



# ANNUAL REPORT

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2019/2020

Thiyama-li Family Violence  
Service Indigenous Corporation

# **Acknowledgement to Country**

**Thiyama-li acknowledges the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples of this nation.**

**We Acknowledge the Traditional Custodians  
of the Kamilaroi, Ngemba and Bareleindji  
lands which we work and live and on which our  
clients across our service area live.**

**We pay our respect to the Elders past, present and all  
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people within our  
boundaries.**



## Vision

To empower Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples not to tolerate generational violence.

## Mission

To achieve our vision, Thiyama-li will be a professional organisation which will be transparent and ethical while providing a trusting and safe environment.

## Location and Map

Based in the North West of New South Wales, Thiyama-li provides services to an estimated Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population of 6,500 spread over 81,000km<sup>2</sup>. Our offices in Moree (head office), Walgett and Bourke outreach services to Brewarrina, Lightning Ridge, Boggabilla.



**Thiyama-li Family Violence Service Indigenous Corporation is a quality accredited organisation with the National Association of Community Legal Centres (NACLC)**

# Chairperson's Report

Lorilie Haines  
Vice Chairperson

It is with pleasure that I present the Chairperson Report on behalf of the Board of Directors of Thiyama-li Family Violence Service Indigenous Corporation for the year 2019/20.

It has been a difficult year for the Service with the COVID 19 pandemic and the new ways in delivering Legal services to those in our communities of Moree, Walgett and Bourke. I would like to acknowledge the outstanding work from all the staff during this time and their commitment to continuing the excellent work of delivering services to survivors of family violence and sexual assault. While community events have been restricted during COVID 19 it is hoped that these can resume in the very near future.

I would like to acknowledge the contributions of the other Directors for their commitment and wealth of knowledge that has been provided to Thiyama-li over the past year. This support has been very valuable.

I wish Thiyama-li Family Violence Service Indigenous Corporation all the best for the coming year and supporting the service to grow. I look forward to the staff continuing to provide quality legal services and Early Intervention programs to all of our communities.

Lorilie Haines

Vice Chairperson

## Board of Directors

### **Chairperson**

Lucas Swan

### **Vice Chairperson**

Lorilie Haines

### **Secretary**

Glen Crump

### **Treasurer**

Cheryl Simpson

### **Directors**

Jen Swan

Barry Swan

Rebecca Trindall





# Chief Executive Officer's Report



**Elizabeth Behrend**  
**Chief Executive Officer**

I am happy to present the CEO report for the year 2019/20. It has been a busy period across the organisation with staff delivering Legal services and Community Development programs to the most vulnerable in our communities of Moree, Walgett and Bourke.

With a team of talented and professional people, Thiyama-li has supported numerous individuals, families and communities across the service delivery region through a broad range of services. Through regular outreach the legal team ensures support and assistance is never far away. Our services are a testament to all of the Thiyama-li team's dedication to their communities and their commitment to assisting survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault.

Like most business within Australia we have been impacted by the COVID 19 pandemic. This saw staff work from home from March until July. This closure made work practices difficult due to isolation, but it was a credit to all staff that they found ways to make it work. It was with some celebration when we could all return to some normalcy and all be together again. The pandemic has made for new work practices to create both a safe work environment for staff and our clients. We are a COVID Safe workplace. While we are not out of the woods as yet, we are well positioned now to deliver services remotely.

This year has been one of innovation, with a creative and experienced team who have lead and participated in a number of early intervention programs. Although many have been impacted by COVID restrictions we remain focused to deliver Early Intervention programs and provide Community Engagement.

Thiyama-li remains committed to building and maintaining strong partnerships with other services to gain the best possible outcomes for our clients. Our teams regularly attend interagency meetings and events to promote support services to the whole of the community. We continue to build a reputation as a trustworthy and reliable place to seek help. This has been aided by being able to engage locals through client support services and by thinking outside the square in the programs that are delivered. By increasing our awareness, it is our hope that the opportunity for early intervention programs increases as does the confidence needed to ask for help.

I would like to thank the Thiyama-li Board of Directors for their ongoing support and especially the staff who are committed to improving practices not just for those who access our services but strive for an efficient, productive, and high-quality working life. It is a huge task and a very valuable one to our organisation with the focus on assisting the survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault.

Elizabeth Behrend

CEO

# Principal Legal Officer Report



**Zyanna Davidson**  
**Acting Principle Legal Officer**

We thank the National Indigenous Australians Agency (our Agency) for funding our organisation, along with all other Family Violence Prevention Legal Services (FVPLS), for another 3 years.

An extensive review of FVPLS was undertaken by Charles Darwin University (CDU) in 2018, with CDU's report released last year. The report recognised the important work we do, as well as recommending areas for improvement. The report's recommendations will strengthen the foundations of FVPLS and will improve services to further reduce family and sexual violence within our Indigenous communities.

Our Agency requires FVPLS to focus on providing holistic legal and support services, as family and sexual violence are key drivers of care and protection, family law, victims support, violence order and witness assistance concerns. As these concerns relate to the health, safety and wellbeing of our Indigenous women, men and children, so FVPLS need the resources, time and people, to provide a range of quality services, education and programs, in a caring, meaningful and purposeful manner. Our funding and key performance requirements support this, which is welcomed and appreciated.

The framework of accreditation, the recommendations of the CDU report along with the priorities of our Agency, means that Thiyama-li is even better placed to address these concerns.

There have been challenges, with Covid-19 affecting all FVPLS. Our ability to meet clients, outreach and provide education and programs was impacted between March and June, as we made the decision to work from home. Our team then had to think of different ways to communicate with and support our clients. Whilst working from home, our office did not see an increase in a demand for services, probably the result of restrictions on movement within communities, as our clients often prefer to come into our offices and see us. Regrettably, the restrictions placed the vulnerable at risk if living with a perpetrator or if a target of violence, and the request for services as a result of violence perpetrated during the Covid period may not occur for a while.

We could not do the good work we do, without our team. I thank our dedicated solicitors, paralegals and client support officers, for their care, consistency and conscientiousness. These are essential qualities for this area of service provision.

I also wish to thank our Indigenous team members; whose contributions are invaluable.

I am impressed with the way our team has taken on care and protection cases, a service that is long overdue. We continue to assist more clients with family law concerns. We consistently provide quality victims support, and there are now opportunities to provide witness assistance.

It is a privilege to be trusted to be part of a clients' lives, even if only for a short period of time, particularly when our clients see us at their most vulnerable. Our team looks forward to continuing to support our Indigenous women, men and children affected by family and sexual violence.

Zyanna Davidson  
Acting Principle Legal Officer



# Bourke Practice Manager's Report

We have held 16 Community Development Services throughout the year within our local community and outreach areas. We have completed 3 Early Intervention & Prevention Programs in relation to National Child Protection Week and Youth Homelessness Prevention Week.

We have held 9 Community Legal Education Activities in relation to **the Safe House CLE's, White Ribbon and Ochre Ribbon.**

Prior to our March lockdown Bourke Thiyama-li staff were committed to running fortnightly Community Legal Education (CLE's) out of the Bourke Safe House. This commitment gained the trust of the women who attend enabling them to come to the Thiyama-li office for more individualised help. Our dedication toward this CLE has strengthened our working relationships with Catholic Care and the Safe House and we hope to commence this service as soon as COVID restrictions are eased and we are allowed access back into the Safe House.

I would like to thank my staff at the Bourke office for their dedication to providing a quality service to our Thiyama-li clients, I would also like to thank them for their continued support, professionalism and commitment throughout such a challenging second half to the financial year and would like to extend that gratitude to our valued Bourke and Brewarrina Community members for their ongoing support toward our service.



Thiyama-li Bourke staff



Clothesline Project - Schools





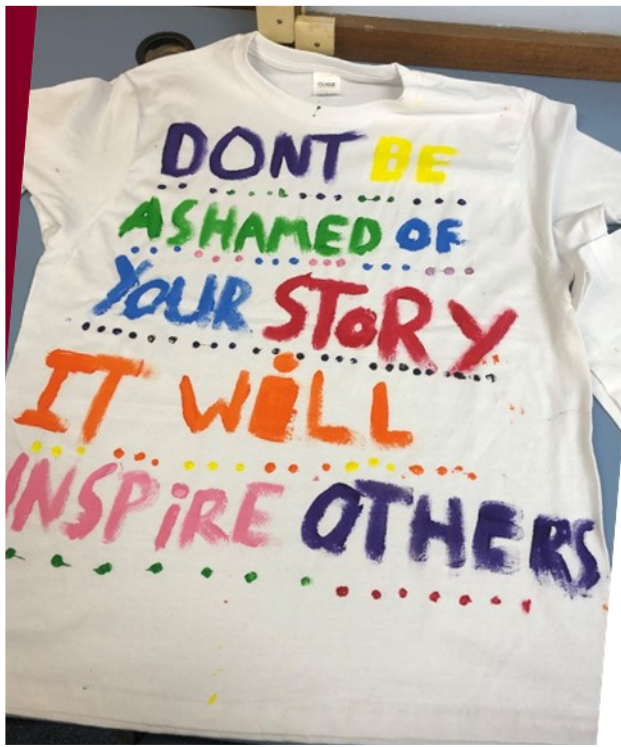
# The Clothesline Project

The Clothesline Project is a national campaign aimed at raising awareness on domestic violence issues, it gives families and friends of Domestic Violence Victims and the survivors an anonymous avenue in which to tell their stories by sharing a personal message on a T-shirt. The shirts are then hung for all to see, spreading the word about the issue while also giving those who may be in a similar situation assurance that they are not alone.

Each year, we invite individuals within our communities to make a shirt sharing a statement of their choice, it can be anything from a quote relating to Domestic Violence to an inspirational message or even a picture, it is solely the individual's choice.







## Clothesline Project Safe House





# White Ribbon Day

White Ribbon Day is an opportunity to bring people together to raise awareness and commit to action to prevent men's violence against women.

The event is ran in November each year and was established for the purpose of allowing people to stand up, speak up, and say no to violence against women.

The campaign is intended to raise awareness about the prevalence of male violence against women, with the ribbon symbolizing "men giving up their arms".





# Walgett Practice Manager's Report

Over the past twelve months, Thiyama-li Walgett Site has worked hard to achieve positive outcomes for our clients and communities in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic. We have set the bar high for our programs and service delivery by continuously reviewing previous programs and service delivery to achieve our goal to become a more holistic service that is adaptable to the changing needs of our client's and communities. This period has continued our pursuit of innovation to ensure service delivery is maintained.

Tangled Web continues to be our most successful program with it being again delivered and well received throughout the Walgett Outreach by both school students and community members. We are very proud of this program as it was developed in house and continue to evaluate and review to ensure the content is still in line with changes to state and federal legislations around the areas of law contained. We have also diversified our community education delivery to produce videos to continue our work in the online sphere.

COVID-19 has thrown a spanner in the works of our holistic service delivery model but we have adapted and continue to offer legal and non legal services to our clients in a COVID Safe environment. We look forward to the continued easing of restriction so we can again provide holistic, culturally appropriate services to our communities.

As my last Annual Report, I would like to thank the Walgett staff for their hard work and dedication throughout the 2019-20 reporting period and the past 5 years. Your breadth of knowledge, support and commitment to making a difference to the lives of our clients is commendable and has been a force behind what we have achieved.

Penny Magann-Jones  
Practice Manager



Thiyama-li Walgett staff



# Financial Snapshot



Jennifer Smith  
Finance manager

Statement of Financial Performance for the year Ended 2020		
	2020	2019
Operating Revenue	2,109,979	1,987,095
Operating Surplus	26,159	8,412
Statement of Financial Position for the year Ended 2020		
Current assets	2020	2019
Cash Assets	723,941	412,801
Receivables	12,643	816
Other		
Total Current Assets	736,584	413,617
Non-Current Assets	2020	2019
Plant, Property and Equipment	465,366	473,218
Total Non-Current Assets	465,366	473,218
Total Assets	1,201,950	886,835
Current Liabilities	2020	2019
Payables	121,752	95,803
Contract liabilities	267,214	55,075
Provisions	112,726	60,585
Income in advance		
Total Current Liabilities		
Non Current Liabilities	61,182	62,455
Total Liabilities	562,874	273,918
Net Assets	639,076	612,917
Retained Earnings	639,076	612,917

# Statistics for 2019/2020



Thiyama-li delivered the following services to 155 clients of which 35 were new clients:



368 non-legal supports



26 Legal advices and tasks



86 Legal (other) representations

## Moree

Total Clients: 39

New clients: 8

Information: 6

Legal task: 0

DNLS: 5

ONLS: 1

Court: 8

Other representation: 86



## Bourke

Total Clients: 6

New clients: 5

Information: 133

Referral: 147

Legal advice: 12

Legal task: 4

DNLS: 126

ONLS: 22

## Walgett

Total Clients: 91

New clients: 13

Information: 5

Referral: 25

Legal advice: 3

Legal task: 1

DNLS: 206

ONLS: 9



*\*DNLS - Discrete non-legal Support*

*\*ONLS-Ongoing Non-legal Support*

# Moree Community Development Activities



## Ochre Ribbon Day

Ochre Ribbon Day is a National Campaign aimed to raise awareness to reduce violence in Aboriginal communities and its devastating impacts on our Men, Women and Children.

This year Thiyama-li celebrated Ochre Day at the Moree Court House with a free BBQ and cold drinks and of course the pleasure to sit with our staff and chat. It was a great day Thiyama-li staff enjoyed mingling and promoting our service to the Moree community. It was a great day has everyone enjoyed the sausage sizzle. It was great all round Thiyama-li handed out a range of information and listen to some of the peoples yarns.





# National Apology Day

This Year's event the community gathered at the Maaruma-li Walaay-ba Sorry Garden. To celebrate the 2008 government's recognition of the pain and suffering caused to the Stolen Generations and their descendants.

The day started off with Welcome to country, with guest speakers followed by elders of the Moree community planting flowers in the Sorry Garden. The Apology was played before the flag raising ceremony, with two elders of the community raising the flag.





## Community Connect Day

Thiyama-li was involved in the Community Connect Day held at the Apex Park. All of the Moree Services and Community were invited to attend. It was a successful day for everyone. The kids enjoyed the activities provided by the Services of Moree.

Thiyama-li staff had a great day doing the sand art with the kids. We sat with the kids while doing sand art and talked about Stranger Danger with the kids which the kids had a lot to say.

Everyone had fun and couldn't get enough of the sand art which was a big hit at the gathering. We had great feedback from the community and especially the children who all loved all our involvement.



## Women's Group

This year Thiyama-li's women's group was a huge success, the women enjoyed making candles and dream catchers it was a great conversation starter. Together we discussed the different types of Domestic Violence. The women involved were really appreciative of the support, information and facilitation that was provided.

Unfortunately, our women's group could not run as often as the women would have loved it to. Every session was a different age group, and everyone respected each other. The women are looking forward to joining our Women's DV Support Group in the future.







## Thiyama-li Family Violence Service Indigenous Corporation



Australian Government  
National Indigenous  
Australians Agency



**NIAA**