

Western Desert News



December 2025

Strong Culture, Strong People

HAPPY CHRISTMAS FROM JYAC!



The Board of Directors and staff at JYAC would like to wish all our members a very happy holidays and a safe, joyful New Year. As we enter the hot festive season, we encourage everyone to take care, stay safe on Country and on the roads, and look after one another. Please note that the JYAC office will be closed from Wednesday, 24 December 2025, and will reopen on Monday, 5 January 2026. We look forward to seeing all our members in the new year and continuing our important work together in 2026.

MUTUAL TRUST BENEFITS UPDATES FOR MARTU

SENIOR HARDSHIP POLICY

FROM 1 JANUARY 2026
FOR 6 MONTHS UNTIL
30 JUNE 2026

POLICY LIMIT - \$1,500
PER BENEFICIARY
OVER 55'S ONLY



FURTHER POLICY INFORMATION WILL
BE MADE AVAILABLE AND SENT OUT
PRIOR TO THE CHRISTMAS BREAK

SUMMARY 2025

As we come to the end of 2025, we want to share an update with the Martu community about the big work JYAC has done this year, what has been happening across Country and communities, and what we are planning for the year ahead.

This year has been about making JYAC stronger — improving how we are governed, fixing our finances, rebuilding relationships with partners, and supporting Martu people on Country. All of this work helps create a strong and stable organisation for the future.

I am very proud of the staff and the work they have delivered for Martu — both on Country and behind the scenes — so we can do more with Martu and more for Martu over the next 12 months. When an organisation is strong, companies and government want to work with us. It also means we can clearly tell Martu what is happening, and Martu can trust the staff and the organisation. Some of the things below might seem boring or not important. But it is like building a house — if the foundations are not strong, the walls and roof won't stay up. Strong foundations mean that no matter who is on the Board or who the CEO is in the future, Martu can trust JYAC to always do the right thing, look after Martu interests, and protect Martu native title rights and responsibilities. JYAC's role is about good governance and strong processes. The Board does not make decisions about culture or lore. That important guidance comes from the Wanajarra Yina Elders Council and the Nominators, who provide cultural advice and direction so JYAC can do its job properly.



RANGER WRAP UP MEETINGS 2025



2025 has been a busy year for all things JYAC rangers. To finish up the field season, the JYAC Ranger Coordinators Clayton and Phelan, along with JYAC Cultural Advisor TJ and JYAC's Heritage Coordinator Elvina, drove out to communities to facilitate end of year Ranger wrap up meetings. Discussing everything that has been achieved over 2025 and what's to come for 2026. We all took this opportunity to look back and understand what worked well and what lessons were learnt and how we can continue to grow in a positive direction for all Martu peoples and Martu Ngurra.



2026 is already looking bigger and better, we are excited for what's to come! A new project will see the addition of a Kuju Wangka Coordinator to explore cultural tourism opportunities along Yiwarra Kuju. We've also been successful for a grant to grow the JYAC Martu Ranger Women's Team, which will create more opportunities for Martu women.



HERITAGE SUMMARY: A look back on 2025

This year JYAC supported a total of 11 heritage surveys, 10 environment surveys and 31 monitoring works on Martu *ngurra*, helping protect important cultural places and supporting informed land use



Martu consultants on heritage surveys have identified several new areas of cultural significance and knowledge recorded by heritage consultants has been delivered to JYAC to ensure their continuous protection.



In 2025, Martu consultants were paid for 447 days of work combined!



What's coming in 2026?

Upcoming Drive Programme

JYAC is implementing a new drive programme where Martu individuals will be employed to make it easier to mobilise teams for heritage work.



JYAC AGM SOUTH HEDLAND 2025

This year, JYAC held its Annual General Meeting in South Hedland at the JD Hardie Centre—the first time in four years that the AGM has been taken north. It proved to be one of our largest attendances in recent years, with 138 Common Law Holders and members joining us on the day. We received excellent feedback from members, including those who shared that this was the first AGM they had been able to attend in some time due to health challenges, and that it was refreshing to gather in a cool, comfortable facility. We are pleased to welcome Alastair Sammy to the Board for Karlamyngurrara, and to re-welcome Murphy Williams for Ngayunanalku and Bill Williams, Pitjikirli, for a further two years. Overall, it was a strong and successful AGM, and we thank all members who travelled and participated.

Alastair Sammy



Murphy Williams



Bill Williams



PROJECTS

Community Art Centres (GRP)

This project is delivering three new art centres across Punmu, Kunawarritji and Jigalong, supported by grant funding for community engagement, detailed design, approvals and construction. JYAC continues to work closely with community corporations, Martumili and the Shire of East Pilbara to plan for the operation and long-term management of the facilities.

Construction is progressing well across all sites, with the art centres on track for handover to the communities between June and August 2026. Once complete, the centres will provide dedicated spaces to support Martu artists, strengthen cultural practice and create new social and economic opportunities in community.

Community Infrastructure Renewal (RPPP)

The project builds on the Martu Community Co-Design Project (21-22) and is focused on progressing the next phase of community infrastructure planning across the three Martu communities. Grant funding is supporting renewed community engagement, detailed design, site assessments, approvals and preparation of “shovel-ready” documentation for proposed community buildings, in close partnership with local community corporations.

Following further consultation, Punmu and Kunawarritji have confirmed changes to the proposed building locations. These decisions were made through positive community discussions and will improve the suitability and long-term use of the facilities. The updated locations are now being incorporated into the design and approvals process, positioning the projects to seek construction funding once designs are finalised.



WEDGEFIELD WAREHOUSE

Works on the Wedgefield warehouse, which commenced in July 2025, continue to progress well. The refurbishment is on track for completion by the end of 2025 and will enable JYAC to fully utilise the site to support year-round field activities.

Modular offices are currently being constructed offsite, with practical completion expected between mid-late December 2025. In parallel, JYAC successfully secured grant funding to employ a dedicated warehouse manager who started in September, strengthening day-to-day site management and improving coordination of field staff and operations.

Thank you to our funders and partners who have helped us! Lotterywest, ILSC and Pilbara Development Commision



MARTUKU JIJIKU MAYA

As 2025 comes to a close, MJM has had a strong year supporting Martu young people to stay connected to education, culture and opportunity. Students achieved a range of outcomes including improved school attendance, First Aid certification, sporting and cadet achievements, leadership opportunities, and creative projects with Martumili. Some students also took part in state-wide leadership and training programs, building confidence and skills.

MJM welcomed new staff, completed trauma-informed training, improved safety and facilities, and created a bush tucker garden with students. Engagement with families, schools and community partners has remained central, helping young people navigate family responsibilities and Sorry Business.

Looking ahead to 2026, JYAC will continue to strengthen education engagement, expand cultural and wellbeing programs, refine systems, and secure future funding to keep MJM operational, ensuring ongoing support for Martu young people and strong futures on Martu ngurra.



NEXT 12 MONTHS OF JYAC!



Protect Martu Ngurra (Country)

- Better systems to manage mining and exploration
- Strong negotiations and heritage protections
- Growing Ranger programs, including Women Rangers
- Supporting tourism and language on Country



Advance Martu People & Communities

- Working directly with communities on priorities
- Visiting all main communities in 2025
- Delivering major community projects and Arts Centres
- Pushing for better housing and infrastructure



Generate Wealth & Opportunity

- New economic programs starting in 2026
- Supporting Martu businesses and enterprises
- Exploring renewable energy opportunities
- Activating Wedgefield for jobs and growth



Governance, Compliance & Communication

- Clear rules, plans and member education
- Better communication and a new website
- Strong risk, HR and finance systems
- Simplified and stronger trust structures



CEO Service Model

- Strategic and advisory CEO role
- Building leadership within JYAC staff
- Strong governance and compliance continues
- Day-to-day operations led by staff



JYAC CAMERA ROLL



Feedback or questions?

If you would like to provide feedback or ask a question, please contact us at admin@jyac.com.au.
We love hearing from our members and common law holders.

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