



NGALDURRONG YANA | WALK TOGETHER

Annual Report

2020 – 2021

Language Repatriation

The repatriation of Dja Dja Wurrung language is essential to the cultural foundation of Dja Dja Wurrung People and the Dja Dja Wurrung Group. This document provides a continuation of this practice.

The following words hold cultural significance and importance to Dja Dja Wurrung and First Nations Peoples. The importance of **Aboriginal, Ancestor, Country, Culture, People, Cultural Heritage, Caring for Country, First Nations and Traditional Owner** are capitalised throughout this document to signify their importance.

Aunty/Uncle is used as a sign of respect regarding the person that is mentioned.

Dja Dja Wurrung frequently appears throughout this document and is interchangeable with Djaara.

Dja Dja Wurrung language is used with the English interpretation after it the first time the word appears.

Corporation frequently appears throughout this document and is interchangeable with Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation, trading as DJAARA.

Enterprises frequently appears throughout this document and is interchangeable with Dja Dja Wurrung Enterprises Pty Ltd, trading as DJANDAK.

Our/ us/ we throughout this document is an inclusive term of ownership reflecting Dja Dja Wurrung People, DJAARA and DJANDAK.

Balak	Mob, People, group
Balaki Wuka	Giving to community
Balaki Wurrekang	Community Engagement
Barpa	to make, build
Bunjil	The Eaglehawk, Dja Dja Wurrung creator
Dhelk Djuwima	show, share = sharing respect
Dhelkunya Dja	Healing/make good, land/ Country
Dja Dja Wurrung	Yes, Yes speaking/lip/tongue
Dja or djaa	Earth
Djaara	People, Dja Dja Wurrung People
Djali	Tongue/ Language
Djandak	Country, Dja Dja Wurrung Country
Djandak Dja Kuditja	Country Healing, its Home.
Djandak Wi or Wii	Country Fire
Djuwima Djandaki	to show and to share our Country
Dumarr	Thank you
Galkangu	Build together, we make together, make things happen together, more connected to Country. DJAARA also use it when referring to Joint Management.

Gapa Giya	to know, to think / to ask, to tell
Gartna Balak	Connecting People
Gatjin	Waterways
Giyakiki	Story, yarn
Guyura	Kooyoora
Kapa Gatjin	to know water
lo beng nyanga warrmi	no one sits behind
Larni Yirrip	Home of the Ironbarks
Malamiya	long ago, Dreamtime, before this time. DJAARA also use it when referring to Dja Dja Wurrung Cultural Heritage.
Milakuk	Lightning
Murrup	Spirit
Ngaldurrong yana	Walk together (together walk)
Nhati mungga	to put forth ideas, to bring them into being
Nhatipil	having an idea
Nyauwi	Sun
Waa	the crow, the brother of Bunjil
Wala-wala	Rain
Wanyarram Dhelk	Healthy Water
Wartaka	Come with purpose. DJAARA also use it when referring to Djaara member focus groups
Wurreka	to yarn, to talk

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Our Determination

The Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation is a representative body for Dja Dja Wurrung People. It was established in 2004 with the principal objectives and responsibilities of the Corporation being to:

- Promote the health and wellbeing of the Dja Dja Wurrung People
- Protect and promote the laws, culture, property rights and human rights of the Dja Dja Wurrung People

In 2008, through the Corporation, Dja Dja Wurrung People gained Registered Aboriginal Party (RAP) status to further the fight to be recognised as the Traditional Owners of Djandak (Country).

After 15 years of intensive negotiations, the Corporation, on behalf of Dja Dja Wurrung People, and the Victorian Government signed the historic Recognition and Settlement Agreement on 28 March 2013.

The Agreement is a means by which Dja Dja Wurrung traditions and the unique relationship of Dja Dja Wurrung People to Djandak are recognised, strengthened, protected, and promoted, for the benefit of all Victorians, now and into the future.

In 2021, the Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation paid respect to Dja Dja Wurrung People and began trading as ‘DJAARA – Balaki Wuka (Giving to community)’. Dja Dja Wurrung People have and will always be the foundation of the Corporation.

The Dja Dja Wurrung Enterprises (DDWE) Pty Ltd, trading as DJANDAK, operates as the commercial arm of DJAARA to conduct and manage the work needed to achieve the many project outcomes undertaken across Dja Dja Wurrung Country. It was established as an independent for-profit operation to help achieve long-term self-sustainability. The Enterprise is owned and operated by Dja Dja Wurrung Traditional Owners. DJANDAK is also a Supply Nation certified business that works in natural resource management, Cultural Heritage management and landscaping. Together, Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation trading as DJAARA and Dja Dja Wurrung Enterprises Pty Ltd, trading as DJANDAK, comprise the Dja Dja Wurrung Group.

Organisational Structure (simplified)



Our Motivation

“ The development of the Dja Dja Wurrung’s first Country Plan coincided with the historic settlement of our native title claim with the Victorian Government. The settlement represented a once in a lifetime opportunity to achieve legal recognition of our connection to Country and our rights as Traditional Owners - including our access to, use and management of the natural and cultural resources on Country.

The Country Plan will provide direction for the Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation and the Traditional Owner Land Management Board. It will be used to build partnerships with our key stakeholders and to increase the involvement of Dja Dja Wurrung Traditional Owners in the effort to achieve our goals.

An extract from Uncle Graham Atkinson's message from the Chairperson 2004 -2014, in the Dhelkunya Dja (Healing Country) Plan.

Our Dhelkunya Dja Plan is a 20-year plan (2014-2034) setting out the community vision for our People to be strong, underpinned by our living culture; our lands and waters to be in good condition and actively managed to protect our values; and to promote the laws, culture, and rights of all Dja Dja Wurrung People.

These goals give purpose to our work and are developed to guide all land management on Dja Dja Wurrung Country.

Today, the Dja Dja Wurrung Group delivers a range of programs to meet the aspirations set out in the Dhelkunya Dja Plan. We are guided by the nine goals and aspirations set out by the Dja Dja Wurrung community.



Goal 1 Djaara

Every Dja Dja Wurrung person is happy, healthy and secure in their identity, livelihood, and lifestyle



Goal 2 Cultural Practice & Customs

Dja Dja Wurrung customs and practices are alive and respected - keeping us connected to our past, our present and our future



Goal 3 Malamiya | Cultural Heritage

Our Malamiya is recognised and promoted as a celebration of our identity and community



Goal 4 Bush Tucker & Medicine

Our Country continues to nourish us by providing bush tucker & medicine



Goal 5 Wanyarram - Rivers & Waterways

Our rivers and waterways are healthy and meet the needs of our People and land



Goal 6 Land

Our upside-down Country is healthy again



Goal 7 Self - determination

As our Country’s first People, Djaara have an established place in society and are empowered to manage our own affairs



Goal 8 Traditional Owner Economy

We have a strong and diverse economic base to provide for our health and wellbeing and strengthen our living Culture



Goal 9 Galkangu - Joint Management

All Crown Land on Dja Dja Wurrung Country is Aboriginal Title, and we are the sole managers

Our Leadership



Message from the Chair – Trent Nelson

Dhelkaya everyone.

Dealing with COVID-19 impacts through 2020 to 2021, I believe the Dja Dja Wurrung Group CEO and operational staff across the Dja Dja Wurrung Group have done an exceptional job at keeping the business doors open during an unknown pandemic. I am honoured to bring to you my sixth report as Chairperson of Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation now trading as DJAARA.

Firstly, I would like to say Dumarr (Thank you) to the Djaara community for their strength and resilience in being able to still participate, share knowledge, and respect each other in another year of a global pandemic.

Each year the Board and Corporation have an enormous year in delivering outcomes for DJAARA and the wider community.

This year, it has been under the changing conditions of lockdown restrictions every month. Not knowing the certainty of what the next month will bring in delivering operational outcomes hasn't been an easy task.

I want to thank DJAARA's Board of Directors for their dedication this year to attend monthly meetings, mostly online and a few in-person luckily, between lockdowns, it hasn't been easy, but we have persisted.

We even saw excellent attendance from a director who lives outside of Victoria in dealing with COVID restrictions and still attending meetings; this shows real dedication, I believe.

I would like to acknowledge our outgoing Board Members — Nikita Charles, Uncle Ron Marks, Jida Gulpilil and Caleb Dunolly-Lee — they have contributed immensely to the Corporation over the past 2-3 years.

I'm pleased we were able to deliver three board development workshops focusing on better engagement between Directors and Alternate Directors, on Board governance, Director roles and responsibilities, financial management, and implementing actions from the 2020 Board review and Annual General Meeting.

Our family directors play an integral role in supporting and driving our high-quality governance of decision making. Their dedication continues to build the framework for our professional Traditional Owner organisation to deliver on daily outcomes.

The commitment, actions and attendance of our Board members safeguard our ability to withhold our agreements in statutory functions under our Recognition Settlement Agreement. As we know, the directors devote their time voluntarily when attending monthly board meetings and representing DJAARA; I take my hat off to them in the strong leadership they possess for our Djaara families and mirror the strengths of our Martinga Kuli.

I want to thank the Dhelkunya Dja Land Management Board and their staff for their hard work this year in governing and guiding our Joint Management Plan into implementation for its first year.

I want to thank all our sub-committees to the Board also. The Wartaka groups have been a significant contributor in engaging Djaara to provide guidance in creating new ideas and visions for the way we manage Djandak and support work in the community, making us again front and centre in the landscape.

The work that is done allows us to continually celebrate DJAARA as a well-established Traditional Owner organisation that has slowly built up its capacity over the last 10 years in being able to deliver the aspirations of our People to the on-ground projects and measurables.

In closing, I would like to thank our Group CEO, Rodney Carter, DJAARA General Manager, Cassandra Lewis, DJANDAK General Manager, Steve Jackson and all our staff across the Dja Dja Wurrung Group for their hard work and commitment they deliver daily through all the projects they work within, as well as creating new ideas in how we can make better opportunities for our families for the future in economic development and self-determination.

Our Dja Dja Wurrung members, our Board and all the staff across the Dja Dja Wurrung Group can hold their head up high across Victoria, as a Traditional Owner Group Entity with a strong governance structure. The standard we have created continues to build our professional reputation on Country and across Victoria with other organisations. This is something we should all be very proud of.

Batak (Take care),
Trent Nelson
DDWCAC Chairperson



Our Board of Directors

The Board of Directors of DJAARA is the governing body of the Corporation. It performs the vital role of setting the direction and overseeing the operations and objectives of the Dja Dja Wurrung Group. The Dja Dja Wurrung Group comprises DJAARA and Dja Dja Wurrung Enterprises (DDWE) trading as DJANDAK.

The Corporations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) Act 2006 (CATSI Act) sets out the duties and responsibilities of Directors. These duties are consistent with the duties under common law and in the Corporations Act 2001.

There are 18 Family Groups specified in the Constitution, descendants of our Martinga kuli (Ancestors). Each Family Group may elect a Director and an Alternate Director on the Board. Each Director nominee must be a member of the Corporation and of the Family Group which nominated them. While members may choose to be recognised as having affiliation with any number of the Martinga kuli, they must identify with only one ancestral Family Group for directorship and voting purposes.

The Board is responsible for the Corporation's overall performance and compliance. Directors are entrusted with establishing an appropriate system of corporate governance in a complex and rapidly changing environment. Directors also take on additional responsibilities on sub-committees and in representing Dja Dja Wurrung in external organisations and forums. The dedication, commitment, and significant contribution of Directors, on behalf of their Family Groups and all Djaara (Dja Dja Wurrung People) through their work on the Board, is acknowledged and respected.

- During 2020-2021 the Board utilised online platforms to meet virtually and access meeting papers, enhancing efficiency, and successfully maintain a 'business as usual' approach to carrying out Board functions while adhering to COVID-19 restrictions.
- DJAARA Board meetings were held on the following dates:

17 July 2020	20 February 2021
15 August 2020	20 March 2021
18 September 2020	23 April 2021
17 October 2020	22 May 2021
19 November 2020	25 June 2021
5 December 2020	
- The 2019-2020 AGM was held on 21 November 2020
- Standing items on the Board meeting Agenda include Sorry Business, Declarations of Conflict of Interest, Membership Applications, Language Requests and Year to Date Financial Management Reports.
- Matters for Decision brought to the Board include Land Use Activity Agreement matters and Board Briefing Papers prepared by relevant Program Managers from DJAARA and DJANDAK.

- The Board receives updates on activities across the Dja Dja Wurrung Group - Recognition and Settlement Agreement Implementation, Malamiya (Cultural Heritage), Member Engagement, Communication and Relationships, Galkangu (Joint Management), Dhelkunya Dja Policy, Business Services and DDWE. All activities can be placed against achieving outcomes of the Dhelkunya Dja Plan 2014-2034.
- Updates are provided on Board sub-committees, the Dhelkunya Dja Land Management Board, and other committees and groups on which there are Dja Dja Wurrung representatives.
- The Minutes of DDWE Board and Investment Advisory Committee meetings, as well as communiques from organisations such as the First Peoples' Assembly of Victoria and the Federation of Victorian Traditional Owner Corporations, are provided to the Board for noting.
- Board Members increased their knowledge and skills during full day Board Induction and Development Sessions held in March and May.

FAMILY GROUP

John Charles



Aunty Sue Charles, Director

I am only new to the Board, but I would like to be more involved in DJAARA.

I'm very passionate about our Culture and also would like to inspire and encourage young Djaara people and all clans People to have a voice and participate in their decisions and empowerment.

Being involved in the Board has strengthened my knowledge of the Corporation and the Dja Dja Wurrung Group and its activities.

I think communication with members about employment and other opportunities is important.



Natasha Charles, Alternate Director

I am very passionate about helping our People achieve their life goals and health goals as well.

I'm learning a lot about my Culture, and I have a lot more to learn, and hope to have a voice for our People, and upcoming generations.

My aspiration is to one day be a leader and teach our Culture to younger ones and be a role model for our Dja Dja Wurrung People, and to get them more involved in projects and having their say.

Thomas Dunolly



Deb Dunolly, Director

As a Djaara person, working and living on Dja Dja Wurrung Country allows me to reconnect with traditional land practices and sustain a strong connection to Cultural Heritage. Healing and looking after Country means we can pass our knowledge on to future generations.

Taking care of our Djaara People, water, plants, and animals is important on our journey to heal and thrive.

Our achievements as Djaara People are heading in the right direction to reach our goals. Being a Board member is a great honour and to be part of the decision-making process is a huge responsibility to ensure we as Djaara People move forward in a positive way.



Kayla Baksh, Alternate Director

Culture and Country are important to me and my aspiration is to continue learning and doing what I can to Heal Country and pass that knowledge on to my family.

Leonard Kerr



Sharnie Hamilton, Director

The importance of being a Board member of a Traditional Owner Corporation is that you are the voice for your Family Group and also for Djaara to move forward and to reach the dreams and aspirations of First Nations People. It's deadly to see really good governance to make the achievements and aspirations of Djaara.



John B Kerr, Alternate Director

Forest work keeps alive an old tradition, connecting me directly to the time when my great, great, great, great grandfathers worked in the forest and the bush provided for them – a living, food, and shelter.

I'm proud that this cultural connection continues in my family now. For us, all of the forest is culturally significant, and we continue to follow the path of protecting our Cultural Heritage and continuing this living Culture.

FAMILY GROUP

King Girribong, Lerimburneen, Walpanumin



Andrew Travis, Director

I hold very high values in myself and uphold them with strength from my Ancestors.

I am happy to say I do this all on my traditional Dja Dja Wurrung Country.

This would never been possible without my respected Elders, those who are with us now and those who have passed, and I thank them for this.



Aunty Marilyne Nicholls, Alternate Director

The Dja Dja Wurrung RSA has opened doorways for me to work on Djandak on a cultural level and a great opportunity to work with other Dja Dja Wurrung family group members to heal Djandak (Country) and Gatjin (Waterways) together.

It has provided an outdoor education experience that aligns with our Dhelkunya Dja Country Plan goals.

Caroline Malcolm



Uncle Graham Atkinson, Director

This historic agreement will bring Dja Dja Wurrung People back into the landscape. We will no longer be invisible. We will have the right to access our traditional lands for hunting and ceremonial purposes enabling us to keep our Culture alive and strengthen our connection to our traditional lands and waters.



Kerri Douglas, Alternate Director

I am very proud to represent Djaara when conducting Ceremonies on Djandak, and also to share my knowledge and educate people to change their perceptions of Aboriginal stereotypes.

I would like to extend my cultural practices to include educational programs to assist teachers in embedding Aboriginal perspectives.

As a practicing artist, I aspire to establishing my own art shop to showcase the work of Djaara and all Aboriginal artists in my community.

Henry Harmony Nelson



Trent Nelson, Chairperson/ Director

I take my role as a chairperson/ director at the Corporation really serious, I enjoy being able to feel supported by other directors and be able to lead and make decisions that will eventually affect and support Dja Dja Wurrung families and full group.

Being able to lead by example and be a part of a high-quality functioning board is inspirational to me and helps me create more skills I can support in other ways through my community as a Traditional Owner. I feel this is self-determination that our Ancestors wanted us to create and be a part of for the future generations to come.



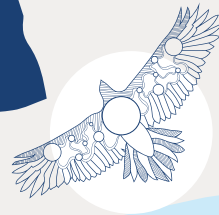
Mick Bourke, Alternate Director

The reason I became a Board member is to support my family in being able to access their Country and employment opportunities on Country, as well as practicing our Culture through Cultural activities, hunting, and gathering, and one day to have parts of Country we own. An aspiration is for Djaara People to be housed within our Country with their own home and parcel of land.

Over the last 6 years I have reintroduced Cultural Fire back into the landscape through a platform that has come from our RSA. In my position at DELWP as a planner and using my Cultural knowledge, I can combine the two to create opportunities for our members to access Country and to practice our Cultural rights by farming our Country with Cultural Fire.

FAMILY GROUP

**Catherine
Robinson**



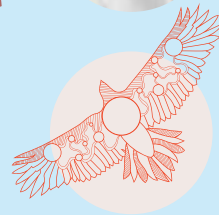
Belinda Duarte, Director

As a Djaara person on the DJAARA Board, I feel significant cultural responsibility as a descendant of Catherine Robinson and the old People who have come before me. Being part of the Traditional Owner Corporation allows each of us the opportunity to continue to support our People and build upon foundations that will create change for generations to come.

The united commitment to this aspiration is evident throughout the organisation and the community. This period has been an inspiring experience and I look forward to supporting the rights and wellbeing of Djaara into the future.

Alternate Director (Vacancy)

**John
Terrick**

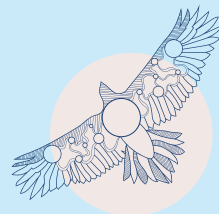


Liz Allen, Director

Historically, exclusion policies and practises kept our people on the fringe of inclusion and participation in the community, as a board member, it is important to share the value of our traditional knowledge, skills, and experiences for an inclusive community. My priority is to ensure protection of our Culture, Country and environment and celebrate for all of our generations to come.

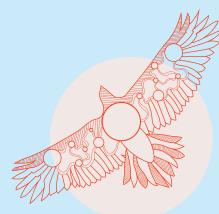
Alternate Director (Vacancy)

**Emma
Curr**



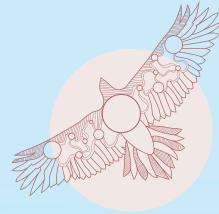
Director & Alternate Director (Vacancy)

**David
Harrison**



Director & Alternate Director (Vacancy)

**Finemore
Jackson**



Director & Alternate Director (Vacancy)

The Family groups of Tommy Avoca, Tommy Farmer, Samuel Kinnear, William Parker, Martin Simpson, Charlotte Williams and Alfred Davies do not have members who have formally given the Corporation notice that they wish to identify with them to nominate for or elect the family group Director and Alternate Director.

A message from the Dja Dja Wurrung Group CEO
Rodney Carter



The last year's operations have been one of the most challenging we have faced as an organisation and as a People. The demands placed upon all of us have tested our resolve and resilience as a people.

Generations before us have faced other pandemics and have been able to live and experience their lives as best they could.

No harder it would have been for our Ancestors exposed to the newcomers to Djandak, our homelands and what was in store for them. We are grateful to them that they also never gave up and have given us the most beautiful legacy in our Culture and Traditions. As our positive reputation now precedes us, so does our increasing capabilities. Thankfully, the last year for our organisation saw it grow beyond expectations when others were struggling to deal with this new world with a pandemic.

There are so many people that deserve mentioning that always give their heart to what we are doing and go beyond expectations. To my staff, I feel incredibly amazed at what we collectively achieved together for our people; there is no other group in the state, let alone the world I could so humbly be a part of. Thank you to our Corporation Board and our Chairperson Trent Nelson for the support they have given me, and the confidence shown to me as a Dja Dja Wurrung man.

Just over six years ago and from signing the Recognition and Settlement Agreement, we all felt extremely proud but never completely knew what was in store for us in reclaiming our rightful place as Central Victoria's First People. Still, today we have a place of respect by others to be proud of for who we all are.

As we evolve as an organisation, I feel less can be said by me in these reports; as you will have seen by reading it, our Dja Dja Wurrung Corporate Family has grown so much. The many people as staff and members through Wartaka's have diversified beyond imagination and stepped up to tell you who and what we are from their voices.

One particular matter that had constantly challenged me was to lead for you the creation of our corporate footprint on Djandak, a home for us to launch all of our operations across Djandak, the Corporate and Community Centre to act as a 'Cultural Hub'. I am pleased to say we have now done that together. Though we are still to confirm the next stage of concept details and build it, all of the pieces and resources to do it are now complete.

I would like to repeat these words to close my message to you. I am confident in who we are, respecting our Ancestors names always, and never prouder to be the CEO of the Dja Dja Wurrung Corporate Family, whose team is a group of committed Djaara and non-Djaara people with Murrup (Spirit) in their hearts and extremely capable of the challenges ahead.

R. Carter

A message from the DJAARA General Manager
Cassandra Lewis



At the forefront of our operations has been the intrinsic focus to ensure the safety and well-being of our staff and members throughout this world pandemic. DJAARA has further developed within this time and has expanded our resources to match the increase of work requests. These changes have allowed our work to continue as we aligned with the compliance laws effectively.

Although COVID-19 has overshadowed 2021, we are beginning to see the light at the end of the tunnel. We look forward to reopening our office and getting back to a different "normal." One thing the pandemic has not changed is our focus to deliver on the aspirations of our People. As your Corporation General Manager and a proud Djaara woman, I am extremely positive the future will be brighter for many of us.

This year our focus has been on three main areas;

1. To protect our People;
2. To support our members; and
3. To keep DJAARA strong.

We wasted no time adjusting with this purpose in mind, and I am thankful for the support we received to do this.

The ongoing changes to restrictions meant new pandemic-related solutions needed to be developed. Our Executive and Corporate Services team worked at lightning speed to create practical solutions for DJAARA. This was made evident through flexible working arrangements that allowed staff to care for their families and children even though significant restrictions were placed upon us. In addition, we expanded our remote technology capacity so fast no one missed a beat.

We are grateful to members who have been so open and flexible to the new virtual ways of communicating and providing engagement through their computers.

Our engagement was primarily through online Wartaka. This allowed us to engage with Djaara to share their knowledge, expertise, and ideas that have contributed significantly to Dja Dja Wurrung Group projects. It also provided ongoing opportunities for flexible employment for Djaara.

As of June 30, 2021, the Dja Dja Wurrung Group comprised 143 full-time, part-time, and casual employees. Of the 143 employees, 103 are Dja Dja Wurrung members.

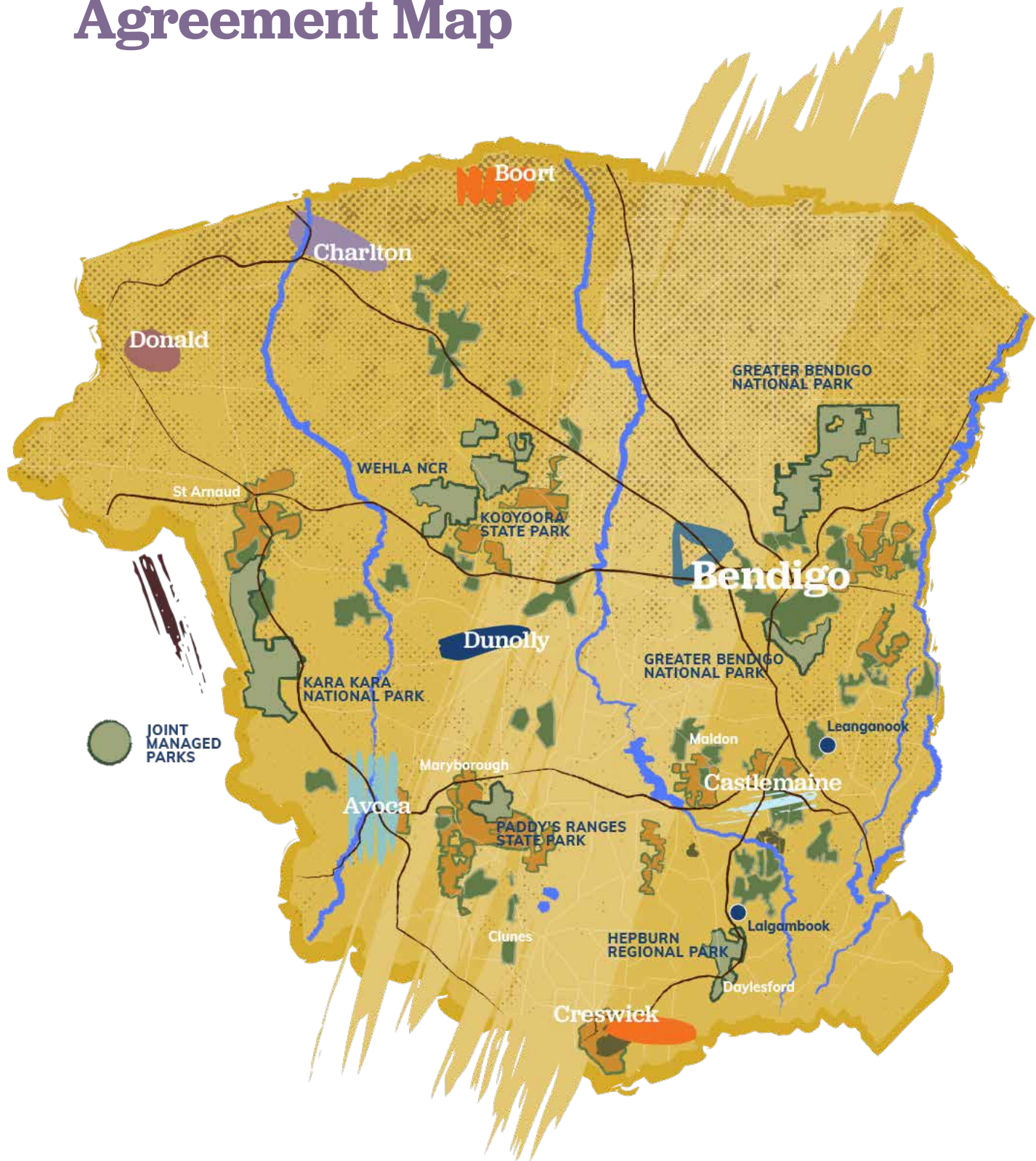
While we are disappointed that strict COVID-19 restrictions have limited opportunities for members and staff to gather and hold events, I am grateful for the creativity used by our staff to engage with our members.

Despite the COVID-19 environment and the significant challenges and pressures placed on them with their work and personal lives, I appreciate our staff, who showed resilience and passion for their work and continued playing their part in delivering projects.

We will strive to maximise the opportunities for Djaara through our Recognition and Settlement Agreement, continuing the work of our Martingakuli (Ancestors) before us. We will strive to keep delivering on our community's aspirations and always keep the Dhelkunya Dja (Healing Country) Plan and the inspiring goals and wisdom within it at the forefront of our minds as we go forward.

C. Lewis

Dja Dja Wurrung Recognition & Settlement Agreement Map



Balaki Wuka | Giving to Community

“ Our Martinga Kuli (Ancestors) play a vital role in the work we do as Djaara, we are the voice that they didn’t have, we are able and capable to continue the fight for self-determination for future generations as they did for us.

Aunty Fay Carter, Dja Dja Wurrung Elder.

Our Djaara members are an essential part of the governance of DJAARA. Their role is to make important decisions about how DJAARA is run, who its directors are and how we manage the services we provide. The principal objectives of DJAARA are to promote Dja Dja Wurrung People's health and well-being and protect and promote the laws, Culture, property rights, and human rights of Dja Dja Wurrung People. DJAARA needs our members to ensure we reach these objectives and achieve our Dhelkunya Dja (Healing Country) Plan goals and aspirations.

In an effort to achieve these goals, our Program Manager – Member Engagement, manages the Community Support Program, membership, and all member enquires, programs, events, and activities. The role also oversees various wartaka that provide Djaara with a voice to set the precedence for how agencies, organisations, and other stakeholders engage with Djaara.

This position is fundamental to implementing Djaara voices, art, and language across DJAARA's many projects.

“ DJAARA has been well established as a prescribed body corporate and continues a positive progressive approach to the rights and recognition of our members.

Liz Allen, John Terrick Family Group Director

The Program Manager is a first-time identified position filled by a Djaara person for Djaara needs and aspirations. It ensures that Djaara needs are met in terms of employment, training, and furthering self-determination.

Currently, we have 399 Djaara on our membership database. The database is made up of the following Family Groups.

Family Group	Members
Charles	75
Curr	15
Davis	6
Dunolly	18
Harrison	41
Jackson	4
Kerr	45
King Girribong, Lerimburneen, Walpanumin	32
Malcolm	31
Nelson	86
Robinson	22
Terrick	21
No Family Group	3

Balaki Wurrekang | Community Engagement

COMMUNITY SUPPORT PROGRAM

DJAARA developed the Community Support Program and Guidelines in 2014 with a suite of targeted initiatives which aims to provide the opportunity for Djaara to increase their health and wellbeing, economic participation, and financial independence.

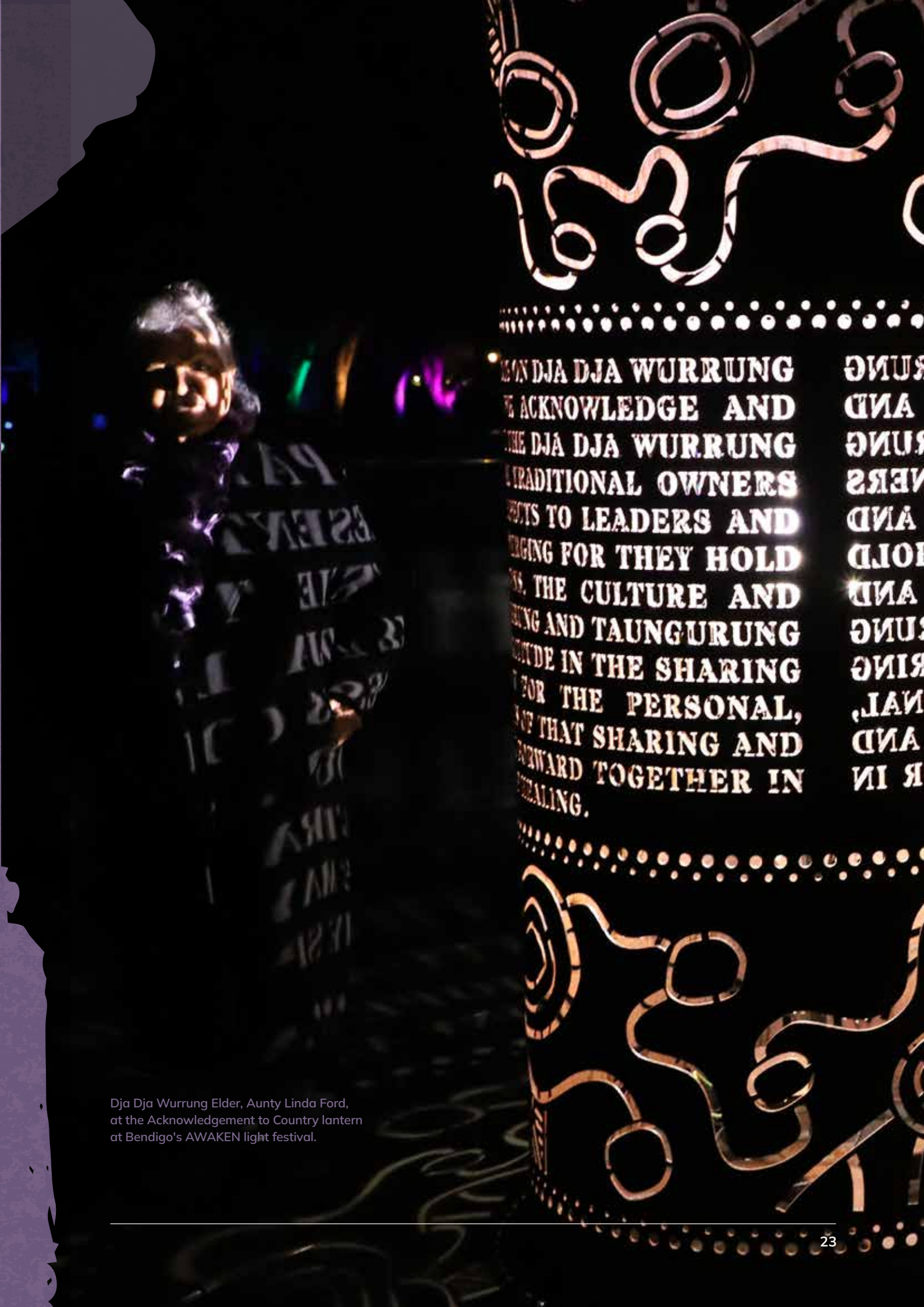
All programs are assessed on a needs basis. Individual program guidelines specify the allocation of funds per year.

Below is a list of programs/ amounts that were accessed by Djaara in the 2020/21 financial year.

Community Support Program	Amount
Primary Education	4,345.76
Secondary Education	1,000.00
Tertiary Education	3,016.00
Elite Sports	0.00
Healthy Living Subsidy	649.99
Micro Business	0.00
Sorry Business	9,000.00
Driver's Licence Program	0.00
Elders Celebration	2,000.00
Moving Back to Country	1,533.50
Family Group Meetings	8,003.50
Total	29,548.75

The objectives of the programs are to:

- Relieve the financial stress of education and gaining employment by increasing opportunities for Djaara to access training and educational costs.
- Increase the health and wellbeing of Djaara and actively support participation in sporting activities.
- Relieve the financial burden of Sorry Business
- Support Djaara in the development of their own businesses.
- Celebrating our Elders' milestone birthdays.
- Supporting Djaara to move back onto Djandak.
- Supporting annual Family Group Meetings so that Family Groups can discuss matters important to them.



Dja Dja Wurrung Elder, Aunty Linda Ford, at the Acknowledgement to Country lantern at Bendigo's AWAKEN light festival.

Dja Dja Wurrung Language Repatriation

Our language, Dja Dja Wurrung language, connects us to water, land, animals, Spirits, and our People. It called our Martinga Kuli (Ancestors) to ceremony. Today, it strengthens our identity.

For generations, Dja Dja Wurrung language, and elements of it, were shared between clans and with our Eastern Kulin Nation neighbours and visiting mobs who travelled long distances to gather together.

The mission period recounts stories of our Martinga Kuli being punished for using Dja Dja Wurrung language and customs in their everyday life. Through the years, Dja Dja Wurrung language, words, and traditions have survived through Dja Dja Wurrung People’s dynamic and determined connection to Culture and Djandak.

Over the years, our language renewal, reclamation, and repatriation has become an extension and continuation of our oral history practices and traditional practice of sharing knowledge with our People and those that reside in Central Victoria. We share our language to ensure it remains in the landscape it belongs.

Today, Dja Dja Wurrung language is present and used on a daily basis. It is slowly emerging into the mainstream. It is on signs, buildings, place names, road names, names for buildings and the next generation are naming their babies in language.

Djali Balak, (Djali means tongue/language and Balak means mob, People, group) our Language Sub Committee of the DJAARA Board, meet quarterly and provides advice on language and pronunciation. They continue to work with DJAARA’s Language Repatriation Officer to develop our Dja Dja Wurrung dictionary and to help with the many language requests. The dictionary is an ongoing commitment to gather

Dja Dja Wurrung language, reinstate it and empower our People to learn, speak and teach it. In addition to this a phrase book and online app are being developed to increase the potential for Djaara to access and learn our language across many platforms.

We share an example of the single words and phrases being gathered for the Dja Dja Wurrung dictionary.

cheek, jaw	murrak [see branch]
cherry-ballart, tree	balatj alternative balotj
chest	djang
chest	gap
chicken	bupuwi yapaka

DJAARA continues to create a significant language ecology movement through teaching and creating awareness of Dja Dja Wurrung language. We strive to ensure the repatriation of Dja Dja Wurrung language is present in all that we do. Dja Dja Wurrung language must be in the mainstream; to appear in these spaces once more and decolonise it with language, returning it to Djaara. Seeing language is empowering for Dja Dja Wurrung People because language is intrinsically connected to Djandak. It also connects one to one’s identity through kinship relationships with their Martinga kuli (Ancestors). Dja Dja Wurrung language, Country, and People are one in the same thing.

Across 2020-2021, DJAARA have received many language requests from kindergartens, preschools, and schools for play spaces. Through the guidance of our Djali Balak Language Committee, words that have been

shared into the public domain are general Dja Dja Wurrung words and placenames. There are certain words, and their meanings that build the complexity of Dja Dja Wurrung language which needs to be learnt by our community before being shared with the public.

The following are examples of general words and placenames that have either been requested or granted:

Bakara	Shoulders
Banya	Ring tail possum
Barramal	Emu
Batjan	Mum (batjan ‘fork’, mum ‘bum’ = because it sits in the fork of a tree) – Koala
Bupup	Baby
Burp	Head
Dharrang Gauwa	Mt Tarrengower
Dhelkunya	To heal, to cure, to care
Djaa	Country
Djaka	To eat
Djakitj	Food
Djilawa	Toilet
Djina	Feet, toes
Dong-dong	Lizard
Galk bu girra	Gum trees or trees
Garr	Nose
Garrwa	Bathroom
Gatjakarr	Corella
Gatjin	Water
Gauwa	Mountain, pointed mountain
Gurnmil (gurn ‘neck’, -mil ‘having’)	Snake
Gurri	Kangaroo
Guwak	Kookaburra
Lalkambuk	Mt Franklin

LANGUAGE SESSIONS

DJAARA’s Language Repatriation Officer has been conducting weekly online community drop-in language lessons for Djaara Members and monthly lessons for the Dja Dja Wurrung Group employees.

The community drop-in sessions have focused on the pronunciation of Dja Dja Wururng language. The community members who attend are learning very quickly and have provided positive feedback. This feedback has been centred around healing and the reclaiming of language and identity. The aim is to eventually move on from pronunciation to the point where everyone is comfortable learning more about grammar. The sessions are slow-paced, but we adopt the motto lo beng nyanga warrmi, “no one sits behind”, as personal commitments sometimes do not allow consistent attendance. But we guarantee those who attend, whether it is their first time or have participated in each lesson, are all on the same page, and the journey is walked together.

Malak	plants, greens, green (colour)
Mir	eyes
Murrun	a live, living essence, spirit of a living person
Ngaldurrong	altogether
Waa	Australian raven
Wi or wii	fire
Wila	Brush tail possum
Wilkerr	dingo
Wimbul	ears
Womin-djika	welcome
Wonyotjarrapil	family
Wurru	mouth
Yaluk	running creek or river
Yapenya	to dance, to celebrate, to do corroboree
Yarka	to search, to want, to explore, to discover
Yulawil (yula ‘spike’, -wil ‘having’)	Echidna

Treaty

Our Reserved Seat Holder for the Northwest region and DJAARA representative is Trent Nelson. Our Treaty Traditional Owner Engagement Officer works alongside our reserved seat member to ensure Djaara voices are a part of the Treaty process.

The plan was to create opportunities for on and off Country gatherings but unfortunately COVID-19 affected the outcome of those ideas. We continue to find ways to engage our community in these important discussions.

THE TREATY PROCESS

The first phase of Victoria's treaty process focused on community engagement and the design and establishment of the First Peoples' Assembly of Victoria (Assembly), the first democratically elected representative body for Traditional Owners of Country and Aboriginal Victorians in the state's history.

On 9 December 2019, following the outcome of Aboriginal community elections, the former Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Gavin Jennings, declared the Assembly to be the Aboriginal Representative Body, as required by the Advancing the Treaty Process with Aboriginal Victorians Act 2018.

There is no legislated timeline for the treaty framework to be agreed by the Assembly and State of Victoria.

THE YOO-RROOK JUSTICE COMMISSION

The Yoo-rrook Justice Commission was formally established on 14 May 2021.

Yoo-rrook means 'truth' in the Wemba Wemba/Wamba Wamba language, which is spoken in the north-west region of Victoria. The Yoo-rrook Justice Commission is the first truth-telling body to be established in Australia. It is independent of both government and the Assembly. The mandate and form of the Commission were designed by the Assembly and the government, based on consultations with Aboriginal communities across Victoria.

First Peoples' Assembly - Establishment of an Interim Elders' Voice

The Assembly Chamber voted to establish the Interim Elders' Voice. The Interim Elders' Voice will be a Committee of the Assembly and the mechanism for Elders to have their voices heard in the work of the Assembly. It will involve Elders leading the design of the permanent Elders' Voice selection process, structure, role, and responsibilities. Elders across Victoria will be invited to participate in these meetings.

DJAARA works to provide Dja Dja Wurrung knowledge, and experience within these processes.

Wartaka | Come with Purpose

“ Being a member of a Wartaka gives me great pleasure to be involved and see the progress of the Wartaka project.

Aunty Sue Charles – DJAARA Board member

Our Dja Dja Wurrung member focus groups have a new Djaara name, Wartaka, which means to come with purpose. The intention of a Wartaka is to provide support, guidance, and knowledge to different aspects of DJAARA from our Dja Dja Wurrung members.

This can be cultural advice for existing or new projects, input into program and event development, and artwork and language requests that arise throughout the Group.

Across the 2020-2021 period, we conducted many Wartaka's online due to COVID-19 restrictions. This allowed for discussions to continue and for Djaara input to remain present across our project planning. We persisted in creating creative ways to bring Djaara culture, knowledge, and practices to our members' homes.



In this time, we were able to deliver the Member Engagement Wartaka list below.

YOUNG WOMEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION (YWCA)

In January 2021, DJAARA were given the opportunity to work with the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA) to come up with an initial concept plan for a housing complex that will house women. The site is to be based here in Bendigo and will be developed in Flora Hill.

The Wartaka first held an initial meeting with the YWCA in February 2021. Some of the key input from Djaara woman on the wartaka is to provide support, guidance and ideas to the planners and architects working with the YWCA especially on:

- Djaara housing needs
- Good housing design for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women
- Developing a close relationship with the YWCA.
- Contribution of Djaara language throughout the complex which also includes the naming of the facility.
- A number of employment and business opportunities for Djaara which includes, construction, onsite landscaping, maintenance of the property and other employment opportunities that may arise.

CULTURAL STRENGTHENING

The Cultural Strengthening Wartaka is empowered to take part in providing guidance, support, and knowledge to the Member Engagement Team. This Wartaka comes together for the purpose of achieving our aspirations from the Dhelkunya Dja (Healing Country) Plan 2014-2034.

Scope of works

- Djaara events and activities (on Country events)
- Continue and expand our Community Support Program to provide targeted support to Djaara for economic well-being.
- Work with wider community on Country to increase awareness and recognition of Djaara, history and events i.e., Wirama Shield etc.
- Collect information on individual members' ceremony knowledge, skills, and employment aspirations to ensure that we have a roster of those wishing to participate in Ceremony and paid employment.
- Establish a mentoring and work experience program for high school aged Djaara and other Aboriginal children with key government partners.
- Other programs/ events that may fall under Member Engagement.
- Review the Cultural Strengthening Wartaka Terms of Reference on an annual basis.

Any recommendations made by the Wartaka on projects, events and activities being planned on Country will be delivered by the DJAARA Group, more specifically, the Member Engagement Team, in consultation with the DJAARA Executive Team.

TRADITIONAL OWNER SELF-DETERMINATION PLAN

DJAARA, our Dja Dja Wurrung members and the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) have come together to develop a Traditional Owner Self-Determination Plan. This Plan sets out how DELWP can empower our People in our journey towards self-determination. It sits alongside the Pupangarli Marnmarnepu 'Owning Our Future' Aboriginal Self-Determination Reform Strategy 2020. DJAARA, as well as other Traditional Owner groups across Victoria, helped shape this five-year, state-wide Strategy which responds to the whole-of-government commitments set out in the Victorian Aboriginal Affairs Framework 2018-2023 (VAAF) and the Self-Determination Reform Framework (SDRF). Further updates regarding the Traditional Owner Self-Determination Plan will be made available as it progresses.

Djaara Events

Our annual events were limited this year due to the uncertainty of pandemic restrictions. The events that did take place brought our People together at a time when we all needed our community.

THE DJA DJA WURRUNG CUP – Charlton Harness Racing Club

The relationship between the Charlton Harness Club and Dja Dja Wurrung People goes back to 2012, when DJAARA granted the Charlton Harness Club permission to establish the Charlton Harness Racing Training Centre on 12 hectares of traditional Dja Dja Wurrung land on the outskirts of the township.

The Training Complex currently houses three individual stabling complexes, with the capacity to be expanded to ten. Each stabling complex consists of a fully serviced 60 x 30 shed, complete with lock-up harness and feed areas, internal yoke up and wash areas, two internal boxes and eight adjoining day yards. Being located on the existing Training Track facility, trainers also have unrestricted use of the 820-metre banked Training Track, 2,000 metre Straight Track and Swimming Dam on site. The Complex is also located only a short distance from Charlton’s Main Racetrack to which trainers have open use.

In May 2021, DJAARA hosted the annual Dja Dja Wurrung Pacing Cup in Charlton. DJAARA organises a bus to transport staff and members to the races. The races are an opportunity for staff and members to get dress up and have a day at the races.

The day began with the Dja Dja Wurrung Group CEO, Rodney Carter, conducting a Welcome to Country which was followed by a smoking ceremony shared by Pauline Ugle. Before the races get underway there are introductions, food, and a chance to relax.

Previously, races have been named after Dja Dja Wurrung Ancestors or in Dja Dja Wurrung language. This year, Nyauwi (Sun), Wala-wala (Rain), Murrup (Spirit) and Milakuk (Lightning) were the key names used for the races.

Each year, DJAARA presents gifts to the horse owner, trainer, and jockey. This year gifts were made by Nikita Charles and Ron Kerr Jnr for the winning teams. In 2022, DJAARA will be putting out an Expression of Interest for Djaara artists to create the Charlton Harness Racing gifts.



Dja Dja Wurrung Elder, Aunty Linda Ford, participates in the smoking ceremony at the Charlton Cup.

Wirama Shield

The Wirama Shield match between Eaglehawk and Sandhurst planned for Saturday, 7 August 2021 was cancelled due to COVID-19. This meant that the match could not go ahead for 2021 and will be played in 2022.

Member Events

Based of feedback from the Djaara Member Engagement Questionnaire that was sent to members, there were a number of events that Djaara are interested in participating in. Here is a list of annual/ monthly events that DJAARA currently hosts/ jointly hosts and are planning.

Annual	Monthly
Wirama Shield	Weaving sessions with Aunty Marilyn Nicholls - Current
Dja Dja Wurrung Pacing Cup	Song & Dance sessions
Easter Parade	Language sessions
Soccer Match	Adornment making
Family & Children's Day	Other Cultural Activities
Women's gathering	
Men's gathering	
Elder's gathering	



Malamiya | Cultural Heritage

Our annual events were limited this year due to the uncertainty of pandemic restrictions. The events that did take place brought our People together at time when we all needed our community.

DJAARA and Dja Dja Wurrung People recognise the importance of Malamiya (Dja Dja Wurrung Cultural Heritage) – our significant places and landscapes, our stories and language, our customs and practices and our responsibilities for looking after Djandak (Dja Dja Wurrung Country). DJAARA takes our role as a Registered Aboriginal Party (RAP) seriously.

Dja Dja Wurrung artefacts are scattered across Djandak, telling of the rituals and practices of our Martinga Kuli (Ancestors). Our Malamiya is a non-renewable resource, and is recognised, protected, and conserved in Victorian legislation. Our Malamiya is protected regardless of whether it is on private or public land or previously disturbed or harmed.

DJAARA continues to share Dja Dja Wurrung knowledge, understanding and promotes awareness and respect of Dja Dja Wurrung

Culture through managing and protecting Malamiya. The work that we do supports many of the goals set out in our Dhelkunya Dja (Healing Country) Plan.

Our Malamiya team are responsible for several statutory functions under the Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006 when managing Djandak. A significant part of our role is being an integral part in the Cultural Heritage Management Plans (CHMPs) process and monitoring and enforcing compliance with the Act. We are responsible for processing requests for field representatives to assist in assessments, surveys, and monitoring construction activities.

“ CHMPs help us have more control over our Malamiya.

Jackson Dunolly-Lee, Aboriginal Heritage Officer

WHAT IS A CHMP?

A Cultural Heritage Management Plan (CHMP) is required under the Aboriginal Heritage Act where an activity – such as mining, development, or construction - meets certain criteria. The sponsor of the activity must engage a heritage advisor, a person recognised under the Act as suitably qualified, to assist in the preparation of the plan. As a RAP, DJAARA has the right to evaluate any CHMP that relates to Djandak and to be consulted during the development of the plan.

Across Australia, a CHMP is an assessment of the impact that the activity will, or may have

on, Aboriginal Cultural Heritage. Our Malamiya team meet with the contractor/interested party to negotiate the conditions that will be included in the CHMP to protect or minimise damage to any Cultural Heritage that may be affected by the project.

DJAARA is involved in all phases of the CHMP process. This includes being involved in the initial discussions around the methodologies to be employed, providing field staff to assist in the assessment processes, and once the plan is completed, in monitoring compliance with the agreed conditions.

“ To walk on Country and follow in the footsteps of our apical Ancestors to locate, preserve, and protect our Malamiya history is something we all, as Dja Dja Wurrung descendants, hold close to our hearts. And we share that knowledge with our future generations, for generations to come. A Cultural Heritage Management Plan plays a big part in helping all Dja Dja Wurrung People achieve that role.

Ron Kerr Project Co-Ordinator
Cultural Heritage – Statutory Functions

PROTECTING MALAMIYA

This year has seen an increase in the number of plans evaluated. These cover a broad spectrum of activities, from small housing subdivisions to major projects including water supply and power infrastructure and are spread widely across Dja Dja Wurrung Country.

CHMPs approved in FY 2020/2021	
14587	Powerline Installation Goornong Amendment
15956	Proposed Development 471 High Street, Golden Square
16376	Ravenswood Solar Farm
16515	Mitiamo Stock and Domestic Pipeline – CHMP3
16515	Amendment to Mitiamo Stock and Domestic Pipeline-CHMP4
16673	Industrial Subdivision 5574-5620 Calder Highway, Big Hill
16772	Rising Sewer Main & SPS Imagine Estate, Strathfieldsaye
16822	Proposed Retirement Village at 60-100 Emu Creek Road, Strathfieldsaye
16951	Mitiamo Pipeline Water Storage Area Amendment
17002	Proposed Subdivision 34 Corinella Road, Woodend
17108	Premier Mine Road Boat Access
17187	Barkers Creek Boat Ramp & Carpark
17193	Emu Creek Underpass, Shared-use Path
17202	Goulburn-Murray Waters Connections Project, Elliot Property, 225 Listers Road
17210	Proposed Land Rehabilitation at Huntly Streamside Reserve
17229	59 Dukes Lane, Strathfieldsaye, Residential Subdivision
17254	Dunolly Gravel Pit MIN WA006838
17319	Premier Mine Road Car Park
17320	Victoria Mining Exploration Pty Ltd Frenchman's Reef Project PL006367
17375	Long Gully Constructed Wetland
17381	South West Loddon Pipeline – Stage 2.6

17381	Amendment to Southwest Loddon Pipeline – Stage 2.6
17351	Bridgewater Pipeline, Bridgewater
17404	Shared Path & Creek Crossing Project, Jobs Gully Road, Jackass Flat
17411	40 Wombat Drive Dunolly PL006999
17419	Musk Farm 11 School Road, Musk Wedding Venue
17426	Sedgwick Road Safety Upgrades
17486	Student Accommodation Development at 1-3 & 75 Nightingale Street, Maryborough
17475	Maiden Gully Central Residential Subdivision
17477	4 Albert Street, Trentham 3548 Subdivision
17561	75 Rowley Park Road, Campbells Creek Proposed Rural Residential Subdivision
17798	9 Pioneer Drive, Maiden Gully Proposed Subdivision
17806	Bendigo GovHub Office, 195-299 Lyttleton Terrace, Bendigo

FIELDWORK

The second half of 2020 and the early part of 2021 saw an increase in the days of field work carried out by DJAARA field representatives. From December 2020 to April 2021 two major projects, the Mitiamo Stock and Domestic Pipeline and salvage works at the site of the Kyneton Hospital, were major components of our workload. Both of these projects have now been completed. The ongoing development of the Western Victoria Transmission Network has also contributed greatly to our workload, with some fieldwork for this CHMP still outstanding.

Since February two field representatives have been working with Parks Victoria, assisting their staff in the identification, and recording of Aboriginal Cultural Heritage in the Kooyoora State Park.

Received still in progress at 30/6/2021	
16515	Amendment 1 – Mitiamo Stock and Domestic Pipeline- CHMP4
17612	Amendment 1 – Bendigo Botanic Gardens Extension: Central Hub Site
17311	Western Victoria Transmission Network Project, Glenbrae to Elmhurst
17327	Bendigo Solar Farm, Bridgewater
17381	Amendment 2 – Southwest Loddon Pipeline – Stage 2.6
17537	Woodend to Bendigo GCP Replacement
17649	18 Chapel Street, Kangaroo Flat
17652	Cultural Practice and Customs Area of Kooyoora State Park
17668	Hamilton Corporation Pty Ltd – Proposed Residential Village at 7 Station Street, Epsom
17703	Coliban Water Mains Delivery, Strathfieldsaye
17704	Coliban Water Mains Delivery, Maiden Gully
17727	DJANDAK Melville Caves Picnic Area Reimagining
17773	98 Kennewal Street Subdivision
17775	Coliban Water – Trentham Water Treatment Plant Upgrade
17947	Department of Transport – Calder Highway Safety Works, Marong to Wedderburn
17968	Proposed Residential Development at 53 Dukes Lane, Strathfieldsaye
17998	Residential Subdivision at 110 Simpsons Road, Eaglehawk
18015	23-25 Chapel Street, Kangaroo Flat
18016	Regional (Animal Strike) Fencing - Elphinstone
18017	Regional (Animal Strike) Fencing Ravenswood to Kangaroo Flat
18021	Proposed Accommodation at 153 Charlies Road, Elevated Plains
18023	47 Fryers Street, Campbells Creek Proposed Residential Subdivision
18028	Proposed Residential Development of 90 Dukes Lane & 410 Somerset Park Road

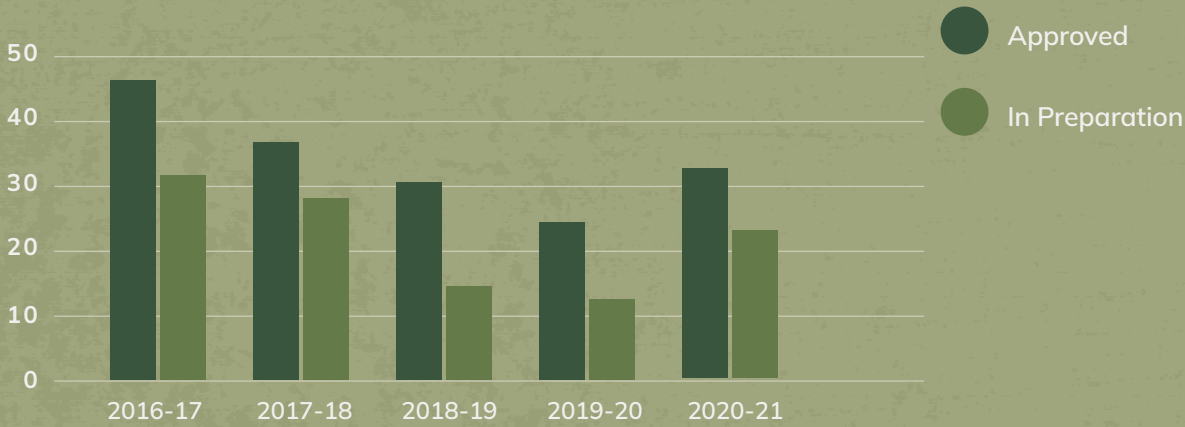
CULTURAL HERITAGE PERMITS (CHPS) ISSUED IN 2020-2021

Under the Aboriginal Heritage Act, the RAP has the authority to approve permits in relation to Cultural Heritage on Dja Dja Wurrung Country. Permits can be issued for: research, to harm Cultural Heritage, to sell heritage, to remove heritage from Victoria, rehabilitate an Aboriginal place, or to reinter Aboriginal remains.

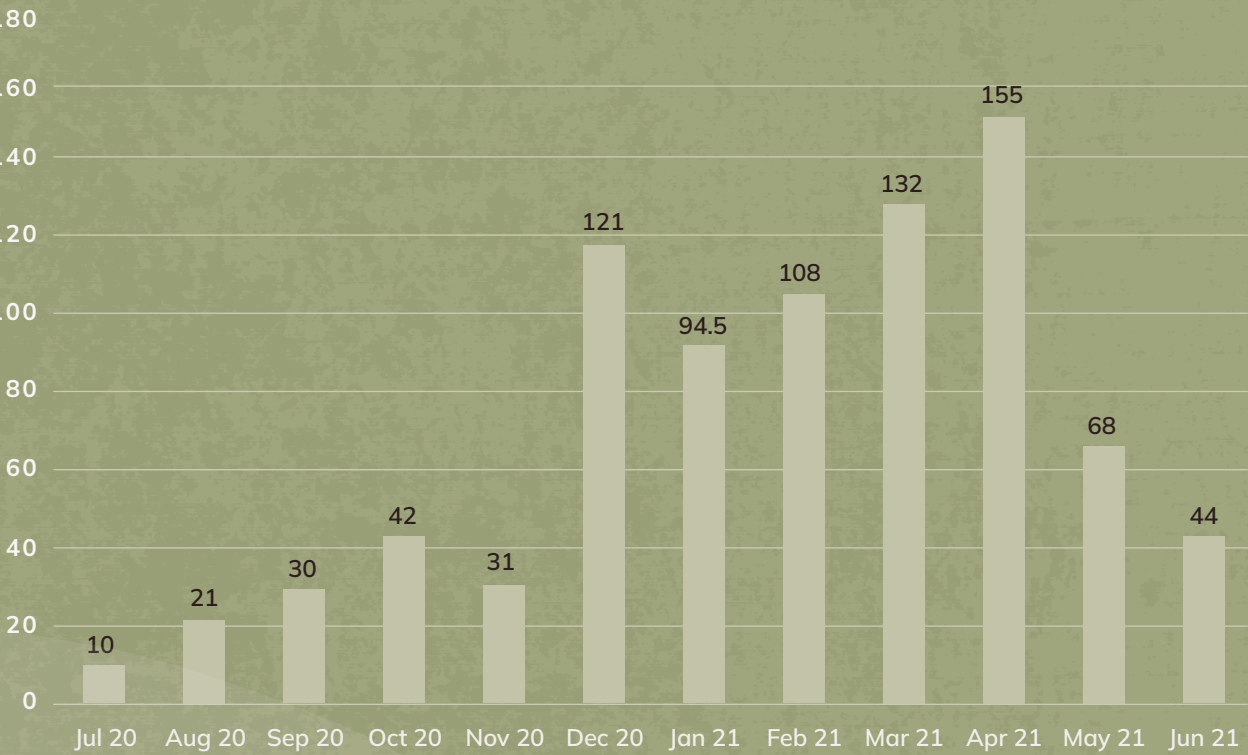
Most of the permit applications that we receive are for research projects, with a lesser number having been issued for permission to harm Aboriginal Cultural Heritage. The ‘permission to harm’ permits are not a licence to harm, and we always ensure that the conditions set in the permits minimise the possibility of actual harm.

- DDWCAC_1_2021 – Fire, Flood and Food: People and Landscape in Northern Victoria, Australian Research Council Strategic Research Initiative 2020. This research project being carried out by Latrobe University in conjunction with members of the Yung Balug group.
- DDWCAC_2_2021 – Elmore Progress Association – Campaspe River Nature Reserve. The Environment Protection Authority (EPA) applied for a permit to carry out development work to improve the reserve. This area includes some Cultural Heritage, which can be avoided through the participation of DJAARA representatives during the works.
- DDWCAC_3_2021 – Mapping Dja Dja Wurrung Objects Through Global Museum Networks: Historiographies, Inventories and Provenances. This permit extends a prior permit to allow the researcher, Jocelyn Bardot of Melbourne University, to complete her work.

CHMP ACTIVITY



CHMP Activity — Five Year Comparison



Cultural Heritage Fieldwork July 2020 - June2021



TRAINING

As with other activities, COVID-19 has restricted the opportunities to progress training and induction sessions for our casual worker pool. One workshop was run on 11 March 2021, and the four members who attended have been utilised on the roster since then.

Two workshops for ceremonies were held during April. The first, held online, was for members currently on the roster: this was well-attended, and the outcomes were seen as quite positive. The second workshop was held at the Bendigo Tennis Centre on 24 April, with two members attending.

COMPLIANCE ACTIVITIES

The Corporation has two staff members who have been appointed as Aboriginal Heritage Officers (AHOs) under the Aboriginal Heritage Act. As well as providing a support for Cultural Heritage activities within the RAP boundary, AHOs can undertake compliance work anywhere in Victoria.

Six CHMP-related compliance inspections were undertaken with two minor compliance issues being identified. The AHOs also participated in four investigations along with staff from Aboriginal Victoria. Three of these were within the RAP boundary, while the fourth was at Kerang Lakes. The three investigations on Country were:

- Graffiti at a rock shelter within the Kooyoora State Park. An artefact deposit at the shelter was also disturbed. A person was apprehended in relation to this matter.
- A scarred tree at Hancocks Lake was damaged by an unknown person. The remaining section of the tree has been removed to another location to prevent further damage.
- A breach of the Act at Korong Vale relating to unauthorised activities.

RECORDING OF HERITAGE COLLECTIONS

No recording of heritage collections has been undertaken over the last twelve months. Recording of the McKenzie collection reported last year has not taken place due to the ongoing issues around COVID-19.

CEREMONY AND CULTURAL ACTIVITIES

Over the 2020/21 financial year we received 186 booking requests for Welcome to Country and Smoking ceremonies. Of these only 134 were completed, largely due to cancellations because of COVID-19 restrictions.

As in previous years bookings have come from a diverse range of groups and organisations across the public and private sectors:

Booking / Client Breakdown	
Government organisations	54
Schools/TAFE/University	35
DJAARA/ DJANDAK events	25
Landcare groups	19
Health Care Networks	18
Community Groups/Community Festivals	14
Local Businesses	12
Private bookings - wedding/new home	4
Prison/Youth Detention Centre	3
Child Care/Early Learning Groups	2

We would like to acknowledge the following members who have represented DJAARA at these events and functions:

Amos Atkinson	Rick Kerr	Harley Douglas	Marilyne Nicholls
Graham Atkinson	Ron Kerr	Kerri Douglas	Rebecca Phillips
Kayla Baksh	Peta Hudson	Harley Dunolly-Lee	Damien Saunders
Michael Bourke	Daikota Nelson	Jason Kerr	Andrew Travis
Natasha Carter	Rick Nelson SNR	Racquel Kerr	Paulie Ugle
Rodney Carter	Trent Nelson	Rhianna Kerr	



Lianyuk Rock Shelter

OTHER ACTIVITIES

Following the discovery of stone artefacts at McBeath Road, Pine Grove by Site Leader Rick Kerr, the Malamiya team along with staff from the regional office of Aboriginal Victoria spent a day onsite recording the place for inclusion on the Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Register.

As part of the RAP response to the release of the Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Council's (VAHC) Taking Care of Country discussion paper an online consultation session was arranged with RAP members to gain feedback on the paper. This was part of the information gathering process for the VAHC's first annual report to the Victorian Government. This was cancelled due to lack of participation.

As noted in the 2019-2020 Annual Report, the Malamiya team carried out a research excavation at Mt Alexander. The analysis and reporting of the excavation were carried out during the current reporting period. As previously stated no Aboriginal cultural material was found.

The post-contact materials recovered; two bullet cartridges found in the middle to lower levels of



Stone artefacts at McBeath Road



the excavation are of 20th century origin. From our observations, it would appear that water flow through the shelter would have removed earlier cultural material from the site.

We continue to work with other sections of the Corporation, providing our expertise to a range of matters including Land Use Activity Agreement determinations and Galkangu (Joint Management) processes.

In May, Ron Kerr co-presented at the Australian Museums and Galleries Association's conference along Ms Jocelyn Bardot, a PhD student who has been researching the distribution of Dja Dja Wurrung Cultural Heritage in museums both in Australia and overseas. Ron provided a Traditional Owner's perspective on the meaning of these articles and their presence in museums.

Over the past 12 months we have been engaged with the Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions (DJPR) in developing conditions for the protection of Cultural Heritage in relation to the release of areas of central Victoria for mining exploration. We have worked alongside Taungurung and Yorta Yorta in this exercise.

Recognition & Settlement Agreement Implementation

Our Recognition and Settlement Agreement (RSA) is an important milestone for Dja Dja Wurrung People and the Victorian Government, as they now recognise us as the Traditional Owners of this Country and acknowledge the history of dispersement and dispossession that has affected our People.

Our Agreement allows for continued recognition, through protocols, acknowledgements and Welcomes to Country, and signage across Dja Dja Wurrung Country. It also provides us with some legal rights to practice Culture, access, and use our land and resources, and to have a say in what happens on our Country.

The Agreement gives us Aboriginal title of some of our traditional lands, including the right to actively manage Country.

The Agreement is an important starting point for the self-determination of Dja Dja Wurrung, and we now continue to build up the structures and processes that will enable us to make the most of these rights.

DJAARA's RSA Implementation team deals with Djaara rights which are recognised under the RSA. Those rights include those set out in section 9 of the Traditional Owner Settlement Act 2010 (Vic) (see box), the rights under the various parts of the RSA including the right to take flora and fauna from land where Traditional Owners' rights are recognised, and the right to compensation when activities affect Traditional Owner rights.

Honouring those rights means that, on a daily basis, the RSA Implementation team negotiates with local government authorities, State agencies, private developers, community groups and resource developers. Often this involves solving difficult legal questions, becoming involved in small-and large-scale projects, teaching others about the RSA, and finding creative options that recognise Djaara rights. The team also contributes to research projects which aim to enhance Djaara rights and build partnerships.

“My inspiration in my role allows me to have outcomes for DJAARA (Community and Corporation). Through these outcomes, I can supply jobs, traineeships, community benefits, or opportunities to benefit Djaara.

Being a part of these negotiations and working to have these community benefits and outcomes gives me satisfaction. The satisfaction to use my Rights as a Djaara Man to supply opportunities to others.

Caleb Dunolly-Lee, Project Officer Land Use Activity Agreement

“The Recognition and Settlement Agreement Implementation team are at the forefront of many developments which will positively impact Djaara and Traditional Owners for many generations to come. From our work in implementing the Timber Creek decision, to our input into the First Principles Review process and the outcomes achieved via individual negotiation and advisory activities under the LUAA, we look forward to the year ahead with great anticipation of the advancement of Djaara rights and recognition.

We thank the Dja Dja Wurrung Group leadership, staff, Djaara community, Traditional Owner corporations and all other organisations (government and non-government) for their partnership with us in this meaningful work.”

Davina Wijesinghe, Program Manager - RSA

The Dja Dja Wurrung have the following Traditional Owner Rights in relation to the land in the Agreement Area which are recognised in accordance with section 9 of the Traditional Owner Settlement Act 2010 (Vic):

- | | |
|--|--|
| a) to enjoy the culture and identity of the Dja Dja Wurrung; | d) to camp on the land; |
| b) to maintain a distinctive spiritual, material and economic relationship with the land, and the natural resources on, or depending on, the land; | e) to use and enjoy the land; |
| c) to access and remain on the land; | f) to take natural resources on, or depending on the land; |
| | g) to conduct cultural and spiritual activities on the land; and |
| | h) to protect places and areas of importance on the land. |

Summary of the Recognition and Settlement Agreement activities

LAND USE ACTIVITY AGREEMENT

The RSA includes a Land Use Activity Agreement (LUAA). The Land Use Activity Agreement recognises Dja Dja Wurrung Peoples' rights when the State Government considers proposed activities on Crown land across Djandak. Under the LUAA, there are five categories of land use activity: routine, advisory, negotiation A and negotiation B, and agreement. They each have a procedural requirement that must align with our Agreement.

From 1 July 2020 to 30 June 2021, there were a total of 66 Advisories, 1 Negotiation A and 15 Negotiation B.

RECOGNISING DJAARA RIGHTS

We have worked with local governments and State agencies to ensure that Djaara rights recognised in the 2013 Recognition and Settlement Agreement are respected and observed. Part of ensuring that rights are recognised is working with DJANDAK and the Dja Dja Wurrung Group's Malamiya (Cultural Heritage) team to ensure a 'one-stop shop' service can be provided by the Group. This means any person dealing with the Group can be confident that rights, Cultural Heritage, and commercial opportunities can be promoted simultaneously.

INITIAL OUTCOMES REVIEW/RSA REFUNDING

The RSA Implementation team has been closely involved in the RSA refunding process which followed the Initial Outcomes Review. DJAARA has worked hard at contributing opportunities for agreement, including changes which bring about greater recognition of the Board's demand for self-determination and to align the compensation process with the High Court's Timber Creek/Griffiths decision in 2019. The terms of the agreement have been reached after active representations to the State, including correspondence between the Board and the Attorney-General.

FIRST PRINCIPLES REVIEW

We have contributed to the State's First Principles Review process. The process is intended to consult Traditional Owners about changing agreements under the Traditional Owner Settlement Act 2010 to better reflect the rights and aspirations of Traditional Owners and to fix anomalies in current agreements. DJAARA, as the holder of rights under a RSA, now eight years old, has a unique and important contribution to make to that process.

DJAARA CORPORATE AND COMMUNITY HUB

The RSA Implementation team was closely involved in the representations to the State for the successful awarding of \$11.2M and a grant of freehold land to DJAARA to construct the corporate and community hub at Hattam Street, Golden Square. The hub will provide a permanent home for DJAARA operations, increase Dja Dja Wurrung presence in the area and contribute to the regional economy.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREAS (LGAS)

We have built on relationships developed during the Balaki Wurrekang local government treaty program in 2019 to secure closer working relationships with local government across the region. Some outcomes include improved communication, closer engagement on economic opportunities, a commitment to develop a treaty-like agreement, and the award of a substantial art project with Hepburn Shire Council.

GROUND RELEASE

The State government announced the release of four areas for mining exploration in the North-Central region. DJAARA negotiated for Dja Dja Wurrung and the other two Traditional Owner groups affected to participate in the tender assessment process to assess each tenderer's capacity to build constructive relationships with Traditional Owners and to carry out exploration in an environmentally sustainable way. DJAARA also made recommendations to the State after the process including ways to improve future processes and for the State to honour Traditional Owners' rights and interests in mining exploration.

YOUNG WOMEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION (YWCA)

DJAARA participated in constructive negotiations with the YWCA, which sought to develop a social housing project in Flora Hill for single mothers and their families. The RSA program negotiated appropriate compensation for the use of the Crown land and a Wartaka (Dja Dja Wurrung member focus group) provided design input and guidance on cultural and social requirements of the project.

NALDERUN

DJAARA supported Nalderun Aboriginal Corporation to develop Djakitjuk Djanga (Country's food), a bush foods project at Harcourt. Our support included support for leasing arrangements and an auspicing arrangement for the funding.

SUPPORTING RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE REGION

The RSA Implementation program has worked with residential building developers to find ways to ensure that compensation is paid at a fair rate to DJAARA where Crown land is used as part of residential developments. Agreements have been reached with several developers, ranging from smaller developments to a 161-lot residential development at Huntly.

HUNTLY COMMON

DJAARA has worked with Huntly Common Pty Ltd, a resource developer which proposes to use mining rights it already holds to reprocess contaminated sludge at Huntly Common. The developer proposes to reprocess the sludge and engage the Dja Dja Wurrung Group to rehabilitate the area to restore the pre-mining landscape and habitat of the area.

YOUTH TRAINING CENTRE

The Department of Justice and Community Safety (DJCS) jointly advised they were proposing to fence Crown land next to a Youth Training Centre. More information was sought, and a discussion held regarding the planned activity. DJCS decided not to proceed with the activity and to instead look at ways of collaborating with DJAARA about the use of the land.

LAND USE ACTIVITY AGREEMENT AUDIT

DJAARA and Department of Justice and Community Safety (DJCS) jointly commissioned a Land Use Activity Agreement Audit which commenced in February 2021. The purpose of the Audit was to analyse all land use activities undertaken on or permitted on Crown Land on Djandak since the inception of the Land Use Activity Agreement (LUAA) on 25 October 2013. The target entities comprised 44 State and Local Government Authorities. Specifically, the Audit aims to understand the level of, and factors contributing to, non-compliance with the LUAA and to uncover any unknown breaches of the Audit where these have occurred.

The Auditor released its draft report to the Advisory Committee on 30 June 2021. The Advisory Committee is made up of 2 DJCS representatives, 2 DJAARA representatives and 2 representatives from the Auditor's firm. The draft report includes findings and recommendations and DJAARA RSA implementation team looks forward to reporting on the developments in this area in the following annual report.

Dhelkunya Dja Policy



“ The Dhelkunya Dja Policy area is a new and very exciting team within the Dja Dja Wurrung Group. The next 12 months of work in the area will look to establish Dja Dja Wurrung People’s strategic aspirations in the management of cultural landscapes across Djandak.

Nate Perry, Program Manager- Dhelkunya Dja Policy

The Dhelkunya Dja Policy area is new to DJAARA. Its purpose is to strengthen Djaara self-determination by implementing the Dhelkunya Dja Plan goals and providing strategic clarity to Dja Dja Wurrung Group decision-making.

Dhelkunya Dja Policy supports meaningful engagement between DJAARA and Government to implement the goals of the Dhelkunya Dja Country Plan

The Dhelkunya Dja Policy team will recruit a Dhelkunya Dja Policy Trainee. This position will be an opportunity for a Djaara person to build a career in community engagement, policy, and land management. The role will also provide an opportunity to receive a Certificate III or IV in Business or Community Services.

LEGISLATIVE REVIEWS

The Policy team has engaged with the State to embed Dhelkunya Dja goals in several legislative reviews. Members and staff have provided input into the following submissions:

PUBLIC LAND LEGISLATION REVIEW

DJAARA’s submission asserts the Victorian Government’s proposed Public Land Act must enable Traditional Owner self-determination. DJAARA’s submission discusses how the proposed Act could allow Djaara to be land managers. It also recommends implementing the forthcoming Victorian Traditional Owner Cultural Landscapes Strategy, enabling lease income for Aboriginal Title lands and redefining “public land.”

WILDLIFE ACT REVIEW

DJAARA’s submission for the review of the Wildlife Act 1975 identified barriers for Djaara individuals and the Dja Dja Wurrung Group to interact with “wildlife” or other spirits on Djandak. The submission requests recognition of culturally significant species and Djaara collective rights. It also highlights the Western cultural bias of the current Act, discusses returning spirits (species) to Country and Traditional Owner management and decision-making regarding “wildlife.”



STRATEGIC POLICYMAKING

Below are other Dhelkunya Dja Policy projects occurring over the next 12 months:

- Forest Gardening Framework – this framework aims to outline Dja Dja Wurrung contemporary cultural land management philosophy and approach, forest gardening.
- Climate Change Policy – the policy will define a Dja Dja Wurrung position on climate change and identify priorities to heal Djandak in the context of current climate change challenges.
- Sole Management Policy – this policy will define sole (land) management priorities and identify how Dja Dja Wurrung will advocate for and policy aligns with and seeks to implement the forthcoming Victorian Traditional Owners Cultural Landscapes Strategy within Djandak as well as the review of public land legislation noted above.



Dja Dja Wurrung & PV Partnership Agreement launch in December 2020 at Notleys Campground in Bendigo.

Galkangu | Joint Management



“ Placing Djaara back into the landscape is key to cultural revival. The Joint Management Plan created and complimented by the Dhelkunya Dja Country Plan now more than ever before gives us a creative licence to explore the embedding of our Culture into creating experiences for the enjoyment and celebration of Victorians to Central Victoria. We are sure others will support these exciting new developments for our Joint Managed Lands.

Rodney Carter, Dja Dja Wurrung Group CEO

Through the Recognition and Settlement Agreement, Galkangu (Joint Management) is the term used to describe the formal partnership arrangement between DJAARA (DDWCAC) and the State, where both share their knowledge to jointly manage six Dja Dja Wurrung Parks. These are the Greater Bendigo National Park; Hepburn Regional Park; Paddys Ranges State Forest; Kara Kara National Park; Kooyoora State Park; and Wehla Nature Conservation Reserve.

Galkangu recognises Dja Dja Wurrung Peoples' significant connection to Djandak and their inherited rights and responsibilities to care for Country. The goal of Galkangu is to enable Dja Dja Wurrung knowledge and connection to Country to be expressed in the planning and management of the six Dja Dja Wurrung Parks. To do this, the Dhelkunya Dja Land Management Board (DDLMB) was appointed by the Minister to develop a Joint Management Plan (JMP). Through DJAARA, we work to ensure the Plan is implemented to the best of our ability with our partners; DDLMB, Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP), Parks Victoria, and Dja Dja Wurrung Enterprises Pty. Ltd. (trading as DJANDAK).

With an emphasis on using Dja Dja Wurrung language wherever possible, the DJAARA Joint Management Team was given the name Galkangu (make things happen together). The Wartaka (Dja Dja Wurrung member focus group) supporting joint management implementation projects adopted the name Djuwima Djandaki (to show and to share our Country). Djuwima Djandaki was also adopted as the name of the DJAARA joint management implementation program.

HOW ARE WE GOING DELIVERING THE JOINT MANAGEMENT PLAN?

The 2020-21 year has provided many opportunities to progress implementation of the Joint Management Plan for the Dja Dja Wurrung Parks.

Good progress was made implementing the Joint Management Plan, with 58 of the 96 priority Strategic Actions on track. Another nine Strategic Actions being implemented experienced minor issues, and two experienced major issues, all linked to delivery or funding delays. There are 24 Strategic Actions which have not commenced but are planned for delivery over the next three to five years.

GOOD GOVERNANCE

The year started with a strong focus on setting up a governance framework with Parks Victoria and DJANDAK to successfully deliver projects together across the Parks.

A partnership agreement with Parks Victoria was finalised that set up our joint priorities and deliverables across the Dja Dja Wurrung Parks and broader Recognition and Settlement Agreement area.

We developed the Djuwima Djandaki annual works plan for investment of DJAARA Joint Management Plan implementation funding.

A project management platform called Miradi was adopted to monitor, track performance, and report on implementation of the Joint Management Plan. It allows many individuals to contribute to maintaining the Joint Management Plan, updating it as changes are agreed and required, and recording and reporting on progress.

We developed, reviewed, and improved project delivery systems to ensure the process was robust and inclusive moving into the future. This involved the introduction of project inception meetings with our partners, and developing Project Briefs, and Communications and Engagement Plans, before stepping into project delivery.



L-R: Dan McLaughlin - Regional Director Parks Victoria, Hon. John Pandazopoulos - Chair of Parks Victoria, Uncle Graham Atkinson - Chairperson - Dhelkunya Dja Land Management Board, Trent Nelson - DJAARA Chairperson and Dja Dja Wurrung Group CEO, Rodney Carter.



Djuwima Djandaki Wartaka members providing advice and direction in development of the concept designs for the Melville Caves precinct at Guyura (Kooyoora State Park)



Melville Caves precinct concept design development at a Djuwima Djandaki Wartaka campout at Guyura in March 2021

The Djuwima Djandaki Wartaka was formed, with Dja Dja Wurrung members coming together to provide advice and direction in decision-making about park management and development in line with the aspirations of Djaara. The Djuwima Djandaki Wartaka provides cultural input and develops the vision for projects and ensures support across Dja Dja Wurrung membership and maximises family representation amongst Djaara.

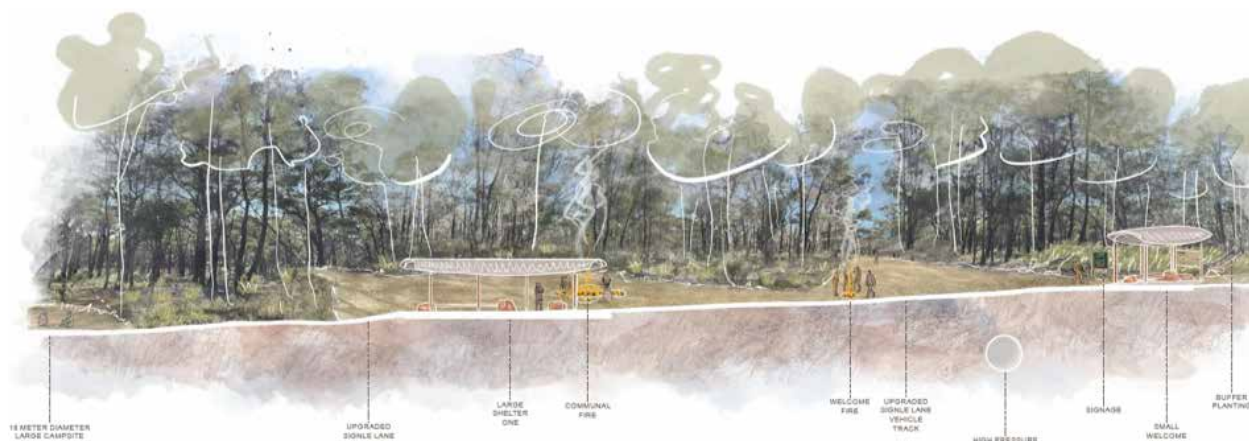
RECREATIONAL, CULTURAL PRACTICES, AND CUSTOMS AREA PROJECTS

The DJAARA investment in the Joint Management Plan implementation aims to strengthen Dja Dja Wurrung cultural practices, customs, and heritage. The Recreational, Cultural Practices, and Customs Area projects are managed across the Group and empower Dja Dja Wurrung to look after Country our way. These projects invest in the renewal and improvement of infrastructure in the Dja Dja Wurrung Parks, embedding Dja Dja Wurrung values into the landscape using

traditional knowledge to inform contemporary design.

A major project has been the planning of new and improved visitor facilities at Guyura (Kooyoora State Park), encompassing the picnic area, camping area, the Melville Caves lookout carpark visitor area, as well as the adjoining trail network. Cultural Heritage surveys of the project footprint were conducted to recognise, incorporate where appropriate, and protect Cultural Heritage, in the site designs.

Throughout development of the strategic vision and concept designs, the Djuwima Djandaki Wartaka provided advice and direction on what the visitor facilities should look like and contain. The next project stage will be improving the trail network and Dja Dja Wurrung members will determine what cultural information, stories and knowledge should be included in signage along the trails and at the visitor sites.



Dja Dja Wurrung campground concept design schematic drawing

The Dja Dja Wurrung Group is developing a new campground in the Bendigo Regional Park adjacent to the No. 7 Park in Kangaroo Flat. The campground is to be called Larni Yirrip (Home of the Ironbarks). It will showcase the Dja Dja Wurrung presence in the landscape and create a new Dja Dja Wurrung place for community to share, allowing visitors to immerse themselves in Dja Dja Wurrung culture. Members of the Djuwima Djandaki Wartaka worked closely with the landscape architect in developing the strategic vision and concept designs.

“Many homes existed at Country, and they were villages and places of community living, sadly those homes are no longer standing. This Village concept for camping at Country will be the first to be built in nearly 200 years and provide not only for Djaara but visitors to Central Victoria a unique experience of connecting to Country, please enjoy this achievement with us.

Rodney Carter, Dja Dja Wurrung Group CEO



Melville Caves precinct concept design development at a Djuwima Djandaki Wartaka campout at Guyura in March 2021



Amos Atkinson talking to Brad Creme about campground improvements at Guyura (Kooyoora State Park)



Sharnie introducing People to Dja Dja Wurrung culture at a Junior Ranger activity at Vaughn Springs in April 2021



Sharnie showing children how to make ochre paints at a Junior Ranger activity at Vaughn Springs in April 2021

OTHER PROJECTS

The Galkangu team works closely with the Dja Dja Wurrung Rangers at Parks Victoria. The rangers were involved in most Djuwima Djandaki Wartaka events throughout the year. The Cultural Heritage Rangers conducted a substantial amount of Cultural Heritage assessments along trails and tracks at Guyura to help with the project planning. The Galkangu team worked closely with the rangers to restart the Junior Ranger Program, with two events held at Rocky Crossing and Vaughn Springs over the April school holidays.

Members of the Djuwima Djandaki Wartaka were involved in a project in the Castlemaine Diggings National Heritage Park that aims to improve awareness of the significant Aboriginal and European heritage landscape in the Park. The members came together to determine what cultural knowledge and stories should be shared for use on interpretative signage and to develop content for online resources.

Dhelkunya Dja Land Management Board

The Dhelkunya Dja Land Management Board (DDLMB) was established in 2014, one year after the Recognition and Settlement Agreement (RSA) was signed, to oversee the development of a Joint Management Plan (JMP) for the six Dja Dja Wurrung Parks. These Parks were returned to Djaara in 2013, on Aboriginal title for the purposes of Joint Management.

The Board takes its name 'Dhelkunya Dja', meaning Healing Country, from the Dja Dja Wurrung Country Plan 2014, which is the touchstone for developing a Joint Management Plan that will deliver on the aspirations of the Djaara People.

DJAARA recommends the appointment of Board members to the Minister, and the Board is appointed under the Conservation, Forests and Lands Act 1987 (Vic). The Country Plan covers the entire Agreement Area, whereas the Joint Management Plan (JMP) covers the six Joint Managed Parks under the Board's legislated responsibilities.

Now the Board's role is to oversee the implementation of the JMP, working closely with the Joint Management Partners - DJAARA, DJANDAK, Parks Victoria, and DELWP. In 2020, the Minister appointed new Board members for a three-year term, with increased Djaara representation to strengthen the Traditional Owner leadership.

The DDLMB provides an important means for Djaara to participate in the management of Djandak (Country), and is a launching pad for emerging leaders to acquire governance experience. In June 2020, Nikita Charles was appointed as the DDLMB Deputy Chairperson, and in September 2020, we welcomed Rhianna Kerr to the role of Board Administration and Project Officer.

In 2020-2021 the Board established our new hosting arrangements with DJAARA commencing on the 1 July 2020. This was done through a Service Level Agreement, and fulfilled a Djaara Community aspiration towards Djaara Self-Determination, to base the Board's Secretariat on Country in Bendigo. It has been a challenging year due to the ongoing COVID-19 Pandemic.

Like many organisations working under similar circumstances, the Board adapted to this time of uncertainty with innovation and perseverance. We are proud to report that we have achieved 'Business as Usual' on mission-critical work supporting the implementation of the first Joint Management Plan for the Dja Dja Wurrung Parks (JMP).

In 2020-21, the Board received three JMP implementation reports. Reporting on the JMP has been named 'Gapa Giya' from the Dja Dja Wurrung language, which means, 'to know, to think / to ask, to tell'. These periodic reports highlight the positive momentum of strategic projects now underway. They have so far highlighted good early progress on 94 of the 96 strategic actions in the JMP.

The DDLMB makes regular reports to the DJAARA Board of Directors, and to the Djaara community through the Group information meetings. In 2021, the DDLMB launched an Observer Program, which aims to give direct experience of Board participation to interested Djaara members through an Expression of Interest process. The Board is working to ensure that the Djaara Community has a good understanding on the work of the Board and the progress of Implementing the JMP.

The Board's transition to being based on Country in Bendigo was a key milestone in 2020-21 in the spirit of self-determination. It helps the Board to strengthen our important relationships with DJAARA and the Dja Dja Wurrung community it represents.

Manyangurr ngulumbara dhelkunya
Djandak murrupi

We meet together to return good
health to Country and Spirit

Corporate Services

Corporate Services includes Finance, Accounting, Payroll, Human Resources, Assets, Reception, and general administration functions, and has grown exponentially alongside the growth of the organisation.

The Corporate Services team has made significant progress in navigating competing pressures and placing itself centrally to provide shared services to the Dja Dja Wurrung Group. The team is led by a Corporate Services Manager who joined DJAARA in September 2020 and two new roles were created - Administration Officer and Accounts Administration Officer - to extend the effective and efficient support services to the Dja Dja Wurrung Group.

Improvements and New Initiatives

A. COVID-19 MEASURES

At DJAARA, our first priority is our staff's health and well-being and those around us. This is particularly relevant in the time of the COVID-19 pandemic.

A new COVID-19 policy was developed that outlines the measures and approaches to dealing with the pandemic. The team supported the transition to new processes and practices within the Workplace to adapt to a new COVID safe environment and made arrangements to ensure our offices were COVID safe.

Additionally, a new knowledge base 'COVID-19 Resources' Page was developed for staff on our intranet site.

B. HUMAN RESOURCE INFORMATION SYSTEM (HRIS)

We implemented a new Human Resource and Payroll integrated system at DJAARA, collectively referred to as Gartna Balak, meaning 'Connecting People' in Dja Dja Wurrung language.

With the introduction of the Gartna Balak system, the Group's payroll is now processed internally. The system is a one-stop-shop for all employee information, assists in the entire employee lifecycle process, communication and helps streamline processes including:

- Electronic timesheets through the web portal or mobile application.
- Applying for leave, viewing leave balances and teams leave calendar
- Updating personal information
- Managing licenses and certificates
- Viewing company directory, Organisation Chart, and policies
- Viewing salary information, update banking and superannuation details and other employment records
- Asset Management
- Generation of real-time HR and other employee reports.

With the introduction of Gartna Balak, we reviewed our Recruitment Selection and Onboarding procedure to guide managers in the recruitment process.

“ The Corporate Services team would like to thank every staff member, management, and the wider community for providing continued support and cooperation in managing change and contributing positively to process improvements and operational efficiency at DJAARA.

Geethu Koshy, Corporate Services Manager

C. LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

As part of capability building and development within the organisation, during the Financial Year 2020-21 the following training was rolled out:

All staff:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cultural Competence training through Centre for Cultural Competence Australia• Personal Empowerment & Conflict Management- PEACE Training• COVID-19 Infection Control training• HRIS System training- Gartna Balak
Focus groups:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Drug and Alcohol training• Payroll & Taxation training• Return to Work Coordinator training• Basic Microsoft training
Managers:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Workplace Discrimination Harassment and Bullying for Managers• Addressing Inappropriate Behaviour• Managing Mental Ill health• Management Behaviours to Drive Safety• Coaching on Performance• Confidentiality in the Workplace• Privacy Fundamentals in the Workplace• Sexual Harassment in the Workplace

D. POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

To enable safe and productive work environment, new policies and plans were developed and reviewed, including:

- Cultural Heritage Employment Policy
- Discrimination Harassment and Bullying Policy
- Recruitment and Onboarding Procedure
- Risk Management Policy and Framework
- Confidentiality Policy
- Grievance and Complaint Policy and Procedure
- DJAARA COVID-19 Workplace Policy

E. SALARY CLASSIFICATION PROJECT

The need for Salary Classification to be undertaken has arisen from the organisation's continuing growth, the creation of several new positions and complexities added to the organisational structure. The Salary Classification project commenced in 2020 and is an ongoing project. Some of the early wins include identifying applicable awards for the group after a rigorous process of classifying current Position Descriptions for every position/ job according to the positions' duties, responsibilities, task, and authority levels. Once the project is fully implemented, it will establish a fair and consistent pay system within the organisation, thus allowing internal movements of staff, improving transparency, budget, and payroll management processes, etc.

F. ASSET MANAGEMENT PROCESS

Partnering with MGR-IT and Hi-Tech, DJAARA has taken initiatives to improve the stakeholder relationship, introduced efficiency in the Asset Management Process, and contributed to cost-saving in this area.

G. SYSTEM SECURITY REVIEW

A system security review was conducted to ensure the organisation adheres to compliance requirements and manages risks at all levels. A new Intranet project evolved out of this process which is currently in the development phase.

Wurreka | To Yarn, To Talk

COMMUNICATIONS

Since being established in July 2020, the role of communications, branding and media has continued to develop. It has highlighted DJAARA's target groups for communication, refined how we share information, and defined how we promote DJAARA.

On the 3rd of May 2021, DJAARA updated its brand. The brand refresh provides a vibrant change in colour and design. It is evident across the pages of our website, our logo and colour palette. Through our website and direct email marketing, we are effectively distributing information across many digital platforms to our members, Indigenous Organisations and communities, the public and government bodies.

Our website features a designated Members' Area and highlights our latest news, gunga (jobs) and opportunities, monthly newsletter, our current media releases, and statements.

It also houses a resource page that offers DJAARA project fact sheets, booking forms, links to Dja Dja Wurrung knowledge and videos.

Through the communications, branding, and media we continue to strive to achieve the six communication principles across the Dja Dja Wurrung Group. These have been developed in line with the Dhelkunya Dja (Healing Country) Country Plan aspirations.



Dja Dja Wurrung Group CEO Rodney Carter getting ready for the online launch of DJAARA's new Brand and Website.

- **Culture** – To strive to uphold Djaara cultural obligations to look after Country for future generations.
- **Partnerships** – To commit to working with our members, Elders, young people, neighbours, agencies, and the broader community in the effort to Care for Country.
- **Looking after Country** – To manage Djaara Country in a contemporary context as Dja Dja Wurrung people and Culture are not frozen in time.
- **Traditional Knowledge** - To strive to maintain, control, protect and develop Djaara traditional knowledge and cultural expressions.
- **Self - determination** - To place Dja Dja Wurrung language, culture, knowledge, and practices back in the landscape.
- **Economics** - To increase the recognition of Djaara as the Traditional Owners of this Country with ongoing rights and obligations.

DJAARA has been involved in Bendigo's major events throughout 2021. An Acknowledgement to Country lantern was commissioned for the Awakening Light festival held in Rosalind Park. This was the focal point at the entrance to the festival.



DJAARA LIGHTS

Djaara Lights is a collaboration between DJAARA and the City of Greater Bendigo. It will explore the Dja Dja Wurrung Six Seasons through several light-based contemporary artworks, an illuminated artwork, and an Augmented Reality experience.

Dja Dja Wurrung and Yorta Yorta artists Drew Berick and Troy Firebrace have been leading the overall creative design with help from 20 local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to design the augmented reality artwork for the project.

The public artworks will be located along Oscars Walk, starting at the Bendigo and Adelaide Bank forecourt and will end at the Telstra Exchange Building on Short Street. When the final artwork is in place it will remain there for three years.



Riley creating his virtual reality artwork for Djaara Lights

WHITE NIGHT

White Night was proposed to return to Bendigo in 2021 and DJAARA has continued discussions with the organisers to ensure that Djaara are part of this spectacular event. However, planning has been halted due to COVID-19 restrictions.

Bendigo will experience all the sparkle and brilliance of this major event in a vibrant celebration of the city. Public and private spaces will once again be transformed, with stunning light displays, celestial oddities, street eats and powerful, diverse voices.

DJAARA is currently in discussions to perform the opening ceremony when the event kicks off later in 2021.



L-R: Drew Berick, Maria Randall – Communications Relationship Manager, DJAARA, Maree Tonkin- Community Coordinator CoGB, & Troy Firebrace.

(L-R) Dja Dja Wurrung Elder Aunty Fay Carter, Rodney Carter and Natasha Carter in the Bendigo Advertiser's 150th anniversary of Bendigo feature. It was acknowledged that Dja Dja Wurrung history and presence pre-dates the municipality.



Giyakiki | Story, Yarn

The accomplishments of the Dja Dja Wurrung Group have generated interest from various media locally, statewide and nationally. The voice of DJAARA is being included in important opportunities across Djandak.

The accomplishments of the Dja Dja Wurrung Group have generated interest from various media locally, statewide and nationally. The voice of DJAARA is being included in important opportunities across Djandak.

Many of our major project partnerships have highlighted the work and aspirations of DJAARA on Djandak.

These include some of the stories below.

- Dja Dja Wurrung artistic and cultural input into the Court Services Victoria
- Djandak Dja Kunditja (Healing its home) Kangaroo Grass Project
- Djandak Wi with DELWP
- The new GovHub building with Development Victoria, and Regional Development Victoria
- The TAFE Revitalisation Project in Bendigo



(L-R) DJANDAK General Manager Steve Jackson, Dja Dja Wurrung Group CEO Rodney Carter and Malamiya Program Manager Jon Marshallsay attend the excavation media event for the Bendigo GovHub.

NOVEMBER 24, 2020,

Dja Dja Wurrung Corporation promised funds in 2020-21 state budget for cultural hub

A NEW cultural hub for the Dja Dja Wurrung Corporation is set to take its dreams forward, centralising its business and sharing its culture with the entire community.

[Dja Dja Wurrung Corporation promised funds in 2020-21 state budget for cultural hub | Bendigo Advertiser | Bendigo, VIC](#)

DECEMBER 4, 2020,

Dja Dja Wurrung ink deal with Parks Victoria to manage central Victorian parks

INDIGENOUS leaders have cemented an agreement with Parks Victoria giving Traditional Owners a formal role managing swathes of land across the region.

[Dja Dja Wurrung ink deal with Parks Victoria to manage central Victorian parks. | Bendigo Advertiser | Bendigo, VIC](#)



Member for Bendigo East Jacinta Allan, Dja Dja Wurrung artist Racquel Kerr, Member for Bendigo West Maree Edwards, Dja Dja Wurrung Group CEO Rodney Carter, and DJAARA Chair Trent Nelson reveal the Bunjil artwork that will appear on the new Court Services Victoria Building in Bendigo.

DECEMBER 14, 2020,

Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation ready to work with state government on cultural tourism

The Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation has welcomed a push to develop a cultural tourism strategy in the Loddon Campapse region.

[Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation ready to work with state government on cultural tourism | Bendigo Advertiser | Bendigo, VIC](#)

MARCH 26, 2021,

Dja Dja Wurrung blast decision to deny funding for returning ancestors to Country

The Australian Research Council has responded to criticisms about its decision not to award funding.

[Dja Dja Wurrung blast decision to deny funding for returning ancestors to Country | Bendigo Advertiser | Bendigo, VIC](#)

APRIL 1 2021,

Podcast: Indigenous agriculture uses ancient knowledge and native plants to farm with the land, not against it

Imagine for breakfast having Kakadu plum jam on freshly toasted kangaroo grass bread, a hot pot of wattle seed coffee steeping on the kitchen table. Is it that hard to picture?

<https://www.canberratimes.com.au/story/7189389/would-you-eat-kangaroo-grass-bread/>

MAY 19, 2021,

Belladonna Girl returns to racing in style with Dja Dja Wurrung Pacing Cup win at Charlton

Already eyeing a Queensland winter carnival campaign with Aladdin and Apieceoflou, Charlton trainer Greg Norman hopes his star three-year-old's may have some company.

[Belladonna Girl returns to racing in style with Dja Dja Wurrung Pacing Cup win at Charlton | Bendigo Advertiser | Bendigo, VIC](#)

Financial Report Extract

REVIEW OF OPERATIONS

The surplus of the group for the financial year ended 30 June 2021 after provision for income tax expense was \$3,706,638.

At 30 June 2021, the group recorded a strong financial position, with current assets exceeding current liabilities by \$12,936,725, providing the directors with sufficient working capital to ensure the group can pay its debts as and when they fall due.

The group also recorded retained earnings at 30 June 2021 of \$14,142,494. Of such retained earnings, \$8,888,547 is committed at balance date and has therefore been disclosed as a reserve.

The group's surplus and net asset position has been significantly impacted by a change in financial reporting requirements as the group is no longer able to recognize a liability for unexpended or committed funds.

The group's external auditors appreciate the effectiveness of the group's internal process, procedures and records, noting no instances of non-compliance with the requirements of ORIC, the ACNC and ATO.

The audited financial statements submitted to ORIC will cover the period 1 July 2020 to 30 June 2021. Based on the information provided in the reports the group is solvent as at 30 June 2021 and has sufficient resources to pay its debts as and when they fall due.

CHANGES TO FINANCIAL REPORTING FRAMEWORK

In previous years the group prepared special purpose financial statements as the board of the parent entity considered the group to be a non-reporting entity.

The group's special purpose financial statements did not previously comply with the recognition and measurement requirements of all Australian Accounting Standards. The Office of the Registrar of Indigenous Corporations (ORIC), which regulates indigenous corporations, has previously accepted the preparation of special purpose financial statements.

ORIC permitted the group to transition to Australian Accounting Standards during the year ended 30 June 2021 instead of the previous year.

Transitional relief was also granted by ORIC, that meant that the impact of the transition could be recognised as an adjustment to retained earnings on 1 July 2020 without restatement of comparatives.

The comparative information presented in the financial statements is therefore less comparable as it was prepared in accordance with the group's previous accounting policies.

Dja Dja Wurrung Economic Development Funds For the year ended 30 June 2021

Investments CURRENT	2020 \$	2021 \$	
Term deposits	911,417	913,658	Community Sector Bank – Term Deposit
Indigenous Real Estate – Development Funds	1,388,915	1,475,566	IBA I-REIT High growth, commercial real-estate as per Investment Strategy recommendation
Indigenous Prosperity Fund – Growth Fund	953,819	1,258,219	IBA - Indigenous Prosperity Fund – Growth High growth
Indigenous Prosperity Fund – Income Fund	1,071,938	1,362,971	IBA - Indigenous Prosperity Fund – Income Modest growth, less risk
Total Investments	4,326,089	5,010,414	This represents a growth of \$684,325 since last financial year that includes the reinvestment of distributions from the Development funds.

'A traditional way of business'

“ DJANDAK continues to build its reputation as a multi-faceted business providing reputable Natural Resource Management, Open Space Development and Heritage Services aligned to the aspirations of Dja Dja Wurrung as expressed in the Dhelkunya Dja Country Plan.

Message from the General Manager – Economic Development — Steve Jackson

In context of the COVID-19 pandemic and the ongoing uncertainty of its impacts on State and Local government budgets, the 2020-21 Business Plan set a realistic objective to sustain the previous year’s performance with a budget of \$3.9M. In January 2021, the budget was revised to \$4.6M which was realised, representing growth of over 17%.

As DJANDAK continues to mature and demonstrate its sustainability, it has also sought opportunity through projects and consultancy engagements to progress the Cultural Tourism

strategy and other new business opportunities. The civic infrastructure developments of GovHub, Law Courts and TAFE in Central Bendigo, implementation of the Joint management Plan of the six Parks, on-going support for the regional UNESCO recognition of Gastronomy and Wanyarram Dhelk works on Bendigo Creek along with the introduction of Dumawul – Creative Enterprises project has created the platform for the second Dja Dja Wurrung Enterprise planned for launch in 2022 to operate alongside DJANDAK.

DJANDAK has also continued to develop the plans for a third Enterprise focussed on food and fibre. Current research continues in:

- Kangaroo Grass and derived products
- A yabby farm as entry into aquaculture Victoria, and Regional Development Victoria
- A feasibility study of Bush Foods commencing in 2022

Other key achievements in 2020/21 were:

- Design of facility improvements for Kooyoora under Joint Management Implementation to be completed in 2022 with Recognition and Settlement Agreement funds.
- Sustained project efforts of Djandak Dja Kunditja (Kangaroo Grass) and Balak Kalik Manya (Walking Together) continuing through 2021-22.

- Completed nearly \$1M of on-ground works in support of Dja Dja Wurrung Group and State and Local Government requirements.
- Undertook a major feral goat culling program at Kara Kara.
- Delivered thought-provoking research to document Cultural values that inform Climate Change Policy and Strategy and contributed to significant State strategies including Biodiversity 2037 and the Regional Catchment Strategy.
- Led a review of revegetation services for the State of Victoria, engaging with other Traditional Owners and First Nations establishing a pathway for First Nations leadership of the sector.
- Continued to expand Djandak Wi with a to Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) systems and an increased program.

Financial results over the journey of DJANDAK

	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Income	\$417,206	\$840,000	\$1,160,000	\$1,959,700	\$2,700,200	\$3,875,000	\$4,594,000
Expense	-\$407,052	-\$725,000	-\$950,000	-\$1,443,120	-\$2,178,200	-\$3,450,000	\$3,764,000
Gross Margin	-\$10,154	\$125,000	\$210,000	\$516,580	\$522,000	\$425,000	\$830,000
Operating Efficiency	-2.4%	14.9%	18.1%	26.4%	19.3%	11%	18.1%

The Dja Dja Wurrung Enterprises Board met the requirements of the Dja Dja Wurrung Group Corporate Governance Charter in 2020-21, with six meetings.

We thank the Directors for their dedication and valuable contribution – Liz Allen, Uncle Graham Atkinson, Trevor Budge, Rodney Carter (Chair), Trent Nelson and Rob Rendell.

As of June 30, 2021, Dja Dja Wurrung Enterprises comprised 25 full-time and part-time employees and a pool of nine casual employees.

Of the 25 full-time and part-time employees, 40% are Dja Dja Wurrung members.

The combined total number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander full-time and part-time employees at Djandak equals 44%. Of the nine casual employees, 57% are Dja Dja Wurrung members. The combined total number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander casual employees equals 85%.

Focusing on the NRM on-ground works crew of which there are 11 full-time and part-time employees, 55% of the crew are Dja Dja Wurrung members. The combined total number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees is 65% of the NRM on-ground works crew.

The employment figures above exclude DJANDAK Wartaka engagements including Kappa Gatjin, Aboriginal Waterway Assessments, the design of GovHub and Law Courts and consultation on Dumawul – Creative Enterprises.

DJANDAK has demonstrated great resilience in 2012-21 and additionally paved the foundation for additional Dja Dja Wurrung Enterprises.

Balak Kalik Manya | The Walking Together Project



Balak Kalik Manya -The Walking Together Project is a four-year project led by DJANDAK in collaboration with Parks Victoria, Regional partnerships and two Local Government Authorities. It is committed to writing site-specific management plans for two sites within Dja Dja Wurrung Country; Kalimna Park in Castlemaine and Wildflower Drive in Bendigo, as “role-model” strategies to protect biodiversity values of parks and native bushland under threat from urban expansion.

The project is exploring how we can increase community connection with nature, how to improve visitation rates and encourage appropriate use of these sites, all while maintaining and improving biodiversity. Both sites were selected due to their proximity to growing townships and the increasing pressures of urbanisation encroaching both park boundaries.

The project will promote Djaara employment and assist in Djaara reconnecting with traditional practices of land management.

Balak Kalik Manya entered its third-year lifecycle of the project in 2020/21. DJANDAK completed extensive community consultation with both Djaara and non-Djaara people, to better inform our management plans of the things that community value across the two parks, and the direct threats that need to be addressed through this project

A survey was created with assistance from Parks Victoria to uncover more information about demographics and how people currently use the parks. Of the 172 responses received, a summary report has been created merging the data into bar graphs, pie charts and other valuable graphics that quickly summarise demographics and usage of the parks. The survey has proved to be a success with demographics and park usage better understood than previous, along with other brief learnings associated with threats and values from the community's perspective.

After workshopping our management plans with Djaara members, community members and government stakeholders, our respective management plans for Kalimna Park and Wildflower Drive were released at a draft phase to allow more comments and reviews from stakeholders. The draft plans were open for comment for about a month and received a few submissions from people who had not provided input into the plans thus far. DJANDAK is currently in the process of finalising our plans with graphic designs, before officially releasing.



DJANDAK continued providing park management actions across both sites; particularly worth noting is the weed management work that DJANDAK's NRM Works Crew has started in the Moonlight Creek section of Kalimna Park. This waterway has been extremely degraded and left to further decline since the time of the goldrush, with large infestations of gorse and blackberry extending nearly a kilometre in this small ephemeral creek.

DJANDAK also engaged Pollen Studio to create concept designs for new visitor entrances to both parks. Shelter, toilets, carparking, all ability access, plantings, signage and seating will be installed to provide better amenities and access into the site for all community to enjoy, while enabling both Djaara and DJANDAK a place on Country to promote our culture and business.

The 2021/22 financial year will see the implementation of strategies and recommendations arising from the management plans, while also constructing our visitor entrances through DJANDAK's NRM Works Crew.

For more information on the project please see this short video- <https://vimeo.com/441201115>

Climate Change

Djaara (Dja Dja Wurrung People) and Djandak (Dja Dja Wurrung Country) have endured previous large-scale climatic change events. Current climate change conditions present new challenges as the contemporary values associated with wanyarra (water) management vary from Djaara cultural values for healthy water on Djandak.

The Climate Change research project led by DJANDAK on behalf of DJAARA was funded by the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) under Victoria's Pilot Water Sector Climate Change Adaptation Action Plan.

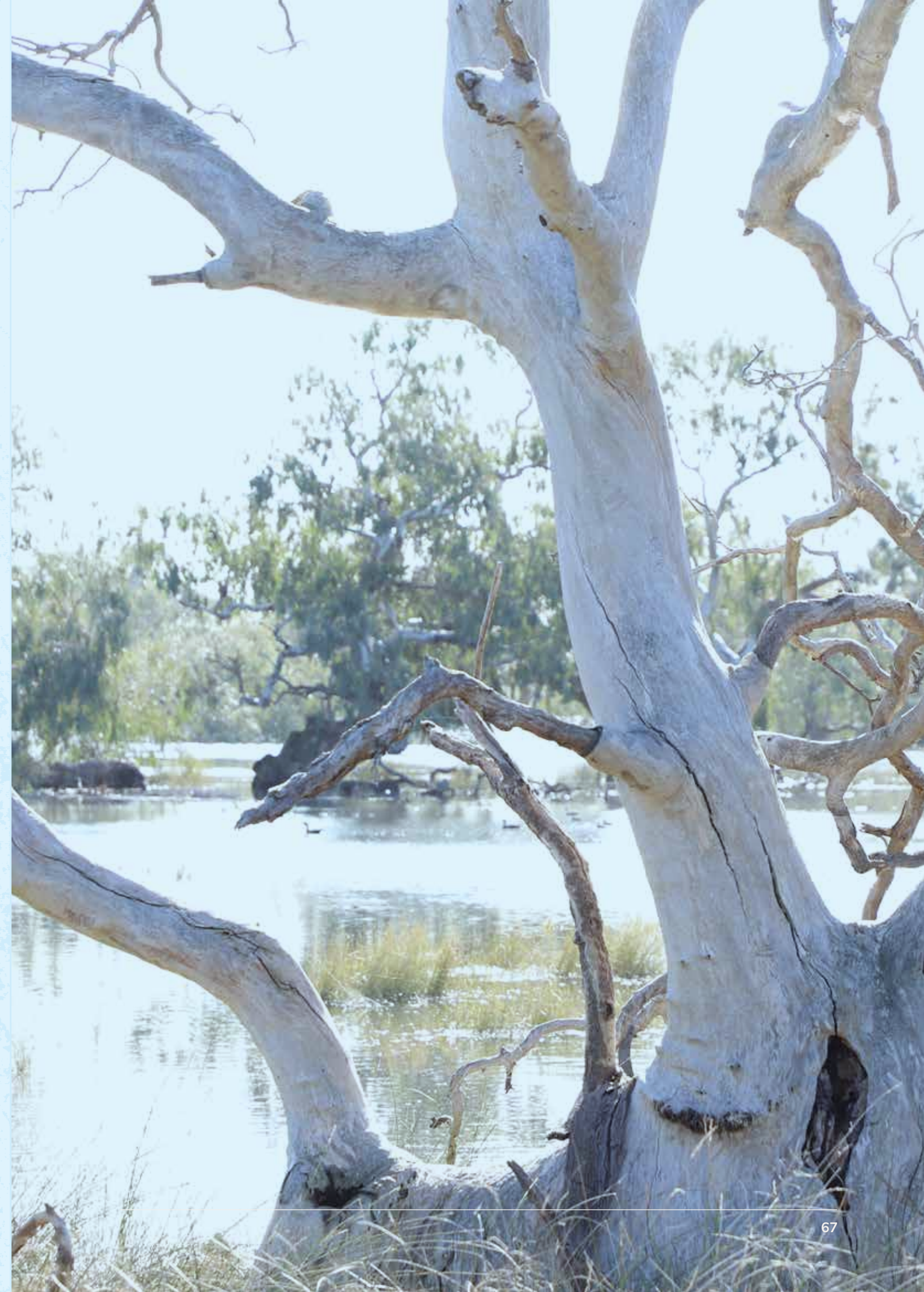
The objective of the Climate Change project was to identify the relationships between climate change and Dja Dja Wurrung cultural values associated with wanyarra. This was identified through focussed research and high level Dja Dja Wurrung engagement, consultation, and review.

The outcome of the project was the development of a report titled 'Report - Climate change: activating cultural values to inform effective policy and strategy development' and the associated Dja Dja Wurrung Cultural Water Values Framework to understand and champion Dja Dja Wurrung cultural values connected with wanyarra. The report outlines the intent to influence current thinking and shift values that guide wanyarra management practices to be reconciled with Djaara cultural values as the Traditional Owners and custodians for Djandak.

Embedding Dja Dja Wurrung cultural values will contribute to reducing the impacts of climate change through the adoption of the Dja Dja Wurrung cultural wanyarra values framework to managing Djandak

Through support and resourcing for the application of the framework, Dja Dja Wurrung will attain:

- Djaara leading the application of the cultural water values framework to natural resource management and climate change adaption programs and activities.
- Djaara to lead place-based decision making as an equal partner with the State;
- Djaara place-based models of care that monitor the effects of climate change on Djandak; and
- To develop a Dja Dja Wurrung Group climate change strategy and policy.



DJANDAK Academy

DJANDAK Academy continued to support Dja Dja Wurrung members to be trained and upskill in the natural resource management area whilst being paid and gaining practical work experience in the field.

Seven in total for the 2020-2021 financial year. This included two Dja Dja Wurrung members who completed their Certificate III in Civil Construction earlier this year. Four young Dja Dja Wurrung members transitioning from secondary college to the workforce were provided training at the commencement of their employment at Dja Dja Wurrung Enterprises in the on-ground works crew.

All four obtained their Level 2 First Aid Certificate; Agricultural Chemical User Permit; and the Course in Minimising Risks in the Use of 1080 & PAPP Bait Products for Vertebrate Pest Control. A further two Dja Dja Wurrung members also completed their 1080 & PAPP Bait Products for Vertebrate Pest Control.

Of the four young Dja Dja Wurrung members transitioning to the workforce from secondary college, two are now employed full-time as DJANDAK Rangers. The remaining two are considering further training options through the DJANDAK Academy in the field of landscape design. It is also worth noting that there was a balance of female and male participation.



Wartaka | Come with Purpose

The Dja Dja Wurrung Enterprises has continued to engage Dja Dja Wurrung members through the Wartaka membership engagement process either remotely utilising online meeting tools or where possible in person, observing Covid safe conditions.

In total there were 1,449 hours of Dja Dja Wurrung member engagement for the 2020-2021 financial reporting period. This was distributed between 34 Dja Dja Wurrung members representing ten Family Groups or an Apical Ancestor.

The total number of separate activities was 37 across 13 key Wartaka participation areas. The median participation rate was 7, the participation rate per activity ranged from between one to 11 members. Whilst average rate of participation per activity was 6 members.

With respect to gender, there was greater female participation, accounting for approximately 55% of the total member participation number. However, this may be attributed to the Dja Dja Wurrung Women's Knowledge Group which is comprised of nine Djaara women in total.

The age range varied across Wartaka participants 18 to 84 years of age, including ten of our Elders and a significant number of our next generation.



Djandak Wi

“ As Djaara we are seeing them change their way of putting fire into our Country through planned burns. This is probably the most positive thing to see that we are slowly rubbing off on them, and they are getting why we need Djandak Wi the way we do it not only to get the fuel loads down but get our People in the landscape and to heal the native vegetation and get rid of invasive species.

Amos Atkinson, DJANDAK Project Officer - JMP

So far, the 2021 season has been an improvement on last year, especially taking into account the COVID restrictions which made getting out in large groups a real struggle, however we were still able to perform Djandak Wi (Country Fire) at several Djaara nominated sites.

There remains additional opportunity to partner with Department of Land, Water, Environment and Planning (DELWP) throughout the Djandak Wi and Controlled Burn programs. DELWP continues to learn from us, especially how we see fire being put into the landscape, which is a real positive.

This is starting to influence the way DELWP are putting fire in the landscape at their burns. At many fuel reduction burns, we are starting to see our Djandak Wi approaches being used, resulting in less intensive heat and more mosaic burning across Djandak.

After many years of requests, we have finally been granted access to the Fire Web which is the system that DELWP use to plan and deliver fire. With this access we now have much greater control of our burns. This makes us more efficient in our approach to burns, we will now be able to plan and track the progress of each Djandak Wi. We now have over 50 burns in the system, of which about a dozen are planned and ready to go when we want.

DJANDAK have been building capacity with three new fully qualified Djaara workers at DJANDAK coming on this year who are being taught cultural burning, letting them learn the right way and what the true meaning of why and when the right way is to burn Country. DJANDAK also have another 3 young Djaara workers who are booked in to complete their Fire training in the coming months. For the first time ever, we will have more Djaara women attending than men.

Djandak Wi at Tang Tang Swamp image by Mick Bourke, Cultural Burn Planner Forest Fire Regions DELWP.



Amos Atkinson DJANDAK Project Officer - JMP at Tang Tang Swamp



(L-R) Dja Dja Wurrung women Kayla Baksh and Jess Donaczy participate in Djandak Wi at Tang Tang Swamp.

“ Our aim is to have all our Djandak Wi planned and ready to go so we can burn when Country needs it rather than having to wait for the system to catch up. So, the outlook is good for Djandak Wi.

Amos Atkinson, DJANDAK Project Officer - JMP

We have also been able to participate in 12 DELWP managed asset protection burns which helps build our capacity and understanding of types of fire. It's really encouraging to see the young Djaara men and women learning from our Cultural Fire Practitioners and bringing them along for the journey to start to heal Country and to heal ourselves, teaching the indicators and biodiversity that is missing from our landscape. Djandak Wi is empowering Djaara to become the great land managers, the way our Ancestors managed Country for millennia. We also work with our neighbouring Nations, Barapa Barapa and Yorta Yorta inviting them to our burns.

Parks Victoria (PV) also are now actively inviting us along to their ecological burns. We actively engage with PV on ecological fire and invite them to our Djandak Wi as we are all working together for the same goals. The feedback from the PV crew who came to our Tang Tang Swamp Djandak Wi was that we do fire in a way which is so calm, relaxed and well organised.

Tang Tang is one of our showcase sites which demonstrates how we are applying Djandak Wi to heal Country. Whilst we continue to build the scale of our Djandak Wi program, we will now be spending a greater focus on how we continue to build and pass on knowledge between Djaara.

Djandak Dja Kuditja | The Kangaroo Grass Project

“ It is really important to have Open Days on Country to see the great work happening on projects like Djandak Dja Kuditja.

Cassandra Lewis, DJAARA General Manger

Djandak Dja Kuditja means Country Healing, its Home (with Kangaroo Grass). The Dja Dja Wurrung Group uses this term to describe The Kangaroo Grass Project

Djandak Dja Kuditja is a large project that recognises the importance of Kangaroo grass as a highly significant plant that can heal Country by bringing back life and spirit to Djandak. Running from 2020 to 2023, the project is funded by the Federal Department of Agriculture, Water and Environment's Smart Farms Program.

Kangaroo grass naturally reaches out to grow as a grassland in big, beautiful tussocks, hugging and protecting the earth and providing important tussock homes for the small animal ecosystems we need to nurture and grow.

This project will bring back grasslands, growing Kangaroo grass over thousands of acres to show how it can improve the health of land, water, animal life and culture.

Some interesting facts about Kangaroo grass (Themeda triandra)

- Seeds are thought to be ground to make a flour for small flat bread, coatings and stuffings, with 20% protein and no gluten
- Plants live for decades (over 50 years) when looked after, with deep roots and adaptation to climate
- Tussocks can spread 50cm wide, there all year (perennial) to protect and shade soil and animals
- Some seed can have dormancy and require moist summer conditions to grow
- Seeds have a tail (awn) that wriggles when it gets wet, to drill into the ground, burying the seed

DJANDAK DJA KUDITJA PROGRESS & HIGHLIGHTS

- We got off to a flying start to organise the many parts of the project, like seed, equipment, suitable land, researchers and partnerships.
- The Kangaroo grass Project Manager worked with the planting team to return the plants to Djandak, “many hands made light work” planting 44,000 seedlings.
- Established field Research team, DJAARA funded PhD and field work to research key questions to improve understanding of Kangaroo grass seed and sowing on scale.
- An industry reference panel was established, for input from people who have planted Kangaroo grass over the years.
- A governance group of key stakeholders was established
- In 2021, planting 120,000 plants over 20 acres on Djandak, to demonstrate successfully cropping and harvesting Kangaroo grass, so we can develop a Djaara commercial business to grow and sell the seeds.
- A new paid positions was announced - a Mentorship and Djaara 'Knowledge building group' formed by expression of interest.
- We are working with partnership to further clean seed for the high demand, high protein food market.
- Two Open Days were held on Country for DJAARA, members and staff at the two field sites.
- We established a Governance group of state leaders across all key State Government stakeholders.
- The Governance group meeting on-site, which ignited new understanding and support for 'food ready seed cleaning'
- Rewarding education process with DJAARA PhD student and Agronomy Researcher at La Trobe University (Bundoora), who have been keen to learn and follow Dja Dja Wurrung project leadership, rights, our Country Plan, and self-determination. It has been an important and valuable experience working with academic researchers, media, and stakeholders.



Future Business Opportunities

Strong market demand has continued in 2020/21 across a range of products and services ideally suited to Indigenous business, in particular:

- demand for native food and fibre products continues to outstrip supply in Australia,
- interest in Aboriginal tourism products has grown exponentially, and
- increasing appreciation for Indigenous craft and culture is driving enormous interest in Aboriginal businesses and entrepreneurs.

Through a range of DJANDAK's initiatives, DJAARA has made substantial progress toward ensuring that we can take part in this fast-growing market and benefit from the economic development opportunities it represents for our people, specifically we have:

- secured \$1m in funding from the Victorian Government to establish Dumawul – a new Dja Dja Wurrung Enterprise that will provide heritage and design services, incubate craft and culture businesses created by Djaara, and further develop tourism offerings,
- worked in partnership with DELWP in the development of the Victorian Traditional Owner Native Food and Botanicals Strategy,
- worked in partnership with the Indigenous Land and Sea Council (ILSC), developed a business plan and completed an economic feasibility study into the viability of constructing and operating a commercial Yabby Farm,

- participated in research projects that consider how traditional plants can be turned into major, sustainable industries, and
- hosted a 3-day tour on Djandak with Visit Victoria to secure their support for developing new tourism products that highlight BI Culture and places.

Whilst DJAARA is well-placed through Dja Dja Wurrung Enterprises to strategically capitalise on these opportunities from a governance, capability, skills and knowledge perspective, there are significant access barriers to:

- water for cultural and economic purposes,
- land for farming, tourism, and cultural purposes, and
- investment funds.

DJANDAK has continued to engage with other Traditional Owner groups, stakeholders at all levels of Government, and other partner organisations and authorities to find solutions to these challenging problems.

Despite these barriers, we stay committed to realising our opportunities in these areas for the benefit of our People and Country.



Galkangu | (Joint Management) Plan Design

There's been a lot of planning and design occurring for the Guyura Design Project during 2020/2021.

The Djuwima Djandaki Wartaka developed the Nhatipil (having an idea, the Strategic Vision Phase) to renew the Melville Caves area of Guyura during the campouts in November and December 2020 celebrated it being endorsed by the project control group at a 3rd campout held in March 2021.

Since then, the vision of the Wartaka has been developed by the project team and the lead designer during the Nhati mungga (to make or create, Concept Design Phase) and the nearly completed Nhati yurpa (to put forth ideas, to bring them into being, the Detailed Design Phase).

This has included a new range of park furniture inspired by the DJANDAK Natural Resource Management (NRM) works crew's vision, and revised amenity block designs which can be used across the Dja Dja Wurrung parks and beyond. Barpa (to make, build, the Construction Phase) is planned to begin in 2021 with the Lookout Carpark the first area to be renewed, followed by the campground and then the picnic area.

Guyura Design Project (Kooyoorra State Park)



To support this project, the Galkangu (Joint Management) Plan Signage Style Guide has had the new DJAARA branding identity integrated into it, a Malamiya (Cultural Heritage) Management Plan has been developed and there's been significant engagement with the community and Parks Victoria to support this jointly managed project.

DJANDAK is now planning to re-engage Djaara through the Wartaka to develop the Nhatipil for the next phase of works at Guyura which will involve embedding Dja Dja Wurrung values into an improved trail network and on lots of new signage. The JMP team has also been planning for upcoming JMP design projects in the JMP parks by developing improved processes for ensuring Djaara are empowered to develop the Nhatipil for these places. 2021/2022 is when you'll see on-ground results from all of this planning and design, and it will be worth celebrating!

Kara Kara Native Vegetation Improvement Project

In mid-2021, a crew of five DJANDAK shooters were contracted to care for Country in the Kara Kara National Park, through a program to address the impact of feral goats on the park's vegetation.

Kara Kara is on the Western boundary of Djandak and includes significant cultural sites and artefacts that tell the story of Dja Dja Wurung occupation over many generations.

The Park is in unusually good condition and includes some of the highest-quality Box Ironbark forests in Australia; however, the understorey of these forests show the impact of grazing by native and feral animals, most notably goats. The feral goat management program is part of an agreement between Djaara and Parks Victoria to Ngaldurrong Yana (Walk together) through a joint management partnership.

Working closely with a lead professional shooter, the team spent a total of 30 days at Kara Kara developing skills in line with Djaara values, which on this project included the tracking and hunting of feral goats. While only 30 goats were estimated to be in the park, the team to date eradicated 52 animals (as well as identifying roughly 30 more). This program will continue in following years as part of the Galkangu (Joint Management) project and we will look to expand it out into other joint management parks.

While many DJANDAK staff already hunt for cultural and recreational reasons, this provided them the opportunity to complete the required training and obtain their commercial shooter licence, allowing them to now hunt as part of their work at DJANDAK.



DJANDAK shooter Dennis Edwards says their approach was informed by the type of vegetation, together with data from two "Judas" goats, whose movements were tracked using a GPS collar, leading the shooters to each goat's mob of roughly 10 animals.

While goat numbers were relatively small, the damage done by the emergence of these hard-hoofed introduced animals is already clear. Annual vegetation monitoring completed over many years by the Kara Kara Field Naturalists shows the health and diversity of vegetation within fenced "exclusion" areas that prevent grazing (by kangaroos, wallabies and feral goats, rabbits, and deer) to be higher than the rest of the park where grazing occurs.

“Once we got our eye in, they were easy to find. We just had to learn how to use the equipment and how to approach the goats. They were pretty much on every ridgeline we came across within our target areas.”

Dennis Edwards, a non-indigenous member of the shooting team.

Djaara also worked with local conservation group Connecting Country to develop a methodology to measure the impact of reduced grazing on the health of the park's vegetation, this monitoring will be repeated over time so we can measure the impact the removal of these animals has on the flora.

The shooting program is the first of its kind for Djaara and its success paves the way for future employment and career opportunities for Djaara People, as well as opportunities to get Djaara back on Country.

“Working alongside Djaara People was incredibly eye-opening, the pride they take in their work really stands out.”

Dennis Edwards, a non-indigenous member of the shooting team.

The program is the beginning of a long-term collaborative approach that incorporates ecological knowledge and Traditional Owner cultural knowledge.

REVEGETATION REVIEW - RIGHT PLANT, RIGHT WAY

Our work in the revegetation sector has seen DJANDAK lead an important review of the sector with the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP). It was important to us that First Nations voices were clearly heard throughout the review process. Whilst the project was a new area for DJANDAK, we set about doing it our way. We took the first five months of the project to just go and yarn with other First Nations, Traditional Owners Corporations and Aboriginal businesses involved in revegetation to understand the best way to get everyone together to yarn. We decided to hold a workshop where we firstly brought all the groups together to talk about what revegetation means for us and what the current approach to revegetation is. On the following day we brought in representatives from the wider sector, including Catchment Management, Landcare, Government.

Due to the innovative way the workshop was structured, we created a great environment that enabled really productive conversation among all of the partner agencies. Our unique approach included following up with all First Nations participants and representatives on the final day, to gain consent on the content of the review and what learnings from the workshop could be communicated.

This review will look to sit beside a National Strategy (project Phoenix) for revegetation which will provide a clear pathway for Djaara to access opportunities that suit our obligations, Country, and economies, whilst empowering us to lead revegetation and healing Country. The report is a living document which will continue to be developed and shaped 'The Right Way'.

The TAFE Revitalisation Project

The TAFE Revitalisation project collaboration with the Dja Dja Wurrung Group highlights Djaara culture in a contemporary, urban context.



The multi-storey Image of Waa was designed by Wurundjeri, Dja Dja Wurrung and Ngurai Illam Wurrung artist, Mandy Nicholson, is installed on the new Bendigo TAFE Campus.

The multistorey facades, interior and landscaping showcases Djaara art, reflective of the rich culture of Dja Dja Wurrung People and Country, creating a statement of living culture.

The project commenced in 2020, with a significant outcome of the TAFE revitalisation project enabling DJAARA to engage Djaara artists to work collaboratively on four creative projects. Each piece represents a Djaara story and collectively creates a cohesive narrative of Dja Dja Wurrung culture as wholistic, multifaceted and resilient.

The TAFE project contributes to an exciting new cultural precinct that celebrates Djaara culture through sharing these stories with the community.

Artistically designed imagery of Waa applied to the TAFE facade and interior infuses Djaara wisdom as a moiety and vital knowledge keeper into a place of education, creating a cohesive narrative with the neighboring Law Court that features the moiety, Bunjil. Together Waa and Bunjil are the two primary moieties that make up the Dja Dja Wurrung cultural and belief systems.

The 'Layers of Country' detail and symbolises our shared journey, both physically and spiritually. These are the journey's we all share while travelling through Dja Dja Wurrung Country. Physically seeing each of the layers, Forest, Sky, Wind, Water, On and Below Country, helps everyone to understand and look at Country differently and appreciate the complex layers that form these journeys.

Wonyotjarrapil (family/kin) embodies Djaara cultural knowledge that enables People and Country to live in harmony. The imagery illustrates the cultural practice of reciprocal relationships and how Djaara read Country by watching and feeling the spiritual landscape.

Elements of the Dja Dja Wurrung seasonal calendar are showcased creatively through Djaara art, Indigenous planting and materials sourced from Country.

The architectural landscape piece creates a narrative of the Djaara seasonal calendar illustrating the changing landscape through time, including indicators for Dja Dja Wurrung People to hunt and harvest food.

Water Policy Officer

DJANDAK has been involved in a wide range of activities in the Water Policy and planning space.

Our work has provided input into government and local strategic and high-level water policy planning such as:

- North Central Regional Catchment Strategies
- Tullaroop Integrated Catchment Management Plan
- Integrated Water Quality Management Plan (CoGB)
- Aboriginal Water Officer Network participation
- Murray Lower Darling Rivers Indigenous Nations (MLDRIN) delegation
- Seasonal Watering Proposals and Seasonal Outlook
- Sustainable Water Strategies including participation in Environmental Water Reserve Working Group (EWRWG)
- Climate Change Adaption Project
- Upper Teddington Reservoir
- Unregulated Rivers Scoping Project
- Urban Water Strategies
- Continue to feed into Roadmap for Water for Victoria

Djaara have provided vital knowledge and direction to projects and policy in the following:

- Water, Country, and Community project/ application
- Tullaroop and Long Swamp Aboriginal Waterways Assessment (AWA)
- Five Mile Creek AWA (late June 2020)
- Deep Creek Water Assessment (mini-awa conducted by Caitlin, Soph and Aunty Marilyne – funded through Climate Change project)
- Wanyarram Dhelk works, engagement and signage
- Yung Balug and Boort Wetlands Cultural Watering Management Plan (decolonizing EWMP process)
- Water For Aquaculture – Water for TO Economic Development – Yabby Farm (Jarrod)
- Kapa Gatjin Advisory Group – meetings ran at reduced capacity due to covid and limited funding. Engaged in various projects throughout the year such as RCS, Climate Change Adaption, Tullaroop and Long Swamp AWAs, Wanyarram Dhelk interpretive signage and engagement for site design, Deep Creek Streamside Reserve mineral spring design, White Hills Botanical Gardens project

The commitment and goals achieved by our Water Policy Officer role led to securing funding for another two years from the Water for Country and Community grant. This support will enable the delivery of Dja Dja Wurrung values for the Water for County project by developing a strategy and technical solution to allow Djaara to control significant water rights.

Kapa Gatjin Advisory Group

The purpose of the Kapa Gatjin (to know water) Advisory Group is to support the Water Unit at Dja Dja Wurrung Enterprises to implement the Dja Dja Wurrung members Country Plan aspirations for Rivers and Waterways.

The Kapa Gatjin Advisory Group is made up of 10 Dja Dja Wurrung People with interests and knowledge in water, with at least 50% of those being Elders.

DJANDAK has continued to engage the Kapa Gatjin Advisory Group at a reduced capacity, with meetings being conducted either remotely through online meeting tools or where possible in person observing COVID-19 safe conditions.

In total there were 22 Kapa Gatjin meetings held this financial reporting period, with an average of 4 participants per session.


- Eight of the meetings held were dedicated to high level state water planning and policy initiatives such as Regional Catchment Strategies, Seasonal Outlook, and Climate Change Adaptation.
- 14 meetings were dedicated to overseeing the design and implementation of works to various on ground local water project sites such as Wanyarram Dhelk, Huntly Common, White Hills Botanic Gardens, Deep Creek Mineral Springs, and Tullaroop Creek & Long Swamp Aboriginal Waterway Assessment.

Important things to consider given the last 12 months.

The group has been running at a reduced capacity due to COVID-19 with a majority of meetings being held via video/phone call.

Many Kapa Gatjin members have other roles, responsibilities and jobs that have prevented them from attending all meetings.

Most meetings throughout 2021 were capped at 5 members (due to both covid and funding). There are 5 females and 5 males in the group, however equal gender representation at meetings is dependent on individual attendance.



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