

## **TSRA BOARD MEETING 155 COMMUNIQUE**

**Tuesday 25 – Thursday 27 November 2025**

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**The Torres Strait Regional Authority (TSRA) Board Meeting 155 was held at the Joey Nona Conference Room, Torres Haus on Thursday Island, 25 – 27 November 2025.**

### **TSRA 2025-26 BUDGET APPROVED BY BOARD**

TSRA engaged Providence Consulting to review its internal budget governance processes, resulting in improvements such as a comprehensive funding control model aligned with internal budgets and Portfolio Budget Statements, allocation of appropriations and external revenue to programs, and a new budgeting tool that supports program planning based on projects, historical spending, and revenue for better current and forward-year management.

The Board agreed to support the TSRA in continuing to strengthen its financial management practices by endorsing the 2025-26 Internal Budget.

This budget sets the foundation for the forward years (2026-27 and 2027-28) based on current known assumptions from programs (internal budget) and Government (external budget).

The Board determines TSRA's strategic vision, policies and budget allocations as the political arm of the TSRA.

### **TSRA 2026 GOVERNANCE CALENDAR ENDORSED**

The TSRA Board endorsed the 2026 Governance Calendar with Board Meetings scheduled for March, June, September and November 2026.

In accordance with Section 144E(1)(a) of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Act 2005, the TSRA Chairperson must convene a minimum of four Board Meetings each year. The endorsed 2026 calendar was developed to meet this requirement while considering key dates including public and school holidays.

Key stakeholder meeting dates, such as Local Councils, have yet to be released. These dates will be incorporated into the Governance Calendar once confirmed.

The Board further agreed to its first Strategic Planning Workshop in February 2026. These annual workshops provide an opportunity for the Board to outline key priorities and shape the future direction of the organisation.

### **TSRA BOARD WELCOMES AIATSIS CHAIR AND CEO**

The Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS), Chief Executive Officer Leonard Hill introduced Karl Hampton, the newly appointed Chairperson to the TSRA

Board and shared an overview of their strategic priorities and discussed their vision for the future of AIATSIS.

AIATSIS is an Australian Government statutory authority established under the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act (PGPA) 2013*. The Indigenous-led, national institute that celebrates, educates and inspires people to connect with the diverse history, cultures and heritage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australia.

### **ARMY AILAN COMMUNITY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM PRESENTATION**

The Australian Army's Major Caitlin McDermid and Warrant Officer Liam Wardle provided an exit engagement to the TSRA Board on the recent Army Ailan Community Assistance Program.

The 2025 Army Ailan Community Assistance Program (AACAP) is a historic partnership between the National Indigenous Australians Agency (NIAA), Australian Army and the TSRA. It was the first time the AACAP has been delivered in the Torres Strait, in the 29 years of the AACAP Program's operation.

Funded through the NIAA Indigenous Advancement Strategy, the Army delivered projects on three communities:

- Erub Community Hall and Kemus Road culvert
- Warraber Kup-Mari facility and 232 metres of road paving
- Poruma basketball court shelter and refurbishment of change rooms

In addition to the construction activity, the Army delivered paving and construction training to 50 residents and provided dental, physio and veterinary support to 244 dental patients, 72 physio patients and 102 veterinary patients.

### **TSRA RANGER TRANSITION**

The TSRA Board resolved to retain the Ranger Program under the TSRA and seek to secure direct funding investment beyond 2028. The Board consider this approach would maintain autonomy, ensure community representation, support region-wide environmental management, and preserve APS employment conditions for Rangers.

TSRA also reaffirmed its commitment to co-delivering the Land and Sea Strategy, strengthening partnerships, and transitioning two Indigenous Protected Areas by 2028.

### **FISHERIES ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

The TSRA Board supported the Fisheries Advisory Committee (FAC) to create a Torres Strait Fisheries Trust to hold all community owned Protected Zone fishing rights.

The proposed new model requires the new non-government entity (Charitable Trust) to register as a specific Quota Holder similar to the TVH (Transferable Holder) Sector and receives the TIB (Traditional Inhabitant Boats) Quota rights.

The Charitable Trust will determine the optimal use of the commercial fishing quota rights for the greatest community benefit. The establishment of the Charitable Trust will develop and grow Torres Strait Islanders interests in fisheries throughout the region.

The Board further agreed the TSRA communicate the decision to each of the 20 Torres Strait communities and provide feedback to the next Board meeting.

#### **TORRES STRAIT ISLAND REGIONAL COUNCIL DEPUTATION**

Torres Strait Island Regional Council (TSIRC) Deputy Mayor Councillor Ranetta Wosomo, Councillor Rocky Stephen and CEO James William met with the TSRA Board to focus on key priorities for Zenadth Kes.

The deputation addressed the Board on a range of issues including infrastructure, health, transportation and economic development.

The TSRA Board welcomed the opportunity to connect and continue working with TSIRC to progress shared priorities and aspirations for the region.

#### **CAPE AND TORRES HEALTH COMMISSIONING PRESENTATION**

Cape and Torres Health Commissioning (CaTHC) Chairperson, Aileen Addo, and Chief Executive Officer, Abbe Anderson, presented to the TSRA Board on the function and purpose of CaTHC.

CaTHC is an independent and community -controlled entity, focused on planning and purchasing health services based on local input and evidence. CaTHC will enable communities in the Torres Strait, Cape York and Northern Peninsula Area to have a greater role in health service planning and funding to better meet local needs and priorities.

CaTHC was created through the Torres and Cape Health Care (TORCH) Commissioning Fund project, a joint effort involving community leaders, the Queensland Aboriginal and Islander Health Council and the Commonwealth and Queensland governments.

#### **NEXT MEETING**

The Board agreed to their next meeting on 17-19 March 2026.