

TSRA BOARD MEETING 154 COMMUNIQUE

Tuesday 9 – Thursday 11 September 2025

The Torres Strait Regional Authority (TSRA) Board meeting was held at the Joey Nona Conference Room, Thursday Island, 9 – 11 September 2025.

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS: TORRES STRAIT MAJOR INFRASTRUCTURE AND OTHER PROJECTS

The TSRA Audit Committee reviewed the 2024-25 Financial Statements for the Torres Strait Major Infrastructure and Other Projects (TSMIOP) Trust Fund before TSRA Board endorsement and official signing by Chairperson George Nona.

The TSMIOP is the trust component of the TSRA financial statements, and the Audit Committee is delegated by the TSRA Board to examine the financial statements and determine they are a true reflection of the financial position of the TSRA at 30 June 2025.

The TSRA Board established an Audit Committee in compliance with:

- Section 45 of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (PGPA Act)
- *Public Governance and Accountability Rule 2014* (PGPA Rules)
- Section 17 *Audit Committee for Commonwealth Entities*.

NATIONAL INDIGENOUS AUSTRALIANS AGENCY UPDATE

Michael White and Shay Simpson from the National Indigenous Australians Agency (NIAA) provided an update on services and programs funded under the Indigenous Advancement Strategy (IAS) and review of working arrangements between NIAA and TSRA. The focus was on establishing a framework for cooperation to support operational-level working arrangements over the next 12 months and longer-term collaboration.

NIAA is the coordination point for National Agreement on Closing the Gap and implements Australian Government policies by ensuring ‘*Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are heard, recognised and empowered.*’

SEAFOOD PROCESSING TRAINING FOR LOCAL FISHERS

Local fishers will be invited to expand their skills with a five-day seafood processing course at TSRA Torres Haus on Thursday Island plus future sessions planned for Masig. The course covers cleaning and preparing seafood to standard, safe knife handling and equipment use and workplace health and safety.

The training is supported by the TSRA's Fisheries Program to enhance the region's wealth by managing and maintaining sustainable fishing industries and increasing employment and economic opportunities for Torres Strait Islander and Aboriginal people.

The Fish Processor Induction Skill Set course is from 29 September – 3 October and funded by the Department of Trade, Employment and Training (DTET) under Skilling Queenslanders for work.

Media release available at

www.tsra.gov.au/news/beyond-the-boat-seafood-processing-training-for-local-fishers/

TSRA BOARD WELCOMES INDIGENOUS BUSINESS AUSTRALIA CHAIR TO BOARD 154

Recently appointed Indigenous Business Australia (IBA) Chairperson, Darren Godwell, was introduced to the TSRA Board, sharing the main direction of IBA's new strategy and new legislative powers.

The IBA Board endorsed the agency's Toward 2030 Strategy in July with the Minister for Indigenous Australians signing off on the strategy in August. The published version will soon be available to view. The engagement was productive and positive with both TSRA and IBA?? agreeing to a stronger partnership to help expand economic opportunities and access to services for Torres Strait Islander and Aboriginal people in the Torres Strait region.

IBA purposes are outlined in section 146 of its enabling legislation, the *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Act 2005 (Cth)*:

- a) To assist and enhance Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander self-management and economic self-sufficiency.
- b) To advance the commercial and economic interests of Aboriginal persons and Torres Strait Islanders by accumulating and using a substantial capital asset for the benefit of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

STRAIT EXPERIENCE: A KEY CREATOR OF SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC CHANGE

Strait Experience co-founder, Fraser Nai, presented to the TSRA Board his company's vision and mission to strengthen visitor economy and tourism in the region.

As a leading tourism company in the region since 2021, Strait Experience has:

- sustainably connected thousands of tourists each year to the region
- supported more than 70 Torres Strait businesses/people, providing economic empowerment
- returned over \$400,000 to the region's emerging tourism businesses/people.



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The TSRA Chairperson commended Mr Nai on the success of the Strait Experience venture and welcomed regular updates to the Board.

COMMUNITY ENTERPRISE QUEENSLAND PRESENTATION

Community Enterprise Queensland (CEQ) Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Michael Dykes, and Chief Operating Officer (COO), Fred Gela, updated the TSRA Board on CEQ initiatives to address 'cost of living' challenges in the region including the Healthy Kai Kai, Healthy Living project.

The project is a TSRA and CEQ collaboration responding to community requests to build a sustainable local community nutrition and health lifestyle service – mobilising more action on ground across the Torres Strait and Northern Peninsula Area (NPA) to support healthy lifestyles and prevent chronic disease.

NEXT MEETING

The TSRA Board agreed to next meeting on 25-27 November 2025.