

Job Spot

- Childcare Group Leader (Toddler) - Badu
- HACC Home Helper - Dauan
- HACC Home Helper - St Pauls
- HACC Home Helper - Boigu
- HACC Home Helper - Badu
- HACC Home Helper - lama
- HACC Home Helper - Mabuiaig
- Casual Engineering Officer/ Plant Operator - Mabuiaig
- Divisional Manager - Masig
- Assistant Children Services Worker – Badu Island

For position descriptions please contact May Mosby on:

Phone: (07) 4034 5731 Fax: (07) 4034 5726

Email: recruitment@tsirc.qld.gov.au



Torres Strait Islanders are encouraged to apply



TORRES STRAIT ISLAND REGIONAL COUNCIL
 PO Box 7336, Cairns QLD 4870 or
 PO Box 501, Thursday Island
 Qld 4875
 Ph: (07) 4048 6200
 Fax: (07) 40691868

Councils and communities are working together to "Get Ready" to make Queensland the most disaster resilient state in the nation.

get ready
 QUEENSLAND

Get Ready Day will be held on 20 October.

\$200,000 has been set aside for exceptional ideas that connect the community and help people to plan and prepare for local community resilience-building activities.

This is not a once a year program but a change in the way Queenslanders face problems. By building a prepared and resilient Queensland population it is anticipated there will be:

- fewer lives lost
- less damage to property
- less economic impact
- faster return to work
- fewer days when businesses are closed
- a safer Queensland

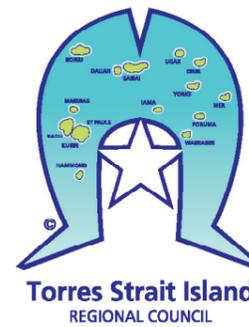
Get Ready – Exceptional Ideas Resilience Initiative closing date: 30 November 2013 and Successful ideas announced: January 2014. To apply see www.dlgcr.qld.gov.au/resilience



We wish to share our news with all of our constituents including those on Facebook. So if you have an account, don't forget to 'Like' Torres Strait Island Regional Council! Share, keep updated and give us feedback!



TSIRC value the opinions and ideas of its constituents. We welcome all feedback on any Council related topics and are willing to publish story ideas or images that you send to us. For further information email info@tsirc.qld.gov.au



Strait Talk

Kawau

Kuikumbaigau

Yangukudul

The official newsletter of the
 TORRES STRAIT ISLAND REGIONAL COUNCIL

September 2013

What's inside...



YUMI



Mayor not happy with sea claim decision

Eddie Koiki Mabo once said that 'what is on the land, what is below the land, what is in the sea and what is under the sea, belongs to my people.'

The High Court handed down a decision on August 7, 2013 recognising that native title rights to the sea, including rights to fish commercially, are not extinguished by a legislative regime that otherwise requires a permit for commercial fishing (Leo Akiba on behalf of the Torres Strait Regional Seas Claim Group v Commonwealth of Australia [2013] HCA 33).

Torres Strait Island Regional Council Mayor Fred Gela said that Torres Strait Islanders have a right not only to access their lands and seas, but also to control how it is accessed by others.

"We also have a right to control our own destinies which are inseparable from our lands and seas; this entails a right to absolute, unfettered exclusivity and control," Mayor Gela said.

The High Court held that there was "nothing in the character" of a conditional prohibition on taking fish (such as the requirement of a licence) that meant that it extinguished the native title right.

A claim to sea country in the Torres Strait has been a long time coming. The original Mabo case in 1992 included a sea claim, but the portion of the claim relating to the sea was not pursued to the High Court for technical legal reasons.

The current claim, known as the Torres Strait Sea Claim, was lodged in 2001 and has now been through two Federal Court decisions before its appeal to the High Court.

Mayor Gela said that The Sea Claim is a first step, but by no means the last.

"Torres Strait Islanders are one with their lands and seas, but I wish to see in my lifetime, the laws of the Commonwealth of Australia and State of Queensland recognise and protect this spiritual partnership, in turn realising the vast golden economic opportunities contained within for the betterment of all Torres Strait Islanders," he said.

"My father has always said to me 'if you are going to do something, do it properly or not at all.'"

"The Sea claim has further recognised that the claimant's native title rights extend from domestic rights to hunt and fish for sustenance, but also to commercial rights to sell such produce," Mayor Gela said.

"If this was the unqualified outcome, the decision would have been historic as the commentary has suggested.

"Unfortunately, the High Court qualified this finding in also declaring that the right to sell marine produce commercially was still subject to traditional fisherman and hunters first obtaining State and Commonwealth fisheries license," he said.

Mayor Gela also said that a failure to do so could result in severe fines being imposed on traditional hunters and fisherman.

"This is a disappointing outcome as it merely documents what is presently, and has been for some time, the situation in the Torres Straits and provides nothing new," he said.



An Enterprise Content Management (ECM) System provides total integration of electronic and paper based corporate records.

TSIRC are currently training staff to use the system to make recording data and files more efficient.

Key functions that some of the staff who were trained have learnt, were being able to register a document, search for a document and edit a document, while they have also learnt other functions to enable some of the following activities to be performed more efficiently:

- Plan
- CAD Drawing
- Video
- Web Page
- Film
- Map
- Photograph
- Email
- Staff rosters
- Incoming letters
- Purchase orders
- Meeting minutes
- Invoices
- Budget reports

McGrath foundation partnership

A partnership has been created between the McGrath Foundation and the Masig Youth 4 Life group to promote research into the cure for breast cancer through fundraising.

Masig Youth 4 Life is now an official partner of the McGrath Foundation and TSIRC is a sponsor of to assist with essential expenses associated with planned events.

The partnership will be an ongoing arrangement with Masig Youth 4 Life planning to promote the McGrath Foundation through fundraising by participating and coordinating local and regional sporting and cultural events.

This is a huge step for not only promoting the McGrath Foundation, but to also promoting the Masig and the TSI region as a potential venue for tourism and special events.

Fly Designs Inc. provides support to Masig Youth 4 Life through in-kind administration support and have kicked off the fundraising drive by providing NRL memorabilia and jersey's to be raffled.

The partnership between Masig Youth 4 Life and the McGrath Foundation will provide tremendous opportunities for the Masig community with creating national and international networks with the intent of developing local industries and promoting the region.

The Pink Torres Kitesurf Expedition organised to raise One Hundred Thousand dollars for the McGrath Foundation earlier this year was a success.

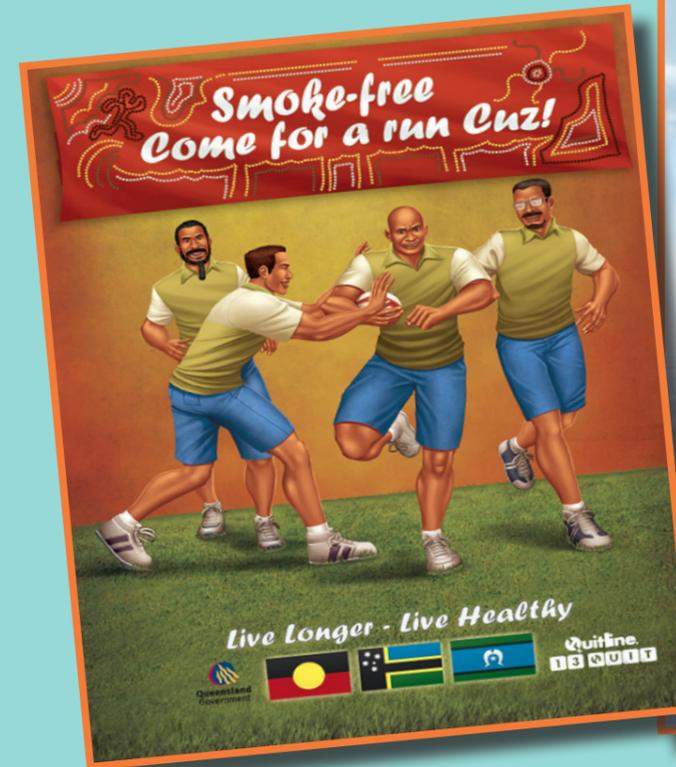
The Expedition commenced on Seisia and completed its journey on Saibai . The expedition visited Warraber, Poruma and Masig along its journey, with its participants spending time with community members and resting at each of the three communities.



Quit Smoking - Ph 137848 (13 QUIT)

These posters have been created as part of an Indigenous Smoking Cessation project.

The posters are connected with a comic book called R5. You can access the comic at: www.inceptionstrategies.com/r5.htm



We value our employee's

TSIRC are proud of its hard-working and dedicated employees who regularly go above and beyond to produce desired results for the department's in which they work in. TSIRC want these hard working employees to know they are valued and appreciated. Council would also like to acknowledge those who have completed studies and training and for those undergoing courses to keep up the great work.



Just recently Bernard Dorante completed his Certificate III in Waste Management (pictured). TSIRC would like to congratulate Mr Dorante. It is important that employees are educated in their fields and taught how to operate efficiently and effectively to ensure their skills are enhanced and that Council benefits all-round.





Community visit to Masig Island



Back: Francis Nai (chair PBC) Jack Pearson (director PBC) Charlie Asai (director PBC). Middle: Wilfred William (director PBC), Ned Mosby (director PBC), John Morris (duty chair PBC). Front: TSIRC Deputy Mayor Keith Fell, TSIRC Mayor Fred Gela & Masig Cr Fraser Nai.

The mayor and deputy mayor recently visited Masig to speak with the community. The community engagement approach and discussion points were tailored to areas that Councillors identified are of great significance to the community.

Masig's community visit involved a series of deputations on a wide range of issues and meetings with the PBC and the Community.

Topics canvassed were:

- National Partnership Housing Agreement
- Homeownership Options
- Katter Leases & Leasing in general
- Housing Maintenance
- Coastal Protection
- Treaty
- Community Police Transition to QPS

Masig community expressed its gratitude and esso to TSIRC Executives, Staff, and Masig Councillor Fraser Nai, for leadership in organising the visit.



Nominate now for TSIRC Australia Day Awards 2014

Do you know someone who deserves one of the following awards?:

- Citizen of the Year
- Employee of the Year
- Young Citizen of the Year
- Senior Citizen of the Year
- Australia Day Achievement Award

Then nominate them! It's easy!

All you have to do is email info@tsirc.qld.gov.au with the name of the person you wish to nominate, where they are from and why they deserve the award.

If you don't have email, ask your Divisional Manager at your nearest TSIRC office to email your nomination for you!

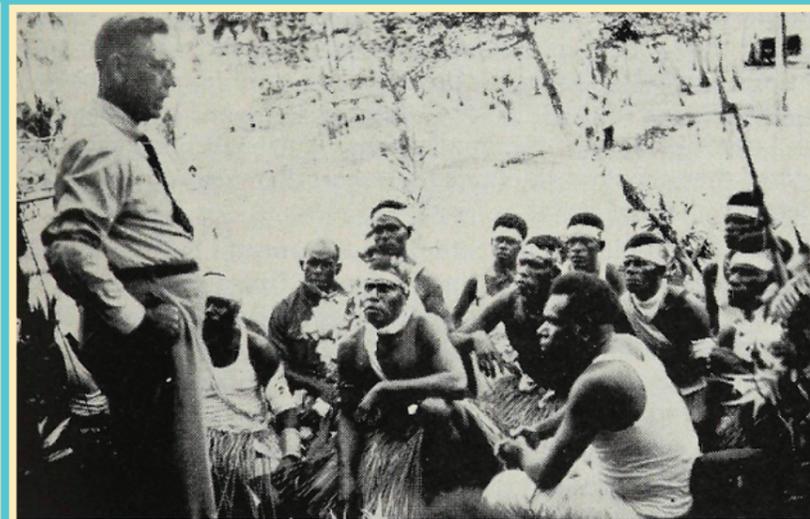
It's important that we award our valuable community members so they can understand how appreciated they are!



76th Anniversary of first Council Meeting

Quote from Uncle Wees Naawi, present at the historical Masig meeting: "You go out.

Time to come out now. It's low water. Go out. Four in one dinghy. Off we go. Just flour; we no food I tell you. You ought to see hard work. Ooh...too hard. So we work all year round. 'You fellers go out now'. And we carry damper belong we. Damper. Damper enough for four. Four slice. One, two, three, four. That's all that's for dinner. Go down catchem shell bringem come. Go, go, go, go. Right down....we pick up shell and we shout to our mate, 'Come, shell, plenty shell. Shark go come. Watch them cross one, hammerhead! That's the one. Oh dear, careful this one. Come home. That's our best time. From December, January, February go start again....Money belong we 3 pounds a month. That money last one year because mummy work too in garden."



QLD Government Minister EM Hanlon meeting with Saibai Island Fishermen, trying to convince them to return to work.

The 23rd of August this year marked the 76th anniversary of the Historical Meeting held on Masig between TSI Fishermen and Queensland Government representatives to negotiate terms, so that TSI fishermen could continue working for the four Queensland Government owned vessels.

This day represents a significant achievement for all Torres Strait Islanders and should be recognised as a day of celebration and recognition of our ancestors fight to achieve equality.

This historical meeting initiated the Torres Strait Act and was introduced by the Queensland Government in 1939.

The meeting accepted the following Demands:

1. The abolition of the 'Boo' or Time Whistle on all Islands.
2. Greater facilities for inter-Island visits without the necessity for Permits from the Government Teacher.
3. The appointment of Police on Islands on which they reside.
4. Conference of all Councillors to be held at the earliest opportunity.



Masig Island Village (date unknown).

New government says it will build a new relationship with Indigenous Aussies

The new minister for Indigenous Affairs, Nigel Scullion, has signalled there will be a different approach to Indigenous affairs under the Coalition government.

"We know that the solutions lie within the communities and within those families. And we need to engage far closer with communities, families and individuals to look for those solutions.

Mr Scullion says there will be a move away from what he calls the former "top-down" approach and says there'll be a greater role for community-controlled services.

He's told NITV he will work to empower individuals and communities to take more responsibility in the areas of education and employment.



New Indigenous Affairs Minister Nigel Scullion

"We certainly want those principles of sending children to school, we want all the kids who are of age to go to school and be enrolled. We want those people who are able to work to be moving from welfare, if they're on welfare, into work. They're fundamentals we need to work on straight away.

TORRES STRAIT SUMMER KING TIDES 2014

Island	Date	Time	Height	
Thursday Island HAT = 3.86m	30/01/2014	12:32	3.73m	king tide
	27/02/2014	11:31	3.62m	
Hammond Island Barge Ramp HAT = 3.81m	30/01/2014	12:26	3.64m	king tide
	27/02/2014	11:27	3.54m	
Kubin (Moa Is) HAT = 3.77m	29/01/2014	12:10	3.53m	king tide
	26/02/2014	11:22	3.52m	
St Pauls (Moa Is) HAT = 4.13m	31/01/2014	12:37	4.01m	king tide
	28/02/2014	11:37	3.89m	
	01/03/2014	12:13	3.82m	
Badu Island HAT = 4.07m	29/01/2014	12:39	3.81m	king tide
	26/02/2014	11:53	3.79m	
Mabuiag Island Barge Ramp HAT = 3.94m	30/01/2014	12:55	3.76m	king tide
	28/02/2014	12:34	3.66m	
Dauan Island HAT = 4.01m	31/01/2014	13:15	3.89m	king tide
	01/02/2014	13:48	3.79m	
Sabai Island HAT = 3.86m	31/01/2014	13:25	3.73m	king tide
	28/02/2014	12:35	3.63m	
	01/03/2014	13:07	3.59m	
Boigu Island HAT = 4.77m	28/01/2014	14:19	4.44m	
	26/02/2014	14:01	4.48m	king tide
Yam Island (Iama) HAT = 4.16m	31/01/2014	12:30	4.04m	king tide
	28/02/2014	11:35	3.93m	
	01/03/2014	12:09	3.91m	
Sue Island (Warraber) HAT = 4.18m	31/01/2014	12:07	4.07m	king tide
	28/02/2014	11:08	3.97m	
	01/03/2014	12:46	3.94m	
Coconut Island (Poruma) HAT = 4.55m	31/01/2014	11:28	4.47m	king tide
	28/02/2014	10:26	4.35m	
Yorke Island (Masig) HAT = 4.35m	31/01/2014	11:05	4.28m	king tide
	28/02/2014	10:01	4.17m	
	01/03/2014	10:41	4.16m	
Stephens Island (Ugar) HAT = 4.11m	31/01/2014	10:49	4.01m	king tide
	28/02/2014	09:46	3.94m	
	01/03/2014	10:25	3.91m	
Darnley Island (Erub) HAT = 4.13m	31/01/2014	10:39	4.06m	king tide
	12/02/2014	09:32	3.99m	
	09/03/2014	10:14	3.96m	
Murray Island (Maer) HAT = 3.52m	31/01/2014	10:05	3.47m	king tide
	28/02/2014	09:01	3.42m	
	01/03/2014	09:42	3.39m	

Gudhamadh Community Health Council Re-Established

The Gudhamadh Community Health Council on Masig was re-established with great enthusiasm from the Masig Community.

Former vice chair Ms Hilda Mosby said the previous health action group was set up to look at our health needs and to work together with the community.

The new appointed Health Council is determined to focus on services and operations with giving back to the community.

TSIRC support community initiatives such as these.



New ramp for Dauan jetty

The new Dauan pontoon gangway has been completed after the necessary welding work was performed and an excavator lifted it and fixed it into place.

A special thanks is owed to the TSIRC building team for helping with the timber boards for the gangway and for their all-round support on-ground. The community of Dauan can now safely use the ramp when being transported to and from the island.

Local Disaster Management Plan

Despite its beautiful surrounds, the Torres Strait is vulnerable to disaster events, both natural and man-made. When an event occurs, local government has primary responsibility for managing the impacts within its boundaries. It is therefore important to have joint effective and coordinated disaster management arrangements in place to ensure that our disaster management systems are capable of addressing the response and recovery for an event. This Plan has been developed by the Torres Strait Local Disaster Management Group on behalf of the Torres Shire Council and Torres Strait Island Regional Council. This Plan sets out the legislated arrangements required under the Queensland Disaster Management Act 2003

and outlines the disaster management system and specifying agreed roles and responsibilities. It also describes how the disaster management system works during an event. The focus of the Plan is on an 'all-hazards' approach, which minimises impacts on disaster-affected communities by ensuring a joint coordinated effort by all levels of government and non-government organisations with responsibilities or capabilities in disaster management. The Plan is risk-based that will be kept up to date to match changes in legislation or in the region's risk profile, and to reflect knowledge gained from disaster events in the Region and elsewhere.

Taking care of business at Regional Round Table



The first Local Government Regional Round Table hosted by Local Government Minister David Crisafulli provided a platform for frank and productive discussions on the financial challenges facing local councils.

More than 120 Mayors, Deputy-Mayors and CEOs, including TSIRC's, attended the event at Jupiters Townsville with a dinner on 14 August and the formal discussions taking place on 15 August.

The Round Table looked at practical ways for local governments to remain viable while keeping costs down for ratepayers.

The reform agenda included discussions about how the state can reduce regulation, share services between councils, public/private partnerships, depreciation costs and funding allocations.

It also launched the Improving Financial Sustainability and

Management Scheme for Councils to examine options to improve financial sustainability.

The Round Table agenda included presentations from the CEO of Queensland Treasury Corporation Philip Noble and the Queensland Auditor-General Andrew Greaves.

Also present were senior representatives from the Local Government Association of Queensland, the Department of the Premier and Cabinet, Queensland Treasury and Trade and the Department of Local Government, Community Recovery and Resilience.

Councils have now voted on measures for councils, the Local Government department and Cabinet to pursue.



H O P E & Thankfulness

Council has no doubts new government will honour seawall funding

Despite recent media reports to the contrary, the Torres Strait Island Regional Council remains grateful for the assistance it has received throughout its nearly decade-long journey to secure funds to construct seawalls.

This includes the assistance from Federal Coalition MP Warren Entsch when in January last year he introduced a private members motion to parliament which gave TSIRC the political coverage required for its voice to finally be heard by the former Gillard Government, after years of lobbying.

In spite of letters being sent, discussions taking place, video's being broadcast and funding applications posted, the Torres Strait's cries for assistance in obtaining funds to construct seawalls continually fell on deaf ears.

Mr Entsch introduced his motion and stated that the former federal government, before giving sums of up to \$120 million to Pacific Island nations to protect their vital infrastructure from coastal inundation, should protect Torres Strait Islanders, as Australian citizens, who could not secure a cent.

Thanks to Mr Entsch, the issue was brought out of obscurity into the political arena where it was subjected to such intense scrutiny that the then Minister for Regional Development, Simon Crean announced that the government would explore all options.

In June last year, the Gillard Government awarded \$5 million under the Regional Development Australia Fund (RADF) and a further \$7 million through other programs to build and reconstruct seawalls in the Torres Strait. These funds were matched by the state government.

So, detailed plans were drawn to commence the Torres Strait Coastal Protection Works (Seawalls) Project, a team was appointed, Native Title issues were addressed with enthusiasm by local communities in anticipation, engineering designs were developed, word was spread of the good news, and communities celebrated a long-awaited victory!

This was and is a huge achievement for Council and the region and again, TSIRC would like to express its gratitude for all those who assisted in achieving this result.

Many people are unaware of the impacts placed upon the Torres

Strait communities that are affected by tidal inundation each year during the wet season. Homes are flooded, communities are inundated and face coastal erosion, infrastructure including health centres and schools are damaged and sewerage systems are shut down.

The funds committed to the project by the State and Commonwealth due to procedural issues associated with elections and change of government has not yet been made available but we are more than hopeful the new government will honour the funding allocation so that the project can continue to move forward.

Given the bilateral support for Mr Entsch's original motion, the TSIRC have faith in the new government to follow through with the funding that was committed to seawalls in the Torres Strait region and confidence that they are aware and informed of the seriousness of the issue and the impacts it places on affected communities.

These funds are necessary for the safety of TSIRC constituents as Queenslanders and as Australians.

Although prior to the election the incoming government announced that they would not be committed to honour promised RDAF funding, TSIRC refuses to let this cause fear for the project's future.

While there was \$3.2 million signed off on between funding partner, the Torres Strait Regional Authority (TSRA) and Council last year for essential preliminary design and planning work (which has enabled the project to remain on track) – an estimated additional \$23 million is needed to complete the project.

This TSRA funding has been absolutely vital.

Nothing can be determined until the new government is formed, though the TSIRC is thankful for its voice in Mr Entsch who has said he will continue to lobby for the securement of the funds that were initially allocated.

The TSIRC will continue to be optimistic toward the future of the project and would like to thank the new government in anticipation for realising how important this project is to the future of the Torres Strait, Australia's only region with an international border.



- Masig desalination plant has been completed
- Mer raw water pump station has been completed and is working efficiently to provide a more consistent supply of water to the community's desalination plant. When reticulation problems have been resolved and water levels in the lagoon reach 50% water restrictions will be reviewed.
- Poruma desalination plant is in its final stages of completion.
- Kubin subdivision has been completed.
- St Pauls-Kubin Road is currently being worked on and progress is taking place.
- Poruma sewer is now complete and undergoing commissioning to make sure the plant is working correctly which is due to be finished and in-use by the community by late October.



TSIRC's Engineering Department look after a range of community infrastructure and vital services such as the above sewage treatment plant, waste disposal sites and airstrips.

Natural Environment Research Program

Through participatory scenario planning with Torres Strait communities and regional stakeholders, informed by integrated ecosystem services, climate and resilience modeling, The Natural Environment Research Program aims to explore potential future scenarios for the region, identify 'no regrets' strategies to protect livelihoods and achieve sustainable economic development. The Torres Strait is a region of rich natural and cultural values, with tight linkages between its environmental assets and the livelihoods of local communities.

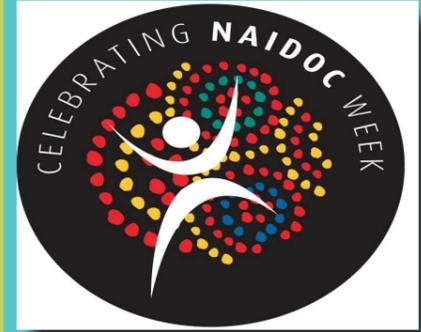
The Torres Strait Treaty explicitly aims to protect these communities' livelihoods, and improve them through sustainable economic development. Global drivers such as peak oil, fluctuating economic conditions and climate change will also have complex positive and negative impacts on livelihoods. Because of the rapid and increasing rate of change and uncertainty, it is important to make predictions of potential changes and plan proactively rather than respond reactively. This requires the design of 'no regrets' strategies which bring benefits under any conditions of future change, and which are flexible and therefore less likely to be 'mal-adaptive'.

Building resilient communities for Torres Strait futures





NAIDOC 2013



NAIDOC Week celebrations are held across Australia each July to celebrate the history, culture and achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

NAIDOC is celebrated not only in Indigenous communities, but by Australians from all walks of life.

The week is a great opportunity to participate in a range of activities and to support your local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community.

NAIDOC originally stood for 'National Aborigines and Islanders Day Observance Committee'.

This committee was once responsible for organising national activities during NAIDOC Week and its acronym has since become the name of the week itself.

TSIRC support NAIDOC week and realise how important it is to celebrate our history, culture and achievements.

See images on this page of Masig NAIDOC celebrations in July.

