

As a result of these extreme conditions the ILC destocked the property, retaining a core flock of 2,300 breeding ewes on the property and 185 breeding cows on agistment at 30 June 2003. A significant livestock water refurbishment plan was implemented in early 2003, using Aboriginal workers from the Charleville and Cunnamulla CDEP organisations.



CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

Research during the stocktake of ILC properties identified a need to increase the capacity of landowners to manage their land. In response, the Capacity Development Unit (CDU) was established in December 2002 to promote and provide opportunities for Indigenous people to enhance their ability to derive benefits from land acquisition and land management. To achieve its aim, the CDU will:

- promote best management practices within the ILC
- assist the development of ILC personnel
- establish strategic alliances with stakeholders.

CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES WITHIN THE ILC

The Capacity Development Unit formalised the roles and responsibilities of the Capacity Development Coordinators in relation to land acquisition assessment, land management assessment and the Property Remediation Program.

Coordinators participated in regional information sessions nationally to inform stakeholders of the role of capacity development in the new programs. The sessions also increased the unit's awareness of regional capacity development issues and established contacts with appropriate agencies and organisations.

The unit contributed to the development of the application assessment process by participating in regional assessment teams, assessing applicants' capacity and commitment, and responding to queries regarding capacity and commitment issues.

The Capacity Development Coordinators also contributed to the development of the land workshops that are held to assess applications under the new programs. The aim was to design workshops where clients can make informed decisions about the responsibilities and commitment required for owning and managing land, and where the ILC can advise applicants of requirements in property management planning.

The unit was active in networking with key government and non-government agencies in relation to corporate governance and accessing funding for strategic planning and training. Relationships were established with:

- TAFEs, service providers and the Office of the Registrar of Aboriginal Corporations regarding strategic approaches to coordination and delivery of corporate governance training
- FarmBis regarding funding for agricultural and natural resource based training activities on Indigenous-held land
- Department of Workplace Relations, the Office of Aboriginal Economic Development and ATSIC regarding the Indigenous Small Business Fund and how to better coordinate the ILC policy and procedures with those of these agencies.

The skills and abilities of ILC staff were developed by:

- working with regional teams during application assessments to ensure that a standard approach is used across the Divisions. This also helps to determine the skills required to manage the application process
- developing methods to share knowledge between staff members regarding property management planning and financial management tools
- recognition of the need for regional contact development and good record.

EXTENSION, EDUCATION AND TRAINING STRATEGY

In November 1999 the ILC Board identified the need to establish an Extension, Education and Training Strategy (EETS) to support Indigenous landowners to increase their capacity to own, operate and manage Indigenous-held land. The absence of such support was identified as a significant barrier to Indigenous people trying to realise their aspirations.

Pilot programs commenced with five communities and continued through the year. The programs offered assistance to undertake training in corporate governance, management, operation skills and personal development training.

In-principle agreements were established with two pilot programs: Coobabla Farm, WA, and Yappala Station, SA. A contractual agreement with the Title Holding Body of Yappala station was developed to integrate training and land management support. The training offered was:

- accredited
- integrated with other land management support, including property management planning
- tailored to the needs of the participants
- covered by an agreement of mutual reciprocity.

The ILC developed training support materials which allow for assessment that meets national training quality framework requirements, is relevant to the needs of the landowners and is culturally appropriate.

A partnership agreement was established with Murrumbidgee College of Agriculture, a Registered Training Organisation, which delivered accredited corporate governance training at Certificate 4 and Diploma level.

Five Yappala Board and community members are expected to graduate in April 2004 with Certificate 4 in Business Governance. They will be the first in Australia to achieve this.

The training at Yappala is a first in the development of the capacity of the corporation members and is a positive example of a whole-of-community, whole-of-government approach to the development of Indigenous capacity to manage Indigenous-owned land. During 2002-2003, AFFA granted just over \$84,000 to the EETS program with remaining funds being granted according to the contract schedule.

The EETS Strategy will be finalised in September 2003 and a final report will make recommendations in regard to training that will be incorporated into ILC policy. An independent external evaluation report will also be completed.

The Capacity Development Unit provides the resource base to implement the outcomes of the Extension, Education and Training Strategy across the ILC.

POLICY AND RESEARCH UNIT

The Policy and Research Unit supports the land acquisition and management functions by providing services in policy advice and research support to Divisional land acquisition and management staff, the Corporate Management Team, the Deputy General Manager, the General Manager and the Board. The following areas define the unit's operations.

POLICY REVIEW AND ADVICE

Significant effort went into the review and development of the organisation's major policy documents. The National Indigenous Land Strategy 2001-2006 was revised. The revision articulated a new approach