



**Aarnja**<sup>ltd</sup>

*The Regional Body for Kimberley Aboriginal people...*

## MEMBERS' UPDATE MAY 2023

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Welcome to the May 2023 Aarnja Newsletter. Since the last update there have been significant developments in our move towards creating effective Kimberley Aboriginal governance. Here is a sample of what we've been working on.



### AARNJA SUPPORTS ABORIGINAL VOICE

Due to the aspirations of our Kimberley Aboriginal people, especially our elders, Aarnja is dedicating time and resources to pushing for a Kimberley YES vote in the campaign for a Voice to Parliament. We see the importance of informing our people about referendums, the constitution, and what the Voice stands for. We recently co-hosted a ©YES to a Voice campaign workshop with Kimberley Land Council and held a community BBQ at Goolarri Media to share ways our community can get involved and possibly run grassroots YES campaigns across the Kimberley. This aligns with Aarnja's vision to empower Kimberley Aboriginal people, communities, and organisations to have a strong Kimberley Aboriginal identity and to participate in modern society's social and economic opportunities. We think constitutional recognition is a key step towards reconciliation and achieving better outcomes for Kimberley Aboriginal people. Over the coming months we'll be available to inform and to meet with our members to provide further information. We look forward to delivering on this important work. Unfortunately, with resources committed to the campaign, our sponsorship program will be on hold until July 1st. To learn more about how you can support the YES23 campaign please visit: <https://yes23.com.au/> where you will find information including resources for use in support of a ©YES vote in the 2023 referendum.



*Do you know about the Aboriginal Representative Organisation Project and Aarnja's role as the regional Pilot site? If not, please contact our office to speak to one of our ARO Team.*



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## KIMBERLEY ABORIGINAL REGIONAL BODY DESIGN GROUP

*This update was released as a joint statement by KARB design group leaders: Aarnja, Kimberley Land Council, Kimberley Aboriginal Medical Services, Kimberley Aboriginal Law and Culture Centre, Kimberley Language Resource Centre, Empowered Young Leaders, West Kimberley Futures - Empowered Communities Binarrri-binyja yarrowoo.*

For over 40 years, Kimberley Aboriginal people have called for a regional body to speak strong, with one voice to government. A strong regional body will give us a bigger say on policies and decisions that affect our people, our country, our languages, our families. A Kimberley Aboriginal Regional Body must be designed our way, to suit Kimberley Aboriginal people for the long term. We must take our time and be careful to respond to community, not government. We must respect the voices of local people and the principles of place-based decision-making. A Kimberley Aboriginal Regional Body must respect our cultural traditions and the Law. It must respect the role of Traditional Owners, of

existing organisations and the diversity of our community. The time to act is now. We have come together to form a Design Group and start work on a model of regional governance. But it is the voices of Kimberley Aboriginal people that must shape the design of a Kimberley Aboriginal Regional Body. Consultation and engagement will be key. We look forward to working with you in coming months and years as we design and establish a Kimberley Aboriginal Regional Body. **For further information, please get in touch with Aarnja.**

### DO YOU NEED TO UPDATE YOUR DETAILS?

Are you a member of Aarnja? Have your contact details recently changed? Please feel free to reach out to the Aarnja Office on [info@aarnja.org.au](mailto:info@aarnja.org.au) or by calling (08) 9192 2361 to update your details. You can also check that your information is correct on our register.

### WELCOME NEW STAFF!

Over the last six months Aarnja has had a big recruitment drive, pulling together a stellar cast of staff. New faces on our office team include Cauline Masuda and Theresa Sibosado. We're also pleased to introduce Sacha Swan and Janene Bedford, who are both working on our Aboriginal Representative Organisation Pilot Project.