



## Newsletter 3, August 2025

ICN 8264 (under special administration)

### Dear members and other interested people,

Our names are Jack James and Paula Smith and we are from the firm Rodgers Reidy. On 17 December 2024, the Registrar of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Corporations appointed us as the special administrators of First People of the Millewa-Mallee Aboriginal Corporation RNTBC (FPMMAC).

During this administration, we will keep you informed of progress through regular newsletters and information meetings.

These newsletters and all meeting notices will be available on the public Register of Indigenous Corporations at [oric.gov.au](http://oric.gov.au) – use the 'Find a corporation' tool, search using 'First people' and click on the ICN access a list of corporation documents.

### Current progress

We are currently in stage two of the special administration. This newsletter will outline some of the progress we have made in the opening stages of our work:

STAGE 1	COMPLETE
Take control of the assets, including bank accounts; build a complete picture of issues and challenges; and establish a clear plan of action.	
STAGE 2	IN PROGRESS
Restore good operational order.	
STAGE 3	PENDING
Prepare the corporation for return to members control.	

Over the coming months, we will move into stage 3 of the special administration, which is preparing the corporation for return to members control.

### Extension of special administration

The special administration was due to end on 20 June 2025, however the registrar extended the end date to 19 September 2025. The main reasons for the extension was to allow further time to complete some important tasks, such as the recruitment of a permanent CEO.

During the period to the end of the special administration, we will also:

- undertake a recruitment campaign for a permanent CEO
- recruit needed management roles
- work with the new CEO to ensure a proper handover
- hold information meetings to update members and Traditional Owners
- appoint the new board of directors (including independent director/s).

## Important meeting day for all FPMMAC members and Traditional Owners: Friday, 19 September

### Information meeting

We will be holding our third information meeting.

**Date:** Friday, 19 September 2025

**Time:** 10:00 am to 12:00 pm

**Place:** The Powerhouse Hall  
The Powerhouse  
Hugh King Drive  
Mildura VIC 3500

The information meeting will only be open to corporation members and Traditional Owners. It provides the opportunity to hear from the special administrators about work being done and allow people to ask questions.

A representative from ORIC, will attend and be available to answer any questions you may have.

Virtual access to the meeting will be made available to members upon registration.

**SEE THE ATTACHED MEETING NOTICE**

### Lunch

### Information sessions

**1:00 pm to 3:00 pm**

**Treaty Authority presentation** – local treaty making (Andrew Jackomos and Duean White)

### Afternoon tea

**3:45 pm to 5:00 pm**

**Treaty Assembly presentation** – Statewide treaty making (Melissa Jones and Assembly Team)

### Dinner

**6:00 pm to 9:00 pm**

**Informal celebration dinner**

FPMMAC 10th Anniversary and recognition as native title holders

**Travel assistance:** Travel assistance and accommodation will be provided in accordance with FPMMAC's Travel Assistance Policy. Details have been provided to members separately. If you are eligible for travel and/or accommodation assistance, please contact [admin@fpmmac.com.au](mailto:admin@fpmmac.com.au) by 7 September 2025.

**RSVP:** By Sunday 7 September to [admin@fpmmac.com.au](mailto:admin@fpmmac.com.au)

**Enquiries:** Uleena Murray 0439 271 614,  
Shalailah Carter 0447 523 234, or  
Toby-Lee Kirby (FNLRS) 0434 632 875

## New Rule Book

On 28 March 2025, First Nations Legal & Research Services (FNLRS) wrote to us and (amongst other things) stated:

- the FPMM claim group had been workshopping a rule book for the PBC incorporating elements of FPMM governance principles
- the rule book in development is intended to be adopted as the rule book for the PBC, whether that be FPMMAC or a new corporation
- if FPMMAC is nominated as the PBC for the FPMM native title claim, amendments to the Rule book be made by FPMMAC adopting any rule book developed and approved by the claim group at the authorisation meeting to be held on 11 May 2025.

FNLRS further stated that this approach would “ensure that the process for the development of the rule book aligns with the nomination of the PBC by the claim group, is led by the claim group, which is composed of all native title holders, and avoids duplication of resources.”

On 3 April 2025, we had a Teams call with FNLRS to discuss the above matters.

On 4 April 2025, we wrote to FNLRS and advised that if FPMMAC is nominated as the PBC, and noting we had not seen the proposed rule book developed by the claim group, in principle, we have no issue with adopting a rule book approved by the claim group subject to our review of the proposed rule book, its compliance with the CATSI Act and ORIC's review and approval.

Subsequently:

- FNLRS advised a new rule book was approved by the native title claim group at an Authorisation Meeting held on 11 May 2025.
- We submitted this rule book to ORIC and, following some very minor amendments which were agreed by the FNLRS, it was registered on 19 June 2025

Notwithstanding the above, if any members or Traditional Owners have any concerns or suggested further amendments to the rule book, we are happy to discuss these and seek comments from members.

**A copy of this new rule book is available on the FPMMAC website.**

## Update on Advisory Group

By way of update:

- LeRoy Badenoch has stepped down as a member of the advisory group
- We have received 2 nominations from the Nyeri Nyeri language group who we have appointed to the advisory group

Following these changes, the current members of the Advisory Group are:

- |                    |                |
|--------------------|----------------|
| • Susan Baxter     | • Rodney Reid  |
| • Nathan Giles     | • Robby Knight |
| • Vanessa Peterson | • Nyawi Black  |

Mainly, the advisory group will help us to (amongst other things):

- review of the Register of Members and Membership Applications
- review the rule book to strengthen governance at FPMAC
- assist with CEO recruitment
- native title negotiations.

## Membership applications

We are aware that, as at the date of our appointment, there were a number of membership applications that had not been considered by the former board. A review of minutes of meetings of the former Board, reveals that no membership applications were dealt with during 2024.

Further confusion was caused when, in September 2024, names were added to the Register of Members and updated on the ORIC website and then, in October 2024, these names were removed. Whilst the names were removed due to the membership applications not having been approved by the Board, the process caused a lot of confusion and frustration.

We are working with the advisory group to have these applications reviewed as soon as possible.

We apologise for the length of time taken to deal with this matter and are keen to have it resolved as soon as possible.

## Staffing

At the time of our appointment, the corporation did not have a permanent CEO or a senior leadership team. This resulted in significant operational issues and, in particular, poor financial management and an absence of reporting to funding agencies that resulted in funding being withheld.

In order for FPMAC to grow and be successful, it needs a skilled and experienced CEO supported by a strong management team. Following are details of actions being taken to put this in place.

### **Recruitment of a new Chief Executive Officer (CEO)**

The process to recruit a new permanent CEO has commenced. Proposals were sought from a number of recruitment agencies who specialise in recruiting in the not-for profit sector. Following an assessment of these proposals, Pipeline Talent has been selected to undertake the recruitment process. Pipeline Talent is 100% indigenous owned and managed.

The closing date for applications was 10 August 2024. Further information can be obtained from [pipelinetalent.com.au/candidate-portal/browse-all-opportunities](https://pipelinetalent.com.au/candidate-portal/browse-all-opportunities)

Pending the appointment of a permanent CEO, Chris Marshall will continue as interim CEO.

### **Recruitment of General Manager – new position**

The recruitment for the new role of General Manager was recently undertaken. The response to the recruitment campaign was good. Following interviews, we are pleased to advise that Ian Curwood was successful and commenced in the role on 4 August 2025.

Ian has a strong track record in leadership roles including change management processes. Since May 2021, Ian has worked at Mallee Catchment Management Authority in Executive Management roles. Ian's experience in this role will provide valuable skills to the FPMAC leadership team and strengthen internal procedures and external stakeholder relations.

Importantly, in the General Manager role, Ian will be responsible for overseeing reporting obligations under the various funding agreements in place with State and Commonwealth agencies.

### **Appointment of Chief Financial Officer (CFO) – new position**

We are pleased to advise that Daniel Pascale has been appointed as CFO and commenced in the role on 14 July 2025. Daniel was born and

raised in Mildura, and is a Certified Practicing Accountant, having worked at Charles and Partners for over 15 years.

### **Recruitment of Manager – Cultural Heritage, Native Title and Environment – new position**

The recruitment for the new role of Manager – Cultural Heritage, Native Title and Environment was recently undertaken. There was a good response to the recruitment campaign. Following interviews, we are pleased to advise that Kenny Stewart was successful. As members will know, Kenny is a long standing employee of FPMMAC and has significant experience in cultural heritage and native title matters. In addition, Kenny has very strong relationships with key stakeholders and will be a great advocate for future funding and other opportunities to the benefit of FPMMAC.

## **Finances**

As previously advised the finances of FPMMAC at the time of our appointment were in disarray.

- Proper financial records had not been maintained and there was no appropriately qualified staff to undertake the work.
- As a result, the preparation of the FY24 financial statements had not commenced.
- No acquittals had been provided to funders for FY24 and lodgements with the Australian Taxation Office for GST and PAYG had not been made since May 2024.

Significant work has been undertaken to bring the financial records up-to-date.

Based on the work done, we consider that at the date of our appointment, FPMMAC was **insolvent or about to become insolvent**. With the work done so far, and the ongoing support of funders, we consider that FPMMAC is now solvent.

The audit of the FY24 and FY25 financial statements has commenced.

## **Funders**

Significant work has also been undertaken to bring the outstanding reporting to funders up-to-date. This work is important to keep up-to date. The new General Manager will be responsible to overseeing reporting for all funding agreements in place with FPMMAC. We are most appreciative of the ongoing support of funders to FPMMAC.

## **Native Title Consent Determination**

As members and Traditional Owners would know, the Native Title Determination was handed down by the Federal Court on Country on Friday 18 July 2025.

We acknowledge that this is a significant and positive outcome for Traditional Owners (now Native Title holders) and sincerely congratulate all involved.

FPMMAC has received nation-building funding from the Federation of Victorian Traditional Owners Corporations (FVTOC) to facilitate meetings with each of the Latji Latji, Nintjait and Nyeri Nyeri language groups (individually and then collectively) to discuss (amongst other things) the implications of FPMMAC being the PBC and the opportunities this presents to native title holders (and therefore to FPMMAC).

In addition, Dean Cowie, Executive Director Land Justice, Department of Premier and Cabinet, will be organising an information session in Mildura for local businesses, local government and other stakeholders to explain the implications of the native title determination and the role of FPMMAC as the PBC, the agent of the native title holders.

Further information about the above matters will be provided in the coming weeks.

Many thanks,  
Jack and Paula

## **SPECIAL ADMINISTRATORS**



Rodgers Reidy  
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## **MORE ON SPECIAL ADMINISTRATION**

The Registrar has a fact sheet, *Special administrations: what members and directors need to know* – see [oric.gov.au/special-admins](http://oric.gov.au/special-admins) or call 1800 622 431.



ICN 3630 (under special administration)

**Following the cancellation of the 19/20 August meetings due to sorry business, we can now confirm the details of our third information meeting.**

### **Corporation members and Traditional Owners are invited to an information meeting**

On 17 December 2024 the Registrar of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Corporations appointed us as the special administrators of First People of the Millewa-Mallee Aboriginal Corporation.

We are holding our third information meeting about the special administration and would like to invite all members of the corporation and interested parties to come.

**Only corporation members and Traditional Owners will be able to attend the information meeting.**

A representative from ORIC will also be at the meeting and will be available to answer questions.

This is your opportunity to discuss the special administration and your corporation's future. Please come along.

Lunch will be provided at the end of meeting.

### **Travel assistance**

Travel assistance and accommodation will be provided in accordance with FPMAC's Travel Assistance Policy. Details have been provided to members separately.

## **NOTICE OF INFORMATION MEETING**

For corporation members and Traditional Owners

Details of the meeting:

**Date** Friday, 19 September 2025  
**Time** 10:00 am to 12:00 pm  
**Place** The Powerhouse Hall  
The Powerhouse  
Hugh King Drive  
Mildura VIC 3500

### **Attending virtually**

If you want to attend the meeting virtually, register before 12 noon on Tuesday 16 September 2025 via:

- Email: [admin@fpmmac.com.au](mailto:admin@fpmmac.com.au)
- Ph: (03) 5832 0222

After you register, at a date closer to the meeting, we will send you instructions on how to access the meeting.

### **Agenda**

1. Update on special administration
2. Update from interim CEO
3. Next steps in the special administration
4. Asking questions.

## **SPECIAL ADMINISTRATORS**



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