

Opening Statement from Wreck Bay Aboriginal Community Council (WBACC).

Good Morning/Afternoon, my name is Annette Brown Chairperson of Wreck Bay Aboriginal Community Council, (WBACC).

I wish to acknowledge traditional Custodians of the land we gather and meet on today.

I respectfully acknowledge the Honorable Members of The Australian Parliament.

I would like to take this opportunity to let you all know that this is WBACC's first appearance at estimates.

Establishment of WBACC:

Wreck Bay Community secured land tenure via the Aboriginal Land Grant (Jervis Bay Territory) Act 1986, and Wreck Bay Aboriginal Community Council (WBACC) was established.

Challenges:

WBACC is currently working with NIAA seeking amendments to Aboriginal Land Grant (Jervis Bay Territory) Act 1986 which can lead to meaningful Cultural, social and economic outcomes for members of the body Corporate (WBACC) and the Commonwealth alike.

WBACC ability reach an agreement on amendments to section 52a Clause 7 of the Aboriginal Land Grant (Jervis Bay Territory) Act 1986 allowing WBACC to legally enforce compliance and regulations by WBACC. Under the bylaws of 2016 this wasn't reached due to complications of judicial issues relating to how this will be managed and by which Commonwealth Agent. WBACC has bylaws but no ability to enforce. This requires negotiation and commitment by Commonwealth Agencies.

Complexities:

- Jervis Bay Territory Acceptance Act 1915 establishes that ACT laws are applicable if able to be applied.
- Jervis Bay Territory (JBT) is a non-self-governing Territory and managed by agencies of the Commonwealth for different purposes.

- WBACC retains management of 403 hectares of Aboriginal Land this includes Wreck Bay Village is located in the 403.
- Approximately 6.500 hectares of Aboriginal land was leased to Commonwealth Director of National Parks.
- Department of Defence also manage facilities in the territory.
- The Department of Infrastructure contract local government type services to JBT and manages the remaining private leases on behalf of the Commonwealth.
- Reforms to EPBC Act 1999. WBACC requires meaningful dialogue at the highest level of Government to improve WBACC ability to achieve Sole Management objectives within Booderee National Park.
- WBACC have bylaw making powers but no legal ability for enforcement.
- WBACC attempts to deliver local type government functions to Wreck Bay Village on a grant funded basis.

WBACC today is made up of different departments which manage the housing for community, the daycare centre, the Caring For Country Rangers program, the job, land and economy program, Cultural Heritage, Community Liasion, contract services, educational programs and training.

As Jervis Bay Territory is a non self-governing territory there are gaps that affect all residents within the territory due to its location and in the absence of a State Government.

Looking to the future WBACC would like to further improve health services available to Community Members, sustainability of Community Housing, more educational and training support, improved cultural and heritage protections, make legal services available for Community just to name a few.

These things can be best achieved to their full potential through “real” co-design from the WBACC and Community.