



# **Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara**

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## **MEDIA RELEASE: 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of APY Land Rights Act**

2 October 2021

It is with great pride that we join with Traditional Owners to acknowledge the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the groundbreaking Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara Land Rights Act.

The Pitjantjatjara Land Rights Act 1981 (SA) remains unprecedented in Australian land rights history in that it granted inalienable freehold title to its traditional Aboriginal owners.

It did this by creating Anangu Pitjantjatjara (renamed Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara in 2005) as a statutory authority in which title of the land in the far north west of South Australia is vested.

Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara's members are the traditional owners who determine, collectively, how the land is to be managed.

South Australian Premier Steven Marshall said: "The Pitjantjatjara Lands Rights Act came into operation on 2 October 1981 – this remains a historic and very proud achievement of the Tonkin Liberal Government."

"The law acknowledges Anangu ownership over an area of more than 102,000 square kilometres in the north-west of our state," Mr Marshall said.

"The Marshall Government has provided funding to the APY Executive Board to celebrate this important milestone.

"While the celebration has been deferred until early next year due to COVID-19, I look forward to visiting the APY Lands again when they can take place.

"In the meantime, I congratulate the APY administration for its continuing work to keep the people on the lands safe from COVID.

"I have recognised this in the grant to the APY of the Premier's COVID-19 Safe Aboriginal Community Leadership Award."

APY General Manager Richard King said the APY Land Rights Act was one of the first in Australia to be granted. He acknowledged and thanked Labor and Liberal governments for their continued support in the decades since the hand back.

"The Anangu of the far north west of South Australia successfully won their land back on this day 40 years ago," Mr King said.

"While much has happened and life has improved across the Lands, there is still lots to be done. I would like to acknowledge those people who made this happen, while encouraging the next generation to become involved in creating a future for themselves and their families by taking on the leadership challenges and guiding their generation to a better future where their dreams can be achieved through their hard work and dedication."

As announced by APY on 4 August 2021, a festival planned to celebrate the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary this month has had to be postponed due to the ongoing health risks posed by the COVID-19 Delta variant.

The decision to postpone the event was not taken lightly and serves to protect the health and wellbeing of all involved.

The 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary festival, drawing artists and official guests from across the country, has been rescheduled to take place on 10 April 2022. Mr King said funding support for the anniversary, provided by the Marshall Government, was greatly appreciated.

Mr King said planning for the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations would continue with the expectation that vaccination levels would continue to improve during 2021.

“APY looks forward to a marvellous celebration in 2022,” Mr King said.

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