

**ROBE RIVER  
KURUMA**  
ABORIGINAL  
CORPORATION RNTBC  
ICN 7612



# RRKAC Newsletter

February 2023

Welcome to the RRKAC February 2023 Newsletter.

As part of our Strategic Plan, RRKAC made a commitment to remain accountable by establishing regular reporting on achievements, performance, and progress to the RRK community, boards and other stakeholders. As part of that commitment, we will be developing a more regular newsletter to share the activities and outcomes from RRKAC and KML. We will share the newsletter online via Facebook, the RRKAC website, and copies in the RRKAC office. We will also send out copies with the fortnightly senior's cards. If you would like a newsletter posted to your home address, please let us know.

RRKAC has commenced 2023 in full flight as we make inroads to address our ambitious 2021-2024 Strategic Plan.

At RRKAC everything we do is underpinned by our vision of *Working together as a community to establish a solid foundation towards independence, community wellbeing, cultural identity, and healthy Country now and for future generations.*

*Independence:* We are able to make our own choices as individuals, families and community.

*Community Wellbeing:* Our people are well, and our community is strong.

*Cultural Identity:* We are connected to our Country and our culture lives on.

*Healthy Country:* We are at the centre of caring for our Country and managing our land.

## Jajiwurra Rangers

In 2021 traditional owner groups across the Pilbara started coming together to discuss their shared aspirations for developing Indigenous land management programs across their region with a strong cultural base. This has led to the development of the *Pilbara Cultural Land Management Project (PCLMP)*, of which RRKAC is a founding member. The PCLMP aims to support Pilbara traditional owner groups implement cultural and conservation land management at scale across the region, and importantly recognises and supports partnerships with a wide range of stakeholders in the region. With strong support from RRK traditional owners, and with the growth of a vibrant Pilbara-wide Indigenous land management movement, RRKAC has been working on the commencement of the Jajiwurra Ranger Program to set it up with a solid foundation for success.

Jajiwurra, otherwise known as the Robe River, runs through the centre of RRK Country and incorporates some of the most important cultural and environmental values of the landscape. Jajiwurra is central to people's identity and the source of their name as the Robe River Kuruma people. The name of the Jajiwurra Ranger Program reflects this deep cultural connection to Country.

Development of a strong ranger program will facilitate cultural revitalisation of RRK people, and contribute important cultural, social, environmental, and economic outcomes for RRK people and the region.

RRKAC were thrilled in December 2022 to be awarded \$100, 000 as part of the West Australian Aboriginal Ranger Program administered by the Parks and Wildlife Service of the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions for planning and development of RRK's Jajiwurra Rangers Program.

We are also pleased to announce that in February 2023 we received advice that Rio Tinto will support the Ranger Program with funding of \$650, 000 per year for the next three years.

The establishment of the Jajiwurra Rangers has been a long-term aspiration of the RRK community, and RRKAC is looking forward to sharing updates, along with employment opportunities, as we progress the development of this program.

Our new Ranger Coordinator, Andrew Love, commences work at RRKAC on Tuesday, 7<sup>th</sup> March 2023. Andrew brings to RRKAC extensive land management, GIS, project management, and leadership experience. Most recently Andrew was the Ranger Group Coordinator for the Northern Tanami Rangers. We welcome Andrew to the RRKAC team!

### **Robe River Kuruma Environmental Management and Reporting Framework**

Robe River Kuruma Traditional Owners participated from the 15<sup>th</sup> to the 17<sup>th</sup> of February in the first of three workshops to develop a monitoring, evaluation and reporting framework for Robe River Kuruma country. The 3-day workshop was built on the Robe River Kuruma Healthy Country Framework's (HCF) foundation and focussed on operational planning. Using the participatory planning tools of the adaptive management framework "Healthy Country Planning", Traditional Owners reviewed and updated the Healthy Country Framework developed in 2018/19.

In addition to the cultural and environmental values of Robe River Kuruma country, which were nominated to become conservation targets in 2018, a new target, "Strong People". The new target was added to reflect the importance of aboriginal stewardship and integrate the work the corporation undertakes through its member support program to lift the livelihoods of Robe River Kuruma Traditional Owners.

Day two of the workshop assessed the impact of existing threats of the HCF on the new target. Then participants brainstormed strategic goals to improve a conservation target's health or reduce the effects of priority threats to Robe River Kuruma country.

With the help of a conceptual model, Traditional Owners identified key strategies to achieve these goals. Strategies were grouped into broad categories: of strategies that focus:

- on supporting the return of Traditional Owners to the country
- addressing employment goals,
- on looking after the many significant cultural sites and precincts.
- on addressing the unsustainable water take and use of water in mining operations
- investigating the impact of climate change on threatened and endangered species
- on right-way fire management through the emerging Jajiwurra Ranger Program.

In April Robe River Kuruma Aboriginal Corporation and the Jajiwurra Rangers will continue with this operational planning and commence developing a monitoring framework.

### **RRK Cultural Protocols now in place at Rio Tinto Robe Valley Mining Operations**

The RRK Cultural Protocols were developed at the suggestion of the Heritage Advisory Committee (HAC) who wanted to educate residents, workers and visitors who are on RRK Country. The Cultural Protocols have been produced in conjunction with the HAC with financial support from Rio Tinto. They are in a handbook and poster format. The posters are in the meeting rooms at the Robe Valley mining operations and the handbooks are located within all worker's accommodation rooms.

The handbook and poster outline the cultural protocols that RRK People have for looking after country, to promote understanding, build respect, ensure cultural safety and protect cultural heritage. The cultural protocols acknowledge the RRK People's deep connection with their Country and describe the significance and importance of many places on RRK Country, such as sacred sites, cultural heritage sites and precincts, burial grounds, as well as law and ceremonial places.



## Robe River Services



Robe River Services (RRS) has commenced and is collaborating well across the different portfolio areas of Strategy, Community Development, and Country and Culture.

RRS aims to be a driver of economic opportunities for RRKAC and its members. It is well underway with several activities including:

- Partnering with Keogh Bay to look at the feasibility of setting up a NDIS program for members
- Develop an EOI for RRK members to be part of RRK Business Panel Register that will be advertised to our stakeholders for future contract opportunities.
- Establish a new list of Cultural Awareness Training providers who will participate in a CAT Training workshop towards the end of March 2023.
- Currently assessing a commercial opportunity with positive returns and develop a business case proposal for KML trust to consider investment.

As part of these activities, RRS has been involved in stakeholder engagement particularly with Rio Tinto and MRL to advocate business development opportunities to advance the interests of RRK members.

The second RRS board meeting is scheduled to take place in late March 2023.

RRS will hold an official launch later this year, in the meantime keep an eye out for updates on how RRS will be working with and for the RRK community.

If you have any queries about Robe River Services, contact Manager, Business Development - Ash Talbot via [admin@rrkac.org.au](mailto:admin@rrkac.org.au)

## RRK Community Census Project

RRKAC recently completed a Community Census Project to engage and understand RRK communities' skills, strengths, and challenges. 152 members completed the comprehensive survey, which was completed in person, over the phone and via an open link members completed themselves. The information collected builds a base of knowledge to inform RRKAC's broader community well-being, cultural identity, and employment strategies.

Below is a snapshot of some of the key insights gained from the 152 RRK community that completed the survey –

26% currently Employed.

63% seeking Employment.

32% aspiring Business Owners.

38% have a Disability and/or ongoing Health Concerns

32% are interested in being involved in the Jajiwurra Rangers Program

Thank you to all members that participated in the project. Your involvement will assist the Corporation in achieving its strategic vision as we work together as a community to establish a solid foundation towards independence, community wellbeing, healthy Country, and cultural identity now and for future generations.

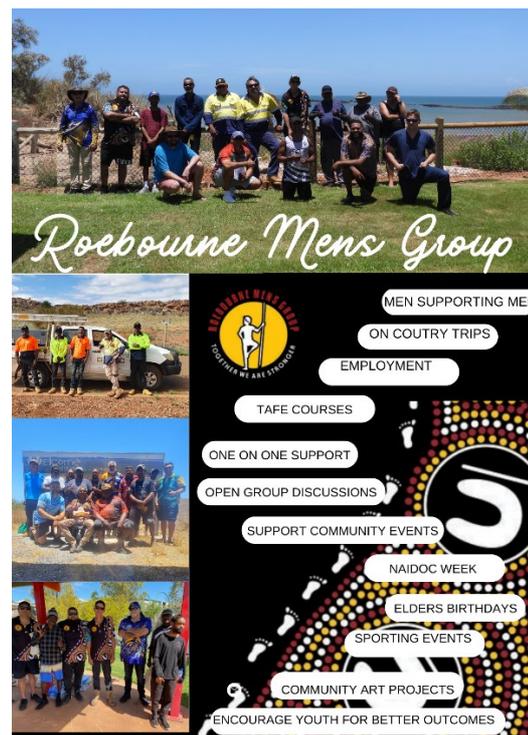
It is anticipated that the survey will be delivered every 2 years, to track and reassess outcomes and inform future programming to build community capacity and respond to challenges.

## Roebourne Men's Group

RRKAC is supporting the Roebourne Men's Group collaboration with Yandina Community Services and Yandi for Change. The group meets every Tuesday for lunch from 11am – 1pm at various locations throughout the region. Some of the support available for men that are involved include –

- On Country trips.
- Employment support.
- Group discussions on pressing topics – Alcohol and Drugs, Mental and Physical Health.
- Community Art Projects.
- One on One support and linkage to relevant services and programs offered.

If any RRK men wish to be involved or would like further information, please contact the office.





### **RRKAC Breakfast Club 2023**

Big things are happening in the Youth space with the RRKAC Breakfast Club! We have moved to a new exciting space at Millars Well Pavilion which has the space and facilities to support our ever-growing program.



We currently have 14 students Kindy to Year 8 engaged in Term 1.

9 house pick-ups, 5 school drops, 13 big smiles every Tuesday and Thursday.



RRKAC Breakfast Club runs every Tuesday and Thursday morning with home pick up from 6.15am – 7am.

Participants in Breakfast Club receive breakfast and help to make a healthy packed lunch to take to school. Everyone then enjoys activities, sports, and learning fun before being dropped off at school!

We welcome RRK member Maria Maraltadj to the Youth space on a regular basis to support the Breakfast Club and other youth programs.

If you would like to book your student into the breakfast club for Term 2, please email [youthcouncil@rrkac.org.au](mailto:youthcouncil@rrkac.org.au)

*Did you know?*

The Communities Team can help get your child enrolled in school and help set them up with the tools they need for success, ranging from uniforms, stationary, programs and tutoring?

We also encourage our members to access the RRKAC Book Nook in the front office. We have free kids books for our members to take or swap to encourage and promote reading.



**RRKAC Learner's Sessions - Driving Success**

Congratulations to RRKAC Youth member Taya Willock for obtaining her Learner's at RRKAC's most recent Learners' Session.



The next step for Taya is driving lessons and Pilbara RYDE!

If you would like support to get your Learners, please register for our upcoming March dates.

**Rio Tinto Opportunities**

Rio Tinto are investing in scholarships which support participants to successfully complete their tertiary studies, with the opportunity to progress into employment with Rio Tinto through their Vacation and Graduate programs.

**Scholarship value:** Up to \$16,500 annually

**Year of study:** Any

**Length of scholarship:** For the duration of the undergraduate degree.

Applications are also now open for Rio Tinto's Indigenous Cadetship Program 2023. If you are an Indigenous student studying a mining-related discipline such as engineering, technology, science, or humanities, you could be awarded up to \$16,000 to help complete your studies. Through Rio's vacation and graduate programmes, you will have the opportunity to progress to employment with Rio Tinto.

If you are interested in either the Scholarship or Cadetship, please contact our RRRKAC Employment and Training team on 08 9185 5005.

### **Member Support Program**

It has been an extremely busy start to 2023. Since MSP applications opened on the 9<sup>th</sup> of January the MSP team has processed over 360 support applications over 6 weeks! This has been a huge effort from the team, and we thank the members for their understanding during this busy time.

While it has been so busy, we just want to put out a friendly reminder that the applications process is 5-10 business days and that applications cannot be processed until all supporting documentation including invoices for payments are received.

### **What Can I Access?**

This month we would like to highlight one of new buckets *Living Stronger* - \$1500

The new Living Stronger bucket was designed to help members genuinely improve and enrich their own lives and that of their families through several focuses' areas.

#### **1. Health and Wellbeing**

- Counselling sessions
- Health insurance
- Gym membership /equipment
- Petcare / Vet Bills

#### **2. Sport and Recreation**

- Sporting fees
- Representation sport

#### **3. Arts and Creativity**

- Art equipment including paints
- Creative workshops
- Musical instruments

#### **4. Pursuing Ambitions and interests**

- Personal development
- Conferences or events

#### **5. Vehicle Maintenance**

- Vehicle repairs/tyres (improve safety and reliability)
- Car rego



Check out Leon who was able to purchase a new bike under Living Stronger to improve health and wellbeing.

## Employment

It has been an exciting start to 2023 with several new RRK staff starting work in the RRKAC office.

We are happy to inform the community that we now have seven traditional owner staff members working for RRKAC! We would like to give a big welcome to our four new team members and congrats to the TO staff that are starting traineeships and moving into new roles within the corporation.

- Claudine James – Trainee Member Support Officer (Cert II Community Services)
- Kiara Evans – Trainee Member Support Officer (Cert II Community Services)
- Latisha Evans – Trainee Housing Support Program (Cert II Community Services)
- Arnold Bobby – Cultural & Environment Project Officer
- Eugene Evans – Male Cultural Heritage Officer
- Darrielle Lockyer – Female Cultural Heritage Officer
- Sonya Keyser – Receptionist

Increasing the footprint of RRK staff working in the office is one of our main objectives along with helping members build capacity, engage with training, and find employment. We are excited to share further opportunities we have coming up in 2023.

## RRKAC Casual Pool

Our Casual Employment Pool is designed to give members an avenue to learn new skills and build on existing experience within a formal work environment. By engaging members in this space, we can prepare them to enter the workforce, build confidence at work and provide an opportunity to grow in a supportive environment so they are able to undertake new opportunities post RRKAC. With RRKAC expanding into new areas and projects it presents different opportunities including Admin, Heritage, Youth, Wabamugu Mia-Ngarli, Rangers, Housing, Events and Member Services. The casual pool has had great success with members moving into contract positions with RRKAC or gaining employment in other areas. To date we have had 10 casual pool staff engaged in the office in 2023.

Employment Team will be in contact. Also check out our new *RRKAC Employment and Training*

*Opportunities* Facebook page this is a centralised area for us to share employment and training opportunities for RRKAC members.



RRKAC Staff members – Eugene Evans Claudine James, Kiara Evans, Darrielle Lockyer



RRKAC Staff and Casual Pool workers – Leanne Whiting, Rodney Alexander, Sonya Keyser, Claudine James, Darrielle Lockyer, Kiara Evans, Arnold Bobby, Jeremy Bobby.

***Looking for work? Interested in joining our Casual Pool? Want to complete some Training?***

Scan the QR code below and complete the Employment Expression of Interest Registration Form and the Employment Team will be in contact. Also check out our new *RRKAC Employment and Training Opportunities* Facebook page this is a centralised area for us to share employment and training opportunities for RRKAC members.



### Employment Pathway Program 2.0

With the success of our first RRKAC Employment Pathway Program (EPP) last year we are excited to launch EPP 2.0 running in March 2023. We have assessed the first round and made some amendments, this second round of the EPP is designed to take a group of 10 RRKAC members through six phases of employment support over three weeks of both intensive group work, and self-paced individual pathway building designed to support members to get job ready, address barriers, build capacity and gain an understanding of employment industries within our region. We will have the likes of Rio Tinto, BRIDA, NBAC, MRL, FMG, Programmed and community organisations in attendance to speak to participants about employment opportunities. Members who completed the three-week program are eligible to receive a \$500 voucher.

Please contact the RRKAC office and speak to the Employment team to register your interest in the EPP 2.0



### Employment Good News Stories

Congrats to Aiden Irvine who was accepted into Marr Mooditj Training Academy in Perth to complete his Cert IV in Mental Health. Aiden is currently completing his first block and we wish him all the best.

### Housing Pathways Support Program

In 2022 RRKAC received funding from the Northwest Aboriginal Housing Fund to establish a Housing Pathway Support Program (HPSP) to build the capacity of Aboriginal people to move towards homeownership.

The Program not only supports Robe River Kuruma people, but also the broader Aboriginal community of the Karratha area.

The program is centred around five social objectives which are;

- Financial Literacy
- Wellbeing
- Employment/Training
- School Attendance
- Household Management.

The program was officially launched in August 2022 and RRKAC received 43 Expressions of Interest during a three-week period.

The HPSP team welcomed 14 families in August 2022, which was increased to 21 families in December in 2022 and set to become 28 families in February 2023.

The HPSP team are pleased to report the following outcomes:

- Two separate families have been supported to purchase their own home in December 2022, with two more families moving towards purchasing their homes in early 2023.
- 13 people have completed Financial Literacy training.
- Money coaching has been offered to all participants engaged in the program.
- 10 people have been supported with job applications and updated resumes.
- 4 children engaged in the program attend Breaky Club.

### **Danika Farmer House Purchase**

In July 2022 Danika Farmer received a text message from RRKAC announcing the launch of the Housing Pathway Support Program.

She and her husband Izac had been saving to purchase a home in Karratha so they would be closer to Danika's family and have more support for their 4 young sons.

Following Danika's expression of interest, she engaged with a support worker located at RRKAC and they were able to establish a plan of support for purchasing a home.

Through the program Danika completed Financial Literacy training, connected with lenders offering low deposit home loans, and received coaching and support around purchasing a home and the hidden costs associated with purchasing a home, including reducing her insurance costs.

Danika and her family moved into their new home in time for Christmas 2022 and her eldest son was able to start kindy in Karratha this year, which was important to Danika. Not to mention how much they are enjoying being close to Danika's parents!

If you, or a family member are interested in buying your own home please contact Cass on 08 9185 5005 or [info.hpsp@rrkac.org.au](mailto:info.hpsp@rrkac.org.au)



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