

# >>ABOUT THE NLC



Numbulwar dancer performing at the Telstra Art Awards, Darwin.

## >>ABOUT THE NLC

**T**he Northern Land Council is a statutory authority established under the *Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act 1976* representing the Aboriginal people in the north of the Northern Territory. It is also a representative body for the purposes of the *Native Title Act 1993*, and in this capacity the NLC also represents Aboriginal people living in the Tiwi Islands and on Groote Eylandt.

## >>HOW WE WORK

The Land Council has 78 elected members from communities throughout the Land Council's region, and five co-opted women's positions. Elections are held every three years, including the election of a Chairman, a Deputy Chairman and an Executive member representing each of the Land Council's seven regions. The Chairman is a full-time employee of the Council. The term of the ninth Full Council of the Northern Land Council is October 2001-October 2004.

Full Council Meetings are held twice each year, at which members determine the policy and direction the Land Council is to take and formally approve land use agreements to which traditional Aboriginal owners have given their consent. Executive and Regional Council meetings are held at various places in the regions between Land Council meetings.

The Executive Council is responsible for managing Council business between Full

Council meetings. The seven Regional Councils are responsible for decisions over local issues to the extent of their delegated power, and for recommendations to Full Council over other matters.

The Land Council's Chief Executive and staff are responsible for implementing Council decisions on policy direction and fulfilling the organisation's statutory responsibilities. The Land Council has regional offices in Palmerston, Katherine, Jabiru, Nhulunbuy, Tennant Creek, Ngukurr, Borroloola and Timber Creek. The head office is in Darwin.

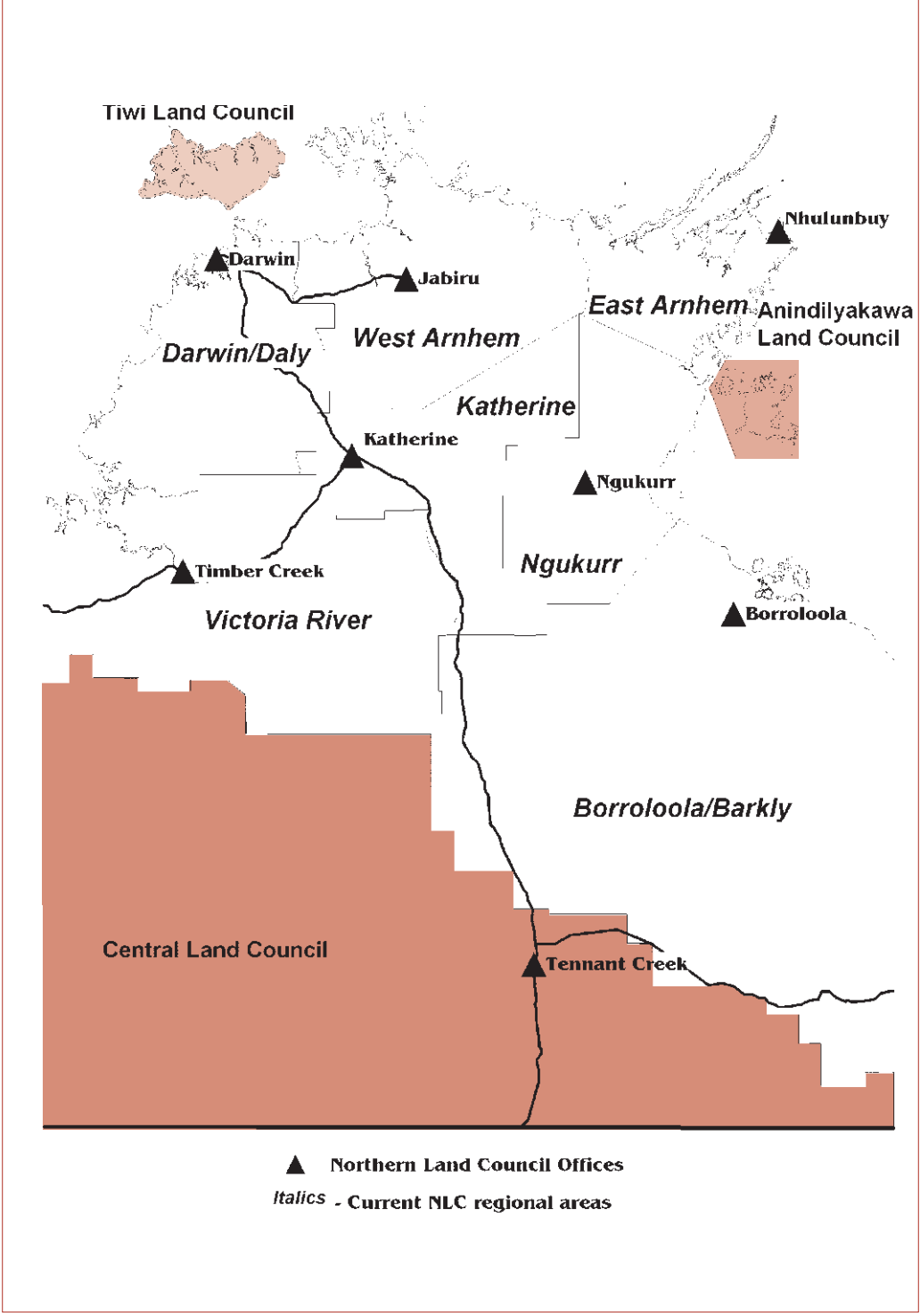
The Northern Land Council is part of the portfolio responsibility of the Federal Minister for Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs. The Honourable Philip Ruddock occupied this position until October 2003. The Honorable Amanda Vanstone now heads the portfolio and has done so for the majority of the reporting period.



*Women dancers at Barunga Festival.*



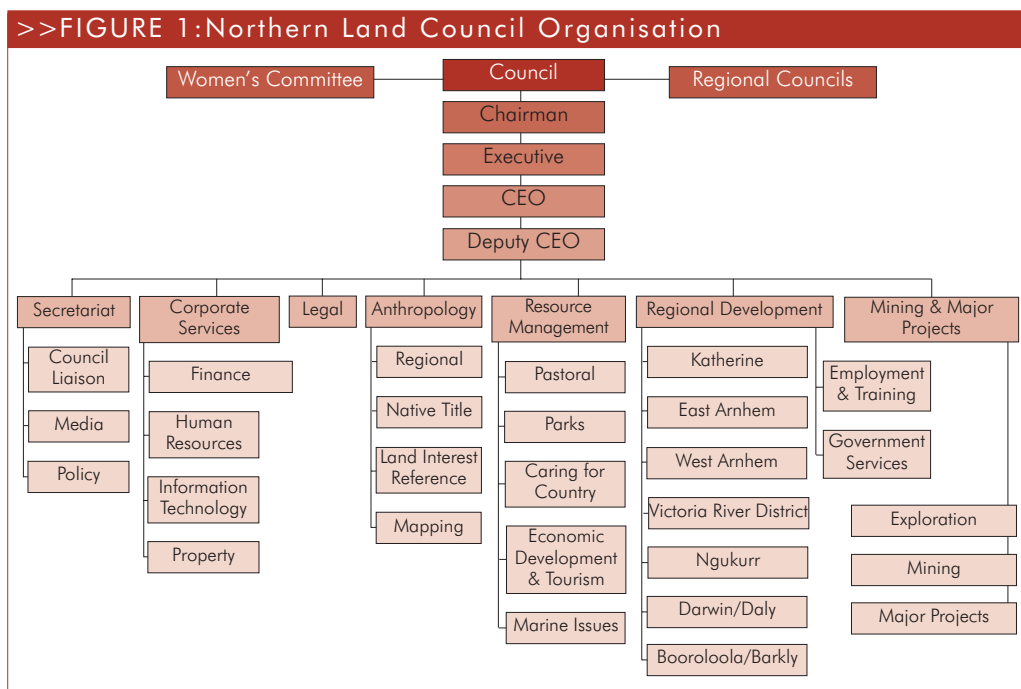
>>MAP 2:Regions and Regional Offices



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## >>WHAT WE DO

Section 23(1) of the *Land Rights Act* sets out the functions and responsibilities of the Northern Land Council. They are to:

- find out and express the wishes of Aboriginal people about the management of their land and legislation about their land;
- protect the interests of traditional owners of, and other Aborigines interested in, Aboriginal land;
- assist Aboriginal people to protect sacred sites, whether or not they are on Aboriginal land;
- consult traditional owners and other Aborigines interested in Aboriginal land and land under claim;
- negotiate on behalf of traditional owners with people interested in using Aboriginal land and land under claim;
- assist Aboriginal people claiming land and, in particular, arrange and pay for legal assistance for them;
- keep a register of Land Council members

and members of Aboriginal land trusts and descriptions of Aboriginal land;

- supervise and assist Aboriginal land trusts.

In carrying out its functions, the Land Council must consult with traditional owners and other Aborigines with an interest in the land. Landowners must give their consent before the Land Council enters into an agreement, or takes any action affecting their land.

The Land Council also has statutory responsibilities and duties to:

- attempt to conciliate disputes between Aborigines regarding land matters;
- hold in trust, and distribute to Aboriginal associations, statutory payments from the Aborigines Benefit Account (ABA) to communities affected by mining operations and income received on behalf of landowners under negotiated agreements;
- process applications for permits to enter Aboriginal land.



## >> FULL COUNCIL MEMBERS

\* Executive member

### BORROLOOLA/BARKLY (14 members)

Wombaya	Max Finlay *
Alexandria	Angus Limmerick
Borrooloola	Leonard Norman
Borrooloola	Roddy Friday
Borrooloola	Roy Hammer
Brunette Downs	Tony Green
Elliott	Kevin Neade (resigned, replaced by Suzanne Kenny)
Nicholson River	Michael Barclay
North Barkly	Azman Rory
Murranji	Jeffrey Dixon
Muckaty	Amy Lauder
Robinson River	Keith Rory
Rockhampton Dwn	Gordon Noonan
Women's Position	Nancy McDinny

### DARWIN/DALY (15 members)

Daly River West	John Sullivan *
Daly River South	John Daly (NLC Deputy Chairman)
Belyuen	Caroline Olsen
Naiyiu Nambiyu	Betty Daly
Daly River North	Eddie Shields
Darwin	Pauline Baban
Darwin	Rosemary Parfitt
Darwin East	David Kenyon
Darwin South	Fabian Hazelbane
Darwin South West	Margaret Daiyi
Pine Creek	Fred Muggleton (Jnr)
Peppimenarti	Harold Wilson (Jnr)
Port Keats North	Matthais Nermarluck
Port Keats	Felix Bunduk
Palumpa	Roger Wodidj

### EAST ARNHEM (17 members)

Yirrkala	Dhuwarrwarr Marika *
Gunyangarra	Galarwuy Yunupingu (NLC Chairman)
Blue Mud Bay	Jabani Lalara
Blue Mud Bay	Gilbert Marawili
Galiwin'ku	Johnny Barrmula
Galiwinku	Dick Munungu
Galiwin'ku	Alfred Wunbaya
Galiwin'ku	Don Wininba
Gapuwiyak	Wesley BandiBandi
Gapuwiyak	Donald Biningdjirri
Ramingining	Richard Bandalil
Ramingining	Jack Munyarirr
Yirrkala	Banduk Marika
Layna Homelands	Djambuwa Marawili

Milingimbi	Henry Djerrigal
Milingimbi	Alfred Birrinydja
Women's Position	Ruth Nunburrurr

### KATHERINE (8 members)

Katherine	Andy Andrews *
Barunga	Helen Lee (replaces former member, deceased)
Beswick	Veronica Birrell
Bulman	Apaak Peter Miller
Weemol	Phillip Ashley
Katherine	Noel McDonald
Mataranka/Djimbra	Robert Smiler
Women's Position	May Rosas

### NGUKURR (10 members)

Ngukurr/Roper	Kevin Rogers *
Hodgson/Roper	Vincent August
Numbulwar	Mujiji Nunggargalu
Ngukurr/Roper	Gordon Nawundulpi
Ngukurr/Roper	William Hall
Numbulwar	Samuel Ngalmi
Numbulwar	Moses Numamurdirdi
Nutwood/Cox River	Barney Illaga
Urapunga	David Daniels
Women's Position	Grace Daniels

### VICTORIA RIVER DISTRICT (7 members)

Yarralin	George Campbell *
Amanbidji	Peter Waterloo
Bulla	Raymond Long
Timber Creek	Elaine Watts
Yingwunarra	Vacant
Pigeon Hole	Jacky Anzac
Women's Position	Dora Griffith

### WEST ARNHEM (12 members)

Warruwi	Bunug Galaminda *
Gunbalanya	Kevin Buliwana
Gunbalanya	Isaiah Burrnali
Gunbalanya	Phillip Mikinj Mikinj
Kakadu	Mandy Muir
Cobourg	Reuben Cooper
Warruwi	Jenny Inmulugulu
Maningrida	Helen Williams
Maningrida	Dean Herreen
Maningrida	Charlie Brian
Maningrida	Morris Geinbarabara
Minjilang	Mary Yarmirr

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## >>NLC STRATEGIC PLAN

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The NLC's Strategic Plan was developed after widespread community consultations over a 12-month period. The Plan has been published and widely distributed to Aboriginal people in the NLC region and is available in both a Plain English and full format at Regional Offices.

During the year, work was undertaken on developing a new Strategic Plan based around the new Outcomes/Outputs Reporting Framework. The new NLC Full Council will consider the new Strategic Plan in the year ahead.

### 1. Land and sea acquisition: "GETTING COUNTRY BACK"

- A. Secure recognition of Aboriginal interests in land and sea resources.
- B. Acquire land and sea interests to meet the rights, interests and needs of Aboriginal constituents.

### 2. Land and sea management: "CARING FOR COUNTRY"

- A. In conjunction with traditional owners, assist in the management and development of their land and sea based resources; and
- B. Assist traditional owners who elect not to undertake particular development proposals on their country.
- C. Land disputes conciliation – provide effective support to conciliation of Aboriginal land disputes.

### 3. Accountability and representation: "BRINGING THE NLC TO THE PEOPLE"

- A. Council membership and procedures: Ensure Council is representative and accountable to constituents.
- B. Regionalisation: Enhance the socio-political position of regional Aboriginal population groupings to enable them to better determine priorities and directions regarding their future.

### 4. Advocacy and networking: "TALKING STRONG FOR OUR PEOPLE"

- A. Protect and enhance the rights of Aboriginal people in the NLC's region by representing their views and interests at local, national and international level.
- B. Facilitate entrenchment of Aboriginal legislative and constitutional rights at local and national levels.

### 5. Self-Determination: "MAKING OUR OWN DECISIONS"

Enhance the socio-political autonomy of Aboriginal people in the Northern Territory by:

- A. Regional Agreements.
- B. Local governance at community level.
- C. Cultural and social factors.

### 6. Economic independence

Assist Aboriginal people in development which utilises Aboriginal land and sea resources and leads to increased economic independence while maintaining resource and cultural integrity.

### 7. Education and awareness: "LETTING PEOPLE KNOW"

Provide information which empowers Aboriginal constituents to make free and informed decisions.

