National Native Title Tribunal

Commitment to Service Excellence

About the National Native Title Tribunal

The National Native Title Tribunal (Tribunal) is an independent agency established by the *Native Title Act 1993* (Cth) ('the Act').

The Tribunal comprises a President and members, who are appointed by the Governor General under the Act to make decisions, conduct inquiries, reviews and mediations, and assist various parties primarily with native title applications, right to negotiate applications and Indigenous land use agreements ('ILUAs').

The Tribunal is supported by the Native Title Registrar, also appointed by the Governor General. Together, the statutory office-holders of the organisation (the President, members and the Native Title Registrar) each have separate and specific functions and responsibilities to perform under the Act.

Members of staff are employed by the Federal Court of Australia under the *Public Service Act 1999* (Cth).

Members of staff and the Native Title Registrar are required to act in accordance with the Australian Public Service (APS) Code of Conduct. The APS Code of Conduct is available on the Australian Public Service Commission website. A copy of the code may also be obtained by contacting the Tribunal directly.

The President and Tribunal members have entered into a voluntary Code of Conduct. A copy of the code is available on the Tribunal website or by contacting the Tribunal directly.

More information about the Tribunal is available on our website at www.nntt.gov.au. You can also call us on 07 3052 4040.

Our vision

We strive to make predictable, just decisions; ensure procedural justice; and deliver a fair and efficient dispute resolution service. It is important to us that the Tribunal, the Native Title Registrar and all members of staff are competent, reliable, honest, conduct themselves with integrity and are respectful of others.

Our service standards

You can expect us to:

- carry out our functions in a fair and impartial manner
- be courteous, helpful and respectful of your individual needs
- give you prompt and responsive service
- provide you with clear, accurate and up-to-date information
- explain our decisions and decision making processes
- deliver our services in a safe and secure environment.

Please note our members of staff cannot give legal advice or recommend a lawyer to represent you.

Our Expectations

To help us deliver the best possible service, we expect you to:

- provide us with complete and accurate information
- tell us promptly of any changes to your contact details
- keep appointments or tell us in advance if you are unable to keep an appointment

- communicate with our staff and members in a polite and respectful way. If behaviour is abusive or threatening, we may need to change or limit the way we communicate with you
- let us know if you require information or assistance within a specific timeframe
- respond promptly to our requests for information
- treat our staff with courtesy and respect
- tell us about any special needs you have so we can try to meet them
- let us know in advance if you need an interpreter to use our services
- ask us to explain anything you are unsure of.

If you need the assistance of an interpreter, please contact the Translating and Interpreting Service on 131 450 and ask them to call the Tribunal.

If you have a hearing disability or speech impediment**,** please contact us through the National Access Hub. For more information, visit accesshub.gov.au

Feedback and Complaints

We value your feedback, as it helps us ensure we are meeting the needs of our clients. If you wish to provide general feedback on our services, please do so:

- in person at one of our offices
- by calling us on 07 3052 4040
- in writing to the National Native Title Tribunal, PO Box 12440, George Street Post Shop, BRISBANE QLD 4003
- electronically by emailing enquiries@nntt.gov.au.

If you are not satisfied with the level of service you have received, you can make a complaint or provide us with feedback detailing your concerns.

When responding to complaints or concerned feedback, the Tribunal will respect and, so far as possible, take account of the needs of the person, including any language or cultural barriers, difficulties with literacy, or disabilities.

The manner in which we deal with and respond to a complaint or feedback will depend on whether the complaint relates to:

- *Tribunal services* – general issues about the quality of the Tribunal's services, such as the provision of assistance and information
- *Staff assisting the Tribunal* – the conduct of a member of staff
- *The President, Tribunal members or the Native Title Registrar* – the conduct of the President, Tribunal members or the Native Title Registrar
- *Tribunal mediation* – the conduct of Tribunal members or staff in the course of providing mediation assistance

You cannot make a complaint to us about a decision made by the President, a Tribunal member or the Native Title Registrar, or the decision making process. If you do not agree with a decision in which you have an interest, you may be entitled to appeal or seek a review of the decision. Our staff can provide you with information on the procedures for seeking review of a decision, but cannot give you advice on whether you should do so.

You also cannot make a complaint to the Tribunal about a person who represented you in Tribunal proceedings, however, our staff may be able to assist in directing you to the appropriate organisation with which to lodge your complaint.

How to make a complaint

If you wish to make a complaint or provide feedback regarding your concerns please

email NNTTRegistrar@nntt.gov.au or phone the Registrar's Office on (07) 3052 4040.

If you prefer to make your complaint or provide feedback in person, please do so at the Tribunal office nearest to you. If the matter is complex, we may ask you to put it in writing.

If you wish to make a complaint or provide feedback in person and require an interpreter or someone with a similar cultural background to assist you, or if you have a hearing disability or speech impediment, please discuss this with us in advance and we will make every effort to accommodate your needs.

Responding to your complaint or feedback

Once a complaint or feedback is received, we will act as soon as possible to:

- try to resolve the matter informally
- acknowledge it in writing
- investigate the matter, having regard to the appropriate standards
- contact the person who raised the matter and advise them of the outcome, either verbally or in writing. If the outcome involves the appointment of an independent investigator, this will be undertaken as quickly as possible.

A complaint can be withdrawn at any time.

If you are dissatisfied with the response to your complaint, you can seek an internal review by the President of the Tribunal.

If you feel your complaint has not been dealt with adequately following an internal review, then you can contact the office of the Commonwealth Ombudsman.

Complaints to the Commonwealth Ombudsman can be made in person, by calling Freecall 1300 362 072, electronically at www.ombudsman.gov.au or in writing to GPO Box 442, Canberra ACT 2601. The Commonwealth Ombudsman cannot hear complaints about the President, Tribunal members or the Native Title Registrar.

If the complaint relates to the conduct of a Tribunal member or member of staff providing mediation services, you can also contact the Registered Mediation Accreditation Body under which the mediator is accredited. For more information, please contact us on 07 3052 4040 or visit the Mediator Standards Board at www.msb.org.au.

Confidentiality

Information about your complaint will be kept confidential, subject to the need to disclose information in the proper investigation of the complaint and the requirements of the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* (Cth) and the *Privacy Act 1988* (Cth). If you are concerned about the confidentiality of your complaint or other personal information, please discuss this with a member of staff.