The role of the Registrar of the Wreck Bay Aboriginal Community Council

This information sheet explains the role of the Registrar of the Wreck Bay Aboriginal Community Council (the **Council**) under the *Aboriginal Land and Waters (Jervis Bay Territory) Act 1986* (the **Act**). This information sheet explains how registered members can raise an issue or concern with the Registrar. It also explains what the Registrar generally can and cannot do.

What the Act does

The Act establishes the Council and gives it important responsibilities including core statutory functions to hold and manage Aboriginal Land for the benefit of the Wreck Bay community. The Council has functions which include managing and maintaining Aboriginal Land, protection of natural and cultural heritage, community service provision, land use planning, and conducting business enterprises for the economic or social benefit of registered members.

The Council is governed by an executive committee made up of the Chairperson, the Deputy Chairperson, the Secretary and six other elected members. The executive committee and the Chief Executive Officer together are the accountable authority of the Council under the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013*. Executive committee members may resign by notifying the Registrar in writing. The Act gives the Minister and the Registrar a role in removing executive committee members from office in particular circumstances.

Who is the Registrar?

The Act says that the Registrar of the Council is to be a person appointed by the Minister in writing. The Registrar is an SES employee in the National Indigenous Australians Agency (NIAA).

Current Registrar:

Selena Pattrick
Group Manager, Eastern Group
National Indigenous Australians Agency

The role of the Registrar

The Registrar **can act** only where the Act provides a specific function or power of the Registrar. The Registrar does not supervise or oversee the Council generally.

For example, the Registrar has a role to:

- Perform specific functions relating to Council meetings when required
- Perform specific functions relating to election of executive members when required
- Conduct fit and proper person investigations when required
- Inquire into grievances raised by registered members
- Act as administrator of the Council if all executive members are removed from office

Generally, the Registrar **does not**:

- Oversee the Council's governance or performance
- Review, change or overturn Council decisions
- Resolve general disputes within the community
- Direct the Council's strategy, priorities or service delivery

These are usually matters for registered members and the executive committee to work through in general meetings with reference to the processes set out in the Act and in the Council's governing rules and/or policies.

The Council is a member-based organisation. Registered members can:

- Ask questions
- Seek information
- Attend and vote at general meetings; and
- Call meetings and use meeting processes to raise concerns and seek change.

Registered members also have a responsibility to:

- Act respectfully and in good faith
- Use established governance processes; and
- Support proper community decision-making.

Contacting the Registrar

Registered members may contact the Registrar if they are aggrieved by action taken under the Act.

When raising a concern, registered members should consider including:

1. A clear description of the issue and expected outcome
2. Confirmation that you are or have been a registered member
3. The relevant part of the Act (if known)
4. Steps already taken with the Council to resolve the concern
5. Supporting records (e.g. emails, meeting notices, minutes or timelines); and
6. Whether you consent to information being shared (note information may be shared where necessary to assess the matter, including with the Council or the Minister).

This information helps the Registrar to determine whether the matter is within the Registrar's remit under the Act.

What happens next

The Registrar will assess whether the issue raised falls within the Registrar's remit under the Act and may request further information before deciding how to proceed.

Contact channels

Email: Complaints@niaa.gov.au

Phone: (02) 6152 3050

Online: Feedback and complaints | NIAA

Our Commitment to Privacy

The NIAA is committed to protecting people's privacy and handling personal information responsibly. Personal information is information about a person that can identify them, such as their name, contact details or other information linked to them. We will comply with the *Privacy Act 1988* (Cth) and take reasonable steps to ensure personal information is collected, used, stored, shared and disposed of appropriately. Protecting privacy is important to maintaining trust and is a responsibility shared by everyone in our organisation. More information on NIAA's Privacy Policy is available here: Privacy Policy | NIAA.

To find out more about how we manage personal information you may contact:

NIAA Privacy Officer
Phone: (02) 6152 3080
Email: privacy@niaa.gov.au

Important note

This information sheet is a plain language guide only. It is not legal advice. Registered members should refer to the Act, the Council's governing rules and/or policies and obtain independent legal advice if necessary.