



2021-2022 ANNUAL REPORT

NARANG BIR-RONG ABORIGINAL CORPORATION

© Copyright 2022

Cover Photo: Stock photo courtesy of
<https://www.garyradler.com/>

This work is copyright and may not be reproduced either in whole or part without the prior written approval of Narang Bir-rong Aboriginal Corporation (NBAC).

Narang Bir-rong Aboriginal Corporation is a not for profit, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander controlled family and child support service.

Warning: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples should be aware that this publication may contain images and names of people who have since passed away.

Narang Bir-rong Aboriginal Corporation
PO Box 573, Penrith NSW 2751
Phone: +61 2 4761 4000
Fax: +61 2 4761 0727
Email: info@nbac.org.au
www.nbac.org.au

ABN: 53 577 022 604



ACKNOWLEDGMENT

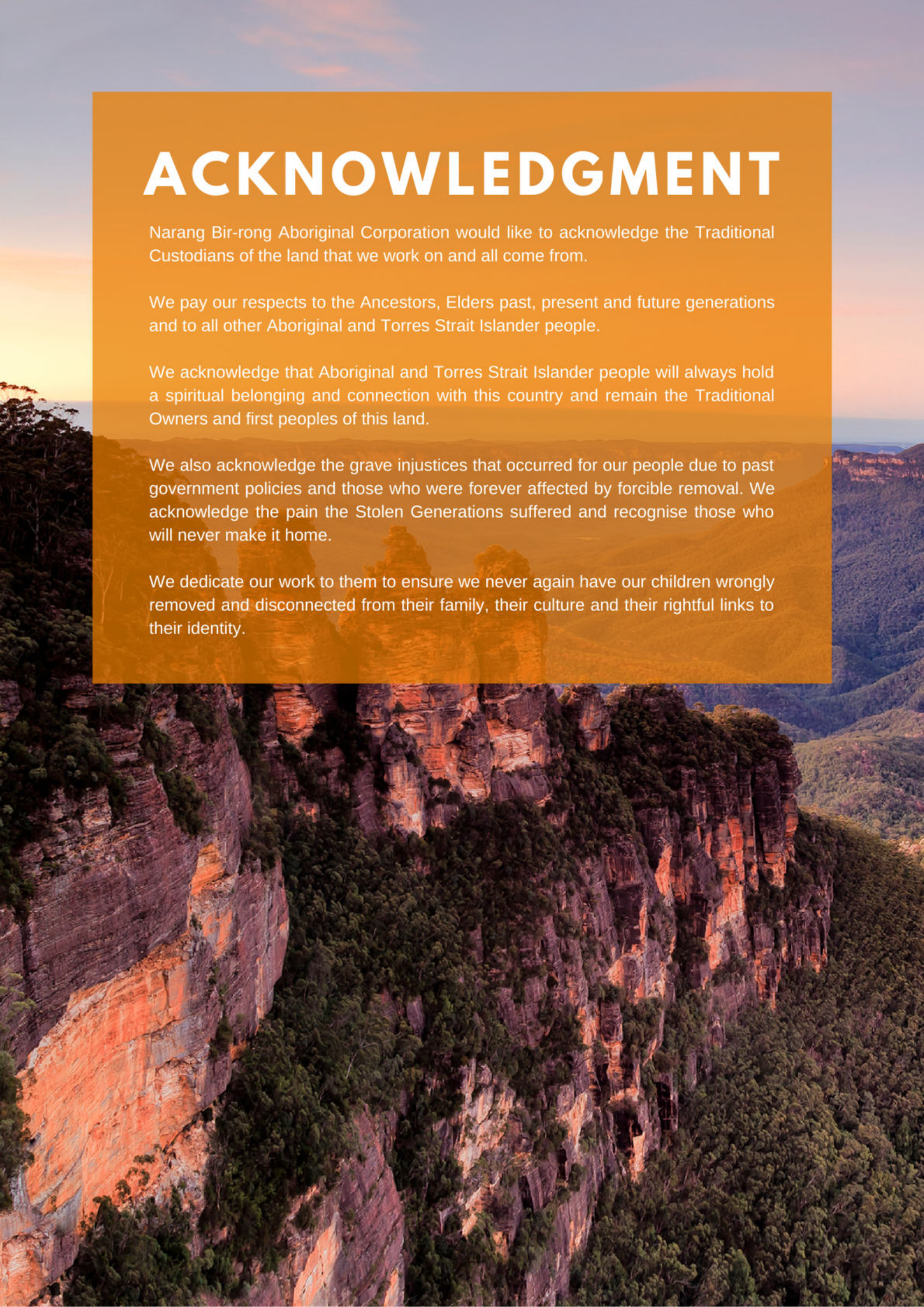
Narang Bir-rong Aboriginal Corporation would like to acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land that we work on and all come from.

We pay our respects to the Ancestors, Elders past, present and future generations and to all other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

We acknowledge that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people will always hold a spiritual belonging and connection with this country and remain the Traditional Owners and first peoples of this land.

We also acknowledge the grave injustices that occurred for our people due to past government policies and those who were forever affected by forcible removal. We acknowledge the pain the Stolen Generations suffered and recognise those who will never make it home.

We dedicate our work to them to ensure we never again have our children wrongly removed and disconnected from their family, their culture and their rightful links to their identity.



CONTENTS

A Message from our CEO	5
A Message from our Chairperson	8
Our Board of Directors	11
The Issues	14
Our Story	15
Strategic Plan 2022-2025	17
Out-of-Home Care Report	22
Family Preservation Report	26
Carer Recruitment Report	31
Specialist Services Report	35
Administration & Human Resources Report	40
Marketing & Communications Report	44
Staff Advisory & Events	48



A message from Heidi Bradshaw, Chief Executive Officer

This year has been another challenging and significant year for Narang Bir-rong Aboriginal Corporation, as we continued to progress to become a stronger and more consolidated organisation. Managing through the uncertainties of COVID-19 has been a dominant feature of the last few years and our decisions have been focused on supporting our clients whilst keeping our people safe and adapting the way we work.

But as we transitioned into living with COVID-19, much of our effort has been directed to strengthening our foundations and embedding the key values of NBAC into every aspect of our work.

These values are so critical to NBAC in working towards our ability to continue to make everlasting differences to our community. Those values continue to be:

- Connections
- Empowerment
- Consistency
- Belonging
- Confidentiality

We have made significant progress and are now increasingly shifting our focus to consolidating our way of work and improving the outcomes for Aboriginal children and families in our community.

Managing the Impacts of COVID-19

COVID-19, and associated lockdowns, has and continues to disrupt life for many of us, although the impact on individual people have been varied and, in some instances, devastating. NBAC continues to work hard to support our staff and clients through this uncertainty.

NBAC continues to maintain our COVID-19 Staff Vaccination Policy and currently has 100% staff vaccinated. We have introduced ongoing additional protections for our staff and clients including multiple sanitizer stations, air purifiers, twice weekly Rapid Antigen Testing and we continue to have a working from office/working from home hybrid model to allow for social distancing to still occur.

Transforming Narang Bir-rong Aboriginal Corporation

In early 2022, the Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ) made a very large announcement, anticipating significant growth for all Aboriginal Community Controlled agencies.

For me, announcing growth to the organisation is always a double-edged sword. On the absolute downside what this means is that we continue to have Aboriginal children needing care and protection and worse still – entering foster care.

On the upside what this means is that with this announcement, we will now be seeing transition plans for Aboriginal children and families (both in Family Preservation and Out of Home Care) moving across from both DCJ and non-Aboriginal service providers to Aboriginal Community Controlled Agencies (ACCO) like NBAC.

It has long been recognised that Aboriginal people have their needs best met when working with Aboriginal service providers. Due to the nature of our families, communities and history, we often have firsthand knowledge of the devastating impacts that invasion has caused our people.

This final and justified recognition from the State Government, will allow more Aboriginal children and their families to remain connected to an empathic Aboriginal organisation who aims at change and not continuing the transgenerational trauma that has far too long affected our people.

In order to support this current and upcoming growth relating to the transition, we have implemented a number of structural changes. The senior leadership team now consists of three Senior Managers.

These managers oversee the areas of Permanency Support (Family Preservation & Out of Home Care), Carer Recruitment and Specialist & Support Services and Marketing and Corporate Services. Each of these three positions oversees a number of different programs who have also grown and/or changed structure.

Whilst we have seen growth in the organisation over the last 12 months, alongside the majority of organisations and businesses, we also fought a work force shortage.

To target and manage this shortage, we have implemented Casework Assistants on all casework teams. These are entry level positions whose aim is to become skilled and qualified to become Caseworkers in their programs.

We have identified in house and external training programs for these positions alongside quarterly reviews in order to determine readiness or other training and support necessary. We are excited about this initiative and have so far seen three Casework Assistants transition into Caseworker positions this year.

We were proud to announce the implementation of the Specialist and Support Services Program which include the direct oversight of Family Time Workers, Cultural Connections Worker and the Leaving Care/After Care Caseworker.

For a very long time, NBAC has been hoping to reach a scale in terms of organisational size that we can start these two very important positions of cultural support and leaving care/after care assistance. Whilst these programs only receive a small amount of direct funding, NBAC continues to work on initiatives to maintain these very important and impactful roles for our children and young people.

I have to also acknowledge the success of our first ever NAIDOC Ball! With over 200 people in attendance and a sold out event - we can't wait for next year!

Outlook

After much consultation, our new Strategic Plan 2022 – 2025 was developed and approved in February 2022. This strategy document included a number of new focus areas including:

- Staff Capability and Capacity
- Diversifying Funding
- Carer Recruitment, Retention and Development
- Process Improvement
- Service Capacity and Growth
- Brand: Marketing and Communication
- Strengthening Aboriginal Culture

So far, our focus in 2022 has been on implementing support to assist in building these changes and embedding them in everything we do. We will explain these in more detail in this Annual Report. There is much to do, but we have a clear plan and are making progress.

Having the right employees on board to lead our transformation is critical, and we certainly believe we have a fabulous team at this point leading us forward.



Heidi Bradshaw
Chief Executive Officer



A message from Annette Toomey, Chairperson

Thankyou for the opportunity to report on NBAC.

While 2022 has proved to be a challenging year due to navigating the impacts of the pandemic. With great admiration, the Board have witnessed the resilience and dedication of all NBAC staff in ensuring that our children, families, and carers receive consistent support, quality services and stability throughout those difficult times.

Despite these challenges and through the ongoing commitment from all staff, NBAC has continually met its obligations and achieved great milestones. This year saw our 2022 – 2025 Strategic Plan developed and approved in February 2022.

Through passionate input from staff, board members and with ongoing practise feedback from young people and carers, we believe that the Strategic Plan ensures NBAC remains firm in its ability to continue to provide quality services, while building on strong foundations to support expected growth within the organisation.

The leadership shown and developed over the years at NBAC has forged a pathway for NBAC in being recognised as one of the leading Aboriginal Out of Home Care and Family Preservation providers in NSW.

The Board has every confidence that the qualities recognised in our organisations leaders will continue to drive NBAC in quality improvement and in its ability to manage growth over the next 12 months.

This year, the Board completed a review on our Directors in order to ensure that we had the right mix of skills and capabilities to continue to drive the organisation.

This review resulted in the invitation of three new Specialist Directors being onboarded; Matthew Lancaster, Brandon Etto and Shaun Cumming. These new Directors bring expertise in strategy, finance and leadership and we are excited to formalise their appointment at this years AGM.

To learn more about our board, head to our website!

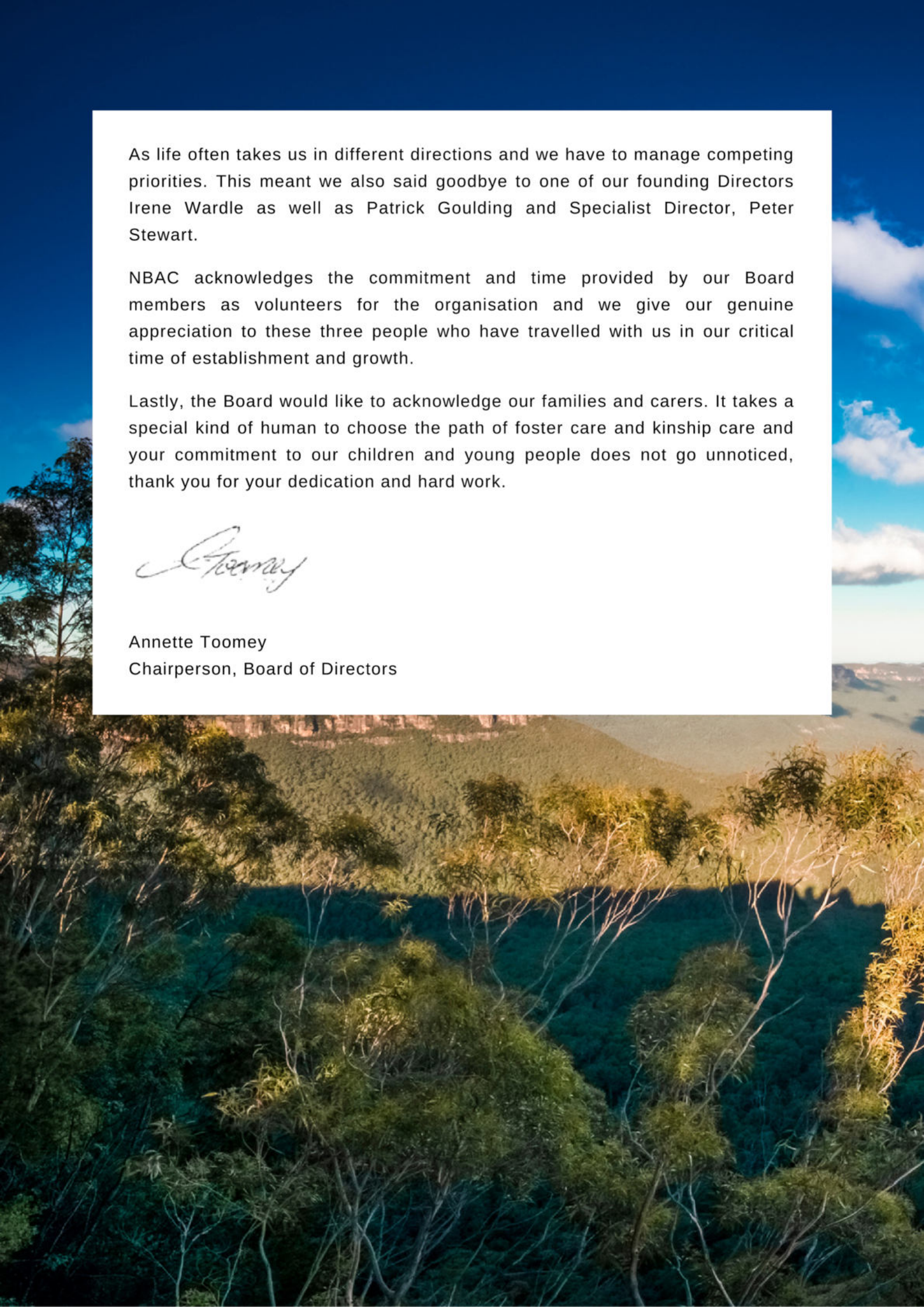
As life often takes us in different directions and we have to manage competing priorities. This meant we also said goodbye to one of our founding Directors Irene Wardle as well as Patrick Goulding and Specialist Director, Peter Stewart.

NBAC acknowledges the commitment and time provided by our Board members as volunteers for the organisation and we give our genuine appreciation to these three people who have travelled with us in our critical time of establishment and growth.

Lastly, the Board would like to acknowledge our families and carers. It takes a special kind of human to choose the path of foster care and kinship care and your commitment to our children and young people does not go unnoticed, thank you for your dedication and hard work.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Annette Toomey', written in dark ink.

Annette Toomey
Chairperson, Board of Directors





THE IMPORTANCE OF THE CHAIRPERSON/CEO RELATIONSHIP

Our Chairperson, Annette Toomey and Chief Executive Officer, Heidi Bradshaw were extremely grateful to be a part of The Guardian Lab's (in association with Google and CampFireX); *Helpful by Nature: The Power of Connection through Community* content piece, which highlighted the importance and strength of Aboriginal women in leadership.

During a collection of stories and yarns with eight Aboriginal community leaders, our CEO Heidi Bradshaw reflected on her experience during the interviews: *"My gratitude is so high to be a part of this, and to be part of the fight to empower our women to use the strength that runs through our bloodlines."*

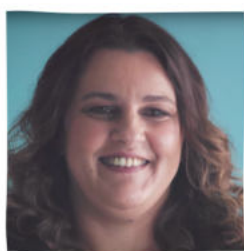
Both Heidi and Annette were able to share the support that as Aboriginal women they have provided one another within the organisation and in life. They hope to continue sharing and telling stories to empower our emerging generations of strong Aboriginal women.

Our Board of Directors

Our Board of Directors, each of whom is an elected member of our community, governs Narang Bir-rong Aboriginal Corporation.

It is essential that our directors have a wide range of experience, knowledge, skills and expertise and are committed to our goals and philosophy.

From 1st July 2021 to 30 June 2022, the NBAC Board has had a total of seven directors:



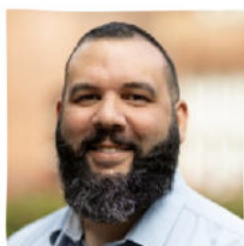
Annette Toomey

Annette is a Kabi Kabi woman, born and raised on Darug country in Western Sydney, NSW. Annette is currently the Chairperson of NBAC, and has had experience within the child protection and Out of Home Care system in NSW for more than 10 years.



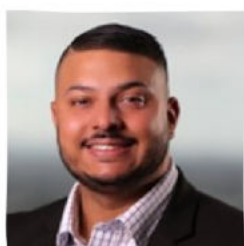
Ivan Clarke

Ivan is a Barkanji man, born and raised on Bundjalung country. Ivan is currently a Director of NBAC, and has had many years of experience as a counsellor, clinical and educational consultant and is a group leader in the Strong Aboriginal Men's Program.



Matthew Lancaster

With connections to Palawa (Lutruwita – Tasmania) Country, Matt is currently a Director of NBAC. Matt brings a wealth and is now the Advancement Manager of the Gadigal Centre at the University of Sydney.



Brandon Etto

Brandon is a Darug/Gomeroi man born in South West Sydney raised and educated on Wiradjuri land and Dharawal country. Brandon is currently a Director of NBAC. The current Executive Officer for the Aboriginal Housing Office Brandon is a motivated, results-oriented leader.



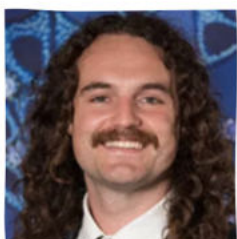
Shaun Cumming

Shaun is a Garigal man who grew up on Gumbaynggiir Country. Shaun is currently a Director of NBAC. Shaun is the Director of Aboriginal Economic Wellbeing within NSW Treasury's Economic Strategy and Productivity Group. Shaun is committed to enabling opportunities for our community.



Peter Stewart

Peter was a non-Indigenous specialist Director until June 2022. Peter's legal expertise at Coleman Greig allowed him to provide advice and representation on a host of complex commercial issues. Peter was also instrumental in NBAC's transition from Barnardos Australia.



Patrick Goulding

Patrick is a Darug man from the Blue Mountains and Western Sydney, who remained as a Director of NBAC until early 2022. Patrick's expertise includes preparation of agreements for commercial use of Aboriginal art and advising clients on ICIP Protocols.

Our board are each volunteers, who contribute their time to the organisation as such. We appreciate their time and commitment to see NBAC continue to be strong in its governance, and thrive within the community.



ABOUT NBAC

Narang Bir-rong Aboriginal Corporation (NBAC) has been operating in the Western Sydney/Nepean Blue Mountains community since it was established in 2008.

We were in an auspice arrangement with Link-Up Family Services from 2008 until 2012, and then operated under Barnardos Australia until 2019.

We were the first ever Aboriginal Out of Home Care (OOHC) program to be established in our area in 2008 and over the years we have continued to operate, grow and finally obtain our own accreditation and funding in 2019.

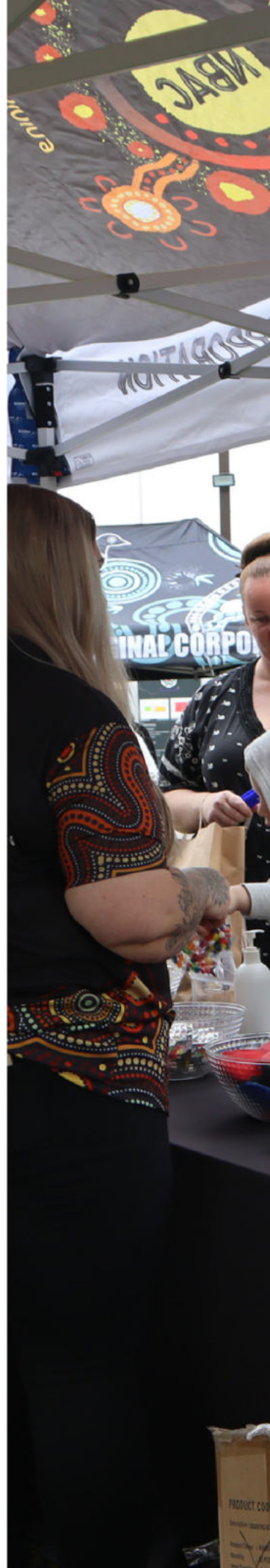
We recognise the need for our service within Western Sydney, as there are over 13,000 people in the area who identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander.

Since 2008, NBAC has expanded from three staff and 14 children to 33 staff and near 200 children. 45% of the growth in staff has occurred in 2022.

In addition to providing OOHC services to Aboriginal children, in 2018 we also began providing Family Preservation programs to Aboriginal children and their families at risk to entering the care system.

As Aboriginal people, we know that the best placed people to work with Aboriginal people and make the changes we need to see is us, above everyone else. The trust and rapport we are able to build with our families coming from the same cultural background is what enables us to achieve results.

We believe in taking a holistic approach in trying to solve some of our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community's biggest challenges. We empower our children, young people, families and carers by creating opportunities for self-determination and by supporting real change.



THE ISSUES

The harsh assimilation policies of previous Australian governments are responsible for an estimated

100,000+

children removed from their families during the Stolen Generations, with many losing connection to culture and community throughout their entire lives.

(Bringing Them Home Report, 1997)

INTERGENERATIONAL TRAUMA

has had a profound impact on Aboriginal people, resulting in often higher rates of intervention with the juvenile justice system, drug and alcohol use, higher rates of mental health concerns, unemployment and housing.

1 in 4

Aboriginal children in Years 5, 7 and 9 remain below national minimum standards in reading. (Closing the Gap Report, 2020)

17%+

of Aboriginal students are below national minimum standards in numeracy (Closing the Gap Report, 2020)

8+

Aboriginal people in Australia have a life expectancy <8 years lower than average (Closing the Gap Report, 2020)

6,829

Aboriginal kids in out-of-home care in NSW on 30 June 2021.

We now make up 47% of all children in the system.

OUR STORY

NBAC



2008

Founded by Aboriginal people for Aboriginal young people and families, operating under Link-Up Family Services.



2012

NBAC transitioned to running its operations under Barnardos Australia.



2019

Narang Bir-rong Aboriginal Corporation finally recieved its accreditation & funding to transition into an independent ACCO.

2022

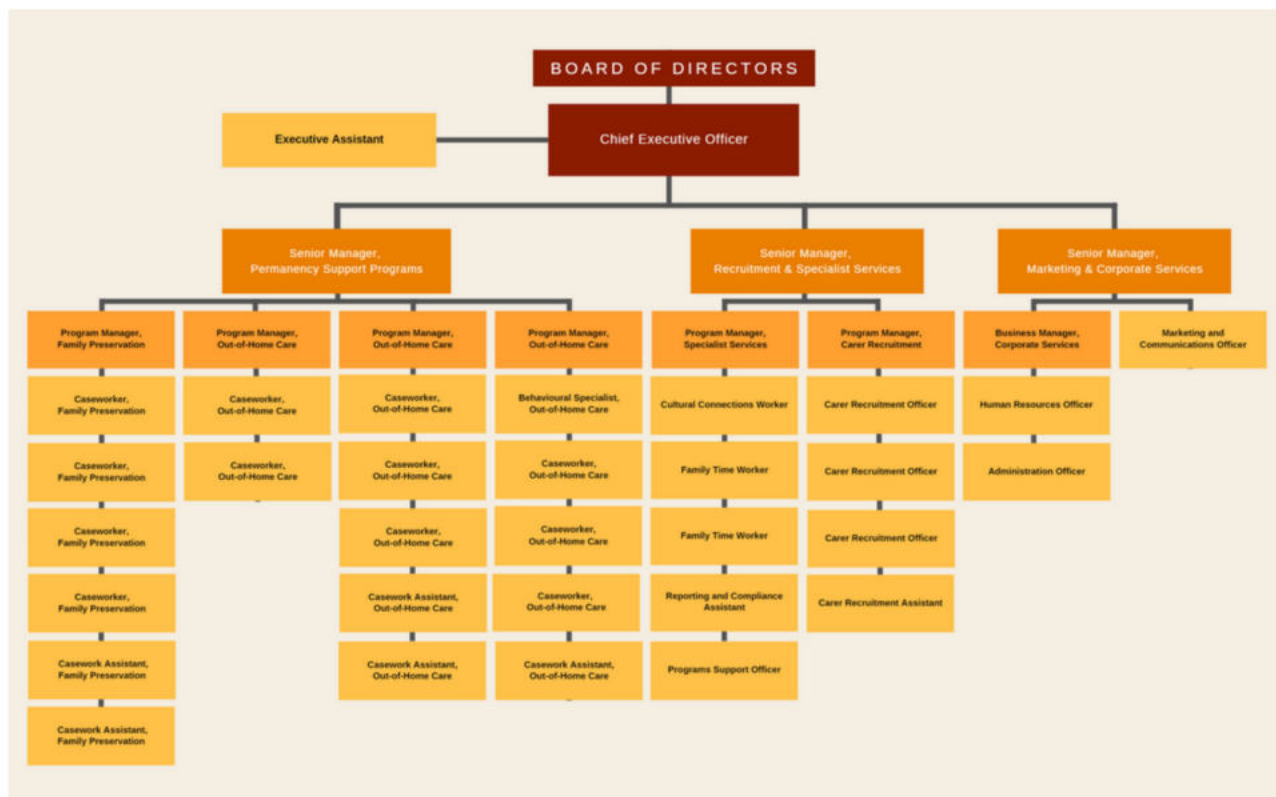
We provide both **Family Preservation** and **Out-of-Home Care** programs to Aboriginal children and their families at risk to entering the care system. Within these programs, we provide cultural care plans for all kids, connecting them with their community, kin and culture.

This year, we have hosted community days, celebrating our culture to build greater community pride in our culture and traditions. We advocate for anti racism education across all workplaces to build cultural safety for Aboriginal young people entering the workforce and to give them a sense of pride and empowerment as they start their young adult work lives.

In all aspects of our work, we aim to become the changemakers our kids deserve.

Our Staff

Narang Bir-rong Aboriginal Corporation's team are a dedicated group of hard working and committed people. At 30 June 2022, we had 33 members of staff, all of which identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.



STRATEGIC PLAN 2022-2025

NBAC is focused on delivering the outcomes defined in our Strategic Plan 2022-2025.

Staff Capacity and Capability

NBAC commits to 100% Aboriginal employment rates and aim to provide opportunities that ensure confidence through education for Aboriginal people. We enable employee development to prepare aspiring leaders for supervisory and management roles. All staff participate in decision making and strategic planning of the organisation.

Diversifying Funding

The diversification of our funding streams will enable NBAC to have significant growth over the next few years. It will strengthen our ability to respond to the needs of our clients and community, ensuring that all Aboriginal children, young people and families within our programs are supported in safe, thriving environments.

Carer Recruitment, Retention and Development

We dedicate ourselves to finding the best quality carers for our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people. By providing the highest standard of family-based care, best-practice casework and specialist support services, we not only support the child or young person in care, but the carer and their family.

Process Improvement

Ensuring that our organisation functions at peak capacity at all times enables our work for our clients and community to take the forefront of our focus. We are strong advocates for sharing knowledge and information across the organisation, and believe that our strengths come from within.

Service Capacity and Growth

Growing the capacity of our organisation is not a choice, but a necessity. We know that the rate of Aboriginal children and young people coming into care is increasing and FAST. Our kids need us to do better. We have no choice – we have to grow to meet the need.

Brand: Marketing and Communication

Marketing is the missing link between the strategic direction of the organisation and the delivery of results. It is the glue that connects everything together and ensures that the right activity is taking place, at the right time, to the right audience through the right channels.

Strengthening Aboriginal Culture

We see understanding and engaging with culture as a powerful force for strengthening identity and developing resilience and wellbeing for Aboriginal children and young people. We work intensively to develop cultural care plans, programs and activities tailored to individual cultural needs of our children and young people.

Our Vision

We aim over this timeframe to have a significant increase in the size of our family preservation program and to focus strongly on restoration planning wherever possible. By 2025, NBAC will have increased its capacity to serve almost double our current numbers of Aboriginal Children in Out-of-Home Care.

We acknowledge that the transgenerational issues suffered by our people as a result of invasion, oppression and disconnection have existed too long in our communities.

We commit to doing things differently.

We acknowledge that there are no other people as passionate or feel more responsible to create this change for our people than we are.

Our Values



CONNECTIONS
We honour connections with family, culture and Country.



EMPOWERMENT
We empower all those in our community through education.



CONSISTENCY
We provide consistency of care and remain a safe refuge, always



BELONGING
We strive to build security and true belonging in our children



CONFIDENTIALITY
We ensure confidentiality to all those in our community

OPERATIONAL GOALS

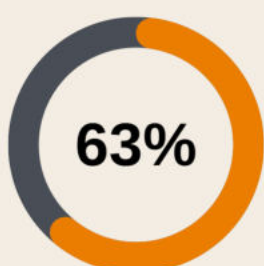
In order to meet the goals within the Strategic Plan 2022-2025, each department works within a framework of operational goals and reporting on key performance indicators

Narang- Bir-rong Aboriginal Corporation is in the business of changing and shaping lives.

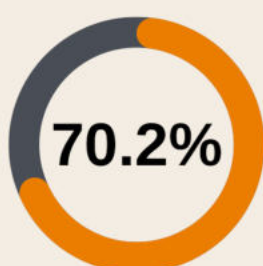
Providing exceptional Aboriginal Out of Home Care & Family Preservation services to make a real difference in the lives of Aboriginal children, young people and their families.

Each area has been working towards these goals since March 2022, following the implementation of the operational plans, and are compiled from multiple program reporting areas.

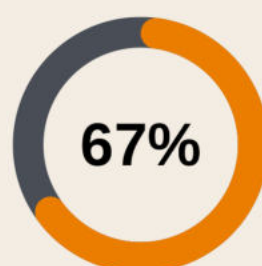
Goal Attainment 2022-2022



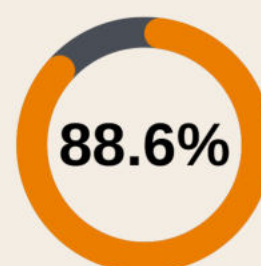
Family
Preservation



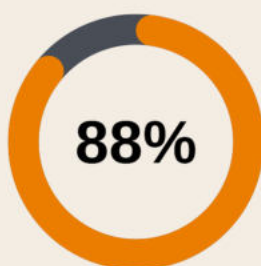
Out-of-Home
Care



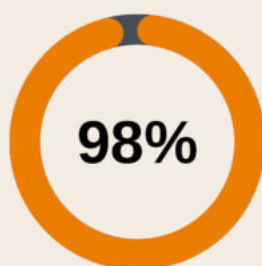
Carer
Recruitment



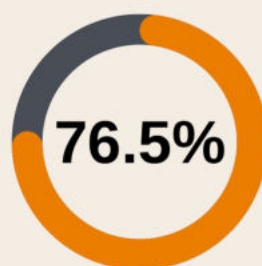
Specialist
Services



Administration



Human Resources



Marketing &
Communications

KEEPING OUR LITTLE STARS SHINING



PATHWAYS TO PERMANENCY

'Permanency Planning' is a term used by DCJ to ensure that the case plan goal of a child or young person is being met. These case plan goals may include family preservation, restoration, long term care, adoption or guardianship orders. Permanency planning guides the works that we do, through supporting the emerging generation of Aboriginal people by maintaining connections to community, family, culture and land. There are many pathways to permanency, including:

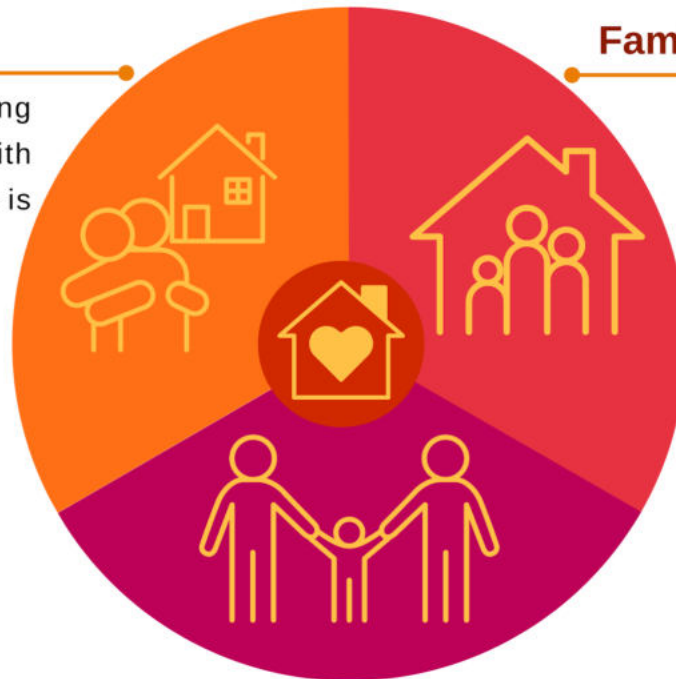
Restoration

This means returning the child to live with their family when it is safe to go home.



Family Preservation

This means keeping a child with their parents by reducing child protection concerns and with no removals.



Long-Term Care

This is where a child lives in a long-term care arrangement (ie. with a foster carer or kinship carer)



Family preservation and **restoration** work is at the core of our work when it is in the best interest of a child or young person. We work with each child and young person on a case-by-case basis to determine the best outcomes to suit their individual needs.

As an agency, NBAC **does not** support adoption or guardianship orders for any children or young people in our programs. In relation to adoption, we do not support replacing the connections to a child's identity and giving ownership of that child to someone other than their parents. Adoption orders also completely remove the opportunity for restoration. Guardianship orders do not have the appropriate mechanisms in place to ensure cultural safety and family connection's are maintained. They also make it harder for restoration back to family.



OUT-OF-HOME CARE

NBAC supports our children who are having to grow up in the foster care system, helping them break the cycle of disadvantage with improved physical, social, emotional, cultural and educational wellbeing.

Our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Foster Care Program is committed to placing children and young people in care situations that support their identity and self-esteem and where they are safe.

OUT-OF-HOME CARE

1,000+
home visits
completed this year

92

children in the
program

39

kinship care
arrangements

6

in the process
of restoration

91.2%

placement
stability

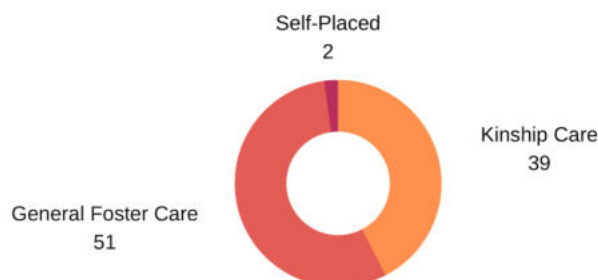
Our Children and Young People

Currently the program has case management of 92 children and young people. 85 of these children and young people are in long-term care, one child remains with short-term orders and there are six children and young people working with us toward returning home through restoration.

Over the reporting year, the team have worked with an additional 13 children and young people who have entered the program. We have embraced these children, carers and families into the service to support their needs as individuals as well as a family unit.

Currently there are 39 children and young people in kinship care, 51 in general foster care and two of our children are self-placed with family, working towards restoration.

Caring Arrangements



Program Support

Our work consists of placement support and monitoring, working toward closing the gap on health and education outcomes, restoration, family finding, maintaining family connections, crisis intervention, after hours and post crisis support, behaviour management and addressing any additional needs that carers and children may have including financial assistance.

The team provide support to children and carers including minimum monthly home visits, regular phone calls and emails. In addition, the team tailors the support based on the children and carers needs. This could mean weekly home visits or daily phone calls and emails.

One of our largest focus' as a team is maintaining children and young people's identity. In the past 12 months, NBAC implemented the use of a program; Caring Life. Caring Life is an online platform that allows for children in out-of-home care have access to their photos, videos, documents (scans of school reports, sporting certificates, birthday cards, art work etc) during their time in care. This ensures that each child and young person maintains their sense of identity and has tangible memories to look back and reflect on when they exit care. It ensures their stories are not lost.

Our Team

The team has grown significantly in the year of 2022 to one Senior Manager, three Program Managers, nine Caseworkers and 4 Casework Assistants.



Out-of-Home Care Service Coverage



Whilst we are funded to deliver services to Western Sydney/Nepean Blue Mountains in reality we provide services to a much larger area depending on location of our carers.



BEN'S RESTORATION

The NBAC Out of Home Care team are very excited to share one of our restoration matters for this year, which will pave the way for future restoration work within our organisation.

After remaining in kinship care since June 2020, 5-year-old Ben* will be returning home to his Dad permanently as of 30 September 2022.

Since May 2022, Ben has been supported into transitioning back into his father's care. This was through a combination of supervised and then unsupervised time at Dad's home which eventually progressed to weekend sleepovers.

We are extremely proud to have seen Ben's Dad work hard to be able to return his son to his care, working alongside his partner, Newpin Restoration Services, NBAC's Case Worker, and Ben's foster carer. Dad has successfully addressed all concerns

Newpin Restoration Service; Ben, his father, father's partner, NBAC Case Worker and Ben's kinship carer have all developed a strong relationship that will provide ongoing support to Ben's father post Ben returning home to ensure the restoration remains permanent.

**names have been changed for privacy and confidentiality purposes*

The above image is not a representation of any child in NBAC's programs



FAMILY PRESERVATION

Our Family Preservation program is committed to building strong, well-functioning families, by providing resources and support that educates and empowers parents and children. By building on their strengths, creating confidence in their own abilities and improving their competence, we enable many families to remain safely together.

We believe in providing a holistic service that focuses on the individuality of family with a tailored focus on not just reducing the children protection concerns but empowering the family to reach their own goals whilst working with us.

FAMILY PRESERVATION

2,500+
home visits
completed this year

26

families
engaged in
program

9

closures with
no removals

22

children didn't
come into out-
of-home care

12

families
continuing to
engage

Our Families

During the reporting year, Family Preservation has worked intensively with 26 families. Their work has consisted of day to day intensive family support including after hours responses. The team covers a large area from Lithgow to Auburn, Hawkesbury and Nepean Blue Mountains. The aim is to be in the clients' home roughly 2-3 times per week, plus attendance at appointments.

The majority of our families have had long standing involvement in the child protection system and experience a wide range of child protection concerns. In general, families are referred to the Family Preservation program for intensive support after all other services and avenues have been exhausted and, in most cases, we are the last resort for families to make the necessary change prior to the removal stage.

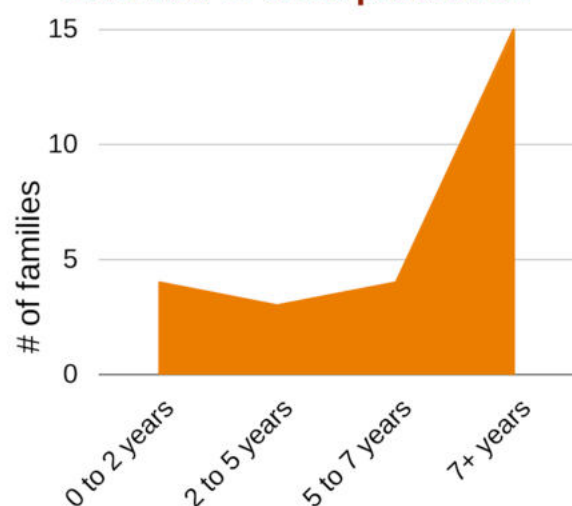
Advocacy

The team also spends many hours advocating for their clients and linking families with supports, holding service meetings to ensure everyone is working at the right pace. They continue to connect the family deeper into community by attending cultural events with them.

The team are strong believers in having a voice at the table when a decision is being made to bring children into care. When this occurs, they are avid advocates for their clients. If however the decision requires

removal, the Family Preservation team stay engaged with the parents for 6 to 8 weeks to assist them in planning for restoration and a hand over to the new service. Our lines of communication are always open and we will still assist parents any way we can.

Timeframes that families were involved in child protection



Throughout 2022, the team have provided case management to families with extremely high needs and have seen amazing results. The team provide hands on support, which can even include cleaning a client's home. We work alongside the family members and guide them in the process with the aim that the family can then maintain a manageable home. Our aim is to educate and break the cycle of intergenerational trauma.

Whilst not all children reside with their Aboriginal parent, the program aims to provide cultural knowledge and assistance to the non-Aboriginal parents to ensure culture is surrounding the child.



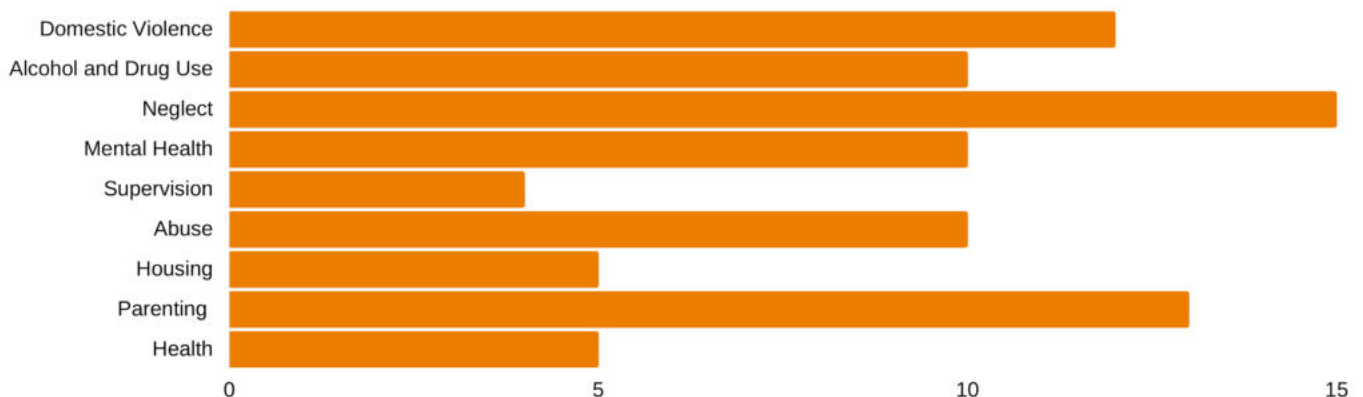
Child Protection

Over the course of the 2022, the program unfortunately has had four families affected by child removal.

Decisions in removing children do not occur easily and require the involvement of the Department of Communities and Justice with NBAC. Before this decision is reached, every effort is made to work with the family to reduce the risk. The removal of children is something that the team feel deeply and take personally.

Despite their low number of removals, our team continues to learn and analyse their practice to ensure this number is further reduced with the aim of getting to zero removals each year.

Child protection concerns for our families



WORKING COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIPS

NBAC extends our sincere thanks to the following organisations, who our Family Preservation team work with to create outstanding outcomes for our families:

Whole Family Team (WFT)

The Whole Family Team are referred to families struggling with mental health issues and drug and alcohol addictions. WFT accept referrals from DCJ and work holistically alongside our Family Preservation Program. This partnership has been very successful.

Marrin Weejali

The Family Preservation team access Marrin Weejali for Counselling Services and Drug and Alcohol relapse prevention programs. Family Preservation consult with the counsellors and implement any recommended strategies that are put forward to assist the client on their journey.

Dandelion Support Network

A fantastic organisation and support network for Family Preservation. Dandelion enables us to provide our families with clothing, Manchester, toys, books, nursery furniture, prams and car seats. Although the items are second hand they are in extremely good condition and valuable to our clients.

NEAMI Housing Support

NEAMI is a new resource for Family Preservation and an extremely important one. NEAMI Housing Program are assisting families residing in community housing properties and experiencing maintenance issues that Department of Housing will not repair. We have utilised NEAMI for three of our families and have had numerous repairs made, for example, holes in walls and window fixtures.





SUCCESS THROUGH FAMILY PRESERVATION

The Family Preservation team were proud to see one of our long-standing families succeed in our program. The Dempsey* family were with us for 2 years.

The family worked extremely hard to achieve all goals outlined in their family action plan successfully. They remained engaged with NBAC, DCJ and other support services throughout their time with the program. Their family goal statement was "I want a drug free home for my children" which the family successfully achieved.

Both Dominic* and Sophie* are drug free, and Sophie has also attended counselling with NBAC's Caseworker Amanda Klinar every week for 3 months participating in a drug relapse prevention plan.

Since disengaging with drug use, Sophie and Dominic have noticed that they are more present in their children's lives and the community.

NBAC also assisted the family prior to closure with a Housing transfer through Aboriginal Housing. Sophie and Dominic also had some unexpected news prior to closing that Sophie was expecting their 7th child and are very much excited for a new chapter in their lives.

**names have been changed for privacy and confidentiality purposes*

The above image is not a representation of any child or family in NBAC's programs



CARER RECRUITMENT

At Narang Bir-rong Aboriginal Corporation, we dedicate ourselves to finding the best quality carers for our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people.

By providing the highest standard of family-based care, best-practice casework and specialist support services, we not only support the child or young person in care, but the carer and their family.

CARER RECRUITMENT

7

new carer
households
authorised

13

kids entered
the out-of-home
care program

64

authorised
caring
households

15

carer
assessments
commenced

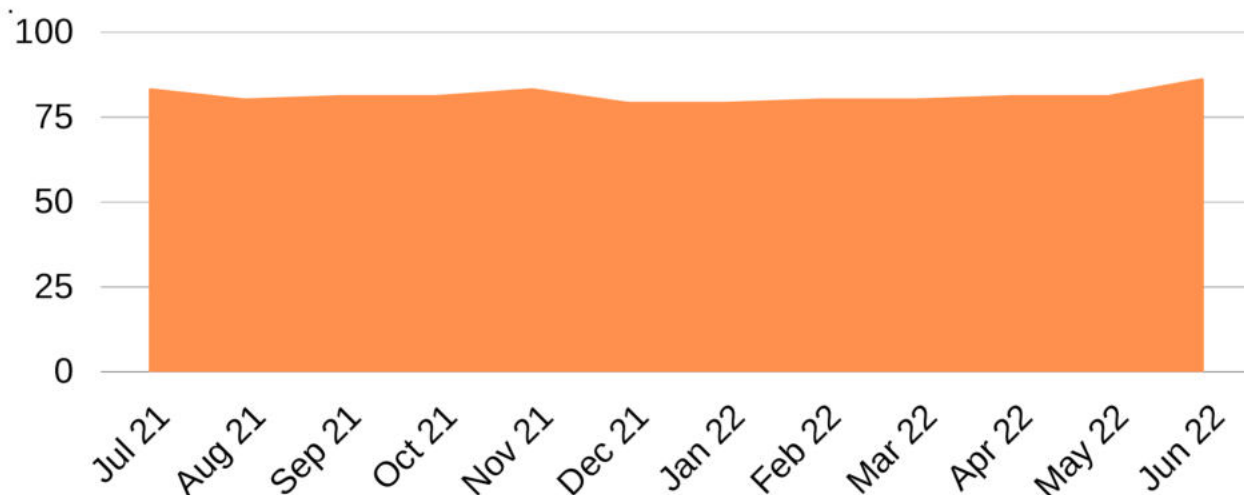
Our Work

Since July 2021 to 30 June 2022, the recruitment department has accepted an additional 13 children and young people enter into NBAC. The team worked to authorise and complete assessments and training for 7 new carer groups. We were also able to place 10 children and young people with their family in kinship care, a high priority for NBAC when looking at permanency outcomes of our children and ensuring we can help them to return home.

In 2022, the NBAC Recruitment program made a commitment to focus on the transfer of Aboriginal children and families from DCJ so these children can be case managed by an ACCO to ensure connection to their culture.

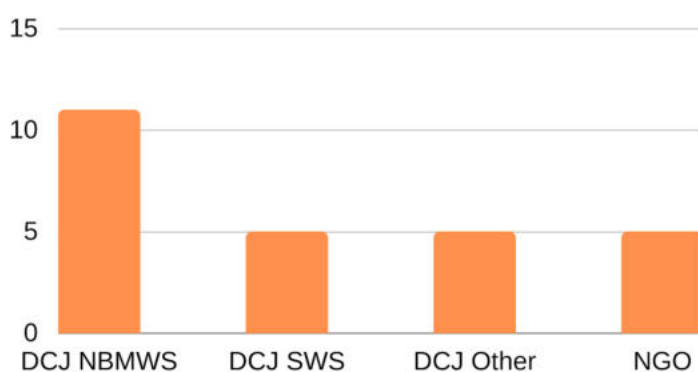
This has been an initiative from DCJ for over 10 years, however it has in 2022 gained more traction. We partnered with DCJ St Marys Community Services Centre and South Sydney CFDU, to enable these offices to refer Aboriginal children to transfer.

Placement summary per month



Our funded numbers were increased from 85 to 90 to cater for these transfers. During this period, we were referred 28 households from DCJ and other NGO's for transfer. 5 children were accepted during this period, with another 4 assessments undertaken of an additional 6 children. Starting in July 2021, NBAC Recruitment have undertaken reviews of a total of 47 children for transfer from DCJ and other NGOs.

Transfer Referrals



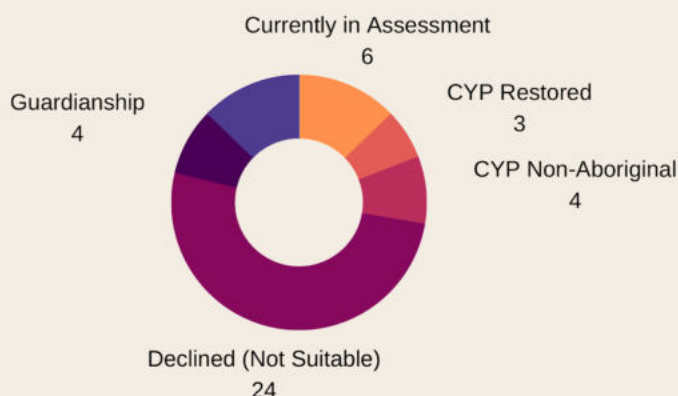
The team worked along side caseworkers from other services to gather information and risk assess each matter. They also formed good trusting relationships with the carers transferring which made the process to transfer to NBAC as seamless as possible, with minimal disruption to the child or placement.

In 2022, we have started the first outsourcing of assessments, whilst the new workers undertook their Step-by-Step Assessment training which was completed in late July. Both staff are now aiming to receive their provider numbers soon to become approved assessors.

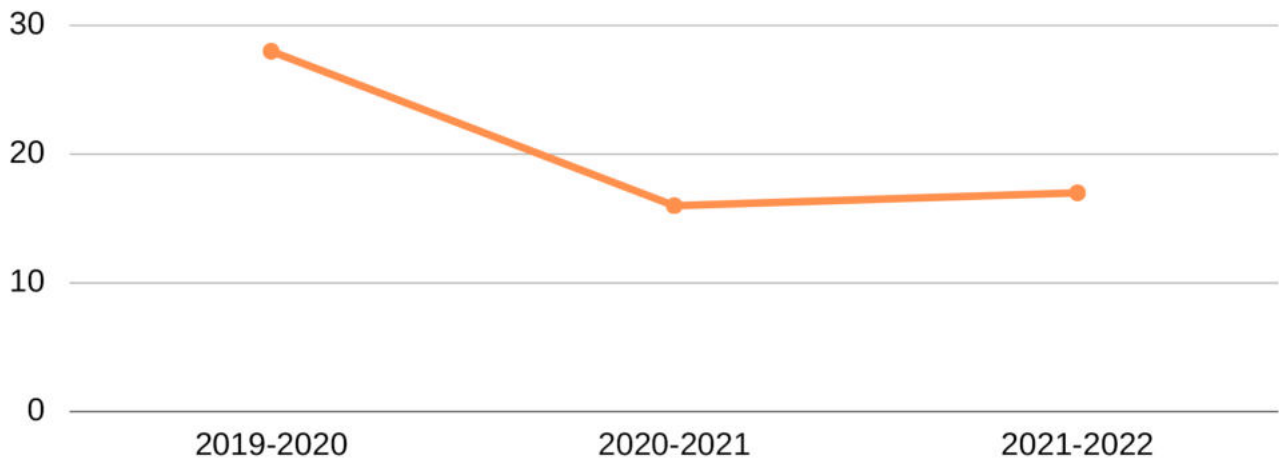
Transfers Overview

This review of transfer has been an arduous task for the recruitment team to undertake, as 74.4% of referrals do not proceed forward to assessment stages, and we have to advocate for NBAC to not take on the risk with DCJ Managers, which is not without its challenges.

Therefore only 25.6% of the CYP's referred for transfer have proceeded forward to CMT stages.



Annual Carer Enquiries



We have received 17 carer enquires since July 2021, mainly through the website, as the new service brochure has a QR code linked for carer enquiries. There has been an overall increase of 1% since 2020-2021, however this is still in trend across the sector with a lack of carer enquires due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which has ultimately led to a decrease in all agencies ability to take on new children who were coming into care.



Carer Reviews

In January 2022, NBAC launched their first online carer review tool, which enabled carers to complete the review confidentially from their own phone or computer.

This was created in response to the COVID-19 Pandemic and NSW lockdowns which prevented staff from going into carers homes to perform the reviews.

This new system also saved the team a significant amount of time performing face-to-face reviews, which can take several hours.

27 Caring households participated in this online process, which enabled staff to safely perform carer reviews and developmental plans. It also led to suggested changes to practise.



SPECIALIST SERVICES

Our Specialist Services department oversee family time supervision, the cultural needs of the children and young people within our service and the leaving care readiness and after care programs. We also provide cultural programs and events which strengthen our kids' connection to community and culture.

The program empowers our team to create the best possible support for the children and young people in our programs, and also the carer and their family.

SPECIALIST SERVICES

84

cultural care
plans complete

3

young people
exited care in
2021-2022

100%

compliance
with ChildStory
reporting

6,371

memories
uploaded to
Caring Life

In 2022, NBAC Specialist Services Programs saw the implementation of two new program areas and key workers: the Cultural Connections Worker and the Programs Support Officer.

Cultural Connections

The Cultural Connections Worker is responsible for the creation and implementation of the children's cultural care plans in Out of Home Care, as well as creating and hosting cultural events for clients and staff at NBAC, creating cultural networks within the community. In consultation with family and community, this year the Cultural Connections Worker has completed out 84 of 91 (91%) of all Cultural Care Plan reviews. This position has also supported the development and delivery of cultural programs throughout 2022.

We also held a 6-week cultural program through Blackfit Fitness Program with our Leaving Care and Family Preservation Programs kids. All the kids and young people enjoyed this program learning painting with symbols, making ochre, cooking with emu eggs, dance and much more. This is a program we hope to continue to facilitate in 2023.



The Cultural Connections Worker has engaged with the elders in the community by attending Baabayan and also the Elders in Residence. Due to our device donation success, NBAC donated computers to Baabayan Aboriginal Corporation after they were broken into, and their computers were stolen. These assist them to run a homework program.



Leaving and After Care

The Programs Support Officer is responsible for young people in leaving care stages 15+ to help create and implement the young person's Leaving Care Plan; ensuring the young person is meeting all of their leaving care goals and supporting the young person to achieve independence when they turn 18 years.

This position also supports our After Care clients aged 18-25 years with housing, health and employment. Both of these positions have enabled a higher level of support to the young people in the Out of Home Care Program.

During this year the Specialist Services Program has helped two young people achieve independent living, moving into their first apartments, where the team helped secure furnishings and homewares to support the young person's independence.

The position of Programs Support Officer has been vacant for the past 3 months. This hasn't stopped the Program Manager, with the help of the Cultural Support Worker continue to run fortnightly cooking and living skills classes with the young people which they are enjoying creating and trying new foods.

In 2022, the Programs Support Officer worked intensively with three young people in leaving care stages. We also worked in partnership with Platform Youth Services, we were able to help one young person to move into their first apartment and start a traineeship through working together.



Care Leavers 2022-2025

Currently at NBAC we have 2 young people exiting care in 2022.

In the next 4 years we will see the largest proportion of young people exit care with 19 young people working toward this milestone.





Family Time

Whilst NBAC acknowledges that there have been multiple ways to refer to the time that children and young people in care see their family including Family Visits, Contact, Visits etc, for the purposes of this report, we will refer to this as Family Time.

The Family Time Workers have been a great support to the OOHC teams in 2022, currently supporting 8 regularly occurring family time visits per week.

110+
family time visits
facilitated



Compliance and Reporting

The Compliance and Reporting Officer role overseas the compliance reporting for OOHC, generating once a week reports to this team to ensure compliance is being met.

Compliance is a critical aspect of OOHC as the teams are responsible for ensuring a large amount of legislative obligations are met. Whilst we acknowledge at times this is a lot of work for both caseworkers and carers, we also know the purpose is to ensure the safety of our children and young people in care at all times.

THE CULTURAL CARE PLANNING PROCESS

Cultural care planning is integral to a child's well being and identity alongside access to kin and community for each and every one of our kids. Our team undertake an intensive process of research and family findings to strengthen our own ability to connect our kids back to culture and country. Each plan is tailor made to the cultural needs of our children and their families.



FINDING FAMILY CONNECTIONS

This year, the Cultural Connections program was especially proud of one of our detailed and comprehensive Cultural Care Plans for one of the children in our Out-of-Home Care program. Having entered the program in 2020 at just one year old, her family history was extremely limited. The Cultural Connections Worker was able to successfully find her family line and trace this back five generations. She even found a photo of her great, great, great grandmother, an original sovereign of Darug nation, Gadigal clan.

A woman with dark, wavy hair and a leopard-print scarf is looking down at a laptop. She is wearing a black top and large gold earrings. The background is a lush green park with a large tree and a building in the distance. The scene is bathed in warm, golden light, suggesting late afternoon or early morning. An orange semi-transparent banner is overlaid on the bottom half of the image, containing the title and two paragraphs of text.

ADMINISTRATION & HUMAN RESOURCES

Along with supporting our employees, the administration team ensure we deliver the resources required to enable our services remain productive and timely and on budget.

This division of NBAC also oversees the recruitment of new employees and embeds our culture of care throughout the entire organisation.

ADMINISTRATION & DONATIONS

100+

food hampers
provided to our
clients

226

laptops
recieved from
donors

180

laptops
distributed to
our children

18

laptops being
processed for
distribution

Donations and Partnerships

NBAC have become engaged in multiple partnerships during 2022 and we intend to expand our partnerships and philanthropic focus in the year ahead.

Food and Essential Supplies



Westcare and Second Bite have provided NBAC with significant supplies of food, hygiene packs and homestart packs for our kids who are in the leaving care program. NBAC were able to supply these to the majority of our clients and intend to continue supplying these going forward.

Device Scheme



NBAC continue to receive calls for device donations for our children to help with their education. There have been over 50 devices donated in this reporting period. Thanks to this generosity from our donors, we have been able to offer every child and young person in our programs a device. The donations have made a huge difference to lives of these children and their ability to access education during these times.

NBAC were also able to donate 10 devices to DV West to be given to local women that are staying in a local Domestic & Family Violence shelter, to enable their kids to continue schooling during this current time.

We would like to sincerely thank these donors for their impressive contributions, and hope that we are able to expand further partnerships with these corporations in the future.



HUMAN RESOURCES



Training and Staff Development

NBAC places significant resources towards meeting the needs of the organisation so we are able to best serve our community. We believe that in having capable staff we are then able to produce the best possible outcomes for our children, young people and their families.

After months of program evaluations, in 2022 we introduced Casework Assistants for both the OOHC and Family Preservation Programs. During our evaluations, we acknowledged there was a need for both assistance with administration for the Caseworkers alongside a shortage of qualified and trained Aboriginal people who can step into these highly intense and critical roles.

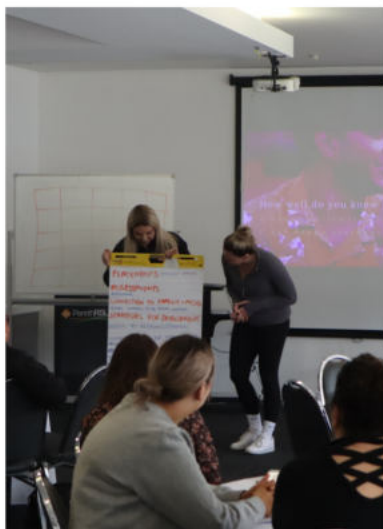
In the implementation of these roles, NBAC partnered with ACWA to deliver a Casework Development Program which included the integral components of:

- Communication and relationship building
- Case notes and documentation
- Introduction to child protection and the legal system
- ...and many more!

Following this training, NBAC are working closely with the Casework Assistants in order to assess their readiness to move into Casework roles. Stay tuned on this front!

In addition to the above, NBAC have facilitated the following this year:

- Leadership training for managers
- First Aid training with TAFE NSW for all staff
- Reconciliation week event for staff and afternoon tea
- Caseworker Development Program with ACWA
- A number of Staff Development Days



Staff Recruitment

As the organisation continues to grow to meet the needs of our community, a number of new positions became available this year. This has resulted in an additional 23 new staff being employed by the organisation. However, our focus remains on employing the right people for each position and empowering our current team to step up into higher roles. In order to achieve great things - we seek to look after our employees in these delicate and challenging roles but also hire the best.



Most Valuable Person

This year, we implemented the Most Valuable Person monthly award to recognise excellence amongst our teams.

Each month, our management team nominate one worker from their team, which is then put to a chance draw.

Each winner receives a \$50 gift card and a trophy to proudly display for the month at their desk.



MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS

Marketing is the missing link between the strategic direction of the organisation and the delivery of results. It is the glue that connects everything together and ensures that the right activity is taking place, at the right time.

It is the role of the Communications and Marketing department to increase carer and employee capacity in the organisation but to also develop more effective social marketing campaigns targeted to Aboriginal audiences to improve awareness of child protection and family preservation issues for our communities.

MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS

Our Message

NBAC promote our message and initiatives through various digital and physical channels, which allow us to highlight our work, build trust and awareness within the local community and grow our core business capacity through foster carer recruitment and donation drives.

Our key platforms include: Social Media Promotion, Content Creation, Advertising, Donation Drives, Website and Google Optimisation and Events. We work to strengthen relationships with key stakeholders using communication channels to keep them abreast with NBAC news, issues and advocacy.

We also provide all primary stakeholders a number of opportunities to engage and 'have their say' in policy creation, general feedback and on events through a number of surveys.

During this year, we have overseen the establishment of a foster carers' mailing list, which has improved official communications to carers and resulted in a total overhaul in the process for annual carer reviews.

We continue to build a website with content that reflects our core mission and values, as well as a range of documents to enable us to communicate our services and strategic direction to primary stakeholders.

Strategic Direction Support

This year we have created a range of internal documents to assist with the distribution and organisational understanding of the 2022-2025 Strategic Plan. We have developed a core strategic document and then a range of 'handbooks' for each department. These are available to our whole organisation to access at any point, as we look toward achieving these goals over the next few years.



Service Brochures

This year we commenced the creation of a range of internal and external documents to improve processes and better communicate to primary stakeholders about our programs and initiatives. Following last year's rebrand, it is essential that we are able to communicate our mission and values through our documents.



Website Development

Releasing relevant and timely content which furthers our mission and provides information and insight into our communities and programs is integral to the growth of our platform. The following is a list of new webpages developed and published between 1 July 2021 and 30 June 2022:

NAIDOC Charity Ball

<https://nbac.org.au/naidoc-charity-ball-2022/>

Board Member: Shaun Cumming

<https://nbac.org.au/shaun-cumming/>

Leaving and Aftercare Program

<https://nbac.org.au/leaving-and-aftercare-program/>

Board Member: Brandon Etto

<https://nbac.org.au/brandon-etto/>

Transferring to NBAC

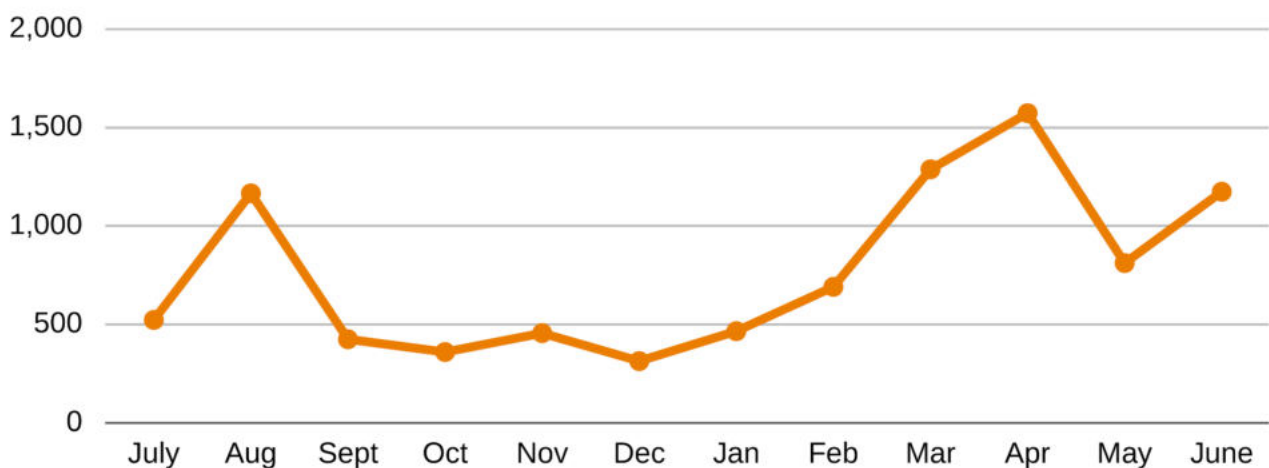
<https://nbac.org.au/transferring-to-nbac/>

Board Member: Matt Lancaster

<https://nbac.org.au/matthew-lancaster/>

We have observed a reasonable period of growth in traffic to the site, with occasional spikes associated with social media advertising campaigns and events.

Website Sessions per Month



Coen's Story

We were super proud to be able to share Coen's* story this year. Coen is a 6-year old Aboriginal boy in foster care in Western Sydney. Coen loves to play outdoors, with some of his favourite activities including playing soccer, riding his bike and doing find-a-words. Coen also loves playing video games



Coen and his sister Zoe, aged 4 years old, were previously living separated as unfortunately there were no foster care placements available for them to live together. NBAC are proud to celebrate their reunification through their new foster carers who are planning to providing them a safe and stable home until they are well into adulthood.

Cohen helps remind us that all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people deserve to have a safe place to live.

This advertisement ran across our digital platforms, which then opened the door for multiple amazing people to apply to care for other Aboriginal kids just like Coen.

**names have been changed for privacy and confidentiality purposes*

The above image is not a representation of any child in NBAC's programs

Social Media

Our social media platforms allow us to promote our message and build a following which raises awareness of the important issues we represent that impact young Aboriginal people and their families.

The platforms enable our organisation to have further outreach with the community and build ongoing networks and relationships.

We have watched the growth of our social media over the past year, and have observed further growth in its reach and engagement. We continue to research and develop strategies to grow these channels.

Currently we regularly utilise [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [Linkedin](#), [Twitter](#) and [YouTube](#) to publish content and reach our community, and will continue to use it to promote and raise awareness of our organisation.



STAFF ADVISORY AND EVENTS

The purpose of the NBAC Staff Advisory Group (SAG) is, in partnership with the NBAC Chief Executive Officer, to increase staff happiness and wellbeing by promoting a sense of community across the organisation, allowing greater participation in NBAC's strategy, operations, planning and policy development.

The Staff Advisory Group is responsible for implementing events and initiatives that it believes will further NBAC's vision and relate to its Terms of Reference.

STAFF ADVISORY GROUP

9

current
members

2

successful
events

2

policies drafted
and
implemented

The Narang Bir-rong Aboriginal Corporation ('NBAC') Staff Advisory Group was established in 2021 in accordance with the organisations 2020/2021 Strategic Plan. Its establishment is aimed improving staff participation in our operations and service delivery.

The group is responsible for representing the views, interests and/or identified issues that affect the clients, staff and community of NBAC and advise the NBAC CEO on priority areas, as well as provide advice and ideas on strategies to minimise those identified issue;.

Our Members

From July 1, 2021 to June 30 2022, the NBAC Staff Advisory Group has had a total of 13 members, including current members:

- Allison Fakatava
- Amanda Klinar
- Caitlin Marlor
- Cindy Hayes
- Heidi Bradshaw
- Jamal Chami
- Paige Favre
- Skye Pettit-Young
- Tanika Hayes



Policy Consultation

This year the staff advisory group were provided the opportunity to consult and develop on two policies; the Family Time Policy, and the Home Visit Policy. Both developed as NBAC and NSW emerged from lock downs and ongoing COVID measures, both policies advised the framework used as our staff recommenced face-to-face work. To date, we are happy to note that there have been no major COVID-19 outbreaks in our facilities.

CULTURAL FAMILY FUN DAY 2022

Through our CEO, NBAC were extremely honoured to receive the Westfield Local Heroes Grant, which enabled us to host a Cultural Family Fun Day in April 2022 at Penrith Valley Regional Sports Centre. We were proud to invite each of the families who are within our programs to participate in a day of culture, games and fun.

The day included everything from traditional Aboriginal dance, jumping castles, traditional art activities, photobooths and even a colour run! We also had an excellent Welcome to Country by local Darug elder, Uncle Graham Cooper. We held this activity, as we know cultural and cimmunity connection is one of the strongest aspects of our service.

We hope to build a community and support network for each of our families in the program, from our staff, to our board members and between families and kids within the program.





NAIDOC Ball 2022

GET UP! STAND UP! SHOW UP!

We were extremely excited to host our first ever Charity Gala to celebrate this year's NAIDOC Week, and the theme of "Get up! Stand up! Show up!". The proceeds of this gala went towards funding our Leaving Care Program.

The night was truly unforgettable, sharing some of our culture with the broader community. This included a traditional Welcome to Country by local Darug elder, Uncle Greg Simms, a live painting completed throughout the night by Aboriginal artist Josh Sly and an exclusive performance by Muggera Dance Group.

Why did we do this?

Recent research on Aboriginal young people who have 'left care' (turned 18) suggests that within one year, 50% of these young people will be either unemployed, imprisoned, homeless or have become a young parent.

At 1 July 2022, only four states in Australia had trialled an extension of care until 21 years. New South Wales is not one of them.

There are horrific examples across the sector of Aboriginal care-leavers who, on their 18th birthday, contacted their service provider not knowing where they would sleep that night.

Agencies like NBAC are not funded to provide support to our young people passed the age of 18. This year we established our Leaving Care Program with the support of some donations to help assist our young adults to not get lost in the world.

Our aim is to continue to work with them to achieve their goals and break the cycle of transgenerational trauma but we needed a way to raise funds for the program.



OUR SPONSORS

We would like to extend our gratitude to each of our NAIDOC Ball sponsors for 2022, without which our event would not have been nearly as magical as it ended up!

Settlement Services International (SSI)

SSI is a community organisation and social business that supports newcomers and other Australians to achieve their full potential. They work with all people who have experienced vulnerability, including refugees, people seeking asylum and culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities.

The organisation's vision is to achieve a society that values the diversity of its people.



Wesley Mission (Family Preservation)

Wesley Mission's Family Preservation services aim to improve outcomes for children, young people and families by reducing risk and safety concerns so they can experience healthy and positive development and develop the skills for parents to maintain a stable, safe and strong home.

Wesley Mission are excited to be a part of acknowledging the excellent achievements of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community.



Aboriginal Housing Office (AHO)

The AHO is funded by the NSW and Australian governments to administer the state's Aboriginal community housing assets. Their vision is to ensure every Aboriginal person in NSW has equal access to, and choice in, affordable housing.

The AHO enjoyed the opportunity to celebrate Aboriginal culture through recognising our achievements and excellence of work within the community





THANKS TO ALL WHO CAME ALONG!

We would like to sincerely extend our thanks to every single person who Got Up, Stood Up and Showed Up for our first ever NAIDOC Ball. We were extremely impressed to see such an amazing turn out and support for our programs and organisation.

Thanks to the support of our sponsors and community, we successfully raised

\$21,947.36

for the Leaving and After Care program!





ABBREVIATIONS

NBAC

Narang Bir-rong Aboriginal Corporation

CYP

Child and/or Young Person

CMT

Case Management Transfer

OOHC

Out-of Home Care

DCJ

The Department of Communities and Justice

CFDU

Child and Family District Units

NWSBM / NBM

Nepean Western Sydney Blue Mountains District /
Nepean Blue Mountains

SWS

South West Sydney

NGO

Non-government organisation

LALC

Local Aboriginal Land Council

ACWA

Association of Children's Welfare Agencies

A YEAR IN REFLECTION







**“WE HAVE A PERSONAL AND A CULTURAL
RESPONSIBILITY TO MAKE THINGS BETTER
FOR OUR KIDS.**

**I AM, AND WE ALL ARE CONSTANTLY
THINKING ABOUT WAYS TO MAKE THINGS
BETTER WITHIN OUR ORGANISATION, AND
FIND WAYS TO ENSURE WE ALWAYS KEEP
OUR KIDS CONNECTED.”**

- HEIDI BRADSHAW, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

