



Kokatha Aboriginal Corporation RNTBC

ABN: 17 649 502 722 ICN: 8093

PRESS RELEASE

KOKATHA ABORIGINAL CORPORATION'S HISTORIC APPOINTMENT

The State Aboriginal Heritage Committee has appointed its first Recognised Aboriginal Representative Body (RARB), which will lead to greater control for Aboriginal people in managing their own cultural heritage.

Kokatha Aboriginal Corporation is the first approved by the Committee under the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 1988*, and it will now represent the views and negotiate on behalf of all Traditional Owners of Aboriginal cultural heritage within its appointment area.

The appointment will see Traditional Owners directly negotiate the way Aboriginal cultural heritage is managed under development.

Its appointment follows that of the Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara and Maralinga Tjarutja RARBs, which were automatically appointed when the legislation was amended in 2017.

KAC Chair, Ms Kahlia Gibson said "there were tears of joy" at Kokatha's office when news of its appointment was received.

"This is a monumental moment for Aboriginal communities in South Australia and the Kokatha community in particular," Ms Gibson said.

"This decision signifies a welcome change in heritage protections and highlights the importance of Aboriginal people managing their own affairs.

"This achievement should be celebrated as a sign that we are on the path to self-determination, and this is not just a change for all Kokatha people to celebrate, but for all Aboriginal people."

The State Aboriginal Heritage Committee Chairperson, Mark Koolmatrie, said the first appointment has been a long time coming.

"For the last seven months, we have worked collaboratively with KAC to develop best-practice policies, particularly in the areas of consultation, dispute resolution and heritage management," Mr Koolmatrie said.

"KAC is a worthy appointment. Its board and staff have demonstrated their unified vision for their corporation, for Kokatha people, and for Aboriginal people across the state. The Committee congratulates Kokatha on its achievement."

Premier Steven Marshall said the important appointment would see greater control and transparency for Aboriginal people over decisions affecting their heritage.

"I congratulate the Kokatha Aboriginal Corporation on its appointment as a Recognised Aboriginal Representative Body," Premier Marshall said.

Kokatha Business Centre, 35 Flinders Terrace, Pt. Augusta SA 5700 ; PO Box 3030, Pt. Augusta West SA 5700 Email admin@kokatharntbc.com.au : phone: 08 86422068: Web page: www.kokatha.com.au



Kokatha Aboriginal Corporation RNTBC

ABN: 17 649 502 722 ICN: 8093

“This significant announcement recognises the importance of safeguarding Aboriginal heritage and ensures Traditional Owners are at the centre of decision-making about that heritage.”

All native title holders and claimants have priority for RARB status under the Aboriginal Heritage Act.

To assist those bodies wishing to be appointed, the Committee has developed model principles for inclusion in RARB policies, which the Committee requires before an appointment can be made.

For further information:

From Kokatha Aboriginal Corporation: Cate Ballantyne, CEO, 8642 2068

From the State Aboriginal Heritage Committee: Jill Walsh, Executive Officer, 8226 8900