
MONTHS IN REVIEW

JANUARY–FEBRUARY

Compiled by Lucy Jackson and Rebecca Gallegos

17/12 The Federal Government releases its Mid-Year Economic and Fiscal Outlook confirming its decision to cut \$43.1 million from the legal services sector, including \$13.4 million from Indigenous legal aid.

20/12 The Supreme Court of Western Australia dismisses the Collard family's application for compensation in a Stolen Generations test case. Dennis Eggington, CEO of the Aboriginal Legal Service, describes this outcome as devastating.

23/12 The NSW Planning Assessment Commission approves the extension of the Rocla sand mine at Calga near the Central Coast. Aboriginal people and local residents have expressed their concern over the approval process and the protection of a sacred site located on the mine site.

31/01 The Northern Territory's eight super shires are replaced by a new local government structure of regional councils, with local authority members now being paid for their roles.

01/01 In his New Year's Day Message, Prime Minister Tony Abbott says he will use 2014 to begin 'a conversation' about recognising Indigenous people in the Constitution.

07/01 Gunbalanya becomes the first community in the Northern Territory (NT) to trial a Federal Government truancy officer plan. Federal Indigenous Affairs Minister Nigel Scullion says the program will be expanded to 19 other NT communities by the end of January.

09/01 The Federal Government announces its national parliamentary inquiry into alcohol misuse and violence will focus only on misuse in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities across the nation.

14/01 Nominations for the Indigenous Governance Awards open. Visit iga.reconciliation.org.au for information.

10/01 A second appeal against an order made by the mandatory alcohol treatment tribunal is lodged in the Alice Springs courts.

22/01 The Girramay people of northern Queensland are awarded freehold title to over two hectares of land.

25/01 AFL star Adam Goodes is named Australian of the Year for his community work through the 'Go Foundation' and advocacy against racism; Fred Chaney AO is named Senior Australian of the Year for his work in reconciliation and Indigenous affairs.

26/01 Survival/Australia Day, and the 65th anniversary of the Australian Citizenship Act, is observed.

01/02 The traditional owners of Badu Island are granted freehold title over 9000 hectares of land, following several years of negotiations with the Queensland Government.

04/02 The Federal Court dismisses a challenge to the Rio Tinto mining lease brought on behalf of the Dhurilli nation, finding that the Northern Land Council had fulfilled its obligation to properly consult and advise all relevant groups.

05/02 Former CEO of the Katungul Aboriginal Corporation Community and Medical Services, Damien Matcham, is ordered to pay over \$1.2 million in fines and compensation in a groundbreaking decision by the Federal Court. Mr Matcham has been banned from being involved in the management of any Aboriginal or Torres Strait Island corporation for 15 years.

05/02 Noongar man Shayden Thorne arrives back in Perth following his release from a Saudi Arabian prison. The Perth man had been jailed in 2011 after being accused of possessing terrorism-related material on a laptop.

12/02 The Prime Minister delivers the annual Closing the Gap report. Figures show improvements in child mortality, year 12 completion and a small improvement in life expectancy. There has been limited progress in literacy, numeracy and employment rates have increased.

13/02 The sixth anniversary of the Commonwealth's Apology to the Stolen Generations is commemorated.

14/02 The 10th anniversary of the death of Thomas 'TJ' Hickey is marked by a rally in Sydney. The group marched to NSW Parliament House via Redfern Police Station, calling on the NSW Government to apologise over the death of the 17-year-old in 2004.