



Registrar's word

This is the second report on *the impact of our work* under our new public reporting style.

This report aims to measure the impact of our work – the activities and outcomes we have reported in July and November. While understanding where our work has had a positive impact is important, understanding where we can make improvements is equally important to me.

We undertake 2 surveys to inform this report – one of corporations and one of our staff. The responses provide valuable information to us. So, thank you to all of those who take the time and effort to complete our corporation survey.

This report highlights some interesting trends for me, including

a higher proportion of corporations that are not complying with compliance notices. It is important to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander corporate sector, as a whole, to have well governed corporations that meet their obligations under the *Corporations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) Act 2006* (CATSI Act). Corporations that do not comply with their obligations do their members a disservice and undermine the integrity of member control.

To this end, I have little patience for those corporations that jeopardise the reputation of the sector and forget their obligations to members.

We will continue to use the full breadth of powers under the CATSI Act when dealing with corporations that do not meet their obligations.

I was excited to see in this report that people are making use of ORIC's new and revised resources like the new corporation portal myCorp, and materials on the website such as the CATSI Conversations. We are planning to develop additional materials to support the priorities set out in the 2026 Regulatory Posture.

I was also heartened to read the effect of our position statements are being realised. It was my intention with the release of my position statement on reporting and annual general meeting (AGM) extensions for more corporations to organise their affairs, so as to hold their AGMs and lodge their reports on time. Information in this report indicates more corporations are holding their AGMs on time.

But I remain disappointed by the fall in the number of corporations that lodged their reports on time.

The myCorp portal makes it easy and quick for corporations to lodge their general reports.

Small corporations only need to lodge a general report and yet this cohort remains the most recalcitrant.

ORIC will continue its focus on reporting compliance in 2026 and I hope to see an improvement in lodgement rates this time next year.

Tricia Stroud
Registrar of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Corporations

Corporation and other stakeholder's satisfaction with the ORIC website

In ORIC's corporation survey, we asked about experiences using the ORIC website. Of the 127 respondents, 91% advised that they had accessed the ORIC website in the previous 12 months.

Of these, 86% had a positive experience with the website and 54% found the website easy to use. The majority of respondents (75%) reported that the information on the website had been useful to them.

Support for new corporations

In 2025 ORIC continued to send newly incorporated corporations an induction kit, which explains what their obligations are under the CATSI Act. There were 24 survey respondents who reported that their corporation had registered under the CATSI Act in the previous 12 months; of which 9 responded they had received the induction pack, 3 responded they had not, and 12 said they did not know.





Suggested improvements to the pack from survey respondents included:

- step by step guidance for obtaining an ABN
- one person suggested making the kit shorter while another suggested including more information and templates.

In addition to the induction kit, ORIC contacts corporations 4 months after their incorporation to see if they've met the obligations for new corporations under the CATSI Act and see if they need any support.

Of the 24 survey respondents who reported that their corporation had been registered in the previous 12 months, there were 9 responses to whether they had received a call 4 months after registration. Of these 9 responses, 2 responded that they had received a call, 6 said they had not and one was unsure. ORIC's records confirm that it can improve its consistency of contacting new corporations and we are taking action to address this in the future.

CATSI Conversations

ORIC has short videos available on its website about key requirements of the CATSI Act called CATSI Conversations. Of the 127 survey respondents, 38 said they had watched a CATSI Conversation and of them, 25 reported they had found them to be very useful or useful. Of the 38 respondents, 27 reported the topics covered were very relevant or relevant to their corporation. New topic suggestions were received from 7 of the 38 respondents, suggestions included:

- corruption
- money laundering / fraud / embezzlement
- managing related party benefits.

ORIC will consider these suggestions when developing new CATSI Conversations.

ORIC's support services

ORIC provides support services to corporations including:

- LawHelp – facilitating access for eligible corporations to free legal advice
- Corporation Jobs – advertising corporation jobs on ORIC's website at no cost.

Of the 127 corporation survey respondents, 17 reported that they had used LawHelp and/or Corporation Jobs.

The service received from either was rated as excellent or good by 13 respondents.

Reports of concern about a corporation

In ORIC's corporation survey we asked about the experience of engaging with us in relation to a report of concern about a corporation. Of the 127 survey respondents, 12 reported that they had made a report of concern about a corporation to ORIC in the previous 12 months. Of these, 4 respondents rated their experience as excellent, good or fair. There were 10 of the 12 respondents that reported that they did not receive the outcome they wanted, with 3 (30%) advising that they had understood why they had not received the outcome sought. While someone might not get the outcome they want, they should understand the reasons and if they have review or appeal rights. We will focus on improving this rate.

ORIC often receives feedback the outcome sought was not received. This mostly happens when the report of concern is outside of ORIC's remit (e.g. employment related matters), or the person making the report is seeking an outcome that ORIC is unable to provide under the CATSI Act. It also happens when ORIC is taking regulatory action that is not public and not visible to the person who has made the report.

Views from corporation survey respondents on the timeliness of the report of concern process were mixed.

None of the suggested improvements received from corporation survey respondents went to the report of concern process. Instead, they were largely views people had about ORIC's ability to act.

Corporation compliance with AGM requirements

Corporation compliance with AGM requirements has remained an area of focus for ORIC. A corporation is required to hold its AGM within 5 months of the end of its financial year, unless an exemption has been granted.

Of the 127 corporation survey respondents, 96 (or 76%) advised that they had held their AGM within 5 months of the end of its financial year, 19 had not and 12 respondents were unsure.

For the 19 respondents who reported their corporation had not held its AGM on time, 2 had an exemption, 14 did not and 2 were unsure if their corporation had an exemption. Reasons provided for why the AGM had not been held on time included:

- illnesses and sorry business
- required reports not finalised in time i.e. auditor's report
- being too busy
- unable to achieve quorum.



Suggestions were received from 23 of the 127 corporation survey respondents in relation to what further information ORIC could provide in relation to supporting AGM compliance.

These suggestions included:

- sending reminders
- granting more exemption requests
- assistance from ORIC to hold an AGM
- training.

ORIC will consider these suggestions as a part of planning support for 2026 AGMs.

Staff satisfaction with position statements and standard operating procedures (SOPs)

ORIC has continued to introduce SOPs to assist regional officers with core regulatory processes and activities, many of these SOPs support the implementation of position statements and refreshed fact sheets. These SOPs, along with other tools and templates, are supporting our efforts for efficiency and consistency.

ORIC surveys its staff about the SOPs and position statements. Of the 13 responses received, 10 reported that they are in a team that use the SOPs as part of their day-to-day work.

Of the 10 responses, 8 respondents said the SOPs were easy to read. All

respondents reported that they apply the processes set out in the SOPs, with almost all using the templates provided in the SOPs.

For position statements, 9 of the 10 respondents said that they were easy to read; were used as a part of their work and that they have helped them communicate more clearly with stakeholders.

Registrar's Regulatory Posture

The Registrar recently released her 2026 Regulatory Posture, which includes these updated regulatory priorities:

- **roles and responsibilities for Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) and directors** – CEOs play a critical role in the success of a corporation. CEOs oversee the day-to-day running of the corporation in line with the strategy set by the directors. Directors are responsible for appointing CEOs and managing their performance. ORIC's focus in this area will be on providing resources for boards and reminding them of both their rights and expectations from CEOs, and also their obligations as an employer
- **related party benefits** – the CATSI Act includes requirements for corporations to seek approval from members to give financial benefits to a related party.

This is an important accountability mechanism to ensure there is transparency around any benefits given by the corporation to a related party. ORIC's focus in this area will be building awareness among corporations of their related party benefit obligations under the CATSI Act, as well as improving the understanding of members, directors and other stakeholders as to what constitutes a related party benefit.

- **winding up** – the CATSI Act includes provisions to wind up a corporation. The Registrar may apply to the Court for orders to wind up a corporation. This is a different process to deregistering a corporation. Generally winding up a corporation is more appropriate if it holds assets, as the winding up process includes the liquidation of assets. ORIC's focus will be on winding up corporations that fail to comply with a compliance notice and/or whose officers are misbehaving, are habitually non-compliant and are no longer serving the interests of their members or community.
- **member rights and harmony** – the Registrar will maintain a focus on this area during 2026, with increased focus on boards who demonstrate they are unwilling or unable to meet their responsibilities under the CATSI Act, to be accountable to members and act in the interests of the corporation and members as a whole.

- **sector focus** – corporations that deliver municipal services – the continuation and longevity of these corporations is critical to communities where there are no alternative service providers. ORIC's focus on corporations delivering municipal services will be primarily through examinations to check their financial and governance health.

Examination and special administration outcomes

From 1 July 2025 to 20 February 2026, ORIC completed 25 examinations. The outcomes of these examinations were:

- 6 management letters (24%)
- 15 compliance notices (60%)
- 2 show cause notices (8%)
- 2 other types of outcomes (8%).

Of those 15 compliance notices:

- 4 response dates had not passed at time of reporting
- 3 were formally closed as requirements had been met
- 3 were responded to in part and were subject to further follow up
- 5 were not responded to and ORIC had taken, or was considering, further action.



From 1 July 2025 to 23 February 2026, ORIC concluded 3 special administrations. In all 3 instances, the corporation was returned back to the control of members in a healthier position – this is the primary goal of special administration.

Modernising and streamlining digital interactions

On 31 March 2025, ORIC released a new online portal, myCorp and a new public Register of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Corporations. At the same time, ORIC released a new customer relationship management system (MILI) which records its interactions with corporations and other stakeholders.

Since the introduction of myCorp, 3,183 user accounts have been created – no accounts were carried over from the old portal. Further, 4,240 (or 72%) of the 5,885 forms lodged with ORIC were lodged through myCorp.¹

Related to myCorp and MILI, there have been 1,219 external requests for system help and 5,551 internal requests for system help.

¹This is a comparison of forms that can be lodged online and in hard copy only. Some forms can only be lodged in hard copy and these have been excluded from this analysis. This analysis also excludes exemption requests submitted as part of other forms and information updated directly through myCorp that requires a form to update outside of the portal.

Corporation support

ORIC's 2024–27 corporate plan includes a broad indicator to see improved compliance among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander corporations, including meeting their reporting obligations and acting when directed. Since July 2025, the Registrar has not issued a direction to a corporation. Comparatively, corporations' compliance with compliance notices has declined since February 2025. In the February 2025 report, ORIC reported 38.8% of compliance notices issued following an examination had been complied with, 16.6% had not been responded to and the requirements of 11.1% had only partially been met.

Of the 15 compliance notices issued following an examination from July 2025 to February 2026, 33% had not received a response from the corporation by the due date, 20% had only partially been complied with and 20% had been fully complied with.

The corporate plan also sets out specific indicators in relation to more corporations holding their AGMs and lodging their reports on time. As reflected in the Registrar's Regulatory Posture, annual reporting and AGMs are a standing regulatory priority.

Included in the corporate plan is an indicator to see a year-on-year improvement in the proportion of corporations that lodge their reports on time. Most corporations are required to

lodge their reports by 31 December.

For those corporations we have seen a drop in the proportion of corporations that lodged their reports on time from 33% for 2023–24 reports to 29% for 2024-25 reports.

ORIC has analysed the behaviour of corporations following a reporting reminder. Generally after a reminder, there is an increase in enquiries relating to reporting, an increase in the number of myCorp accounts created and an increase in reports lodged. In 2025, reporting reminders commenced in August. However, it wasn't until November that report lodgements started to significantly increase. We also observed a jump in lodgement rates after a reminder using stronger language was sent out, which coincided with ORIC publishing the list of non compliant corporations on its website.

Increasing the proportion of corporations that lodge their reports on time will remain a focus for ORIC in 2026.

ORIC's corporate plan has an indicator for a year on year reduction to the number of corporations seeking an extension to hold their annual general meeting. In February 2024, the Registrar released a position statement in relation to reporting and AGM extensions indicating they would only be granted in unforeseen circumstances. Since 2023, ORIC has seen a year-on-year reduction in the number of corporations seeking an AGM extension from 243 to 204 in 2024 and 111 in 2025.

This decrease was an intended effect of the position statement.

Together with the 76% of survey respondents who indicated their corporation had held their AGM on time, ORIC considers this demonstrates an improvement in the number of corporations that are holding their AGMs as required by the CATSI Act.

Refresh guidance and education materials

ORIC's 2024–27 corporate plan sets out indicators in relation to number of enquiries and reports of concern about topics of new and revised materials.

In its November 2024 placemat report, ORIC reported the release of materials relating to the Indigeneity provisions of the CATSI Act as well as reporting and annual general meeting extension requests. In its February 2025 report, ORIC also reported on the introduction of its report of concern process aimed at helping corporations resolve issues themselves, including enacting the dispute resolution process set out in their rule book, when appropriate.

From 31 March 2025 to 31 January 2026, ORIC has received:

- 488 enquiries about meetings
- 27 enquiries about Indigeneity provisions
- 21 enquiries about exemptions and extensions
- 772 enquiries about reporting.

Over the same period, ORIC also received:

- 11 reports of concerns about reporting
- 82 reports of concern about general meetings
- 29 reports of concern about disputes.

Another indicator set out in ORIC's 2024–27 corporate plan is analysing enquiries and reports of concern for trends to identify where new materials are required.

Between 31 March 2025 and 31 January 2026, the largest number of reports of concern was in relation to *Corporation directors and officers* – 253 (or 37.9% of the 667 reports of concern received). Split board is a focus of the 2026 Registrar's Regulatory Posture, which will include developing materials to assist split boards and other actions.

ORIC's training opportunities

ORIC provides a limited number of supported places to assist directors of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander corporations to undertake a Certificate IV in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Governance. During 2024–25 ORIC supported 16 participants to continue the qualification, and 18 participants to commence. As at 30 June 2025, 5 participants had completed the qualification.

During 2024–25 ORIC delivered 18 in-person workshops 'Corporate governance for Indigenous corporations'. There was a total of 279 participants in these workshops. Of these, 255 (91%) completed the workshop.

Participants in the corporate governance workshop are asked to self-assess their confidence in corporate governance, and the role and responsibilities of the board. Of those that completed the assessment, 49% reported an increase in their confidence immediately at the close of the workshop. Another 49% reported their confidence levels remained the same. Of this second cohort, 92% self-assessed as being fairly confident or very confident.

