TORRES STRAIT REGIONAL AUTHORITY 1997~1998 ANNUAL REPORT

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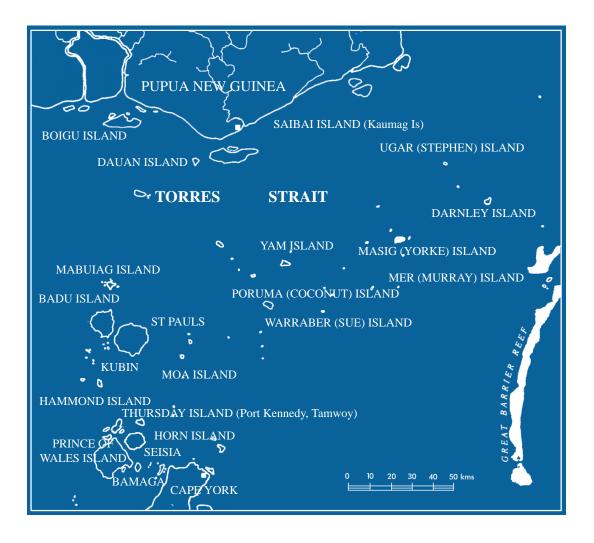
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The artwork on the front cover was designed by Torres Strait Islander artist, Alick Tipoti.



Annual Report 1997~98



TORRES STRAIT REGIONAL AUTHORITY

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TORRES STRAIT REGIONAL AUTHORITY

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

Dear Minister

In accordance with section 144ZB of the *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission Act 1989*, I am delighted to present you with the fourth Annual Report of the Torres Strait Regional Authority (TSRA). This Annual Report covers the period from 1 July 1997 to 30 June 1998.

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

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John Abednego Chairperson

10 September 1998

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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 1997~98 Annual Report

The Torres Strait Regional Authority's Annual Report 1997~98 is the Chairperson's report to the Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs on the performance and achievements of the TSRA during 1997~98. It is a key accountability document to the Parliament of Australia.

Report structure

The Chairperson's report provides 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.

Chapter Three provides details of the TSRA Members, Advisory Committees, Portfolio Positions and the TSRA meetings held during 1997~98. Chapter Four provides some detail about the Torres Strait Region and the people who live there. It also describes the environment in which the TSRA operates; talks about how and when the TSRA was created and, in a broad sense, what it does and the framework in which it distributes grants and loans.

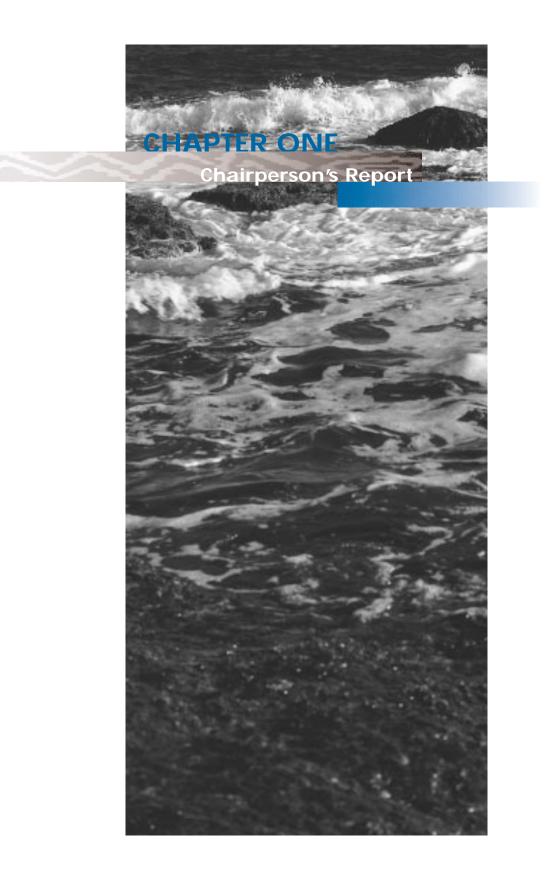
Three program-based sections (Economic, Social and Cultural and Corporate Services) in Chapter Five provide more detailed information on strategies and activities the TSRA has undertaken during the year to meet its program objectives and its commitment to effective human resource management.

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

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

Additional information

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



CHAPTER ONE Chairperson's Report





CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

Introduction

During 1997~98, the Torres Strait Regional Authority progressed towards its goals of achieving greater autonomy and an improved lifestyle for Torres Strait Islanders and Aboriginal people living in the Torres Strait region. A number of important events occurred in the Torres Strait which have strengthened our drive for greater autonomy, improved our standard of living and given us hope for greater economic development and self sufficiency. This

Annual Report, the fourth since the TSRA was established in 1994, highlights what we have achieved in $1997 \sim 98$ and the challenges we are yet to confront.

Torres Strait Islanders: a new deal

In August 1997 the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs handed down a report entitled, *Torres Strait Islanders: a new deal—A Report on Greater Autonomy for Torres Strait Islanders.* It enquired how Torres Strait Islanders would achieve greater autonomy in the Torres Strait region. The report to the Australian Parliament was both exciting and challenging for Torres Strait Islanders. It recommended a number of radical changes to the administration of the Torres Strait that would see far greater decision-making power put into the hands of Torres Strait Islanders. It also recommended streamlining the administrative structures in the Torres Strait, including the TSRA and the Island Coordinating Council, into one all-encompassing entity called the Torres Strait Regional Assembly. This Assembly would deal directly with both the Australian and Queensland State Governments on an equal basis and could, in time, form a self governing Territory of Australia.

The TSRA is looking forward to working with other administrative organisations in the region to progress the report to the fullest. We believe extensive consultation with all Torres Strait Islander communities in the region as well as non-Indigenous people is essential. I am pleased to say that both the Australian Government and the Queensland State Government are supportive of the recommendations contained in the report. This demonstrates the level of maturity that exists between Torres Strait Islanders and Government.

Separate Act of Parliament

The Australian Government has also given the TSRA a commitment that it will have its own separate Act of Parliament, which will clearly distinguish Torres Strait Islanders as a separate Indigenous race from Australian Aboriginal people. We are proud of who we are and we are proud that the Australian Government has seen that we are separate. It is hoped that the Authority's separate Act of the Australian Parliament will be passed in late 1998.

Extension to Moratorium on Mining and Drilling of Torres Strait Seabed

The TSRA emphasises the critical importance of the environment and sea to Torres Strait Islanders' culture and way of life. A moratorium on mining and drilling of the Torres Strait seabed, between the Governments of Australia and Papua New Guinea, was due to expire on 14 February 1998. Consequently, it was absolutely crucial for Torres Strait Islanders to secure a further extension of this moratorium if our way of life was not to be threatened. We, like many other Indigenous peoples of the world, have nowhere to go if our environment is spoiled by pollution. If our environment is damaged, our culture is damaged.

The TSRA consistently lobbied both the Australian and Papua New Guinea Governments for an agreement to prevent mining in Torres Strait waters and I am pleased to say that the Australian Government fully supported Torres Strait Islanders in extending the moratorium. High level negotiation took place in Papua New Guinea in December 1997 and an agreement was reached between both Governments that a further five-year moratorium be put in place. The TSRA considers this a major achievement as it ensures the protection of our natural resources from any possible environmental damage. The Government of Australia is to be congratulated in supporting the Torres Strait Islanders in this important achievement. I would also like to thank the Government of Papua New Guinea for its good faith over these negotiations.

Major Infrastructure Development Proposal

The TSRA has been proactively holding discussions with the Commonwealth and Queensland Governments regarding a proposal for major infrastructure development in the Torres Strait. We had hoped to secure extra funds for much needed upgrading of basic health related infrastructure such as water, sewerage and housing. I am pleased to report to the Working Group that an agreement has been reached with both Governments on a three-year infrastructure upgrade, valued at approximately \$60 million. The program is to be phased in over a three-year period with joint funding of \$10 million in the first year and the bulk of the remaining money coming in years two and three. This will ensure the islands of the Torres Strait have adequate water and sewerage facilities, as well as increased housing, which will dramatically lift the health status of Torres Strait Islanders. Last year the community of Murray Island, with a population of over 400 people, had to exist on a water ration of 10 litres/day/person for a number of weeks. This is not acceptable in Australia and the infrastructure development program will prevent this situation recurring.

Economic Development

Political autonomy must go hand-in-hand with economic autonomy which means economic development and self-sufficiency for Torres Strait Islanders. Establishment of the TSRA as an autonomous body has allowed my Members to prioritise funds towards an enhanced economic development program. Both the Australian and Queensland Governments support this economic drive by Torres Strait Islanders.

Before TSRA was established there were very few economic development opportunities for Torres Strait Islanders. We now have a portfolio of 60 loans and eight community enterprises, valued at more than \$2 million. Autonomy for the TSRA has allowed us to set our own priorities. This has occurred in only four years! The TSRA has been at the forefront of economic development and fully supports the Australian Government's drive towards economic empowerment for Indigenous Australians. The Authority is proud of its people's desires to take up the challenge of economic development. We have our vision, we have developed concrete plans for advancement and we have established constructive dialogues with our Governments.

Conclusion

I am pleased to report that our approach has paid substantial dividends in the year just passed. We are a determined and strong people who know our rights and our needs. We are tough but fair negotiators. I am pleased to say that the Australian Government has seen us for that. We are looking forward to the next year in the lead up to the Year 2001, which is the centenary of Australia's Federation. We seek to enter the new century working closely with the Australian and Queensland Governments. We wish to achieve greater autonomy and know this is largely in our own hands as we grapple with the Australian Parliament's Autonomy Report. We will continue to strive to bring our people's standard of living up to Australian standards and to ensure our youth can prosper through further economic development opportunities. We will also continue to ensure the environment of the Torres Strait is kept safe for future generations.

Lastly, we will work with Australian Governments—of all persuasions—for the betterment of Torres Strait Islanders and the region: to ensure we have a country that can stand proud and tall within the international community.

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John Abednego Chairperson









GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT

This, the TSRA's fourth year of operation, has been one of significant achievement and change. The TSRA continues to prove that a regionally focused and lead organisation can provide major positive gains for Torres Strait Islander and Aboriginal people. The success of the TSRA has also been highlighted in the Section 26 Review of the ATSIC Act, in which a number of ATSIC Regional Councils focused on the TSRA's successful operations as a possible direction for them to achieve greater self-management.

The Prime Minister's visit in July 1997 was a highlight, among many, for the year. The TSRA had great pleasure in coordinating his visit to Thursday Island, which proved extremely successful. Among other highlights was the successful negotiation to continue the moratorium on mining and drilling, under the Torres Strait Treaty; the joint Commonwealth/State infrastructure package; and the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs Report, *Torres Strait Islanders: a new deal*, which was handed down in August 1997.

Relationship with the Minister

The TSRA Administration continued to have 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: his visits to St. Pauls and Badu communities were significant, as he was able to see the social and economic progress of these communities.

The TSRA administration is proud of the way it works with the Minister's office in arranging visits to the Torres Strait, as well as providing him with timely advice in the utmost professional manner.

Administration

This year the TSRA Administration worked with a newly elected Board and Chairperson, Deputy Chairperson and ATSIC Commissioner. I am proud to say the TSRA Administration has built an extremely good working relationship with the new Chairperson and Board Members, which has continued the previous relationship with the former Chairperson and Members. The TSRA Members and the Administration work in full cooperation to ensure the aims and aspirations of Torres Strait Islander people are promoted to the Commonwealth and Queensland Governments, as well as the international community.

As was the case last year, the TSRA's main focus was developing the areas of health, housing and infrastructure. In this endeavour the TSRA entered negotiations with both the Commonwealth and Queensland Governments for a significant increase in expenditure on major infrastructure priorities to upgrade the living conditions of Torres Strait Islander and Aboriginal people. This was successful and culminated in a three-year agreement that will provide approximately \$60 million to upgrade water, sewerage and housing throughout the Torres Strait. This achievement demonstrated that the TSRA has the ability to work in full cooperation with the Commonwealth and Queensland Governments, both at the Departmental and Ministerial level. I would like to thank the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet and the Queensland State Departments of Premier and Cabinet, Housing (particularly the Office of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Housing), Natural Resources and Local Government and Planning for their cooperation in ensuring major infrastructure developments occurred throughout the year.

Staffing

This year the TSRA staffing level was maintained at 26. I am pleased to say the turnover of staff was dramatically reduced, as compared to previous years, which gave the Administration stability and maintained corporate knowledge. The staff performed magnificently throughout the year, as proven by our Internal Audit. The audit, conducted by the Office of Audit and Evaluation, was by far the most impressive audit the TSRA Administration has had during its four years of operation. It demonstrated there is always room for improvement in an organisation's operations and accountability. My thanks go to the Managers and staff of the Corporate, Field and Secretariat sections for achieving such a positive result.

The TSRA is a small agency and has little or no capacity to further reduce its staff. There is limited opportunity to outsource services in the Torres Strait as there are no other professional service providers. Such constraints have to be taken into account when assessing efficiency gains and budget reductions. If the model of the TSRA is to be applied elsewhere in Indigenous Australia the Government must ensure it is properly resourced, and that other such organisations are similarly resourced. The TSRA suffers from being the first such regional model and resourcing it to an effective level should be a priority.

The TSRA secured three trainees under the Department of Employment, Vocation, Education, Training and Industrial Relations scheme. I am proud to say one trainee was appointed to a permanent position at the ASO3 level. Torres Strait Islander and Aboriginal people comprise 64 per cent of the TSRA's staff and it is hoped that, through further traineeships and other training and educational possibilities, this percentage will increase.

The Commonwealth Department of the Environment, Sport and Territories (DEST) continued to provide funding for the position of an Environmental Officer during the year. This position is of vital importance to the TSRA as it deals with increasingly complex environmental matters. This is the only full-time position in the Torres Strait that deals with environmental matters. The environment of the Torres Strait has suffered from a lack of Commonwealth and State funding over the years. However, I am pleased to say the Federal Minister, through his Department, has greatly increased funding and resource allocation to the Torres Strait to ensure pressing environmental concerns are addressed. I would like to thank the DEST staff for their cooperation in this vitally important area.

New Financial Arrangements

An amendment to the ATSIC Act, passed in June 1997, enabled the TSRA to deal directly with the Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs and the Department of Finance for its global budget in 1998~99. Consequently, during this year the TSRA has had extensive negotiations with the Minister over its 1998~99 budget.

A major part of these negotiations centred around a joint Commonwealth/State major infrastructure funding package, aimed at securing extra funds for much needed upgrades of basic health related infrastructure. An agreement was reached with both the Commonwealth Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet and the Queensland State Department of Premier and Cabinet on a three-year infrastructure upgrade valued at approximately \$60 million. The program is to be phased in over a three-year period with joint funding of \$10 million in the first year and the bulk of the remaining funds coming in years two and three. This will ensure proper planning takes place so all aspects of the project will be managed effectively.

I am pleased to say that both the Federal and State Governments have allocated, in their budget statements of May 1998, \$5 million each for the years 1998 and 1999, with the Commonwealth also committed to matching the State's money for years two and three.

This agreement was secured primarily because of the change in the financial arrangements that allowed the TSRA to go directly to the Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs, and present a case based on sound planning and need.

It should be noted that none of the 15 outer island communities have any sewerage or drainage systems. In addition, a recent survey conducted by the Island Coordinating Council and the Queensland Office of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Housing stated \$100 million needed to be spent to address the housing shortage on the outer islands.

Business and Economic Development

The TSRA's Corporate Plan identifies the business and economic development programs essential for Torres Strait Islander and Aboriginal people to become more self-sufficient.

As a result of this commitment, the TSRA Members allocated \$1.553 million to this program for the year. The TSRA lent 40 clients \$720,000 and expended \$525,000 under the CEIS Program. The TSRA is also aware that many of its clients have little experience operating a small business and provides after-establishment assistance, such as basic bookkeeping. This assistance is an important part of the economic development function to ensure client's businesses do not fail because of a lack of understanding of business concepts and operations.

In March 1998 a Ministerial Council for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs (MCATSIA) was held in Melbourne specifically addressing economic issues for Torres Strait Islander and Aboriginal people. The Chairperson and I took great pleasure in presenting the TSRA's business and economic development programs to MCATSIA. These programs concentrate on assisting small businesses and vertical integration to provide further opportunities for Torres Strait Islanders and Aboriginal people. We highlighted the TSRA's success in providing assistance to viable businesses, particularly in the area of fishing, which may be applicable to other remote northern Indigenous communities. The session was extremely well received by MCATSIA's members.

In May 1997 the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs Inquiry into Indigenous Business visited the Torres Strait to examine the TSRA's Business and Economic Development Programs. The Inquiry visited Thursday Island, St. Pauls and Badu Island to see first-hand the TSRA's Programs. The Committee was extremely pleased with the TSRA's progress on economic development and its commitment to providing clients with a responsive service. The Chairman of the Committee, Mr Lou Leiberman said the TSRA, 'scored ten out of ten for the operation of its programs'. Consequently, I would like to thank all the staff in the Business and Economic Development Section for their efforts in providing a service of excellence.

Joint Advisory Council

The Joint Advisory Council (JAC) discusses various issues that effect the daily lives of traditional inhabitants under the Torres Strait Treaty. The Treaty allows for free movement of traditional inhabitants from the Torres Strait Protected Zone and the Western Province of Papua New Guinea without the use of passports. Free movement allows the full spectrum of traditional activities to take place. The Treaty also provides a framework for Fisheries and Resource Management of the Torres Strait.

The JAC meeting was held in Port Moresby on 11–12 December 1997. The meeting discussed, amongst other things, the moratorium on mining and drilling of the seabed in the protected zone and Section 16 Notices. These two issues are of vital importance to Torres Strait Islander and Aboriginal people in the region.

The issue of Section 16 Notices, which prohibits 13 Papua New Guinean nationals who rioted in December 1995 at Saibai Island from entering Australia, was resolved. The Papua New Guinean delegation agreed that the Section 16 Notices would stay in force as they represent the only true deterrent for people who commit cross-border offences of a significant nature.

The moratorium on mining and drilling of the seabed is an agreement between the Australian and Papua New Guinean Governments which was due to expire in February 1998. The Australian delegation, lead by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, entered the JAC Meeting with the position that the moratorium should be extended for a further ten years. However, agreement was reached between both delegations that a further five-year moratorium would be put in place. The TSRA views this as a significant achievement as it ensures the natural resources in the Torres Strait are protected from any possible environmental damage caused by mining and drilling on the seabed.

I would like to thank the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade for its role in conducting these successful negotiations.

Memorandum of Understanding

The TSRA and ATSIC have entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) that provides the TSRA with information technology, human resources and financial management systems. Through the MoU, the TSRA is following Commonwealth Guidelines in that small agencies should, wherever possible, obtain their information technology systems from larger agencies.

I would like to thank the staff of ATSIC, particularly senior management, who through the MoU (and beyond its scope), helped the TSRA carry out its roles and responsibilities throughout the year.

I would particularly like to thank Ms Pat Turner, CEO of ATSIC, for her assistance throughout the year in providing services through the MoU. Ms Turner, who finished her term as CEO of ATSIC in June 1998, always worked in a cooperative manner with the TSRA. I wish her the best of luck in her future endeavours.

Native Title

In September 1997 the TSRA Board made a significant decision to implement a proactive plan for operating the Native Title Representative Body and Office. The plan centred on a regional agreement stemming from the Saibai Island test case. It involved all Torres Strait Islanders who are Native Title holders, whether living in the Torres Strait or on the mainland, in pursuing their Native Title aspirations through the TSRA's Native Title Office.

As a result of this decision the Native Title Office engaged a lawyer in January 1998 and advertised for an anthropologist in April 1998.

The TSRA's Native Title Office is significantly under-funded in comparison to other Native Title Offices throughout Australia. Consequently, the TSRA made a submission to the Government for an increase in funds to ensure its resources are in parity with all other Native Title Offices. The funding was not approved this year, but the TSRA is hopeful that further negotiations with the Minister will prove successful next year.

An increase in funding is essential to ensure the broad range of Native Title activities can take place in the Torres Strait.

Second Stage Water Upgrade

This project is a joint \$16 million funding arrangement with the Queensland State Department of Local Government and Planning to construct new water supplies for eight outer island communities. It is an essential project as the Torres Strait suffered from a severe water shortage during the year in which a number of communities had to be barged water from reservoirs based on Horn Island. The Murray Island community, with a population of over 400 people, was for several weeks reduced to a water supply of 10 litres/day/person.

Contracts for the project management were signed in January 1998. Planning is now proceeding: Gutheridge, Haskins & Davies handed down a preliminary report in May 1998. Major works are scheduled to start on the outer island in May 1999. In the meantime, complimentary minor works are being carried out to ensure water shortages do not occur during the upcoming dry season.

Conclusion

I firmly believe the TSRA Administration made significant administrative and organisational gains this year in its ability to serve Torres Strait Islander and Aboriginal people.

I look forward to the coming year. I know the joint Commonwealth/State Major Infrastructure Upgrade Program will provide a better standard of living for Torres Strait Islanders on the outer islands. I also know the Business and Economic Development Program will allow people in the region to benefit from greater economic self-sufficiency.

I thank the Chairperson, Mr John Abednego, for his help in enabling 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 has greatly helped me provide the TSRA Members with the best possible service.

Lastly, I am sure that Members and the staff of the TSRA will work in close cooperation next year for the betterment of the Torres Strait and its people.

David Galvin General Manager

CHAPTER THREE





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 Miseron Levi Mr Getano Lui (Jnr) AM Mr Joseph Mosby OAM Mr Gibson Pearson Mr Henley 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 appointment 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). (See Chairperson's Report).



Mr Henry Garnier, Deputy Chairperson



Mr Garnier is Deputy Chairperson of the TSRA, Chairperson of Hammond Island Council, TSRA Portfolio Member for Environment, Marine and Fisheries, 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 Alternate Deputy Chairperson of the TSRA, Chairperson of Dauan Island Council, TSRA Portfolio Member for Women's Issues, and a Board member of Mura Kosker Sorority, IBIS and the ICC. She is also the Manager of the Dauan Island Health Centre. Issues of concern to Mrs Mau are providing access to basic services for the people of the outer island communities; regular maintenance to current housing units to liveable 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 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 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC) Board and is Chairperson of the Torres Strait Islander Advisory Board (TSIAB). He is also the 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 that traditional values of the Torres Strait are not eroded. He is highly respected for his efforts in this area, and also for his role in negotiating arrangements under the Torres Strait Treaty by participating 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, the 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 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 that the TSRA can make the Torres Strait a better place to live in by planning to meet the needs of the people, and setting goals for beyond the year 2000.

Mr Edward Dau, Member for Boigu Island

Mr Dau is Chairperson of Boigu Island Council, a member of the ICC and a member of the IBIS Board. He believes housing, health, education and economic development are the most pressing issues in the Torres Strait region. During his term as TSRA Member, Mr Dau will work towards ensuring any 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 Arts, Language, Culture and Sport, Chairperson of Mer Island Council and a member of the ICC. He would like to see the development of a sustainable economy in the Torres Strait and improved standards of education. During his term, Mr Day will ensure that 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 Chairperson of the Commercial Development Corporation (CDC), Chairperson of Seisia Island Council, and a member of the ICC. Prior to the elections in April 1997, Mr Elu was the Torres Strait Zone Commissioner, Chairperson

of TSIAB, and Chairperson of the ATSIC Tourism Committee. He was also on the Legislative Review Committee and Aboriginal Employment Development Policy (AEDP) Task Force. Mr Elu is encouraging increased 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 is working towards a degree of financial independence.



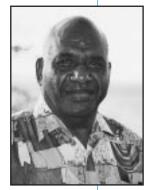


Fr Salatelu Joe, Member for Kubin Community, Moa Island

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 socio-economic environment.

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

Mr Levi is 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 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 Chairperson of the ICC, the IBIS Board

Mr Lui is 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 life-long service to the people of the Torres Strait region.

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

Mr Mosby is 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 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 the development of industries throughout the Torres Strait region.

Mr Henley Stephen, Member for Ugar (Stephen) Island

Mr Stephen is Chairperson of Stephen Island Council and is a member of the ICC. Mr Stephen feels strongly about the need to establish airstrips on Stephen, Dauan Islands and St Pauls Community to help alleviate the difficulties currently faced with emergency situations and daily travel. He also believes all islands should have the availability of healthy food and basic accessories in the island stores. Mr Stephen is supportive of Torres Strait Islanders gaining ownership and management of the fishing industry within the region.





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 the Chairperson of the Nurapai Health Action Group, a member of the Torres Strait and NPA Health Council, and a Kaurareg Elder.



Mr Terrence Whap, Member for Mabuiag Island

Mr Whap is 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 Chairperson of Bamaga Island Council having served on Council for three years. He is also Chairperson of the Joint Transport Infrastructure Committee and a member of the ICC. As Chairperson he has been responsible for improving health, housing, enterprise development and employment/training in Bamaga. He has been instrumental in provision of mains sewerage, water supply, sealing of roads, new housing and sporting/recreation infrastructure such as a community centre, swimming pool and gymnasium.



Advisory Committees

The TSRA has recently established two advisory committees; the Native Title Steering Committee and the Customs Enforcement and Surveillance Committee. TSRA Members were involved in five Advisory Committee meetings during this reporting period.

Portfolio Positions

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

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

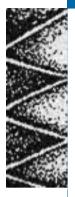
TSRA Meetings

The TSRA held five meetings between 1 July 1997 and 30 June 1998.

Meetings	Date	Days
No. 15	8–10 September 1997	3
No. 16	24 October 1997	1
No. 17	15-16 December 1997	2
No. 18	2–4 March 1998	3
No. 19	1–5 June 1998	5

CHAPTER FOUR





About the TSRA

Torres Strait Region

The Torres Strait region lies off the far north-eastern tip of Australia and is a 150 kilometre wide passage between Cape York Peninsula and the south-west coast of Papua New Guinea. The Torres Strait region consists of islands, reefs, and coral and sand cays, reaching to within five kilometres of the Papua New Guinea coastline.

The Torres Strait region is culturally unique with a beautiful natural environment. It is predominantly inhabited by Torres Strait Islander people who possess strong seafaring and trading traditions, and are bound to the sea by 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 began in 1877. The administration was relocated from Somerset to Thursday Island.

There are 15 outer island communities, each with populations ranging from 83 to 589. There are also two mainland communities. The total population of the Torres Strait region 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.

The ownership of land by Torres Strait Islander people, according to their customs, was recognised in the landmark High Court decision on Native Title in 1992. This decision, which originated on Murray Island, has had implications for Torres Strait Islander and Aboriginal people throughout Australia by recognising Native Title in common law and restoring to the people of Murray Island their traditional rights to land.

Operating Environment

The TSRA has implemented specific programs aimed at reducing, or where possible eliminating, the disadvantages suffered by people living in the Torres Strait region. Due to the poor socio-economic and health status of Torres Strait Islander and Aboriginal people, the improvements can only be gradual. The report by the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody has made it apparent that fundamental changes in society's attitudes and recognition of the rights of Australia's Indigenous citizens are required before significant improvements can be achieved. These factors should be considered when assessing the TSRA's programs.

The following report of the TSRA's operating environment has two sources:

- Statistics, largely derived from 1996 Census information which provides details of the Torres Strait Islander and Aboriginal population in the Torres Strait region and underlines the extent of the need in several program areas; and
- Commonwealth Government strategies/policies/responses which have shaped many of the TSRA's program activities.

The 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. This small increase may indicate a continuing migration of people out of the area but more research is required; 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; and
- participation rates for Torres Strait Islander and Aboriginal people were lower than for the total population (55 per cent compared to 68 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

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 major causes of death for Torres Strait Islander and Aboriginal people were circulatory disease, diabetes, peri-natal conditions, respiratory diseases and cancers.

Health statistics revealed that one in four adult Torres Strait Islanders suffered from Diabetes Mellitus and four out of every 10 deaths resulted from heart and circulatory disease. Sexually transmitted disease incidence was up to 70 times the

Queensland rate and the peri-natal mortality rate was more than twice the Queensland rate.

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 quality and quantity of water and the sewerage and waste disposal systems. Data gathered from community consultation and available statistics and studies indicated that several factors had a major impact on the health status of the Torres Strait region. These factors were: 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. Due to the environmental infrastructure of the region, the strategies which must be implemented in the region differ from those relevant to areas on mainland Australia. *

* This material is largely derived from the Australian Bureau of Statistics 1996 Census and The Torres Strait Health Strategy (1993).

Formation of the TSRA

The Torres Strait Regional Authority 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 had been one of 35 ATSIC regions throughout Australia. The review proposed 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 consequent 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.

A Chairperson, Deputy Chairperson and Alternate Deputy Chairperson are all elected by Members of the TSRA. A Commissioner, also elected by 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 of the TSRA

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;
- 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:
 - matters relating to Torres Strait Islander affairs and Aboriginal affairs in the Torres Strait area, including the administration of legislation;
 - the coordination of 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;
- h. take reasonable action considered 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 expressly 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 an internal Territory in respect of which there is in force written approval by the Minister under section 142B;
- 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 of the TSRA

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; and
 - b) to act as trustee of money and other property vested in it on trust.
- (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

- (1) 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:
- (2) The TSRA must perform its functions and exercise its powers in accordance with any general written directions from the Minister.
- (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.

CHAPTER FOUR About the TSRA

- (4) Subject to the 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 representative of the TSRA as a Commissioner of ATSIC as well as allowing ATSIC to provide staff, resources and other services to assist the TSRA to carry 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 for the 1994 ~ 95 financial year. The MoU was extended for 1997 ~ 98. These services include provision of Human Resources Management Services such as payment of salaries and allowances; staff training and development; and financial services, including use of ATSIC's financial systems.

The TSRA appreciates the cooperation and assistance throughout the year of ATSIC CEO Ms Pat Turner, who finished her term in June 1998.

Program Structure

In 1997 ~ 98, the TSRA received funds from the Department of Finance (DOF), following consultations between the Chairman of the TSRA, the Chairman of ATSIC 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 as follows:

- 1. ECONOMIC (funded under budget component Other Program, item 2b above, and budget component CDEP, item 1 above).
- 2. SOCIAL AND CULTURAL (funded under budget component Native Title, item 3 above and Other Program, item b above).
- 3. CORPORATE SERVICES (funded under budget component Running Costs, item 2a above)

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

ECONOMIC

LOANS Sub-program: 1. Commercial Component 1.1 **Business Funding Scheme (BFS)** Home Ownership Component 1.2 GRANTS Sub-program: 2. Economic Development Component 2.1 Community Development Employment Projects (CDEP) Component 2.2 Community Training Program (CTP) Finance/Administration/Business – Trades – Land management – Study grants Component 2.3 Community Economic Initiatives Scheme (CEIS)

SOCIAL AND CULTURAL

Sub-program: 1. Cultural Component 1.1 Native Title Component 1.2 Heritage, Culture and Environment Language maintenance – Sacred Sites – Art and Culture – Environment

Sub-program: 2. Social

Component 2.1	Broadcasting
Component 2.2	Social programs
	Women's Issues – Disabled and Aged Care – Sport and Recreation – Youth Support

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Component 2.3	Social Justice
	Legal Services – Advocacy Services – Human Rights
Component 2.4 Component 2.5	Community Housing and Infrastructure 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 (Chapter Five) has been designed to demonstrate program performance and 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 respect to the Economic and Social and Cultural Programs (Grants and Loans), the report provides information for each sub-program/component under the headings of:

- 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 by using wherever possible Project and Program Performance Indicators that are practical, achievable, meaningful and measurable.

Corporate Documents

From 1 July 1997 to 30 June 1998, the TSRA produced the following Corporate Documents:

Service Charter

Guide for CDEP organisations

Program Delegations Grant Procedures Guide to Grant Procedures (to be completed in 1998~99) Terms and Conditions of Grant Program Statements and Policies Operational Plan Torres Strait Development Plan

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 1996~97 Annual Report, and seven community newsletters. The newsletter, known as *TSRA Community News*, is distributed throughout the Torres Strait region and the Australian mainland via insertion in the *Torres News*. The aim of *TSRA Community News* is to keep people living in the Torres Strait and on the mainland informed of what is happening in the TSRA. It consists of TSRA media releases and articles specifically relating to the activities of the TSRA's elected and administrative arms. It commenced in June 1996.

Torres Strait Development Plan

Under section 142D of the ATSIC Act, the TSRA must formulate, and revise from time to time, a plan known as the Torres Strait Development Plan (the "Plan"). Section 142D states:

- (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.

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- (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 is expected to be gazetted early in the new financial year.

Ministerial Appointments

The Minister appointed TSRA Fiscal Management Officer, Mr Iain Loganathan, to act as General Manager for the periods 27 July to 31 July and 3 August to 21 August 1998.

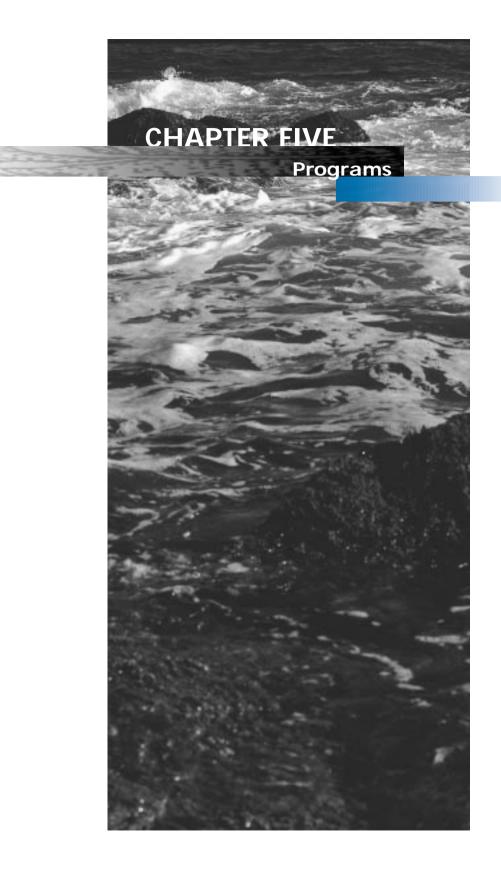
Review of Electoral System

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 to the effect 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;
- 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; and
- the ATSIC Act be amended to provide for Review Panels established under S141 of the ATSIC Act, to review the boundary of the Torres Strait area, and to make recommendations in that regard.





Programs

With the compilation of the TSRA's own Program Statements (see Corporate Documents Section), the format of this Program Report has been amended to reflect the new Program Structure, which differs from that used in the $1996 \sim 97$ Annual Report. This change has necessitated redistribution of the $1996 \sim 97$ figures for the purposes of comparison. The totals remain the same.

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 developing 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

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 establishment and/or ongoing management of their business. This program is commercial and the funding criteria are consistent with that 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. The TSRA no longer refers all applications to a business agent and instead uses a register of business consultants which provides a more timely service to clients.

1997~98 BFS loan distribution

Industry sector	No. of loans approved	\$ value
Commercial fishing Light industrial Retail Seafood processing	34 1 2 2	365,454 50,000 116,892 129,961
Tourism	1 40	60,000 721,307

<u>Outputs</u>

The TSRA Corporate Plan highlights economic development as the key to establishing a viable economic base in the Torres Strait. During 1997~98, the TSRA made 40 loans, totalling \$721,307.

<u>Outcomes</u>

During its first three years of operation, the TSRA has moved away from the BFS model used by ATSIC. These changes have been made in an attempt to provide a more timely service, especially to clients based on the outer islands. During the 1997 ~98 financial year TSRA officers visited all the Community Councils to discuss individual business funding proposals.

The BFS has enabled a number of businesses to establish within the Torres Strait 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 assisted many individuals and partnerships to establish successful business ventures in a range of industries. The industries include retail, commercial fishing, tourism, seafood processing and light industrial. This in turn creates employment for the Indigenous people of the Torres Strait and Northern Peninsula area.

When the TSRA was established on 1 July 1994, there were three BFS clients. The number of new BFS clients has steadily increased from 30 in $1996 \sim 97$ to 70 in $1997 \sim 98$. It is anticipated that the growth will continue during $1998 \sim 99$.

Feedback from clients indicates that provision of a business mentor and monitoring accountants provides important assistance for new enterprises.

Component support

During 1997~98, \$93,900 was expended on insurances, valuations, monitoring consultancies, feasibility studies, legal and other fees. Of this amount, \$13,600 was borrowers recoverables (insurances and certain valuations).

Financial and staffing resources summary

Budgetary Basis	Actual 1996~97	Budget 1997~98	Actual 1997~98
Component Expenditure	679	720	680
Component Support Expenditure	131		94
TSRA Staff Years			2

Component: Home Ownership

Objectives

To provide home ownership for the Torres Strait Islander and Aboriginal residents of the Torres Strait region through home loans, thereby improving their economic status and social well-being.

Description

The Housing Loan Scheme provides loans for homes or land at concessionary interest rates to Torres Strait Islander and Aboriginal people of the Torres Strait region who normally would 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.

<u>Outputs</u>

Two loans were made from the Housing Fund in $1997 \sim 98$. One, for \$171,000, was used to purchase an existing house and land and the other, for \$133,000, was used to construct a house. Another loan for \$195,000 was approved to be funded in $1998 \sim 99$.

<u>Outcomes</u>

As at 30 June 1998 the TSRA had a housing loan portfolio of 23 active loans, which has a current loan balance of \$1,874,039.64. Arrears, as at 30 June 1998, totalled \$30,852.59, which calculates to 1.65 per cent of the current loan balance. It is not TSRA policy to make use of writeback strategies with clients who are

in arrears. One TSRA home loan was paid out during the year and two loans were transferred to TSRA from ATSIC in February 1998. All 23 properties were insured as at 30 June 1998.

Component support

Amounts totalling \$3,040 were disbursed in 1997~98, representing house insurance payments, all being borrowers' recoverables.

FINANCIAL AND STAFFING RESOURCES SUMMARY

HOUSING LOANS SCHEME \$('000)				
Budgetary Basis	Actual 1996~97	Budget 1997~98	Actual 1997~98	
Component Expenditure	184	0	195	
Component Support Expenditure	9		3	
TSRA Staff Years			0.25	

Sub-program: Economic Development

Component: Community Development Employment Projects 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

Community Development Employment Projects (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 Department of Employment, Education, Training and Youth Affairs (DEETYA).

<u>Outputs</u>

The TSRA distributed \$20,269,792 of Program funds for CDEP to projects in the Torres Strait region, achieving full expenditure. It is the TSRA's single largest program. As at 30 June 1998, there was a total of 1,655 participants in 17 communities/CDEP schemes, representing an increase of 63 participants over the last year. Expenditure for 1997~98 was \$20,269,792, comprising wages (\$15,222,684) and recurrent/capital (\$5,000,244).

Outcomes

CDEP communities within the Torres Strait region are involved in a number of work projects which CDEP members see as benefiting their particular community. During 1997 ~ 98, 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; art and crafts; and broadcasting.

Continuing a trend started in 1996~97, CDEP organisations continued to win housing and major infrastructure contracts. In addition, a strongly stated TSRA policy resulted in major construction companies employing increasing numbers of CDEP participants, thus providing the workers with extended working hours, increased income and valuable training.

In the third and fourth quarters of 1997~98 six community development employment projects were reviewed at Boigu, Coconut, St Pauls, Kubin and Mabuiag communities. Follow ups to these reviews will be implemented in 1998~99.

Three-year Community Development Plans were also compiled for all 17 Island communities and seven major TSRA-funded organisations, thus providing a solid base for planning the CDEP Works schedules as well as the general physical, social, economic and cultural development, in conjunction with the State Government, of the Torres Strait region.

Component support

The following expenditure occurred during 1997~98, in support of the CDEP component:

_	Purpose	Amount (\$)
	Training in CDEP procedures (Boigu Island Council)	870
	Investigative Audit into allegations of fraud (Boigu Island Coun	cil) 7,659
	18 Community Development Plans	2,4110
	5 CDEP Reviews	14,225
	Total	46.864

Financial and staffing resources summary

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT EMPLOYMENT PROJECTS \$('000)			
Budgetary Basis	Actual 1996~97	Budget 1997~98	Actual 1997~98
Component Expenditure	17,658	20,270	20,223
Component Support Expenditure	19		47
TSRA Staff Years	9		6

Component: Community Training Program **Objectives**

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

Description

The Community Training Program (CTP) provides the opportunity for community organisations to apply for funds to upgrade skills in administration, financial management, service industries and trades, as well as training related to environmental issues, health, heritage and 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.

<u>Outputs</u>

In 1997 ~ 98, the TSRA provided \$1,295,401 to various Torres Strait Islander communities and organisations to continue the CTP program.

Outcomes

As in previous years, the 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 1997~98, a concerted effort continued to be made to link these courses with CDEP and the training and employment opportunities DEETYA offers to the

communities. Torres Strait communities utilised skilled residents to conduct training where possible, while in other instances expressions of interest were sought from trainers based elsewhere. The TSRA Board has made it clear that it considers community-based training as one of the utmost priorities 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 program is coordinated by the Island Coordinating Council (ICC). It 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 held between representatives of the TSRA, the ICC and the State Government, enabling close monitoring of the performance of the Councils.

Component support

No component support funds needed to be disbursed in 1997~98.

FINANCIAL AND STAFFING RESOURCES SUMMARY

COMMUNITY TRAINING PROGRAM \$('000)				
Budgetary Basis	Actual 1996~97	Budget 1997~98	Actual 1997~98	
Component Expenditure	722	1,295	1,295	
Component Support Expenditure	0	0		
TSRA Staff Years	1.5		1.5	

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 enables grants to be provided to Torres Strait Islander and Aboriginal organisations for establishing and/or expanding commercial incomegenerating ventures.

Outputs

During 1997~98, the TSRA approved four grants under the CEIS to Island Councils.

Island Council	Purpose	Planned (\$)	Actual (\$)	Rolled over
Badu	Crusher for rock & gravel quarry	130,000	130,000	
Saibai	Takeaway Store	45,000	45,000	
Seisia	Camping Grounds	150,000	150,000	
Mabuiag	Seafood processing plant	200,000		200,000
TOTAL		525,000	325,000	200,000

1997~98 Ceis grant allocations

Outcomes

The Badu Island Community Council's purchase of a rock crushing plant represents a significant expansion of its current quarry operations by increasing the quarry's capability to market aggregate for sale throughout Torres Strait Region.

The Seisia Island Council was granted \$150,000, which constituted a 50 per cent contribution, to construct four A-frame huts on the Council-owned campgrounds. The Council currently lease their campgrounds to a private operator. The lease agreement provides for a positive rate of return on the council investment. The skills and expertise brought in by the private sector has lifted the profile of the campgrounds resulting in a steady increase in tourist numbers. This increase has contributed to the profitability of other community-run enterprises, such as the petrol station and supermarket.

The Saibai Island Council was granted \$45,000 to establish a takeaway food outlet. A demountable kitchen has been purchased with fitted freezers, gas stove, bain-marie, deepfryer and air-conditioner. Once the business is operational the Council intends to lease or sell it to a local resident.

The Mabuiag Island Council was approved \$200,000 to establish a seafood processing plant. The Island has a geographic competitive advantage for the Torres Strait rock lobster industry with excellent reef complexes within easy reach of island divers. The processing plant will initially be leased out to a Torres Strait Islander with the skills essential for ensuring the operation's profitability. The lease provides a commercial return to the Council as well as providing training and employment opportunities for members of the local community.

All the funds from CEIS were spent in support of businesses or used to create new business enterprises. It is planned that these grants will generate additional income for communities and create employment opportunities within the Torres Strait region.

Component support

An amount of \$4,843 was disbursed to meet initial management costs relating to the Seisia supermarket.

FINANCIAL AND STAFFING RESOURCES SUMMARY

COMMUNITY ECONOMIC INITIATIVES SCHEME \$('000)				
Budgetary Basis	Actual 1996~97	Budget 1997~98	Actual 1997~98	
Component Expenditure	383	525	325	
Component Support Expenditure	3		5	
TSRA Staff Years	1.5		0.5	

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. To provide coherent and responsive programs to improve the quality of their lives and to ensure equity in their access to services and participation in the wider community.

Sub-program: Cultural

Component: Native Title

<u>Objectives</u>

To achieve maximum recognition of the Torres Strait Islander and Aboriginal peoples' special relationship to land and sea under the *Native Title Act 1993*.

Description

This component facilitates Torres Strait Islander and Aboriginal residents' aspirations to their land and seas through the Native Title Act. This is asserted through the TSRA's function as a Native Title Representative Body.

<u>Outputs</u>

The TSRA provided funding of \$368,000 under this program in 1997~98 to the Island Coordinating Council (ICC) for the ongoing operation of the Native Title Office.

<u>Outcomes</u>

In September 1997 the TSRA Board decided on a strategy for Native Title claims in the Torres Strait. The strategy is:

- 1. Agreed to adopt the recommendations put forward by the Native Title Steering Committee, as follows:
 - a. That the TSRA re-affirm Saibai Island as the test case for the Torres Strait.
 - b. The TSRA actively seek a regional agreement with all stakeholders.
 - c. That the proposed regional agreement provides for the following:
 - i. Land: All land areas within the Torres Strait (including the Seisia and Bamaga DOGIT areas) be included in the regional agreement, with the Kaurareg lands being included should the Kaurareg people agree to join the regional agreement. The land areas should be those above the low water mark.
 - ii. All seas within the defined Torres Strait area, including the seabed to a depth of one metre below the seabed surface, all submerged or submersible reefs, cays, sand bard, rocks and mudflats.
 - iii. All resources in the seas and upon the land areas save minerals.
 - iv. Exemptions will be made in favour of the appropriate stakeholders in respect of shipping lanes, lighthouse/light beacon areas, the gas pipeline and other areas critical to fulfilment of Commonwealth obligations. It is proposed that any such areas be defined at an early stage of negotiations.
 - v. Maintaining the Torres Strait Treaty including an extension of the moratorium against mining and mining exploration for a further ten years beyond 14 February 1998.

- vi. Management of the resources vested in the hands of the TSRA (in respect of sea areas) and the Native Titleholders (in respect of land areas).
- d. That the TSRA negotiate with all Native title claimants within the Torres Strait to bring their claims within the auspices of the TSRA Native Title Office with the exception of:
 - the Kaurareg claims presently being administered through the Cape York Land Council;
 - the Mualgul claimants (in the event that they elect to remain funded by the Attorney-General's Department).
- 2. Agreed that the Native Title Steering Committee implement an extensive community consultation process.

As a result of this decision, the Native Title Steering Committee and the Native Title Office have been conducting extensive consultations throughout the Torres Strait as well as mainland Queensland to progress Native Title claims. These consultations have resulted in six communities lodging their Native Title claims through the TSRA Native Title Office.

In response to the September decision, the Native Title Office has employed a lawyer and is in the process of employing an anthropologist. This will bring the Native Title Office staff to four persons.

The Saibai Island claim over land is still continuing to be progressed between the claimants, the Queensland and Commonwealth Governments. While progress has been slower than expected, due to the thoroughness of the negotiation process, the claim will still serve as a benchmark for all other Torres Strait Island Native Title claims.

Component: Heritage, Culture and Environment <u>Objectives</u>

To help the Torres Strait Islander and Aboriginal 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 to support projects which seek to preserve and protect the environment, heritage, culture and languages of the Torres Strait Islander and Aboriginal people of the Torres Strait region. It also promotes and maximises their involvement in managing their land, sea and sacred sites, and works toward ensuring they regain ownership and control of the areas and objects of cultural significance.

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

Outputs

The TSRA disbursed a total of \$63,400 for the support of artistic and cultural activities in the Torres Strait region. It also provided \$79,600 towards projects aimed at preserving and studying the region's unique environment.

Outcomes

A sum of \$70,000 was granted to the Coconut Island Council for a revegetation project which involved replanting palm trees and native grass to check and reverse erosion of the sand cay. This project has met with reasonable success and will be continued with the assistance of the CDEP scheme operating on the Island.

A sum of \$9,600 was granted to the Thursday Island High School for their program of monitoring and tagging the tropical rock lobster (Panulirus Ornatus) to ascertain its migratory trends and other life cycle characteristics. This gives young people the opportunity to learn more about their environment and natural resources.

Small amounts, totalling \$63,000, were granted to various communities and organisations to enable their participation and attendance at cultural festivals involving both traditional and modern artistic and cultural activities. The TSRA thus maintains itself as the logical source of assistance to many individuals and organisations for whom maintenance and development of their cultural and artistic heritage is of a high priority.

A combined Environment Australia/TSRA project continued throughout the year. The purpose is to prepare a strategy to achieve ecologically sustainable development of resources using an integrated planning model (Strategy for the Planning of Resources Integration in Torres Strait – SPRITS). The need for a strategy arose from an agreement between Australia and Papua New Guinea to jointly plan the safe environmental use of resources in the Torres Strait Protected Zone (TSPZ). It is planned to introduce the Strategy in early 1999.

The Strategy will formally draw together all locally-based and southern-based agencies and service providers using a SPRITS working group coordinated by a permanent Coordinator/Secretariat located on Thursday Island.

Key stakeholders for Queensland are the Departments of Premier and Cabinet and Environment; Environment Australia represents the Commonwealth. The ICC and the TSRA complete the Stakeholder Committee.

The TSRA's Environmental Coordinator has also worked closely with the ICC's MaSTERS program (a Marine Strategy for Torres Strait), the Torres Strait Conservation Planning Strategy, TS Fisheries Scientific Advisory Committee, Indigenous Protected Area research, Flora and Fauna surveys, heavy metals monitoring in traditional food species and the proposed gas pipeline project.

Sub-program support

CULTURAL SUB-PROGRAM \$('000)

No sub-program support funds needed to be disbursed in 1997~98.

Financial and staffing resources summary

Budgetary Basis	Actual 1996~97	Budget 1997~98	Actual 1997~98	
Component Expenditure				
Native Title	361	368	368	
Heritage, Culture and Environment	t 50	143	143	
Sub-program Support Expenditure	0		0	
TSRA Staff Years	2.57		0.5	

Sub-program: Social

Component: Broadcasting Objectives

To ensure Torres Strait Islanders and Aboriginal people 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 Torres Strait Islander and Aboriginal 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 Torres Strait Islander and Aboriginal residents of the Torres Strait control of their own broadcasting and television services. Through the Broadcasting for Remote Aboriginal Communities Scheme (BRACS), it provides remote communities with the facilities to gain access to, and control of, television and radio services. It encourages production of programs with local and cultural import for distribution within the Torres Strait region and the rest of Australia. It also supports the operation and development of the Torres Strait Indigenous Media Association (TSIMA).

<u>Outputs</u>

The TSRA provided funding of \$556,580 under this component. TSIMA received approximately two-thirds of this funding (\$383,148) for operating and community broadcasting costs. The remainder of the funds (\$173,432) was divided equally between 16 outer Island Councils for the costs of operating and maintaining their own BRACS units.

<u>Outcomes</u>

TSIMA currently broadcasts 20 hours per week providing a local news service, music, current affairs and other items of interest. This is achieved by replacing part of the Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC) broadcast. TSIMA is also the main source of expertise for repair and maintenance of the outer islands' BRACS units.

A comprehensive review of the Torres Strait region's broadcasting resources was completed during 1997~98.

The review included an analysis of the operations, needs and planning of the 16 outer islands' BRACS units (as well as that of TSIMA) and provided recommendations for upgrading the broadcasting equipment of the units over the next three years. The TSRA Board approved the recommendations.

The Australian Broadcasting Tribunal granted TSIMA the licence for 24-hour operation and the review recommended, to the TSRA Board, the necessary increase in funding. In addition, the review recommended installation of a new transmitter, the funding of which was also approved by the TSRA Board for 1998~99.

Component: Social Programs Objectives

To ensure the rights and well-being of Torres Strait Islander and Aboriginal women, youth, disabled and aged are respected and are commensurate with the norm

applied in the wider Australian community. Specifically, this component aims to:

- reduce the incidence of drug abuse, domestic violence, neglect and other symptoms of social dysfunction affecting the Torres Strait Islander and Aboriginal population of the Torres Strait region; and
- promote the social and physical well-being of the Torres Strait Islander and Aboriginal 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 component provides funding for the operational costs of centres and sporting associations for women, youth, disabled and aged people. It provides funding to hold sporting events, to provide transport to and from those events, and to erect and upgrade sporting and community facilities and equipment.

<u>Outputs</u>

The TSRA provided a grant of \$129,717 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 \$131,000 was provided to the Port Kennedy Association (PKA) to help meet the costs of their operations and \$38,306 was provided to the Youth Activities Services (YAS) for the same purpose.

A grant of \$249,532 was given to the Torres Strait Youth and Recreational Sporting Association (TSYRSA) and \$52,225 was allocated to the Yam Island Council to upgrade some of their sporting facilities.

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 and support of victims of domestic violence, care for the aged and disabled, counselling, refuge facilities and child care assistance. The organisation works closely with the TSRA Women's Issues Officer, the TSRA Board portfolio of Women's Issues and the project staff.

The PKA operations include a play group, a youth social worker, and continue to operate a social enrichment program. It also operates a child care centre, which opened during 1997~98.

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

The TSY&RSA received \$249,532. This funding enabled various sporting codes (indoor volleyball, darts, basketball and football) to conduct, through their specific sporting associations, coaching clinics, competitions (including the annual Island of Origin Rugby League tournament), contributions to outer islands sports infrastructure, school sports meetings and overseas sporting exchanges. The TSY&RSA employed a full-time administrator and sponsored coaching training.

Sport in the Torres Strait is extremely active throughout the year and tournaments and events are organised in most island communities.

The upgrading of Yam Island's sporting facilities is now complete.

Component: Social Justice Objectives

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

Description

The TSRA provided financial assistance towards provision of culturally appropriate legal aid services. It also supports advocacy services representing the interests of Torres Strait Islander and Aboriginal people in contact with the juvenile and criminal justice system, and is committed to developing Torres Strait perspectives to be brought to bear at international and national forums.

Outputs

The TSRA provided the TSNP Legal Service with \$395,804 under this program during 1997~98 for provision of a legal service to Torres Strait Islander and Aboriginal people living in the region.

<u>Outcomes</u>

The principal outcome of this program has been the availability of adequate legal representation for people living in the Torres Strait region, at the Magistrate Courts of both Thursday Island and Bamaga, for civil and criminal matters.

The TSNP Legal Service completed 563 criminal matters and 355 civil matters.

Intensive negotiations took place during 1997~98 between the TSNP Legal Service, a legal consultant (Tony Fitzgerald) and the TSRA about standardising the Services Delivery Policy Framework, to bring the objectives, performance, direction and reporting standards of the TSNP Legal Service into line with the other Indigenous Legal Services operating throughout Australia.

Component: Community Housing and Infrastructure **Objectives**

To increase the number of Torres Strait Islander and Aboriginal people in 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 towards 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.

<u>Outputs</u>

In 1997~98, the TSRA contributed \$1,299,080 to the Island Councils' operations, \$475,780 towards purchasing or replacing earth moving and other machinery, \$862,474 towards constructing Council buildings and upgrading airstrips, \$1,876,725 towards constructing community halls and resource centres, and \$182,049 towards upgrading and maintaining housing and visitors' facilities.

<u>Outcomes</u>

The Island Councils used the TSRA's funds to employ 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.

Construction of the Yam, Bamaga and Port Kennedy community halls was completed and construction commenced on the Tamwoy Development Association's (TDA) community halls.

A backhoe was purchased for Darnley, outboard motors for Hammond, a rock crusher for Badu, a truck and forklift for Saibai, a Council vehicle for Kubin, a bobcat for Dauan and a bulldozer for Mabuiag.

The TSRA contributed \$669,000 towards upgrading the Yorke Island airstrip with concrete pavers. This project was undertaken in conjunction with the State Government. An abattoir was constructed at Seisia and worksheds at St Pauls and

Saibai. A feasibility study for housing sub-divisions was undertaken at Murray Island, pensioners' units were completed at Yam, visitors and general living quarters were erected at Dauan and a regular housing maintenance program was conducted at St Pauls. Using their 1996~97 savings, the Boigu Island Council purchased a group of fully serviced dongas from the departing building contractors.

Component: Environmental Health <u>Objectives</u>

In recognition of the vital impact which 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 communities in the Torres Strait region. This is achieved by upgrading or providing appropriate and sustainable infrastructure and priority housing, as well as ensuring that adequate environmental health programs are implemented in 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 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 are maintained and improved. Consideration can also be given to emergency health projects, such as responses to situations where epidemics are a threat, particularly of mosquito–borne diseases.

<u>Outputs</u>

No primary health care grants have been provided in 1997~98 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 Health Infrastructure Priority Projects (HIPP) and the National Aboriginal Health Strategy (NAHS) for major infrastructure works with direct health implications was \$2,782,725.

A total amount of \$1,115,000 was granted for other infrastructure works to other organisations from normal program funds.

<u>Outcomes</u>

Water Upgrade Stage 2 (NAHS)

Stage 2 of the Water Upgrade will ensure water-related infrastructure in Stephen, Hammond, Dauan, Yorke, Boigu, Murray, St. Pauls and Kubin communities will continue in 1997~98. The TSRA provided a further \$2.2 million to the ICC as a contribution toward the estimated \$15 million project cost (the project is jointly funded with the Queensland Government). The TSRA's total contribution towards this project over 1996~97, 1997~98, 1998~99 is \$7,574,160.

The project is divided into three parts (evaluation, design and construction). In 1997 ~ 98 the project managers, Gutheridge, Haskins & Davies (GH&D), travelled to all communities and completed the evaluation stage of the project. GH&D has recommended that construction be undertaken in two stages—a minor works contract and a major works contract. The minor works contract will commence in August 1998 and the major works early in 1999. Completion of the minor works contract should ensure that most communities receive an adequate water supply during the coming dry season.

Health and Infrastructure Priority Program

The TSRA provided \$553,000 to Bamaga Island Council as the final contribution towards the Health and Infrastructure Priority Program (HIPP) projects at Bamaga. Construction of the sewerage system, sealing of internal roads and drainage improvements was completed in 1997~98. The Council completed stage one of the Housing Project. Stage two of the Housing Project involved Bamaga Council constructing eight houses and a further eight kit homes. The houses were completed in May 1998 and four kit homes were completed this financial year. The Council has started constructing the remaining four kit homes, which are scheduled to be completed early in 1998~99.

As part of the HIPP program, Seisia Island Council received funding of \$840,000 in 1996~97 for constructing internal roadworks including sealing and drainage works. The project commenced in 1997~98 and is scheduled to be completed in July 1998.

Normal program funds

The Kubin Island Council received funding of \$65,000 to construct septic tanks and erect rain water tanks. The Boigu Island Council received funding of \$1,050,000 in 1997~98, in addition to the Council's own contribution of \$372,825, towards a joint TSRA/State program of improving roads and drainage and constructing a sea wall.

Sub-program support

The following expenditure occurred during the 1997 ~ 98 financial year, in support of the Social Sub-program:

Purpose	Component	Amount (\$)
Review of TSIMA/BRACS operations	Broadcasting	21,255
Fitzgerald consultancy for legal service	Social Justice	5,190
Sports and recreation plan for the	Social programs	4,145
Torres Strait region		
Legal fees for transfer of assets	Social programs	369
Port Kennedy Association		
Emergency housing works at Ngurupai	Comm. Housing	18,900
Housing Cooperative	and Infrastructure	<u>)</u>
Visitor's accommodation on outer	Comm. Housing	6,000
Islands ICC and Infrastructure		
Legal fees for water upgrade and	Environ. Health	9,644
housing development		
Total Management Plans summary document	Environ. Health	7,752
Total		73,255

FINANCIAL AND STAFFING RESOURCES SUMMARY

SOCIAL \$('000)			
Budgetary Basis	Actual 1996~97	Budget 1997~98	Actual 1997~98
Component Expenditure			
Broadcasting	556	557	557
Social programs			
 Women's issues 	127	130	130
 Sport and recreation 	508	332	302
 Community support 	117	169	169
Social justice	353	396	396
Community housing and infrastrue	cture 2,025	5,659	4,695
Environmental health	14,252	3,916	3,898
Component Support Expenditure	21		73
TSRA Staff Years	1.7		2

Corporate Services

<u>Objective</u>

- 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 the provision of efficient services for the TSRA and the Minister in order to facilitate decision-making.
- 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

CORPORATE SERVICES \$('000)	Actual	Dudget	Actual
Budgetary Basis	Actual 1996~97	Budget 1997~98	Actual 1997~98
Component Expenditure			
Suppliers	1,471		
Employee expenses	1,674		
Write-down of assets	422		
Total expenditure	3,567		
TSRA Staff Years			

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, Reception and Registry.

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

Financial management

The TSRA's budget allocation in 1997~98 was \$34.822 million, which was made up of:

CDEP	\$20.205 million
Native Title	\$ 0.368 million

Programs	\$11.703 million
Running Costs	\$ 2.546 million

In addition, there were program rollovers of \$2,722,687 and administrative rollovers of \$204,000.

Internal audit

The ATSIC Office of Evaluation and Audit (OEA) undertook an internal audit of the TSRA in May 1998. The audit concluded with:

Audit considers that the TSRA is performing well and there is a significant improvement since the previous audit. There are effective internal control systems in place and operating.

Audit concluded that there was greater commitment to the TSRA's procedures and guidelines in its grant administration. The administration of grants by the TSRA is satisfactory. The Office operates with a sound administrative control environment. Problem areas have been identified and appropriate remedial action initiated in most instances.

External audit

The Australian National Audit Office conducted a financial statement audit in September 1997. The audit gave an unqualified opinion on the TSRA's 1996~97 financial statements.

Personnel

The Corporate Services Section works in conjunction with ATSIC Corporate Division under a MoU, which includes provision of financial, information technology and human resources services. Staff attended various internal and external training courses throughout the year including Accrual Accounting, Information Technology, Effective Reading, Women are Winners, Ministerials and Public Speaking.

Property

As noted in the TSRA' s 1996~97 Annual Report, the TSRA has an office accommodation usage of 873 square metres for 29 staff as well as TSRA Honourable Members, giving an average of 30.10 square metres per person.

Secretariat section

The Secretariat Section provides secretariat support to the TSRA Board Members and executive support to the Chairperson and Portfolio Member for Women's Issues. It is also responsible for the Public Affairs function.

Over the last year the Secretariat Section has been responsible for organising Board meetings, representative travel, special events, news releases and publication of corporate documents.

Equal employment opportunity

The TSRA is part of ATSIC's EEO Program under the MoU and takes part in appropriate conferences and training programs. Staff are advised of the current arrangements and receive ATSIC EEO and Harassment booklets and pamphlets as they are revised and developed. EEO and Harassment officers for the TSRA have been elected from existing staff. EEO statistical information is collected, on a voluntary basis, on recruitment of all TSRA staff. The TSRA staffing statistics are detailed in Appendix 6.

Freedom of information

A statement outlining the structure of the TSRA, as required under Section 8 of the *Freedom of Information Act 1982*, is at Appendix 3. No FOI requests for access to documents were received in the current reporting period. Consequently, no staff costs were incurred. Also, no applications for Internal Review or applications to the Administrative Appeals Tribunal (AAT) for review of a decision in relation to a request was received in the reporting period.

Industrial democracy

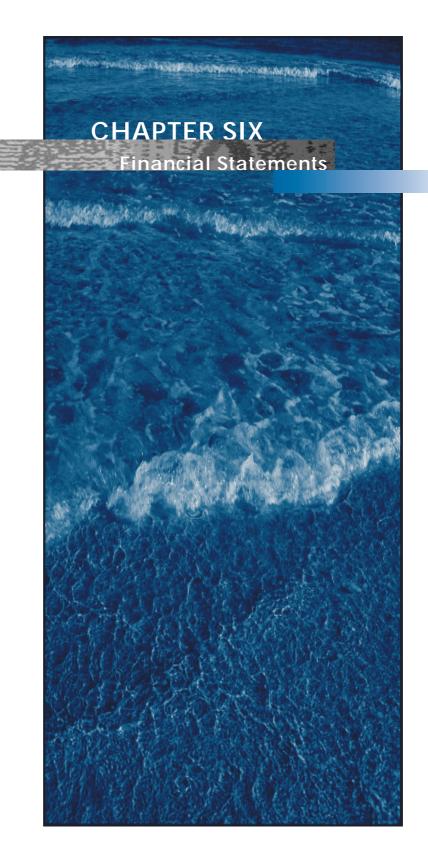
Under the MoU with ATSIC, the TSRA is included in that agency's industrial democracy policies and activities. The TSRA Union representative takes part in the CPSU National Delegates Conference. The TSRA staff receive ATSIC workplace change publications, staff circulars, policies and strategies as they 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. Under the MoU, the TSRA is part of ATSIC's OH&S Policy 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). Staff also receive publications from Comcare. An OH&S Officer for the TSRA has been elected from within the staff. Comcare undertook an OH&S investigation of the TSRA in April 1998, which recommended improvements in some areas of OH&S. The TSRA is addressing these matters.

<u>Privacy</u>

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.





TORRES STRAIT REGIONAL AUTHORITY CERTIFICATION OF FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

for the year ended 30 June 1998

In our opinion, the accompanying statements of the Torres Strait Regional Authority for the year ended 30 June 1998 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

present fairly the information required by the Minister for Finance and Administration's Guidelines for Financial Statements of Commonwealth Authorities.

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

Ah A.go

John Abednego Chairperson

10/09/1998

Henry Garnier Deputy Chairperson

10/09/1998



TORRES STRAIT REGIONAL AUTHORITY STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES

as at 30 June 1998

	Notes	1998 \$′000	1997 \$′000
PROVISIONS AND PAYABLES	-		
Employees	10	446	322
Suppliers	10	65	129
Grants	12	1,236	2,388
Other	13		133
Total provisions and payables	-	1,747	2,972
Total liabilities	=	1,747	2,972
EQUITY			
Asset revaluation reserve	14	1,198	-
Accumulated surpluses	14	12,222	11,302
Total equity	-	13,420	11,302
Total liabilities and equity		15,167	14,274
	_		
FINANCIAL ASSETS Cash	15	3,323	3,950
Receivables	15	3,323 2,810	2,243
Receivables	10	2,010	2,243
Total financial assets	=	6,133	6,193
NON-FINANCIAL ASSETS			
Land and buildings	17, 19	7,736	6,622
Plant and equipment	18, 19	858	1,062
Other	20	440	397
Total non-financial assets	-	9,034	8,081
Total assets	_	15,167	14,274
Current liabilities		1,658	2,811
Non-current liabilities		89	161
Current assets		4,421	4,940
Non-current assets		10,746	9,334



TORRES STRAIT REGIONAL AUTHORITY STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS

for the year ended 30 June 1998

OPERATING ACTIVITIES Cash received Appropriations 34,822 31,662 Interest 287 537 Other 549 197 Total cash received 35,658 32,396 Cash used (32,768) (37,555) Employees (1,532) (1,701) Suppliers (1,197) (1,433) Total cash used (35,497) (40,689) Net cash from operating activities 161 (8,293) INVESTING ACTIVITIES 161 (8,293) Cash used 339 303 Cash used 339 303 Repayments of loans 339 303 Cash used (1,096) (399) Purchase of property, plant and equipment (31) (724) Loans made (1,096) (399) Total cash used (1,127) (1,123) Net cash from investing activities (788) (820) Net decrease in cash held (627) (9,113) Add cash at 1			Notes	1998 \$′000	1997 \$′000
Appropriations 34,822 31,662 Interest 287 537 Other 549 197 Total cash received 35,658 32,396 Cash used (32,768) (37,555) Grants (32,768) (37,555) Employees (1,197) (1,433) Total cash used (35,497) (40,689) Net cash from operating activities 161 (8,293) INVESTING ACTIVITIES 2339 303 Cash used 339 303 Total cash received 339 303 Cash used (31) (724) Loans made (1,096) (399) Total cash used (1,1127) (1,123) Net cash from investing activities (788) (820) Net cash from investing activities (627) (9,113) Add cash at 1 July 3,950 13,063	OPERATING ACTIVITIES				
Interest 287 537 Other 549 197 Total cash received 35,658 32,396 Cash used Grants (32,768) (37,555) Employees (1,532) (1,701) Suppliers (1,197) (1,433) Total cash used (35,497) (40,689) Net cash from operating activities 161 (8,293) INVESTING ACTIVITIES 2339 303 Cash used 339 303 Total cash received 339 303 Repayments of loans 339 303 Cash used (1,096) (399) Total cash received 339 303 Cash used (1,096) (399) Purchase of property, plant and equipment (31) (724) Loans made (1,127) (1,123) Net cash from investing activities (788) (820) Net decrease in cash held (627) (9,113) Add cash at 1 July 3,950 13,063	Cash received				
Other 549 197 Total cash received $35,658$ $32,396$ Cash used($32,768$) $(37,555)$ Employees $(1,532)$ $(1,701)$ Suppliers $(1,197)$ $(1,433)$ Total cash used $(35,497)$ $(40,689)$ Net cash from operating activities 161 $(8,293)$ INVESTING ACTIVITIES 339 303 Cash received 339 303 Total cash received 339 303 Coash used $(1,096)$ (399) Total cash received $(1,127)$ $(1,123)$ Net cash from investing activities (788) (820) Net cash from investing activities (627) $(9,113)$ Add cash at 1 July $3,950$ $13,063$	Appropriations			34,822	31,662
Total cash received 35,658 32,396 Cash used (32,768) (37,555) Employees (1,532) (1,701) Suppliers (1,197) (1,433) Total cash used (35,497) (40,689) Net cash from operating activities 161 (8,293) INVESTING ACTIVITIES 161 (8,293) Cash received 339 303 Total cash received 339 303 Cash used (1,096) (399) Purchase of property, plant and equipment (1,096) (399) Total cash used (1,127) (1,123) Net cash from investing activities (788) (820) Net cash from investing activities (627) (9,113) Add cash at 1 July 3,950 13,063	Interest			287	537
Cash used Grants $(32,768)$ $(37,555)$ Employees Suppliers $(1,532)$ $(1,701)$ Suppliers $(1,197)$ $(1,433)$ Total cash used $(35,497)$ $(40,689)$ Net cash from operating activities 161 $(8,293)$ INVESTING ACTIVITIES Cash received Repayments of loans 339 303 Total cash received 339 303 Cash used Purchase of property, plant and equipment Loans made (31) (724) 	Other			549	197
Grants (32,768) (37,555) Employees (1,532) (1,701) Suppliers (1,197) (1,433) Total cash used (35,497) (40,689) Net cash from operating activities 161 (8,293) INVESTING ACTIVITIES 161 (8,293) Cash received 339 303 Total cash received 339 303 Cash used (31) (724) Loans made (1,096) (399) Total cash used (1,096) (399) Total cash used (1,127) (1,123) Net cash from investing activities (788) (820) Net decrease in cash held (627) (9,113) Add cash at 1 July 3,950 13,063	Total cash received			35,658	32,396
Employees Suppliers(1,532)(1,701)Suppliers(1,197)(1,433)Total cash used(35,497)(40,689)Net cash from operating activities161(8,293)INVESTING ACTIVITIES Cash received Repayments of loans339303Total cash received339303Cash used(31)(724)Loans made(1,096)(399)Total cash used(1,127)(1,123)Net cash from investing activities(788)(820)Net decrease in cash held Add cash at 1 July(627)(9,113)Add cash at 1 July3,95013,063	Cash used				
Suppliers(1,197)(1,433)Total cash used(35,497)(40,689)Net cash from operating activities161(8,293)INVESTING ACTIVITIES239303Cash received339303Total cash received339303Cash used(31)(724)Purchase of property, plant and equipment(31)(724)Loans made(1,096)(399)Total cash used(1,127)(1,123)Net cash from investing activities(788)(820)Net decrease in cash held(627)(9,113)Add cash at 1 July3,95013,063				(32,768)	(37,555)
Total cash used(35,497)(40,689)Net cash from operating activities161(8,293)INVESTING ACTIVITIES Cash received Repayments of loans339303Total cash received339303Cash used Purchase of property, plant and equipment Loans made(31)(724)Iotal cash used(1,096)(399)Total cash used(1,127)(1,123)Net cash from investing activities(788)(820)Net decrease in cash held Add cash at 1 July(627)(9,113)3,95013,063(13,063)					
Net cash from operating activities161(8,293)INVESTING ACTIVITIES Cash received Repayments of loans339303Total cash received339303Cash used Purchase of property, plant and equipment Loans made(31)(724)(1,096)(399)(1,127)(1,123)Net cash from investing activities(788)(820)Net decrease in cash held Add cash at 1 July(627)(9,113)3,95013,063(627)(9,113)					
INVESTING ACTIVITIES Cash received Repayments of loans <u>339</u> 303 Total cash received <u>339</u> 303 Cash used Purchase of property, plant and equipment (31) (724) Loans made (1,096) (399) Total cash used (1,127) (1,123) Net cash from investing activities (788) (820) Net decrease in cash held (627) (9,113) Add cash at 1 July 3,950 13,063	Total cash used			(35,497)	(40,689)
Cash received Repayments of loans339303Total cash received339303Cash used Purchase of property, plant and equipment Loans made(31)(724) (1,096)Total cash used(1,096)(399) (1,127)Total cash used(1,127)(1,123)Net cash from investing activities(788)(820)Net decrease in cash held Add cash at 1 July(627)(9,113) (1,063)	Net cash from operating a	activities		161	(8,293)
Repayments of loans339303Total cash received339303Cash used Purchase of property, plant and equipment Loans made(31)(724) (1,096)Total cash used(1,096)(399) (1,127)Total cash used(1,127)(1,123)Net cash from investing activities(788)(820)Net decrease in cash held Add cash at 1 July(627)(9,113) 3,95013,063					
Total cash received339303Cash used Purchase of property, plant and equipment Loans made(31)(724)Loans made(1,096)(399)Total cash used(1,127)(1,123)Net cash from investing activities(788)(820)Net decrease in cash held Add cash at 1 July(627)(9,113)3,95013,063					
Cash used Purchase of property, plant and equipment Loans made(31)(724) (1,096)Total cash used(1,096)(399) (1,127)Net cash from investing activities(788)(820)Net decrease in cash held Add cash at 1 July(627)(9,113) 3,95013,063	Repayments of loans			339	303
Purchase of property, plant and equipment(31)(724)Loans made(1,096)(399)Total cash used(1,127)(1,123)Net cash from investing activities(788)(820)Net decrease in cash held(627)(9,113)Add cash at 1 July3,95013,063	Total cash received			339	303
Loans made(1,096)(399)Total cash used(1,127)(1,123)Net cash from investing activities(788)(820)Net decrease in cash held(627)(9,113)Add cash at 1 July3,95013,063	Cash used				
Total cash used(1,127)(1,123)Net cash from investing activities(788)(820)Net decrease in cash held Add cash at 1 July(627)(9,113) 3,95013,063	Purchase of property, plant and e	equipment		(31)	(724)
Net cash from investing activities(788)(820)Net decrease in cash held Add cash at 1 July(627)(9,113) 3,95013,063	Loans made			(1,096)	(399)
Net decrease in cash held(627)(9,113)Add cash at 1 July3,95013,063	Total cash used			(1,127)	(1,123)
Add cash at 1 July 3,950 13,063	Net cash from investing activi	ties		(788)	(820)
	Net decrease in cash held			(627)	(9,113)
Cash at 30 June 3,323 3,950	Add cash at 1 July			3,950	13,063
	Cash at 30 June			3,323	3,950



TORRES STRAIT REGIONAL AUTHORITY SCHEDULE OF COMMITMENTS

as at 30 June 1998

	Notes	1998 \$′000	1997 \$′000
BY TYPE			
Operating leases		29	37
Total commitments	-	29	37
BY MATURITY			
Operating Lease Commitments			
One year or less		24	23
From one to two years		5	14
From two to five years		0	0
Over five years		0	0
Operating lease commitments	-	29	37

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

The TSRA Board in decision 266 forward committed \$2.2 million for a Water Infrastructure Project from the 1998–99 appropriation.

TORRES STRAIT REGIONAL AUTHORITY SCHEDULE OF CONTINGENCIES

as at 30 June 1998

As at 30 June 1998 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 1998

1. SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

General System of Accounting underlying the Financial Statements

The accounts have been prepared using the historical cost convention, except for certain assets which are at valuation. The accounts have been prepared in accordance with the Guidelines for Financial Statements of Commonwealth Authorities issued by the Minister for Finance and Administration in July 1997.

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. 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 is provided on property, plant and equipment, including freehold buildings but excluding land and artefacts. The depreciation rates are 2 per cent for buildings and 20 per cent for computers, plant and equipment respectively. From 1996–97 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 prorata 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 are measured at their 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 1998.

Provisions made in respect of employee entitlements which are not expected to be settled within 12 months are measured at present value of the estimated future cash outflows to be made by the Authority in respect of services provided by employees up to the reporting date.

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 where indicated.

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 ar an asset according to whether it is a long term benefit.

i) Taxation

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

	1998 \$′000	1997 \$′000
2. EMPLOYEE EXPENSES		
Basic Remuneration for services provided	1,655	1,674
The Authority contributes to the Commonwealth Sector Superannuation (CS	S) and the Pub	lic Sector

Superannuation (CSS) and the Public 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 contributions 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.

	1998 \$'000	1997 \$'000
3. SUPPLIER EXPENSES		
Supply of Goods and Services Operating Lease Rentals Total Suppliers Expenses	1,231 	1,449 22 1,471
4. WRITE DOWN OF ASSETS		
Doubtful Loans Write Down of Plant and Equipment Depreciation of Buildings Depreciation of Plant and Equipment Total Write Down of Assets	14 - 118 225 357	16 71 116 219 422
5. GRANTS EXPENSE		
Social Economic Total Grant Expense	10,606 21,009 31,615	11,892 18,951 30,843
6. INTEREST REVENUE		
Bank Loans	180 107	434 103
Total Interest	287	537
7. OTHER REVENUE		
Rental Income on Properties Funds Returned from Previous Year Sundry	113 - 344	92 18 87
Total Other Revenue	457	197
8. RESOURCES RECEIVED FREE OF CHARGE		
Provision of Internal Audit Services by OEA	18	12
68 AL AUTHON		

	1998	1997
	\$′000	\$′000
9. ABNORMAL ITEMS		
Additional Plant and Equipment capitalised as a result of stocktake	-	171
Transfer of loans from ATSIC*	223	-
	223	171

* 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	24	16
Superannuation	3	2
Annual Leave	182	131
Long Service Leave	237	173
Total employee entitlement liability	446	322
11. PAYABLE TO SUPPLIERS		
Trade Creditors	65	129
12. GRANT LIABILITIES		
Non Profit Institutions	1,236	2,388
13. OTHER LIABILITIES		
Loan contracted		133
		133



14. EQUITY

Item	Accumulated Results	Asset Revaluation Reserve	Total Equity
	\$'000	\$′000	\$'000
Balance at 1 July 1997 Surplus Net revaluation Increase Transfers to (from) Reserves Change in Accounting policies	11,302 920 - - -	- - 1,198 - -	11,302 920 1,198 – –
Balance 30 June 1998	12,222	1,198	13,420

Item	Accumulated Results	Asset Revaluation Reserve	Total Equity
	\$′000	\$′000	\$'000
Balance at 1 July 1996 Surplus/(Deficit) Net revaluation Increase/(Decrease) Transfers to (from) Reserves Change in Accounting policies	13,133 (1,831) - - -	- - - -	13,133 (1,831) – – –
Balance 30 June 1997	11,302	-	11,302

The net revaluation increase in the Asset Revaluations Reserve comprises:

	1998
	\$'000
 Revaluation increment – Land 	562
 Revaluation increment – Buildings 	636
	1,198

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

	1998 \$'000	1997 \$′000
15. CASH, RES STOR		
General Fund	2,500	3,012
Housing Fund (see Note 27)	779	786
Other ×	44	152
Total Cash	3,323	3,950
70		

	1998 \$'000	1997 \$'000
16. RECEIVABLES		<i>\</i>
Goods and Service	-	1
Housing Loans	1,926	1,591
Enterprise Loans	897	382
Grant Overpayments		284
	2,823	2,258
Provision for Doubtful Loans	(13)	(15)
Net Receivables	2,810	2,243
Receivables includes receivables overdue by:		
– less than 30 days	20	12
– 30 to 60 days	6	10
 more than 60 days 	56	21
	82	43
17. LAND AND BUILDINGS		
Administration Assets		
Freehold land – at valuation	1,600	947
Freehold land – at cost	· _	91
	1,600	1,038
Buildings on freehold Land – at valuation	6,115	2,286
Buildings on freehold Land – at cost	43	3,505
	6,158	5,791
Accumulated Depreciation	(22)	(207)
Total Land and Buildings	7,736	6,622
18. PLANT AND EQUIPMENT		
Plant and Equipment – at valuation	273	276
Plant and Equipment – at cost	1,109	1,088
	1,382	1,364
Accumulated Depreciation	(524)	(302)
Total Plant and Equipment	OFS 858	1,062
	<u>PRLS STD</u>	
		~
	VAL AUT	'1

19. ANALYSIS OF PROPERTY, PLANT AND EQUIPMENT

Table A

Movement Summary 1997–98 for all assets irrespective of valuation basis

Item	Land	Building	Total Land & Buildings	Other Plant & Equipment	Total
	\$'000	\$′000	\$'000	\$'000	\$′000
Gross value					
as at 1 July 1997	1,038	5,791	6,829	1,364	8,193
Additions	_	34	34	31	65
Revaluations	562	333	895	_	895
Disposals	_	_	_	(13)	(13)
Other Movements	-	-	-	-	-
Gross value					
as at 30 June 1998	1,600	6,158	7,758	1,382	9,140
Accumulated Depreciation as at 1 July 1997	N/A	207	207	302	509
Depreciation charge for assets held 1 July 1997	N/A	118	118	225	343
Depreciation charge					
for additions	N/A	-	-	3	3
Adjustments for revaluation	N/A	(303)	(303)	-	(303)
Adjustments for disposals	N/A	-	-	(6)	(6)
Adjustments for					
other movements	N/A	-	-	-	-
Accumulated Depreciation					
as at 30 June 1998	N/A	22	22	524	546
Net book value	1 (00	(10)	7 70/	050	0.504
as at 30 June 1998	1,600	6,136	7,736	858	8,594
Net Book value as at 1 July 1997	1,038	5,584	6,622	1,062	7,684

Table B Summary of balances of assets at valuation as at 30 June 1998

Item	Land	Building	Total Land & Buildings	Other Plant & Equipment	Total
	\$′000	\$′000	\$′000	\$′000	\$′000
As at 30 June 1998					
Gross Value	1,600	6,115	7,715	272	7,987
Accumulated Depreciation	-	(22)	(22)	(139)	(161)
Other Movements	-	-	-	-	-
Net Book Value	1,600	6,093	7,693	133	7,826
As at 30 June 1997					
Gross Value	947	2,286	3,233	106	3,339
Accumulated Depreciation	-	(137)	(137)	(38)	(175)
Other Movements	-	-	-	-	-
Net book value	947	2,149	3,096	68	3,164
				1998	1997
20. OTHER NON-FINANCIAL	ASSETS			\$'000	\$'000
Prepayments Paid				440	397
21. CASH FLOW RECONCILI	ATION				
				(0.4.4.4.0)	
Net Cost of Services Revenue from Government				(34,143) 34,840	(33,676) 31,674
Abnormal Items				223	171
Operating surplus/(deficit)				920	(1,831)
Depreciation				346	335
Abnormal Item				(223)	(171)
Assets written off				(/	71
Doubtful Debts				14	16
Grant of program assets				-	255
Other adjustments				(53)	(7)
Decrease in trade debtors				1	14
(Increase)/Decrease in grant of	overpayments			284	(116)
Increase in prepayments				(43)	(2)
Decrease in trade creditors				(64)	(30)
Decrease in salaries accruals				RRES S 8	4
Increase in employee provisio	115			(1 152)	(6 952)
Decrease in grant liabilities Loss on Disposal				(1,152)	(6,852)
Loss on Disposal				\mathbf{A}	
Net cash provided by operative	ating activitie	S		161	8,293
					73

22. REMUNERATION OF AUTHORITY MEMBERS

The total amount of the Authority Members remuneration during the financial year was \$195,007 (1996–97 \$259,496). In addition, superannuation payments made on behalf of the Authority members during the financial year was \$9,982 (1996–97 \$11,344).

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

	1998	1997
\$0 - \$9,999	17	28
\$10,000 - \$19,999	1	1
\$90,000 - \$99,999	1	1

23. RELATED PARTY DISCLOSURE

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

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

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

24. LOANS TO AUTHORITY MEMBERS AND RELATED PARTIES

Two loans were due to the Torres Strait Regional Authority by related parties of Ms M Mau and Mr J Ahmat. Both loans were approved under normal business loan criteria.

	1998	1997
Loan to member related party outstanding at year end	18,761	36,831
Loan repayments during the reporting period	3,903	12,010
Interest revenue included in operating result from	119	3,092
loan to member related party		

74

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	383,148
	Tamwoy Development Assoc.	2,582,371
J Ahmat	Badu Island Council	3,551,194
T Billy	Warraber Island Council	1,198,802
	TSNP Legal Service	395,804
Ron Day	Murray Island Council	1,040,437
E Dau	Boigu Island Council	2,655,352
G Dewis	Port Kennedy Association	495,037
	TSIMA	383,148
E Doolah	Darnley Island Council	975,727
J Elu	Seisia Island Council	1,193,565
	TSNP Legal Service	395,804
H Garnier	Hammond Island Council	632,352
S Joe	Kubin Island Council	774,965
M Levi	St Pauls Island Council	1,931,726
G Lui	Yam Island Council	1,671,735
M Mau	Dauan Island Council	829,105
	Mura Kosker Sorority	129,717
J Mosby	Yorke Island Council	2,352,070
	TSNP Legal Service	395,804
G Pearson	Coconut Island Council	956,033
H Stephen	Stephen Island Council	39,151
T Waia	Saibai Island Council	1,108,096
T Whap	Mabuiag Island Council	777,149
R Williams	Bamaga Island Council	3,308,434

All of the Members of the Authority apart from R Wasaga and G Dewis served on the Islands Coordinating Council which received grants of \$3,178,991 during the year.

26. RENUMERATION OF OFFICERS

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

	1998	1997
\$100,000 - \$110,000	* 1	1
Income received or due and receivable by officers	103,000	103,000
		75

	1998	1997
	\$'000	\$'000
27. REMUNERATION OF AUDITORS		
Remuneration to the Auditor-General for auditing		
the financial statements for the reporting period.	28,000	43,300

28. ECONOMIC DEPENDENCY

The Authority depends on the continuing appropriation of money by the Parliament to carry out its normal activities.

29. 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:

Opening Balance 1 July	786,402	666,915
Receipts		
Appropriations	-	-
Loan Repayments	156,606	283,849
Bank Interest	30,958	39,886
	973,966	990,650
Payments		
Loan Advances	195,177	183,822
Refund to Clients		20,426
	195,177	204,248
TSRA Housing funding		
Balance as at 30 June 1998	778,789	786,402

30. 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.

31. SEGMENT REPORTING

The Authority operates wholly within Australia and primarily in the areas of loans, grants and other funding to further the economic and social advancement of Torres Strait Islanders and Aboriginal persons living in the Torres Strait area.

32. FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS

a) Terms, conditions and accounting policies

Instrument(including recognition criteria and measurement basis)(including significant terms at tions affecting the amount, ti certainty of cash flow)Deposits at call15Deposits are recognised at their nominal amounts. Interest is credited to revenue as it accrues.Temporarily surplus funds, main monthly drawdowns of appropri placed on deposit with the Nati Australia Bank. Interest is earned daily balance at the prevailing of for money at call and is paid atLoans16Loans are recognised at the amounts lent. Provision is made for bad and doubful 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.Loans are made secured for per 10 years. Repayments of princip in full at maturity. Early settlemen option of the Authority. Effective rates on fixed rate loans averagi cent; the effective rate on floatin 5.5 per cent (1996-97: 1.75 per 6 per cent respectively). Interest are due on the 15° day of eachTrade creditors11Creditors 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 3Grants liabilities12The Authority recognises a liability on the signing of grant agreements. The amount of the liability is for the total of all payments under the agreement which are no longer at the Authority'sThe Authority approves research a maximum period of up to thre Grant payments are made in ins according to the grante emeelin milestones and subject to funds <th></th> <th></th> <th></th> <th></th> <th></th>					
nominal amounts. Interest is credited to revenue as it accrues.monthly drawdowns of appropri placed on deposit with the Nati Australia Bank. Interest is earner daily balance at the prevailing of for money at call and is paid at leansLoans16Loans are recognised at the amounts lent. Provision is made for bad and doubful 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.Loans are made secured for per 10 years. Repayments of princip in full at maturity. Effective rates on fixed rate loans average cent; the effective rate on floatin 5.5 per cent (1996–97: 1.75 per 6 per cent respectively). Interest are due on the 15" day of eachTrade creditors11Creditors 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 nel 3Grants liabilities12The Authority recognises a liability on the signing of grant agreements. The amount of the liability for the total of all payments under the agreement which are no longer at the Authority's discretion. The part of the liability recognised in the Statement of Assets and Liabilities comprises payment stated to be at the Authority's discretion are not recognised as liabilities and are expensed onlyThe Authority by ParlianPayments agreed which fail this recognistion criterion are disclosed as contingent liabilities. Any payment stated to be at the Authority's discretion are not recognised as liabilities and are expensed onlyThe Authority by	and condi-	Nature of underlying instrume (including significant terms an tions affecting the amount, tin certainty of cash flow)	ng recognition criteria and	Notes	
Ient. 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 monthy basis.10 years. Repayments of princip in full at maturity. Early settleme option of the Authority. Effective rates on fixed rate loans average cent; the effective rate on floatifi 	ntion, are ntional ned on the ned ally rate	Temporarily surplus funds, mainly monthly drawdowns of appropria placed on deposit with the Natio Australia Bank. Interest is earned daily balance at the prevailing da for money at call and is paid at r	amounts. Interest is credited	15	Deposits at call
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).The Authority approves research a maximum period of up to thre Grants liabilitiesGrants liabilities12The Authority recognises a liability on the signing of grant agreements. The amount of the liability is for the total of all payments under the agreement which are no longer at the Authority's discretion. The part of the liability recognised in the Statement of Assets and Liabilities comprises payments which are more rather than less likely to be made and would except in exceptional circumstances include payments which are subject to future appropriation by the Parliament. Payments agreed which fail this recognition criterion are disclosed as contingent liabilities. Any payment stated to be at the Authority's discretion are not recognised as 	ipal are made nent is at the ve interest uge 1.75 per ting rate is per cent and st payments	Loans are made secured for peri- 10 years. Repayments of principal in full at maturity. Early settlement option of the Authority. Effective is rates on fixed rate loans average cent; the effective rate on floating 5.5 per cent (1996–97: 1.75 per 6 per cent respectively). Interest p are due on the 15 th day of each r	vision is made for bad and loans when collection of the part thereof is judged to be er than more likely. Interest d to revenue on a six	16	Loans
the signing of grant agreements. The amount of the liability is for the total of all payments under the agreement which are no longer at the Authority's discretion. The part of the liability recognised in the Statement of Assets and Liabilities comprises payments which are more rather than less likely to be made and would except in exceptional circumstances include payments which are subject to future appropriation by the Parliament. Payments agreed which fail this recognition criterion are disclosed as contingent liabilities. Any payment stated to be at the Authority's discretion are not recognised as liabilities and are expensed only	t 30 days.	Settlement is usually made net 30	ominal amounts, being the at which the liabilities will be iabilities are recognised to the at the goods or services have eived (and irrespective of	11	Trade creditors
77	ree years. instalments ting agreed ds being ament.	The Authority approves research a maximum period of up to three Grant payments are made in inst according to the grantee meeting milestones and subject to funds t appropriated annually by Parlian	ng of grant agreements. The of the liability is for the total yments under the agreement e no longer at the Authority's n. The part of the liability ed in the Statement of Assets ilities comprises payments e more rather than less likely ide and would except in nal circumstances include s which are subject to future ation by the Parliament. Is agreed which fail this on criterion are disclosed igent liabilities. Any payment be at the Authority's n are not recognised as and are expensed only	12	Grants liabilities

(b) Net Fair Values of Financial Assets and Liabilities

		1998	1998	1997	1997
		Total carrying amount	Aggregate net fair value	Total carrying amount	Aggregate net fair value
	Note	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Financial Assets					
Cash at Bank	15	3,323	3,323	3,950	3,950
Loans	16	2,823	2,823	1,973	1,973
Total Financial As	sets	6,146	6,146	5,923	5,923
Financial Liabilitie (Recognised)	es				
Trade creditors	11	65	65	129	129
Grant Liabilities	12	1,236	1,236	2,388	2,388
Total Financial Lia	abilities				
(Recognised)		1,301	1,301	2,517	2,517

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 internet 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 exposures 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 exposures to any concentration of credit risk.



	Weighted Average Effective Interest Rate		% %	6 1.75			
	Weighted Avera Effective Interest Rate		% % %	5.5 1.75			
			000,\$ 26-96	3,950 1,958	5,908	5,908	
	Total		000,\$ 000,\$ 26-96 86-26	3,323 2,810	6,133	6,133	
	Non Interest Bearing		000,\$ 000,\$	1 1	I I		
	2	rs		- 22	22		
		< 5 years	79-98 96-79 \$`000	23	53 2		
		years	000,\$	-	69		
	erest Rate	2 to 5 years	97-98 96-77 900°\$ 900°\$	- 168	168		
	Fixed Interest Rate	years	97-99 96-79 \$`000`\$	- 187	187		
	LL.	1 year or less 1 to 2 years	97-98 \$′000	- 442	442		
$\overline{\cdot}$		or less	000,\$ 000,\$	- 92	92		
(cont.)		1 year	97-98	- 221	221		
truments	Floating Interest Rate		26-96 86-79 79-36 86-79	3,323 3,950 1,926 1,591	5,249 5,541		
ial Ins sk	Notes			15 16			
Note 30 Financial Instruments (b) Interest Rate Risk	Financial Instrument			Financial Assets (Recognised) Cash at Bank Loans	Total Financial Assets (Recognised)	Total Assets	

Note 30 Financial Instruments (b) Interest Rate Risk		(cont.)							
Financial Instrument Notes	s Floating Interest Rate		Fixed Interest Rate	srest Rate		Non Interest Bearing	Total	Weighted Average Effective	Average ve
		1 year or less	1 to 2 years	2 to 5 years	> 5 years			Interest kate	Kate
	000,\$ 000,\$ \$-000	000,\$ 000,\$	000,\$ 000,\$ 26-96 86-26	000,\$ 000,\$ 26-96 86-26	000,\$ 000,\$ 26-96 86-26	97-98 96-79 \$`000`\$	000,\$ 000,\$ 26-96 86-26	97-98 96-97 %	6-97 %
lities	1	ı ı	ı ı	I	1	65 129	65 129	n/a	n/a
Grant Liabilities 12	I I	1	ı I	I I	I I	1,236 2,388	1,236 2,388	n/a	n/a
Total Financial Liabilities (Recognised)						1,301 2,517	1,301 2,517		
Total Liabilities							1,301 2,517		





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 1998. The financial 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 directors of the Authority 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 Minister of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs.

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 as to whether, in all material respects, the financial statements are presented fairly in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards, other mandatory professional reporting requirements (Urgent Issues Group Consensus Views) 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.

A O

In my opinion,

(i) the financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Guidelines for Financial Statements of Commonwealth Authorities

(ii) the financial statements give a true and fair view, in accordance with applicable Accounting Standards, other mandatory professional reporting requirements and the Guidelines for Financial Statements of Commonwealth Authorities, of the financial position of the Torres Strait Regional Authority as at 30 June 1998 and the results of its operations and its cash flows for the year then ended.

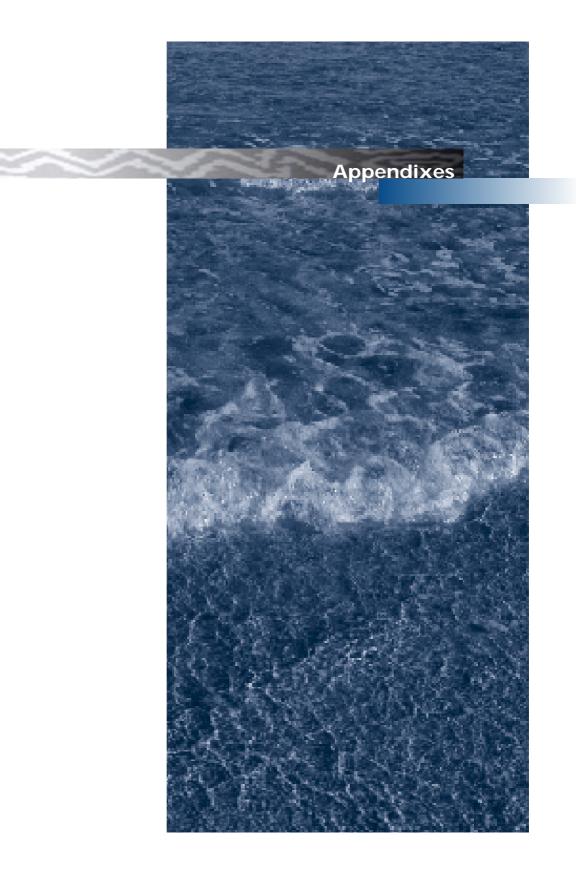
Australian National Audit Office

Allan M Thompson Executive Director

Delegate of the Auditor-General

Canberra

11 September 1998



APPENDIX 1

TSRA Grants

Recipient	Purpose	\$
Badu Island Council	CDEP wages CDEP capital/recurrent Contribution to Council operating costs Community training BRACS Rock crusher Quarry enterprise (CEIS)	2,375,352 702,376 61,814 155,000 8,652 118,000 130,000
Bamaga Island Council	CDEP wages CDEP capital/recurrent Contribution to Council operating costs Community training BRACS Community hall HIPP sewerage, housing, roads	1,652,256 488,563 74,963 56,000 8,652 450,000 578,000
Boigu Island Council	CDEP wages CDEP capital/recurrent Contribution to Council operating costs Community training BRACS Roads, drainage, sea wall	1,114,619 397,028 45,053 40,000 8,652 1,050,000
Coconut Island Council	CDEP wages CDEP capital/recurrent Contribution to Council operating costs Community training BRACS Revegetation project	592,100 198,954 38,327 48,000 8,652 70,000
Darnley Island Council	CDEP wages CDEP capital/recurrent Contribution to Council operating costs Community training BRACS Backhoe	606,429 203,770 44,876 22,000 8,652 90,000

	APP	ENC	DIXES
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	Community centre (\$377,063 rolled over to 1998~99)	0
Dauan Island Council	CDEP wages CDEP capital/recurrent Contribution to Council operating costs Community training BRACS Two-bedroom living quarters Donga Bobcat	456,148 153,273 36,232 53,800 8,652 35,000 38,000 48,000
Hammond Island Council	CDEP wages CDEP capital/recurrent Contribution to Council operating costs Community training Outboard motors for school ferry	394,126 132,434 37,500 48,512 19,780
Island Coordinating Council	Operating costs Community training Computer equipment Vehicle for Chairman NAHS (water upgrade) Native Title Office	354,371 200,000 34,920 21,700 2,200,000 368,000
Kubin Island Council	CDEP wages CDEP capital/recurrent Contribution to Council operating costs Community training BRACS Vehicle Septic tanks Rainwater tanks and pumps	451,202 151,611 37,500 35,000 8,652 26,000 25,000 40,000
Mabuiag Island Council	CDEP wages CDEP capital/recurrent Contribution to Council operating costs Community training BRACS Bulldozer Sea food enterprise (<i>CEIS</i> , \$200,000 rolled over to 1998~99)	439,297 147,611 40,589 21,000 8,652 120,000 0

APPENDIXES

Mer Island Council (Murray)	CDEP wages CDEP capital/recurrent Contribution to Council operating costs Musical instruments Community training BRACS Freezer (\$412,526 rolled over to 1998~99) Feasibility study housing	629,757 211,603 50,678 4,000 58,000 8,652 47,747 30,000
Mura Kosker Sorority	Operating costs	129,717
Port Kennedy Association	Operating costs Community training Community hall	131,000 13,022 351,015
Saibai Island Council	CDEP wages CDEP capital/recurrent Contribution to Council operating costs Community training BRACS Works shed Truck and forklift Island dancers Takeaway enterprise (CEIS) Child care Centre (\$100,000 rolled over to 1998~99)	656,470 220,583 45,191 15,000 8,652 26,000 80,000 11,200 45,000 0
Seisia Island Council	CDEP wages CDEP capital/recurrent Contribution to Council operating costs Community training BRACS Slaughterhouse HIPP roads (\$18,239 rolled over to 1998~99) Camp grounds huts (CEIS)	632,851 212,649 34,688 50,000 8,652 100,000 4,725 150,000
St Paul Island Council	CDEP wages CDEP capital/recurrent Contribution to Council operating costs Community training	1,165,091 391,489 52,187 204,307

		APPENDIXES
	BRACS Study grant House maintenance	8,652 40,000 50,000
	Relocation of workshop	20,000
Stephen Island Council	Contribution to Council operating costs BRACS	30,499 8,652
T.I.State High School	Marine research Rock eisteddfod	9,600 7,000
T.I.State Primary School	School dance tour	12,000
TSY&RSA	Operating costs	249,532
Tamwoy Development Association	CDEP wages CDEP capital/recurrent Operating costs Community training TRAWQ community hall	982,234 355,137 103,000 90,000 1,052,000
Torres Strait Islanders Media Association	Operating costs	383,148
TSNP Legal Service	Operating costs Solicitor's accommodation	375,304 20,500
TSRA Board Art and Culture portfolio	Travel to England to view the Haddon collection	11,290
Warraber Island Council	CDEP wages CDEP capital/recurrent Contribution to Council operating costs Community training BRACS BRACS building extensions	797,529 267,983 38,878 50,760 8,652 35,000
Yam Island Council	CDEP wages CDEP capital/recurrent Roll over CDEP capital Contribution to Council operating costs	1,114,518 359,097 15,395 44,089

APPENDIXES

Yorke Island Council	Community training BRACS Basketball stand and tools Basketball court cover Community hall Pensioner units CDEP wages CDEP capital/recurrent Contribution to Council operating costs Community training BRACS Paving of airstrip	25,000 8,652 13,000 39,225 23,710 29,049 1,162,705 390,688 46,025 70,000 8,652 669,000
	60 years Council celebration	5,000
Youth Activities Services	Operating costs	38,306
Zuna Entertainment	Mills Sisters Tour	12,500

APPENDIX 2

Torres Strait Regional Authority Structure under Section 8 of the *Freedom of Information Act 1982*

This statement is correct as at 30 June 1998.

Establishment

The Torres Strait Regional Authority (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 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;

APPENDIXES

- (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;
- (I) 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 of the TSRA

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 (see chapter four for more details). 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 allocating funds within the region. These include:

- · loans and grants for enterprises;
- housing loans;
- 92
- 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 TSRA elected arm makes the decisions concerning funds allocation and the administrative arm is responsible for implementing those decisions. The administrative arm also ensures grants and loans are used in accordance with the purposes for which they are provided and 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 records, occupational health and safety, equal employment opportunity, industrial democracy, grants and personnel policy documents such as instructions from the Public Service Commissioner, the Department of Industrial Relations 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 Decision Making Principles, *Finance Procedures Manual*, and the Program and Administration Delegation Manuals.

APPENDIX 3

Expenditure against approved estimates

Estimate Item	Approved allocation (\$)	Actual expenditure (\$)*
CDEP	20,205,000	20,269,792
Other program**	11,703,000	13,387,380
Native Title	368,000	368,000
Running costs	2,546,000	2,743,321

 * 1997~98 Budget figure amended to include additional estimates, other grants and 1996~97 roll-over

** Includes Economic, Social and Cultural Programs

APPENDIX 4

Advertising and market research

National advertising of job vacancies was done, under a MoU, through ATSIC. The TSRA also used the local print media for advertising job vacancies, media releases and distributing the TSRA newsletter under Commonwealth Financial Guidelines.

One advertising agency, Morgan & Banks, was contracted to recruit a key person for the TSRA. The TSRA undertook no market research, polling or direct mailing to organisations.

APPENDIX 5

Staffing overview

- a. Staff classification breakdown as at 30 June 1998 (part-time and temporary staff)
- b. Nominal total staff as at 30 June 1998 (including part-time and temporary staff)
- c. Representation of EEO groups within salary levels as at 30 June 1998
- d. Senior Executive Service gains and losses in 1997~98
- e. Quantum and distribution of performance pay in 1997~98
- f. Staff training summary
- g. Consultants summary
- h. Organisation chart as at 30 June 1998

a. Staff classification breakdown as at 30 June 1998 (part-time and temporary staff)

Classification	Torres Strait Islander and Aboriginal			Non Torres Strait Islander and Aboriginal
	Male	Female	Total	Male Female Total
SES 1				
SOG A				
sog c				
PAO 2				
ASO 6				
ASO 5				
ASO 4				
ASO 3		1	1	
ASO 2	1		1	
ASO 1		2	2	
Sub total	1	3		
Total			4	

APPENDIXES

b. Nominal total staff as at 30 June 1998 (includes part-time and temporary staff)

Classification		Strait Isla d Aborigir			res Strait I d Aborigir		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	
SES 1 Sog a				1		1	
sog c				3		3	
PAO 1 ASO 6	2		2	3	1	1 3	
ASO 5	Z	2	2	5	1	1	
ASO 4 ASO 3	1	4 2	5 2	1		1	
ASO 2	1	1	2				
ASO 1		3	3				
Sub total	4	12		8	2		
Total			16			10	

c. Representation of EEO groups within salary level as at 30 June 1998

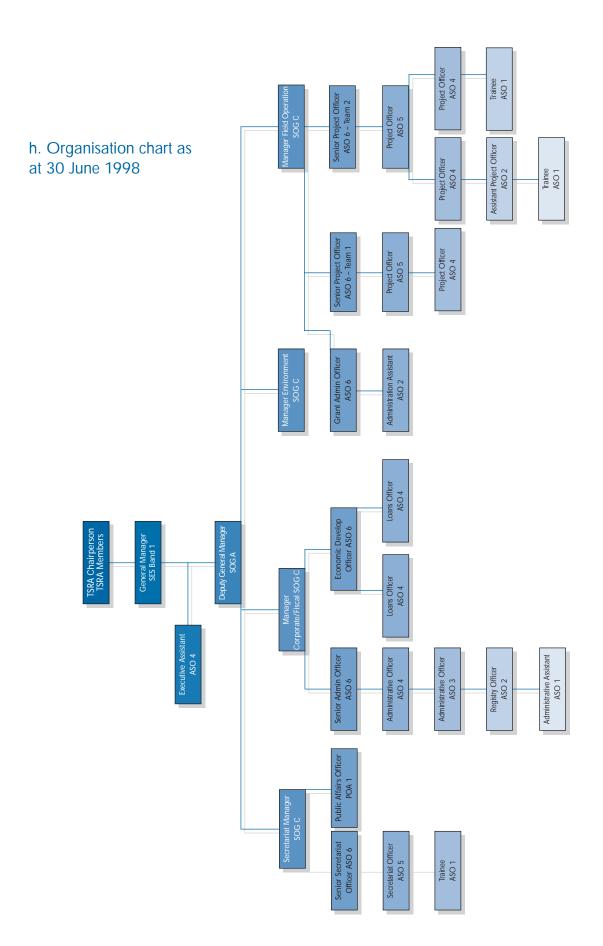
Salary	Women	TSI&A	NESB	PWD
Below \$26,457 (includes ASO1)	3	3	3	
\$27,091 to \$30,042 (includes ASO 2)	2	3	3	
\$30,043 to \$33,304 (includes ASO 3)	1	1	1	
\$33,3305 to \$37,341 (includes ASO 4)	5	6	6	
\$37,342 to \$40,675 (includes ASO 5)	3	2	2	
\$37,342 to \$40,675 (includes PAO 1)				
\$40,676 to \$47,591 (includes ASO 6)		2	1	

				APPENDIXES
Salary	Women	TSI&A	NESB	PWD
\$47,592 to \$55,170 (includes SOGC)			1	
\$68,497 (includes SOGA)				
\$82,120 (includes SES 1)				
Total	14	17	17	
NESB Non–English PWD People with	n-speaking Ba a Disability	ckground		
d. Senior Executiv No gains or losses for 1	0	ains and loss	es in 1997~	98
e. Quantum and No specific performanc 1997~98.				
f. Staff training su The net expenditure on not delineate staff mem	staff training of	-		

g. Consultants summary

The TSRA paid \$192,756 for the services of 14 consultants during $1997 \sim 98$, as detailed below:

vestigative audit	7,100
nance and budgetary advice	44,807
view of TSIMA and BRACS operations	9,120
DEP review	6,800
ommunity plans	5,300
DEP review	7,425
ommunity plans	9,840
ommunity plans BFS	7,170
onitoring reports (11 consultancies)	5,847
ommunity plans	1,800
gal Service Policy Framework	8,800
sport and recreation plans	15,000
asibility study Magun Seafoods	4,600
asibility study Fishing Vessel Dauan	2,680
	28,418
siness consultant Tamwoy	4,568
siness consultant Seisia Supermarket	19,431
siness consultant Hammond Mini Mart	4,050
	192,756
	vestigative audit nance and budgetary advice view of TSIMA and BRACS operations DEP review ommunity plans DEP review ommunity plans DEP review ommunity plans BFS onitoring reports (11 consultancies) ommunity plans gal Service Policy Framework sport and recreation plans asibility study Magun Seafoods asibility study Fishing Vessel Dauan onitoring reports and feasibility studies consultancies) esiness consultant Tamwoy usiness consultant Seisia Supermarket asiness consultant Hammond Mini Mart





Glossary of Abbreviations and Acronyms



GLOSSARY OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

Glossary of abbreviations and acronyms

AAT	Administrative Appeals Tribunal
ABC	Australian Broadcasting Corporation
AEDP	Aboriginal Employment Development Policy
Ailan Kastom	Island Custom
AM	Member of the Order of Australia
ASO	Administration Service Officer
ATSIC	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission
ATSIC Act	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission Act 1989
BFS	Business Funding Scheme
BRACS	Broadcasting for Remote Aboriginal Communities Scheme
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CDC	Commercial Development Corporation
CDEP	Community Development Employment Projects
CPSU	Commonwealth Public Service Union
СТР	Community Training Program
CEIS	Community Economic Initiatives Scheme
DEETYA	Department of Employment, Education, Training and Youth Affairs
DEST	Department of Environment, Sport and Territories
EAP	ATSIC Employee Assistance Program
EEO	Equal Employment Opportunity

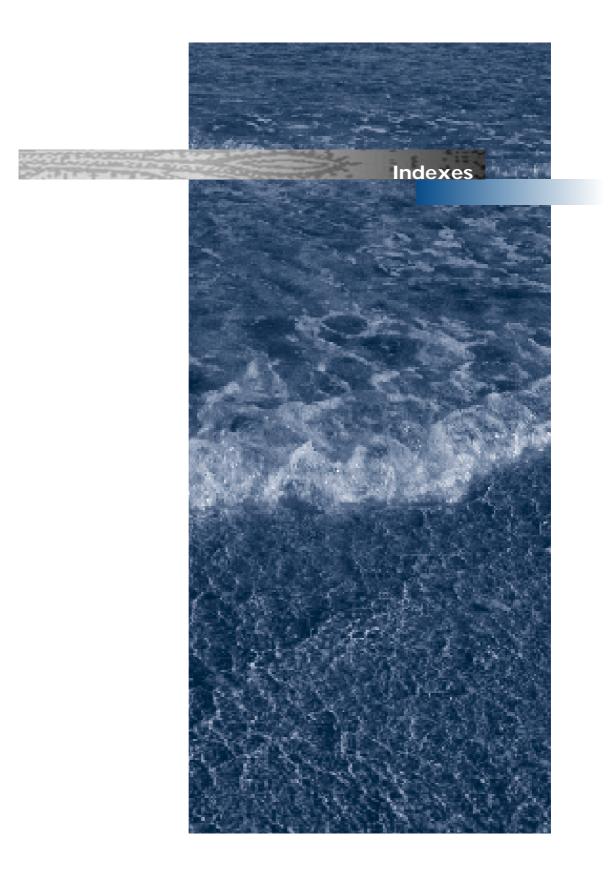
02

GLOSSARY OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

FOI	Freedom of Information
HIPP	Health Infrastructure Priority Projects
Hon	Honourable
IBIS	Islanders Board of Industry and Service
ICC	Island Coordinating Council
JAC	Joint Advisory Council (in relation to the Torres Strait Treaty)
Jnr	Junior
MCATSIA	Ministerial Council for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
Mura Kosker	Mura Kosker Sorority Incorporated
NAHS	National Aboriginal Health Strategy
NESB	Non–English-speaking Background
NPA	Northern Peninsula Area
MAO	Medal of the Order of Australia
OEA	ATSIC's Office of Evaluation and Audit
OH&S	Occupational Health and Safety
PAO	Public Affairs Officer
РКА	Port Kennedy Association
PNG	Papua New Guinea
PWD	People with a Disability
SES	Senior Executive Service

GLOSSARY OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

SOG	Senior Officer Grade
SPRITS	Strategy for Planning Resource Integration in the Torres Strait
TDA	Tamwoy Development Association
TRAWQ	Tamwoy, Rosehill, Aplin, Waiben and Quarantine
TSI&A	Torres Strait Islander and Aboriginal
TSIMA	Torres Strait Islander Media Association
TSIAB	Torres Strait Islander Advisory Board
TSNP	Torres Strait and Northern Peninsular Legal Service
TSRA	Torres Strait Regional Authority
TSY&RSA	Torres Strait Youth and Recreation Sporting Association



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