



GOLDFIELDS LAND AND SEA COUNCIL

Aboriginal Corporation (Representative Body)

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Senate Standing on Committee Community Affairs
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To the Committee,

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Amendment (A Stronger Land Account) Bill 2014

The Goldfields Land and Sea Council (GLSC) welcomes the introduction of the *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Amendment (A Stronger Land Account) Bill 2014*.

The establishment of the Indigenous Land Corporation (ILC) and the Land Account played a crucial role in the negotiations leading up to the passage of the *Native Title Act 1993*. GLSC considers that if the native title system is to be judged as a fair and just response to historic dispossession, the ILC must be enabled to fully perform its founding statutory functions: helping Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to acquire land, and assisting with land management where required.

Accordingly, GLSC supports the Bill's requirement that any change to the current functions of the ILC must pass through a strengthened parliamentary procedure (clause 193IA). Further, GLSC considers that the proposed measures to reinforce the ILC's independence – limiting the renewal of directors' terms, introducing the Nomination Committee, and qualifying the Minister's power to make requests to the ILC – are an appropriate step forward.

As for any organisation, the integrity of the ILC's internal governance is crucial for the successful performance of its functions. It is in no-one's interest for real or perceived conflicts of interest, inefficiencies, or insufficient transparency or accountability, to interfere with the ILC's operation. In this respect, proposed clauses 191F(1A), 191W, 191YB, 192F and 192SA are a welcome enhancement of the ILC's governance architecture.

GLSC commends this Bill to the Committee and to the Parliament.

Yours sincerely,

Hans Bokelund

Chief Executive Officer

Goldfields Land and Sea Council