



LIFELINE FOR LANDMARK MEDIA BODY DROWNING IN DEBT

Today the Registrar of Indigenous Corporations, Selwyn Button, placed the largest Aboriginal media organisation in Australia under special administration.

Located in Alice Springs, Central Australian Aboriginal Media Association (Aboriginal Corporation)—usually known as CAAMA—was incorporated in 1980.

The corporation gives Aboriginal people in Central Australia a strong voice in the media and plays a major role in sustaining Aboriginal languages and cultures. It was the first Aboriginal broadcast group in Australia to secure a community broadcasting licence, with the purpose of providing Aboriginal people in Central Australia with radio programs produced by Aboriginal people, in Aboriginal languages and English.

The Registrar’s office has been monitoring CAAMA’s financial position over recent years while it implemented strategies and changes to policy and structure intended to address solvency concerns. However the position has worsened and the Registrar has decided it’s time for specialist support. In 2018–19, CAAMA generated approximately \$4.1 million in revenue, of which 63 per cent was grant funding. But its liabilities are also considerable, and growing.

In making the announcement, Mr Button said, ‘CAAMA is a landmark media corporation approaching its 40th anniversary. Unfortunately, over the last couple of years it has been unable to demonstrate improvements to its financial position or that it can trade itself out of debt. Despite having a repayment plan with the Australian Tax Office, its tax debt has more than doubled, reaching a critical level that is not sustainable. The special administrators will look at all options to help CAAMA improve its financial position.’

The Registrar has appointed Mr Jack James and Ms Paula Smith from Rodgers Reidy as joint special administrators until 12 June 2020.

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ORIC MR1920-15
9 March 2020