

**Parliamentary Joint Committee on
Native Title and the Aboriginal and
Torres Strait Islander Land Fund**

**Indigenous Land Corporation
Annual Report 1999-2000**

Submission No: 1

2 August 2000

Ms Sharon Firebrace

Chairman

Indigenous Land Corporation

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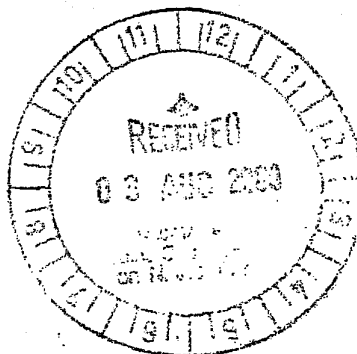
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INDIGENOUS LAND CORPORATION

2 August, 2000

Ms Robina Jaffray
A/g Secretary
Parliamentary Joint Committee on Native Title and
the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Land Fund
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600



Dear Ms Jaffray,

DRAFT AUDIT REPORT - UNAUTHORISED RELEASE

I refer to your letters of 10 April and 24 July, 2000, regarding this matter, and apologise for not responding to the earlier correspondence. I was under the impression that this matter had been dealt with.

My letter of 29 February, 2000 to the Auditor General was forwarded after consulting Mr Bill Miller, Director Evaluation and Audit ATSIIC whom I met on 14 February, 2000 to discuss concerns with newspaper articles relating to Roebuck Plains Station, and the findings of the draft audit report.

I am enclosing a copy of the Auditor General's response to my letter. You will note that the Auditor General believes "it is highly unlikely that the report referred to in the Sydney Morning Herald was leaked from this (ANAO) office". The Auditor General noted my intention to approach ATSIIC's Office of Evaluation and Audit to conduct an investigation into this matter.

I subsequently discussed this case with Mr Bill Miller, Director Evaluation and Audit who felt it was preferable to review the adequacy of ILC's internal control systems to ensure the safeguarding of current and future sensitive and confidential material. He felt this would be a more positive response to the matter, than seeking a Federal Police investigation. I briefed the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the ILC to act accordingly. I also formally referred the Audit Issues Papers and Mr Miller's report and recommendations to the CEO requesting him to brief me, and the Board, on actions taken or proposed to be taken to address the matters raised.

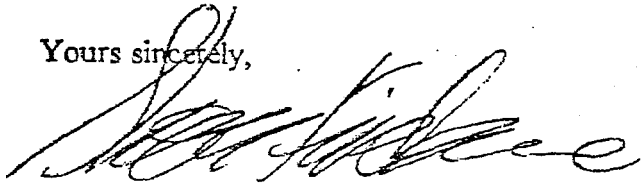
The CEO initiated the preparation of a report but this was not finalised before the ILC Board met on 8 May, 2000. At that meeting the Board discussed the Audit Report and Mr Miller's report and was briefed by Mr Miller and Dr Paul Nicholl of the ANAO on

their respective reports. I was not present at this stage of the Board meeting but Minutes of Meeting record that the Board agreed to initiate a response to the 10 recommendations of the Performance Audit and "is taking what it considers to be appropriate responses to the issues raised by both Dr Nicholl and Mr Miller". The Board did not resolve to refer any matter to the Federal Police.

I trust this will assist the Committee's deliberations.

I have forwarded a copy of this letter to the Auditor General for his information.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sharon Firebrace', written in a cursive style.

Sharon Firebrace
Chairman

FAXED



Reference: F99/227

31 March 2000

Ms Sharon Firebrace
Chairman
Indigenous Land Corporation
Level 1, 3-5 Phipps Close
Deakin ACT 2600

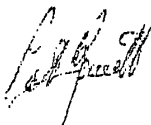
Dear Ms Firebrace

Thank you for your letter of the 29 February 2000 advising of the newspaper article referring to our 'draft report' on the Indigenous Land Corporation.

The ANAO has a critical need to protect the confidence of agencies which entrust sensitive information to it. Accordingly, there is a requirement that all staff observe strict security policy and procedures and operate within a secure environment. The unauthorised disclosure of classified or sensitive information would be a fundamental breach of the high standards of integrity and professionalism essential to the ANAO. There were two very experienced officers working on the ANAO's performance audit of the ILC. They adopted a clear desk policy during the audit in order to protect sensitive material. Therefore it is highly unlikely that the report referred to in the Sydney Morning Herald was leaked from this office.

I understand that you have asked ATSI's Office of Evaluation and Audit to undertake an investigation within your office to determine if the leak was from the Indigenous Land Corporation. I would appreciate it if you would provide me with a copy of that report.

Yours sincerely



P. J. Barrett