



**NORTHERN  
LAND COUNCIL**

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# CORPORATE PLAN

2020/2021 – 2023/2024

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# Foreword

Our response to the COVID-19 pandemic showed that Northern Land Council (NLC) can lead from the front when it comes to working with both government and the non-government sectors to make good decisions for our First Nations people.

This corporate plan outlines our priorities to be a voice for the bush and build on existing and new partnerships. We will proactively manage country and facilitate opportunities for our constituents to secure real, sustainable benefits from their land, seas and waters.

We can only achieve these successes if our foundations are sound. Guided by the establishing foundations under the Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act 1976 (ALRA), Aboriginal Land Act (NT) 1978 and the Native Title Act 1973 (NTA) we will continue to consult with traditional owners and be responsive to their needs. To do this we will continue to invest in regionalisation, increase our presence in communities and provide better customer service to Aboriginal people across our regions.

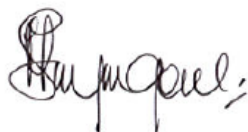
The purpose of this plan is to provide information about the activities that the NLC will undertake over the next four years. The plan describes our areas of purpose, areas of focus and objectives. The plan outlines what we will do to deliver on outcomes and how we will assess our progress and achievements.

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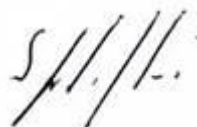
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# Statement of Preparation

As the accountable authority of Northern Land Council (NLC), we present the Corporate Plan, which covers the periods of 2020/21 – 2023/24, as required under paragraph 35(1)(b) of the Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013 (PGPA).



Marion Scrymgour  
Chief Executive Officer



Samuel Bush-Blanas  
Chairperson

## Submission of the Corporate Plan

The first confirmed case of COVID-19 in the Northern Territory (NT) was reported in Darwin in early March 2020. On 14 March 2020, in response to the COVID-19 threat the NLC's Executive Council determined to protect its constituents and announced that all existing non-essential permits would be suspended and no new non-essential travel permit would be granted.

By 26 March 2020, the Commonwealth Government implemented biosecurity zones which further restricted travel into remote areas.

In response, the NLC took extensive measures to protect Aboriginal people across the Territory. Senior management and resources were re-allocated to protect remote communities from the COVID-19 threats at a time when these resources would usually actively lead the corporate planning process. During this time the NLC assessed and issued over 3,000 essential worker permits, supported Aboriginal people to return and stay on country, conveyed essential health messaging in language across our region, conducted significant coordination with the Commonwealth and Territory Governments, and administered the emergency homelands assistance funding programs.

As a result, it was not reasonably practicable for the NLC to meet the ordinary time of submission and opted to defer submission in accordance with the PGPA Rule.

# The Northern Land Council

The NLC is an independent statutory authority of the Commonwealth under ALRA. It is responsible for assisting Aboriginal peoples in the Top End of the Northern Territory to acquire and manage their traditional lands and seas.

Initiated in the early 1970s to assist in the Royal Commission into reviewing appropriate ways to recognise Aboriginal Land Rights (Woodward Commission) in the Northern Territory, the land councils have gone on to claim back almost half of the land mass of the Northern Territory and 85 per cent of the coastline on behalf of traditional Aboriginal owners.

The largest land council in Australia, the NLC, is also the native title representative body (NTRB) pursuant to the NTA for the northern region covering approximately 605,819 square kilometres. This includes Tiwi Islands and Groote Eylandt, Ashmore and Cartier Islands Territory in addition to land that is not claimable under ALRA for example crown or other lands in towns, national parks and that vested in the Northern Territory Land Corporation including pastoral leases and offshore coastal boundaries of Australia's exclusive economic zone.

The NLC represents more than 36,000 Aboriginal people living in the NLC region. The large majority of the constituents, some 80 per cent are residents in remote locations. Traditional Aboriginal law is practiced in many communities, with most speaking an Aboriginal language as their first language. English is often a secondary language, reinforcing the importance of NLC's statutory role in providing Aboriginal people with a voice on issues affecting their lands, waters, seas, communities and livelihoods.

The NLC's statutory obligations under ALRA include to:

- Ascertain and express the wishes of Aboriginal peoples about the management of their land and legislation about their land
- Protect the interests of traditional Aboriginal owners of, and other Aboriginal people interested in, Aboriginal land
- Assist Aboriginal peoples to protect sacred sites, whether or not they are on Aboriginal land
- Consult traditional Aboriginal owners and other Aboriginal peoples interested in Aboriginal land and land under claim
- Negotiate on behalf of traditional Aboriginal owners with peoples interested in using Aboriginal land or land under claim
- Assist Aboriginal peoples to carry out commercial activities
- Assist Aboriginal peoples claiming land and, in particular, arrange and pay for 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; and
- Attempt to conciliate disputes between Aboriginal peoples regarding land matters.

- Hold in trust and distribute to Aboriginal associations statutory payments from the Aboriginals Benefits Account to communities affected by mining operations and income received on behalf of landowners under negotiated agreements.
- Any other functions as prescribed.

The NLC also holds the additional functions under the following legislations:

- Native Title Act 1993 (Cth)
- Aboriginal Land Act 1978 (NT)
- Kenbi Land Trust Act 2011 (NT)
- Cobourg Peninsula Aboriginal Land, Sanctuary and Marine Park Act 1981 (NT)
- Northern Territory Aboriginal Sacred Sites Act 1989 (NT)
- Territory Parks and Wildlife Conservation Act 2006 (NT)
- Northern Territory Civil and Administrative Tribunal Act 2014 (NT)
- Water Act 1992 (NT)
- Nitmiluk National Park Act 1989 (NT)
- Special Purpose Leases Act 1953 (NT)
- Atomic Energy Act 1953 (Cth)
- Pastoral Land Act 1992 (NT)
- Environment Protection & Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (Cth)

# Vision and Guiding Values

The most important responsibility of the NLC is to consult with traditional Aboriginal owners of Aboriginal land and other Aboriginal peoples with an interest in affected land. Landowners must give informed consent before any action is taken to affect their lands and seas.

The NLC works with traditional Aboriginal owners and Aboriginal people to care for country and protect, manage and promote the rights, interests and aspirations spread across seven regions. The role is to give traditional Aboriginal owners a strong voice and to ensure their land rights are both protected and enabled.

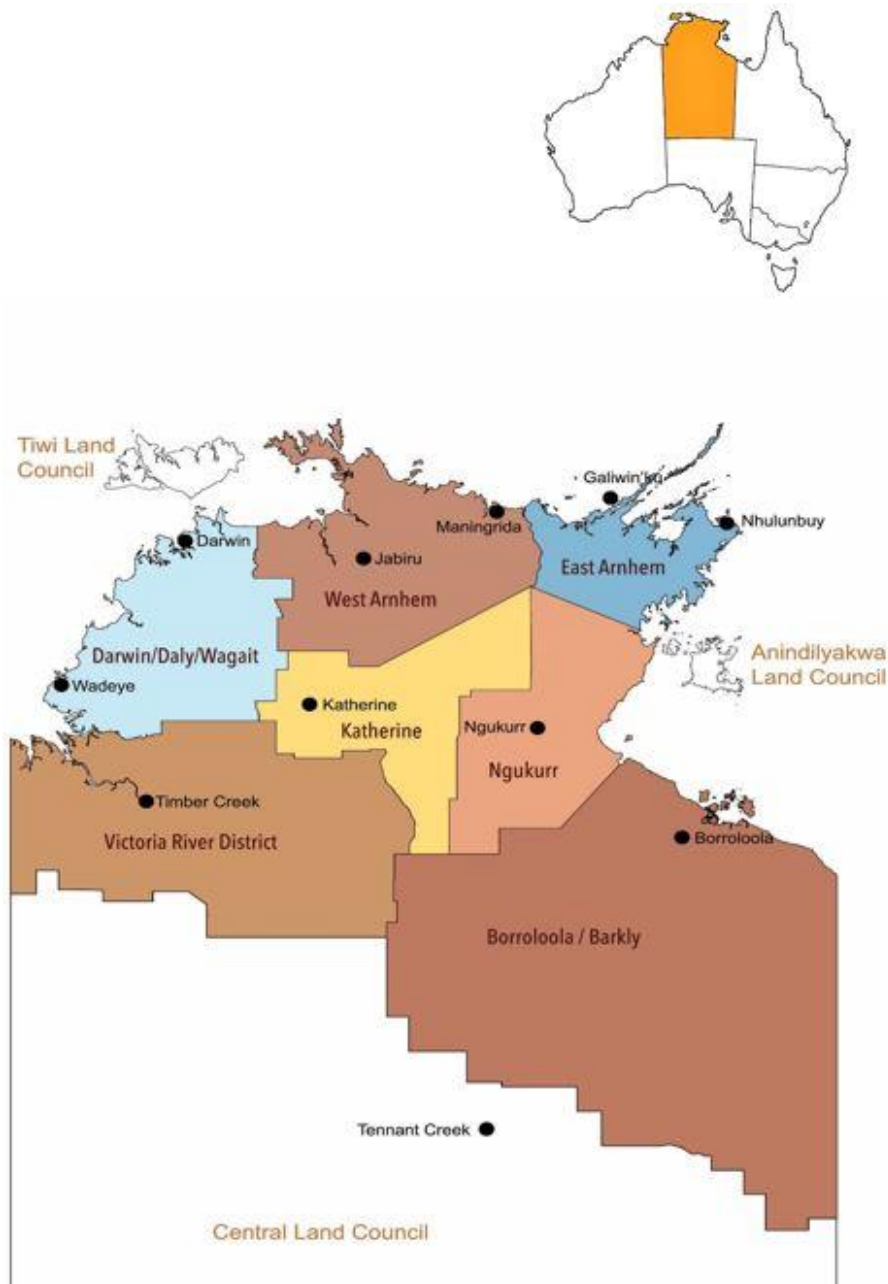


Figure 1 Northern Land Council and its seven regions

## **Vision**

A Territory in which the rights and responsibilities of every traditional Aboriginal owner is recognised and in which Aboriginal people benefit economically, socially and culturally from the secure possession of their lands, seas and intellectual property.

## **Mission**

To assist Aboriginal people in the north of the Northern Territory to acquire and manage their traditional lands and seas, through strong leadership, advocacy and management.

## **Values**

The NLC will:

- Consult with and act with the informed consent of traditional Aboriginal owners in accordance with ALRA
- Communicate clearly with Aboriginal people, taking into account the linguistic diversity of the region
- Respect Aboriginal law and tradition
- Be responsive to Aboriginal people's needs and effectively advocate for their interests
- Be accountable to the people that we represent
- Behave in a manner that is appropriate and sensitive to cultural differences
- Act with integrity, honesty and fairness
- Uphold the principles and values of social justice; and
- Treat our stakeholders with respect.



# Capabilities

The NLC Full Council is the supreme body that provides leadership and cultural integrity, through 78 elected and five co-opted women Council Members. Full Council meetings are held biannually. Council members determine policies and directions of the organisation, approve land use agreements and exploration and mining agreements for which traditional Aboriginal owners have given their consent. Elections are held every three years and the nomination and election process is undertaken in accordance with the Method of Choice approved by the Minister for Indigenous Australians.

The NLC **Chair**, **Deputy Chair** and **Executive** members representing each of the NLC's seven regions are elected at the **Full Council** meeting.

The **CEO** is responsible for managing the NLC's operations, implementing Full Council decisions and reporting back to the Full Council.

The corporate structure represents the operations of the land council. The structure is designed to ensure that services are delivered efficiently, ethically and transparently.

**Land and Law:** The Land and Law division comprises Legal Services, Anthropology and the Minerals and Energy branches. The division identifies and consults with traditional Aboriginal owners to secure and protect their rights and interests in land, water and sea. The team provides legal advice to the NLC and traditional Aboriginal owners; conducts land rights and native title claims; negotiates agreements; and pursues litigation where appropriate. It also provides advice and oversight of the NLC's obligations regarding mineral and petroleum exploration, production and associated activities as they relate to the ALRA and the NTA.

**Community Planning and Development Services:** The Community and Regional Services division is made up of the Regional Development, Caring for Country and the Community Planning and Development branches. The Regional Development branch is responsible for managing the NLC's network of regional offices beyond Darwin and performs a number of services in our remote communities. It coordinates funding allocations for ceremonies and funerals; processes permit applications; and facilitates the Section 19 proposal and assessment processes across the region. The Caring for Country branch hosts and provides administrative support to land and sea ranger groups across the NLC region; provides policy support and advice on land and sea management issues; and supports joint management of national parks. The Community Planning and Development branch supports Aboriginal land-owning groups to use payments from land use agreements to drive their own development and secure lasting benefits from their land, waters and seas.

**Corporate Services:** The Financial Services division provides financial and information communications technology (ICT) management across the NLC. It is also responsible for assets, fleet, infrastructure and facility management throughout our region.

**People Services:** The People Services division supports the NLC's diverse and growing workforce. It is responsible for the entire suite of human resources, including recruitment, industrial relations, payroll, learning and development and work health safety. The division is also responsible for information management, which includes archiving, records management and library.

**Executive Services:** The Executive Services division works collaboratively across the NLC to provide advice and professional services to the CEO. The division plays a key role in developing and monitoring NLC policy positions; managing relationships and communications with key external

stakeholders; and ensuring good governance practices. The division also leads a number of priority projects including regionalisation, remote housing, water rights reform, land use management and royalty and permit data management reforms.

NLC Organisational Structure October 2020

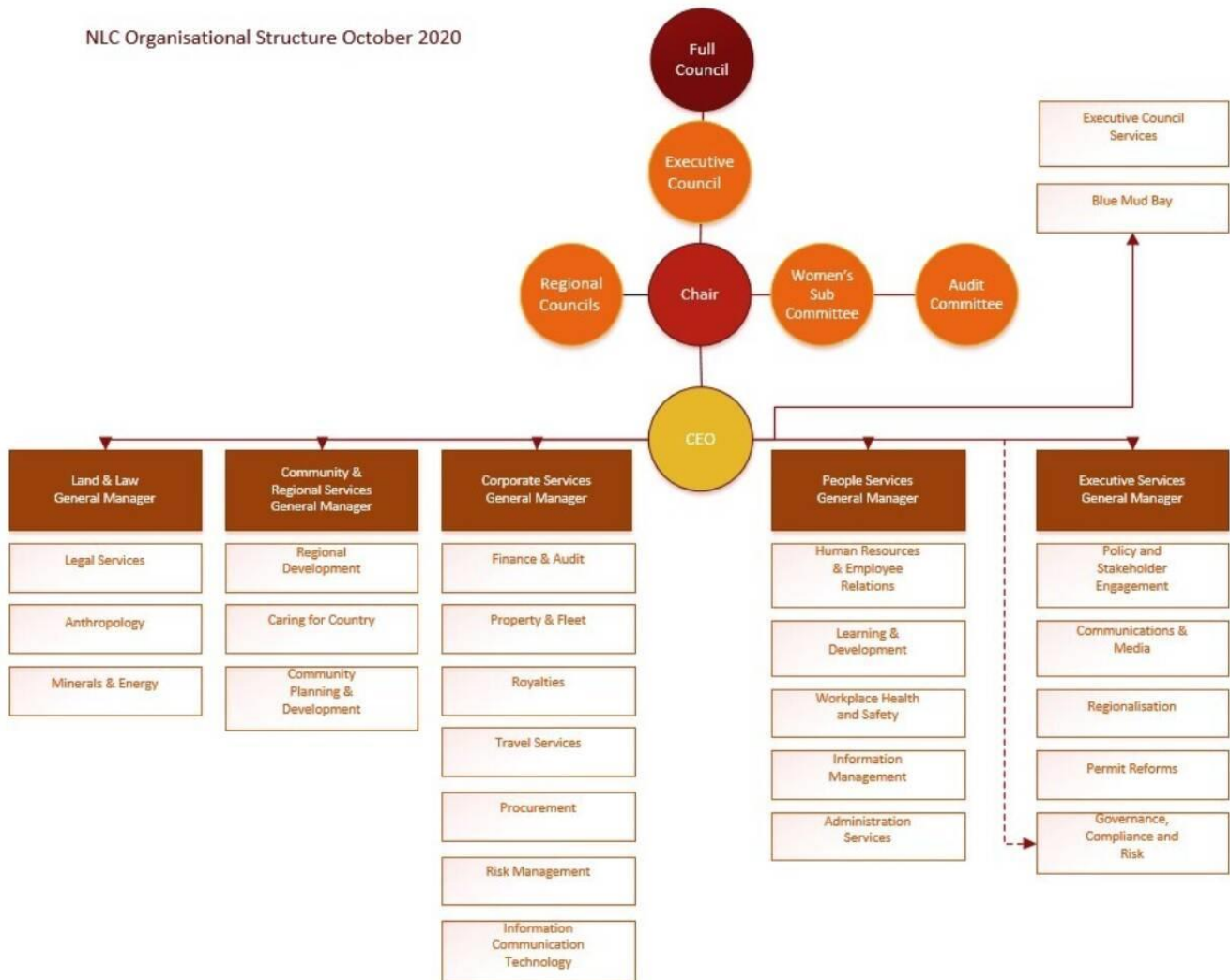


Figure 2 NLC Organisational Chart

# Operational Environment

## Environmental

Situated across the top end of the NT, the NLC covers a land mass area of approximately 605,819 square kilometres. Characterised by a sparse population scattered across a large area, rich, diverse and strong Aboriginal cultures, unique land tenure arrangements, extreme remoteness, often exacerbated by poor infrastructure and a climate that leaves some areas inaccessible for weeks or months of the year.

The region is spread across a wide range of landscapes from desert country to vast wetland systems, tropical savannah and coastal regions. Operating within the wet-dry tropics, the top end receives approximately 93 per cent (on average 1600mm) of its annual rainfall within the wet season months (October to April).

Adverse weather can substantially impact access and timing, including:

- Methods of travel and accommodation
- Communication methods for phone and internet services
- Availability of safe housing and accommodation for traditional owners, regional and visiting staff
- Meetings and consultations with traditional Aboriginal owners in very dispersed remote locations, including islands
- Capital motor vehicle, equipment and maintenance expenses; and
- Access to drinking water and affordable fresh food.

## Addressing the Social Disparities

The geographical and social environments in which the NLC operates is impacted significantly by the scattered populations of Aboriginal peoples. Seventy-five per cent of the constituent are disproportionality dispersed across very remote communities and small family settlement groups impacting the access and affordability to core services ranging from early childhood, education, health, employment and housing costs, compromising the level of health and wellbeing across the sub populations.

The NLC is responding by:

**Delivering the Regionalisation Strategy** Building the Bush is designed to realise the full potential of developing the Aboriginal estate. Decentralising the NLCs services will provide for a stronger regional presence and enable to better support Aboriginal communities. This program requires additional resources to be allocated to enable an investment in infrastructure for the NLC to increase its presence and service delivery in the across the regional and remote locations.

**Delivering the Community Planning and Development initiatives** To be successful, investment in community development programs must be co-designed to suit the distinctive circumstances of Aboriginal people in regional and remote areas, and lead to genuine work and business prospects.

**Initiating an informed youth council across the regions** Developing an Emerging Leaders Council (ELC) aims at building the confidence and understanding of emerging leaders through a range of experiences and leadership activities designed to build their capacity in becoming the next generation of leaders in their community and within the broader NLC organisation. The ELC will be a forum for emerging Aboriginal leaders, providing them the opportunity to identify and influence issues that affect their lives, community and country.

## **Social, Economic and Regulatory**

The growth and demand of the NLC's functions continues to increase, particularly across land use agreements. The NLC's people and financial resources are significant players which are required in order to meet the increasing demands for processing third party interests as well as advocating for the interests of the NLC constituents. As the volume of core work increases, there is a corresponding need for increased capacity to meet demand. While recent efficiency initiatives have delivered savings, increased funding is needed to meet the growing demand for services; otherwise, the efficiency of those services may be compromised.

**Land use agreements** Demand for NLC services continues to increase, particularly in relation to land use agreements. People and financial resources are allocated to allow appropriate consultation with traditional owners when expressions of interest are received. There is a corresponding need for increased resources and capacity to meet demand. While recent efficiency initiatives have delivered savings, increased funding is needed to meet the growing demand for services including negotiating and post agreement making compliance; otherwise, the efficiency of those services may be compromised.

**Mining exploration and production** Mineral and petroleum activities alone, have led to additional pressure in recruiting specialised staff to deal with large scale and highly technical projects, such as hydraulic fracturing and major infrastructure projects. Technical skills are required across each stage of the minerals and energy resource development process (exploration and feasibility, construction, operations, mine closure and rehabilitation, post-closure land use and handback of land). Importantly, major projects provide a stream of economic and social opportunities for the traditional Aboriginal owners.

**Economic development opportunities** The NLC continues to support and drive towards the success of economic development opportunities across its jurisdiction. Examples of works include Mirrar and its future works of Jabiru, Project Sea Dragon and its tourism developments across the north east Arnhem Land, the Jawoyn Association and its award-winning businesses in Katherine and Nitmiluk, the Larrakia Development Corporation and its initiatives for new innovative projects including a cultural centre in the Darwin region, the establishment of an Aboriginal Sea Company under the Blue Mud Bay agreement with the NT Government, opportunities for a new approach to improving remote housing and the further development of homelands, and the implementation of the Learning on Country program.

# Performance Statement

The NLC has identified four strategic areas of focus required to fulfil its vision, mission and purpose.

Given the NLC's core value of consultation, targets are often not the method to assess success. Trends will emerge from data collected over time to enable analysis of the NLC's performance. Some activities are projects scheduled to be completed by a set time while others are ongoing functions mandated by our establishing legislation.

The NLC reports on its performance in the Annual Report which is submitted to the Minister for Indigenous Australians and tabled in Parliament following the end of the financial year. Copies of the Annual Report are available on the NLC website [www.nlc.org.au](http://www.nlc.org.au)

## Summary of focus areas and objectives

### Focus area one: Advocate: Be a voice for Aboriginal people

Objective: 1.1 Facilitate and enable full participation by council members

Objective: 1.2 Influence policy, funding and service delivery decisions by Government and the private sector on key issues for traditional owners

Objective: 1.3 Protect and promote the rights and interests of Aboriginal people

Objective 1.4 Ensure Aboriginal rights and interests are considered to inform water planning and management decisions

Objective 1.5 Water is available and used for Aboriginal economic development

### Focus area two: Opportunity and Empower - Create real opportunities for Aboriginal people and traditional owners

Objective: 2.1 Consult, govern and lead participatory decision making by traditional owners

Objective: 2.2 Facilitate opportunities for economic development aligned with aspirations of traditional owners

### Focus area three: A strong NLC - Be a culturally rich and trusted organisation that gets things done and our community can be proud of

Objective: 3.1 Build the NLC's regional capacity – Regionalisation

Objective: 3.2 Strategically align contemporary HR practices into the organisation

Objective: 3.3 Celebrate Aboriginal culture and NLC history

Objective: 3.4 Develop and implement the NLC governance and compliance framework

Objective: 3.5 Deliver effective financial management

Objective: 3.6 Maintain an efficient and well supported ICT system

Objective: 3.7 Effectively manage fleet, vehicle, property and assets

Objective 3.8 Review and rationalise the record management systems

### Focus area four: Proactively manage country – Acquire, manage and protect traditional lands and waters in accordance with statutory functions

Objective: 4.1 Develop land management capacity and identify land use capability for every Land Trust and land of interest (Native Title)

Objective: 4.2 Delivery of best practice people and land management principles to develop Aboriginal Land Trusts within our Regions

Objective 4.3 Water is available and used for Aboriginal economic development

Objective: 4.4 Deliver the Blue Mud Bay (BMB) Implementation Action Plan

Objective: 4.5 Secure Land and Native Title Rights for traditional owners across the NLC Region

Objective: 4.6 Effectively manage visitors to Aboriginal Land Trust Land in accordance with the aspirations of traditional owners

Objective: 4.7 Deliver core anthropology services

## Focus area one: Advocate: Be a voice for Aboriginal People

### Objective: 1.1 Facilitate and enable full participation by Council members

Activities	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	Target metric to assess success in 2020/21 or targeted completion
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide leadership, good governance and cultural integrity</li> <li>Full, Executive and Regional Council meetings held during the year</li> </ul>	✓	✓	✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Target: 2 Full Council Meetings held</li> <li>Target: 6 Executive Council Meetings held</li> <li>Target: 12 Regional Council Meetings held</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Governance induction for all new members</li> </ul>	✓	✓	✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Measure: Number of member inductions</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Governance training for Executive Council members</li> </ul>	✓				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Measure: Number of members trained</li> </ul>

### Objective: 1.2 Influence policy, funding and service delivery decisions by Government and the private sector on key issues for traditional owners

Activities	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	Target metrics to assess success in 2020/21
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide leadership and advocate for legislative and policy reform to ensure access and equity.</li> </ul>	✓	✓	✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of working groups, steering committees and reference groups participated in</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop internal policy positions through informed research, consultation with Council Members and engagement with traditional owners.</li> </ul>	✓	✓	✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ongoing activity</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In partnership, develop and monitor the implementation of the National Partnership Agreement on Closing the Gap.</li> </ul>	✓	✓			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Jurisdictional Target &amp; Priority Reform Implementation Plan 2021/2024</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monitor the implementation and reporting on the National Partnership Agreement on Remote Housing</li> </ul>	✓	✓	✓		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ongoing activity</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Proactively engage with governments and their infrastructure development program to support land access and aspirations of traditional owners</li> </ul>	✓	✓	✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ongoing activity</li> </ul>

### Objective: 1.3 Protect and promote the rights and interests of Aboriginal people

Activities	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	Target metrics to assess success in 2020/21
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support recognition of Aboriginal people in the Australian Constitution and Voice to Parliament.</li> </ul>	✓	✓			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Target completion 2021/22</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engage traditional owners in developing a Northern Territory Treaty Negotiating Model.</li> </ul>	✓	✓			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Target completion 2021/22</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Raise awareness of the interests and issues of Aboriginal people through effective communications and marketing.</li> <li>Protect and promote the rights to land and waters that have been fought and won through Native Title and land claims.</li> </ul>	✓	✓	✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Measure: number of external publications/documents released</li> <li>Measure: number of social media interactions with NLC channels</li> <li>Measure: number of successful determinations</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop and implement Place Names Engagement Framework</li> </ul>	✓	✓			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Target completion 2021/22</li> </ul>

### Objective: 1.4 Ensure Aboriginal rights and interests are considered to inform water planning and management decisions

Activities	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	Target metrics to assess success in 2020/21
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop and implement projects to document cultural water requirements for key catchments in order to inform government-led water planning and management processes.</li> </ul>	✓	✓	✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Target completion 2023/24</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support traditional owners to be active participants on water committees and in decision-making forums.</li> </ul>	✓	✓	✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Target completion 2023/24</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop policy positions for actions that have potential to significantly impact the rights and interests of Aboriginal people (eg floodplain harvesting policy position).</li> </ul>	✓	✓			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Target completion 2021/22</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Seek opportunities and funding to support Aboriginal Ranger programs to include water monitoring activities.</li> </ul>	✓	✓			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Target completion 2021/22</li> </ul>

### Objective 1.5 Water is available and used for Aboriginal economic development

Activities	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	Target metrics to assess success in 2020/21
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advocate government for broadening of eligible land to be considered under the Aboriginal Water Reserve.</li> </ul>	✓	✓			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Target completion 2021/22</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with government to resolve regulations and ensure the Aboriginal Water Reserve policy is enshrined in legislation.</li> </ul>	✓				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Target completion 2020/21</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop an approach to governance arrangements, consent requirements and benefit sharing for use of water from the Aboriginal Water Reserve and implement accordingly.</li> </ul>	✓	✓			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Target completion 2021/22</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Seek funding opportunities to support and develop Aboriginal Water Reserve governance structures.</li> </ul>		✓	✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Target completion 2023/24</li> </ul>



Activities	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	Target metrics to assess success in 2020/21
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support Aboriginal enterprises to access and use water from the Aboriginal Water Reserve for economic development.</li> </ul>		✓	✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Target completion 2023/24</li> </ul>

## Focus area two: Opportunity and Empower - Create real opportunities for Aboriginal people and traditional owners

### Objective: 2.1 Consult, govern and lead participatory decision making by traditional owners

Activities	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	Target metrics to assess success in 2020/21
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide neutral and/or independent expert advice to help inform the free prior and informed consent of traditional owners, Full Council, Executive Council and Regional Council</li> </ul>	✓	✓	✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Target: Consultations held with relevant traditional Aboriginal owners and affected people and native title claimants and holders.</li> <li>Measure: Consultations held within legislative, legal and or bi-annual scheduled timeframes</li> <li>Measure: Number of land use agreements tabled for Full Council decision.</li> <li>Measure: Report on 5-10 year consultation trend by consultations and engagement of estate groups</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop NLC consultation practices, resources and methodology being culturally appropriate and best leading practice.</li> </ul>	✓	✓	✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ongoing activity</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evaluate satisfaction of traditional owners with NLC consultation practices and methodologies</li> </ul>		✓		✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evaluation conducted every two years</li> </ul>

**Objective: 2.2 Facilitate opportunities for economic development aligned with aspirations of traditional owners**

Activities	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	Target metrics to assess success in 2020/21
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assist Traditional Owner groups to apply for grants and lodge section 19 applications</li> </ul>	✓	✓	✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Measure: Number of groups assisted</li> <li>Measure: Number of successful projects commenced</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Deliver current Community Planning and Development projects</li> </ul>	✓	✓	✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Measure: Number of groups investing in project opportunities in each region</li> <li>Measure: Number of projects</li> <li>Measure: Amount of investment by traditional owners</li> <li>Measure: Percentage of investment expended to date</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facilitate economic opportunities through timely presentation of land use agreements to traditional owners</li> </ul>	✓	✓	✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Measure: number of land use expression of interest proposals received</li> <li>Measure: number of land use agreements executed</li> <li>Measure: number of land use agreements executed to Aboriginal Enterprises</li> <li>Measure: quantify and record the trend of economic benefit received by traditional owners.</li> </ul>

**Objective 2.3 Develop and maintain partnerships with companies, funding bodies and Aboriginal enterprises which enhance the delivery of NLC services to traditional owners.**

Activities	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	Target metrics to assess success in 2020/21
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop terms of reference and or engage in formal memorandum of understanding with third parties</li> </ul>	✓	✓	✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ongoing activity</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Seek and explore partnerships that will deliver improved outcomes for traditional owners</li> </ul>	✓	✓	✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ongoing activity</li> </ul>

**Objective: 2.4 Identify and support career and development pathways for Aboriginal people within the NLC region**

Activities	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	Target metrics to assess success in 2020/21
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Design an evidence-based and certified CFC career pathways programs.</li> <li>Design a series of career pathway programs targeting youth, women and older adults</li> <li>Implement and monitor the series of programs across the regions</li> </ul>	✓	✓			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Target completion 2021/22</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engage with remote communities to develop pathways through Learning on Country programs and other NLC programs</li> </ul>	✓	✓	✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Target: 11 Learning on Country programs funded</li> <li>Measure: number of remote community schools engaged with the NLC</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Initiating an informed youth council across the regions</li> </ul>		✓			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Target completion 2021/22</li> </ul>

## Focus area three: A Strong NLC - Be a culturally rich and trusted organisation that gets things done and our community can be proud of

### Objective: 3.1 Build the NLC's regional capacity – Regionalisation

Activities	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	Target metrics to assess success in 2020/21
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain a regional office network to provide a one stop shop and conduit for remote regional Aboriginal people</li> </ul>	✓	✓	✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Measure: Number of regional offices</li> <li>Measure: Number of staff representing the different branches located in regional offices</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide responsive customer service to Traditional Owners and native title holders and the general public across the NLC Region.</li> <li>Establish a process to evaluate the satisfaction of Traditional Owners and native title holders with NLC customer service</li> </ul>	✓	✓	✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Measure: customer satisfaction levels</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify and consult with traditional owners and where required submit s19 for land and housing development and refurbishment in Maningrida, Wadeye, Galiwinku, Timber Creek, Elliott and Borrooloola</li> </ul>	✓	✓			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Target completion 2021/22</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Secure funding for tender-ready documents and project management for                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Katherine Regional Service Hub (KRSH)</li> <li>Nhulunbuy Regional Service Hub (KRSH)</li> <li>Regional office upgrades (Maningrida, Wadeye, Galiwinku, Timber Creek, Elliott)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	✓	✓			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Target completion 2020/21</li> <li>Target completion 2021/22</li> <li>Target completion 2021/22</li> </ul>

### Objective: 3.2 Strategically align contemporary HR practices into the organisation

Activities	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	Target metrics to assess success in 2020/21
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop, pilot and implement a well-defined, all-inclusive NLC induction framework</li> <li>Develop a well-defined, all-inclusive NLC [onboarding] induction framework pack in partnership with NLC constituents</li> <li>Pilot the quality and effectiveness of the induction [onboarding] pack</li> </ul>	✓	✓			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Target completion by 2021/22</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide a suite of training opportunities for NLC staff</li> </ul>	✓	✓	✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ongoing activity</li> </ul>

### Objective: 3.3 Celebrate Aboriginal culture and NLC history

Activities	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	Target metrics to assess success in 2020/21
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>NLC History Project (celebrating 50 years)</li> </ul>	✓	✓			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Target completion 2021/22</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support major community events</li> </ul>	✓	✓	✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Measure: Number of major community events supported</li> </ul>

Activities	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	Target metrics to assess success in 2020/21
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Administer the funeral and ceremonial fund</li> </ul>	✓	✓	✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Measure: number of funeral and ceremony applications approved</li> <li>Measure: applications processed within five business days</li> </ul>

### Objective: 3.4 Develop and implement the NLC governance and compliance framework

Actions	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	Target metrics to assess success in 2020/21
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop and implement a Governance and Compliance framework which includes clear roles and responsibilities, sustained scrutiny and reporting framework</li> </ul>	✓	✓	✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ongoing activity</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure robust relevant and current corporate policies and procedures</li> </ul>	✓	✓	✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Target: 100% of corporate policies current</li> <li>Target: Policies and procedure reviewed by specified date</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement the NLC risk management framework               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify, monitor, review and report on financial risks on a quarterly basis</li> <li>Identify, monitor, review and report on risks, including WHS on a quarterly basis</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	✓ ✓	✓ ✓	✓ ✓	✓ ✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Target: Quarterly updates of NLC Risk Register</li> <li>Target: Quarterly WHS Committee Meetings and reports</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Compliance with the Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013 (PGPA Act)</li> </ul>	✓	✓	✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ongoing activity</li> </ul>

### Objective: 3.5 Deliver effective financial management

Activities	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	Target metrics to assess success in 2020/21
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Manager and adhere to the delivery of corporate accounting requirements including               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Secure and allocate funds to enable NLC operations to achieve its purpose</li> <li>Grant acquittals</li> <li>FBT &amp; GST</li> <li>Variance analysis</li> <li>Unmodified auditor's report</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	✓ ✓ ✓ ✓	✓ ✓ ✓ ✓	✓ ✓ ✓ ✓	✓ ✓ ✓ ✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Measure: Financial reports presented and approved by the Full, Executive and Regional Councils on a quarterly basis</li> <li>Target: Annual Audit completed within reporting timeframe</li> <li>Target: 100% of GST and FBT lodgment are made on time (monthly and annually)</li> <li>Target: All grant acquittals submitted on time</li> </ul>

### Objective: 3.6 Maintain an efficient and well supported ICT system

Activities	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	Target metrics to assess success in 2020/21
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement, monitor and support sustainable IT systems to enable operations across the NLC.</li> </ul>	✓	✓	✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ongoing activity</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Resolve ICT issues in a timely manner</li> </ul>	✓	✓	✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ongoing activity</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement a streamlined solution to effectively track and manage land use agreements and disbursements accessible to all NLC divisions</li> </ul>	✓	✓	✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Target completion 2023/24</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement an integrated information platform to enable managers and staff to access information online make informed decisions</li> </ul>		✓			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Target completion 2021/22</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Manage NLC's records and archival obligations</li> </ul>	✓	✓	✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ongoing activity</li> </ul>

### Objective: 3.7 Provide an efficient asset management and fleet service to all NLC staff; ensure all vehicles are appropriately serviced, equipped and maintained

Actions	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	Target metrics to assess success in 2020/21
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop monitoring and surveillance compliance measures across all service schedules, data input and vehicle booking request systems</li> </ul>	✓	✓	✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Target: Fleet pool fully registered and scheduled services completed</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Effectively manage NLC assets</li> </ul>	✓	✓	✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Target: Incident reports regarding fleet, vehicle, property and assets to increase by &gt;25%</li> </ul>

## Focus area four: Proactively Manage Country – Acquire, manage and protect Traditional lands and waters in accordance with statutory functions

### Objective: 4.1 Develop land management capacity and identify land use capability for every Land Trust and land of interest (Native Title)

Activities	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	Target metrics to assess success in 2020/21
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Desktop analysis of land use capability data for each Land Trust developed by other agencies.</li> </ul>		✓	✓		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Target: 1 Complete Land Trust analysis by region</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Resource the development of healthy country plans</li> </ul>	✓	✓	✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Target: 2 annually</li> </ul>

### Objective: 4.2 Delivery of best practice people and land management principles to develop Aboriginal Land Trusts within our Regions

Activities	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	Target metrics to assess success in 2020/21
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support Traditional Owner engagement in resource management and developing land use planning guides.</li> </ul>	✓	✓	✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ongoing activity</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Incorporate property planning into Land Use Agreement terms and conditions</li> </ul>		✓	✓		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Target completion 2022/23</li> </ul>

Activities	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	Target metrics to assess success in 2020/21
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support and deliver Aboriginal Ranger programs across NLC regions</li> <li>Manage Indigenous Protected Areas within our regions</li> <li>Support National Park Joint Management</li> </ul>	✓	✓	✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Measure: Number of ranger groups supported</li> <li>Measure: number of Aboriginal employees</li> <li>Measure: number of Aboriginal Protected Areas managed</li> <li>Measure: Area of land and water under community Aboriginal control and management</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement the Women's Ranger Employment Strategy</li> </ul>	✓	✓	✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Target: 50% of rangers employed by the NLC are women</li> <li>Target: Women rangers are represented in every NLC ranger groups</li> <li>Target: All NLC ranger groups employ Indigenous women in one or more leadership roles (eg coordinators, assistant coordinators, or senior rangers)</li> <li>Target: All women rangers have access to the full range of training opportunities</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop and implement the Youth Ranger Engagement Strategy</li> </ul>	✓	✓	✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Target: All ranger groups employ custodians to evaluate and prioritise youth engagement activities during work planning</li> <li>Target: All ranger groups have a comprehensive list of youth engagement activities included in their 2020-21 work plans</li> <li>Target: All youth engagement partnerships with the NTG or other organisations have formal terms of reference</li> <li>Target: All rangers and their coordinators have a valid Ochre card number on file with NLC</li> <li>Target: All ranger groups are serviced by a professional social worker</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Build capacity of NLC Ranger Groups to be actively involved in all land and water monitoring activities undertaken on Aboriginal lands.</li> <li>Develop the Ranger Workforce Development Strategy</li> </ul>	✓	✓	✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ongoing activity</li> <li>Target completion 2021/22</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improved employment &amp; business outcomes for Aboriginal People</li> </ul>	✓	✓	✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ongoing activity</li> </ul>

Activities	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	Target metrics to assess success in 2020/21
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assist to develop and implement an effective Minerals and Energy Cultural Monitor Program</li> <li>Increase informed consultation and participation of Aboriginal peoples in activities including research, liaison, negotiation, steering committees and reference groups.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓</li> <li>✓</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓</li> <li>✓</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓</li> <li>✓</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓</li> <li>✓</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ongoing activity</li> <li>Ongoing activity</li> </ul>



#### Objective: 4.4 Deliver the Blue Mud Bay (BMB) Implementation Action Plan

Actions	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	Target metrics to assess success in 2020/21
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Action the Blue Mud Bay Implementation Plan agreement between NLC by 31 December 2022</li> <li>Aboriginal Sea Company Established</li> </ul>		✓			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Target completion 2021/22</li> </ul>

#### Objective: 4.5 Secure Land and Native Title Rights for traditional owners across the NLC Region

Actions	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	Target metrics to assess success in 2020/21
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Progress unresolved land claims in the NLC region</li> </ul>	✓	✓	✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Measure: number of claims recommended for grant</li> <li>Measure: number of claims being pursued by NLC staff</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Progress unresolved Native Title Claims in the NLC region</li> </ul>	✓	✓	✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Measure: number of unresolved claims</li> <li>Measure: Number of resolved claims</li> <li>Measure: Summary of groups represented</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Perform litigation as required</li> </ul>	✓	✓	✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Measure: number of litigations during the reporting period</li> </ul>

#### Objective: 4.6 effectively manage visitors to Aboriginal Land Trust Land in accordance with the aspirations of traditional owners

Actions	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	Target metrics to assess success in 2020/21
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop an online permit management system</li> <li>Effectively manage visitor and permit requests in accordance with traditional owner aspirations</li> <li>Hold consultations with traditional owners to establish new permit agreement zones for</li> </ul>	✓	✓	✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Target: Online permit management system launched by July 2020</li> <li>Measure: number of permit agreements zones</li> <li>Measure: number of permits issued</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Secure funding and expand the NLC ranger compliance program</li> </ul>	✓	✓			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Target completion 2021/22</li> </ul>

#### Objective: 4.7 Deliver core anthropology services

Actions	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	Target metrics to assess success in 2020/21
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain the Land Interest Register</li> </ul>	✓	✓	✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Measure: number of Land Interest References requested</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide anthropologic advice to the NLC and traditional owners</li> </ul>	✓	✓	✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Measure: number of Land Interest References released</li> </ul>

Actions	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	Target metrics to assess success in 2020/21
					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Measure: number of documents held in the LIR</li> <li>• Measure: number of anthropological advices issues</li> <li>• Measure: number of ongoing disputes conciliation under management</li> <li>• Measure: requests for mapping requests</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Royalty reform: Engage, identify, review and implement key royalty reforms</li> <li>• Engage with consultants to realign the functionalities of the Anthropology branch</li> </ul>	✓	✓	✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Target completion: 2023/24</li> </ul>

# Performance and Risk

The NLC operates in a challenging environment across the life of this Plan. Success in achieving the outcomes is dependent on:

- Guaranteed real funding levels from government and user pays policy;
- Secure government funding and support for the principles expressed in the ALRA and Native Title Act;
- Secure and on-going government funding to ensure compliance with the Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013 (Cth);
- The capacity to recruit and retain skilled and motivated staff; and
- Performance reporting on the NLC plans.

The NLC has installed strong performance reporting processes to ensure transparency and accountability on the progress of the agreed actions set.

Plans			Reporting	
Plan	Duration	Review	Report	Audience
Strategic Plan	5-years		Annual	Executive Council
Corporate Plan	4-year	Annually	Bi-annual	Audit and Risk
			Annual	Commonwealth Government
Annual Report	1-year	Annually	Annual	Commonwealth Government

**Improving performance:** In line with its values, the NLC is committed to continuous improvement practices in both services provided and the ways in which they are done. This is achieved through a combined approach including planning, reviewing and improving the systems and processes, assessing the workforce and improving relationships with traditional owners, Aboriginal people and key stakeholders.

## Risk management framework

Sound risk management practices delivered by the NLC enables risk to be understood and managed proactively, optimising success and minimising threats. NLC members are responsible for setting the policy and oversight of the risk management framework. This is important as it integrates the process for managing risk into the organisation’s governance, strategic planning, management, reporting processes, policies, and organisational culture of which complies with the Australian/New Zealand Risk Management Standard (AS/ANZ ISO 31000:2018).

The Executive Team is responsible for ensuring good governance through the delivery of transparent management systems. Processes and controls are in place to minimise risks and impacts to the organisation’s strategic objectives and desired operational outcomes.

The NLC has in recent years established and implemented a systems approach as a means to provide oversight and manage risk. This includes a risk management plan, risk framework, risk policy, risk analysis and risk register. In addition, the NLC initiated a *Governance, Compliance and Risk* team to drive the day to day management, performance and accountability measures across the organisation

**The Audit Committee** plays an important oversight role in monitoring financial risk, compliance and financial performance in conjunction with NLC Management. The risk management framework is an evolving document and has been updated in line with the Strategic Plan.

**The Committee Charter** sets out the membership, role and purpose of the Audit Committee, which also acts as an advisory body on operational and financial management controls and reporting responsibilities, oversees internal and external audit functions, and provides independent and objective assurance that the NLC's systems, processes and risk management strategies are robust and comply with acceptable standards and government requirements.

The CEO attends Audit Committee meetings as an observer. The Australian National Audit Office (ANAO) have a standing invitation to attend all Audit Committee meetings.

## Resourcing of the Corporate Plan

**Funding:** The Aboriginals Benefit Account is the primary funding source for the NLC including funding for Native Title Representative Body functions and special purpose grants.

**Key partners and stakeholders** Successful delivery of this Corporate Plan relies on having a good understanding of the operating context and establishing and maintaining strong relationships with its stakeholders.

Stakeholders having varying level of interest and impact in different ways on how the NLC operates. It continues to establish new and improve existing relationships with key stakeholders to maximise the outcomes associated with the delivery, resourcing and functionality of its services to its Aboriginal people. This is achieved by working collaboratively with the traditional owners, Aboriginal organisations and government and non-government partners.

Level	Stakeholders
Commonwealth	Minister for Indigenous Australians Department of Finance
Territory	Northern Territory Government Central Land Council Anindilyakwa Land Council Tiwi Islands Land Council
Regional	Municipal and Regional Councils