

MONTHS IN REVIEW

MAY / JUNE

compiled by Robert McCreery

03/05-04/05

- The Australian and Queensland Governments announce their ongoing investment in the Cape York Welfare Reform Trial (the 'Trial'). Both governments acknowledge that the Family Responsibilities Commission is central to the success of the Trial. The funding will introduce new measures to further support school enrolment and attendance as well as the development of job and life skills in the communities of Aurukun, Coen, Hope Vale and Mossman Gorge.

26/05

- Today marks the 16th National Sorry Day. National Sorry Day is held on 26 May each year, the anniversary of the tabling of the *Bringing Them Home Report* in Parliament.

26/05

- 'Journey to Recognition' is launched. A major public awareness campaign, Journey to Recognition is a relay across the country involving thousands of Australians. It has the aim of building support for the recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the Australian Constitution.

03/06

- Australia mourns the death of Mandawuy Yunupingu. Mr Yunupingu was the 1992 Australian of the Year, the lead singer of Yothu Yindi and the first Indigenous Australian to be appointed a school principal. In 1992 Mr Yunupingu was named Australian of the Year for his role in 'building bridges of understanding between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people'.

05/06

- The Attorney-General, Mark Dreyfus, releases draft terms of reference for a new Australian Law Reform Commission inquiry: *Native Title law—Twenty Years and Beyond*. The draft terms of reference focus on proving connection to land and waters and authorisation; the laws which establish who can negotiate in particular circumstances. The Inquiry will look at ways to improve native title law and encourage faster, simpler resolution of native title claims for all parties.

19/06

- The High Court hands down its judgement in *Maloney v The Queen*: a case relating to an Indigenous resident of Palm Island in Queensland who was charged with possession of more than a prescribed quantity of liquor in violation of the *Liquor Act 1992* (Qld). The appellant appealed against the conviction claiming it

was inconsistent with the *Racial Discrimination Act 1975* (Cth) ('RDA'). The High Court found that the legislative provisions in question were a 'special measure'—taken for the sole purpose of securing the adequate advancement of the Indigenous people of Palm Island—within the meaning of the *RDA*. Accordingly, the appeal was unanimously dismissed.

- Indigenous women from across the country travel to Parliament House in Canberra to share their views on the issues facing their communities at the Government funded 'Oxfam Straight Talk Summit'.

20/06

- The first *Stronger Futures in the Northern Territory Six-Monthly Progress Report* is released.

21/06

- The Australian Government reaches a landmark agreement with residents of Ilpeye-Ilpeye town camp in Alice Springs. The agreement includes a compensation package that will provide the means for residents to build their own homes. Ilpeye-Ilpeye will be the first town camp in the Northern Territory to undergo a full subdivision process under Northern Territory planning legislation, meaning they will be able to develop their own land and own their own homes.

24/06

- The Australian Government announces the service providers that will deliver its Remote Jobs and Communities Program ('RJCP'), which starts on 1 July 2013. The RJCP regions cover almost 5.9 million square kilometres, with providers servicing around 33,000 job seekers in New South Wales, Queensland, Western Australia, South Australia and the Northern Territory, including in those communities participating in the Cape York Welfare Reform trials.

25/06

- The Australian Government releases the *Community Living Area Land Reform in the Northern Territory Outcomes Paper* (the 'Paper'). The Paper outlines proposed reforms to support more economic development opportunities for Aboriginal people living in community living areas in the Northern Territory. The Paper explains proposed reforms including allowing community living area land owners to grant leases for a broader range of purposes, including for commercial, infrastructure and public purposes. The Paper includes draft regulations to implement some of the proposed reforms.