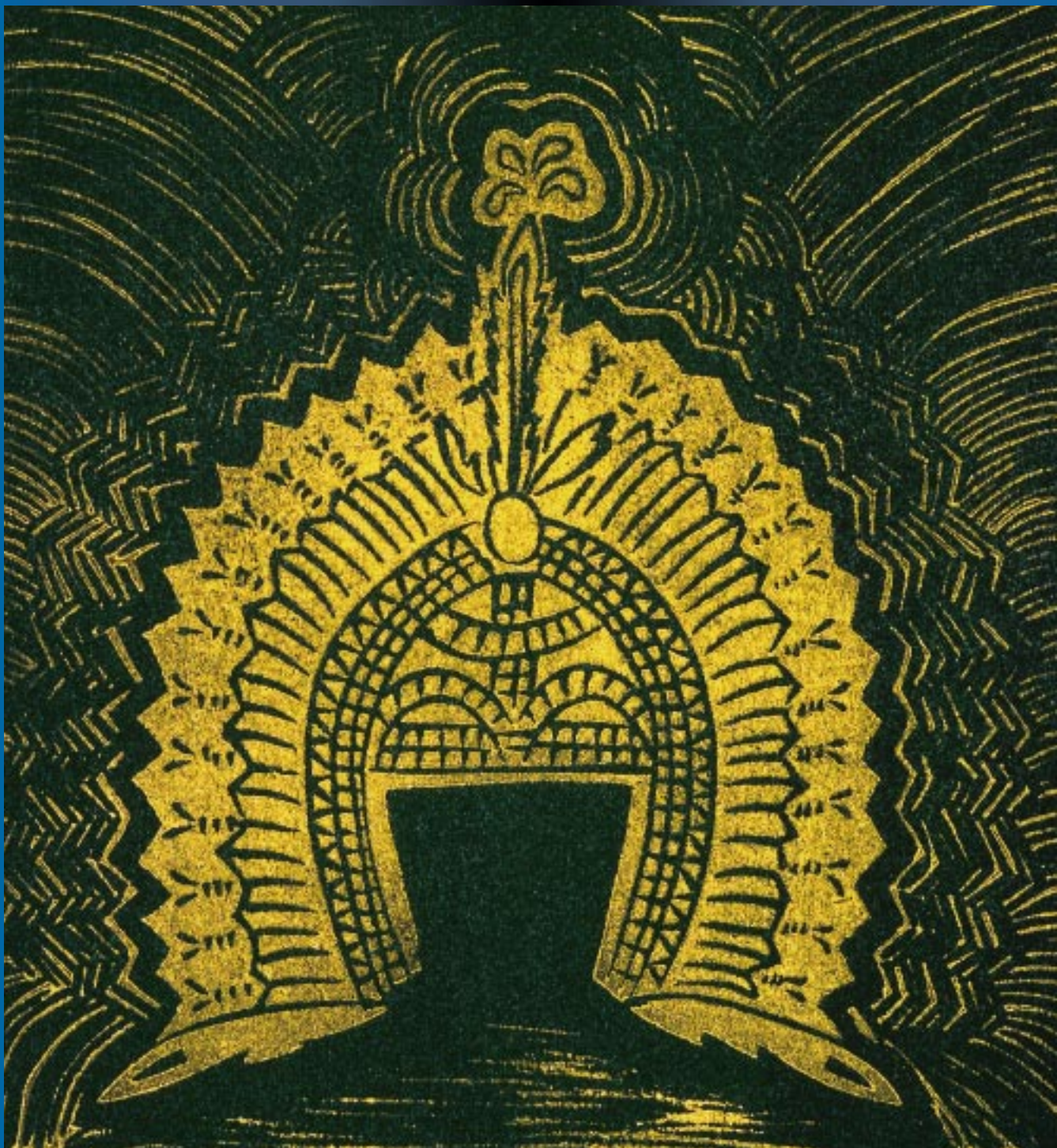


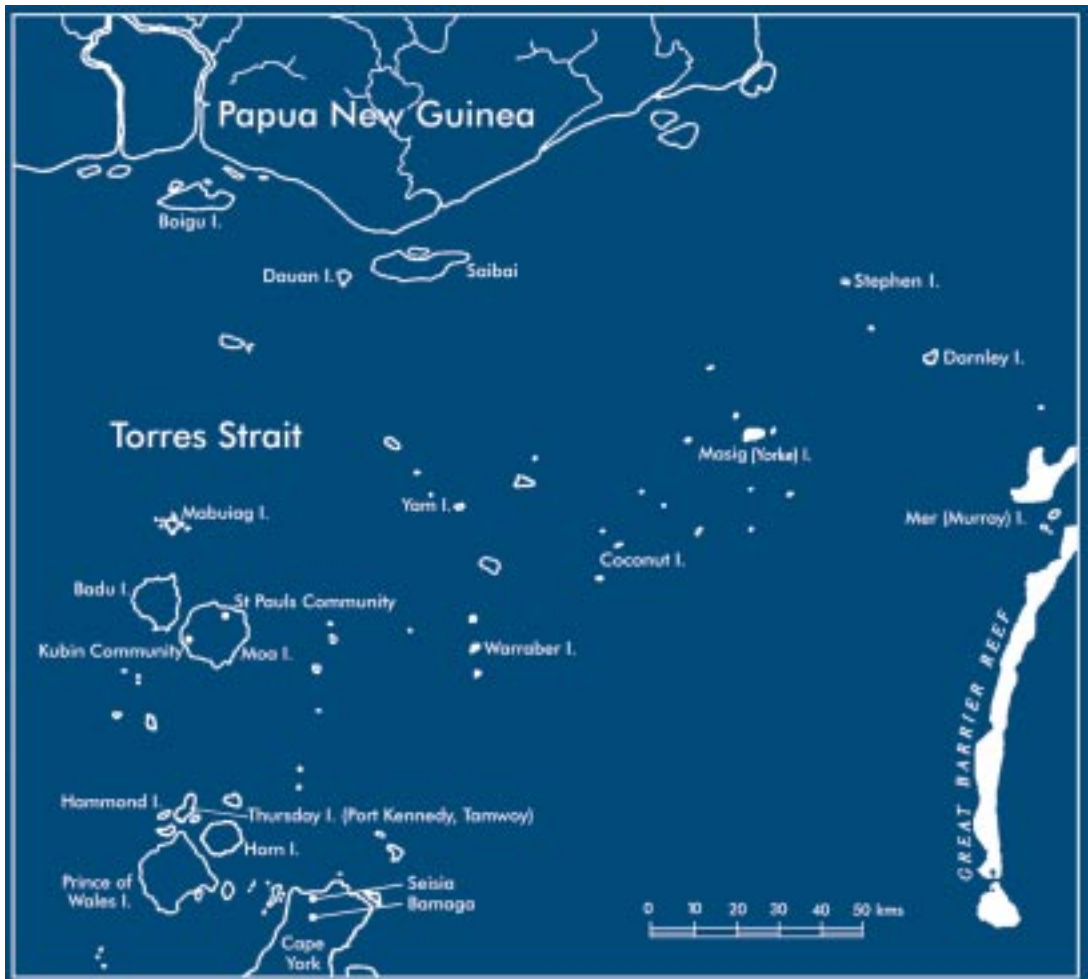
# Torres Strait Regional Authority



Annual Report  
1998–1999



# Annual Report 1998–99



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Senator the Hon. John Herron  
Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs  
Suite MF44  
Parliament House  
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Minister

It gives me great pleasure to present you with the fifth Annual Report of the Torres Strait Regional Authority (TSRA), in accordance with section 144ZB of the *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission Act 1989*. This Annual Report covers the period from 1 July 1998 to 30 June 1999.

As we move into the new millennium the TSRA will continue to work in partnership with the Commonwealth Government to improve the quality of life for all Torres Strait Islander and Aboriginal people living in the Torres Strait region.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "John Abednego". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

John Abednego  
Chairperson  
22 September 1999



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## **Our vision**

To empower our people to determine their own affairs based on our unique Ailan Kastom bilong Torres Strait from which we draw our unity and strength.

## **Our goals**

- Gain recognition of our rights, customs and identity as Indigenous peoples.
- Achieve a better quality of life for all people living in the Torres Strait region.
- Develop a sustainable economic base.
- Achieve better health and community services.
- Ensure protection of our environment.
- Assert our native title to the lands and waters of the Torres Strait region.



## Preface

### Guide to the 1998-99 Annual Report

The Torres Strait Regional Authority's (TSRA) Annual Report 1998-99 is the Chairperson's report to the Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs on the performance and achievements of the TSRA during 1998-99. It is a key accountability document to the Parliament of Australia.

### Report structure

The Chairperson's report provides broad comment on the TSRA's challenges and achievements during the reporting period and discusses the TSRA's performance with a political and economic perspective.

The General Manager's report provides a more detailed administrative and organisational overview of the TSRA's performance against its expected outcomes.

Details of the TSRA Members, Advisory Committees, Portfolio Positions and the TSRA meetings held during 1998-99 appear in the next chapter followed by some detail about the Torres Strait region and the people who live there. This chapter also describes the environment in which the TSRA operates; how and when the TSRA was created; what the TSRA does; and the framework in which it distributes grants and loans.

Three program-based sections (Economic, Social and Cultural and Corporate Services) then provide more detailed information on strategies and activities the TSRA has undertaken during the year to meet its program objectives and its commitment to effective human resource management. These sections have been compiled in accordance with the issues and priorities outlined in the Torres Strait Development Plan.

Audited financial statements are provided in Appendix 1. Other appendixes contain information on a range of topics including grants the TSRA has made during the year (Appendix 2); the TSRA's statutory functions and powers as described for section 8 of the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* (Appendix 3); TSRA's expenditure against approved estimates is in Appendix 4; advertising and market research details are in Appendix 5; and Appendix 6 contains a full staffing overview including the TSRA's organisation chart.

To help guide the reader, the report also includes a table of contents, a glossary, an alphabetical index and a compliance index.

### Additional information

To obtain more information please contact Ms Nicolette Körmendy, Public Affairs Officer, Torres Strait Regional Authority, PO Box 261, Thursday Island, Queensland 4875 on telephone (07) 4069 1247 or facsimile (07) 4069 1879.

## Chairperson's report



### Introduction

Since the TSRA was established in 1994, we have progressed at a swift pace towards our goals. Looking back over 1998–99 I can proudly say that for the TSRA it has been a year of many achievements. We have taken significant steps towards our aim of creating a positive future for the Torres Strait, a future involving greater autonomy, a level of self sufficiency and an improved standard of living for Torres Strait Islanders in our region. At the TSRA we are greatly encouraged by the outcomes of 1998–99 and have entered into the next financial year with renewed vigour. This Annual Report, our fifth,

details the TSRA's achievements over the past year and the challenges we continue to face through the pursuit of our goals.

### Greater autonomy

Torres Strait Islanders strive to gain greater autonomy so as to have control over all issues affecting the Torres Strait region. A report handed down in 1997 by the House of Representatives Standing Committee, entitled *Torres Strait Islanders: a new deal—A Report on Greater Autonomy for Torres Strait Islanders*, recorded detailed results of an investigation into how Torres Strait Islanders could achieve greater autonomy in the Torres Strait region. A number of changes were recommended, which would give Torres Strait Islanders greater decision-making power over issues affecting the region.

It recommended streamlining the administrative structures in the Torres Strait, including the TSRA and the Island Coordinating Council, to create one all-encompassing body. This body would negotiate with both the Commonwealth and Queensland Governments on an equal basis.

During the past year, the TSRA arranged for representatives of communities throughout the region to join together to discuss the report's recommendations and determine the future direction of the Torres Strait. A Greater Autonomy Task Force, of which I am Chair, has been formed to facilitate the process and negotiate on behalf of the people with the Commonwealth and State Governments. Funded by the TSRA, the Task Force has arranged a thorough consultation process to ensure everyone in the Torres Strait, both Indigenous and non-Indigenous, has the opportunity to provide input. Since the report was first handed down, we have received a positive response from both governments and recent negotiations have indicated their ongoing support for our goal of greater autonomy. The TSRA will move into the new millennium in the spirit of cooperation with both governments.

## **Separate Act of Parliament**

Torres Strait Islanders will be identified as an Indigenous race distinct from Aboriginal people with the establishment of the TSRA's own Act of Parliament. The Commonwealth Government has given the TSRA a firm commitment that such an Act will be enacted, and the TSRA is currently drafting the final Bill. We are waiting for endorsement from Members before it proceeds to Parliament. We are very proud to achieve recognition of our separate identity.

## **Native Title**

Significant progress was made during the year with native title issues in the Torres Strait and the Native Title Office has been strengthened. Through the Native Title Office, the TSRA offers its own services to native title claimants in the region. All claimants who seek the TSRA's representation are funded by the TSRA and assisted by our staff. In February 1999, the people of Saibai Island, through TSRA representation, secured legal recognition of their native title rights over Saibai and the neighbouring islands of Mawalmay Thoera, Thawpay Kawamag and Kuykuthal Kawamag. The Federal Court also made the finding that native title exists on Moa Island, a claim put forward by the Mualgal people, with which the TSRA assisted but did not represent. Saibai and Moa are both the first successful native title claims in the Torres Strait since the Mabo Case in 1992. These are marvelous achievements, not only for Torres Strait Islanders, but for all Indigenous peoples in Australia. Saibai Island was the TSRA's test case and the Native Title Office is now using Saibai as a model for other cases we represent. As a result we expect future claims will be processed at a faster rate.

In September 1998, the Office of Evaluation and Audit conducted a review of the TSRA Native Title Office under the request of Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs, Senator the Hon. John Herron. As a result the Director of the Office of Evaluation and Audit, Mr Bill Miller, presented the TSRA with a positive report of the office's performance. The report stated that the TSRA had effectively managed its responsibilities as per the Native Title Act. It also recommended that the office's funding be significantly increased. The independent report was fair and unbiased and was well received by the TSRA Members. It proved that the TSRA Native Title Office is successfully fulfilling its role as the native title representative body in the Torres Strait.

The Native Title Office is now looking at native title claims over the sea and is proposing an all-encompassing claim over the Torres Strait. To achieve this the TSRA believes Torres Strait Islanders living in our region need to reach a regional agreement and the office is midway through the process of consulting communities throughout the Torres Strait. Through a regional agreement we believe we will be in a stronger position to obtain max-

imum rights. We will be seeking formal negotiations with the Commonwealth and Queensland Governments regarding a regional and economic agreement and are commencing anthropological work to collect the evidence needed to substantiate our claims.

## **Economic development**

The TSRA recognises the importance of developing economically sustainable industries in the Torres Strait so we can achieve a degree of economic independence in addition to political autonomy. The TSRA has therefore developed an economic development program to which we direct funds to increase the economic opportunities for Torres Strait Islanders in the region. Since the TSRA was first established in 1994 our portfolio of business loans has rapidly increased, exceeding 100 loans, with an accompanying increase in community enterprises. Our business loans section is proving very successful and it is pleasing to see so many people willing to seize this opportunity for enterprise. The Queensland and Commonwealth Governments have shown great interest in and support for the TSRA's economic initiatives. Other Indigenous groups and both governments have recognised that the economic development principles adopted by the TSRA are achieving tangible outcomes.

The TSRA believes that, in the areas of tourism and fisheries, there is great potential for economic development in the region. On invitation from the Djajanti Group, one of the largest integrated fishery enterprises in Asia, a Torres Strait delegation visited the group's seafood operations in Indonesia, during February 1999, to examine the latest technology and production techniques within their seafood processing industry.

The Djajanti Group is exploring the possibility of a joint venture proposal in the Torres Strait and several of their group's representatives visited our region in 1998 to assess the region's potential for industry development and to determine whether there was a suitable site for this possible joint venture proposal. The TSRA welcomes further discussions with the Djajanti Group as it is important we examine all potential options for economic development in our region.

In line with our goal of greater autonomy Torres Strait Islanders aim to gain control of the Torres Strait fisheries. Torres Strait Islander leaders and fishermen are currently negotiating with the Commonwealth and Queensland Governments on developing a policy which will enable Torres Strait Islanders to have greater control. The TSRA is greatly encouraged by, and proud of the progress we have made with economic development in the region and we continue to advance steadily towards our goals.

## **Infrastructure development and progress**

Having successfully secured the necessary funds, the TSRA has begun implementing a Major Infrastructure Program, designed to meet the basic health-related infrastructure needs of the communities. Last October the State Government signed an agreement with the TSRA committing \$15 million towards the program. With funding also from the Commonwealth Government, the TSRA has a total of \$30 million with which to implement

this program over three years. Assisted by program managers Ove Arup & Partners, the TSRA Members have prioritised the projects that must be completed throughout the communities. Work commenced in 1998 and several projects have already been completed, including the Saibai Island roads/drainage project in November 1998 at the cost of \$2.5 million. It is planned that tenders for water, sewerage and drainage will be called early next financial year.

Through construction of much needed infrastructure and upgrading of existing facilities, the program will vastly improve the lifestyle, and therefore wellbeing, of our people. This cooperative funding arrangement between the TSRA and the two governments has been a great success and we propose to continue the Program in three year cycles over a period of 10 years to ensure infrastructure development is continued in each community.

The TSRA is also addressing the water shortages experienced by the island communities for many years, through the Torres Strait Water Upgrade Project. In February 1999 tenders were let for the \$21 million second stage of the project, jointly funded by the TSRA and the Queensland Government. The project is to be implemented on eight outer island communities. In past years many island communities have run out of water supplies during the long dry seasons and councils have had to go to great expense to have water transported to their communities on barges. The facilities and systems constructed through this project will ensure communities have adequate water supplies year around.

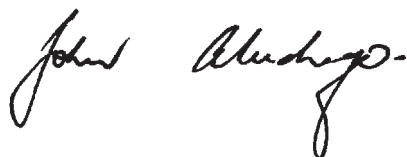
## **Torres Strait Health Framework Agreement**

In February 1999 the TSRA and the Commonwealth and Queensland Governments signed an historic health agreement which committed the three parties to combining their efforts to improve the health status of Torres Strait Islanders living in our region. Through this approach we will address the health issues specific to the Torres Strait.

This will be accomplished through increasing the region's health resources, improving our health services and developing an environmental and health care policy. Since the signing of the agreement we have held a planning session to clarify the roles and responsibilities of each party. Addressing the health issues in our region is a very challenging task which requires the efforts of both governments and the TSRA. I am confident this cooperative approach will be effective as it is proving successful with the Major Infrastructure Program.

## Conclusion

I am pleased to conclude that the TSRA is entering the new millennium on a positive note. We have made much progress since our establishment and are well prepared for the upcoming challenges. We are focused on our goals and will continue our push to achieve our peoples' rights to a good standard of living and to self-government so we and our future generations may enjoy a future that is positive. Our relationship with the Commonwealth and Queensland Governments is strong and both have demonstrated their support for our cause. We will continue to fortify this relationship and move into the new millennium in the spirit of cooperation.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "John Abednego". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

John Abednego  
Chairperson

## General Manager's report



### Introduction

The TSRA, during its fifth year of operations, built on its strengths from previous years and took on new initiatives allowing it to become more independent and more effective as a regionally based and focused organisation. The TSRA's successful operations and progress have evoked great interest from a number of ATSIC Regional Councils. In May 1999 the Ngaanyatjarra Council Aboriginal Corporation of Western Australia met with the TSRA on Thursday Island to learn of the organisation's operations and to seek advice on its future direction. The Ngaanyatjarra Council is itself pushing for regional autonomy and is considering the option of establishing an authority, similar to the TSRA. Such interest emphasises the TSRA's success and its suitability as a model for other Indigenous organisations.

The past year was marked by several highlights including the signing of the Major Infrastructure Program (MIP) agreement between the TSRA and the Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Policy and Development, through which funding was secured for a \$30 million upgrade of environmental health infrastructure on the outer islands. Another significant development was the signing of the Health Framework Agreement between the TSRA, Commonwealth and Queensland Governments, committing the parties to collectively coordinating and planning strategies to improve the health status of Torres Strait Islanders and Aboriginal people living in the region. During the year the Office of Evaluation and Audit (OEA) conducted a review of the TSRA Native Title Office (NTO) and last September presented the TSRA with a positive report on the NTO's functions and performance. As a result, funding for the NTO has been significantly increased. Another highlight during the year was the TSRA's Workplace Agreement which received 98 per cent support from staff.

### Relationship with the Minister

The TSRA Administration continues to maintain a strong, professional and constructive relationship with the Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs, Senator the Hon. John Herron. The Minister visited the Torres Strait three times during the year; visiting Yorke Island for the opening of the Yorke Island Council Office and Thursday Island for the opening of the TRAWQ Community Hall.

Senator Herron also attended the Cultural Festival on Thursday Island in September and met with the TSRA on greater autonomy issues.

The TSRA Administration is proud of the way it coordinates with the Minister's office in arranging visits to the Torres Strait, not only for Senator Herron but also for other Ministers



and guests. In addition, the TSRA Administration provides the Minister with timely advice in a professional manner.

## **Administration**

One of the pleasurable aspects of working at the TSRA is the full extent to which the TSRA Administration and Board cooperate with each other to ensure the aims and aspirations of Torres Strait Islanders and Aboriginal people living in the region are fulfilled. I would like to thank the Chairperson, Mr John Abednego, for his cooperation, guidance and advice during this year in which so many positive achievements have occurred.

As with all other Commonwealth Government agencies, the TSRA was required to negotiate a separate Workplace Agreement with the staff during the year. I would like to thank all staff members for their cooperation in achieving a workable Agreement beneficial to both Management and the staff. The level of satisfaction is apparent from the high percentage of staff who voted in favour of the Agreement on 13 November 1998.

During the year the TSRA completed its Development Plan Towards 2001 which serves as a guide for the organisation as it progresses the Board's goals. The TSRA also produced a Service Charter which has been distributed widely throughout the Torres Strait. This document informs the TSRA Board, Administration and clients of the services the TSRA provides and the standards it is required to uphold.

The TSRA's main focus during the year was upgrading health, housing and infrastructure in island communities throughout the region. The successful signing of the \$30 million Major Infrastructure Program funding agreement for developing sewerage, drainage/roads and water reticulation systems, and the signing of the Health Framework Agreement are major achievements. These successful outcomes demonstrate the TSRA's ability to work cooperatively with the Commonwealth and State governments, both at a departmental and ministerial level. I would like to thank the Commonwealth Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet and the Office for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Services, the Queensland State Department of the Premier and Cabinet, Housing (particularly the Office of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Housing), the Department of Natural Resources and the Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Policy and Development for their cooperation in ensuring the upgrade of environmental health infrastructure in the Torres Strait was substantially progressed.

## **Staffing**

This year the TSRA staffing level was maintained at 26 with only minimal disruption from staff turnover. This has allowed the TSRA Administration to consolidate its corporate knowledge, enabling it to deal more effectively with Commonwealth and State agencies in addition to providing a better service to our clients. Again the TSRA staff performed magnificently during the year, proven by our internal audit conducted by the OEA and also our external audit conducted by the Australian National Audit Office (ANAO). I am pleased to say the ANAO audit was the TSRA's best result throughout its five years of operation.

Again, as demonstrated, there is always room for improvement in an organisation's operations and accountability and I know I speak on behalf of all staff when I say we will try to achieve a better result next year.

My thanks go to the staff of Corporate, Field and Secretariat sections for achieving such a positive result. The TSRA employed three trainees this year as part of its strategy of developing local staff. One of these trainees was appointed to a permanent position at the AS02 level. Torres Strait Islander and Aboriginal people comprise 65 per cent of the TSRA staff and it is hoped that through further traineeships, other training and educational opportunities, this percentage will increase.

The TSRA maintained an Environmental Officer position during the year, with funding assistance from the Commonwealth Department of Environment, Sport and Territories (DEST). This is the only position in the Torres Strait that deals with environmental matters on a full-time basis. It is pleasing to note that the Federal Minister for the Environment has provided \$200,000 through his department to monitor heavy metals in dugongs, turtles and shellfish—an extension of the Heavy Metals Baseline Study, a four year study which began in 1989.

I would like to thank all staff for their cooperation and support during the year.

## **Business and economic development**

One of the TSRA's aims is to increase the self-sufficiency of Torres Strait Islanders and Aboriginal people living in the region. The TSRA's Development and Corporate Plans identify business and economic development as essential for achieving this goal. The TSRA Members therefore allocated \$1.553 million to the business and economic development program for the year. The TSRA lent 51 clients \$910,956 under the Business Funding Scheme and committed \$655,000 during 1998–99 under the CEIS Program. Mr Miseron Levi, TSRA Portfolio Member for Small Business and Economic Development, continued to be a great support for the TSRA's Business and Economic Development Program throughout the year.

The TSRA received very good feedback on its contribution to economic development in the region from the Hon. Mr Peter Reith, Federal Minister for Employment, Workplace Relations and Small Business, during his visit to the Torres Strait this year. Minister Reith met with the TSRA for a presentation on our business programs, and also visited Badu and Seisia communities to observe their economic and business development. I am pleased to say Minister Reith was impressed with the TSRA's progress and with developments in the Badu and Seisia communities. It is hoped that he and his department will cooperate closely with the TSRA in providing more effective programs and opportunities for Torres Strait Islanders and Aboriginal people during the next financial year.

## **Joint Advisory Council**

The Joint Advisory Council (JAC) established under the auspices of the Torres Strait Treaty between Australia and Papua New Guinea discusses various issues that affect the daily lives of the traditional inhabitants under the Treaty. The Treaty allows for the free movement of traditional inhabitants from the Torres Strait Protected Zone and the Western Province of Papua New Guinea (PNG) without the use of passports. Free movement allows the full spectrum of traditional activities to take place. The Treaty also provides for the framework of fisheries and resource management in the Torres Strait.

This year's JAC meeting was held in Brisbane in October 1998. The meeting discussed, amongst other things, the moratorium on mining and drilling of the seabed in the protected zone, the Chevron Gas Pipeline proposal, environmental issues and the ongoing extradition of PNG nationals who committed a serious robbery on Saibai Island. After the successful extension of the moratorium on mining and drilling for a further five years in February 1998, the Queensland Government sought to enter into discussions with PNG Governmental representatives for a further extension in the quickest possible timeframe. Such a move was fully supported by the TSRA and Commonwealth Government representatives.

The meeting was highly successful and I would like to thank the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade for arranging and successfully hosting the meeting.

## **Services Agreement**

The TSRA and ATSIC entered into a Services Agreement that provides the TSRA with information technology, human resources and financial management systems.

Through the agreement the TSRA is following Commonwealth Guidelines which state that small agencies should, wherever possible, obtain their IT systems from larger agencies. I would like to thank ATSIC staff, particularly senior management who, through the Services Agreement and beyond its scope, helped the TSRA carry out its roles and responsibilities throughout the year.

With the movement to outsourcing IT, next financial year the TSRA will run its own financial management system and use a private provider for its IT systems. However, it will continue to use ATSIC for its human resources advice and payroll function.

I would particularly like to thank Mr Glenn Rees, Acting CEO of ATSIC, for his assistance throughout the year in providing and maintaining the services through the agreement. Mr Rees has always worked cooperatively with the TSRA and I thank him for his continued interest and cooperation during the year.

## **Conclusion**

The TSRA Administration during the year demonstrated its ability to substantially progress matters which will result in better lifestyle and housing outcomes for Torres Strait Islander and Aboriginal people living in the region. I look forward to the approaching year during which the second stage of the water upgrade project will be completed, ensuring significant benefits to the eight outer islander communities it is serving. Also the Major Infrastructure Program will gain momentum during the coming year and the provision of sewerage, drainage and upgrade of water reticulation will provide dramatic benefits to communities where no such services exist at present. I also believe that the Business and Economic Development program will go from strength to strength and I look forward to working in cooperation with the Department of Employment, Workplace Relations and Small Business.

I would like to thank the Chairperson, Mr John Abednego, for his continued support which has enabled the TSRA Members and Administration to work in the utmost cooperation for the benefit of Torres Strait Islander and Aboriginal people. Mr Abednego's leadership and advice has greatly helped me during the year.



David Galvin  
General Manager

## TSRA Members

The TSRA consists of 20 Members. Eighteen Members hold office by virtue of their election to Island Council Chairperson positions on 15 March 1997 under the *Queensland Community Services (Torres Strait) Act 1984*. The other two Members, representing Port Kennedy and Horn/Prince of Wales Islands, were elected on 22 March 1997 in accordance with Division 5 of the *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission Act 1989*.

The TSRA Members are:

Mr John Abednego	Mr Henry Garnier
Mrs Margaret Mau	Mr Terry Waia
Mr Jack Ahmat	Mr Ted Billy
Mr Edward Dau	Mr Ron Day
Mr George Dewis	Mr Elia Doolah
Mr Joseph Elu	Fr Salatelu Joe
Mr Mison Levi	Mr Getano Lui Jnr AM
Mr Joseph Mosby OAM	Mr Gibson Pearson
Mr Rocky Stephen	Dr Roney Wasaga
Mr Terrence Whap	Mr Reg Williams

### Mr John Abednego, Chairperson



Mr Abednego became the elected Chairperson of the TSRA on 22 April 1997 and his term ends in the year 2000. He is the TSRA representative for Tamwoy, President of the Tamwoy Development Association (TDA), President of the Torres Strait Islander Media Association (TSIMA) and Chairperson of the TRAWQ communities (Tamwoy, Rosehill, Aplin, Waiben, and Quarantine). Mr Abednego is also a Board member of Islanders Board of Industry and Service (IBIS), and a member of the Island Coordinating Council (ICC). He is also a member and Torres Strait representative on the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation. One of Mr Abednego's priorities as Chairperson is to secure a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Commonwealth and Queensland Governments to fund infrastructure development in the Torres Strait over the next ten years (see Chairperson's Report).



### **Mr Henry Garnier, Deputy Chairperson**

Mr Garnier is the Deputy Chairperson of the TSRA, TSRA Portfolio Member for the Environment, Marine and Fisheries, Chairperson of Hammond Island Council, and Deputy Chairperson of the ICC. Mr Garnier believes the most important issues affecting Torres Strait Islander and Aboriginal people in this region are housing, health, economic development, education, water supply and development of a sustainable fishing industry. His vision is for Torres Strait Islander people to own and manage their own fishing industry and to establish their own banking or credit union facility in the region.

### **Mrs Margaret Mau, Alternate Deputy Chairperson**

Mrs Mau is the Alternate Deputy Chairperson of the TSRA, TSRA Portfolio Member for Women's Issues, Chairperson of Dauan Island Council and a Board member of the Women's Council for Rural and Regional Communities, IBIS and the ICC. Issues of concern to Mrs Mau are: providing the people of the outer island communities with access to basic services; regular maintenance to current housing to ensure livable standards and, most importantly, establishment of airstrips on Dauan and Stephen Islands to assist in emergency situations and daily travel. In her role as Portfolio Member for Women's Issues, Mrs Mau is pursuing and encouraging ongoing training and development of Torres Strait women to enable them to gain equal representation in decision-making processes within the region.



### **Mr Terry Waia, ATSIC Commissioner for the Torres Strait Zone**

Commissioner Waia represents the TSRA on the ATSIC Board and is Chairperson of the Torres Strait Islander Advisory Board (TSIAB). He is also Chairperson of Saibai Island Council and a member of the ICC. Mr Waia has very strong traditional ties to Saibai Island and is eager to ensure traditional values of the Torres Strait are not eroded. He is highly respected for his efforts in this area especially for his role in negotiating arrangements under the Torres Strait Treaty through participation in several delegations to Papua New Guinea. As Commissioner, Mr Waia is working towards a better relationship between Torres Strait Islander people living on the mainland and Torres Strait Islander people living in the Torres Strait. He will be keeping mainland Torres Strait Islander people informed of the operations of the TSRA and, at the same time, he will represent their concerns to ATSIC and the TSRA.

### **Mr Jack Ahmat, Member for Badu Island**

Mr Ahmat is Chairperson of Badu Island Council and a member of the ICC. He believes the main concerns in the region are health, housing, promotion of culture, economic development, and protection of the environment and fisheries. He believes it is important for the TSRA to support Torres Strait youth.



### **Mr Ted Billy, Member for Warraber Island**

Mr Billy is the Chairperson of Warraber Island Council, a member of the ICC and a member on the Board of Directors for the Torres Strait and Northern Peninsular (TSNP) Legal Service. Mr Billy believes the TSRA is providing a good opportunity for his people to take another step forward to a better future. Issues that are important to Mr Billy are health, housing, small business, training, employment and education. Mr Billy is keen to see qualified Torres Strait Islanders working as service providers in Torres Strait communities.



### **Mr Edward Dau, Member for Boigu Island**

Mr Dau is the Chairperson of Boigu Island Council, a member of the ICC and a member of the IBIS Board. He sees housing, health, education and economic development as the most pressing issues in the Torres Strait region. During his term as TSRA Member, Mr Dau will work towards ensuring negotiations between Australia and Papua New Guinea regarding the Torres Strait Treaty take into account the views of his people. He believes the waters (sea) of the Protected Zone must be safeguarded for future generations of Torres Strait Islander people.







### **Mr Ron Day, Member for Mer (Murray Island)**

Mr Day is the TSRA Portfolio Member for the Arts, Language, Culture and Sport, Chairperson of Mer Island Council and a member of the ICC. He would like to see development of a sustainable economy in the Torres Strait and improved standards of education. During his term, Mr Day will ensure the TSRA promotes Torres Strait culture and encourages young adults to participate in mainstream sports.

### **Mr George Dewis, Member for Port Kennedy**

Mr Dewis is the TSRA representative for Port Kennedy on Thursday Island and is the TSRA Portfolio Member for Legal and Media. He is also on the Boards of the Port Kennedy Association; the Torres Strait Cooperative; TSIMA; and the Torres Strait and Northern Peninsula Area (NPA) Health Council. Mr Dewis has a keen interest in media and sees health and housing as major concerns.



### **Mr Elia Doolah, Member for Erub (Darnley Island)**

Mr Elia Doolah is the TSRA Portfolio Member for Education, Training and Employment; the Chairperson of Darnley Island Council; Chairperson of the Area Consultative Committee; Executive member on the ICC; and a member of the IBIS Board. Mr Doolah is particularly focused on training and education and is keen to see qualified Torres Strait Islander people serving their communities.

### **Mr Joseph Elu, Member for Seisia Community**

Mr Elu is the Chairperson of the Commercial Development Corporation (CDC), Chairperson of Seisia Island Council, and a member of the ICC. Mr Elu is encouraging an increase in funding for business development, establishment of a small business development agency, and an agreement on a regional economic development strategy which incorporates



eco-tourism. Under Mr Elu's direction, Seisia Island Council has successfully established a number of business enterprises and has achieved a greater degree of financial independence. Mr Elu was the Commissioner of ATSIC from 1994 to 1997 and was responsible for ATSIC's Aboriginal Employment Development Policy (AEDP) Review and the Tourism Industry Strategy Formulation.

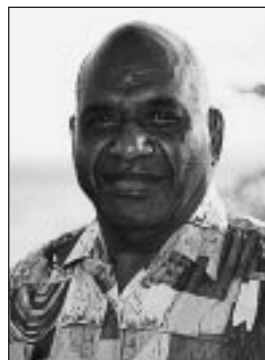
### **Fr Salatelu Joe, Member for Kubin Community, Moa Island**



Fr Joe, an Anglican Minister, was elected Chairperson of Kubin Island Council in March 1997 and is a member of the ICC. He believes the TSRA can help community people work together towards improving their socioeconomic environment. Fr Joe also believes that, for autonomy to be achieved, more emphasis needs to be placed on training Torres Strait Islanders for key roles, especially in the area of business management, which is essential for business enterprises. Fr Joe fully supports initiatives such as the Federal Government's Indigenous Employment Policy which he believes is successfully training Torres Strait people so they may ultimately achieve autonomy.

### **Mr Miseron Levi, Member for St Pauls Community, Moa Island**

Mr Levi is the Chairperson of St Pauls Island Council and the TSRA Portfolio Member for Small Business and Economic Development. He is also a member of the ICC and is on the IBIS Board. Mr Levi regards economic development and mainstream employment as the most important issues facing Torres Strait Islander and Aboriginal people living in the Torres Strait region and, as a result, has actively encouraged development in this area. He has identified the need for greater infrastructure and economic development in the region where increasing numbers of Torres Strait Islander people are returning to their traditional homeland to live.





### **Mr Getano Lui (Jnr) AM, Member for Yam Island**

Mr Lui is the Chairperson of the ICC, the IBIS Board and Yam Island Council. He was also the first Chairperson of the TSRA and has served as a director on the CDC. Mr Lui is a dynamic individual who has actively promoted the needs and aspirations of people living in the Torres Strait region. Through political lobbying, Mr Lui has focused government attention on issues affecting people living in the Torres Strait region. He views greater autonomy for the region as being of paramount importance. Mr Lui has been awarded membership of the

Order of Australia (AM) in recognition of his lifelong service to the people of the Torres Strait region.

### **Mr Joseph Mosby OAM, Member for Masig (Yorke) Island**

Mr Mosby is the Chairperson of Yorke Island Council and a member of the ICC. He is the longest serving Chairperson in the Torres Strait region and has been actively involved in Indigenous affairs for more than three decades. On Australia Day 1996, Mr Mosby was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) in recognition of the work he has accomplished on behalf of the people of the Torres Strait region. Within the TSRA, Mr Mosby has strongly supported development of infrastructure requirements for Torres Strait communities.



### **Mr Gibson Pearson, Member for Poruma (Coconut) Island**

Mr Pearson is the Chairperson of Coconut Island and a member of the ICC. He encourages Torres Strait Islander and Aboriginal organisations to be accountable and has sought to improve the working relationship between the community and the TSRA administration. Mr Pearson is encouraging the TSRA to promote development of industries throughout the Torres Strait region.



### **Mr Rocky Stephen, Member for Ugar (Stephen) Island**

Mr Stephen is the Chairperson of Stephen Island Council and is a member of the ICC. He was elected to the position of Chairperson after Mr Henley Stephen, the previous Chairperson, passed away in April. Mr Stephen feels strongly about the need to establish airstrips on Stephen Island, Dauan Island and St Pauls community to help alleviate the current difficulties with daily and emergency travel. Being a young Chairperson himself, Mr Stephen would like to work towards establishing more sporting and recreational facilities throughout the region for Torres Strait youth to use.



### **Dr Roney Wasaga, Member for Ngurupai (Horn) and Muralug (Prince of Wales) Islands**



Dr Wasaga, as the TSRA Portfolio Member for Health, Housing and Infrastructure, is concerned with issues affecting health and the environment. During his term as a TSRA Member, Dr Wasaga hopes to help improve the quality of life for all people living in the Torres Strait. Dr Wasaga is a Pastor of the Universal World Church and a decorated Doctor of Divinity. He is also a member of the Torres Strait and NPA Health Council, a member for the Constitutional Centenary Foundation and a Kaurareg Elder. He is very pleased to see some developments in the areas of health, housing and infrastructure since he was elected, especially the improvements to services brought about by the TSRA.

### **Mr Terrence Whap, Member for Mabuiag Island**

Mr Whap is the Chairperson of Mabuiag Island Council and a member of the ICC. During his term, Mr Whap would like to achieve better infrastructure for island communities; more sporting facilities for youth; and greater employment for Torres Strait Islander people.





### **Mr Reg Williams, Member for Bamaga Community**

Mr Williams is the Chairperson of Bamaga Island Council, Chairperson of the Joint Transport Infrastructure Committee and a member of the ICC. He has focused his energies on addressing the issues of land, health, housing, education, and employment in his community. He has been concentrating on development of roads, sewerage, sporting facilities and a civic centre. He is now investigating development of a new housing sub-division to accommodate community people and visiting business people.

### **In memory of Mr Henley Stephen, Member for Stephen Island**

The Torres Strait lost one of its most respected leaders in April, 1999, when Mr Henley Stephen passed away due to an illness. Mr Stephen made a significant contribution towards developing the TSRA, and towards improving the lifestyle and wellbeing of Torres Strait Islanders. Mr Stephen is sadly missed by the TSRA and the people of the Torres Strait region.



## **Advisory Committees**

The TSRA has four advisory committees: the Native Title Steering Committee; the Gas Pipeline Reference Group; the TSRA Bill Advisory Committee; and the Customs Enforcement and Surveillance Committee. All committees, except the Customs Enforcement and Surveillance Committee met during the year. The Native Title Steering Committee held four meetings during 1998–99. The committee members are Mr John Abednego, Mr Elia Doolah, Mr Jack Ahmat, Mr Ted Billy and Mr Joseph Elu. The Gas Pipeline Reference Group held two meetings and its members are Mr John Abednego, Mr Getano Lui Jnr, Mr Henry Garnier, Mr Edward Dau, Mr Miseron Levi and Mr Elia Doolah. The TSRA Bill Advisory Committee includes Mr John Abednego, Mr Getano Lui Jnr, Mr George Dewis, Mr Joseph Elu and Mr Terry Waia. This committee held one meeting during the year.

## Portfolio positions

The TSRA established portfolio positions at the first meeting of the new Board in April 1997. The TSRA Portfolio Members are:

Women's Issues	Mrs Margaret Mau
Small Business and Economic Development	Mr Miseron Levi
Arts, Language, Culture, and Sport	Mr Ron Day
Legal and Media	Mr George Dewis
Environment, Marine and Fisheries	Mr Henry Garnier
Health, Housing, and Infrastructure	Dr Roney Wasaga
Education, Training and Employment	Mr Elia Doolah

## TSRA meetings

The TSRA held four meetings between 1 July 1998 and 30 June 1999.

<i>Meetings</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Days</i>
No. 20	7–9 September 1998	3
No. 21	30 November to 2 December 1998	3
No. 22	23–25 March 1999	3
No. 23	31 May to 3 June 1999	4

The majority of the members were able to attend all meetings, however:

- Mr Reg Williams and Mr Getano Lui Jnr were unable to attend TSRA Meeting No. 20;
- Mr Edward Dau, Mr Gibson Pearson and Mr Henry Garnier were unable to attend TSRA Meeting No. 22; and
- Mr Miseron Levi, Mr Terry Waia and Mr Ron Day were unable to attend Meeting No. 23.





## About the TSRA

### Torres Strait Region

The Torres Strait stretches 150 kilometres from the tip of Cape York Peninsula in North Queensland to the south-west coast of Papua New Guinea. Islands, reefs, and coral and sand cays are scattered throughout the region, the northern most island reaching to within five kilometres of the Papua New Guinea coastline.

Culturally unique and remarkably beautiful, the Torres Strait is predominantly inhabited by Torres Strait Islander people who possess strong seafaring and trading traditions, and maintain bonds to the sea through their culture, lifestyle and history.

The region was named after Torres, a Spanish explorer who sailed through the Torres Strait in 1606. After the arrival of missionaries and early settlers who were involved in the pearling, beche-de-mer and mining industries, the Queensland administration of the Torres Strait was established in 1877, relocating from Somerset to Thursday Island.

The region includes 15 island communities, with populations ranging from 83 to 589, and also two mainland communities. The region's total population is 8,572, of whom 6,064 are Torres Strait Islander and Aboriginal people. Approximately 22,680 Torres Strait Islander people live outside the Torres Strait region.

Torres Strait Islanders first achieved recognition of their traditional rights over their land in 1992, through the High Court's landmark decision to grant Islanders Native Title rights over Mer (Murray Island). This was the first time Native Title had been recognised under Australia's common law. It set a precedent for Torres Strait Islander and Aboriginal people throughout Australia who have since put forward their own claims, hoping to achieve an equally successful outcome. Torres Strait Islanders have since achieved Native Title rights over Moa Island and Saibai Island in the Torres Strait and are now pursuing their Native Title rights over the sea.

### Operating environment

The TSRA aims to improve the lifestyle and wellbeing of Torres Strait Islander and Aboriginal people living in the region through implementing programs that address their poor socioeconomic and health status. Due to the history of severe disadvantage suffered by the Indigenous people of the region, such improvements will be gradual. A report by the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody revealed that significant improvements can only be achieved through fundamental changes in society's attitudes and recognition of the rights of Australia's Indigenous citizens. Consideration should be given to these factors when assessing the TSRA's programs.

The following report of the TSRA's Operating Environment has two sources:

- Statistics, taken from the Australian Bureau of Statistics' 1996 Census information, which provide details of the Torres Strait Islander and Aboriginal population in the Torres Strait region, indicating the extent of need in several program areas; and
- Commonwealth Government strategies, policies and responses which have shaped many of the TSRA's program activities.

## **Extent of need**

### **Population**

The 1996 Census showed that the Torres Strait Islander and Aboriginal population in the region:

- at 6,064, represented 80 per cent of the total population of the region, approximately 2 per cent of the Indigenous population of Australia and approximately 6.5 per cent of the Indigenous population of Queensland;
- had increased by 8 per cent since 1991; and
- had a median age of 20 years compared to 32 years for the non-Indigenous population of the region (i.e. half the Indigenous population in the region was 20 years old or less).

### **Employment**

The 1996 Census information showed:

- the number of unemployed Torres Strait Islander and Aboriginal people in the Torres Strait region was 184 and altogether 1,785 people were employed. This represents an unemployment rate of 5 per cent for Torres Strait Islander and Aboriginal people compared to 7 per cent for the non-Indigenous population of the region. In 1991 the unemployment rate in the Torres Strait Islander labour force was 12 per cent. Note: Community Development Employment Project (CDEP) participants are counted as employed.

### **Education**

The 1996 Census showed that in the Torres Strait region:

- 10 per cent (365) of Torres Strait Islander and Aboriginal people aged 15 years or over indicated they had tertiary qualifications compared to 47 per cent of non-Indigenous people; and
- a further 2 per cent (85) of Torres Strait Islander and Aboriginal people aged 15 years or over were studying for a tertiary qualification.

### **Income**

Household incomes of Torres Strait Islander and Aboriginal people were, according to the 1996 Census, on average lower than those of other households. Of those households where all income data were available:

- 36 per cent of households earned less than \$500 per week compared to 22 per cent of other households; and
- at the upper income levels, 6 per cent of Torres Strait Islander and Aboriginal households had incomes over \$1,500 per week compared to 22 per cent of other households.

## **Housing**

According to the 1996 Census, in the Torres Strait region:

- 13 per cent of Torres Strait Islander and Aboriginal people owned, or were purchasing, their homes compared to 15 per cent of non-Indigenous people; and
- the average household size, of households with Torres Strait Islander and Aboriginal occupants, was 4.7 persons per dwelling compared to 2.7 with no Indigenous occupants.

## **Health**

The following information is derived from the Australian Bureau of Statistics 1999 report entitled 'The Health and Welfare of Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples' and the Torres Strait Health Strategy (1993):

- Over the period 1976–94, estimated mortality rates for Torres Strait Islanders living in the Torres Strait area were about two and a half to three times higher than those for all Queenslanders after adjusting for age.
- The main causes of excess deaths in the Torres Strait area for the period 1989–94 were diabetes (33 per cent of the excess) and heart disease (19 per cent), followed by perinatal conditions (13 per cent), pneumonia (12 per cent), bronchitis, emphysema and asthma (12 per cent) and cancer (11 per cent).
- In 1993, the life expectancy of Torres Strait Islander and Aboriginal people living in the Torres Strait region was approximately 23 years less than that for non-Indigenous Australians. Women were expected to live 30 years less than non-Indigenous Australian females.
- The region's hospital admissions in 1993 were twice that experienced on the Queensland mainland. Health problems in the region were exacerbated by the poor quantity and quality of water and the sewerage and waste disposal systems.
- Data gathered from community consultation and available statistics and studies indicated that numerous factors impacted on the health status of the Torres Strait region including environment, housing, infrastructure, nutrition, access to health services, community involvement and traditional culture, alcohol and other substance abuse, infectious diseases, women's health and mental health.

## **Formation**

The Torres Strait Regional Authority (TSRA) was established on 1 July 1994, under the *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission Act 1989*, following a review of the Act. Under the Act, the Torres Strait was one of 35 ATSIC regions throughout Australia. The review proposed the creation of a separate Torres Strait Authority with the same powers as ATSIC.

Following consultation with the Torres Strait Regional Council, and the Council's subsequent historic decision, the Parliament of Australia established the Torres Strait Regional Authority within the framework of the *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission Act 1989* (ATSIC Act).

The TSRA consists of an elected arm and an administrative arm. The elected arm is comprised of 20 elected representatives who are Torres Strait Islander and Aboriginal people living in the Torres Strait region. Eighteen TSRA Members are Island Council Chairpersons elected under the *Queensland Community Services (Torres Strait) Act 1984*, and two TSRA Members are elected under Division 5 of the ATSIC Act.

Members of the TSRA elect a Chairperson, a Deputy Chairperson and an Alternate Deputy Chairperson. A Commissioner, also elected by the TSRA Members, represents the TSRA on the ATSIC Board. The Commissioner is also the Chairperson of the Torres Strait Islander Advisory Board (TSIAB). A General Manager is responsible for the TSRA's administration and staffing.

## Functions

The functions of the TSRA, as outlined in Section 142A of the ATSIC Act are to:

- a. recognise and maintain the special and unique Ailan Kastom of Torres Strait Islanders living in the Torres Strait area;
- b. formulate and implement programs for Torres Strait Islanders, and Aboriginal persons, living in the Torres Strait area;
- c. monitor the effectiveness of programs for Torres Strait Islanders, and Aboriginal persons, living in the Torres Strait area, including programs conducted by other bodies;
- d. develop policy proposals to meet national, State and regional needs and priorities of Torres Strait Islanders, and Aboriginal persons, living in the Torres Strait area;
- e. assist, advise and cooperate with Torres Strait Islander and Aboriginal communities, organisations and individuals at national, State, Territory and regional levels;
- f. advise the Minister on:
  - (i) matters relating to Torres Strait Islander affairs, and Aboriginal affairs, in the Torres Strait area, including the administration of legislation;
  - (ii) the coordination of the activities of other Commonwealth bodies that affect Torres Strait Islanders, or Aboriginal persons, living in the Torres Strait area;
- g. when requested by the Minister, to provide information or advice to the Minister on any matter specified by the Minister;
- h. take such reasonable action as it considers necessary to protect Torres Strait Islander and Aboriginal cultural material and information relating to the Torres Strait area if the material or information is considered sacred or otherwise significant by Torres Strait Islanders or Aboriginal persons;
- i. at the request of, or with the agreement of, the Australian Bureau of Statistics but not otherwise, to collect and publish statistical information relating to Torres Strait Islanders, and Aboriginal persons, living in the Torres Strait area;

- j. such other functions as are conferred on the TSRA by this Act or any other Act;
- k. such other functions as are expressly conferred on the TSRA by a law of a State or of an internal Territory and in respect of which there is in force written approval by the Minister under section 142B;
- l. to undertake such research as is necessary to enable the TSRA to perform any of its other functions; and
- m. do anything else that is incidental or conducive to the performance of any of the preceding functions.

## **Powers**

The powers of the TSRA, as outlined in section 142C of the ATSIC Act, state:

- (1) The TSRA has power to do all things that are necessary or convenient to be done for or in connection with the performance of its functions.
- (2) The powers of the TSRA include, but are not limited to, the following powers:
  - (a) to accept gifts, grants, bequests and devises made to it;
  - (b) to act as trustee of money and other property vested in it on trust;
  - (c) to negotiate and cooperate with other Commonwealth bodies and with State, Territory and local government bodies;
  - (d) to enter into an agreement for making a grant or loan under section 142GA to the State of Queensland or an authority of that State (including a local government body);
  - (e) to enter into an agreement (other than an agreement referred to in paragraph (d)) with a State or a Territory.
- (3) Despite anything in this Act, any money or other property held by the TSRA on trust must be dealt with in accordance with the powers and duties of the TSRA as trustee.
- (4) The powers of the TSRA may be exercised in or out of Australia.

## **Powers of direction by the Minister**

The TSRA is directed by the Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs Senator the Hon. John Herron under section 142E of the ATSIC Act, which states:

- (1) The TSRA must perform its functions and exercise its powers in accordance with any general written directions given to it by the Minister.
- (2) The Minister must not give directions about the content of any advice, information or recommendation that may be given by the TSRA to a Minister, Department of State or authority of the Commonwealth.
- (3) The Minister must not give directions about the content of any advice, information or recommendation that may be given by the TSRA to:
  - (a) a Minister of a State or Territory; or
  - (b) a Department of State of a State or Territory; or

- (c) an authority of a State or Territory; except for the purpose of protecting the confidentiality of information given to the TSRA by the Commonwealth or an authority of the Commonwealth.
- (4) Subject to subsection (5), the Minister must cause a copy of a direction to be laid before each House of Parliament within 15 sitting days of that House after that direction was given.
- (5) The rule in subsection (4) does not apply if the laying of a copy of a direction before each House of the Parliament would result in the disclosure of a matter in a manner that would be inconsistent with the views or sensitivities of Torres Strait Islanders or Aboriginal persons.

## Relationship with ATSIC

The relationship between the TSRA and ATSIC is largely governed by the *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission Act 1989*. This Act provides for the inclusion of a TSRA representative as a Commissioner of ATSIC and allows ATSIC to provide staff, resources and other services to assist the TSRA in carrying out its statutory functions.

On 1 July 1994, the TSRA agreed to enter into a MoU with ATSIC for provision of human and other resources during 1994–95. The MoU was extended for 1997–98. In 1998–99 the MoU was changed to a Service Agreement which included provision of Human Services, Management Systems such as payment of salaries and allowances; staff training and development; and financial services, including use of ATSIC's financial systems.

The TSRA appreciates ATSIC's cooperation and assistance throughout the year.

## Program structure

In 1998–99 the TSRA received funds from the Department of Finance (DOF), following consultations between the Chairperson of the TSRA and the Minister, under a three-line budget as follows:

- 1. CDEP
- 2. OPERATING COSTS
  - (a) Running Costs
  - (b) Other Programs
- 3. NATIVE TITLE

The TSRA's program structure is defined by the Operational Plan as follows:

- 1. ECONOMIC  
(funded under budget component Other Program, item No.2b, and budget component CDEP, item No.1, above).
- 2. SOCIAL AND CULTURAL  
(funded under budget component Native Title, item No.3 and Other Program, item No.2b above).

### 3. CORPORATE SERVICES

(funded under budget component Running Costs, item No.2a above).

The structure used for distributing Grants and Loans funds is outlined below:

## Program structure 1998–99 – 2000–01

### ***ECONOMIC***

#### ***Sub Program: 1. Commercial***

LOANS

- 1.1 Business Funding Scheme (BFS)
- 1.2 Home Ownership

#### ***Sub Program: 2. Economic Development***

GRANTS

- 2.1 Community Development Employment Projects (CDEP)
- 2.2 Community Training Program (CTP)  
*Finance/Administration/Business; Trades; Land management; Study grants*
- 2.3 Community Economic Initiatives Scheme (CEIS)

### ***SOCIAL AND CULTURAL***

#### ***Sub Program: 1. Cultural***

- 1.1 Native Title
- 1.2 Heritage, Culture and Environment  
*Language Maintenance; Sacred Sites; Art and Culture; Environment*

#### ***Sub Program: 2. Social***

- 2.1 Broadcasting
- 2.2 Social programs  
*Women's Issues; Disabled and Aged Care; Sport and Recreation; Youth Support*
- 2.3 Social Justice  
*Legal Services; Advocacy Services; Human Rights*
- 2.4 Community Housing and Infrastructure
- 2.5 Environmental Health



## Program performance reporting

The TSRA's Program Performance Reporting system involves annual reporting by communities and organisations using the Project Performance Indicators relevant to the sub-programs/components from which they receive funding. These indicators are outlined in the TSRA Program Statements and Policies.

The Program Performance Reporting section of this Annual Report has been designed to demonstrate program performance and the achievement of objectives, using the Program Performance Indicators, also outlined in the TSRA Program Statements and Policies. The Program Performance Indicators are compiled from the Project Performance Indicators and the Field Reports.

With regard to the Economic and Social and Cultural Programs (Grants and Loans), the report provides information for each sub-program/component under the headings:

- Objectives
- Description
- Outputs
- Outcomes
- Sub-program/Component support
- Financial and staffing summary

The TSRA has attempted to provide information which shows the extent to which objectives are being achieved through using, wherever possible, Project and Program Performance Indicators that are practical, achievable, meaningful and measurable.

## Corporate documents

From 1 July 1998 to 30 June 1999, the TSRA produced the following Corporate Documents:

*TSRA Service Charter*

*TSRA Guide to Grant Procedures* (commenced in 1997–98)

*Torres Strait Development Plan*

In addition, the TSRA developed its own Grant Monitoring System, integrating grant commitments, offers, acceptances, funds releases, financial and performance reporting as well as field visits.

The TSRA also produced the 1997–98 Annual Report, and 10 community newsletters. The TSRA community newsletter (known as *TSRA News*) is a publication distributed throughout the Torres Strait region and Australian mainland via insertion in the local newspaper, *Torres News*. The aim of *TSRA News* is to inform people living in the Torres Strait and the mainland of what is happening at the TSRA. It consists of media releases by the TSRA and articles specifically relating to the activities and achievements of the TSRA's elected and

administrative arms. The TSRA community newsletter compilation and distribution commenced in June 1996.

The TSRA also produced a Native Title information brochure, which included segments on the history of Native Title legislation, its processes, strategies and progress to date. A photographic brochure on the Torres Strait entitled 'A Glimpse of the Torres Strait' was also produced and distributed to various organisations and agencies. All of these publications can be viewed on the TSRA website ([www.tsra.gov.au](http://www.tsra.gov.au)).

## Torres Strait Development Plan

Section 142D of the ATSIC Act states:

- '(1) The TSRA must formulate, and revise from time to time, a plan to be known as the Torres Strait Development Plan (the 'Plan').
- (2) The aim of the Plan is to improve the economic, social and cultural status of Torres Strait Islanders, and Aboriginal persons, living in the Torres Strait area.
- (3) The Plan must outline the strategies and policies that the TSRA intends to adopt in order to implement the Plan, including, but not limited to, a marine strategy for the Torres Strait area.
- (4) Each Plan must relate to a period of at least three years, but not more than five years.
- (5) The TSRA must review the Plan regularly.
- (6) The TSRA must perform its functions under this section in consultation with the Minister.
- (7) Without limiting the operation of the *Freedom of Information Act 1982*, the TSRA General Manager must ensure that copies of the Plan as in force from time to time are available for inspection and purchase at each office of the TSRA.
- (8) The TSRA General Manager must cause notice of the publication of the Plan to be published in the Gazette.'

The TSRA approved and published the Plan in March 1998. It was gazetted during 1998–99. The Development Plan is reflected in the various sections and sub-sections which comprise this report.

## Ministerial appointments

There was only one Ministerial appointment during the reporting period. Mr Iain Loganathan, Fiscal Management Officer, was appointed to act as General Manager by the Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs for the period 27 July to 21 August 1998.

## Review of electoral system

Section 141 of the *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission Act 1989* states that, following Regional Council elections, the Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs must convene a panel to review ATSIC's zone, region and ward boundaries, and the ATSIC and TSRA electoral system.

The panel was convened in March 1997 and submitted its report to the Minister in November 1997.

With regard to the TSRA, the report made three recommendations as follows:

1. that the TSRA Rules and the TSRA Election Rules be amended to provide for the establishment of two wards: one ward consisting of all of Thursday Island but excluding the Tamwoy Community (which is taken to include the Tamwoy, Rosehill, Aplin, Waiben and Quarantine Communities) and the other ward consisting of Horn and Prince of Wales Islands.
2. that the relevant rules be amended so that eligibility to vote in TSRA elections for the above proposed wards be clearly defined and that they parallel eligibility to vote in wards in ATSIC Regional Council elections.
3. that the ATSIC Act be amended to provide for Review Panels established under section 141 of the Act, to review the boundary of the Torres Strait area, and to make recommendations in that regard.

## Program reports

The format of the 1998–99 Program Report has been developed in accordance with the 1997–98 Program Statements. In 1999–2000 the structure will be affected, to some degree, by the new accrual, outcome based structure introduced by the Commonwealth Government earlier this year.

### Program: Economic

#### Objectives

To supplement and contribute to mainstream programs aimed at increasing the economic empowerment and status of Torres Strait Islander and Aboriginal people living in the Torres Strait region, and to develop opportunities for enhancing employment, training, enterprise development and home ownership.

### Sub-Program: Commercial

#### ***COMPONENT: BUSINESS FUNDING SCHEME***

#### Objectives

To increase the economic independence of Torres Strait Islander and Aboriginal people of the Torres Strait region by facilitating the acquisition, ownership and development of commercially viable enterprises in accordance with the principles of sustainable economic development.

#### Description

The Business Funding Scheme (BFS) provides concessional finance in the form of loans and loan guarantees to Torres Strait Islander and Aboriginal individuals, partnerships and corporations residing in the Torres Strait region to acquire and/or develop commercially successful business enterprises.

As part of the BFS program, a monitoring accountant is hired to provide professional advice and expertise to all loan recipients for the establishment and/or ongoing management of their business. This program is commercial, and the funding criteria is consistent with those applied by commercial lending institutions.

A number of applications are assessed in-house by the TSRA staff, while larger applications rely on an independent appraisal prepared by a business consultant.

#### Outputs

The TSRA Corporate Plan highlights economic development as the key to establishing a viable economic base in the Torres Strait. The BFS has experienced significant growth in provision of commercial loans to Torres Strait Islanders. During the financial year 51 loans, totalling \$910,956, were advanced.

## Outcomes

While the majority of the loans remain within the fishing industry, it is pleasing to see that Torres Strait Islander and Aboriginal people are undertaking a diverse range of commercial activities. For example, of the loans financed this financial year, the following areas of commercial activity were undertaken.

Industry sector	No. of loans disbursed	Value (\$)
Commercial fishing	41	511,911
Seafood processing	1	82,613
Retail	1	54,384
Transport	5	203,915
Trade	3	58,133
<b>Total</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>910,956</b>

The BFS has assisted Indigenous people of the Torres Strait establish a number of businesses within the region, all of which provide an important service to the wider community. The BFS promotes the economic independence of Torres Strait Islander and Aboriginal people by helping them acquire, own and develop commercially successful enterprises. Over the years, the BFS has helped many individuals and partnerships establish successful business ventures in a range of industries. This in turn creates employment for the Indigenous people of the Torres Strait and Northern Peninsula Area.

If required, the BFS provides an additional service to clients which is organising and paying for insurance over the assets. The insurance cost is then charged back to the client's loan account.

During the financial period recovery action was taken on six loans.

## Component support

One of the key success factors in the Economic Development program is the use of Business Agents to help clients establish their business and if required, provide ongoing professional assistance.

In addition to paying for the Business Agents, the TSRA also pays for legal costs. These costs include legal advice and preparation of legal documentation.

## Financial and Staffing Resources Summary

BUSINESS FUNDING SCHEME \$('000)		
BUDGETARY BASIS	1997-98	1998-99
Component Expenditure	680	910
Component Support Expenditure	94	72
<b>TSRA staff years</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2.5</b>

## **COMPONENT: HOME OWNERSHIP**

### **Objectives**

To provide the Indigenous residents of the Torres Strait region with home ownership through home loans, thereby improving their economic status and social well being.

### **Description**

The Housing Loan Scheme provides home or land loans at concessionary interest rates to Torres Strait Islander and Aboriginal people living in the Torres Strait region, who would usually be unable to obtain assistance from conventional lending institutions. The scheme is targeted at low income, first home buyers according to a point system based on family size and rental circumstances. The scheme is self funding.

### **Outputs**

Three loans were released from the Housing Fund in 1998–99. This included \$130,000 for construction of a house, \$195,000 for purchase of land and \$8,589 for renovations.

### **Outcomes**

At 30 June 1999 the TSRA had a housing loan portfolio of 25 active loans, which has a current loan balance of \$2,176,907. During the financial year one client discharged his home loan.

### **Component Support**

If required, the Housing Loans Scheme provides an additional service to clients, which is organising and paying for insurance. The insurance cost is then charged back to the client's loan account. The TSRA arranged home insurance cover for eight clients at a value of \$2,818.

### **Financial and Staffing Resources Summary**

HOUSING LOANS SCHEME \$(‘000)		
<b>BUDGETARY BASIS</b>	<b>1997–98</b>	<b>1998–99</b>
Component Expenditure	195	333
Component Support Expenditure	3	3
<b><i>TSRA staff years</i></b>	<b><i>0.25</i></b>	<b><i>0.5</i></b>

## **Sub-Program: Economic Development**

### ***COMPONENT: COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM***

#### **Objectives**

To provide the opportunity for Torres Strait and Aboriginal people to voluntarily work in community managed activities which contribute to economic, social and community development and cultural maintenance.

#### **Description**

The Community Development Employment Program (CDEP) is available to Torres Strait Islander communities within the Torres Strait region. The scheme enables unemployed Torres Strait Islander and Aboriginal persons to undertake work on activities chosen by the community or organisation as an alternative to unemployment benefits.

The scheme facilitates community development through implementing projects decided by the communities themselves, at their own pace and following their own priorities. Community development is further enhanced through the scheme's flexibility and capacity to link with other programs such as the Business Funding and Community Economic Initiatives Schemes; the Community Training Program; Apprenticeships; and various accredited training programs provided by the Commonwealth Department of Employment, Education, Training and Youth Affairs (DEETYA).

#### **Outputs**

The TSRA committed \$21,176,341 of Program funds for CDEP to projects in the Torres Strait region, achieving 99.5 per cent expenditure over commitment. It is the TSRA's single largest program. As at 30 June 1999, there were 1,700 participants in 17 communities/CDEP schemes, representing an increase of 45 participants over last year. Expenditure for 1998–99 was \$21,064,514, comprising wages (\$16,066,618) and recurrent/capital (\$4,997,896).

#### **Outcomes**

CDEP communities within the Torres Strait region are involved in a number of work projects which CDEP members believe are benefitting their particular community. During 1998–99, these projects supported activities such as road and drainage maintenance; nursery projects; livestock management; cargo handling; fishing enterprises; maintenance of buildings, sea walls, levee banks and other public utilities; arts and crafts; and broadcasting. To these ongoing activities were added housing and major infrastructure contracts which CDEP organisations continued to win, thereby continuing and expanding the trend started during 1996–97. In addition, a strongly stated TSRA policy resulted in major construction companies employing increasing numbers of CDEP participants, thus providing workers with extended working hours, increased income, as well as valuable training.

In 1998–99 there was a systemisation of the planning processes initiated with the compilation of the 1997–98 Community Development Plans, which took into account the definition of local needs and the various strategies, many involving other Commonwealth and State agencies. This was greatly facilitated at agency level through increased consultations, coordination and cooperation, particularly with the Queensland Government agencies. The CDEP scheme became the focal point to which a host of other inter-agency programs, notably related to training and business development, were connected.

Reviews of six CDEP projects, in the context of a revised review format with which the whole organisation is now involved, were conducted at Darnley, Yam, Saibai, Warraber, Mer (Murray) and Bamaga communities. Necessary follow-up of these and previous reviews is undertaken on an ongoing basis.

The 1998–99 CDEP work plans and programs closely followed the local priorities outlined in the three-year Community Development Plans which were developed in 1997–98 and reflected in the TSRA triennial system of funding.

### Component support

The following expenditure occurred during 1998–99, in support of the CDEP component:

Purpose	Amount (\$)
CDEP Seminar and Training Workshop	22,220
10 major organisation reviews (including six CDEP schemes)	26,408
<b>Total</b>	<b>48,628</b>

### Financial and Staffing Resources Summary

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT EMPLOYMENT PROJECTS \$(‘000)			
BUDGETARY BASIS	Actual 1997–98	Budget 1998–99	Actual 1998–99
Component Expenditure	20,223	21,176	21,065
Component Support Expenditure	47		49
<b>TSRA staff years</b>	<b>0.6</b>		<b>0.6</b>



## **COMPONENT: COMMUNITY TRAINING PROGRAM**

### **Objectives**

To improve individual and community skill levels to improve self management of communities and enable individuals to become more competitive in the mainstream labour markets.

### **Description**

This component provides community organisations with the opportunity to apply for funds to upgrade skills in administration, financial management, service industries and trades. It also provides opportunities for training related to environmental issues, health, heritage, culture and land management. This training can take the form of formal courses, on-the-job training, or a mixture of both. The component may also provide financial assistance to a sponsoring organisation's staff member to undertake a full-time accredited course at a recognised tertiary educational institution.

### **Outputs**

In 1998–99, the TSRA committed \$1,454,000 to various Torres Strait Islander communities and organisations to continue the Community Training Program (CTP), achieving 98.5 per cent expenditure over commitment.

### **Outcomes**

As in previous years, training funds were used to improve managerial, administrative, and trade-based skills. Courses such as building trades, computer operation, economic project management (fishery/seafood processing, fuel outlets, hazardous substances, retailing, first aid), and financial management were conducted.

During 1998–99, there continued to be a concerted effort to link these courses with CDEP and the training and employment opportunities offered to the communities by DEETYA, as well as the network of Job Centres. Whilst Torres Strait communities used skilled residents to conduct training, expressions of interest were sought from trainers based elsewhere. The TSRA Board has made it clear it considers continuation of community-based training as a top priority in the Torres Strait.

As part of the total CTP allocation, the TSRA contributed \$200,000 to the Financial Administration Improvement Program (FAIP), a Queensland Government initiative aimed at improving the standards of financial administration and reporting of the Island councils. The Island Coordinating Council (ICC) coordinates the program which involves intensive training in financial administration of the councils' staff, both through on-the-job training by professional Financial Services Officers and through formal sessions delivered by contracted training consultants. Regular and frequent meetings are being held, involving representatives of the TSRA, the ICC and the State Government, enabling close performance monitoring of councils and organisations. Significant successes were achieved in this area this year, with an increasing number of Island councils receiving unqualified audit reports from the Queensland Auditor General.

### Component support

No component support funds needed to be disbursed in 1998–99.

### Financial and Staffing Resources Summary

COMMUNITY TRAINING PROGRAM \$(‘000)			
<b>BUDGETARY BASIS</b>	<b>Actual 1997–98</b>	<b>Budget 1998–99</b>	<b>Actual 1998–99</b>
Component Expenditure	1,295	1,454	1,432
Component Support Expenditure	0		0
<b>TSRA staff years</b>	<b>1.5</b>		<b>1.5</b>

### COMPONENT: COMMUNITY ECONOMIC INITIATIVES SCHEME

#### Objectives

To contribute directly to the economic growth of communities by enabling the development of income-generating projects with social, cultural and economic benefits.

#### Description

This component provides grants to Torres Strait Islander and Aboriginal organisations for establishing and/or expanding commercial income-generating ventures.

#### Outputs

During 1998–99, the TSRA approved the following four grants under the CEIS program to the Island Councils:

#### 1998–99 CEIS grant allocations

<b>Island Council</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Planned (\$)</b>	<b>Actual (\$)</b>	<b>Rolled over (\$)</b>
<b>Boigu</b>	Live seafood facility	30,000	30,000	0
<b>Mabuiag</b>	Seafood processing plant	200,000	0	200,000
<b>Bamaga</b>	Motel	400,000	0	400,000
<b>Kubin</b>	Motel	255,000	0	255,000
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>885,000</b>	<b>30,000</b>	<b>855,000</b>

#### Outcomes

Funding for the live seafood holding tanks at Boigu was only released late in 1998–99 because of an abnormally long and heavy wet season, which prevented construction. The Boigu Island Council has ordered the necessary materials but, by 31 July 1999, no further progress was reported.

The Mabuiag seafood processing plant, with funds rolled over from 1997–98, was still beset by problems relating to land tenure over the proposed site and additional expenditure required for connecting the power supply. These problems are slowly being resolved and it is expected that full expenditure will be achieved during 1999–2000.

The TSRA Board, at their December 1998 meeting, approved the allocation of \$400,000 towards the Bamaga Motel project subject to the Bamaga Council being able to secure supplementary funding from other sources. As preliminary negotiations with a suitable equity partner were taking place, the funds were rolled over into 1999–2000.

The TSRA Board, at their March 1999 meeting, approved \$255,000 for constructing a motel/guest house at Kubin. The Project Manager has been appointed and the site selected. While it was necessary to roll the funds over due to the strict conditions governing the release of capital funds, no problems are envisaged this financial year.

### Component support

A total of \$30,156 was spent during 1998–99 for ongoing monitoring and feasibility studies for CEIS projects.

COMMUNITY ECONOMIC INITIATIVES SCHEME \$(‘000)			
BUDGETARY BASIS	Actual 1997–98	Budget 1998–99	Actual 1998–99
Component Expenditure	325	885	30
Component Support Expenditure	5		30
<i>TSRA staff years</i>	<i>0.6</i>		<i>0.6</i>

## Program: Social and Cultural

### Objectives

To enable Torres Strait Islander and Aboriginal people of the Torres Strait region to lead independent and healthy lives, with full recognition of their cultural heritage and rights to land, through the provision of coherent and responsive programs which improve the quality of their lives and ensure equity in their access to services and participation in the wider community.

### Sub-program: Cultural

#### COMPONENT: NATIVE TITLE

### Objectives

To achieve maximum recognition of the Native Title rights of Torres Strait Islander and Aboriginal peoples in relation to the lands and seas of the Torres Strait.

### **Description**

This component facilitates the securing of legal recognition of Native Title in the Torres Strait; and proper regard for Native Title rights in relation to all projects affecting Torres Strait land and seas.

### **Outputs**

The TSRA provided funding of \$373,000 under this program in 1998–99 to the Island Coordinating Council (ICC) for the ongoing operation of the Native Title Office.

### **Outcomes**

Two determinations recognising Native Title in the Torres Strait, in addition to the Mabou Case, have now been obtained. These determinations related to the islands of Saibai and Moa. The TSRA was instrumental in securing both determinations. The TSRA now intends to use the Saibai model to expedite all the other land claims in the Torres Strait.

The TSRA is acting on behalf of the claimants in a majority of the Torres Strait communities and progressing their Native Title claims. This high level of representation has been the result of 12 months extensive community consultations carried out by the TSRA Chairperson, the Native Title Steering Committee and Native Title Office staff.

The office is being further upgraded with the addition of a second solicitor and a research assistant. It is expected that another administration support officer will also join the office in due course.

Several significant land management issues have also been addressed by the Native Title Office including Native Title clearances of the water upgrades on seven islands.

## ***COMPONENT: HERITAGE, CULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT***

### **Objectives**

To help the Indigenous people of the Torres Strait region preserve, protect and develop their cultural heritage and to promote their involvement in environmental issues affecting them.

### **Description**

This component provides funds towards projects seeking to preserve and protect the environment, heritage, culture and languages of the Indigenous people of the Torres Strait region; to promote and maximise their involvement in managing their land, seas and sacred sites; and to ensure they regain ownership and control of the areas and objects of cultural significance to them.

In addition, this component provides funds to promote, develop and support the Torres Strait region's Indigenous people in their involvement in traditional/modern artistic and cultural activities. It also raises awareness of the contribution made by the Torres Strait's Indigenous art, culture and history to the wider Australian and world community.

## Outputs

The TSRA disbursed a total of \$79,000 to support artistic and cultural activities in the Torres Strait region.

## Outcomes

The TSRA provided the Torres Shire Council with a \$45,000 contribution towards organising the biennial Torres Strait Cultural Festival, and \$17,000 each to the Thursday Island State Primary and Secondary Schools in support of their annual local and interstate programs of traditional dancing.

The TSRA thus maintains itself as the logical source of assistance to local individuals and organisations for whom the maintenance and development of the region's cultural and artistic heritage is a high priority.

The TSRA employs an Environmental Officer who deals with Torres Strait environmental issues on a full-time basis. The Officer is currently involved in several projects, one being the Torres Strait Heavy Metals Monitoring Program, a study of trace metals in traditional seafood species in the Torres Strait. This project monitors the concentrations of heavy metals in dugong, turtles, and other marine species in the region and aims to improve the diet-related health of Torres Strait Islanders. The Torres Strait Heavy Metals Monitoring Program is a cooperative arrangement between the TSRA, James Cook University, the Australian Institute of Marine Science and the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority. Environment Australia has contributed \$200,000 to the TSRA for the project which will proceed until 2001, when it is hoped that further funding can be obtained to enable it to continue. The TSRA is also working in cooperation with the ICC towards declaring two Indigenous protected areas in the western region of the Torres Strait. It is also liaising with the World Wildlife Fund in relation to turtle management and flora and fauna issues.

## Sub-Program support

No sub-program support funds needed to be disbursed in 1998–99.

## Financial and Staffing Resources Summary

CULTURAL SUB-PROGRAM \$(‘000)			
BUDGETARY BASIS	Actual 1997–98	Budget 1998–99	Actual 1998–99
Component Expenditure			
Native Title	368	280	280
Heritage, Culture and Environment	143	79	79
Sub-program Support Expenditure	0		0
<b>TSRA staff years</b>	<b>2.57</b>		<b>0.5</b>

## Sub-program: Social

### **COMPONENT: BROADCASTING**

#### **Objectives**

To enable Torres Strait Islanders and Aboriginals of the Torres Strait region access to the range of broadcasting and communication services available to mainstream Australia.

To develop and extend the broadcasting and communications network of the Indigenous residents of the Torres Strait to reinforce and promote their cultural identity and to foster general community awareness of their culture and priorities.

#### **Description**

This component gives the Indigenous residents of the Torres Strait control of their own broadcasting and television services. Through the Broadcasting for Remote Aboriginal Communities Scheme (BRACS), the TSRA provides remote communities with the facilities to gain access to, and control of, television and radio services. It encourages the production of programs with local and cultural input for distribution within the Torres Strait region and the rest of Australia. It also supports the operations and development of the TSIMA.

#### **Outputs**

The TSRA provided funding of \$990,395 under this component. Approximately two thirds of this funding (\$649,395) was received by the TSIMA for operating and community broadcasting costs. The remainder of the funds (\$341,000) was divided between 16 outer island councils for upgrading, operating and maintaining their own BRACS units.

#### **Outcomes**

TSIMA obtained a licence for 24-hour operation from the Australian Broadcasting Tribunal and operated on that basis in 1998–99, providing a local service of news, music, current affairs and items of interest. A new transmitter was installed and, continuing its role as the main source of expertise for repairing and maintaining the outer islands' BRACS units, TSIMA organised and implemented their conversion to the digital system.

The 1997–98 Review commissioned by TSIMA recommended a systematic program to upgrade the buildings and equipment used by the outer Islands BRACS units. This program was incorporated into the TSRA three-year funding plan on an 'urgency of needs' basis and, in 1998–99, the BRACS units operating at Mabuiag, Murray, Boigu, Yorke and Saibai Islands received \$15,000 each to that effect, in addition to their normal operating costs.

## **COMPONENT: SOCIAL PROGRAMS**

### **Objectives**

To ensure the rights and wellbeing of Indigenous women, youth, disabled and aged are respected and are commensurate with the norm applied in the wider Australian community.

To reduce the incidence of drug abuse, domestic violence, neglect and other symptoms of social dysfunction affecting the Indigenous population of the Torres Strait region.

To promote the social and physical wellbeing of the Indigenous peoples of the Torres Strait region and development of a positive self-image through increased access to, and participation in, recreation and sporting activities.

### **Description**

This program element provides funding for the operational costs of women, youth, disabled and aged people centres and sporting associations. It also provides funding to hold sporting events and associated travel costs, as well as constructing and upgrading sporting and community facilities and equipment.

### **Outputs**

The TSRA provided funding totalling \$889,830 under this component, comprising:

#### ***Women and child care***

A grant of \$135,295 was provided to the Mura Kosker Sorority, an organisation formed to address the issues affecting Torres Strait Islander and Aboriginal women living in the Torres Strait region.

A grant of \$100,000 was provided to the Saibai Island Council for construction of a child care centre.

#### ***Youth and sports***

A grant of \$181,169 was provided to the Port Kennedy Association (PKA) to contribute towards the costs of their operations and to assist with the travel costs of several persons to attend a world conference on education in Hawaii.

A grant of \$38,881 was provided to the Youth Activities Services (YAS) to contribute towards the costs of their operations.

A grant of \$274,630 was given to the Torres Strait Youth and Recreational Sporting Association (TSYRSA) as a contribution to their operating costs and to the assistance, in terms of both funding and expertise, which they provide to the various Indigenous sporting associations in the Torres Strait.

A grant of \$50,000 was allocated to the Warraber Island Council to upgrade their sporting facilities.

A grant of \$100,000 was given to the St Paul Island Council towards construction of a Sports Stadium (mainly the floor slab).

### **Outcomes**

Mura Kosker Sorority is the principal community based service provider to women and their families within the Torres Strait region. The main services provided are protection of and support to victims of domestic violence, care for the aged and disabled, counselling, refuge facilities and child care assistance. The organisation is working very closely with the TSRA Women's Issues Officer, the TSRA Portfolio Member for Women Issues and the project staff.

The child care centre at Saibai was constructed by the St Paul Island Council's building team and is now in full use.

The Port Kennedy Association operations include a play group and a youth social worker, and the organisation continues to operate a social enrichment program. The Association also operates a child care centre, which opened during 1997–98. Members of the organisation attended a World Education Conference in Hawaii.

The activities of the YAS are more modest, as reflected by their budget. However, the services rendered (mostly games, excursions, counselling) are very valuable as they are addressed to the young unemployed, school age adolescents and other 'groups at risk'.

The TSYRSA received \$274,630 which enabled various sporting codes (including indoor volleyball, darts, basketball and Rugby League football) to conduct coaching clinics and competitions (including the annual 'State of Origin' Rugby League tournament) through their specific sporting associations. The funding also contributed towards outer islands' sports infrastructure, school sports meetings and sporting exchanges, such as a sporting delegation from the Torres Strait to the Arafura Games in Darwin. As in previous years, the TSYRSA employed a full-time administrator and fulfilled its role as umbrella organisation for the sporting activities taking place in the Torres Strait, notably the annual Rugby League tournaments organised at Badu and on Thursday Island.

Construction of the sporting facilities at St Pauls and Warraber were delayed by an unusually long and heavy wet season: works commenced late in the financial year. The projects are expected to reach completion before the end of December 1999.

The TSRA contributed \$30,000 towards a joint initiative with the Queensland Government (\$40,000) through which a comprehensive Sport and Recreation Plan was developed for the whole of the Torres Strait. This Plan comprises three tiers (local, cluster and regional) and is completed except for the three eastern islands (Murray, Stephen and Darnley), where its draft form will be finalised in 1999–2000.



## **COMPONENT: SOCIAL JUSTICE**

### **Objectives**

To ensure the human and legal rights of the Indigenous people of the Torres Strait region are enforced at international, national, state and local levels.

### **Description**

The TSRA contributes funds towards provision of culturally appropriate Indigenous legal aid services. It also supports advocacy services representing the interests of Indigenous people in contact with the juvenile and criminal justice system, and is committed to development of Torres Strait Indigenous perspectives, to be brought forward in international and national forums.

### **Outputs**

The TSRA provided \$370,242 under this program during 1997–98 for provision of a legal service for Torres Strait Islander and Aboriginal people living in the region.

### **Outcomes**

The principal outcome of this program has been the availability, at the Magistrate Courts of both Thursday Island and Bamaga, of adequate legal representation for people living in the Torres Strait region. Funding was modified to accommodate the salary of a solicitor residing on Thursday Island.

In 1998–99, the TSNP Legal Service gave preliminary legal advice and consultations to 316 clients, provided assistance in 162 civil cases and represented 456 criminal cases. They also gave 29 'brief outs' in Cairns and commenced a program of intensive legal and office training for their staff, including several sessions on dealing with clients.

## **COMPONENT: COMMUNITY HOUSING AND INFRASTRUCTURE**

### **Objectives**

To increase the number of Indigenous people of the Torres Strait region with access to adequate housing, infrastructure facilities and essential municipal services consistent with and appropriate to their needs.

### **Description**

The TSRA may provide funding under this component for:

- contributing to the operating costs of local and remote communities' councils and organisations;
- providing limited funding to housing cooperatives on Thursday Island which are excluded from the Commonwealth/State Housing Agreement;

- supplementing the State's vehicle and machinery replacement program; and
- providing community amenities, buildings, essential services and temporary accommodation.

### **Outputs**

In 1998–99 the TSRA provided \$1,493,623 as a contribution to the Island councils' operations; \$613,571 towards purchasing or replacing earth moving and other machinery; \$791,773 towards erecting council buildings, community halls, resource centres and other amenities; and \$50,000 towards upgrading housing.

### **Outcomes**

The Island councils used the TSRA's funds for employing council clerks, who are responsible for managing and coordinating the council's operations, and to supplement the funds provided by the Queensland Government for council operations and the capital equipment replacement program.

The Murray Island Council used \$45,000 for emergency repairs to their old community hall and for designing a new community hall. They are seeking financial assistance to build the new hall from the State Government as well as from the first year of the TSRA's three-year funding cycle (commencing 2001–02). Altogether, \$9,158 was also spent to upgrade and maintain the temporary seafood processing plant established pending resolution of land tenure issues related to the new freezer, construction of which will begin in 1999–2000.

The Boigu Island Council secured funding from the State Government for constructing their community hall, and the TSRA's contribution of \$300,000 was released to the State Government. Construction had not started at the time this report was written.

A 25-metre swimming pool was built at Bamaga with a \$100,000 contribution from the TSRA, as well as State, surplus and enterprise funds. The swimming pool is used not only by the Bamaga residents, but also by the Seisia, Injinoo, Unmagico and New Mapoon communities.

The community hall at Saibai (\$300,000) is nearly completed.

The Dauan Island Council received \$50,000 to upgrade their community hall. However the funds were requested and released late and the upgrades will be affected during 1999–2000.

The Torres Strait Cooperative undertook a program of upgrading several of their 50 houses on Thursday Island.

The Island councils received grants which enabled them to purchase items of machinery

and equipment.

<b>Council</b>	<b>Equipment purchased</b>
Darnley Island Council	Dump truck and bobcat
Hammond Island Council	Compactor truck and bobcat
Kubin Island Council	Tip truck
Saibai Island Council	Two trailers, road sweeper and backhoe (contribution)
Seisia Island Council	Backhoe and small crane
Stephen Island Council	Garbage truck
Yorke Island Council	Backhoe, truck and three trailers

## **COMPONENT: ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH**

### **Objectives**

In recognition of the vital impact housing, water and power supplies, roads and waste disposal have on people's health, the objective of this component is to improve the health standards of the Indigenous communities of the Torres Strait region by upgrading or providing appropriate and sustainable infrastructure and priority housing, as well as ensuring that adequate environmental health programs are implemented in the remote communities of the Torres Strait.

### **Description**

Funds provided under this component essentially address large scale housing and infrastructure programs, such as water upgrades, power, internal community roads and drainage systems, sewerage and housing schemes, all which could not be funded through the normal allocation of funds made annually to the TSRA. These funds may also be used to cater for the necessary surveys, program planning, needs analyses, research and design.

Normal TSRA funding can be used to supplement State and local government agencies to ensure environmental health standards in remote communities are maintained and improved. Consideration can also be given to emergency health projects such as responses to situations where epidemics are a threat, particularly mosquito-borne diseases.

### **Outputs**

There have been no primary health care grants provided in 1998–99 as Indigenous health programs have been mainstreamed to specialist Commonwealth and State agencies following a Commonwealth Government decision.

The total funding output provided by the TSRA under the National Aboriginal Health Strategy (NAHS) and the new TSRA/State MIP for major infrastructure works with direct health implications was \$7,218,239.

## Outcomes

### *Water Upgrade Stage 2*

Stage 2 of the Water Upgrade is addressing water supply headworks issues in eight Island communities — Boigu, Dauan, Hammond, Kubin, Murray, St Pauls, Stephen and Yorke and is the largest single infrastructure project yet undertaken in the Torres Strait.

The TSRA and the Queensland Government are jointly funding the \$21 million project, contributing \$14 million and \$7 million respectively. The Island Coordinating Council (ICC) is delivering the project over two years and in two phases — 'Minor' and 'Major' Works.

The objective of the Minor Works is to rectify inadequacies in the existing water supply systems therefore eliminating the need for emergency barging of water to communities whose supplies become exhausted in the dry seasons. These works were successfully completed on time and under budget in 1998. As a result, no Torres Strait community required barging of water supplies in the 1998 dry season — proof of the project's success.

The Major Works component comprises five parallel construction contracts. This use of multiple contracts is designed to ensure rapid project delivery and to maximise cost efficiency. These works are scheduled for completion in 1999–2000.

The completed water supplies will adhere to a 'composite' philosophy. This means they will incorporate two types of supply system — one that will operate in the wet season when water is plentiful and a second that will operate in the dry season when water is scarce. For example, the Kubin supply will comprise a weir and groundwater system to attract and store wet season rain. Excess water will be pumped to a 28 million litre (ML) storage or 'dam' where it will be stored to provide water in the dry season. In other cases the system will comprise rainwater collection in storage and desalination of seawater.

### **A summary of works**

<b>Community</b>	<b>Works</b>
Boigu	20 ML covered excavated storage; desalination system (180KL/day)
Dauan	4 groundwater infiltration systems; 6 ML covered excavated storage
Kubin	Weir and infiltration system; 28 ML uncovered excavated storage
Hammond	2 groundwater infiltration systems; submarine pipeline from Thursday Island
Murray	20 ML covered excavated storage; desalination system (180 KL/day)
St Pauls	2 infiltration systems; 28 ML uncovered excavated storages
Stephen	2 groundwater bores; 4 ML covered excavated storages
Yorke	24 ML covered excavated storage; 60 KL/day desalination plant

### **Major Infrastructure Program**

The Major Infrastructure Program (MIP) seeks to improve infrastructure standards in the 15 outer island communities, and Bamaga and Seisia. The TSRA and Queensland Government jointly fund this \$30 million project through which infrastructure will be developed in each community from 1999 to 2001.

The TSRA has appointed consulting firm Ove Arup and Partners to manage the program; Ove Arup has appointed a panel of consultants to manage the individual projects. These consultants have completed extensive consultations with the Torres Strait Islander communities, resulting in detailed planning reports. These reports identify the numerous health-related infrastructure requirements of the 17 Torres Strait communities.

In 1999 Ove Arup completed an evaluation of the planning reports which was undertaken to prioritise each project on the basis of improved health outcomes. The TSRA Board endorsed the priorities in March 1999 and, as a result, projects involving water supply, sewerage and drainage will be completed over the three years of the program. It is proposed that the MIP will continue in three year cycles (over a 10-year horizon) to ensure all Torres Strait communities have the necessary, basic health-related infrastructure.

Since the beginning of 1999 the Saibai drainage and roads project has been completed and work has commenced on the following projects:

Badu Water Supply	Boigu Sewerage
Boigu Water Reticulation	Coconut Water Supply
Darnley Sewerage	Darnley Water Supply
Dauan Water Reticulation	Hammond Sewerage
Hammond Water Reticulation	Kubin Sewerage
Murray Sewerage	Saibai Sewerage
Seisia Sewerage	Seisia Water Supply
St Pauls Sewerage	St Pauls Water Reticulation
Yam Sewerage	Yam Water Supply
Yorke Sewerage	Yorke Water Reticulation

### **Aerial photography and mapping**

The TSRA has contributed \$200,000 toward an Aerial Photography and Mapping project, to which the Queensland Government is also contributing funds. The ICC is implementing this project which will result in the first ever production of accurate large-scale maps of all Torres Strait communities including Thursday Island, Horn Island, outer islands, Bamaga and Seisia. Photography of a large number of significant smaller islands is also taking place.

The photography and mapping project was 70 per cent complete in 1998–99 with the remainder scheduled for completion in 1999–2000. Despite being incomplete, the mapping has already been used extensively by consultants undertaking planning and design for the MIP. The accuracy of planning has been dramatically improved through the mapping, which will result in a significant reduction of survey costs for scheduled infrastructure projects.

Once completed, the mapping will have a large number of uses. Areas of use will include town and infrastructure planning; asset management; environmental management; and land tenure. Importantly, the maps are available in a digital format, therefore a database will be formed that can be modified over time as communities develop.

### Sub-Program support

No additional funds were expended in support of the Social and Cultural Program.

### Financial and Staffing Resources Summary

SOCIAL \$(‘000)			
BUDGETARY BASIS	Actual 1997–98	Budget 1998–99	Actual 1998–99
Component Expenditure			
Broadcasting	557	990	980
Social programs			
Women’s issues and child care	130	235	235
Sport and recreation	302	480	450
Community support	169	204	204
Social justice	396	370	370
Community housing and infrastructure	4,695	3,981	2,949
Environmental health	3,898	7,518	7,218
Components Support Expenditure	73	–	–
<b>TSRA staff years</b>	<b>1.7</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>1.7</b>

## Program: Corporate Services

### Objectives

- Support delivery of the TSRA services to Torres Strait Islander and Aboriginal people in the Torres Strait region.
- Promote the efficient and effective use of human, financial and physical resources.
- Create a rewarding, safe, healthy and equitable working environment.
- Ensure provision of efficient services for the TSRA and the Minister to facilitate decision-making.

- Manage and maintain assets of the TSRA.
- Administer housing loans, enterprise loans, and major infrastructure projects to Torres Strait Islander and Aboriginal people in the Torres Strait region.

### Financial and Staffing Resources Summary

<b>BUDGETARY BASIS</b>	<b>Actual 1997–98</b>	<b>Actual 1998–99</b>
Component Expenditure		
Suppliers	1,260	1,510
Employee Expenses	1,655	1,728
Write Down of Assets	357	403
Total Expenditure	3,272	3,641

### Corporate overview

The Corporate Services Section provides a range of administrative and program services and is responsible for managing the corporate and financial needs of the TSRA including Executive Support, Finance, Housing and Enterprise Loans, Property, Personnel, Human Resources, Workplace Agreement, Staff Development and Training, Reception and Registry.

The Secretariat Section is separate from the Corporate Support Section and is responsible for Public Affairs, Secretariat Services to the Office of the Chairperson as well as to TSRA Board Members.

### Financial management

The TSRA's budget allocation in 1998–99 was \$40.294 million, which comprised:

CDEP	\$21.081 million
Native Title	\$0.373 million
Other Programs (including running costs)	\$18.840 million

### Internal audit

The ATSIC Office of Evaluation and Audit undertook an internal audit of the TSRA from 21 to 24 April 1999. The audit concluded that the TSRA is performing soundly. While the administrative and program areas are operating efficiently and effectively, there is room for improvement in grant and loans administration, and this is being addressed.

### External audit

The 1998–99 financial statement audit conducted by Arthur Anderson, on behalf of the Australian National Audit Office (ANAO), commenced in June 1999 and is scheduled to be completed by end of July 1999.

The 1997–98 financial statements audit conducted by Arthur Anderson on behalf of ANAO, completed in September 1998, gave an unqualified audit opinion.

### **Workplace Agreement**

The Industrial Relations Commission certified the TSRA Workplace Agreement 1998–00 (‘the Agreement’) on 7 December 1998. The Agreement was developed at workplace level in consultation with staff and the Community Public Sector Union.

The Agreement improves the effectiveness and efficiency of the TSRA by having a work environment and employment framework which supports productivity gains through greater efficiency and flexibility. It promotes client services, supports the elected arm of the TSRA and extends to employee pay and conditions, which encourage high performance.

### **Personnel**

The Corporate Services Section works in conjunction with ATSIC Corporate Division under a Service Agreement, which includes providing IT and human resources services. Staff attended various external and internal training courses throughout the year including accrual accounting and budgeting, ACCPAC — a new accounting system, AIMS — the Department of Finance accrual budgeting system, Information Technology, and public speaking. One staff member was completing a Graduate Certificate in Public Administration with the Public Service and another was undertaking a Public Sector Management Course, conducted by the Local Management Group.

### **Property**

As noted in the TSRA’s 1997–98 Annual Report, the TSRA has an office accommodation usage of 873 square metres for 29 staff and TSRA Board Members, giving an average of 30.10 square metres per person.

### **Secretariat Section**

The Secretariat Section incorporates Public Affairs, Women’s Issues, Secretarial Services to Honourable Members as well as to the Office of the Chairperson. The TSRA held four board meetings during the year. Members were also involved in portfolio meetings, a large number of inter-agency meetings and forums, providing policy advice and direction for the TSRA. The Women’s Issues function involves working closely with the TSRA Portfolio Member for Women’s Issues and the Torres Strait women’s organisation. Public Affairs is responsible for producing the Annual Report, the Service Charter, the Corporate Plan, corporate documents including brochures, posters, community newsletters, media releases, public awareness campaigns, organising special events, and advertising and as well as coordinating replies to Ministerials. Public Affairs also liaises between the media and the Chairperson, and is the contact point for the public and Commonwealth and Queensland Governments, responding to enquiries in relation to the TSRA and the Torres Strait region.



### **Equal Employment Opportunity**

The TSRA is part of ATSIC's EEO Program under the Service Agreement and takes part in appropriate conferences and training programs. Staff are advised of the current arrangements and receive ATSIC and Public Service and Merit Protection Commission (PSMPC), EEO and Harassment booklets and pamphlets as they are revised and developed. EEO and Harassment officers for the TSRA have been elected from within the staff. EEO statistical information is collected on recruitment of all TSRA staff and provided to the PSMPC at the end of each financial year. The TSRA EEO statistical data is set out in Appendix 6(c).

### **Freedom of Information**

A statement outlining the structure of the TSRA, as required under section 8 of the *Freedom of Information Act 1982*, can be found in Appendix 3. One FOI request was received for access to Native Title documents. No applications for Internal Review or applications to the Administrative Appeals Tribunal (AAT), for review of a decision in relation to a request, were received in the reporting period.

### **Industrial democracy**

The TSRA is included in ATSIC's industrial democracy activities and policies under the Service Agreement. The TSRA union representative takes part in the CPSU National Delegate's Conference. The TSRA staff receive ATSIC workplace change publications, staff circulars, policies, and strategies as they are developed. Staff members also participate in regular management, section and staff meetings.

### **Occupational health and safety**

This report is provided under section 74 of the *Occupational Health and Safety (Commonwealth Employment) Act 1990*. The TSRA is part of ATSIC's OH&S Policy Agreement under the Service Agreement and takes part in appropriate national consultation. Staff are informed of the current arrangements and receive OH&S publications from ATSIC as they are developed. The TSRA staff have access to the ATSIC Employee Assistance Program (EAP) under the Service Agreement, and also receive publications from Comcare. An OH&S Officer for the TSRA has been elected from within the staff.

### **Privacy**

For the reporting period, no report was served on the TSRA by the Privacy Commissioner under section 30 of the *Privacy Act 1988* and no personal privacy complaints were made against the TSRA.

## Appendix 1: Financial Statements

### **TORRES STRAIT REGIONAL AUTHORITY CERTIFICATION OF FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

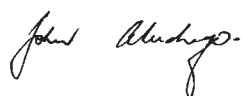
*for the year ended 30 June 1999*

In our opinion, the accompanying statements of the Torres Strait Regional Authority for the year ended 30 June 1999 consisting of:

- Operating Statement;
- Statement of Assets and Liabilities;
- Statement of Cash Flows;
- Schedule of Commitments;
- Schedule of Contingencies; and
- Notes to and forming part of the Financial Statements

give a true and fair view of the matters required by Schedule 2 of the Finance Minister's Orders made under the Commonwealth Authorities and Companies Act 1997.

Signed in accordance with a resolution of the Members of the TSRA.



John Abednego  
Chairperson  
9/9/1999



Henry Garnier  
Deputy Chairperson  
9/9/1999

**TORRES STRAIT REGIONAL AUTHORITY  
OPERATING STATEMENT**

*for the year ended 30 June 1999*

	<b>Notes</b>	<b>1999 \$'000</b>	<b>1998 \$'000</b>
<b>NET COST OF SERVICES</b>			
Operating expenses			
Employees	2	<b>1,728</b>	1,655
Suppliers	3	<b>1,495</b>	1,260
Depreciation of buildings		<b>134</b>	118
Depreciation of plant & equipment		<b>239</b>	225
Write down of assets	4	<b>45</b>	14
Grants	5	<b>36,940</b>	31,615
<b>Total operating expenses</b>		<b>40,581</b>	34,887
<b>Operating revenues from independent sources</b>			
Interest	6	<b>314</b>	287
Other	7	<b>445</b>	457
<b>Total operating revenues from independent sources</b>		<b>759</b>	744
<b>Net cost of services</b>		<b>39,822</b>	34,143
<b>REVENUES FROM GOVERNMENT</b>			
<b>Revenues from government</b>			
Parliamentary appropriations received		<b>40,294</b>	34,822
Resources received free of charge	8	<b>13</b>	18
<b>Total revenues from government</b>		<b>40,307</b>	34,840
<b>Abnormal items</b>	9	<b>–</b>	223
<b>Surplus of revenues from government over net cost of services</b>	14	<b>485</b>	920
Accumulated surpluses at beginning of reporting period	14	<b>12,222</b>	11,302
<b>Accumulated surpluses at end of reporting period</b>	14	<b>12,707</b>	12,222

**TORRES STRAIT REGIONAL AUTHORITY  
STATEMENTS OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES**

*as at 30 June 1999*

	Notes	1999 \$'000	1998 \$'000
<b>PROVISIONS AND PAYABLES</b>			
Employees	10	523	446
Suppliers	11	67	65
Grants	12	2,535	1,236
Other	13	39	–
<b>Total provisions and payables</b>		<b>3,164</b>	<b>1,747</b>
<b>Total liabilities</b>		<b>3,164</b>	<b>1,747</b>
<b>EQUITY</b>			
Asset Revaluation Reserve	14	1,198	1,198
Accumulated surpluses	14	12,707	12,222
<b>Total equity</b>		<b>13,905</b>	<b>13,420</b>
<b>Total liabilities and equity</b>		<b>17,069</b>	<b>15,167</b>
<b>FINANCIAL ASSETS</b>			
Cash	15	4,459	3,323
Receivables	16	3,655	2,810
<b>Total financial assets</b>		<b>8,114</b>	<b>6,133</b>
<b>NON-FINANCIAL ASSETS</b>			
Land and buildings	17, 19	8,248	7,736
Plant and equipment	18, 19	696	858
Other	20	11	440
<b>Total non-financial assets</b>		<b>8,955</b>	<b>9,034</b>
<b>Total assets</b>		<b>17,069</b>	<b>15,167</b>
<b>Current liabilities</b>		<b>2,848</b>	<b>1,658</b>
<b>Non-current liabilities</b>		<b>316</b>	<b>89</b>
<b>Current assets</b>		<b>4,602</b>	<b>4,421</b>
<b>Non-current assets</b>		<b>12,482</b>	<b>10,746</b>

**TORRES STRAIT REGIONAL AUTHORITY**  
**STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS**  
*for the year ended 30 June 1999*

	Notes	1999 \$'000	1998 \$'000
<b>OPERATING ACTIVITIES</b>			
<b>Cash received</b>			
Appropriations		40,294	34,822
Interest		314	287
Other		434	549
<b>Total cash received</b>		41,042	35,658
<b>Cash used</b>			
Grants		(35,641)	(32,768)
Employees		(1,651)	(1,532)
Suppliers		(1,493)	(1,197)
<b>Total cash used</b>		(38,785)	(35,497)
<b>Net cash from operating activities</b>	21	2,257	161
<b>INVESTING ACTIVITIES</b>			
<b>Cash received</b>			
Repayments of loans		590	339
<b>Total cash received</b>		590	339
<b>Cash used</b>			
Purchase of property, plant and equipment		(276)	(31)
Loans made		(1,435)	(1,096)
<b>Total cash used</b>		(1,711)	(1,127)
<b>Net cash from investing activities</b>		(1,121)	(788)
Net (decrease) increase in cash held		1,136	(627)
Add cash at 1 July		3,323	3,950
<b>Cash at 30 June</b>	15	4,459	3,323

**TORRES STRAIT REGIONAL AUTHORITY  
SCHEDULE OF COMMITMENTS**

*as at 30 June 1999*

	Notes	1999 \$'000	1998 \$'000
<b>BY TYPE</b>			
Operating leases		101	29
<b>Total commitments</b>		<b>101</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>BY MATURITY</b>			
<i>Operating lease commitments</i>			
One year or less		22	24
From one to two years		33	5
From two to five years		46	0
Over five years		0	0
<b>Operating lease commitments</b>		<b>101</b>	<b>29</b>

Operating leases are exclusively in relation to the hire of vehicles from DAS Fleet.

**TORRES STRAIT REGIONAL AUTHORITY  
SCHEDULE OF CONTINGENCIES**

*as at 30 June 1999*

As at 30 June 1999 there are no contingencies which create uncertainty as to possible gain or loss for the Authority.

**TORRES STRAIT REGIONAL AUTHORITY**  
**NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**  
*for the financial year ended 30 June 1999*

**1. SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES**

**Basis of Accounting**

The financial statements are a general purpose financial report.

They have been prepared in accordance with

- Guidelines titled *Forms of Financial Statements for Commonwealth Authorities and Companies (CAC) Bodies and Commonwealth Authorities and Companies Orders (Amendment) 1998 for the Financial Statements of CAC Bodies issued by the Minister for Finance and Administration in December 1998*
- Australian Accounting Standards and Accounting Guidance Releases issued by the Australian Accounting Research Foundation, and having regard to Statements of Accounting Concepts, and
- the Consensus Views of the Urgent Issues Group.

The financial statements have been prepared on an accrual basis and are in accordance with historical cost convention, except for certain assets which, as noted, are at valuation. Except where stated, no allowance is made for the effects of changing prices on the results or on the financial position.

**Accounting Policies which have been significant in the Preparation and Presentation of the Accounts**

***a) Fixed Assets***

On 1 July 1994 certain assets were transferred to the Torres Strait Regional Authority by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission. These assets were valued at the net book amount at which they were included in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission Financial Statements for the year ended 30 June 1994. Apart from furniture and fittings in staff houses all other assets with a cost of less than \$1,000 are expended in the year of acquisition.

The land and building have been revalued by an independent organisation, North Queensland Valuers, in April 1998. The increased value of the asset has been credited to the Asset Revaluation Reserve Account.

***b) Depreciation***

Depreciation rates (useful lives) and methods are reviewed at each balance date and necessary adjustments are recognised in the current, or current and future reporting periods, as appropriate. Depreciation is provided on property, plant and equipment, including

freehold buildings but excluding land and artifacts. The depreciation rates are 2 per cent for buildings and 20 percent for computers, plant and equipment. The 1998–99 depreciation is calculated on a straight-line basis so as to write off the net cost of each asset during its expected useful life. Assets purchased during the year are depreciated on a pro rata basis.

***c) Employee Entitlements***

Provision is made for employees' annual leave and long service leave. No provision has been made for sick leave as all sick leave is non-vesting and the average sick leave taken by employees is less than the annual entitlement for sick leave.

Provision made in respect of annual leave and long service leave expected to be settled within 12 months is measured at its nominal values.

The liability for long service leave is recognised and measured at the present value of the estimated future cash flows to be made in respect of all employees at 30 June 1999.

***d) Comparative Figures***

Where necessary, comparative figures have been adjusted to conform with changes in presentation in the financial statements.

***e) Cash***

For the purpose of the statement of cash flows, cash includes cash on hand and at bank.

***f) Bad and Doubtful Debts***

Bad debts are written off to expenses during the year in which they are identified, to the extent they have not previously been provided for. A provision is raised for doubtful debts based on a review of all outstanding receivables at year end.

***g) Rounding***

Amounts are rounded to the nearest \$1,000 except in relation to:

- Loans to authority members and related parties
- Remuneration of officers
- Remuneration of auditors
- Other transactions with authority members and related entities

***h) Resources Received***

Resources received free of charge are recognised as revenues in the Operating Statement where their fair value can be reliably measured. Use of resources is recognised as an expense or an asset according to whether it is a long term benefit.



**i) Taxation**

The Authority is exempt from all forms of taxation except fringe benefit tax.

**j) Segment Reporting**

The Authority operates in a single industry and geographic segment, being provision of government programs in Australia.

**k) Economic Dependency**

The Torres Strait Regional Authority is controlled by the Government of the Commonwealth of Australia.

The Authority is dependent on appropriations from Parliament of the Commonwealth for its continued existence and ability to carry out its normal activities.

**2. EMPLOYEE EXPENSES**

	1999 \$'000	1998 \$'000
Basic remuneration for services provided	1,728	1,655

The Authority contributes to the Commonwealth Sector Superannuation (CSS) and the Public Sector Superannuation (PSS) schemes which provide retirement, death and disability benefits to employees. Contributions to the schemes are at rates calculated to cover existing and emerging obligations. Current contribution rates are 20.1 per cent of salary (CSS) and 11 per cent of salary (PSS). An additional 3 per cent is contributed for employer productivity benefits.

**3. SUPPLIER EXPENSES**

	1999 \$'000	1998 \$'000
Supply of goods and services	1,473	1,231
Operating lease rentals	22	29
Total suppliers expense	1,495	1,260

**4. WRITE DOWN OF ASSETS**

Doubtful loans	45	14
Total write down of asset	45	14

## 5. GRANTS EXPENSE

	1999 \$'000	1998 \$'000
Social	15,104	10,606
Economic	21,836	21,009
Total Grant Expense	36,940	31,615

## 6. INTEREST REVENUE

Bank	182	180
Loans	132	107
Total interest	314	287

## 7. OTHER REVENUE

Rental income on properties	156	113
Funds returned from previous year	4	—
Sundry	285	344
Total other revenue	445	457

## 8. RESOURCES RECEIVED FREE OF CHARGE

Provision of internal audit services by OEA	13	18
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## 9. ABNORMAL ITEMS

Transfer of loans from ATSIC*	—	223
	—	223

\* Two housing loans were transferred from the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (Loan Account Numbers 10011 and 71280).

## 10. LIABILITIES TO EMPLOYEES

Salaries and wages	29	24
Superannuation	73	3
Annual leave	173	182
Long service leave	248	237
Total employee entitlement liability	523	446

## 11. PAYABLE TO SUPPLIERS

	1999 \$'000	1998 \$'000
Trade creditors	67	65

## 12. GRANT LIABILITIES

Non-profit institutions	2,535	1,236
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## 13. OTHER LIABILITIES

Loan contracted	39	–
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## 14. EQUITY

Item	Accumulated results \$'000	Asset revaluation reserve \$'000	Total equity \$'000
Balance at 1 July 1998	12,222	1,198	13,420
Surplus	485	–	485
Balance 30 June 1999	12,707	1,198	13,905

The net revaluation increase in the Asset Revaluations Reserve comprises:

	1998 \$'000
• Revaluation increment — land	562
• Revaluation increment — buildings	636
	1,198

The valuation was performed by an independent valuer, Mr NV Teves Avle (Registered Valuer No. 382) of North Queensland Valuers and was dated 28 April 1998.

## 15. CASH

	1999 \$'000	1998 \$'000
General fund	3,790	2,500
Housing fund (see Note 29)	667	779
Other	2	44
Total cash	4,459	3,323

## 16. RECEIVABLES

	1999 \$'000	1998 \$'000
Goods and services	14	–
Housing loans	2,177	1,926
Enterprise loans	1,489	897
	3,680	2,823
Provision for doubtful loans	(25)	(13)
Net receivables	3,655	2,810

Receivables includes receivables overdue by:

– less than 30 days	30	20
– 30 to 60 days	25	6
– more than 60 days	114	56
	169	82

## 17. LAND AND BUILDINGS

### Administration assets

Freehold land — at valuation	1,600	1,600
	1,600	1,600
Buildings on freehold land — at valuation	6,341	6,115
Buildings on freehold land — at cost	462	43
	6,803	6,158
Accumulated depreciation	(155)	(22)
	6,648	6,136
Total land and buildings	8,248	7,736

## 18. PLANT AND EQUIPMENT

	1999 \$'000	1998 \$'000
Plant and equipment — at valuation	275	273
Plant and equipment — at cost	1,185	1,109
	1,460	1,382
Accumulated depreciation	(764)	(524)
<b>Total plant and equipment</b>	<b>696</b>	<b>858</b>

## 19. ANALYSIS OF PROPERTY, PLANT AND EQUIPMENT

**Table A: Movement Summary 1998–99 for all assets irrespective of valuation basis**

Item	Land	Buildings	Total land and buildings	Other plant and equipment	Total
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
<b>Gross value as at 1 July 1998</b>	1,600	6,158	7,758	1,382	9,140
Additions:	—	645	645	78	723
Revaluations	—	—	—	—	—
Disposals	—	—	—	—	—
Other movements	—	—	—	—	—
<b>Gross value as at 30 June 1999</b>	<b>1,600</b>	<b>6,803</b>	<b>8,403</b>	<b>1,460</b>	<b>9,863</b>
<b>Accumulated depreciation as at 1 July 1998</b>	N/A	22	22	524	546
Depreciation charge for assets held 1 July 1998	N/A	116	116	232	348
Depreciation charge for additions	N/A	17	17	8	25
Adjustments for revaluation	N/A	—	—	—	—
Adjustments for disposal	N/A	—	—	—	—

**19. ANALYSIS OF PROPERTY, PLANT AND EQUIPMENT** *(continued)*

Adjustments for other movements	N/A	–	–	–	–
<b>Accumulated depreciation as at 30 June 1999</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>155</b>	<b>155</b>	<b>764</b>	<b>919</b>
<b>Net book value as at 30 June 1999</b>	<b>1,600</b>	<b>6,648</b>	<b>8,248</b>	<b>696</b>	<b>8,944</b>
<b>Net book value as at 1 July 1998</b>	<b>1,600</b>	<b>6,136</b>	<b>7,736</b>	<b>858</b>	<b>8,594</b>

**Table B: Summary of balances of assets at valuation as at 30 June 1999**

Item	Land	Building	Total land and buildings	Other plant and equipment	Total
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
<b>As at 30 June 1999</b>					
Gross value	1,600	6,341	7,941	275	8,216
Accumulated depreciation	–	155	155	(193)	(348)
<b>Net book value</b>	<b>1,600</b>	<b>6,648</b>	<b>8,248</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>7,868</b>
<b>As at 30 June 1998</b>					
Gross value	1,600	6,115	7,715	272	7,987
Accumulated depreciation	–	(22)	(22)	(139)	(161)
<b>Net book value</b>	<b>1,600</b>	<b>6,093</b>	<b>7,693</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>7,826</b>

## 20. OTHER NON-FINANCIAL ASSETS

	1999 \$'000	1998 \$'000
Prepayments	11	440

## 21. CASH FLOW RECONCILIATION

	1999 \$'000	1998 \$'000
Net cost of services	(39,822)	(34,143)
Revenue from Government	40,307	34,840
Abnormal items	–	223
<b>Operating surplus</b>	<b>485</b>	<b>920</b>
Resources received free of charge	13	–
Depreciation	373	346
Abnormal Item	–	(223)
Doubtful Loans	45	14
Other adjustments	(62)	(53)
(Increase)/decrease in trade debtors	(14)	1
(Increase)/decrease in grant overpayments	–	284
(Increase)/decrease in prepayments	–	(43)
(Increase)/decrease in trade creditors	2	(64)
(Increase)/decrease in salaries accruals	5	8
(Increase)/decrease in employee provisions	72	116
Increase/(decrease) in grant liabilities	1,299	(1,152)
Increase/(decrease) in loan contracted	39	–
Loss on disposal	–	7
<b>Net cash provided by operating activities</b>	<b>2,257</b>	<b>161</b>

## 22. REMUNERATION OF AUTHORITY MEMBERS

The total amount of the Authority Members' remuneration during the financial year was \$207,622 (1997–98 \$195,007). In addition, superannuation payments made on behalf of the Authority Members during the financial year was \$12,020 (1997–98 \$9,982)

The number of Members of the Authority whose remuneration falls within the following bands are as follows:

	1999	1998
\$0 – \$9,999	16	17
\$10,000 – \$19,999	3	1
\$90,000 – \$99,000	1	1

## 23. RELATED PARTY DISCLOSURE

The following served as members of the Torres Strait Regional Authority during the financial year.

J Abednego	G Lui
J Ahmat	M Mau
T Billy	J Mosby
R Day	G Pearson
E Dau	H Stephen (deceased 9/4/99)
G Dewis	R Stephen
E Doolah	T Waia
J Elu	R Wasaga
H Garnier	T Whap
S Joe	R Williams
M Levi	

The aggregate remuneration of the Board is disclosed in Note 22.

## 24. LOANS TO AUTHORITY MEMBERS AND RELATED PARTIES

Five loans were due to the Torres Strait Regional Authority by Members and related parties. All loans were approved under normal business loan criteria.

	1999 \$	1998 \$
Loan to member related party outstanding at year end	138,123	18,761
Loan repayments during the reporting period	23,502	3,903
Interest revenue included in operating result from loan to members and related party	1,064	119



## 25. OTHER TRANSACTIONS WITH AUTHORITY MEMBERS RELATED ENTITIES

The following Members of the Authority served on organisations which were in receipt of funding from the Torres Strait Regional Authority during the financial year.

Member's name	Council	Grants received (\$)
J Abednego	TSIMA	640,195
	Tamwoy Development Association	30,500
	TRAWQ Community Council	1,919,317
J Ahmat	Badu Island Council	3,381,032
T Billy	Warraber Island Council	1,094,946
	TSNP Legal	370,242
R Day	Murray Island Council	1,212,786
E Dau	Boigu Island Council	1,928,501
G Dewis	Port Kennedy Association	194,669
	TSIMA	640,195
	TS Cooperative Society	50,000
E Doolah	Darnley Island Council	1,164,317
J Elu	Seisia Island Council	1,161,112
	TSNP Legal Service	370,242
H Garnier	Hammond Island Council	731,445
S Joe	Kubin Island Council	810,432
M Levi	St Pauls Island Council	1,939,419
G Lui	Yam Island Council	1,630,303
M Mau	Dauan Island Council	842,988
	Mura Kosker Sorority	151,295
J Mosby	Yorke Island Council	1,666,619
	TSNP Legal Service	370,242
G Pearson	Coconut Island Council	1,179,129
H Stephen	Stephen Island Council	81,680
R Stephen	Stephen Island Council	81,680
T Waia	Saibai Island Council	1,605,015
T Whap	Mabuiag Island Council	748,523
R Williams	Bamaga Island Council	2,235,266

All Members of the Authority, apart from R Wasaga and G Dewis, served on the Island Coordinating Council which received grants during the year.

## 26. REMUNERATION OF OFFICERS

The number of officers included in these figures are shown below in the relevant income details.

	1999	1998
	1	1
\$90,000 – \$110,000		
Income received or due and receivable by officers	<b>\$95,000</b>	\$103,000

## 27. REMUNERATION OF AUDITORS

Remuneration to the Auditor-General for auditing the financial statements for the reporting period.	<b>\$28,000</b>	\$28,000
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No other services were provided by the Auditor-General during the reporting period.

## 28. TORRES STRAIT REGIONAL AUTHORITY HOUSING FUND

The Torres Strait Regional Authority Housing fund was established on 1 July 1994 by Section 144V(1) of the *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission Act 1989*.

The transactions of the fund are summarised as follows:

	1999 \$'000	1998 \$'000
<b>Opening balance 1 July</b>	<b>778,789</b>	786,402
<b>Receipts</b>		
Loan repayments	<b>191,087</b>	156,606
Bank interest	<b>27,132</b>	30,958
	<b>997,008</b>	973,966
<b>Payments</b>		
Loan advances	<b>330,289</b>	195,177
	<b>330,089</b>	195,177
<b>TSRA housing funding</b>		
<b>Balance as at 30 June 1999</b>	<b>666,919</b>	778,789

**29. TORRES STRAIT REGIONAL AUTHORITY LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES FUND**

The Torres Strait Regional Authority Land and Natural Resources Fund was established on 1 July 1994 by Subsection 144W (1) of the *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission Act 1989*. There were no amounts paid into the fund during the period.

### 30. FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS

#### a) Terms, conditions and accounting policies

Financial Instrument	Notes	Accounting policies and methods (including recognition criteria and measurement basis)	Nature of underlying instrument (including significant terms and conditions affecting the amount, time and certainty of cash flow)
Deposits at call	15	Deposits are recognised at their nominal amounts. Interest is credited to revenue as it accrues.	Temporarily surplus funds, mainly from monthly drawdowns of appropriation, are placed on deposit with the National Australia Bank. Interest is earned on the daily balance at the prevailing daily rate for money at call and is paid at month end.
Loans	16	Loans are recognised at the amounts lent. Provision is made for bad and doubtful loans when collection of the loan or part thereof is judged to be less rather than more likely. Interest is credited to revenue on a six monthly basis.	In general, loans are made secured for periods up to 10 years. Repayments of principal are made in full at maturity. Early settlement is an option for both parties. Effective interest rates on fixed rate loans average 1.75 per cent. Interest payments are due on the 15th day of each month. Interest is charged six monthly.
Trade creditors	11	Creditors and accruals are recognised at their nominal amounts, being the amounts at which the liabilities will be settled. Liabilities are recognised to the extent that the goods or services have been received (and irrespective of having been invoiced).	Settlement is usually made net 30 days.

**b) Net fair values of financial assets and liabilities**

		1999	1999	1998	1998
	Note	Total carrying amount \$'000	Aggregate net fair value \$'000	Total carrying amount \$'000	Aggregate net fair value \$'000
<b>Financial assets</b>					
Cash at bank	15	4,459	4,459	3,323	3,323
Loans	16	3,680	3,680	2,823	2,823
<b>Total financial assets</b>		8,139	8,139	6,146	6,146
<b>Financial liabilities (recognised)</b>					
Trade creditors	11	67	67	65	65
Grant liabilities	12	2,535	2,535	1,236	1,236
<b>Total financial liabilities (recognised)</b>		2,602	2,602	1,301	1,301

*Financial assets*

The net fair values of cash, deposits on call and non-interest-bearing monetary financial assets approximate their carrying amounts.

The net fair value of loans receivable and the term deposits are based on cost as the Board does not believe there to be a material difference to a discounted cash calculated flow basis, using subsidised interest rates.

*Financial liabilities*

The net fair values for trade creditors and grant liabilities, all of which are short-term in nature, are approximated by their carrying amounts.

**c) Credit risk exposure**

The economic entity's maximum exposure to credit risk at reporting date in relation to each class of recognised financial assets is the carrying amount of those assets as indicated in the Statement of Assets and Liabilities.

The economic entity has no significant exposure to any concentration of credit risk.



## INDEPENDENT AUDIT REPORT

To the Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs

### Scope

I have audited the financial statements of the Torres Strait Regional Authority for the year ended 30 June 1999. The statements comprise:

- Statement by Authority Members
- Operating Statement
- Statement of Assets and Liabilities
- Statement of Cash Flows
- Schedule of Commitments
- Schedule of Contingencies, and
- Notes to and forming part of the financial statements.

The members of the Authority's Board are responsible for the preparation and presentation of the financial statements and the information they contain. I have conducted an independent audit of the financial statements in order to express an opinion on them to you.

The audit has been conducted in accordance with Australian National Audit Office Auditing Standards, which incorporate the Australian Auditing Standards, to provide reasonable assurance as to whether the financial statements are free of material misstatement. Audit procedures included examination, on a test basis, of evidence supporting the amounts and other disclosures in the financial statements, and the evaluation of accounting policies and significant accounting estimates. These procedures have been undertaken to form an opinion whether, in all material respects, the financial statements are presented fairly in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards, other mandatory professional reporting requirements and statutory requirements so as to present a view of the entity which is consistent with my understanding of its financial position, the results of its operations and its cash flows.

The audit opinion expressed in this report has been formed on the above basis.

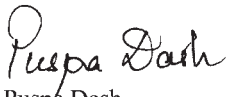
GPO Box 707 CANBERRA ACT 2601  
Centenary House 19 National Circuit  
BARTON ACT  
Phone (02) 6203 7300 Fax (02) 6203 7777

### **Audit Opinion**

In my opinion,

- (i) the financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Schedule 2 of the Finance Minister's Orders; and
- (ii) the financial statements give a true and fair view, in accordance with applicable Accounting Standards, other mandatory professional reporting requirements and Schedule 2 of the Finance Minister's Orders, of the financial position of the Torres Strait Regional Authority as at 30 June 1999 and the results of its operations and its cash flows for the year then ended.

Australian National Audit Office



Puspa Dash  
Senior Director

Delegate of the Auditor-General

Canberra

10 September 1999

## Appendix 2: TSRA Grants

Recipient	Purpose	\$
<b>Badu Island Council</b>	CDEP wages	2,388,566
	CDEP capital/recurrent	740,001
	Contribution to Council operating costs	78,965
	Community training	157,000
	BRACS	16,500
<b>Bamaga Island Council</b>	CDEP wages	1,442,634
	CDEP capital/recurrent	444,821
	Contribution to Council operating costs	86,811
	Community training	144,500
	BRACS	16,500
	Swimming pool facilities	100,000
<b>Boigu Island Council</b>	CDEP wages	1,106,064
	CDEP capital/recurrent	353,984
	Contribution to Council operating costs	56,953
	Community training	50,000
	BRACS	31,500
	Community hall and basketball cover	300,000
	Establish seafood industry (CEIS)	30,000
<b>Coconut Island Council</b>	CDEP wages	814,504
	CDEP capital/recurrent	248,999
	Contribution to Council operating costs	49,126
	Community training	50,000
	BRACS	16,500
<b>Darnley Island Council</b>	CDEP wages	821,457
	CDEP capital/recurrent	164,475
	Contribution to Council operating costs	148,475
	Community training	13,410
	BRACS	16,500
<b>Dauan Island Council</b>	CDEP wages	494,306
	CDEP capital/recurrent	176,183
	Contribution to Council operating costs	50,999
	Community training	55,000
	BRACS	16,500
	Community hall upgrade	50,000
<b>Hammond Island Council</b>	CDEP wages	358,286
	CDEP capital/recurrent	140,872
	Contribution to Council operating costs	188,287
	Community training	44,000



## Appendix 2: TSRA Grants *(continued)*

Recipient	Purpose	\$
<b>Island Coordinating Council</b>	Contribution to operating expenses	351,606
	Community training program - FAIP	200,000
	Heavy machinery hire/lease	8,027
	Major Infrastructure Project	5,018,239
	Native Title Office operating expenses	279,750
	Torres Strait water upgrade	2,200,000
<b>Kubin Island Council</b>	CDEP wages	477,764
	CDEP capital/recurrent	175,881
	Contribution to Council operating costs	90,287
	Community training	50,000
	BRACS	16,500
<b>Mabuiag Island Council</b>	CDEP wages	468,180
	CDEP capital/recurrent	172,921
	Contribution to Council operating costs	54,922
	Community training	21,000
	BRACS	31,500
<b>Mer Island Council (Murray)</b>	CDEP wages	764,363
	CDEP capital/recurrent	235,102
	Contribution to Council operating costs	62,662
	Community hall upgrade	45,000
	Community training	65,000
	BRACS	31,500
	Freezer upgrade	9,158
<b>Mura Kosker Sorority</b>	Contribution to operating expenses	127,295
	Community training	16,000
	Women's activities	8,000
<b>Port Kennedy Association</b>	Contribution to operating expenses	181,169
	Community training	13,500
<b>Saibai Island Council</b>	CDEP wages	797,647
	CDEP capital/recurrent	233,161
	Contribution to Council operating costs and 4WD truck	100,093
	Community training	55,000
	BRACS	31,500
	Community hall and child care	387,615

## Appendix 2: TSRA Grants *(continued)*

Recipient	Purpose	\$
<b>Seisia Island Council</b>	CDEP wages	678,339
	CDEP capital/recurrent	235,341
	Contribution to Council operating costs	175,932
	Community training	55,000
	BRACS	16,500
<b>Stephen Island Council</b>	Contribution to Council operating costs	65,180
	BRACS	16,500
<b>St Paul Island Council</b>	CDEP wages	1,158,436
	CDEP capital/recurrent	359,239
	Contribution to Council operating costs	56,044
	Community training	248,000
	BRACS	17,700
	Sports stadium	100,000
<b>Tamwoy Development Association</b>	Community training	19,580
	Office equipment	10,920
<b>Torres Shire Council</b>	Contribution towards festival expenses	45,000
<b>Torres Strait Cooperative Society Ltd</b>	Contribution to housing program	50,000
<b>Torres Strait Islanders Media Ass.</b>	Contribution to 24-hour operating expenses	562,395
	BRACS digital conversion	77,800
<b>TRAWQ Community Council Inc</b>	CDEP wages	1,310,286
	CDEP capital/recurrent	369,043
	Contribution to operating costs	190,002
	Operational capital	39,486
	Horn Island Administration Officer	10,500
<b>TSNP Legal Service</b>	Operating expenses	364,242
	Training	6,000
<b>TSYRSA</b>	Contribution to operating expenses	264,630
	Community training	15,000
	Island of Origin Carnival	10,000

## Appendix 2: TSRA Grants *(continued)*

Recipient	Purpose	\$
<b>Warraber Island Council</b>	CDEP wages	707,090
	CDEP capital/recurrent	218,671
	Contribution to Council operating costs	100,685
	Community training	52,000
	BRACS	16,500
<b>Yam Island Council</b>	CDEP wages	1,187,106
	CDEP capital/recurrent	340,723
	Contribution to Council operating costs	55,974
	Community training	30,000
	BRACS	16,500
<b>Yorke Island Council</b>	CDEP wages	1,091,590
	CDEP capital/recurrent	339,851
	Contribution to Council operating costs	128,678
	Community training	75,000
	BRACS	31,500
<b>Youth Activities Services</b>	Operating and employment costs	38,881

## Appendix 3: Freedom of Information section 8 statement

This statement is correct to 30 June 1999.

### Establishment

The TSRA was established under the *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission Act 1989* (ATSIC Act) on 1 July 1994.

### Functions

Section 142A of the ATSIC Act outlines the functions of the TSRA as to:

- (a) recognise and maintain the special and unique Ailan Kastom of Torres Strait Islanders living in the Torres Strait area;
- (b) formulate and implement programs for Torres Strait Islanders, and Aboriginal persons, living in the Torres Strait area;
- (c) monitor the effectiveness of programs for Torres Strait Islanders, and Aboriginal persons, living in the Torres Strait area, including programs conducted by other bodies;
- (d) develop policy proposals to meet national, State and regional needs and priorities of Torres Strait Islanders, and Aboriginal persons, living in the Torres Strait area;
- (e) assist, advise and cooperate with Torres Strait Islander and Aboriginal communities, organisations and individuals at national, State, Territory and regional levels;
- (f) advise the Minister on:
  - (i) matters relating to Torres Strait Islander affairs, and Aboriginal affairs, in the Torres Strait area, including the administration of legislation;
  - (ii) the coordination of the activities of other Commonwealth bodies that affect Torres Strait Islanders, or Aboriginal persons, living in the Torres Strait area;
- (g) when requested by the Minister, to provide information or advice to the Minister on any matter specified by the Minister;
- (h) take such reasonable action as it considers necessary to protect Torres Strait Islander and Aboriginal cultural material and information relating to the Torres Strait area if the material or information is considered sacred or otherwise significant by Torres Strait Islanders or Aboriginal persons;
- (i) at the request of, or with the agreement of, the Australian Bureau of Statistics but not otherwise, to collect and publish statistical information relating to Torres Strait Islanders, and Aboriginal persons, living in the Torres Strait area;
- (j) such other functions as are conferred on the TSRA by this Act or any other Act;
- (k) such other functions as are expressly conferred on the TSRA by a law of a State or of an internal Territory and in respect of which there is in force written approval by the Minister under section 142B;

- (l) undertake such research as is necessary to enable the TSRA to perform any of its other functions;
- (m) do anything else that is incidental or conducive to the performance of any of the preceding functions.

### **Structure**

The TSRA is a Commonwealth Statutory Authority established under the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission Act 1989. It consists of an elected arm and an administrative arm. The elected arm is made up of a Chairperson, Deputy Chairperson, Alternate Deputy Chairperson and Torres Strait ATSIC Commissioner and Members, who are elected to office by Torres Strait Islander and Aboriginal people in their respective communities. The administrative arm is the responsibility of the General Manager.

### **Provision of funding**

The TSRA is required to prepare estimates of receipts and expenditure for each financial year for submission to the Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs.

The TSRA operates a number of programs and sub-programs for the allocation of funds within the region. These include:

- loans and grants for enterprises;
- housing loans;
- economic, social and cultural grants to organisations and individuals;
- the administrative and elected arm running costs;
- funding for programs to be conducted by the State; and
- funding for programs to be conducted by community councils.

The actual allocation of program money is undertaken by the TSRA elected arm. The administration is responsible for implementing the elected arm's decisions. The administration also ensures grants and loans are used in accordance with the purposes for which they are provided, and that grants and loans are appropriately acquitted and repaid.

### **Categories of documents**

The Corporate Section maintains files on:

- financial records including procedures, TSRA expenditure, client accounts, housing and enterprise loans, asset register and property management;
- human resource management records including personnel files of TSRA officers, occupational health and safety, equal employment opportunity, industrial democracy, grants and personnel policy documents such as instructions from the Public Service Commissioner, Department of Industrial Relations and Small Business and the Remuneration Tribunal;

- engagement of consultants;
- Ministerial briefings; and
- responses to Ombudsman and Freedom of Information activities.

The Secretariat Section maintains copies of submissions presented to the TSRA meetings, minutes of the TSRA Meetings, TSRA Decision Sheets, and financial records relating to payment of TSRA members and meetings.

Field Operations Section maintains files relating to grants and community profiles.

A number of manuals and guidelines are used in the TSRA's decision-making policies and guidelines, including the TSRA Decision Making Principles, Program Statements, Finance Procedures Manual, and the Program and Administration Delegation manuals.

## **Appendix 4: Budget allocations for estimate items**

<b>Estimate item</b>	<b>Approved allocation (\$)</b>
CDEP	21081
Other programs**	16670
Native Title	373
Running costs	2906

## **Appendix 5: Advertising and market research**

The TSRA used ATSIC, under a MoU, for national advertising of job vacancies. In addition, the TSRA uses the local print media for advertising job vacancies, media releases and distribution of the TSRA newsletter under Commonwealth Financial Guidelines.

The TSRA undertook no market research or polling and direct mailing of organisations.



## Appendix 6: Staffing overview

- Part-time and temporary staff at 30 June 1999
- Nominal total staff at 30 June 1999 (including part-time and temporary staff)
- Representation of EEO groups within salary levels at 30 June 1999
- Senior Executive Service gains and losses in 1998–99
- Quantum and distribution of performance pay in 1998–99
- Staff training summary
- Consultants summary
- Organisational chart at 30 June 1999

### a. Staff classification breakdown at 30 June 1999 (part-time and temporary staff)

Classification	Torres Strait Islander and Aboriginal			Non Torres Strait Islander and Aboriginal		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Senior Executive Service						
Executive Level 2						
Executive Level 1						
APS Level 6						
APS Level 5						
APS Level 4						
APS Level 3						
APS Level 2						
APS Level 1	1	2	3			
Sub total	1	2				
<b>Total</b>			<b>3</b>			

**b. Nominal total staff at 30 June 1999 (includes part-time and temporary staff)**

Classification	Torres Strait Islander and Aboriginal			Non Torres Strait Islander and Aboriginal		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Senior Executive Service				1		1
Executive Level 2						
Executive Level 1	1		1	2		2
APS Level 6	1	1	2	3		3
APS Level 5		2	2		1	1
APS Level 4	1	4	5	1	1	2
APS Level 3		1	1			
APS Level 2	1	3	4			
APS Level 1	1	2	3			
Sub total	5	13		7	2	
<b>Total</b>				<b>18</b>		<b>9</b>

**c. Representation of EEO groups within salary level at 30 June 1999**

Salary	Women	TSI&A	NESB	PWD
\$90,150 (Senior Executive Services)				
\$64,981 to \$76,135 (Executive Level 2)				
\$56,341 to \$60,838 (Executive Level 1)		1	2	
\$43,949 to \$50,485 (APS Level 6)	1	2	2	
\$40,691 to \$43,148 (APS Level 5)	3	2	2	
\$36,482 to \$39,612 (APS Level 4)	5	5	5	
\$32,733 to \$35,329 (APS Level 3)	1	1	1	
\$28,739 to \$31,869 (APS Level 2)	3	4	4	
Below \$28,065 (APS Level 1)	2	3	3	
<b>Total</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	

TSA&I Torres Strait Islander and Aboriginal  
NESB Non-English-Speaking Background  
PWD People With a Disability

**d. Senior Executive Service gains and losses for 1988–99**

No gains or losses for 1998–99.

**e. Quantum and distribution of performance pay for 1998–99**

No specific performance pay was remunerated to the SES Officer in the TSRA for 1998–99.

**f. Staff training summary**

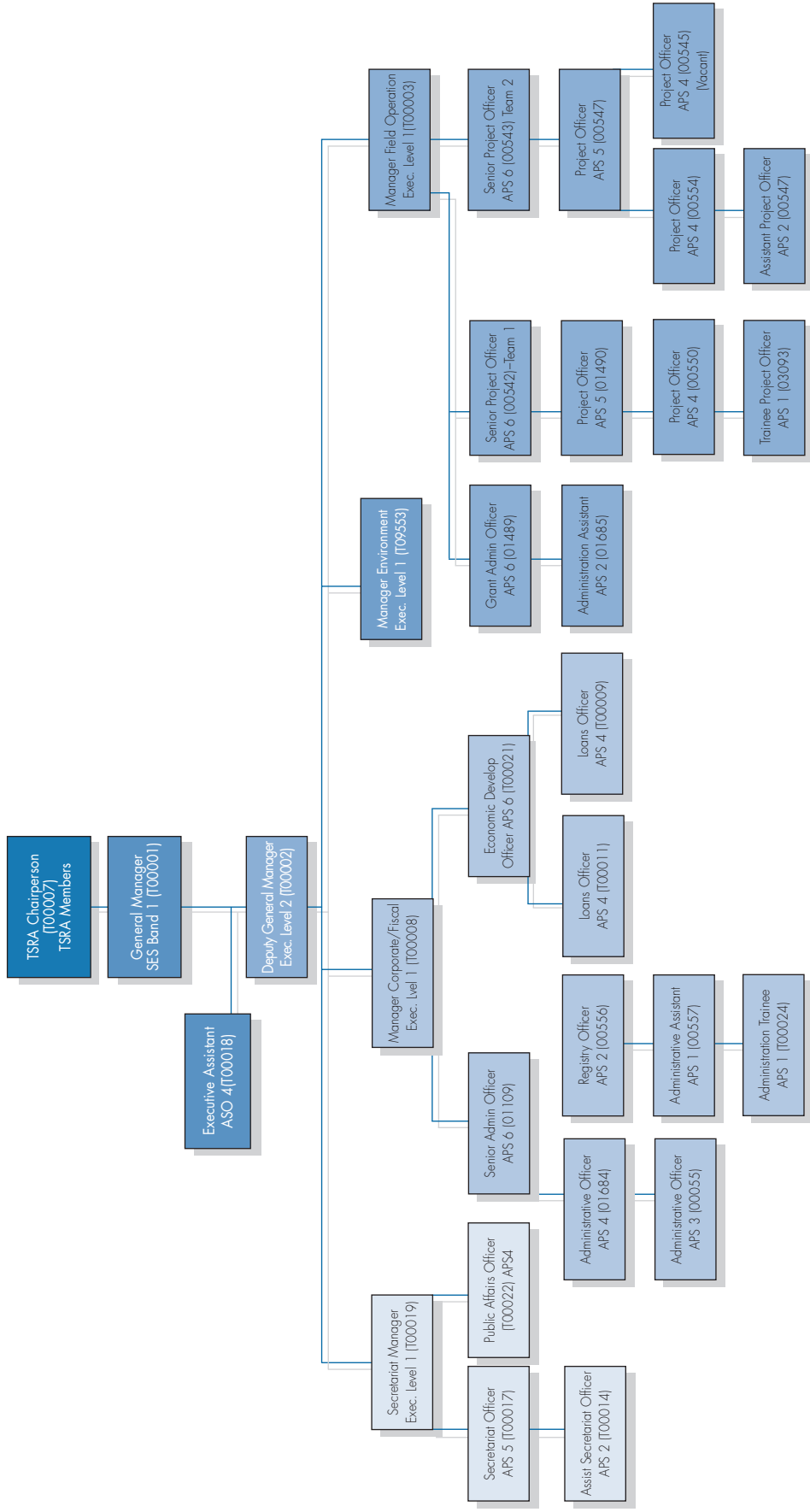
The net expenditure of staff training during 1998–99 was \$31,685. Records do not delineate staff members who attended multiple training sessions.

### g. Consultants summary

The TSRA used the services of 1 consultant during 1998–99, as detailed below:

Consultant	Details of consultancy	Amount (\$)
Sue Hodgson	Yam Island Council Major Operation Review	3,050
	Saibai Island Council Major Operation Review	3,050
	Mura Kosker Sorority Major Operation Review	1,700
	Murray Island Council	3,600
	Torres Strait Youth and Recreational Sporting Association Major Operation Review	1,700
JPS Consultancy	Darnley Island Council Major Operation Review	3,728
	BFS Feasibility Studies	5,054
Kevin Wone	Warraber Island Council Major Operation Review	3,640
Brad Jackson	Bamaga Island Council Major Operation Review	3,500
	Youth Activities Service Major Operation Review	1,220
	Tamwoy Development Association Major Operation Review	1,220
	St Pauls Is Council CDEP Training Seminar	6,340
Lane Accounting	Assessment of Motel/Guest House	9,000
	BFS Feasibility Study	976
Hall Chadwick	Kubin Island Council Motel/Guest House	2,596
	Valuation to Purchase TSIMA	3,596
	Dauan Island Council Guest House	2,596
Spencer Morgan and Associates	Various BFS Feasibility Studies	19,553
Felan Consulting and Events Services	BFS Feasibility Study	1,902
	Coconut Island Council Tourism	3,173
Linda Meus	BFS Mentor (retail)	4,911
	Hammond Island Mini Mart Retail Mentor	8,195
Price Waterhouse	BFS Feasibility Study	1,500
Geoff Doyle Consulting Services	Dauan Island Council Motel/Guesthouse	1,000
<b>Total</b>		<b>96,800</b>

# ORGANISATIONAL CHART AS AT 30 JUNE 1999



## **Glossary**

AAT	Administrative Appeals Tribunal
AEDP	Aboriginal Employment Development Policy
Ailan Kastom	Island Custom
AM	Member of the Order of Australia
ANAO	Australian National Audit Office
ATSIC Act	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission Act 1989
ATSIC	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission
BFS	Business Funding Scheme
BRACS	Broadcasting for Remote Aboriginal Communities Scheme
CDC	Commercial Development Corporation
CDEP	Community Development Employment Projects
CEIS	Community Economic Initiatives Scheme
CPSU	Commonwealth Public Service Union
CSS	Commonwealth Sector Superannuation
CTP	Community Training Program
DAS	Department of Administrative Services
DEETYA	Department of Employment, Education, Training and Youth Affairs
DEST	Department of Environment, Sport and Territories
DOF	Department of Finance
EAP	ATSIC Employee Assistance Program
EEO	Equal Employment Opportunity
FAIP	Financial Administrative Improvement Program
FOI	Freedom of Information
Hon.	Honourable
IBIS	Islanders Board of Industry and Service
ICC	Island Coordinating Council
IT	information technology
JAC	Joint Advisory Council (in relation to the Torres Strait Treaty)
Jnr	Junior

MIP	Major Infrastructure Program
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
Mura Kosker	Mura Kosker Sorority Incorporated
NAHS	National Aboriginal Health Strategy
NESB	Non-English-Speaking Background
NPA	Northern Peninsula Area
NTO	Native Title Office
OAM	Medal of the Order of Australia
OEA	ATSIC's Office of Evaluation and Audit
OH&S	Occupational Health and Safety
PKA	Port Kennedy Association
PNG	Papua New Guinea
PSMPC	Public Service and Merit Protection Commission
PSS	Public Sector Superannuation
PWD	People with a Disability
SES	Senior Executive Service
TDA	Tamwoy Development Association
TRAWQ	Tamwoy, Rosehill, Aplin, Waiben and Quarantine
TSI&A	Torres Strait Islander and Aboriginal
TSIAB	Torres Strait Islander Advisory Board
TSIMA	Torres Strait Islander Media Association
TSNP	Torres Strait and Northern Peninsular Legal Service
TSRA	Torres Strait Regional Authority
TSYRSA	Torres Strait Youth and Recreation Sporting Association
YAS	Youth Activities Services

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