



SPECIAL ADMINISTRATION ONLY OPTION FOR PURGA ELDERS

The Registrar of Indigenous Corporations, Anthony Beven, has today placed the Purga Elders & Descendents Aboriginal Corporation under special administration.

The corporation based in Purga, near Ipswich in Queensland, holds title over part of the former Purga Mission, established in 1901 on over 1,500 acres. In the 1940s the mission declined when many Aboriginal people were removed to the Cherbourg Mission (some 300 kilometres to the west).

In 1999 a small portion of the original Purga Mission was vested in the Purga Elders & Descendents Aboriginal Corporation, including the historical cemetery and the original Purga meeting place for the celebration of heritage and culture. The main aim of the corporation today is improving the lives and well-being of Aboriginal people through the preservation of traditional values.

‘This is a corporation with a long history but for some time I have been concerned by the number of complaints I have received from members and directors about its management,’ said Mr Beven. ‘Of particular concern is the corporation cancelling memberships without due process.’

On 14 October 2015 a compliance notice was served on the corporation by the Registrar requiring the directors to review 128 cancelled memberships and to take the appropriate action to reinstate them.

The corporation failed to comply with the compliance notice and also failed to adequately respond to a show cause notice issued by the Registrar on 27 November 2015. As a result, the Registrar has appointed Mr Peter Saunders from the accounting firm of Kennedy Saunders as the special administrator of the corporation until 21 April 2016.

‘A corporation is only placed under special administration as a last resort,’ said Mr Beven. ‘My office has attempted to work cooperatively with the corporation for some time to address concerns about the cancelled memberships but all reasonable requests have been ignored and this has left me with no other option.’

The special administrator, with support from the Registrar’s office, will work closely with the members to resolve internal disputes at the corporation, resolve the cancelled memberships and improve standards of corporate governance.

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