



Registrar's word

This report demonstrates ORIC is making strong progress against the targets and indicators set out in our *2024–27 Corporate Plan*. We have been implementing an ambitious and comprehensive reform program in ORIC and I am pleased with what we achieved in 2024–25.

Our reform work has impacted all ORIC's functions and includes significant projects like our new IT systems, a new website, new guidance materials and a continuing investment in the capability of our staff.

The intent of this reform is to:

- increase the trust and confidence of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander corporations in ORIC as a regulator

- establish ORIC as a regulator of choice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

In 2025–26 we will continue our reform agenda, and we will have a focus on our priorities as set out in my *2025 Regulatory Posture*. We will be working with corporations to ensure their:

- AGMs are held on time unless an exemption has been granted
- reporting is complete, accurate and timely
- rule books are modern, transparent and workable for members
- information is up to date with ORIC including notifying ORIC of changes to officers within 28 days
- directors are fulfilling their duties consistent with the CATSI Act.

As set out in *ORIC's Regulatory Compliance Framework* our work will take into account corporations' attitudes towards meeting their obligations under the CATSI Act. We will take a proportionate response which builds on our reform agenda, including:

- supporting corporations to comply by enhancing our training, guidance and other resources
- helping corporations to build their own capability to resolve issues themselves
- using the full breadth of powers under the CATSI Act
- where possible support corporations to resolve non-compliance and governance issues or use regulatory powers where necessary.

We will employ tailored approaches to dealing with corporations which considers their circumstances. We will report publicly and transparently on our performance.

Tricia Stroud
Registrar of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Corporations

Strengthen ORIC's Investigation function

In 2024–25 ORIC strengthened its assessment and referral processes. All matters referred to the:

- Investigation team were assessed within one month
- Commonwealth Director of Public Prosecutions (CDPP) were accepted for assessment.

ORIC have referred 19 corporations to the CDPP for minor regulatory prosecution regarding non reporting and one corporation was referred in 2024–25 for non-compliance with AGM requirements.

In its November 2024 report, ORIC reported that it was expecting to release its new investigation case management software (ICMS) with full integration by 9 November 2024. This was delayed until 24 July 2025, and is now in use. The delay to releasing the new ICMS also impacted the release of ORIC's Investigations Procedure Manual from early March 2025 to 1 July 2025.





ORIC's Regulation function

ORIC's Regulation function undertakes examinations and oversees the appointment of special administrators to corporations experiencing financial and governance difficulties. ORIC's Regulation function also monitors the external administration of corporations registered under the CATSI Act.

ORIC undertakes 2 types of examinations:

- rolling program – focused primarily on medium and large corporations to check their financial and governance health
- targeted – may be undertaken due to concerns raised by stakeholders, discrepancies in financial information or interactions with the corporation.

ORIC completed 41 examinations in 2024–25 and carried over 16 examinations for completion in 2025–26. Of the 41 completed examinations, 19 were targeted.

The Registrar of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Corporations (the Registrar) can appoint a special administrator to a corporation on certain grounds set out under the CATSI Act. The purpose of appointing a special administrator is to return the corporation to a healthier state and back to the control of members. Special administration is a unique power under the CATSI Act and not one the Registrar exercises lightly.

As at 30 June 2025, there were 4 corporations under special administration. During 2024–25, 3 special administrations were concluded with the corporations being successfully handed back to members.

Use of breadth of powers under the CATSI Act

Consistent with *ORIC's Regulatory Compliance Framework* ORIC aims to take proportionate regulatory action in response to compliance matters.

ORIC has been focussed on expanding its use of compliance notices during 2024–25 which in the past have generally only been issued following an examination. In 2024–25 ORIC issued 6 compliance notices outside of an examination.

ORIC also issued 17 compliance notices as a result of an examination. Consequently, almost one-quarter (22.5%) of compliance notices issued in 2024–25 were outside of an examination.

In relation to exercising other regulatory powers, in 2024–25 ORIC:

- made 56 Registrar initiated changes to corporation's rule books under section 69-35 of the CATSI Act
- called one Registrar initiated meeting under section 439-10 of the CATSI Act
- issued 2 notices to produce books under section 453-5 of the CATSI Act.

Tailored support for corporations

ORIC's tailored support for corporations includes:

- an induction kit for newly registered corporations
- a check-in process with newly registered corporations to ensure they have met their requirements under the CATSI Act and to offer support
- training for boards of corporations exiting special administration.

Of the 3 corporations that exited special administration in 2024–25, one undertook corporation specific training and the other 2 corporations were referred to governance workshops.

Improving ORIC's service

A priority of ORIC has been to improve support for corporations, building the capacity of its staff and making its correspondence with corporations easier to understand and more fulsome. ORIC has also been reviewing its internal and external guidance materials.

In 2024–25 ORIC held 9 all staff training sessions on aspects of the CATSI Act as well as a further 6 training sessions targeted at delegates of the Registrar who make decisions under the legislation. ORIC ran a further 2 workshops for its staff on facilitation

skills and adult education principles to assist with the delivery of governance training.

ORIC's project to review its template correspondence has resulted in all its correspondence templates being revised to be clearer and easier to understand.

ORIC's target is to answer 80% of calls received. In 2024–25 ORIC received 11,900 calls; of which it answered 9,658 (or 81.1%).

Modernise and streamline interactions with corporations and the general public

ORIC can report on average processing times since the introduction of its new processing system on 31 March 2025.

From 1 April to 30 June 2025, ORIC took an average of:

- 11.5 days to process 43 rule book change requests which were received and resolved in the same period
- 2.7 days to resolve 1,946 enquiries
- 3.8 days to process 306 auditor's, financial and directors' reports
- 5.6 days to resolve reports of concern raised in relation to corporations.

All top 3 topics of reports of concern received from 1 April to 30 June 2025 related to corporation officers and directors; specifically:

- 24 reports of governance failures
- 15 reports of breach of directors' duties
- 12 reports about the election or appointment of directors.

From 1 April to 30 June 2025 ORIC received and resolved 435 online help enquiries from corporations.

Review and refresh of guidance materials

In 2024–25 ORIC released new materials in relation to:

- report a concern and disputes
- unreasonable complainants
- complaints about ORIC staff and contractors
- director term exemptions
- annual reporting.

ORIC also revised its:

- materials relating to the CATSI Act's Indigeneity provisions
- *After Registration* fact sheet
- *Customer Service Charter*
- Registered Native Title Bodies Corporate policy statement (PS–10).

ORIC has commenced work on materials relating to feedback, criminal activity, permission to deny a members' request for a general meeting, deregistrations, minor regulatory prosecutions and reviewable decisions.

Guidance for stakeholders

ORIC has 8 vodcasts called *CATSI Conversations* on its website on topics for corporations such as the skills that a board needs and what to do when a board can't agree. In 2024–25 there were 2,499 views of ORIC's *CATSI Conversations*.

In relation to ORIC's other guidance materials, in 2024–25 there were:

- 6,096 fact sheet downloads
- 861,185 visits to website pages
- 1,907 model rule book downloads
- 426 *Healthy Corporation Checklist* downloads
- 854 policy position statement downloads.

Refreshed support services for corporations

ORIC facilitates access to free legal assistance through its LawHelp service for eligible corporations in certain circumstances. In 2024–25 ORIC received 37 requests for legal help; of which 25 were supported (or 67.5%). Six requests were outside of scope, 3 were withdrawn by the applicant and 3 are being carried forward into 2025–26.

ORIC also assists with advertising vacant roles in corporations registered under the CATSI Act and provides

recruitment resources on its website. In 2024–25, ORIC advertised 30 corporation roles. There were 2,828 visits to ORIC's corporation vacancies and recruitment resources webpages with 611 downloads of recruitment materials.

Training for corporations

ORIC provides a limited number of supported places to assist directors of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander corporations to undertake the Certificate IV in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Governance. During 2024–25 ORIC supported 18 participants to commence this qualification.

During 2024–25 ORIC delivered 67 non-accredited training activities in total. There were 18 corporate governance workshops (all face-to-face), 43 workshops on single topics (6 face-to-face and 37 online), and 6 private workshops tailored for individual corporations (all face-to-face). Across these activities, there were 1285* participants representing 637* corporations. (* Participant and corporation numbers are understated due to limitations in capturing participant information.)

Increased public reporting

In 2024–25 ORIC ceased producing its year book and replaced it with 3 placemat reports based on:

- What did we do? (November)
- What was the impact? (February)
- How well did we do it? (July)

This is the final placemat report for 2024–25.

To inform our February placemat report we undertook a survey of all CATSI Act corporations which received 163 responses.

Provide information about the CATSI Act and Registrar

ORIC attends events for a range of purposes including to:

- share and learn from other regulators
- present on ORIC's regulatory approach and priorities
- talk to corporations about their obligations under the CATSI Act
- discuss challenges facing RNTBCs.

The Registrar and ORIC staff attended 17 events during 2024–25 including native title, regulator and other events.