

ANNUAL
REPORT

2020 · 2021



BIGAMBUL

Native Title Aboriginal Corporation

· BNTAC ·

Acknowledgements

Bigambul Native Title Aboriginal Corporation (BNTAC) acknowledges and recognises the Traditional Owners of Our nation and pay our respect to Bigambul Elders – past, present and future.

The Bigambul Native Title Aboriginal Corporation Board of Directors would like to recognise the input and contributions of Our Members, fellow Directors and staff, as well as contractors, services and suppliers that contribute to supporting and enabling our operational and strategic work programs.

We extend acknowledgement and thanks to our key funders and major partners and collaborators, including:

- Shell Group – Queensland Gas Company (QGC)
- Australian Rail Track Corporation – Inland Rail
- Origin Energy
- Australian Government – Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications
- Australian Government – Department of Prime Minister & Cabinet (PM&C)
- Queensland State Government
- Goondiwindi Regional Council

Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander readers should be aware that this report may include images of deceased Aboriginal persons.

The words ‘Aboriginal’, ‘Indigenous’ and ‘First Nations’ have been used with ultimate respect in reference to Bigambul people – as the original custodians and inhabitants of Our lands and current Determination area.

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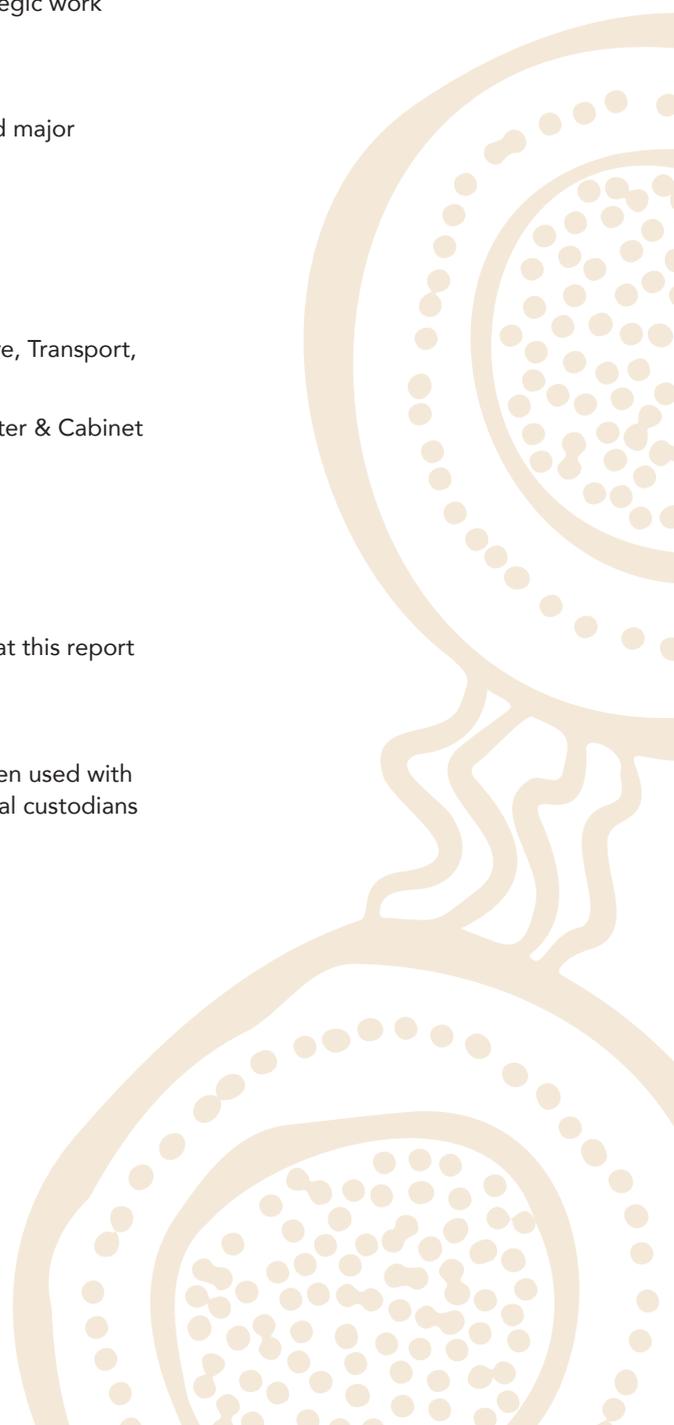


TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acronyms	4
Who We Are	5
What We Do	6
Our Model for Success and Structure of Programs and Projects	8
Our Model for Success	8
Our Strategic Priorities	12
Our Supporting Mix of Core Service Programs	14
Our Vision Our Purpose	16
Guiding Philosophies & Values	17
Our Guiding Philosophies	17
Our Underpinning Values	17
Our History, Ancestry, Native Title and Lands	18
Our Nation's History	18
Bigambul Ancestry	18
Our Native Title Determinations and Rights	19
Bigambul Lands	20
Key Result Areas (KRAS)	21
Chairperson's Report	26
Executive Director's Report & 2020/2021 Outcomes Highlights	30
Culture	32
Country	33
People	35
Economy	36
Corporate Services Report	37
Governance and Management Report	38
Operations and Service Activity Reports	42
Culture	43
Country	48
People	52
Economy	54
Our Key Collaborators and Proponents	57
Cultural Heritage Management Program	58
Mob-Bur-Gul-La Joint Venture	60
Key Proponents Operating on our Lands	61
Other Partners and Formal Relationships	63



BIGAMBUL

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• BNTAC •

ACRONYMS

AHS	Australian Heritage Specialists
ARTC	Australian Rail Track Corporation – Inland Rail
AWA	Aboriginal Waterways Assessment
BNTAC	Bigambul Native Title Aboriginal Corporation
CHMP	Cultural Heritage Management Plans
GST	Goods and Services Tax
ILUA	Indigenous Land Use Agreements
KRAs	Key Result Areas
NBAN	Northern Basin Aboriginal Nations
NIAA	National Indigenous Australians Agency
PBC	Prescribed Body Corporate
PBI	Public Benevolent Institute
PM&C	Prime Minister & Cabinet
RNTBC	Recognised Native Title Body Corporate
RTN	Rights to Negotiate
SAA	Significant Aboriginal Areas
SoC	Statement of Commitment
SQL	Southern Queensland Landscapes
ToR	Terms of Reference

WHO WE ARE

The Bigambul People are Traditional Owners with a current Determination Area extending across more than 17,000 square kilometres in Queensland's Southwest region. The Bigambul People gained formal recognition as Native Title Holders on 1 December 2012.

The Bigambul Registered Native Title Aboriginal Corporation (BNTAC) is the Registered Native Title Body Corporate (RNTBC) and holds our native title rights and interests in trust – representing and advocating for Our People in all native title matters for the benefit of our wider community and nation.

Our fundamental Purpose is to honour, identify and occupy our continuous connection to country through our ancestors and with our Elders so we can teach and grow our young people – to lay the groundwork for a sustainable and thriving Bigambul nation. Commitment to this directive guides and informs all aspects and levels of organisational planning and function. This supports and aligns to BNTAC's Vision and underpinning strategic priorities, encapsulating the following lead outcome objective areas:

- Cultural identity;
- Leadership;
- Self-determination; and
- Economic independence.

Since formally obtaining Consent Determination in 2016, BNTAC has demonstrated overt progress in growing and broadening the range and types of activity work programs and their included scope of supporting projects and activities – including in relation to **Our Culture, Country, People and Economy**. Growth has been achieved across the full breadth of our outcome objective areas, as well as in relation to our interim Key Result Areas (KRAs) and their respective targets, as reflected in our current Strategic Plan for the existing five-year planning and activity period (2018-2023).

Expansion and diversification have been aided and supported by commensurate growth to internal capacity and capability; supplemented by resource, monetary and in-kind contributions from locally and regionally operating partners, collaborators and proponents, as well as State and Federal government departments and private enterprise. Progress and advancements to these ends have particularly been supported through the positive snowball effect created by BNTAC's successive positive outcomes in applying for competitive and closed funding opportunities.

BNTAC's success in continuing to broaden the range and scope of our key work programs, as per our strategic directives and in line with Our Vision and Purpose, has contributed a positive snowball of momentum, evidence and energy in terms of both enabling and generally encouraging continual innovation and strategic thought and planning as to current and future programs and projects. BNTAC's continued success in securing financial and other related resource contributions progress has also played a vital role in supporting Bigambul to see through and then legitimately be able to build and extend on the key successes achieved. This backdrop has precipitated a highly conducive environment for Aboriginal leadership and innovation in terms of what we are doing as a people and a nation to support and promote the Vision and Purpose of BNTAC, and the overall health and well-being of Our people, Our country and the Bigambul nation more broadly.

WHAT WE DO

BNTAC's broad areas of strategic and operational focus are identified based on the leadership and direction of Bigambul people. Our all-Bigambul descended Board of Directors is drawn from our Membership - composed of Bigambul descended individuals - and providing critical leadership and oversight in terms of setting priorities and related strategic and operational programs for the PBC.

There is strong emphasis on prioritising and facilitating opportunities for wider community input and dialogue regarding current and future BNTAC strategic priorities, projects and also engagement and participation opportunities. We aim to achieve broad community input from a range of people and agencies, and with representation from across a variety of different community member cohorts and including an extensive range of different organisations and agencies from different sectors, and with varying specialist focus areas.

BNTAC prioritises working in a strengths-based manner that maximises scope for potential benefits to be derived from targeted project and program activities. In particular, we aim to contribute to achievement of individual and shared outcome objectives that span the full breadth of the social determinants areas and in turn that are aligned to and promote the entirety of the Close the Gap targets for First Nations Australia - focused on amelioration of disadvantage for Aboriginal people in all aspects that it is experienced.

Aboriginal people are consistently over-represented across key health, social and economic indicators. This includes lead measures commonly used in association with measuring a specific population's and/ or groups' general propensity for and representation among total people impacted by commonly used classifications and manifesting types of health, social and economic disadvantage. Although these rafts of factors are experienced by both First Nations people and non-Indigenous Australians, latest and recent data demonstrates consistent trends of showing over-representation of Aboriginal people across disadvantage measures, despite First Nations Australian's making up around 3% of Australia's total population.

Over the last 12-48 months, BNTAC has directed considerable efforts to grow and diversify our relationships and networks at regional, state and national levels. This has included concurrent emphasis to pursue innovative and multidisciplinary relationships across a variety of different agency and organisation types, including different corporate structures and industry area specialisations; and composed of both formal and informal and passive and active relationships and collaborator networks.

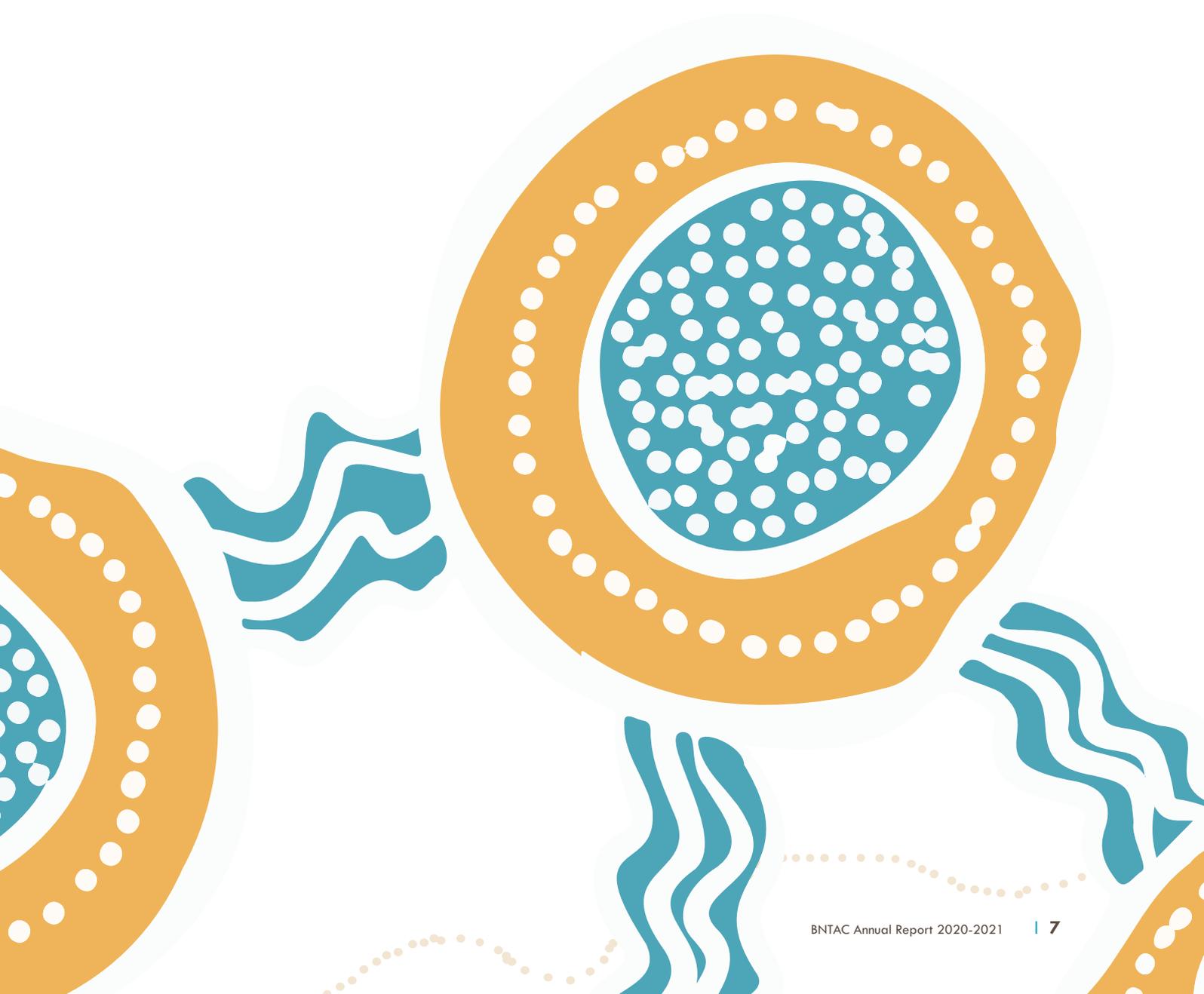
As part of local, state-level and national collaborative initiatives at both system and service/project delivery levels, there is consistent emphasis on establishing and operating strengths-based relationships that achieve optimum benefits in the way of shared efficiencies and cost savings. A key aspect to how BNTAC approach both our joint and collaborative projects and initiatives is the embedded and consistent focus on implementing strengths-based arrangements for how we will plan and conduct joint business. This includes targeting maximum use and appropriate distribution of individual and pooled resources, infrastructure and other forms of capacity and capability in the form of available cash contributions, ability to contribute time of expert personnel and key workers, and access to available cultural knowledge and expertise in its supporting practices and related cultural techniques.



WHAT WE DO

BNTAC's most recent 12month profile of projects and activities that we have either developed and delivered as self-led or collaborative initiatives, have embodied a broad focus across the aforementioned areas of Culture, Country, People and Economy. Key activity targets encapsulated as part of this following main activity work stream classifications include:

- Caring for Bigambul country, inclusive of our lands, waterways and cultural heritage
- Recording and revival efforts pertaining to Bigambul culture, inclusive of language, arts and traditional knowledge systems
- Projects and activities that promote and actively support Aboriginal leadership self-determination and social and economic participation and independence, including by way of targeted on country training and employment initiatives
- Targeted efforts to document, preserve and revive Bigambul culture and traditional knowledge systems and its application through cultural practice and techniques, including relating to Our language and traditional art forms, and also in regard to Caring for Our lands, waterways and cultural heritage, including preventative measures for drought and fire resistance such as cultural burn offs



OUR MODEL FOR SUCCESS AND STRUCTURE OF PROGRAMS AND PROJECTS

< Our Model for Success >

BNTAC has prioritised and invested in developing and implementing the highest standards of First Nations governance and best practice processes for quality leadership and effective management and project delivery processes.

We aim to ensure representative leadership and advocacy for Our people and Country, and to deliver a comprehensive service model that preserves and restores Our Culture, Supports and advances the rights and aspirations of Our people, and ensures the health and preservation of Our country and waterways for current and future generations.

Our relationships and networks are inclusive of a range of different First Nations and non-Aboriginal organisations and entities, comprising funders and partners, as well as other formal and informal collaborating groups and agencies from across a broad mix of industries and sectors (i.e. government, non-government, corporate and private sector etc.) and areas of specialisation within these broad categories:

- Environment and caring for country
- Community and social support related sectors
- Agriculture and primary industries
- Mining and Industry
- Training and employment delivery and support sectors
- Native Title law and processes and encompassing individual and peak agency bodies
- Cultural rejuvenation and preservation, inclusive of Bigambul language, arts and traditional knowledge systems and drawing on language expertise and input of specialist cultural and language centre services as needed.

< Our Model for success >

Our broad range of relationships and networks aim to support and contribute toward BNTAC's achievement of resonant, responsive and relevant planning and project activity rollout. A critical focus is how we approach the planning and mobilisation of our strategies and initiatives to achieve effective merger and application of our traditional knowledge systems and practices with required activities and standards based on current legislative and industry regulating requirements, as well as latest evidence and best practice as it relates to the broad specialist areas that we plan and deliver projects. Our BNTAC Directors are also involved in various capacities in providing representation across a number of formal agency bodies and networks, including as part of both strategic and operational level activity orientated alliances.

In support of ensuring embedded provisions that promote and support Bigambul leadership and direct input and direction of Our people – including across multiple generations – BNTAC has been successful in the last 48 months to establish a dedicated Bigambul Youth Advisory Council and Elders Working Group. The Youth Council's formation was precipitated by BNTAC's delivery of the first of its kind Native Title Youth Summit, which in addition to being retained as an ongoing youth focused community initiative, also contributed the foundations for establishment and immediate commencement of the Council, which is Bigambul's first formal Youth governing group. In addition to meeting routinely as its own entity, the Council readily liaises and works with the BNTAC Executive Director and overarching Board of Directors as part of the planning and rollout of current and foreshadowed strategic and operational work programs.

Similar arrangements are in place for and were undertaken to establish the Bigambul Elders' Advisory Group, which was formed as a direct output of the first Bigambul Elders' Gatherings. The first official gathering was held in 2020/2021 and formally extended on prior ad hoc Elder engagement activities delivered, to formally embed the targeted initiative as part of the PBC's annual community engagement program, and also to promptly develop and mobilise the representative Elders' Advisory Group, which will also be retained as an ongoing measure and similar to the Youth Council, have formally embedded links and processes to provide and receive feedback between the Group and the BNTAC Board of Directors, as well as the Youth Council as part of inter-generational knowledge transfer efforts.



< Our Model for success >

In addition to contributing generally to the priorities and directions of the PBC and current and future planned projects and strategies, the Elders' Group supports access to a legitimate and formally recognised authority regarding Bigambul culture and ensuring practices and measures that promote and uphold true meaning and intended use of our traditional knowledge systems as well as language and arts practices. We ensure all current and planned activity initiatives are grounded in evidence and the direction and leadership of Bigambul people – with critical emphasis on actively promoting and supporting the outcome objectives and aspirations as identified by current and emerging generations in regard to Bigambul country, culture, language and the social, health and economic participation and prosperity of Our people.

BNTAC ensures and operates additional provisions to safeguard and thoroughly guarantee optimal input and representation opportunities for Our people and inclusion of the voice and direction of our youth and emerging generation of future leaders as part of current and future strategic and operational programs and inclusive of planning and delivery stages. This includes governance structures and supporting procedures that ensure the Youth Council contributes two nominated Youth representatives to serve on the PBC's overarching Board of Directors.

At management and governance levels, BNTAC maintains rigorous internal systems and processes to ensure effective monitoring and oversight of all aspects of Company function – with embedded processes and frameworks to track and report on program and project activities, and importantly, their efficacy and impact contributing to achievement of set targets and outcome objectives. Extending on the former, particular focus is attributed to maintaining optimum alignment and congruence between our operational and strategic work programs, including the relevance and responsiveness of current and planned programs and projects, and their active support of BNTAC's Vision and Purpose and both interim and long-term outcome targets and objectives.

Growth and development to the range and mix of formally funded and self-financed initiatives is being successfully achieved across the broad areas of caring for country and cultural heritage; preservation and rejuvenation of cultural knowledge, inclusive of language and arts; and support to develop and grow our peoples and nations' economic participation and in turn independence and self-determination. Successful outcomes and growth across these broad activity categories is actively supported by commitment to rigorous and transparent Aboriginal leadership; and effective processes for monitoring and outcomes measurement – contributing a growing evidence base and successful track record for BNTAC and our nation.



< Our Model for success >

Other key enablers supporting overall efficacy in Company operations and development and expansion of project initiatives, include the following range of experiences and strength factors:

- Strong, representative and transparent leadership of Bigambul people, underscored by accessible and readily available input and feedback opportunities for Our people and community
- Rigorous and compliant systems, processes and practices - and their supporting policies and procedures - for high quality and compliant Aboriginal leadership that effectively merges traditional cultural knowledge with current governance, finance and management best practices, including that comply with relevant legislative and Company incorporation requirements
- Commitment to and embedded measure for rigorous, comprehensive and routine activity and outcomes monitoring and measurement – particularly in line with community-led targets and deliverables, and with included provisions around continuous quality improvement (CQI) that promote continual application of outcomes and learnings toward iterative improvements and refinements across all aspects and areas of Company function
- Application of holistic approaches that recognise, promote and support the complete wellbeing of Our people (inclusive of physical, social, emotional, spiritual and cultural dimensions) as well as the social and economic prosperity and participation of Our people and nation
- Extending on the former, simultaneous approaches and strategies that promote the current and future health, vibrance and regeneration of Our country – inclusive of our lands and waterways - and with strong emphasis on reviving use and application of traditional ecological approaches and land management techniques, such as cultural burn offs
- Development and accumulation of BNTAC's own evidence base and successful track record relating to program and project delivery, including regarding benefits and desired impacts achieved through application of traditional cultural knowledge and approaches is also a major focus of this directive. This relates to each of our overarching program areas and their respective scope of focus (i.e. caring for country, supporting our people and community, economic development, cultural preservation and rejuvenation), as well as all stages of the the project cycle (i.e. spanning planning, management and delivery, as financial acquittals and completion of all reporting requirements).

OUR STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

BNTAC has demonstrated continual growth and diversification in regard to the mix and range of programs and projects that we operate and deliver. This has been supported by aforementioned progress in securing monetary and other types of resource contributions through competitive government and non-government funding rounds, combined with successfully negotiated arrangements secured through our growing networks and relationships, including with key partners and collaborators, and proponents and funders; and across a range of jurisdictional levels, industries and sectors, and spanning government, non-government and private sector industries.

Our range of complete, current and confirmed upcoming projects are grounded in the needs, priorities and aspirations of Our people and nation – inclusive of our land, waterways and cultural heritage – and also taking into consideration targeted efforts to preserve and rejuvenate our language, culture and traditional knowledge systems. Projects and activities across the full breadth of these areas aim to support and promote our overarching Company Vision and long-term outcome objectives, as well as pure more short-mid term outcome targets reflected across BNTAC's current range of key strategic documents and their underpinning realisation plans.



OUR STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Noted priority areas that encapsulate key Company outcome objectives at this time centre on:

- Cultural identity,
- Leadership,
- Self-determination, and
- Economic independence.

These objectives influence and underscore all aspects and levels of BNTAC's strategic and operational work programs – including our latest Strategic Plan for the current five-year activity period (extending from 2018 to 2023), the priorities of which comprise:

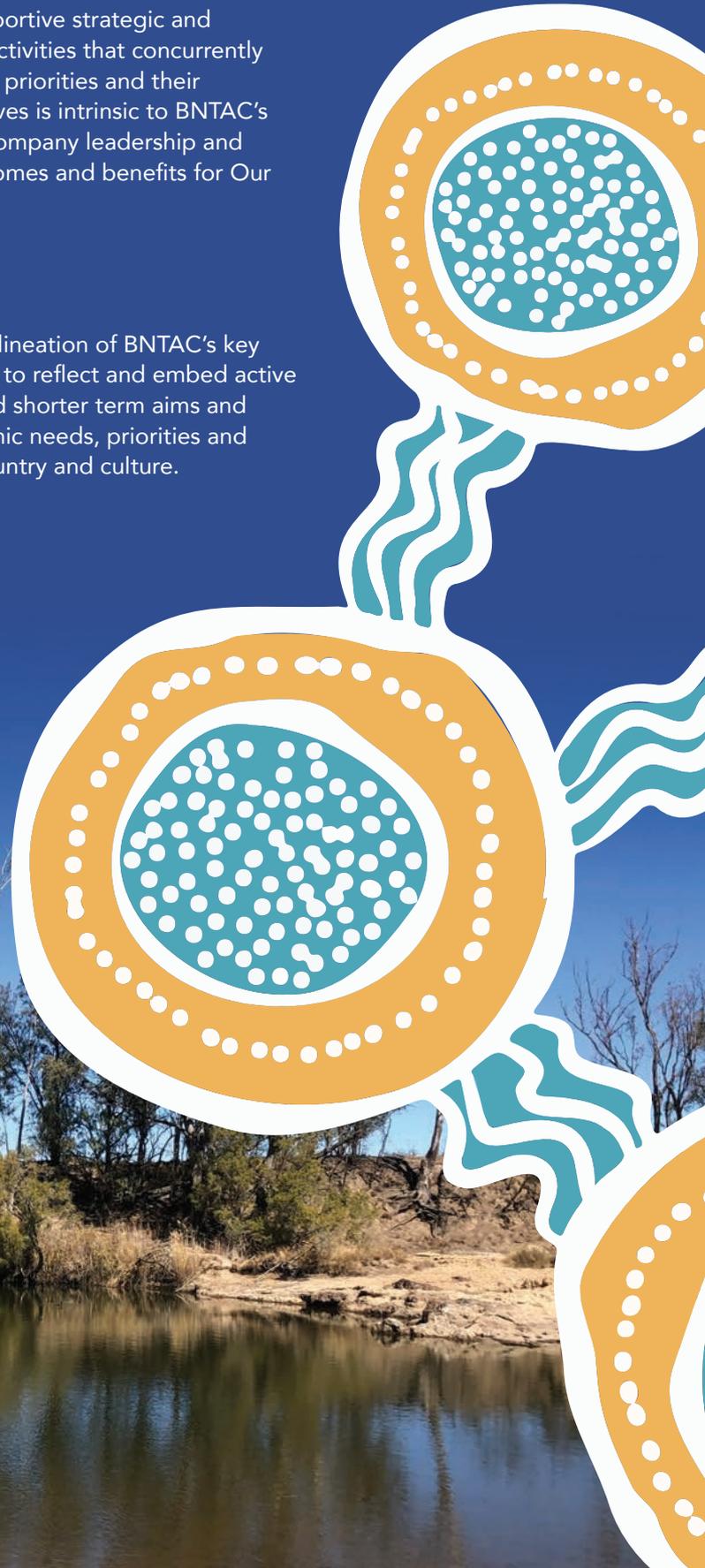
- Maintaining rigorous corporate governance that are culturally inclusive, accountable and transparent;
- Investing in the preservation and advancement of historical and traditional lands, cultural knowledge and practices and promoting Bigambul connection to country;
- Leveraging commercial opportunities to build the economic strength of the Bigambul people;
- Building the skills and capacity of Bigambul people through expanded training opportunities; and
- Bolstering and maintain BNTAC capabilities in moving towards self-sufficiency.



OUR SUPPORTING MIX OF CORE SERVICE PROGRAMS

Achieving an integrated range of aligned and supportive strategic and operational programs comprised of projects and activities that concurrently promote and advance our overarching and interim priorities and their underpinning activity targets and outcome objectives is intrinsic to BNTAC's strategic and operational approach for effective Company leadership and management that supports real and tangible outcomes and benefits for Our people and nation.

To these ends, the current structure, scope and delineation of BNTAC's key program work program areas has been developed to reflect and embed active and integrated alignment with BNTAC's longer and shorter term aims and objectives, and the continually evolving and dynamic needs, priorities and aspirations of Our people, and for Our nation's country and culture.



OUR SUPPORTING MIX OF CORE SERVICE PROGRAMS

The subsequent decided range of dedicated work programs reflect our core service delivery and associated activity streams – around which we plan and currently centre our focus in terms of project planning and development, and also in regard to focus points for discussion and consultation across our key stakeholder and relationship groups:

- 1 Culture - Cultural preservation and rejuvenation that targets the maintenance and revival of Bigambul Language, Arts and Traditional Knowledge Systems, with a focus on achieving transfer across current and emerging generations
- 2 Country – focused on Caring for Country and promoting the health and rejuvenation of our land, waterways and cultural heritage
- 3 People - Supporting health and wellbeing, social inclusion and resilience, and economic participation and independence outcomes of Our people, including advancing Our people's right to self-determination
- 4 Economy - focused on building our nation's and peoples' economic participation and independence through skills, training and employment initiatives that bring about real outcomes for Bigambul people and our nation, with particular attention toward expanding available opportunities on Bigambul country

OUR VISION

To preserve pride through cultural identity and see Bigambul people become resilient strong and empowered through leadership, knowledge and education that encapsulate self-determination, economic prosperity and independence.

OUR PURPOSE

We honour, identify and occupy Our continuous connection to our country through our Ancestors and with Our Elders so we can teach and grow Our future generations and lay the foundation for a sustainable and thriving Bigambul nation.

GUIDING PHILOSOPHIES & VALUES

< Our Guiding Philosophies >

BNTAC's corporate focus and strategic and operational priorities and supporting strategies are guided by commitment to the following philosophies.

Cultural Identity

The rich cultural practices, knowledge systems and cultural expressions of Bigambul peoples are sources of great strengths and keeping Bigambul culture thriving is a necessary part of the solution to broader Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander disadvantage in Australia.

Leadership

Through leadership, knowledge transfer and establishment of effective corporate governance, solid values and principles to create empowerment and resilience, will continually enhance sustainability of the Bigambul Nation.

Self Determination

Self-determination as an ongoing process which ensures the continuance of Our people's participation in decision-making and control over Our own destiny as a Bigambul Nation.

Economic Independence

We believe knowledge is power and through innovative partnerships and economic participation. Our collective primary aim is improving opportunities for the social and emotional wellbeing of Bigambul people.

< Our Underpinning Values >

- **Cultural authority**
We are strong in Our cultural identity and knowledge;
- **Respect**
We are committed to working together and building effective and sustainable partnerships;
- **Honesty**
We demonstrate integrity and transparency in Our actions;
- **Trust**
We have faith in Our Elders and communities and each other;
- **Vision**
We display understanding to achieve independence for our people.

OUR HISTORY, ANCESTRY, NATIVE TITLE AND LANDS

< Our Nation's History >

The Bigambul Determination Area was a particularly violent frontier in the Nineteenth Century. History tells of the fierce bravery of our Nation's people; with the resistance of the Bigambul people to pastoral incursion well documented. This resistance was however met with reprisal attacks by settlers and coordinated efforts of 'dispersal' by colonial authorities.

The Bigambul resistance campaign was geared toward causing maximum economic disruption for settlers in an effort to convince them to abandon the region completely. This however would stimulate reprisal attacks and as noted, more coordinated efforts of violence and dispersal that would ultimately see the Bigambul population reduced to 300 by the end of 150 – a significant decline from population estimates of 3,000 pre-settler contact.

The massacres committed against the Bigambul people are well documented; however, there is high likelihood that were more instances of violence perpetrated than recorded.

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3. Evans, R. 2007 A History of Queensland. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
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< Bigambul Ancestry >

The native title holders of Our nation are the Bigambul People who are the biological descendants of the following Bigambul apical ancestors:

1. Nellie Yumbeina
2. Queen Susan of Welltown
3. Jack Noble
4. Sally Murray
5. Susan, Mother of Duncan Daniels
6. Jack and James Armstrong

OUR HISTORY, ANCESTRY, NATIVE TITLE AND LANDS

< Our Native Title Determination and Rights >

The Bigambul People are the Traditional Owners for approximately 17,134 square kilometres which lies between the towns of St George, Tara, Texas and the Darling Downs region of Queensland. Our country spans part of the Balonne, Goondiwindi, Toowoomba and Western Downs regional councils.

We were formally recognised as Native Title Holders by the Federal Court of Australia in a two-part native title claim, determined by consent on 1 December 2016 and 23 June 2017 respectively.

In respect of our traditional lands and waters, the Bigambul people have non-exclusive rights and interests to:

- Access, be present on, move about on, and travel over, the area;
- Camp and live temporarily on the area as part of camping, and for that purpose build temporary shelters on the area;
- Hunt, fish and gather on the land and waters of the area for personal, domestic and non-commercial communal purposes;
- Take, use, share and exchange natural resources from the land and waters of the area for personal, domestic and non-commercial communal purposes;
- Take and use the water of the area for personal, domestic and non-commercial communal purposes;
- Conduct ceremonies on the area;
- Be buried and bury Native Title Holders within the area;
- Teach on the area the physical, cultural and spiritual attributes of the area;
- Maintain places of importance and areas of significance to the native title holders under their traditional laws and customs and protect those places and areas from physical harm;
- Light fires on the area for domestic purposes including cooking, but not for the purpose of hunting or clearing vegetation; and
- Be accompanied onto the area by certain non-Bigambul people, being people required for the performance of ceremonies and cultural activities.'

OUR HISTORY, ANCESTRY, NATIVE TITLE AND LANDS

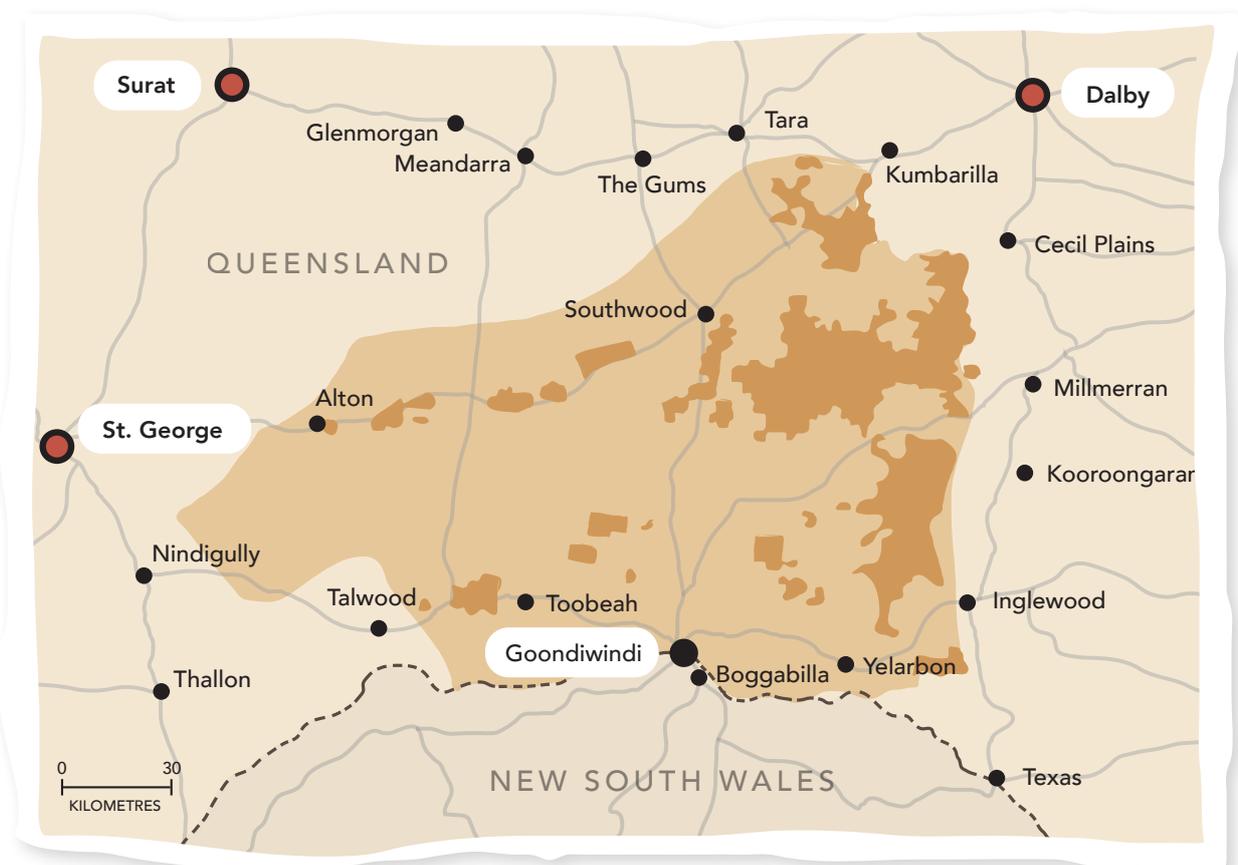
< Bigambul Lands >

The Bigambul nation and our encompassing lands and waterways are located in South West Queensland, spanning the Queensland and New South Wales borders and centred on the riverine area between the Macintyre and Weir rivers.

The current boundary is defined in part by the Macintyre River in the south (which becomes the Barwon River at its junction with the Weir River), the Macintyre Brook, and the Moonie River in the west. In the north, it extends to encompass Western Creek (a tributary of the Weir River) and in the east, the boundary falls short of Cecil Plains, Millmerran, Inglewood, Beebo and Texas. Goondiwindi is the largest town in the claim area.

Our country is neighboured in the north by the Barunggam, and by the land associated with the Mandandanji to the north-west. In the south-east at Beebo and Texas lies a transitional boundary zone in which Bigambul and Gambuwal / Kammbuwal people likely share interests, and to the north-east lies Giabel country. The southern extent of Bigambul country abuts Kamilaroi country / Gommeroi and the south-western corner meets Yuwaalaraay country.

Figure 1. Our lands



KEY RESULT AREAS (KRAS)

Bigambul Native Title Aboriginal Corporation's (BNTAC's) current Strategic Plan spans five (5) years (2018 – 2023). The plan comprises five (5) Key Result Area's (KRAs) that constitute our current strategic priorities. These include:

- 1 Maintain rigorous corporate governance practices that are culturally inclusive, accountable and transparent;
- 2 Invest in the preservation and advancement of historical and traditional lands, cultural knowledge and practices and promote Bigambul connection to country;
- 3 Leverage commercial opportunities to build the economic strength of the Bigambul people;
- 4 Build the skills and capacity of Bigambul people through expanded training opportunities; and
- 5 Bolster and maintain BNTAC capabilities in moving toward self-sufficiency.

The following tables summarise each KRA's respective targets / priorities; and associated mapped supporting strategies / outcome measures.



KEY RESULT AREA 1

Maintain rigorous corporate governance practices that are culturally inclusive, accountable and transparent.

GOAL	PERFORMANCE MEASURES
Maintain effective governance, operational performance standards and financial stability.	<p>Finances, assets, investments, debts, properties and facilities are ethically managed in compliance with the Regulatory and Statutory obligations.</p> <hr/> <p>Code of Conduct, corporate policies and procedures ensure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Responsible corporate behaviour;• Accountable and transparent decision making;• Effective budgeting, accounting, auditing, financial reporting;• Effective management of risk and opportunity;• Effective performance monitoring, evaluation and reporting.• Development and Implementation of Board Charter and Members Charter
Maintain proficient planning investment and delivery strategies and procedures.	<p>Planning, investment and delivery framework includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Corporate Plan;• Three-Year Business Plan [aligned to Board Member terms of appointment];• Annual Operational Plans;• Risk Mitigation Strategy;• Communication Strategy;• Investment Strategy. <hr/> <p>Social, cultural, education, commercial business and economic development and land acquisitions strategies.</p> <hr/> <p>Establish and maintain a constant and strong advocacy and representation.</p>

KEY RESULT AREA 2

Invest in the preservation and advancement of historical and traditional lands, cultural knowledge and practices and promote Bigambul connection to country

PRIORITY	PERFORMANCE MEASURES
<p>Develop and maintain a Bigambul Cultural Immersion Program.</p>	<p>Board to establish protocols and rules that demonstrate respect for Bigambul law and cultural practice, to inform a Bigambul Cultural Immersion Program.</p> <hr/> <p>All government and industry employees participate in compulsory cultural immersion programs prior to commencement of any major project work conducted</p>
<p>Strengthen Apical Ancestor family group connections to traditional land, kinship system, lore, culture, customs and values.</p>	<p>Ancient cultural footprints, stories and customs applicable to sacred sites and places of significance are restored and preserved;</p> <hr/> <p>Apical Ancestor families have their family tree formally developed and recorded;</p> <hr/> <p>Design a Bigambul language program that promotes Bigambul language in schools, all levels of Government through Elders sharing stories and experiences.</p>
<p>Maintain a Cultural Heritage, Land and Environment Rehabilitation and Preservation Policy and Management Plan.</p>	<p>All major projects conducted within Bigambul Nation, comply with our Cultural Heritage, Land and Environment Policy and Management Plan standards and conditions and include strategies and resources to ensure the effective rehabilitation and preservation of all areas adversely affected.</p>
<p>Maintain a Bigambul Cultural Heritage Register</p>	<p>Maintain up-to-date Register and record physical locations and significance of sacred and other important sites, song lines and stories within Bigambul Nation.</p>

KEY RESULT AREA 3

Leverage commercial opportunities to build the economic strength of the Bigambul people

PRIORITY	PERFORMANCE MEASURES
<p>Develop and maintain sustainable, profitable and viable commercial businesses</p>	<p>Design a long-term (10 year) economic development strategy that leverages benefits from ILUAs, CHMPs and other agreements, seeks joint ventures with commercial enterprises and enters into partnerships with governments to boost Bigambul businesses and employment;</p> <hr/> <p>Investigate and access opportunities for economic development and employment through government programs (land and water management, monitoring and regeneration of country through the development of the Bigambul Rangers program.</p>

KEY RESULT AREA 4

Build the skills and capacity of Bigambul people through expanded training opportunities.

PRIORITY	PERFORMANCE MEASURES
<p>Maximise economic participation for our people by ensuring access to quality vocational training and the pursuit of real jobs and business opportunities from all project developments.</p>	<p>Design and development of the business model of the proposed Bigambul Centre for Training and Excellence;</p> <hr/> <p>Establishment of partnerships and joint ventures to support and build capabilities of the Bigambul Centre for Training and Excellence;</p> <hr/> <p>Building the skills and capacities of Bigambul people through training programs on country, connected with schools, vocational training and Tertiary Institutions, linked to employment outcomes</p>

KEY RESULT AREA 5

Bolster & maintain BNTAC capabilities in moving toward self-sufficiency through social enterprise and grant funding.

PRIORITY

Working in productive partnerships with government agencies and industry proponents who are equally committed to delivering opportunities for Our people from all project developments within the Bigambul boundaries.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Secure Prime Minister & Cabinet (PM&C) Indigenous Advancement Strategy (IAS) funding for capacity building, training, management systems and economic development over 2018-2020;

Secure funding from Proponents, State and Federal Governments;

Secure joint ventures with Philanthropic Organisations;

New and innovative business opportunities can be developed in response to Trust and individual, family or group business interests and aspirations;

Develop and maintain a Bigambul Small Business Certification Program.

(CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

On behalf of fellow BNTAC Board of Directors, it gives me great pleasures to present the BNTAC 2020/2021 Annual Report. I would also like to extend recognition and acknowledgement to Our Membership and greater Bigambul community and acknowledge the input and contributions of staff and our main supporters – including from across our growing partner and financial supporter networks.

Since formally obtaining Consent Determination in 2016, BNTAC has demonstrated overt progress in growing and broadening the range and types of activity work programs and their included scope of supporting projects and activities – including in relation to Our Culture, Country, People and Economy. Growth has been achieved across the full breadth of our outcome objective areas, as well as in relation to our interim Key Result Areas (KRAs) and their respective targets, as reflected in our current Strategic Plan for the existing five-year planning and activity period (2018-2023).

This has been supported by progress in securing monetary and other types of resource contributions through competitive government and non-government funding rounds, combined with successfully negotiated arrangements secured through our growing networks and relationships, including with key partners and collaborators, and proponents and funders; and across a range of jurisdictional levels, industries and sectors, and spanning government, non-government and private sector industries.

Primary proponents operating on Our lands with whom we readily coordinate include:

- QGC Shell
- ARTC – Inland Rail
- Origin Energy
- Arrow Energy
- Tri Star

Other major partners and collaborators with whom BNTAC maintain active working relationships include:

- Goondiwindi Regional Council
- Toowoomba Regional Council
- Balonne Shire
- Western Downs Regional Council
- Norther Basin Aboriginal Nations
- Murray Darling Basin Authority

BNTAC would also like to recognise and acknowledge our formal relationships with the following government and non-government agencies that have contributed financial support and resource contributions to BNTAC for the 2020/2021 period:

- Foundation for Rural & Regional Renewal (FRRR)
- Australian Government – Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development & Communications
- Australian Government – Department of Prime Minister & Cabinet (PM&C)
- Australian Government - Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment
- Queensland Government – Department of Environment, Land and Water

Our range of complete, current and confirmed upcoming projects are grounded in the needs, priorities and aspirations of Our people and nation – inclusive of our land, waterways and cultural heritage – and also taking into consideration targeted efforts to preserve and rejuvenate our language, culture and traditional knowledge systems. Projects and activities across the full breadth of these areas aim to support and promote our overarching Company Vision and long-term. outcome objectives, as well as pure more short-mid term outcome targets reflected across BNTAC’s current range of key strategic documents and their underpinning realisation plans.

Noted priority areas that encapsulate key Company outcome objectives at this time centre on:

- Cultural identity,
- Leadership,
- Self-determination, and
- Economic independence.

These objectives influence and underscore all aspects and levels of BNTAC’s strategic and operational work programs – including our latest Strategic Plan for the current five-year activity period (extending from 2018 to 2023), the priorities of which comprise:

- Maintaining rigorous corporate governance that are culturally inclusive, accountable and transparent;
- Investing in the preservation and advancement of historical and traditional lands, cultural knowledge and practices and promoting Bigambul connection to country;
- Leveraging commercial opportunities to build the economic strength of the Bigambul people;
- Building the skills and capacity of Bigambul people through expanded training opportunities; and
- Bolstering and maintain BNTAC capabilities in moving towards self-sufficiency.

BNTAC ensures and operates optimal systems and provisions to safeguard and thoroughly guarantee input and representation opportunities for Our people and inclusion of the voice and direction of our Elders and youth, particularly supported via recent formal establishment of Our Elders' Advisory Group and Youth Council.

At management and governance levels, BNTAC maintains rigorous internal systems and processes to ensure effective monitoring and oversight of all aspects of Company function – with embedded processes and frameworks to track and report on program and project activities, and importantly, their efficacy and impact contributing to achievement of set targets and outcome objectives. Extending on the former, particular focus is attributed to maintaining optimum alignment and congruence between our operational and strategic work programs, including the relevance and responsiveness of current and planned programs and projects, and their active support of BNTAC's Vision and Purpose and both interim and long-term outcome targets and objectives.

Growth and development to the range and mix of formally funded and self-financed initiatives is being successfully achieved across the broad areas of caring for country and cultural heritage; preservation and rejuvenation of cultural knowledge, inclusive of language and arts; and support to develop and grow our peoples and nations' economic participation and in turn independence and self-determination. Successful outcomes and growth across these broad activity categories is actively supported by commitment to rigorous and transparent Aboriginal leadership; and effective processes for monitoring and outcomes measurement – contributing a growing evidence base and successful track record for BNTAC and our nation.

Other key enablers supporting overall efficacy in Company operations and development and expansion of project initiatives, include the following range of antecedents and strength factors:

- Strong, representative and transparent leadership of Bigambul people, underscored by accessible and readily available input and feedback opportunities for Our people and community
- Rigorous and compliant systems, processes and practices - and their supporting policies and procedures - for high quality and compliant Aboriginal leadership that effectively merges traditional cultural knowledge with current governance, finance and management best practices, including that comply with relevant legislative and Company incorporation requirements
- Commitment to and embedded measure for rigorous, comprehensive and routine activity and outcomes monitoring and measurement – particularly in line with community-led targets and deliverables, and with included provisions around continuous quality improvement (CQI) that promote continual application of outcomes and learnings toward iterative improvements and refinements across all aspects and areas of Company function
- Application of holistic approaches that recognise, promote and support the complete wellbeing of Our people (inclusive of physical, social, emotional, spiritual and cultural dimensions) as well as the social and economic prosperity and participation of Our people and nation
- Extending on the former, simultaneous approaches and strategies that promote the current and future health, vibrance and regeneration of Our country – inclusive of our lands and waterways - and with strong emphasis on reviving use and application of traditional ecological approaches and land management techniques, such as cultural burn offs
- Development and accumulation of BNTAC's own evidence base and successful track record relating to program and project delivery, including regarding benefits and desired impacts achieved through application of traditional cultural knowledge and approaches is also a major focus of this directive. This relates to each of our overarching program areas and their respective scope of focus (i.e. caring for country, supporting our people and community, economic development, cultural preservation and rejuvenation), as well as all stages of the project cycle (i.e. spanning planning, management and delivery, as financial acquittals and completion of all reporting requirements).

Despite the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on various aspects of Company functions, BNTAC was successful in maintaining effective Board oversight and leadership across our key programs and current projects for the period. As required and based on continually evolving lockdown requirements during the last 12 months, online virtual meetings were held in supplement to physical gatherings, which are largely coordinated and held in Goondiwindi. Our standard Board meetings were also complemented by targeted out-of-session meetings and related strategy and planning sessions, in line with our main program work streams and the range of current projects and activities currently either in progress, already completed, or set to commence in the new financial year (2021/2022).

The BNTAC Executive Director continues to provide an instrumental role in providing both day-to-day and strategic level oversight of the Company and our current range of strategic and operational work programs in place. Strongly embedded provisions are also now in place so that all aspects of the Company's strategic and operational oversight is conducted in a manner that guarantees transparency and representative leadership, input and direction of Bigambul people, including across the breadth of our youth and Elder generations.

Other antecedents for the Company's effective governance and management also include:

- Implementation and maintenance of a comprehensive set of Corporate and Operational Policies and Procedures, in line with regulatory and legislative standards
- Implementation and maintenance of operational performance standards, including pertaining to current and future financial management and viability / sustainability
- Extending on above, application and maintenance of best practice financial management, planning and forecasting – including end of month routine financial analysis, appointment of BNTAC Auditor, annual Audit preparation and Annual Draft Budget and Expenditure mapping / forecasting
- Maintenance of to the PBC's Finance, Risk and Audit Charter
- Maintenance of and adherence to the BNTAC Governance Charter
- Sustained strategic efforts and planning to progress our five (5) KRA's as per the BNTAC Strategic Plan

A critical and ongoing focus is embedding systems and processes that support our achievement and continued maintenance of what is a true and effective balance between good and high-quality leadership from a First Nations perspective and based on Our own unique knowledge systems and values, and also what is required of BNTAC from a compliance perspective and in order to meet our legislative and incorporation requirements. This is a continuing priority for BNTAC and a critical requirement given BNTAC's noted successes in continuously increasing and diversifying our current range of core program areas and their underpinning range of projects and initiatives.

Elvie Sandow

Elvie Sandow BNTAC Chairperson



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT & 2020/2021 OUTCOMES HIGHLIGHTS

As the Executive Director of BNTAC, I am very pleased to present this year's Annual Report for the Registered Native Title Body – highlighting and evidencing the significant growth and outcome achievements made to-date, including against both Our founding and periodic (5year) strategic targets. I would like to take the opportunity to acknowledge the work and commitment of Our Board and Membership, and extend special thanks to Our Bigambul people and key supporting partners, proponents and funders for contributed efforts during 2020/2021.

The structure and scope of BNTAC's 2020/2021 service activity and operations report has been developed based around our established program area classifications, comprising:

- Culture
- Country
- People
- Economy

Movement to this format and means of structuring and arranging pertinent activity and outcomes information has been largely driven by BNTAC's expanding program of work – with our current range of either already completed, in progress or upcoming projects each being able to be linked one or more of the above activity classifications, which actively and effectively align to and support and promote our immediate 5-year and overarching long-term priorities for the PBC and Our nation's people, country and culture.

Key outcomes and highlights achieved for 2020/2021 in regard to each new program classification area summarised below. Progress and achievements across the breadth of key reported program areas has been actively supported and aided by the PBC's continually growing range of active networks and relationships with across a range of partners and collaborators, and key proponents operating on our lands and other government and non-government financial contributors, namely including:

- QGC Shell
- ARTC – Inland Rail
- Origin Energy
- Northern Basin Aboriginal Nations
- Murray Darling Basin Authority
- Foundation for Rural & Regional Renewal (FRRR)
- Australian Government – Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development & Communications
- Australian Government – Department of Prime Minister & Cabinet (PM&C)
- Australian Government - Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment
- Queensland Government – Department of Environment, Land and Water
- Care Goondiwindi
- Goondiwindi Regional Council
- Toowoomba Regional Council
- Balonne Shire
- Western Downs Regional Council

< Culture >

A major and continuing project initiative that falls under this division of operations is our dedicated Bigambul Language Preservation & Rejuvenation work program. BNTAC has been successful in continuing to grow our program of activities as part of the dedicated language preservation and rejuvenation initiative – aimed at documenting, reviving and promoting the continual transmission of Bigambul language and related traditional cultural knowledge, with a strong emphasis on active involvement across generations – particularly our young people and emerging future leaders and Elders. The initiative’s commencement was first enabled by a successful application to QGC for one-off funding that precipitated stage one of the work programs – focusing on conducting an initial baseline scoping and collation process to document all available archival and member held information relating to Bigambul language. This first stage was identified as a necessary starting point, given the absence of any comparable initiatives either recently or previously undertaken to thoroughly document and record our language, and promote its revival, transmission and maintenance across current and future generations. To these ends, the second stage to the language program focused on extending on the initial baseline project and collation piece of work to develop subsequent written and audio-visual language resources showcasing Bigambul language and traditional cultural knowledge, and suitable for use and application across a variety of settings, including schools and educational settings as part of the teaching transmission of Bigambul language and culture. The resource development project was enabled by a successful application to the Australian Government’s Indigenous Languages and Arts program and was successfully completed in 2020.

BNTAC was also successful in obtaining follow on funding through a subsequent round of the Indigenous Languages & Arts program to develop a Bigambul teaching aid toolkit – specifically tailored toward supporting teachers and educators in effectively using and applying our complete range of language resources and delivering impactful language teaching and transmission to their respective student cohorts. The toolkit is accompanied by a web-based application also targeted at supporting optimum teaching and transmission outcomes. BNTAC has actively engaged with Goondiwindi State Primary and State High Schools in support to the resources’ uptake and application as part of current curriculum and language teaching activities to their respective student cohorts. BNTAC aims to continuously broaden and increase participation and engagement of our region’s schools and other types of educational settings.

In 2019/2020, BNTAC obtained vital capacity and capability development funding from the Commonwealth Government’s Department of Prime Minister & Cabinet. The one-off funding contribution was purposed to support BNTAC to establish our first on-country office space and co-located cultural centre venue. Both co-located venues represent a first for BNTAC and the Bigambul nation in terms of affording the Registered Native Title body a dedicated office premises located within Our Determination Area, and also in terms of establishing our very first dedicated cultural centre space – providing a publicly accessible physical premises to support engagement with and profiling of both BNTAC and the Bigambul nation more broadly – with the latter entailing particular emphasis on utilisation of the venue as a means to enhance and supplement efforts surrounding the promotion and revitalisation of Our culture, including language, arts and traditional cultural knowledge.

A growing area of work and priority for BNTAC pertains to the preservation and maintenance of Our nation’s cultural heritage and sites, features and objectives that constitute Significant Aboriginal Areas (SAAs) within our country and Determination Area. The cultural mapping process represents a self-initiated work program by BNTAC commenced around two-years prior, which has been subject to continuous growth and expansion. Our expanding database of information is contributing vital knowledge to ensure that cultural heritage sites and places are conserved and protected by ensuring government departments, developers and landowners are consulting with BNTAC at any time or stage works are proposed within the our nation and listed SAA areas and their respective boundaries.

BNTAC has also now formally developed and mobilised our Gullu Wongul Nation Plan. The focus of the 'Plan' has been to identify Our nation's spiritual, cultural, environmental, social and economic objectives for what represent Our nation's and peoples' key sites of significance – at this time including:

- Inglewood Grinding Grooves
- Boobera Lagoon
- Lees Reserve
- Old Camp and Turtle Bend – Toobeah
- Sandy Beach

An inter-related and complementary activity program has also been worked to actively implement and deliver the Bigambul Cultural Immersion Program - developed during prior financial years and focused on providing a critical induction to Our nation and culture from all perspectives and with included consideration as to key sites of significance. It is now a requirement that all existing government agencies and private business and industry providers operating on Our lands and utilising our waterways have all staff working on Bigambul country complete the Cultural Immersion Program, and for new operators, that this be completed prior to commencement of actual works on Our lands. This requirement is to be reflected in all existing and new land and water use agreements.

The supplements work BNTAC has continued during 2020/2021 to develop a Cultural Heritage Land and Environment Rehabilitation and Preservation Policy and corresponding Management Plan. In addition to merging methods and techniques traditionally applied by Bigambul people with current evidenced approaches purported as best practice in the environmental management sector, there is a strong emphasis on ensuring that included targets and their supporting strategies accurately and wholly encapsulate, reflect and combine any existing and/or in development plans and strategies already in place and relating to the management of Our country and cultural heritage. BNTAC are now negotiating and developing agreements that identify specific targets and activity requirements for respective business' and agencies' operating on Bigambul country to meet their social, cultural, environmental and economic responsibilities to Our nation and people – tailored to the specific nature of each proponents' associated usages of and activities on Our lands and waterways – inclusive of key cultural heritage sites.

< Country >

BNTAC's work program to these ends largely commenced with a comprehensive Aboriginal Waterways Assessment (AWA) in 2018/2019 that allowed our nation to consistently measure and prioritise river and wetland health to in turn precipitate better planning, identification and response to water health needs. Outcomes of the assessment were documented and presented as part of a comprehensive report for Our nation and included relevant findings and implications for development of a subsequent Water Resource Plan (WRP) for formal accreditation and endorsement by the Murray-Darling Basin Authority, as per requirements of Chapter 10 of the Murray-Darling Basin Plan.

This foundation of work contributed significant evidence and outcomes toward BNTAC's most recent scoping and development process to establish our 10year Caring for Country Plan, developed during 2020/2021 as a result of our successful application to the Looking After Country Program in 2019/2020. The aim of the project is to develop a long-term roadmap for Our country's health in respect to Our lands, waterways and cultural heritage. In this manner, the Plan provides a centralised and consolidated blueprint for both self-directed and collaborative activity priorities and action. In addition to presenting findings from latest scoping and investigation exercises relating to the needs of Our country in terms of its maintenance and rejuvenation conducted in direct connection with this latest project inactive, to also draws and builds on evidence and outcomes to result from prior key projects, such as the AWA process.

The lead objectives of the 10year Caring for Country Plan is to present a tailored roadmap for the Bigambul nation that identifies Our:

- Priorities for caring for Bigambul country in regard to our lands, waterways and cultural heritage – and including in relation to their cultural, social, spiritual, environmental and economic value(s), use(s) and need(s)
- Extending on above, objectives and outcome targets connected to the former priorities that the Plan aims to achieve
- Subsequent strategies and activity measures required, including timelines for rollout and resource and input needs to support their realisation, as well as key actors and responsible activity and change agents

A key dimension to the Plan's development and rollout also relates to formation and application of a corresponding caring for country scorecard framework to enable interim and long-term measurement of outcomes and impacts achieved in regard to each priority area and its outcome targets and deliverables. The project includes its own scoping and baseline assessment processes, as well as drawing on the sizeable and growing foundation of evidence and outcomes developed to-date and afforded by BNTAC's prior projects targeting the health and wellbeing of our lands, waterways and cultural heritage.

Simultaneous emphasis is on ensuring an Aboriginal led project development and delivery approach, which hinges on active participation and involvement of Bigambul people in setting Our nation's priorities, underpinning targets and subsequent realisation strategies for both maintained and improved country health and wellbeing outcomes. This includes an embedded emphasis on identifying and pursuing opportunities enabled by the Plan for training and skills development and employment of Bigambul people.

The Caring for Country Plan is a decade-long initiative with embedded review milestones across its rollout plan and schedule. To support mobilisation and commencement of key mapped activity deliverables for the first 1-3years, BNTAC will also be engaging a dedicated Caring for Country worker during 2021/2022 to formally drive and help implement both BNTAC's self-directed and what are mapped collaborative measures for undertaking – including by proponents as part of their agreed environmental, social, cultural and economic responsibilities in conducting their core business and/or industry on our lands.

A connected priority entering the 2021/2022 financial year is launch of the Bigambul Drought Preparedness, Resilience and Resistance project enabled by BNTAC's successful application to the Drought Resilience Program in 2020/2021 administered by the Australian Government Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment. The scope of the new project initiative centres on better preparing and equipping Our country and waterways inclusive of its primary users, including natural resource and agricultural entities, individual land owners and primary producers and general community including Bigambul people, to be more drought prepared by of implementation of targeted resilience and resistance efforts. The project will culminate in establishment of BNTAC's own in-house pool of Bigambul Caring for Country Drought Resistance Officers and team leader positions, who will complete accredited fire and traditional cultural burn off and land rejuvenation training. The former training and skills development project components will actively support these roles in delivering targeted cultural burn offs and traditional land and ecology rejuvenation and resistance techniques. This is to be completed in combination with provision of on-country demonstrations, information sessions and workshops targeting a combination of community members, land owners and larger pastoral and agricultural companies. In addition to contributing to our country's drought tolerance and resistance, the project will contribute critical skills development to Bigambul people as well as culminating in new and expanded work opportunities for Our people and on Our country.

< People >

BNTAC has also been active in working across our proponent networks to identify and support tangible collaborative opportunities relating to the training and skills development of Our people and expanded local employment pathways and options available – including as part of both our own and our partners’ growing range and mix of work programs being conducted on Our lands and waterways.

Lead proponents that BNTAC has engaged with in this regard include QGC Shell and Australian Rail Track Corporation (ARTC) – Inland Rail. This is evidenced by both proponents’ active support for Our Youth Summit by way of formal financial contribution and also via presentation to participating young people regarding available training and employment pathways that they operate and deliver on Our lands and as part of the core business that they deliver and plan to grow and diversify within these areas.

During 2020/2021, BNTAC participated in follow-on collaborations and planning with Inland Rail in support of this work programs lead directives, and to connect with ARTC’s growing presence of operations within Our determination area and their strongly expressed commitment to work with BNTAC and our current and emerging generation to expand and diversify trading and employment pathways and opportunities available particularly that are delivered / available on Bigambul country.

BNTAC are also pleased to report our successful application for one-off financial contribution from QGC, to enable delivery of a targeted Empowerment and Development Project set to commence in 2021/2022 and focused on increasing training and employment outcomes for Aboriginal people in Our determination area, and with simultaneous focus across the following cohort:

- School leavers
- Those completing TAFE and tertiary qualifications and training
- Individuals who have been disengaged from training and employment for sometime

The project is being undertaken as a much needed initiative in connection with the work BNTAC is and has been undertaking to actively support Our peoples increased engagement with and simultaneous improved outcomes regarding training and employment – inclusive of successful transitions between the two as well as increased completion and retention outcomes. The need for the project is derived from recognised overrepresentation of Our people across a range of key disadvantage indicators and measures, and also as an outcome of recent scoping and development stages undertaken to support formal documentation of Our nation’s first consolidated blueprint for the economic development and prosperity of Our nation and its people. Outcomes of the former project and its initial scoping and end-stage outcomes, coupled with review of latest training and employment data sets and related indicators highlighting disproportionate levels of health, social and economic disadvantage within our community have indicated a strong need, use ad place for a targeted initiative that enables Our people access to conduit positions and subsequent supports that tangibly aid and assist Our mob in accessing locally and regionally available training and employment pathways, as well as access to wrap-around supports that increase their engagement, training completions and employment retention outcomes, through simultaneous response to concurrent health, wellbeing and social priorities commonly intertwined with Aboriginal peoples’ experience of unemployment and poor educational attainment. To these ends, the project will support engagement of two Empowerment Officer roles that will deliver vital case management and service linkage support to Our people, whilst concurrently working with local training and employment providers to establish regionally consistent and culturally secure standards and practices that better support engagement and retention/completion outcomes

< Economy >

A lead project launched, mobilised and completed during 2020/2021 focused on the scoping and development of our nation's own Bigambul 10year Economic Development & Prosperity Strategy. The project was enabled by BNTAC's successful application for one-off financial contribution from the Foundation for Rural and Regional Renewal (FRRR) completed and lodged in 2019/2020.

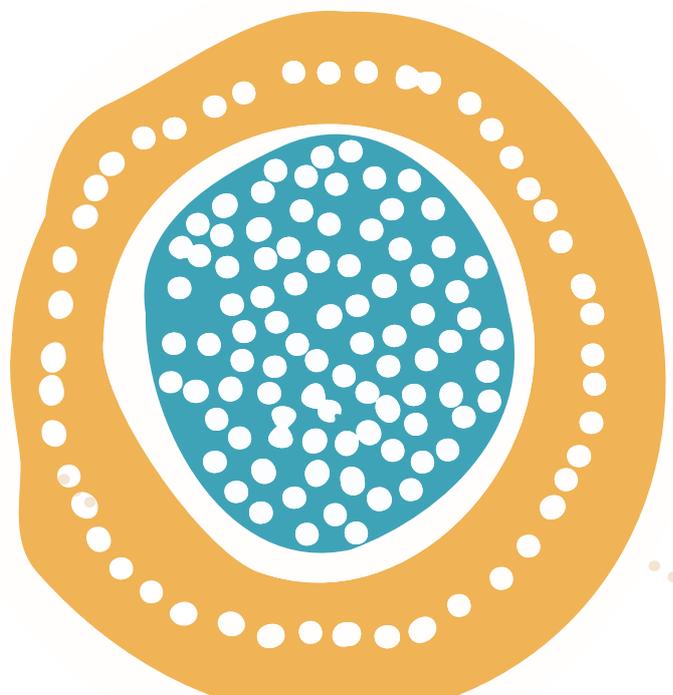
The purpose and scope of the Strategy – which represents the first of its kind for both BNTAC and Our nation - is to identify our 10year economic development and prosperity priorities and related opportunities and strategies for their realisation. In addition to comprising community-led priorities and aspirations and correlating realisation strategies directly pertaining to economic development and training and employment access and participation, the 10year framework also embodies a comprehensive rollout approach inclusive of Our peoples' priorities and targets and subsequent supporting measures needed for Bigambul peoples' health and wellbeing and social and financial inclusion and prosperity.

Growing evidence corroborates Our peoples' long purported need for comprehensive and integrated service approaches that actively and concurrently support Our peoples' wellbeing and prosperity across the full breadth of key health and social determinants areas. This approach recognises the need and importance of achieving sustainable foundations for outcomes improvement for Our people by way of embedding holistic system and service responses that achieve simultaneous, integrated response(s) to the full breadth and range of contributing risk and poor outcome factors being experienced, and bring about real and sustainable foundations for outcomes improvement.

The 10year strategy includes an iterative roadmap for rollout and implementation of the plan and its holistic targets and activity deliverables associated with promoting optimum outcomes in respect or wellbeing and social and financial outcomes for Our people. This includes measures and actions to be undertaken by BNTAC as part of collaborate arrangements in consort with major training and employment providers, and also working in collaboration with noted proponent and partners with whom we already collaborate and liaise to these ends.

This program area will be a retained priority for expansion and growth moving into 2021/2022 and beyond. BNTAC also identify strong opportunity for the growth and diversification of avenues and strategies to be mobilised in connection with this initiative, particularly as our range and type of internal and collaborative programs and projects continue to expand and gain momentum with respect to community and key industry stakeholders' input and scope for active participation and contribution.

Justin Saunders
Justin Saunders *Executive Director*





CORPORATE SERVICES REPORT

< Governance and management report >

The Bigambul PBC is committed to furthering the aspirations of Our people. To do this, we have invested in and demonstrated the highest standard of good First Nations governance and effective and transparent decision-making; to ensure we are acting in the best interest of our native title holders. BNTAC are committed to ensuring the recognition, protection and enjoyment of native title and the right of Our Bigambul communities to economic, social and environmental development that reflects our values and aspirations.

BNTAC are strongly aware that in undertaking our lead directive as the Registered Native Title Body for Our nation, there is a critical need to ensure optimum processes for transparent and effective leadership and decision-making that is grounded in the voice and input and current and future priorities and aspirations of Our people. We also acknowledge that in administering our key functions, we are often asking Our people to make lasting decisions regarding Our nation and the future of Our country, people and culture – consequently reinforcing and demanding the requirement for strong local leadership and appropriate and commensurate representation of current and future generations within our community.

To these ends, a critical focus of the last 2-3years for BNTAC has been targeted efforts to both embed and safeguard the highest standards of and supporting systems and processes for First Nations governance. As reported previously, the governance and structural reforms have been designed to put the Bigambul Nation into the best position to apply the nation rebuilding approach to Indigenous governance advocated by Reconciliation Australia and the Office of the Registrar of Indigenous Corporations. The nation rebuilding approach is supported by many years of research by Harvard University and the University of Arizona showing the approach to be best practice for enabling Indigenous nations that have been negatively impacted by colonisation to overcome disadvantage and to rebuild their nations.

In order to implement this approach the constitution of BNTAC was amended to provide for a Board that was:

- more broadly representative of the Bigambul People;
- took into account the knowledge, experience and expertise required to govern BNTAC in accordance with best practice and put it in the best position to achieve its objective of delivering long term generational benefits to the Bigambul People; and
- recognised the importance of having a mechanism that enabled both Bigambul Elders and the next generation of Bigambul youths to have input into the decision-making process.



The subsequent new Board structure of BNTAC now consists of up to 12 directors being:

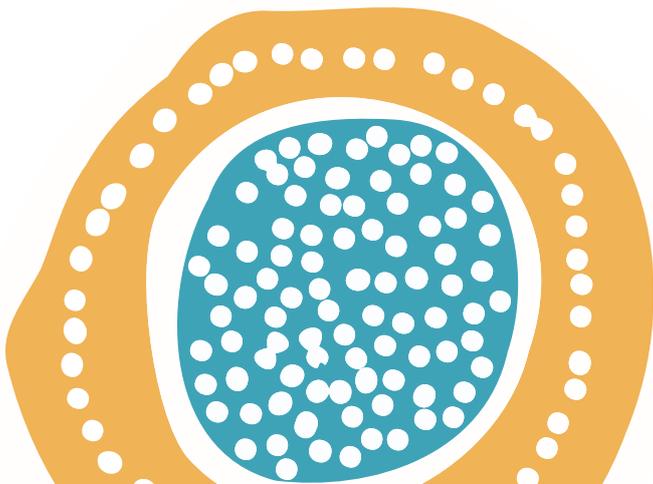
- the chairs (or nominees) of the Elders Advisory Council and the Youth Advisory Council;
- up to 7 member endorsed Bigambul People (including at least one additional Elder and one additional Youth) nominated and selected based on experience, diversity across apical ancestors, gender and age diversity; and the skills needed on the Board (Member Directors);
- up to 2 skills-based directors; and
- an executive director (if one is appointed by the Board).

The Board issued an Expressions of Interest Notice to fill the vacancies on the Board for the Member Directors and the new Directors are expected to be endorsed at the upcoming AGM.

In addition to the restructure of the BNTAC Board, BNTAC has moved forward with the establishment of the charitable trust, the Gunnawinna Charitable Trust, to hold, invest and protect the assets that derive from the native title rights of the Bigambul People.

The Trust Deed has been finalised and the Constitution of the Trustee Company has been settled. Three Directors have been appointed for the purpose of enabling registration of the Trustee Company. An Expressions of Interest Notice has called for nominations of additional Bigambul People who would be interested in being appointed to the Board of the Trustee Company. Once the registration of the Trustee Company has been completed the Trust Deed will be signed to complete the establishment process. The intention is to build a capital base within the trust that can be invested for the benefit of future generations of the Bigambul People.

A major reason for adopting the nation rebuilding approach is to pursue opportunities for economic and cultural development on behalf of the Bigambul People. There are already significant business opportunities on the horizon for the Bigambul Nation that have arisen as a result of taking an entrepreneurial and innovative approach to managing its assets. In order to do pursue these activities without putting the native title assets at risk, a separate BNTAC controlled company (Gunnawinna Development Corporation) is in the process of being incorporated whose sole purpose will be to pursue these opportunities. Three Directors have been appointed for the purpose of enabling registration of the Trustee Company. An Expressions of Interest Notice has called for nominations of additional Bigambul People who would be interested in being appointed to the Board of the Gunnawinna Development Corporation.



Underpinning the entire structure is the Charter of Governance of the Bigambul Nation. The Charter for the Governance of the Bigambul Nation is aimed at creating an approach to the governance of our Nation that is based on a shared vision to address the three major challenges facing the Bigambul Nation:

- finding ways to support the shared social and cultural relationships, values and physical, social and emotional well-being of the Bigambul People including ceremony, language, knowledge, kinship ties, traditional lands, art, stories and history;
- creating conditions where Bigambul People can meet our economic, health and material needs and support our families;
- developing ways to support self-governance of the Bigambul Nation and escape the unwanted dependency on government and other external decision-makers and sources of funding that limit the freedom of the Bigambul People to self-determine our own paths.

The four principles that are articulated in the Charter are summarised below:

- **Practical Sovereignty** - We are and always have been an independent Nation with inherent sovereignty and our approach to governance will be based on this principle. We will work within the legal and regulatory systems imposed upon us but we will demand recognition as a Nation and assert our right to self-determination and our indigenous cultural human rights.
- **Effective Governance** - BNTAC has a responsibility to the Bigambul People to always act in good faith in the best interests of the Bigambul Nation as a whole and not to use its position or power to unjustly enrich itself, its directors or its members; ensure that its strategic direction and decision-making aligns with the shared objectives of the Bigambul People through community consultations, engagement and participation; encourage and facilitate the involvement of the Bigambul People in its governance by becoming members of the corporation, directors and committee members; be accountable to the Bigambul People for achieving its strategic objectives and impacting positively on the challenges we face as a Nation; and to put in place governance structures that are consistent with our traditions but meet our contemporary needs and that are fair and unbiased, enable effective administration and management of the affairs of the Bigambul Nation and builds the capability and wealth of the Bigambul People.
- **Strategic Direction** - To rebuild our Nation we must approach the challenges strategically and focus on how we can support and build the systems and society that will underpin the development of the Bigambul Nation that we wish our great-grandchildren to inhabit. In order to achieve this our focus cannot solely be on fixing immediate problems but we must look long term to how we fix our communities and their cultural, social, political and economic health.
- **Public-Spirited Leadership** - Those who take on leadership roles must be dedicated, committed to performing them to the best of their ability and actively engaged in driving the organisation to meet the strategic objectives of the Bigambul Nation. Those in leadership positions must govern our Nation and serve its People for the greater good to empower the Bigambul Nation as a whole not particular individuals, families or clans within the Nation. Such positions of leadership are to be treated as positions of honour and must not be used as a self-serving means to divert resource allocations or promote particular agendas. Our leaders must work together unselfishly and with a sense of public-spiritedness and compassion so that the Bigambul Nation and its People as a whole prosper.

The above achievements and developments are supplemented by formal steps to both mobilise and implement BNTAC's very first Youth Council and Elders Advisory Group. The Youth Council was a direct output of the 2019/2020 Youth Summit – the first of its kind for BNTAC and the native title sector more broadly. Similarly to the former approach, the Elders Advisory Group was also established as a direct output of the Elders Gathering held in 2020. Both forms of gatherings provided a major platform to enable each groups' formation whilst achieving direct input and direction from our Youth and Elders' as to the scope and priorities that each respective entity will target. The formation of both groups has also enabled a formal and ongoing mechanism through which BNTAC is able to receive and also provide information and feedback to our local community – and for the first time, with surety as to the inclusion of both our youth and Elders' voices.

Despite the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on various aspects of Company functions, BNTAC was successful in maintaining effective Board oversight and leadership across our key programs and current projects for the period. As required and based on continually evolving lockdown requirements during the last 12 months, online virtual meetings were held in supplement to physical gatherings, which are largely coordinated and held in Goondiwindi. Our standard Board meetings were also complemented by targeted out-of-session meetings and related strategy and planning sessions, in line with our main program work streams and the range of current projects and activities currently either in progress, already completed, or set to commence in the new financial year (2021/2022).

The BNTAC Executive Director continues to provide an instrumental role in providing both day-to-day and strategic level oversight of the Company and our current range of strategic and operational work programs in place. As noted, strongly embedded provisions also now operate so that all aspects of the Company's strategic and operational oversight is conducted in a manner that guarantees transparency and representative leadership, input and direction of Bigambul people, including across the breadth of our youth and Elder generations.

Other antecedents for the Company's effective governance and management also include:

- Implementation and maintenance of a comprehensive set of Corporate and Operational Policies and Procedures, in line with regulatory and legislative standards
- Implementation and maintenance of operational performance standards, including pertaining to current and future financial management and viability / sustainability
- Extending on above, application and maintenance of best practice financial management, planning and forecasting – including end of month routine financial analysis, appointment of BNTAC Auditor, annual Audit preparation and Annual Draft Budget and Expenditure mapping / forecasting
- Maintenance of to the PBC's Finance, Risk and Audit Charter
- Maintenance of and adherence to the BNTAC Governance Charter
- Sustained strategic efforts and planning to progress our five (5) KRA's as per the BNTAC Strategic Plan

A critical focus is also embedding systems and processes that support our achievement and continued maintenance of what is a true and effective balance between good and high quality leadership from a First Nations perspective and based on Our own unique knowledge systems and values, and also what is required of BNTAC from a compliance perspective and in order to meet our legislative and incorporation requirements. This is an ongoing priority for the PBC and a critical requirement given BNTAC's noted successes in continuously increasing and diversifying our current range of core program areas and their underpinning range of projects and initiatives.



OPERATIONS AND SERVICE ACTIVITY REPORTS

Structure and flow

The structure and scope of BNTAC's 2020/2021 service activity and operations report has been developed based around our established program area classifications, comprising:

- Culture
- Country
- People
- Economy

This is the first financial year where BNTAC has applied these formalised classifications to distinguish our main areas and divisions of Company operations. Movement to this format and means of structuring and arranging pertinent activity and outcomes information has been largely driven by BNTAC's expanding program of work – with our current range of either already completed, in progress or upcoming projects each being able to be linked one or more of the above activity classifications, which actively and effectively align to and support and promote our immediate 5-year and overarching long-term priorities for the PBC and Our nation's people, country and culture.

The subsequent activity reports are divided by our main program classifications. The scope of included information relates to reporting on lead projects and activities undertaken, completed and/or planned during the period and outcomes and/or progress regarding these, as well as how these outcomes are and have contributed toward BNTAC's current range of lead strategic priorities and related targets.

< Culture >

Scope: The scope of this program area focuses on the preservation and rejuvenation of Bigambul Language, Arts and Traditional Knowledge Systems, including targeted activities that support and promote transfer across current and emerging generations

Aligned KRA's:

- Maintaining rigorous corporate governance that are culturally inclusive, accountable and transparent; and
- Investing in the preservation and advancement of historical and traditional lands, cultural knowledge and practices and promoting Bigambul connection to country

Aligned Outcome Objectives:

- Cultural identity
- Self-determination
- Leadership

Over the last three years and particularly the most recent 24-48 months, BNTAC has directed significant efforts to develop and expand the work that we do as both an organisation and as a whole-of-nation to document, revive and preserve Bigambul culture – inclusive of our language, art forms and traditional cultural knowledge systems.

Culture is intrinsic to Our people and Our nation and BNTAC has undertaken dedicated efforts to ensure that this is reflected in terms of the structure and guiding approach and ethos of the organisation, as well as forming a major focus of our current and continuously expanding work program – so much so that this forms one of the main divisions of Company operations. This is particularly poignant too given the way in which culture underscores and drives both Our founding purpose and directives, as well as our current five-year Strategic priorities. As per above, this work stream demonstrates strong and salient alignment with our lead outcome objectives relating to cultural identity, self-determination and leadership, as well; as promoting our existing 5-year strategic priorities centred around the preservation and advancement of our cultural knowledge and practices; and too, active integration and application of the former as part of the governance, management and operations of the Company.

A major and continuing project initiative that falls under this division of operations is our dedicated Bigambul Language Preservation & Rejuvenation work program. BNTAC has been successful in continuing to grow our program of activities as part of the dedicated language preservation and rejuvenation initiative – aimed at documenting, reviving and promoting the continual transmission of Bigambul language and related traditional cultural knowledge, with a strong emphasis on active involvement across generations – particularly our young people and emerging future leaders and Elders. The initiative’s commencement was first enabled by a successful application to QGC for one-off funding that precipitated stage one of the work program – focusing on conducting an initial baseline scoping and collation process to document all available archival and member held information relating to Bigambul language. This first stage was identified as a necessary starting point, given the absence of any comparable initiatives either recently or previously undertaken to thoroughly document and record our language, and promote its revival, transmission and maintenance across current and future generations. To these ends, the second stage to the language program focused on extending on the initial baseline project and collation piece of work to develop subsequent written and audio-visual language resources showcasing Bigambul language and traditional cultural knowledge, and suitable for use and application across a variety of settings, including schools and educational settings as part of the teaching transmission of Bigambul language and culture. The resource development project was enabled by a successful application to the Australian Government’s Indigenous Languages and Arts program and was successfully completed in 2020.

To extend on the foundations achieved by stages one and two of our dedicated language work program, BNTAC was also successful in obtaining follow on funding through a subsequent round of the Indigenous Languages & Arts program to develop a Bigambul teaching aid toolkit – specifically tailored toward supporting teachers and educators in effectively using and applying our complete range of language resources and delivering impactful language teaching and transmission to their respective student cohorts. The toolkit is accompanied by a web-based application also targeted at supporting optimum teaching and transmission outcomes. BNTAC has actively engaged with Goondiwindi State Primary and State High Schools in support to the resources’ uptake and application as part of current curriculum and language teaching activities to their respective student cohorts. BNTAC aims to continuously broaden and increase participation and engagement of our region’s schools and other types of educational settings. Plans are also in progress to develop dedicated supports to teachers and educators that will assist them in developing their comfortability and confidence in delivering Bigambul language teachings, including using and applying the existing range of available resources and the available teaching aid toolkit and supporting web-based application. As part of this approach, we also envisage establishment of provisions to allow Elders’ to be able to conduct outreach to schools and educational settings in support of language teaching and transmission, and too, in ensuring the accurate use and application of resources, as well as correct our language generally (i.e. use of appropriate pronunciation, dictation etc.).

The dedicated Bigambul language preservation program is to be retained as an ongoing initiative and priority for BNTAC. Continual efforts are being undertaken at strategic and operational levels to both promote and maximise scope for impact and benefit from activities conducted to-date, as well as exploration of future pathways through which we can continue to build on the foundations created through the significant outcomes achieved already in the short span of 2 years since receiving initial formal investment to this activity stream. BNTAC identify significant opportunities regarding the former and in regards to our continued progress to grow and diversify the way in which we promote, preserve and maintain our culture and language through the establishment of our first on country office space and co-located cultural centre venue.

In 2019/2020, BNTAC was successful in obtaining vital capacity and capability development funding from the Commonwealth Government’s Department of Prime Minister & Cabinet. The one-off funding contribution was purposed to support BNTAC to establish our first on-country office space and co-located cultural centre venue. Both co-located venues represent a first for BNTAC and the Bigambul nation in terms of affording the Registered Native Title body a dedicated office premises located within Our Determination Area, and also in terms of establishing our very first dedicated cultural centre space – providing a publicly accessible physical premises to support engagement with and profiling of both BNTAC and the Bigambul nation more broadly – with the latter entailing particular emphasis on utilisation of the venue as a means to enhance and supplement efforts surrounding the promotion and revitalisation of Our culture, including language, arts and traditional cultural knowledge. The space also affords BNTAC and Our people a dedicated gathering and

meeting space, as well as enabling our own space and venue to assist in delivery of a broad range of both closed and public events and initiatives, such as training and professional development, art shows and displays, Elders and Youth gatherings etc. These new developments are instrumental for BNTAC in terms of strengthening our active presence in Our determination area, and enabling supplemented capacity and capability with regards to access to available infrastructure and resources to be able to continue to grow and diversify our increasing range and profile of programs and the projects and activities that operate beneath them. Through combination of the former, the office space and cultural centre also afford our Bigambul people expanded engagement and participation avenues, including formal training and employment. This is demonstrated by the recent launch of an Expression of Interest (EOI) process during 2020/2021 seeking applications from interested Bigambul people to be part of a register of local Caring for Country and Cultural Heritage Field Officers, purposed to provide response to ad hoc and periodic requests for project support relating to our expanding cultural heritage and caring for country programs.



Extending on above, in connection with both our cultural and caring for country work programs, a growing area of work and priority for BNTAC pertains to the preservation and maintenance of Our nation's cultural heritage and sites, features and objectives that constitute Significant Aboriginal Areas (SAAs) within our country and Determination Area. The cultural mapping process represents a self-initiated work program by BNTAC commenced around two-years prior, which has been subject to continuous growth and expansion, with a snowball affect being created through the continual accumulation and addition of Significant Aboriginal Areas (SAA) and related cultural knowledge and historical information. Our growing database of information is contributing vital knowledge to ensure that cultural heritage sites and places are conserved and protected by ensuring government departments, developers and landowners are consulting with BNTAC at any time or stage works are proposed within our nation and listed SAA areas and their respective boundaries. It is noteworthy that as part of this process traditional knowledge and cultural information associated with any significant sites remains confidential and is not made available to government departments of the public without BNTAC's and our nation's Traditional Owners' permission. In addition to contributing vital knowledge and information necessary for the preservation and protection of key areas of significance to Our people, nation and culture, BNTAC's growing cultural heritage work program has played a positive and influential role in generating opportunities for teaching and training of Our people, and importantly transmission opportunities between our older and younger generations.

Mapping and recording of key cultural heritage sites to inform subsequent preservation and protection strategies is accompanied by BNTAC's continuing work program commence in 2018/2019 to develop and implement the Bigambul Nation Planning – Cultural Flows – Gulli Wongul Nation Plan. The focus of the 'Plan' has been to identify Our nation's spiritual, cultural, environmental, social and economic objectives for what represent Our nation's and peoples' key sites of significance – at this time including:

- Inglewood Grinding Grooves
- Boobera Lagoon
- Lees Reserve
- Old Camp and Turtle Bend – Toobeah
- Sandy Beach



The project was enabled by financial support provided by the Northern Basin Aboriginal Nations (NBAN). A dedicated Working Group comprising Bigambul Traditional Owners and Elders was formed at the project's commencement and is still operational at this time. The primary focus for 2020/2021 and proceeding forward has been the Plan's mobilisation and implementation stages, which are to be paralleled by embedded provisions to support routine progress and outcomes monitoring -in line with the established spiritual, environmental, social and economic objectives established for each included cultural location. An inter-related and complementary activity program has also been work to actively implement and deliver the Bigambul Cultural Immersion Program - developed during prior financial years and focused on providing a critical induction to Our nation and culture from all perspectives and with included consideration as to key sites of significance.

It is now a requirement that all existing government agencies and private business and industry providers operating on Our lands and utilising our waterways have all staff working on Bigambul country complete the Cultural Immersion Program, and for new operators, that this be completed prior to commencement of actual works on Our lands. This requirement is to be reflected in all existing and new land and water use agreements. Introduction and formalisation of the cultural immersion training requirement complements and supplements the work BNTAC has undertaken and continued during 2020/2021 to develop a Cultural Heritage Land and Environment Rehabilitation and Preservation Policy and corresponding Management Plan.

During 2020/2021, BNTAC progressed to further develop the policy and its supporting realisation and rollout plan. The aim is to provide a consolidated merger of current best practice cultural heritage and environmental conservation and management practices in combination with activity measures uniquely tailored to Our nation's environment and ecology. In addition to merging methods and techniques traditionally applied by Bigambul people with current evidenced approaches purported as best practice in the environmental management sector, there is a strong emphasis on ensuring that included targets and their supporting strategies accurately and wholly encapsulate, reflect and combine any existing and/or in development plans and strategies already in place and relating to the management of Our country and cultural heritage. This is to ensure congruency and alignment between all aspects of our work programs in this regard, and consequently optimum support for Our organisation's and nation's Vision and objects in regards to culture, cultural heritage and caring for country. BNTAC has also set a directive to have the policy's targets and associated realisation plans and supporting activity measures reflected and embedded as they relevantly apply as part of all land and waterway use agreements with key government and private sector business and industry in our region. Extending on the former, BNTAC are now negotiating and developing agreements that identify specific targets and activity requirements for respective business' and agencies' operating on Bigambul country to meet their social, cultural, environmental and economic responsibilities to Our nation and people – tailored to the specific nature of each proponents' associated usages of and activities on Our lands and waterways – inclusive of key cultural heritage sites, and to respond to both potential and actual impacts as a result



of their core business activities.

During 2020/2021, BNTAC has made active progress in mobilising our targets and embedded requirements pertaining to negotiation of established land and water use agreements with key proponents in Our determination area, including as part of Indigenous Land Use Agreements (ILUAs) and Cultural Heritage Management Plans (CHMPs). An active example of work to these ends is highlighted by BNTAC's recent work to collaborate and coordinate with Goondiwindi Regional Council for development of a tailored Compliance Toolkit and Manual. Goondiwindi Regional Council identified an opportunity to work with BNTAC to develop a cultural heritage 'compliance toolkit' that streamlines the way in which Council meets its city of care and responsibility under the Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act 2003. The toolkit's development process entailed Council and BNTAC undertaking a collaborative working approach that also placed strong emphasis on embedding strong cultural and Aboriginal leadership. To these ends, BNTAC conducted an initial workshop with Elders and Council – so also attended a series of site inspections to understand the types of work and activities that Council will conduct, followed by a detailed training program and collaborative approach to document and develop an applied toolkit that embeds Our nation's approach and practices for cultural heritage management.

The former project symbolises an instrumental piece of work and is part of what BNTAC foreshadow to be an expanding work program, given the wide range of proponents operating on and around our lands and waterways. The toolkit provides a working example of an applied resource for tangible application that acknowledges that Aboriginal cultural heritage is not one-dimensional and comprises of tangible (physical) and intangible (non-physical) culture and knowledge that is intertwined and part of a wider cultural landscape. This includes and is not limited to archaeological material, landscape features, sites/places, flora, stories and knowledge etc. Subsequent systems are needed that correctly cover and meet the true and wholistic needs of Our complete cultural environment, not just artefacts. The project's toolkit development stage was completed in 2020/2021, paving the way for its formal application in 2021/2022 as part of all of Council's engagement with and usage of Bigambul lands and waterways and included sites of significance. The compliance manual and toolkit will actively support Council's relevant and tangible contribution to the preservation and maintenance of Our cultural heritage, including across its noted breadth of types and forms that it exists and remains as part of Our country, culture and knowledge systems. The project has also provided a valuable exemplar in terms of both methodology and resource outputs for undertaking of similar projects with other key proponents operating in Our nation.

Paralleling BNTAC's work with government and private proponents to embed targeted strategies and practices for the preservation and maintenance of Our nation's cultural heritage - inclusive of the diverse types and forms in which it exists and has been identified to-date - have also been recent developments in regards to the support that we provide to individual land owners and primary producers. This is to ensure their positive contribution to whole of nation cultural heritage conservation efforts, and simultaneous mitigation of risk and impact to result from farming and agricultural uses of our lands and waterways. An example of a recent initiative conducted to these ends during the 2020/2021 financial year is the Northern Basin Fencing Program (NBFP) – an Australian Government funded project focused on installation of riparian fencing and off-stream watering infrastructure (pipelines, pumps and troughs) along major waterways within Southern Queensland and encapsulating the Bigambul nation. The project involves an active and dynamic approach of working side-by-side with landowners to assess and survey individual property needs in regards to both cultural heritage and the protection and conservation of included waterways and their comprising flora and fauna. The project represents an ongoing initiative for BNTAC forecast for completion around mid 2023, and being undertaken with valuable assistance from BNTAC's partner, Australian Heritage Specialists.

< Country >

Scope: This work stream is focused on Caring for Country and promoting the health and rejuvenation of our land, waterways and cultural heritage

Aligned KRA's:

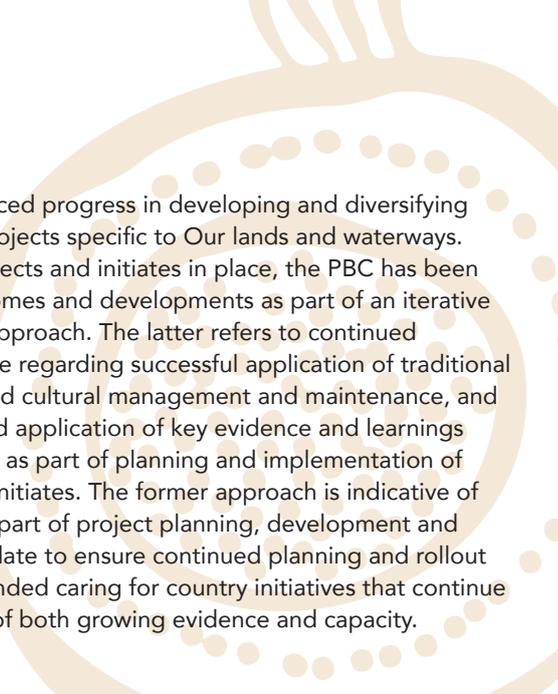
- Investing in the preservation and advancement of historical and traditional lands, cultural knowledge and practices and promoting Bigambul connection to country;
- Leveraging commercial opportunities to build the economic strength of the Bigambul people; and
- Building the skills and capacity of Bigambul people through expanded training opportunities

Aligned Outcome Objectives:

- Cultural identity,
- Self-determination, and
- Economic independence.

BNTAC's caring for country work stream represents a priority division of operations – actively supporting our current strategic directives of preserving and advancing Our traditional lands, inclusive of waterways and their included flora and fauna. Latest developments under this work division have also centred around maximising potential avenues and opportunities for income generation and subsequent scope for economic benefit to Our people and nation. We also aim to develop and support BNTAC's own mechanisms for income generation to be used toward reinvestment initiatives – in line with current priorities and our growing work divisions.

Prior and more recent developments under this work program actively support and promote our long-term outcome objectives in regards to actively cultivating Our nation's cultural identity. Country and in particular water is intrinsic to Bigambul culture and identity at both individual and whole-of-nation levels. Subsequent efforts to preserve and revive our lands and waterways and their encompassed ecologies are vital for the continuity and maintenance of Our culture, and too Our peoples' connection with their cultural identity and history. An included aspect to Our caring for country work stream also centres on developing and expanding Bigambul leadership and self-determination with regards to the range of current and future preservation and maintenance initiatives in place and as outlined above, required of proponents and key government and private agencies operating on and surrounding our lands and waters. BNTAC has subsequently prioritised continual development of our nation's capacity, capability and recognised strength of position as an acknowledged and respected authority regarding the health and wellbeing of country and too what constitutes best practice approaches and practices in terms of effectively merging current environmental management techniques with traditional ecological approaches and their underpinning knowledge systems and supporting cultural practices. As part of the former, continual efforts are also attributed to identify subsequent opportunities for Our people and nation to leverage economic participation and training and employment benefits from pursuit and application of our advocated caring for country and waterways approaches – with noted emphasis too on expanding available opportunities to Our people to be able to work on country, as well as learn and sustain our traditional cultural knowledge and environmental management practices that have been historically taught and transferred between generations.



Over the last 2-3 years, BNTAC has achieved evidenced progress in developing and diversifying Our caring for country work program inclusive of projects specific to Our lands and waterways. In addition to expanding the range and type of projects and initiatives in place, the PBC has been effective in utilising and applying year-to-year outcomes and developments as part of an iterative and connected program development and rollout approach. The latter refers to continued progress to establish our nation's own evidence base regarding successful application of traditional cultural approaches and practices for land, water and cultural management and maintenance, and importantly, active efforts to embed applied use and application of key evidence and learnings resulting from prior and current activities, especially as part of planning and implementation of subsequent planned projects and resulting activity initiatives. The former approach is indicative of a continuous quality improvement methodology as part of project planning, development and delivery; that draws on evidence and outcomes to-date to ensure continued planning and rollout of what are relevant, responsive and evidence grounded caring for country initiatives that continue to build and extend on outcomes and foundations of both growing evidence and capacity.

Our approach to iterative project planning and development and effective application of our growing evidence base and progressively increasing internal capacity and capability in regards to caring for country is demonstrated by BNTAC's continued growth and development in regards to our waterways initiatives. BNTAC's work to these ends commenced with a comprehensive Aboriginal Waterways Assessment (AWA) in 2018/2019 that allowed our nation to consistently measure and prioritise river and wetland health to in turn precipitate better planning, identification and response to water health needs. Outcomes of the assessment were documented and presented as part of a comprehensive report for Our nation and included relevant findings and implications for development of a subsequent Water Resource Plan (WRP) for formal accreditation and endorsement by the Murray-Darling Basin Authority, as per requirements of Chapter 10 of the Murray-Darling Basin Plan.

Similarly to the holistic lens applied to other aspects of BNTAC's core work programs, particularly relating to the management and care of Our lands, waterways cultural heritage, the AWA was thorough and comprehensive in considering and unpacking relevant value(s), use(s) and need(s) relating to waterways and wetlands as they apply to Our the following dimensions: spiritual, social, cultural, environmental and economic. Key findings that emerged in this regard included:

- The Bigambul people have always valued the waterways as key meeting places, important for ceremonies and family gatherings. These gatherings are used as opportunities to pass on knowledge, teach children and tell stories which connect them to their ancestors.
- The Bigambul people value the position of the creeks and rivers as important for the transmission of culture and ceremonial purposes, such as sharing information and initiations and song-lines.
- The Bigambul people value the position of the creeks and rivers as important for the transmission of culture and ceremonial purposes, such as sharing information and initiations and song-lines
- The Bigambul people recognise the importance of respecting and protecting the native fish species and turtles which live in the waterways
- The Bigambul people utilise parts of the water system for cultural reasons, e.g., using native flora and fauna in making weapons and tools
- The Bigambul people recognise the importance of clean water for swimming, drinking and continuing traditional fishing practices (spearing fish from trees)
- The Bigambul people, historically and contemporarily, value the use of water for cultural sites, e.g., Narran Lakes
- The Bigambul people utilise clean water from the waterways for cultural Men's and Women's Business
- The Bigambul people recognise the interconnectedness of water and its role in maintaining healthy natural systems



Extending on above, the AWA was also comprehensive in considering the cultural, social-political; health and wellbeing; economic; and environmental risks and impacts associated with our waterways, and subsequent mapped responses needed to combat and/or mitigate these factors. Outcomes of this process exemplified the importance of ensuring targeted, strategic action for the health and preservation of our Nation's waterways – now and into the future and as part of both individual and collaborative efforts to be pursued by BNTAC and our network of partners and proponents operating on our lands and utilising our waterways. In addition to presenting the scientific / environmental and economic aspects of risk and impact and their associated response strategies, close attention was also paid to mapping key considerations and needed action regarding the centrality of our waterways and wetlands to the preservation and promotion of Bigambul culture and connection; and subsequent impacts on the health and social and emotional wellbeing of Bigambul people.

While of central value alone and having been instrumental in development of Our nation's immediate and future plans relating to waterway health and required maintenance and rejuvenation efforts needed, this foundation of work also contributed significant evidence and outcomes toward BNTAC's most recent scoping and development process to establish our 10year Caring for Country Plan, developed during 2020/2021 as a result of our successful application to the Looking After Country Program in 2019/2020. The aim of the project is to develop a long-term roadmap for Our country's health in respect to Our lands, waterways and cultural heritage. In this manner, the Plan provides a centralised and consolidated blueprint for both self-directed and collaborative activity priorities and action. In addition to presenting findings from latest scoping and investigation exercises relating to the needs of Our country in terms of its maintenance and rejuvenation conducted in direct connection with this latest project inactive, to also draws and builds on evidence and outcomes to result from prior key projects, such as the AWA process.

The lead objectives of the 10year Caring for Country Plan is to present a tailored roadmap for the Bigambul nation that identifies Our:

- Priorities for caring for Bigambul country in regards to our lands, waterways and cultural heritage – and including in relation to their cultural, social, spiritual, environmental and economic value(s), use(s) and need(s)
- Extending on above, objectives and outcome targets connected to the former priorities that the Plan aims to achieve
- Subsequent strategies and activity measures required, including timelines for rollout and resource and input needs to support their realisation, as well as key actors and responsible activity and change agents

A key dimension to the Plan's development and rollout also relates to formation and application of a corresponding caring for country scorecard framework to enable interim and long-term measurement of outcomes and impacts achieved in regards to each priority area and its outcome targets and deliverables. The project includes its own scoping and baseline assessment processes, as well as drawing on the sizeable and growing foundation of evidence and outcomes developed to-date and afforded by BNTAC's prior projects targeting the health and wellbeing of our lands, waterways and cultural heritage.

Simultaneous emphasis is on ensuring an Aboriginal led project development and delivery approach, which hinges on active participation and involvement of Bigambul people in setting Our nation's priorities, underpinning targets and subsequent realisation strategies for both maintained and improved country health and wellbeing outcomes. As part of the former, there is also an embedded emphasis on identifying and pursuing opportunities enabled by the Plan for training and skills development and employment of Bigambul people. This forms part of BNTAC's holistic approach to all aspects of program and project planning and delivery that seeks to maximise scope for potential benefits to Our people and nation by way of increased participation and engagement opportunities that in addition to contributing economic independence outcomes also develop Our peoples' and nations' self-determination and recognised authority and leadership as the traditional custodians and original inhabitants of our determination area.

The Caring for Country Plan is a decade-long initiative with embedded review milestones across its rollout plan and schedule. To support mobilisation and commencement of key mapped activity deliverables for the first 1-3years, BNTAC will also be engaging a dedicated Caring for Country worker during 2021/2022 to formally drive and help implement both BNTAC's self directed and what are mapped collaborative measures for undertaking – including by proponents as part of their agreed environmental, social, cultural and economic responsibilities in conducting their core business and/or industry on our lands.

A simultaneous and connected priority entering the 2021/2022 financial year is launch of the Bigambul Drought Preparedness, Resilience and Resistance project enabled by BNTAC's successful application to the Drought Resilience Program in 2020/2021 administered by the Australian Government Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment. The scope and purpose of the new project initiative centres on better preparing and equipping Our country and waterways inclusive of its primary users, including natural resource and agricultural entities, individual land owners and primary producers and general community including Bigambul people, to be more drought prepared by of implementation of targeted resilience and resistance efforts. The formal program of drought resilience and resistance activities will culminate in establishment of BNTAC's own in-house pool of Bigambul Caring for Country Drought Resistance Officers and team leader positions, who will complete accredited fire and traditional cultural burn off and land rejuvenation training. The former training and skills development project components will actively support these roles in delivering targeted cultural burn offs and traditional land and ecology rejuvenation and resistance techniques. This is to be completed in combination with provision of on-country demonstrations, information sessions and workshops targeting a combination of community members, land owners and larger pastoral and agricultural companies. In addition to contributing to our country's drought tolerance and resistance, the project will contribute critical skills development to Bigambul people as well as culminating in new and expanded work opportunities for Our people and on Our country.

Similar to BNTAC's approach evidenced by other land and waterway projects to-date, there is a critical focus on effectively merging latest best practices land management and drought resistance techniques with Bigambul traditional cultural and ecological knowledge and its supporting practice techniques. Regarding the former, the project also targets achievement of knowledge transfer relating to Our nation's and culture's traditional land management techniques and its included strategies for drought resistance and tolerance, such as cultural burn offs. This will be essential in supporting nation-wide skills and capacity development to be able to implement and retain key land management techniques and associated drought prevention strategies now and into the future for Our nation. BNTAC identify this project as being a timely addition and extension to our current caring for country program that will positively build and extend on existing foundations of evidence and experience afforded by both previous and currently in progress land and waterway management and health rejuvenation strategies either already delivered or currently in progress.



< People >

Scope: Supporting health and wellbeing, social inclusion and resilience, and economic participation and independence outcomes of Our people, including advancing Our people's right to self-determination

Aligned KRAs:

- Maintaining rigorous corporate governance that are culturally inclusive, accountable and transparent;
- Leveraging commercial opportunities to build the economic strength of the Bigambul people; and
- Building the skills and capacity of Bigambul people through expanded training opportunities; and

Aligned Outcome Objectives:

- Cultural identity,
- Leadership,
- Self-determination, and
- Economic independence.

This work program directly relates to project activities that BNTAC have either completed, have currently in progress, or have developed as confirmed upcoming initiatives, to support the health, wellbeing and social and economic prosperity and independence of Bigambul people, inclusive of current and emerging generations. BNTAC has already mobilised and commenced progress to these ends. A major initiative mobilised by the PBC that commenced efforts to these ends was formal launch and delivery of the Bigambul Native Title Youth Summit in 2019, which was the first event of its kind for both Our nation and the native title sector more broadly. Convened over 5-days in Goondiwindi, the Youth Summit provided unique opportunity for the gathering of Bigambul young people to engage in active and dynamic nation building. In addition to workshops and sessions covering pertinent information regarding Our nation's history and BNTAC's formation and key scope and functions with respect to native title, a simultaneous and equal focus was receiving direct input and feedback from Our young people regarding current and future needs and priorities, and importantly, their aspirations for both themselves and their nation with regards to culture, social and economic participation, and the preservation and marine and of lands and waterways – including opportunities for on country training, skills development and employment. A major outcome of the Summit also included formal establishment of Our nation's first Bigambul Youth Council, which continues to operate and provide a vital ad ongoing mechanism through which to receive the voice and contributions of our young people and ensure their representation and inclusion as part of current and future planning across the breadth of our work programs and priority activity streams.

The Youth Council has more recently being complemented by the simultaneous establishment of a dedicated Elders Advisory Group for our nation, which was developed as a key output of the 2020 Elders' Gathering, at which time the scope, terms of reference and priorities of the group were established by participating Elders' to enable the group's timely commencement and mobilisation. Similar to the Youth Council, the Elders' group enables BNTAC access to an embedded and continuously operating mechanism through which to receive vital Elder input and feedback. Formation of the group has also afforded BNTAC an important channel through which to provide and deliver cultural authority and leadership across the breadth of our program areas and particularly in regards to supporting the accurate and appropriate inclusion, integration and transfer of cultural knowledge systems and supporting practices, including in regards to language and arts, lands and waterways, cultural heritage, and active efforts to support inter-generational engagement and knowledge transfer between our existing Elders and emerging generations of future leaders.

In supplement to the above targeted strategies, BNTAC has also been active in working across our proponent networks to identify and support tangible collaborative opportunities relating to the training and skills development of Our people and expanded local employment pathways and options available – including as part of both our own and our partners’ growing range and mix of work programs being conducted on Our lands and waterways.

Lead proponents that BNTAC has engaged with in this regard include QGC Shell and Australian Rail Track Corporation (ARTC) – Inland Rail. This is evidenced by both proponents’ active support for Our Youth Summit by way of formal financial contribution and also via presentation to participating young people regarding available training and employment pathways that they operate and deliver on Our lands and as part of the core business that they deliver and plan to grow and diversify within these areas.

During 2020/2021, BNTAC participated in follow-on collaborations and planning with Inland Rail in support of this work programs lead directives, and to connect with ARTC’s growing presence of operations within Our determination area and their strongly expressed commitment to work with BNTAC and our current and emerging generation to expand and diversify trading and employment pathways and opportunities available- particularly that are delivered / available on Bigambul country.

BNTAC are also pleased to report our successful application for one-off financial contribution from QGC, to enable delivery of a targeted Empowerment and Development Project set to commence in 2021/2022 and focused on increasing training and employment outcomes for Aboriginal people in Our determination area, and with simultaneous focus across the following cohort:

- School leavers
- Those completing TAFE and tertiary qualifications and training
- Individuals who have been disengaged from training and employment for some time

The project is being undertaken as a much needed initiative in connection with the work BNTAC is and has been undertaking to actively support Our peoples increased engagement with and simultaneous improved outcomes regarding training and employment – inclusive of successful transitions between the two as well as increased completion and retention outcomes. The need for the project is derived from recognised over representation of Our people across a range of key disadvantage indicators and measures, and also as an outcome of recent scoping and development stages undertaken to support formal documentation of Our nation’s first consolidated blueprint for the economic development and prosperity of Our nation and its people. Outcomes of the former project and its initial scoping and end-stage outcomes, coupled with review of latest training and employment data sets and related indicators highlighting disproportionate levels of health, social and economic disadvantage within our community have indicated a strong need, use ad place for a targeted initiative that enables Our people access to conduit positions and subsequent supports that tangibly aid and assist Our mob in accessing locally and regionally available training and employment pathways, as well as access to wrap-around supports that increase their engagement, training completions and employment retention outcomes, through simultaneous response to concurrent health, wellbeing and social priorities commonly intertwined with Aboriginal peoples’ experience of unemployment and poor educational attainment. To these ends, the project will support engagement of two Empowerment Officer roles that will deliver vital case management and service linkage support to Our people, whilst concurrently working with local training and employment providers to establish regionally consistent and culturally secure standards and practices that better support engagement and retention/completion outcomes. As part of the latter project component, development of a credentialing framework for endorsement of ‘culturally accredited’ training and employment providers is also planned, to aid in raising our nation’s trading and employment providers’ collective standards and supporting processes for improved training and employment engagement and retention outcomes.

< Economy >

Scope: Focused on building our nation's and peoples' economic participation and independence through skills, training and employment initiatives that bring about real and lasting outcomes for Bigambul people and our nation, with particular attention on expanding available opportunities live and work on Bigambul country.

Aligned KRA's:

- Leveraging commercial opportunities to build the economic strength of the Bigambul people;
- Building the skills and capacity of Bigambul people through expanded training opportunities; and
- Bolstering and maintaining BNTAC'd capabilities in moving towards self-sufficiency.

Aligned Outcome Objectives:

- Leadership,
- Self-determination, and
- Economic independence.

Over the course of 2020/2021, BNTAC has increased our range and type of projects and dedicated activity initiatives purposed to promote improved wellbeing and prosperity outcomes for Bigambul people - with particular emphasis on successful employment participation and retention outcomes that contribute to economic participation and independence outcomes at both individual and whole-of-nations levels; and with concurrent focus on incorporating strategies to address:

- I) Individualised support to Bigambul people residing in and outside Our determination area, involving provision of individualised case management and coordination supports that address access challenges and barriers related to successful attainment of training and employment. We aim to contribute sustainable foundations for individual and family wellness - aimed at promoting successful linkage to accredited training and completion of aspired qualifications, followed by real and tangible transitions to and retention of employment.
- II) Active coordination and liaison to key training and employment providers operating within Our Determination Area to promote and embed regionally consistent and culturally tailored training and employment retention and support standards and associated practice measures, that contribute to achievement of nation-wide improvements in regards to systems and processes that positively support and precipitate strengthened First Nations accredited training access and completions and subsequent transitions to real and sustainable employment pathways and retention outcomes. BNTAC plans to formalise the former agreed standards and practices as part of development of Our nation's very first accreditation framework tool – tailored to assess and endorse culturally safe training and employment providers operating in Our nation. The intended structure and application of the tool will also support providers' to identify change and quality improvement measures needed to be able to achieve accreditation standards and endorsement status.

The above activity components formed part of a key project initiative already launched, mobilised and completed during 2020/2021 and focused on the scoping and development of our nation's own Bigambul 10year Economic Development & Prosperity Strategy. The project was enabled by BNTAC's successful application for one-off financial contribution from the Foundation for Rural and Regional Renewal (FRRR) completed and lodged in 2019/2020.

The purpose and scope of the Strategy – which represents the first of its kind for both BNTAC and Our nation is to identify our 10year economic development and prosperity priorities and related opportunities and strategies for their realisation. In addition to comprising community-led priorities and aspirations and correlating realisation strategies directly pertaining to economic development and training and employment access and participation, the 10year framework also embodies a comprehensive rollout approach inclusive of Our peoples’ priorities and targets and subsequent supporting measures needed for Bigambul peoples’ health and wellbeing and social and financial inclusion and prosperity.

The Strategy’s embedded multidisciplinary approach towards First Nations’ economic development and prosperity reflects Our nation’s and cultures’ holistic approach to and simultaneously purported need for integrated strategies and service responses for health, wellbeing and social and economic inclusion and prosperity – inclusive of cultural connection and identity - and recognising the dynamic and increasingly evidenced interconnections and relationships between and across these outcome domains that are commonly used as key determinant measures’ of Our peoples’ physical, social, emotional, financial, and cultural and spiritual health.

Growing evidence corroborates Our peoples’ long purported need for comprehensive and integrated service approaches that actively and concurrently support Our peoples’ wellbeing and prosperity across the full breadth of key health and social determinants areas. This approach recognises the need for and importance of achieving sustainable foundations for outcomes improvement for Our people by way of embedding holistic system and service responses that achieve simultaneous, integrated response(s) to the full breadth and range of contributing risk and poor outcome factors being experienced, and bring about real and sustainable foundations for outcomes improvement. This approach subsequently entails connected efforts to remedy and ameliorate the full range and extent of connected health, social, financial and cultural issues and related outcomes of concern, so as to avoid continual poor outcomes experiences and risk of digression backwards in regard to resurgence of what were the main presenting issues, risks and related outcomes of concern.

A key aspect and focus of the strategy’s scoping and development has also entailed broad consultation to Our community and a mixed cross section of industry providers and stakeholders, to enable a baseline assessment of current major skills areas and industries of employment, and too, where key identifiable gaps and shortfalls exist in regards to meeting current industry and sector workforce demands; as well as where there are opportunities and forecast developments that will grow and expand skills and capacity demands to these ends based on upcoming major projects and growth initiatives – including across a broad cross-section of employment areas and included specialisations within these industry areas’ classifications.

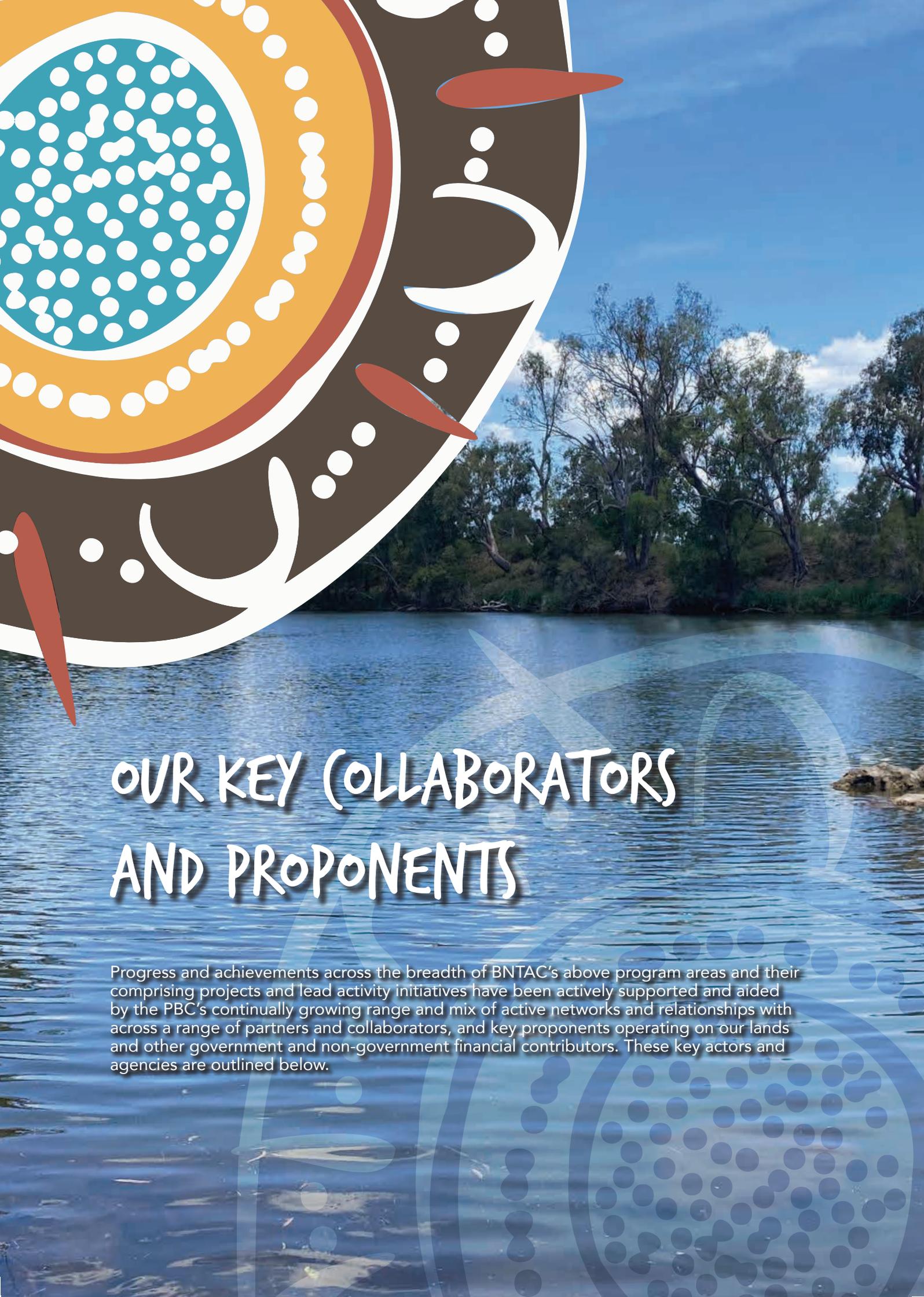


The Strategy's development also maps and considers key reported access challenges and barriers relating to Our peoples' attainment of training and employment, and too factors impacting successful completion and retention outcomes. Proposed strategies and measures to mitigate and address these challenges are also included and delineated with respect to both training and employment and across respective areas and industries of employment.

The 10year strategy includes an iterative roadmap for rollout and implementation of the plan and its holistic targets and activity deliverables associated with promoting optimum outcomes in respect or wellbeing and social and financial outcomes for Our people. This includes measures and actions to be undertaken by BNTAC as part of collaborate arrangements in consort with major training and employment providers, and also working in collaboration with noted proponent and partners with whom we already collaborate and liaise to these ends.

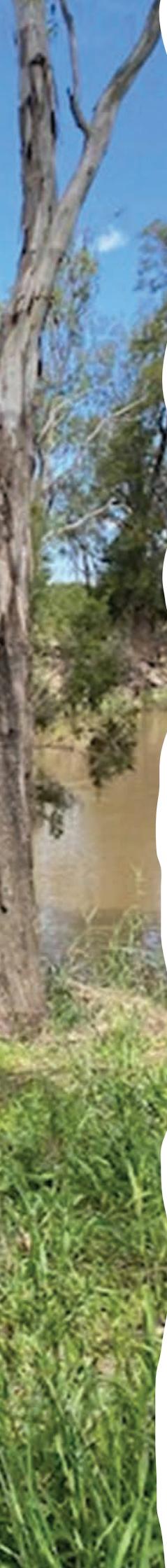
This program area will be a retained priority for expansion and growth moving into 2021/2022 and beyond. BNTAC also identify strong opportunity for the growth and diversification of avenues and strategies to be mobilised in connection with this initiative, particularly as our range and type of internal and collaborative programs and projects continue to expand and gain momentum with respect to community and key industry stakeholders' input and scope for active participation and contribution. An outcomes monitoring framework will be routinely populated and maintained in connection with the strategy's rollout and delivery, with a focus on reporting against key indicator and measures for Our people and nation used in relation to measurement and assessment of health and wellbeing, social and financial and economic outcomes.





OUR KEY COLLABORATORS AND PROPONENTS

Progress and achievements across the breadth of BNTAC's above program areas and their comprising projects and lead activity initiatives have been actively supported and aided by the PBC's continually growing range and mix of active networks and relationships with across a range of partners and collaborators, and key proponents operating on our lands and other government and non-government financial contributors. These key actors and agencies are outlined below.



(CULTURAL HERITAGE MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

BNTAC have developed a range of cutting edge programs and strategies for cultural heritage over the past year on a number of government and private led projects within Bigambul country, with the assistance of Australian Heritage Specialists (AHS), who have been assisting as technical adviser.

Since the Dukkan Gorge disaster occurring in Western Australia, there has been a shock wave through the cultural heritage sector and many companies have undertaken a review of their compliance systems to make sure they are appropriately developed. We expect this will lead to a better understanding of the importance for protection of cultural heritage in our Country, including likely legislative reform to the Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act 2003 (Qld) and likely expansion of Commonwealth legislation for protection of cultural heritage, which is currently lacking.

Three recent case studies for cultural heritage activities completed by BNTAC include:

◀ Compliance Toolkit and Manual – Goondiwindi Regional Council ▶

Goondiwindi Regional Council identified an opportunity to work with BNTAC to develop a cultural heritage 'compliance toolkit' to streamline the way in which GRC meets its duty of care under the Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act 2003. In partnership with AHS, BNTAC conducted an initial workshop with Elders and Council – who also attended a series of site inspections to understand the type of work activities that Council was generally conducting, which was followed by a detailed training program and toolkit for key Council Officers relating to Bigambul's approach to cultural heritage.

The project was instrumental detailing a system that acknowledges that Aboriginal cultural heritage is not one-dimensional and comprises of tangible (physical) and intangible (non-physical) culture and knowledge that is intertwined and part of a wider cultural landscape. It can include archaeological material, landscape features, sites/places, flora, fauna, stories, and traditional ecological knowledge. Systems must be correctly implemented to cover the complete cultural environment, not just artefacts.

The project has been completed to a very high standard and we are awaiting the go-ahead to finalise the 'toolkit' into a compliance manual for Council, which will close out the agreed strategy alongside a 'cultural emersion' day on Country with senior Council representatives and BNTAC.

The project has also been identified as a being well suited to a range of government and private proponents, who all need to manage their duty of care for Aboriginal cultural heritage. In this light, Bigambul and AHS will continue to work together with other proponents to ensure that Bigambul's cultural heritage is protected through better training and awareness of our culture within the region.

< Bigambul Cultural Mapping >

A self-initiated BNTAC project which identifies and maps significant sites, features, and objects within Bigambul country. The process includes the establishment of registered Significant Aboriginal Areas (SAAs) encompassing cultural heritage places which are entered onto the Department of Seniors, Disability Services, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships (DSDSATSIP) database.

The registered 'SAAs' makes certain that cultural heritage places are conserved and protected by ensuring government departments, developers, and landowners are consulting with BNTAC any time works are proposed within the specified SAA boundaries. Traditional knowledge and cultural information associated with any significant sites, features, and objects remains confidential and is not made available to DSDSATSIP or the public, without BNTAC's permission.



Thus far the project has offered great opportunities for teaching and training, with the older and younger generations coming together to share and learn about Bigambul history, Bigambul country, and Bigambul culture. Future opportunities as part of the project includes the development of internal mapping systems, databases, and site cards, which keeps a record of known significant sites, features, and objects for future generations and cultural heritage work.



< The Northern Basin Fencing Program (NBFP) >

An Australian Government (QLD) funded project which proposes the installation of riparian fencing and off-stream watering infrastructure (pipelines, pumps, and troughs) along major waterways within Southern Queensland. The project works side-by-side with landowners to assess individual property needs, aiming to protect and conserve the health of waterways and their associated flora and fauna by ensuring the impacts of livestock, unmanaged weeds and pests, and farming practices are reduced and mitigated.

As part of the project, Bigambul representatives have been working closely with Bigambul Technical Advisors (Australian Heritage Specialists), Southern Queensland Landscapes (SQL), and local landowners to complete cultural heritage surveys and develop management strategies that identify, conserve, and protect cultural heritage places, features, and objects. The project is ongoing and is estimated to be completed by June 2023

We are pleased to have developed a key partnership with Australian Heritage Specialists on these projects.

MOB-BUR-GUL-LA JOINT VENTURE

During 2020/2021 saw BNTAC deliver on many of its capability and commercial business development goals. This was primarily through the establishment of the Mob-bur-gul-la Joint Venture.

BNTAC recognised the need to build capability in business and decided to seek to identify appropriate partners. A competitive tender process was undertaken resulting in Impact250 being selected because of their trusted experience in delivering economic development with traditional owner groups. This has proven to have developed into a productive and respectful partnership which is already commenced delivering outcomes for Bigambul people.

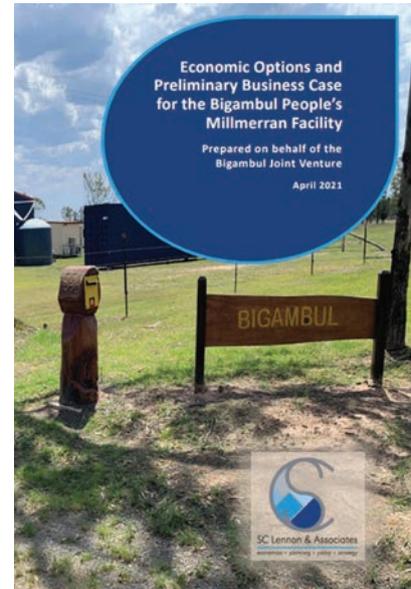
Mob-bur-gal-la JV is an equal partnership. The Mob-bur-gal-la name was selected, meaning Old Man Kangaroo. Mob-bur-gal-la JV started as a Terms sheet which detailed the broad business partnership that BNTAC and Impact250 would work together. By the time of writing this report, the partnership has successfully progressed to be formally incorporated.

Mob-bur-gal-la JV initial focus is to develop business opportunities associated with the ARTC – Inland Rail that traverse Bigambul traditional land. Whilst there are many projects which the Mob-bur-gal-la JV will assess, the initial focus is on two project areas associated with Inland Rail construction; Millmerran Facility Conservation Park and Land Management Services.

The Millmerran property owned by the Bigambul Nation is the proposed site for an Inland Rail Construction site. It is proposed that the some of the camp infrastructure be retained post Inland rail as permanent and be utilised as a Tourist Facility and Conservation Park. Mob-bur-gal-la JV been actively engaging with ARTC and its subcontractors. A business case was developed by independent economic consultants (below) which demonstrated the economic opportunity including significant employment opportunities and regional economic development benefits.

Mob-bur-gal-la JV has been active in gaining financial support to build the business case and support the next phase of the detailed engineering design and cost estimate. Support for the projects has been strong and demonstrated by the funding partners which include;

- National Indigenous Australians Agency (NIAA)
- Indigenous Land and Sea Corporation (ILSC)
- QGC
- Inland Rail
- BNTAC and Impact250



The project requires significant ongoing work to realise the opportunity. These steps include seeking ARTC and head contractor support, funding for the Park, secure the Millmerran suite for the temporary camp. Currently focus is to develop the master plan, and following our detailed procurement process, we have selected Cooee Traveller/Oxigen consortium to undertake this works phase.

Mob-bur-gal-la JV Land Management Services is an offering to contractors to undertake works on Bigambul country to look after land; environmental and cultural heritage. The combined service offering is unique and being well received by potential clients. Mob-bur-gal-la JV has developed a commercial proposal and capability statement to be ready for when tenders are released in FY2022.



The Mob-bur-gal-la JV looks forward to delivering on business opportunities on Bigambul Land for the betterment of Bigambul people. Whilst very early on in the JV, we have made significant progress on opportunities identified, and will continue to build on these and others in the future.

KEY PROPONENTS OPERATING ON OUR LANDS

< Shell Group – Queensland Gas Company (QGC) >

BNTAC is a party to an indigenous land use agreement (ILUA) with Shell QGC, which was entered into in 2012 (QGC ILUA).



The QGC ILUA provides Bigambul People consents to Shell QGC's petroleum exploration, production and infrastructure activities on Bigambul Country. In return for these consents, Shell QGC has obligations to pay financial compensation to the Bigambul People.

The QGC ILUA also provides for Shell QGC to implement a training, employment and business strategy for the benefit of Bigambul People, as well as a cultural heritage management strategy for the avoidance of harm to Aboriginal cultural heritage on Bigambul Country.

A review of the terms of the Shell QGC ILUA by the BNTAC Board directors and Shell QGC was initiated in 2020 and is ongoing. The aim of this process is to review the ILUA to identify what works effectively, what could be improved and agree and formalise amendments. The review process, agitated for by BNTAC directors for a number of years, has now created momentum for other native title holders to follow in seeking review outcomes.

The QGC ILUA needs to be modernised to keep with the times. Since 2012, the Bigambul People have had their successful native title consent determination and have significantly increased their commercial capabilities and governance arrangements. ILUAs which make provision for limited benefits to the native title parties but open-ended consents for proponents are no longer acceptable and do not give proponents a social licence to operate.

In 2021, BNTAC directors have met with Shell QGC to:

- Conduct a high-level workshop of the operation of the cultural heritage management arrangements.
- Negotiate arrangements for the funding of a Bigambul Empowerment Officer, who will work with Bigambul People seeking employment and re-entry to the workforce, through individual case-management approaches. The role will navigate Bigambul People to Shell QGC projects, deployment opportunities, training and scholarships. It will also work with local businesses to support them in culturally capable and safe recruitment and retention practices.
- Consider a report commissioned by Shell QGC which sets out suggested “Guidelines for Best Practice Compensation Packages” and a multi-jurisdictional benchmarking analysis of compensation packages in native title agreements in the oil and gas sector. BNTAC directors and BNTAC’s commercial and legal advisors are considering this report further and its implications for the ongoing commercial arrangements under the ILUA.

Whilst some aspects of the review have been accelerated, others have been frequently delayed. Given the slow pace in some spaces of Shell QGC’s engagement, BNTAC directors have communicated to Shell QGC that the review needs to now be progressed as a priority, so Bigambul People are properly recompensed for the impacts on our native title and to tackle social disadvantage and drive commercial opportunity for Bigambul People, which are the only ways to reinstate Shell QGC’s social licence to operate on Bigambul Country.

< Department of Environment and Science - Queensland Parks and Wildlife Services (QPWS) >



BNTAC has been working closely with QPWS to develop Access Guidelines that are aligned to the Bigambul Nations cultural values and uses, practices and protocols..

Since the establishment of the Working Group, Terms of Reference and the execution of the Working Group Implementation Plan, BNTAC, to date developed a series of access guidelines that direct QPWS and the Bigambul Nation to access the State and National Forests that traverse our traditional lands. The role of the working group is to be the primary group to address common issues between the parties and in relation to the management of protected areas.

The following Access Guidelines have been developed:

Access Guideline – Burials

Access Guideline – Camping

Access Guideline – Bigambul Traditional Owners Access

Access Guideline – Natural Resources

Across the Bigambul Determination Area is fifteen (15) State Forests and four (4) National Forests.

Australian Rail Track Corporation (ARTC) – Inland Rail



Australian Rail Track Corporation – Inland Rail have a formal Cultural Heritage Management Plan (CHMP) in place with BNTAC. Through the CHMP, ARTC-Inland Rail provides the deployment of Cultural Heritage Field Officers comprising: one Senior Cultural Heritage Field Officer and two Cultural Heritage Field Officers. Funding was also committed to BNTAC toward development of the Bigambul Cultural Induction Program and purchase of Geo-spatial equipment to identify cultural heritage and SAAs.

A priority for BNTAC and ARTC during 2020/2021 has been processing joint plans and arrangements to support enhanced training and employment opportunities for Bigambul people. This is being pursued and developed as a priority activity stream with ARTC's scope of operations in our determination area continuing to grow and expand. BNTAC and ARTC formalised their active working partnership with signing of a Statement of Commitment (SoC) in 2019/2020.

OTHER PARTNERS AND FORMAL RELATIONSHIPS

During 2020/2021 activity period, BNTAC maintained our ongoing collaboration and partnership with Goondiwindi Regional Council, to progress a range of our priorities and current projects and initiatives. BNTAC would like to acknowledge and thank Goondiwindi Regional Council for their enduring support and commitment to partnership, and we look forward to working in close consort with Council across the breadth of our programs; with a particular focus around cultivating shared efficiencies; and expanded social and economic development opportunities, and participation and independence outcomes of Bigambul people.

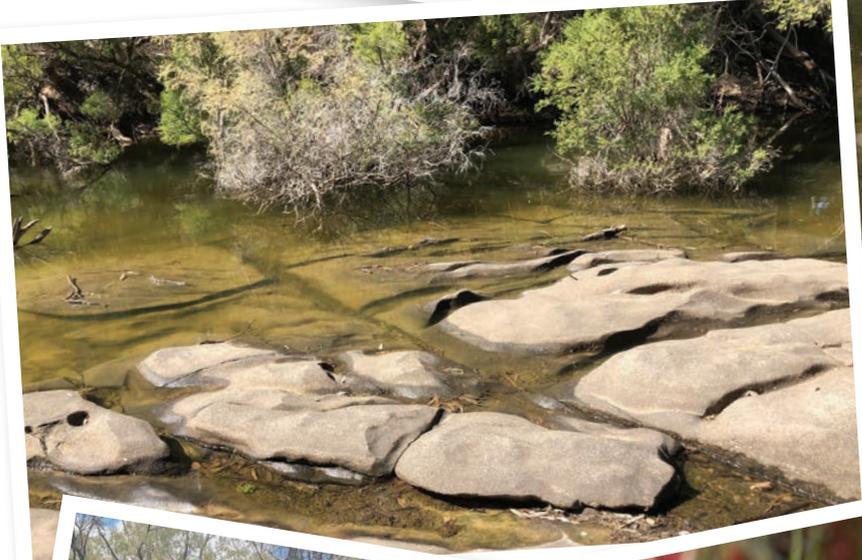
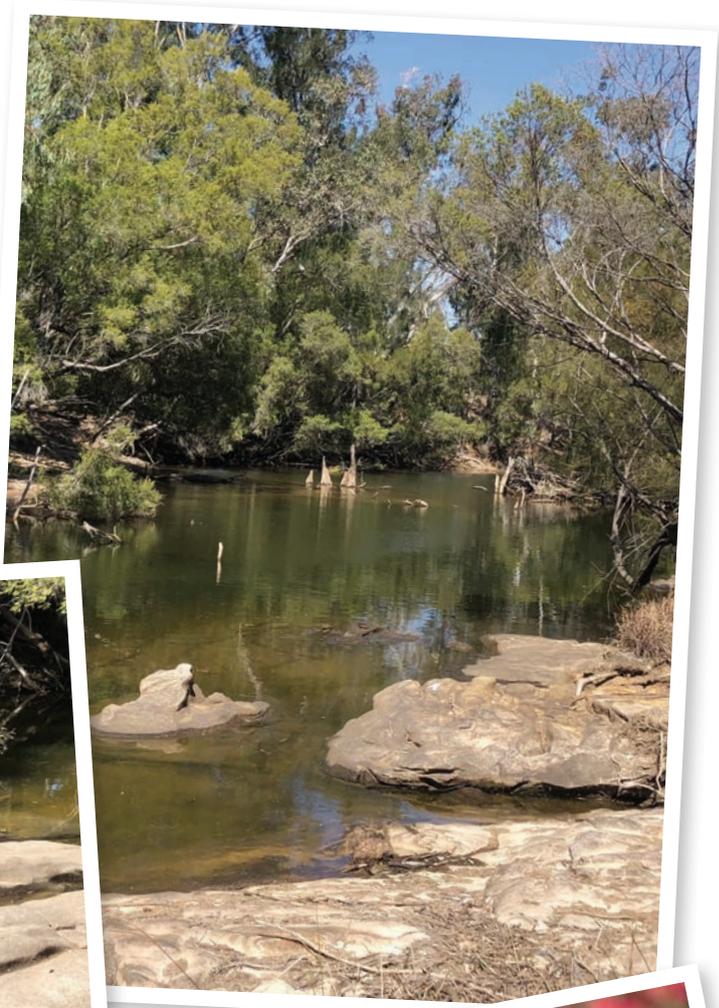
Other major partners and collaborators with whom BNTAC maintain active working relationships include:

- Norther Basin Aboriginal Nations
- Murray Darling Basin Authority

BNTAC would also like to recognise and acknowledge our formal relationships with the following government and non-government agencies that have contributed financial support and resource contributions to BNTAC for the 2020/2021 period:

- Foundation for Rural & Regional Renewal (FRRR)
- Australian Government – Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development & Communications
- Australian Government – Department of Prime Minister & Cabinet (PM&C)
- Australian Government - Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment
- Queensland Government – Department of Environment, Land and Water







BIGAMBUL

Native Title Aboriginal Corporation
• BNTAC •

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