



ORIC Oracle

INDEPENDENT DIRECTORS: can add a skill set

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A great board is like a great band—you need the right mix of talent, skills, experience and personalities. If your board needs boosting in the rhythm section consider an independent director.

Finding the right people

More and more corporations are inviting independent (non-member) specialist directors onto their boards. This is especially true for larger corporations that manage multiple services and have frequent dealings with funding bodies.

If your board has a skill gap, or is missing some specialist knowledge, or just needs some extra support, try ORIC's new free service, **Independentdirectory** (<http://director.oric.gov.au>). There are many highly qualified candidates to choose from.



▲ Rick Callaghan working at Weeli Wolli, Western Australia

Meet independent director Rick Callaghan

A Potaruwutj man from the south-eastern part of South Australia, Rick Callaghan has worked with traditional and non-traditional people across Australia, mainly to help establish businesses.

'A strong focus is cultural and heritage matters, particularly obtaining resources,' says Rick. 'For the past four years I've worked with MIB Aboriginal Corporation in the East Pilbara, helping to develop assets through commercial opportunities resulting from its native title determination.'

In 2010 Rick joined the board of the Regional Anangu Services Aboriginal Corporation (RASAC) as an independent director. This large, diverse and successful corporation primarily supplies municipal services, such as community road maintenance, sporting facilities maintenance and rubbish tip maintenance to 12 communities in the APY lands in north-west South Australia. It has also started to provide community patrols to six communities.

'My skills are chiefly in governance and investment matters,' says Rick. 'My background is in business management and human resources, so I enjoy sharing business ideas with the other directors. I lend support, bearing in mind that English for many is a third or fourth language. Most of our meetings require interpreters.'

Maintaining language and cultural identity is vital to RASAC but equally important is that the directors understand the financial and governance issues. 'It's a very good board but that's not to say it hasn't experienced some moments of instability in the past,' says Rick.

For just on six years Rick has attended board meetings.

'What impresses me most is how well the member directors run these meetings. There's no humbug, discussions are serious and professional.'

It's a team effort. As you would expect, the challenges involved in governing a large corporation are constant, but the load is made lighter because directors work together and share with each other their knowledge and skills.

'I'm proud that, along with the other directors, I've helped to steer the corporation in the right direction, and we've stayed on top of financial and governance issues. I've found the experience thoroughly rewarding.'

RASAC has three independent directors that work closely with 10 Anangu member directors. Last year it had revenue of \$10.2 million and employed 79 people including 46 Anangu.

Read more about independent director Rick Callaghan at www.oric.gov.au

'No one should underestimate the complexity of governing a corporation. For us, having three independent directors serving on our board provides us with technical advice and expertise, and helps to share the workload.'

Regional Anangu Services Aboriginal Corporation

'We had nothing to lose and a lot to gain. It just made sense to look beyond the community for people who had the skills we wanted and who could work with us in an equal and cooperative way to set things right.'

Bawinanga Aboriginal Corporation

'One of the best things we did in 2013 was to recruit three independent directors with specialist skills in primary healthcare, finance, and governance. The board has benefitted from expert advice as have our members and the community we serve.'

Central Australian Aboriginal Congress Aboriginal Corporation

'Our board consists of representatives from nine separate communities and two independent directors committed to our shared vision. I'd say the independent directors complement the skills and experience of the board by strengthening overall capacity, particularly government processes.'

Miwatj Health Aboriginal Corporation

Find a director at independentdirectory

You can find profiles of many skilled candidates on **Independentdirectory** at <http://director.oric.gov.au>.

It's a free service and there's no obligation—registering your corporation in **Independentdirectory** does not mean you HAVE to appoint someone.

Independentdirectory

gives you the opportunity to see who's out there with the skills you may be interested in.



an overview of candidates that match your corporation's desired skills

view more for each candidate

see the specific skills that match

see the preferences that match

TIME SAVING TIP:

Edit your members' list all year round at <https://online.oric.gov.au>.

Doing this will save time when you come to lodge your general report.

OVERDUE REPORTS?

The Registrar may take legal action against your corporation if you don't lodge your reports. Make sure you are not on the **List of corporations in breach of 2014–15 reporting requirements** on www.oric.gov.au.

Lodge online right now

<https://online.oric.gov.au>

If you need help with reports call 1800 622 431 (not free from mobiles).

WHEN YOU'VE GOT THE RIGHT TALENT WORKING TOGETHER YOU CAN MAKE GREAT MUSIC.



independentdirectory

If your corporation's board needs a new lead guitarist [or perhaps a financial expert] you might find them in the **Independent Directory**.

Register your corporation today at <http://director.oric.gov.au>.



Is your board making great music?

A board of directors is like a band. You need the right mix of talent, skills, experience and personality to produce the best sound [or outcomes for your corporation].

Get in rhythm by listening to each other. When you've got rhythm, the music flows and playing the tune feels easy.

[Directors perform better when they listen to each other and act in harmony.]

Once you've got rhythm start on style—be adventurous, take risks.

[A board that's working well together has the confidence to tackle bigger projects and challenges.]

Bring in new instruments to enhance your sound.

[Different directors have different talents. If you're missing a major skill think about an independent specialist director.]

Create energy in your audience. You know you're going well when others are listening and responding.

[Share with members what's going on at the corporation. Share the vision, goals and progress towards them—be enthusiastic about it.]

The best music is made when the band clearly enjoys playing together—there's chemistry.

[The relationships between the directors is just as important as having the right skills.]

Photo: Mambali Band playing at the Big Rivers Community Festival, held in Katherine in August 2015. The festival was hosted and funded by CAAMA Music and was the first ever Aboriginal music event of its kind.

Reproduced courtesy of CAAMA Music (Central Australian Aboriginal Media Association)