



Tiwi Land Council

Corporate Plan 2025-2029



Foreword

A message from the Chair

The Tiwi Land Council was established in 1978 by our past Tiwi leaders, in recognition of our unique cultural heritage and strong connection to our Islands.

Their vision was to create a voice that would represent the rights and interests of all Tiwi people, grounded in our identity as one people.

Today, we honour their legacy by continuing to protect our land, our culture, and our future. The ancestors of all Tiwi people are buried across our land, and it is our responsibility to ensure their legacy is respected and their country is cared for.

This 2025–2029 Corporate Plan sets out the strategic priorities identified by our Council members—Tiwi men and women who have been elected to speak for their communities. These priorities reflect our collective vision for a strong, self-determined future.

Achieving these goals will require all of us—elders, youth, families, leaders, and partners—to work together with unity and purpose. I am proud to serve as Chair at this important time and excited by the opportunities that lie ahead for our people.



Leslie Tungatulum
Chair, Tiwi Land Council



A message from the CEO

This is the second Corporate Plan that Leslie and I have overseen as the Accountable Authority for the Tiwi Land Council.

Our first Plan in 2024 represented a significant overhaul of previous TLC Corporate Plans. The Plan was simplified. Key Activities were refined. Performance measures were redeveloped from scratch. The Plan proved a useful tool for tracking and communicating progress to our Council and Tiwi community members.

The 2025 Plan is largely consistent with our 2024 Plan. We made great progress last year, but there is still plenty of work to be done. And Tiwi priorities remain constant.

Our core statutory function is the effective management of Traditional Owners' rights and interests in Tiwi land. Central to that objective is the need to care for Tiwi country and preserve and revitalise Tiwi culture. Tiwi want to see the development of a sustainable economy and they want a greater say in the policies that effect their lives.

This is the work of the Tiwi Land Council. We will continue to progress these priorities, and we hope to do so with the support and hard-earned trust of all Tiwi people.



Brendan Ferguson
Chief Executive Officer, Tiwi Land Council



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1. Introduction

About Tiwi Land Council

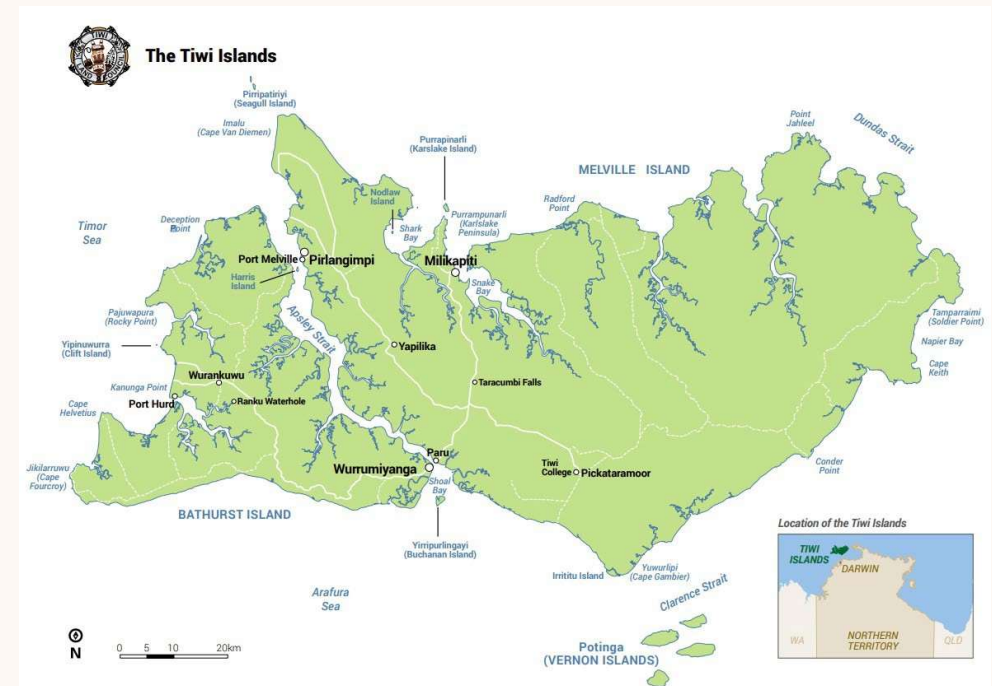
The Tiwi Land Council was established in 1978, a significant milestone for Tiwi people and the culmination of years of work seeking recognition as the custodians of the Tiwi Islands and the keepers of Tiwi cultural identity. This formal recognition marked a pivotal moment in the assertion of Tiwi self-determination and cultural authority.

The Tiwi Land Council is a corporate commonwealth entity under the *Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act 1976* ('ALRA'). It is responsible for a number of key functions under the ALRA, but most relevantly, to ensure that activities on the Tiwi Islands are undertaken only after proper consultation with the relevant Tiwi clan group(s) and with the consent of the traditional Aboriginal owners of that land.

About this Corporate Plan

In accordance with section 35(1)(b) of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* ('PGPA') the Accountable Authority of the Tiwi Land Council presents the 2025/2026 Corporate Plan for the Tiwi Land Council.

This Corporate Plan reflects discussions with Land Council members and input from Land Council staff.



It outlines the strategic direction, goals, and key priorities of the Land Council for the period 1 July 2025 to 30 June 2029 and reflects the Land Council's commitment to sustaining Tiwi culture, strengthening governance, and building a prosperous future led by and for Tiwi people.



2. Purpose

Our statutory functions

The purpose of the Tiwi Land Council is to perform the functions given to it under section 23 of ALRA.

Broadly, the objectives, functions, and the role of the Tiwi Land Council include (see section 23 of the ALRA):

- **Identification and representation** of, the traditional Aboriginal owners of the Tiwi Islands.
- **Consulting** with traditional Aboriginal owners, and other Aboriginal people interested in the Tiwi Islands, with respect to any proposed use of that land.
- **Ascertaining and expressing the wishes and opinions** of traditional Aboriginal owners, and other Aboriginal people who may be affected by some proposed development on the Tiwi Islands.
- **Protecting the interests** of traditional Aboriginal owners, and other Aboriginal people with traditional interests in the Tiwi Islands, including through **negotiation** with persons desiring to obtain an estate or interest in the Tiwi Islands.

- Assisting Aboriginal people to **carry out commercial activities** on the Tiwi Islands.
- Assisting Aboriginal people with the **protection of sacred sites** on the Tiwi Islands.
- Assisting Aboriginal people with the **protection of the Tiwi Island environment**.

Our guiding vision

Consistent with our prescribed statutory functions, the Tiwi Land Council works to secure:

*The **effective management of Tiwi country and revitalisation of Tiwi culture** for the benefit of future generations of Tiwis.*



3. Key activities

Our 2024–28 Corporate Plan was built around six key activities. To continue fulfilling our purpose, the Tiwi Land Council has reaffirmed these six key activities that reflect the breadth of our work and guide our priorities from 2025 to 2029. These activities are designed not only to address our current objectives but also to provide a foundation for sustainable and positive change for Tiwi people.



Managing the **use of Tiwi land and waters**, consistent with the wishes of Tiwi traditional owners



Supporting development of, and participation in, the **Tiwi economy**



Protecting the **health of Tiwi country**



Listening to, and promoting, **Tiwi voices** within and beyond our Islands



Sustaining and celebrating **Tiwi culture**



Administering an **effective and efficient Land Council** sustained by the **trust of Tiwi people**





Managing the **use of Tiwi land and waters**, consistent with the wishes of Tiwi traditional owners

Strategic priorities

Effective and efficient administration of land use and access, balancing robust consultation and consent processes, with timeliness and the interests of proponents

Additional support for Traditional Owners in navigating land use and permit application processes to reduce barriers to the use of their land

Securing **native title rights over Tiwi Sea Country**

Development of accurate **clan registers and traditional ownership records** to support the land use application process

Support the protection of **sacred sites** and sites of cultural significance

What's involved

Our core function is the management of Tiwi country on behalf of traditional owners. Tiwi Land Council is working to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of land use and permit application processes. This involves defining consistent internal processes for considering applications, holding regular Full Council, Executive and clan meetings and engaging with Traditional Owners to understand and calibrate expectations. We will also ensure that Traditional Owners are provided with appropriate support to navigate these processes when seeking to do business on their own country.

To support these processes, our anthropologists are working to address gaps in historical records, updating genealogies and undertaking cultural mapping that will assist in the timely identification of decision-makers for country.

Tiwi people have expressed a strong desire to have greater control over their sea country. The Tiwi Land Council will continue to progress towards a native title claim to assert rights over sea country.

Who is responsible

The Legal Team works closely with the Land Use and Operations team, including Anthropologists and Resource and Environmental Officers, to manage the various aspects of our land use processes.





Protecting the health of Tiwi country

Strategic priorities

Proactively **manage threats to Tiwi biodiversity**, in partnership with Tiwi Rangers, through data collection, research and enforcement

Secure **dedication of the Indigenous Protected Area (IPA)** on Tiwi land, and determine Tiwi interest in an IPA for sea country

Maintain and develop **effective relationships with research partners**, to inform management and strategic activities

Management activities are coordinated across organisations i.e. Rangers, IPA, TO's, NGO's, agreement holders

What's involved

Tiwi Land Council plays a critical role in protecting the health of Tiwi country, which involves proactive work to manage threats to biodiversity, including feral and invasive species such as cats, buffalo, cane toads, fire ants and gamba grass as well as the threat of late season wildfire.

The Tiwi Land Council initiated consultation in relation to an IPA, which is now close to dedication. The IPA Planning Committee will now transition to a formal sub-committee of the Land Council – to ensure appropriate governance of the IPA – and further explore interest in an IPA over sea country.

While the Tiwi Rangers do not currently sit within the Tiwi Land Council, we provide leadership through research and data collection to inform the work of rangers. An example of this is a 3-year research program in relation to feral cat management, due to take place between FY25 and FY28 in partnership with research institutions, to inform future management practices.

Who is responsible

The Resource and Environment Officers and Biosecurity Officer lead our environmental work, under the direction of the Manager, Land Use and Operations. It is intended that these staff will take guidance from the IPA Committee, once established, and continue to work closely with the Tiwi Rangers.





Sustaining and celebrating Tiwi culture

Strategic priorities

Develop a **structured program of Cultural activities**, including support for ceremony, coordination of events and return and safe keeping of Tiwi cultural objects

Further **develop and strengthen our Cultural Committee** to oversee and direct our Cultural activities

What's involved

The Tiwi Land Council plays an important role in supporting cultural activities, through funding for funerals and Pukumani ceremonies and participation in cultural events. However, there is now an opportunity to develop a more comprehensive Cultural program that includes:

- A program of events, on Tiwi and beyond, with the centrepiece being the Tiwi Cultural Festival, piloted in August 2024 and set for expansion in 2025.
- The return of Tiwi cultural objects and development of appropriate, physical and virtual, keeping places in community.
- The recording of cultural heritage, including stories, songs and dance.

Tiwi Land Council will need to find creative ways to pay for the Cultural Program, complementing our core Government funding. The newly established Cultural Committee plays a critical role in overseeing the Cultural Program.

Who is responsible

The Manager of Tiwi Culture and Engagement has carriage of this work, with support from the Media and Communications Officer and Administration Officer (Tiwi based). Additional support for our work in relation to Tiwi culture comes from our Anthropologists, whose cultural mapping and genealogy work intersects with our Cultural Program, and our field support staff.





Supporting development of, and participation in, the **Tiwi economy**

Strategic priorities

Develop a blueprint for a future Tiwi economy, which includes **mapping and facilitating industry opportunities for Tiwi**, with direction from Tiwi clans and communities and in collaboration with government and key proponents

Coordinate support for Tiwi led enterprise, brokering access to grants, research, industry networks and additional capability.

What's involved

While the Tiwi Land Council has a long history of supporting Tiwi economic participation – including through the establishment of forestry and port operations and a Tiwi led training entity (TITEB) – in recent years, the Land Council has been less proactive in driving economic participation.

There is an opportunity for the Tiwi Land Council to coordinate planning for a future Tiwi economy, together with the Australian and Northern Territory Governments, Tiwi led enterprises and industry partners. Such planning should account for existing assets, infrastructure and market opportunities, as well as the strengths and employment aspirations of Tiwi people.

In addition to large scale, long-term planning, Tiwi Land Council can also support the growth of small scale, Tiwi enterprises, facilitating access to capital, networks and capability together with government and non-government partners, including Tiwi Enterprises and Tiwi Resources who are already active in this space.

Who is responsible

This work will be driven by the Tiwi Land Council's Senior Policy & Development Officer with oversight from the Manager, Policy and Advocacy, and further support from the Grants & Projects Officer.





Listening to, and promoting, **Tiwi voices** within and beyond our Islands

Strategic priorities

Establish a **permanent Tiwi Land Council presence** in the Tiwi communities

Collaborate with local stakeholders and advocate for Tiwi community members interests

Promote **Tiwi voices in external policy forums**, including through Northern Territory and Australian Government agencies

What's involved

It is critical that the Tiwi Land Council reestablish its permanent presence on Tiwi to ensure that we are responsive to Tiwi community needs.

It is also critical for the Tiwi Land Council to establish strong working relationships with other local stakeholders, as we are all working for the one people.

- The Tiwi Land Council has taken on responsibility for reinvigorating the Tiwi Leaders Forum, designed to drive improved coordination of government and non-government services in Tiwi communities, with a focus on education and youth, workforce and community wellbeing.
- Our relationships with the Tiwi Islands Regional Council and the Office of Township Leasing are particularly important in discharging our core functions of managing land interests.

Finally, the Tiwi Land Council will continue to strengthen our participation in external policy forums, alongside the NT Land Councils and other Aboriginal community-controlled organisations, to help shape Australian and NT government policy and service provision. Our policy priorities have been set by Full Council, with a focus on economic participation, housing and homelands and social and emotional wellbeing.

Who is responsible

The Manager, Policy and Advocacy, oversees the Tiwi Leaders Forum and leads our advocacy activities and external engagement in policy forums. Our Tiwi Culture and Engagement team also play a critical role in informing our advocacy agenda and ensuring a strong Land Council presence on Tiwi.





Administering an **effective and efficient Land Council** sustained by the **trust of Tiwi people**

Strategic priorities

Improve **Council governance** through clear policies, effective communication, appropriate training and high participation

Build a **collaborative, high performing workplace**, supported by strong management practices and effective internal systems.

What's involved

Improving the effectiveness of the Land Council remains essential to rebuilding trust amongst Tiwi people. That trust is a prerequisite for the Land Council to successfully fulfil its purpose and deliver long-term benefits to the Tiwi Islands.

Since the 2022 ANAO Report, the Tiwi Land Council has made substantial progress in strengthening governance and improving internal systems and practices. By June 2025, all 13 recommendations had been addressed, with most fully implemented. These reforms directly support our strategic priorities, building a more accountable, capable, and effective organisation.

While notable advances have been achieved, the Land Council recognises that further work is required to fully embed these reforms and lift organisational performance. Ongoing efforts are focused on:

- Completing the development and implementation of a full suite of Council and staff policies, supported by structured training and improved systems.
- Finalising long-term improvements to the permit system and ensuring robust processes for Section 19 agreement compliance.

Further detail is set out below in relation to the Operating context.

Who is responsible

All members of the Management Team have responsibility for delivering on the identified strategic priorities, together with the Governance, Risk and Compliance Officer who provides critical support.



4(i) Operating context: Environment

About the Tiwi Islands

The Tiwi Islands are located approximately 80 kilometres north of Darwin in the Arafura Sea. They consist of two large, inhabited islands – Melville and Bathurst – and numerous smaller uninhabited islands.

There has been an unbroken history of occupation and ownership of the Tiwi Islands by Tiwi people, and the population of just over 3000 is more than 90 per cent Tiwi. The Tiwi possess a distinct culture and language.

The Tiwi Islands are a biodiversity haven, supporting many plant and animal species not recorded anywhere else in the world.

There are three major communities on the Tiwi Islands; the largest, Wurrumiyanga, is on Bathurst Island while the smaller communities of Milikapiti and Pirlangimpi are located on Melville Island. They are serviced by regular transport services from Darwin. There are also several smaller communities and outstations including:

- Wurankuwu and Four Mile on Bathurst Island; and
- Paru, Pickataramoor, Taracumbi, Condor Point, Takamprimili and Pitirimirra on Melville Island.

Socio-Economic and Geographic Challenges

Like many remote Aboriginal communities in the Northern Territory, the Tiwi Islands face significant socio-economic challenges. These include high rates of chronic ill-health, overcrowded housing, and low employment and household income levels.

The remoteness and limited accessibility of the Tiwi Islands also result in logistical difficulties and increased costs for delivering materials, services, and everyday supplies. These factors contribute to limited long-term investment opportunities and employment prospects for Tiwi people.

Governance and Regulation

The Northern Territory's Land Councils are corporate Commonwealth entities established under ALRA and subject to the PGPA Act. As such, they are highly regulated. There is an ongoing tension in meeting the expectations of Tiwi constituents, whilst also ensuring compliance with statutory obligations.

Building and Strengthening Organisational Capacity

The Tiwi Land Council has undertaken significant efforts to strengthen its internal capacity and better serve the needs and aspirations of the Tiwi people. These efforts reflect a long-term commitment to building a capable, culturally grounded, and community-focused organisation.

We anticipate reaching our planned staffing targets by the end of FY26, an important milestone that will enhance our ability to deliver core functions and services effectively. Our organisational structure is purposefully designed to prioritise the needs of Tiwi communities and the priorities identified in this plan.

Funding environment

The Tiwi Land Council receives core funding from the Commonwealth Government to fulfil its statutory duties. While recent increases in funding have supported organisational growth, any future constraints could limit the Council's ability to deliver on its purpose. To mitigate this, the Council is also exploring third-party funding opportunities, particularly to support strategic priorities in cultural heritage and environmental management.



4(ii) Operating context: Organisational structure (governance)

Composition of the Tiwi Land Council

Under our new Method of Choice, the Tiwi Land Council is made up of 40 members, with five representatives from each of the eight Tiwi land owning groups.

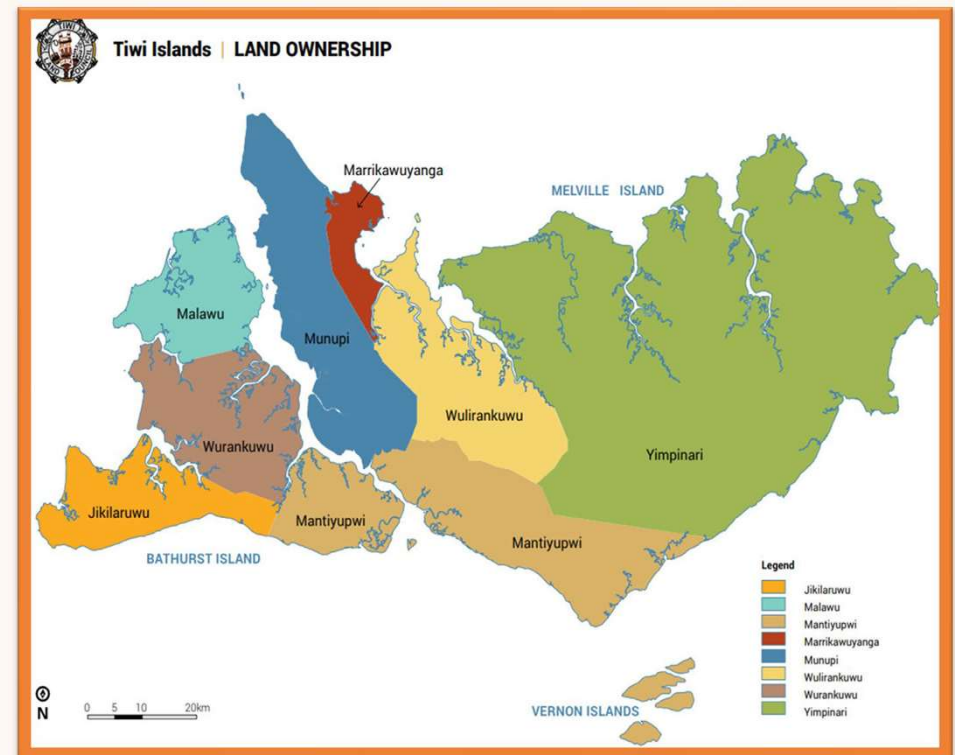
Those five representatives include a Trustee, and four additional representatives, of which two are women and two are men.

The eight land-owning groups are as follows (see a representation of land ownership to the right):

- Jikilaruwu
- Malawu
- Mantiyupwi
- Marrikawuyanga
- Munupi
- Wulirankuwu
- Wurankuwu
- Yimpinari

The Land Council elects a Chair and a Deputy Chair.

The Accountable Authority of the Tiwi Land Council is comprised of the Chairperson and the CEO.



4(ii) Operating context: Organisational structure (committees)

Committees

The Tiwi Land Council has established an Executive, with delegated authority to make decisions about certain matters on behalf of the Tiwi Land Council.

Additionally, the Tiwi Land Council has established:

- a **Cultural Committee**, to lead and advise on matters in relation to Tiwi culture; and
- an **Indigenous Protected Area (IPA) Committee** to oversee the Tiwi Plan of Management for the IPA.

The Land Council is also responsible for facilitating the **Tiwi Leaders Forum** to support improved coordination of agencies and their services in our Tiwi communities. While the Tiwi Leaders Forum is not a sub-Committee of the Land Council, it does play an important role in the Tiwi governance framework.

An **Audit and Risk Committee**, comprising four independent members, has also been established to advise the Accountable Authority in its management functions.



4(ii) Operating context: Organisational structure (staffing)

Staffing presence

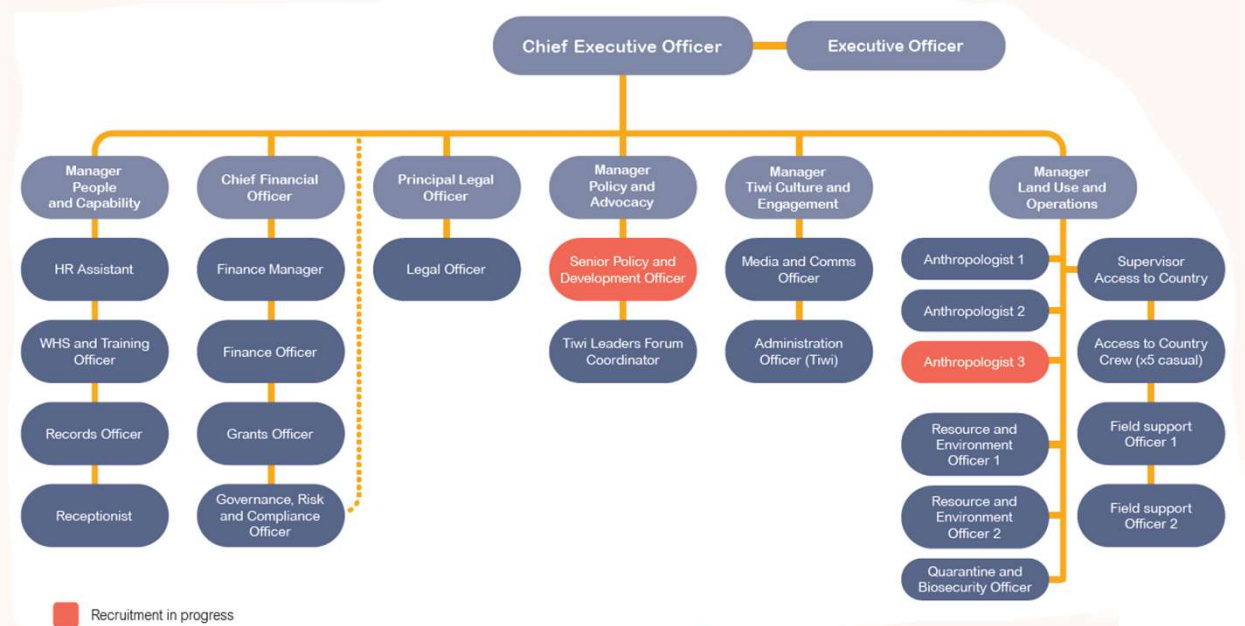
The Land Council currently employs 27 full-time and part-time staff in a range of operational roles to support the effective delivery of its statutory functions and day-to-day activities. Several staff are also employed in a casual capacity, including our recently established Access to Country crew, which operates during the dry season to clear Tiwi roads.

The Land Council's main headquarters are in Darwin with a temporary office in Wurrumiyanga. A key priority identified in this strategic period is the establishment of a permanent office on the Tiwi Islands. The Land Council has identified a preferred site in Wurrumiyanga and is working with the Office of Township Leasing to formalise plans. This initiative supports our commitment to enhance accessibility and strengthen Land Council engagement with Tiwi communities.

Until our office is fully established, engagement with Tiwi people is maintained through regular visits to the Islands by the management team and our field staff. Land Council staff play an active role in coordinating and participating in regular clan, Executive and Full Council meetings held in each community. This meeting cycle supports regular communication with Tiwi Traditional Owners and community members.

The most material change to our staffing structure since the last Corporate Plan is the addition of a Manager, Policy and Advocacy. This role, together with two supporting staff, is primarily responsible for driving our Key Activity in relation to the 'Tiwi Voice', ensuring that Tiwi perspectives are effectively represented in policy development and decision-making processes at all levels of government.

Below is the updated Organisational Chart for the Tiwi Land Council:



4(iii) Operating context: Capability

Pursuant to section 16E(2) item 4(a) of the PGPA Rule, this section outlines how TLC will develop the necessary capability to undertake our key activities and achieve our purposes.

Workforce capability

TLC has achieved significant growth in the past three years, dramatically increasing our internal capacity. This growth has been achieved through dedicated recruitment, led by TLC's People & Capability Manager, with support from local Tiwi Island networks. We have also seen a reduction in turnover; no staff have left TLC in 2025.

To increase our presence on the Tiwi Islands, TLC has prioritised employment of Tiwi staff. TLC now employs five casual Tiwi staff, and six full-time Tiwi staff, two of whom are members of our Management Team.

Darwin-based staff are encouraged to work from the Tiwi Islands where possible and appropriate, under the coordination and management of the Manager, Land Use & Operations and the Manager, Tiwi Culture & Engagement.

Staff are encouraged to utilise their training and professional development budgets on identified development needs. Additional training opportunities are provided to staff with regular targeted workshops for the entire TLC cohort, and an annual staff retreat to bring the team together for future planning and team bonding. Staff with mandatory continued professional development obligations, such as the Principal Legal Officer and Chief Financial Officer, are encouraged to attend profession specific conferences with reasonable costs covered by the Land Council.

Finance Information Security

As the organisation continues to grow, the Finance Team remains committed to supporting this development by adapting both staffing capacity and financial systems. The team works closely with staff across the organisation to ensure that expenditure is effectively managed within approved budgets and in compliance with all relevant legislative requirements, including the PGPA Act.

In parallel, the Finance Team prioritises information security, ensuring that financial data and systems are protected through appropriate controls and secure platforms. This commitment helps safeguard the integrity of financial operations and supports organisational accountability.

Asset acquisition and management

As described above, a high priority for the Tiwi Land Council is securing a permanent office in Wurrumiyanga together with accommodation for visiting staff and contractors. We are currently working to secure a site and develop plans for the building, with provisional support from NIAA to fund construction when ready. In the meantime, we will continue to explore opportunities to use existing office space on the islands to increase our presence on Tiwi.

As part of the plan for the new building, we will consider the needs of our Cultural program, including audio and video equipment and fit for purpose premises to record cultural heritage.

Our vehicles are now fitted with devices to track their location and appropriate use, improving our management of the fleet and staff WHS.

Governance

The Land Council remains committed to strengthening its governance by actively monitoring progress against the recommendations in the ANAO's recent governance audit. Ongoing review and implementation of these recommendations ensure transparency, accountability and continuous improvement in organisational practices.

To promote and embed good governance across all levels of the organisation, the Land Council provides regular training for trustees, Council members, and staff. This training is delivered by external providers, as well as internally by senior staff—including the Principal Legal Officer and Chief Financial Officer—where appropriate. These efforts aim to build knowledge, support informed decision-making, and reinforce a strong governance culture.



4(iv) Operating context: Risk

Enterprise Risk Management Framework

The Tiwi Land Council Risk Management Framework integrates legislative requirements and commonwealth risk management standards and incorporates an emphasis on storytelling as a means of understanding and communicating risk.

Risks to the TLC can come from many different sources, and each risk may have multiple, long-term and short-term impacts. These risks are recorded and grouped into four categories: strategic, operational, systemic, and whole of Tiwi. In 2025, fraud and safety risks were added as separate categories, considering their impact on the delivery of our service to the Tiwi community.

In 2024-2025 some of the processes that contributed to the proactive management of operational risk included:

- The review and adoption of the Audit and Risk Committee Charter in December;
- A 3-year rolling internal audit plan approved by the Accountable Authority in March;
- Completion of the Risk Management consultancy with RiskIQ;
- An internal audit “health check” of the procurement process commenced in May;
- Presentation of the draft Policy Governance Framework to the Audit and Risk Committee in June.

Risk oversight and management systems

As Tiwi Land Council grows in its understanding of the sources of key risks, and its risk capabilities, it plans to enhance timely and efficient communication of risk information to support decision-making.

There are different forums and levels where risks are identified, assessed and communicated which include meetings at departmental, management, executive and council levels; corporate planning; and surveys that were conducted internally and externally and through the internal audit function.

Risk reporting to the management team and the Audit and Risk Committee provides information on how the entity and the risk owners understand the sources of risk and their impact on TLC’s success. Contrary to the conventional approach of reviewing mitigative actions, TLC’s risk register records how the risks are managed from the various outcomes of TLC’s key activities. The internal audit function complements this process by informing management and the Accountable Authority through the Audit and Risk Committee of the effectiveness of the risk controls that are in place.

In the next 3-5 years, our focus is on finding the appropriate tools to:

- Articulate TLC’s desired risk culture at all levels from the Council to the Team;
- Research, consult and develop initiatives to uplift risk culture;
- Communicate risk that enables Council members and staff to understand how risk management contributes to the achievement of goals and objectives;
- Develop risk profiles for every work area or department;
- Empower managers to actively monitor risk profiles of each department/area of responsibility
- Integrate risk information with key operational systems;
- Embed risk management in decision-making for strategic planning and project and program risks.



4(iv) Operating context: Risk



Managing the **appropriate use of Tiwi land and waters**, consistent with the wishes of Tiwi traditional owners

Key risks	Controls
Non-compliance by proponents with terms and conditions of Land Use Agreements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Raise the profile and strategic importance of compliance work, as a Land Council obligation.• Consultation and awareness sessions on conditions of section 19 leases and permits at clan level to ensure mutual understanding of rights and responsibilities and proper process for reporting and addressing breaches.• Systematic process of compliance monitoring, involving site visits, physical inspections and audits.• Ongoing review and improvement (where appropriate) of existing Land Use Agreements.• Ongoing close monitoring of financial obligations by the Finance Team and escalation as appropriate.
Unauthorised access and activity on Tiwi	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• An effective and functional permit system which provides conditions of access to visitors to the islands.• Increased communication with external parties to encourage compliance with access conditions.• Increased TLC presence on the islands to facilitate compliance checks and to follow up reports of non-compliance
Failure to accurately identify relevant traditional owners and affected parties, compromising the consultative process for land use applications	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reinforce the importance of the traditional owners' identification process, as a starting point for all land use applications.• Invest in cultural mapping and genealogy work to improve our records that underpin this work

4(iv) Operating context: Risk



Protecting the health of Tiwi country

Key risks	Controls
Unmanaged feral animals and invasive species on the island that can damage the Tiwi ecosystem and reduce biodiversity, affecting the health of Tiwi country and reducing food sources and economic opportunity for Tiwi (among other things)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop management plans, and proactively resource the management of key threats, in collaboration with other key stakeholders.
Inadequate response to major natural or other disasters such as bushfires, marine pollution, cyclones and coastal flooding that can impact on the whole of Tiwi	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensure appropriate mitigation work is embedded in management plans where possible (e.g. in relation to fire).• Ensure up-to-date plans are in place for coordinated emergency responses, drawing on government and other resources.



Sustaining and celebrating Tiwi culture

Key risks	Controls
Loss of Tiwi artefacts, traditional knowledge, cultural expressions and practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Strengthen and monitor the coordination and governance of the Cultural Committee• Undertake mapping and perform site assessments with landowners for protection of sacred sites• Invest in measures to ensure the preservation of Tiwi artefacts, artworks, recordings and other documents, including through physical spaces and secure forms of media• Coordinate education and training, teaching and sharing of Tiwi traditional knowledge and activities that promote cultural practices and expression.• Invest in and support significant Tiwi cultural rituals and ceremonies like Kulama and Pukamani.• Invest in further opportunities to showcase and promote Tiwi culture, including through the Tiwi Cultural Festival

4(iv) Operating context: Risk



Supporting development of, and participation in, the **Tiwi economy**

Key risks	Controls
There is no shared, coherent strategy across Tiwi, for development of a future economy that reflects community aspirations for Tiwi land and sea country	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishment of a Policy and Advocacy unit including recruitment of a Senior Policy and Development Officer to develop an economic participation framework Plan, map and coordinate prospective industry opportunities for Tiwi lands, with direction from Tiwi communities and in collaboration with Govt and key proponents



Listening to, and promoting, **Tiwi voices** within and beyond our Islands

Key risks	Controls
Lack of trust in Land Council amongst Tiwi traditional owners and community members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduce Manager of Tiwi Culture and Engagement to strengthen Tiwi community engagement Cultural Committee established to demonstrate greater responsiveness to cultural priorities Tiwi Leaders Forum Coordinator and Manager Policy and Advocacy roles introduced to coordinate and ensure Tiwi Land Council is listening and responding to Tiwi voices, regarding other priorities like education, health, leadership and service provision Establish a permanent office in Wurrumiyanga, and a presence in the other two communities Develop and implement leadership and development program for council members
Lack of representation of Tiwi traditional owners' interests in NT and Australian government and sectoral forums	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Active engagement with various policy forums and platforms to promote Tiwi interests in critical areas of NT and federal government responsibility (e.g. NTECAA, JSC for remote housing, APONT, etc.) Support improved coordination of services on Tiwi through Tiwi Leaders Forum.

4(iv) Operating context: Risk



Administering an **effective and efficient Land Council** sustained by the **trust of Tiwi people**

Key risks	Controls
<p>Delays or blockages in establishing the necessary structures, systems and internal capability to enhance effectiveness in the performance of our statutory functions, leading to poor outcomes for Tiwi and staff burnout.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Land Council's new staffing model ensures greater staff capacity and provides for shared management of key strategic initiatives. • Implement the Policy Governance Framework to guide the development, regular review and archiving of all Land Council policies and procedures. This will include the delegation of responsibilities to the Accountable Authority, Management and other staff as appropriate, promoting leadership and accountability in all processes within Land Council. • Areas of administrative focus include good governance, grant administration, fraud control management and work health and safety.
<p>Inadequate safety and communication systems for employees working remotely or in isolated areas</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop WHS Management Framework for Land Council that will guide the training and appointment for Health and Safety Representatives, First Aiders and Fire Wardens, safety checks on worksites (Darwin and Tiwi) and vehicles, safety procedures and communications for employees working remotely, isolated or alone in the office outside office hours. • Develop a crisis communication plan for responding to emergencies and to manage reputational risk. Provide training to Council members and employees on safety protocols and risk management.
<p>Inadequate, inappropriate and/or insecure ICT systems to support the business of Land Council</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commission an ICT threat assessment, with a focus on business continuity, information safety and security and recommended changes/improvements given the special nature of Land Council's context.

4.(v) Operating context: Cooperation and subsidiaries

Cooperation

There are many different organisations operating on the Tiwi Islands, working for the benefit of Tiwi people. It is critical that those organisations are working together in a coordinated fashion.

The Tiwi Land Council is committed to maintaining and strengthening working relationships with these organisations. Our focus is on ensuring that the Tiwi people have trust and confidence in the Land Council and its work.

We work with a range of stakeholders to achieve our purpose and actively participate in regional forums that help us to progress matters of shared priority. A list of major stakeholders is set out on the right.

Subsidiaries

The Tiwi Land Council has no subsidiaries.

Key stakeholders	Nature of partnerships
Northern Territory Land Councils <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Anindilyakwa Land Council</i> <i>Central Land Council</i> <i>Northern Land Council</i> 	Share knowledge of best Land Council practices and collaborate on policy priorities on behalf of Aboriginal people in the NT
Tiwi owned corporations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Tiwi Enterprises Ltd</i> <i>Tiwi Resources Pty Ltd</i> <i>Tiwi Islands Training and Education Board (TITEB)</i> <i>Tiwi Plantations Corporation Pty Ltd</i> <i>Tiwi Partners</i> <i>Tiwi Port and Marine</i> <i>Bathurst Island Housing Association Inc (BIHA)</i> <i>Clan group corporations</i> 	Work in partnership, across different industries, to support Tiwi economic participation
Local Government <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Tiwi Islands Regional Council</i> 	Coordination of municipal and essential services
Northern Territory Government Agencies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Department of the Chief Minister and Cabinet</i> <i>Department of Logistics and Infrastructure</i> <i>Heritage Branch</i> <i>Aboriginal Areas Protection Authority</i> 	Coordination of programs and services for the benefit of Tiwi people
Australian Government Agencies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>National Indigenous Australians Agency</i> <i>Department of Finance</i> <i>Australian National Audit Office</i> <i>Aboriginal Investment Northern Territory</i> <i>Office of Township Leasing (OTL)</i> 	Funding support, regulation and audit. Close collaboration with OTL on account of their function in holding s19A leases over Townships.



5. Performance measures

The following performance measures are intended to support Tiwi Land Council, and other key stakeholders, to monitor our progress against the key activities and strategic priorities identified in this Corporate Plan.

In identifying appropriate performance measures, Tiwi Land Council staff have considered the need to understand performance from different perspectives – through both qualitative and quantitative measures – and to ensure that relevant data can readily be collected.

The Land Council performance results will be published in our 2025-26 Annual Performance Statements as part of our Annual Report.

We measure and assess our performance through the lens of our purpose, strategic priorities, key activities and performance measures to understand:

- what we expect to achieve within the reporting period and over the four years of the Corporate Plan; and
- the impact we hope to achieve in delivering our purpose.

We will review our performance measures each year to ensure they remain relevant and appropriate. We continue to uplift our performance maturity, by:

- refining our performance framework to strike the right balance between output, effectiveness and efficiency measures
- strengthening our rationales and methodologies
- embedding our monitoring and evaluation practices
- considering new measures as our remit and operating model is further embedded
- providing training to staff in data collection and evaluation
- continuing to ensure alignment with our key activities.

The performance measures presented in this plan have changed from those presented in the previous Corporate Plan. These changes have been made to ensure compliance with the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Rule (2014)*, and to ensure alignment with the revised key activities set out in this Corporate Plan. A summary of changes is included at Appendix A.

Over the reporting period, each department will be responsible for tracking, monitoring and reporting their performance against relevant activities and measures. A predetermined performance methodology (as outlined within each measure) will be used. Where a performance measure is supported by a target, business areas will be required to report against the target to demonstrate performance against the key activity and measure. For all performance measures, each department will assign a result rating for each measure, supported by clear evidence and data analysis as per the tolerance levels below:

- **Achieved:** 100% of the performance target has been achieved
- **Substantially achieved:** 75–99.9% of the performance target has been achieved
- **Partially achieved:** 50–74.9% of the performance target has been achieved
- **Not achieved:** <50% of the performance target has been achieved.



5. Performance measures



i. Key Activity: Managing the appropriate use of Tiwi land and waters, consistent with the wishes of Tiwi traditional owners

Performance measure	Why this matters?	Target FY25/26	Target FY26/27	Target FY27/28	Target FY28/29	Data sources
1.1 Land use application procedures comply with ALRA requirements and applications are processed in accordance with land council procedures	The ALRA requires that in managing Aboriginal land and sea, the land council protects the interests of Aboriginal people including through obtaining the consent of Traditional Owners and allowing for other affected Aboriginal people to express their views. The ALRA also states that the land council should use its best efforts to perform its functions in a timely manner.	Review and audit of 4 land use applications to monitor ALRA compliance	Review and audit of 4 land use applications to monitor ALRA compliance	Review and audit of 4 land use applications to monitor ALRA compliance	Review and audit of 4 land use applications to monitor ALRA compliance	Compliance report: Recorded, updated and maintained by Land Council staff – Resources and Environment Officers Methodology: Quantitative analysis of land use applications
1.2 Conduct compliance checks on executed land use agreements		4 compliance checks	4 compliance checks	4 compliance checks	4 compliance checks	Compliance checks: Recorded, updated and maintained by Land Council staff – PLO/Resources and Environment Officers Methodology: Quantitative and qualitative assessments of executed land use agreements
1.3 Develop and implement an effective and efficient permit system		Conduct Stage 3 permit review	Implement review recommendations	Implement review recommendations	Monitoring of permit system	Stages 2 and 3 review and recommendation reports: Recorded, updated and maintained by Land Council staff – Resources and Environment Officers Methodology: Qualitative analysis of the Land Councils' permit system
1.4 By 2028-29, a sea country Native Title Application is lodged with the National Native Title Tribunal	Tiwi people have an aspiration to gain more control over the use of the seas adjacent to their Islands, in a context where interest from external stakeholders in accessing or exploiting sea resources is increasing.	Consider funding options for NT Sea Country claim	Apply for Rep body, NTSP or alternative funding source, receive funding and plan claim steps	Prepare Native Title Sea claim	Lodge Native Title Sea claim	National Native Title Tribunal/Land Council Anthropologists Methodology: Qualitative assessment and analysis of Native Title Sea Claim for the Tiwi Islands
1.5 Genealogies and clan registers are digitised up to date and kept current	Having up to date and accurate genealogies and clan registers is critical to the performance of several key land council functions under the ALRA, including consulting with TOs and any other Aboriginal people interested in the land with respect to any proposal relating to the use of that land (Section 23(1)(c))	Genealogies: 70% Clan registers: 80%	Genealogies: 90% Clan registers: 90%	Genealogies: 100% Clan registers: 100%	Maintenance of Clan Register and Genealogies and up to date	Genealogies and clan registers: recorded, updated and maintained by Land Council staff Methodology: Quantitative assessment of genealogies and clan registers
1.6 Number of requests/actions to protect sacred and other significant sites to be finalised internally and submitted to AAPA (as relevant) within 12 months	Supporting the protection of sacred sites and sites of cultural significance is one of the land council's ALRA functions	65% of the requests are actioned	70% of the requests are actioned	75% of the requests are actioned	80% of the requests are actioned	Recorded, updated and maintained by Land Council staff – Anthropologists Methodology: Quantitative assessment of Sacred Site Protection requests

5. Performance measures



ii. Key Activity: Protecting the health of Tiwi country

Performance measure	Why this matters?	Target FY2025/2026	Target FY2026/2027	Target FY2027/2028	Target FY2028/2029	Data sources
2.1 Incursions and introductions of key threats to the islands	Land Council carries out the wishes of Aboriginal people to protect the unique Tiwi ecosystem.	0 new introductions of key threatening species	0 new introductions of key threatening species	0 new introductions of key threatening species	0 new introductions of key threatening species	Survey results and confirmed identification of key threatening species. Methodology: Quantitative analysis of key threatening species on country
2.2 Dedication of IPA and implementation of Plan of Management		IPA dedicated and funding agreement executed. IPA Committee established, and governance framework established. Service delivery contract with Tiwi Resources established.	Plan of Management effectively implemented.	Plan of Management effectively implemented.	Plan of Management effectively implemented.	Performance report from Tiwi Resources as per service delivery contract. Methodology: Qualitative assessment and analysis of Indigenous Protected Areas
2.3 Research activities inform and provide direction to Land Council to enable informed decision making	Informed and educated decision making, capacity building for Land Council	TLC to partner on two research projects	TLC to partner on two research projects	TLC to partner on two research projects	TLC to partner on two research projects	Research agreements issued by TLC Methodology: Quantitative assessment and analysis of research projects
2.4 Land Council coordinates Island wide strategies	It is important that all relevant stakeholders are coordinated in their management of Tiwi country. Land Council has an important role to play in fostering collaboration	Review and update existing Tiwi Island strategies	Review and update existing Tiwi Island strategies	Review and update existing Tiwi Island strategies	Review and update existing Tiwi Island strategies	Strategic partnerships Developed by Land Council staff together with stakeholders Methodology: Qualitative analysis and assessment of existing Tiwi Island strategies

5. Performance measures



iii. Key Activity: Sustaining and celebrating Tiwi culture

Performance measure	Why this matters?	Target FY2025/2026	Target FY2026/2027	Target FY2027/2028	Target FY2028/2029	Data sources
3.1 Develop the Tiwi festival into a recognised annual event, hold two further significant Tiwi cultural events and provide ongoing support for Kulama and Pukumani ceremonies	Members of the land council and the Tuwurrampila Cultural Committee have been consistent with their feedback that the Land Council must play a leadership role in relation to Tiwi culture events and ceremonies	Yearly	Yearly	Yearly	Yearly	Event impact and outcome: Facilitated by Tiwi Culture and Engagement Team and Tuwurrampila Cultural Committee Methodology: Quantitative analysis of event attendance and participation
3.2 Hold consistent meetings of the Tuwurrampila Cultural Committee	To ensure appropriate governance of Tiwi Land Council cultural activities	4 meetings	4 meetings	4 meetings	4 meetings	Minutes of Meetings: Facilitated by Tiwi Culture and Engagement Team and Tuwurrampila Cultural Committee Methodology: Quantitative analysis of Cultural Committee meetings
3.3 Identification, return and safekeeping of Tiwi cultural artefacts	Repatriation of Tiwi artefacts is a critical component of preserving and celebrating Tiwi culture, ensuring that Tiwi works are in Tiwi hands	Improve the safekeeping of artefacts already in the land council's possession	Negotiate the return of relevant artefacts	Creation of a safekeeping place for the artefacts	Secure the return and accessible display of Tiwi artefacts, including in both physical and virtual forms	Facilitated by Land Council Anthropologists Methodology: Qualitative and quantitative assessment of Tiwi artefacts

5. Performance measures



iv. Key Activity: Supporting development of, and participation in, the Tiwi economy

Performance measure	Why this matters?	Target FY2025/2026	Target FY2026/2027	Target FY2027/2028	Target FY2028/2029	Data sources
4.1 Facilitate coordinated approach to Tiwi economic participation	Land Council has a role to play in coordinating industry opportunities for Tiwi, with direction from Tiwi communities and in collaboration with Government and key proponents. We should assist, as appropriate, in economic advancement of Tiwi people within the Land Council region and support Tiwi led enterprise opportunities.	Develop a plan for a future Tiwi economy, that is grounded in Tiwi priorities and provides direction to all relevant stakeholders.	Support TOs and their Corporations to explore identified industry opportunities and engage with proponents	Support TOs and their Corporations to explore identified industry opportunities and engage with proponents	Support TOs and their Corporations to explore identified industry opportunities and engage with proponents	Land Council Economic Development Officer and Grants Officer Methodology: Quantitative and qualitative assessment of community, stakeholders and proponent engagements

5. Performance measures



v. Key Activity: Listening to, and promoting, **Tiwi voices** within and beyond our Islands

Performance measure	Why this matters?	Target FY2025/2026	Target FY2026/2027	Target FY2027/2028	Target FY2028/2029	Data sources
5.1 Establish a permanent staff presence on the Tiwi Islands	Permanent presence in all three communities and improved communication channels, to promote awareness on issues affecting Tiwi people, their land and other rights.	Secure new office site in Wurrumiyanga and develop plans and costings for the new office	Secure funds and commence construction of Wurrumiyanga office and identify shared tenancy arrangements for Milikapiti and Pirlangimpi	Complete construction of Wurrumiyanga office	Staff permanently based in Wurrumiyanga	Management Team Methodology: Quantitative assessment of staff permanent presence on Tiwi Islands
5.2 Hold regular clan meetings		3 per clan per year	3 per clan per year	3 per clan per year	3 per clan per year	Land Council Shared Calendar Methodology: Quantitative assessment of clan meetings
5.3 Hold consistent meetings of the Tiwi Leaders Forum	To support improved coordination of services on Tiwi and to promote Tiwi voices in external policy forums.	2 meetings	2 meetings	2 meetings	2 meetings	Minutes of Meetings: Facilitated by Tiwi Policy and Advocacy Team Methodology: Quantitative assessment and analysis of Tiwi Leaders Forum meetings
5.4 Issue regular editions of the Tiwi Newsletter - Pupuni Ngirramini	Communication tool about the Land Council's activities and initiatives for the Tiwi people.	4 newsletters	4 newsletters	4 newsletters	4 newsletters	Land Council Media and Communications Officer Methodology: Quantitative assessment of Tiwi newsletter

5. Performance measures



vi. Key Activity: Administering an effective and efficient Land Council sustained by the trust of Tiwi people

Performance measure	Why this matters?	Target FY2025/2026	Target FY2026/2027	Target FY2027/2028	Target FY2028/2029	Data sources
6.1 Audit and Risk Committee Meetings	To support Land Council in fulfilling corporate governance and oversight responsibilities in reporting, external and internal audit, risk management and internal control, compliance, fraud and corruption, ethics and organisation culture	4 meetings	4 meetings	4 meetings	4 meetings	Minutes of Meetings: Governance, Risk and Compliance Officer Methodology: Quantitative analysis of Audit Risk Committee meetings
6.2 Develop and implement an Internal Audit Framework (IAF)	To enhance efficiency by better understanding how policies and procedures boost effectiveness; understand Land Council's operational risks including health and safety issues, fraud and compliance and cyber threat and fine tune internal controls.	Internal audit reports are delivered, and recommendations implemented, in line with the IAF				Internal audit report and recommendations: Governance, Risk and Compliance Officer Methodology: Qualitative analysis and assessment of Internal Audit Framework
6.3 Conduct budget reviews against actuals and present financial reports to Council members and Accountable Authority	To ensure compliant use of funds and prudent budget estimates for transparency and accountability	Quarterly	Quarterly	Quarterly	Quarterly	Quarterly Financial reports: Chief Financial Officer/ Finance Team Methodology: Qualitative and quantitative analysis of budget against actuals
6.4 Unmodified auditors report	Land Council responsibly manage and adhere to the delivery of statutory and auditing requirements	Annual unmodified report	Annual unmodified report	Annual unmodified report	Annual unmodified report	Annual Financial Statements: Chief Financial Officer/Finance Team Methodology: Qualitative analysis and assessment of auditors report
6.5 Governance policies and processes are reviewed when they are due, updated and/or created and communicated	Good governance practices through ongoing policy reviews, consultation, monitoring, reporting and compliance management.	90% compliance with policy review framework	100% compliance with policy review framework	100% compliance with policy review framework	100% compliance with policy review framework	Updated Policies: Governance, Risk and Compliance Officer Methodology: Qualitative analysis and assessment of governance practices
6.6 Council member training and representation in forums, conferences and hearings on behalf of Land Council	To ensure Council members have opportunities to further develop their skills and are supported to perform their duties to the best of their abilities	2 training opportunities are delivered to Full Council, with additional opportunities for willing members to attend hearings and conferences	2 training opportunities are delivered to Full Council, with additional opportunities for willing members to attend hearings and conferences	2 training opportunities are delivered to Full Council, with additional opportunities for willing members to attend hearings and conferences	2 training opportunities are delivered to Full Council, with additional opportunities for willing members to attend hearings and conferences	Attendance list for each trainings/forums: Executive Officer Methodology: Quantitative assessment of trainings and forums for Council members
6.7 Relevant opportunities are offered to each Land Council employee, as identified through a training matrix and annual development plans	To ensure land council staff are equipped with the relevant skills to perform the requirements of their role.	100% of staff have active development plan; 80% of training budget expended	100% of staff have active development plan; 80% of training budget expended	100% of staff have active development plan; 80% of training budget expended	100% of staff have active development plan; 80% of training budget expended	Development plans: People and Capability Manager Budget: Chief Financial Officer Methodology: Quantitative analysis and assessment of trainings for Land Council employees

Appendix A: Alignment of performance Measures and Targets

Summary of changes to performance information and targets

The Land Council made several changes to its performance information following its annual review. Those changes are summarised in the table below.

Relevant performance measure – Corporate Plan 2024-2028	Relevant performance measure – Corporate Plan 2025-2029	Changes made	Rationale for changes
1.2 Conduct compliance checks on executed land use agreements.	1.2 Conduct compliance checks on executed land use agreements.	Targets for FY 2026-2028 were changed from 6 to 4 compliance checks	Target reduced to ensure a better balance between compliance activities and the ongoing need to efficiently process new applications
1.3 Develop and implement an effective and efficient permit system	1.3 Develop and implement an effective and efficient permit system	Timing of targets adjusted	Updated to reflect the revised timeframe for the permit review following delays in FY25
1.4 By 2027-28, the Land Council has lodged a Sea Country Native Title Application with the National Native Title Tribunal	1.4 By 2027-28, the Land Council has lodged a Sea Country Native Title Application with the National Native Title Tribunal	Targets for FY 2026 to FY 2028 were changed and rolled into subsequent year	These changes more accurately reflect future stages following recent discussions with the NLC (NTRB).
2.1 Incursions and introductions of new threats to the islands	2.1 Incursions and introductions of key threats to the islands	Updating wording to define the focus as key threats to the islands.	As TLC can't monitor all introductions, we need to focus on key threats to measure our performance against the target.
2.2 Dedication of IPA and sea country applications	2.2 Dedication of IPA and implementation of Plan of Management	Performance measures, targets and data source were amended.	These changes more accurately reflect future stages following recent completion of the consultation phase.
2.3 Research activities inform and provide direction to Land Council to enable informed decision making	2.3 Research activities inform and provide direction to Land Council to enable informed decision making	Targets for FY 2026 to FY 2028 were amended.	SRC is currently inactive. Updated targets allow TLC to participate in and to direct research that informs decision making.
2.4 Land Council develops Island wide strategies that inform management activities for all stakeholders	2.4 Land Council coordinates Island wide strategies	Performance measures, targets and data source were amended.	Updated language to better reflect what TLC are hoping to achieve.
5.2 Hold regular clan meetings	5.2 Hold regular clan meetings	Targets for FY 2026-2028 were changed from 4 to 3 clan meetings	Target adjusted in recognition of the high burden on staff participating in clan meetings and the challenge of progressing land use matters between meetings.