

ABORIGINAL  
CORPORATION

# *Annual Report*

**2014 - 2015**



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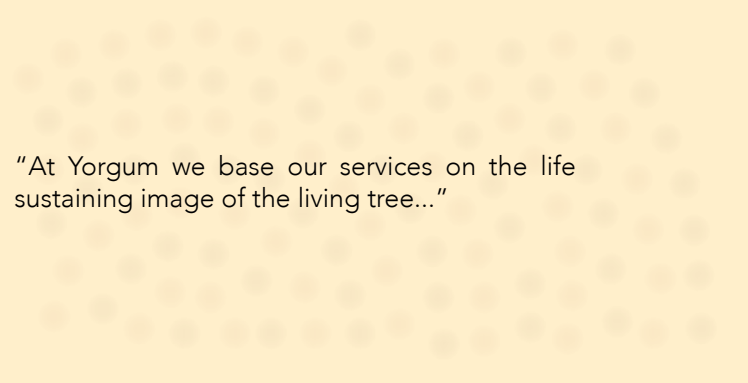
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"At Yorgum we base our services on the life  
sustaining image of the living tree..."





SECTION ONE

# About Yorgum

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## The Story So Far...

### BEGINNINGS

In 1991, a group of Aboriginal women, some of whom worked in women's refuges, discussed their concerns about the lack of appropriate counselling support for Aboriginal women experiencing spiritual, emotional and psychological pain. They came to the conclusion there was a need for a 'healing' approach rather than an ongoing, crisis-driven 'patch-up' approach. Their vision led to the establishment of Yorgum.

After many years of struggle for funding to sustain the service, Yorgum became incorporated in 1993. In that same decade, recommendations from the *Aboriginal Deaths in Custody Report*, the *Bringing Them Home Report* and the *Swan Mental Health Report* reinforced the importance of Yorgum, and the need for a strong team of Aboriginal Counsellors, as a unique and essential service.

Since those early days, Yorgum has grown stronger and has played an integral role in our community by assisting and supporting hundreds of Aboriginal clients with counselling and other supports.

### MEETING THE REAL NEEDS

The issues faced by our communities are complex and interwoven. The cyclical effects of violence and abuse experienced by many, are linked to a range of other issues such as health, finances, employment, education, and crime, deaths in custody, family fragmentation and loss of identity. Yorgum has strived to offer a holistic service that supports the whole person in the context of their family and community.

### THE SERVICE GROWS

This holistic approach has been enhanced over the years, by additional services. For example, in 2006 Yorgum was funded to provide *Link-Up Services*, *'Bringing Them Home'* Counsellors and, from WA Country Health, the *Building Solid Families* program. In 2010, Yorgum received funding to provide services through its Social and Emotional Wellbeing *Workforce Support Unit (WSU)* to specifically support workers funded through the PMC under the national Social and Emotional Well Being Program.

Two decades on, we are proud to be a strong, mature Noongar service, playing a crucial role in the healing of Aboriginal people in Perth and Western Australia.

Farewell

This year we sadly farewelled two deeply valued staff — Lorna Alone and Mary Nannup — who've been with us from the beginning.



# The Yorgum Way

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Yorgum's purpose is to provide a nurturing place, and an environment which promotes the cultural strength and empowerment of Aboriginal people and their families through a holistic healing process that supports their spiritual, physical, intellectual, and emotional wellbeing.

The 'Yorgum' is a large red-flowering gum tree which has healing properties. Aboriginal people have used this tree for thousands of years in the treatment of numerous ailments, including diseases of the eyes.

At Yorgum, we base our services on the life-sustaining image of the living tree: its deep roots, its rising sap, its blossoming flowers, its branches reaching to the sky, and the shelter and sustenance it gives to different forms of life — insects, reptiles, birds and other animals. All of these are a symbol of connectedness and inter-dependence in the diversity of living beings. This image conveys the philosophy of the Yorgum staff and the way in which they work.

We aim to heal and strengthen the whole tree, not just parts. We are not just addressing individual problems, we are aiming to nourish people and families and communities so that they grow healthy and strong together.

We value our diversity. Different individuals, different families, different language groups (from anywhere in Australia) are all included and respected in Yorgum. We remember that human differences can be accepted as expressions of our uniqueness and our capacity to survive.

The roots of the Yorgum represent the culture, identity, self-esteem and safety that helps us grow strong. When these roots are weak, when there is abuse, or when spirit or culture or identity or self-esteem are ignored or undermined, the tree – and all its individual parts, can become ill.

The soil that the Yorgum grows in represents the consistent, supportive and loving relationships and life enhancing values that we need to be healthy. A tree is an organic system. If the whole system is diseased, you can't just treat one of the roots and expect the rest of the tree to be healthy. You must treat the whole tree as well as the soil within which it grows.



"The shelter and sustenance it gives to different  
forms of life..."



SECTION TWO

# *The Year In Review*

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# Chairperson's Report

This has been a very busy and challenging year for Yorgum Aboriginal Corporation, but I'm pleased and proud to say that the hard work of the CEO and staff has helped us to meet all of the challenges and at the same time continue to deliver very important services to the community.

In 2014/15, the Chair was shared between myself and Laurence Riley. This helped us share a large workload, when we, like so many Aboriginal leaders, have a range of other commitments drawing on our time.

### A YEAR OF CHANGE

This was Laurel Seller's first year as CEO, and she and her management team showed enormous resilience and commitment in navigating a number of key changes.

The introduction of a dramatic restructure of funding by the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet — with the introduction of the Indigenous Advancement Strategy — was a major challenge. This saw Yorgum's management team heavily involved in developing a submission to maintain the activities of the Link Up and Workforce Support Programs. This caused a lot of stress throughout the Service, and we thank everyone for their professionalism in working through that. By the end of the year that professionalism was rewarded by the news that we had been successful in securing funding.

### SUCCESSSES

We are very proud of the fact that Yorgum also achieved accreditation this year. This is not only a reaffirmation of our staff's professionalism, but creates a solid foundation for us to become steadily stronger and more secure in the years to come.

The Department for Child Protection and Family Support (DCPFS) worked with us on a review into our clinical processes that has made us stronger and more effective as an organisation.

Yorgum's commitment to providing our services in culturally appropriate ways is reflected in our healing camps, our forums, our community activities, and by the growth in clients coming to our door, reflecting a growing community trust in our services.

### APPRECIATION

We want to take this opportunity to express our deep appreciation for Laurel Sellers and all the staff — including those who've moved on — who worked so tirelessly this year. Yorgum is an incredibly important organisation for our community, and it only continues because of all your work.

We know Yorgum has a bright future, and look forward to the coming year with hope and optimism.

**Bruce Loo (on behalf, also, of Laurence Riley).**



# CEO Report

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At the end of my first full year as CEO of Yorgum I feel honoured to follow in the footsteps of the founding members who, 21 years ago, saw the need for a place of healing for Aboriginal people, and did something about it. Over the years many others continued that work, and this year, we've worked very hard and, I think, effectively, to keep their vision alive in a changing world.

We must never lose sight of that vision. For me, it's all about our clients, and their families and our Aboriginal community. People don't come through our door with a label. They may not necessarily fit into just one program. That's why Yorgum has a team of people that can respond to and support each person in a holistic way.

This year we've had many challenges and achievements. It's been a tough year on many levels, but at the end we are much stronger than we were at the beginning, and the future looks bright.

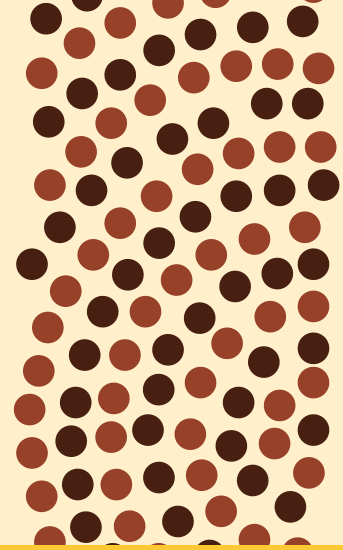
## SOME FEATURES OF THE YEAR

Far too much has happened this year to include in a short report, but a few features are worth mentioning.

- In May 2015 Yorgum were very proud to announce that we had achieved accreditation against the QIC Health and Community Services Standards.

Our accreditation status not only reassures our clients and partners of the quality of our services and work processes, but demonstrates our commitment to continuous improvement, excellent risk management processes and accountability to our community.

- Like many other Aboriginal agencies, we had to negotiate significant changes in funding, in response to the Commonwealth's new Indigenous Advancement Strategy (IAS). This required us to look closely at our services, and work together to articulate what we do well, and where we can continually improve. We really appreciate the fact that our value was recognised through ongoing funding under this program. There was a lot of work involved in these changes, but I think we have emerged from it with more clarity and direction.
- Yorgum's commitment to continuous improvement in our processes was reflected when taking on board recommendations from a review of our clinical processes by DCPFS. The recommendations in the Review had suggestions for further improving our client referral processes. Yorgum put procedures and processes in place to improve our standards in this area, and to continue to meet the requirements of the DCPFS funding agreement. As the year ended we were already seeing the fruits of this work in both the increase in numbers of clients served, and the quality of their experience.
- In an organisation like ours, data management is a significant challenge, because each funding agency has different data reporting requirements. This year we established a comprehensive and efficient data-base that creates the basis for much improved data collection, evaluation and accountability.



- Yorgum is one of three important Aboriginal health-related organisations located within close walking distance. Our close proximity within the triangle brings enormous potential as long as we work together. This year, in order to capture this potential, we commenced working on a Memorandum of Understanding with the Aboriginal Alcohol and Drug Service (AADS) and Derbarl Yerrigan Health Service. The aim of the MOU is to lock in an agreed process to enable our staff to work collaboratively to ensure the well-being of the people that we strive to serve.
- The quality of our work is dependent on the skills of our staff as they are our most important resource. They need to be passionate, skilled, united and collaborative. This year we invested in them by providing opportunities for extensive training and development. As a result, a number of staff have attained qualifications and developed and enhanced their skills. Through all the changes and challenges of the year we've strived to maintain the highest quality of service to our clients, families and community. I'm very grateful to all Yorgum's staff for their resilience and teamwork and the part they played in achieving our successes.

## INTO THE FUTURE

Our work this year has built a great foundation for the years to come. We have a number of plans 2015/16.

- We'll work together to review and embed our Strategic Framework, including the Strategic Plan, Business Plan, and Staff Development Plans. Every part of this Framework will be built on a culturally appropriate, professionally rigorous, person-centred approach to our work that ensures that everyone is focussed - first and foremost - on the client's needs and aspirations.
- The emphasis on staff training and development will continue, ensuring our staff are trained and competent in a culturally appropriate model of working.
- We will explore the potential of outreach services in the four corridors by engaging with other community based organisations in the Perth Metropolitan area.
- We will further embed our data-collection processes, so that we can efficiently meet the data needs of all our various funding bodies and programs.
- We will continue to deliver our Family Violence package and other Programs to the community.
- And of course we will continue to maintain and improve our services to all of our Clients.

I express my deep appreciation to the Yorgum team for your commitment, generosity and hard work throughout the year. We survived many challenges. Yorgum is strong and resilient and we look forward to a successful future.





## Thanks

Three key members of the Yorgum team left us at the end of the 2014/15 year.

**Martin Smith** was the manager of the Clinical Counselling Team through a difficult process of review and rebuilding.

**Alisha Roberts**, led the Workforce Support Unit through a time of uncertainty (due to funding changes), ensuring that the quality of service remained high.

**Daniel Millgate**, as Executive Assistant Manager, was instrumental in ensuring that Yorgum achieved accreditation, which has significantly strengthened our organisation.

We are grateful for their enormous contributions, and wish them well in their new endeavours.

This year the WA Governor, Her Excellency the Honourable Kerry Sanderson AO, visited Yorgum. She was keen to meet us after learning of our work from Dr Robert Isaacs OAM of the WA Aboriginal Advisory Council.

We welcomed her warmly. Anthony Kickett (A/Team Leader of Yorgum Link-Up) gave the Welcome to Country. That welcome was enhanced by a Didgeridoo performance by Martin Smith (Yorgum's Clinical Manager), and Bruce Loo (Board of Directors) acted as MC for the event. The Governor was also presented with Noongar clapping sticks and a beautiful coolamon, along with a bouquet of flowers.

Laurel Sellers (CEO) gave an overview of Yorgum, our history and philosophy. Over morning tea the Governor spoke with all of our staff individually, and learned more about our work and our personal journeys.

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## Governor's Visit

### "MY HOUSE AND YOURS"

There is a stained glass window in the Entry Hall of Government House. It bears the coat of arms of Queen Victoria, decorated throughout by beautiful red flowers with a yellow centre. These flowers reminded the Governor of the flowering Yorgum and provided a link, as Her Excellency said, "between my house and yours." Because of this she presented us with a framed print of the Window, alongside a photo of Yorgum flowers. It was a moving symbol of connection, and now hangs in our reception area, welcoming every client and visitor.



**Back Row L-R:** Dr Robert Isaacs, Martin Smith, Leon Henry, Alisha Roberts, Casey Grant, Jenna Trainor, Gloria Kickett, Patricia Ryder, Natalie Kickett, Jason Taylor

**Middle Row:** Anthony Kickett, Jindee Simmons, Kirsten Richardson, Jo Anne D'Cress, Edna Ninnette, Casey Butler, Carol Buckley MVO, Lauren-Rose Leigh, Leslee Skuse

**Front Row:** Roberta Cameron, Karen Farrell, Jodie Campbell, Bruce Loo, Laurel Sellers, Loretta Evans, Brian Johns, Daniel Millgate

**Seated:** Lennett Sandy, Mary Nannup, Lorna Alone, Her Excellency the Honourable Kerry Sanderson AO, Julie Potter, Laurence Riley.

# Objectives

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Our Objectives for this financial year were...

## OBJECTIVE 1

### ***Deliver Professional Services For Aboriginal People***

- To achieve accreditation
- To ensure culturally valued high quality reunification, workforce support and clinical practice
- To measure the quality of the services we provide

## OBJECTIVE 2

### ***Develop And Sustain Contemporary Cultural Services***

- Continue to lead the sector in the cultural services that we provide (includes reunification, workforce support and clinical services)
- To provide unique models of practice that draw positive attention
- To grow our service

## OBJECTIVE 3

### ***Maintain and Evolve a Secure and Stable Foundation***

- To provide internal stability through good governance and high quality processes and procedures
- To continue updating and improving the business

## OBJECTIVE 4

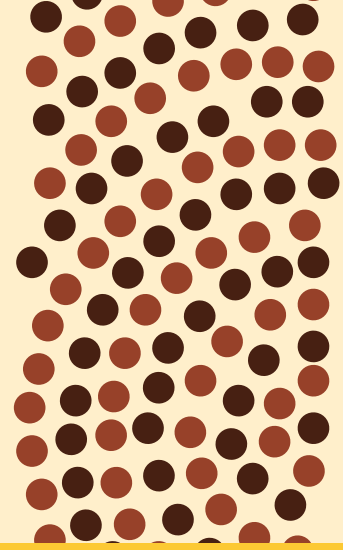
### ***Enhance Yorgum's Community Influence And Dialogue***

- To ensure brand clarity and strive for Community confidence and support
- To possess a clear engagement strategy for Community
- To increase the Management Committee's visibility in Community

## OBJECTIVE 5

### ***Engage And Develop Our Staff***

- To deliver high quality staff training, development and supervision
- To ensure staff are qualified against a benchmark
- To ensure the right people are in the right roles
- To build two-way trust and trustworthiness



# Program Areas

In 2014/15 we delivered a number of different programs. These are shown below, and more detailed reports are shown on the following pages.

## 1. LINK-UP

This unit provides support to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people separated from their families as a result of past government' removal policies and practices, including institutionalization and adoption or foster care. This Service aims to help members of the stolen generation to trace their families and be reunited with them where possible.

## 2. CLINICAL SERVICE

This service provides support to individuals and families under the following government funded Programs:

- Building Solid Families Program (WA Country Health);
- Child Sexual Abuse Therapeutic Service (Department for Child Protection and Family Support - DCPFS);
- Counselling for Aboriginal Children Experiencing Family Violence (DCPFS);
- Indigenous Family Safety Program (Prime Minister and Cabinet)
- Royal Commission Community-based Specialist Support Service (Department of Social Services)

## 3. WORKFORCE SUPPORT UNIT

This unit provides and coordinates support to all workers delivering Social and Emotional Wellbeing (SEWB) services.



"Benefits? Finding out about family connections; being able to speak openly and honestly about my own life experiences, getting positive feedback from other men. "

*Healing Camp participant*

# Link-Up

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The Link-Up Program provides a range of services to members of the Stolen Generations, their families and descendants, and their foster and adoptive families. The Program is funded by the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet.

## ABOUT THE SERVICE

The Link-Up Program is all about healing – in Aboriginal ways. It is about supporting people to heal from the direct and indirect social and emotional wounds inflicted on members of the Stolen Generations, as well as their families and descendants. We do this through research and assistance to people exploring their family history, and through healing groups, camps and activities. Our support workers include caseworkers, *Bringing Them Home (BTH)* Counsellors, and a Research team that undertakes the research on family information and connections.

Our workers are mainly based in Perth but we also have small offices in Kalgoorlie, and Port Hedland to support local people.

At Yorgum, we strive to follow a professional approach that is holistic and integrated, with a client and family focus.

## A GOOD YEAR

We in the Link-Up team feel very proud of what we have been able to achieve this year. It was a year of uncertainty, due to changes in funding related to the Indigenous Advancement Strategy (IAS). Through all this, though, we continued to focus on the social and emotional wellbeing of our clients and their families, and have emerged from the uncertainty with greater clarity and strength. Our BTH Counsellors, Caseworkers and Researchers all worked together to maintain high levels and quality of service delivery.

We brokered many reunions, and assisted many families in re-discovering their connections. We also had two very successful and effective healing camps (one for men and one for women).





"The staff were culturally sensitive and spoke with great warmth and understanding."

*Healing Camp participant*

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## A FEW HIGHLIGHTS

This year, we strived to ensure that the Healing Camps were designed to achieve clearer and more deliberate outcomes. We wanted to hold ourselves accountable to offering people something more than rest, respite and connection by investing in activities that would aid people in their healing journey. The feedback from the Camps was extremely positive.

We worked hard, this year, to strengthen and support our Link-Up services in Kalgoorlie and Port Hedland. The Kalgoorlie office was relocated from Bega Garbarringu Health Services to new premises in partnership with the Aboriginal Parenting Program. We managed to achieve this with minimal disruption.

Another highlight was a very successful music program in Kalgoorlie, aimed at young people who have been affected by the intergenerational trauma of forced removal, and facilitated in collaboration with Life without Barriers.

In June, Jo-Anne D'Cress left the Manager position for an acting role as Manager of Clinical Services. The vacated position was filled by Anthony Kickett who previously held the position of Link Up Team Leader. We believe this move will strengthen the essential partnership between Clinical Services and the Link-Up team. The capacity to refer Link Up clients to the Clinical service is a very important in our strategy to provide a wrap-around service to our clients in Yorgum.





## INTO THE FUTURE

We are aiming to strengthen our work of recovery from the damage done by forced removal of children. We hope to increase our focus in certain key areas. :

- We will place more emphasis on setting, measuring and achieving *bench-marks* that demonstrate genuine healing from the effects of forced removal. This will help us have a clearer understanding of who comes in, and why, and what activities and services make a genuine difference in their lives.
- The intergenerational effects of the Stolen Generations are continuing to impact parents and young people today. Whilst healing members of the Stolen Generations remains our core business, we want to use what we have learned from this work to assist *all* people affected, directly or indirectly, by policies or practices of forced removal.
- Whilst we know from experience that ‘yarning’ and informal relationship building are effective and culturally appropriate ways to foster healing, we want to put more effort into demonstrating this, by setting benchmarks and gathering and evaluating evidence in all that we do.
- None of this can happen without committed, skilled and united staff, so we will continue to build a strong team. In doing so, we not only strengthen Yorgum’s services to our clients, but also build the overall capacity of the Aboriginal community.

We extend our gratitude and appreciation to everyone – Caseworkers, Counsellors, Research Officers and Administration workers for their amazing, compassionate and empathetic services to people who have been impacted by forced removal of children.

Jo Anne D’Cress & Anthony Kickett





"The campfire has always been a place of yarning and storytelling; a place of healing, where we build strength and resilience. We still use it like that when we can. Around the campfire, people can feel safe in their own solitude and reflection, at the same time as they are connected and supported in a common space. Guys become relaxed and more engaged. The campfire makes us feel safe and clear enough to start talking about what worries us, or what matters to us."

Anthony Kickett  
*Link-Up Manager*







# Clinical Services

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Yorgum offers a unique, all-Aboriginal counselling service for Aboriginal people of all ages, including children. We strive to foster healing from family violence, sexual abuse, and grief and loss, as well as providing general support.

The word 'Clinical' can sound out of place in an Aboriginal healing service, but the Yorgum way is to provide services that are both professionally rigorous and culturally effective. We work in Aboriginal ways, informed by evidence-based practices that foster social and emotional well-being.

## A SOLID FOUNDATION

It's been a big year for our Clinical Services. We have successfully addressed some staffing challenges, worked towards and achieved Accreditation, and strived to meet all Key Performance Indicators required by the funding bodies. In addition, we have developed policies and procedures that ensured improved management, and have reviewed and improved our clinical forms and assessment processes. As a result, our referral processes, risk management, practice flow-charts and clinical policies have all been clarified and significantly improved.

We undertook a thorough review of our services, with the support of our funding body — the Department for Child Protection and Family Support. Our practices have become far more effective as a result, and we have welcomed improved accountability, both to the Department and, even more importantly, to our own community.

Another key focus this year was to ensure that all members of our clinical team completed the Diploma in Counselling, ensuring that our clients can expect the best from us in our counselling.

All of the above has given us a strong foundation to grow into the future and our client referrals have improved significantly as a result.

Another area of success has been in building stronger professional connections within Yorgum. We have improved the link between the Clinical counsellors and the Link-Up staff. This ensures that our services can be easily accessed by people using the various Link-Up programs, if they feel the need for clinical counselling.

## A SOLID FUTURE

Using this foundation, we're moving into the next 12 months with real confidence. We know we will continue to provide better quality services, to more clients. To achieve this, we have some important priorities...

We want to ensure that all our counsellors have access to the best possible clinical supervision. This work is as hard as it is essential, and our counsellors need to be fully supported to provide the best possible service, and to keep their own spirit strong so that the work remains sustainable.

We want to work harder to connect with, and gain the trust of, our community, and the various organisations that support them. We want to keep focussing on Yorgum's founding vision – we're here to offer healing to Aboriginal people, and we can only do that by reaching out to as many as possible, and make everyone feel welcome and safe when they call us, or walk in our door.

We want to ensure we are working with the entire Yorgum team to make this a place of welcome. Some of this is about our informal practice, not just our clinical work. We are not just 'clinicians'. We are Aboriginal people, here for the wellbeing of all Aboriginal people.

### **A STRONG TEAM**

As we said, it's been a big year, with a bigger one yet to come. It's all made possible by a team of skilled, dedicated and hard-working people. Our appreciation and gratitude go to them, and we hope and trust that we can support them in their commitment to bring healing to other Aboriginal people, in this uniquely 'Yorgum way'.

**Martin Smith & Jo Anne D'Cress**



"For me, the changes to our foyer reflect the approach we're trying to foster. That is, we want it to be a genuinely welcoming, and culturally safe place. Everyone is welcome when they arrive; even people who, for various reasons, have become angry and frustrated. Sometimes just 'having a cuppa' with someone can allow us to help them to the next step in their healing journey"

*Laurel Sellers. CEO*

"Sarah"\* is in her early 20s. She tragically lost her young son a few years ago, and has experienced ongoing domestic violence. For the last two years, Yorgum has been a constant in her life, and it has helped her heal. Although Sarah remains in the grief cycle, experiencing issues with housing and eviction, she empowered herself through accessing the support of Yorgum. We were able to help her through both counselling and case work. We linked Sarah with other services such as Aboriginal Alcohol and Drugs services and rehabilitation services, and she was able to develop alternatives to self-medicating.

Part of her 'grief counselling' was blanket-making. This sounds strange, but Catherine\*, her case-worker, explained that 'by occupying her hands she could get her mouth to go'. Catherine has been really impressed by Sarah's progress. "Sarah has come a long way... she now comes in and voices her needs", so she's empowering herself.

This speaks volumes of the trust and meaningful relationship that Yorgum built with Sarah, enabling her to feel safe and to advocate on her own behalf. Sarah's story is an example of culturally appropriate work Yorgum provides. Catherine says that part of this was that she, like Sarah, is Aboriginal, 'but I'm from different country'. This reinforced clear boundaries, within culturally appropriate services. Catherine adds: "Yorgum's door is always open. Sarah can always come in, and just as importantly, she can disengage from us whenever she feels she's ready."

*\* All names changed to maintain confidentiality*

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## ANCIENT KNOWLEDGE, MODERN PRACTICE

*"Flower Essence Therapy is an ancient healing discipline that has its oldest known living tradition with the Noongah Aboriginal people of the South West of Australia."*

"Living Essences of Australia" website

At Yorgum, we are now offering this practice of Wildflower Essence Therapy alongside our clinical services.



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## Workforce Support Unit

The Workforce Support Unit has been operating since 2010, to support all staff working in Social and Emotional Wellbeing Programs.

The staff that we support — “Social and Emotional Wellbeing” (SEWB) workers — are wide ranging. They include Caseworkers, Researchers and Counsellors, and work in a variety of programs, including positions related to *Link-Up*, *Bringing them Home*, *Stolen Generations*, *Substance Use and Mental Health*. They work in a number of agencies across the Perth Metropolitan area, and in regional WA from the Pilbara down to the Great Southern. The Workforce Support Unit continued to support all SEWB workers, enabling them to:

- Gain, at least, minimum qualifications;
- Access professional development opportunities;
- Identify the professional and cultural supervision that they may need to stay strong and effective in their work;
- Connect with, and learn from, each other and guest experts at forums, and
- Enhance their own self-care.

### CHANGES

This was a year of transition. The Federal Government’s Indigenous Advancement Strategy meant that all services — including all those we support — needed to tender for their funding. Clearly this led to a great deal of uncertainty, and a number of SEWB staff needed to look for work. While we were successful in securing another 12 months of funding, many of the agencies we support were not.

### ACHIEVEMENTS

Despite this uncertainty we remained focussed on our work of strengthening the SEWB staff. A priority for us was to ensure SEWB workers attained at the least, a Diploma of Counselling. In March this year the last of fourteen (of eighteen) workers achieved their Diploma (via Community Training Australia). Whilst the remaining four did not graduate, they achieved significant competencies.

In addition, the last of our students completed their Certificate IV Mental Health training and four people completed the Diploma of Mental Health at Marr Mooditj Training.



"The balance was perfect. Learning from experts, and also having fun and laughter. Warm and solid. It was a very, very special experience that will stay with me as a reminder of why I love being a part of a SEWB workforce/team. Thank You!"

*Professional Development Forum  
participant*

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## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FORUMS

A highlight of the year was the two Professional Development Forums that we convened for SEWB workers. The first Forum held in September 2014 at Monkey Mia, brought together workers from Derbarl Yerrigan, Ngangganawilli Aboriginal Health Service, Wheatbelt Aboriginal Health Service, and Yorgum.

Despite the uncertainty that many SEWB workers were feeling, this three day forum was filled with energy, connection and empowerment. We designed it to maximise networking opportunities, to offer professional and skills development, and to re-energise people in the difficult but essential healing work that they do.

The Regional Forum held in Perth in May 2015 was combined with a Statewide Forum and attracted almost 70 staff. At the State Forum, we joined with SEWB workers from the Kimberley region, and opened it up to all people who were working to enhance social and emotional wellbeing; not just those who were in specifically funded programs. This enriched the networking and the learning. It helped participants see beyond their own 'silos', and discover the wider healing work that is being done.

We had many key note speakers include Darryl Kickett, Pat Dudgeon, June Oscar and Robyn Williams, who shared their insight and expertise. All participants were able to learn from each other, and from their own reflections.

The evaluation results of both forums were consistently high, with an overall satisfaction rating averaging 4.4 out of a possible 5.

## MOVING FORWARD

Looking back, we can be proud of what the program achieved over the last 5 years. Yorgum attracts strong, committed staff and, this year, the WSU team demonstrated their resilience and commitment in the way that they remained focussed on empowering SEWB workers, despite the uncertainties of the year ahead.



## TRAINING THAT WE BROKERED OR DELIVERED...

Red Dust Healing is a specific cultural healing program — specific to the history and circumstances of Australian Indigenous people — developed by Tom Powell and Randal Ross. [www.thereddust.com](http://www.thereddust.com)

- **Red Dust Healing: Service Provider Workshop**
- **Red Dust Healing Workshop. (3 day intensive)**
- **Red Dust Healing: Train the Trainer (3 day intensive)**

Indigenous Psychological Services — established and led by Dr. Tracy Westerman — provides a range of programs that address the paucity of specialist mental health services for Aboriginal people, despite the obvious need for these. [www.indigenouspsychservices.com.au](http://www.indigenouspsychservices.com.au)


- **Suicide Prevention in Aboriginal Communities Delivered by Indigenous Psychological Services - Dr Tracey Westerman.**
- **Mental health Assessment of Aboriginal clients. Delivered by Indigenous Psychological Services - Dr Tracey Westerman.**

The Marumali program is based on a unique model of healing, developed and delivered by Aunty Lorraine Peeters, a survivor of the removal policies herself. [www.marumali.com.au](http://www.marumali.com.au)

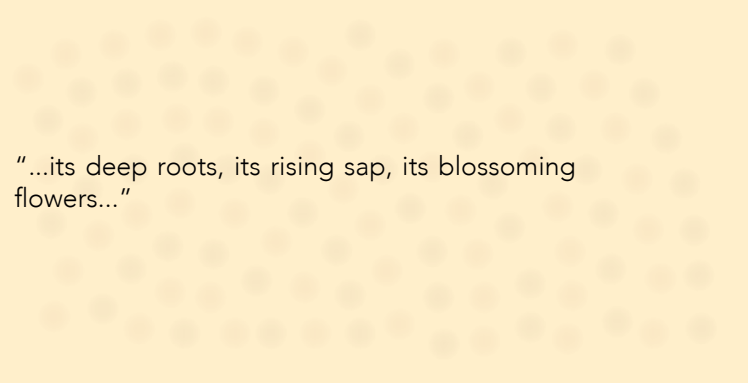
- **Marumali Training – Grief and Loss program.**
- **Senior First Aid delivered by St John's.**
- **Aboriginal Mental Health First Aid. Delivered by Yorgum**
- **Family and Domestic Violence. Delivered by Yorgum**







"...its deep roots, its rising sap, its blossoming  
flowers..."



SECTION ONE

# *Financial Reports*

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# Auditor's Report

## YORGUM ABORIGINAL CORPORATION

### STATEMENT BY BOARD OF DIRECTORS

For the Year ended 30 JUNE 2015

The directors of the Corporation hereby declare that:

The accompanying financial statements and notes of the Corporation as at 30 June 2015;

a) present fairly the Corporation's financial position as at 30 June 2015 and its performance for the year ended on that date in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards, mandatory professional reporting requirements and other authoritative pronouncements of the Australian Accounting Standards Board.

b) at the date of this statement, there is reasonable grounds to believe that the Corporation will be able to meet its debts as and when they become payable.

This statement is made in accordance with a resolution of the Board and is signed for and on behalf of the Board by:

Chairperson *g m. mated*

Dated this *26* day of *September* 2015

Perth, Western Australia



## YORGUM ABORIGINAL CORPORATION

### DIRECTORS' REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2015

The Directors present this report on the entity for the financial year ended 30 June 2015.

#### **Principal Activities**

The principal activities of the entity during the course of the year were Counselling, Link-Up and Workforce Support.

There have been no significant changes in the nature of these activities during the year.

#### **Operating Results**

The operating result of the entity for the financial year was a Profit / (Loss) of (\$225,506). (2014: \$269,652).

#### **Review of Operations**

A Review of the entity operations during the financial year and the results of those operations are as follows:

- a) The entity's operations during the year performed as expected in the opinion of the directors; and
- b) The entity continued to engage in its principal activities during the year, the results of which are disclosed in the attached financial statements.

#### **Significant Changes in State of Affairs**

There have been no significant changes in the state of the entity's affairs during the financial year.

#### **After Balance Date Events**

No known matters or circumstances have arisen since the end of the financial year which significantly affected or may significantly affect the entity's operations, the results of those operations or the state of affairs of the entity in subsequent financial years.

#### **Future Developments**

The entity expects to maintain the present status and level of operations and hence there are no likely known developments in future financial years.

#### **Environmental Issues**

The entity's operations are not regulated by any significant environmental regulation under a law of the Commonwealth or of a State or Territory.

YORGUM ABORIGINAL CORPORATION

DIRECTORS' REPORT  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2015

**Options**

There have been no options over issued shares or interests in the entity were granted, during or since the end of the financial year, for any person who is or has been an officer or auditor of the entity.

**Auditor's Independence Declaration**

The lead auditor's independence declaration for the year ended 30 June 2015 has been received and formed part of the financial statements.


**Proceedings on Behalf of the entity**

No person has applied for leave of Court to bring proceedings on behalf of the entity or intervene in any proceedings to which the entity is a party for the purpose of taking responsibility on behalf of the entity for all or any part of those proceedings.

The entity was not a party to any such proceedings during the year.

This statement is made in accordance with a resolution of the Board of Directors and is signed for and on behalf of the directors by:

  
Chairperson

  
Director

Dated this 26 day of September 2015

**INDEPENDENT AUDIT REPORT  
TO THE MEMBERS OF  
YORGUM ABORIGINAL CORPORATION**

**Scope**

We have examined the attached general purpose financial report for the year ended 30 June 2015. The Directors are responsible for the preparation and presentation of the financial report in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards (including the Australian Accounting Interpretations) and the Corporations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) Act 2006. This responsibility includes establishing and maintaining internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of the financial report that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error; selecting and applying appropriate accounting policies; and making accounting estimates that are reasonable in the circumstances.

The financial report has been prepared for distribution to members for the purpose of fulfilling the accountability requirements under the Corporations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) Act 2006 and the Corporation's constitution. We disclaim any assumption of responsibility for any reliance on this report or on the financial report to which it relates to any person other than the members, or for any other purpose other than that for which it was prepared.

Our examination has been conducted in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. These Auditing Standards require that we comply with relevant ethical requirements relating to audit engagements and plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance whether the financial report is free from material misstatement. Our procedures included examination, on a test basis, of evidence supporting the amounts and other disclosures in the financial report, the evaluation of the appropriateness of accounting policies and the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates. These procedures have been undertaken to form an opinion as to whether, in all material respects, the financial report is presented fairly in accordance with the basis of accounting described in the Notes to the financial report.

We believe that the opinion expressed in this report has been formed on the basis in which audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate.

**Independence**

In conducting our audit, we have complied with the independence requirements of Australian professional ethical pronouncements.

**Audit Opinion**

In our opinion:

- (i) the Directors and the Corporation have complied with the Australian Accounting Standards (including the Australian Accounting Interpretations); and
- (ii) the financial report has given a true and fair view of the Corporation's financial position as at 30 June 2015 and of their performance for the year ended 30 June 2015.





### **Inherent Uncertainty Regarding Going Concern**

Without qualification to the opinion expressed above, attention is drawn to the following matter. The financial report is prepared on the basis of the Corporation being a going concern. This is dependent upon continued funding from government agencies.

### **Compliance with the Corporations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) Act 2006**

In our opinion:

- (i) the Directors and the Corporation have complied with the obligations imposed by the Corporations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) Act 2006 and the Constitution of the Corporation; and
- (ii) the balance sheet is based on proper accounts and records and is in agreement with those accounts and records.

### **Compliance with Commonwealth & State (WA) Grant Funding Conditions**

In accordance with the various Commonwealth of Australia and WA Grant General Terms and Conditions for Funding Agreements Relating to Indigenous Programs, and subject to the scope limitations above

In our opinion:

- (i) The Grant Acquittal Statement gives a true and fair view of the Corporations' financial transactions for the year ended 30 June 2015 in accordance with the applicable Australian accounting standards and other mandatory professional reporting requirements; and is based on proper accounts and records.
- (ii) All assets with a purchase or construction cost exceeding \$5,000 (GST inclusive), acquired with Australian Government Funds have been insured with an insurer recognised by the Australian Prudential Regulation Authority or regulated by a State/Territory Auditor-General;
- (iii) The Corporation is maintaining an Asset Register of assets acquired with grant funds where the purchase or construction cost of the asset exceeds \$5,000 (GST inclusive);
- (iv) The assets or services purchased with grant monies were purchased in fair and open competition and in accordance with the approved procurement methods for the acquisition of assets or services as set out in the Supplementary Terms and Conditions.
- (v) The Association is maintaining appropriate bank accounts as set out in the Supplementary Terms and Conditions and during the financial year all transactions in each of these accounts was found to be related to the grant the account was established for.

**STIELOW & ASSOCIATES**



Leon Stielow  
**CHARTERED ACCOUNTANT AND REGISTERED COMPANY AUDITOR**  
**PRINCIPAL**

Dated this 23<sup>rd</sup> day of September 2015

Perth, Western Australia



**STIELOW & ASSOCIATES**  
CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS

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23 September 2015

Yorgum Aboriginal Corporation  
PO Box 236  
NORTHBRIDGE WA 6865

### **AUDITOR'S INDEPENDENCE DECLARATION**

I declare that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, during the year ended 30 June 2015 there have been:

a) no contraventions of any applicable code of professional conduct in relation to the audit.

**STIELOW & ASSOCIATES**

Leon Stielow  
CHARTERED ACCOUNTANT  
PRINCIPAL

Dated this *23<sup>rd</sup>* day of *September* 2015

Perth, Western Australia



Liability limited by a scheme approved under the Professional Standards Legislation.

23 September 2015

Yorgum Aboriginal Corporation (YAC)  
PO Box 236  
NORTHBRIDGE WA 6865

Dear Committee Members,

**RE: YAC AUDIT MANAGEMENT POINTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Please note the following points for your attention:

**1. Financial Controls**

The organisation is maintaining adequate financial controls and these are working effectively. This has resulted in a high level of compliance with the funding body Terms and Conditions of Grant Funding. The controls currently in place should be maintained on an ongoing basis.

**2. Grants - Ability to Repay Surplus Grant Funds/Complete Incomplete Activities with Available Funds**

As at 30 June 2015 and to the date of this letter YAC has the ability to, if required, repay surplus grant funds or complete all incomplete activities with the funds on hand. YAC should contact all funding bodies where surplus/unexpended grants exist to ascertain the status of these funds in terms of whether they will have to be returned or can be utilised this financial year.

**3. Taxation Liabilities & Court/Tribunal Orders**

YAC has paid the June GST/PAYG liability during July and according to their ATO Integrated Client Account have no other outstanding liabilities or unlodged BAS as at the date of this letter. As at the date of this letter no court or tribunal orders have been identified.

**4. Superannuation Entitlements (SGC)**

The SGC liability identified in the Financial Report which related to unpaid SGC as at 30 June 2015 has been paid in full. YAC has complied with ATO legislation and met its obligations in relation to SGC.

**5. Fees Paid to Directors**

No fees were paid to Directors from Grant funds during the period 1 July 2014 to 30 June 2015.

**6. Current Liabilities**

The amount required to meet current liabilities due in the 12 months to 30 June 2016 payable as a result of legal commitments entered into by YAC pursuant to the funding agreement is NIL.

If you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully  
**Stielow Associates**



Leon Stielow  
Principal



# Financial Statements

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## STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

for the year ended 30th June 2015

	2015 \$	2014 \$
<b>OPERATING REVENUE</b>		
Grants and contributions provided	4,572,802	4,652,834
Interest received	729	1,117
Other operating revenues	847,868	808,333
User charges and fees	-	-
	<u>5,421,399</u>	<u>5,462,284</u>
<b>OPERATING EXPENSES</b>		
Depreciation and amortisation	128,761	133,794
Employee Costs	3,007,844	2,269,501
Other operating expenses	2,178,773	2,789,337
Abnormal Item	331,527	-
	<u>5,646,905</u>	<u>5,192,632</u>
<b>CHANGE IN NET ASSETS FROM OPERATIONS</b>	<u>(225,506)</u>	<u>269,652</u>



**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION**

at 30th June 2015

	2015 \$	2014 \$
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>		
Cash at bank	1,239,271	2,891,698
Receivables	36,007	234
	<u>1,275,278</u>	<u>2,891,932</u>
<b>CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>		
Creditors	294,588	674,122
Provisions	144,851	153,929
Unexpended grants	297,176	782,949
	<u>736,315</u>	<u>1,611,000</u>
<b>NET CURRENT ASSETS</b>	<u>538,963</u>	<u>1,280,932</u>
<b>NON CURRENT ASSETS</b>		
Property, plant and equipment	3,066,950	2,550,487
	<u>3,066,950</u>	<u>2,550,487</u>
<b>NET ASSETS</b>	<u>3,605,913</u>	<u>3,831,419</u>
<b>EQUITY</b>		
Accumulated surplus	<u>3,605,913</u>	<u>3,831,419</u>

**STATEMENT OF WORKING CAPITAL**

at 30th June 2015

	2015 \$	2014 \$
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>		
Cash at bank	1,239,271	2,891,698
Receivables	36,007	234
	<u>1,275,278</u>	<u>2,891,932</u>
<b>CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>		
Creditors	294,288	674,122
Provisions	144,851	153,929
Unexpended grants	297,176	782,949
	<u>736,315</u>	<u>1,611,000</u>
<b>NET CURRENT ASSETS</b>	<u>538,963</u>	<u>1,280,932</u>
<b>CURRENT RATIO</b>		
(current assets/current liabilities)	<u>1.73</u>	<u>1.80</u>

**STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN EQUITY**

for the year ended 30th June 2015

	2015 \$	2014 \$
Accumulated funds at the beginning of the year	3,831,419	1,645,584
Change in net assets resulting from operations	(225,506)	269,652
Add: Assets Revaluation Reserve	-	1,916,183
Accumulated funds at the end of the year	3,605,913	3,831,419

# Funding Sources

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Of course, none of our work would be possible without funding, and we genuinely appreciate the trust shown in us by our four primary funding bodies.

## **The Department for Child Protection and Family Support (DCPFS)**

The Department's mission is to protect and care for children and young people who are in need, and support families and individuals who are at risk or in crisis.

## **The Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet (PMC)**

The Department's principal function is to provide high-quality policy advice to the Prime Minister and the Cabinet on matters that are at the forefront of public and government administration.

## **The WA Country Health Service (WACHS)**

The WA Country Health Service is committed to providing accessible health services to the regional population, and a quality health care workforce.

## **The Department of Social Services (DSS)**

The Department of Social Services aspires to be Australia's pre-eminent social policy agency. Their mission is to improve the lifetime wellbeing of people and families in Australia.

## **Healing Foundation**

The Healing Foundation helps our people to heal by connecting them back to our culture, philosophy and spirit.

## **Indigenous Land Corporation (ILC)**

The ILC is a corporate Commonwealth entity, established in 1995, with the purpose of assisting Indigenous people to acquire and manage land to achieve economic, environmental, social and cultural benefits.





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## Nine Guiding Principles

Yorgum continues to be guided *both* by the principles of professional practice *and* by 'Aboriginal ways of working'. These 'ways of working' are well summarised by the nine 'guiding principles' adopted by the *National Strategic Framework for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples' Mental Health and Social and Emotional Well Being*.

1. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health is viewed in a holistic context, that encompasses mental health and physical, cultural and spiritual health. Land is central to well being. Crucially, it must be understood that when the harmony of these interrelations is disrupted, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ill health will persist.
2. Self-determination is central to the provision of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health services.
3. Culturally valid understandings must shape the provision of services and must guide assessment, care and management of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' health problems generally and mental health problems in particular.
4. It must be recognised that the experiences of trauma and loss, present since European invasion, are a direct outcome of the disruption to cultural well being. Trauma and loss of this magnitude continues to have inter-generational effects.
5. The human rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples must be recognised and respected. Failure to respect these human rights constitutes continuous disruption to mental health, (versus mental ill health). Human rights relevant to mental illness must be specifically addressed.
6. Racism, stigma, environmental adversity and social disadvantage constitute ongoing stressors and have negative impacts on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' mental health and well being.
7. The centrality of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander family and kinship must be recognised as well as the broader concepts of family and the bonds of reciprocal affection, responsibility and sharing.
8. There is no single Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander culture or group, but numerous groupings, languages, kinships, and clans, as well as ways of living. Furthermore, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples may currently live in urban, rural or remote settings, in urbanised, traditional or other lifestyles, and frequently move between these ways of living.
9. It must be recognised that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have great strengths, creativity and endurance and a deep understanding of the relationships between human beings and their environment.





**YORGUM ABORIGINAL CORPORATION**  
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