



A RASAC grader crosses a flooded creek on the way to repair homelands' access roads. Photo: RASAC

Because of the remoteness, the challenging terrain and extreme temperatures undertaking even straightforward construction activities present logistical difficulties. 'Trucking in materials is one thing but we must also be mindful of cultural sites, looking after our tools and preserving our resources, especially our water supplies,' says Susan. 'A further hazard is undue wear and tear on equipment and vehicles.'

Fortunately, there is a great deal of knowledge and understanding about cultural protocols to draw on as RASAC employs a high percentage of local people—of the 80 staff 60 are employed within communities. 'We also like to consult as often as we can with the homelands' traditional owners,' says the corporation's chairperson, Owen Burton. 'Engagement with the communities is central to our success and is the main reason for us being here.'

Strong governance

As an organisation RASAC reflects good governance. Its board of directors is made up of representatives from 10 main community groupings on the APY Lands. In most cases the representative is the elected community council chairperson or deputy.

The corporation also has three independent directors (external) from different backgrounds who each contribute valuable business skills and life knowledge.

The board meets regularly, on average every six to eight weeks, and is supported by a general manager and other staff based in Alice Springs.

Background

RASAC is a not-for-profit organisation wholly owned by Anangu.

For more information www.rasac.com.au.



Australian Government
Office of the Registrar of Indigenous Corporations

ORIC Oracle

EXPERIENCE and GOOD ORDER

August 2013



Established some 20 years ago Regional Anangu Services Aboriginal Corporation (RASAC) is working hard.

Today RASAC is a large well-run organisation looking after the needs and welfare of a number of remote communities across the Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara (APY) Lands. Its main business is providing municipal and homelands services to about 3,000 people living in 10 different communities scattered across 100,000 square kilometres.

'We maintain the public areas of the communities, such as the sporting ovals, town streets and homelands' roads,' says Sean Williamson, one of RASAC's directors. The corporation also manages the rubbish collections and tips, and looks after the airstrips.

Other services include community office support (in five communities), bookkeeping services and running a fuel outlet and small workshop at Pipalyatjara.

RASAC also maintains a works depot, workshop and fuel outlet at Umuwa which not only carries out motor vehicle repairs for the communities but also for visiting government and non-government service providers and contractors. A primary focus is providing training and long-term employment opportunities for Anangu, the traditional owners of the APY Lands.



(1): RASAC's heavy plant is used for major road work projects. (2 and 4): Amata's 'clean up day'. Residents and a RASAC crew (in the ute) work together. (3 and 5): Pukatja's 'pride day'. Photos: RASAC

AGM and annual reporting time

Now that the 2012–13 financial year has closed it's time to prepare your reports and hold your annual general meeting (AGM).

Attention charities

There is no change in reporting requirements for CATSI Act corporations which are registered charities. This means you **don't** have to send your reports to the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC).

A memorandum of understanding between the Registrar and the ACNC confirms that the ACNC **will** accept reports lodged with the Registrar under the CATSI Act as satisfying ACNC annual reporting requirements. You do not have to report twice.

For more information see ORIC's media release of 21 June 2013 at www.oric.gov.au under 'publications'.

Do it now. Don't be late!

- Call and hold AGM
Due between 1 July and 30 November
- Lodge 2012–13 reports with the Registrar
*Due between 1 July and 31 December**

*Corporations that don't lodge their 2012–13 reports by 31 December 2013 could face prosecution.

Why not lodge online—it's easier than you think: <https://online.oric.gov.au>
Corporations can lodge a range of forms and reports online.

Need help? If you need assistance filling in your reports or some extra time, contact us. ORIC is here to help you.

freecall: 1800 622 431 (not free from mobiles) email: info@oric.gov.au website: www.oric.gov.au

The corporation is closely involved with the communities and each year, for example, it sponsors all the local football and softball teams. 'Playing sport is very important to us,' says Sean Williamson. 'It gets everyone together and it's good family time.'

A primary focus is providing training and long-term employment opportunities for Anangu.

RASAC has experience and know-how, and continues to maintain good working relationships with its federal and state funding partners. It is committed to following correct processes.

'We take great care in planning and carrying out our projects,' says Susan Lamabina, another of RASAC's directors. 'Often we are performing tasks in very demanding arid conditions and we have to make sure we have thought of everything before we start.'

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Chairing meetings

The chairperson's job is to steer the meeting through its business efficiently and fairly.



- A good chairperson will have a sound knowledge of the corporation's aims and objectives (that's its business and its rules).
- At the meeting the chairperson will:
- welcome everyone
 - check a quorum is present
 - check someone is taking the minutes
 - follow the agenda (business of the meeting)
 - show respect—make all members feel valued and encourage their participation
 - be impartial maintain control
 - listen to all viewpoints
 - not allow one or two members to dominate
 - strive for consensus
 - start and finish the meeting on time
 - check and sign the minutes.

THE RULE BOOK

Check what's in your rules

When it comes to chairing meetings make sure you follow your rule book. Rule books vary. Your corporation may include some special rules.

All rule books are available at www.oric.gov.au.

ELECTING a chairperson

There are two ways to elect a chairperson. Check your rule book but the most common way is for the chairperson to be elected from among the directors at the first directors' meeting after the annual general meeting (AGM).

Chairing GENERAL MEETINGS

The chairperson typically chairs general meetings. If the chairperson is not available the directors choose a replacement (usually one of them) or the members elect someone. Check what your rule book says.

Chairing DIRECTORS' MEETINGS

The chairperson normally chairs all the directors' meetings but some rule books say that the chairing function should be rotated. This is so that each director has a turn, or the task is shared among a few. It is up to your corporation to decide how long (or how many meetings) each director should chair.

POWERS of the chairperson

As a general rule the chairperson doesn't have any more powers (or rights or authority) than any other director of the corporation. However, some CATSI Act corporations have chosen to give extra powers to their chairperson, such as the power to call meetings or to have the casting vote. This is fine so long as these powers are written down in the corporation's rule book or delegated by the other directors.

Delegated POWERS

A delegated power is a permission given by the directors to another person to carry out a particular function.

Most corporation rule books provide for delegated powers but check what yours says.

Remember, delegated powers must be minuted and they should also be reviewed each time the directors change.

Photo: © Ingeijie Tadros/The Image Bank courtesy of Getty Images