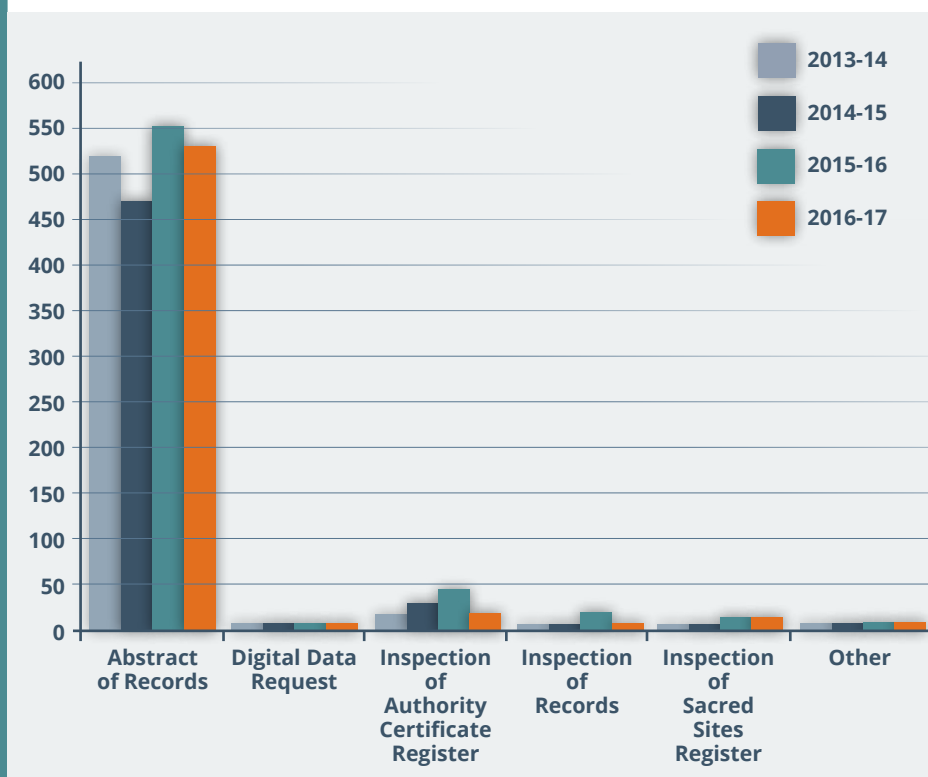


Figure 13: Quantity of requests for information by type between 2013-14 to 2016-17

Regional Picture

Requests for information were highest in the Darwin Hinterland region at 188. Alice Springs Town Area, was the next highest at 99; followed by the Katherine Hinterland region at 49, Arnhem Land East at 34 and Tennant Creek Hinterland region at 33

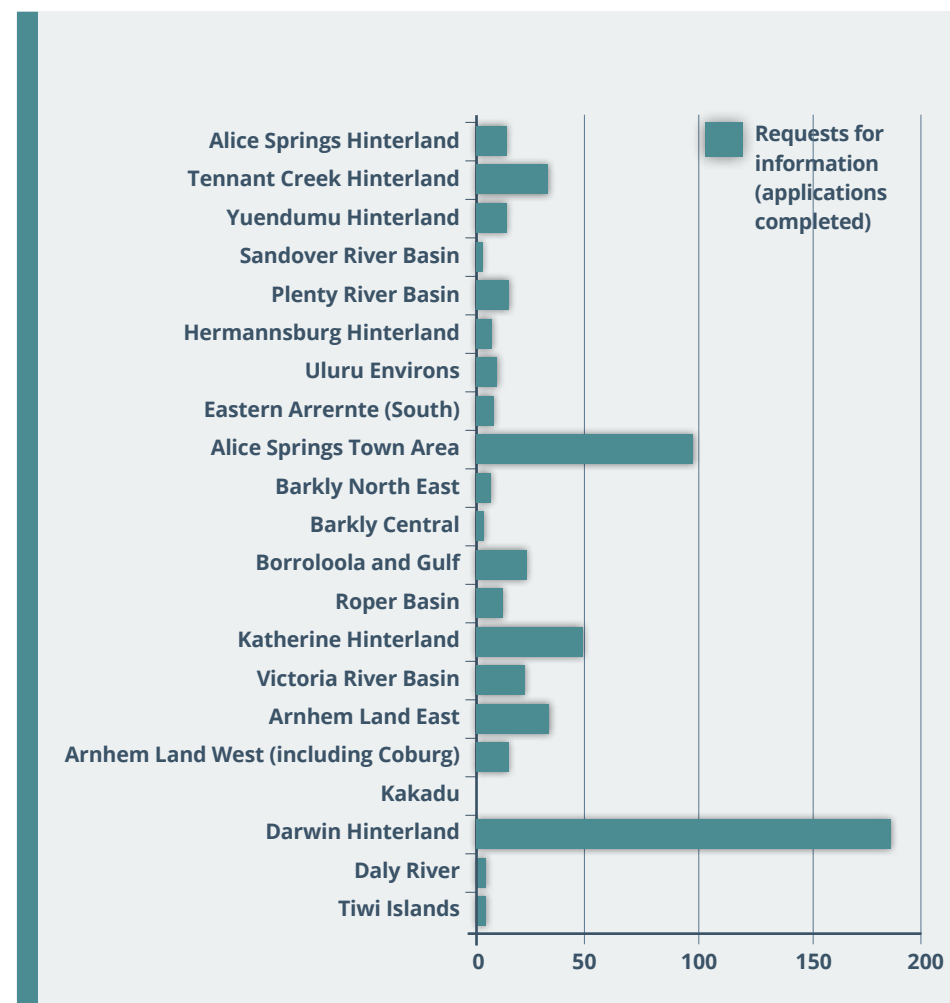


Figure 14: Regional areas and quantity of requests for information 2016-17

▲ Service Users and Project Types

Figure 15 displays the application groups who requested information, with the top three groups being: Private Individuals and Companies; Northern Territory Government; and Mining and Exploration.

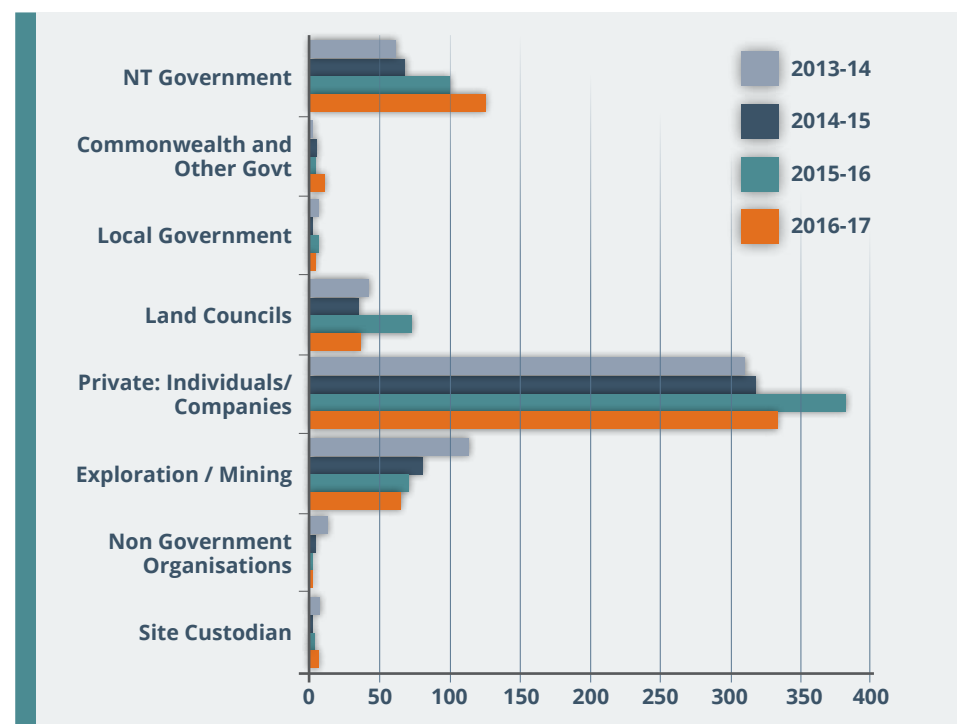


Figure 15: User groups of requests for information in July 2013 to June 2017

The majority of requests from Private Individuals and Companies were associated with the sale and purchase of property. Whilst this figure is slightly lower than the previous reporting year the number of applications is consistent with demand in recent years. Contrary to the overall reduction across sectors in the application for requests for information, the Northern Territory Government increased its use of this service by 27%, which indicates the Northern Territory Government's continued approach to risk management in the project planning phase.

Applications from the Mining and Exploration Industry have reduced in the current reporting year slightly. However, this reduction is balanced by a relative increase in applications for Authority Certificates from this sector which reflects that a number of projects are moving into more advanced stages of development.

In 2016/17 requests for Abstracts of Records accounted for 533 of the 579 applications, which is consistent with the previous reporting period. Applications to inspect the Registers of previously issued Authority Certificates and Registered Sacred Site extracts and requests for digital data accounted for the remainder of applications in this category.



Roadworks on the Plenty Highway

Timeliness

There has been a significant decrease in the number of days to respond to Request for Information applications, from 4.6 days in the previous reporting period to 1.1 days in 2016–17. The reductions in timeframes are a result in changes to internal process and the redevelopment of the Authority's database.

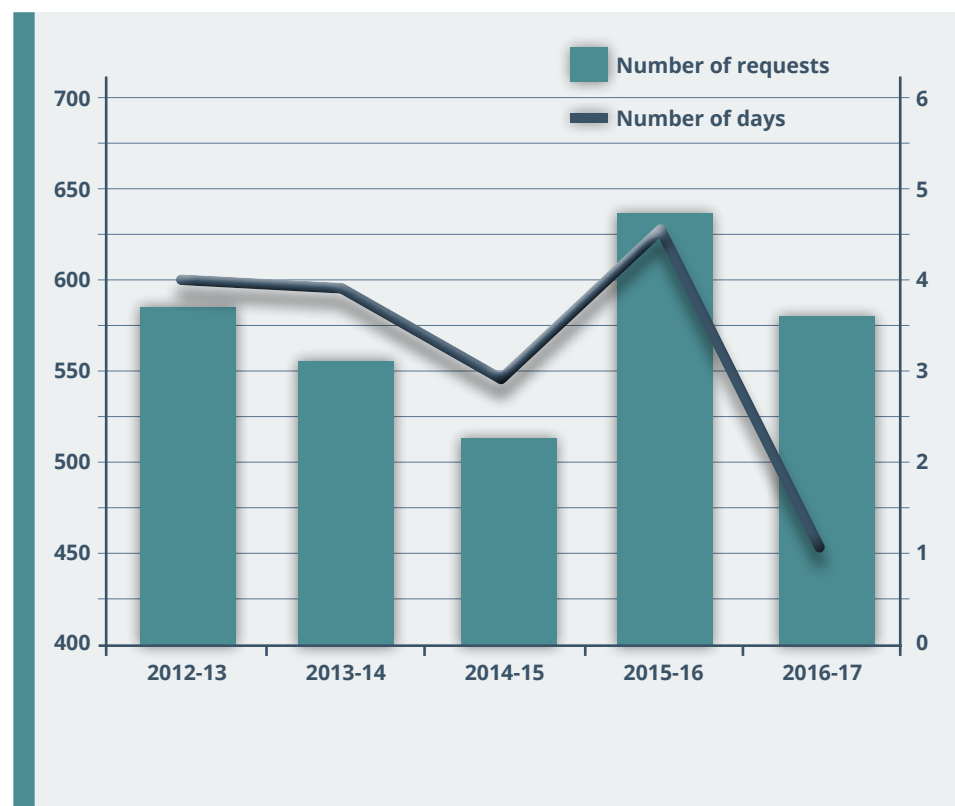


Figure 16: Total quantity of all requests for information and days to respond between July 2012 and 30 June 2017

While the average of all requests for information was 1.1 days, a total average for each type of request varied.

Abstract of Records, which represented 92% of requests received, took on average 1.14 days to complete, while Other Requests took on average 0.4 days. The more complex types of requests such as Inspections of the Sacred Sites Register took on average 1.48 days, and Inspections of Authority Certificates took on average 0.62 days. Digital data requests which require the negotiation of agreements with conditions specific to each situation took on average 3.3 days.

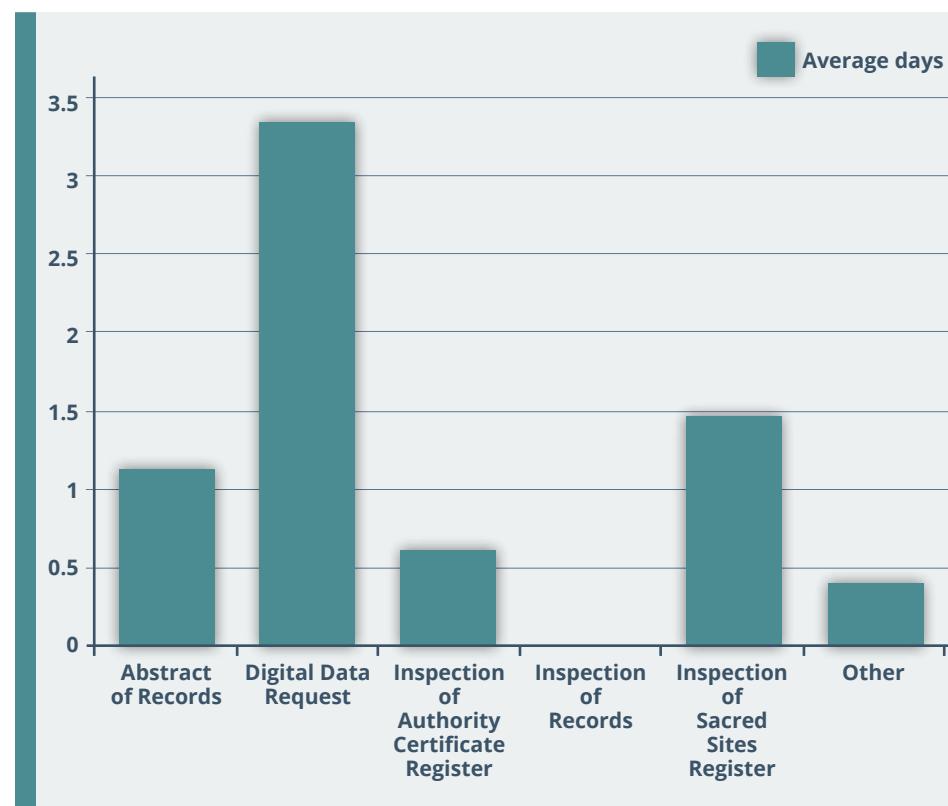


Figure 17: Breakdown of quantity of each type of Request for Information (i.e. Abstract of Records, Digital Data Requests) and days to respond in 2016–17

Register of Sacred Sites

Quantity

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

There were 26 sites registered by the Authority in 2016–17, a marked increase from 2015–16 where only three sites were registered. This increase was due to the implementation of a new sacred site registration process, whilst the low number of sites registered in 2015–16 was a result of transitional arrangements associated with delays in the appointment of new board members.

There was also an increase in the number of sites being requested for registration in this reporting period. A total of 37 sacred sites were requested for registration, over double the amount of last year. This reflects that Authority staff have been active in geographic areas that the organisation may not have previously consulted with custodians.

This has also seen an increase in the number of sacred sites being recorded through field work in 2016–17, with 234 previously unrecorded sacred sites being documented and entered into the Authority database. The Authority has, in total, 2071 registered sacred sites, and 11,015 recorded sacred sites in its database, bringing the total number to 13,086 sacred sites documented in the Northern Territory.

Timeliness

The implementation of the new registrations process has seen a reduction in the backlog of sacred sites requested for registration. Significant desktop research has been undertaken to aid in the reduction of these numbers. Projects undertaken by interns have been able to identify gaps in current requests and populate these through the review of existing reports. The remainder of the information has been obtained through fieldwork in conjunction with Authority Certificate work. The Authority continues to explore options to enable the increase in the number of sites registered by the Authority Board.



Custodians and AAPA staff at Keep River Crossing.

Damage to Sacred Sites

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

In 2016–17 there were four site damage matters carried over from previous years; and during 2016–17 there were 21 new reports of alleged damage. Cases of reported site damage were investigated in numerous locations across the Northern Territory. The highest number of site damage matters reported (5) was located in the Alice Springs Town Area

In total 19 reported cases were closed during 2016–17 and ten remained open at the end of the reporting period. Cases are closed after investigation if there is insufficient evidence to progress a matter to the court. Typically the Authority prosecutes on average 2 site damage matters per annum. In 2016-17 the Authority put one matter before the courts, this case is ongoing.

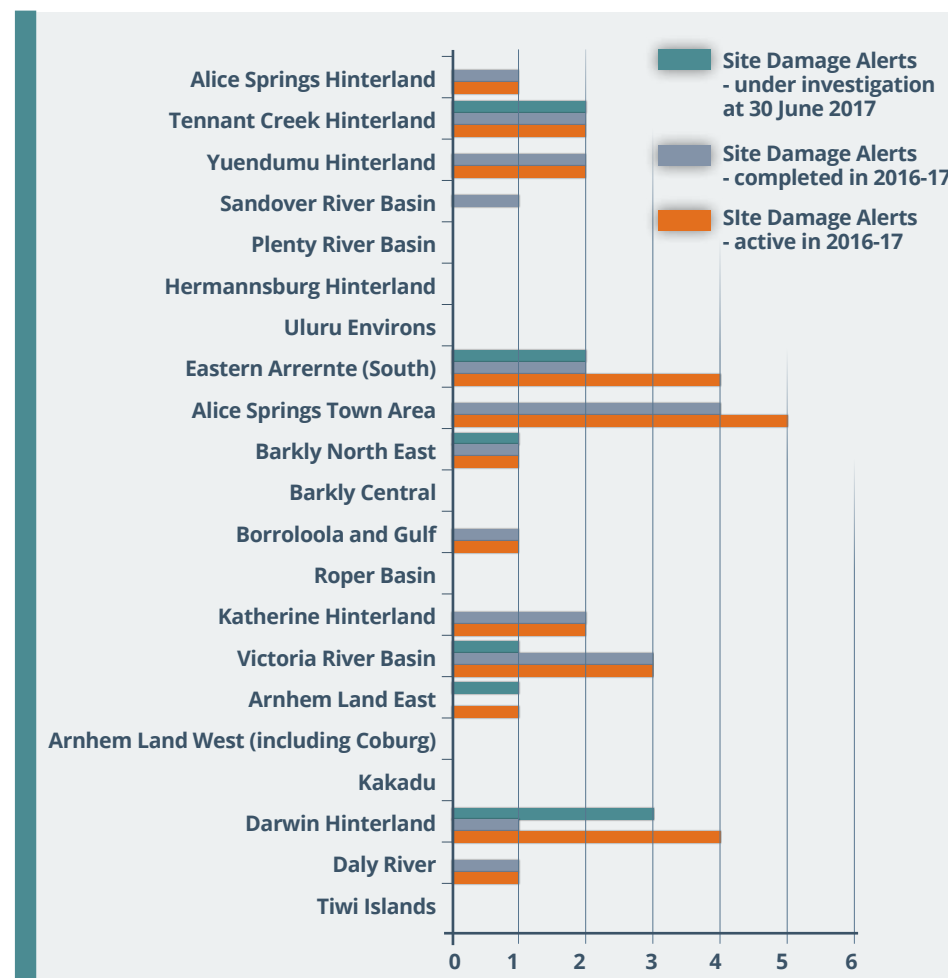


Figure 18: Quantity of sacred site damage cases active and completed in 2016–17 as well as sites still under investigation at 30 June 2017

6 Human Resources Managing Our People



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The Human Resource Management principle, the Merit principle, the Equality of Employment principle and the Performance and Conduct principle contained in the *Public Sector Employment and Management Act*, inform the human resource management policy and procedures of the Authority.

The Authority provides a safe and healthy working environment, ensuring it remains compliant with the Northern Territory's *Work Health and Safety (National Uniform Legislation) Act* and aligns its policies and procedures to the legislative requirements and the NT WorkSafe standards ensuring that the safety of staff and consultants, including Custodians, is maintained to the highest standard possible.

The Staff of the Authority

The Authority employs staff under the relevant provisions of the *Sacred Sites Act*. As a consequence, the Authority is not a prescribed agency within the meaning of the *Public Sector Employment and Management Act*. The Commissioner for Public Employment approved, on 5 May 2004, pursuant to section 17(1) of the *Northern Territory Aboriginal Sacred Sites Act*, that employees of the Authority be employed under the same terms and conditions as in force from time to time, specified in the By-laws made under section 60 of the *Public Sector Employment and Management Act*.

The Authority had a total of 29.64 full-time equivalent (FTE) staff members as at 30 June 2017 or 34 head count which is down from 30.71 FTE or 37 head count the previous year. This reduction is mainly due to employees changing from full-time to part-time employment arrangements. In 2015-16 there were nine part-time employees, which has increased to 12 employees in 2016-17. In 2016-17 there were three resignations and two fixed term contracts completed in comparison with the last reporting period where there were five resignations, five fixed term contracts completed and one retirement.

The overall number of staff has not changed significantly over the last three years and most staff turnover is due to short-term contracts aligned to backfilling of four positions left vacant by employees accessing Parental Leave in 2016-17. Six new staff have been employed in 2016-17. They have filled the three vacated positions in Research and Land Information in both Alice Springs and Darwin (three positions), two vacated positions in Corporate Services and one Project Officer for the Information and Technology Project.

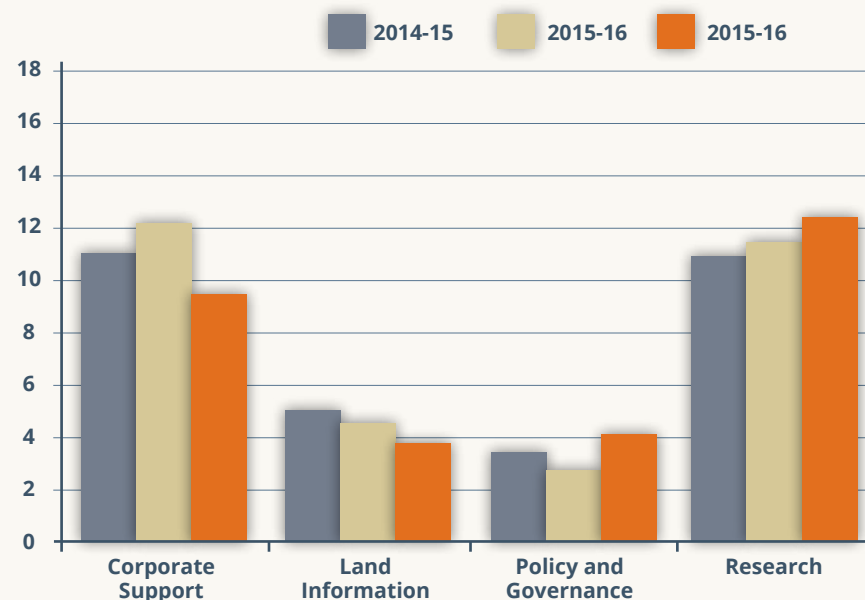


Figure 19: Full-time equivalent by organisational structure code in 2014-15, 2015-16 and 2016-17

Equity and Diversity

The Authority adheres to current anti-discrimination legislation, including the *Northern Territory Anti-Discrimination Act*, providing a workplace free from discrimination and harassment, where employees are treated equally and their differences are valued and respected in the workplace. The Authority ensures that people are employed based solely on their suitability to perform the relevant duties. This ability is based on the person's: knowledge and skills; qualifications and experience; and potential for future development.

In 2016–17 a total of 6% of employees identified as coming from a non-English speaking background compared to 4% the previous year. In 2016–17 a total of 15% of employees identified as Indigenous this is 5% higher than the Northern Territory Government average. There was a slight decrease in the percentage of Indigenous employees in this reporting period. This was due to a temporary fixed term position being recruited due to the need to backfill for an Indigenous employee on parental leave. The Authority continues to implement recruitment strategies that encourage and promote the employment of Indigenous people through such initiatives as the Aurora (Internship) Project, Indigenous Employment Program and Indigenous Employment and Career Development Strategy.

Members of the Authority Board are not included in these figures.

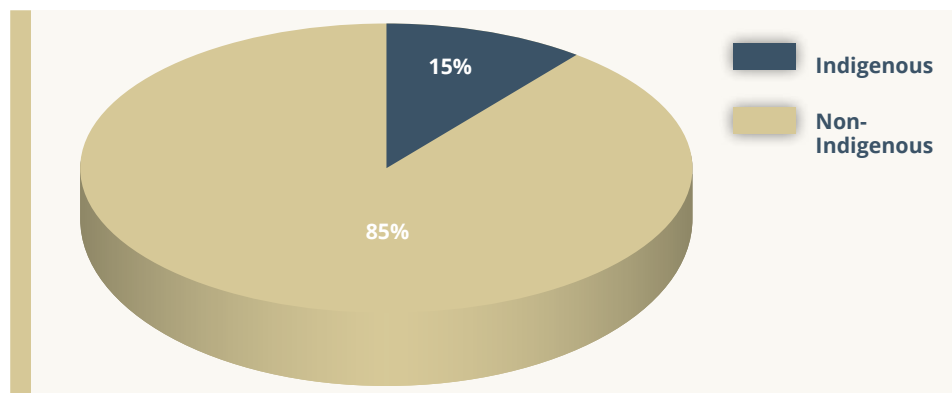


Figure 20: Indigenous and non-Indigenous employees (excluding Board members)

The gender distribution of the staff of the Authority at 30 June 2016 was 60.28% female and 39.73% male; this is equivalent to the Authority's workforce from the previous year.

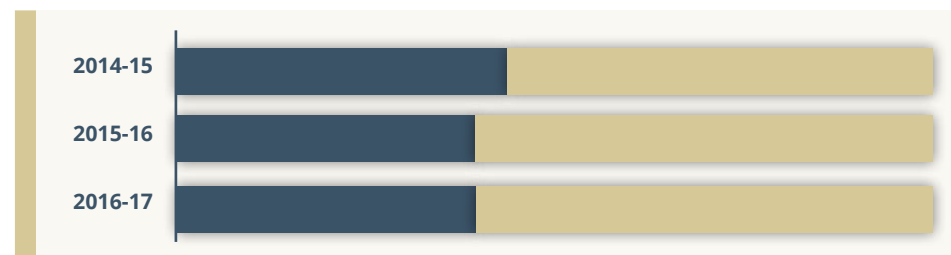


Figure 21: Authority staff (excluding Board members), gender comparison

About a third of staff (38%) fell into the age group of 35–44 year olds; 18% of staff fell into the 45–54 age group; 3% of staff fell into both the 15–24 and 65 and over age group; the 55–64 age group contained 15% of Authority employees; while the 24–34 contained 24%.

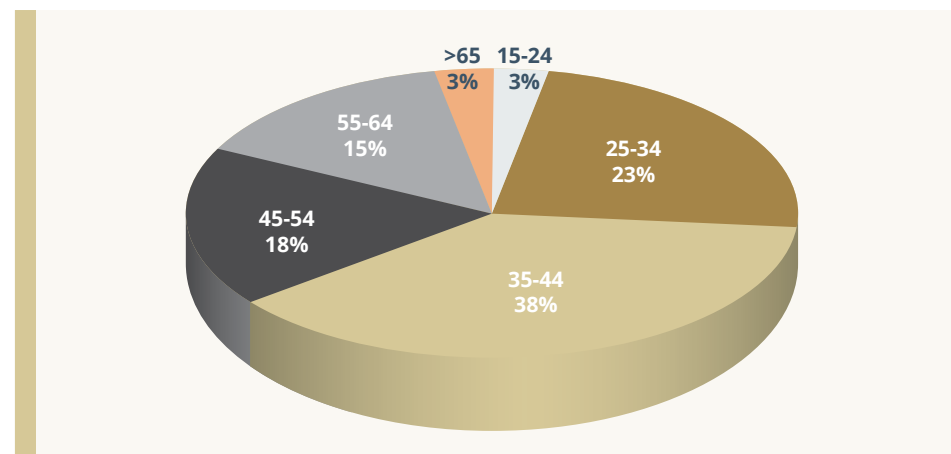


Figure 22: Authority staff (excluding Board members), age comparison

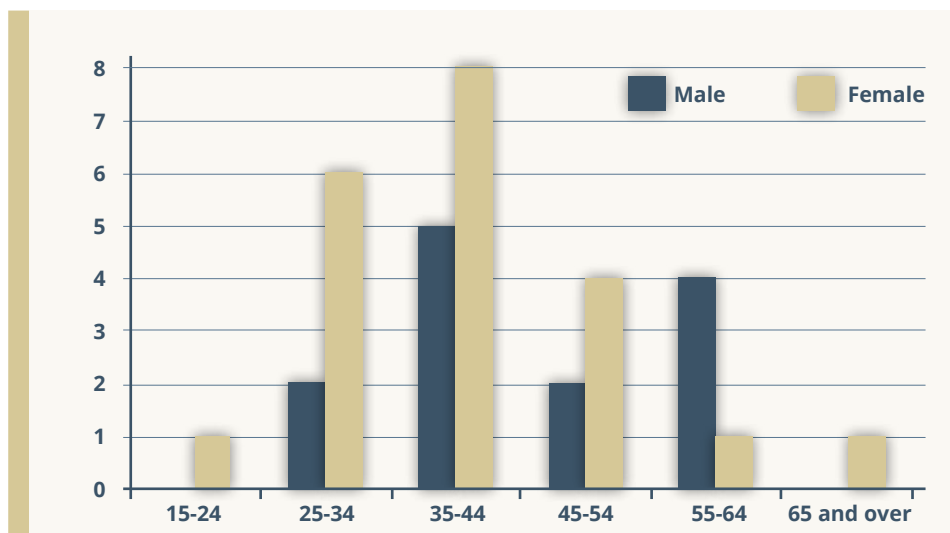


Figure 23: Authority staff by gender and age groups (excluding Board members)

NOTE: Information provided in 2015/16 erroneously included Board members, though explanatory information stated they were not.

Workplace Policies

In ensuring that the Authority provides a structured, consistent, safe and procedurally fair approach, in 2017 the Authority developed and implemented a number of new policies and procedures, and updated and reviewed existing policies and procedures to ensure their currency in relation to the *Fair Work Act* and the best practice models.

The Authority developed policies which are specific to dispute resolution and inappropriate workplace behaviour in order to assist in the informal and formal procedural requirements using best practice principles as recommended by the Fair Work Ombudsman. These policies ensure resolutions occur in a swift manner, that issues are dealt with in a confidential setting and that each party positively engages in the resolution process. These policies aim to achieve successful outcomes by maintaining good relationships between the disputing parties as well as providing flexibility for the best possible outcome of the resolution.

In 2016-17 The Authority introduced a new study assistance policy and procedure. To ensure transparency and consistency in application the study assistance, the policy is governed by a Study Assistance panel.

Policies and procedures were developed to recognise prior service and flexible work agreements. This is a continuation of recognising the changing work environment and providing flexibility to ensure a work/life balance is maintained. In 2016-17 no applications were received for recognition of prior service and 16 employees accessed a flexible work agreement arrangement of which 12 employees were employed on a part-time basis equating to 39% of the workforce.

Remote Fieldwork Time Off in Lieu, Remote Vehicle Travel and the Personal Protective Clothing and Equipment Policies were developed specifically for the Research and Land Information Unit to address remote travel and safety requirements. The Authority continues to be committed to providing a safe workplace for all its employees and consultants, therefore having robust and current policies regarding remote travel and safety equipment as well as providing fully equipped and suitable vehicles with the correct safety equipment for the remote environment is a high priority for the Authority.

In 2016-17 three workers compensation claims were accepted.

Employee Assistance Program

The Authority funds an Employee Assistance Program to provide external specialist counselling services to individual employees, current spouses/partners and dependants. Counselling services are available for three sessions each financial year per issue and is to support employees and their families deal with a variety of work-related and personal issues that may impact on work performance.

Throughout 2016-17 the Authority continued to promote the service through promotional material and through meetings. In 2016-17 the Authority spent \$4,455 on counselling services for staff and immediate family and this service was accessed 23 times.

Staff Training and Development

Training and development focuses on providing the skills and competencies necessary for staff to perform the tasks involved in achieving the desired outcomes of the Authority; as well as building the knowledge, skills and attributes of the employee. The Authority recognises that training is a continuous process integrated with, and running parallel to, the tasks and roles that employees are recruited to undertake.

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

In 2017 the Authority established a Study Assistance Panel to assess applications to assist staff undertaking accredited tertiary qualifications. The application and assessment procedure has a transparent appraisal process that is evaluated by a minimum of three members from the Executive Management Group. In 2016–17 four tertiary qualification study assistance applications were supported: an Associate Degree in Spatial Science; a Diploma of Science; a Diploma of Accounting; and a Certificate IV in Business Administration.

During 2016–17 a further 17 non-accredited undertaken by individual staff members to assist them in performing their roles and meeting the compulsory training requirements of the organisation including remote first aid and four wheel drive training.

The Authority spent \$20,760 on training programs and associated expenses during this reporting period. The majority of expenditure was for travel associated with inducting new staff members (\$7,500), policy design and master classes (\$4,125), four wheel drive training (\$2,246) and remote first aid training (\$2,020).



Robinson River Community

7

Sustainability



Sustainability 54

The Authority in the Community 54

Sustainability

In its role of protecting sacred sites, the Authority helps deliver positive social outcomes through its key services:

- Authority Certificate clearances
- Requests for Information
- Registering of Sacred Sites

Through the provision of these services the Authority enhances relations between Aboriginal Custodians and the wider Territory 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 2016–17 the Authority negotiated and issued 157 Authority Certificate clearances to protect sacred sites across the Northern Territory. The clearances provided protection to multiple sacred sites whilst facilitating development projects.
- The Authority issued 579 requests for information from its Register of Sacred Sites which provided the public with information about sacred sites known to the Authority and helped minimise the risk of inadvertent damage to the identified sites; and 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 26 sacred sites, 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 providing support for small businesses, organisations and or community activities. In 2016–17 the Authority supported eight applicants from small business, non-government organisations, and cultural organisations by providing them with full or partial Authority Certificate waivers for their respective projects. The actual total cost of the eight clearances was \$75,321. The Authority provided partial or full waivers to a total of \$32,786.

7 Financial Report



Billabong and outstation at the edge of Legune Station.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT OVERVIEW

.....

For the Year Ended 30 June 2017

The Aboriginal Areas Protection Agency experienced consistent revenue conditions for 2016-17 compared to the previous year. Employee expenses dropped slightly by \$119K due to unfilled vacancies while purchases of Goods and Services grew by \$341K mainly due to contracted anthropological consultancies to cope with a number of large projects.

The ARMS upgrade reached the end of phase 1 with the investment of an additional \$0.061M. Phase 2 of this project was being scoped at the end of the financial year.

Aboriginal Areas Protection Agency equity rose to more than \$2.5M as at 30 June 2017 placing the organisation in a sound financial position.

Insurance Report

The Authority is required to disclose the dollar amount expended on Insurance policies. For the financial year 2016-17 the amount \$34,362.15 (exclusive of GST) was expended as follows;

- Motor Vehicle Insurance \$ 6,030.02
- Workers Compensation \$22,135.93
- Combined \$ 6,196.20

Financial Report 2015-2016

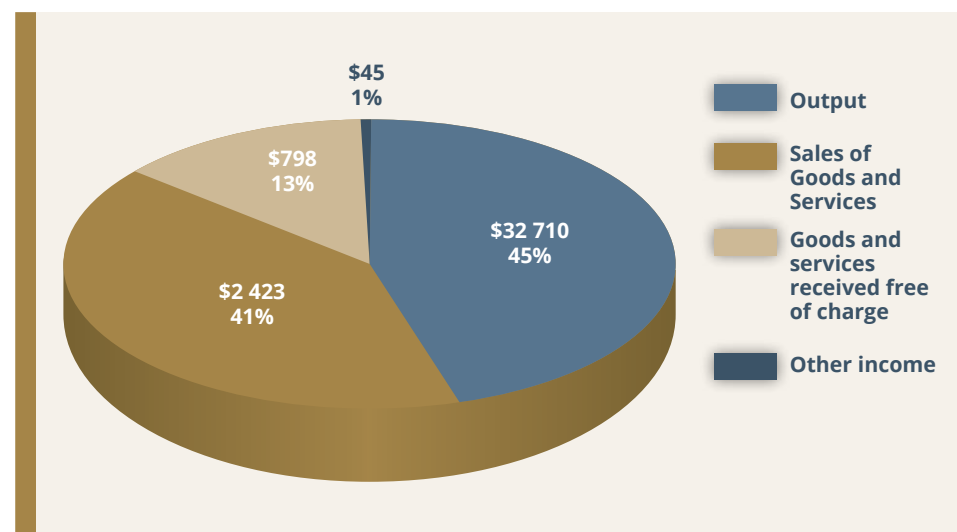
For the year ended 30 June 2016

Income

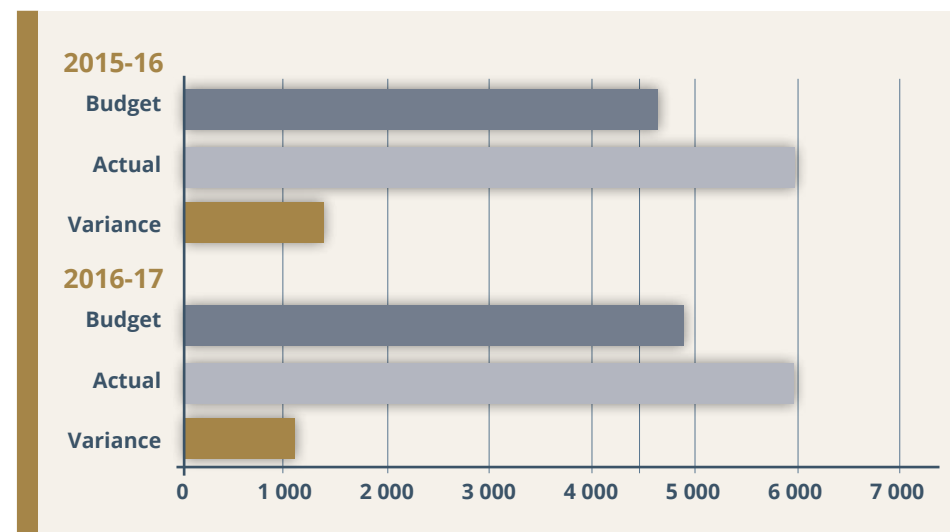
The Authority is funded by a combination of NT Government appropriation, goods and services income, notional income derived from goods and services provided by the Department of Corporate and Information Services free of charge, and some miscellaneous income. The chart below illustrates the relative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

The total income for 2016-17 is approximately \$1.088M (or 23%) more than the budgeted amount of \$4.895M. Output appropriation was in line with budget at \$2.716M; however goods and services income was significantly higher at \$1.095M (or 82%) above the budgeted amount of \$1.328M due to an increased demand for services.

Income Received in \$000'



Total Income - Budget Versus Actual in \$000'

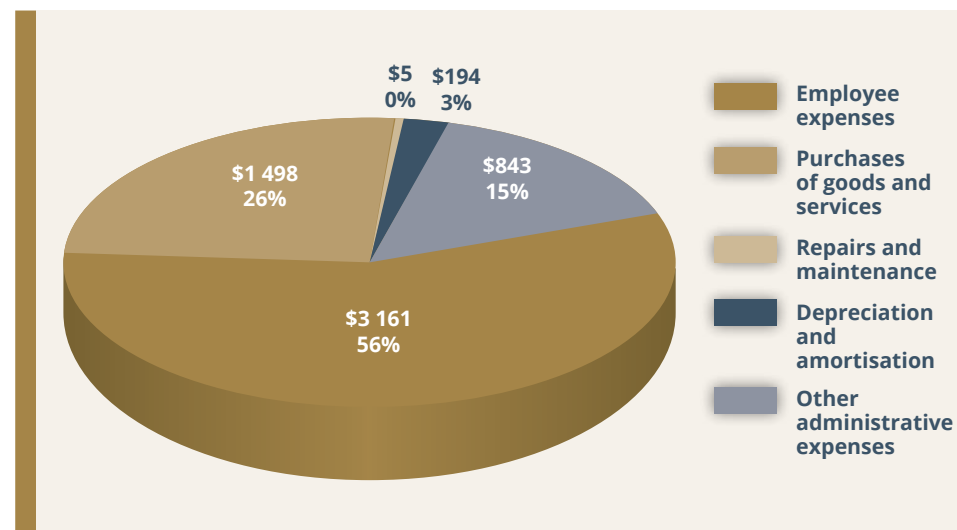


Expenditure

Total Expenditure is made up of five broad categories: - Employee, Purchase of Goods and Services, Depreciation and Amortisation, Repairs and Maintenance and Other Administrative Expenses (i.e. DCIS Free of Charge services). The graph below illustrates the relative value of each expenditure category. Expenses rose by 3%, predominantly due to increased consultants engaged to undertake Anthropological services as demonstrated through the increased service demand through increased income.

Total Expenditure for 2016-17 of \$5.69M was slightly over budget by \$790k. The result was an increase of \$187k in expenditure in comparison to 2015-16.

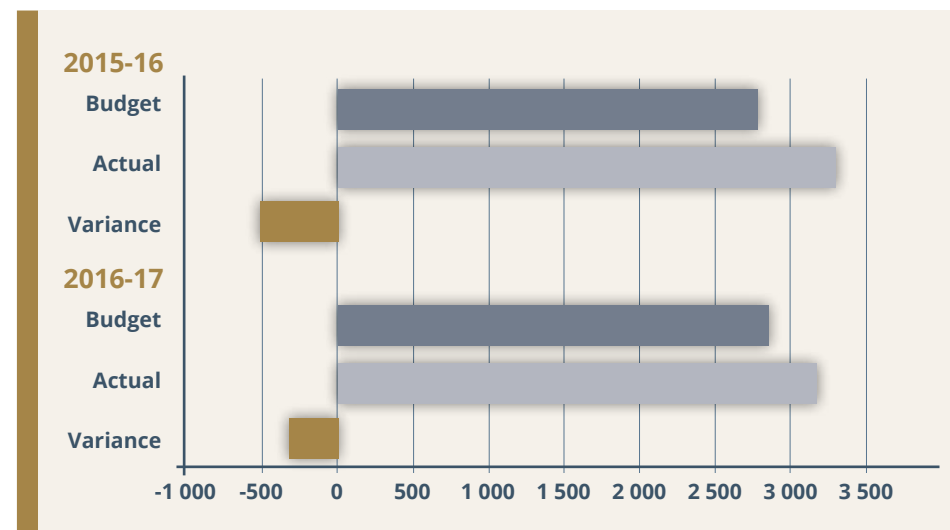
Expenses in \$'000'



Employees

Although there was a decrease in staffing numbers due to a number of staff returning from parental leave and back filling of these positions ceasing, the employee expenditure in 2016-17 continued to exceed the budget allocation by \$313K however, there was a \$119K reduction in employee expenses in comparison to 2015-16. The above budget employee expenses continued to be offset by the above budget income generated by increased demand for services.

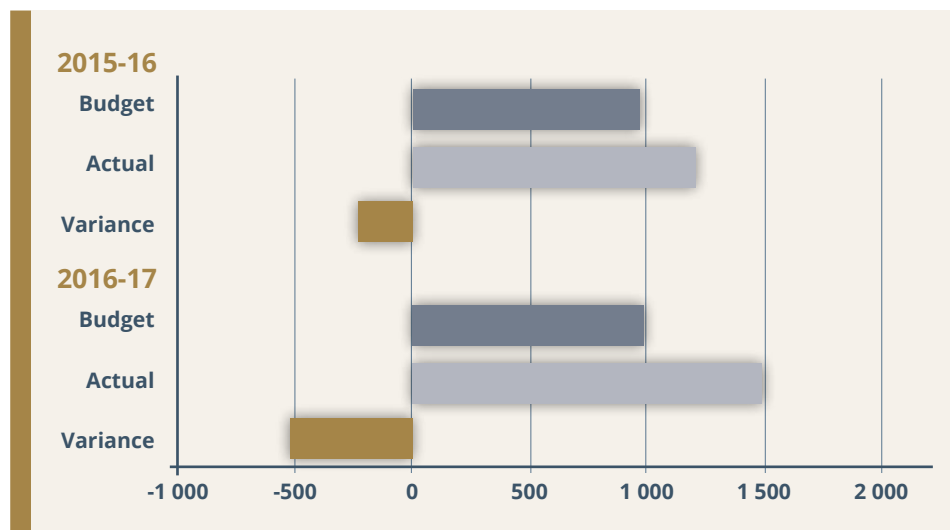
Total Employee - Budget Versus Actual in \$'000'



▲ Purchase of Goods and Services

Total expenditure in 2016-17 for goods and services at \$1.489M was over budget by \$510K in comparison to 2015-16 for goods and services at \$1.202M and over budget by \$242K. The above budget purchases of goods and services expenses continued to be offset by the above budget income generated by increased demand for services.

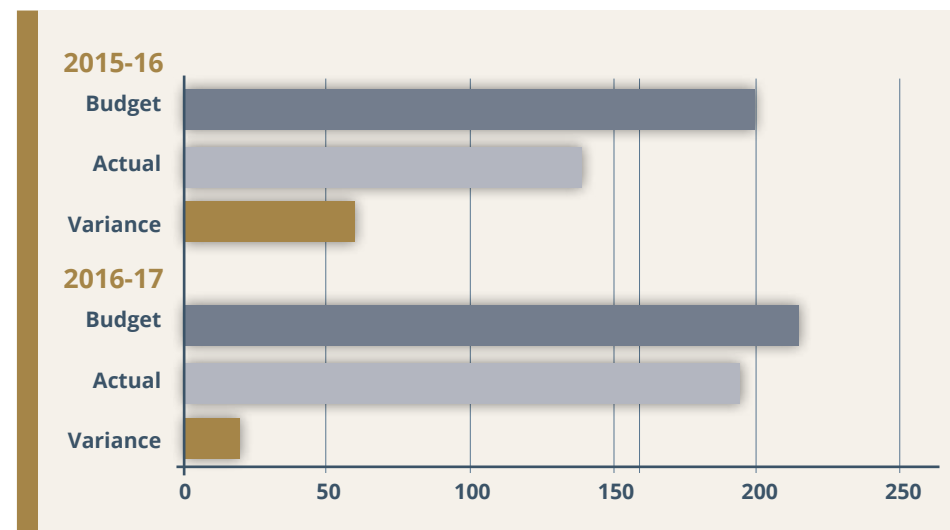
Total Purchases of Goods and Services - Budget Versus Actual in \$'000'



▲ Depreciation and Amortisation

Total Depreciation and Amortisation expenditure in 2016-17 was \$20K less than budgeted in comparison to a variance of \$60k in 2015-16. This was due to the timing of the capitalisation of the new software in 2015-16 to the value of \$363K.

Total Depreciation and Amortisation - Budget Versus Actual in \$'000'

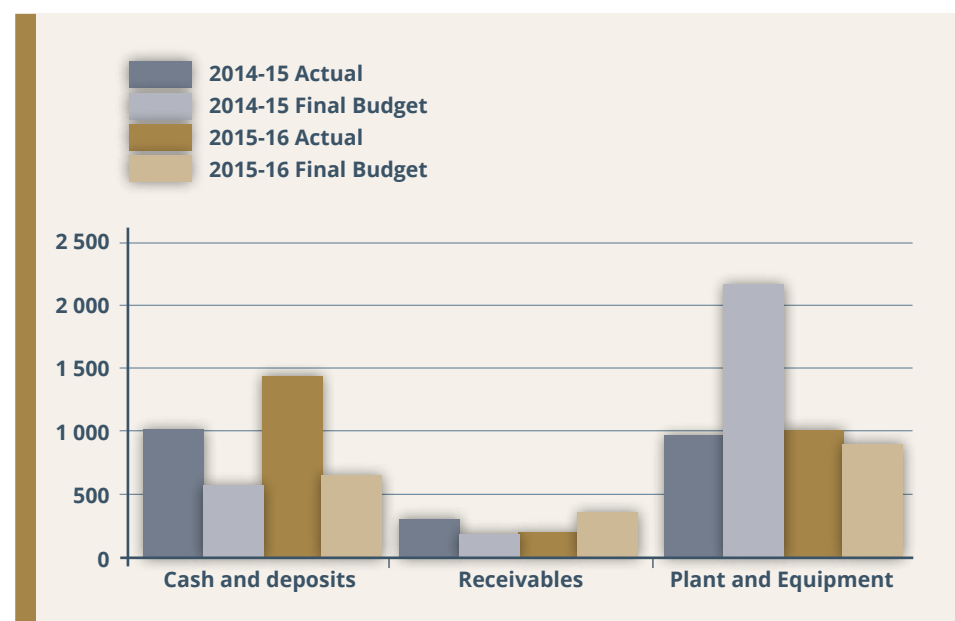


Balance Sheet

▲ Assets

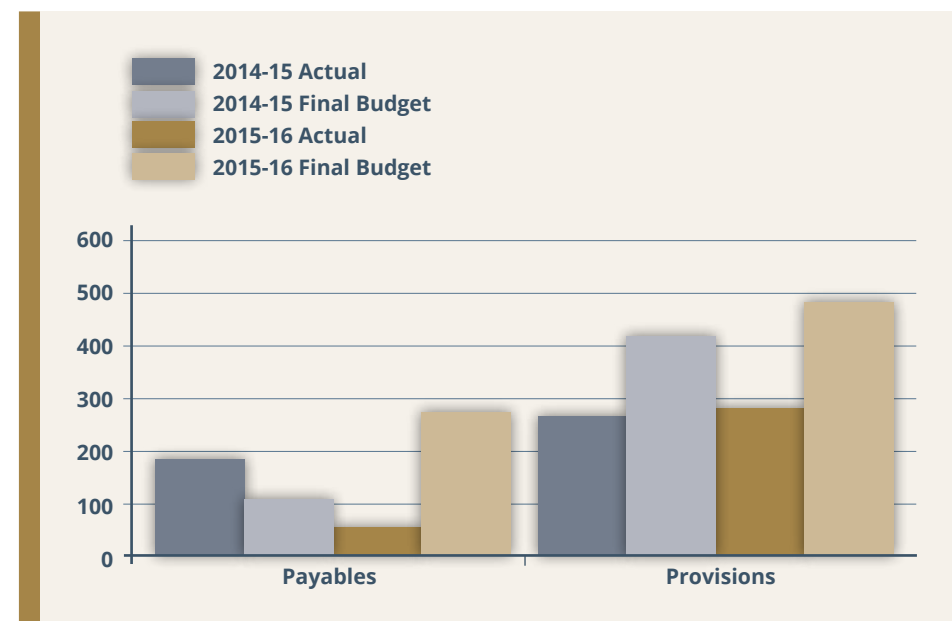
Total assets are made up of three main categories: - cash and deposits, receivables and plant, property and equipment. The total of these assets has increased by \$293K to \$2.946M compared to 2015-16 assets of \$2.653M. Cash and deposits have increased by \$347K; this was due to the surplus achieved.

Receivables have increased by \$79K compared to 2015-16 and plant, property and equipment has decreased by \$133K since 2015-16 due to the accumulated depreciation on plant and equipment.



▲ Liabilities

Liabilities are made up of two main categories; Payables and Provisions. Total liabilities have increased by \$8K to \$398K in 2016-17 compared to \$390K in 2015-16. Payables have decreased in line with government policy by \$11K to \$44K in 2016-17 compared to \$55K in 2015-16. Provisions (which are predominantly employee provisions) have increased by \$19K in 2016-17 from \$335K in 2015-16 to 354K in 2016-17; this is mainly due to staff transferring to the Authority with transferrable entitlements as part of their employment conditions.



▲ Equity

The increase in Assets, together with the decrease in Liabilities, has resulted in an improved financial position for the Authority. Total equity has increased by \$292K to \$2.557M

▲ Statement of Changes in Equity

The statement of changes in equity presents the Authority's profit for the reporting period, items of income and expense recognised in other comprehensive income for the period, the effects of changes in accounting policies and corrections of errors recognised in the period. The statement of changes in equity shows the movement in equity from the previous financial year.

▲ Cash Flow Statement

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

▲ Net cash from Operating Activities

A decrease of \$208k was experienced in 2016-17 for cash used for Operating activities compared to the previous financial year which was \$615K in 2015-16 compared to \$407K in 2016-17.

Net Cash from Investing Activities

\$61K was utilised for cash payments towards the IT enhancement project.

▲ Net Effect

The net effect of cash flow activities for the financial year, led to an increase in cash at bank by \$345K to \$1,790K.

CERTIFICATION OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

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

We further state that the information set out in the Comprehensive Operating Statement, Balance Sheet, Statement of Changes in Equity, Cash Flow Statement, and notes to and forming part of the financial statements, presents fairly the financial performance and cash flows for the year ended 30 June 2017 and the financial position on that date.

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



Dr Benedict Scambary
Chief Executive Officer
30 September 2017



Mr Alan Buckingham
Chief Finance Officer
30 September 2017

COMPREHENSIVE OPERATING STATEMENT

For the year ended 30 June 2017

	Note	2017	2016
		\$000	\$000
INCOME			
Appropriation			
Output		2,716	2,696
Commonwealth			
Sales of goods and services		2,423	2,419
Interest revenue			
Goods and services received free of charge (1)	4	798	810
Other income		45	63
TOTAL INCOME	3	5,982	5,988
EXPENSES			
Employee expenses		3,161	3,280
Administrative expenses			
Purchases of goods and services	5	1,428	1,147
Repairs and maintenance		65	57
Depreciation and amortisation	9	194	139
Other administrative expenses ⁽¹⁾		843	881
TOTAL EXPENSES	3	5,691	5,504
NET SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)		291	484
OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME			
Items that will not be reclassified to net surplus/deficit			
Changes in accounting policies			
Correction of prior period errors			
Changes in asset revaluation surplus			
TOTAL OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME		0	0
COMPREHENSIVE RESULT		291	484

¹ Includes DCIS service charges.

BALANCE SHEET

As at 30 June 2017

	Note	2017	2016
		\$000	\$000
ASSETS			
Current Assets			
Cash and deposits	7	1,791	1,444
Receivables	8	281	202
Prepayments		10	2
Total Current Assets		2,082	1,648
Non-Current Assets			
Property, plant and equipment	9	874	1,007
Total Non-Current Assets		874	1,007
TOTAL ASSETS		2,956	2,655
LIABILITIES			
Current Liabilities			
Payables	11	44	55
Provisions	13	354	284
Total Current Liabilities		398	339
Non-Current Liabilities			
Provisions	13	0	51
Total Non-Current Liabilities		0	51
TOTAL LIABILITIES		398	390
NET ASSETS		2,558	2,265
EQUITY			
Capital		1621	1621
Accumulated funds		936	644
TOTAL EQUITY		2,557	2,265

STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN EQUITY

For the year ended 30 June 2017

Note	Equity at 1 July	Comprehensive result	Transactions with owners in their capacity as owners	Equity at 30 June
	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000
2016-17				
Accumulated Funds				
Transfers from reserves	(638)	(292)		(930)
Other movements directly to equity	(5)			(5)
	(644)	(292)		(936)
Capital – Transactions with Owners				
Equity injections				
Capital appropriation	(564)			(564)
Equity transfers in	(1,195)			(1,195)
Other equity injections	(57)			(57)
Capital withdrawal	195			195
Total Capital	(1,621)	0		(1,621)
Total Equity at End of Financial Year	(2,264)	(292)		(2,556)
2015-16				
Accumulated Funds				
Transfers from reserves	(156)	(483)		(639)
Other movements directly to equity	(5)			(5)
	(161)	(483)		(644)
Capital – Transactions with Owners				
Equity injections				
Capital appropriation	(564)			(564)
Equity transfers in	(1,195)			(1,195)
Other equity injections	(57)			(57)
Capital withdrawal	195			195
Total Capital	(1,621)			(1,621)
Total Equity at End of Financial Year	(1,782)			(2,264)

CASH FLOW STATEMENT

For the year ended 30 June 2017

Note	2017	2016
	\$000	\$000
CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES		
Operating Receipts		
Appropriation		
Output	2,716	2,696
Commonwealth		
Receipts from sales of goods and services	2,443	2,583
Interest received		
Total Operating Receipts	5,159	5,279
Operating Payments		
Payments to employees	(3,129)	(3,345)
Payments for goods and services	(1,623)	(1,319)
Total Operating Payments	(4,752)	(4,664)
Net Cash From/(Used in) Operating Activities	16	615
CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES		
Investing Payments		
Purchases of assets	(61)	(187)
Total Investing Payments	(61)	(187)
Net Cash From/(Used in) Investing Activities	(61)	(187)
CASH FLOWS FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES		
Net increase/(decrease) in cash held	346	428
Cash at beginning of financial year	1,444	1,017
CASH AT END OF FINANCIAL YEAR	7	1,445

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1. OBJECTIVES AND FUNDING

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

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

The Authority is funded by, and is dependent on, the receipt of Parliamentary appropriations and 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 Aboriginal Areas Protection 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 is to include:

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

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 intraagency transactions and balances have been eliminated.

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

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

The following new and revised accounting standards and interpretations were effective for the first time in 2016-17:

AASB 124 Related Party Disclosures

This standard applies to not-for-profit sector for the first time in 2016-17. The accounting standard requires disclosures about the remuneration of key management personnel, transactions with related parties, and relationships between parent and controlled entities. For any such transactions, disclosures will include the nature of the related party relationship, as well as information about those transactions' terms/ conditions and amounts, any guarantees given/received, outstanding receivables/payables, commitments, and any receivables where collection has been assessed as being doubtful.

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.

At 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 come onto the balance sheet together with a lease liability for all leases with a term of more than 12 months, 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.

While 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.

Consequently, it is expected that approximately \$0.5 million in operating lease commitments will be required to be recognised in the balance sheet through a lease liability and corresponding right to use asset from 2019-20 in accordance with AASB 16 Leases. In the comprehensive income statement the operating lease expense will be replaced with a depreciation expense relating to the right to use asset and interest expense relating to the lease liability. These cannot be quantified at this time.

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 with 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.

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 Authority established under the *Northern Territory Aboriginal Sacred Sites Act*.

The principal place of business of the Department is: 4th Floor RCG Centre, 47 Mitchell St, Darwin, NT.

d. Agency and Territory Items

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

Central Holding Authority

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

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

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

The Central Holding Authority recognises and records all Territory items, and as such, these items are not included in the agency's financial statements. However, as the agency is accountable for certain Territory items managed on behalf of Government, these items have been separately disclosed in Note 20 – Schedule of Administered Territory Items.

e. Comparatives

Where necessary, comparative information for the 2015-16 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 2016-17 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	
		2017	2016	2017	2016	2017	2016
		\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000
INCOME							
Output		2,037	2,022	674	674	2,716	2,696
Commonwealth							
Sales of goods and services		2,413	2,419			2,423	2,419
Interest revenue							
Goods and services received free of charge	4	599	607	199	203	798	810
Other income		45	63			45	63
TOTAL INCOME		5,094	5,111	873	877	5,982	5,988
EXPENSES							
Employee expenses		1,450	2,038	1,711	1,242	3,161	3,280
Administrative expenses							
Purchases of goods and services	5	731	1197	697	7	1428	1204
Repairs and maintenance				66		66	
Depreciation and amortisation	9	146	100	48	39	194	139
Other administrative expenses ¹		644	671	199	210	843	881
TOTAL EXPENSES		2,971	4,005	2,721	1,499	5,692	5,504
NET SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)		2,123	1,105	(1,848)	(623)	290	484

¹ Includes DCIS service charges.

Income

Income encompasses both revenue and gains.

Income is recognised at the fair value of the consideration received, exclusive of the amount of GST. Exchanges of goods or services of the same nature and value without any cash consideration being exchanged are not recognised as income.

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 onpassed to the relevant agencies as Commonwealth appropriation.

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

Sale of Goods

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

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

Rendering of Services

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

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

2017	2016
\$000	\$000

4. GOODS AND SERVICES RECEIVED FREE OF CHARGE

Corporate and information services	798	810
	798	810

5. PURCHASES OF GOODS AND SERVICES

The net surplus/(deficit) has been arrived at after charging the following expenses:

Goods and services expenses:

Consultants ⁽¹⁾	569	341
Advertising ⁽²⁾	10	7
Marketing and promotion ⁽³⁾	0	0
Document production	6	8
Legal expenses ⁽⁴⁾	53	19
Recruitment ⁽⁵⁾	1	14
Training and study	21	37
Official duty fares	93	66
Travelling allowance	23	28
Insurance	34	43
Boards and Committees	89	50
IT Charges	189	181
	1,088	795

⁽¹⁾ Mainly anthropology services

⁽²⁾ Includes marketing, promotion and IT consultants.

⁽³⁾ Does not include recruitment, advertising or marketing and promotion advertising.

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

⁽⁵⁾ Includes recruitment-related advertising costs.

6. WRITE-OFFS, POSTPONEMENTS, WAIVERS, GIFTS AND EX GRATIA PAYMENTS

	Agency		Agency		Territory Items		Territory Items	
	2017	No. of Trans.	2016	No. of Trans.	2017	No. of Trans.	2016	No. of Trans.
	\$000		\$000		\$000		\$000	
Write-offs, Postponements and Waivers Under the Financial Management Act								
Represented by:								
<i>Amounts written off, postponed and waived by Delegates</i>			2	2				
Irrecoverable amounts payable to the Territory or an agency written off								
Losses or deficiencies of money written off								
Public property written off								
Waiver or postponement of right to receive or recover money or property								
Total Written Off, Postponed and Waived by Delegates			2	2				
<i>Amounts written off, postponed and waived by the Treasurer</i>								
Irrecoverable amounts payable to the Territory or an agency written off								
Losses or deficiencies of money written off			18	2			19	3
Public property written off								
Waiver or postponement of right to receive or recover money or property								
Total Written Off, Postponed and Waived by the Treasurer			18	2			19	3
			20	4			19	3

7. CASH AND DEPOSITS

	2017 \$000	2016 \$000
Cash on hand		
Cash at bank	1	1
On call or short-term deposits	1,790	1,443
	1,791	1,444

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

8. RECEIVABLES

Current		
Accounts receivable	201	222
Less: Allowance for impairment losses	(6)	(20)
	195	202
Interest receivables		
GST receivables	(11)	
Other receivables	97	
	281	202
Total Receivables	281	202

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 16 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.

	2017	2016
	\$000	\$000

9. PROPERTY, PLANT AND EQUIPMENT

Plant and Equipment		
At fair value	1,408	1,374
Less: Accumulated depreciation	(832)	(724)
	576	650
Computer Software		
At capitalised cost	363	418
Less: Accumulated depreciation	(65)	(61)
	298	357
Total Property, Plant and Equipment	874	1,007

9. PROPERTY, PLANT AND EQUIPMENT (continued)

2017 Property, Plant and Equipment Reconciliations

A reconciliation of the carrying amount of property, plant and equipment at the beginning and end of 2016-17 is set out below:

	Land	Buildings	Infrastructure	Construction (Work in Progress)	Plant and Equipment	Computer Software	Total
	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000
Carrying Amount as at 1 July 2016					649	358	1,007
Additions						61	61
Disposals							
Depreciation					(134)	(60)	(194)
Carrying Amount as at 30 June 2017					515	359	874

2016 Property, Plant and Equipment Reconciliations

A reconciliation of the carrying amount of property, plant and equipment at the beginning and end of 2015-16 is set out below:

Carrying Amount as at 1 July 2015	959		959
Additions	(175)	363	198
Disposals	(134)	(5)	(139)
Depreciation			
Carrying Amount as at 30 June 2016	649	358	1,007

Acquisitions

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

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

Complex Assets

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

Subsequent Additional Costs

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

Construction (Work in Progress)

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

Revaluations and Impairment

Revaluation of Assets

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

- land;
- buildings;
- infrastructure assets;
- heritage and cultural assets;
- biological assets; and

- intangibles.

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

Impairment of Assets

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

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

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

In certain situations, an impairment loss may subsequently be reversed. Where an impairment loss is subsequently reversed, the carrying amount of the asset is increased to the revised estimate of its recoverable amount. A reversal of an impairment loss is recognised in the Comprehensive Operating Statement as income, unless the asset is carried at a revalued amount, in which case the impairment reversal results in an increase in the asset revaluation surplus. Note 15 provides additional information in relation to the asset revaluation surplus.

Agency property, plant and equipment assets were assessed for impairment as at 30 June 2017. No impairment adjustments were required as a result of this review.

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:

	2016	2015
Plant and Equipment	2-5 years	2-5 years
Computer Software	5 years	5 years

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

10. FAIR VALUE MEASUREMENT OF NON-FINANCIAL ASSETS

a. Fair Value Hierarchy

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

	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Total Fair Value
	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000
2016-17				
Asset Classes(a)				
Construction			175	175
Plant and equipment			783	783
Total			958	958
2015-16				
Asset Classes(a)				
Plant and equipment			1,007	1,007
Total			1,007	1,007

There were no transfers between Level 1 and Levels 2 or 3 during 2016-17.

b. Valuation Techniques and Inputs

There were no changes in valuation techniques from 2015-16 to 2016-17.

c. Additional Information for Level 3 Fair Value Measurements

i. Reconciliation of Recurring Level 3 Fair Value Measurements

	Plant and Equipment	Construction (Work in Progress)
	\$000	\$000
2016-17		
Fair value as at 1 July 2016	918	
Additions		175
Depreciation	(135)	
Fair value as at 30 June 2017	783	175
2015-16		
Fair value as at 1 July 2015	959	
Additions	187	
Depreciation	(139)	
Fair value as at 30 June 2016	1,007	

	2017	2016
	\$000	\$000
11. PAYABLES		
Accounts payable	4	4
Accrued expenses	40	51
Total Payables	44	55

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.

12. BORROWINGS AND ADVANCES

The Aboriginal Areas Protection Authority did not have any advances or borrowings

	2017	2016
	\$000	\$000

13. PROVISIONS

Current		
<i>Employee benefits</i>		
Recreation leave	253	181
Leave loading	50	51
Other employee benefits - Airfares	4	4
<i>Other current provisions</i>	47	48
	354	284
Non-Current		
<i>Employee benefits</i>		
Other provisions Recreation Leave		51
		51
Total Provisions	354	335

The Agency employed 29.85 employees as at 30 June 2017 (29.82 employees as at 30 June 2016).

Employee Benefits

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

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

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

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

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

14. COMMITMENTS

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

	2017	2016
	\$000	\$000

15. NOTES TO THE CASH FLOW STATEMENT

Reconciliation of Cash

The total of agency 'Cash and deposits' of \$1,444 million recorded in the Balance Sheet is consistent with that recorded as 'Cash' in the Cash Flow Statement.

Reconciliation of Net Surplus/(Deficit) to Net Cash from Operating Activities

291

483

Net Surplus/(Deficit)

Non-cash items:

Depreciation and amortisation

194

139

Asset write-offs/write-downs

Asset donations/gifts

(Gain)/Loss on disposal of assets

Changes in assets and liabilities:

Decrease/(Increase) in receivables

(79)

104

Decrease/(Increase) in inventories

Decrease/(Increase) in prepayments

(8)

Decrease/(Increase) in other assets

(Decrease)/Increase in payables

(11)

(130)

(Decrease)/Increase in provision for employee benefits

20

20

(Decrease)/Increase in other provisions

(1)

(1)

(Decrease)/Increase in other liabilities

Net Cash from Operating Activities

407

614

16. 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; investments loan and placements; payables; advances received; borrowings and derivatives.

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.

Exposure to interest rate risk, foreign exchange risk, credit risk, price risk and liquidity risk arise in the normal course of activities. The agency's investments, loans and placements, and borrowings are predominantly managed through the NTTC adopting strategies to minimise the risk. Derivative financial arrangements are also utilised to manage financial risks inherent in the management of these financial instruments. These arrangements include swaps, forward interest rate agreements and other hedging instruments to manage fluctuations in interest or exchange rates.

a. Categorisation of Financial Instruments

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

	Fair value through profit or loss		Held to maturity investments	Financial assets - Loans and receivables	Financial assets - available for sale	Financial liabilities - amortised cost	Total
	Held for trading	Designated at fair value					
	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000
2016-17 Categorisation of Financial Instruments							
Cash and deposits				1,791			1,791
Receivables ⁽¹⁾				281			281
Advances							
Total Financial Assets				2,072			2,072
Deposits held ⁽¹⁾				44			44
Total Financial Liabilities				2,116			2,116
2015-16 Categorisation of Financial Instruments							
Cash and deposits				1,017			1,017
Receivables ¹				305			305
Total Financial Assets				1,322			1,322
Deposits held ⁽¹⁾							
Payables ⁽¹⁾				186			186
Total Financial Liabilities				1,508			1,508
⁽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:

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

Financial liabilities are classified into the following categories:

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

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

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

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

- acquired or incurred principally for the purpose of selling or repurchasing it in the near term with an intention of making a profit; or
- part of a portfolio of identified financial instruments that are managed together and for which there is evidence of a recent actual pattern of short-term profit-taking; or
- a derivative that is not a financial guarantee contract or a designated and effective hedging instrument.

A financial instrument may be designated as at FVTPL upon initial recognition if:

- such designation eliminates or significantly reduces a measurement or recognition inconsistency that would otherwise arise; or
- the instrument forms part of a group of financial instruments, which is managed and its performance is evaluated on a fair value basis, in accordance with a documented risk management or investment strategy, and information about the grouping is provided internally on that basis; or

- it forms part of a contract containing one or more embedded derivatives, and AASB 139 Financial Instruments: Recognition and Measurement permits the contract to be designated as at FVTPL.

Financial liabilities at fair value through profit or loss include deposits held excluding statutory deposits, accounts payable and accrued expenses. Financial assets at fair value through profit or loss include short-term securities and bonds.

Held-to-Maturity Investments

The Aboriginal Areas Protection Authority does not have any held-to-maturity investments.

Loans and Receivables

Loans and receivables are non-derivative financial assets with fixed or determinable payments that are not quoted in an active market other than those held for trading and available for sale. Loans and receivables exclude statutory receivables.

Available-for-Sale Financial Assets

The Aboriginal Areas Protection Authority does not have any available-for-sale financial assets.

Financial Liabilities at Amortised Cost

Financial instrument liabilities measured at amortised cost include all advances received, finance lease liabilities and borrowings. Amortised cost is calculated using the effective interest method.

Derivatives

The Aboriginal Areas Protection Authority does not have derivatives.

Netting of Swap Transactions

The Aboriginal Areas Protection Authority does not have any netting of swap transactions.

b. Credit Risk

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

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

Receivables

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

Internal Receivables(a)	Aging of Receivables \$000	Aging of Impaired Receivables \$000	Net Receivables \$000
2016-17			
Not overdue	111		111
Overdue for less than 30 days	0		0
Overdue for 30 to 60 days	0		0
Overdue for more than 60 days	0		0
Total	111		111

Reconciliation of the Allowance for Impairment Losses (b)

Opening

Written off during the year

Recovered during the year

Increase/(Decrease) in allowance
recognised in profit or loss

Total 0

2015-16

Not overdue	41		41
Overdue for less than 30 days	10		10
Overdue for 30 to 60 days	0		0
Overdue for more than 60 days	23		23
Total	73		73

Reconciliation of the Allowance for Impairment Losses (b)

Opening

Written off during the year

Recovered during the year

Increase/(Decrease) in allowance
recognised in profit or loss

Total 0

External Receivables(a)	Aging of Receivables \$000	Aging of Impaired Receivables \$000	Net Receivables \$000
2016-17			
Not overdue	57		57
Overdue for less than 30 days	0		0
Overdue for 30 to 60 days	0		0
Overdue for more than 60 days	37		37
Total	95		95

Reconciliation of the Allowance for Impairment Losses (b)

Opening 0

Written off during the year 15

Recovered during the year 0

Increase/(Decrease) in allowance
recognised in profit or loss

Total (15)

2015-16

Not overdue	70		70
Overdue for less than 30 days	19		19
Overdue for 30 to 60 days	0		0
Overdue for more than 60 days	77		77
Total	166		166

Reconciliation of the Allowance for Impairment Losses (b)

Opening 0

Written off during the year 19

Recovered during the year 0

Increase/(Decrease) in allowance
recognised in profit or loss

Total (19)

c. Liquidity Risk

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

	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	%
2017 Maturity analysis for financial assets and liabilities									
Assets									
Cash and deposits							1,791	1,791	
Receivables							281	281	
Total Financial Assets							2,072	2,072	
Liabilities									
Payables							44	44	
Total Financial Liabilities							44	44	
2016 Maturity analysis for financial assets and liabilities									
Assets									
Cash and deposits							1,444	1,444	
Receivables							202	202	
Total Financial Assets							1,646	1,646	
Liabilities									
Payables							55	55	
Total Financial Liabilities							55	55	

(i) Interest Rate Risk

The Aboriginal Areas Protection Authority is not exposed to interest rate risk as agency financial assets and financial liabilities, with the exception of finance leases are noninterest bearing. Finance lease arrangements are established on a fixed interest rate and as such do not expose the Aboriginal Areas Protection Authority to interest rate risk.

(ii) Currency Risk

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

d. Net Fair Value

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Level 3 – inputs are unobservable.

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

- the fair value of cash, deposits, advances, receivables and payables approximates their carrying amount, which is also their amortised cost;
- the fair value of derivative financial instruments are derived using current market yields and exchange rates appropriate to the instrument; and
- the fair value of other monetary financial assets and liabilities is based on discounting to present value the expected future cash flows by applying current market interest rates for assets and liabilities with similar risk profiles.

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

	Total Carrying Amount	Net Fair Value Level 1	Net Fair Value Level 2	Net Fair Value Level 3	Net Fair Value Total
	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000
2017					
Financial Assets					
Cash and Deposits	1,791	1,791			1,791
Receivables	281	281			281
Total Financial Assets	2,072	2,072			2,072
Financial Liabilities					
Payables	44	44			44
Total Financial Liabilities	44	44			44
2016					
Financial Assets					
Cash and Deposits	1,444	1,444			1,444
Receivables	202	202			202
Total Financial Assets	1,646	1,646			1,646
Financial Liabilities					
Payables	55	55			55
Total Financial Liabilities	55	55			55

The net fair value of the financial instruments are based on level 1 method, the carrying amount of these financial instruments recorded in the financial statements approximates their respective net values. Where differences exist, these are not material.

There were no changes in valuation techniques during the period.

17. Related Parties

i) Related Parties

The Aboriginal Areas Protection 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; and
- spouses, children and dependants who are close family members of the Portfolio Minister or KMP; and
- all public sector entities that are controlled and consolidated into the whole of government financial statements; and
- 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 Aboriginal Areas Protection Authority are those persons having authority and responsibility for planning, directing and controlling the activities of Aboriginal Areas Protection Authority. These include the Minister of Environment and Natural Resources, the Chief Executive Officer and the four members of the executive team of Aboriginal Areas Protection Authority 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 Governance and Policy; and
4. Mr Peter Russell, Manager, Compliance.

iii) Remuneration of Key Management Personnel

The details below excludes the salaries and other benefits of Minister of Environment and Natural Resources as the Minister's remunerations and allowances are payable by the Department of the Legislative Assembly and consequently disclosed within the Treasurer's Annual Financial Statements.

The aggregate compensation of key management personnel of Aboriginal Areas Protection Authority is set out below:

	2016-17
	\$000
Short-term benefits	708
Long-term benefits	0
Termination benefits	0
Total	708

iv) Remuneration of Authority Board

The Aboriginal Areas Protection Authority Board consists of 10 Indigenous representatives plus two government nominated positions. The Indigenous representatives received Board Sitting fees that totalled \$88k during 2016-17.

18. CONTINGENT LIABILITIES AND CONTINGENT ASSETS

a) Contingent Liabilities

Aboriginal Areas Protection Authority had no contingent liabilities as at 30 June 2016 or 30 June 2017

b) Contingent Assets

Aboriginal Areas Protection Authority had no contingent assets as at 30 June 2016 or 30 June 2017

19. 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.

20. 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)).

	2017	2016
	\$000	\$000
TERRITORY INCOME AND EXPENSES		
Income		
Taxation revenue		
Grants and subsidies revenue		
Current		
Capital		
Fees from regulatory services	45	63
Royalties and rents		
Other income		
Total Income	45	63
Expenses		
Central Holding Authority income transferred	45	63
Doubtful debts		
Bad debts		
Other administrative expenses		
Total Expenses	45	63
Territory Income less Expenses	0	0

21. BUDGETARY INFORMATION

Comprehensive Operating Statement	2016-17 Actual	2016-17 Original Budget	Variance	Note
	\$000	\$000	\$000	
INCOME				
Taxation revenue				
Grants and subsidies revenue				
Current				
Capital				
Appropriation				
Output	2,716	2,716	0	
Commonwealth				
Sales of goods and services	2,423	1,328	1,095	(a)
Interest revenue				
Goods and services received free of charge	798	851	(53)	
Gain on disposal of assets				
Other income	45	0	45	
TOTAL INCOME	5,983	4,895	1,088	
EXPENSES				
Employee expenses	3,161	2,848	313	(b)
Administrative expenses				
Purchases of goods and services	1,488	980	508	(c)
Repairs and maintenance	5	8	3	
Depreciation and amortisation	194	214	(20)	
Other administrative expenses	844	851	(7)	
Grants and subsidies expenses				
Current				
Capital				
Community service obligations				
Interest expenses				
TOTAL EXPENSES	5,692	4,901	791	
NET SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)	291	(6)	297	

(a) Variance due to additional funds generated by increased activity
(b) Additional FTEs
(c) Additional consulting anthropologists due to major projects

Balance Sheet	2016-17 Actual	2016-17 Original Budget	Variance	Note
	\$000	\$000	\$000	
ASSETS				
Current assets				
Cash and deposits	1,791	1,860	(69)	
Receivables	281	304	(23)	(d)
Inventories				
Advances and investments				
Prepayments				
Other assets				
Total current assets	2,082	2,166	(84)	
Non-current assets				
Receivables				
Advances and investments				
Property, plant and equipment	874	929	(55)	
Prepayments				
Other assets				
Total non-current assets	874	929	(55)	
TOTAL ASSETS	2,955	3,095	140	
LIABILITIES				
Current liabilities				
Deposits held				
Payables	44	183	(139)	(d)
Borrowings and advances				
Provisions	354	317	(37)	(e)
Other liabilities				
Total current liabilities	399	500	(101)	
Non-current liabilities				
Borrowings and advances				
Provisions				
Other liabilities				
Total non-current liabilities	0	0	0	
TOTAL LIABILITIES	399	500	(101)	
NET ASSETS	2,556	2,595	39	
EQUITY				
Capital	1,621	1,621	0	
Reserves				
Accumulated funds	936	974	39	
TOTAL EQUITY	2,556	2,595	39	

(d) Both receivables and payables declined due to management policy to minimise.

(e) Changes of accounting policy led to all staff entitlements being treated as current liabilities.

Cash Flow Statement	2016-17 Actual	2016-17 Original Budget	Variance	Note
	\$000	\$000	\$000	
CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES				
Operating receipts				
Taxes received				
Grants and subsidies received				
Current				
Capital				
Appropriation				
Output	2,716	2,717	0	
Commonwealth				
Receipts from sales of goods and services	2,443	1,328	1,115	
Interest received				
Total operating receipts	5,159	4,044	1,115	(a)
Operating payments				
Payments to employees	(3,129)	(2,848)	(280)	
Payments for goods and services	(1,623)	(988)	(635)	
Grants and subsidies paid				
Current				
Capital				
Community service obligations				
Interest paid				
Total operating payments	(4,752)	(3,836)	(915)	(b)
Net cash from/(used in) operating activities	408	208	(200)	
CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES				
Investing receipts				
Proceeds from asset sales				
Repayment of advances				
Sales of investments				
Total investing receipts				
Investing payments				
Purchases of assets	(61)	(100)	(39)	
Advances and investing payments				
Total investing payments	(61)	(100)	(39)	(c)
Net cash from/(used in) investing activities	(61)	(100)	(39)	
Net increase/(decrease) in cash held	346	108	238	
Cash at beginning of financial year	1,444	1,752	(308)	
CASH AT END OF FINANCIAL YEAR	1,790	1,860	(70)	

(a) Variance occurred due to increased activity

(b) Increased expenditure for consulting anthropologists

(c) Computer Software

22. BUDGETARY INFORMATION: ADMINISTERED TERRITORY ITEMS

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

Administered Territory Items	2016-17 Actual	2016-17 Original Budget	Variance	Note
	\$000	\$000	\$000	
TERRITORY INCOME AND EXPENSES				
Income				
Taxation revenue				
Grants and subsidies revenue				
Current				
Capital				
Fees from regulatory services	45	0	45	
Royalties and rents				
Other income				
Total income	45	0	45	
Expenses				
Central Holding Authority income transferred	45	0	45	
Doubtful debts				
Bad debts				
Other administrative expenses				
Total expenses	45	0	45	
Territory income less expenses	0	0	0	