

The Anangu Lands Paper Tracker

ATTACHMENT A:
OVERVIEW OF "THE ANANGU LANDS PAPER TRACKER" PROJECT

www.papertracker.com.au

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UnitingCare Wesley Adelaide

UnitingCare Wesley Adelaide (UCW-Adelaide) is a South Australian community service organisation with over 100 years experience in providing service to low income and disadvantaged people in South Australia. We work with people and communities to break the cycle of disadvantage.

UCW-Adelaide has a long track record of engagement with Indigenous people, initially through service provision but more recently through community support and advocacy for human rights. The changing emphasis in our work is partly a reflection of the changing times, but is also consistent with our commitment to a 'strengths perspective' and to our support for Indigenous self-determination.

The origin of the Paper Tracker project

Our engagement with South Australia's remote Indigenous communities grew out of the Uniting Church's more than 70-year relationship with Anangu (Pitjantjatjara and Yankunytjatjara peoples). That relationship began at Pukatja in 1937 with the establishment of the Ernabella Mission and continued through the struggle for land rights in the 1970s and 80s.

In 2005, UCW-Adelaide extended support to a group of Traditional Owners from the Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara (APY) Lands who were concerned at the lack of information being provided to them as part of a government review of the *Pitjantjatjara Lands Rights Act 1981* (as it was then known).

This experience highlighted the considerable difficulties remote Indigenous communities face in advocating for their basic human rights. In particular, we recognised that far too often Anangu have no access to information that is of critical importance to them and are consequently unable to determine the course of their own lives from a position of knowledge and strength.

In 2006, the UCW-Adelaide's Board decided that it wanted to find new ways for our organisation to support remote Indigenous communities. This decision led to the establishment of the Anangu Lands Paper Tracker project.

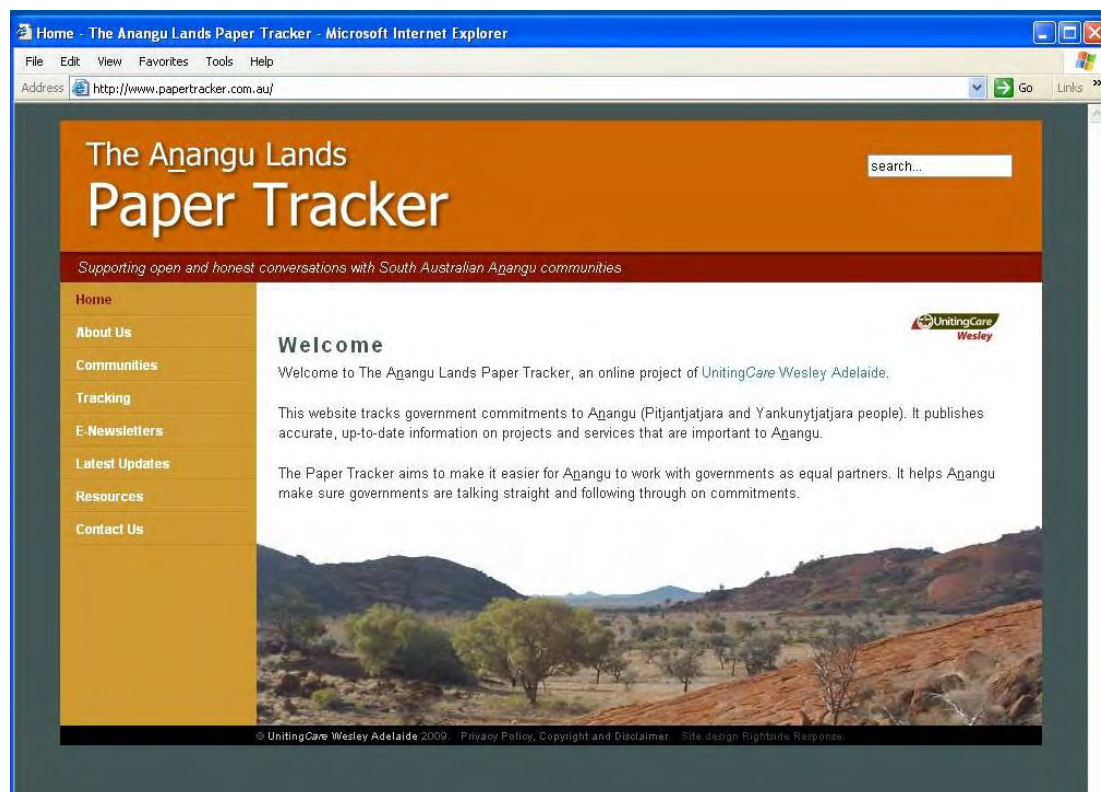
PROJECT OVERVIEW: The Anangu Lands Paper Tracker

The Anangu Lands Paper Tracker is an online project that monitors government commitments to Anangu (Pitjantjatjara and Yankunytjatjara peoples) and advocates for the timely fulfilment of existing commitments.

The main goals of the project are to make it easier for Anangu to:

- talk with governments as equal partners
- make decisions from a position of knowledge and strength
- participate in broader debates about their future.

The Paper Tracker is about making sure governments 'talk straight' with Anangu and follow through on their commitments. It helps Anangu and governments work together to make sure things happen. It makes it easier for Anangu to ask governments why some promises have not been kept. It helps Anangu follow the government's paper trail.



Who is it for?

The Paper Tracker project is for all Anangu living in remote communities in South Australia (see map). Specifically it covers all of the communities located on the Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara (APY) Lands and the Maralinga Tjarutja Lands. It also covers Umoona and Yalata (two Anangu communities situated on lands held by South Australia's Aboriginal Lands Trust).

The project also helps friends and supporters of Anangu to understand what governments are saying and doing. Increasingly, the Paper Tracker is becoming a catalyst for media coverage and parliamentary debate.



How does the Paper Tracker work?

When governments make a commitment to do something significant for Anangu, a new page is added to the Paper Tracker website. The page then tracks that particular commitment. For example, if a government announces that it will build additional housing in particular Anangu communities, a page is added to the website to track the story of that promise. If the promise is kept and construction of the housing begins, we put that information on the website. If the promise isn't kept or things are taking too long, we write to the government to ask them for an update. Whatever we learn is published on the website so that all Anangu (and other interested parties) can know what is happening.

Since July 2007, the project has tracked progress made against 80 government commitments and/or areas of identified need. This has included tracking:

- responses to the findings and recommendations of the Mullighan Inquiry into child sexual abuse on the APY Lands
- unfulfilled commitments to establish a regular bus service between Yalata and Ceduna and a twice weekly service between Alice Spring and communities on the eastern side of the APY Lands
- the failure of State and Federal Governments to fulfil long-standing commitments to transfer the delivery of key services to six rural transaction centres on the APY Lands (the 'PY Ku Network')
- unacceptable delays in the construction of new police facilities
- the establishment and successful operation of community safety groups
- government responses to the critical shortage of accredited interpreters for speakers of Pitjantjatjara and Yankunytjatjara
- commitments to provide Anangu with training and employment in housing construction
- delays in the supply of Opal fuel to Yalata
- a significant fall in funding for family centres and homemaker programs on the APY Lands.

Why is it called the 'Paper Tracker'?

For thousands of years Anangu have carefully tracked the movement of people and animals across their lands. Traditionally, these tracking skills helped Anangu find food and water and allowed them to know when strangers came onto their land. Today it is often difficult for Anangu to track written information - especially when it is held in Canberra or Adelaide and only available in English.

E-Newsletter

Every couple of months the Paper Tracker project distributes a [free e-newsletter](#). Each issue highlights particular government commitments and actions. It also provides updates on outstanding promises, draws attention to unanswered questions and spotlights Anangu achievements. As of early February 2009, more than 700 individuals and organisations had subscribed to the newsletter and 17 issues had been published.

Radio Show

In 2008, the project produced two radio programs to complement its online presence. Portions of each program were broadcast in both English and the Pitjantjatjara and Yankunytjatjara languages. The aim of the programs was to make it easier for Anangu to keep up-to-date with what governments are saying and doing. The programs were produced in partnership with the Anangu-controlled PY Media and aired on their radio station 5NPY. UCW-Adelaide is planning to continue with this aspect of the project in 2009.

Community visits

UCW-Adelaide recognises the importance of meeting regularly with Anangu on their lands. These meetings are opportunities for Anangu to highlight issues that are of particular concern to them and for us to check the direction and impact of our work. We aim to make at least three visits to Anangu communities each year.

BROADER ADVOCACY WORK

Direct contact with Members of Parliament

UCW-Adelaide has worked hard to form strong relationships with Members of both the Australian and South Australian Parliaments. These efforts aim to ensure that parliamentary debate is well-informed and considered.

For example, on 30 May 2007, the State Government introduced a Bill to establish an inquiry into the incidence of child sexual abuse on the APY Lands. In response, UCW-Adelaide contacted a handful of Members of the South Australian Parliament and urged them to seek clarification on particular aspects of the Inquiry.

The concerns we raised about possible reporting requirements directly influenced the introduction and adoption of some key amendments to the Government's Bill. Those amendments established a clear process for monitoring the Government's ongoing response to the Inquiry's final

report and recommendations. Specifically, after receiving the final report of the Inquiry, the Government is now required - under statute – to provide:

- a preliminary response to the recommendations within three months,
- a full response within six months, and
- further responses, annually for five years, outlining progress made in implementing the recommendations.

Advocacy campaigns

At times the tracking of a specific commitment or government decision leads UCW-Adelaide into a more concerted advocacy campaign. For example, in 2007 and 2008, we worked closely with Umoona Community Council (Coober Pedy) in support of their efforts to have core federal funding reinstated. As a result of these and other efforts, in late May 2008, the Federal Government agreed to provide Umoona Community Council with the bulk of its core funding for that financial year.

CONTACT INFORMATION

The Paper Tracker project is located within UCW-Adelaide's Research and Development Unit.

In addition to a full-time worker (Jonathan Nicholls), the project receives strong support from UCW-Adelaide's Minister (Rev Peter McDonald).

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