



# Aboriginal Participation Bulletin No 16

Sharing stories on how the Transport Portfolio is embracing Aboriginal cultures, working with Aboriginal peoples and businesses to provide sustainable employment and engagement opportunities.

## Unlocking growth and empowerment

The Gnalla Enviro commenced its *Litter Removal and Brush Cutting Works Contract* with Main Roads in August 2023. Under this Contract, which has achieved a 100% Indigenous workforce, empowerment and camaraderie have unfolded as these dedicated employees have found more than just a job, discovering a pathway to brighter futures.

With Gnalla's commitment to their team's development, several individuals were not only provided with the opportunity to obtain their HR truck licenses but those who needed it were also supported in acquiring their driver's licenses, breaking down barriers to mobility and independence.



Image: Gnalla Enviro crew on site

Beyond technical skills, Gnalla invested in the personal growth of their employees, offering financial literacy programs to help them navigate car purchases, savings strategies and overall financial management.

This integrated approach extended to supporting their families, recognizing that the well-being of each employee is intertwined with that of their loved ones.

Through upskilling and cross-training initiatives, Gnalla fostered a culture of continuous learning and

versatility, empowering their team to adapt and thrive in various facets of the business.

This nurturing environment not only instilled a positive attitude towards work but also fostered a sense of belonging, transforming colleagues into a close-knit family united by shared goals and unwavering support for one another, creating a truly remarkable team to work with each day.

## Yooral greets drivers in Casuarina

Striking artwork has been installed along the newly constructed section of Thomas Road in Casuarina.

Designed by Justin Martin, a Whadjuk man with ties to the Nyungar and Yamatji nations, the artwork reflects and celebrates Nyungar heritage and the important cultural context of the area.

The art depicts a *Yooral* (traditional carrying vessel) filled with local spider orchards and tells the story of how Justin visited the area in his youth collecting spider orchards with his mother.

Jointly funded by Main Roads and the City of Kwinana, the artwork was brought to life by Milne & Stonehouse, Justin Martin, supported by Nyoongar Yamatji cultural advisor Cheryl Martin and local fabricators. Landscaping will reflect the art and enhance the new gateway to the City of Kwinana



Artwork installation designed by Justin Martin

### Deadly Driving Program funding

As part of the Thomas Road Duplication project in Casuarina, Main Roads contributed \$100,000 to the City of Kwinana to be spent on local Aboriginal initiatives, administered by the Boola Mara (*Many hands*) Advisory Group.

The funding covers the purchase of three vehicles and conversion to dual-control vehicles to conduct driving lessons, the software and management system, instructor training and for thirty individuals to obtain driver's licences.

After an invitation from local groups, a judging panel, including the Mayor of City of Kwinana and Main Roads representatives, have awarded funding to Medina Aboriginal Culture Centre to establish the Deadly Driving Program with the aim of providing free driving lessons to local Aboriginal community members.

Paul Garlett, Chairperson of the Medina Aboriginal Culture Centre, advised that the program includes the cost of lessons, pick-ups from individual's homes if needed and ensuring required hours of driving are completed for driving assessments.

This provides the participating Aboriginal community members with the opportunity to acquire a valid driver's licence, which could assist them in gaining meaningful employment.

The program is built around sustainability with funding sources in place to ensure its long-term viability after the initial contribution has been expended.

### Aboriginal Business Keeping WA Moving

Garli, an Aboriginal owned and run civil construction and contracting business, was awarded a \$20 million contract with Main Roads' Metropolitan Region in 2023, for the delivery of various projects in the Perth metropolitan area over a period of two years.

To date, five separate projects with a combined value of over \$9 million are either in construction or completed in the 8 months since the contract has been awarded. A further six projects are scheduled to be completed by mid 2024.

These projects are varied and include Principal Share Path rehabilitation, small intersection upgrades and shoulder widening works with safety barriers.

Garli has assisted Main Roads with timely delivery of projects and works by actively engaging with other Aboriginal businesses and staff in the metropolitan area.

Garli is consistently achieving 30% subcontractor spend and work hours, putting their business at the forefront of Aboriginal participation.



*Some of the Garli crew on site*

### Graduation of Yaka Dandjoo's final cohort

After nearly two and a half years since the first cohort began on the Bunbury Outer Ring Road's (BORR) Yaka Dandjoo ready-for-work training program in September 2021, it has now celebrated its final cohort of graduates.

Over the course of the entire program, 191 participants have graduated across 13 cohorts, with 54 per cent (104) of graduates being female and 43 per cent (83) of graduates being youth.

The final graduation event was open to not just the family and friends of the final cohort, but also all past graduates and their respective family and friends. Also in attendance were the various contracting and program partners who have been integral throughout the years-long program in ensuring its success.

The event celebrated the graduates and the program as a whole and it was the final opportunity for all individuals involved in the program to come together and celebrate the outcomes, work, and achievement of Yaka Dandjoo.

The program was conceived and designed to provide a new sustainable employment pathway for both local Aboriginal and unemployed people (many of whom had never been employed) to engage in a supported program with opportunities to enter the civil construction industry. The name itself means "working together" in Noongar language.



*The Yaka Dandjoo Program's final cohort has graduated*

### Solid future career at DoT for trainee

For the past two years, the Department of Transport's (DoT) Maritime business area has hosted a [Solid Futures Aboriginal trainee](#).

Sebastien Farrugia joined DoT as a Solid Futures trainee in February 2023, working in the boat registrations team. Following his traineeship, Sebastien secured a permanent role as a Customer Service Officer in the boat registrations team based at Walyalup Koort.



*All in a day's work for Sebastien Farrugia*

Sebastien said that since joining DoT he felt supported and respected as an Aboriginal person.

"Attending the Reconciliation and NAIDOC Week events gave me the impression that people really care about reconciliation," Sebastien said.

Sebastien loves the culture and community at DoT but feels there is still a lot of work to do to help people learn and understand First Nations culture.

"People are respectfully curious about my tribe and the celebration of important First Nations events makes me feel like my culture is acknowledged and we are heard and appreciated."

### Fremantle Fishing Boat Harbour makeover

Works undertaken for the Department of Transport (DOT) along Capo D'Orlando Drive saw the main contractor, Advantearing Civil Engineers, engaging several Aboriginal businesses including:

- Bithuwanda Fenceworks who undertook design, fabrication, and installation of palisade fencing and chainmesh fencing. Bithuwanda prepared complex mounting details for the 3m high palisade fence and installed the fencing to a high standard using safe procedures due to the 2m drop-off behind the fence.
- Awilura, who hired trucks for the haul of rocks used to construct revetments (impact-resistant material for the rockface).
- Advance Scanning, who located underground services, including pipes and electric cables. This ensured that all excavation work could be done safely to avoid digging up the underground services.



*Bithuwanda Fenceworks installation under way*

### Koormal Group build new facility

Construction of a new ablution building was completed for DOT Maritime in November 2023 at Casuarina Boat Harbour.

This was made through direct Aboriginal business engagement as part of the broader Transforming Bunbury's Waterfront Stage 3.1 project.

This contract was successfully tendered for and awarded to Koormal Group Pty Ltd. Koormal Group Pty Ltd safely delivered the toilet block to a high standard of finish and on budget, with 37% hours worked by Aboriginal peoples.



*Koomal Group building new facility at Casuarina Boat Harbour*

### Strategic partnership facilitates Carnarvon Fascine channel success

A partnership between Maritime Constructions and Garli Maritime has bolstered Aboriginal engagement within the DOT Maritime maintenance dredging services.

The Carnarvon Fascine access improvement project was successfully completed in March 2024, a \$7 million dollar investment of hard work and significant collaboration among multiple groups.

The dredging contractor, Maritime Constructions, collaborated with Garli Pty Ltd to subcontract their joint venture, Garli Maritime, to complete the civil works for management of dredge material disposal and re-establishment of the coastal sand spit landform for protection of the Fascine waterway.

The partnership saw Aboriginal engagement reach 24% of worked hours over the 8-month duration.

150,000 cubic metres of material was dredged from the seabed of the combined Fascine and Teggs Channels for beneficial reuse to stabilise the sand spit at the entrance to the Fascine waterway.

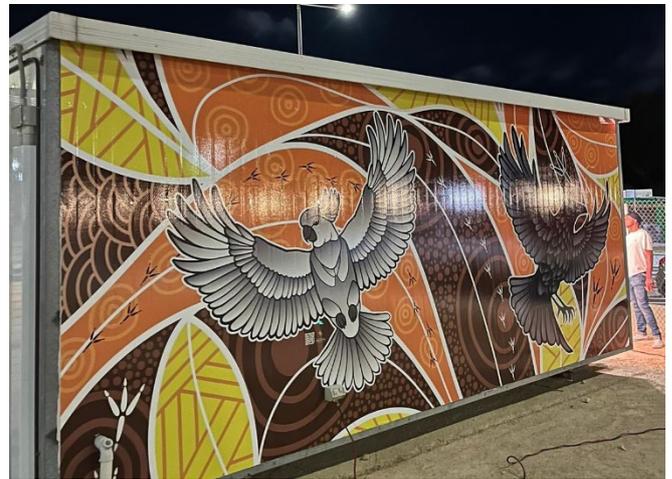
Following completion of works in Carnarvon, several on-site personnel have seamlessly transitioned into work positions at other operational locations, showcasing a commitment to ongoing engagement and integration.

Prior to the commencement of the works, consultation was completed with the registered Native Title Body Corporate - Yinggarda Aboriginal Corporation (YAC) to provide details of the planned works and opportunity for discussion. The YAC board formally endorsed the project on 9 June 2023.

### Artwork brings life to Cannington Bus Interchange

A visual expression of Noongar culture is now on display at Cannington Bus Interchange, adding a splash of colour to the busy area.

Yamatji and Noongar graphic designer Darryl Bellotti was commissioned by the Public Transport Authority (PTA) to create a digital artwork to be displayed on a transportable building being used for the Armadale/Thornlie Line shutdown, serving both to enhance the visual appearance of the area and helping to deter graffiti and anti-social behavior at the site during the shutdown.



*Yamatji and Noongar Graphic Designer, Darryl Bellotti's artwork*

The design showcases Darryl's interpretation of Noongar culture for the surrounding suburbs and area, including Cannington and Victoria Park.

The commission complements a nearby existing filigree lighting display commissioned by Darryl for the City of Canning's Cecil Avenue East redevelopment.

### Smoking Ceremony kicks off Bellevue Stage 2

A Smoking Ceremony was recently hosted by Nick Abraham from Warrang Bridil, prior to the start of work on Stage Two of the Bellevue railcar depot, and attended by the project team.

As the new C-series trains go into service on the Mandurah and Joondalup lines, B-series trains will be cascaded to the Midland and Fremantle lines. The new depot, near Midland Station, will provide maintenance, cleaning, and stabling facilities for the Bs and for Transwa's diesel fleet.

EastRail has been appointed to undertake the construction. Work started in March and is scheduled to run until August 2026.

The completion of the railcar assembly and high-voltage testing facility in 2021 marked the conclusion of Stage One at Bellevue. The depot will run the length of Elgee Road and will connect with the assembly facility at the eastern end.



*Smoking Ceremony held by Nick Abraham from Warrang Bridil*

### ALUA’s OnTrack Employment Program

A dynamic knowledge, skills-based and hands-on training program run by the METRONET Victoria Park-Canning Level Crossing Removal Project team is going from strength to strength since starting in 2023, upskilling and securing employment for 35 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander individuals so far, launching them into new career and training opportunities.

The seven-week OnTrack Employment Program provides training and job opportunities for unemployed entry-level work ready individuals, helping improve their knowledge and skills in financial management, literacy and numeracy, cultural safety and communication. With the bonus of onsite experience in operating small plant and equipment, participants are then offered help finding jobs or apprenticeships.

Aligned with its Sustainable Employment Plan, OnTrack is helping the project make great strides towards achieving employment targets. With four recruitment rounds now complete, Aboriginal trainees account for 49% applicants to pass through the OnTrack Employment Program.

As Project Sustainable Employment Program Lead Bianca Howard explains, OnTrack is a win-win for participants, the project and the construction industry as a whole.

“OnTrack offers individuals a chance to upskill and improve their job prospects while providing the project with accredited work-ready employees, as well as contributing to increased equity and diversity in the civil construction industry overall,” Bianca said.

The social impact of this program is huge, and the ripple effect of these training and employment outcomes for local Aboriginal participants will directly impact their families and the broader community in this area.

Follow the link to learn more about the program and its impact, [On Track and giving back – METRONET](#)



*The latest cohort in the OnTrack Program*

### Keel Bundu Fuels Community Prosperity in METRONET Thornlie-Cockburn Link Project

In a remarkable demonstration of local collaboration and Indigenous empowerment, the partnership known as KEE Bundu, formed by KEE Group and Bundu Contracting, is making significant strides in the METRONET Thornlie-Cockburn Link project.

KEE Bundu delivers fuel to the site on a nightly basis – 6 days a week. Once the team is on site, they refuel all the machinery – from trucks and fuel tanks, to lighting towers and cranes – averaging around 60 pieces of equipment each night.

Central to this achievement is Bundu Contracting, a company that is 100% Aboriginal-owned and committed to fostering opportunities and growth within Indigenous communities. Through its collaboration with KEE Group, a prominent fuel services provider, KEE Bundu has secured a contract to supply fuel for the Thornlie-Cockburn Link project.

However, this partnership extends beyond mere fuel supply; it’s about cultivating expertise and capacity within the Indigenous workforce. Acknowledging the specialised skills needed for fuel delivery,

particularly in handling hazardous materials, KEE Bundu has taken proactive measures to ensure project success.

Since securing the contract for the Thornlie-Cockburn Link project, KEE Bundu has invested in a new fuel truck and delivered comprehensive training for drivers in the safe transportation of dangerous goods.

This proactive approach not only enhances safety measures but also addresses the shortage of qualified truck drivers, thereby contributing to a more skilled and resilient workforce.

Through the provision of meaningful employment opportunities and investment in skills development, KEE Bundu exemplifies the core principles of the Gnarla Bidji Strategy, driving positive change and paving the way for long-term prosperity. This project has facilitated exciting career opportunities for many young Indigenous people like Kazumi Chaplin, 21, who has completed a three-year traineeship with KEE Bundu.

As a result of this exciting growth within their business, KEE Bundu are in a strong position to increase recruitment and training of Indigenous employees, fuelling success within the community.

If you are a registered Aboriginal business, or more than 50 per cent Aboriginal-owned, we encourage you to complete our [Construction Business Register](#) to have your business listed as interested in METRONET work opportunities.



KEE Bundu's fuel truck in action

## Inaugural Aboriginal Business Webinar

The Transport Portfolio Aboriginal Engagement (TPAE) team held its first online Webinar to provide information to Aboriginal businesses interested in learning more about working with the Transport sector.

TPAE partnered with procurement representatives from DOT, PTA and Main Roads who spoke about the types of tendering available and where find information on upcoming infrastructure works.

The online event also provided information on:

- How and where to register to work with the Transport sector
- What the agencies need to know about the business
- Where to find tendering information
- How to access the infrastructure pipeline of works being delivered by all the agencies including the Office of Major Transport Infrastructure Delivery (OMTID) and METRONET
- An update on Westport's planning and how businesses can register for more information.

Opportunities were provided throughout the session for questions, and a Q&A Panel was held at the end for all participants to ask questions.

The webinar was very well attended, with approximately 80 people registered.

We are planning future opportunities to provide informative forums that will assist Aboriginal businesses to engage further with the industry.

More information will be provided on this soon.



The Webinar coordinators - TPAE Team and procurement representatives