

## CATSI Act good for businesses

Many business models suit registration under the CATSI Act. You can set up your corporation as a:

- **community business**—to pursue economic development activities for the benefit of the community. Profits may go back into the business or distributed among the community
- **personal business**—which may suit an individual, a family group, or just those who share a common business interest. Profits may be distributed among the members and/or fed back into the business
- **peak body**—for promoting business opportunities and interests in either a particular region or for a particular business sector. For example, the Association of Northern, Kimberley and Arnhem Aboriginal Artists Aboriginal Corporation—better known as ANKAAA—looks after the interests of artists across a large area of northern Australia.



The CATSI Act protects the interests of business owners, creditors and key stakeholders.

## Training >>>

ORIC runs courses in corporate governance training right across Australia. Courses are specially designed to meet individual needs.

See the training map on the ORIC website.

Directors from Yagbani Aboriginal Corporation get to grips with corporate governance training, Goulburn Islands, Northern Territory. (From left to right) Ida Waianga-Ceda, Douglas Djalamba, Albert Naruraidj, (standing) ORIC's Russell Styche, Ricky Gurruwiwi, Rodney Mardbinda. Photo: ORIC

## Guiding hand

Have an idea for a business?

Want some help getting it started?

Indigenous Business Australia (IBA) assists eligible Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to acquire, establish and grow small to medium businesses. How? IBA provides business support services and business finance through its **Business Development and Assistance Program**.

Kym Wiley, a Townsville mother of three and owner of Coyote K9's dog washing service, loves being her own boss because it means she can balance work and family commitments. By attending IBA's **Into Business Workshop** series Kym found the guidance and assurance she needed to progress her business.

Like Kym, you may have a business to develop and be eligible for IBA's range of services.

Kym Wiley with one of her four-legged clients. Photo: IBA



Contact IBA today on **1800 107 107** or for more information visit [www.iba.gov.au](http://www.iba.gov.au)

## The right side of the law



From time to time ORIC staff will check in with you to make sure you are running your corporation well—that means according to your rule book and the law. We can help you with reporting procedures but you must stay compliant.

**So please lodge your annual reports on time!**

But if your corporation does run into difficulties (for example, because of a lack of funding) the Registrar may intervene. Sometimes corporation directors request assistance. Under the CATSI Act the Registrar has the power to appoint a special administrator to help corporations fix their own problems.

**Special administration is a unique measure under the CATSI Act and can be a great service to corporations which have temporarily lost their way.**



Australian Government

Office of the Registrar of Indigenous Corporations

# ORIC Oracle

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## Why it's better under CATSI

In this edition of the *ORIC Oracle* we are promoting the many benefits of registering under the *Corporations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) Act 2006* (CATSI Act) and why choosing ORIC as your regulator makes sense.



We can come to you. Priscilla Williams (left) reviews the general report for Marnjal Community Aboriginal Corporation with support from ORIC's Roseanne Mirto while they both enjoy the sunshine in Halls Creek Town Park. Photo: ORIC

Whether large or small, remote or regional, multi-faceted or a single operation, every corporation benefits under CATSI. Its provisions include:

- non-liability of corporation members for any debts that the corporation may incur
- corporation members can decide the rules that will govern their corporation (note: these rules make up the corporation's rule book)
- corporations can decide to adapt their rules (rule book) to suit their own special Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander customs and traditions
- profits from the corporation may be distributed to its members (as long as this is written in the rule book)
- free registration (unlike alternative regimes which may charge a fee)
- minimal paperwork—in some cases corporations may be exempted from submitting annual reports
- nation-wide operation—corporations are not limited to the state or territory in which they are registered
- access to a range of ORIC support services.



It's so quick. Rayleen Pindan lodges a general report for Djilimbardi (Aboriginal Corporation) online, Fitzroy Crossing. Photo: ORIC

The CATSI Act provides flexibility. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander corporations under CATSI have complete freedom not only to set their own objectives but also to include in their constitutions (rule books) cultural practices. The CATSI Act is about individual needs—so while it is based on the *Corporations Act 2001* it is different in several fundamental and important areas.

## Spread the word



If you know of an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander group that is thinking about becoming a corporation under the CATSI Act please tell us!

We can explain the advantages in more detail and go through the registration process—a few easy steps is all it takes.





Five of the six founding directors: Mischa Cartwright, Dawn Ross, Elaine Peckham, Cheryl Ross and Deanella Mack. Photo: CAASWA

Central Australian Aboriginal Strong Women's Alliance (Aboriginal Corporation) — CAASWA — represents the voices of Aboriginal women across Central Australia. Based in Alice Springs it incorporated under the CATSI Act in August 2011.

'We would like to acknowledge ORIC's help and support in Central Australia in putting together our rule book and establishing the governance of our organisation.'



For more information  
[www.caaswa.org.au](http://www.caaswa.org.au)

'The process of registering is simple,' says the Registrar, Mr Anthony Beven. 'We've thrown out the red tape and streamlined the process.'

## Registering under the CATSI Act

### STEP 1

#### Making the decision to become a corporation

When a group decides it wants to form a corporation it gets together to work out the corporation's main aims and purpose. Someone in the group keeps a record of the meeting (the minutes). Remember to send these minutes to ORIC with your application form, *How to register a new corporation* (available on the ORIC website).

### STEP 2

#### Complete your rule book

The next step is to write your rule book. The rule book forms the backbone of your corporation. It sets out the rules about how your corporation will operate. All members agree to the rules.

ORIC can help you write your rule book or, if you prefer, we can send you some useful guides, such as *The rule book info kit* or *The rule book condensed*.

## Online forms

Make your application online at: <https://online.oric.gov.au>

New and existing corporations can lodge a range of forms and reports online

Background image: Kings Canyon. Photo: istockphotos