empowered
C O M M U N I T I E S

Our 2017 Report

OUR NATIONAL VISION

Four years ago Indigenous leaders from eight regions - remote, urban and regional - joined forces to drive a common reform agenda for Indigenous empowerment.

The eight regions are shown on the map opposite.

THEIR VISION IS STRAIGHTFORWARD:

"We want for our children the same opportunities and choices other Australians expect for their children. We want them to succeed in mainstream Australia, achieving educational success, prospering in the economy and living long, healthy lives. We want them to retain their cultures, languages and identities as Peoples and to be recognised as Indigenous Australians."

Their aim is to shift the Indigenous affairs paradigm from passive welfare and government overreach to empowerment of Indigenous families and individuals. They have designed a model that will tip the power balance between Indigenous People and Government, making Government work with and for Indigenous people to close social and economic disparity, and ensure that identities, languages and cultures are not lost.

A commitment to the goal of development – development that fosters empowerment – is central, supported by getting greater value and productivity from critical investment in Indigenous affairs.

This requires successfully connecting and cementing the work of Indigenous People locally in regions with supportive structural changes to Government systems.

Business as usual ⟶ Empowered Communities

Current centralised
Government control

Indigenous People
with more control

CENTRE OF
GRAVITY

CENTRE OF
GRAVITY

It has to be done in a way that enables building capability, self-reliance, aspiration, opportunity and increased choice - that puts Indigenous People in the driver's seat, with responsibility and decision making for their lives and development resting with them. While the EC vision is shared, the specific pathway to empowerment varies across regions to suit local circumstances.

Map regions:
- NE Arnhem Land (NT)
- Cape York (QLD)
- East Kimberley (WA)
- West Kimberley (WA)
- Ngaanyatjarra Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara (NPY) Lands Central Australia
- Central Coast (NSW)
- Inner Sydney (NSW)

The national case for change

PRIORITIES FOR EMPOWERMENT

Indigenous People:

1 **Participate** in education & learning with parents involved

Proportion of children attending school 90% or more

Indigenous **49%** **79.3%** Non-Indigenous

2 **Care** for children and other vulnerable people

2:1 Indigenous children are twice as likely to be developmentally vulnerable than Non-Indigenous children

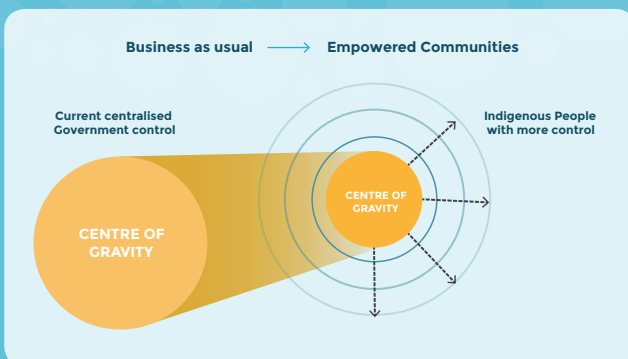**3** **Participate** in work or training

Labour force participation rate

Indigenous **55.9%** **76.4%** Non-Indigenous

Unemployment rate

17.2% Indigenous

5% Non-Indigenous

4 **Have stable housing** and aspire to home ownership

Proportion of homes that are owned outright or with a mortgage

Indigenous **37.4%** **69.6%** Non-Indigenous

5 **Live in safe communities** with rights respected under the law and the community's values

Indigenous people are over **13x** more likely to be hospitalised for assault than non-Indigenous people

Those who spearhead this movement have led reform in their own regions over many years. They now stand together, convinced that with the power of their collaboration they can shift the balance to Indigenous empowerment. It's a ten year journey they are making with Governments and corporate Australia (through Jawun) as crucial partners.

Our regional vision

We continue to work towards a community where our knowledge, identity and culture is valued and where we can access the best of both worlds.

This means that Aboriginal people have strong connections to land, language, people and culture (the 'home' world), as well as the aspiration, opportunity and capability to access a wide range of choices in broader society (the 'away' world) and achieve prosperity.
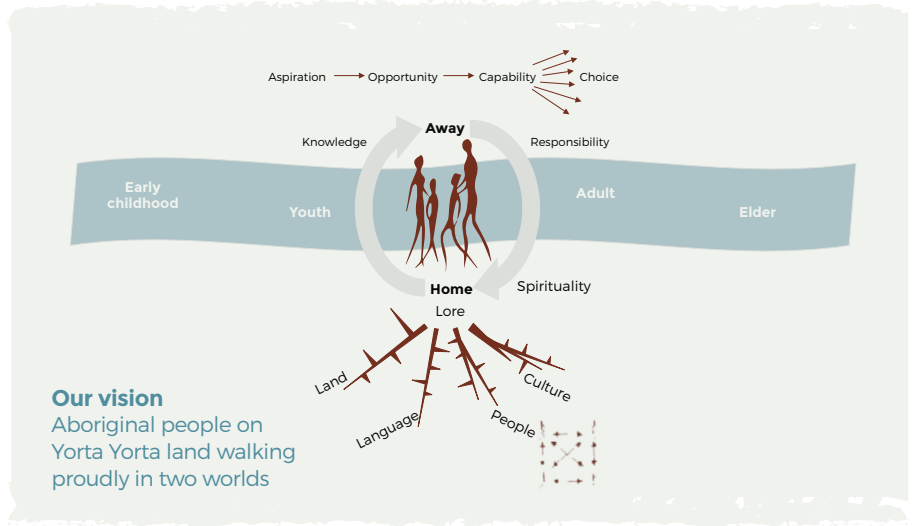
Our regional vision is to see our people achieve the same life choices and opportunities as others in the wider community; whilst still acknowledging and celebrating our Aboriginal heritage, which is in line with the broader Empowered Communities (EC) vision.
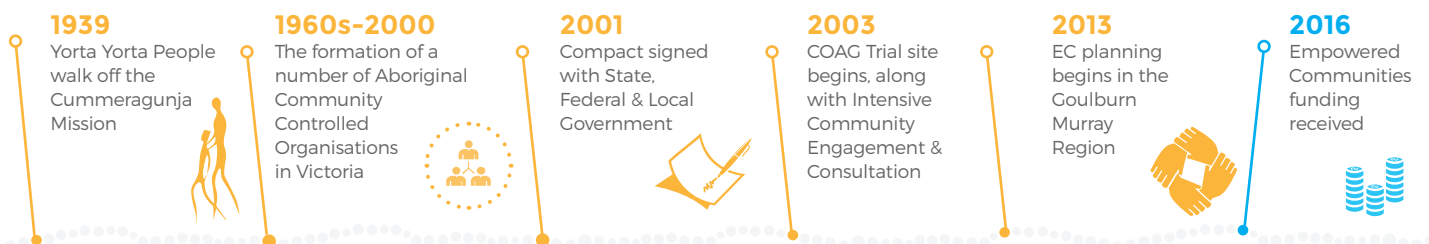
Our pathway of empowerment

To realise our aspirations for both the home and away worlds, we need strong families who have control over their own future, who can come together at community consultations and are equipped to negotiate their local community development agenda. Every community, family group or individual must have a platform where open and honest discussion can take place as to what their future will look like for each one of them. For this to happen we need to increase mainstream cultural competency, shared ownership and agendas, inclusive of increased cultural expression and affirmation.

Our vision
Aboriginal people on Yorta Yorta land walking proudly in two worlds

Our development focus

Empowerment priority	Our aspirations	Community tells us	Data tells us	We don't yet know
Indigenous People: ① Participate in education & learning with parents involved ② Care for children & other vulnerable people ③ Participate in work or training ④ Have stable housing and aspire to home ownership ⑤ Live in safe communities with rights respected under the law & the community's values	• Education • Employment • Justice • Health • Social inclusion & culture	**Education** Challenging the historically poor mainstream system and encouraging Aboriginal youth to realise high educational attainment. **Employment** Accessing more than 1,000 work placements for Aboriginal jobseekers **Justice** Developing partnerships and social justice ownership that focus on initiatives to increase community engagement, and that will also provide credibility and authority **Health** Addressing emotional and social wellbeing through provision of high-quality, culturally appropriate, community-controlled services and role models for strong positive social norms **Social inclusion** Raising the value of Aboriginal knowledge and expertise in modern economies, driving environmental, social and economic benefits for the whole community	**Education** Year 12 completion rate for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders young people aged 20-24 was **27%** (Census, 2011) **Employment** Of 620 people who reported being in the labour force of these **47.4%** were employed full time, **25.2%** were employed part-time and **20.5%** were unemployed (Census, 2011) **Justice** % increase in alleged offender incidents by Indigenous status for Goulburn Murray Region 2011-2016 was **16.51%** Greater Shepparton, **75%** Moira and **31.14** Campaspe **Culture** Total no. of Aboriginal artists has increased from **35** in 2010-2011 to **149** people in 2014-2015 (Gallery Kaiela data) **Social inclusion 44** people or **1.3%** of Indigenous population speaks Indigenous language at home	The Algabonyah Data Unit's first Annual Report Card for the Goulburn Murray region will be tabled later this year. This Report Card will build upon results contained within the recently tabled Interim Report and address any gaps in indicator reporting where data was not available at the time of publishing.

Our journey so far

1939
Yorta Yorta People walk off the Cummeragunja Mission

1960s-2000
The formation of a number of Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations in Victoria

2001
Compact signed with State, Federal & Local Government

2003
COAG Trial site begins, along with Intensive Community Engagement & Consultation

2013
EC planning begins in the Goulburn Murray Region

2016
Empowered Communities funding received

What we've done so far

In 2006, a Community Census was conducted in Shepparton that engaged all of the family groups. That information, along with other re-engagement events along the way, was used to inform the establishment of the first priorities in the Goulburn Murray (GM) Algabonyah model.

The establishment of the Backbone in the Goulburn Murray (GM) was created with the Kaiela Institute (KI) as the Secretariat for the Algabonyah Community Cabinet (ACC). At a community gathering convened to develop the Algabonyah model, a Yorta Yorta word for describing meeting place was selected. The use of the word Algabonyah represents the need for community to come together and have their voice heard.

KI took on the role of the Secretariat in 2015 with five Aboriginal Organisations initially opting in to make up the cabinet members. This number has since reduced. Paul Briggs is the Regional Leader for EC in the GM and is also the Executive Chair of KI. Now in 2017 after some changes along the way, the Backbone has Yorta Yorta/Ngarrindjeri Woman Jan Muir as the Regional Coordinator, Hamish Fletcher as Director of Strategic Policy and Implementation and Katrina Mohamed a Goreng Goreng Woman from South East Queensland as Executive Assistant to Paul Briggs. In addition, Jawun has provided ongoing support through the provision of secondees to EC.

# What are the changes we are starting to see...

SHIFT SCALE

No change yet — Big shifts
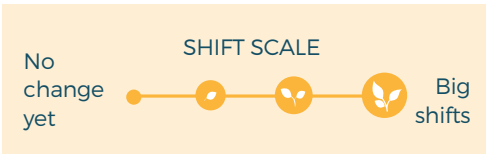
- **Decision making/empowerment** ●
- **Relationships & collaboration** ◉
- **Working differently** ●
- **Skills for change** ●

See overleaf for
CHANGE CASE STUDIES

How we are working together

Our initial approach sought to achieve our aspirations under the safety of the Malka (shield), a platform where there is collaboration between the primary decision-making partners.

The interim Algabonyah Community Cabinet, is composed of opt in community representatives and Aboriginal service delivery organisations.

MALKA

SHARED VISION

Cultural Authority

Opt In Organisations

ALGABONYAH

SECRETARIAT

SHARED AGENDA
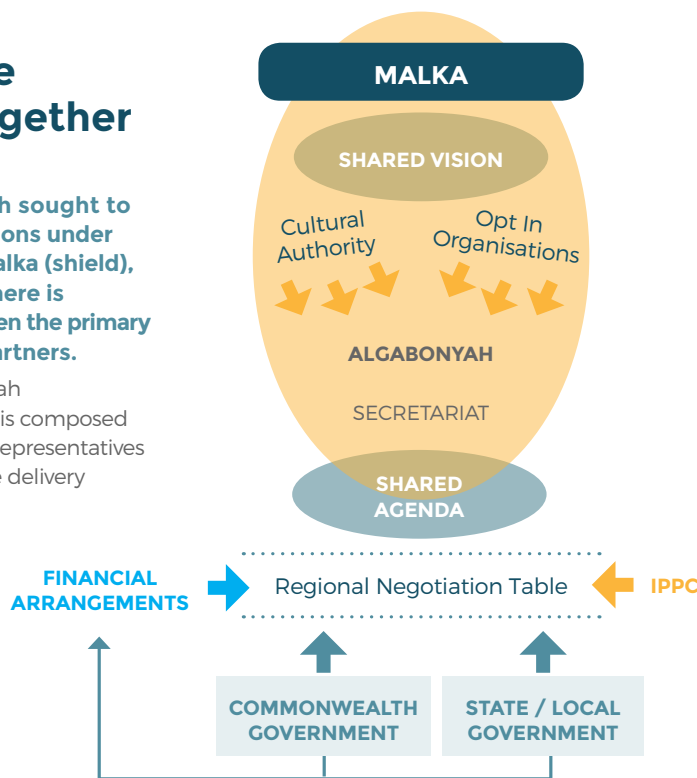
The interim structure of governance first used to form the ACC is under review.

The next round of Community Consultation planned for 2017 will go back to the Goulburn Murray Community to affirm the model of representation.
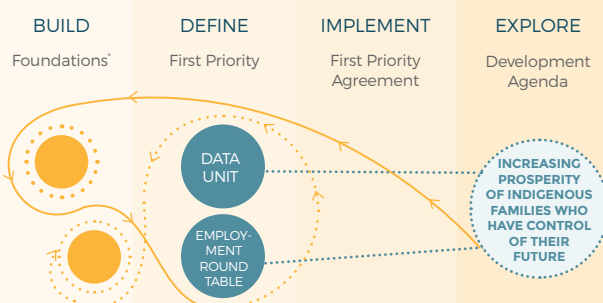
Specifically, the purpose of consultation will be to reaffirm the direction proposed in the 2006 Community Consultation.

The aim is to build trust and gain community support for a new form of regional Community Governance.

FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS → Regional Negotiation Table ← **IPPC**

| COMMONWEALTH GOVERNMENT | STATE / LOCAL GOVERNMENT |

Where we are up to

2016
EC Backbone is formed. Interim Algabonyah Community Cabinet is established. Economic Round Table & Education, Training to Employment round tables held.

Algabonyah Data Unit is established & work begins on a Regional Score Card.

BUILD
Foundations*

DEFINE
First Priority

IMPLEMENT
First Priority Agreement

EXPLORE
Development Agenda

DATA UNIT

EMPLOY-MENT ROUND TABLE

INCREASING PROSPERITY OF INDIGENOUS FAMILIES WHO HAVE CONTROL OF THEIR FUTURE

What's on the horizon

- **Intensive community consultation**
- **Formally establishing the Algabonyah Community Cabinet**
- **Continuity of regional planning**
- **Embedding Data Unit development**
- **Establishment of an Economic Development Unit**

*Champions, governance, backbone, community engagement & data

EMPOWERED COMMUNITIES

Where we are starting to see positive change

Algabonyah Community Cabinet

When EC in the GM was established the first model of governance was based on a reliance of opt in organisations making up the community representation structure.

As the model has progressed and as we head into the next phase of what EC will become, it seems clear that a new model of Community representation is needed to ensure that the Aboriginal Communities voice is heard and responded to in a way that builds strength and confidence in the EC vision. This will ensure the development of a community-led structure with strong backing, promoting transparency and accountability in decision-making.

A part of the current work being conducted by the EC Backbone, is preparing the next round of engagement with the GM Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community to re-establish their support for a re-defined representative model and to begin the consultation for what Community wants to see within a regional development plan.

The Algabonyah Data Unit

The Algabonyah Data Unit was established by the Kaiela Institute in 2016 to support the development of the Regional Annual Report Card.

The Algabonyah Data Unit will be responsible for facilitating the design and implementation of the community – based indicator framework, as well as the collection, analysis and reporting of relevant data. These activities will underpin the successful delivery of the Annual Report Card. The Algabonyah Data Unit reports through Kaiela Institute to the Algabonyah Community Cabinet.

The inaugural Algabonyah Economic Roundtable

The Roundtable was co-convened by the Algabonyah Community Cabinet, representing an alliance of Aboriginal community organisations from across the Goulburn Murray region, and the University of Melbourne.

It brought together regional and national leaders from universities, TAFEs, business, local, state and national governments, and the Aboriginal community. The Kaiela Institute facilitated the Roundtable.

The Roundtable acknowledged that the Goulburn Valley region faces high levels of economic uncertainty. Traditional regional employment sectors face intensive competition, resulting in structural changes. Workforce demand increasingly favours those with advanced skills matched to employers' needs, rather than lower-skilled or unskilled workers.

The Roundtable noted that, at present, approximately 1,700 Aboriginal people are employed in the Goulburn Valley region. However, Aboriginal people face approximately 20% unemployment, rising to 40-50% for youth. Many of those Aboriginal people who are employed are engaged in shrinking employment sectors. The Roundtable strongly emphasised the importance of identifying and promoting highly targeted education and training pathways to create a pipeline of supply that will meet future job demands.

From this round table came the Algabonyah Employment Brokerage Program and a commitment by a number of organisations to a 2% Aboriginal employment target within their organisations.

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COMMUNITIES