



## Media Release No 665

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### **TORRES STRAIT WOMEN COMPLETE LEADERSHIP PROGRAM FOR SECOND YEAR RUNNING**

The Torres Strait Women's Leadership program has begun for its second year, with seven new Torres Strait women taking part to fulfil their vision for higher levels of female representation in local leadership and governance.

The program run by the Torres Strait Regional Authority (TSRA) began on Sunday 9 August 2014 and will be held over three sessions, two in the Torres Strait and a graduation ceremony in Canberra.

The TSRA Chairperson, Mr Joseph Elu, said the organisation recognises that Indigenous women are underrepresented in decision-making in all levels of government and in many Indigenous Corporations, which is why the program was created.

"Women make up 50 per cent of the population in the Torres Strait and Northern Peninsula Region and have always been the backbone of their communities as strong advocates for improvement to a better standard of living, health and education," Mr Elu said.

"Regardless of these contributions, the existing representation of women on governance committees in the Torres Strait is by far much less than the average for Indigenous organisations across Australia.

"As a result of this there is a need to do more to get the balance right and the Torres Strait Women's Leadership program is one of a series of capacity building initiatives we are supporting."

Mr Elu said this dynamic group of diversely strong women are joined with the passion to make an impact in their community and the wider Torres Strait.

"Their aim is to take a stand for equality in leadership and we welcomed the Women into the program," Mr Elu said.

"The TSRA is pleased to have invested in this cohort of women and are looking forward to seeing the outcomes."

**ENDS**

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**Front Left to right: Susanah Tapau (Mer), Jenni Pilot (Thursday Island), Lisa Mabo (Thursday Island)  
Helen Mosby (Masig),**

**Back Left to right: Vera Havili (Thursday Island), Larissa Bani (Mabuiag Island), Olive Bann  
(Thursday Island)**