



*Empowering our people in our decision, in our culture, for our future*

The TSIRC team welcome all of our readers to **Strait Talk** for 2016. We look forward to sharing all of our staff achievements and community success stories.



**Environmental Health Workers (EHW's) present at the 10th National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Environmental Health (NATSIEH) Conference.**

Thank you to all of our staff that continue to share the great work that is taking place in our communities. We invite any of our community members, stakeholders and staff to get in touch at [info@tsirc.qld.gov.au](mailto:info@tsirc.qld.gov.au) if you have a positive story you would like to share with our readers.

EHW Coordinator, Philomena David and Environmental Health Workers Susannah Mosby, Lama Trinkoon, Crossfield Manuel and William Bero presented **'Our Vision: Empowering our people, in our decision, in our culture, for our future'** at the 10<sup>th</sup> NATSIEH Conference in Coffs Harbour last October.

The presentation - based on Council's own vision statement - highlighted the teams ongoing successes in empowering their community teams to deliver high quality and at times challenging programs by building community awareness and support. The team also demonstrated how their programs are culturally relevant to the environment and culture of the Torres Strait.

Executive Manager Community Services, David Abednego; Manager Environment and Health, Ewan Gunn and EHW Administration Officer, Kathy Cochran were also in attendance to support their team.

The team received accolades for their presentation and Council were especially proud to witness our very own EHW Coordinator, Philomena David receive the prestigious award for Leadership in Environmental Health. This award is generously sponsored by the enHealth Working Group on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Environmental Health.

*Mina big eso to our EHW team for their tireless work and commitment to improving our communities and making them a safer and healthier place to live in.*



**INGU KOZEN MINGU THONAR**

Ngalmun Lagau Minalar Art Centre | Kubin MOA Island

Mersane Loban lives on Moa and is originally from Badu and says "I was first introduced to art at high school and was taken by the many different styles and techniques used in the creation of art. I have always loved drawing and developing different styles in my spare time. I believe that art is a significant way for me as a Torres Strait Islander woman to express myself. I hope the results demonstrate this."



You can find out more about Mersane and the other excellent artists who work with Moa Arts | Ngalmun Lagau Minalar through the Moa Arts Facebook page or website: <http://moart.com.au>



*Whole of family approach for our IKC's*

Our Indigenous Knowledge Centre (IKC) team all came together for Professional Development workshops in Cairns joining in with other teams from across the Cape and the Strait last October. One of the highlights was the Ozobots workshop, an innovative and fun educational tool for kids.

The common interest amongst the group was how to include a 'whole of family' approach to strengthen meaningful engagement across the IKCs. TSIRC's Manager for Community Services, Mary Gela, says the IKCs are a great way for Elders to reconnect with their community. Mary encourages her team to contribute programs that are inclusive of all age groups and strengthen culture.

Many great programs are already taking place including language groups and homework clubs. One of our Hammond Island employees Toni Pearson wants to see more activities for young mums and their kids, such as reading together after school.

The IKC team talked about how to make IKCs more engaging by doing simple things such as bringing educational posters down to children's eye level which could trigger important discussion with their parents.

The biggest challenge that IKCs face is not ideas for activities but adequate funding to get programs up and running for their communities.



**METHOD:**

In a large saucepan fry off your finely chopped onion, garlic and ginger until brown.

Add chicken pieces and let it steam in the pot with the lid on so that it absorbs the garlic and ginger flavours.

Splash in your soy to get a nice colour and flavour. Let it cook out on medium heat and continue stirring.

While the chicken is cooking add vermicelli to a bowl with boiling water from the kettle, with just enough water to cover the vermicelli. Let vermicelli sit until soft. Cut the vermicelli in half with scissors.

Once the chicken is half cooked add 1 tablespoon of chicken stock powder, allow flavour to cook then add vermicelli, add more soy as needed.

Simmer for another 10 minutes until chicken is cooked and lastly add your bamboo shoots. Remove from the heat.

May serves her Simur with steamed jasmine rice. Family members dish out their own meal from the shared pot at the table. This makes a nice family meal that can be enjoyed together any day of the week.

May Mosby from our Human Resources team is sharing her Simur Chicken recipe for those of us who haven't cooked it before. Simur Chicken as most of you will know is one of the most popular Ailan dishes eaten in the Torres Strait. There are many methods of cooking this dish; May shares hers here:

*Simur Chicken*



KAI KAI

**INGREDIENTS:**

- 1kg chicken pieces (cut to size)
- 1 large brown onion
- 4 cloves garlic
- 1 thumb size ginger
- Vegetable Oil
- Pun Chun Premium Dark Soy Sauce (or any dark soy)
- 250g packet Vermicelli
- 1 small tin of bamboo shoots
- 1 tablespoon of chicken stock powder

*Serves a family of 5*



May has also recently graduated with a **Dual Diploma of Business and Management**. She is pictured here with her outstanding team of graduates.

(L-R) Danie Savage, Kubin; May Mosby Cairns; Maggie Kelly, Iama; Mokathani Lui, Poruma; Ranette Nawakie, Badu



Council was in Mer for the October Council Meeting and to celebrate the opening of the Ardour Akair Meta, the new waiting area at Mer Airport.

Ardour Akair Meta was built by the TSIRC Building Services Unit and painted by Mer artists. Au esoau to the Traditional Owners, TSRA and the people of Mer.



## 2016 Local Elections WELLBEING & MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT

In March 2016, Local Council elections will be taking place across Queensland. People who are registered to vote will elect representatives to serve as Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Councillors for their local Council. Voting for your preferred candidates is a great way for you to influence the future of the region.

If you are 18 years and over, by law, you must register to vote. You can register to vote or check your details here: <https://www.ecq.qld.gov.au/voters-and-voting/enrolment>.

A returning officer will be appointed to the Torres Strait region. The officer's job is to help you if you have any questions about the elections and registering to vote. The officer's details will be made available in your community prior to elections.

Learn how to vote here: <https://www.ecq.qld.gov.au/voters-and-voting/how-to-vote>

### Do you want to be a Councillor?

It is important that Council have a diverse range of people and opinions to ensure that the broad interests of the community it represents are heard and acted upon. Nominations to stand as a Councillor close soon so if you are interested it is important to put forward your nomination as soon as possible.

To be eligible to stand as a Councillor you must:

- be an Australian citizen and over the age of 18 years.

- currently residing and enrolled in the local government area for which you are nominating.

You may be disqualified from being a Councillor under certain circumstances. You can check with the Electoral Commission on 1300 881 665.

If you are eligible and would like to find out more please get in contact with the Electoral Commission of Queensland on 1300 881 665 or visit <http://dilgp.qld.gov.au/so-you-want-to-be-a-councillor/how-to-nominate-for-council-election.html> for more information.

If you or anyone you know is having a hard time and needs support there are several services you can reach out to for help.

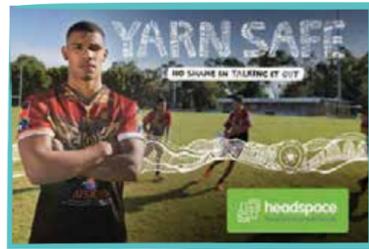
### For our staff

We encourage our staff and their families to use the Employee Assistance Program (AccessEAP) which is a free and confidential counselling support service **24 hours a day, seven days a week.**

Professional counselling will provide a safe, supportive and accepting environment during what may feel like a lonely, confusing and difficulty time. To make an appointment to speak to a counsellor please call **AccessEAP on 1800 81 87 28.**

### For young people in our communities

**headspace** helps young people aged 12–25 years who are going through a tough time.



**headspace** centres are located across Australia and help you to access the right type of health worker for your needs.

**ehespace** provides confidential online and telephone support service seven days a week and supports young people and their families going through a tough time. The service is free of charge.

Contact [ehespace.org.au](http://ehespace.org.au) or call 1800 650 890.

[www.headspace.org.au](http://www.headspace.org.au)

### Family Support Services:

The Family Support Unit offers a wide range services such as family support, anger management, mediation, drug and alcohol counselling, advocacy, education and promotion.

They are located at the Primary Health Care Centre on Douglas Street and can be contacted on 07 40690400.

Family Support team members are: Marsat Ketchell, Ivy Trevallion, Ivy Wapau, Rob Trevallion and Terry Abednego.

### Mental Health Services:

If you require counselling, support for mental health, alcohol, tobacco and other drug issues you can contact Queensland Health's Mental Health & ATODS Team. The team are based on Thursday Island at 161 Douglas Street "Old Court House" **Ph: (07) 4069 0695.**

### USEFUL PHONE NUMBERS

**in an EMERGENCY dial 000 for police or ambulance**

TI Hospital	(07) 4069 0200
Bamaga Hospital	(07) 4069 3166
Lifeline Telephone Counselling	13 11 14
Cairns Base Hospital: After Hours Psychiatry	(07) 4226 0000

## A very Kinnini Christmas



Torres Strait Island Regional Council staff and Councillors were blessed to participate in Kirriri's Community Christmas Tree event as part of the December 2015 Council Meeting. Kids received Christmas presents from Santa and his helpers under their Community Christmas Tree.

Mayor Gela and Councillor Sabatino hosted the community event and fireworks spectacular and thanked both their families and community for all of the hard work that went in to make such a well-organised event possible.

A large table of traditional island foods was shared with the community and guests with a night of dancing, carols by candlelight, sibuwani (gift-giving ceremony) and performances by local youth groups. The highlight of the night was a spectacular display of fireworks funded by Torres Strait Island Regional Council for the community and its children.

Koeyma Eso to Kirriri for sharing such an amazing night with us all.

**TSIRC thanks Sea Swift for their generous sponsorship in freighting the fireworks over to Kirriri.**



## Dance Kombat

is a program designed to create fun, safe, culturally appropriate activities for ladies with babies and young children, to encourage physical fitness and recreation within the Torres Strait.

Our Health and Wellbeing Manager, Ella Kris, explains: "The program addresses a number of key factors for a demographic that can struggle to find opportunities for physical fitness and recreation. The training component of the project was focused on building the skills of women, overcoming cultural protocols and enabling participation in programs and activities that inspire other women and girls.

"This engagement allows women in community to be provided with activities specific to their unique skill sets, strengths and circumstances such as catering for their child care requirements. Women are given an extra opportunity to be empowered through specific attention and consideration being given to this gender focused initiative."

The program was held on Hammond Island from 12–15<sup>th</sup> October 2015, with 15 ladies from Erub, Mer, St Pauls, Kubin, Warraber, Mabuiag, Saibai and Thursday Island in attendance.

TSIRC was very happy to officially open the **Aragun Child Care Centre** on Badu on the 18<sup>th</sup> of November 2016. The building was opened by Mayor Gela, in the presence of Cr Baira and blessed by Bishop Nona. Koyema Eso to the children and families of Badu.



## Kapu goeyga St Pauls!



Staff from Finance, Housing and Administration brushing up on their Excel training at St Pauls last November. The training was provided by LGAQ's Jack Coad.

L-R: Yancy Tamu, Housing – Warraber; Renee Pearson, Housing – Poruma; Peli Ware, Housing – St Pauls; Mary Wapau, Finance – St Pauls; Trainer – Jack Coad; Tina Tabuai, Admin – Saibai; Melita Ware, Finance – St Pauls; Kay Noah, Admin – Mer; Anna Mene, Finance - St Pauls.

This is what the **FUTURE** looks like!



TSIRC's Building Services Unit took on six new apprentices from our communities who have been hard at it building five new family homes in Boigu with more communities to follow. The homes are being built as part of the National Partnership Agreement for Remote Indigenous Housing (NPARIH) scheme.

Lloyd Sunderland, our General Manager, Building Services Unit said the group selected was "an elite and well-balanced group who had strong foundations to go forward with". Part of the selection criteria was good high school scores. Lloyd not only wanted to teach skills but also nurture the apprentices' confidence to "hold their heads up alongside any other tradie."

"I have seen hundreds of tradies go through, but there has been a flaw in the process. We will give the apprentices a balanced trade experience with contracts on the mainland to ensure mainstream experience, alongside the learning that comes with the challenges faced when working remote."

Mayor Fred Gela said that "sadly for many years construction companies have just been satisfying the bare minimum of Indigenous Employment Policies, bringing in FIFOs and employing a local to just push the wheelbarrow around. We want our people to become skilled tradespeople. Well over 50% of our building team are Indigenous."

The Mayor acknowledged the apprentices and the "massive sacrifice they are making to embrace opportunities." All of the apprentices spend months away from their families to build homes for other communities in the region. Mayor Gela also spoke of the importance of building community role models and the long history and enormous contributions done by hard working Torres Strait Islander people.

While visiting Boigu for this story our team watch the local kids circling around the new homes on their BMXs, they are looking up at the young apprentices building homes for their families. A community couldn't ask for better role models.

## TSIRC'S RESCUE ROO'S

TSIRC have partnered up with **Queensland Ambulance Services** (QAS) to deliver safety programs to children in our communities. RESQ R000's (Rescue Roo's) is a basic children's first aid program to be developed for our school-age children from prep to year six. Our Healthy Lifestyle Officers (HLOs), who hold First Aid Certificates and Working with Children Blue Cards also updated their CPR skills with QAS in order to deliver the program.

The program aims to support safer communities by teaching primary school children how to identify, prevent and respond to accidents and medical emergencies. The learning objectives have been aligned with Education Queensland's syllabi for Health and Physical Education and the Australian Resuscitation Council Guidelines.

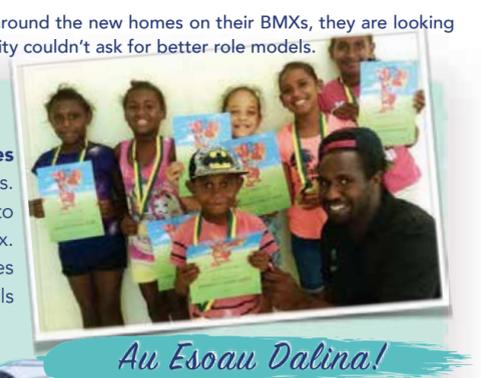
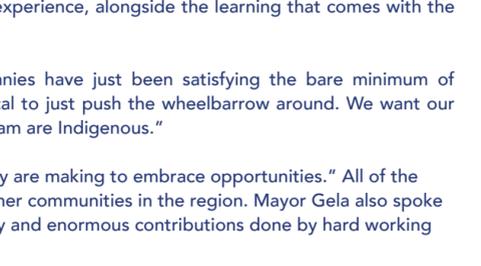
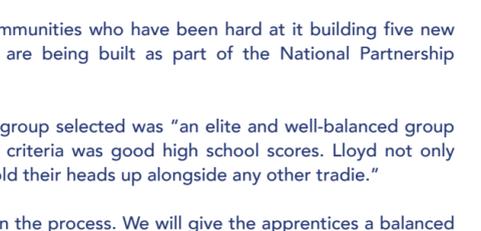
**The fundamental message is that the first step in an accident or medical emergency is to seek the assistance of an adult if possible and always call triple zero (000) for accidents and medical emergencies.**

Kids receive a certificate and a gold medallion at the end of the session.

Ella Kris | Manager Health and Wellbeing

BACK L-R: SAMAT KETCHELL, Building Trades Mentor; NATALEE THORNE, MRAEL Apprentice Service Provider, RICHARD KETCHELL, Apprentice Carpenter, Erub.

FRONT L-R: LAVERT GELA, Apprentice Carpenter, Hammond Island; MICHAEL WARE, Apprentice Carpenter, St Pauls; LUKE TREVALLION, Apprentice Plumber, TI; KINAUR AKIBA, Apprentice Electrician, Dauan, MARSAT KETCHELL, Apprentice Painter and Decorator, Erub.



## Au Esoau Dalina!

Our Healthy Lifestyle Officer, Alex Blanco interviewed Dalina Barsa who recently retired from Council after seven years of service.

"It has been privilege to work for Torres Strait Island Regional Council. I am grateful to work with such a supportive team. I would like to personally thank my colleagues and the community of Mer Island who supported me throughout my journey as Divisional Manager. I am glad to be part of such a fantastic team. I will cherish all of my experiences with Council. I look forward to seeing you in future."