



MORNINGTON ISLAND ARTS CENTRE BACK ON ITS FEET

The Registrar of Indigenous Corporations, Anthony Beven, has today announced the end of the special administration of Mirndiyan Gununa Aboriginal Corporation.

The corporation is based on Mornington Island in the Gulf of Carpentaria in Queensland. It has been operating since 1973 and was incorporated in 1983. The corporation organises, presents and promotes the traditional art and culture of the Lardil and Kaiadilt people of the Wellesley Islands, which includes Mornington Island.

The corporation is known for its celebrated dance troupe, the Mornington Island dancers and the unique style of its painters, particularly those of the highly respected artist Ms Sally Gabori who passed away in 2015. The corporation is funded by Commonwealth and Queensland government agencies and receives support from the Indigenous Art Centre Alliance.

On 31 January 2017 the Registrar, at the request of the corporation's directors, appointed a special administrator to the corporation. The corporation was at the time experiencing short-term cash flow problems and needed to change the way it carried on its business.

'The directors became deeply concerned about the future of the corporation. They requested specialist regulatory assistance to turnaround the corporation,' Mr Beven said.

The special administrator has made significant improvements to the corporation's financial and business model, and reinvigorated community interest in its activities.

'The corporation has been through a turbulent period,' Mr Beven said. 'There are still challenging times ahead but it is well placed to pursue its goals and objectives.'

Ms Fiona Hamilton was recently engaged as the new general manager. Ms Hamilton has had extensive experience working with Aboriginal organisations throughout Australia. A new board of directors, including two independent directors, have also been appointed to lead the corporation.

Mirndiyan's future is much brighter and it is now positioned to continue its important work of maintaining the cultural heritage of the people of the Wellesley Islands.

The Registrar's office will monitor the corporation over the next 12 months and also offer governance training for the corporation's new directors in coming months.

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