

RESPONSE TO NOUS REVIEW RECOMMENDATIONS - NTSCORP

TOR 1 Extent to which each organisation has achieved positive native title outcomes for persons who hold or may hold native title in its region taking account, where relevant, of disruptions caused by COVID-19. (Recs 1-2)
Rec 1 NTSCORP should continue to engage external anthropologists to ensure that it produces high quality connection reports and meets Federal Court deadlines.
Response Accepted. Implemented. Will undertake this process in all circumstances where the Commonwealth Funding Body provides funding for this purpose.
Rec 2 NTSCORP should establish processes that ensure it provides adequate briefings and support to external anthropologists that it engages, including ways to ensure culturally appropriate engagements where Community Facilitators have limited availability.
Response Accepted. Implemented in part. As explained during the review, NTSCORP provides comprehensive briefings to our external anthropologists. NTSCORP will continue this practice. NTSCORP is in the process of considering how field work should be undertaken if a community facilitator is not available. See also additional funding request below.
TOR 2 Extent to which each organisation assesses and prioritises applications for assistance in a manner that is equitable, transparent, and robust, and is well publicised and understood by clients and potential clients. (Recs 3-4)
Rec 3 NTSCORP should develop a public facing Facilitation and Assistance Policy that clearly outlines how requests for assistance are assessed and prioritised, to improve transparency. It should actively promote the document to Traditional Owners who are seeking engagement with NTSCORP.
Response Accepted. Implemented in part. As explained during the review NTSCORP had already developed a new Facilitation and Assistance Policy and application forms and a new Internal Review Policy for Board adoption. Our Website is currently being redesigned and it will be uploaded there once live.
Rec 4 NTSCORP should consider the development of new memorandum of understanding (MOU) with neighbouring NTRB-SPs to ensure a collaborative approach to cross-border claims.
Response Accepted. Yet to be implemented. This will be actioned in 2025

TOR 3 Extent to which each organisation deals respectfully, equitably, transparently and in a culturally appropriate manner with persons who hold or may hold native title in its region, including by adequately investigating and resolving complaints. **(Recs 5-10)**

Rec 5 NTSCORP should establish a more structured approach to responding to stakeholders so that missed calls and emails receive attention in a timely manner.

Response

Accepted in part.

Yet to be implemented.

As explained during the review NTSCORP staff do return calls, however there may be some delays due to workload. This recommendation will be raised at an all staff meeting in early 2025 and a process developed for a more streamlined approach to returning phone calls and emails.

Rec 6 NTSCORP should take steps to diversify its Community Facilitation team.

Response

Accepted.

Implemented in part.

NTSCORP will be making a funding request to N.I.A.A for ongoing funding to fund 3 new community facilitation staff.

Rec 7 NTSCORP should update its Complaints Policy to include procedures for dealing with real or perceived conflicts of interest.

Response

Accepted.

Implemented in part.

NTSCORP has redrafted its Complaints Policy to include procedures for dealing with real or perceived conflicts of interest. The revised policy will be referred to the Board for adoption in early 2025.

Rec 8 NTSCORP should ensure that it distributes information about claim group meetings and updates on the progress of claims and research to all relevant native title interest holders.

Response

Not accepted

NTSCORP already provides information about claim group meetings and the progress of claims and research to all native title holders who have contacted NTSCORP and registered. The contact lists are very comprehensive. NTSCORP cannot provide confidential material publicly and therefore does not accept this recommendation.

Rec 9 NTSCORP should develop more channels to update community members about native title matters. This should involve, at a minimum, updating the NTSCORP website and developing comprehensive annual reports containing information about performance of the organisation for the past year.

Response Accepted. Implemented in part. As explained during the review, NTSCORP's Website is currently being redesigned and it will go live in 2025. NTSCORP is also working on a comprehensive annual report for 2023-24 for publication.
Rec 10 To increase transparency and accountability to the community, NTSCORP should update its website to make key documents, such as its Complaints Policy, publicly available.
Response Accepted. Implemented in part. As explained during the review NTSCORP's Website is currently being redesigned. All key documents, including the Complaints Policy, will be uploaded there once live.
TOR 4 Extent to which each organisation performs its functions in a cost-effective manner, including by identifying the key cost drivers for the organisation. (Recs 11-12)
Rec 11 NTSCORP should benchmark salaries more frequently to ensure staff salaries remain competitive.
Response Accepted. Implemented in part. NTSCORP is currently undertaking a process to benchmark salaries to ensure we remain competitive.
Rec 12 NTSCORP should optimise its vehicle inventory by owning only the number of vehicles required to effectively carry out core business activities.
Response Accepted. Implemented. NTSCORP has sold 4 vehicles and only retains those which are required to carry out core business activities.
TOR 5 Extent to which each organisation has governance and management structures, and organisational policies and an organisational culture that support efficient and effective project delivery. (Recs 13-21)
Rec 13 NTSCORP should review its organisation structure to clarify the delegation of work and refine position descriptions to minimise senior staff members' involvement in lower level operational or administrative tasks, improve cost-effectiveness and enable senior staff to focus more on core business and strategic thinking.

Response Accepted. Implemented in part. NTSCORP is in the process of reviewing its organisational structure and subject to the outcome may need to make a funding request to N.I.A.A to implement the recommendation.
Rec 14 NTSCORP should appoint a Deputy CEO to ensure appropriate processes are able to continue when the CEO is away or overwhelmed with work.
Response Accepted. Implemented in part. This matter has been raised with the Board as part of a succession planning process and subject to the Board's decision, NTSCORP may need to make a funding request to N.I.A.A to implement the recommendation.
Rec 15 NTSCORP should undertake a strategic planning process to update its Strategic Plan and publicise the plan on its website to provide meaningful strategic direction for the coming three to five years.
Response Accepted. Implemented in part. The Board have approved the commencement of a collaborative process to develop a new strategic plan and once complete will be included on the website.
Rec 16 NTSCORP should implement mechanisms to create and maintain a culture where staff feel safe to give and receive feedback and make complaints.
Response Accepted. Yet to be implemented. NTSCORP's Policies and Procedures are under review. As part of this review, NTSCORP will seek advice from external employment specialists on appropriate policies to be adopted.
Rec 17 NTSCORP should establish or outsource an HR function to support recruitment and handle internal complaints.
Response Accepted. Yet to be implemented NTSCORP is in the process of reviewing its organisational structure and subject to the outcome may need to make a funding request to N.I.A.A to implement the recommendation.
Rec 18 NTSCORP should review and amend its Constitution to limit the tenure of Directors in line with best practice to encourage new Directors to join the Board and to ensure it represents the diversity of its stakeholders. Board renewal should be managed through a phased transition to ensure that only a portion of the Board is being renewed in each nomination period.

Response THIS RECOMMENDATION WILL BE CONSIDERED AT THE NEXT BOARD MEETING AND A RESPONSE WILL BE PROVIDED
Rec 19 NTSCORP should publicly advertise for new Board nominations.
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Rec 20 NTSCORP should consistently produce informative annual reports and make them available on its website. The annual reports should include information about NTSCORP's performance as a means of communication to its stakeholders.
Accepted. Implemented in part. As explained during the review, NTSCORP's Website is currently being redesigned and it will go live in 2025. NTSCORP is also working on a comprehensive annual report for 2023-24 for publication.
Rec 21 NTSCORP should prioritise the submission of budgets and financial reports on time to ensure that it complies with the requirements of its funding bodies.
Response Accepted. Implemented. NTSCORP has diarised reporting dates and revised internal processes to ensure it complies with reporting requirements.
TOR 6 Extent to which each organisation is adequately supporting Prescribed Body Corporates towards self-sufficiency. (Rec 22-26)
Rec 22 NTSCORP should develop and implement a publicly accessible policy that outlines the services it provides to PBCs. This document should be actively circulated to all PBCs and reviewed annually.
Response Accepted. Implemented in part. As explained during the review, NTSCORP has been developing a PBC Service Agreement and this is expected to be finalised, together with a Policy, in early 2025.
Rec 23 NTSCORP should implement formal service agreements or MOUs with PBCs as a matter of urgency to clarify the scope of support NTSCORP will provide PBCs.
Response Accepted. Implemented in part. As explained during the review, NTSCORP has been developing a PBC Service Agreement and this is expected to be finalised in early 2025
Rec 24 NTSCORP should develop and implement a fee for service policy for PBCs so that there is clarity for PBCs about additional support that can be provided from NTSCORP and to cover circumstances where a third party should be covering PBC costs in responding to Future Acts.

Response Accepted. Implemented in part. As explained during the review, NTSCORP has been developing a PBC Service Agreement and this is expected to be finalised, together with a Policy, in early 2025. A fee for service arrangement and third party costs recovery will be considered.
Rec 25 NTSCORP should undertake the development of a strategic plan for PBC development in consultation with the PBCs and use this plan to make a case for funding to further develop PBC capability.
Response Accepted/implemented in part. THIS RECOMMENDATION WILL BE CONSIDERED IN CONSULTATION WITH PBCs IN MAY 2025
Rec 26 NTSCORP should review its processes to ensure that funding to be provided to PBCs is allocated without unreasonable delay.
Response Accepted. Implemented. NTSCORP will design a new procedure for all assessment of needs and allocation of PBC funding, in line with N.I.A.A milestones for PBC Funding.
TOR 7 Extent to which each organisation has developed its planning for a post-determination environment (Recs 27)
Rec 27 NTSCORP should undertake strategic planning to define its role in the post-determination environment.
Response Accepted. Implemented in part. The Board have approved the commencement of a collaborative process to develop a new strategic plan which will include the organisation's operations in the post-determination environment.