

Business plan 2015-16

The Registrar identified several priorities in the ORIC business plan 2015–16 to align with the *ORIC strategic plan 2014–17*. These priorities acknowledge that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander corporations are important for communities and Australian society.

In line with the business plan and the Registrar's core functions, ORIC's aim has been to increase public confidence in the standards of corporate governance and the viability of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander corporations.

Reducing red tape

Over recent years the Registrar has worked with states and territories to ensure that associations and cooperatives are able to transfer easily to the CATSI Act. In 2015–16 a number of jurisdictions completed the task of amending their legislation or regulations to make this so.

All state and territory legislation for associations and cooperatives, and the Commonwealth *Corporations Act 2001*, now permit associations, cooperatives and companies to transfer their incorporation to the CATSI Act.

To assist organisations with the transfer process, particularly as it's different in each jurisdiction, ORIC has continued to develop step-by-step guides which are readily available on the ORIC website.

Again to assist organisations with transfers, the Registrar has provided a range of other material and resources. For example, the eligibility requirements for LawHelp, ORIC's pro bono legal assistance scheme, have been expanded to include organisations wishing to seek legal advice before they transfer (see page 49).

Stronger organisational governance for corporations

To assist Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander corporations searching for an independent director to sit on their boards, the Registrar launched the Independent *directory*, a free

online service for corporations to find and be matched with suitable qualified candidates. The Independent *directory* was officially launched on 21 October 2015 (see page 68).

Enforce the law

Where there was evidence of wrongdoing the Registrar took action, as appropriate.

Complaints received from and about corporations were assessed and referred for further investigation as necessary.

The Registrar concluded 16 minor regulatory prosecutions against corporations that failed to meet their reporting obligations, filed two major criminal actions, finalised one civil prosecution while a further one remained in progress.

Regulation and compliance

For the sixth consecutive year the Registrar has exceeded the target of 95 per cent of corporations compliant with reporting obligations, with 97.1 per cent of corporations meeting this requirement during the year.

The Registrar completed examinations of 39 corporations, slightly below the initial plan to carry out 45 examinations during the year.

Eleven special administrations were completed during 2015–16 with all 11 successfully handed back to members' control.

Capacity development

The Registrar delivered corporate governance training to 865 people from 208 corporations, exceeding the target of reaching at least 750 people. Over 88 per cent of participants reported a significant increase in governance training and skills (which is just under the target of 90 per cent).

A new two-day corporate governance training program designed especially for corporations in remote communities was developed. Feedback from two trials was promising.