

Aboriginal Participation



Meet the Buyer and Supplier Forum – Business networking session

Meet the Buyer and Supplier Forum

The Transport Portfolio's inaugural Meet the Buyer and Supplier Forum was held on 20 October 2021 with over 350 representatives from Aboriginal businesses and contractors participating on the day.

Dressed in a Buka/Boka/Booka (traditional cloak worn by Noongar peoples) Noongar Elder, Neville Collard performed the Welcome to Country and gave the audience an insight into the Country they were meeting on.

The Hon. Rita Saffioti opened the Forum with a keynote speech

highlighting how Aboriginal peoples and businesses will directly benefit from the unprecedented investment in transport infrastructure. The audience heard how in the next five years the Transport Portfolio will achieve:

- \$700 million total spend on procurement, contracts and jobs with recognised Aboriginal businesses
- 3.5 million hours of employment by Aboriginal peoples.

The targets build on, and are complementary to broader State Government updates to the

Sharing stories on how we are **embracing Aboriginal cultures and working with Aboriginal peoples and businesses** to provide increased and sustainable **employment opportunities**.

Aboriginal Procurement Policy which includes Aboriginal employment targets for the first time.

In his speech, Director General Transport, Peter Woronzow outlined the significant investment in road and rail, and ways Aboriginal businesses can be involved in delivering this for the state. The Outback Way project was shared as a case study of the



Plenary session speakers and panel members

positive impacts a project can have for Aboriginal peoples, businesses and the community.

The plenary session finished with an interactive Q&A session where audience members asked questions of a panel of business and industry leaders.

Aboriginal business representatives then spent the afternoon making their way around the booths, networking with contractors and exploring business opportunities.

We were fortunate to have former WA treasurer and Aboriginal Affairs Minister, Ben Wyatt, as the Master of Ceremonies throughout the plenary session. He also made an appearance at the business networking session, much to the delight of participants.

Have you done the Yaarkin Challenge?

The Yaarkin Challenge is a series of heritage and environmental signs recently installed along the Principal Shared Path (PSP) as part of the NorthLink WA project.

The 37 km challenge saw 15 signs and amenities installed at 13

locations along the PSP between Lightning Swamp and Muchea.

Inspired by *The Yaarkin*, known as the Turtle Spirit, who travelled during the *Nyitting* when the Earth was cold, path users will find information on the Aboriginal and European history of the area and key environmental information along the way.

The development of these signs involved extensive consultation with a Noongar Reference Group, whose members shared stories of family and culture for this project.

A key feature of each sign is a painting by Mr Nathan Corunna, also a member of the Noongar Reference Group, which ties in the story of *The Yaarkin*.

Delivered by Aboriginal-owned businesses, Sista Girl Sign & Print and Marawar Building Services installed a mix of free-standing, pedestal and kiosk signs with bike pump facilities, water fountains and rest shelters.

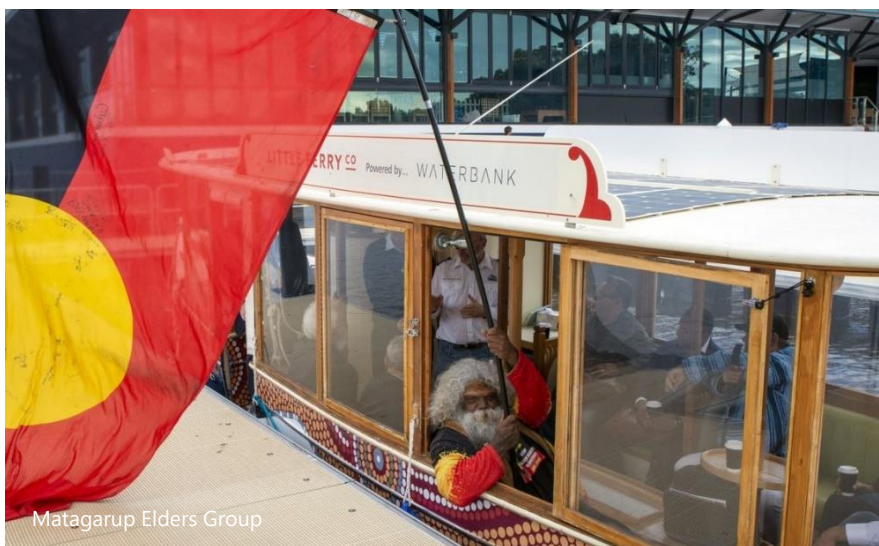
Elders advisory group for Causeway Bridge

The Causeway Pedestrian and Cyclist Bridge project has formed an Elders advisory group to provide cultural input and inform the design of the bridges and the pathway.

The group's name, Matagarup Elders Group (MEG), was decided by its members and is symbolic of the project footprint on the Swan River near Heirisson Island, which Aboriginal peoples refer to as Matagarup, meaning a place where the river is only leg deep (also known as "muddy knees"), and it can be crossed by foot.



Yaarkin Challenge sign



Matagarup Elders Group

Traditionally, the site of this project had specific areas for "women's" and "men's" business, therefore the MEG consists of eighteen members, with equal male and female representation for each of the families recognised as having cultural connection to the area.

The MEG's inaugural meeting began with an electric powered ferry ride on the Swan River, with men and women in separate boats, so the project team could show the Matagarup Elders around the site from the perspective of the river. This enabled conversation about the constructability of the project, as well as traditional knowledge sharing.

This was followed by a workshop to provide additional information about the project and establish terms of reference, meeting procedures and engagement protocols.

In this together

With the support of East Kimberley Job Pathways (EKJP), employer Guerinoni & Son and Main Roads, Kununurra community member Nathan Boxer reached an employment milestone.

Local civil construction company, Guerinoni & Son, employed Nathan as a machinery operator in mid-2021 and was unwavering in its commitment to see Nathan succeed.



Nathan Boxer

Guerinoni & Son worked closely with EKJP who delivered ongoing mentoring and provided Nathan

with the required PPE and a push bike with two thorn proof tubes, bicycle safety lights, a bike lock and helmet so he could safely commute to and from work.

Early on, Nathan was finding it challenging to meet employment requirements and expectations but with support he completed six months of employment and gained a positive outlook to his employment and life.

Nathan was engaged on the Main Roads Moonamang Project which was completed in December 2021.

Kimberley Industry Forums

Our Main Roads Kimberley team hit the road in December visiting Broome, Derby, Kununurra, and Halls Creek to present to contractors, suppliers, and interested community members.

The Industry Forums covered the region's current works program, major works planned in the next two years and opportunities for local and Aboriginal businesses.

Staff met with over 114 current and future providers, sharing the unique opportunities in the Kimberley and providing information on the requirements to work with Main Roads.

If you haven't registered as a Main Roads supplier in the Kimberley region, or have new services to offer please contact:

ana.powell@mainroads.wa.gov.au



Minister for Transport and Director General Transport with Bindoon Bypass (early works) project team

Bindoon Bypass early works update

Early works for the [Bindoon Bypass](#) project continue to achieve high levels of Aboriginal employment.

Garli, an Aboriginal owned and operated company is delivering the early works in partnership with Main Roads Wheatbelt Region Network contractor, Service Stream. Works include 7 kms of new highway north of Calingiri Road, extending to Seven Mile Hill.

The project currently has over 55 per cent Aboriginal employment, has taken on 15 new starters in 2021 and facilitated over 50 training tickets.

Transport Minister, Rita Saffioti and Director General Transport, Peter Woronzow visited the project site in mid-December to meet with workers and see the progress of works.

Yaka Dandjoo success

Since establishing the Yaka Dandjoo Sustainable Employment program last year as part of the [Bunbury Outer Ring Road \(BORR\) project](#), there have been countless graduate success stories.

The second cohort of 30 students recently graduated from the

program, of which, 26 went on to participate in work experience with the South West Gateway Alliance and contractors in fields such as mobile plant operations, surveying, soil testing and underground services.

Tara Calyon is one of the most recent Yaka Dandjoo graduates to gain employment on the BORR project as a plant operator. Tara is a proud Yamaji/Wardandi woman and a mother of three.

“The program was inspirational,” she said. “It has been life-changing for myself and so many others around me”.

To support Tara on her journey, her husband and son also joined the program, and have both found positions with local contractors on the project.

As of 31 December 2021, over \$3.3 million was spent with Aboriginal businesses engaged on BORR.

Through the spend target of \$20 million with Aboriginal business, the aim is to drive Aboriginal employment, support Aboriginal businesses and create industry sustainability for the future.

The team has also been working closely with the Aboriginal Heritage Advisory Group, in collaboration with the Urban Design and Landscaping Focus Group to review and agree on the Urban Design and Landscaping Strategy.

Artwork will be installed on bridge abutments and noise walls with a minimum of three of the seven selected locations completed by Aboriginal artists.



Tara Calyon with her 13-tonne smooth drum roller – Golding Crescent site