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ANNIVERSARY  
GANDANGARA

Local Aboriginal Land Council

Marumali  
Gandangara Health Services  
Gandangara Transport Services

ANNUAL  
REPORT

23  
24



## A MESSAGE

## FROM OUR BOARD DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON

### **We Put The Sand In The Pit, But We Don't Make The Sand Castles**

My role as Deputy Chairperson is to support the Chairperson of the Gandangara Local Aboriginal Land Council. On the occasions when the Chairperson is unavailable, I step in to emulate the role, but when the Chairperson is available, I resume my role as Deputy Chairperson and Board member. I also act as a touchstone for other Board Members. In addition to the Members Meetings, we have regular Board Meetings where we discuss issues and proposals and the strategic direction of GLALC. Following our election in September 2023, we welcomed three new Board members who haven't served on the Gandangara Local Aboriginal Land Council Board before, and they are still familiarising themselves with our processes. We welcome them and value the addition of new experiences and insights they bring to the Board.



**DIANE  
VAN AKEN**  
*Deputy Chairperson*



A central requirement and responsibility of the Gandangara Board, to our Members, is overseeing the implementation of the objectives and strategies established in the Community, Land and Business Plan. The four leading priorities for growth and improved performance in the recently completed Business Plan was the protection and promotion of Aboriginal culture and heritage, the provision of community benefit schemes, the acquisition, management and development of land and other assets, and the development of business enterprises and investments.

Even though the Board is responsible for overseeing the CLBP, the hands-on implementation of all strategies and programs is an operational matter and is the responsibility of the CEO Melissa Williams, and her management team. However, we support the implementation of all strategies, initiatives and programs by making sure we read all the documentation that comes before the Board as well as doing our due diligence. This is a central requirement of our code of conduct, and to also be across all relevant issues within them.

We always appreciate the advice of the CEO and any relevant expert subject submissions, especially on complex issues like finance and land claims. Usually, all documents are read prior to our gathering for a Board meeting to discuss matters. Inevitably, someone will have questions, which we welcome, and we often listen to presentations and proposals by external suppliers who have submitted their credentials to provide a service to us. Having read and heard all matters a member of the Board puts forward a motion, which is then seconded and voted on. All votes and abstentions are officially

recorded. Once a formal approval is given by the Board, the CEO is then directed to implement the agreed actions.

We support the CEO by not making things difficult for her and her Leadership team. There are a wide range of interests and opinions on the Board, which is important to have, but we make sure we keep personal interests and agendas separate from operational matters. We put the sand in the pit but we don't build the sandcastles.

### **We Have Secured Our Dreams & Own Our Future**

I think that our most significant achievement of the past year or so has been the purchase of 105 and 107 Moore Street. It's been a long time in the making since 2019, with a drawn-out negotiation process, which has been frustrating for both our Members and everyone at Gandangara, but we have succeeded in securing our dreams. This is a profound outcome that will resonate throughout our community for generations to come. Now, plans are well underway for the creation of our new Health and Wellness Hub at 105, and 107 will provide us with a strong rental income stream well into the future. These purchases will both contribute strongly to our economic development and asset values.

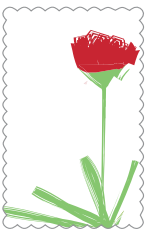
Having both the Cultural and Heritage and Health and Wellness Hubs in one location unifies our groups into one strong body and provides a one-stop shop for our Elders and Members. They will have easier access to the services they need, and a holistic support environment. We have wanted this for a long time and it is now becoming a reality. It gives us all,

as a community, the pride of seeing what we have achieved out of our consultations. We own our future, and it proves to us and the world just how much we are able to achieve for ourselves, by ourselves.

### **Better People Deliver Better Results & Grow A Better Organisation**

We are a people business, so it makes sense that if you bring in better people through a merit based recruitment process, you will build a better business, and that's exactly what has happened at Gandangara. And much of the credit for this has to go to our CEO, Melissa Williams, management team and network. Six years ago, at Gandangara's administration centre, we barely had ten staff. I was the Admin Manager, and we had a receptionist, a site Manager, a property person, a CEO and three finance people. Back then, there were days when I had to lock the door to go to the bathroom because I was the only one there. A multi-million-dollar organisation, run by a skeleton staff. Today, we now have over fifty people across all the groups, because of our CEO Melissa Williams' foresight and business acumen, that has insisted on raising our standards. We are blessed with a strong and experienced management team supported by skilled and experienced professionals, who are very cohesive and work well together, often after hours.

The formula is simple. Better people deliver better results and grow a better organisation. I believe that without the expansion of the quality staff that the Board and Management have acquired, we probably wouldn't have been successful with the Western Sydney Infrastructure grant submissions, which was



even more significant. And in turn, we wouldn't have had the resources to buy the two buildings on Moore Street. We are now confidently applying for more and more grants, knowing we have skills and experience to make convincing presentations, and we also have the resources to deliver on those grants that we do win. It's hard work but it's rewarding because we are growing stronger and faster.

Another pleasing feature of the past year or so has been the increase in Membership and community engagement. More and more people are being attracted to what we have to offer them, and because of what we have come to mean and represent to them. Connection. Belonging. Thriving.

### Building Up Our People

Each year we continue to work on expanding, and growing the value of, our land assets. One of our three successful Western Sydney Infrastructure Grants Program (Formerly West Invest) grant applications made last year has led to the Cumberland City Council negotiating with us for the use of McCredie Cottage and over 11,800 square metres of surrounding land. This unique property will be redeveloped into the Gandangara First People's Support Centre for Veteran Rehabilitation and Youth Diversion programs. This will be a permanent, purpose-built centre dedicated to promoting the health and wellbeing, independent living, community and social access, and return to work support for community veterans and ex-servicemen, and for young men at risk of re-offending. The centre will be

created by transforming the existing Linwood property into a heritage and green space community asset.

### Every CLBP Gives Us The Opportunity To Improve, On The Last One

One of the main priorities, in our newly published Community, Land and Business Plan, is economic growth, through increasing the quantity and value of our properties and land holdings. We want to explore a range of opportunities to help build our residential portfolio, and to increase our land holdings with successful land claims.

We also need to be agile. The CLBP is our guide to agreed outcomes, but we also have to be able to adjust effectively to events that affect us but are beyond our control, such as elections of new governments, changes in legislation or government policy. We need to respond positively so that we



can keep building on what we have achieved, and continuing to implement. That's why I believe every four-year CLBP gives us the opportunity to improve and grow on the last one.

### **One Gandangara Consolidates All Our Strengths Giving Pride & Respect, To Our Community**

One Gandangara means having a united front, which is important in an organisation and in a community made up of people from very different backgrounds, with very different attitudes, expectations and life experiences.

From a business perspective One Gandangara consolidates all our strengths into one whole unit that is greater than the sum of its' parts. This enables us to leverage the strong positive perceptions and relationships of one entity into our other entities, for the

benefit of all. My time at Gandangara will come and go, but I know that I will be leaving behind a successful legacy for the next generation to build upon.

Importantly our community will hopefully gain a renewed sense of purpose, seeing that they are instrumental, through community consultations, in helping to achieve this goal. We are elected to the Board to represent the Members. We feel a sense of accomplishment as well, through unseen challenges at times, knowing we have delivered. They also get empowered services that get strength from each other. Sadly, self-determination for Aboriginal people can be elusive but having such a strong organisation as Gandangara representing their interests and providing them with practical support, provides the motivation and encouragement to achieve it for themselves.

### **A Big Welcoming Home For All Of Us**

What I am looking forward to most in the near future, is seeing the transformations that will happen to the buildings at Moore Street. They are now becoming a real time, three-dimensional realisation of our ambitions. It's something wonderful that we can all be excited about. It will deliver a really big contribution to our community and social life, as well as providing many employment opportunities for Aboriginal people. And it's going to happen in my term in office.

As this happens, we can create a 360-degree presentation of what to expect on our website. This will heighten interest and build anticipation, as it comes closer to being a reality, bringing the community and our Members on board for the journey.



## A MESSAGE

## FROM OUR CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

The primary objectives of the Chief Executive Officer is to effectively manage the operations of GLALC in accordance with delegated authorities; to provide accurate and sound advice to the Chairperson and Board to enable informed decisions in a timely and appropriate manner.

### **1: MANAGEMENT & LEADERSHIP OF STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES**

#### **A Winning Game Plan**

Sport is in the DNA of Australians. We love to compete, to play hard but fair. Most of all, we love to win competitions, so we learn how to win. The first requirement of a successful team is to develop a winning game plan (our CLBP), and then build and mobilise the team to put the game plan successfully into action. To achieve that requires everyone on the team to understand their role, to get over the line for our Members and community.

To be a successful organisation is no different. It is, after all, a team effort. And every team wants to win. That's why it is important to make sure we have a winning game plan, clearly articulated to achieve better lives for the community we serve. We also have to invest in Our People who will help us deliver on our commitments and objectives. Our game plan, for meeting the needs and wants of our Members and community, is set out in our Community, Land and Business Plan 2024-2028. It is there for everyone to see, so if we don't deliver, we are not winning. It is that simple.



**DR MELISSA  
WILLIAMS**  
CHIEF EXECUTIVE  
OFFICER



## We Share A Two-Way Street

Our success relies on the complementary efforts of our organisation, our Members and our community, all working together on a two-way street. We all have a vested interest in a better life for all people and we know our roles. Gandangara's role is to execute the game plan, and our Members' and community's role is to give us feedback to improve what we do, and to support and use our services. Without our Members and community we would not be in business.

## Reaching For Higher Standards

There is a truism about behaviour and performance that makes this telling observation: The standards you walk past are the standards you accept.

Given the importance of our work to the people who rely on us the most, we really do need to reach higher

standards in our performance because, nowhere in Australia have we closed the gap. We have to show by our example, and by the standards to which we operate, that we are proving the case for change in others. We are showing people what we can achieve. We all have to have a stake in the game. We hire people who share our values and objectives, and we are getting people who are invested in this community. People who have already proved their standards line up with ours. We are

invested in the standards of practice in all we do in both outsourced and in sourced resources.

## Beating The Stereotypes & Closing The Gap In Understanding

It is vitally important to us to show Australia that we can work together well. That we can be equally proud of all people in our community. I don't want another year to go by for our Council to be tarnished by unfair and uniformed perceptions that we can't do this, or achieve that, or we can't handle money and we can't work with people. The truth is, we are beating all these stereotypes, in every way. That's why we want to show everyone and silence our critics. We are leaving a strong legacy for our future generations. We carefully and astutely invest the money we have been entrusted to look after, into the means for closing the gap. We do this because we respect and value our community, our people, and our country, so we all need to be invested in this belief, and not be selfish. We all need to remember our values and what's at stake here – to do better by our Members – and give it our wholehearted support.

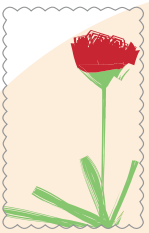
We are dedicated to measurably improving the quality and length of the lives of our Members, and for all people, which is why we do have strategies in place to address the 17 year gap in life expectancy between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people. However, out in the wider world there exists a real gap in understanding of many of the factors that have long

term negative impacts on Aboriginal people, and others in our community.

There is little understanding of the impact of intergenerational trauma, or knowing how to deal with people who have low levels of literacy and numeracy, or the treating of diseases that were introduced. So many people are coming to us presenting with a growing range of problems, many of which have gone undiagnosed. They come to us because we understand how to relate to people, how to engage with them in a culturally safe and insightful manner. That's why we get better feedback from them, and are then able to provide for their needs that much better, so they do begin to enjoy a better life.

Our practical experience and understanding enhances our provision of the services we offer, and we are growing our team of specialists and skilled health providers, who also share our values and have cultural sensitivities. This is another clear demonstration that we are succeeding in these crucially important areas. Having said that, it's not easy to find such people, because in order to drive the ambitious plan our Members and community have set for us, you have to be at the top of your game, you have to be resilient and have determination to keep overcoming the hurdles that are always there. But we are finding them.

We also have a proven model of successfully investing in services that many deeply affected people can



benefit from, such as survivors of the Stolen Generation, and those who have suffered abuse or are dealing with drug and alcohol abuse.

With so much at stake, and with so many people relying on us, if we don't have people standing up and showing up, to fight for what we are striving to get, then we won't achieve them. That's why we need to support the ones we do have that are standing up and showing up every day for our goals.

This is not my personal request, it is a statement of a simple fact of life of the world in which we have to operate. Standing up and showing up is what western business wants of us, but we have to meet those demands while also doing it with cultural understanding and human insight unique to Aboriginal people. This is not easy to achieve, but we are doing it.

### **There Are Expectations Of All Of Us**

There is, quite rightly, a strong confident belief that Gandangara delivers on its' overarching reason for existing: to serve and protect the best interests of its' Members, by way of its' stated objectives in the Community, Land and Business Plan. Along with that belief comes clear expectations of all levels of Gandangara, and its Membership.

### **The Expectations of the Board**

They are to support and sponsor, encourage, and lend advice to the CEO and the Leadership Team. To work together when problems arise, and not work against each other. Provide clarity in their remit and adhere to the separation of responsibilities between them and the Office of the CEO.

### **The Expectations of the CEO & Office of the CEO**

The CEO will be very clear on the expectation to deliver on the Community, Land and Business Plan, and to mobilise the team to deliver it. There is a requirement for a lot of consultation to take place, strict adherence to compliance requirements, and to steer the transformation of the organisation. The CEO must have a very good understanding of the core function of the organisation, when building a strong foundation, and not be distracted when diversifying other services. However, doing this can require making difficult, and sometimes unpopular decisions. Ultimately, the Board measures the CEO by the numbers. That is their leadership at work, monitoring my delivery and outcomes, and how well we are delivering on our profit and loss balance sheet.

### **The Expectations of the Staff**

All managers and employees have to get up, show up and stand up for Gandangara and our Members. The management's duty is to contribute to policy

development and implementation, make it clear to employees, monitor performance and support and train the team. If employees don't deliver, they are not meeting the requirements of our Membership. They have to commit to doing what they stated that they would do, in their recruitment process, and not act entitled. They are, after all, representing their family's reputation. They have signed up to the values and vision, and they have to embrace the Gandangara way.

### **The Expectations of the Members**

Is for Members to actively engage regularly with Gandangara and contribute practically and positively to the Community, Land and Business Plan. To provide support and encouragement at meetings, for the people working hard on their behalf. To be advocates of Gandangara, not just of the services we provide, but for what we are doing for peoples morale, and thereby encouraging more people to become Members.







### **The Many Rules We Have To Work By**

Being a recognised Local Aboriginal Land Council, legally designated as a membership based, not-for-profit organisation, we are governed by over 400 internal rules and regulations that we need to strictly adhere to, in order to maintain our standing.

Our many compliance requirements demand that we keep an accurate record of company documentation, such as the minutes of meetings. Along with everything else required of us by law, and by our peak body the NSW Local Aboriginal Land Council's standards of practice. It is critically important that we make sure we have a paper trail of our processes and resolutions, and to clarify what is the official, latest, most relevant version of those processes and decisions.

The Gandangara Local Aboriginal Land Council is obliged, by law, to comply with four sets of statutory guidelines, each of which has many stringent conditions. Those four are the Aboriginal Land Rights Act 1983, the Corporations Act, the Australian Charities Commission and the Public Interest Disclosure Act.

The GLALC itself, falls directly under the guidelines of the Land Rights Act 1983, and we are administered by the New South Wales Local Aboriginal Land Council, the state's peak representative body in Aboriginal Affairs. The individual operational entities of our

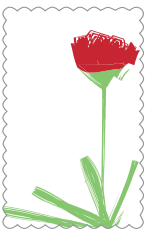
organisation – our Health and Transport Services and Marumali Health Brokerage – are all regulated by the Australian Corporations Act as it applies to them. While our status as a not-for-profit organisation falls under the directions of the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission. Given their level of authority, it is worth understanding what each of these statutory bodies demand of us.

### **The Aboriginal Land Rights Act 1983**

The purpose of this Act is to provide for land rights for Aboriginal people in New South Wales. The Act also provided for the establishment of Aboriginal Land Councils, and for land to be entrusted to those Councils. The Act also places a restriction on which land can be dealt with by Aboriginal Land Councils. Land Councils can only deal with land which is the subject of native title rights, and where a native title determination has been made. This provision often results in Aboriginal Land Councils seeking declarations that native title does not exist in relation to particular land and waters. Once this has occurred, the Aboriginal Land Council is able to undertake dealings with the land.

### **The Corporations Act 2001**

This Act sets out the laws dealing with business entities in Australia. The company is the Act's primary focus, but other entities, such as partnerships and managed investment schemes, are also regulated. The Act is the foundational basis of Australian corporate law, with every Australian



state having adopted the Act as required by the Australian Constitution. As such, it is the principal legislation regulating companies in Australia. It regulates matters such as the formation and operation of companies, the duties of officers, takeovers and fundraising.

### **Australian Charities Commission**

The Commission was established to ensure all organisations claiming charity status must be strictly not-for-profit, and have only charitable purposes that are for public benefit, and no other purpose. The Australian Charities and Not-for-Profits Commission Act 2012 requires all registered charities to have a level of transparency and accountability to the public, as part of promoting public trust and confidence in the sector. The Annual Information Statement ( Annual Report ) is a key part of supporting this transparency, by informing the public about the programs and management of charities.

### **The Public Interest Disclosure Act 2013**

This Act was implemented to promote the integrity and accountability of the Commonwealth public sector, by creating a framework for facilitating the reporting of suspected wrongdoing, and ensuring timely and effective investigation of such reports. This public interest disclosure scheme supplements existing avenues for complaints and investigations, and provides support and protection to persons who make disclosures under the Act.

## **2: LAND ACQUISITION, LAND USE & MANAGEMENT RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **Growing Our Staff, To Serve Our Growing Organisation**

We also continue to increase the number of qualified staff needed to manage our land and important sites. We employed Bronwyn Partell as a Senior Project Officer (lead Archaeologist) who has expertise in Geographic Information Systems, enabling us to recognise and reconcile cultural and heritage sites of significance, and to make sure they are protected and recorded on a national database. We also have another Senior Project Officer (Anthropologist) Kath Schilling, who is researching family histories, significant sites and their meanings. In addition, we have a Program Manager (Heritage, Ecology, Land Management Unit) Strini Pillai, who is working on land restoration and protection at our Eco-Depot at Heathcote Ridge. We have a deed in place with the Sutherland Shire Council that outlines the restoration, protection and access measures needed for the site.

### **Protecting The Land We Have, & Claiming More**

We are also working with Transport for NSW who have agreed to provide for us the effective means of blocking illegal access to the land, and to prevent further damage. Along with protecting the land we have, we continue to work diligently on our land claim strategy and are pursuing

all possible claims. We are prioritising these claims because the land is very important to us culturally and spiritually. They also give us the opportunity to increase our asset values, which is essential to keeping us both independent and financially viable as an organisation.

We also spend a lot of time auditing the land we have, to determine how we can put it to best use, in line with what our Members have asked us to do on their behalf. And how to best protect and restore it. It's also very important that we do not lose any precious genetic material such as plant species and seed sources, or diminish the land's cultural value through unnecessary or inappropriate development. In doing all these things we are guided by a simple, powerful truth – the healthier our land is, the healthier we are as a people.

### **Successful Partnerships Sharing Critical Resources**

We have worked successfully many times in partnerships with local councils, and we currently have a Memorandum of Understanding with the South Western Sydney Local Health District to share critical resources in much need areas such as psychiatry, speech pathology and dental care. These partnerships continue to develop, and expand our means of providing ever better health care for our Members and community.

### 3: FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP RESPONSIBILITIES

#### The Astute Management Of Our Investments Is Paying Dividends

The long-term investment strategy we put into place a couple of years ago is working and is really paying off. Our astute management and advice are continuing to grow the value of our financial, land and property assets steadily and safely. Just how well we are doing can be gauged by one simple measure: In 2018 we were an organisation valued at around \$67 million. Today, we are valued at just over \$103 million. That's an increase of over 55% in just six years, which is an extraordinary result given how much turbulence the business and finance world has experienced in that time. Our income streams continue to more than cover our costs so we remain solvent, and our net worth continues to increase steadily. We are also going to strengthen our financial position further, with new revenue streams coming from the Western Sydney Infrastructure Grants Program (Formerly West Invest) funded projects once they are fully developed and operational.

### 4: ABORIGINAL CULTURE RESPONSIBILITIES

#### Our Authority Is Respected. Our Voice Is Being Heard

We have a growing reputation for Aboriginal cultural and historical knowledge and expertise, and our

passion for protecting our land. Our authority in these important matters is being respected, and our voice is being listened to in council chambers and corporate boardrooms whenever decisions about development and Aboriginal land interests are being made.

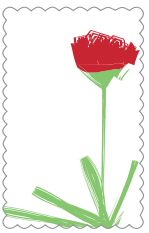
We have spoken up for our culture, for our history and our rights, and local councils have listened closely and respectfully to what we have to say. As a result, we all benefit by being heard. We go forward, together, in a genuine partnership that encourages the celebration of our shared cultures and joint projects which serve to improve and protect our shared lands, our shared heritage and all our common interests.

#### Protecting Our Land Every Way Possible Finding It. Fighting For It. Managing It

It is our legal responsibility, and our moral duty to protect our land in every way possible, which means finding it, fighting for it, and managing it. This is a never-ending process which includes a wide range of plans and activities across our land holdings, and throughout our community. All of which are constantly being developed, and are at varying stages of implementation. The diverse areas we are working on include the following:

- We are creating a Cultural Map of our lands, and a geographical information tool that enables us to look at where our land is within our jurisdiction, and what policies exist around it

- We are developing of a range of land management strategies to protect our various land holdings
- We are working closely with all our stakeholders – the local councils and peak bodies, to ensure the protection of our culture and heritage in our area
- We perform an advocacy role, wherever and whenever it's needed, to ensure the protection of significant sites in our area
- We have been granted initial funding from the Western Sydney Infrastructure Grants Program (Formerly WestInvest) to begin the development of 103 Moore Street, Liverpool into a Cultural Hub, Learning Centre and Keeping Place for our artefacts and history
- We provide regular cultural dance and music classes and performances
- We perform regular Welcome to Country across our boundaries
- We have two Senior Project Officers engaged in recognising, recording, monitoring, evaluating and managing our sites, and making sure those sites are uploaded into our mapping tools
- We are investigating the potential for local, cultural tourism in our region, interstate and internationally, by making greater use of our lands and our history.



To improve the understanding and appreciation of our culture, to increase interest in it, and develop the income streams that can flow from them

- We are educating local schools and local government departments on how to present, and raise awareness, of Aboriginal cultural knowledge
- We provide cultural tours led by our ranger at the Eco-Depot
- We train the staff of local businesses in cultural sensitivities and Aboriginal protocol, with the use of exhibitions and public talks
- We have a dedicated website to provide information about, and easy access to, all our services

- We run cultural competence and ability programs.

Through our increasing engagement and involvement with the community, as well as our growing influence and mutually beneficial partnerships with other councils in our region, we are establishing ourselves as the foremost cultural education provider, leading the way to the many social and economic benefits that result from our efforts.

We are successfully raising community awareness of our organisation’s brand with continual online and social media activities, and our distinctive, high-profile bus and building signage. The increased awareness of who we are, and the many services we offer, is attracting more investment and funding, and more clients to our services.

## 5: HEALTH & TRANSPORT RESPONSIBILITIES

### Our Partnerships Are Improving The Health & Wellbeing Of Aboriginal People

As another advance in our continuous, dedicated efforts to deliver the priority objective of the National Agreement on Closing the Gap (that everyone enjoys a long and healthy life) for our Members and community, Gandangara has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) regarding a Formal Partnership Agreement between the Gandangara Health Services and the South Western Sydney Local Health District.

This Partnership Agreement details how South Western Sydney Local Health District works collaboratively with Gandangara to improve health outcomes for Aboriginal people in South Western Sydney. The MoU acknowledges the important role each organisation plays in meeting the





health needs of Aboriginal communities, and that there are significant benefits to be gained from a collaborative and coordinated approach to providing the necessary health services to deliver the desired results. The principles that underpin the Partnership are the following:

- Support for the principles of Aboriginal/First Peoples self-determination
- A collaborative and inter-sectoral approach is critical to improving health outcomes for Aboriginal people
- A commitment to providing culturally appropriate care and health services for Aboriginal people
- Mutual respect for each organisation’s role, objectives and governance requirements
- A holistic approach to health service provision.

The objectives of the Partnership are the following:

- Close the Gap in health disparity between First Peoples and other Australians
- Work collaboratively to improve health outcomes for Aboriginal communities in South Western Sydney
- Facilitate the sharing of resources and services
- Identify areas of specific health needs or gaps in access to services and work collaboratively to develop strategies to address them
- Develop ways to engage Aboriginal patients, carers and other consumers in the design and monitoring of the outcomes of health services
- Improve the responsiveness and appropriateness of SWSLHD’s health services for Aboriginal people

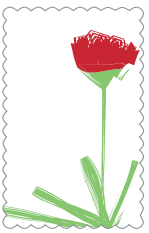
- Cooperate in seeking additional resources to improve health care delivery and services for Aboriginal people in South Western Sydney
- Jointly participate in training and development initiatives.

We believe this Partnership will measurably improve the breadth and quality of the health services provided to all Aboriginal people in our community, and make real, practical improvements in their health and wellbeing.

**Everything Is Connected. The Living Land To The Living Being**

We are making it much easier for our Members and community to access our health services through the cooperative relationship between our Health and Transport Services and our lands, thereby enhance





the holistic wellbeing of our Members and the community.

Our transport service makes sure our people get to the health services and providers they need to see on time. Easier access to the most appropriate health care, getting to appointments on time, finding and talking to the right health professionals and receiving the right treatments, are all essential to achieving the improved health and wellbeing outcomes we want for all our clients.

Our Transport Service has also expanded its' services into chronic care patients, to make sure our most needy patients are being looked after properly. They also provide regular, organised outings to many social and community events, and bringing our people together with our lands with trips to country. The indoor benefits we provide are now being matched to our outdoor blessings. This is true connection and belonging.

At the same time we working just as diligently on the health and wellbeing of our lands, by protecting and restoring them to their true natural state. In turn, our restored, healthy lands are helping to restore our people by giving a place where they can enjoy natural beauty, listen to and watch the wildlife, breathe fresh air and feel peaceful. It's here, on our land, that they can truly appreciate how everything is connected – the living land to the living being.

## **6: GOVERNANCE & BOARD OF DIRECTORS RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **Representing The Needs & Desires Of Our Members**

The main duty and responsibility of the Board of Directors is to represent and protect the interests of our Members. The Board do not have direct managerial or implementational roles within Gandangara, these operational roles are the responsibility of the Management Team, in each of our entities. However, Directors do play a significant part in the process by attending all Member, Board and Board Sub-Committee meetings, where they present the expressed needs, concerns and desires of the Members, and sharing the feedback they get from Members and the wider community. Another essential aspect of their role is the mandatory reading of all relevant documents and proposals presented to them. They are then required to discuss, debate and decide on proposals and business plans that are developed to serve the best interests of the Members. The Directors then oversee the implementation of all the annual objectives, of each business entity as defined in each current Community, Land and Business Plan.

It is the responsibility of the CEO and the Executive Management team to provide the Directors with regular and timely reports on all developments and implementations being carried out on behalf of the Members, in line with the agreed Community, Land and Business Plans.

### **Our Diligence & Integrity, Protects Us All**

Local Aboriginal Land Councils are strictly regulated and monitored to ensure the interests and assets of their Members are protected. Any failure to comply with relevant regulations risks the loss of funding and self-determination. So, we take compliance very seriously and we ensure that we do so to the very highest degree.

As detailed earlier, the Gandangara Local Aboriginal Land Council is obliged, by law, to comply with four sets of statutory guidelines, each of which has many stringent conditions. Compliance with all four sets statutory guidelines is a continual process of both administrative implementation and the quality control of the performance of the various roles assigned by them. In each case we have completely fulfilled our statutory obligations. Contributing to our high level of compliance and professionalism are our many regular Board and Member meetings during which all these important matters are openly discussed. For this calendar year alone, we have scheduled 91 such meetings. Our diligent adherence to compliance is reflected in the continued 100% rating we have achieved in the NSW Aboriginal Land Council Risk Assessment System. This is a very significant and valuable achievement, and it serves as a powerful testimony to our professional diligence, and the integrity of all our management teams.

## Ensuring Transparency & Accountability

It is impossible to have honest, sound governance without complete transparency of the actions and accountability of management. For that very reason we have added four additional controls of our own, to the existing requirements outlined by the regulatory bodies, in order to avoid any and all possible conflicts of interest by Board Members.

Those four controls are:

1. All Board Members undertake the NSWALC Governance Training Program to ensure they all have a clear understanding of their responsibilities, and take personal accountability for their actions

2. Every Board Member must provide a signed Pecuniary Interest Declaration that has to be handed to the CEO before the start of each Board meeting
3. Every Board Member must provide a signed Conflict of Interest Declaration and hand it to the CEO before the start of each Board meeting
4. We have a Gift Register to make sure all gifts over the value of \$20, offered to Board Members, executives, managers and staff members, are registered as a matter of public record. The reason is obvious. It is to avoid any suspicion of our Directors, managers and employees' motives, and to

eliminate opportunities for anyone at Gandangara to be unduly influenced by the generosity, or other motives, of outside parties.

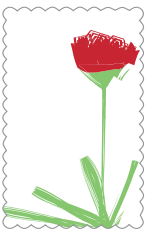
## Our Code Of Conduct Protects Our Members' Interests

We take pride in our high standards of practice but we don't take them for granted. We have ensured the protection of our Members' interests with our own Code of Conduct embedded into the GLALC Governance Charter. The Code of Conduct makes the Board of Directors of the Council collectively responsible for the governance and strategic direction of the Council. The Code also guarantees that the decisions of the Board are always made in the interest of all Aboriginal persons within the Council's area.

In the spirit of openness, and to provide complete transparency into the expectations of Council performance, all our rules and Codes of Conduct are freely available to Members any time during normal business hours at the Council Head Office.

Along with providing transparency of process we have also have our own website and a social media platform which openly and honestly presents who we are and what we do, to the public. Our openness gives everybody an opportunity to know everything about us, to communicate directly with us, and to have easy access to our services. They also serve as our direct line of connection with our Members, and the wider





community. We also publish quarterly Newsletters, post daily social media updates, texts and emails to keep our Members well informed and up to date with all the Board's and Council's decisions and initiatives.

We provide our Members with direct, personal access to our Board and management teams by holding as many meetings as possible. Encouragingly, this has led to a significant increase in the number of Members attending meetings. Having these regular, open exchanges of ideas, thoughts and feelings, are a real benefit and encouragement to all of us, by helping us to understand each other better, drawing us closer together and making us all feel stronger and prouder.

### **Everybody's Performance Matters. Everybody's Performance Is Assessed**

At Gandangara everybody's performance matters and everybody's performance is regularly assessed, because it's the best way for us to be consciously good at what we do, especially for those with the most responsibility. It's not just the performance of the Board of Directors that is monitored and assessed, we also have a process in place to assess the performance of the Chief Executive Officer. The Chairperson of the Board is required to regularly review the performance of the CEO on behalf of the Board and the Members.

The Chairperson has to evaluate how well the CEO fulfils the clear requirements of the role, as it is clearly stated in the Aboriginal Land Rights Act, the ALR Regulations and the ALR Model Rules. This evaluation

is especially concerned with financial reporting and the expenditure of funds to the Board and to our Members, as well as the day-to-day management of all Gandangara business.

In addition to these in-house processes, the Directors, the CEO and all the staff are required to complete the annual NSWALC training programs.

### **Honest Governance & Accountability**

All these strict governance compliance, training, and conflict of interest controls are in place to make sure we all benefit from having open, honest governance. And that everyone in an executive, decision-making position is held accountable for their decisions. All of which give us the confidence to have complete faith in the Board to make the best decisions on behalf of our Members.





## LOOKING FORWARD

### Yesterday's Hard Work Is Paying Big Dividends Tomorrow

Last year Gandangara successfully submitted for two Western Sydney Infrastructure Grants Program (Formerly WestInvest) grants worth \$24.3 million to fund the creation of much needed community, culture, health and social wellbeing infrastructure in our region.

This was a remarkable achievement for all of us, as this was the first time such grants were open to submissions from Aboriginal organisations. For us to have won two such submissions is an incredible vote of confidence in our understanding of community needs and our capacity to deliver these projects. We now look forward to using the funding to commence the work on realising these wonderful programs.

The first of the grants, worth \$7.4 million, is for the creation of a Gandangara Cultural Connection Hub. It will be a significant contribution to our whole community by combining a state of the art cultural and arts facility with a curated Keeping Place for Aboriginal knowledge and artefacts of historical and cultural significance. Together, they will present a vividly attractive, and informative celebration of the very best of local Aboriginal culture.

The Hub is designed to enhance our sense of community and belonging, by providing a welcoming environment where our community can come to connect and learn together, and from each other, in the Living Culture and Learning Centre, in our native gardens and interpretive nature walks, our café and in our meeting rooms.

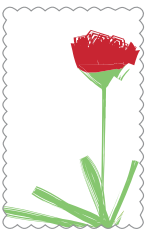
Our second, larger grant worth \$16.9 million, will

be used to establish the Gandangara First People's Support Centre for Veteran Rehabilitation and Youth Diversion programs. A permanent, purpose-built centre dedicated to promoting health and wellbeing, independent living, community and social access, and return to work support for some of the most vulnerable men and youths in our Aboriginal community.

The centre will be created by transforming the existing Linwood Estate into a heritage community asset, with community access to over 10 acres of open green space.

These grants provide us with social assets needed by all communities – especially ours. They give us the practical means to close some of the gaps in our social, educational and health circumstances, and also nurture and enhance our pride in who we are.





We have also built our Heathcote Ridge Eco-Depot. This will provide us with a dedicated centre where our rangers will be stationed, to carry out remediation and restoration work on the land and protect and preserve our important historical sites. It will also serve as an education workshop for the community where they can learn about our flora and fauna.

The Eco-Depot has been made possible with \$350,000 of NSW Government funding. They have also provided us with an additional \$90,000 to provide an equipped vehicle for our rangers. We held an art competition amongst our Members and the ranger vehicle is wrapped in the winning design, providing a vivid promotion of our art wherever it goes.

### **Improving The Personal Touch**

We have many points of contact with our Members and community at our various sites and service entities, where they have a direct personal customer experience with us. It is important for them and for us that every experience is a pleasant one, which is why we continue to improve and enhance our performance at every point and level of their engagement with us. As a modern, forward-thinking organisation, we also continue upgrading our technology to improve our professional effectiveness and, ultimately, customer experience.

### **We Want To Hear More Of Your Voices**

We encourage as many Members as possible to engage with us because we are here to serve them. That's why we organise several Member meetings every year, to give them the opportunity to be involved in their organisation. We especially want to see our Membership attendance to increase at our Community, Land and Business Plan meetings, where decisions on future actions and programs are made. That's why it's so important as many Members as possible have an active attendance, to give the Board and Management the chance to hear their voice, and act on it.

The commitment and hard work of our management teams and the Directors continue to pay us wonderful dividends today. Every year we grow stronger, more confident and have more resources to provide more of what our Members and community need.

### **One Gandangara In One Location**

I want Our People to be excited about the realisation having One Gandangara HQ in one location at Moore Street, Liverpool. It will be our landmark urban headquarters reaching out to our satellite entities, and all our different land tenures from Bankstown to Sutherland. We need to care for these sites and take people to them and share the country with them.

We had to wait until February for approval of the funding deed before going forward. This gave us the resources to allow the architect to revise our original plans to include a roof-top garden, additional facilities upstairs, a commercial kitchen, an art studio, an open and closing function facility, a meeting centre, bathrooms, a yarning circle and an interpretative walk. We now have more money and we are using it to provide more for our Members and community.

We are optimistic about the vision of the Cultural Connections Hub and Health and Wellbeing Hub co-located at Moore Street Liverpool.

We also continue to pursue our long-term investment strategies, especially the clean up, protection and restoration of Heathcote Ridge. We have recently been given a signed offer from Transport NSW that they will install Jersey blocks and gates to close the access points to Heathcote Ridge on our behalf. Hopefully, this will be the beginning of our land coming back to full health.



# STRONGER MEMBERSHIP

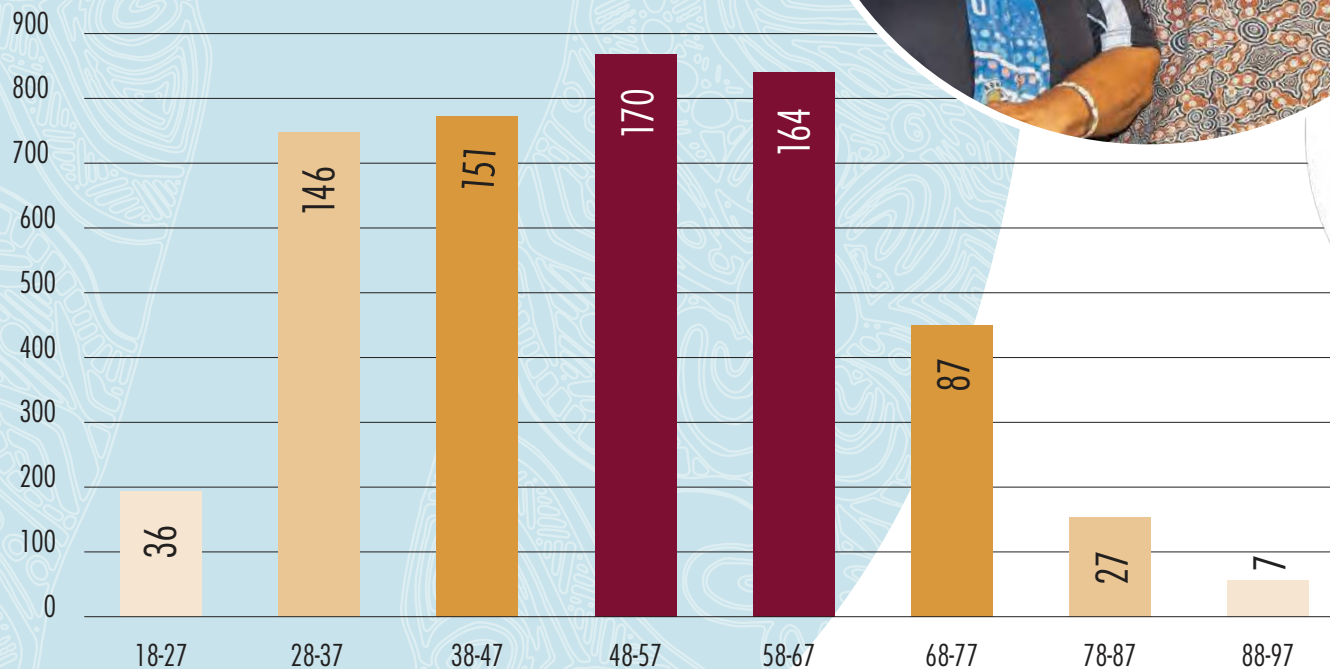
# WHO WE ARE

# 788

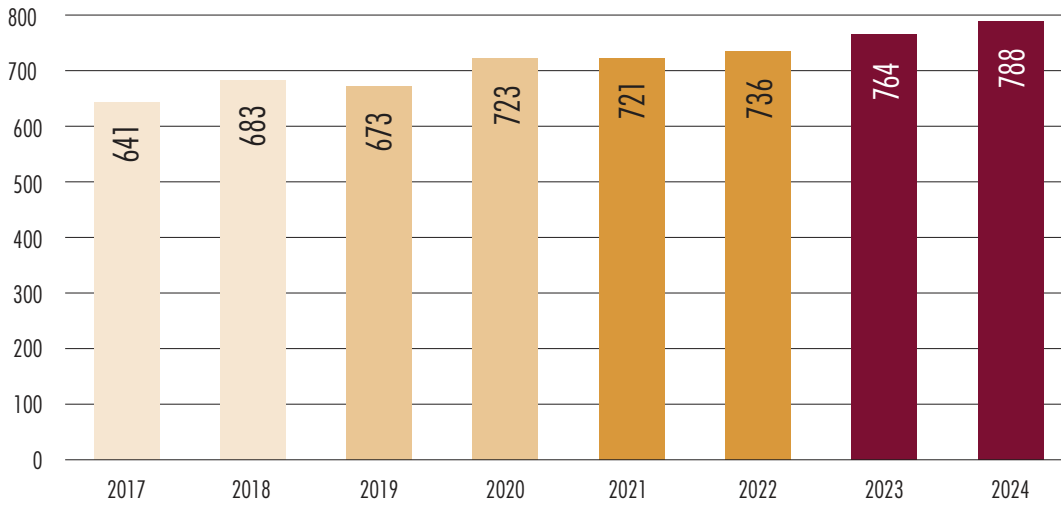
## MEMBERS



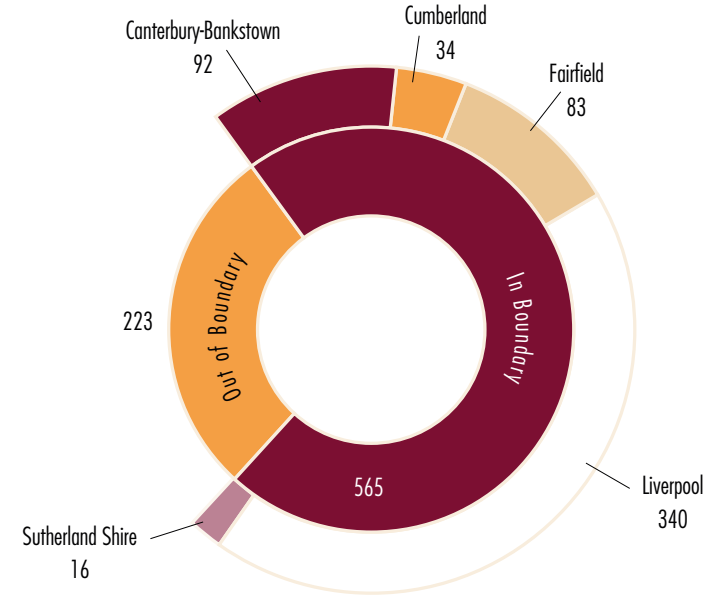
Members by Age Range



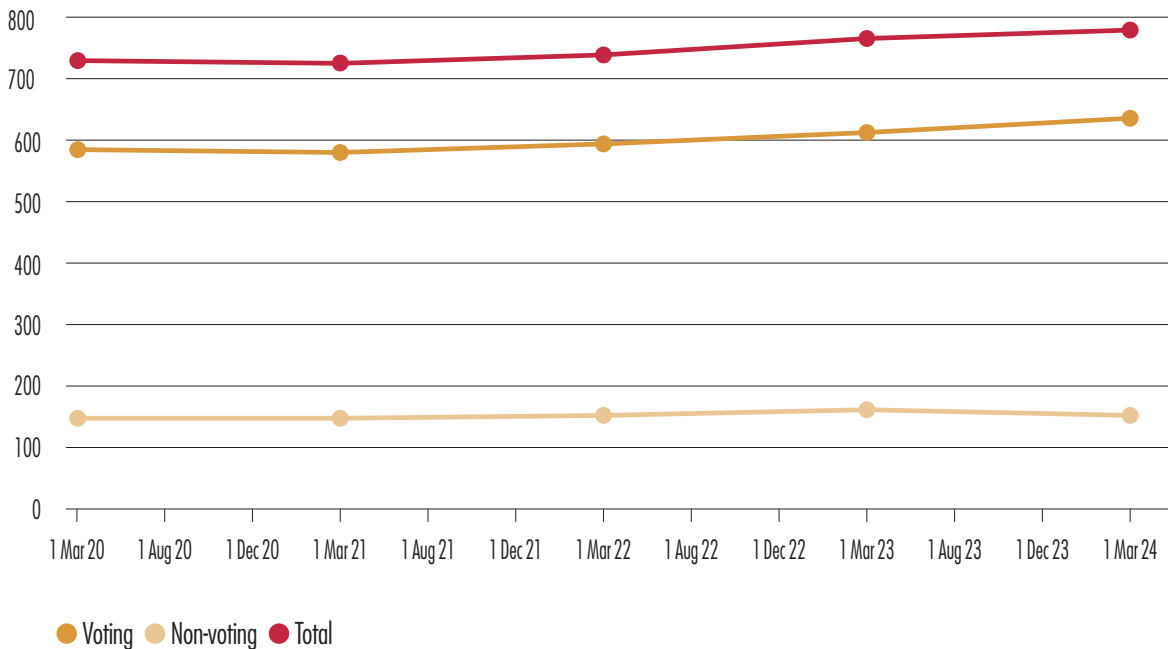
### Number of Members per year



### Number of Gandangara Members by LGA



### Number of Voting & Non Voting Members



Gandangara Local Aboriginal Land Council Members' Meetings within the Financial Year 2023-2024	
Meeting	Date
Annual Ordinary	20 Sept 23 (held)
Ordinary	13 Dec 23 (held)
Ordinary	20 Mar 24 (held)
Ordinary	19 Jun 24 (held)

# BOARD MEMBERS ELECTED FROM 20 SEPTEMBER 2023



## **STRONGER GOVERNANCE. STRONGER BUSINESS. STRONGER MEMBERSHIP**

**Over the past few years an important word has been missing from many of our Member's conversations about their Council. That word is trust.**

Everything we aspire to, the standards we set for ourselves, and the success we want as an organisation, as a community, and as individual Members cannot be achieved without trust. Our wellbeing and our future rely on it. That's why the foremost priority of the Board has been to do everything needed to restore our trust. To restore the firm belief in the reliability, the truth and the ability of the Board, CEO, the Management and employees of Gandangara Local Aboriginal Land Council to do what is right in the interests of our Members.

## **Trust is built the same way that it is lost – one action, one decision at a time.**

The Council has taken many actions and made many decisions over the past year with that one critical goal in mind. They have been done in the three areas that affect everything we are responsible for as your Council – governance, business and membership. We have implemented many controls and administrative improvements, made many changes to protocols and attitudes and brought in many new, experienced and skilled people to ensure that we now have more robust levels of governance; that we have stronger performing centres of business and services; and most importantly, that we have a stronger, more united and more closely engaged membership.

## **STRONGER GOVERNANCE**

### **Strategic Transition and Road Map**

As we conclude our Community, Land and Business Plan (CLBP) for 2020-2024, we are transitioning into a new strategic roadmap that aligns with our evolving goals and aspirations. This new plan builds upon the solid foundation laid by the previous CLBP, ensuring that our initiatives and strategies continue to reflect the depth and breadth of our community consultations. The development of this roadmap is a testament to our commitment to robust governance and meaningful engagement.

**The Council have made sure that it is you, our Members, whose Land Council this is, are the keepers, the owners of the rules and codes**



**of conduct we must follow** and comply with, by passing a code of conduct ( GLALC Governance Charter) at the last Members meeting in June 2024. The objective of this code of conduct is to make the Board of Directors of the Council (the Board), Staff and Members collectively responsible for the governance and strategic direction of the Council. The code of conduct also insists that the Board must make decisions in the interest of all Aboriginal persons within the Council's area.

To provide complete transparency in this most critical measure of Council performance all existing rules and codes of conduct are freely available to all Members, to read and discuss any time during normal business hours at the Council's office.

**We have also ensured that the transparency applying to the codes of conduct now includes the conduct itself.** You need to know how your Council should make its' decisions, you should also know what decisions the Council does make. We have implemented the very first priority of the current Business Plan – the 'Open The Doors' initiative – that ensures the Council engages more openly, regularly and effectively with our Members. As a result, we are now seeing more Members attend and participate in the quarterly Members meetings, which all Board Members attend. We all benefit from more meaningful exchanges of ideas, thoughts and feelings.

### **Championing Transparency Through Our Public Interest Disclosure Officers**

The effective management of Public Interest Disclosures (PID) is at the heart of our commitment to strong governance. Our dedicated PID Officers, including Steve Ingram, our Board PID Officer, CEO Melissa Williams, Compliance and Business Performance Manager Haydn Allbutt, and Health Services Manager Angela Spithill, play a vital role in this process. Together, they ensure our approach to PID aligns with the latest training and best practices the NSW Ombudsman provides, reinforcing our dedication to transparency and accountability.

In addition to our digital communication efforts, we actively engage with our community and Members through social media. We have also expanded our professional engagement through the establishment of a professional presence on LinkedIn to strengthen relationships with stakeholders and partners.

Our website is a vital resource for our Members and the broader community. With over 17,000 visitors and 49,000 page views, it offers access to our Land Council's entities, services, programs and events, facilitating easy access to information and support. Additionally, we launched our bi-monthly e-newsletter in December 2023, which has quickly grown to over 437 subscribers. This ensures that our Members and Partners are kept up-to-date with a range of initiatives, meetings, consultations, processes, and key initiatives, even if they are unable to attend meetings.

### **The transparency and accountability of actions is mainly applied to avoiding any**

### **possible conflicts of interest by Board Members.**

Three controls have been implemented.

1. All Board Members have undertaken the NSWALC governance training program to ensure they have a clear understanding of their responsibilities and accountability for their actions.
2. Every Board Member must provide a signed Pecuniary Interest Declaration and is handed to the Chairperson and Public Officer before the start of each Board meeting.
3. Every Board Member must provide a signed Conflict of Interest Declaration and handed to the Chairperson and Public Officer before the start of each Board meeting.

**It is also very important to have a diversity** of background, experience, knowledge, and skills on the Board to give it broader perspectives and a wider range of insights and ensure more balanced and considered decision-making.

We cannot legislate for this level of diversity so it is up to the Members themselves to ensure there is a diversity amongst Board members, as they are the ones who elect them. We encourage you to consider this important requirement when making your voting decisions.

In addition to the choices our Members make, there will also be an innate degree of diversity achieved naturally

because every Board is made up of Aboriginal people who have come from diverse family, tribe and nation backgrounds, representing a range of Aboriginal cultural influences, sensitivities and insights.

These newly implemented governance training and conflict of interest controls, along with the inherent diversity of their Aboriginal backgrounds, give us complete faith in the current Board to make the best decisions for our Members.

**In addition to monitoring and raising the performance of the Board, we have also put in place an assessment process of the Chief Executive Officer's performance.** It is an important part of the Boards role to review the performance of the Chief Executive Officer to the Board and the Members. The Chairman reviews how well (or not) the CEO has complied with the clear stipulations of the Aboriginal Land Rights Act, ALR Regulations and ALR Model Rules in regards to financial reporting to the Board and our Members, and to the day to day management of Gandangara LALC business and expenditure of its' funds.

All of these measures now ensure open, honest governance, and everyone in an executive decision-making position is held accountable for their decisions.

**The Board is also demonstrating its ability to manage the Gandangara Local Aboriginal Council and its controlled entities effectively in many ways.**

- The Board has hired a qualified Chief Executive Officer with a proven track record of success in business and people management
- The Board has put controls into place that make sure all of GLALC runs as an effective organisation
- The Board has implemented processes and programs that drive efficiency and effectiveness in our controlled business entities
- The Board has undertaken a risk assessment audit and implemented risk management strategies, to future-proof the organisation so we can plan, govern and continually improve our performance and outcomes.

**It is our clear priority and intention to become a trusted organisation** and business partner for our Members and every organisation and community we work with. For that to be believable and achievable then, honesty and integrity begins with us, the Board and CEO. **The Board is leading by example for honesty and openness in business dealings** by putting clear conflict of interest protocols and policies into place, starting with themselves. The Gandangara Conflict of Interest Declaration is a document that has to be completed and signed by every Board Member, and handed to the CEO before the start of every Board meeting.

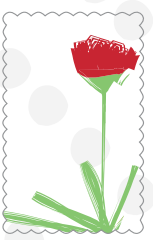
**Our Conflict of Interest Declaration** demands all Board Members, and the CEO, must disclose any personal, business, or volunteer affiliations that may give rise to a real, or apparent, conflict of interest. They

must also specify any other non-profit, or for-profit boards they, or their spouse sit on, and any businesses for which they, or an immediate family member are an officer, director, or a majority shareholder. They must also describe any relationships, transactions, positions they hold, volunteer or otherwise, or circumstances that they believe could contribute to a conflict of interest.

Testimony to the quality and high standard of integrity of our Gandangara Policy Charter, the NSWALC has sent a copy of it to all the other Local Aboriginal Land Councils, as an example to them of good practice.

**Just as the Sub-Committees provide specialised knowledge to the Board, the Board also needs additional skills**, which the Council provides for them through relevant skills-based appointments of experienced managers. The previous culture of nepotism and jobs for the boys has been completely eradicated. All new appointments of managers are now entirely merit based. All appointees are now chosen for their proven experience and expertise in their specific area of responsibility.





## BOARD BIOGRAPHIES



### DIANE VAN AKEN

*Deputy Chairperson  
(Special Duties:  
Chairperson Membership  
Sub Committee)*

I am the Record and Archive Manager for the Catholic Diocese of Parramatta. I have a background in Information Management, Procurement and Governance. I have lived within Gandangara's boundary my whole life, however I also claim my Mother's line as far as Goolagong, Cowra, Condobolin and Warengesda.

I was raised in housing commission and went to Sadlier Public School and to Ashcroft High School and spent two years in and out of juvenile institutions. I completed high school at Liverpool Girls High School. I worked at New South Wales Aboriginal Land Council (NSWALC) for 24 years in various roles finishing in 2017 as the Acting Human Resources Manager. Following my redundancy, I became Administration Manager at Gandangara and was involved in the office relocation to Macquarie Street. Working at the peak body, directly with community and on the Gandangara Board has provided me with a unique set of skills.

I helped with the creation and implementation of software that managed the Electoral Rolls of the 120 LALCs across NSW. I have successfully led change through two data migrations for an Electronic Document Record Management System (EDRMS). I seek to give back to my community through my involvement with the Police Aboriginal Consultative Committee (PACC) and I am the Aboriginal representative for Catholic Cemeteries and Crematoria and act as a role model in my community.

I was elected to the GLALC Board from 2015 to 2017 and re-elected in 2019 and 2022. My responsibilities include financial stewardship and interpreting complex legislative and compliance requirements.

I am a married Mum to five beautiful children and Nanny to three beautiful grandchildren.





## TONY SCHOLES DONOVAN

*Director (Special Duties:  
Chairperson of the Risk, Audit,  
Investment, People & Performance  
Sub Committee)*

I am a proud Aboriginal man with connections to the Dughutti nation on the North Coast. My family are the Donovan & Donahue families. I also have family connections to the Yuin Nation. Throughout my professional life I have helped many Aboriginal communities in various organisations. My qualifications include: Bachelor Adult Education & Community Mgt, Masters of Mgt Business in Non-for-Profit Organisations (UTS) 2015.

### **Professional Employment Experience**

- 2022** Australian Electoral Commission
- 2018-2019** Shellharbour Aboriginal Community Youth Association
- 2015-present** Board of Directors, Gandangara LALC
- 2013-2015** Various organisations including Ability Options
- 2013-2015** Badanami Centre, Western Sydney University (WSU)
- 2011-2012** Mens Health Information Resource Centre (WSU)
- 2009-2010** Aboriginal Development Officer for Liverpool City Council
- 2008** Chairperson, Coffs Harbour LALC & Local Government Elections
- 2005-2008** Co-ordinator Life Without Barriers & Coffs Harbour Aboriginal Family Community Care Centre
- 2000-2004** Department of Juvenile Justice
- 2000-2003** AEC for Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Commission elections



## GAIL SMITH

*Director  
(Special Duties: Co-  
Chairperson of the  
Membership Sub Committee)*

I am a proud Dughutti Goori Gulbun woman from Kempsey North Coast. I grew up on Green Hills Reserve and also spent a lot of time visiting my Mum's place in Bellbrook Mission and Cabbage Tree Island Bundjalung, so I know and understand the stolen Generation.

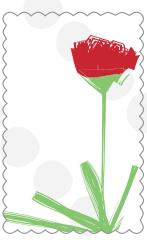
I'm a hands-on person with much personal local experience which helps me help with others, especially children, who I regularly foster.

I have worked for the South Western Sydney Local Health District as a community health educator and coordinator for over 20 years and I have been involved in aged care facilities as well as in childcare. I am also on the consultative group for Liverpool Council.

I have been a Member of GLALC for over 30 years, serving on the Board for the past six years. I'm responsible for looking after our Memberships, encouraging more of our people to be active Members, not just for themselves but for their children's futures.

I am also responsible for verifying Membership qualifications and identity.

My qualification is a Diploma in Aboriginal studies from UTS.



**BERNADETTE COMPTON**  
*Director (Special Duties: Member of the Membership Sub Committee)*

I am a proud descendent of Gamilaraay, Yugembeh and Minjunbal nations of the mainland. I was born in Surry Hills (Gadigal).

I am a multi-skilled Indigenous performer and dancer in traditional Minjunbal dance. I have been dancing and sharing cultural knowledge for many years in schools across the Wider Sydney area and internationally with my sons' group Muggera.

In 2004 I was the Indigenous liaison officer for St Gregory's Marist College, taking care of over 20 Indigenous students and consulting with their families and communities. My foster caring journey began at Kari in 2012 where I continued to take care of children who were in Out of Home Care (OOHC) and supervised contact visits with their parents.

I am passionate about working with children, community, and culture. I have a diploma in Child, Youth and Family Intervention, a Certificate III in Education School Support Services, a Certificate III for In-School Support Services and Certificate III for Business Administration. I am currently at BCRG as the Aboriginal Cultural Coordinator. As a Director at Gandangara, I am passionate about Culture & Heritage and I sit on the Membership Sub-Committee of the GLALC Board.



**STEVE INGRAM**  
*Director (Special Duties: Public Officer, Chairperson Housing Sub Committee, Member of the Risk, Audit, Investment People & Performance Sub Committee)*

I am Wiradjuri, my father and grandfather are from the Condobolin region; my mother was of English heritage and met my father in Eveleigh Street, Redfern. I was born in Canley Vale, close to the first Gandangara office and was raised in the Liverpool-Fairfield area. I have a strong relationship across many different fields throughout the area, with sporting association and community development. I sit on the Board for SDSFA and I am the Secretary of the founding soccer club in the Southern District Area.

My work experience gives me the confidence and skills to contribute positively to Gandangara. I left school to work for the CBC Bank in Sydney, working up to becoming a Teller and Small Business Accounts Manager.

In 1973, I joined the army and did two stints for nine years. In 1987, I joined the NSW Police as a Special Constable, Internal Security looking after dignitaries and visiting VIPs for 10 years. I also served as President of the Union for the Specials. In 1996, I joined NIB health fund as a Business Development Manager, promoting health and teaching sales skills.

From 2006-2014, I worked as a consultant for Ezi Security, controlling critical infrastructures crowd and terrorism security for military bases. I have been a full-time carer for one of my sons since then and undertake voluntary work for the community. As a Director of Gandangara, I serve on the Housing Sub-Committee, and the Risk, Audit, Investment, People & Performance Sub-Committee. I am the Public Officer, responsible for the checking and signing of Board documentation.



## AMANDA ROA

*Director (Special Duties: Chairperson Housing Sub Committee, Member of the Risk Audit, Investment People & Performance Sub Committee)*

I am a proud Darug woman. I have lived my entire life on Cabrogal land and have been a passionate member of the Land Council since I was 18, following in the footsteps of my mother, who was an activist for change in our community. My life's work has been dedicated to supporting my people and community, striving to achieve outcomes, build capacity, and strengthen our culture for future generations. I consider it a privilege to serve as a Board Director, knowing that the decisions we make will shape the future for my children and grandchildren, helping our culture to grow and thrive.

Gandangara is more than just a land council to me; it's my home and family. They have raised me and culturally guided me.

I aspire for my four children, to be as inspired, passionate and dedicated to community as I am. I have watched them develop their cultural creativity through engaging in Gandangara's programs. They are proud of who they are and where they are from. It shows me that as a family, and community we are heading in the right direction.

I am deeply passionate about working with communities, achieving outcomes through community projects, and leading and supporting others to do the same. I will continue to support my community throughout my working life and beyond, ensuring the cultural lens is applied, respected and maintained.



## ROXANNE SHERIDAN

*Director (Special Duties: Member of Housing Sub Committee)*

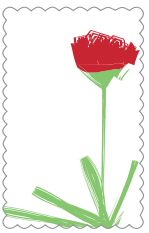
I am a descendant of the Wiradjuri Nation (from Narrandera NSW) on my mother's side. I am descendant of the Yamitji Nation (Geraldton WA) on my father's side.

I have worked for the NSW Department of Communities and Justice for the past 13.5 years in various roles.

I have many years' experience working directly with NSW's most disadvantaged families, as an advocate for them in all things, including housing, finances and rehabilitation, along with connecting them to the right services.

I am dedicated to helping the most disadvantaged communities across NSW. I lead and manage high level projects and possess exceptional skills in delivering programs.

I have extensive experience in building genuine, effective relationships with internal and external stakeholders, particularly in Aboriginal communities. I am a great communicator with sound interpersonal skills.



## ROSLYN WAY

*Director (Special Duties:  
Member of the Membership  
Sub Committee)*

I am a descendent of Wiradjuri and Kamilaroi nations. I am dedicated to improving outcomes for Aboriginal families, with a passion for supporting children and young people.

I have worked in various organisations, including Aboriginal Hostels, the Department of Education, and other Government agencies. I'm dedicated to building connections within our community and providing children, youth and Elders with advocacy and support.

With extensive expertise and experience in children-focused initiatives, my work is centred on fostering relationships and rebuilding and strengthening community connections, all with a child-focused approach, whatever their area of need.

Anyone who knows me, will know I have spent my professional and personal time dedicated to working with children. It is my passion and my drive. I am here to support my community, whatever their need.



## SANDRA GERMAN

*Director*

As a proud Wiradjuri woman from Wellington, I am honoured to serve as a Board Member of Gandangara Local Aboriginal Land Council. My heritage is deeply rooted in the Bell, Stanley, Burns, Lane, and Chisolm families, and I am committed to preserving and promoting the rich cultural legacy of the Wiradjuri people.

I am versatile, multi-skilled and have worked in a variety of roles. My background includes General Office/Computer skills, basic Bookkeeping and Property Management. I am a proactive team player with the ability to adapt to change.

### **Professional Employment Experience**

- 2023-present Aboriginal Tenancy Officer, Birribee Housing
- 2018-2023 Administration Assistant, Bechtel Australia Pty Ltd
- 2018 Receptionist, Hi-Tec Oils NSW
- 2018 Tenancy Officer, Gandangara LALC
- 2016-2018 Client Service Officer, FACS Housing Services NSW
- 2016 Catering Assistant, Lewisham Nursing Home
- 2014-2015 Store Cleaner, Telstra, Westfields
- 2005-2007 Property Officer, Gandangara LALC
- 2000-2004 Rental Officer, Gandangara LALC
- 2000 -2000 Administration Officer, Gandangara LALC
- 1999 -2000 Personal Assistant to CEO, Gandangara LALC
- 1997-1999 Receptionist, Gandangara LALC

# STRONGER GOVERNANCE

# BOARD MEMBERS FY 2022-2023

From 1 July 2022 to 26 September 2023



**TONY SCHOLES  
DONOVAN**  
Chairperson



**DIANE  
VAN AKEN**  
Deputy Chairperson



**GAIL  
SMITH**  
Director



**BERNADETTE  
COMPTON**  
Director



**STEVE  
INGRAM**  
Public Officer



**ROXANNE  
SHERIDAN**  
Director



**TROY  
DAVIS**  
Director



**MATTHEW  
FELLINGHAM**  
Director



**TANYA  
ELLIS**  
Director



**BARRY  
BROOKER (Vale)**  
Director

# STRONGER GOVERNANCE

# BOARD ATTENDANCE

The names of the Directors in Office during the financial year of 2023-2024 are as follows:

**Troy Davis** (Chairperson – Suspended in Qtr4)

**Diane Van Aken** (Deputy Chairperson)

**Gail Smith** (Director)

**Tony Scholes Donovan** (Director & Chairperson in Qtr1)

**Bernadette Compton** (Director)

**Steve Ingram** (Public Officer/Director)

**Roxanne Sheridan** (Director)

**Amanda Roa** (Director)

**Roslyn Way** (Director)

**Sandra German** (Director)

**Tanya Ellis** (Director)

**Matthew Fellingham** (Director)

**Barry Brooker** (Director)

In accordance with S. 63A of ALRA GLALC Board Members are elected at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) every four years. The current Board Members were elected at the AGM of Gandangara Local Aboriginal Land Council held on 20 September 2023. The next election is expected to be held in September 2027.

## GLALC BOARD MEETING ATTENDANCE

BOARD MEMBER	MEETINGS ATTENDED	MEETINGS ELIGIBLE TO ATTEND	INITIAL APPOINTMENT	APPOINTMENT CEASED
Troy Davis	12	14	14/09/2022	
Diane Van Aken	15	15	01/05/2019	
Gail Smith	15	15	30/09/2015	
Tony Scholes Donovan	11	11	30/09/2015	
Bernadette Compton	10	15	18/09/2019	
Steve Ingram	15	15	18/09/2019	
Roxanne Sheridan	11	15	14/09/2022	
Amanda Roa	10	10	20/09/2023	
Roslyn Way	8	10	20/09/2023	
Sandra German	9	10	20/09/2023	
<b>Tanya Ellis</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>18/09/2019</b>	<b>20/09/2023</b>
<b>Matthew Fellingham</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>18/09/2019</b>	<b>20/09/2023</b>
Vale 16/12/2023				
<b>Barry Brooker</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>18/09/2019</b>	<b>20/09/2023</b>

## GLALC BOARD MEETING DATES HELD WITHIN THE REPORTING YEAR

MEETING TYPE	DATE
Ordinary Board Meeting	17/07/2023
Extraordinary Board Meeting (Auditors Report)	14/08/2023
Extraordinary Board Meeting 1	18/09/2023
Extraordinary Board Meeting 2	18/09/2023
Ordinary Board Meeting	18/09/2023
Extraordinary Board Meeting	20/09/2023
Ordinary Board Meeting	27/11/2023
Ordinary Board Meeting	29/01/2024
Extraordinary Board Meeting	26/02/2024
Extraordinary Board Meeting	01/03/2024
Ordinary Board Meeting	25/03/2024
Extraordinary Board Meeting - Budget	15/04/2024
Extraordinary Board Meeting	20/05/2024
Ordinary Board Meeting	27/05/2024
Extraordinary Board Meeting – CLBP	17/06/2024

## CHECKLIST FOR IMPORTANT COMPLIANCE DATES

15/07/2023	Bank Reconciliations	15/01/2024	Bank Reconciliations
15/07/2023	PAYG – STP Finalisation	28/01/2024	Half Yearly Report to NSWALC
17/07/2023	OBM	28/01/2024	SCG Superannuation Payments
28/07/2023	IAS – PAYG Lodgement	28/01/2024	NSWALC SRA Reporting (take over from RAS)
28/07/2023	NSWALC Half Yearly Financial Reports	29/01/2024	Review of Policies
28/07/2023	Quarterly BAS Statements	29/01/2024	Stock Take of Assets
28/07/2023	SGC Superannuation Payments	29/01/2024	OBM
30/07/2023	Public Interest Disclosure Report	31/01/2024	ACNC Annual Information Statement
15/08/2023	Accounts to Auditor	15/02/2024	Bank Reconciliations
15/08/2023	Bank Reconciliations	28/02/2024	IAS - PAYG Lodgement
22/08/2023	IAS – PAYG Lodgement	28/02/2024	Quarterly BAS statements
29/08/2023	Members Pack Mail-out (for 20/9/2023 OMM)	5/03/2024	IAS – PAYG Lodgement
15/09/2023	Bank Reconciliations	15/03/2024	Bank Reconciliations
18/09/2023	OBM	20/03/2024	OMM
20/09/2023	Complete Annual Report (presented to AGM)	23/03/2024	IAS – PAYG Lodgement
22/09/2023	IAS - PAYG Lodgement	25/03/2024	OBM
30/09/2023	Notification of NSWALC that AGM has been held	27/03/2024	NSWALC RAS Audit
2/10/2023	Delegation Matrix Review	31/03/2024	FBT Year End
15/10/2023	Bank Reconciliations	15/04/2024	Bank Reconciliations
21/10/2023	IAS – PAYG Lodgement	21/04/2024	2024 Budget and Funding Application submission to NSWALC
28/10/2023	Quarterly BAS Statements	21/04/2024	Lodge Certified Membership Roll to the Registrar
28/10/2023	SGC Superannuation Payments	28/04/2024	IAS – PAYG Lodgement
1/11/2023	Annual Report to NSWALC	28/04/2024	Quarterly BAS Statement
1/11/2023	Audited Financial Statements to NSWALC	28/04/2024	Superannuation Payments
1/11/2023	Auditors Management Letter and GLALC Response to Auditors Management Letter	15/05/2024	Bank Reconciliations
1/11/2023	CLBP Implementation Report to NSWALC (contained in Annual Report)	21/05/2024	IAS – PAYG Lodgement
15/11/2023	Bank Reconciliations	27/05/2024	OBM
20/11/2023	OBM	3/06/2024	Professional Work Planning and Career Development review
21/11/2023	IAS – PAYG Lodgement	4/06/2024	Members Pack Mail-out (for 2/6/2024 OMM)
21/11/2023	Members Pack Mail-out (for 13/12/2023 OMM)	15/06/2024	Bank Reconciliations
13/12/2023	OMM	19/06/2024	OMM
15/12/2023	Bank Reconciliations	20/06/2024	RAS – New Board to approve CLBP in place when they were elected by this date.
22/12/2023	IAS – PAYG Lodgement	26/06/2024	IAS – PAYG Lodgement

BOARD SUB-COMMITTEES			
	MEMBERSHIP	RISK, AUDIT, INVESTMENTS, PEOPLE & PERFORMANCE (RAIPP) SUBCOMMITTEE (INCL. CULTURE & HERITAGE)	HOUSING
Troy Davis		●	●
Diane Van Aken	●		
Tony Scholes Donovan		●	
Gail Smith	●		
Bernadette Compton	●		
Steve Ingram		●	●
Roxanne Sheridan			●
Amanda Roa		●	●
Roslyn Way	●		
Sandra German			
Tanya Ellis		●	●
Matthew Fellingham		●	
Barry Brooker		●	●
MANAGERS' SUB-COMMITTEES			
Melissa Williams		●	
Mark Spithill		●	●
Zeita Davis	●		
Trudy Healey			●
Kath Schilling	●		





## Gandangara

Local Aboriginal Land Council

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TH

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LOCAL ABORIGINAL LAND COUNCIL

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