



# **LAND TRIBUNAL**

## Annual Report

**FINANCIAL YEAR**

*2022/2023*

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**ESTABLISHED UNDER THE ABORIGINAL LAND ACT 1991**





**LAND TRIBUNAL**  
Office of the Acting Chairperson

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4 September 2023

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The Hon. Yvette D'Ath MP  
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Email: [attorney@ministerial.qld.gov.au](mailto:attorney@ministerial.qld.gov.au)

Dear Attorney,

**Re: Land Tribunal Annual Report 2022-2023**

As required by s 245(1) of the *Aboriginal Land Act 1991*, I present my report on the operations of the Land Tribunal.

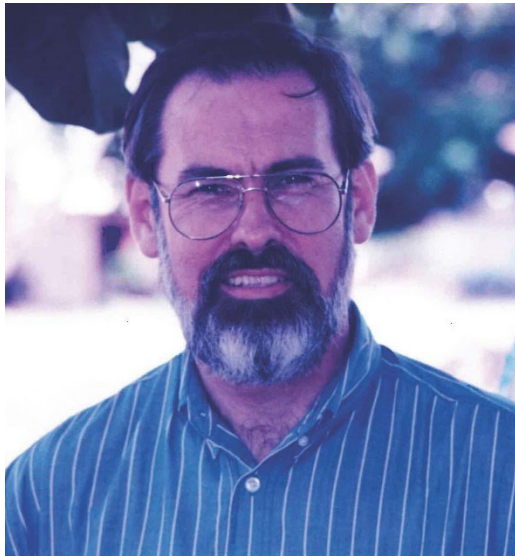
Yours sincerely,

Acting Chairperson  
Fleur Kingham

## Chairperson's Overview

My appointment as Chairperson of the Land Tribunal on a part-time basis was extended from 11 February 2023 for a period of 12 months. This report covers the period 1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023.

### Tribute to Graeme John Neate AM



*Graeme Neate, "a man of profound empathy, deep understanding, and unwavering commitment".  
(Cape York Partnership)*

I record my deep sadness on the passing of Graeme John Neate AM on 17 June 2023 and express my sincere condolences to his family.

Graeme was the inaugural Chairperson of the Land Tribunal, a position he held for more than 9 years from January 1992 to May 2001.

Graeme may be better known for his later service on the National Native Title Tribunal, which included 14 years as its President. However, his contribution to Queensland's land title framework deserves special recognition.

Graeme established and nurtured a new judicial institution under novel state-based

land rights legislation. He developed well considered and culturally appropriate processes, including hearings on country. As well as being an exceptional lawyer, Graeme was a generous mentor and a highly principled leader and decision-maker.

I am confident that claimants and lawyers alike will join with me in remembering Graeme fondly and with great respect. His family can take pride in his positive and enduring legacy.

**Last year's report:** The following is my annual report for 2021/2022. I reproduce it in full because no claims have been referred to the Tribunal and no action taken to resolve its future.

**Background:** The *Aboriginal Land Act 1991* established the Land Tribunal on 21 December 1991 to receive and hear claims made by groups of Aboriginal people to areas of claimable land. The Act contained a sunset clause, which provided no new claims could be lodged after 22 December 2006. A hearing is initiated by a claim under the Act being referred to the Tribunal. All claims referred to the Tribunal have been determined. The last claims determined were the Boodjumulla (Lawn Hill) National Park claims, which were determined by Chairperson McDonald on 24 August 2016.

The Land Tribunal's costs for this financial year were \$0.00.

**The future:** Some claims under the Act were lodged with the Department of Resources but have not been referred to the Tribunal.

The Department of Justice and Attorney-General and the Department of Resources are in consultation about the outstanding claims and the future process for accessing records of the Tribunal.

The Tribunal's files are a valuable record of First Nations Peoples history and culture as well as colonial and post-colonial land use.

The Statement of Commitment, which initiated the Pathway to Treaty, includes principles to reframe the relationship between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and the Queensland Government. These include respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture, shared responsibility, and empowerment.

I have committed the Tribunal to work with the Queensland State Archives to develop a culturally appropriate process for both recording and providing access to the evidence given in claims hearings by First Nations Peoples.

I wish to acknowledge the assistance of the Principal Registrar and staff of the Land Court in securing and organising the Tribunal's records in preparation for that project.



**ACTING CHAIRPERSON  
FLEUR KINGHAM**