



**MINA
KOEYMA
ISSUE**

WELCOME
back to our
DOUBLE
issue of
Strait Talk. We

look forward to celebrating all of the successes across the region and keeping our island communities informed of Council activities. We invite all of you to get involved with our Strait Talk Newsletter and look forward to your contributions over the coming year. We would also like to take this opportunity to thank all of our contributors who helped make this newsletter what it is.

Eso

From the office of the Mayor

I would firstly like to acknowledge our good Lord for his many blessings on each and everyone of us, our Traditional Owners, Elders past and present, my colleagues, Councillors of our respective communities - and our constituents across the length and breadth of the Torres Strait.



It's a pleasure to once again reignite our Strait Talk newsletter, which has played a key role enabling us to continue to connect with our communities reporting on TSIRC's activities and the milestones we achieve.

In my foreword I would like to provide you with a brief summary canvassing a few of the significant topics that are right at the forefront, right now. *[continues page 2]*



Our Healthy Lifestyle Officers talk about their programs on p. 25



From the office of the Mayor [continued]**Seawalls Project - Construction**

It's very pleasing to note that the Seawalls Project will be delivered by the Torres Strait Island Regional Council as the principal contractor in partnership, and where applicable, external contractors will be engaged to assist.

I must acknowledge and thank all of the funding partners, without their financial support none of this would be possible. \$12 million has been provided by the State Government through the Department of Local Government Community Recovery & Resilience. Commonwealth Government have also provided \$7 million through the Department of Prime Minister & Cabinet, \$5 million through the Department of Infrastructure & Regional Development and a further \$2.2 million through Torres Strait Regional Authority (TSRA) - bringing the total capital works budget to \$26.2 million.

It must also be understood that this will not be enough to carry out all of the relevant works in the six priority communities that are affected. We will continue to actively lobby in partnership with TSRA to both State & Commonwealth Governments to complete all of the identified protection works required to enhance community liveability, public safety, protection of 'essential to life' infrastructure, and the preservation of our culturally significant, sacred sites.

Employment Opportunities

Until further scoping of the Saibai and Boigu Seawalls project is finalised, I would like to outline generally the order in which we would source construction staff for the Seawalls project:

Employment sources for 2014/15 program:

1. Skilled and unskilled labour will be sourced from TSIRC pool and backfilling via council's recruitment process;
2. Hire labour (RSS) from My Pathway if resources are unavailable from TSIRC pool.

Further employment opportunities have been identified in regard to material supply contractors through the Indigenous Employment Policy Requirements. Council will include conditions in their contract for minimum targets of local employment as outlined in the tender documentation.

Saibai

It's really pleasing to report the commencement of construction of the cemetery wave return wall, which is well and truly underway. Footings have been poured and blocks are onsite waiting to be laid.

Tender has been finalised, securing a supply chain for the procurement of raw materials for the construction of the rock armour wall. This is quite a large project, which will involve major earth works, drainage works and demolition work.

Saibai Seawalls Project will be predominately constructed using rock armour with a concrete wave return wall and additional areas will be protected by the construction of earth bund walls.

At this stage we are anticipating a start on the rock armour wall in May and are aiming for a project handover of completed works by 2017. These timeframes are indicative and are subject to change over the course of the project.

Poruma

Urgent temporary protection works have commenced with the aim to mitigate further erosion, which is threatening one of our rental properties. This house has already lost one section of fencing due to the house being less than 10 metres from the rising coastline.

We are going out to tender for the supply of material and anticipating commencing construction of the permanent wall by May this year. The project will focus on reclaiming some of the areas that have already been lost as a direct result of king tides and strong winds.

Boigu

Tenders for the supply of raw materials should be completed soon allowing for the commencement of the project in July this year. The scope of the protection works will consist of rock armour wall, the use of Seabee bricks, construction of overtopping wall and the raising and extending of bund walls.

TSIRC Certified Agreement

The Certified Agreement negotiations occurred between November and December 2014 in Cairns and Hammond Island with employee representatives from each Division and Department of Council.

The purpose of the Certified Agreement was to enable better and more flexible entitlements and conditions for employees that reflect Council's values and vision to cement its position as an Employer of Choice, consistent with its Corporate Plan objectives.

The process was inclusive, informative, and demonstrated Council's fresh and

collaborative approach with the goal of supporting a happy, healthy and productive workforce that provides improved services to our communities.

Voting was held between 15 and 18 December with 86% of employees casting their vote and an incredible 98.25% of those staff voting 'yes'.

On 19 January 2015, the *Torres Strait Regional Council Certified Agreement 2015-2017* was certified by Deputy Commissioner Knight of the Queensland Industrial Relations Commission (QIRC) and so began Council's journey in showcasing its position as an Employer of Choice in the region.

HOUSING PROGRAM

Rural and Remote Program

I am pleased to announce that we will be building new homes and additional extensions to existing houses in Iama, St Pauls, Hammond and Saibai to address their high demand. We have achieved this by working in partnership with State Government and other key stakeholders in the Rural and Remote program (formerly known as the Cabinet Budget Review Committee or CBRC) to address the critical housing needs in our region. This is financed by surplus funds allocated by the State for the provision of social housing. There are no leasing conditions imposed as a prerequisite to accessing this investment.

National Partnership Agreement on Remote Indigenous Housing (NPARIH)

NPARIH is a Commonwealth investment that has a number of conditions, which must be addressed before this investment can be realised (including 40-year leasing). Council's Legal Services Division has actively engaged

with stakeholders at a community, State and Commonwealth level on the NPARIH scheme to build 73 houses in the region. Furthermore, our long-running negotiations for a Regional Indigenous Land Use Agreement reached in-principle consent by all parties. The finalisation of this Agreement will streamline compliance for land dealings so that parties can respond more efficiently to community needs. We are determined to continue to negotiate so that this major housing investment will continue to expand - and potentially even double - however, it is completely dependant on several complex factors, including Indigenous Land Use Agreements and land availability. Initial project phases as follows;

Phase 1	Phase 2
Boigu Poruma Mabuiag	St Pauls Badu Warraber Kubin
Phase 3	Phase 4
Mer Saibai	Mabuiag Hammond Iama

Housing Maintenance

Our Council's Building Services Unit has continued to address and exceed Council's objectives directed towards improving the living standards of its constituents by maintaining and upgrading Council's stock of social housing. I am pleased to share that our Building Services Unit has successfully achieved these objectives within both budget and nominated timeframes.

Utilising our 33 Island-based employees (supplemented by both Island-based and external contractors), the Building Unit

responded to some 6,117 repairs and maintenance requests, 94 major housing upgrades and internal and external house repaints. I am thankful that the numerous disability modifications to our housing portfolio continue to support our residents to return to their homes and families.

Plug-in Projects

22 potential plug-in projects (additional rooms on existing housing) have also been identified for TSIRC. Scoping is now proceeding with the view to begin contracted works during the year.

Capital Works

We have had a huge few years in terms of major project delivery, most of which we undertook as a result of a very successful joint partnership arrangement that we forged with the Torres Strait Regional Authority (TSRA) that involves both organisations contributing equally and injecting several million dollars into our communities. This is an initiative that receives overwhelming support and is what we continue to strive for as it addresses the many local aspirations reflected in our Community Development Plans and are the building blocks that are identified in the Torres Strait Regional Development Plan.

Capital works include the completion of a new sail shade cloth over the basketball court at Kirirri (Hammond Island), which has provided a more suitable, and safer sports environment for our children. We have also refurbished and renovated our Community Halls in Saibai and Badu and have completed a welding workshop for the community of Warraber. Fencing at Boigu Airport is completed and we are now installing solar lights on our wharf at Hammond.

We continue to work closely with TSRA to ensure this successful joint funding arrangement continues and will be looking to roll out upgrades to community Stadiums next year.

Cultural Festival

We are very excited to be working towards our very own Cultural Festival. This is an opportunity to acknowledge the diverse cultures between our people.

We have identified Badu as the host community and are in the process of identifying major Capital Works to be undertaken before the Festival can go ahead.

We are also in discussions with Badu's PBC so that the Traditional Owners have the opportunity to be involved in all decisions for their community. We see this as an opportunity to celebrate, preserve and share our cultures and Ailan Kastom across the region, and with our Pacific neighbours.

I trust that you look forward to seeing our ambitious and critical projects evolve so that we can continue to work together to improve our wellbeing and keep our communities beautiful.

God Bless



Mayor Fred Gela



CEO's Welcome

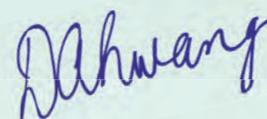
As we quickly move into 2015, I am looking forward to a big year with positive outcomes. My focus areas for this year are capacity building, communication and wellbeing.

Working together with our elected Council, I believe we can harness our combined wealth of knowledge and experience towards accomplishing our vision of

'Empowering our people, in our vision, for our future'.

Empowerment through capacity building and communicating our vision and maintaining wellbeing both now and into the future.

Dania Ahwang





This section celebrates healthy Ilan cooking. Naila Nomoa, our Customer Service Officer from Badu Island is currently working in our Cairns office and shares her delicious Steamed crayfish in banana leaf.

Ingredients:

1 Crayfish
1 Banana leaf
1/2 Cassava (Manyotha)
10c piece of Ginger
1 clove of Garlic
1 cup of Coconut milk*
Salt and Pepper to taste.

Method:

Cut crayfish in half and wash thoroughly. Place banana leaf inside a steamer basket and place your crayfish inside. Finely dice ginger and garlic and rub over the meat, add your grated cassava and pour over the coconut milk. Season with salt and pepper. Wrap banana leaf over the crayfish as neatly as possible. Steam for 5-10 mins and finish off in the oven until cooked to your preference.

*Use reduced fat coconut milk or fresh coconut water for a healthier option.

Serves 1-2 people.
Enjoy!



2015 COUNCIL MEETING DATES

January 17 & 18 - Teleconference

February 17 & 18 - Teleconference

March 17 & 18 - Teleconference

April 21 & 22 - Thursday Island

May 26 & 27 - Iama

June 29 & 30 - Erub

July 21 & 22 - Warraber

August 20 & 21 - Masig

September 22 & 23 - Boigu

October 27 & 28 - Mer

November 17 & 18 - Badu

December 15 & 16 - Hammond

General public are welcome to attend.

Any member of the public wishing to make a deputation / representation must give notice in writing to Council two weeks prior to the meeting. These may be provided to the Divisional Manager, or emailed to the Chief Executive Officer, Ms Dania Ahwang, at info@tsirc.qld.gov.au

Please note Council Meeting locations may change. Please contact your Divisional Manager or call 07 4034 5700 for an up to date list.

Notice pursuant to section 277 (1) of the Local Government Regulation 2012

New Housing Investment on Hammond Island

The Council of Australian Government's National Partnership Agreement on Remote Indigenous Housing (NPARIH) promises to deliver much needed social housing investment into our communities. Many communities have already signed up in the TSIRC electorate, with Native Title Prescribed Bodies Corporate (PBC's) approving the program under Indigenous Land Use Agreements (ILUA's), including on Kubin and St Pauls Communities on Moa Island, Saibai, Mabuiag, Boigu, Poruma, Warraber, Badu and Mer Islands. Construction has already started in some of these communities.

With strict timeframes for the rollout of this program and the uncertainty on Hammond Island (due to an undetermined Native Title claim), it has been necessary for the State Government (with the support of TSIRC) to issue a notice under the Native Title Act (Cth), to the Hammond Island Native Title claimants to advise of TSIRC's intention to proceed with this important social housing investment for the benefit of our constituents. This will ensure that essential housing investment is secured for Hammond Island.

TSIRC respects all traditional lands and acknowledges the Kaurareg People as rightful traditional owners. Notwithstanding the notice, TSIRC and State Government do however remain firmly committed to negotiating in good faith an Indigenous Land Use Agreement (ILUA) over the short-term to progress the program on Hammond Island, as has occurred on all other islands in the Torres Strait.

Should you have any queries in relation to the program, please contact our Legal Team on (07) 4034 5700.



Like us on Facebook



We will be showcasing a new artist for each edition of Strait Talk, this month we profile Weldon Matasia who has been selected by the Badhulgaw Kuthinaw Mudh | Badu Art Centre.

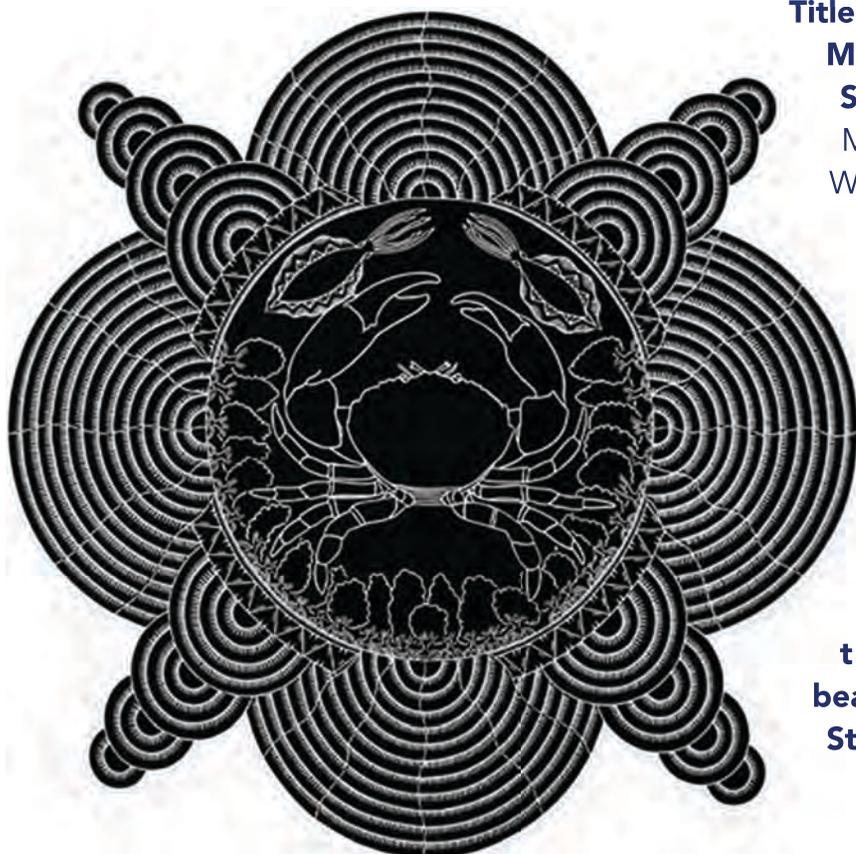
Weldon MATASIA

Kala Lagaw Ya people

Born 1986 Waiben (Thursday Island), Queensland, Australia

Weldon's work shows an emerging visual language that is unique to this fine young artist. His development and use of curves with interceding radial lines have their origins in Weldon looking over the edge of his boat into the depths of the water, and watching the sunlight make patterns across the ocean floor.

Their use, much like the way he creates a mantra-like process in the construction of jewellery produces a hypnotic effect, creating a vehicle for both the abstraction of his imagery and the reconnection of it back to its source material. Those patterns can be seen (and felt) all over Badu on every beach and in every way his relief work is truly magnificent.



Title: Round Thag.

Medium: Lino

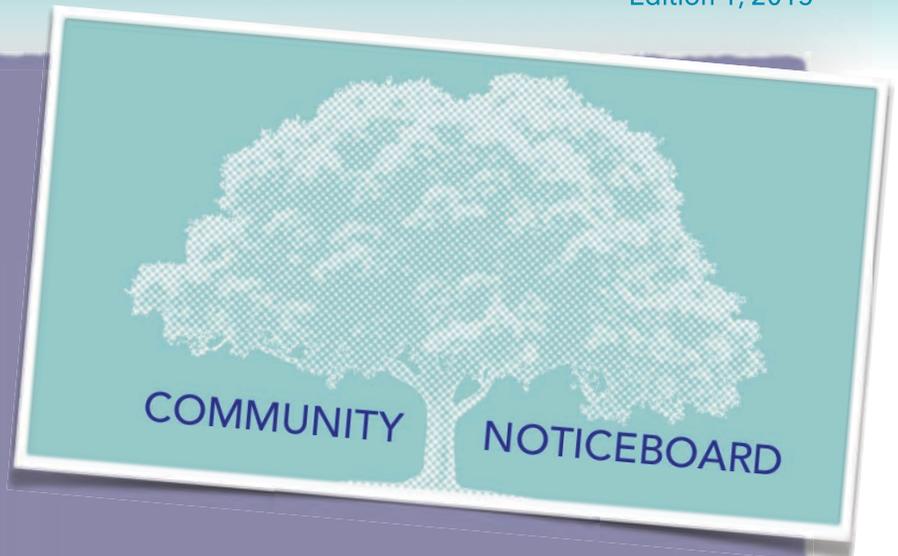
Story: The title of the print is of a Mangrove Island at the mouth of Waru-id Koesa (Old Village River). This important mangrove patch is a popular mud crab hunting area, and also plentiful for squid during the Kuki Season. The designs on the outside represent the dropping of the tide which we call Wur-nurik.

We thank the artist and Badhulgaw Kuthinaw Mudh for taking the time to share this beautiful work with us all here at Strait Talk.

TSIRC COMMUNITY GRANTS SCHEME

Applications for Round 1 of our 2015 / 2016 Community Grants Scheme are available from the 1st of June 2015. Applications need to be submitted by 5pm on the 30th of June 2015.

Please visit www.tsirc.qld.gov.au/publications/media-releases/forms or visit your TSIRC office to access our application pack.



ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH NEWS

There are new animal management laws that were endorsed by Council in December 2014. The laws are designed to protect the community from dangerous dogs and disease.

The laws that will be targeted this year include;

- All dogs to be registered,
- Dogs not to be roaming,
- All dogs over three months old to be de-sexed (castrated or spayed)
- Only two dogs per house.

To support compliance, so fines don't need to be issued, we are planning a vet visit to all the outer islands in May 2015 for de-sexing and euthanasia. If there is non-compliance following the vet visit, fines may be issued.

If you would like to know more about the vet visit and to make sure you comply with the animal management laws please contact Ewan Gunn, Manager Environment and Health on 07 4034 5710.

Please get in touch if you would like to enquire about how to submit a story or photo, or if you would like to promote a community event or meeting on our Strait Talk Community Noticeboard. Email: info@tsirc.qld.gov.au or contact your local divisional Council office.

Fuel Bowser Operations

Opening days and times for Council operated fuel bowzers will differ in each division based on operational work programs.

Community	Days	Times	Notes
Boigu	Monday or Friday	11.00am – 12.00pm 3.00 – 4.00pm	
Dauan	Monday to Friday	2.00 – 3.00pm	
Saibai	Monday to Friday	2:00 to 4:00 pm	
Mabuiag	Monday to Friday	10.30 – 11.00 am 1.30 – 2.00pm 3.30 – 4.00pm	
Badu			Operated by BIF
Kubin			Operated by IBIS
St Pauls	Monday or Thursday ONLY	8.30am – 5:00pm	ULP supplied through IBIS. Diesel fuel supplied through council.
Hammond	Monday to Friday	8:00am to 5pm.	
Yama	Monday ONLY	9:00 – 10:00 am	Operated by IBIS.
Warraber	Monday to Friday.	10.30 – 11.30am	Diesel ONLY. ULP fuel supplied through IBIS.
Poruma	Monday to Friday	10.30 – 11.30am 1.00 – 3.00pm	
Masig			Operated by IBIS.
Ugar	Monday to Friday	9.00 – 10.00am 1.00 – 2.00pm	
Erub	Monday to Friday	9.00 – 10.00 am 2.00 – 4.00 pm	
Mer	Monday to Friday	9:00am – 12:00 pm	

“A WOMAN’S VOICE IS A MOTHERS CRY”

To celebrate International Women’s Day, which we celebrated in March, we are profiling four of our high achieving female employees from across our organisation who have recently undertaken Indigenous women’s leadership programs across Australia.

Our Health and Wellbeing Coordinator, Ella Kris and Catharine Enosa who is the Multi-skilled Administration Officer at Warraber, were selected to participate in Torres Strait Regional Authority’s ‘Torres Strait Women’s Leadership Scheme’ that was facilitated by Australian Rural Leadership Foundation. This program began in a remote location unknown to the participants to ‘expect the unexpected’ so that participants could learn more about their leadership style in unfamiliar situations. Participants were then invited to Canberra to continue their development and work towards delivering strong outcomes from the program, which included working towards improving gender equity on boards and councils across the Torres Strait.



They recently met with Nigel Scullion who is Senator for the Northern Territory and Minister for Indigenous Affairs so he could continue to support their progress. The participants

discussed how they could include Torres Strait Islander women in the delivery of future leadership programs.

Since undertaking this program one of the outcomes for Ella was building her confidence in her existing capacity to lead in all types of situations. She sees the role of women in leadership positions in the region as an opportunity to better represent a broader section of Torres Strait Islander people and says ‘A woman’s voice, is a mother’s cry.’



Already holding a Masters of Public Health, Ella sees herself further contributing to Torres Strait Islander health and wellbeing and will commence a Doctorate of Philosophy through the School of Medicine at the University of Sydney. Her thesis is on the ‘Exploration of Torres Strait Islander spirituality in a Primary Care space’, through which she hopes to

contribute to the way health professionals deliver their services in cross-cultural settings. Ella with the support of the team, ensures our Healthy Lifestyle Officers complete their training and certification to deliver high quality services that improve our constituents' health and wellbeing across our communities.

As one of the younger participants of the program Catharine Enosa talked off this as an opportunity to push herself outside of her comfort zone so that she was better able to identify her personal strength's. "It helped me be more confident in my decision making, planning and professional outlook" Catherine also said she learnt a lot from all of the women involved and it made her think about how she will prepare for the future.

Teena Akiba our Training and Development Officer and Lorna Bowie, who has just been seconded as our Seawalls Project Coordinator, have also been selected to participate in the Dada Gana Indigenous Women's Leadership Program (IWLP), which is a joint venture between the Australian Government's Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet and the STARS Institute of Learning and Leadership. Dada Gana is a unique seven-month month leadership capacity building program.

Dada Gana aims to work with existing and potential Indigenous women leaders nationwide to develop their capacity as leaders and increase the pool of highly qualified and experienced leaders who are strong, smart role models for other women and who contribute to the modern economy. Dada Gana works with



leaders who are strong in their culture, identity and spirit, emotionally intelligent, masterful communicators, and highly skilled in building workable relationships and producing sustainable results.

Both Teena and Lorna have described this program as life changing and both women are following their own paths of leadership. Lorna sees this as an opportunity to focus on her work / life balance and believes that her leadership will only be strengthened when supported in a professional and family friendly workplace.

Lorna has chosen to do her leadership project on her family and herself with a focus on balancing out her life. "I feel in order for me to make a difference out in the world I must start with me and my family first."

"I went into Dada Gana because I wanted a change in my life with work and family because I felt that I was in a rut and would not be able to change. I also know that I wanted to better myself as a leader. After the first block I am excited for the change ahead that I have been longing for and I've already started seeing some progress in my life but there is still a lot more to do."

Lorna also acknowledges the Leadership team: "We were lucky to have inspirational ladies and highly experienced leaders such as Wendy Watego and Vicki Scott, founders of STARS Institute of Learning and Leadership, Dr Jackie Huggins, author, historian and Aboriginal rights activist, Sandra Georgiou, founder of the Black Bold and Beautiful event, and Suzanne Thompson, Cultural Facilitator and Educator."



Teena has used this opportunity to strengthen her leadership skills so she can act in more senior mentoring positions. This is utilised in her new role as Council's Training Officer where Teena develops culturally appropriate programs that specifically caters to a broad range of staff in cross-cultural settings. Teena feels strong in her ability and comes away knowing that she has the strength needed to lead for her people and her family.

We wish these women every success in their careers and the contributions they provide for their family and community. Dania, our CEO, adds: 'I encourage and support all of our staff to continue to develop professionally and

being myself a keen and continuing learner, I am a strong believer in the benefits to these women and those that they share their lives with, not only professionally but also personally. Like every successful formula, they bring a good mixture of youth, maturity, experience and a powerful motivation to continue their development. They are magnificent role models for their family, friends, colleagues and communities and I look forward to sharing their success.'

Applications for the Torres Strait Women's Leadership Scheme reopen in April 2015. Please see the TSRA website for further information. www.tsra.gov.au/the-tsra/leadership-capacity-building

Applications for Dada Gana – National Indigenous Leadership Scheme open in the second half of 2015. For further reading on Indigenous Leadership, see Out of the Box – Thinking on Indigenous Leadership. Program applications and the book are available at www.starsleadershipinstitute.com

CONGRATULATIONS!

Congratulations to our CEO Dania Ahwang on taking out the much deserved Torres Strait International Women's Day Award for her contribution to Economics. This award recognises the achievement or contribution of an individual female, teams or group who have contributed and supported economic independence of women in the Torres Strait.

We would also like to take this opportunity to thank Mura Kosker Sorority Incorporated for all their hard work organising and hosting the awards for women in the Torres Strait and a huge congratulations to all of the other deserving winners.

Our STRAIT SMILE oral health program is run by our Healthy Lifestyle Officers across our communities.



SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL WELLBEING SERVICES

IN THE TORRES STRAIT



People living in all locations in the Torres Straits can receive Social and Emotional Wellbeing Services from Queensland Health's Mental Health & ATODS Team based on TI.

Some problems you might have that Mental Health can help with are feeling stressed and anxious about something and not being able to cope, feeling like your thoughts and ideas are unusual and out of control, feeling so down and slack that you just can't get yourself back up, being worried about a friend or family member who's having these problems, or feeling so down and stressed that you think it's not worth going on in life. If you are not sure, please call the team and talk it over.

The Team has six specialist Mental Health Clinical workers, including Nurses, Social Workers and Psychologists, an experienced Indigenous Health Worker, a specialist Child and Youth worker, and has access to two Psychiatrists who are on call 24-7 to respond to Mental Health needs, and who visit the Islands every month. One of these Psychiatrists, Dr Bruce Gynther, has been working with people in the Torres for more than 7 years - so he is well known up this way.

The Mental Health Team works closely with staff at the TI Hospital, the Family Support Program Social and Emotional Wellbeing Counselling Team, and the Drs Nurses and Health Workers on the Outer Island Clinics.

Every month the Mental Health Team visit all the Outer Island Clinics - so they are flying at least somewhere once a week or more often. Special arrangements can be made for places where there are no fixed wing airstrips, and people who experience serious mental health issues can come in to TI Hospital from the Outer Islands sometimes to get some extra help from Mental Health.

The best way to get in touch with the Team if you have problems that you need help with, or you are concerned about a friend or family member, is to call the numbers below directly and talk to one of the Team Members. If they think they can help they can complete a referral for you. You can also see your Health Worker, Nurse or Doctor at your home base and ask them to refer you to Mental Health.

Mental Health Team: Torres Straits: (front row) Indigenous Health Worker Frances Ahwang; Clinical Nurse Kim Henry; Administration Officer Peta Yorkston; (back row) Team Manager Mark Millard; Clinical Nurse Phil Gosling; Clinical Nurse Tony Napper; Child & Youth Social Worker, Heta Erueti. (absent Clinical Nurse Jocelyn McDonald)



MISSION STATEMENT

To work with individuals, families, community groups & others to ensure that people affected by mental illness are given timely access to recovery oriented specialist mental health services. We aim to reduce symptoms, build resilience, and enhance choice and social inclusion

Further Information on Mental Health & ATODS

The Torres and Cape Hospital and Health Service and NPA Mental Health & ATODS Services provide specialist mental health services to the district. We provide comprehensive case management, assessment, treatment, consultation, as well as having a health promotion focus for the community. Child & Youth and Adult Specialist Mental Health Services are provided by a multi-disciplinary team including social workers, psychiatrists & indigenous mental health workers.

How the service works for Adults.

- If you want help you can make a self-referral, come to Specialist Mental Health Service (SMHS) Office or telephone 40690695.
- Speak with your Doctor, Health Worker or Nurse, they can make a referral letter for SMHS.
- SMHS will book an appointment for you, then they will do an assessment. It is important that you speak truly, so we can look after you properly and have your needs met.

How the service works for Children & Young People

- Parents & Caregivers if you have any concerns with your child, we offer consultations. You can call 4069 0695.
- This service is for any child up to 18 years who would like help.
- Visit your community health centre staff to make a referral letter first.
- When SMHS receive the referral letter, we will contact you.

Privacy and Confidentiality

- You have the right to receive care from SMHS, where nobody will hear
- You have the right to receive care where nobody else will listen or find out.
- If we give you treatment, we keep it confidential. Ask us if you want to look at your records.
- We have respect for your needs when you visit us.
- Don't be ashamed to talk about any problems you have. We have respect to keep all support private.

Treatment and Support

- If you have any concerns, don't wait, come see us now.
- We have programs for your needs to rehabilitate and support your recovery.
- If treatment is required, we will ask for your approved consent.
- If you are ashamed to talk, you can have someone speak on your behalf with your approved consent.
- We have trained local Health Workers if you want them to take you when you visit the nurse.

Hours:

Monday - Friday: 8:00am - 4:30pm

161 Douglas Street "Old Court House" PO BOX 391, Thursday Island, QLD 4875

Ph: (07) 4069 0695

Fax: (07) 4030 6067

USEFUL PHONE NUMBERS

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

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



MABO DAY 3rd June 2015

To celebrate the life of Eddie Koiki Mabo and the anniversary of the High Court of Australia's judgment in the 1992 Mabo Case we encourage our community members to speak with their local Councillors on how to apply for the Councillor Discretionary Fund to support community activities that celebrate Mabo Day.

Like us on Facebook to see what else we'll be doing to celebrate.

NEW INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE CENTRE OPENS ON WARRABER



Elders and community members sang traditional island songs as they welcomed in guests for the opening of the new Indigenous Knowledge Centre (IKC) on Warraber last week on Wednesday 25th of February.

Warraber IKC was officially opened by TSIRC Mayor, Fred Gela and a Welcome to Country was done by Mr Samuel Tamu, Chairperson of the Warraberalgal Native Title Corporation. Warraber Councillor Wille Lui was the MC for the event.



Pastor Nelson Billy, Assembly of God, Warraber Island, conducted the blessing and opening prayer and was invited by Mayor Gela to cut the ribbon at the entrance to the IKC, to the delight of the community gathered to witness this historic event. Pastor Billy also added "I feel really proud, not only for our community but also for our future generations."

Warraber IKC was developed in partnership with Torres Strait Island Regional Council (TSIRC) and State Library of Queensland (SLQ). Work on the IKC began with a focus group made up of Warraber residents who provided feedback on the type of IKC they would like to see built for their community. The group's input determined the spaces that would be developed as well as the educational tools, resources, books and DVDs that would be available to the community through the IKC.

After the initial planning had been completed, State Library Project Officers and TSIRC staff worked together over a number of months to make the IKC a reality. Everybody pitched in to help. The TSIRC building team worked on modifications to the Council Divisional Office, Multi-Skilled Administration Officers continued



their collaboration with community to fine-tune the IKC as it was developed, and Divisional Manager Olive Lui provided project management as well as lending a hand to assemble furniture when timeframes were tight.



Helena David and Catharine Enosa are Multi-skilled Administration Officers for TSIRC and coordinate the IKC. Catharine lights up when she talks of all of the possibilities for her community. She is passionate about using the IKC as a means to preserve culture and working with both the Elders and young people. "Pictures last", she states. "It's a way we can preserve and share our culture." She adds that this might be a place where young people strive beyond their expectations to become future leaders.

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Mayor Gela said Cr Willie Lui had been a strong advocate for the next IKC to be in his community for some time. He sees the IKC as an enormous benefit for his community and hopes it can "break the cycle of disadvantage by getting more people into the workforce". He sees enormous potential for the IKC to also be a place for adult learning with access to the Internet and a place for adults to borrow books so they can fully participate in their community. He also hopes that adults who use the space encourage their own children to read more and increase their knowledge and skills in technology and media.

Mayor Gela adds "This is the generational change, our young children are using technology in a way we never thought possible. This library will support schools and families to value add to the development of their children."

Ms Janette Wright, State Library of Queensland CEO and State Librarian attended the launch and welcomed Warraber IKC to the Queensland IKC network. Janette talked of IKC's as a "window to the world" for people living in remote communities.

In a community of nearly 200 people, 80 people had already registered as IKC members before it had even opened. This is a testament to the critical need for community managed educational spaces that provide a space for the safekeeping of Torres Strait Islander culture.



Queensland Government's Torres and Cape Hospital and Health Service published this story in their newsletter on our very own Nathan Tabuai. Nathan is our Environmental Health Worker on Saibai. We are proud to share it here again in Strait Talk.

No need to suffer the monsoon mozzie



Mosquitos are a risk to our health. Mosquitoes cause discomfort, illness and in extreme cases death. However, Environmental Health Worker Nathan Tabuai suggests Saibai Islanders can stay safe from the harmful effects of mosquitoes by taking some precautions.

Nathan, who works for the Torres Strait Island Regional Council on Saibai Island, explained that mosquitoes are worse after the north west winds and rain in the afternoon. This is when the air becomes still.



Nathan Tabuai



Nathan advises community members can prevent mosquito bites by using insect repellent, wearing light coloured clothing, staying indoors in the evening, screen houses, use mosquito nets and coils, empty water containers around the house and dispose of rubbish.

Nathan checks water tanks and yards for mosquito breeding. Nathan said "if mosquito larvae are present in water tanks the water is treated to regulate the mosquitoes and keep the water safe". Nathan said "I will only check water tanks and yards for mosquito breeding with the permission of house owners. Nathan reported that The Saibai Island Council does regular weekly rubbish collections and in April will do another community wide clean up.



Nathan advises community members not to panic but to contact him if they have any queries. Nathan can be contacted at the Torres Strait Island Regional Council office, 22 Main Road, Saibai Island or PH. [\(07\) 4083 2808](tel:(07)40832808)

COUNCILLOR'S CORNER



Each issue of Strait Talk we invite a Councillor to speak on the important issues for their people and their community. We are fortunate to have Councillor Dimas Toby share his vision and discuss the major achievements made by Council for Boigu in this edition of Strait Talk.

Firstly I would like to acknowledge Father God, the Kaurareg nation, Mayor Gela, my fellow Councilors and our colleagues. I would also like to acknowledge elders past and present, and our future generation - the youth of Zenadth Kes.

Watching our young people build their confidence in their community drives my passion and one of my responsibilities as a Councilor is to inspire and shape our future leaders to lead our region, to make sure that the skills they have learnt from home, they will one day take with them when they leave to work on bigger projects in there life.

Today youths are leaving home to take up employment opportunities elsewhere outside of our region. While they are here on the island, I'd like to focus on how we can better provide more employment opportunities and guide them in the right direction with their life achievements - whether it's as a trade-person, medical practitioner or as a sportsperson. As a

young leader myself I'd like to share my own experiences of staying on in my own community and how I've worked hard to find opportunity so that I can stay on and be of service to my people and community.

As a young person I am proud of my achievement to take up the important role of a Councilor for Boigu, I was elected unopposed and I'm very thankful for my community to accept me and support my role as their leader for the community. We need to focus, not only on our Council but also on our education, sports, our health and our cultural responsibilities and make sure that people are leading on these in their communities - with the support of other government agencies providing service to my people will make our community successfully achieve our goals.

I have also been the SES Local Controller for three years, managing a team of 15 people. We are guided by the TSIRC Emergency Management Plan and all work hard to keep our community safe. We do

things such as sandbagging in preparation for monsoonal season, assist in our community major events and respond to emergency situation when required. Our team is made up of all ages, youths and elders and everyone in the team takes pride in getting involved.

Last May I started employment with TSRA as their Ranger Supervisor APS 5 for the Guda Malulgal (Top Western) cluster area to look after our land and country. I have always had a passion to care for my land and sea to make sure we have sustainable resources for our people and future generation, to retain our land through our culture. Part of my role is to educate and provide awareness to our kids, and the wider community about caring for our country and the natural resources we have in our region.

Living out on these islands is all about family, we are guided by our culture, our elders and our religion faith and these determine how we best make our decisions to suit the livelihood in our community. As a leader you will need to have the time to sit with the people and listen to what their views are so that you can best represent their wishes and meet their needs. I am always interested on involving in our culture and our church and encourage everyone else to be involved in these activities. This is what makes me a good leader in our community working together with everyone.

With the election coming up next year I look forward and seek community blessing if I would be of service to my community for next term so I can continue to strive and together achieve the goals that are important and are close to the heart of my

people and community. I am also open to working with any interested nominees to share my knowledge of the responsibilities involved in local government politics. I believe you need to be open and transparent with your intentions and how you want to lead your community and be confident with your skills and experience to fulfil your role. I hope we continue to elect people for their leadership, their vision and their honesty. Time has changed and the new way forward is to elect those with the skills and confidence to participate in high-level discussions with a broad range of stakeholders, within in the community and wider region.

I see our community as a ship. Our Council and its administration is the engine room and our passengers are our community members. I am the Captain of this ship. I will steer with my compass to arrive at our destination, which is guided by our spiritual leaders and elders to steer us on our safe path. Our ship is far on its journey and has sailed.

We will start our major Seawalls project this year and have secured 8 houses to be built in Boigu. We have also secured major renovations on 2 community houses through our Plug-in program, which will provide jobs for the community. As well as the building we already have underway we have also completed reports to seek funding for feasibility and building to be done on 12 more houses on our subdivision land. PBC have supported and allocated land for this Social Housing program. This will be another opportunity for local employment and create jobs.

Currently I am working with our Council, PBC, TO's and the Department of Natural



Resources and Mines on the 'Katter leases'. There are 48 of these for Boigu Island that have not yet been approved. This has taken over 30 years to resolve, however we now expect these to be granted over the coming period. This will mean our community members have the opportunity for home-ownership through a 99-year lease social housing program. I would not have been able to achieve these important goals and milestone without the support of the Mayor, our Council, our community and our stakeholders who have made the difference to move forward and meet the needs of my people and

community. I hope to continue to receive the good and healthy working relationship for the better of our people.

In closing I would like to say a Koeyma Eso to all of my supporters and my community. I would like to thank Mayor Gela for all of his support, and my fellow Councilors who work with me to help address our issues for Boigu and across our region, and a big thank you to our major funding bodies TSRA, and other government departments.

God Bless
Cr Dimas Toby

The Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

Are you an employee in need of support? The Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is a voluntary and confidential counselling service available to all employees and immediate family members. AccessEAP is currently offering employees four free-of-charge counselling sessions by telephone or face-to-face with fully qualified and registered psychologists and social workers to assist in the improvement of:

- Personal Issues
- Working Relationships
- Substance Abuse
- Depression
- Grief and Loss
- Financial Concerns
- Anxiety
- Parenting
- Legal Concerns
- Work / Life Effectiveness

AccessEAP also offers the Manager Support program, an advisory service for managers, team leaders and other members of staff with responsibility for supporting and motivating employees. Manager Support can assist in maximising employee potential improving communication and developing awareness for managers or leaders.



The Employee Assistance Program is available by telephone 24/7 on:

1800 81 87 28 or (02) 8247 9191

For more information visit:

ENGINEERING UPDATE



Looking back at 2014 we are impressed at what the Engineering Department has achieved in such a short space of time; most notable was the emphasis on training. We hit the ground running in 2014 with our Divisional Engineering Officers successfully completing their Certificate IV in Frontline Management Training. Later in the year participants from our Engineering Department commenced their Certificate II in Water Operations, and a further 15 of our Engineering Officers completed Airport Security Screening Training. This training ensures our staff can deliver more effective services for their communities. Large projects we have completed include resealing

both Warraber and lama airport, upgrading access roads at Hammond Island and Moa, and Badu, St Pauls and Masig received much-needed jetty repairs. 2015 is set to be a busy year, and will bring new and exciting changes to the Engineering Department, particularly structural changes, which should see the Engineering Department running more efficiently and effectively.

This year has already seen the start to the Seawall project, and will also bring with it the prospect of more training for our Engineering Officers in water/sewer, airports and heavy machinery.

Lorna Bowie,

Seawalls Coordinator.



HEALTHY LIFESTYLE WORKSHOPS

Firstly I would like to acknowledge our Great God and our Traditional Owners past and present. I would also like to congratulate the newly appointed Healthy Lifestyle Officers (HLO's) who have since come on board to join our team.

Earlier this year we met in TI to reflect on what we did in terms of community activities and projects in 2014. The highlight for me last year was working with Primary School children from Tagai Campus at Murray Island doing our Strait Smile Program. This is a toothbrushing program that looks at short term strategies that has a long term affect. We continued our Healthy Lifestyle Officers training in our Certificate III in Fitness with a Registered Training Organisation from Brisbane called Fitnace. It was an intense two weeks of theory and practical activities and as a result of our hard work we all succeeded. I believe this a big achievement for our communities as we now have qualified group fitness instructors to improve our Healthy Lifestyle activities in our communities. I would like to say big esso to the Queensland Health Cardio Unit in Brisbane for their support.

Thank you also to our Health and Wellbeing Coordinator, Ella Kris who has programmed many fun activities and projects such as Dance Kombat, Strait Smile Program and group fitness sessions. Watch out for more to come from our team.

Au esoau

Alex Blanco

Healthy Lifestyle Officer
Mer



Welcome to the Strait Talk grants SHOUT OUT!

In each edition we will list some grants that are available for our constituents to apply for. Good luck!

TSRA have grants programs available in their Common Funding Round (CFR) to support community activities. The grants open twice a year with the next one opening on the 5th of March 2015, closing at 4pm on the 14th of April 2015. Documents can be found at www.tsra.gov.au/the-tsra/grant-funding from 9am on the opening day.

The Australia Council for the Arts has grants programs for individuals and groups. Details and application forms can be found here: www.australiacouncil.gov.au/funding/new-grants-model/

The grants programs open four times a year. The next round will open on the 21st of April and closes on the 2nd of June 2015.

The Gambling Community Benefit Fund supports a whole range of activities in communities in Queensland. The grants open 4 times a year with the next round opening mid April and closing on 31st of May 2015. Please go to www.justice.qld.gov.au/corporate/sponsorships-and-grants/grants/community-benefit-funding-programs for guidelines and applications forms.

FREEHOLD PROCESS

On 1 January 2015, state legislation came into effect that allows Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to obtain ordinary freehold title to land like other parts of Queensland and Australia. Council was successful in nominating St Pauls, Hammond and Poruma to participate in a pilot (trial) program. As Trustee of the Deed of Grant in Trust for each community, Council will consult with communities to explain the freehold option and decide whether it is appropriate to make any land available for freehold grant. The freehold pilot program is being run by Council with assistance from Queensland's Department of Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander and Partnerships. Keep an eye out for information about freehold and the dates for community consultations at Poruma, Hammond or St Pauls.

OUR TEAM

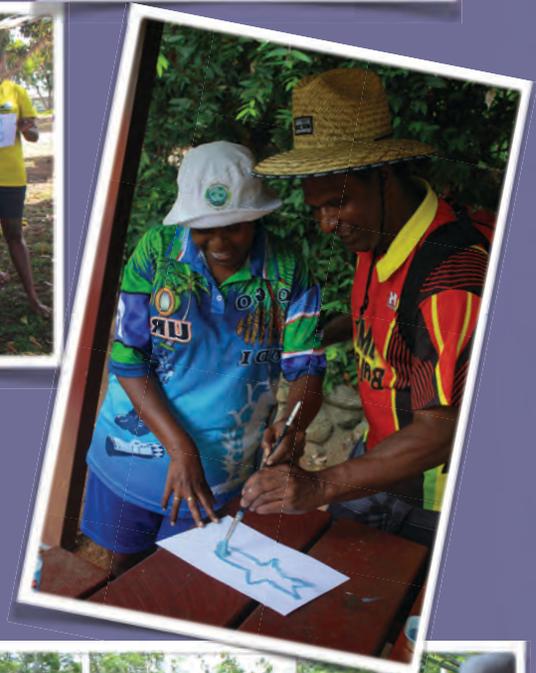
Professional development, workshops and training, leadership, team-building activities and meetings all contribute towards improving and skilling up our local workforce so that we can continue to improve our service delivery for all of our communities and constituents.



International Women's Day



Divisional Managers Retreat



Warraber IKC Opening

OUR TEAM

Professional development, workshops and training, leadership, team-building activities and meetings all contribute towards improving and skilling up our local workforce so that we can continue to improve our service delivery for all of our communities and constituents.



Leadership Training

Councillors Meeting at Hammond



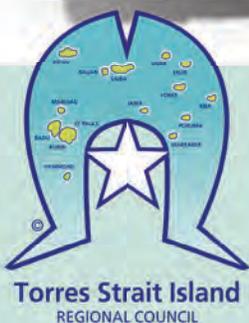
Communications Workshop



Environmental Health Workshop



Communications Workshop



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