



**Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee
Additional Estimates 2024-25**

Central Land Council appearance: Friday 28 February 2025

Opening statement, Central Land Council CEO – Les Turner

28 February 2025

On behalf of the Central Land Council, I want to offer my respects and condolences to the families and communities who lost senior men and women who have been part of the land rights movement since the beginning. I also offer my respects and condolences to the families and communities of the two women recently killed by their partners in Alice Springs. Nobody should experience violence in their home nor from their partners. I also acknowledge the trauma of all survivors of domestic and family violence and the courage of those who speak up.

The rate of domestic and family violence-related homicide in the Northern Territory is seven times the national average. The majority of women killed are Aboriginal. This is a problem for all of us, and we need to be united in working to address this systemic scourge on society.

The CLC continues to remain focused on performing its statutory functions to protect and advance the rights and interests of Aboriginal people.

The CLC maintains a strong commitment to robust governance to ensure that our work delivers benefit to our Aboriginal constituents. The CLC council and administration values accountability to constituents and to the Parliament. The organisation is driven by Aboriginal self-determination and committed to serving Aboriginal people, to deliver benefits valued by them. The CLC appreciates the role of this Senate committee, and endeavours to provide the committee with the information you require to fulfil your role. The CLC also acknowledges that in its November attendance at senate estimates several assertions were made about the CLC that could adversely affect its reputation, that of certain council members and individuals employed by it. The CLC intends to submit a written response to the Committee providing its view on those matters.

In November last year, the Australian Parliament passed the legislation that settled the Wakaya Alyawarre Land Claim after 44 years. This was one of the CLC's last two outstanding claims under the Aboriginal Land Rights Act and its settlement is testament to the efforts and resilience of Aboriginal people in Central Australia. Earlier this month we also opened a new ranger hub in Kintore. The Walungurru Rangers now have a purpose built facility with a large shed and office, shade structures for outdoor meetings, an external toilet block and a barbecue area. This is just one of our 14 ranger groups who are working to look after country across the central desert and who are going from strength to strength each year.