





Goal 5

Celebrate and
build on 50 years
of leadership
and excellence
in Indigenous
studies

Goal 5 performance measurement

Key performance indicator: positive external perception of AIATSIS' continued importance

Review outcomes

Through AIATSIS' engagement during the review process, at the end of 2013–14 the review report had been submitted to the Department of Education. AIATSIS supports the recommendations of the review.

Engagement in AIATSIS 50th anniversary events and activities

3000 people at the 50th anniversary launch event.
45,579 page views of the AIATSIS 50 Years website by 12,445 users between its launch (25 March) and 30 June.

50th anniversary celebrations

Lorrkkon ceremony launches AIATSIS 50th anniversary

AIATSIS launched its 50th anniversary celebrations at Reconciliation Place, Canberra, with an ancient and sacred Lorrkkon ceremony performed by 30 dancers, singers and ceremonial elders from Arnhem Land in the Northern Territory. Australian film icon Jack Thompson was the guest speaker at the event.





The Lorrkkon ceremony was a symbolic replication of the final mourning ceremony held in 2005 to honour Big Bill Neidjie, the keeper of ancient knowledge and the last speaker of the Gagudju language from northern Kakadu. It combined ceremonial dance performance with projected film sequences in an ancient funeral rite practised in Australia's north for thousands of years.

The 2005 ceremony was captured on film and is an immensely important cultural artefact. After the performance and as part of AIATSIS' 50th-year celebrations, the Neidjie family presented the film footage to AIATSIS Chairperson Mick Dodson. AIATSIS will be custodian of the film on behalf of Big Bill Neidjie's descendants.

Opposite page: Actor Jack Thompson speaking at the launch of AIATSIS' 50th anniversary.

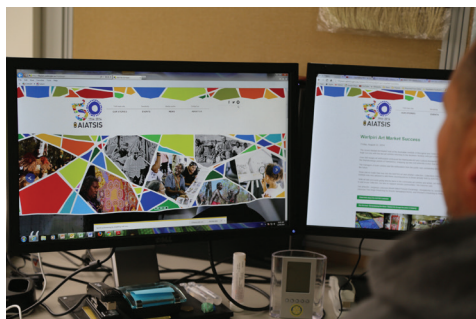
Above: Djakapurra Munyarryun (right) leads dancers from Arnhem Land to commence the Lorrkkon ceremony.

Below left: Binnin people from West Arnhem Land Justin Cooper, Ronald Lamilami, Natasha Nadji, and Dakota Nadji perform in the Lorrkkon ceremony. Natasha prepares to hand film of the final funerary rite of her grandfather, Big Bill Neidjie, to AIATSIS for safekeeping.

Below right: Part of the crowd at Reconciliation Place for the Lorrkkon ceremony and launch of AIATSIS' 50th anniversary.

Photo credits – Andrew Babington





A new website to celebrate

A new website (50years.aiatsis.gov.au) has been created as part of the 50th anniversary program of activities. It features striking imagery, rich textures and abundant audio and video content that creates a sensory experience for users.

Commemorative 50-cent coin released

The Prime Minister of Australia, the Honourable Tony Abbott, launched the AIATSIS commemorative 50-cent circulating coin at Parliament House in June as part of anniversary celebrations. Created in partnership with the Royal Australian Mint, both the circulating coin and a special collectors' edition have been produced.

The collectors' edition features a colour-printed AIATSIS logo. The coin design includes an element of the logo – the shield – that has survived since the beginning of the institute in 1963. The shield is derived from the boomerang totem of the Gu:na:ni (Kunjen) people from the Mitchell River region of the Gulf of Carpentaria. The original shield is an important piece in the AIATSIS Collection.



Telling our 50-year story

AIATSIS: the great keeping place is a DVD produced in 2013–14 to tell the story of AIATSIS as a unique and significant cultural institution. The presenter, Luke Carroll, takes viewers on a journey through every aspect of AIATSIS – the library, archives, audiovisual collection and digitising and research – that highlights its position as a cultural resource and treasure.



Top left: The new look AIATSIS website.

Top right: Actor Luke Carroll guides viewers through the Library stacks in the corporate DVD.

Above: AIATSIS 50th anniversary collectors' edition coin
Credit – The Royal Australian Mint

Planning for the next 50 years

Review of AIATSIS

In June 2013, the former Department of Industry, Innovation, Climate Change, Science, Research and Tertiary Education commissioned an independent review of AIATSIS. The purpose of the review was to provide advice on AIATSIS' contribution to broader government policy objectives, assess its performance against its legislated functions and recommend how its role as a national research institution could be strengthened.

The review was undertaken by ACIL Allen Consulting in partnership with Professor Mark Rose and Dr Mark McMillan. A reference group comprising Professor Ian Anderson (the University of Melbourne and Chair of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Higher Education Advisory Council) and Ms Patricia Turner AM provided advice to the review team. The Department of Education, the portfolio within which AIATSIS now resides, accepted the final report of the review on 4 June 2014.

The AIATSIS Council and executive welcomed the review and AIATSIS agrees with the review recommendations. The review report provides valuable input from AIATSIS' stakeholders and identifies important issues and challenges to address for the future.

AIATSIS received an additional \$3.3 million for one year in the 2014–15 federal budget to continue its digitisation activities, pending a response to the review.

AIATSIS is now working with the Department of Education to develop a strategy that will address the challenges it faces in maintaining and protecting its world-class collection, respond to the review and position the organisation to anticipate and respond to emerging issues over the next 50 years.