



SPECIAL ADMINISTRATOR TO ASSIST A LARGE NATIVE TITLE CORPORATION

The Registrar of Indigenous Corporations, Selwyn Button, has today placed Buurabalayji Thalanyji Aboriginal Corporation RNTBC under special administration.

The corporation was established to serve the rights and interests of Thalanyji people in the Pilbara region of Western Australia, an area of 11 thousand square kilometres straddling the Ashburton River where it reaches the coast. The corporation became a registered native title body corporate through a consent determination in 2008; its main operations are based in Onslow, with an administration team located in Perth.

The corporation has a varied portfolio of owned and part-owned businesses such as a travel agency, service stations, mechanical workshop and construction which operate to generate funds for community support programs and projects as well as create employment and training opportunities for Thalanyji people.

In August 2019 the corporation's books were examined. The examination identified that the corporation had failed to keep members informed, and denied them of the opportunity to ask questions. An annual general meeting that should have been held by 30 November 2018 was yet to occur nine months later, so members were unclear on the corporation's financial position and unable to ask questions about it. Several times, members had asked the directors to call a general meeting.

In making the announcement, Mr Button said, 'Accountability and transparency should be front of mind for any corporation with the aim of converting profits into benefits for community, especially a corporation that turns over in excess of \$10 million annually.

'We know that directors of the corporation have displayed a poor standard of corporate governance, including failing to lodge audited financial statements. This is a corporation with strong and engaged members who have been denied the opportunity to assess the corporation's performance. A special administrator will help make the shifts necessary for the corporation to flourish in future.'

The Registrar has appointed Mr Peter Saunders as the special administrator until 17 July 2020.

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