



RRKAC Newsletter

February 2024

A word from our CEO

Welcome to 2024! We have kicked off the year with an on Country visit with the global CEO of Rio Tinto in an attempt to break the stalemate we have arrived at with Rio Tinto. As a recap - To date, as part of the Agreement Modernisation process RRKAC has presented Rio Tinto with a reasonable compensation package designed to redress the significant underpayment for resources that have earned the company billions of dollars in revenue over five decades, and also includes proposals for non-financial commitments. This is to address the non-payment of compensation in the current Participation Agreement for Mesa J because Rio Tinto did not want to talk about the past in 2006. This has greatly disadvantaged Robe River Kuruma People socially, economically, environmentally, and culturally.

At the end of 2023 we wrote to Rio Tinto's Board of Directors and their joint venture partners, to update them on the company's lack of progress with the negotiations and requested a meeting of our joint boards (RRKAC and KML) with Jakob Stausholm, the CEO of Rio Tinto.

Over the 4th and 5th of February 2024 we met with Jakob and key Rio Tinto executives and staff.

The Board and Trust Directors, together with staff met on the morning of the 4th of February and travelled to Pannawonica where we picked up the rest of the team and drove out to the Old Yalleen

Station to prepare our messages and do a dress rehearsal for the meeting with Jakob. This was time well spent preparing and allowed us to figure out the best people to speak to certain topics.

Then we moved on to the Jandinna Cemetery where Wally checked the road to find out that it had been washed out. So, we changed our plans and headed to Mesa N.

After a pretty hot day, we headed back to the hall, did a check in and debrief and then headed back to Tharla Camp to get ready for dinner with the Rio Tinto Team.



The second day we met the Rio Tinto Executives who flew in by charter. We met in the Community Hall, did a safety brief, short overview of the day then hit the road.

Our first stop was Old Yalleen Station in the Bungaroo. Elaine did an emotional call out to country and the old people and then was followed by Deanna who invited the Rio Tinto people to take their shoes off and connect to country. This was a very impactful and was great to witness the level of cultural care our team provided to the Rio Tinto team.

Then Kelly followed with a magnificent summary of RRRKAC's position and the commitment we wanted from Rio Tinto and the legacy that she wants to leave for RRRKAC people in the future. She was truly inspirational and set the leadership and tone for the rest of our team. We are so lucky to have such strong leaders who came together as a unified team and showed so much composure, professionalism and leadership in putting forward how RRRK people feel about Rio Tinto, impacts to country, and our expectations.

We closed out this session with a smoking ceremony led by Sharon before Jakob and Simon provided some thanks about being guests here and their hope that we can find a way through the deadlock.



Old Yalleen Welcome to Country



Kelly Slattery with Simon Trott (RTIO Iron Ore CEO) and Jakob Stausholm (RTIO CEO)



Leanne Evans and Jakob Stausholm



Sharon Lockyer and Rodney Alexander Snr smoking Jakob Stausholm

The day ended up with a lunch in community hall and some final words from Kelly asking Rio Tinto to do better. Jakob and Simon on behalf of Rio Tinto said that they will not talk about the past. They want to find a way forward, but it seems to be on their terms. We simply rejected their offer to do a deal without dealing with old mines and old mining and the need to respect our request for no mining in the Bungaroo.

I was proud of our team and wanted to thank everyone who contributed to making this happen. More to come as we regroup and develop our next steps.

Anthony Galante
Chief Executive Officer

Staff Movements

We are excited to welcome Anna Martin to our team. Anna has joined the RRRKAC team in the role of Project Officer, Environment and Heritage. She has recently moved to Karratha from Albany, where she was completing her university degree, a Bachelor of Science in Marine Biology and Environmental Chemistry. Anna is looking forward to working as a part of the Country and Culture team at RRRKAC, working to track the outcomes of RRRK's Healthy Country Plan, and supporting the team more broadly.



Ngurrah-rah (T120) Youth Program

We are proud to share that in first 8 months of service in 2023, the Ngurrah-rah (T120) Youth Program has had over 800 contacts with young people through planned programs, and over 350 contacts through case management.

RRKAC is thrilled at the level of engagement from the community with the program.

All young people have been achieving their goals set in individual support plans, including positive community engagement, skills development for social and emotional wellbeing, re-engagement in school and increased school attendance.

95% of young people that have engaged in the program have not re-offended.

The T120 staff members Lakota and Hayley are upskilling by studying a Cert IV in Youth Work and will look to have this completed by end of 2024.

The Department of Communities have told RRRKAC that our program, functioning, case management and

LIG meetings are used as a positive example to other T120 providers in the State.

Home Stretch WA

The Home Stretch WA Program has had over 300 contacts with clients since the program began three months ago.

RRKAC's Program Lead for Home Stretch and T120, Dave Heathwood, sits on the Community of Practice Guiding Panel for Home Stretch WA, this panel is responsible for overseeing Home Stretch WA development and implementation across the state.

RRKAC's Home Stretch WA staff, Di and John will hopefully be undertaking a Diploma in Counselling in the near future, this will be of benefit to Home Stretch WA clients and RRRK community.

All clients are making progress towards their goals, including securing transitional housing, gaining employment, obtaining Drivers Licenses, education for first time parents, developing skills in social and emotional wellbeing and skills development for transitioning to adulthood.

RYDE Program

The RYDE Program has recommenced as of February, offering mentoring for those already signed up to the Program or that have their L's and require hours for logbooks.



New applicants requiring their Ls can complete the necessary paperwork ready for Learner's sessions which will recommence in March 2024.

RRKAC currently has a vacancy for a RYDE Youth and Community Support Officer, who will be responsible for the delivery of the RYDE Program by engaging and elevating participation, onboarding of volunteer driving mentors and effectively managing project

outcomes in accordance with the funding service agreement.

To be successful, you must have:

- Current 'C' open drivers' license
- Excellent Interpersonal and communication skills
- Ability to build great working relationships with Young People, Volunteers and Service Providers
- Proficient in IT and demonstrated experience using computer software and systems.
- Ability to:
- Work effectively with and for Aboriginal people and especially at-risk youth.
- Model desired workplace behaviours.
- Effectively resolve conflict.
- Hold a current National Police Check (or ability to obtain), Working with Children card (WWC) and pass pre-employment medical including Drug & Alcohol test.

To find out more, or apply please contact Dave Heathwood on 9185 5005 or apply via [Seek](#)

Housing Pathways Support Program

The Housing Pathways Support team are currently supporting 32 families on their journey to home ownership.

If you have an interest in purchasing your own home, call in to see Amanda and the team or email a.drummond@rrkac.org.au.

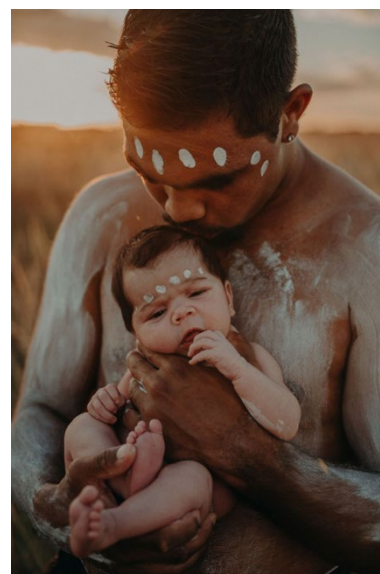
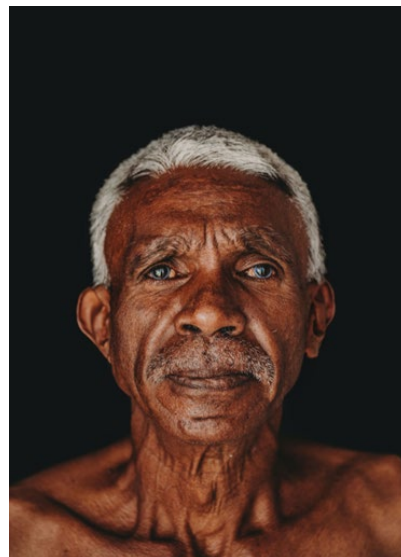
- Money Business yarns every Tuesday 9am - 10:30am upstairs in the Housing office - come have a cuppa & a chat.
- Walking Group is on hold during the hotter months. The team is working on an exciting new delivery of exercise in 2024!
- The next dates for the Strong and Connected Community meetings will be sent out via SMS.
- Jobs and Skills sessions will continue will return on 12th and 26th March.

Last month the Alcohol and Drug Foundation awarded \$14,500 in grant funding for activities to address the goals of the Strong and Connected Community group. These activities serve as protective factors against problematic drug and alcohol use.

The first of these activities will be held on **16th March**.

Bobbi Lockyer will be photographing Youth and Elders together. This is an all-day photoshoot for 30+ people to participate in throughout the day. It is open to any Youth and/or Elders residing in the Pilbara.

Please contact Cass on 0408696849 or email c.doyle@rrkac.org.au if you or anyone you know would like to participate. Check out some examples of Bobbi's amazing photography below!



PHOTOSHOOT WITH BOBBI LOCKYER

FOR YOUTH AND ELDERS



16TH MARCH 2024 | STARTS 9AM

Please contact Cass on 0408696849
or c.doyle@rrkac.org.au if you would like to attend

Land Access and Living on Country Feasibility Study

As reported at our November Family Group Meetings and AGM, Stage One of the *RRK Land Access and Living on Country Feasibility Study* recommended that the principle of equity should guide all developments that are implemented to improve Robe River Kuruma's access to Country. This means that each family group, as defined by each apical ancestor for the Robe River Kuruma (RRK) People, should receive support to build and/or access similar levels of infrastructure to enable land access and living on Country.

Upon consideration of the higher costs involved to progress residential opportunities for families, it has been endorsed by the RRKAC Board to progress an initial proposal for camping infrastructure at significant areas to enable RRK members to visit and access locations and places on Country. Facilities to be prioritised consist of a concrete slab and roof structure, a water tank, and a compostable toilet,

along with a small lockable shipping container for some equipment.

The RRKAC and KML Board of Directors have endorsed progressing Stage Two of the *RRK Land Access and Living on Country Feasibility Study* titled Campground Development to provide definitive costs for three to four campsites, a proposal on how these will be managed and maintained. RRKAC will be undertaking further community consultation to confirm preferred and suitable sites.

Heritage Updates

2024 is set to be a busy year with regards to heritage surveys. We encourage those interested in participating to reach out to the Country and Culture Team to express their interest, noting that fitness for work exams may be required.

Additionally, we are seeking funding to form a Women's Jajiwurra Rangers team, and upon successful funding, we will invite expressions of interest for this initiative. Furthermore, we aim to create a casual pool to support the rangers in conducting environmental surveys, opening opportunities for community involvement in preserving RRK environment and heritage.

Keep an eye out for updates in this space!

Rio Tinto Vibration Exceedence at Mesa C

In late December RRKAC was advised of the potential impact on a rock shelter at the Mesa C Robe Valley operations.

This related to potential vibrations exceedences from blasting in the area and is of serious and ongoing concern to us.

RRKAC was advised by Rio Tinto that due to cultural restrictions the site has not been subject to on-ground inspection, however, the company's preliminary investigation is that the shelter has not been damaged.

Given the substantial damage from blasting on PKKP lands and a similar incident on Eastern Guruma country, RRKAC has grave concerns about Rio Tinto's ability to protect Aboriginal cultural heritage. RRKAC staff Gavin McDevitt, Alex Walter, and Arnold Bobby, travelled to Mesa C on the 9th of February to conduct an investigation of the rockshelter.



Exterior of the rockshelter.

The rockshelter was initially recorded in 2015 as part of the Mesa C mining complex. It contains several lithic artefacts and a potential archaeological deposit; it also falls within an ethnographic site pertaining to kangaroo hunting.

The vibration exceedance event was recorded on the 6th of December 2023. The event was deemed to pose a low risk to cultural values.

During the inspection, recent rockfall was observed in the southern portion of the shelter. It is difficult to determine, at this stage, if the rockfall and vibration exceedance are directly linked. RRKAC requested the 3D scans Rio Tinto took before mining operations began, hoping to tighten event timeframes. Photographs taken during the initial recording are also being subject to analysis by the Country and Culture team.



Registration of interest to become part of Robe River Services Cultural Awareness Facilitator Panel

Robe River Services is inviting RRK members to become a new Facilitator of face-to-face Cultural Awareness Training on Country.

Robe River Services has recommenced delivery for 2024 of face-to-face provision of Cultural Competence Training for new and existing employees with Rio Tinto and will soon be extending this to MRL and CZR Resources on Robe River Kuruma Country.

As part of becoming a facilitator of the **Robe River Services Culture Competency Training Program** service on Country you will directly assist Company employees build a relationship with RRK people, who are at the heart of Cultural delivery and instilling everyday respect by stakeholders and all its employees and contractors on the traditional owner lands they are operating on.

An Expression of Interest will come shortly providing further details on the training materials to be delivered and what training support will be offered to allow you to become a subcontractor with Robe River Services. In the meantime, you can send your initial interest via email, Attention: Manager, Robe River Services to admin@rrkac.org.au with your details below.

Contact details:

Name of RRK member:

Address:

Best Contact Phone:

Email:

Member Support Program Update

We ended 2023 on a record number of applications and an increase in requests to support our members. This has not changed. We have started 2024 with a backlog of applications related to:

- Boys going through and attending lore,
- Emergency medical situations, and
- Complex case management requests.

Staffing issues within the Program have also contributed to the backlog of applications. As a result, applications were closed to members, for what was supposed to be a short period of time to help clear the back log up. Unfortunately, during this time applications from members requesting urgent assistance has not stopped. This means the team has not been able to complete and close off applications in the backlog.

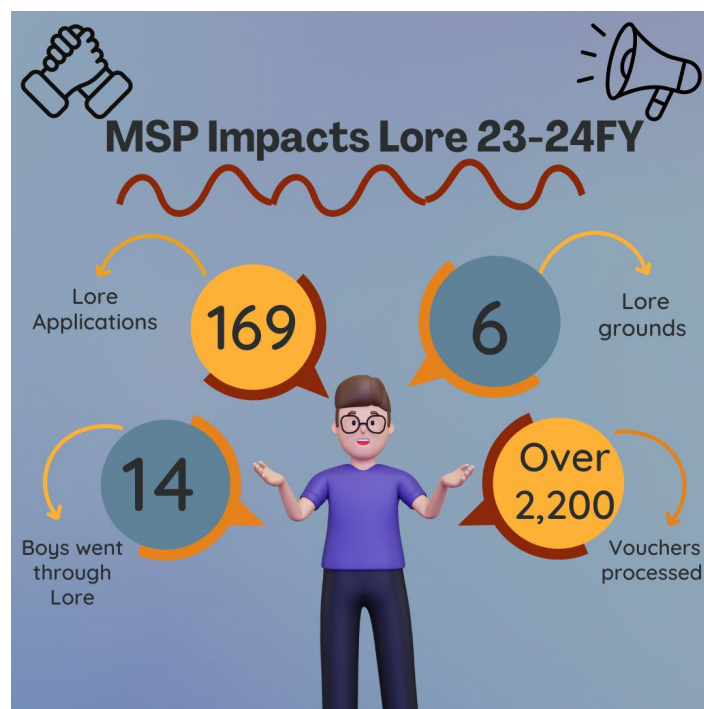
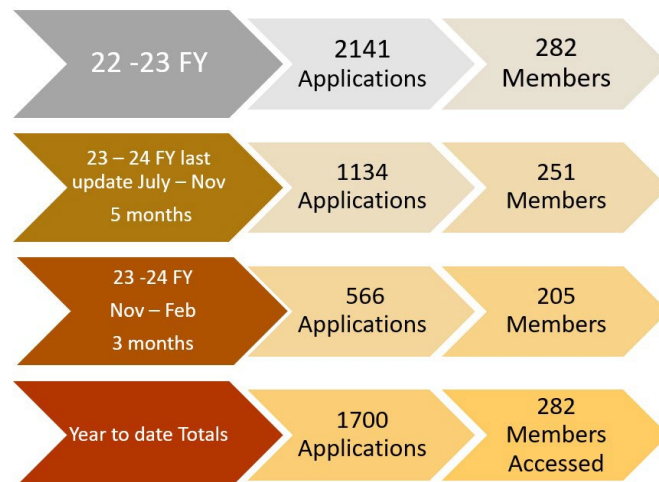
The process and support required for Education applications is something the team have flagged for our review. Education is a priority, and our kids need to be at school however, it is important that our members recognise that the last-minute influx of these applications contributes to the backlog of applications we have in our systems. Almost all schools put out their new school booklists and information around Oct – Nov ready for the following year. It has been disappointing the amount of Education applications that we received the week school was starting and after. Education applications for kids schooling are more complex applications with several different aspects and payments to be made. When members put in applications the week school starts, it creates more processing problems for the MSP.

Please remember the following when putting in Education applications:

- Plan ahead – Late applications do not make it a priority. You have time to prepare.
- Give all the information - Applications should come completed with supporting documents including stationary list, school fee statements, subject selections, and uniform orders.
- You are responsible – Providing information is the responsibility of the parents/ caregivers not that of the MSU staff.

Lore at the end of last year was a massive undertaking due to the unprecedented number of applications we received. Applications had a short turnaround timeframe to support members to be out at the lore grounds. While this influx was stressful for all involved with the record-breaking number of Boys going through in the same Lore season. We take away the positives of more members participating in Lore and cultural activities. We are pleased knowing more people are knowledge holders that can now participate in heritage surveys and the Jajiwurra Rangers.

Check out the stats from this lore season, MSP applications and support through the last 3 months!





Aboriginal Trust Management System (ATMS) Upgrade



As we announced at the AGM last year and in the last newsletter - to better support our members and simplify internal process, RRRKAC has been working with Illuminance Solutions to implement upgrades to ATMS. ATMS is the system that we use to process MSP applications. Automating some of the key functions will provide efficiency across the organisation and allow members access to their information in real time, tracking their MSP applications, and fund balances.

Stage 1 Key Upgrades

- Finance system integration to implement purchase orders.
- Case Management Tools

Stage 2

- Members Mobile App allows members viewing access to their personal profiles on ATMS.
- Integration of incoming service requests (CAT, WTC, Survey etc) and coordinating members availability to such requests.

We are currently part way through Stage 1, with the completion of all stages to hopefully be done in the coming weeks. Unfortunately, the upgrade to the ATMS has not gone as smoothly as we anticipated. In addition to the length of days the upgrade took, there has been issues with data migration. This means we were unable to access any supporting documentation for online applications currently being worked on. Other issues with the ATMS upgrades we are working to resolve include:

- Missing details in the new system that must be moved or input,
- problems with staff being able to access the new system,
- bulk texts providing members updates have not processed through the new system.

This means the team has been unable to process any applications, adding to the already **LONG** backlog of applications. We are positive the backlog of applications received **prior to the 15th will be completed by 26th Feb.** New applications received after that date, will then be processed in order taking into consideration time sensitive applications such as Education.

Applications will be open from the 4th of March.

Moving forward we remind members that the applications process is usually 5-10 days when all supporting documentation is received.

As you know, sometimes with technology it doesn't all ways go as smoothly as we want. Once upgrades are complete, we will announce a wider roll out including education and training of the new Member Portal.

Thank you for understanding and we will continue working to have clear and open communication via our members only Facebook page.

Employment

Looking for work?

Interested in joining our Casual Pool?

Want to complete some Training?






Scan the QR code below and complete the Employment Expression of Interest registration form and the employment team will be in contact.



You can also check out our new **RRKAC Employment and Training Opportunities Facebook Page** - this is a centralised area for us to share Employment and Training opportunities for RRKAC members, you can join the page by scanning the below QR code.



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