

ISSUE NO. 1 | 2021-2022

# YINHAWANGKA NEWS



**YINHAWANGKA**  
ABORIGINAL CORPORATION





## MISSION STATEMENT

The Objective of the Yinhawangka Aboriginal Corporation is to service the members of the Corporation, the Yinhawangka Traditional Owners, to provide relief from poverty, sickness, suffering, misfortune, disability, destitution and disadvantages of Yinhawangka People. YAC is also responsible for the development and management of delivering programs, initiatives and other services for the benefit of Yinhawangka People. The PBC also seeks to maintain, protect, promote and advance the Traditional Owners, Yinhawangka Country, heritage, history, culture, capabilities and the pursuit of happiness and to offer a liberated lifestyle for Yinhawangka.

Yinhawangka Aboriginal Corporation respects the past, present and emerging custodians of Yinhawangka Country.

The PBC acknowledge all Yinhawangka People as the rightful land owners and recognize the hardship of all Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islanders Peoples.

YAC staff are determined to provide help with protecting and maintaining Country, history, heritage and culture.

Yinhawangka sends their deepest condolences to all members of Yinhawangka that have lost a loved one and sends comfort for those that are still grieving.



# **CONTENTS**

- 1. CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT**
- 2. CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT**
- 3. RANGER PROGRAM REPORT**
- 4. RANGER NEWS**
- 5. RANGER UPDATE**
- 6. HERITAGE REPORT**
- 7. SURVEY**
- 8. GIS & REGISTER UPDATE**
- 9. SIGNIFICANT EVENTS**
- 10. CORPORATE NEWS**







# CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

## Halloway Smirke

I'm very fortunate and humbled to provide another chairperson's report for the mob. I'm grateful and appreciative of the YAC Board for reelecting myself as the Chairperson during a time that was and still is challenging for the Yinhawangka Aboriginal Corporation, the membership, and stakeholders. It has been my mission to encourage, support and listen to the board on their opinions, understanding their visions and guiding YAC to prosperous pathways.

As the Chair I've encouraged the YAC Board to develop a Strategic Plan collectively with the Yinhawangka Council and the Decision-Making Committee (DMC) with hopes to protect, persevere and keep Yinhawangka healthy, proud, and strong. As Yinhawangka develops, the PBC is now equipped with a clear vision from the membership and now obligated to help Yinhawangka stay Healthy, stand Strong with Culture, Spirit and Determination. We as the Board of the PBC feel this vision will create growth and prosperity for Land, Culture, Heritage, Education, economic and enterprise development providing the membership with healthy and beneficial outcomes. Achieving this vision for Yinhawangka, the Board has requested to approach other organisations and stakeholder such as IBN, Gumala and Rio Tinto and surrounding pastoralist to develop programs in housing, education, training, health, community services and business enterprises.

YAC attended the 2021 Regional Implementation Committee (RIC) Conference, giving Yinhawangka the opportunity to observe, understand and participate in heavy but healthy discussion about the disadvantages for businesses, organisations, and other PBC entities in regional Australia. As Traditional Owner and chair of the PBC, I was invited to speak on behalf of Yinhawangka pushing an agenda that will benefit Culture, Heritage, and Language of Yinhawangka, then reaching out to the government, businesses and other Traditional Owner groups for opportunities and solutions on working together. The conference provided a forum to deliberate and communicate on-country opportunities, piquing my interest for possible partnerships and understanding of other entities objectives in supporting healthy country and its Traditional Owners.

The representation and involvement of young emerging leaders at the RIC was impressive, witnessing a productive collaboration between youth and Elders is something I would like reflected in YAC's Board and the Trust DMC and Council.

Since the destruction of Juukan Gorge, the nation has reframed their attention to the Pilbara as evident at the RIC, with concerns of surrounding Traditional Owners resulting in heavy scrutiny of mining companies. Yinhawangka must do better as a neighbouring tribe, we must support the Puutu Kunti and Pinikura People by changing how Yinhawangka is approached. Our opinions are valid, and our voices demand to be heard.



# CHIEF EXECUTIVE REPORT

## Kupa Teao - Chief Executive Officer



Thunardoo – Greetings

I acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land on which I work and live, and pay my respects to the Yinhawangka People, and recognise their continuing connection to land, water, sky, and community. I pay respect to Elder's past and present who are the keeper of sacred Indigenous knowledge and skills. I acknowledge emerging Indigenous leaders who will continue to fight for the rights to take control of their future. I would also like to acknowledge the YAC Board of Directors and their unwavering support of me in the role as CEO.

I appreciate the warm welcome I received from Staff, Traditional Owners and Elders, community members and all YAC Business Partners and stakeholders. It is an absolute privilege to work and live alongside these people in this magnificent region. In my role so far in the corporation the word "overwhelming" sums it all up. What an amazing place, great people, the list goes on. I understand it is early days, however the positive experience I have gone through so far, has allowed me to settle quickly in the role.

During the early stages in the job, it is vital that I make every effort to go and out and meet everyone, to continue building relationships and give everyone an opportunity to meet and get to know me. There is a language phrase from the New Zealand Maori, where I come from, we say "kanohi ki te kanohi", when translated in English means, face to face. So, it is important for me to meet with people and engage with them face to face.

I look forward to working closely with everyone, to support YAC vision and their strategic direction, which will be achieved through robust and thoughtful planning, leading to an implementation process that produces results.

On a final note, I would like to acknowledge the Yinhawangka Staff for their resilience and exemplary performance during challenging times, and in the absence of a CEO. I commend their ongoing efforts to go above and beyond their roles and responsibility with a focus on achieving the required business outcomes. Well done!



Kupa Teao - YAC CEO





# YINHAWANGKA RANGER PROGRAM



## Hilton Gruis - Lands Team Leader

The Rangers have stayed connected with country despite COVID-19, still conserving country, history, heritage, and culture. Rangers had multiple opportunities to travel and to attend conferences throughout the year, equipping themselves with new methods and ideas to implement on Yinhawangka Country. Partnerships and joint venture relationships are increasing, providing more exposure and opportunity to the Yinhawangka Rangers such as the Angelo River Vertebrate Fauna Survey and the Biodiversity Conference on Noongar Country (Perth).

### Pilbara Cultural Land Management Program (PCLMP)

A week-long Workshop in Port Hedland in September 2021 focused on land management planning that supports strong cultural, environmental, and economic futures. The purpose was to help Pilbara Ranger groups come together and share knowledge of the cultural, environmental, and economic land uses already in place on their country and explore future scopes and funding and resourcing opportunities through the guidance and support of the PCLMP partnerships. The workshop also provided a training element which gave basic fulcrum use of Google Earth software in pattern monitoring using unmanned piloted aircraft (Drones), an area which the YAC Rangers are well advanced in terms of its drone program objectives. Our Rangers routinely use drones for data collection, heritage recording and monitoring for changes over time at Important Sites for Yinhawangka.



Gajawarri  
(Native Wild Orange)



Flower bud of the  
Capparis Umbontta



Flower of the  
Capparis Umbonata



# RANGER NEWS



## Birduwarli (Palm Springs) Rockfall

Sometime in late May 2021, it was noticed that a rockfall had occurred approximately 100 metres from the entry to Birduwarli. Photographs and drone footage were taken to assist with determining the cause and scale of impact at the site in the first week of June 2021.

It does not appear any rock art images were on the fallen rocks. The cause of the rockfall appears to have been water seepage from recent rainfalls which loosened the boulders resulting in its collapse. YAC will be investigating further however.

The track to Birduwarli has 'Closed Road' signs placed across the access track and before the access gate due to it being a public health hazard area. Members can still access the site for cultural purposes, by calling Hilton for the access code.

Despite setbacks from COVID-19 the Yinhawangka Rangers are determined to keep Yinhawangka Country healthy; constantly out monitoring and maintaining flora, fauna, and waters. The team are excited for country to see the rivers flowing, animals active and plants revived.



Rockfall at Birduwarli



# RANGER UPDATE

## Devina Ranger & Kalwin Dann - Yinhawangka Rangers

Kalwin Dann and I attended the Biodiversity Conference held in Perth at UWA from the 15th to the 17th of September 2021. Over the duration of the three-day conference, we got to network and meet different people from Noongar Country, the Kimberley and to also catch-up with familiar faces from the Pilbara.

Professor Stephen Van Leeuwin is an Aboriginal Noongar Professor in Biodiversity & Environmental Science at Curtin University, a leader in both his Noongar community and professional community. As one of the keynote speakers at the Biodiversity Conference, he spoke about the Indigenous Stewardship which consisted of Indigenous Estate, Indigenous Conservation Estate, Indigenous Land and Sea Managers and working with Indigenous Land and Sea Managers.

My highlight is my new found appreciation to the Rangers from the Kimberley, East Pilbara and Mutawa in the Murchison area who gave presentations on the first day about Flora & introduced Fauna, pattern burns and how to connect Indigenous knowledge and science with Aboriginal Peoples. Learning what the other Ranger Groups were doing to protect their land, was very inspiring and I have equipped myself with their knowledge and the way they conduct their Ranger programs onboard and hope to use some of the methods as soon as our own Yinhawangka Ranger group expands.

Attending the conference has reinforced our determination to help heal, protect, and preserve country as Yinhawangka Rangers.

Cheers,  
Devina Ranger.



Devina with Kimberley Rangers





# HERITAGE

## **Dr Anna Fagan - General Manager ~ Heritage Operations**

The Heritage department of Yinhawangka Aboriginal Corporation has had to jump through many hurdles this year, shifting from surveys, excavations, important meetings, legal and Native Title battles, and workshops and training with mob. Nonetheless, even though it was a tough year, the team has had huge achievements and is heading in the right direction.

Heritage concerns turned sour however with the new Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act Bill 2021. Yinhawangka Aboriginal Corporation staff and Traditional Owners and other Western Australian Traditional Owners marched on parliament in protest over the fact that the new Bill favours the mining industry, while providing no support to PBCs, and fails to protect Country.

To build capacity for the PBC, YAC has been supporting staff and Traditional Owners to attend workshops, training, conferences, and summits, to learn, connect and promote Yinhawangka Culture. YAC and Yinhawangka networked and learnt a great deal at the Pilbara Futures Summit and the AIATSIS Summit in Adelaide.

The Pilbara Summit on Noongar Country in Perth equipped YAC and Yinhawangka to better understand and plan for economic growth after mining for self-determination, financial prosperity, while maintaining cultural and ecological resilience and sustainability. With these new ideas and initiatives YAC can successfully negotiate with stakeholders to propose potential joint venture partnerships in profitable and culturally sustainable economic projects.

Yinhawangka Traditional Owners and YAC staff also attended the AIATSIS conference in Adelaide. This provided a powerful educational forum for Aboriginal People, academics, government, native title, legal experts, and community sectors to yarn about addressing critical and emerging challenges. Yinhawangka returned home armed with more knowledge, network connections, and new and exciting ongoing projects that will be hugely beneficial for the growth of Yinhawangka Aboriginal Corporation and the membership.





# SURVEY UPDATE



## Tracey Foster - Heritage Executive

Surveys have had to keep to a strict timeline to complete all the required fieldwork in 2021 and 2022 in order to progress heritage work and Social Surroundings for West Angelas and the Western Range, while being sensitive of and accounting for many meetings, Sorry Business, and COVID restrictions.

Three trips were allocated to carry out the Social Surroundings fieldwork, where Traditional Owners travelled on Country throughout West Angelas and Western Range while considering Rio Tinto's mining proposals and developments. The Yinhawangka TOs yarned about significant places and potential impacts to Country, educating Rio Tinto representatives on Yinhawangka knowledge, stories, and connection to Country.

Once all Social Surroundings fieldwork and legal management documents for these proposals have been completed, Yinhawangka People will come together to collaborate on alternative solutions for the Greater Paraburdoo and West Angelas mines in order to better protect Country. As always, the team are identifying ever more heritage sites that need to be understood and protected. A very big thank you to all members who have participated in surveys.

Social Surroundings is a revolutionary fieldwork and research project and legal document. It has been designed and driven by Yinhawangka People and Country to identify and reduce short and long term impacts to Country and social, cultural, spiritual, and economic values and propose new management actions and commitments for mining companies and State government.



Traditional Owners on Heritage Survey



# GIS UPDATE



## Renee Manser - GIS Officer

YAC is currently developing and implementing exciting new mapping software and database management system for YAC and the Yinhawangka membership to use. This web-based application will allow YAC and Yinhawangka to view and understand landscape changes and vegetation growth over time, identify areas of ground disturbance from mining operations and exploration and pastoral activities, and to help identify undocumented archaeological places.

Yinhawangka Traditional Owners will have access to history, knowledge, and cultural information as well as ranger program activities, heritage survey updates and outcomes, and cultural activities.

This data management system will provide secure access to staff and members with all the appropriate cultural and gender restrictions and permissions. The program will enable and encourage Yinhawangka membership to help update and upload crucial information about Country, to better protect Yinhawangka Lands and support the PBC and the Yinhawangka Rangers to keep Country strong. YAC hopes to bring the final application to the PBC and membership by early 2022.

# REGISTER UPDATE



## Melisha Kuehn - Senior Administration Officer

In November 2021, YAC Board of Directors approved engagement of Microsoft based program ATMS (Aboriginal Trust Management System) for the PBC Member Management. The implementation of this program brings the PBC in line with other Corporations to effectively manage the record keeping of the Register of Yinhawangka People and Register of Members, now and into the future.

With Phase 1 nearing completion, we are looking to streamline the Membership Application processing through management in ATMS, also working towards updating the YAC Membership Kit to be more user friendly and accessible to joining members everywhere through print and online access.

To access the Membership Kit: <http://www.yinhawangka.com.au/membership/>



# SIGNIFICANT EVENTS

## CHANNAR SINNO STEEL

9th April 2021

Yinhawangka to celebrate the conclusion of the Channar Mining Joint Venture between Sinosteel Group and Rio Tinto.

## NEW CEO

May 17th 2021

Kupa Teao joined Yinhawangka Aboriginal Corporation as the new Chief Executive Officer, previously working in Queensland with another Prescribed Body Corporate (PBC).

## AIATSI

31st May 2021

YAC staff and members attended the 2021 Australian Institute of Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Studies.

## SOCIAL SURROUNDS

April - November 2021

An innovated method of Survey that TO's were able to participate in, to identify and record cultural and spiritual significant items on Yinhawangka Country.

## YIRRA REVISITED 2022

Initial excavations occurred in 2000 with Yinhawangka Traditional Owners and archaeologists. Yinhawangka have finally returned to Yirra to conduct further excavations and research with the top archaeologists in Australia. Yinhawangka People and the scientists alike all expect Yirra to provide extraordinary dates for Yinhawangka history



Simon Trott (RTIO CEO), Marlon Cooke (YAC ),  
Siwei Xu (Sinosteel Chair)



Tahnee Davies, Halloway Smirke, Sara Slattery



Yinhawangka Traditional Owners and  
Archae-Aus consultants



Yinhawangka TO's at Yirra Rock Shelter



# OFFICE NEWS

## Welcome to new YAC Staff...

CEO Kupa Teao, Cook Island and Maori man passionate about First Nation People, worked with Jabalbina custodians to develop a Ranger Program & Culture Awareness package.

Devina is the latest Yinhawangka Ranger to join the team and has enjoyed learning to fly drones that record and monitor important places within Yinhawangka Country. Devina is also enrolled in Certificate II in Conservation and Land Management (CALM) as a North Regional Tafe student and is currently busy working towards completing her qualification.

Renee, GIS Officer, will manage geographical mapping for Yinhawangka Native Title areas, using Geographic Information System (GIS) to input and retrieve data to generate accurate maps for the use of YAC operation such as Heritage and the Ranger Program.

Hayley, starting as Admin Officer has moved into Community Engagement Officer, focusing on YAC's engagements within the Paraburdoo Community.

Brandon, Media Officer, responsible for growing YAC's social media presence, capturing content regarding Yinhawangka culture, heritage and people for the purpose of promoting or achieving.



## CONGRATS ALLISSA

Congratulation to Allissa Limerick, Yinhawangka Ranger, and the first Indigenous student in 5 years in the Pilbara to complete the Conservation & Land Management Certificate III.

Allissa was placed in King's Park Botanical Gardens for work placement as a requirement for her studies, and found the process of mummifying plants exciting and intriguing.

Now equipped with experience and knowledge of flora, Allissa intends to rejuvenate native flora on Yinhawangka Country. Well done Allissa on your achievements and looking after country.



Welcome morning tea for Kupa



Allissa Limerick - Yinhawangka Ranger





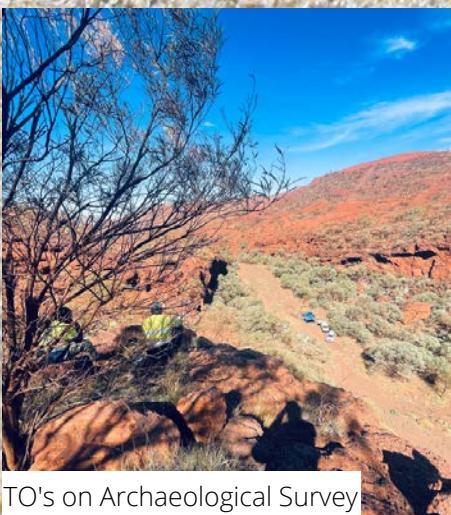
Birduwarli (Palm Springs)



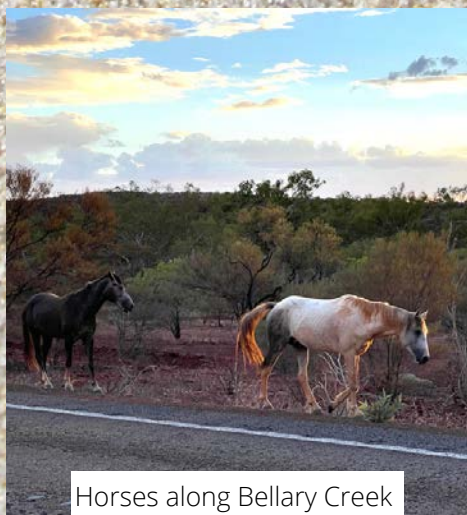
Filming Workshop with TO's



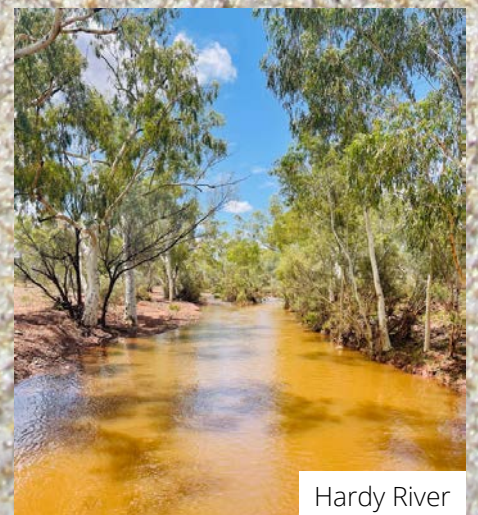
Ethnographical Survey with TO's



TO's on Archaeological Survey



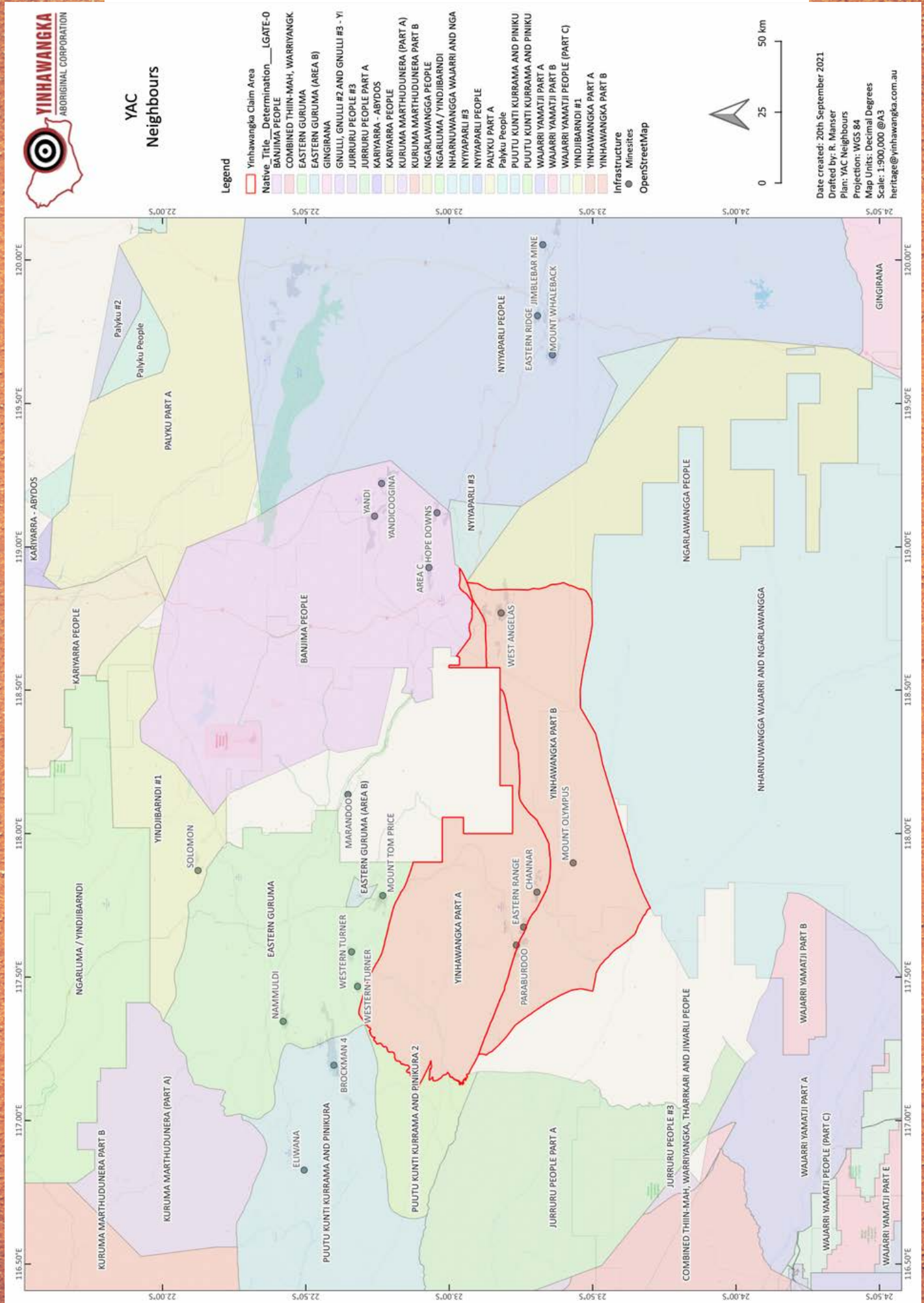
Horses along Bellary Creek



Hardy River



# YINHAWANGKA NATIVE TITLE CLAIM AREA





## ACCESS TO ORIC

Want access to Yinhawangka Aboriginal Corporations Rule Book or Reports, through the Office of the Registrar of Indigenous Corporations (ORIC)? Simply visit the website: <https://www.oric.gov.au/> and type **Yinhawangka** into the search engine or scan the QR Code for instant access using a smartphone.

SCAN QR CODE TO  
ACCESS ORIC



## MUTUAL TRUST ONLINE PORTAL

All Yinhawangka Members have the opportunity to lodge an application to Mutual Trust via the Mutual Trust Application website.

- The online portal is found at this address:  
<https://trustapp.mutualtrust.com.au/>
- You will need to contact the Mutual Trust office to obtain your individual password. **Please keep your password confidential.**
- The username is your email address.
- When people log in they will receive an SMS to their mobile number (please make sure MT has current number) to enable login.
- The app enables people to check balances, make applications, check status of an application and attach documents – there is no need to call or e-mail or fax the MT office

Phone: (08) 3230 7700

Email: [perthadmin@mutualtrust.com.au](mailto:perthadmin@mutualtrust.com.au)



SCAN QR CODE TO  
ACCESS PORTAL



## YINHAWANGKA ABORIGINAL CORPORATION

PO Box 94 Paraburdoo WA 6754

T: 08 9189 5110

E: [admin@yinhawangka.com.au](mailto:admin@yinhawangka.com.au)

[www.yinhawangka.com.au](http://www.yinhawangka.com.au)



SCAN QR CODE TO  
ACCESS YAC WBESITE