From pumpkins to property management plans: developing the organisational capacity of the Jubal Aboriginal Corporation

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Southern Cross University

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WARNING: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are warned that this thesis contains images of deceased persons.
From Pumpkins to Property Management Plans: 
Developing the Organisational Capacity of the Jubal Aboriginal Corporation

Thesis submitted by

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Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of 
Doctor of Philosophy

February 2010
Declaration

I certify that the work presented in this thesis is, to the best of my knowledge and belief, original, except as acknowledged in the text, and that the material has not been submitted, either in whole or in part, for a degree at this or any other university.

I acknowledge that I have read and understood the University’s rules, requirements, procedures and policy relating to my higher degree research award and to my thesis. I certify that I have complied with the rules, requirements, procedures and policy of the University (as they may be from time to time).

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Signature:...............................................................................................................................

Date:
Abstract

Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are increasingly encouraged to develop enterprises, including tourism, as a means to address the chronic disadvantage experienced in many communities. While Governments have instigated programs and policies to assist the entry of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples into the tourism industry, there still remains a deficit of sustainable Indigenous owned and operated ventures. By examining the experiences and activities at one Aboriginal Corporation, this study sought to better understand some of the factors necessary to support the development of such ventures in the Bundjalung Nation, North Eastern NSW. A further objective of the study was to examine the capabilities the communities themselves need to develop. The final objective was to gain insight into the experiences of a Bundjalung community as it engages with capacity and organisational development.

Taking an ethnographic approach and drawing on the principles of Indigenist research, this study was conducted in the Bundjalung Nation of North Eastern NSW. The participants in the study were Board members of the Jubal Aboriginal Corporation, which was formed in 1999. As the Corporation sought to develop its organisational capacity to develop its ideas and aspirations into viable projects and enterprises it engaged in three key activities which were explored during the course of this study. The three key activities were; developing a Shared Responsibility Agreement (an agreement between the Federal Government and the Jubal Community); developing a Property Management Plan; and the process of establishing financial systems in order to meet regulatory obligations. The implications of the study are then analysed in a framework structured to correspond to the three points of entry for capacity development as identified by the United Nations’ Development Program. These points of entry are how the institution develops; how the entity develops and how the individual develops.

By examining the three key activities this thesis highlights the importance of ensuring fundamental organisational capabilities are established in order to support the development of specific enterprises. Also demonstrated in this thesis is the need for Aboriginal Corporations to attend to the development of their organisational systems, structures and plans in addition to specific funded projects.
Additionally, this thesis highlights the fact that despite increased rhetoric about ‘shared responsibility’ Governments are limited in their ability to address their own practises and to properly develop policy and funding flexibility to address the individual needs of each community. This is particularly true with regard to linking community development plans to policy and funding priorities as well as community training needs. This thesis further demonstrates the importance of tailored, place based training and mentoring in areas such as financial record keeping and governance.

Finally, by exploring the particular experience of one community organisation, this thesis demonstrates some of the difficulties and challenges that an Aboriginal Community can encounter as they seek to develop projects and programs and to become economically independent and sustainable.
**Abbreviations**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACC</td>
<td>Area Consultative Committee</td>
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<tr>
<td>AEDO</td>
<td>Aboriginal Enterprise Development Officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AIATSIS</td>
<td>Australian Institute for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARC</td>
<td>Australian Research Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>ATSIC</td>
<td>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission</td>
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<td>CDEP</td>
<td>Community Development Economic Program</td>
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<tr>
<td>CDP</td>
<td>Community Development Plan</td>
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<tr>
<td>COAG</td>
<td>Council of Australian Governments</td>
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<tr>
<td>DA</td>
<td>Development Application</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DSRD</td>
<td>Department of State and Regional Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FAB</td>
<td>First Australian Business</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FaHCSIA</td>
<td>Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FCAATSI</td>
<td>Federal Council for the Advancement of Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FEA</td>
<td>Forest Enterprise Agreements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICC</td>
<td>Indigenous Coordination Centre</td>
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<tr>
<td>ILC</td>
<td>Indigenous Land Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>IP</td>
<td>Intellectual Property</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jubal</td>
<td>Jubal Aboriginal Corporation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LDC</td>
<td>Least Developed Country</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MYOB</td>
<td>Mind Your Own Business</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NSW</td>
<td>New South Wales</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NT</td>
<td>Northern Territory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OIPC</td>
<td>Office of Indigenous Policy Coordination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ORIC</td>
<td>Office of the Registrar of Indigenous Corporations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAR</td>
<td>Participatory Action Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PMP</td>
<td>Property Management Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qld</td>
<td>Queensland</td>
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<tr>
<td>Abbreviation</td>
<td>Full Form</td>
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<tr>
<td>SRA</td>
<td>Shared Responsibility Agreement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TAC</td>
<td>Tabulam Aboriginal Corporation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNDP</td>
<td>United Nations Development Programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNPFII</td>
<td>United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues</td>
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Prologue

One evening early in 2005, I was sitting by a camp fire at Jubal, an Aboriginal community located near Tabulam in North Eastern NSW. We were a mixed group there that night. There were men, women and children of the Jubal community, several students from Southern Cross University who were visiting Jubal for a field trip for their course in Indigenous tourism and myself. We were listening to the Jubal Chairperson, Kevin Torrens, who together with other community members was entertaining us with stories of their life in the area, of growing up Goorie. They were telling us about their culture and of the hardships they had overcome to get to where they are today. One story in particular was very moving and, for me, portrays best the essence of this study.

Kevin told us how in his youth he had worked for the non-Indigenous owner of a property, much of which is now incorporated into the Jubal property. Although Kevin told the story with humour the seriousness of his situation was highlighted when he talked of their payment. For their work on this property they were paid in pumpkins. This story confronted me more than any other I have heard at Jubal for two reasons. First, I encounter so often in my advocacy work the argument that we, as a nation, bear no responsibility for the current poverty experienced by many and the injustices perpetrated against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. People justify this argument by saying that “it all happened so long ago and we are not responsible for what previous generations did”. But how can we deny the truth of a person’s experience? Kevin is in his fifties, thus negating the “previous generations” argument. He is not talking about a distant unenlightened past; this is his personal history and our collective Australian history. We all, as a Nation, as well as the individuals concerned, experience the consequences of past injustices today.

Secondly, the story creates perspective as it was a stark portrayal of how much life has changed for Kevin Torrens and his community. In just one generation they have moved from pumpkins to property management. How has the Jubal community transitioned from being paid pumpkins for labour to now owning this property and aspiring to become economically independent? Thirty years or so ago Kevin Torrens was working the same land, but he had no control, he was excluded, used and paid in pumpkins. Yet, together with his community, Kevin now owns the land. However, in order to realise the community’s aspirations, and under pressure from Government agencies to develop
commercial enterprises, Kevin and his fellow Board members must quickly develop skills they have never before been required to develop. They must become land managers, entrepreneurs and community developers in order to run social programs and start and operate viable enterprises. At the same time they must maintain and incorporate the skills and knowledge they do have about the land they are connected to, the community to which they belong and the ancient culture which they maintain.

The question is then, what factors will assist in this transition to a Western system of entrepreneurship in tourism or any other industry? How can this man who still remembers being told at school that his “brains wouldn’t fit in a matchbox” develop this property into a viable enterprise which can cater to the needs of his community now and into the future? As I sat there listening to Kevin tell the story of his life the question I was left wondering was how do people make this extraordinary leap from subjugation to self-determination? And, importantly, what can be done to support the aspirations of Aboriginal people and to enable and empower instead of exclude and diminish?
Chapter One  Introduction

Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are increasingly being encouraged to engage in developing enterprises in order to address issues related to disadvantage and the lack of engagement in the real economy (Pearson 2004). Tourism is seen to be an industry which offers Indigenous peoples, in Australia and elsewhere, significant opportunities and which can capitalise on their cultures and locations (WTO, 2002). This research was undertaken to develop a better understanding of the factors which would facilitate the sustainable development of Aboriginal owned small to medium tourism enterprises with a particular focus on the Bundjalung region of Northern New South Wales (NSW), Australia.

In this chapter the background to the research is outlined, and the research questions and objectives are identified. Also, a definition of Indigenous tourism is provided and an explanation of terminology used throughout the thesis. Finally, in this chapter the structure of the thesis is outlined.

1.1 Terminology

Defining ‘Indigenous peoples’ is a contentious issue (Gardiner-Garden, 2003; UNFPII, 2004). In Australia, there are two distinct groups of Indigenous peoples. Those referred to as ‘Aboriginal’ are from Mainland Australia (including Tasmania) and those referred to as ‘Torres Strait Islanders’ are another distinct cultural group who come from the islands in the stretch of water between the far north of Queensland and Papua New Guinea. Australian Governments tend to use either the term Indigenous which encompasses all Australian Indigenous peoples or the term ‘Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander’ which acknowledges the difference between the two groups.

These terms have a contested history and definitions have changed depending on the policies of the day (Gardiner-Garden, 2003). I acknowledge that many Indigenous people object to being generically labelled as ‘Indigenous’ or ‘Aboriginal’ as neither of these terms allows for the diversity of cultures and peoples which make up ‘Indigenous’ Australia. I also acknowledge and respect that it is more correct to refer to a specific group by their own name, usually the Nation or clan name. However, this is quite difficult when talking at a National or International level unless referring to a specific group.
In this thesis, therefore, I have used different terms depending on the context. When speaking about Indigenous people at an International or National level I have used the term Indigenous. I have also used the term Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to indicate the Indigenous peoples of Australia as that is a term commonly used in Government documents and more importantly recognises the distinction between the two groups. I also use ‘Aboriginal’ when it is clear I am referring only to Aboriginal peoples. I use the plural ‘peoples,’ where relevant to indicate the diversity of cultures amongst Indigenous peoples.

Finally, when I am talking specifically about the participants of this study I use either the Nation name ‘Bundjalung’ or ‘Goorie’, which is the word most commonly used by the participants in this study to identify themselves. It is a word specific to the North Coast of NSW.

1.2 Defining Australian Indigenous Tourism

In Australia, most States and Territories, as well as the Federal Government, have developed Indigenous tourism policies. The differences in each of these policies reflect the diversity of cultures and locations of Indigenous communities within the States and Territories. The various understandings of Indigenous tourism also reflect the degree of significance, or potential, of Indigenous tourism in the overall tourism industry within the State or Territory, or Australia as a whole. In the Northern Territory (NT), for example, there is a concerted effort to integrate Indigenous tourism into the mainstream tourism industry due to the recognition of Aboriginal cultures and places as an integral component of the image and perception of the NT as a tourism destination. Indigenous cultural tourism in the NT is seen as a key point of differentiation and recognises that “almost all the significant cultural icons of the Territory are on Aboriginal owned land” (NTTC, 2004: 12). Because of this fact, and the fact that Indigenous people comprise 32% of the NT population (ABS, 2008b), a relatively large proportion compared to other States and Territories, the NT has a comprehensive and integrated Indigenous tourism policy.

In contrast however, in New South Wales (NSW) Indigenous tourism is not seen as a key point of differentiation for the State itself. Rather, it is seen as a niche market which can provide opportunities for Aboriginal people (Tourism NSW, 2006b). Consequently, the NSW definition of Indigenous tourism is not as comprehensive as it is in other States and
Territories. It simply says “Aboriginal tourism product is either Aboriginal owned or operated, employs a majority of Aboriginal people, or provides consenting contact with Aboriginal people, culture or land” (Tourism NSW, 2006a:1).

Queensland (QLD) provides yet another example, where there is recognition that Indigenous cultures can be a point of differentiation, but there is also a focus on developing businesses as viable enterprises, both cultural and mainstream, which can help bring employment and economic opportunities to Indigenous people. Tourism Queensland seeks to integrate Indigenous tourism with the mainstream and approaches Indigenous tourism as a holistic proposition which provides opportunities beyond cultural tourism products. For example, the QLD definition states that Indigenous tourism (Tourism Queensland, 2004: 6):

- Presents Indigenous people as vibrant participants in Australian society;
- Is sensitive to the culture and beliefs of Indigenous People;
- Is a means to creating wealth for Indigenous People;
- Integrates seamlessly with the mainstream industry and;
- Targets a broad range of market niches with a similarly broad range of products.

There is a similar understanding of Indigenous tourism in Victoria and Western Australia (WA), both of which have initiated programs to help develop the industry. For example, in Victoria the Koori Business Network in Victoria (Tourism Victoria, 2006), and in WA the Western Australia Indigenous Tourism Operators Committee (WAITOC) (Tourism WA, 2006).

While these policies indicate that the meaning of “Indigenous tourism” can differ from State to State, there are certain key principles integral to a comprehensive understanding of Indigenous tourism. Namely, a proper recognition that Indigenous peoples are active in the industry at all levels; that Indigenous peoples are developing and controlling tourism businesses whether the product is based on a cultural aspect, or whether it is an Indigenous person delivering a “mainstream” product; and, that there is a great diversity of products and pathways to engagement in the industry.

In this study, Indigenous tourism is understood to include Indigenous peoples participating in the tourism industry at all levels, as employees; investors; joint venture partners and
who provide Indigenous cultural tourism products as well as mainstream tourism products. In addition, Indigenous tourism is seen as presenting Indigenous peoples as vibrant participants in all aspects of Australian society; is sensitive to the culture and beliefs of Indigenous peoples; is a means to creating wealth for Indigenous peoples; integrates seamlessly with the mainstream industry and; targets a broad range of market niches with a similarly broad range of products (ATSIC, 1997; Tourism Queensland, 2004).

1.3 Background to the Research

Tourism has been promoted for many years in Australia as a pathway to economic development for Indigenous peoples (Altman, 2001; ATSIC, 1997; Australian Government, 2004). This drive to develop Indigenous tourism can be seen to have two key aspects. First, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have interesting and diverse cultures which can provide tourists with a unique experience for which there is a perceived demand (Altman, 1993; ATSIC, 1997). Second, that developing Indigenous tourism enterprises is expected to bring a wide range of economic and socio-cultural benefits to individuals and communities (Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody, 1991).

The first point, that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians have interesting and diverse cultures recognises the uniqueness of the Indigenous cultures in Australia. It is estimated that at the time of colonisation in 1788, there were over 250 distinct language groups, with approximately two thirds of those languages being extinct or under threat today (Macquarienet, 2008). It is this diversity and expression of languages and cultures that gives Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples their unique place within the fabric of the country and which can be such a valuable contribution to the tourism industry. However, despite their diversity, Indigenous peoples represent only an estimated 2.5% of the Australian population (ABS, 2008a). Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are also geographically dispersed and live all over Australia, with 32% living in major cities, 43% in regional areas and 26% living in remote and very remote locations (ABS, 2008a). The highest population of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples is in NSW and QLD (29% and 28% respectively). However, while only 13% of Aborigines live in the Northern Territory this represents 32% of the NT population as opposed to NSW, where they constitute only 2% of the population (ABS, 2008a).
Although Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples represent a small proportion of the Australian population they are disproportionately represented in most indicators of disadvantage. Overcoming this disadvantage is the second key aspect of the drive to develop Indigenous tourism in Australia. One key indicator of disadvantage, for example, is that Indigenous life expectancy is ten to twelve years less than for non-Indigenous people (ABS, 2009c). Economically, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are also disadvantaged with 45% of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the lowest income group in Australia (SCRGSP, 2007). Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians earn only 65% of the non-Indigenous income and are less likely to be employed, with an unemployment rate of 16% (SCRGSP, 2009). There is a known strong link between unemployment and wellbeing with unemployment linked to increased poverty, poor health and high levels of depression, anxiety and suicide (SCRGSP, 2005). The level of Indigenous self-employment is also comparatively low at 6% compared to 17% of non-Indigenous people (SCRGSP, 2009).

It is this lack of economic development, employment and exclusion from the mainstream economy which has driven policy makers and others to encourage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to engage in the tourism industry (ATSIC, 1997; Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody, 1991). However, despite this encouragement evidence to support the argument that tourism can bring economic development to poor communities has shortcomings (Chok et al., 2007; Goodwin, 2006; Roe et al., 2004). At an international level, arguments supporting tourism development are often founded on evidence gained at a macro level such as measuring the percentage of Gross Domestic Product (GDP), foreign exchange revenues, or visitor arrivals (Goodwin, 2006; Roe et al., 2004). At a more local level, in Australia, there is often confusion about the level of real demand for Indigenous product (Tremblay, 2006). Figures to support the level of demand are extrapolated from general tourism forecasts and from market surveys of international visitors who express a desire to participate in an Indigenous experience while in Australia (TRA, 2006, 2007b, 2008). There are claims that the demand is not as high as commonly thought (Altman, 1993; Ryan and Huyton, 2000), and that the shortage of supply could be attributed more to overstating demand, rather than a lack of supply (Boyle, 2002).

Nevertheless, despite the lack of concrete evidence pointing to a full understanding of the market, there are several benefits espoused to communities engaging in tourism. These
include economic benefits such as establishing economic self-sufficiency and increased income to the community (NCSTT, 1994; WTO, 2002). These benefits are in addition to socio-cultural benefits, such as reviving culture and promoting better understanding about Indigenous cultures (Sofield and Birtles, 1996). Although these benefits are expected, and despite decades of activity around developing Indigenous tourism ventures, there is still a lack of suitable development resources in Australia. Research shows that public sector initiatives to support Indigenous tourism development have been poorly coordinated, inconsistent and have not generally helped those for whom they were intended (Buultjens et al., 2005; Whitford et al., 2001).

Additionally, there is little understanding of Indigenous entrepreneurship in general (Foley, 2000; Hindle et al., 2005; IBR, 2003; Lindsay, 2005) and consequently little is understood about how best to support community endeavours to develop enterprises. Criticism of existing research is that it has mostly been written for Governments and lacks theory and theory testing (Hindle et al., 2005). Also of great importance is the lack of Indigenous perspectives presented in Indigenous tourism literature (Lindsay, 2005).

Studies in other countries have examined success factors for Indigenous enterprise development (Cornell and Kalt, 2004; Hindle and Lansdowne, 2005). There is some debate however as to whether these studies have relevance for the Australian context. Cornell (2006), from the Harvard Project, claims that whilst there are differences the similarities are significant enough to draw some lessons. Dodson and Smith (2003) agree and draw on the Harvard Project work to inform their own studies on governance (which they state is essential for successful organisational development). However, Finlayson (2007) disagrees with the extent that comparisons can be drawn with the Australian context. Sullivan goes further and criticises the methodology of the Harvard Project and cautions against drawing too many conclusions for the Australian context (Sullivan, 2006).

What is apparent, from existing literature, is the need to understand more about the development of Indigenous community-owned and operated tourism enterprises. Recent research by Finlayson (2007) provides an Australian context by studying organisations which are deemed successful. These organisations are not tourism organisations, but represent a cross section of sectors. The usefulness of that research is that it examines organisations which have been in existence for some time; however the research is limited
by its time frame and the fact that participants are self reporting on past successes, rather than examining the organisation in its developmental stages. Dodson and Smith (2003) also give some insight into measures that need to be in place to ensure good governance which is essential for development of the organisation. However, there are still deficiencies in our understanding of how best to support Indigenous organisations which specifically aim to develop tourism enterprises. Also lacking is research that considers the particular location and context in which the development is taken place.

Underlying all these aspects of Indigenous enterprise development is the need for effective capacity development. Capacity development is defined as the ability of individuals, organizations, and societies to successfully manage their own affairs; to perform functions, solve problems and set their own development goals (Fukuda-Parr, 2003, Nair, 2003, World Bank Institute, n.d.). Although capacity development is can be seen as a contested process (Fukuda-Parr, 2003), linking capacity development principles with enterprise development principles can lead to more sustainable development (Cornell, 2006; Cornell and Kalt, 2004). In Australia, capacity development is increasingly being linked to Indigenous policy development as indicated, in particular, by the Australian Parliament’s House of Representative Committee on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs inquiry into Capacity development in Indigenous Communities (HRSCATSIA, 2004). While capacity building is increasingly seen as important, what that means in practice is still undefined.

This research was therefore undertaken in response to gaps in the literature, which included:

1. A lack of knowledge about the factors necessary for developing Indigenous tourism enterprises;
2. A lack of knowledge about the experience of Indigenous communities in trying to develop Indigenous tourism enterprises;
3. A lack of study into the needs of Indigenous communities as they develop tourism enterprises;
4. A lack of study into the type of capabilities and the capacity needed to ensure successful tourism enterprise development.
1.4 Research Questions and Objectives

The overall aim of this study is to gain a better insight into the needs of Indigenous communities as they attempt to build capacity to develop tourism enterprises. This study has focused in particular on the Bundjalung Nation of Northern NSW. This is a region which has largely been ignored in existing research about Indigenous tourism development. This study aims to rectify the paucity of location specific research as the diversity of cultures and geographic locations represented by Indigenous Australia suggests that a generic approach will not adequately address factors specific to each location. A further aim of the study is to address the absence, in the Indigenous tourism literature, of the voices and experiences of Indigenous peoples themselves, particularly those from NSW.

Aim of the study:

To investigate the factors which contribute to the ability of Aborigines to develop community-owned and operated tourism enterprises in the Bundjalung Nation of Northern NSW.

Objectives:

The objectives of the research are:

- To examine the factors necessary to support Bundjalung communities to develop tourism enterprises;
- To determine the key capabilities that Bundjalung communities need in order to develop sustainable tourism enterprises;
- To gain insight into the experience of a Bundjalung community as it engages with developing the capacity necessary to develop a tourism enterprise.

1.5 Methodology

This study was undertaken using a qualitative research methodology and was particularly guided by the principles of Indigenist research as espoused by Australian Indigenous researchers (Atkinson, 2001; Foley, 2003b; Martin, 2001a, 2001b, 2002; Nakata, 1998, n.d.; Rigney, 1996, 1997, 1999, 2001). Primarily, this study was ethnographic with
participant observation being the key method for obtaining evidence. The methodology is explained in full in Chapter Three.

1.6 Limitations

This study has several limitations. Firstly, the participants were all Board members of that organisation. All participants, except one, were men. The study is limited therefore to the perceptions and experiences of the key community decision makers, but who are not representative from a gender or generational perspective.

Additionally, this study involved active participation by both the participants and the researcher who intended to create change. Therefore, the circumstances of the study were not static and the community itself changed and evolved during the course of this study. The results therefore highlight the capacity and development of the Jubal community at a particular time. In the context of this particular study this was seen as a positive outcome of the research process. However, it does mean that using the same process to replicate the study could result in quite different observations.

Another limitation is that this study depended very strongly on personal relationships and the skills of the people involved at the time. It is unlikely that another researcher would have the same experience or have interacted in an identical way.

The study focused on one Aboriginal community, which could be seen as a limitation. It is important to note when considering these limitations and the ability to replicate a study that a key principle of good research with Indigenous peoples is that each community must be approached as unique. Due to the diversity of cultures within Indigenous Australia, a “one size fits all” approach does not work. Therefore, it should not be expected that what works in one community will work in other Indigenous communities and this is recognised in this study. However, the research does provide a valuable case study from which others can draw their own conclusions to build on our experiences and to investigate these factors elsewhere.

1.7 Research Context

The participants of this study were from the Jubal Aboriginal Corporation in the Bundjalung Nation in Northern NSW, Australia. The community is centred around a
property also called Jubal near Tabulam. The corporation structure is relatively new, having been established in 1999, after obtaining the land on which it is situated. A comprehensive background to the Jubal Community, its location, origins and current operations is detailed in Chapter Four.

1.8 Significance of the Research

This study will contribute to a greater understanding of the support necessary to enable the successful development of Aboriginal tourism enterprises. The findings of this study will be particularly relevant to Aboriginal communities and individuals who wish to develop a tourism enterprise. The study will also provide useful information to Government departments and agencies who are involved in policy and development or service delivery to Aboriginal organisations and communities. Also, academics who work in the field of Indigenous tourism and community development will find the study relevant.

Aboriginal Communities

Aboriginal communities who wish to develop tourism enterprises need to have a thorough understanding of the industry into which they are entering and a clear recognition of the many issues they will need to address in order to develop successful businesses. These issues can range from understanding the impact of tourism on the community to understanding the training requirements needed across all aspects of the business. The value of this study is not limited to Indigenous tourism development. There is relevance to all who wish to develop Indigenous enterprises across all sectors. The study will highlight the factors that have contributed to the successful development of the Jubal community and their experience will help other communities address similar issues.

Government Agencies

Governments play a key role in Indigenous economic development. This study will provide information which will assist government agencies to develop effective Indigenous tourism development policy. The study will also assist government agencies to better target service delivery programs.
Tourism Academics and Practitioners

This study will assist tourism researchers by providing insight into the experiences of Aboriginal people as they attempt to develop their tourism business. This study also contributes a tested methodology which incorporates Indigenist research principles with other methodologies such as ethnography and participatory action research. This methodology adds to the body of literature which identifies best practice in cross-cultural research involving Indigenous and non-Indigenous researchers.

1.9 Structure of the Thesis

This thesis is presented in nine chapters. In this first chapter an outline of the study, its objectives and the significance and limitations of the research is presented.

Chapter Two – Literature Review

The context for the study is presented in Chapter Two. Initially, the macro view that tourism is a pathway to economic development and poverty reduction is discussed. Following on from this macro view, the issues surrounding Indigenous tourism development in particular, are examined, with a focus on some of the barriers faced by Indigenous communities in developing tourism enterprises. Having made the case for why tourism development is the background to this study, the factors necessary for successful Indigenous entrepreneurship in general are examined. However, it is considered that entrepreneurship, in a community context, can only take place when certain capacities are developed which leads the discussion into the context of community and capacity development. Indigenous community development is also greatly influenced by the policy environment and therefore an overview of the policy environment at a Federal level, in the time period relevant to this study, 2004–2007, is presented.

Chapter Three – Methodology

The methodology used to conduct this study is explained in Chapter Three, which commences with an explanation of the need for an emancipatory research paradigm which contributes to the empowerment and inclusion of Indigenous peoples. In this chapter I explain how I interpreted the principles of good Indigenous research and incorporated them into a process which I called An Indigenist Process of Inquiry. The chapter is structured according to this process which provides a framework with which to describe the process of conducting the research, the issues considered and how I was situated in the research.
Chapter Four: Background to Jubal  
The Jubal Aboriginal Corporation is introduced in this chapter. The location of Jubal is explained, as well as the history of both the physical place and the corporation. Also described in this section is the structure of Jubal, its current operations and its future vision. The research participants are also introduced in this chapter. Finally, the link between Jubal’s intentions to develop tourism ventures and the three key activities which form the substance of the results is made in Chapter Four. These key activities were the areas where the most energy and resources were directed during the course of the study. The first activity is developing a Shared Responsibility Agreement (SRA) which is an agreement between the Jubal Community and the Federal Government. The second activity is developing a Property Management Plan (PMP). The PMP was initiated by the Indigenous Land Council (ILC) and was instigated to facilitate targeted funding by the ILC. The third activity is the process of establishing financial systems in order to meet regulatory requirements.

Chapter Five – Developing a Shared Responsibility Agreement  
The activity of developing an SRA with the Federal Government is described in this chapter. The intention of an SRA is to facilitate better funding arrangements, and outline mutual obligations between the two parties. The research participants’ experiences of engaging with Government, which sets the context for the SRA, are first outlined in this Chapter. The process of entering into an SRA is then described followed by the outcomes of the SRA.

Chapter Six – Developing a Property Management Plan  
The process of developing a PMP is described in this chapter. The PMP was initiated by the Indigenous Land Council (ILC) and was instigated to facilitate targeted funding by the ILC. An overview of the planning already undertaken by Jubal is outlined followed by a description of the PMP process. This is followed by some observations of the PMP report. In this chapter, the Jubal community’s experience of how the process was instigated is described as well as their experience of engaging in the process. Finally, outcomes of the PMP are discussed.

Chapter Seven – Achieving Financial Compliance  
The process of obtaining financial compliance with the Office of the Registrar of Indigenous Corporations (ORIC) is discussed in Chapter Seven. This activity was a significant part of this study, both in terms of time and impact. The background to engaging in work on the accounts with Jubal is first explained followed by a detailed description of the activity related to developing proper
accounts systems. Following on from this, the impact of being ‘non-compliant’ on the Jubal Board members is discussed before finally considering the implications of achieving compliance for Jubal.

**Chapter Eight – Analysis** Having presented the results of this study in the previous four chapters, in Chapter Eight the implications of the study are drawn together and analysed. The chapter has been structured to correspond with the points of entry for capacity development as identified by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The development of Jubal from three levels is considered: the broad enabling environment, the institutional level and the individual level. Structuring the results in this way enables the results to be presented with clarity and facilitates clear identification of the key focus of Jubal’s development attention.

**Chapter Nine – The Conclusion** In Chapter Nine, conclusions are drawn from the study and related back to the aims and objectives of the research project. In particular, factors necessary to consider when developing enterprise in the Bundjalung Nation are highlighted particularly as they pertain to Government policies and practices. Also discussed in this chapter are factors that Bundjalung communities themselves need to address in order to develop sustainable enterprises. Finally, conclusions are presented about the Jubal Board members’ experiences of capacity development.
Chapter Two   Literature Review

2.0   Introduction

Indigenous peoples around the world have long been encouraged to engage with the tourism industry which is thought to provide a pathway to greater economic and community development (WTO, 2002). In turn, economic and community development is expected to improve the quality of life for Indigenous peoples, address the impoverished state afflicting many and, in the Australian context, diminish dependence on Government transfers (Altman, 1993; eTurboNews, 2005; WTO, 2002). In some Australian States and Territories Indigenous tourism is also seen to be a point of differentiation that can bring benefits to the tourism industry as a whole (NTTC, 2004). These issues are considered in this chapter which sets the context for the study. A broad understanding of tourism as a potential avenue of development for Indigenous peoples is introduced in this chapter. Also considered in this chapter are the factors necessary to ensure successful enterprise development and capacity development within Indigenous communities.

This chapter is presented in six sections. Firstly, in Section 2.1 an overview of the argument that engaging in tourism can lead to positive economic development is provided. The discussion in Section 2.2 follows on from this macro view by discussing Indigenous tourism and Indigenous economic development specifically. The key factors necessary for Indigenous tourism development are outlined and then in Section 2.2.1 the varied and complex costs and benefits are identified that Indigenous communities, in Australia and elsewhere, may encounter when engaging in tourism. Following on from these costs and benefits some of the conditions necessary to enable Indigenous tourism development are also identified. An overview of the Australian Indigenous tourism market, from both a supply and demand perspective is presented in Sections 2.2.3 and 2.2.4 which explains the background behind the push for greater Indigenous involvement in the tourism industry. An examination of the particular barriers Indigenous people face when developing tourism enterprises is then presented in Section 2.2.5.

Having made the case for why this study is being conducted in the context of tourism, in Section 2.3 the discussion moves into understanding more about the development of Indigenous tourism enterprises, and reviews the characteristics of successful Indigenous
entrepreneurship. In particular, the results from research undertaken in Australia, North America and Canada which identify the factors necessary for successful development of Indigenous enterprises in those countries are discussed. A conclusion is made in this section which suggests that while factors relating to the success of Indigenous enterprises are important they are not the whole picture, and that communities must also link enterprise development to broader capacity development in order to succeed.

Capacity development is therefore discussed in Section 2.4 where an overview of the concept and theory of capacity development is presented. In Section 2.4.1, the particular characteristics of capacity development necessary for successful enterprise development are considered, followed by a consideration of how to develop capacity in Section 2.4.2. Finally, in section 2.4.3 the implications of successful capacity development for Indigenous Australians are considered.

As well as developing the capacity of individuals and communities, sustainable development is also dependent on a policy environment that creates opportunities for development. Therefore, in section 2.5, an overview of the Federal Indigenous policy environment for the time period relevant to this study is outlined, including a review of the significant policy changes which occurred during the course of this study.

The focus is brought back to Indigenous tourism in Section 2.6, with a brief look at the Indigenous tourism policy environment at all Government levels in Australia.

## 2.1 Tourism as a Tool for Development

Tourism is claimed to be one of the world’s largest industries generating significant amounts of revenue which are said to bring great benefits to those communities and individuals who choose to engage with the industry (WTO, 2002). Tourism is also promoted as a powerful and dynamic industry which can help alleviate poverty, enhance cultural pride, reduce economic vulnerability through diversification, and which also supports the development of skills and entrepreneurial capacity (WTO, 2002). Most of these claims are predicated on the belief that poverty reduction will occur where there is economic growth, which will trickle-down to the poor, and that tourism can be an effective vehicle for such growth (Roe, 2006).
The complex and multi-faceted tourism industry is presented by some, particularly those working at an International level, such as the World Tourism Organisation (WTO), to be a panacea for poverty reduction (WTO, 2002). The WTO, in making this claim, directly addresses the Millennium Development Goals\(^1\) and builds on the WTO’s 1999 *Code of Ethics*, which stresses the importance of tourism as a means to alleviate poverty (Goodwin, 2006). The WTO promotes particular characteristics of tourism which, it is thought, provide opportunities for economic growth in economically undeveloped communities (WTO, 2002). One such beneficial characteristic is that the consumer travels to the destination, thereby providing an opportunity to sell additional goods and services, such as arts and crafts, in addition to accommodation and tours. Another characteristic is the fact that tourism can offer labour intensive and small scale opportunities which can also promote gender equality through increased employment of women (WTO, 2002). A further attribute of tourism considered important in addressing poverty is the location of tourism activities which can occur in remote areas where other economic opportunities are limited (WTO, 2002). Indeed, according to the WTO (2002), tourists are often attracted to remote areas because of their cultural, wildlife and landscape attributes; the same cultures, wildlife and landscapes that are frequently inhabited by the poor, and who are, therefore, in an advantageous position to capitalise on those assets.

This final point is an example of the complexity and contentiousness of such poverty reduction claims as it ignores the fact that the vast majority of the world’s poorest people do not live in remote areas abundant with pristine landscapes and wildlife. In fact, they live in urban areas (Chok *et al.*, 2007). The UN estimates that the urban population in the developing world will double to 4 billion in 30 years (Chok *et al.*, 2007:49). According to the UN the increase in population in developing countries means that by 2033 one in every three people will live in urban slums (Chok *et al.*, 2007:49). These figures challenge the assumption that opening up pristine landscapes will have poverty alleviation benefits for significant numbers of poor people and indicate the complexity of attributing tourism with the ability to reduce poverty.

\(^1\) The Millennium Development Goals (MDGS), are eight time bound and quantifiable goals arising from the Millennium Declaration in 2000. They are a commitment by the world’s leaders to halve poverty by 2015.
In reality, it is difficult to ascertain the effectiveness of tourism in addressing poverty because there is very little data to demonstrate the link (Chok et al., 2007; Goodwin, 2006; Roe et al., 2004). Traditional tourism indicators focus on quantifying the macro level, such as visitor arrivals and foreign exchange revenues. These instruments are ineffective measurements of the impact of tourism on local economic development and poverty reduction (Goodwin, 2005, 2006; Roe et al., 2004). However, these instruments can provide some useful data which support the argument that tourism can be a means to alleviate poverty, for example, measuring the contribution of tourism to GDP. In developed countries tourism accounts for 3-10% of GDP and in developing countries up to 40% (WTO cited in Sofield et al., 2004). Additionally, of the 12 countries that are home to 80% of the world’s poor, tourism is growing in all but one (WTO cited in Sofield et al., 2004). Further, of the countries that were identified as LDCs in 1971, one has evolved from that status with tourism credited with making a significant contribution (Sofield et al., 2004). Another four countries have also made progress towards leaving their LDC status behind and tourism has been identified as one of the most significant contributing factors (Goodwin, 2006). Recognising the contribution of tourism to poverty reduction and development, in 2005, the WTO, together with the heads of other significant UN agencies, signed the Declaration on Tourism and the Millennium Development Goals. In support of this declaration, the WTO stated that “developing countries received $177 billion in tourism receipts in 2004 which was the primary source of foreign exchange earnings in 46 of the 49 poorest nations” (eTurboNews, 2005).

Despite these figures, definitive links between tourism and economic development for poor communities are not well understood (Goodwin, 2006). Sofield et al. (2004) make the point that linking tourism to poverty reduction is a relatively recent discourse which has gained more significance since the 1990s when development assistance agencies, foreign governments and others chose to focus more sharply on poverty reduction (see also Hall, 2007; Scheyvens, 2007). Often referred to as pro-poor tourism, such a focus has led to initiatives such as the Pro-poor Partnership which has attempted to provide evidence of poverty reduction through tourism and develop an approach to tourism that will bring net benefits to the poor (Ashley and Haysom, 2004; Goodwin, 2005). The theory behind pro-poor tourism is that tourism must move beyond the concept that poverty reduction can be achieved simply by relying on an economic trickle-down effect and look at integrating strategies that achieve real differences (Goodwin, 2005). Some of the benefits that pro-
poor tourism strategies are expected to create are infrastructure gains, capacity building, training and empowerment (Goodwin, 2005). The pro-poor approach also promotes livelihood diversification whereby tourism is promoted as an additional activity rather than replacing existing livelihood activities (Goodwin, 2005). To be counted as successful, however, communities themselves have to be able to identify the benefits they experience from the tourism, and how their quality of life has improved (Goodwin, 2005).

A pro-poor approach to tourism is one measure that highlights the need to integrate an active poverty reduction strategy with tourism development, rather than rely on the top down approach which presumes that if tourism contributes to economic growth, then the poor will eventually receive the benefits (Goodwin, 2006; Roe et al., 2003, 2004). Essentially, however, the success of any poverty reduction initiative depends on its ability to address structural inequalities as well as include greater participation of the poor in assessing the impact of tourism on a whole range of livelihood impacts (Chok et al., 2007).

Further, a distinction must be made between tourism strategies adopting a pro-poor focus and tourism being promoted as an appropriate strategy for poverty alleviation (Chok et al., 2007). Tourism with a pro-poor focus means that tourism businesses may have policies or practices that provide some benefits to the poor, but their purpose is not to specifically reduce poverty; whereas, poverty alleviation through tourism strategy intends to end poverty amongst an identified group (Chok et al., 2007). This distinction is particularly relevant when considering Indigenous tourism in Australia. The pro-poor tourism discourse, like much of the literature linking development and tourism, is focused primarily on the economic development of poor countries. For example, the MDGs and the WTO document *Tourism and Poverty Alleviation* (WTO, 2002) deal specifically with the LDCs. The theory of tourism and economic development for poverty reduction does not tend to consider issues of an economically under-developed group within a developed society such as is the case for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in Australia.

### 2.2 Indigenous Tourism and Indigenous Economic Development

There is no doubt that Australian Indigenous peoples, as a discrete group, are economically under-developed, and many are experiencing real poverty. The population of Aboriginal
and Torres Strait Islanders is estimated by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) to be about 2.5% of the Australian population, and growing (ABS, 2008b).

Most social and economic indicators show that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are worse off than the non-Indigenous population and many live in relative poverty (ABS, 2002; HREOC, 2005; SCRGSP, 2005, 2007, 2009). Poverty in Australia is measured not solely on an income per capita basis, as it is for the LDCs, but also by access to publicly provided services such as health and education as well as the ability of individual citizens to participate fully in the systems of government and economies (Saunders, 2005).

The poverty and disadvantage experienced by Indigenous peoples in Australia is increasingly well documented (see for example: HREOC, 2005; Russell-Mundine et al., 2006; SCRGSP, 2005). Indigenous peoples have a life expectancy some 10 - 12 years less than other Australians (ABS, 2009c); they are more likely to suffer from diseases; they earn 65% of the average Australian income; twice as many Indigenous infants die before their first birthday than non-Indigenous babies and Indigenous people are 5 to 15 times (depending on location) more likely to be murdered (SCRGSP, 2005, 2007, 2009). The unemployment rate for Indigenous peoples is three times higher than non-Indigenous people, with a participation rate in the labour force of only 57% compared to 65% for non-Indigenous people (ABS, 2010, SCRGSP, 2005, 2007, 2009). Only 6% of Indigenous people are self employed, compared to 16% of non-Indigenous people (ABS, 2009b) and of those only 2% are employers (HREOC, 2005; SCRGSP, 2007). These statistics change with location, with those living in very remote areas being much worse off than those who live in major cities.

These statistics are only a snapshot of the many available indicators which paint a picture of deprivation experienced by many Indigenous peoples all around Australia (see for example, SCRGSP, 2009). In short, many Indigenous peoples are not experiencing the same standard of living as other Australian citizens; many are struggling with day to day life and are excluded from the mainstream economy (Pearson and Kostakidis - Lianos, 2009).

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2 In 2009, the ABS changed its methodology for measuring the life expectancy gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people. Previously the commonly accepted figure was 17 years.
2004). The causes of this exclusion are commonly thought to include factors such as the ongoing effects of colonisation, racism, conflict, ill thought out and funded programs, as well as the effects of alcohol and other drugs within communities (Pearson, 2006; Pearson and Kostakidis - Lianos, 2004). The solutions to these issues and to ending the extreme disadvantage experienced by so many Indigenous peoples are contested and create a considerable amount of debate. However, one area that has gained ascendancy as a solution to alleviating poverty is the area of economic development, specifically the development of Indigenous enterprises (Pearson and Kostakidis - Lianos, 2004; Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody, 1991).

In recent times, Federal Governments, both Coalition and Labor, have progressively encouraged economic development by Indigenous communities and individuals as a pathway to greater independence, increased employment opportunities and less reliance on Government transfers. Promoting economic independence is not a new train of thought in Indigenous affairs, but perhaps the impetus has changed since the early 1990s. Certainly, the issue of Aboriginal economic development was a key recommendation arising from the 1991 Royal Commission into Deaths in Custody (Royal Commission) which highlighted the need for greater economic opportunities for Aboriginal people (Birdsall-Jones et al., 2007; Nielsen, 2007; Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody, 1991). When the Federal Government released its second stage response to the Royal Commission’s recommendations, policies to stimulate socio-economic opportunities were integral to its response, with tourism promoted as a particularly viable option for Indigenous communities. As a result, in 1992, the National Indigenous Tourism Strategy was launched (Altman, 1993). The push for greater Aboriginal involvement in the tourism industry, however, does predate the Royal Commission and can, perhaps, be dated at 1965, when the first comprehensive study into the Australian tourism industry was undertaken (Altman, 1993, 2001; Whitford et al., 2001).

However, the Royal Commission did result in concerted efforts towards specifically encouraging Indigenous people to enter the tourism industry. The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC), for example, developed a comprehensive tourism industry strategy in direct response to the Royal Commission’s recommendation that an Indigenous tourism strategy was essential to increase employment and assist in strengthening cultural values (ATSIC, 1997). During this time, alongside policy
development, studies were also undertaken to determine the willingness of Indigenous communities to engage in tourism enterprises (Birdsall-Jones et al., 2007); and funding was provided to support various tourism strategies which promoted the sustainable development of tourism enterprises, including the ATSIC developed *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Tourism Strategy* (Birdsall-Jones et al., 2007). However, despite this significant level of activity, figures show that between 1998 and 2003 only 1% of tourism trip activity, in Australia, involved Indigenous culture (Birdsall-Jones et al., 2007).

It is the low Indigenous participation rate in the tourism industry and the perceived potential for Indigenous tourism activity which has led to continued efforts to develop such enterprises at both a State and Federal level. Most States and Territories have introduced policies which aim to develop and encourage Indigenous tourism. The Federal Government has also continued its efforts to emphasise Indigenous tourism, including a specific focus in its 2004 *White Paper on Tourism* (Australian Government, 2004). The rationale for this policy direction came from Australian Tourism Council (ATC) research which asserted that the tourism industry is only meeting half of the market demand for Indigenous tourism experiences (ATC, 2003). The Government also stated that tourism offers the “prospect of a pathway to economic independence” (Australian Government, 2004: 31).

Despite these assertions, the empirical evidence linking tourism to poverty reduction is as limited in Australia as it is at an international level but similar development arguments are mounted to support the case for developing Indigenous tourism in Australia as those made at the international level. Similar to the WTO’s assertion that remoteness, cultural, wildlife and landscape attributes can draw tourists to a particular destination (WTO, 2002), tourism has been promoted to be an especially desirable industry for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to engage in. The location of many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, and their unique cultures, is presumed to provide market advantages (Altman, 1993). Caution should be shown however when highlighting these particular market advantages because tourism can also be promoted as an advantageous industry for Indigenous communities, particularly remote and isolated ones, due more to the absence of other commercially viable options, rather than any specific market advantages that communities may possess (Altman, 2001).
Whether the real extent of the market is well understood or not, what is clear from policy documents, and research conducted over many years, is that many hold a great deal of hope that tourism will benefit Indigenous peoples, both in Australia, and elsewhere. While the available evidence does not support a clear position on the effectiveness of tourism development in community development and its contribution to improved engagement in the market economy and a reduction in poverty alleviation, an analysis of potential costs and benefits is possible. The potential costs and benefits, for Indigenous peoples, of engaging in the tourism industry are considered in the next section of this chapter.

2.2.1 The Potential Costs and Benefits of Indigenous Tourism

There is insufficient research on the economic and social contributions of tourism to Indigenous communities to enable definitive conclusions about its contribution to community development. It can be difficult to quantify the non-economic costs of engaging in the industry and analysis can be hindered by problems of disaggregating the impacts of tourism into discrete cultural, economic, social and environmental impacts (Altman, 1989, 1993). The tourism industry can present unique challenges as it often requires people to share their homes, land and culture, all of which are highly sensitive and vulnerable (Altman, 1993). For Indigenous communities a particular vulnerability can result because the tradeoffs between environmental and cultural considerations and commercial considerations are usually more closely connected than for other groups (Altman, 1993). Even where there are economic benefits to Indigenous peoples, the costs may be very high and include loss of lifestyle, increased cost of living, greater competition for the use of community assets and disruption to lifestyle as well as environmental degradation of traditional lands (Altman, 1989; NCSTT, 1994). Therefore, communities must carefully consider the implications of developing tourism. Table 2.1 presents a summary of key benefits and costs that Indigenous communities may encounter when engaging in tourism. These costs and benefits are possible outcomes, and may not be present in all situations and in all countries.
Table 2.1 Benefits and Costs of Indigenous Tourism

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Economic Benefits</th>
<th>Economic Costs</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Assists in the establishment of economic self-sufficiency;</td>
<td>• Creates dependency on the global economy;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Provides employment opportunities;</td>
<td>• Creates unequal employment conditions;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Provides earnings from selling goods, service or casual labour;</td>
<td>• Introduces a consumer culture into societies which are not based on the economic power of the individual;</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Provides dividends and profits from locally owned enterprises;</td>
<td>• Increases cost of living;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Provides collective income, including profits from community-run enterprises, land rental, dividends and levies – these incomes can provide significant development capital;</td>
<td>• Excludes locals from the development of tourism policies;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Provides finance for other community needs such as housing or education resources;</td>
<td>• Global rules in investment and competition policy may limit the ability of countries to exert control over local tourism projects;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Provides infrastructure gains, for example roads, piped water, electricity and communications.</td>
<td>• Transport, technology, communications and economic infrastructure build-up provides easy access for other industries and may result in displacement;</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Increases in service sector jobs can exacerbate the loss of lands and skills;</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Erosion of self-reliance of local communities;</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Limited information about other development options, including how not to develop.</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sociocultural Benefits</th>
<th>Sociocultural Costs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Revives culture;</td>
<td>• Creates inequality between people;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Assists in the preservation of sites;</td>
<td>• Impacts negatively on Aboriginal religious beliefs;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Improves management of cultural heritage;</td>
<td>• Impacts on traditional authority structures, gender and intergenerational relations;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Encourages an increase in the Aboriginal population living in the area;</td>
<td>• Impacts on access to traditional lands;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Assists visitor appreciation and enjoyment of Indigenous cultural heritage;</td>
<td>• Inhibits traditional practices such as hunting;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Increases cross – cultural understanding;</td>
<td>• Causes loss of privacy to community members;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Enriches the host community and the experience of visitors through education and interpretation;</td>
<td>• Causes loss of lifestyle, greater competition for the use of community assets and disruption to lifestyle;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Promotes community awareness, acceptance, understanding and appreciation by ‘outsider’ societies;</td>
<td>• Diminishes “authenticity” of culture;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Provides recognition of Indigenous knowledges and expertise;</td>
<td>• Encroaches on Indigenous lands;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Encourages communities to work with each other.</td>
<td>• Introduces bioprospecting under the guise of ecotourism;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
<pre><code>                                                             | • Exploits community members;                           |
                                                             | • Power to make informed decisions is curtailed.       |
</code></pre>

Table 2.1 highlights the many economic benefits that Indigenous peoples may gain from tourism development; such as employment, training and skills development and the opportunity for low-skilled people to enter the workforce and move away from Government transfers (NCSTT, 1994). Tourism can also provide community benefits such as stimulating demand for better goods and services, as well as infrastructure gains, such as better roads and transport services. Joint ventures may bring the community greater benefits than they could accumulate on their own, such as through payment of dividends and rents (NCSTT, 1994).

Such economic benefits to Australian Indigenous communities were confirmed in research undertaken to inform the ATSIC tourism strategy (ATSIC, 1997). The results of the ATSIC research showed that, while it is hard to quantify the economic, social and cultural impact of tourism, one measurable indicator was the number employed or involved as owners. Eleven businesses were examined to inform the ATSIC tourism strategy; all but one of the eleven case study businesses employed one or more Indigenous people (NCSTT, 1994). The study also found that sharing culture elevated respect (from non-Indigenous people); employment was created in businesses supplying tourism enterprises with goods and services; employment was created in areas where other industry was limited; opportunities were provided for low skilled people to enter the workforce as well as an alternative to community services and people were more able to become self-sufficient. The evidence produced by the ATSIC research points to one of the key advantages that tourism has over other industries; tourists travel to the communities (WTO, 2002), thus enabling a broad spectrum of engagement with the industry with the added benefit of being able to remain in traditional lands.

However, despite these positive aspects of tourism development, doubts still remain as to the extent of economic benefits and how far they do trickle-down to Indigenous peoples. This is of particular concern in situations where communities have not been invited to participate in the development of tourism policies (Pera and McLaren, 1999). In addition, a perceived economic benefit in one respect may have the potential to create a cost in another area. For example, while a tourism enterprise might provide employment opportunities, the consequence of more Indigenous peoples moving into tourism related jobs may be the loss of traditional skills which can, in turn, undermine a community’s self-
reliance and create a greater reliance on a global economy which is beyond a community’s control (Pera and McLaren, 1999).

Successful economic development can also lead to exclusion. For example, communities may find it difficult to control development in their traditional lands in the face of pressure from Governments and developers (Pera and McLaren, 1999). Another cost can relate to the rises in the cost of living without a real growth in income for local people (Tanna, 1993), ironically causing an increase in poverty. For example, housing prices may become unaffordable leaving many with the threat of homelessness (Tanna, 1993). Economic development may also bring with it the introduction of a previously unknown consumer culture, leading to potential conflicts between the economic power of the individual and traditional models of a communal economy (Pera and McLaren, 1999). Finally, infrastructure gains such as piped water, electricity and roads, are generally viewed as positive; however, these same gains can also be detrimental to communities. For example, a build up of transport, technology, communications and economic infrastructure can provide easy access for other industries and may result in displacement of Indigenous peoples, or degradation of their environment and cultures (McLaren, 1998, 2003).

Indigenous tourism development should not be seen as all negative however; Indigenous tourism enterprises can have positive sociocultural benefits for participant communities as Table 2.1 shows. For example, tourism can lead to the revival of culture and in some cases can actually lead to the greater preservation of culture through better management as well as reinvigorating cultural practices for tourists (Hodgson et al., 2007). For some Indigenous peoples engaging in the tourism industry can be an empowering experience, which can elevate respect from non-Indigenous people and which can allow greater understanding and cross-cultural experiences (NCSTT, 1994). As one Indigenous person noted:

Tourism can be a powerful tool for us. It can be a means by which we explain ourselves to the broader society. It is the tourists who actively seek out Aboriginal people, places and things. They are our greatest audience... the tourist industry which presently exploits our culture is big business. It is very important that we have some influence over this industry, especially in the national parks. We must work
towards having real control over our sacred places and have a say about what information is given out about us (Bates and Witter, 1996).

These comments highlight the conflicts inherent in tourism. Despite encouraging cultural revival and preservation, tourism can also create a challenge for Indigenous peoples as they attempt to balance the development of a commercial product with maintaining “maximum diversity of cultural heritage”; retaining authenticity and seeking to minimize, or even obviate, negative cultural impacts (Sofield and Birtles, 1996:396). The danger in commercialising culture for consumption however is it can result in a loss of authenticity and connection to those things that are intrinsic to its meaning. Whether tourism destroys or preserves culture is a complex issue. Snow and Wheeler (2000:733), studying two Indigenous nations in Panama, found that in general, “where Indigenous culture is relatively strong tourism tends to cause its decay” and “where culture is relatively weak tourism can give incentives for its regeneration”. These seemingly contradictory findings indicate that the issue of culture and tourism is complex indeed and is dependent on the will and resources of the individual community with no easy paths or models to follow.

Issues of tourism and culture do not only affect the host community, but can also be instrumental in increasing cross–cultural understanding. Visitors can gain a greater understanding of Indigenous cultures which can in turn assist in providing greater recognition and affirmation of traditional knowledges and cultures (Hodgson et al., 2007). For critics of Indigenous tourism however, the very nature of tourism can have detrimental impacts as it is seen to be deeply rooted in colonization and perpetuates unequal relationships between people which can result in many societal and psychological effects for Indigenous communities (Pera and McLaren, 1999).

Other impacts of tourism development can also have serious implications for communities, such as the loss of control over traditional lands and practices. Of particular concern are the impacts arising from the increasing encroachment on Indigenous lands as the world’s natural resources are depleted and developers look to open up new places (Pera and McLaren, 1999). At a more localised level tourism ventures can lead to a loss of privacy for Indigenous peoples who may also find access to lands, essential for them to maintain their traditional practices, is disrupted. Conflicts may occur, for example, when Indigenous peoples do exercise their rights over their land and culture as happened in 2001 at Uluru in
the Northern Territory. The traditional owners there were heavily criticised when they stopped tourists climbing Uluru for twenty days due to the death of a community Elder (BBC, 2001). Tourists can also bring negative impacts through lack of respect for important cultural practices or can, for example, have a negative impact on Aboriginal religious beliefs by trespassing on sacred sites (Hodgson et al., 2007). This also happens on a daily basis at Uluru where it is clearly signposted that the traditional owners of Uluru, the Aanangu people, believe that the rock is sacred and ask tourists not to climb it. Yet every year approximately one third of visitors ignore these signs and climb to its top, many of these climbers are children (National Parks, 2009). However, despite the actions of tourists at Uluru a recent Draft Management Plan stated that 98% of people say that not being able to climb the rock would not affect their decision to visit Uluru (National Parks, 2009). Therefore, as a result of cultural concerns as well as health and safety risks, the Park managers have stated in a draft plan that they aim to phase out the rock climb (National Parks, 2009). However, at the time of writing, that proposal appears to have been revised, following lobbying by tourism operators (AAP, 2009). In general therefore, the Uluru experience indicates how good management, working closely with the Traditional owners can result in a beneficial situation for both the Indigenous peoples and tourists. The recent controversies over whether people should be allowed to climb Uluru also highlight the difficulties that traditional owners have in maintaining control over sacred sites. However, physical trespassing onto sacred sites is not the only way that communities can lose control over aspects of their culture, other ways include the appropriation of cultural practices and artefacts (McLaren, 2003).

Communities must not only weigh up the potential costs and benefits when considering tourism, they must also consider some of the other conditions that may be necessary in order to develop successful, sustainable enterprises.

### 2.2.2 Conditions Necessary for Indigenous Tourism Development

In order to maximise success when developing a tourism business it is vitally important that Indigenous peoples are empowered to make informed decisions about whether participating in the tourism industry is an appropriate development avenue. Following on from that decision Indigenous communities must then decide what form engagement will take (Farrell, 1993; Scheyvens, 2002) and how Indigenous peoples can exert control over any tourism which does develop (Scheyvens, 2002:61).
Often Indigenous peoples do not have the power to make informed decisions and are not informed about other options, including how not to develop (McLaren, 1998, 2003). However, where Indigenous peoples are informed and led by their own leaders (Snow and Wheeler, 2000) many of the more negative aspects of tourism development, such as problems of exploitation, the move from traditional occupations to tourism, rivalry between communities and environmental damage can be mitigated, or managed much better (Snow and Wheeler, 2000).

Power and control is of particular importance when considering the significant responsibility that Indigenous peoples have around the decisions they make about the commodification of their culture. For example, they might question whether they are willing to accept a short term loss for a long term gain. They might need to decide, for example, whether a good economic base is land which supports enough wildlife for people to hunt, or if a good economic base means utilising lands for financial gain (O'Shane, 1993). One of the more complex considerations for Indigenous peoples, when developing tourism enterprises, is to understand how communities can develop tourism without destroying the very fabric of their culture and identity (O'Shane, 1993).

The issue of maintaining and representing culture also impacts on both the demand and supply side of the market. Understanding what drives people to want to experience Indigenous culture as well as considering the benefits, to the Indigenous peoples, of providing such an experience is essential for successful product development. Tourists want an ‘authentic experience’ and express discontent if they do not get it (Hollinshead, 1988, 1996). And yet, providing an ‘authentic’ experience can be a sensitive issue for Aboriginal people who may feel that they are being objectified, but that is indeed, “exactly what tourists want to do” (Altman, 1993:85). The question of what is an “authentic” experience is not easy to define and can lead to difficulties in developing an appropriate product (McIntosh and Johnson, 2005). Tourists may enjoy an attraction even when they know it is “contrived” (Scheyvens, 2002:46). In fact, tourists can have many varied experiences of Indigenous tourism as Ingram (2005) found when studying tourists’ experiences of Indigenous culture, specifically in Central Australia. Ingram identified over 107 themes; with experiences ranging from appreciating and feeling connected to culture and Aboriginal people to being fearful of Aboriginal people and doubting the authenticity of aspects of culture (Ingram, 2005).
The costs, benefits and conditions necessary for entering into Indigenous tourism are varied and complex. For successful product development it is essential for communities to have a realistic understanding of what they are entering into and the impact it may have on the community and their culture (Commonwealth, 2008). Equally, it is important for Indigenous communities to have a clear idea about the market, both its size and what consumers are looking for in order to make informed decisions about participating in the industry. In Section 2.2.3, following, both the demand and supply side of the Australian Indigenous tourism industry are examined.

2.2.3 Market Demand for Indigenous Tourism

Research from Tourism Research Australia (TRA, 2006, 2007b) shows that in 2003, 15% of International visitors, some 830,000 people, and 0.2% of domestic visitors, some 312,000 people, participated in Indigenous tourism activities while travelling in Australia in 2003. By 2005, participation had increased to 915,000 visitors or 18% of International visitors (TRA, 2007a) but has decreased since to 15% or 785,000 people in 2008 (TRA, 2008). The largest number of visitors having an Indigenous experience in 2008 were from the UK (17%), the USA (13%), Japan (12%) and New Zealand (9%) (TRA, 2008). The most common Indigenous experience in 2008 was experiencing an Aboriginal art/craft or cultural display (46%), followed by visiting an Aboriginal art gallery (32%) and visit an Aboriginal cultural centre (29%) (TRA, 2008).

TRA research predicts a forecast growth in International visitors from 830,000 in 2006 to 1.3 million visitors annually by 2016 (TRA, 2006, 2007b). This data, together with market research reports, (ATC, 2003; DITR 2004) has led researchers to describe Indigenous tourism as a growing segment of the tourism market (ATSIC, 1997; Pitcher et al., 1999; Zeppel, 2007). In fact, as the 2008 figures indicate, the Indigenous tourism market has shown a small but steady decline since 2005 (TRA, 2008). These inconsistencies support the claim that demand for Indigenous tourism is not clearly understood (Boyle, 2002; Buultjens et al., 2005; Fuller et al., 2005; Ryan and Huyton, 2000, 2005; Tremblay, 2006, 2007). In Australia, while tourism has long been promoted as a desirable industry for Indigenous peoples to engage in, from an economic and community development perspective, there has been limited quantitative research about the demand in the market, with which to substantiate the promises of potential benefits to communities (Buultjens et al., 2005; Ryan and Huyton, 2000).
Concerns about the level of real demand for Indigenous tourism product are not new. Shortly after the launch of a national Indigenous tourism strategy in 1992, claims were made that there had been little study to validate the level of Aboriginal product available, the true demand for Aboriginal product, and whether growth predictions are sensitive to Aboriginal participation in the industry (Altman, 1993). The lack of empirical evidence to substantiate claims about the extent of Indigenous tourism demand has led to concerns that “promoting Aboriginal tourism without a better understanding of the true nature of tourist demand is irresponsible, socially dangerous and obscene” (Ryan and Huyton, 2000: 54). The concern is that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples may invest significant time, effort and hope into the industry, expecting significant financial and social returns for themselves and their communities and find their hopes and expectations somewhat dashed as the tourist crowds fail to materialise. It is, for this reason, important to have a clear understanding of the true extent of the demand for these products.

Several years after Ryan and Huyton raised the concern about promoting an industry that may not provide the benefits often hoped for, it would seem that knowledge of the demand for Indigenous tourism is still not well understood. This was highlighted in March 2007 when the Federal Tourism Minister’s advisory council expressed a need to identify what inbound tourists really meant when they said they wanted an “indigenous tourism experience” (DITR, 2007). Disagreement over the size of demand for Indigenous tourism products raises a question about the lack of knowledge in this area. There may simply be a paucity of research being undertaken. But the fault could lie with the research itself, more specifically with the inadequate methodology employed when undertaking such research (Tremblay, 2007). Tremblay (2007), for example, assessed Indigenous tourism demand surveys from Canada, New Zealand and Australia and concluded there is a mismatch between the “complexity of the concepts evaluated, what can realistically be measured in large scale surveys and the expected simplicity of methods called upon in the research” (Tremblay, 2007:102). Tremblay raises concerns that Indigenous tourism is a complex notion which defies definition in terms of a product (Tremblay, 2007).

This lack of clarity about demand, together with the perceived benefits of encouraging Indigenous tourism, highlights the dilemma that policy makers face when trying to assess the real benefit to Indigenous peoples of promoting Indigenous tourism as a viable option for development. Although the full extent of the demand for Indigenous tourism may not
be known, there remains considerable pressure for Aboriginal communities to develop sustainable economic options including tourism, supported by the available, albeit limited, market research (ATC, 2003, 2005; DITR 2004).

While the existing market research gives some broad support for Indigenous tourism, further detailed research is required to establish what visitors specifically want, and expect, when they express a desire to engage in Indigenous tourism activities and to discover whether their expectations are met (Tremblay, 2006; Tremblay and Wegner, 2009). In addition, current research into demand for Indigenous tourism experiences does not explore or analyse how, and to what extent, existing Indigenous tourism businesses do provide economic and social benefits. Existing research and reports which measure the extent of the Indigenous tourism market have been concerned primarily with exploring the consumer side in terms of participation rates. What is less well examined and therefore less understood is the connection between the demand for Indigenous experiences and the benefits that may be accruing for Aboriginal people; in other words who is providing the product, who is profiting from providing it and whether the benefits outweigh any costs to the community?

Further examination of the supply side of the market is also required. TRA figures state that 90% of people who did not have an Indigenous experience on this visit expressed a desire to do so (TRA, 2006), which leaves unanswered the reasons why they did not experience Aboriginal culture on this trip. There could be many reasons for this, perhaps visitors were not aware of Indigenous culture before they arrived, and therefore had not planned to experience it thus leaving no time in their itinerary, or perhaps they had the intention but were unable to find the product. It could be that the demand is the not the problem, but rather there is a shortage in supply.

2.2.4 Market Supply of Indigenous Tourism Product

The supply side of Indigenous tourism has long been considered to fall short of demand (Boyle, 2002; Tremblay, 2006); this is despite the fact that identifying the true level of demand is problematic and it could be that supply is perceived to be limited because demand is overstated (Boyle, 2002).
In recent years, however, there have been efforts to increase supply by trying to market Indigenous tourism experiences in a more coherent and accessible way concurrent with a government focus on supporting business development. While generally Governments have tried to provide support for Indigenous business development (see Section 2.6), three initiatives stand out as being instrumental in attempts to specifically develop both the supply and demand of Indigenous tourism products. Two initiatives, Aboriginal Tourism Australia (ATA) and Western Australian Indigenous Tourism Operators Committee (WAITOC) are membership organisations and the third, Indigenous Tourism Australia (ITA), now called the Indigenous Tourism Industry Advisory Panel (ITIAP) is an initiative of Tourism Australia.

ATA was established in 2000 by Indigenous tourism operators and was described as the primary national organisation for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander tourism within Australia (ATA, 2007). For several years ATA aimed to develop Indigenous tourism consistent with Indigenous economic, cultural and environmental values; promote cultural integrity and authenticity across the tourism industry; and provide education on Indigenous protocols to the broader tourism industry (ATA, 2007). ATA was a significant part of the Indigenous tourism landscape for some time however, the organisation ceased operation in June 2008.

Similarly, in Western Australia WAITOC was formed as the peak Indigenous tourism body for Western Australian operators and provides a website that lists products in that state. WAITOC (2007) claims to promote Indigenous tourism businesses through their website and includes those which are well established and those which are expecting to be operating within twelve months. WAITOC also run an annual Indigenous tourism conference (WAITOC, 2007).

ITIAP is a Federal government initiative which falls under the auspices of Tourism Australia. Originally, established as ITA, the Chairperson Aden Ridgeway reported directly to the Minister for Tourism (personal communication, Aden Ridgeway, 28/09/09). Following the election of the Labor Government in 2007, the links between ITA and Tourism Australia were strengthened by re-establishing ITA as an industry panel, with the Chair of ITIAP reporting directly to the Board of Tourism Australia (personal communication, Aden Ridgeway, 28/09/09). The ITIAP website, which was significantly
upgraded in 2008 (ITA, 2008) serves the dual role of promoting Indigenous tourism as well as providing comprehensive business development services to Indigenous peoples. Like WAITOC, the ITIAP website gives contact details for businesses in various states of readiness. The ITIAP website provides comprehensive information relating to existing products as well as business development advice and case studies of successful operations. The site also links to various funding programs to help nascent Indigenous tourism operators.

These initiatives have contributed to an increased ability to market Indigenous tourism product. However, limits in supply are considered to be a key constraint to the development of a larger Indigenous tourism market. The next section of this chapter, therefore, will examine some of the barriers that contribute to the failure or lack of development of Indigenous tourism products which results in the lack of supply.

2.2.5 Barriers to the Development of Indigenous Tourism

Indigenous tourism businesses often fail for the same reasons that non-Indigenous ones fail (Pitcher et al., 1999). These reasons can include inadequate market research, absence of a detailed business plan, inadequate funding, lack of business advisory support, inexperienced managers and poor marketing skills (Bell, cited in Birdsall-Jones et al., 2007; Pitcher et al., 1999).

However, Indigenous communities do specifically encounter certain barriers. As shown in Table 2.2, one of the key barriers for would be Indigenous entrepreneurs is difficulty accessing capital and adequate finance and land tenure (Altman, 1993; Commonwealth, 2008; SCRGSP, 2007). This situation arises primarily because significant amounts of Aboriginal owned land is held by inalienable and communal title, a legacy of colonisation which has resulted in the inability of communities to use property to raise capital (Altman, 1993; Commonwealth, 2008). Also, many communities are in a situation where the productive market in their location is relatively small resulting in a lack of viable enterprises as well as a disproportionately high level of government influence (Altman, 1993). Often, therefore, communities are dependent on government finance to start projects resulting in management structures which can be stifling to enterprise development (Altman, 1993). Additionally, lack of financial literacy is a barrier and is considered a key first step in developing Indigenous business (Commonwealth, 2008). The Law Council of
Australia also considers that lack of access to appropriate legal advice and assistance creates substantial risks for Indigenous entrepreneurs (Commonwealth, 2008).

Additionally, kin and cultural obligations can prove difficult to manage (Altman, 1993; Commonwealth, 2008). For example, the expectations and obligations of relationships can limit the ability of individuals to accumulate their own wealth and to invest in the business (Altman, 1993). Community ownership of the venture can also mean that the profit must be distributed widely and not used for reinvestment in the business (Altman, 1993). As well, a culture of using resources for community benefit can stifle the entrepreneurial drive for individual achievement and acquisition of wealth (Commonwealth, 2008). Another disincentive to business development can occur when the venture is financially successful and causes a reduction in Government program funding, resulting in a negative net benefit (Altman, 1989). In other words, the community may be worse off if they develop a business because they may lose some Government funding as it is expected that the community will be able to use income generated to pay for services or programs that had previously been provided for by Government funding.

As indicated in Table 2.2, Indigenous enterprises are not only faced with limited access to resources they may also start from a different base line than mainstream ones. For example, staff training may have to include such things as hygiene, cleanliness and safety of vehicles, training in regular work hours and punctuality (Rooke, 1993; Spencer, 1993). Community members may also not be interested in working with tourists, or may choose not to work at all (Altman, 1989) which can lead to both a skills issue and a shortage of adequate labour.

To balance these barriers however, recent evidence shows that there is a growing interest in developing Indigenous business. This is attributed in part to demographic shifts. With 60% of the population under 25 there is an increased concern about providing a future for families that does not include the hardship experienced by previous generations (Commonwealth, 2008). There is also more interest from younger people who are able to balance community obligations with business demands (Commonwealth, 2008). Additionally, Indigenous people are creating new models of business. For example, creating businesses that only operate for six months of the year to enable the owners to have time for cultural practices (Commonwealth, 2008).
Table 2.2 Barriers to Tourism Enterprise Development in Indigenous Communities

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Economic Barriers</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Difficulty accessing required capital;</td>
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<td>• Community ownership requires wide distribution of profits;</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Financial success can lead to a reduction in program support resulting in</td>
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<tr>
<td>negative net benefit;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Lack of control in joint ventures;</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Lack of access to land tenure.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Resource Barriers</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Lack of adequate managers;</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Lack of access to appropriate legal advice;</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Lack of skills and training in tourism jobs;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Insufficient infrastructure;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Lack of interest in interactions with tourists;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Individuals choosing not to work;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Community conflict and lack of understanding about its causes.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Industry Barriers</th>
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<tr>
<td>• High expectations of the mainstream industry regarding professional delivery of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>product;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Conflict between the tourism industry’s reliance on tight itineraries and the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>observance of cultural and social protocols;</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Conflict between industry requirements for volume products and Indigenous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>enterprises tendency to accommodate small numbers for limited periods;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Concern about pricing and whether it is possible to be competitive and viable;</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Disconnect between Aboriginal culture and the economic and political structures</td>
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<tr>
<td>involved in tourism;</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Remoteness and cost of travel;</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Lack of networks between Indigenous and mainstream.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Cultural Barriers</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Concern that in the process of customising Indigenous culture to attract and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>entertain tourists that culture may be distorted, exploited and undermined;</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Reduced lack of access to land utilised by tourists</td>
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Many of the barriers identified in Table 2.2 are external to the community. For example, the industry expects the professional delivery of product, particularly in relation to the provision of reliable and timely services (NCSTT, 1994). There can be tension between the tour company’s reliance on a tight itinerary, and the community’s need to observe protocols and community and cultural obligations (NCSTT, 1994). For example, when somebody
dies the resulting ceremony and obligations may preclude the ability of the community to provide the tourism product. In addition to the reliable supply of product, there may be issues around the volume required. Often communities are better suited to accommodate small numbers for short periods of time, whereas the industry tends to deal in volume (NCSTT, 1994).

Finally, barriers can arise due to cultural issues. In particular, communities need to consider whether, and how, they can offer cultural product without diminishing and undermining the culture itself and how people will be affected by experiencing their culture being provided as entertainment for the mass market (Altman, 1993). Communities also have to negotiate the impact of tourism on their land, for example, access to places for ceremony or hunting may be reduced due to the presence of tourists (Altman, 1993).

These barriers are particularly relevant to entering into the tourism industry but also relevant is the apparent lack of Indigenous entrepreneurs and the capacity of communities to develop support such entrepreneurial activity. In order to establish business enterprises there must also be a certain level of capacity within the community. The nature of Indigenous entrepreneurship and then addresses the issue of developing capacity within communities to support enterprise development is examined in the next section of this chapter.

2.3 Indigenous Entrepreneurship

Significant barriers to developing Indigenous tourism enterprises were outlined in the previous section of this chapter. However, these issues are not only confined to tourism. Indigenous entrepreneurship in general is underdeveloped and not well understood (Dana, 2007; Foley, 2000, 2003a; Naudé and Havenga, 2007). In Australia, only 6% of Indigenous people are self-employed compared to 16% amongst the non-Indigenous population (ABS, 2009b). These low rates occur despite the fact that entrepreneurial development has been appraised as a significant component of overcoming Indigenous disadvantage, assisting economic development and as a way to decrease dependency on government welfare (IBR, 2003; Lindsay, 2005; Naudé and Havenga, 2007; Wuttunee, 2007).

Low rates of entrepreneurship amongst Indigenous peoples have led to minimal research about Indigenous entrepreneurship in Australia (Foley, 2000; Hindle et al., 2005; IBR,
2003; Lindsay, 2005). Much of the existing research has been written for Governments and not only lacks theory and theory testing (Hindle et al., 2005) but also the presentation of Indigenous perspectives is limited (Lindsay, 2005).

One study into Indigenous entrepreneurship not written for Government was undertaken for a PhD thesis. Bennett (2005) looked at the barriers to enterprise in a remote Aboriginal community and how to develop workable strategies to support Indigenous entrepreneurs. Bennett developed a mentoring relationship with Willie Gordon, the owner of Guurrbi Tours, an Aboriginal tourism product in Queensland. Bennett’s study found that a good relationship with an effective mentor was important and can help build social capital. According to Bennett, social capital needs to be built at the level of the individual and involves developing a sense of community as well as a support group. Bennett and Gordon were able to develop a model of mentoring which was successful in their case. However, the focus of Bennett’s study was developing Indigenous entrepreneurship at the individual level not at a community level.

Also researching Indigenous entrepreneurship is Indigenous academic Dr. Dennis Foley, although his research focus is on individual urban Indigenous entrepreneurs (Foley, 1999, 2000, 2003a, 2006; Frederick and Foley, 2006). Foley is critical of the lack of attention given to individual entrepreneurs as Government policy focus is primarily on community enterprise development (Foley, 2006). According to Foley, there is a fundamental problem with community enterprise development as the perceived lack of responsibility and direction is at odds with the essence of a successful business, profit orientation and asset accumulation; in short Foley claims that community enterprise models have not worked (Foley, 2006; Frederick and Foley, 2006). Other researchers disagree with the view that a community approach is inconsistent with successful entrepreneurship (Hindle, 2007; Wuttunee, 2007). Wuttunee (2007: 23), for example, writing about Canadian Aborigines, has found that “a community perspective in fact preserves core values that thrive today and are values added to standard business approaches”. It must also be recognised that entrepreneurship has always existed in Indigenous communities (Hindle, 2007). Australian Aborigines have long traditions of trade and commercial practices, however, according to Hindle (2007: 487) the “brutal, land-robbing invasion followed by a debilitating passive welfare system totally devoid of cultural sensitivity” has led to the current lack of entrepreneurial activity in Australian Aboriginal populations.
Given this lack of entrepreneurial activity, a better understanding of the reasons why Indigenous entrepreneurship is lagging in Australia, compared to other Indigenous peoples, and compared to mainstream Australia is necessary. However, a more sophisticated analysis is needed, one which can delve deeper than simply presuming cultural differences that exclude entrepreneurial characteristics (Schaper, 2007). Examination of other factors at play such as exclusion from the cash economy, lack of education and skills development, land title issues, and lack of role models must also be undertaken (Schaper, 2007).

Australian research into these other factors has been limited. While Foley provides some insights it is not clear whether his findings about individual urban entrepreneurs can translate to community entrepreneurship, which is where Governments have focused policy development research efforts. The Federal Government, in particular, has attempted to better understand Indigenous community economic development and how barriers could be overcome by Commonwealth sponsored programs (IBR, 2003). In 2003, the Australian Federal Government undertook an Indigenous Business Review (IBR) which found that while there had been significant resources available for developing Indigenous businesses the outcomes had generally not been successful. The failure of programs was attributed to five reasons (IBR, 2003):

1. Calls for a strategic approach to enterprise development programs had not been implemented;
2. There was limited Indigenous support for the programs and a concern that they had been designed with limited consultation with Indigenous people;
3. The programs did not ‘incentivise’ private sector involvement to bring Indigenous business within the real economy;
4. The programs were not efficiently administered and did not impose market disciplines and they mixed social objectives with business development;
5. The multiplicity of programs and delivery mechanisms imposed an administrative duplication on agencies and diluted effort. The intensity of support required was often underestimated and was often beyond the ability or resources of the agencies.

The IBR recommended that Government Indigenous business development initiatives required changes in order to bring Indigenous enterprise development into the real
Chapter Two: Literature Review

economy (IBR, 2003). The IBR findings were broad in scope and made particular recommendations about taking a more strategic approach supported by better data collection and monitoring methods. A focus on strategy would also include the private sector to avoid duplication of effort by Governments in areas that are already provided for in the private sector as well as to assist in bringing Indigenous enterprise into the real economy (IBR, 2003). The IBR also found a need to strengthen Indigenous institutions which would ensure private sector confidence and engagement. To this end, it was recommended that Government programs focus on building business skills and rewarding enterprise (IBR, 2003). Recognising that potential applicants often do not have sufficient levels of education to take advantage of Government programs a hands on approach was recommended (IBR, 2003). Finally, there was a focus on the role that Government could play in facilitating funding through co-investment, rather than through grants (IBR, 2003). One suggestion was that an Indigenous development fund, to assist in the funding of infrastructure and resource development, should be established. It was also recognised that where commercially viable business opportunities are limited a community development model should be developed (IBR, 2003).

The IBR report did help identify the best approach for Government interventions; however, it did not significantly increase understanding about Indigenous entrepreneurship. In particular, the IBR did not move beyond identifying barriers and the failure of Government programs to more positively identify key elements of success.

Other research does attempt to identify key factors of success, such as research undertaken by the Australian Collaboration and the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS) (Finlayson, 2007). A summary of Finlayson’s findings (2007) are presented in Table 2.3.
Table 2.3  Success Factors for Australian Indigenous Organisations

Good Corporate Governance
- Understand the imperative of good governance and avoid poor governance.
- Tailor governance to the specifics of the operating circumstances.
- Provide training which does not have to be formal, and may include experience gained in the wider community.
- Have a skilled and technically competent Board.
- Ensure separation of powers between Board and administration.
- Ensure Boards are both representative of their community and possess the skills and expertise to provide strategic leadership.

Efficient Responsive Service Delivery
- Appreciate the management of service delivery is of equal importance to corporate governance.
- Implement procedures to ensure they are responsive and accountable to clients.

Community Engagement
- Engage community members and provide information on the activities of the organisation.
- See meetings, functions, classes and information activities as venues for community involvement and interaction.
- Use local knowledge and expertise which taps into community resources.

Internal Strength
- Have clear and transparent vision and objectives for the organisation, with regular corporate and business planning.
- Have strong compliance performance in funding use and acquittal.
- Undertake close ongoing monitoring of program budgets.
- Have a business orientation in financial management.
- Collect data on service provision for internal and external performance monitoring.

Accountability to Funding Bodies
- Demonstrate robust administrative and accountability systems for achieving financial competency, viability and accountability to funding bodies.

Strong Leadership
- Encourage connections to their Indigenous communities and clients.
- Develop wider relationships with industry associations, government, NGOs and local or regionally based mainstream providers.
- Participate in advocacy forums during government inquiries.
- Promote policy exchange and consultations with all stakeholders in their service sector.
- Have support from personal values and professional integrity.
- Are flexible and willing to innovate.
- Are open to challenge.
- Have vision and passion.
- Communicate effectively with communities and stakeholders.
## Staff Development

- Are staffed by passionate people.
- Value and appreciate staff.
- Develop staff by: leading by example, mentoring, formal training, skills transfer, on the job instruction, secondments and involvement in wider settings.
- Regular formal and informal communication between staff and management.
- Have strong policies which are regularly referred to, reviewed and updated.
- Maintain neutrality in community conflict.

## Ability to Respond to Change

- Are flexible, recognising external changes often require internal changes.
- Accept change as natural part of dynamic interactive cycle of relationship management.
- Anticipate policy change.
- Cope with major change.

## Strategic Engagement in Partnerships

- Are strategic in establishing and nurturing partnerships.
- Have a robust negotiating style so that contracts are realistic for organisations.
- Maintain cultural identity and organisational integrity while engaging with partnerships.

## Building for the Future

- Believe that strategic planning is fundamental.
- Engage young people.

## Focus on Core Business

- Have common understanding and acceptance of organisational vision, aims and objectives across the Board, staff and community.
- Outsource non-core activities.

## Intercultural Organisations

- Work effectively with the co-existence of difference.
- Manage workplace diversity effectively.
- Believe that good working relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous staff vital.
- Maintain neutrality and manage ‘working across families’.

Source: Finlayson, 2007

While Finlayson’s findings are informative, it is important to note that her research focused, not only on commercial enterprises, but also included not-for-profit service deliverers who are likely to be funded by Government, for example, health services. However, what she did find, irrespective of the purpose of the organisation, was the need for strong governance tailored to the specific context of the organisation; the need for skilled, accountable leaders good at networking and representing their community; the need for organisational flexibility and the ability to anticipate change; the need to maintain
cultural integrity while engaging with partners and finally, the need to engage in strategic planning and have a common understanding of the organisation’s vision, aims and objectives across all levels (Finlayson, 2007).

Finlayson’s (2007) research also identified barriers which impact on an Indigenous organisation’s ability to be successful. Particularly, this study found that funding levels were inadequate to support the verified demand for services and that non-Indigenous partners often lacked an understanding of the complex holistic nature of Indigenous client service needs. There were also issues with staff; from difficulties recruiting and retaining staff when mainstream agencies are able to offer better pay and conditions to a high rate of staff burnout and a lack of training in management and reporting skills (Finlayson, 2007).

In addition to this Australian research, studies have been conducted in Canada and North America. Given the diversity of the world’s Indigenous peoples and the diversity of cultures these many Nations incorporate, there is always a danger in drawing too many conclusions from the experience of Indigenous peoples from other countries. However, despite the differences there are commonalities between Australia, Canada and North America as they are all settler societies, with predominantly British heritage, where Indigenous peoples have become a displaced minority (Cornell, 2006).

Like Australia, Indigenous people are less likely to own a business in the USA and Canada. Although, contrary to the Australian experience, in those countries Indigenous enterprise is on the rise (Hindle, 2007). Citing research undertaken by Allen Consulting Group in Canada, Hindle (2007: 489) claims that the creation of 12,710 new Aboriginal businesses between 1981 and 1996 has added 48,502 new jobs, of which 30,444 or 63% are Aboriginal jobs. In addition, Hindle (2007) claims that Aboriginal youth are more likely to be self employed than Canadian youth in general.

In America, Indigenous entrepreneurship is also on the rise (Hindle, 2007). American Indian owned businesses increased by 84% between 1992 and 1997 compared with a 7% increase for all American businesses (Hindle, 2007). In Australia, due to inadequate data collection, it is more difficult to obtain data about the number of Indigenous entrepreneurs (Schaper, 2007). However, the pool of Aboriginal entrepreneurs can be determined by the number of self-employed Aborigines (Schaper, 2007). The figure in Australia has hovered
at around 5-7% of all working Indigenous people since 1986; however, this is a substantially lower rate than the number of non-Indigenous self-employed, which is currently 16% of working persons (ABS, 2009b; Schaper, 2007).

As in Australia, Indigenous enterprise is encouraged in the USA and Canada as a pathway to greater socio-economic benefits. In fact, one of the more comprehensive and long term studies into Indigenous enterprise, The Harvard Project, was instigated in the 1980s specifically to investigate strategies to reduce chronic Indian poverty (Cornell, 2006; Jorgensen and Taylor, 2000). The Harvard Project research found that in order to end Indian poverty, there were two factors which were of intrinsic importance: sovereignty and effective institutions of government (Cornell and Kalt, 2004). The Harvard Project concluded that Indian poverty is essentially a political issue, rather than an economic one, and that economic development, without the power of genuine decision making together with effective institutions of governance, will be inhibited (Cornell, 2006; Jorgensen and Taylor, 2000).

The Canadian research showed that it is necessary for leaders to have cultural authority as well as the business skills to drive the business (Hindle et al., 2005). Cultural authority assures the community that the business is being developed in accordance with the aspirations and traditions of the community (Hindle et al., 2005). The Canadian research also showed that Indigenous enterprises are more vulnerable to generational change than mainstream enterprises (Hindle et al., 2005). This vulnerability arises because leaders were periodically elected to their positions, leading to concern that if they were ousted the success of the business would be jeopardized (Hindle et al., 2005). Thirdly, it was found that change can be harder for Indigenous enterprises because a successful venture is held up as an icon, thus making it seem to the community that the business is a failure if change is required to meet market needs or changes are made to operations that are no longer commercially viable (Hindle et al., 2005).

The research from Canada and the USA highlights the fact that economic development is linked to broader development issues. Self-determination, systems of governance as well as particular skills relating to financial and business prowess are essential to achieve economic development. In Australia, the Harvard project findings have been taken up with some enthusiasm and are seen to have some relevance to the situation here (Sullivan,
2006). This is problematic, according to Sullivan (2006) who raises several concerns about both the methodology employed in the Harvard Project as well as applying the outcomes to the Australian context.

One of the key sticking points is the concept of sovereignty, which in the American context is a less politically contentious issue than in Australia (Sullivan, 2006). Cornell and Kalt’s (2004) understanding of sovereignty is less about Indigenous people’s relationship with the State, as in ownership of land and self-government, and more about their ability to exercise control over their lives (Sullivan, 2006). Dodson and Smith (2003) use the term ‘political jurisdiction’ instead which in this context means having “effective control over their area of operation, and that the effects of the decisions of the Board or management impact on the organisation so that there is room for learning from experience” (Finlayson, 2007: 8). Dodson and Smith (2003) also state that other key factors must also be present such as stable and broadly representative organisational structures which have supportive institutional mechanisms; transparency and separation of powers; an effective board with appropriate skills and understanding of their roles and responsibilities.

Another finding of the Harvard Project is that there must be a good cultural match between the organisational structure and operations and the community in which it operates (Cornell and Kalt, 2004). Finlayson, however, makes the point that cultural match is not always conducive to a successful organisation, for example where loyalty to close kin results in lack of accountability (Finlayson, 2007). To ensure a positive approach to cultural match, there is a need for the community to decide what is the common ground between the types of governing structures and procedures it wants to develop and the existing culturally derived forms of authority, standards and values (Dodson and Smith, 2003). Of great importance, Dodson and Smith (2003) conclude that rather than relying on a “romanticised” view of Indigenous culture and expecting it to relate to the world of business and administration it is important to develop links between cultural values and business and administration needs.

These various studies about factors of success for Indigenous enterprise development provide useful insights into Indigenous enterprise development. However, the success of an Indigenous enterprise, particularly in a community context depends largely on the community’s existing capabilities and capacity to develop an enterprise. This is
particularly relevant in the context of tourism where it is expected that a successful tourism business will bring significant sociocultural and economic benefits to a community, which will in turn create an expectation that tourism development will bring broader community development outcomes (WTO, 2002). Therefore, it is clear that intrinsic to successful enterprise development is a consideration of broader contextual development issues. Implicit in the discourse on Indigenous tourism is the need for Indigenous communities to integrate economic development with capacity development activities in order to bring about transformational change and encourage entrepreneurial activity. Capacity development is therefore, in this context, seen as the foundation on which entrepreneurship is built and will provide the framework for analysis in this thesis. It is examined in the following section of this chapter.

2.4 Capacity Development

Capacity development is defined as the ability of individuals, organizations and societies to successfully manage their affairs; to perform functions, solve problems and set their own development goals (Fukuda-Parr, 2003; Nair, 2003; World Bank Institute, n.d.). In an Indigenous community context it seems that developing enterprise by focusing solely on necessary business skills could be problematic and that incorporating what could be seen more as capacity development principles and activities into the enterprise development will lead to more sustainable development (Cornell, 2006; Cornell and Kalt, 2004).

The concept of capacity development is derived primarily from international development theories of community development (Hunt, 2005). Community development appeared in the international development lexicon during the decolonization process of the mid 20th century and was mainly concerned with attempts at community self-sufficiency and social change (FDC, 2002). In the 1980s, the concept of community development was overshadowed by a focus on economic expansion, the development of infrastructure and the transfer of financial capital in order to stimulate economic growth (FDC, 2002). An economic trickle-down approach favoured by state based initiatives took precedence over participatory community driven initiatives (FDC, 2002; Hunt, 2005). The underlying philosophy of development at this time was predicated on the belief that developing countries lacked the necessary skills and abilities to develop. Therefore, if they followed the same development process as rich countries, learning from their success and avoiding their mistakes, they would develop in the same way (Fukuda-Parr et al., 2002). Developed
countries could assist by transferring skills and technologies and provide money through overseas aid programs (Fukuda-Parr et al., 2002).

By the 1990s, however, it became apparent that the expected development outcomes were not being achieved by a focus on economics and infrastructure, leading development theorists to focus on the more human and social dimensions of development (Fukuda-Parr, 2003; Fukuda-Parr et al., 2002; Hunt, 2005). In fact, while the plethora of consultants and development specialists had successfully completed many technical and infrastructure projects, transfer of knowledge was limited (Fukuda-Parr et al, 2002). It had certainly not occurred in “the catalytic way that might ignite a positive chain reaction throughout developing societies” (Fukuda-Parr et al., 2002:3). As a result, concepts of participation, good governance and democracy gained prominence in the development agenda (FDC, 2002; Fukuda-Parr et al., 2002; Hunt, 2005; Idahosa and Shenton, 2006; Nair, 2003). This shift in thinking was marked in 1990, by the first Human Development Report (HDR) of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). Publishing this report signalled an explicit move away from development economics towards incorporating human dimensions of development (Fukuda-Parr, 2003). The work of economist Amyrta Sen became increasingly influential at this time and it was he who developed the conceptual framework that described development as the “process of enlarging peoples’ functioning and capabilities to develop” (Fukuda-Parr, 2003:303).

This enlarged understanding of development led to greater emphasis being placed on capacity development. The UNDP, for example, places capacity development at the heart of its contribution to development programs (Capacity Development Group, 2008).

2.4.1 Characteristics of Capacity Development

Despite the prominent use of the term ‘capacity development’ in international and domestic development discourse, the concept of capacity development remains amorphous and largely under-studied with a paucity of accepted and tested theory (Kaplan, 2000; Makuwira, 2006; Morgan, 2006b). Even more undefined is the means by which capacity development is achieved (Fukuda-Parr et al., 2002). Additionally, most of the ideas about capacity development have derived from North American and European ways of thinking and have less resonance in many other cultures (Morgan, 2006b).
The European Centre for Development Policy Management (ECDPM) has conducted a study of capacity change and performance (Morgan, 2006a). This study has produced empirical evidence with which to start building and testing theory. The ECDPM study carried out 18 field studies, in a wide range of circumstance including the public sector and civil society and at a local, national and international level (Morgan, 2006a). The results of the research indicated that there are five central characteristics of capacity (Morgan, 2006b):

1. Capacity is about empowerment and identity; people acting together to take control over their own lives;
2. Capacity has to do with collective ability; the abilities that allow systems (individuals, groups, organisations, groups of organisations) to do something with some sort of intention and with some sort of effectiveness;
3. Capacity is inherently a systems phenomenon which arises from the dynamics involved in a complex combination of attitudes, resources, strategies and skills, both tangible and intangible. It usually deals with complex human issues which cannot be dealt with purely from a technical perspective;
4. Capacity is a potential state, elusive and transient, which is dependent to a large degree on intangibles. It is hard to induce, manage and measure and may disappear quickly;
5. Capacity is about the creation of public value. Effective capacity can also be used to subvert public interest, such as organised corruption. Therefore, capacity is the ability of a group or system to make a positive contribution to public life.

2.4.2 Developing Capacity

While the ECDPM research identifies some key characteristics, capacity development, as a process, remains contested within the development literature (Fukuda-Parr, 2003; Makuwira, 2006). In particular, there is no agreement on the best way to actually develop capacity. Traditionally capacity development initiatives have focused on the transference of skills, with the assumption that if individuals and organisations are better able to perform their responsibilities then their contributions will increase, thereby achieving capacity development objectives (Missika-Wierzba and Nelson, 2006; Pycroft and Butterworth, 2005). As a result, capacity building interventions have often focused on placing consultants and people with technical skills into development projects. The
resultant measurements of success have been based on ‘inputs’ such as how many personnel have been trained, rather than how capacity has been stimulated (Missika-Wierzba and Nelson, 2006).

This skills transference approach, which has been characterised as “supply-led” does not necessarily ensure increased capacity or ownership of the technical skills gained (Nair, 2003) and has led to recognition that the approach is limited in its effectiveness. As a result, theory has now shifted to a demand driven approach which is results orientated and is focused on the key question of “capacity for what and for whom?” (Nair, 2003:2).

Other capacity development approaches attempt to foster a transparent evaluation culture focused on outcomes, impacts, goals and participatory approaches. For example, a demand led approach shifts from focusing on skills acquisition to skills retention and utilisation and the incentives to retain and utilise skills gained (Nair, 2003). Alternatively, an issues based approach focuses on recipient led change processes where interventions are based on an analysis of the strategic importance of an issue, its link to institutional reform and its impact on poverty reduction (Nair, 2003). Finally, there is asset-based community development (ABCD) which recognises that focusing on strengths and assets is more likely to inspire positive action (Mathie and Cuningham, 2003). This is in contrast to focusing on deficiencies which can lead to communities measuring success by how many resources the community has attracted, rather than how self-reliant the community has become (Mathie and Cuningham, 2003).

These various approaches reinforce the notion that capacity building is not usually an either or situation; successful capacity development does not necessarily fit into one defined theory. In particular, as situations change one or other approach may be appropriate. For example, while demand-led approaches can be important and generate incentives, accountability, transparency and responsiveness, it must also be recognised that sometimes the demand for capacity development is not always present; therefore initially a supply led program may be appropriate. As capacity develops responsiveness and appropriate structures will be generated leading to a more demand led approach. Balancing both supply and demand led capacity building may be critical to the success of the capacity building project (Morgan, 2006a).
However, whatever approach is taken, the UNDP highlight the necessity of addressing capacity at three levels, which they call points of entry (Fukuda-Parr et al., 2002). These three levels of engagement emphasise that successful development encompasses far more than expanding an individual’s skills; crucially opportunities must also be created to use and develop those skills (Fukuda-Parr et al., 2002). Therefore, capacity development must address how all these aspects link together, how the individual develops, how the institution develops and how the broader society enables development (Capacity Development Group, 2008; Fukuda-Parr et al., 2002; Hunt, 2005). Table 2.4 provides a summary of these three levels and highlights the interconnectedness of capacity development.

Table 2.4 Three Levels of Engagement for Capacity Development

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Broad System, or Enabling Environment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- The policy, legal and regulatory framework and the management of accountability systems, resources and process which includes communication flows and relationships within the system. Creating opportunities that enable people to use and expand their capabilities.</td>
</tr>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Entity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- The mission and strategy of the organisation, the culture and structure, the processes, human resources, financial resources, information resources and infrastructure. Builds on existing capabilities.</td>
</tr>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Individual</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- The individual’s capacity to function within the entity and broader system. Enabling a continuous process of learning. The ability to develop performance and/or skills required for particular functions. Accountability, values and/or ethics and incentives and security.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Hunt (2005); Fukuda-Parr, Lopes and Malik (2002).

In Australia, the concept of capacity development has been embraced within the discourse on Indigenous community development and has become a policy issue (Hunt, 2005; Makuwira, 2006). Capacity building initiatives have gained currency particularly due to Government policy which attempts to improve the effectiveness of its Indigenous Affairs policy and through that increase economic opportunities and reduce Aboriginal reliance on welfare dependency (Humpage, 2005).
2.4.3 Capacity Development and the Implications for Indigenous Australia

The growing linkages between the concepts of capacity development and the Indigenous affairs discourse is highlighted by the fact that in 2004, the Australian Parliament’s House of Representative Standing Committee on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs (The Committee) handed down its report into capacity building in Indigenous Communities. The report stressed that there were many understandings of capacity building, depending on one’s approach. In the submissions to The Committee two particular approaches were identified, which The Committee referred to as a) the public management approach and b) the community development approach (HRSCATSIA, 2004). The public management approach was more concerned with responding to external needs and processes and emphasised the need to develop a community’s governance, administration, managerial and leadership structures and skills in order to meet accountability requirements in terms of government funding and processes and to comply with relevant corporate governance laws (HRSCATSIA, 2004:1.54). The community development approach was more related to internal needs and processes, it focused on empowering communities to participate in their own planning, policy making and implementation and their own effective and culturally informed governance structures and generally developing the skills to take control over their own issues and futures (HRSCATSIA, 2004:1.55).

The Committee concluded that both aspects were important and a synthesis of the two was desirable. The Committee also relied on a definition produced by the Ministerial Council on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs (MCATSIA). That body defines capacity as (HRSCATSIA, 2004:1:62):

*The knowledge, ability and commitment for individuals, families, groups and organisations to:*

- Maintain their cultural identity;
- Interact confidently and effectively with the dominant Australian society;
- Identify goals;
- Determine strategies to achieve their goals; and
- Work effectively with government and the private sector to access the resources necessary to implement these strategies.
It seems then that capacity building can be both the ends and the means of development (Sen, 1999) and that capacity building is expected to develop capabilities at the level of the individual, the level of the entity and the level of the broader enabling environment. Therefore from a policy perspective if the Government implements policy which aims to develop capacity then it will lead to individuals and entities developing the personal and institutional resources required to develop sustainable organisations.

In a similar vein, Professor Mick Dodson (2003), considers capacity development to be about regenerating communities from the inside out; where communities are renewing themselves by identifying, appreciating and using their assets. The content of capacity development will need to be customised to account for diversity of circumstances, the context, the available resources and the particular restraints (Dodson, 2003). Professor Dodson (2003) places particular emphasis on the participatory nature of capacity development; the importance for Indigenous people to articulate their own needs and initiate development that is compatible with their cultural values and practices.

However, one of the faults of the capacity development discourse is its focus on the “poor” rather than a focus on power relationships (Makuwira, 2006). Similar to Kaplan’s (2000) thinking, Dodson (2003) also emphasises the need for capacity development of the enabling environment, and challenges the government and the private sector to develop their own capacity; in particular, to take responsibility, to reform and devolve authority and to provide appropriate policy, regulatory and legal frameworks. Focus should not only be on the capacity development of the Indigenous participants. As Dodson (2003) says Government has a responsibility to ensure that appropriate policies and programs support the efforts of Indigenous peoples as they develop their capacity. The policy and regulatory environment will be considered in the next part of this chapter.

### 2.5 The Policy Environment of Indigenous Economic Development

While Indigenous entrepreneurship and capacity development are considered desirable development foci; success in these areas is dependent on good policy at all levels of Government to support and encourage such development. Therefore, the broad policy environment of Indigenous economic development in the period 2004 to 2007 is
considered in the next section of this chapter with particular attention to the changes to Federal policy which had a significant impact on this study.

The plethora of policies aimed at encouraging the development of the Indigenous tourism market segment clearly share a common expectation that Indigenous tourism provides an opportunity for economic development of Indigenous peoples and communities. However, the wider political and social context within which this tourism policy development is taking place is not clearly articulated. If, as Cornell (2006) found, Indigenous poverty is a political issue it is important to consider the broader policy environment of Indigenous economic development in Australia to understand the underlying drive to develop Indigenous tourism.

In Australia, tourism policy is developed by Federal, State and Territory Governments and “reflects social values and community attitudes towards Indigenous people and public policy-making for tourism” (Zeppel, 2007:410). Indigenous tourism ventures, like many Aboriginal businesses in other industries in Australia, develop and exist in a complex social, economic and political environment. As well as the normal range of policies and regulatory environment that all tourism businesses have to operate within, Indigenous peoples, and their communities, are subject to both Federal, State and Territory Indigenous affairs policies. These polices can have significant impacts on the lives of Indigenous individuals, communities and organisations and can enhance or hinder the ability of these groups to develop their enterprises.

In the early part of this decade the then Federal Coalition Government undertook a major reassessment of Indigenous affairs policy resulting in significant changes to the way in which Indigenous affairs was administered at a Federal level. Previously, the Government had administered funds through the ATSIC which was established in 1990 to enable Aboriginal people to be involved in the process of governing their own lives. The ATSIC structure included an elected arm of Indigenous representatives, consisting of 35 regional councils around Australia and a national board of commissioners led by an elected Chairperson; and an administration headed by a Chief Executive Officer (CEO) (ATSIC, n.d.-a). On the 15 April 2004, the Federal Government announced its intention to close down ATSIC and the associated agency, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Services (ATSIS).
In summary, this decision meant that responsibility for ATSIC-ATSIS programs and services was transferred to mainstream\(^3\) agencies from 1 July 2004 and legislation was introduced to abolish the ATSIC Board (ATSIC, n.d.-b). The ATSIC Regional Councils remained in place until 30 June 2005, in an advisory role. However, a National Indigenous Council (NIC) was appointed, by the Federal Government, to provide expert advice to a Ministerial Taskforce on Indigenous Affairs (ATSIC, n.d.-b). Other changes saw the establishment of an Office of Indigenous Policy Coordination (OIPC) within the Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs (DIMIA) (ATSIC, n.d.-b). Additionally, the Federal Government committed to exploring with the States and Territories improved ways to coordinate and deliver Indigenous services in a ‘whole-of-government’ manner, within the framework of the Council of Australian Governments (COAG, n.d.).

In February 2005, the Minister responsible for Indigenous Affairs at that time, Senator Amanda Vanstone, delivered an address to the National Press Club which outlined the Government’s change in Indigenous policy (Vanstone, 2005). The policy changes, according to Vanstone, arose from a commitment by Government to ensure that Indigenous peoples share in the wealth of Australia. Vanstone claimed that inequity existed because Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples had previously not been given their voice, despite the creation of ATSIC. In fact, Vanstone expressed the view that ATSIC was not a representative body because 80% of eligible people did not vote in ATSIC elections. The Minister claimed that this led to the Government being placed in the position of having to rely on intermediaries, consultants, lobbyists and service providers, to speak on behalf of Indigenous people. Vanstone opined that non-Indigenous structures had been forced upon different traditional organizational structures and that ATSIC, a creation of a previous Labor Government, was such a non-Indigenous structure.

The guiding principles, therefore, of this new policy agenda were to circumvent these intermediaries and to listen to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples directly, respond to them and treat them as equal partners (Vanstone, 2005). On the face of it these were principles that nobody could disagree with and the practical manifestations suggested

\(^3\) The term ‘mainstream’ is used by Governments to indicate agencies that do not deliver services specifically to ATSI people, but delivers to all Australians.
made much sense. For example, it seemed a good idea to bring services under “one roof” thus enabling those communities who had multiple funding arrangements with different government departments to now undertake one agreement with the various agencies expected to play a role in bringing funding and service agencies together. Or as Vanstone put it “it’s the job of governments to do the shopping around and the cobbling together in order to meet communities’ priorities and needs” (Vanstone, 2005). The new policy also meant that service providers had to be more aware of where Indigenous peoples were not accessing mainstream services and to ask themselves why the services were not providing adequately for them (Vanstone, 2005).

The new policy agenda had several strengths, including a long overdue focus on equitable funding as well a focus on the remote places, where poverty was most evident (Altman, 2004). There was also recognition that ‘problems’ are interconnected (Altman, 2004). However, this new policy agenda was not without its critics. The new policy agenda had been introduced in response to the perceived failure of previous approaches. There was a sense of entrenched problems in the handling of Indigenous affairs which had led the Government to decide on the implementation of a radical new approach to Indigenous affairs (Sullivan, 2005). Although the Government appeared to be serious about making the new direction work as evidenced by the commitment of senior ministers and bureaucrats to the process (Sullivan, 2005) there was significant opposition.

While it was generally accepted that the move to a more streamlined system for service and funding delivery was a positive change; the aspect of the new policy environment which garnered the most intense criticism was the premise of mutual obligation or shared responsibility (Behrendt, 2004; Dodson and Pearson, 2004; Vanstone, 2005). Central to the delivery of services in the new policy was the concept of Shared Responsibility Agreements (SRAs). These contracts, signed between communities and Government, set out a series of responsibilities and mutual obligations in return for funding. The model for these agreements was based on a number of trials instigated by the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) in 2002, which introduced an initiative to develop integrated and flexible programs and services for Indigenous people in eight trial sites across Australia, one in each State and Territory (COAG, 2004). These trials highlighted the need for effective implementation of shared responsibility principles; the need to strike a balance between driving change and allowing change to happen at its own pace; and an
acknowledgement that substantial change takes time (McCausland, 2005c). However, despite the fact that policy was implemented based on these trials in 2004, the COAG trials themselves were not in fact evaluated until 2007 and were then found to have limitations (Brough, 2007).

This philosophy of mutual obligation and concern about the paternalistic nature of the dialogue around incentives and sanctions (Altman, 2004) was just one area of weakness identified in the new policy agenda. Other weaknesses also identified included the financial commitment which was not particularly significant and did not address how already identified needs, such as new housing, would be met (Altman, 2004). There were also concerns about the length of time that the SRA framework might take to sign off with each community and whether Government had put in place effective models for consultation (Altman, 2004).

In addition, criticism was prevalent around the issue of rights. Tomlinson (2005), for example, considered the new policy environment to be replacing rights with a benefit/obligation compact which undermined the concept of universal rights. He argued that by implementing SRAs in particular, the Government was engaging in “white paternalistic interference” (2005:3). Others agreed that the policy was paternalistic and an imposition that denied self determination and introduced coercion into the provision of services to Indigenous peoples (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner, 2005; ANTAR, 2006; Collard et al., 2005; Edmund Rice Centre for Justice and Community, 2006).

This theme of rights and, more specifically, equity was taken up by other observers to greater or lesser degree; with concern that there would be a substantial power imbalance embodied in such agreements (ANTAR, 2006; Land and Vincent, 2005). There was also a fear that even where SRAs were genuinely supported by communities they may not be fair and equitable (McCausland, 2005a) as it is difficult to see how, for example, a family group can be on an equal footing to the Federal Government (Land and Vincent, 2005). Of greater concern was the fear that SRAs potentially link behavioural change to the provision of certain services which Governments have responsibility to deliver to all citizens (Collard et al., 2005; McCausland, 2005a). It is this point, and the fact that SRAs only applied to Indigenous peoples (ANTAR, 2006) that led many critics to consider the policy
as potentially racially discriminatory (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner, 2005; ANTAR, 2006; Behrendt, 2004; Snowden MP, 2004). In addition, linking the provision of core human rights entitlements such as safe drinking water to an SRA is in breach of International human rights obligations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner, 2005). The policies also raised a question of responsibility. As former Senator Aden Ridgeway (2005) asked, does the linking of the provision of a petrol bowser to the reduction of trachoma, for example, discharge the Government of its responsibilities in this area?

Other concerns raised about the shared responsibility agenda were the lack of evaluation processes, benchmarks and targets in place to evaluate the Government’s performance (McCausland, 2005a; Ridgeway, 2005); and that SRAs trivialised the notion of mutual obligation, or reciprocity, as it is a natural principle of human society that each person has a responsibility to contribute and each person has rights (Dodson and Pearson, 2004). There was also a need for the Government to be specific about what it meant by reciprocity and mutual obligation because these concepts may already have cultural meanings (Tomlinson, 2005). Behrendt also took up this theme and criticised the links made between Aboriginal understandings of reciprocity and the Government’s policy of mutual benefit (Behrendt, 2004).

Overall, the new policy agenda introduced by the Federal Government represented a major shakeup in Indigenous affairs, one which would have an impact on specific policy development, funding arrangements, and which, would necessarily influence economic development, including tourism development, within Aboriginal communities. The underlying philosophy of mutual responsibility together with demands for Indigenous peoples to be less dependent on Government welfare systems had significant implications for the direction that Aboriginal people were encouraged to take and the expectations of the outcomes. Additionally, this philosophy of encouraging economic development has particularly influenced the development of tourism policies by both Federal and State Governments. Indigenous tourism policy in the Australian context is considered in the next section of this chapter.
2.6 Australian Indigenous Tourism Policy

While the Federal Indigenous policy agenda has a significant impact on the ability of communities to develop capacity and engage in economic activity, there are also comprehensive policies specifically regarding tourism development at all levels of Government. These various policies can be a significant influence in the nurturing of nascent Indigenous tourism enterprises (Whitford et al., 2001). However an analysis of twenty five years of government policies found that they did not necessarily benefit those for whom they were created. The analysis identified three findings (Whitford et al., 2001):

1. A disparate publication record of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander tourism policy as a consequence of what might be characterised as government’s reactive approaches to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander tourism;
2. The strong influence of the economic environment on the focus of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander tourism policy which has emphasised the commodification of the Indigenous tourism product; and;
3. The high priority given toward policy that is consistent with an economic rationalist ideology.

Research undertaken by Buultjens et al. (2005), which analysed the public sector initiatives available to Indigenous peoples to assist in developing tourism enterprises, further added to the argument that Governments were not consistent and productive in their support for the development of Indigenous tourism. Buultjens et al.’s (2005) research, conducted in 2002, identified 10 initiatives available at a Federal level, of which seven were provided by the now defunct ATSIC with the Commonwealth Department of Tourism and Training providing the rest. The key findings of the report showed that there is generally poor coordination between programs within and across jurisdictions and that many programs focus on promoting the idea of Indigenous participation in tourism rather than providing resources to realise this participation (Buultjens et al., 2005). For example, programs provide little assistance in ‘visioning’ and applying techniques of market research to feasibility assessment nor did they provide ongoing support for businesses beyond the business planning phase (Buultjens et al., 2005). An additional issue highlighted by Buultjens et al (2005) was that many programs may be difficult to access for Indigenous enterprises in regional areas due to poor support services and lack of access to technology;
Buultjens et al. (2005) particularly highlighted the number of initiatives at both State and Federal levels which are intended to support and develop Indigenous enterprises, in tourism and more generally. The fact that so few enterprises have been successfully developed points to the difficulty of creating effective programs, and raises the question of how accessible and relevant the programs are to intending entrepreneurs and what practical outcomes they deliver.

Additionally, while Governments expect that there will be positive social and cultural outcomes arising from tourism development, Whitford et al. (2001) found that social, economic, political and ecological environments have indeed influenced the development of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander tourism policies but in fact the focus of the resulting policies has been predominantly influenced by economic factors. A consequence of which is the “commodification of indigenous art and culture as manageable and tradeable resources, alongside a lesser concern to increase the well being of ATSI people” (Whitford et al., 2001:173). The Whitford et al. (2001) study concluded that this prioritisation of economic development of the wider Australian tourism industry has been at the expense of the social and ecological interests of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

2.7 Conclusion

The history of the development of Indigenous tourism has been well documented (Pitcher et al., 1999); as has analysis of past research and future research directions (Boyle, 2002; Schmiechen, 2006; Zeppel, 2007). The majority of research on Indigenous tourism has focused on product development and marketing of Indigenous tourism with limited research focusing on assessing tourism policies or tourism planning for Indigenous peoples (Ryan and Huyton, 2005; Zeppel, 2007). Even less attention has been given to the Aboriginal perspective (Hall, 2005; Ryan and Huyton, 2005). This lack of Indigenous voices is problematic as the experiences of Indigenous communities who wish to, or who have, entered the industry are largely silent.
Chapter Three Methodology

3.0 Introduction

This study was undertaken by incorporating an Indigenist research paradigm with ethnographic and participatory action research (PAR) methodologies. This approach was taken in order to conduct the research in a manner consistent with the call from Indigenous researchers to end exclusionary research practices. This research sought to integrate the principles of Indigenist research, as articulated by leading Australian Indigenous academics with the principles from relevant ethical guidelines and appropriate methodologies.

In the first part of this chapter, Section 3.1, the call from Indigenist researchers to undertake research from a paradigm that empowers and includes Indigenous peoples rather than follow research practices which are exclusionary and disempowering is outlined. In this section a framework, the Indigenist Process of Inquiry, for developing and conducting this study is introduced.

In Section 3.2 the Indigenist Process of Inquiry is explained. The Indigenist Process of Inquiry is the framework I developed and used for this study. It was used to consider all aspects of the study from method and methodology to ethics, intellectual property, the literature review and research funding and the process by which the participants were engaged. The research participants are also introduced in this section.

In Section 3.3 the focus is on the methodology and methods used and the rational for their choice. In this section the role of reflexivity in the implementation of this study is explained and the researcher’s background is presented.

In Sections 3.4 and 3.5 the interpretation and then the presentation of the results is considered followed by validation and rigour which is addressed in Section 3.6.

In Section 3.7, a brief comment about the researcher’s role in the participant community beyond the life of the study is made before an evaluation of the process undertaken in this study is presented in Section 3.8.
Chapter Three: Methodology

3.1 Research Paradigm

This research was undertaken by a non-Indigenous researcher with Indigenous participants. Indigenous peoples have long been critical of such a scenario and have challenged non-Indigenous people to ensure their research praxis privileges Indigenous ways of Knowing, Being and Doing (Abdullah and Stringer quoted in Brewer, 2000; Fielder, 1999; Martin, 2001a, 2001b, 2002). In the past several years such a paradigm has been developed by Indigenous researchers and is known as either Indigenous or Indigenist research (Martin, 2001b, 2002; Rigney, 1996, 1999, 2001). It is this Indigenist research paradigm which has been the foundation of this study.

3.1.1 Indigenist Research Paradigm

Increasingly, Australian Indigenous researchers challenge the ways in which non-Indigenous researchers engage in research with Indigenous Peoples (Atkinson, 2002; Foley, 2003b; Martin, 2001a; Rigney, 1997). These Indigenous academics argue that Western methodologies have contributed to the ongoing marginalisation and disempowerment suffered by Indigenous Peoples since colonisation. Further, by privileging Western methodologies, non-Indigenous researchers continue to deny others their culture, their voice and the ability to express their understanding of the world through Indigenous ways of Knowing, Being and Doing (Martin, 2001a).

Indigenous researchers assert that Indigenous exclusion from research methodologies began from the very beginning of European settlement of Australia when the colonisers and explorers of the 1700s brought to Australia a scientific discourse which cast Indigenous Peoples’ knowledge as inferior (Foley, 2003b; Martin, 2001b). The Europeans, attuned to an emphasis on validity, neutrality and universality, cast Western Knowledge as the ‘truth’ against which all other knowledges were measured (Rigney, 2001). Consequently, commencing from the earliest interactions between Aborigines and Europeans, the original inhabitants of Australia were subject to the coloniser’s Western epistemological gaze, which was to have far reaching consequences, the legacy of which is still being experienced by Indigenous peoples today.

The influence of European research since colonisation on the lives of Australian Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders has been analysed by Dr. Karen Martin, an
Aboriginal academic and educator, who has identified six distinct periods which describe the history of research undertaken on Indigenous Peoples in Australia (Martin, 2001b). Martin’s analysis (see Table 3.1) contributes to a greater understanding of how the prevailing research principles of each period directly influenced the development of Government policy and attitudes in general to Australian Indigenous Peoples. Martin’s analysis contributes to a contemporary understanding of Indigenous experiences of research and the call for a different kind of research practice.

**Table 3.1  Martin’s Six Phases of Indigenous Research**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Terra Nullius Phase</td>
<td>• Australia declared terra nullius, or empty land, in 1770;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1770 - 1900</td>
<td>• Research focus on the land; determining resources and economic potential and identifying, cataloguing and collecting data on flora and fauna;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Research was conducted through observation by European colonisers and explorers;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Later, research was undertaken on the environmental and living conditions of Aboriginal peoples;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Fieldwork was conducted from a scientific theory of race and racial superiority;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Research led to legislation to ‘protect’ Aborigines;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• 1886 - 1900 government reserves and missions established resulting in massive movements of Aboriginal people from their lands.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Traditionalising Research Phase (1900 - 1940)

- Invasion of Aboriginal lands continued;
- Aboriginal Peoples continued to be dispossessed through physical removal, disease or death;
- Anthropologists described and categorised Aboriginal people and their cultural practices and scientists gathered extensive data including such things as measuring intelligence and physical attributes;
- Genealogical data was gathered and classifications such as “full blood” and “half blood” were utilised;
- Research and Government policy was predicated on the premise that Aborigines needed protection, but that they had no rights to land or resources found within those lands.

### Assimilationist Phase (1940 - 1970)

- Aboriginal lands were seen as a resource to fuel economic growth;
- Research focused on categorising Aborigines such as ‘traditional’ or ‘non–traditional’;
- Fieldwork was framed around detailing kinship and mythology structures;
- Emphasis was on defining the ‘Aboriginal problem’ and finding ‘solutions’;
- Policies were developed around the presumption that Aborigines classified as “half caste” could readily take on colonial social standards;
- Regulations were imposed on every aspect of Aboriginal peoples’ lives, from participation in schooling and employment to marriage.
Chapter Three: Methodology

Early Aboriginal Phase
1970 - 1990

- Research continued to view, interpret and represent Aboriginal Peoples and lands;
- Research in linguistics, religion, employment and health escalated;
- Structural relationships became welfarist;
- Aboriginal culture became a commodity resulting in the prospecting and appropriating of Aboriginal intellectual property and cultural knowledge.

Recent Aboriginal Phase
1990 - 2000

- Changes in Aboriginal affairs in general contributed to the development of Indigenist research;
- Collaborative research developed allowing Aboriginal people to set research agendas and be involved throughout the research process;
- Research attempted to incorporate Aboriginal knowledges and experiences;
- Focus primarily on documenting ‘traditional’ land management practices in order to develop Western scientific land management techniques and thereby traditional knowledge only recognised when validated by Western science.

Indigenist Phase
2000 plus

- Research challenges colonial research in all its forms;
- Aboriginal people take control and assert Aboriginal ideologies which involve Aboriginal ontological frameworks, epistemological processes and Aboriginal morals and laws;
- Research juxtaposes the core structures of Aboriginal ontology with Western research practices.
- Research draws upon theoretical frameworks such as critical theory, ethnography and hermeneutics and emphasises the lived realities of research participants.
Martin’s (2001b) analysis of these successive phases in research emphasises the importance of understanding the history of research involving Indigenous peoples, their lives and cultures. Recognising and understanding these prior experiences makes sense of the contemporary call, from Indigenous peoples, to develop a new research paradigm that empowers and represents the diversity of cultures, voices, experiences and contexts in which Indigenous research takes place. The six phases, whilst not exhaustive, nor delineated exactly by the time frames shown, succinctly identify the complexity of issues resulting from more than two hundred years of research relationships with Indigenous peoples. It is the assertion of Indigenous academics today that research which has excluded Indigenous participation except as the object, has resulted in the continuing marginalisation and exclusion from policy development and structures of governance (Martin, 2001a, 2001b; Rigney, 1996, 1997, 2001).

This legacy of exclusion and marginalisation has led to attempts by Indigenous scholars to claim a research space which contextualises the present with reference to the past. The resultant paradigm is critical and liberationist recognising social, political, and historical contexts; and with a stated aim to decolonise and reframe research (Martin, 2001a; Rigney, 1996, 1997, 1999, 2001; Smith, 2003). This paradigm privileges the voices of Indigenous peoples and focuses on matters of importance as identified by them and which utilises the core structures of Aboriginal world views – which are distinct for each group and location (Atkinson, 2002; CRCATH, 2001; Henry et al., 2002; Martin, 2001a; Rigney, 1996, 1997, 1999; Smith, 2003). In Australia, the research space claimed is generally known as either Indigenous research or Indigenist research. This is not to be confused with the ethnographic use of the term “Indigenous research” which in that context means to study one’s own culture (Bernard, 2006; Tomaselli, 2008). In this thesis I refer to the paradigm as Indigenist and use the term Indigenist researcher to denote one who is using an Indigenist paradigm, not a researcher who is necessarily Indigenous, or one who is studying their own culture.

The term “Indigenist research” was first used by Aboriginal academic Dr. Lester Irabinna Rigney who draws on a feminist research paradigm to define Indigenist research thus (Rigney, 1996, 1997, 1999, 2001):

- It is emancipatory with political integrity;
It privileges Indigenous voices by focusing on the experiences, ideas, traditions, dreams, interests, aspirations and struggles of Indigenous Australians;

It can only be undertaken by Indigenous peoples, because it must be taken to the heart of the struggle for emancipation and only Indigenous peoples can set the agenda for that struggle.

Rigney’s final point of definition, that only Indigenous researchers can legitimately undertake Indigenist research, challenges non-Indigenous researchers who research with Indigenous peoples. Through his definition, Rigney is raising the complex question of whether it is possible for a non-Indigenous person to conduct research that ensures Indigenous voices, experiences and knowledges are privileged or whether the mere presence of the non-Indigenous researcher stymies that goal. There is no definitive answer to this issue. However, other Indigenous researchers, such as Judy Atkinson, Wendy Brady, Karen Martin, Aileen Moreton-Robinson, and Martin Nakata (Atkinson, 2001; Brady, 1990; Martin, 2001a, 2001b, 2002; Moreton - Robinson, 2000; Nakata, 1998, n.d.) have contributed to the development of the theory of an Indigenist research paradigm. They have developed an expanded understanding of the characteristics of an Indigenous paradigm; thus enabling a dilution of the theory into several key principles (see Table 3.2). Key to good Indigenist research is the intent of the research, recognition of the diversity of Aboriginal experiences and world views and ensuring that cultural protocols and practices are an integral part of methodology which are explicitly incorporated into research design (Martin, 2002; Smith, 2003).

While the issue of non-Indigenous people undertaking Indigenist research is not explored in these principles, a broader understanding and commitment to integrating Indigenous ways of knowledge creation into the research design allows for the possibility that non-Indigenous people can legitimately undertake Indigenist research. However, there remains the question of how to conduct an ethically and culturally responsible Indigenist research study, particularly as a non-Indigenous researcher. The approach I took for this study was to synthesise the literature, ethics guidelines and practical experience to form a research framework to guide me which was consistent with an ethical Indigenist research paradigm.
Table 3.2  Summary of Principles of Indigenist Research

- Empowers Indigenous peoples;
- Aims to decolonise and reframe research;
- Is critical and liberationist recognising social, political and historical contexts;
- Has political integrity;
- Privileges Indigenous voices;
- Recognises and represents the diversity of cultures, voices and experiences;
- Allows Indigenous peoples to set the agenda;
- Focuses on matters of importance to Indigenous peoples;
- Utilises core structures of Aboriginal world views;
- Cultural protocols, social mores and behaviours are an integral part of methodology;
- Integrates Indigenous ways of knowledge creation.


The framework I developed, which I called an Indigenist Process of Inquiry (see Figure 3.1), provided a guide to the key questions and issues pertinent to the development and implementation of an Indigenist research project. The benefit of developing such a framework was that it kept the Indigenist research principles front of mind and reduced complex issues to a clear and concise process which became valuable as a form of checklist. However, using this process was not as simple as ticking a box and moving on. In fact, the process called for deep reflection and consistent engagement with the key principles of the Indigenist research paradigm as these principles were integrated into every aspect of the research project from the initial idea to the dissemination of the findings.

Another benefit was that the process highlighted where the research project was not addressing the Indigenist principles. The principles were the ideal, the aspiration of how to do excellent research and the standard against which to measure. In practice the experience of implementing the principles was sometimes challenging and highlighted that even with the best of intentions the ideal was not always attainable and flexibility was always required. However, developing such a comprehensive framework was an invaluable tool and provided a comprehensive point of reference throughout every step of this research.
project. While the process was developed with the intention to make sense of Indigenist research principles, in practice these questions are not exclusive to conducting Indigenist research and would be addressed in many other research scenarios. However, all these questions were particularly pertinent in the situation of a non-Indigenous researcher engaging with Indigenous people, and at times raised challenging issues.

It is within the context of this framework that I describe the process of undertaking this study in the next section of this chapter. As Tomaselli (2008) states, including the research process as a topic in itself allows the reader to see how the interaction and encounters with informants have helped shape the structure and the text of the study. In the next section of this chapter, therefore, I explain how I undertook this study within the framework of an Indigenist Process of Inquiry.
Figure 3.1 An Indigenist Process of Inquiry

Research proposal
- Who has instigated the inquiry?
- Who will benefit from the inquiry and how?
- Who has participated in designing the scope of the inquiry?
- How is the participant community defined and who decides on the inclusion and exclusion of participants?
- How has free and informed prior consent been obtained?
- What ethical guidelines are being adhered to?
- What Intellectual Property rights have been agreed to?
- What Indigenous sources of knowledge are incorporated into the literature review?
- How is the research funded?

Methodology and Methods
- What methodology is most appropriate in this specific context?
- How can Indigenous knowledge systems, cultures and protocols, specific to this location be integrated into the methodology?
- How will this methodology ensure that Indigenous voices are privileged and accurately represented?
- How does the inquirer situate themselves in the participant community?
- What is the inquirer’s own social, cultural and relational positioning?
- What role, within the research, does the inquirer claim?
- What skills does the inquirer bring to the project?
- What are the social and cultural mores which will inform data collection methods for this inquiry in this location?
- Who has participated in defining and approving the appropriate methods?
- What locational factors and constraints must be integrated into this inquiry?

Interpretation
- Who is interpreting the evidence?
- What process is being followed to ensure accurate interpretation?

Presentation
- What protocols must be followed regarding the publication of material arising out of the inquiry?

The Future
- What commitment has the inquirer made to the community / research participants to follow up on outcomes/recommendations?
3.2 Conducting an Indigenist Process of Inquiry

As explained in the previous section, the Indigenist Process of Inquiry is an attempt to identify the key issues as expounded by Indigenous academics and ethics guidelines and distil them into a format that provides a practical navigational tool for conducting a research project. The following section of this chapter explains how this study was conducted and makes reference to the Indigenist Process of Inquiry.

3.2.1 The Research Proposal – Instigating and Developing the Study

As identified in Table 3.2, central to the concept of Indigenist research, is that research must be about matters of central importance to the particular group participating in the research, as well as provide a benefit to them. The benefit of participating in and the expected benefits of the research must be acknowledged and identified by the Indigenous participants themselves and there must be a clear understanding of what the benefits will be and the limits of the benefits. For example, it is important not to promise an outcome that cannot be delivered.

It follows then that there should be clarity and transparency about who has participated in defining the scope of the inquiry. It is expected that in order for the research to answer the needs of the community, the community itself should be involved in identifying the research question and participate from the outset in defining the scope of the inquiry. Defining the research question, in collaboration with the research participants, will also involve observing appropriate protocols and obtaining appropriate permissions in order to conduct the inquiry.

In this case, the broad research proposal was initially developed by Associate Professor Jeremy Buultjens, from the School of Tourism and Hospitality Management, in conjunction with Professor Judy Atkinson from Gnibi College both at Southern Cross University. The stated project aim was to develop a model for the sustainable development of Aboriginal owned small to medium tourism enterprises in the Bundjalung region. An Australian Research Council (ARC) scholarship was applied for and granted and I subsequently became aware of the project through an article in the Koori Mail in December 2003. Following a discussion about the project with Jeremy Buultjens, I applied
through normal University procedures and was accepted as a PhD candidate commencing in April 2004.

While this research topic commenced from the perceived need for the development of an enterprise development model to assist Bundjalung communities in developing their tourism businesses, there was limited direct input from the Bundjalung communities. This is contrary to ensuring that research addresses community needs, as identified by the community (Karp and Kendall, 2001). To mitigate this issue and to ensure that the research did develop into a process with input from the relevant people it was essential to establish good and constructive relationships from the outset. Following is an overview of how relationships were established for this study and how participants were approached and engaged. For ease of understanding Table 3.3 shows a summary time line of the key events in this engagement process, with a detailed description of the process and people involved following.

**Table 3.3 Summary Time Line of Research Activity**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date Range</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>April 2004</td>
<td>Research Begins.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 2004 – August 2004</td>
<td>Attend Meetings with Robyn Ferguson and Roy Monaghan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 2004</td>
<td>Decide not to pursue original intended participants.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 2004</td>
<td>Meet Frank Walker Coordinator of Tabulam Aboriginal Corporation (TAC).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 2004 – February 2005</td>
<td>Numerous meetings with Frank Walker regarding TACs involvement in research and future plans for tourism development.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 2005</td>
<td>Frank Walker resigns from position.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 2005</td>
<td>Receive ethics approval for study.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 2005</td>
<td>Annabelle Walker introduces me to Kevin Torrens – new coordinator of TAC and Chairperson of Jubal Aboriginal Corporation. Talk to Kevin about Jubal also participating in research.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 2005</td>
<td>Attend TAC board meeting and obtain signed letters of consent.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 2005 – January 2006</td>
<td>Continue working with Kevin Torrens on both TAC and Jubal.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Prior to my commencement as a PhD candidate my future supervisor, Associate Professor Jeremy Buultjens, was in contact with the Northern Rivers Region Aboriginal Enterprise Development Officer (AEDO) Robyn Ferguson, who was employed by the NSW Department of Training and Education. Robyn Ferguson had been instrumental in developing a plan for an Indigenous regional tourism project, through the Bundjalung Elders’ Council, which incorporated many Bundjalung communities. My understanding, at commencement, was that an invitation had been extended by Robyn Ferguson to allow me to work with her on developing the Elder’s project further, and that the project would form the basis of this study. After commencing the PhD I met several times with Robyn and between June 2004 and August 2004 also attended several meetings with her and prospective participants in the Elder’s project. By mid July 2004, I was uncomfortable with the fact that, despite having attended all these meetings with Robyn Ferguson, I had not yet had the opportunity to meet with the Elders’ council, and had received no indication, other than Robyn Ferguson’s verbal invitation, that I had the consent of the Elders to work on the project. Therefore, on the 20th July 2004, I sent a letter to the Chair of the Bundjalung Elders’ Council asking for permission to attend an Elders’ Council meeting to formally introduce myself and the research project and to obtain the necessary permission to conduct research into the Elders’ Council tourism project.

I received no response to that letter, however on the 24th August 2004 I was asked by Robyn Ferguson to visit the Chair of the Bundjalung Elders’ Council to talk about developing a tourism related funding application. At that meeting I asked the Chairperson if she had received my letter and if there was any response; the response I received at that meeting left me in no doubt that the Chairperson did not support the research. Following

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date Range</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January 2006</td>
<td>New Coordinator of TAC starts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 2006 – April 2006</td>
<td>Meet with new coordinator of TAC three times – Jubal continues to participate in study.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 2006 – August 2006</td>
<td>Unable to contact TAC coordinator – decide TAC effectively withdrawn from project. Jubal continues to participate in study.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 2006 – Dec 2007</td>
<td>Jubal continues to participate in research, and ongoing work is undertaken.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
this discussion, and despite the support from Robyn Ferguson, it was clear to me that it
would not be prudent to pursue involvement in the Elders Council project.

Once it became clear that the Elders’ Council project was not going to form the basis of
this study it was necessary to engage other research participants. I was aided in this by
Robyn Ferguson and another Enterprise Development Officer who worked for the
Northern Rivers Area Consultative Committee (NRACC) at the time, Roy Monaghan.
Neither of these enterprise officers was subsequently involved in the research, but their
assistance in establishing my relationships in the region was vital and is gratefully
acknowledged.

In particular, it was Roy Monaghan who helped me to form a relationship with the
administrator of the Tabulam Aboriginal Corporation, (TAC) an organisation which was
specifically investigating various options for tourism enterprise development. I was
initially introduced to the administrator of TAC, Frank Walker, at a meeting with both
Robyn Ferguson and Roy Monaghan which was held to talk about Tabulam’s involvement
in the Elders’ tourism project. Roy Monaghan subsequently spent significant time himself
with Frank Walker discussing TAC’s options. Roy Monaghan had also been in discussions
with First Australian Business (FAB), a Brisbane based group (which ceased operations in
2006), which provided workshops on enterprise development as well as a business
mentoring program. In July 2004, Roy Monaghan organised five people from Tabulam to
attend a three day FAB workshop and, with FAB’s permission, I was allowed to attend as
an observer. After this workshop Roy Monaghan continued to talk to Frank Walker about
TAC being a participant in the proposed research.

At that time, while I was grateful to Roy Monaghan, it concerned me that his enthusiasm
may have resulted in Frank Walker feeling somewhat pressured into working with me. I
was not confident that Frank had been given the opportunity to make an independent
decision about participating in the research. In fact, I did not feel that he could not have
made an informed decision as either Robyn Ferguson or Roy Monaghan had usually been
speaking on my behalf. Aside from being uncomfortable about being spoken for, I was also
mindful that unless I was in direct communication with the potential participants I could
not know with certainty that the proposed research was going to be relevant and useful to
TAC and produce tangible results.
In August 2004, Roy Monaghan left his job and the region. While his departure represented a substantial loss in terms of expertise now available to TAC it did provide the opportunity I needed to spend time getting to know Frank Walker, and for us to talk directly together about the research. Between August and December 2004, I spent as much time as I could at Tabulam talking to Frank, and some of the others at TAC, getting to know what their needs and aspirations were and building up a relationship of trust. I did not submit an ethics application to the University until such time as I felt that Frank and I had a reasonable understanding of what we wanted to achieve and were able to proceed.

In March 2005, Frank Walker and I arranged to meet, however this meeting never took place and after two weeks of attempting to reach him I discovered that he had suddenly left the community, and his job. It was unclear at that point whether he was going to return, but given that he had apparently moved to Queensland it appeared unlikely.

In April 2005, I received ethics approval and was in a position to formalise the research project with Frank Walker and other members of the TAC Board. However, by this time it was definite that Frank was not going to return. This situation presented a practical problem. I had spent several months getting to know the situation that TAC was operating in. I felt that we had a good and productive relationship suitable for the research but I was now uncertain who, or if anybody, would take over the role.

After Frank Walker left there was a period of time when there was nobody in his role. During that time I maintained my presence in the area and frequently checked in with some friends and relatives, in particular Harry and Annabelle Walker. Harry Walker is my husband’s cousin and was a director of TAC at the time; Annabelle is his wife. I had met both Harry and Annabelle prior to commencing this study.

On the 3\textsuperscript{rd} of May 2005, Annabelle Walker informed me that Kevin Torrens, who I had not met, was now the administrator of TAC and she kindly introduced me to him. I explained to Kevin Torrens about my involvement in TAC to date and the research I was proposing to do. As Frank Walker had spoken about me to Kevin Torrens he was keen to continue with TAC’s participation in the research. That same week I also spoke to Uncle Eric.
Walker about my continuing involvement in the project. Uncle Eric Walker\(^4\) was the senior male Elder of Tabulam, my father-in-law’s cousin and also the Chairperson of TAC. In July 2005, at the invitation of Uncle Eric Walker and Kevin Torrens, I attended a TAC Board meeting where I formally presented a research proposal which was accepted and consent forms were signed by the Board members. Kevin Torrens and I then continued to discuss TAC’s participation in the research and over several months we held many meetings and discussions to facilitate participation.

Kevin Torrens is also the Chairperson of another Aboriginal Corporation called Jubal Aboriginal Corporation (Jubal). The Jubal Aboriginal Corporation owns a property, also called Jubal, which was obtained, for the Jubal community, through the Indigenous Land Corporation’s cultural program\(^5\). Jubal had previously completed a Community Development Plan (CDP) and was now looking at developing the property further and had plans to include tourism ventures in the project (see Chapter 4 for further details). I asked Kevin Torrens if he would be willing for Jubal to also participate in the research project, he agreed and we obtained consent from the other research participants. Therefore, until January 2006, I worked closely with Kevin Torrens on both Jubal and TAC activities.

In January 2006, there were further changes at TAC as Kevin Torrens ceased to be the administrator, but remained on the TAC Board. Fred Walker, who is Uncle Eric Walker’s grandson, took over the role. In January 2006, I met with Fred Walker and Uncle Eric Walker. We discussed some of the work that had already been undertaken with the Board of TAC and our hopes for its progression. Fred Walker agreed to participate in the research project.

In February 2006, Fred Walker and I met again, this time without Uncle Eric Walker. It was clear that Fred Walker was keen to direct TAC into purchasing established businesses and was focusing his efforts on gaining funding to conduct a feasibility study on the purchase of an existing and operational business in Tabulam. We met a further two times in March and April 2006, where we discussed this approach.

\(^4\) Uncle Eric Walker passed away in September 2007.

\(^5\) The Indigenous Land Corporation buys land for Aboriginal communities under certain conditions. This is explained more fully in Chapter 4.
After our last meeting in April 2006, I was unable to make contact again with Fred Walker. By August 2006, it was clear to me that the research project with TAC was not progressing. I had no contact with the administrator, and as a result was no longer able to ascertain what TAC was doing in relation to its tourism development. This situation did not seem temporary, particularly as Uncle Eric Walker was now quite ill and I felt it would be inappropriate to intrude on his family at this time to further the research. Even with the signed consent forms, and the previous meetings, it seemed unlikely that I was able to obtain further information, or indeed, informed consent and agreement about the findings. Considering that this was now the third coordinator in the space of a year I was not hopeful that I would practically be able to undertake research with this corporation. Reluctantly therefore, I decided not to pursue TAC’s involvement in this study any longer.

Despite this setback, the research relationship with Jubal was steadily developing. I had a very different relationship with Jubal from the outset and was much more actively involved from the beginning. Jubal became the source of participants and it is the Jubal experiences that form the substance of this study.

The above sets out the chronology of establishing the research project and who was involved in its instigation. Clearly the initial experiences of finding participants, and their subsequent withdrawal, highlight the importance of ensuring that the research is both wanted by and useful to the Indigenous community, and ideally instigated by them. In this case the research was instigated by the University, and while the two people employed by government departments to develop Indigenous business in the area were very supportive, ultimately, they did not speak for the communities and initially there was little ownership or support of the research idea within the Bundjalung communities I was able to connect with.

Despite this problematic start, in terms of adhering to Indigenist research principles, the eventual scope of the study was developed over time in consultation with key Goorie people, particularly Frank Walker and Kevin Torrens. Although research aims and objectives had already been identified before I commenced the study, the forming of the specific research questions was a process of listening to what TAC initially, and later Jubal, wanted to achieve and then formulating the questions and choosing an appropriate methodology.
3.2.2 Defining Community

Following on from the question of who decides what is to be studied, is who or what is the participant community? In some cases this can, perhaps, be simply answered. For example, if the study is regarding who uses a particular service, the participants may be users of, or those eligible to use, that service. However, the concept of community can be very complex. For example, when talking about an “Aboriginal community” are we talking about the traditional clan group prior to colonisation; those who live on the former missions and reserves; the village or town where many may now reside; the family groups; communities of interest including people that live in places thousands of kilometres away, but who have ancestral and cultural connections to the place and so on. Therefore, it is important that the members of the community identify the limits to their own community in the context in which the study is taking place, as their understandings may include or exclude people that are not obvious to the outsider. Equally, it is important that there is transparency about the decision to include or exclude participants and who is making those decisions, as community members who exert power may control participation in the research, to its detriment.

3.2.3 Research Participants

In this study the key participants were Board members of the Jubal Aboriginal Corporation. The Jubal Aboriginal Corporation is a membership organisation constituted of members of four families who were identified at the time of incorporation as belonging to the Jubal Community. The Jubal Community, is a small Aboriginal community located near the township of Tabulam, Northern NSW, it is located within the boundaries of the Bundjalung nation, and is defined by both location, being the property called Jubal, as well as the entity and membership of the Jubal Aboriginal Corporation. The research took place primarily in two locations: at the Jubal property and at the Jubal office at Mallanganee, which is a fifteen minute drive east of Jubal on the Bruxner Highway. The office is shared with the Mall-Bunoogah Aboriginal Corporation and is the location of the shared office equipment such as the computer, telephone and fax machine. The location, background and characteristics of Jubal are more fully described in Chapter Four.

The participants in this study were all Board members of the corporation. This situation initially arose because they were the people who were both involved and interested in the
subject of the study. Therefore, this study reflects the experience and opinions of the
decision makers of the Jubal Aboriginal Corporation. Kevin Torrens, the Chairperson was
the key informant and the person I initially worked closest with. Norm Torrens was
Treasurer and also spent significant amounts of time working with me particularly when
trying to improve the financial governance of the organisation. The third participant was
Gina Roberts, who started out participating in the research as a ‘trainee’ in bookkeeping
and administration. Gina also became the Secretary of the corporation in addition to her
administration and bookkeeping roles. The final participant was Robert Caldwell, who is a
Jubal board member, and with whom I had a very different relationship. With the other
participants I worked very closely in different roles at various times whereas Robert
Caldwell was more of an observer of the research project. Robert Caldwell sadly died in
September 2009.
Table 3.4  Participant’s Details

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kevin Torrens</td>
<td>Chairperson and Coordinator of Jubal. Manages the day to day running of the property. Kevin has been the Chairperson of Jubal since its inception. He was raised in Tabulam, and later lived and worked in Baryulgil. He now lives on site at Jubal. Kevin is in his mid 50s.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norm Torrens</td>
<td>Treasurer of Jubal. Norm has built a house at Jubal and lived there until ill health forced him to move into Casino in 2007. Norm is in his late 50s and is Kevin’s brother.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gina Roberts</td>
<td>Secretary of Jubal from 2006. Gina also became the Jubal bookkeeper and was trained in MYOB and financial administration during the course of this study. Gina is in her late twenties and is Kevin Torren’s daughter. Gina lives in Casino.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robert Caldwell</td>
<td>An ordinary Committee member. During the course of this research Robert lived in Casino and had previously worked for NSW State Forestry. Robert was an expert in site identification. He was in his 60s. Robert Caldwell passed away after this study was completed in September 2009.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.2.4 Obtaining Informed Consent

According to the United Nations’ Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII) consent can only be gained where there is no coercion and people have been given appropriate information and appropriate time to respond (UNPFII, 2005). Additionally, it must be certain that the correct representatives, as identified by the Indigenous peoples themselves, have given consent (UNPFII, 2005).

In the context of this study, obtaining consent was not limited to the signing of a formal letter but also involved an ongoing process of negotiating and information sharing as the consent letter was not wholly appropriate in this verbally orientated culture. It was necessary therefore to find other means to ensure consent, through ongoing discussion of the research process and flexibility about how consent was recorded. In this study, it was also necessary to ensure that consent was obtained not only from the actual participants, but also from other relevant Elders who may or may not have been participating in the research project itself. For example, in the case of TAC I could only proceed if Uncle Eric Walker agreed. In the case of Jubal I had consent from the Board members, but I also attended various Jubal meetings and explained to the wider community what I was doing. In addition, I revisited the issue of consent when notes were taken; words were transcribed, and when presentations and papers were written. There were practical challenges because the people I wanted to obtain consent from, for example, for a paper for a conference had no interest in reading the paper. Therefore, I had to be aware of how I could accurately portray what was written.

3.2.5 Ethical Considerations

In addition to identifying participants and gaining consent, the ethical stance the researcher takes is important. There are two major points of reference for ethical research with Indigenous peoples in Australia which I referred to in relation to this study; the Values and Ethics: Guidelines for Ethical Conduct in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Research (2003) and the AIATSIS Ethical Guidelines (AIATSIS, 2000). The AIATSIS guidelines in particular were invaluable for informing my approach to this study. The relevant points which I incorporated into this study were:
• Allowing time to develop trust and respectful relationships with participants;
• Ensuring proper discussion of the research proposal with participants and allowing enough time for a response;
• Ensuring that the Elders give informed consent to the research;
• Protecting the intellectual and cultural property rights of the participants and the community;
• Enabling participants to review their comments and any other input they have provided;
• Ensuring ongoing consent as the research progresses;
• Ensuring Indigenous knowledge systems and process, particular to this community, are central to the research methods;
• Examining and critically reflecting on my own role and the impact of my Whiteness and culture on the research process;
• Presentation of draft results – in an appropriate format - to participants for confirmation and further feedback;
• Provision of a copy of the thesis to participants upon completion;
• Presentation of the key findings in an accessible format to participants and other community members;
• Seeking agreement on how the research findings may be used;
• Ensuring consent is sought to publish findings.

3.2.6 Intellectual Property and Sources of Knowledge

The issue of Intellectual Property (IP) in relation to Indigenous peoples is complex. One comprehensive report which analysed the laws and policies impacting on Indigenous peoples was published in 1998 and was commissioned by the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS) (Janke and Michael Frankel and Company, 1998). Entitled Our Culture: Our Future – A Report on Australian Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property Rights, the report clearly outlined some of the concerns that Indigenous peoples have relating to their intellectual rights. In particular, the concerns were clustered around the appropriation of languages, spirituality, secret/sacred material, cultural expression and cultural objects. The report also highlighted some of the rights that Indigenous peoples want recognised. Of particular relevance for this study are the following rights:
That Indigenous peoples:

- Own and control Indigenous cultural and intellectual property;
- Be recognised as the primary guardians and interpreters of their cultures, arts and sciences;
- Benefit commercially from the authorised use of Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property;
- Receive full and proper attribution;
- Control the disclosure, dissemination, reproduction and recording of Indigenous knowledge, ideas, and innovations.

Problems can arise with IP when research institutions are bound by contracts or constitutions that do not allow the integration of Indigenous cultural and intellectual property rights, particularly in situations where there is commercial value. While the complex legal situation and implications of existing laws are beyond the scope of this study it is possible to ensure that the key rights are integrated into the research particularly in the ways that evidence is collected and disseminated. Many of the principles outlined in the Janke report are intrinsic to Indigenist research also.

In this study the issue of IP was dictated by University procedures. In undertaking the PhD I was required to sign a Student Participation Deed and Confidentiality Agreement, which states that “ownership in any Project Intellectual Property, which is developed during the course of the Project, shall belong to the University” (Southern Cross University, 2004). However, under the direction of my supervisor, a clause was added to the agreement which states that any Indigenous IP is retained by the Indigenous participants.

3.2.7 Literature Review

In addition to ensuring that Indigenous IP rights are protected, the researcher must ensure that sources of Indigenous knowledge are included in the literature reviewed for the study; this may mean that the review is not limited to scholarly and published work, but includes thinking from other sources. It is important to question whose voice is being heard through the literature and what other sources of knowledge are available, particularly those that privilege Indigenous voices (Martin, 2001a). Therefore the researcher must investigate
other relevant forms of knowledge such as non-academic sources or oral and visual forms which may inform the study being undertaken.

My interpretation of this principle of privileging Indigenous voices in this study was to choose not to privilege only academic literature, or indeed, Indigenous voices only in written form. In practice, this meant that I gave significant weight to developing the relationships with the research participants and listening to their viewpoints and their needs. Therefore, in addition to reading relevant literature, I initially spent significant time and effort on meeting people. I spent time in the community, building relationships and listening and talking to the Goorie people about what was already known and what knowledge was needed to make changes. In addition to reading academic literature I believed it was important to have a good understanding of the policy environment that Jubal was working in; particularly in light of the changes to Federal Indigenous policy during the course of this study.

### 3.2.8 Research Funding

Funding of research should be transparent in order to ensure no hidden conflicts of interest which would influence the research project. This study was funded through the provision of an Australian Postgraduate Industry Award (APIA) through the Australian Research Council (ARC). Additionally, I received a further education scholarship from the Sustainable Tourism Cooperative Research Center (STCRC), which provided a supplemental financial scholarship over two years as well as the opportunity to participate in the STCRC postgraduate education program.

### 3.3 Methodology and Methods

The choice of methodology and methods which must integrate with Indigenous knowledge systems, cultures and protocols and allow for Indigenous voices to be heard is addressed in this chapter. In addition to choosing the methodology the researcher must be clear at this point about how they are situated in the research and the influences, biases and culture they bring to bear on the research. Above all, when integrating Indigenous knowledges, recognition must be given to the fact that Indigenous peoples do not have a homogenous culture, and therefore what works in one community may not be appropriate in another.
3.3.1 Integrating Methodology with Indigenous Knowledge Systems

While the literature on Indigenist research is clear about the principles to be adhered to, the methodology is not so circumscribed. In fact, Martin (2001a) states that research which is entirely Indigenous is not possible because research itself is essentially a western practice. Martin goes on to comment that a multi-disciplinary approach is necessary and says that frameworks such as “historiography, ethnography, phenomenology and particularly hermeneutics have some congruence and cultural safety for research involving Aboriginal people and Aboriginal lands” (Martin, 2001a :5)

However, integral to the appropriate choice of a methodology is the recognition that each community or location of research is unique. Each community, however that is defined for the particular research project, has its own cultural protocols and procedures which should be integrated into the research methodology, and which may take time to discover (Martin, 2001a, 2001b; Smith, 2003).

Additionally, researchers should be aware that most often their role is to reinterpret knowledge or use it in a different way rather than create new knowledge (Burkey, 1993). For this reason researchers must be careful about any presumptions about the level of knowledge within the community, particularly, what is already known. Communities do know what their issues are, and are able to articulate them (Fuglesang, cited in, Burkey, 1993).

The fact that the Jubal community did have known issues meant that this study did not commence from a point of neutrality. Rather, the study commenced with recognition that the participant Aboriginal community was in a position of relative social and economic exclusion. There was at the outset, therefore, an expectation that positive change would result from this research. Additionally, and perhaps most importantly, there was also an intention to avoid a situation where the Aboriginal participants were portrayed as passive objects of research who were a fixable ‘problem’ rather than as participants active in creating change in their community (Fine et al., 2003).

An additional consideration was to identify culturally and socially appropriate methods to gather evidence, specific to that situation. One such example of culturally appropriate methods is given by Professor Judy Atkinson who, in her work and teaching, talks about
“deep listening”. Using the concept of Dadirri, which is an Ngangikurungkurr concept written about by Miriam Rose Ungunmerr-Bauman (Ungunmerr-Baumann, 2002), deep listening is a respectful way of listening; of wanting to listen. Atkinson also talks about the Bundjalung concept called gan’na which means to hear; to listen; to feel; to think to understand (Atkinson and Edwards-Haines, 2003). According to Atkinson this concept of deep listening differentiates Western ways of learning from Indigenous ways of learning. For me, this understanding of different ways of learning was best articulated by Harry Walker, a Bundjalung Elder from Tabulam, who said to me, while we were sitting by the campfire one night, that to learn Goorie way is to listen, watch, wait and then to act, not to ask questions. I related this comment to Miriam Rose Ungunmerr-Baumann’s concept of dadirri and the need to listen deeply and be attentive to forms of communication other than words. Watching and waiting is definitely not a passive activity and requires skill to know what to observe and when to take action (Martin, 2001a).

As has been expressed consistently in this chapter the community must decide what is culturally appropriate and applicable in this situation. This is also true when considering data collection methods. Of particular importance is ensuring that the methods are relevant to this particular community, as each community’s needs (Foley, 2000) and ways of expression are unique. Making these decisions can be hard and the greatest need is to listen and observe and find out how the participants do things and then relate it back to the research. The next section of this chapter justifies the use of the particular methodologies and methods chosen.

3.3.1.1 Ethnography and participant observation

Ethnographers believe that interacting with people in their everyday lives leads to a far deeper understanding about those people than can be gained from other methods (Tedlock, 2000). Tedlock (2000: 455) explains that “specific encounters, events and understandings can be placed into fuller, more meaningful context by such firsthand interaction”.

A key activity for ethnographers to achieve this first hand interaction is through participant observation; a much used way for researchers to establish themselves in a place for a relatively long period of time with the aim of investigating and experiencing a particular culture (Bernard, 2006; Emerson et al., 2001). Participant observation involves a process of immersing yourself in a culture while at the same time maintaining distance to allow
Chapter Three: Methodology

yourself to “intellectualise what you have seen or heard, put it into perspective, and write about it convincingly” (Bernard, 2006:344). There are many ways to engage in the field, and many roles that a researcher can adopt. In this study I was a “participating observer” (Bernard, 2006:347), in other words I was an outsider who recorded my interaction in some aspects of the culture and society I was immersed in.

A key strength of participant observation is that it assists in gaining insight into the culture being studied, which as Bernard says (2006:342) allows you to speak “from the gut” and with confidence about the meaning of the data. Other strengths of participant observation are that it assists the researcher in asking sensible questions because they come to have a deeper understanding of the context (Bernard, 2006). Further, it reduces the problem of participants reacting to the presence of the researcher (Bernard, 2006).

During the course of this study I was immersed in particular aspects of Jubal’s activities and day to day life, mostly in terms of administration and community development activities. Unlike many researchers, who live for extended periods of time in the societies which they study, I did not live in the community. In fact, I lived some 800 kilometres from Tabulam in Sydney. I travelled to Tabulam regularly and would on average be there for one to two weeks per month over the course of three years. I specifically wanted to understand certain aspects of the Jubal environment but was not expecting or seeking to become immersed to the point of becoming an “insider”. At no time did I expect, or experience, that my limited participation would lead to being able to “see, think, feel and sometimes behave as an insider” (Tedlock, 2000: 457). I certainly felt strong ownership of the areas I was involved in. Inevitably however, my race, different life experiences, education and expectations set me apart.

Additionally, I had choices about how much I participated, or remained ‘immersed’. For more than three years I spent significant amounts of time physically at the Jubal property, or the nearby office. I became involved in the day to day life when I was there. However, I never stayed on site – choosing nearby accommodation over camping at Jubal. This decision was made for reasons of personal preference, being a reluctant camper, and practicalities, to have access to phone and power. The result of these choices was that I was able to leave, or withdraw from Jubal, which became particularly important when I found things were too difficult or too intense, or when there were simply too many other
distractions for us to focus on our work together. I also conducted much of the project work, such as completing financial reports or grant writing from Sydney.

Immersion in aspects of the community’s life allowed me to experience through participation and observation, the context in which the Jubal community operated, including the positive factors as well as some of the challenges. However, another important aspect to the study was its participatory nature. This study sought to incorporate the essence of participation, action and working for change, and was influenced by the principles of PAR.

### 3.3.1.2 Participatory Action Research

PAR has its roots in the West, in community development programs and in feminist approaches to community activity (Alston and Bowles, 2003). Proponents of PAR claim it to be an attitude to research which produces practical knowledge that is useful in everyday life and which aims to use reality rather than be a means of representing reality (Reason, 2003; Reason and McArdle, 2004). Importantly, and in congruence with Indigenist research, a key principle of PAR is that social and historical relationships are integrated into the research rather than being separated from observable facts (Burkey, 1993). Also, like Indigenist research, PAR emerged as a form of resistance to traditional positivistic research and includes overt attempts to create change through action (Boughton, 2001; Kemmis and McTaggart, 2000). The purpose of this change is assumed to bring some form of justice to participants so PAR is most commonly used in situations where there is a perception of injustice (Burkey, 1993; Flick, 2002; Kemmis and McTaggart, 2000) and where the articulation of voices and lived experiences have been traditionally silenced in conventional research methods through the imposition of research from agencies or social theorists who are removed from local concerns and interests (Kemmis and McTaggart, 2000; Reason, 2003). It is in this attempt to articulate the voice and lived experiences of those who have been marginalised by more traditional research where PAR resonates particularly with Indigenist Research.

### 3.3.1.3 Participation

While participant observation was central to the data collection in this study, this study commenced from an intention to not only observe and analyse, but to also create change. This aim resonates with a central tenet of PAR that through action there is change, and that
participation is the most effective way to ensure commitment to action (Dick, 2005). PAR is underpinned by a set of beliefs which infer that participation is a desirable goal; that it is possible for all interested people to participate fully and equally and that participation leads to emancipation (Burkey, 1993; Denzin and Lincoln, 1998b; Flick, 2002; Freire, 2000; Kothari, 2001). Levels of participation can be different depending on the context and may range from full and equal participation from both researcher and stakeholders to the researcher maintaining a separate role and participants being informants only (Dick, 2005). Participation is not a uniform experience for all; some may take a more passive role and others may decide not to participate in the research at all (Ivanitz, 1999). In this study, participation was achieved by the participants and me working together on specific activities and project areas and then taking time to discuss and reflect on those activities and their impact on the community. Initially, my aim had been to have a greater degree of participation in the analysis of our activities; however, this was not the wish of the participants. The use of participant observation worked well in conjunction with the level of participation in the research project that the participants chose.

In addition to considering the level of participation, who is participating must also be a factor of understanding how well the community is represented. In this case those that chose to participate in the study were decision makers of the Jubal Aboriginal Corporation, most of who were men. Jubal members did have a collaborative approach to decision making that recognised input from all community members, not just the executive. However, during the period of this study the majority of the executive were men and mostly older men. Therefore, this study reflects their points of view and is not truly representative of gender, age or of those with no specific responsibility within the community.

Another aspect of the power relationship within the study is to recognise that participatory methods does not necessarily negate or diminish the power of the researcher. In fact, a criticism of PAR is that the process both idealises ‘community’ and diminishes the very real issues of researcher/participant relationships (Fielder, 1999). Fielder (1999: 9) says of action researchers: “as much as they try to divest themselves of expert status, to some extent [they] use their expertise and specialist knowledge in the complex and privileged role of facilitator”.
In contrast, Greenwood and Levin (2005) argue that it is important that local knowledge is not romanticised and professional knowledge denigrated, as both are necessary for effective inquiry. As with other methodologies PAR researchers are in positions of power and have to be aware of where the real and perceived imbalances are between the researcher and other stakeholders (Ivanitz, 1999) and avoid constructing an equality which is more an “intellectual construct, often aimed at legitimising our intervention” (Rahnema, M. quoted in Ivanitz, 1999: 54). PAR, therefore, positions the researcher as an interpreter who is never neutral, is guided by their own beliefs and experiences and must always assume a role (Denzin and Lincoln, 1998a; Flick, 2002). As is also the case with Indigenist research, the role of a researcher in PAR is more of a facilitator who is involved in planning, implementing and making changes as well as observing and reflecting (Alston and Bowles, 2003). The researcher must also be aware of the large number of choices they make and strive to ensure transparency and clarity to themselves, the research participants and to the wider world (Reason, 2003). It is incumbent on the researcher, therefore to be transparent about their role and position in the research.

3.3.1.4 Yarning

In this study much of the evidence was gathered through ‘yarning’, which in this context meant sitting together and listening to each other’s stories. The most valuable information sharing sessions were the long conversations over a cup of tea on the front veranda. While these yarns can appear unstructured it was then that we talked and analysed, and really delved into the issue at hand and examined our options for action. Through yarning I also learnt about the broader context, culture and place and was able to position the enterprise and community development within an historical and social context of the people and place. In addition, the process of yarning allows for repetition. I found that unlike more structured ways of interviewing or collecting data, it was often necessary to have several conversations about the same topic or issue. Each conversation would lead to more insight and consensus on the issue at hand. This approach resonated with Harry Walker’s guidance on the Goorie way of learning; listening, watching, waiting and then acting. It was a mistake to presume that one discussion and an apparent decision was in fact the end of the matter, often it was necessary to revisit and reiterate the issue under examination.

It was also important at times throughout the study, to simply be present without a meeting or agenda to deal with. This meant that, where possible, it was important to go to
community events, including funerals. I even went to the odd footy match! It was also hard to make specific times to meet and often I spent significant amounts of time waiting in the street, outside particular places, until the person to whom I wished to speak arrived. Whilst these events can be frustrating and can throw time lines into disarray, they are important, not only because I can obtain a greater understanding of the situation for the research participants, by experiencing the context in which they have to operate; but it also helps to build trust; just by simply getting to know each other. Of course, in some cases, there is also a sense of reciprocation and family obligation, for example if child care is required, or somebody needs a lift somewhere, ‘helping out’ is the appropriate thing to do.

In addition to yarning, evidence was gathered at formal community meetings, board meetings and meetings with other agencies. In general I recorded the evidence through note taking. I rejected the use of a tape recorder because the participants were not comfortable with that. In order to ensure that I was representing the participants correctly I regularly talked through my observations with them, for example, after meetings or while we were working on specific activities. I did not use questionnaires, which given the Goorie view of direct questioning as an inappropriate form of learning would not have elicited such a rich depth of information. Rather I took advantage of the natural flow of the work we were doing to elicit information and opinions as we went. Where there were gaps or lack of clarity or where I made observations I went back to the person and talked to them further on that specific issue and took detailed notes of what they said which provided specific quotes and are reported in the results chapters.

As well as ongoing checking and rechecking with participants I did look to incorporate different methods in to the study in order to create practical outcomes for Jubal as we progressed. This research project was essentially about creating a better future for Jubal. Not only was there an attempt to identify the issues creating the situation or the environment in which they were operating, but we also intended to find solutions to create an environment of possible futures. In other words, the research was to be practically useful to the participants in their development of Jubal. To enable ongoing practical outcomes, it was crucial not to leave analysis until the end of the project; it had to be an ongoing process. In addition, there was a complexity of layers to be examined in order to understand the issues pertaining to the development of a viable entity, both at a personal and community level. The research process itself highlighted the inability of normal
business planning processes to provide space and methods to analyse and dialogue the complexity of layers in a culturally sympathetic way that ensured a narrative that identified Aboriginal people as active agents in resistance and change (Boughton, 2001).

3.3.2 Reflexivity and Situating the Researcher

When choosing a methodology, or indeed the subject of inquiry, researchers are not operating from a values free or culturally abstract position. The choice of a particular methodology, the questions being asked and the context of the study will be influenced by one’s world view and experiences (Atkinson, 2002; Bernard, 2006; Denzin, 1996; Fielder, 1999; Henry et al., 2002; Karp and Kendall, 2001).

Likewise, Indigenist researchers understand themselves not to be an objective entity. Rather one whose worldview, gender, cultural, socio-economic and racial makeup impacts on the research undertaken. This includes the choice of methodology, the choice of research questions and the methods of interpretation. Indigenist researchers therefore have much in common with researchers who believe that knowledge creation is ‘situated’ and that gathering, interpreting and presenting data must be subject to a reflective lens (Harraway quoted in Brewer, 2000; Rose, 1997).

Indigenist researchers (for example, Rigney, 1996, 1997, 1999, 2001) acknowledge the influence of feminist research in their thinking which emphasizes transparency about factors such as gender, economic and social status, education and nationality (Ateljevic et al., 2005; Rose, 1997). Also important is to acknowledge the researcher’s position of authority in the research; particularly recognizing that they are the final arbiters of what is asked, how it is asked, how it is interpreted and finally how it is presented (Gilbert quoted in Rose, 1997).

These are issues which also occupy post-modern ethnographers who consider reflexivity as the lynch pin between collecting data, its analysis and representation. As Brewer explains “Ethnographic data is always personal to the researcher in a way that quantative data is not. Because of participation, understanding is based partly on introspection where their own experiences, attitude changes and feelings when in the field become data. They have to select from an infinite series of events based on personal interests, and the socio-biological
characteristics of a researcher affect what is seen and recorded and its interpretation” (Brewer, 2000:105).

In an interpretive study such as this one, reflexivity is considered to be an integral, albeit contested, tool for a researcher to identify their position in the research. Particular criticism of reflexivity relates to whether a researcher is able to adequately reflect on their role and be aware of “their own discriminatory processes, personal beliefs and how these originate and are embedded within the broader contexts” (Freshwater and Avis, 2004:9). England (1994: 82) defines reflexivity as “self-critical sympatheticintrospection and the self-conscious analytical scrutiny of the self as researcher”, which she claims is essential to fieldwork as it leads to self-discovery and insight into the research questions. It is questionable, however, whether one can know oneself as well as have a complete understanding of the impact of oneself on the research (Rose, 1997). Smith (quoted in Rose, 1997) offers an alternative position, particularly applicable in an Indigenist research context, which understands research as a form of translation between local knowledges and academic knowledges and where the greatest source of insight and meaning are discovered in the gaps between the two. Rose concludes that reflexivity is an uncertain and failed method, and that the best that researchers can hope to do is to open up gaps of meanings which allow “recognition of the diverse knowledges addressed in any research project” (Rose, 1997 :318).

In opening up these gaps of meanings, and by undertaking rigorous reflexivity, it is hoped that researchers engage critically and transparently with the choices they make, particularly regarding what information is disseminated and how (Reason, 2003). Reflexivity though does not remove power imbalances (Michalowski, 1997), or negate the intrusion into others lives, but it can bring awareness to asymmetrical and exploitative relationships (England, 1994). Reflexivity can lead to excessive introspection, which can result in the research project becoming too much about the researcher and their insights. It is beneficial to keep in mind for whose benefit the reflexivity, and the research, is being undertaken; what the personal element brings to analysis and what contribution it makes to the larger project (DeVault, 1997). In other words, as a reflexive researcher I must be cognisant of the fact that while I may benefit from greater insight into myself, the ultimate aim is ensure that I approach the research from a position of transparency and explicitly locate myself in the research for the benefit of the project.
By its nature reflexivity is an amorphous practice, as each individual is examining their own life, attitudes and beliefs which will create a very personal experience and the context of the study will guide the reflexive behaviour. In this study, there were three main areas of reflexive focus which were consistent throughout the study; I described them as being concerned with relationships, culture and process. These three areas had a significant impact on how I approached and understood this study.

3.3.2.1 Relationships

Relationships, to each other, to land and other entities such as animals, air, sea and other waterways are essential to understanding Aboriginal cultures. When you meet people the question is not what do you do? The question is where are you from? Who is your family? In this way you are placed within the kinship system and from that people know how to relate to you and the responsibilities that flow from those relationships (personal communication, Graeme Mundine, 2004).

Being able to respond to the question “where are you from” is no less important for a researcher who must consider what they bring to the study, what aspects of their cultural, social and economic background are going to affect this study and how they situate themselves in both the research project and the community. In this study, the most obvious issue impacting on my relationships was that I am representative of the Western system which many Indigenous peoples have experienced as marginalising and exclusionary. Therefore I could expect that my socio-economic background would not only impact on the choices made in the research, but will also influence my interactions with Indigenous peoples. I also recognise the dynamics of the research relationship were not only determined by my attitudes and biases but also by the attitudes and bias of some the participants. For example, initially, I had to confront distrust and negative attitudes from some Indigenous participants, which was based on previous experiences of researchers as well as day to day interaction with non-Indigenous people, structures of government and other institutions. Additionally, I had to recognise that relationships change, and allow time for the negotiation and renegotiation that these changes necessitate (Naples, 1997).

In addition to establishing trusting relationships, as an outsider to the culture and community, there was much to learn about the specifics of the community and people in which the inquiry is located. In this study, a holistic approach to the research project was
taken. It was necessary for me, as the researcher, to learn a great deal about the social, cultural and political environment in which the research was taking place. Not all of this had a direct bearing on the actual research question, but without such deeper understanding and experience it would have been impossible to gain trust, understand the context and ultimately complete an accurate research project.

### 3.3.2.2 Culture

In order to engage meaningfully with other cultures it is necessary to understand and challenge the foundations of one’s own culture and understand the historical system of knowledge in which one is situated (Smith, 2003). This examination is not a simple process and requires active intellectual work on the part of the knower (Ladson-Billings, 2000). Indigenist researchers must examine their cultural background, their use of language, ways of communicating, verbal and non-verbal as well as their assumptions and biases about what is important.

Awareness of culture must also include an awareness of cultural boundaries. For example, as a non-Indigenous researcher I can stand in solidarity with Aboriginal people; I can be accepted by the community as an integral change agent, but I am not and never will be Aboriginal. Therefore, I need to be clear about my boundaries, and even though I may come to know and understand aspects of culture or community affairs, I have to be clear about the extent of the permission I have to talk about the project and disseminate information. Permission from the community to engage in aspects of their life for the sake of the research project; and to disseminate outcomes from the research, does not give me the right to speak on behalf of the Indigenous community either about their situation or their culture. As a result, I have been circumspect about presenting and disseminating information related to this study.

### 3.3.2.3 Process

A central tenet of Indigenist research is that the research must be beneficial to the Indigenous participants. Therefore as well as the relevance of the research project it is beneficial to identify what skill set the researcher brings and how they will add value to the inquiry process. In an Indigenist context there must be clarity about what contribution the researcher will make to the project and the community. The most valuable researcher, in this context, is one who can be what Denzin and Lincoln (1998b) call a bricoleur or jack of
Chapter Three: Methodology

A bricoleur is a researcher who, rather than being bound to one particular methodology, is flexible enough to explore and employ a variety of methodologies as dictated by the research project at hand and to be aware of the ways they shape the production and interpretation of knowledge (Kincheloe and McLaren, 2005).

In addition to identifying the skills that the researcher can contribute to the inquiry there is the broader concept of reciprocity to consider (Collard et al., 2005; NHMRC, 2003). Underpinning the concept of reciprocity is the notion that the researcher puts back into the community and does not simply take. ‘Putting back’ may be possible to achieve through the research project, but it may mean giving your skills and experience to something completely unrelated to the actual research project. For example, lobbying on a particular issue of importance to the community, or writing funding grants for another project. One of the challenges of the reciprocity concept is the criticism that the researcher is bargaining for the right to undertake their research: that the community will exchange skills in return for allowing the researcher to conduct their study. There is no guarantee that this is not the case, and perhaps once again the relationship defines whether there is genuine reciprocity or exploitation.

3.3.3 Who am I?

Integrating reflexivity into the study was perhaps most challenging to address in the early part of this study. So keen was I not to be racist, colonialist and exploitative that I worried more about potential problems rather than focusing on the potential benefits of the research process, or my involvement in it. However, I came to understand that who I am does not necessarily need to be judged or labelled positive or negative, but it does need to be made transparent, insofar as this is possible. I also recognise that presenting a short synopsis of my background in this chapter is not the extent of the reflexivity involved in this study, which was in fact an ongoing and inseparable part of the research process. It is simply presented here to establish my personal context.

My cultural and socio-economic background in broad terms is White and middle class. I am an immigrant to Australia, originally from South East England where I grew up in a privileged environment; the eldest of two girls. I was educated privately in Catholic schools, wanted for nothing and lived in a beautiful country house which was built around the same time as the first White settlers were moving into the cedar rich country of the
Bundjalung people. I lived in a sheltered semi-rural environment until I left England and moved to suburban Sydney with my family in 1984. Moving to Australia was a very difficult experience for me and it took many years to feel at home here. Despite the passing of years I do not feel particular attachment to any one place in Australia, nor do I identify strongly with being ‘Australian,’ despite picking up an Australian accent and, no doubt, taking on many Australian characteristics and habits. I continue to retain strong connections to family, friends and place in England.

The extent of my cross-cultural experience, prior to coming to Australia, was holidays in various European countries. I also spent five years at boarding school where, to use a well worn cliché, some of my best friends were from other cultures. However, at that time, we identified ourselves as not being racist, because we did not highlight our differences, “we were all the same”. We had no recognition of, or interest in, our cultural differences and English culture prevailed - unquestioned. What I now see as my mono-cultural existence continued in Australia and did not change until my late teens and early twenties when I went to University and broadened my outlook on life through various means such as travel, engaging with people from different backgrounds and becoming interested and involved in various political and social justice issues.

I also bring to this study the benefit of an extensive education; after school I undertook a Bachelor of Arts (BA), majoring in Political Science, and later I gained a Master of Business Administration (MBA). Professionally, I have an eclectic history, having worked mostly in either small business or Non-Government Organisations and in varied capacities from accounting functions to advising a Federal Senator (Senator Vicki Bourne, Australian Democrats) on foreign affairs and aid issues. For much of my adult life I have also been involved, in voluntary capacities, in organisations that cover the full gamut of politics, church and social justice issues.

There is, therefore, very little in my background which resonates with much of Goorie culture and experiences. However, despite being a cultural and social outsider I have married in to the culture. My husband, Graeme Mundine, is a Bundjalung man; he was born in Grafton NSW, his father came from Baryulgil, his grandfather from Tabulam and Pretty Gully. His mother is Gumbayngirr and came from Nambucca Heads. Through my marriage I am inextricably bound to being part of an Aboriginal family and my
comprehension and experiences of Goorie culture is informed by 21 years of relationship with my husband and his family.

Through these relationships I knew much of my husband’s family history and cultural stories prior to commencing this study, particularly as we had undertaken research into his ancestry. However, when he was a child his family of 13 moved to Sydney, some 800 kilometres away from their traditional country, in order to pursue employment for the eldest children. As a consequence Graeme has not lived in his traditional country for many years. His connections remain strong however, and together we had visited the area on several occasions and camped in the bush. Despite this, I could not claim to know or understand many specifics about the people, cultures or places in the Bundjalung Nation. It was therefore necessary for me to approach this study with great openness and sensitivity to what I did not know. In addition, as the wife of a Bundjalung man, I was automatically positioned within the community as a cousin, aunty, niece and sister. It would have been a mistake, however, to rely too much on these intrinsic relationships because I had to ensure that I did not presume too much familiarity and knowledge and still take the time to build a trusting relationship with individual community members.

In addition, being related does not obviate my Whiteness or the need for critical reflection on my role and the impact of my culture on the research. It has been my experience that non-Indigenous people tend to focus attention on describing and, what Maggie Brady (1990) calls, “problematising” Indigenous culture without recognising that each of us also has a culture. In order to conduct ethical Indigenist research non-Indigenous researchers need to engage in an honest and critical assessment of our own particular and collective history, cultural make up and social and economic biases. For me, this included questioning my right and ability, as a White person, to be undertaking this research.

I was challenged to address my right and ability to undertake this research from the outset when I encountered substantial distrust towards non-Indigenous students. In the initial stages of the study, when I was attending meetings around the region with Robyn Ferguson, I was frequently told that Goories were not interested in talking to another White student who would interview them, take from them and never be heard of again. I had anticipated that as a White person undertaking research I may encounter resistance and distrust from Aboriginal participants. However, quite naively, I had not realized the
antipathy towards researchers that many Goorie people had. As a result I had to explore and understand what gave me the right to think that my impact was going to be more beneficial than any other White ‘do gooder’. How could I conduct research that didn’t simply make the Aborigines ‘the problem’ and me the ‘fixer’? I had to address many of my preconceptions and ask myself how I could, and whether I should, conduct this research in good faith when I was an outsider and when my cultural background represents the culture and privilege of the colonizer.

This questioning and exploration of one’s own culture is a personal journey which I found took place continuously throughout the study and did not necessarily result in a definitive statement. I also do not see it as something that can necessarily be written about and ‘analysed’ and presented here as an example of a succinct process I undertook in order to inform this research. For me, this questioning and coming to deeper cultural understandings is all part of living and exploring one’s own life and cultural differences and occurs both intrinsically and extrinsically as part of this study, and in the wider context of my life. Therefore, rather than being explicitly presented in this study, this questioning and reflection is intertwined throughout my observations and analysis.

However, it was necessary to come to some conclusions in order to move forward with this study, and I came to resolve my angst about being another White researcher, through the process of relationship building and dialogue with the research participants, my husband and academic colleagues. That is not to say that my questioning ever diminished, or my concerns ever ceased, rather it caused me to be constantly alert and reflective about my contribution to the research project. For example, I found it necessary to explore my perceptions and reactions, particularly to the physical environment in which I was working. Observing through my particular cultural lens caused me to make judgements about things that I saw, such as the derelict and vandalised houses at the mission, or to react to situations such as the many meetings delayed or missed due to family crises. Over time some of my observations became less judgemental and more understanding as I came to know the reasons why certain things were happening. Others remained an issue but rather than remaining a judgement galvanised me to action.

Mostly, I attempted to deal with these issues through patience, awareness and transparency and also by checking my assumptions with participants, and being open to learning and
challenge. Throughout the study I engaged in dialogue with the participants about what was emerging from the research and through this process I was checking my judgements and interpretations and trying to avoid inferring greater importance on particular evidence than the participants did.

I also came to understand that we were able to utilise our differences to the best advantage in the research project. We recognised that we are different and interpret and understand things differently but that we also brought different skills to the study. In time, as the results show, our cultural differences, my particular skills and experiences and my position in White culture became an important part of my contribution to the research project.

3.3.4 Identifying the Researcher’s Role

In addition to being transparent about who I am, I also needed to consider what I was bringing to this research; what role I was taking. While it might seems obvious what role the inquirer claims, that of the researcher, it may not be that simple and will clearly depend on the methodology chosen. However, it is important that the role is defined so that participants may know what to expect. In addition there is the notion of reciprocity involved in Indigenist research, so whilst the research role may be clear, it is possible that the researcher needs to undertake other tasks to facilitate either the research, or relationships or both.

Defining my role was not easy at first as influenced as I was about Indigenist research principles which served as a constant reminder of my non-Indigenuity. In particular, as my attention was initially so focused on the possible negative consequences of being a White researcher; of trying to fit in, to learn about the culture the participants were operating in and to not cause harm, it took me longer to focus on the benefits that being an outsider could bring to the community and to be clear about my role. Dickson and Green (2005: 249), for example, state that: “[A]n outside ER [external researcher] is often the catalyst. People whose daily lives are consumed by efforts to survive are unlikely to have the time, energy or interest to devote to an inquiry. An ER may be helpful in bringing additional resources to the picture…”.

Further, Dickson and Green (2005) recognise the role that a researcher may play, and which certainly became integral to my relationship to the Jubal community, as a broker or
mediator between the community and other organisations such as Government agencies. As my role in the community developed I was able to assist in what Dickson and Green (2005: 250) call ‘packaging’ the community’s ideas and plans into forms of media which would assist in their development.

Additionally, when I first engaged in the research I was keen to ensure that reciprocity took place. In other words whatever skills and experience I possessed should become part of the research project rather than for me to strive to be an ‘objective’ researcher. I thought that it was far better to incorporate the notion of reciprocity and my participation into the methodology. Initially, therefore, I drew on my business experience and took on the role of business mentor. I also drew on my policy experience and helped inform the community about policy changes that would affect them. However, as the project progressed I found that my role was flexible and changeable as I also took on various activities which were essential to the progress of the enterprise development; including writing funding submissions, training people in administration and book keeping, even doing the backlog of five years of annual accounts. As Kevin Torrens told me, “If you want to work with Goories you have to be prepared to do anything and everything” (personal communication, 2005).

As the study progressed, therefore, my role changed. In addition to undertaking some administrative and practical roles I also took on a role that I experienced as being a ‘translator’. I was often asked to interpret information from governments and funding agencies and at times I was sent to meetings to present the point of view or the needs of the community, because I was seen, by Kevin Torrens, to ‘understand’ and I was able to bring back and present information to the community. This was especially important as the research commenced at a time of major change of Federal Government policy which created uncertainty in the community. Whilst this aspect of the relationship and experiencing the interactions between Aboriginal communities and White society proved to be one of the most interesting and instructive elements of the research project; it did mean that I had to be aware of my boundaries. While I could talk about “we” when I was referring to the specific work we were doing, culturally I remained an outsider. In accordance with ethical research practice I also tried to avoid speaking on behalf of the community, so when I was asked to do that, by the research participants, I had to make it very clear that I had permission, the extent of that permission and to try and ensure that the
process became empowering for and inclusive of the other participants so that they found the confidence to engage with the power structures from which they felt excluded.

It was clear as a result of these changing roles that through the course of the study I was speaking in more than one voice when it came to analysing and interpreting the evidence. I was the observer and analyser, but as a participant I was also speaking in the role of mentor and trainer.

3.3.5 Identifying Research Constraints

An awareness and understanding of the locational factors and constraints, specific to this location, must be integrated into the methods, rather than either being ignored or seen as a problem or a hindrance. In any research project there are factors external to the actual project which have influences and create consequences. In this study, time was a major factor to be considered; specifically whose timeline was important? Certainly the pressure to complete my PhD in the three years of my scholarship influenced my agenda. However, the needs of the community were paramount and it was necessary to always judge achievement and progress in this particular community context. For example, we had to take into account people’s priorities as well as community and family obligations. We may have agreed to complete a particular task in a particular time, but whereas this project was my full time occupation; the other participants had family and community obligations which always took priority. There is a high incidence of illness and social challenges in this community as well as frequent deaths and so the research had to be placed in the context of responsibilities to family and community and the impact of these issues on the individuals. I also had to balance my obligations to the community and, as I became more involved, the workload generated by the activities explored in this study, together with the work I needed to do to complete the study on time, as well as my commitments to my own family. For example, there were times when I felt I needed some time to write parts of my thesis, but there were competing demands such as finalising accounts or writing a grant. On those occasions the time defined needs usually took priority.

Additional constraints to be factored into the project arose from the physical location of the project in a relatively remote place. Some consequences of the location included unreliable mobile phone coverage around Tabulam and those who did have mobile phones often could not afford credit for them. For most of the life of the project there was no funding for
administrative staff, consequently where there were office phones they were intermittently attended. Internet and email access was non-existent to start with and later became available but unreliable. There were also sometimes financial constraints to participation; for example, one group failed to attend the FAB workshop at Lennox Head because they had no money for petrol; another could not attend because they had no licensed driver.

Distance can also be a deterrent to participation; meetings can often require a drive of over an hour each way. Or, for example, I might have to drive for two hours to pick up a piece of equipment such as ink for the fax, because it had run out and the equipment needed to be used urgently. My involvement was also inhibited by the fact that I lived 800 kilometres from Tabulam, so visits necessarily had to be planned in advance, as far as that was possible. While I tried to be as available as possible, the distance did present a constraint.

Another constraint was that those people who were involved in the study were also involved in many other projects and organizations and so demands on their time were often overwhelming. They could be required to spend substantial amounts of time attending seemingly never ending meetings. Therefore the environment and the needs of the community had to take precedence and we had to factor in the very real issues of community life when conducting research.

### 3.4 Interpreting the Results

Interpretation is the process of attaching meaning to the data (Brewer, 2000). The challenge for the researcher is to attach the correct meaning to the data, and to do justice to the complexity of meanings in the field (Brewer, 2000) by not only observing the field, but also interpreting human actions (Karp and Kendall, 2001). Through the process of interpretation a reading or readings of an event is constructed (Brewer, 2000).

The challenge in constructing that reading arises from finding the balance between the voices of the research participants and the voice of the author (Charmez and Mitchell, 1997). Although the intention in this study was to privilege Indigenous voices, the fact remains that as the investigator and author I am inevitably recreating the voices (Emerson et al., 2001) and presenting a version of the subject’s lived experiences (Denzin, 1996).
Additionally, researchers define what is included and excluded. According to Fine et al. (2003:186), researchers often focus too much on the great stories and ignore the “mundane rituals of daily living”. Typically these everyday stories are left out of ethnographic descriptions despite being the stuff of daily life; caution is urged to ensure that researchers “do not construct life narratives spiked only with the hot spots” (Fine et al., 2003: 187). The approach suggested by Brewer (2000) is to pick out key events in the field, which were focal events for the people under study, and to develop comprehensive descriptions. This was the approach taken in this study. There were three focal events, or areas of activity, around which this study evolved and which form the basis of the evidence. These areas of activity were: the process of entering into a Shared Responsibility Agreement (see Chapter Five); the process of developing a Property Management Plan (see Chapter Six); and the establishment of proper accounting practices (see Chapter Seven). Describing in detail these key events, and including observations from community members and myself as participant observer, allows for insights into the everyday stories and experiences of community and enterprise development at Jubal. Analysis of these events is presented in a separate chapter (Chapter Eight) which allows for the themes to be identified and analysed across all three events. The framework for the analysis in Chapter Eight is based on the three points of entry identified by the UNDP as necessary for good capacity development (see Chapter Two, Table 2.4).

In recreating these events it was important to also allow Indigenous participants to have input into, and at the very least approve, the interpretation of the evidence and to build a feedback mechanism into the methodological process. Drafts of the participant’s comments were given to participants to read or where that was not appropriate, or desired by the participants, discussion was also entered into. Feedback was taken into account and incorporated into the final version.

3.5 Presenting the Results

Research is conventionally orientated towards written presentation of work, either through dissertations, reports or through diagrams, tables etc. However, in Indigenous communities there is often a high level of illiteracy, but more importantly Indigenous cultures commonly use non-written ways of communicating knowledge, for example, story, song, dance and painting. Therefore, presenting research outcomes in a written format can be exclusionary and creates a bias away from local knowledge at the outset (Kothari, 2001).
As a result it is imperative that there is an exploration of alternate ways of presenting material. It is important that this is explored with the Indigenous participants so that assumptions are not made about what is suitable in this situation. Importantly this might mean that material is presented as the project progresses, rather than as a final report or thesis. It may also mean that material is written or presented in different formats so that the outcomes of the research are accessible to all interested parties.

The measures I took to ensure appropriate representation of material for this study were to check authenticity with the relevant person, to pay attention to confidential material and to assess and discuss with participants whether publishing certain material would present a risk either to Jubal, or the individual. As I wrote up the descriptions of events, which included what people had said to me, I discussed them with participants to ensure they were accurate representations. I offered a written copy. However, I usually found participants preferred to talk through my observations. I have also incorporated feedback, for example changing or excluding things at their request or ensuring that I took note of the things that participants told me were important to highlight in my thesis. Additionally, I frequently wrote up notes and documents that were then used by the community to inform other agencies, or to use in funding applications.

### 3.6 Validation and Rigour

A criticism of more participatory forms of research is perceived confusion between social activism, community development and research (Kemmis and McTaggart, 2000). Criticism is also levelled at the technical and methodological rigour of interpretative methodologies because they are grounded in the premise that ‘truth’ is shaped by subjective views and “material-social-historical circumstances” that can only ever be authenticated in light of our lived experiences (Kemmis and McTaggart, 2000:581). The dilemma is that if truth is not an objective certainty how can we ensure the kind of rigour that is commonly expected by academics? Kemmis and McTaggart (2000), claim that rigour exists if the research can be replicated under the same conditions and lead to the same results. An alternative view is that transporting knowledge from one situation to another involves not only understanding the contextual conditions under which the knowledge has been created, but also an understanding of the context of the new situation and an active process of reflection about the differences between the two (Greenwood and Levin, 2005).
Understanding rigour and reliability as intrinsic to the context and also a process which must be validated by the participants themselves is concordant with the expectation within the Indigenist research paradigm that reliability has is less to do with capturing a definitive truth and more to do with checking interpretations with participants (Martin, 2001a). To ensure rigour and reliability in this study, the conclusions drawn were checked with the participants as we engaged in dialogue about the research as the study progressed.

### 3.7 The Future

Finally, it is important to look to the future. Having spent time building relationships and trust, should the researcher engage with the community beyond the life of the project? For example, does the researcher make any commitment to following through with recommendations or outcomes arising from the research? Some of the questions relating to the future are also relevant when considering what the researcher can offer to the research project and the notion of reciprocity. How a researcher ends their involvement in the project is important and should be consistent with promises and commitments made previously. It may be appropriate that once the project is finished and the final presentations of the report have been made then the researcher’s involvement in the community is also at an end. It may be however that once the research project is finished it is more appropriate for the researcher to stay connected in some capacity.

At the beginning of this study I committed to working with the community beyond the term of the PhD if necessary. My involvement with Jubal continued, albeit with less intensity as I necessarily had to reduce the time spent in the community. My involvement broadened and included working with the community on business planning for a catering business as well as working on a women’s project on family violence. I continued to work with them on their accounts, write grant applications and financial reports when necessary and undertake mentoring. This arrangement continued until mid 2009 when the Board changed and following discussions between myself and Board members it was decided that Jubal should make alternative arrangements for the work that I had been doing.

### 3.8 Did the Methodology Work?

At the outset of this study I aimed to conduct this research within a framework that was consistent with Indigenist research principles and provided tangible results for the
participant community. As the study progressed, I felt confident that we had, for the most part, achieved this. However, I was keen to obtain feedback from the participants about how they experienced participating in the research. There was no way to avoid the fact that the participants were giving feedback to me and, despite my assurances that I was willing to hear both negative and positive criticisms, I cannot say whether the feedback was positive in order to reassure me. However, the positive nature of the feedback does resonate with the integrity of the relationships that I have with the participants, and is consistent with our conversations and experiences over time. The comments also highlight the need for researchers to engage with the participants about what is appropriate ways of engaging that provides a positive experience and useful outcomes for both the researcher and the participants.

One concrete outcome of this research was that as it progressed participants could see tangible outcomes. For example, Norm Torrens said of the research process:

> It’s been good working with people around us, felt that we were one and for each other. See things happen on ground and you’re involved, gives us a good feeling (personal communication, 2007).

Probably the most beneficial aspect to the research process has been the one-on-one attention, the ability to have some continuity and to really work through the day to day, or as Norm Torrens has called it, the “nitty gritty”:

> It is giving us confidence, individually one on one. It’s the first time - a one off thing. This is the way it’s got to be, we weren’t told – I would have liked to have more (personal communication, 2006).

As identified previously in this chapter, one of my consistent concerns has been the issue of not being Goorie, of being an outsider and how that impacts on the community. Kevin Torrens responded to this when I asked him about this by saying:

> It’s not a problem you’re not a Goorie – there were questions at the beginning but people realized that we were learning something. I always give a ten minute presentation; they like that and you have spoken at meetings which they like. If they
didn’t like you they would get rid of you. But they can see a commitment and you give something back. We would like you here for at least another 12 months. There are not too many [non-Indigenous people] that Goories can work with (personal communication, 2006).

The most personally affirming feedback came from Gina Roberts who, through explaining her experience of the research, articulated what I had set out to do, which was to create a space to work together which was congruent with Indigenist research methods and that developed a significant and mutually empowering relationship:

Without you it wouldn’t have happened, I wouldn’t be where I am now…We need somebody who will connect, knows what us Goories are about. If you don’t have that connection nothing happens. The connection with you was different than other white people. You’re willing to teach. I was willing to learn. I’ve never seen that before with Jubal. Probably because it happened to me with you. You wanted us to take control, others, they wanted to take control. You want us to take power of our own business. People have low expectations; they don’t think we can do it. You do (personal communication, 2006).

3.9 Conclusion

This chapter started by identifying an Indigenist Research Paradigm as the most suitable paradigm from which to undertake this study. Also outlined was the gap in the literature regarding whether only Indigenous people can undertake such research or whether it is possible for non-Indigenous researchers to also operate from this paradigm. A conclusion was made that it is possible; however the non-Indigenous researcher must give deep consideration to several issues in order to ensure that they are approaching the research with cultural and ethical sensitivity. The principles of Indigenist research were combined into a process called an Indigenist Process of Inquiry and the process employed in this study, including the use of appropriate methodologies such as ethnography and PAR were presented. Finally, opinions were presented as to the effectiveness of following the process.
Chapter Four  Background to Jubal

4.0  Introduction

This study focuses on the Jubal Aboriginal Corporation (Jubal), which is located in North East New South Wales (NSW) near Tabulam. In this chapter the location of Jubal is explained. Also explained is the context of the Jubal organisation, how it came into existence, its purpose and current activities and the vision for its future. Finally, the link is made between Jubal’s current development activities and how they relate to their aspirations to develop tourism enterprises.

4.1  The Location of Tabulam

Tabulam is in North East New South Wales, halfway between the towns of Casino to the East and Tenterfield to the West. It is located on the Clarence River and was designated a town in 1885. It is most renowned these days for being the birthplace of Harry Chauvel, the founder of the first Australian mounted regiment, the Light Horse Brigade. The first White settlers who arrived in Tabulam did so seeking pasture for their stock (Wilkinson, 1992) and quickly established large pastoral properties and took over the land for sheep grazing and later cattle (Wilkinson, 1992). Tabulam also became a transport hub for the wood cutters who were able to transport the abundant red cedar down the river to the ports (Wilkinson, 1992).

Currently there are approximately 150 people living in Tabulam (SMH, 2004), which now consists of a post office, a pub and two petrol stations/general stores and a rural agent.
Map 4.1 Map of Northern NSW showing location of the Bundjalung Nation and of Tabulam
4.2 **Aboriginal History of Tabulam**

Tabulam is located in the traditional country of the Wahlubal people of the Bundjalung nation. It was said to gain its name due to a misunderstanding between the first European settlers in the area and the local people (Wilkinson, 1992). Upon arriving into the area the new White settlers apparently called out to the Aboriginal people they saw on the river bank “what do you call this place?” They replied Jubullum, which meant “this is our place, we belong here”. The White settlers heard this as Tabulam and so the town was named (Wilkinson, 1992). Tabulam Elder, Uncle Eric Walker (dec.), described his people’s connection to the place:

> I come from the Bundjalung tribe. When the European came, this was all rainforest here and there, you know what I mean, right to the river. When they seen the young people in the camps when they came over the hill they said to them, “where do you come from?” Jubullum – that’s as much to say, ’we’re from here, we belong here…We are from Jubullum, we are from here, but our tribe is Bundjalung, we are Bundjalung people. (Uncle Eric Walker (dec.), 2 December 2004 quoted in NSWNPWS, 2007)

White settlers arrived in Tabulam around 1840. The history of European settlement in the area has been well documented by non-Indigenous historians (NSWPWS, 2007; Wilkinson, 1992). Records are available therefore which show that the early interaction between the local Aborigines and the European settlers was marked by violence (Collaborative Solutions, 2000). Despite this, the records also show that the Wahlabul people worked on the stations established by the settlers and in return their camps were tolerated as they were the source of a reliable pool of labour (Wilkinson, 1992). In the 1920s and 1930s, the large stations were broken up. This meant that the Aborigines who had until then been allowed to live in their camps within the stations were now pushed into reserves and fringe camps (Riebe, 2002). Harry Walker, a Tabulam Elder, sums up his experience of being moved off his land:

> Growing up around here, running around here I always thought, this is my land, my whatsaname. I didn’t think that I’d now be sitting here after the white man had taken it away. Uncle Harry Walker, 2 September 2005 (NSWNPWS, 2007).
In Tabulam, the pressure to remove Aborigines from the township was first recorded in 1925 and, in 1930, 43 acres were designated for the use of Aborigines (Riebe, 2002). This cold, damp site was called Turtle Point and the Tabulam Aborigines were moved there (Riebe, 2002). Its location in relation to the township of Tabulam is shown in Figure 4.1 at point 10. Uncle Harry Walker remembers the move to Turtle Point.

_Growing up around here we weren’t allowed to be around the town. We had to stay down there at the river or get out of here before the sun goes down over there. But in my time I was here in the town, being born here, roamed around the place here a bit, I didn’t move down to there to the old Turtle Point until I was 7 or 8 years old because in all my time I was around here, up and down this creek and river there._

Uncle Harry Walker, 2 September 2005 Talking about being moved onto the Aboriginal Reserve known as ‘Turtle Point’ (NSWNPWS, 2007).

This aerial photo also shows other sites of significance to the Aboriginal people of Tabulam. For example the Flat Camp, indicated at point 4, shows the site of a traditional cemetery which has now been bought and handed back to the community by the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service.
Figure 4.1  Aerial photograph of Tabulam showing Turtle Point Reserve

Source: (NSWNPWS, 2007)
The land which now forms the Jubal property has played an important role in the history of the families of the Jubal community members and in the history of the dispossession experienced by the Tabulam Aborigines. One of the reasons why the Jubal property has so much importance in the community is that it was a place where Aborigines were able to live outside the reserve and were left relatively undisturbed (Collaborative Solutions, 2000). The community have many stories about their memories of living and visiting the property when title was held by the Hickling family (see Section 4.4) and how they were able to continue their cultural practices and live amongst their families with relatively little attention from the police (Collaborative Solutions, 2000).

Despite the stories of dispossession and discriminatory treatment by the new comers, the local Goories maintained and adapted their culture within the constraints imposed by the new settlers (Riebe, 2002) and even shared it with the non-Indigenous community.

*Mr Ken Imeson, whose father had the butcher’s shop at Tabulam after Ned Jorden, remembers distinctly that the Tabulam blacks gathered for a big corroboree celebration as late as 1932. Everybody went – black or white – to the big gathering held on the eastern side of Tabulam Bridge…Old Harry Mundine was the leader, master of ceremonies, for he was chief and bore the full tribal markings…the whole affair was very noisy and impressive* (Hall, 1977 quoted in Riebe 2002).

Although there is no denying that the Settlers brought hardship, violence and dispossession when they took over the lands of the Wahalbal people (Riebe, 2002; Wilkinson, 1992) good relationships were also built between the original owners and the newcomers (Farwell, 1973; Wilkinson, 1992). One family in particular who developed good relationships and generated respect amongst the non-Indigenous community was the Mundine family. This respect was recognised in 2003 when Harry Mundine, great grandfather of my husband Graeme Mundine, was honoured by the local council and the Tabulam community, both Goorie and non-Indigenous, by the naming of a street within the Tabulam township in honour of him. The plaque erected on the day draws attention to not only the achievements of Harry Mundine and his ancestors and descendents, but also the positive relationships they built with non-Indigenous people in the area.
However, the fact remains that the Wahlabal people were dispossessed of their land and despite the establishment of the Turtle Point reserve, in the early 1950s the Wahlabul people were moved again. A new reserve⁶ was established four kilometres outside the Tabulam township, which is now called Jubullum and is still home to many Aboriginal people today (Riebe, 2002).

Life on the reserve was not easy and was under the administration of a White manager, who oversaw all aspects of life. Kevin Torrens, the Jubal Chairperson, grew up on the reserve and has many memories of how he and his community were controlled:

*We had curfews; we had to be in the house at a certain time. I remember his [the manager’s] wife used to come and see if the house was clean, she would run her finger in a white glove to check for dust. We had to get permission to leave; if we had relatives visiting we had to get permission for them to stay overnight. Otherwise they had to leave before dark, they couldn’t stay there. They also used to hand out treatment for sores, I remember that. Every morning we had to be checked from head to toe, to see whether we*

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⁶ Although these days Jubullum is colloquially referred to as the mission, it was in fact a reserve. Missions were established by the churches as a sanctuary to house and ‘protect’ Indigenous peoples. Reserves differed from missions in that they were established by the Government. Ultimately though, they had the same purpose. Religious bodies sometimes also set up schools, churches and dormitories on reserves and missions (NSW Government, n.d.; NSWNPWS, n.d.)
had it or not, everybody had to be checked. And we used to get rations every Tuesday, they would go and get them, come back and ring the bell and then we’d get the rations (personal communication, 2007).

Community members often talk about their own experiences of hardship, racism and poverty to explain the need for a place such as Jubal. The lifetime of the current Jubal members, particularly most of those who participated in this study, is a period of time where various government policies have resulted in a legacy of welfare dependency, low self-esteem and confidence, distrust, disadvantage and conflict amongst different community and family groups (see, for example, the debate led by Noel Pearson about the effect of Government welfare policy on Aboriginal communities in recent years: Pearson, 2003; Pearson, 2006; Pearson and Kostakidis - Lianos, 2004). In describing the present day circumstances, the participants in this study frequently explained them in relation to events from their personal histories or the broader history of their people. These personal experiences and opinions are woven through this entire study. In particular their conversation is often peppered with stories such as being limited in their freedom of movement and not being allowed in certain places.

*It’s still pretty racist here, there is a property for sale just by the mission which somebody bought recently, and was told by other people in the town “you know there are a lot of blacks over the road”. But it has always been like that, we were not allowed to walk on the same side of the street - that only changed in the 1970s and 1980s. The Tabulam pub had a separate bar until 1986 or 1987; there was a partition between us. That only changed when the fella sold the pub. Most of these things have changed when people died. But White people own the town - they are in control* (personal communication, Norm Torrens, 2007).

*If we weren’t out of town [Tabulam] by 5.00 they’d lock us up. People don’t know that part, it happened in reality* (personal communication, Robert Caldwell, 2007).

Alongside these comments are stories about how individuals challenged the status quo. The story of the pub partition referred to above is a story that Kevin Torrens often tells as a way of showing how he and fellow community members were controlled and excluded in everyday activities, such as being able to socialise freely in the local pub, the social hub of
the small country township. The story is indicative of how things were and the actions individual people had to take in order to make changes, in all aspects of life, which over time have led to Jubal being an independent community exercising self-determination.

We had Saturday work, me and my brother Bob. There were some good farmers who gave you work on Saturdays, so nearly every week we’d do fencing and that stuff. Afterwards we’d go to the pub for a drink and we’d go straight to our little box [the area partitioned off for Aborigines to sit in].

This one Saturday Bob said ‘what do you reckon? We’ll sit down and have a beer in the main bar’. I said ‘come on then’. We walked into the main bar – you could have heard a pin drop. The bar man ignored us for a while. Then he asked us what we wanted, so we asked for a beer.

He said ‘come on Kev and Bob’. He knew us you see, he said ‘no, you know where to go; I’ll bring the beer round to you’. We stayed there for 5 minutes. We just sat and waited.

Then my brother tapped the bar. The bar man said he wouldn’t give us the beer and if we didn’t go to our box he would call the police. We just sat and waited there. He ended up getting somebody to look after the bar while he walked round to the police. You know the police; it’s just round the corner there.

The cop walked there, into the hallway. There were a lot of White people in the lounge – everyone knew what was happening. He waved at me and Bob and said ‘what’s going on?’ Bob was good, he was good at soft words. So he told him that we wanted a beer there. The cop said he’d have a word to the publican. We could see all that going on, see them waving their arms about and stuff. The cop walked back in. He told us, ‘Kevin, Bob, I told this fella them days are gone now’. He told us you’ve got the, what do you call it, the constitutional right and he’s to serve you where you want it. I reckon that was in 1969 or 1970 (personal communication, 2007).

While this act of defiance was a significant act in the life of Kevin Torrens and his brother, and perhaps marked the beginning in a change of relationships with the White townspeople
and Goorie people, it still took some time before that particular barrier was felled for the wider Goorie community. Norm Torrens, for example, in his comments above, remembered the partition being up until the 1980s. Commenting on this difference in perception Kevin Torrens agreed that the physical partition was there until the 1980s and that many Goories still sat in, what they called, the box. Even when they were allowed in the main bar, many Goories did not feel comfortable being there and it took a long time before they did.

These stories highlight the context which provided the impetus to the community members to want to develop a place where they could run their own lives and develop something that would create better opportunities for future generations. However, there was also a movement amongst the Aboriginal population generally towards greater self determination and land rights which also contributed to creating the environment in which Jubal could be established.

### 4.2.1 The Land Rights Movement in Australia

It is important to understand at the outset of any discussion on Indigenous land rights the difference between ‘land rights’ and ‘native title’. Native Title is based on laws, customs and interests that predate the British colonisation of Australia (DFAT, 2008). Native Title encompasses therefore, those rights and laws that the British claimed did not exist, but which are now recognised under the *Native Title Act 1993*. Land Rights however, are rights granted by governments, they are statutory land rights, for example, the *Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act 1976* (DFAT, 2008).

The history of land rights in Australia began the moment Australia was colonised by Great Britain in 1788. At that time the British claimed Australia without negotiating with the people already living there and, not recognising the unfamiliar but complex systems of ownership and land management, they declared Australia *terra nullius* (Reconciliation, 2007). Declaring Australia *terra nullius* meant that the British considered all land in Australia to be Crown land, which they could obviously sell, lease or use as they saw fit. As the settlers moved across Australia more and more Aboriginal people were dispossessed and alienated from their land (Reconciliation, 2007). Many were placed in reserves and had their freedom of movement restricted.
It was not until the 1900s that the fight for land and other rights began to take a coherent form. In the 1940s and 1950s there were strikes for workers rights and in the late 1950s a key protest organisation was formed, the Federal Council for the Advancement of Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders (FCAATSI). This organisation won several areas of land back for Aborigines in the 1960s (Reconciliation, 2007). Another significant development was the establishment of the Aboriginal Tent Embassy in 1972 which highlighted the Federal Government’s failure at that time to recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander’s inalienable right to land (Reconciliation, 2007).

It was the Gurindji strike however which is credited to be the first action to gain widespread support for Indigenous land rights. In 1966, the Gurindji people (NT) led by Vincent Lingari held a strike against poor pay and conditions. This strike turned into a claim for their traditional lands to be returned to them (Reconciliation, 2007). It took them nine years, but in 1975, the Prime Minister, Gough Whitlam handed back the land to the Gurindji people. In 1976, the Aboriginal Land Rights Act (Northern Territory) 1976 was enacted which provided recognition of Aboriginal land ownership of about 11,000 Aboriginal people (Reconciliation, 2007).

The 1970s was a decade which saw the enactment in the Northern Territory of the first major legislation which recognised Aboriginal people’s right to land. Other states enacted legislation in the 1980s and 1990s. Also, independent Indigenous land rights bodies were established in some places (Reconciliation, 2007).

The greatest win for native title, which came to be known as the Mabo Case, had its origins in 1982 when Eddie Koiki Mabo, a Meriam man from Mer Island in the Torres Strait took a case to the High Court of Australia to establish his rights. It took ten years, but in 1992 the Federal Court handed down its decision which recognised native title and established that Indigenous people still had the right to make claims over their traditional lands (Reconciliation, 2007). In response to this case the Federal Government established a National Native Title Act (Reconciliation, 2007).

In 1996, another case was brought which further tested native title. The Wik case was brought by the Wik people of Cape York and the Thayorre People of Queensland (Reconciliation, 2007). The outcome of that landmark case was that the court held that
native title could co-exist alongside the rights of pastoralists on cattle and sheep stations (Reconciliation, 2007).

Since the 1970s the Australian Government has taken action to both legislate and to acquire land to benefit Indigenous communities. Some Crown land has been returned to communities such as in the NT where fifty per cent of land was returned following the Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act 1976 (Reconciliation, 2007). In more recent times the Government has also established bodies that can help Indigenous communities own land. One significant body is The Indigenous Land Corporation (ILC) which is a statutory authority established under the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Act 2005 to assist Indigenous people to acquire and manage land to achieve economic, environmental, social and cultural benefits (ILC, n.d.). It was the ILC which assisted and enabled the Jubal community to purchase its property.

4.3 Origins of the Jubal Aboriginal Corporation

The Jubal Aboriginal Corporation had its origins in a vision statement developed in 1996 for another of the community’s corporations Mull-Bunoogah. Mull-Bunoogah is an Indigenous housing corporation which was established to administer funds provided to maintain community housing.

In 1996, the vision of Mull-Bunoogah was identified as:

To look after all our members by ensuring a proud Bundjalung way of life as equal partners in Australia. To provide our members with good housing, health services, work, freedom and safety, and to work to protect our history, culture and our land for our children and all their future children (Collaborative Solutions, 2000: 12).

One of the greatest needs identified in 1996 was the provision of a safe haven, especially for women and children (Collaborative Solutions, 2000). The desire for such a place is best described by the community members.

Our ideal is to own a large property in the area that some of us can live on, where we can teach our young people about the land, and on which we can make a living. We have applied to the ILC to support us in this. If this land is bought by us then
there will be considerable activity in respect to employment, cultural activity and enterprises that will be based on that land (Collaborative Solutions, 2000:12).

The community had already identified a specific property and had clear ideas about what the property could be used for.

We know this land. We and our fathers and our grandfathers have worked it. We could employ most of our members in various enterprises on it. It has areas good for ploughing and planting with good drainage. There is great timber on the place – hardwoods, ironbark, redwood. We would also replant. There are three creeks through it. Can be worked as a beef cattle property. We could build boys dormitories and have training programmes. Have some people there as managers and live in. We have a local person with agricultural training. There are dip yards on it. We will clear wattle trees which are excellent for making boomerangs. We will have horses for the young fellows to get this experience and work with them. Tea tree plantation is a possibility like at Main Camp. Fencing can be done from the timber on the place. Community services for our people could be run there. We need a shed there to be able to work on cars and do some welding etc (Collaborative Solutions, 2000: 12).

The community’s desire became a reality when they successfully applied to the ILC to purchase a 525 hectare property five kilometres east of Tabulam and 50 kilometres west of Casino (ILC, 2006). The property was bought under the ILC’s cultural acquisition program which aims to:

Address dispossession and ensure that Indigenous people obtain cultural benefits through acquisition of culturally significant land for traditional owners and those with traditional, historical and contemporary links (Indigenous Land Council, 2006:1).

The Jubal Aboriginal Corporation was registered in 1999 and ownership of the property was transferred from the ILC to the Jubal Aboriginal Corporation the same year.
4.4 Location and Characteristics of the Jubal Property

Prior to Jubal acquiring the property it was called Winterton’s, after its former owner. The name was changed to Jubal because the word ‘jubal’ is a Bundjalung word for witchetty grubs, which were in abundance on this property. The stands of Wattle trees ensured that there was a steady supply of jubals and people would travel to this place to harvest them. Jubal is therefore the name of the property and its community as well as the legal entity, the Jubal Aboriginal Corporation, which owns and manages the property.

The Jubal community were able to claim connection to this property because during the early part of the twentieth century title to 200 hundred acres was held in the name of Walter Hickling, a member of the Goorie Community. At that time the 200 acres was part of the Sandilands Station owned by the Bruxner family. The Bruxner’s gave Walter Hickling the 200 acres as a reward for the Hicklings’ skills and work on the station as stockmen (Collaborative Solutions, 2000). Although 50 acres shifted back to the ownership of the Bruxners sometime after 1926, in 1943 land title records show that a conditional leasehold of 150 acres was still held by Walter Hickling (Collaborative Solutions, 2000). Sometime after this the land title was seemingly lost by the Hicklings and the land became part of the Winterton property (Collaborative Solutions, 2000). After the Second World War the family ceased to live there, only visiting and working on the property (Collaborative Solutions, 2000). While it is not clear how the land became part of the Winterton’s property, it is clear from the oral history that the community believe that it was taken by less than honourable means and was simply appropriated by the owner of the Winterton property, Nugget Winterton (Collaborative Solutions, 2000). Uncle Eric recalls that Nugget Winterton, who he called “the devil himself” (Collaborative Solutions, 2000: 8), “pestered and pestered and pestered for that place, ended up he got it” (Collaborative Solutions, 2000:8). While it is unclear how title was lost by the Hicklings, the important thing is that the community were able to prove their long and consistent connection to the land and are now able to claim title once more.

The property the community was able to claim is “undulating with large areas cleared of native vegetation and areas of remnant vegetation with good reserves of timber” (ILC, 2006: 2). Currently the property is used for living and a meeting/gathering space. Approximately 190 hectares of cleared land was leased to Forest Enterprises Australia (FEA) in 2006 and has since been planted with plantation forestry (ILC, 2006).
4.4.1 Current Infrastructure

When Jubal took ownership of the property there was no infrastructure on it. Over the years the Jubal community have built various facilities which have made it more accessible to community members. The current infrastructure is mapped on Figure 4.2, which was produced for Jubal’s Property Management Plan. Currently there is a large machinery shed which is used for machinery storage as well as meetings and community gatherings (figure 4.4).

There is also an ablutions block which houses showers and toilets as well as a kitchen (figure 4.5). The kitchen was refurbished in 2007 and equipped with commercial catering equipment. These facilities are used by community members who live on site as well as visitors. They are also used to cater for visiting groups.
There are four cabins which have been built by community members to live in (figure 4.6). Two have been assessed as being in accordance with council regulations and approvable as class 1 buildings (ILC, 2006). Other community members have caravans or other forms of temporary accommodation.

**Figure 4.6 Kevin Torrens’ self built house**

The property has two creeks running through it, Captains Creek and Tunglebung Creek. There are also three dams, one for domestic use and two stock dams (ILC, 2006). In 2007, a new access road to the Bruxner Highway was built to enable safer access to the property. At the same time an internal road to the community building and car park was built.
Figure 4.7  Map of current infrastructure

Source: Jubal Property Management Plan (ILC, 2006).
4.5 The Jubal Aboriginal Corporation Vision

Jubal Aboriginal Corporation was registered in October 1999. According to the Corporation’s Rules its objective is to: provide economic, cultural and social services to the community.

The Jubal vision is for the community to take control of their own lives; it is a clear expression of a desire to develop their own capacity in order to become independent, and provide a strong and meaningful future for their members. A key desire is to be self-sufficient with much attention being given over the years to the exploration of potential economic activity on the property. While there are many plans for the future (see Section 4.8) one venture that Jubal has already entered into which has resulted in a steady income is the forestry enterprise agreement which involves leasing land to a forestry company to be planted with timber (figure 4.8). Jubal is paid for the use of the land on a lease per hectare basis. The benefit to the community of this type of income, which is referred to as ‘the tree money’, is that it provides some money to cover the cost of running Jubal. Previously, apart from specific grants for specific programs, Jubal had never received money to run the property. Hence, much of the tree money has been spent on buying equipment, tools and other items necessary to run a property of that size; it has been spent catching up on the purchase of essential items to make up for the many years that there was no income for such things.

Figure 4.8 Cleared and prepared land prior to the planting of plantation timber at Jubal
4.5 Community expressions of the Jubal vision

As well as the documentation describing Jubal quoted throughout this chapter, it was also important to hear from the participants themselves about their vision for Jubal and how important it was for them and for their families. For Robert Caldwell the strength of Jubal lies in its family orientation and its connection to their history.

*It is a family based property where the family members work well together. Nobody is trying to be the big boss. Jubal’s not like the other organizations who answer to one man; our directors work together. In Casino, for example, there is a lot of wrangling between organizations and nepotism. Thank God it’s not happening at Jubal. I love going out there – I’ve been doing the site course for ten weeks*. We made the site nice, we put time in on the sites, I had [name removed] and [name removed] working there for five weeks. It was very interesting and we feel we achieved something. Now the younger generation knows where the sites are. We took photographs, and will do a report. We want to get stuff back and store it at Jubal, put it on the wall (personal communication, 2007).

*It made us aware of what was Jubal. My family lived there and now I go out there because it brings back a lot of memories. I took people over to look at the property – gives me a sense of freedom. I leave all that other stuff back here and try to be free* (personal communication, 2007).

Norm Torrens also found the family involvement to be integral to Jubal.

*We are family orientated which stands out from other groups. We did go our separate ways from Tabulam, but eventually when Jubal came along we reunited as one body and as family. It brought nearly all the family members together to being one again and working towards the future. As a body we are making our own decisions for ourselves but in other places the Government tells us what to do. Here we make real strong family decisions, everything that happens goes back through the family* (personal communication, 2007).

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7 The site course is a ten week course sponsored by Adult Community Education (ACE) which has employed Robert Caldwell to train younger community members in site recognition and maintenance.
As a younger community member, Gina Robert’s opinion of the strength of Jubal was in its Elders and its ability to bring the families together.

_Elders, in every way they are more consistent today than the younger ones who give up easily. They want it today and if they don’t see things happening, The Elders have patience… Jubal is bringing culture back – families are bonding, it’s good that we have the Elders and family structure_ (personal communication, 2007).

Currently it is these Elders who are driving Jubal; Kevin’s generation, his brothers and their wives and others who have built houses on the property. These people are clearly putting their energy into Jubal for the sake of the younger generations.

_Jubal has given me hope, to get back to family, it’s a place with incentive and it has got potential. We feel like our younger generation are involved and can carry on from whatever level and appreciate the place_ (Norm Torrens, personal communication, 2007).

_We are not always going to be here and we want the young people to show some interest and step into our positions. Our hope is to see Jubal come on after we’ve gone. We have to talk like that, there’s going to come a time when we are not here_ (Robert Caldwell, personal communication, 2007).

_We hope that they will feel the same way we do; we don’t force them to_ (Norm Torrens, personal communication, 2007).

Although the Elders are the ones most involved in the day to day running of Jubal, there is a much larger group who are members of the Corporation. The membership and management structure of Jubal is discussed in the next section.
4.6 Membership and Management Structure of Jubal

Jubal is an Aboriginal Corporation which comes under the regulations of the Office of the Registrar of Aboriginal Corporations which is governed by the Corporations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) Act 2006 (CATSI Act)\(^8\) (www.ORIC.gov.au).

Jubal is a membership organisation governed by a management board elected from members (the Board). There are approximately 200 members of Jubal. The rules of the Jubal Aboriginal Corporation state that membership is open to adult Aboriginal persons normally and permanently resident in Captain Creek, Tabulam, NSW (Jubal Aboriginal Corporation, 1999). However, it was the drive and determination of four particular families that resulted in the establishment of Jubal. These families are the Hickling, Caldwell, Collins and Torrens families (Collaborative Solutions, 2000). In particular, it was the Hickling’s established connection with the Jubal property that enabled the community to claim the land under the ILC’s guidelines.

Jubal is managed by the Corporation’s governing committee which must have no less than five Board members who, in accordance with its constitution, are appointed for twelve months. Nomination and voting takes place at an Annual General Meeting. While not specified in the rules of the Corporation it is expected by the Community that each of the four family groups has a representative on its management committee.

The Board positions held during the period of this study (2005 – 2007) were:

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chair</td>
<td>Kevin Torrens</td>
<td>Kevin Torrens</td>
<td>Kevin Torrens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secretary</td>
<td>Gertie Robinson</td>
<td>Gina Roberts</td>
<td>Gina Roberts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treasurer</td>
<td>Norm Torrens</td>
<td>Norm Torrens</td>
<td>Anthony Hickling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Committee Member</td>
<td>Robert Caldwell</td>
<td>Robert Caldwell</td>
<td>Robert Caldwell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Committee Member</td>
<td>Anthony Hickling</td>
<td>Norm Torrens</td>
<td>Norm Torrens</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^8\) ORIC was formerly known as the Office of the Registrar of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Corporations (ORATSIC); it changed its name to the Office of the Registrar of Indigenous Corporations (ORIC) following a change to the Corporations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) Act 2006 (CATSI Act) in July 2007. To avoid confusion the new name ORIC is used in this study.
4.7 Jubal Today

Since acquiring Jubal, several community members have built their own basic accommodation (see for example figure 4.6), or are living in temporary structures such as caravans. As a result there is an increasing permanent population with a large and growing visiting population. In addition to those living on the property, the Jubal community is involved in several activities. Some relate to the running and improvement of the property such as installing more water storage capacity. Other activities are more programmatic or regular events.

4.7.1 Annual Jubal Country Gathering

The longest running program held at Jubal is the Annual Jubal Country Gathering which is a week long celebration giving thanks for the land and offering a safe place for women and children. Every year on the October long weekend a large group of people, mostly connected to evangelical churches travel to Jubal and stay for a week of celebrations and worship, camping on the property itself (figure 4.9). Participants come from all over NSW as well as Southern Queensland and it is seen as one of the highpoints in the Jubal year. The majority of participants are Aboriginal; however non-Indigenous people are also welcome to attend.

Figure 4.9 Tents at the Jubal Annual Country Gathering – October 2007

4.7.2 School Holiday Camps

For several years Jubal has been running school holiday camps. Initially they were funded with small grants from sources such as the NSW Department of Aboriginal Affairs and had an art and crafts focus. Since the signing of a Shared Responsibility Agreement (See
Chapter Five) they have received funding from the Attorney General’s department and are now able to hold camps in most school holidays. As depicted in figure 4.10, these camps provide cultural experiences for children and provide diversionary activities for at risk youth as well as opportunities for the community to link with professional service providers, to deliver workshops on issues such as family violence. Usually more than one hundred young people and adults attend the camps.

**Figure 4.10 Workshops and sports at the Jubal holiday camps**

Perhaps the most exciting aspect of Jubal is that it allows people to live a fairly traditional life. Certainly it is this aspect that community members are most proud of and talk about most to visitors. The Chair of Jubal’s management committee, Kevin Torrens, who was one of the first to build a house on the property, estimates that they live on bush tucker 60% of the time. He often tells the story of how when he lived in town he was heavily overweight with significant health problems, but since coming back to live at Jubal he has lost all his excess weight and has minimised his health problems; Kevin attributes his health to the healthy lifestyle and the proportion of his diet that consists of traditional “bush tucker”.

Hunting for food is a skill which is observably being handed down to the younger generations. It is common to go to Jubal and see young boys and men coming home with kangaroos and other species in season, such as turtles, goannas and witchetty grubs. As the pictures at figure 4.11 show, these young people are taught how to prepare the food to eat and in the process are handed down vital skills which keep their culture alive.
Jubal youth are taught how to hunt for food, particularly turtle, kangaroo and goannas, they are also taught how to correctly prepare the food and cook it. Photo credits: Jubal.

Jubal, therefore, is a place that has, in its short existence, established significant infrastructure and commenced a long way along the path of fulfilling the expectations of the community.

Jubal Elders Kevin Torrens and Tim Torrens are making sure the youth are taught their cultural practices. Photo credit: Jubal.
4.7.4 Hosting and Venue Hire

Jubal is frequently used by groups wishing to utilize a meeting place away from the towns or the missions. Usually it is day use, but sometimes they camp there. Also Jubal has hosted educational groups. For example, students from Southern Cross University as well as Tranby Aboriginal College have held field trips at Jubal as shown in figure 4.13.

Figure 4.13 Field trips to Jubal

Photos: Field trip for Southern Cross University Students
Left: on Kevin Torrens’ front verandah. Right: students being given a tour of the property.

4.8 Jubal’s Ideas for the Future

In 2000, Jubal commissioned consultants Collaborative Solutions to produce what came to be known as the *Community Development and Infrastructure Plan for Jubal Country Report* (CDP) which detailed the infrastructure needs of the Jubal property and put forward some ideas towards a business and management plan for the property. As a result of this plan the ILC granted $130,000 for community infrastructure. This money was used for boundary fencing, internal roads and highway access; power connection; telephone connection; water storage; lease of truck and tractor and the construction of the first stage of an Assembly Building, the ablutions block which houses showers, toilets and a kitchen (figure 4.5). Funding was also received for the erection of a machinery shed (figure 4.4).

In 2006, at the request of the ILC, a Property Management Plan was also completed (See Chapter Six). This plan built on previous work undertaken to identify Jubal’s vision for its future and presented it in the context of current and future management needs of the property. Table 4.1 gives an overview of the community’s ideas for its future and the associated infrastructure is mapped at figure 4.3.
## Table 4.1 Overview of Development Ideas for Jubal

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Community Development</strong></th>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Family Cabins</strong></td>
<td>Building of cabins for use by community members, to encourage families to live at Jubal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Market Gardens</strong></td>
<td>Market garden to provide the community with good quality and healthy food.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sporting facility</strong></td>
<td>Develop sporting activities and facilities to provide a safe and healthy environment for young people.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Training and education programs incorporated into building and improvement projects.</strong></td>
<td>Projects such as the building of cabins will include training e.g. in building skills for community members.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>New shed to provide secure lock up for machinery, etc.</strong></td>
<td>The current machinery shed is being used for community meetings and accommodation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Refit of existing shed.</strong></td>
<td>Build toilets/showers and to use in conjunction with ablutions block for residents and visitors.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Commercial Development</strong></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cabins for rent</strong></td>
<td>To provide accommodation for education groups, tourists, visitors to the jail as well as people participating in retreats and programs being run at Jubal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Completion of assembly building to provide venue for training, education, church groups, etc.</strong></td>
<td>Provide a safe and pleasant venue for government agencies and other providers to hire for workshops, seminars and training.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sporting facility</strong></td>
<td>To allow other groups to use sporting facilities (as above) on a commercial basis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Camping grounds</strong></td>
<td>To develop the property as a place for commercial camping.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Host to educational and immersion tours</strong></td>
<td>To develop a business providing tours and immersion experiences to groups such as Churches, Schools, Higher Education institutes and individuals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enterprise</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Café – bush tucker and other catering</td>
<td>Develop a commercial kitchen to cater to the needs of the groups using the Jubal facilities, as well as provide a shopfront for passersby.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portable timber mill</td>
<td>To provide materials for building projects and to sell to public. To provide training and employment for people to hire our mill to harvest timber on their property.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cattle Enterprise</td>
<td>Own our own cattle and run cattle breeding and fattening enterprise.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Health and Safety**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Improvement</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Improved highway access.</td>
<td>New highway access to ensure safe entry and exit from Jubal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water truck.</td>
<td>To provide drinkable water.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increased water storage capacity.</td>
<td>To prevent the need to purchase water.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fencing around dam.</td>
<td>To protect water from animals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fire truck.</td>
<td>To protect in case of Bush Fire.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Four wheel drive.</td>
<td>To enable better access to more rugged parts of the property.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Adapted from Property Management Plan (ILC, 2006) and notes from community meetings.
Figure 4.14 Map of Jubal vision

4.8.1 Community Development

The key priority for the community was the building of cabins. There are two types of cabins the community wished to build; family cabins and commercial cabins. The family cabins were seen as integral to the plan to encourage community members to come back and regularly visit the property. They wanted each family group to have a cabin for the use of that family’s members when they stayed at Jubal. The expectation was that more members would want to come and stay if there was accommodation for them. Further, it was expected that if people came to stay then they would become more involved in the operation of Jubal. The intention was that the community members would build the cabins themselves and would incorporate the construction work into a training program so that members were gaining building skills and certificate qualifications (ILC, 2006).

Other community development aspects to the Jubal vision were to have market gardens, which combined with their hunting, would provide the community with healthy food (ILC, 2006). There was also a strong focus on providing resources for the youth; ideas floated included the construction of a sporting facility and the provision of equipment. There was the hope that they could develop several team sports such as basketball, cricket and football if such a facility was developed.

Incorporated into all the development ideas was a training component. The community desired to use natural resources from the property, such as timber, and to build everything themselves. They were keen to utilise CDEP labour and incorporate that with a training program in conjunction with the local training organisation ACE, which would result in the trainees gaining recognised qualifications.

4.8.2 Commercial Development

In addition to the family cabins, there was also the desire to build cabins for short term accommodation. Tourism was seen to have potential for Jubal, particularly the educational market with a focus on groups from schools, universities and churches as well as domestic and international tourists. A new corrections facility which was opened close to Jubal in 2008 also had the potential to provide opportunities to develop accommodation for the visitors to the jail. Although it was recognised that there was great potential to develop a
viable business based on these cabins they were not seen to be as great a priority as the family cabins.

Additionally, Jubal saw potential to develop the property as a venue for hire. They already had many groups using the property to run programs or hold meetings, and thought that a meeting room would further enhance their ability to market themselves as a venue. Jubal had an approved development application (DA) from council for such a place, which was known as the second stage of the ablutions block. However, to date, Jubal has not yet been able to obtain enough funding to build it.

Another commercial development idea was a café and bush tucker business. This was particularly desired by the women. The women had been cooking on an open fire for the large groups that used Jubal. They recognised the need for proper kitchen equipment. They were intending to cater for the existing groups, and also to establish a café and develop a training program in cooking and hospitality. In 2007, they were able to fully equip their kitchen with a grant from the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Ecumenical Commission (NATSIEC).

Another aspect of development being considered was tourism. Jubal recognised that it was ill-equipped to deal with large tour groups and preferred to focus its attention on hosting domestic educational and immersion tours. It was hoped that providing these tours would enhance cultural renewal and provide employment opportunities.

Finally, the community wanted to capitalise on the available timber on their property and purchase a portable timber mill. They saw scope for using it to harvest timber for the building of cabins, but also saw potential for a contract business to harvest timber on other properties.

**4.8.3 Occupational Health and Safety**

The final area of development was in the area of occupational health and safety. These were areas which were seen to be important for the continued safe development of Jubal. A high priority was the building of a new access road. The existing access was on a dangerous part of the highway and there was concern that people could not enter and exit
the property safely. The ILC committed to fund a new access road and the work was completed in 2007.

Another area of concern was water. There was a need to increase water storage capacity as at certain times, particularly when a big group was staying at Jubal, the community would run out of water and would have to buy it. Also, they saw a need for a water truck which would enable them to move water around as required. Additional work required was improving the fencing around dams to protect the water from contamination. Animals were able to access the dam used for domestic use, which presented a health risk. This work has also now been completed through the provision of another grant.

The final area of need related to the provision of vehicles. Jubal identified a need for a four wheel drive vehicle to enable better access to parts of the property, particularly in wet weather. The community also felt that a fire truck would help them protect the property. The forestry company were building fire trails as part of their commitment to protecting the timber plantation, but Jubal had no resources to protect the rest of the community.

4.9 Jubal and Tourism

The aim of this study was to identify factors which contribute to the successful development of tourism ventures in the Bundjalung region. As identified previously, Jubal was interested in participating in the study as they had identified several potential tourism development options. In this section of the chapter the link is made between Jubal’s current development activities and how that relates to the aim of this study which was to understand the factors necessary to support the development of tourism enterprises.

In 2005, at the commencement of the research, many groups were already using Jubal for different events; some were from universities and colleges, some from churches and increasingly women’s groups and Government agencies saw the value in Jubal as a meeting venue. Therefore, at the time, Jubal was beginning to consider how best to engage with and develop the markets which they had already tapped into. In particular, Jubal was successfully hosting events, such as church gatherings, as well as education and immersion tours for schools, churches and university groups. Key decision makers considered hosting these groups of visitors to be beneficial to Jubal. As Chairperson, Kevin Torrens expressed the following opinion:
I’d love more of it, they’d enjoy coming out here and we can provide activities, we can learn from them. People are starting to recognize us, we have non-Aboriginal people staying here and they are starting to trust us. When I was 16 this white woman came through here but slept in the school because they didn’t trust us blackfellas, now they want to listen to us (personal communication, 2006).

Jubal had also developed its own events, such as the Annual Jubal Country Retreat, held every October. In school holidays they also held camps which were growing as more funding became available, and which catered for up to one hundred children.

In order to host these events Jubal’s priority, in 2005, was to provide accommodation by building cabins on the property. As discussed at a Community meeting in November 2005, they first wanted to build community cabins and then to build visitor cabins (Minutes, 24/11/05). There was also recognition that a new jail being built in close proximity to Jubal could provide opportunities to develop the accommodation side of the proposed ventures. The incentive to do this was not entirely financial but also to provide a social service to the wider Goorie community, as Kevin Torrens explains:

Tourism was prompted by church groups so they had somewhere to stay. We knew that the jail was going up – rather than have families travel back to visit their kids every day. I know how they feel, they are broke and have no money and have to sleep out in parks. We felt for the people – at least they know there is somewhere to stay, they can’t even afford to pay $50 a night (personal communication, 2006).

Other tourism opportunities were expected from the proposed Bundjalung Elders’ trail, a regional Indigenous tourism project. However, there were not high expectations from this project as there had been limited input in the development of the project from Jubal. The desire to be part of the Elders’ trail was primarily because, as a Bundjalung community, Jubal thought they should be included if such a project was ever developed.

We want to be part of the Bundjalung Tours because we are Bundjalung (personal communication, Kevin Torrens, 2006).
However, while there were clearly several options for tourism ventures there had been no concerted effort to focus on the development of these ventures. Most effort since Jubal’s establishment had been on building infrastructure and services for the community. Therefore, at the commencement of Jubal’s participation in this study in 2005, Jubal was grappling with several issues which were integral to its ability to develop tourism ventures. First, the lack of infrastructure, such as adequate accommodation, meeting rooms and enough toilets and showers (which are also used by resident community members) was impacting on the services that Jubal could provide. Second, there were financial barriers, particularly in regard to finding funding for the building of infrastructure such as accommodation. Third, there were problems with its administration systems, particularly the lack of proper accounting systems. Related to this was a need for training of community members in all facets of running a business.

It quickly became apparent that if the focus of this study remained on developing a tourism business without first attending to the fundamental capacity of Jubal to operate such a business then the resultant business would not be sustainable. Therefore, in response to the needs of the community at that time, this research project focused on those areas which Jubal needed to work on in order to develop its internal capabilities to support its capacity for further community and economic development. While the community had ideas for tourism, they were not able to realise them, until they had addressed fundamental systems and infrastructure. As Norm Torrens indicated, to go ahead with tourism enterprises at this stage in Jubal’s development would be a mistake:

*It’s put on the back burner - we’re not in a position to. If we got pushed ahead we’d be biting off more than we can chew. We are battling where we are at the moment. Eventually 5-6 years down the track. We would prefer drop ins and school groups. Big bus loads of people - no we are not interested* (personal communication, 2007).

As a result, this study examined those activities with which Jubal was engaged as part of developing the fundamental systems and building their capabilities to support future enterprise development.

In particular three key activities were examined, which I also participated in as a researcher. As explained in Chapter Three, I chose to describe the three key activities in
detail using words of the participants, my own notes and notes from meetings to give both a chronological sense of what was occurring, as well as provide some commentary and observations about the experience of working on these three activities.

The first activity was developing an SRA, and is addressed in Chapter Five. The SRA was an important step in Jubal’s development as a community and its ability to establish beneficial relationships with Government funding agencies.

The second activity was planning via the PMP. Jubal was required by the ILC to produce a PMP and spent several months in 2006 participating in this planning activity. The PMP is discussed in Chapter Six.

The third activity was the financial side of the organisation. In terms of time and effort this is the area which required the greatest amount of work during the course of this study. It was fundamental to all the other operations because without proper financial systems it was not possible to obtain further funding. Additionally, the lack of these financial systems is shown to impact on the confidence of Board members and the community’s confidence in the ability of the Board members to effectively manage Jubal. The process of achieving financial compliance is addressed in Chapter Seven.

Chapter Eight then draws the themes from the three activities together and the implications of the study are discussed.

4.10 Conclusion

Jubal is a community that has been created from the hopes and desires of a small group of people within the wider Goorie community. Since 1999, they have worked to ensure that Jubal provides a place for their members to live, a place where they can live as cultural a lifestyle as possible and a place that can provide the wider community with a retreat, a place of safety.
Chapter Five  Developing a Shared Responsibility Agreement

5.0  Introduction

Following a major review of the administration of Federal Indigenous affairs, significant policy changes were announced by the Federal Government in 2004 (Vanstone, 2005). Prior to these changes the Federal Government had administered funds through ATSIC which was established in 1990 to enable Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to have greater involvement in the governance of their own lives (ATSIC, n.d.-a). The ATSIC structure included an elected arm of Indigenous representatives, as well as an administrative arm headed by a Chief Executive Officer (CEO) (ATSIC, n.d.-a). On the 15th April 2004, the Federal Government announced its intention to dismantle ATSIC in 2005, and to deliver its policy related services through the establishment of ICCs (ATSIC, n.d.-b), (see Chapter Two – Section 2.5 for further details).

Central to these policy changes was the concept of mutual obligation. According to the Federal Government mutual obligation meant that in return for the provision of funding and services, Indigenous communities would be expected to take more responsibility to ensure the proper use of funds and implementation of programs (Vanstone, 2005). To enable this concept of mutual obligation, communities would be required to sign SRAs which were agreements between communities and the Federal Government. SRAs set out a series of responsibilities and mutual obligations in return for funding and had been modelled on a number of trials instigated in 2002 by COAG. SRAs were expected to result in the development of integrated and flexible programs and services for Indigenous peoples (Vanstone, 2005).

Jubal applied for, and signed, an SRA in 2006. During the course of this study the process of developing an SRA was not as time consuming as other activities such as developing the PMP or constructing financial records. However, it was a significant component activity because it was a new policy which had implications and consequences for Jubal which this study highlights. Also it was important because of the context in which it was signed; it came at a time when Jubal was clear about its need to be self-sufficient but recognised its need to ensure funding to help it develop its projects.
In order to better understand the context in which the SRA was signed the Jubal Board members’ observations about their previous relationships with Government is explored in Section 5.1. Also discussed is their ability to communicate effectively with Government which sets the context in which the SRA was signed. In the next section of the chapter the process undertaken to sign the SRA is discussed. Finally, the outcomes of the SRA are examined.

5.1 Jubal’s experience with Government prior to signing an SRA

The Jubal Aboriginal Corporation was established in 1999, in order to administer the ILC granted property. Jubal is, therefore, a new community in that they are not an ex-mission or Government established reserve, but are a community created from five families with a specific mission (see Chapter Four). Despite the long connections to the physical land which is now called Jubal, the Jubal Aboriginal Corporation was only established in 1999. As a new entity, it was necessary for Jubal to gain recognition from Government departments as a viable community in order to attract program funding. The Jubal Board members felt that achieving this recognition had been difficult and that they were not always heard.

We feel that lots of departments treat a lot of Goories as if we are aliens. All their attention goes to missions. There is no doubt missions need more support, but they give everything to ex-missions – where’s all that money going? What’s it doing to cut down on grog and crime? It hasn’t improved anything. Ex-missions are the government’s priority. They don’t see a need at Jubal, what’s it doing? Putting everything into missions makes them look good - they are sitting cosy, with continuous jobs driving around in government cars (Kevin Torrens, 2006).

We have had this experience with [an Aboriginal Housing Cooperative that provides community housing to some community members connected to Jubal] which is trying to get some repairs and maintenance done on its houses; not because they haven’t been looked after but just natural aging. We have been trying to get it done for five or six years, but we can’t get anything done. But people are going to the ex-missions and doing repair and maintenance assessments all the time. People up there can break a window every day and get it repaired. Norm’s just been given those...
kitchen cupboards that they threw out at Jubullum, there is nothing wrong with them, they have even been repainted, they are in good condition, but they have been replaced up at Jubullum – but we can’t even get basic repairs done to our houses. We are not missions, we feel like aliens (Kevin Torrens, 2006).

Despite feeling excluded from available Government resources because Jubal is not a former mission or reserve, Jubal members strongly asserted their opinion that Jubal is different from a mission. Kevin Torrens, for example, believed that Government still encourages the idea that Goories are dependent on handouts and that Governments work best with service delivery which is orientated towards discrete, identifiable and existing communities (personal communication, Kevin Torrens, 2006). There was also a perception, as articulated by Robert Caldwell below, that it is to the benefit of non-Indigenous people to maintain the missions because it keeps the Aboriginal people from moving into towns.

They don’t want us. They’d rather we was a mission. They are pouring money into Tabulam, for new homes. One woman owns four homes. It’s harder for us; the land council is getting more money. The White people want to keep it that way; they don’t want people to move into Casino [a nearby town] (Robert Caldwell, 2007).

Consequently, Jubal members felt they had to prove themselves; whereas, their perception was that more established communities, those that were previously missions or reserves, were given resources as a matter of course. However, despite this perceived inequality, the fact that Jubal is not a mission was seen as a strength and a point of differentiation which assisted the ability of Jubal to develop effective programs and enterprises.

We look at Jubal as a place we want to live, White people think of it as a mission. We are not mission people we want to better ourselves (Norm Torrens, 2007).

The notion of wanting to better themselves and not be seen as ‘mission people’ was also connected to the desire to be in control, to be independent and self-reliant.

We like to think we are on the way. We like to think we’re almost in the position to be independent. We will continue along those lines. But we will have to go along for a
while getting “handouts”. If we do things right and hang in there we are strong enough to become independent. We have changed our way of thinking, it gets back to decision making, we are in a position to make decisions about what we do with the income (Norm Torrens, 2007).

Another theme which regularly emerged during discussions at Jubal was suspicion about Government intentions particularly in relation to issues of conflict amongst various Aboriginal community groups in the area. Kevin Torrens reminisced that conflict had not always been present in his experience, even in the mission days:

Although we weren’t free, there was discipline and love – we could walk from house to house and people would sit on the veranda and talk to each other and there was a good feeling of love. Now though people are arguing too much and although there is a bit of love, there is not enough (Kevin Torrens, 2005).

Kevin thought the cause of conflict amongst Aboriginal communities and organisations resulted from issues of power. This power arose from Government establishing new Aboriginal organisations to administer various policies.

It’s power - as soon as politics came into it there were problems, once they started setting up cooperatives there were problems. Disunity is caused by the government setting up these different organizations. When they first formed co-operatives…they said we had to elect people onto the committee, but they should have had a rule that there was one person from each family because it ended up that one family would be on the committee – they run it - when it comes to things like the housing list their families got first priority. [Name removed]is a good example, they used to be a much better community, less conflict, but as soon as they started building new houses, they formed a committee and now they are the same as everywhere else (Kevin Torrens, 2006).

In addition to these conflicts there was also some apprehension about the real interest of Government departments in effective community engagement. I attended several meetings that Jubal had with Government departments in order to explain Jubal’s ideas, but generally nothing came from such meetings. Often these meetings highlighted the gaps
between Jubal’s needs and the Government agency’s understanding of their context as an Aboriginal organisation, and in some cases as Aboriginal people. One such example which, for me, exemplified the lack of understanding that some in Government bureaucracies had about Aboriginal people and communities occurred in September 2005, when Jubal was seeking funding to build the second stage of the ablutions block (see Chapter Four). Kevin Torrens held a meeting with one particular funding agency and spent considerable time showing them around and briefing them on Jubal’s plans. While these people did appear to be interested in the plans, I was left with a feeling of disbelief at what I perceived to be ignorance and culturally inappropriate comments, as my notes show.

Notes, 20th September 2005

We had a meeting today with some people from [name removed]. We gave them the grand tour and explained Jubal’s plans for the future. I was amazed when the more senior public servant present asked me if I ‘identify’ [as Aboriginal]. This came after I had told her of my connection to Jubal and a little of my background. I told her that of course I didn’t; that I am White, and English. So she said, “but don’t you ‘identify’ as part of the community?” I said “no, I have been welcomed in as family, and I feel welcome, but I don’t ‘identify’”. As she continued on in this vein Kevin and I were just looking at each other in confusion; he ended up having to tell her that the Elder’s are happy I am here in an effort to end the conversation. But still she talked! She said that I should get a certificate to say that I am part of the community and could identify.9

I was stunned at the ignorance and inappropriateness of this person, who even when it was pointed out that I am English and most definitely not Aboriginal, kept repeating her thoughts that I should get a certificate. She clearly had no understanding of what it is to be Aboriginal and part of a community.

9 A certificate of Aboriginality is provided by Local Aboriginal Land Council, or an Aboriginal Community Organisation and state that the person is known to identify as an Aboriginal person and is accepted by that community as an Aboriginal person. The definition of an Aboriginal person by the Federal Government is a person who: is of Aboriginal descent; identifies as an Aboriginal person; and, is accepted by the Aboriginal community in which they live (NSW Attorney General Law Link, n.d.).
It really makes me wonder about the people that control the resources. Jubal has great ideas, but at the end of the day they always have to prove to somebody who clearly has no understanding of their environment, culture and so on, that they should be funded. I wonder at the priorities as well, there are no quick fixes here, but there was a distinct excitement in the room when we talked about projects and they [the Government representatives] instantly focused on reports. I felt like they were only interested in projects that produced lots of happy black faces for their reports.

My observation about that meeting was shared by Kevin Torrens who made the comment they were only interested in as far as they could big note themselves (Kevin Torrens, 2005).

That was one example of an interaction with a Government funding agency; however, another problem for Jubal was that they were not always recognised as a community to be supported, particularly in the early days, and therefore were not always notified of events or programs that could be useful to them. For example, if a meeting was held to bring Aboriginal organisations and funding agencies together they were often not invited.

Notes, 15th May 2006

It strikes me that there are all these programs designed for Aboriginal communities, but Jubal doesn’t hear about many of them. For example, we found out today there had been a big meeting on Friday [To which Aboriginal organisations and funding agencies had been invited]. Jubal didn’t know anything about it, so all the organisations with resources to help them were in one place, but nobody invited Jubal. They really have to make their own way. When I talked to Kevin about it he just said that he doesn’t want to involve these people they will do it their own way.

Even where there was a good relationship with a Government agency Jubal had problems with the lack of continuity of people working in the agencies, as Norm Torrens explained:

We have been pretty lucky; people did seem to want to help. People that did come were good, all of a sudden. But there is a big problem because of the constant changes in people. The current ILC fella is supportive, but there were three or four
others before him at least, five people easy, working their way through. It seemed like the ILC thought the relationship was getting too strong. To us it felt like they moved people on, on purpose, it looked like a strategy. We are more aware now of dealing with those people, we have an instinct and suspicions (Norm Torrens, 2007).

As well as suspicion that moving people from their positions was a Government strategy, which spoke of the Board member’s lack of trust, it also highlighted the practical difficulties of reinventing relationships and of putting work into explaining and developing the Government agencies understanding of Jubal’s needs.

Further, because they were constantly having to establish and maintain new relationships with individual project workers the Board member’s confidence in their communication skills was undermined and at the commencement of this study was fairly fragile. This fragility of confidence was evident when I first started working with Kevin and was surprised to find that he would ask me to attend meetings with Government representatives, or talk on the phone to people who were ringing about specific requirements. He would say things like talk to Gab, she understands. I quickly learnt it was because I understood and was confident with the terminology that Government used. I could act as a ‘translator’ as I knew what Jubal was trying to achieve and could help them explain it to the Government departments and vice versa. This experience highlighted how inaccessible Government organisations and programs could be to Aboriginal people.

The lack of confidence in Jubal’s ability to communicate their needs also raised some issues for me at a personal level about my role within the community.

Notes, 28th November 2005

I am a little uncomfortable with how the relationship has developed [with Jubal]. It seems that now I have their trust I am overly trusted! A case in point is how Kevin left me to the meeting with the ICC last week. Even though he had organised the meeting, when he rang them (to tell them he couldn’t come, but I would still attend), he actually told them that he didn’t know what we needed to talk about, but I would understand! This week he asked me to meet with Tursa and CDEP. It’s because they think I can explain better what needs to be done, but they know too. They just seem to
think that I can ‘translate’ what they need into “whitespeak” which is probably true. But they shouldn’t give away their power by relying on outsiders. They know what they want and need and if they don’t use the “right” words it doesn’t matter. They also have to understand what the government/funders are saying because otherwise they will miss out.

My concerns arose because here was I, another White person, speaking on behalf of Aboriginal people, even though it was at their request. I questioned myself about how it was assisting self-determination. If people like me, who can apparently ‘bridge’ the two’ languages’ continue to do so does that actually diminish the gap of understanding, or contribute to Governments designing and delivering programs in an accessible way for their constituents? However, this experience also highlighted a constant problem for Jubal of not always understanding Government programs and language. Jubal also took some responsibility themselves for their lack of skills in certain areas, as I noted following a discussion with Norm and Kevin Torrens.

Notes, 6th March 2006

Kevin and Norm had a meeting with the ILC yesterday, which they thought went really well in the end. To begin with though they found it hard because the ILC representative turned up with two pages of agenda, using acronyms and they felt that they did not really understand what the ILC were talking about. They said it was good that [two non-Indigenous people working with Jubal] were there because they understood what the ILC were talking about and were able to “keep them [the ILC] on their toes”. I asked them how they felt about “needing” to have somebody there to help explain everything to them, they said that it wasn’t good and that the organisations should explain things better, but also that it was their own fault in a sense because they don’t have anybody trained up in these things. Norm said they need to have somebody to show them the “nitty gritty”. That’s the day to day things that they don’t know about.

However, as time went by the level of confidence displayed by the Jubal Board members did appear to increase. In 2006, I made the observation to Kevin Torrens that he seemed much more confident, and in control in his dealings with people such as the accountant;
that he appeared to be less intimidated by people such as consultants, and was more confident in engaging with Government agencies. This was evident in actions such as Kevin leaving very strident phone messages for the accountant if he failed to return the call immediately; or in critiquing the PMP consultants, or even writing to ORIC to complain about their failure to deliver governance training. Kevin agreed that he was more confident and identified a key contributor to his confidence as being the work we had been doing on the accounts which was aimed at achieving compliance for ORIC (see Chapter Seven for details about the accounts).

*People have good intentions - but is it good for the group? We are more accountable now and can walk around with our head up high. A lot of people were deliberately hoping we were going down, but we can go to the computer now and show that we are doing everything right* (Kevin Torrens, 2006).

There were other ways in which it was obvious that the Board members were becoming more confident about taking control. Norm told me that *we are all learning and getting a bit of experience with learning to deal with bureaucrats* (Norm Torrens, 2007).

Robert Caldwell, who had many years experience working in State Forests, spoke to me about the difference that having some confidence and knowledge in relevant areas had made to the deal Jubal had made with a forestry company (see Chapter Four for details).

*Like when the Mission went into trees, the community didn’t have a say in the decision and we also see them [forestry employees] driving around the Mission with no permission. At Jubal I spoke up for the money as we go. We made sure we got a good deal, there was a bit of objection, people didn’t want trees, they were worried about the erosion and pesticides; but the company put all that in furrows and we are happy with it* (Robert Caldwell, 2007).

These various opinions by the Board members provided the context in which the Jubal Board members were to engage with an SRA. In the next section of this chapter, Jubal’s reasons for signing the SRA are explained and the outcomes of the agreement are then discussed.
5.2 Jubal and the SRA

As explained in Chapter Two, changes to the administration of Indigenous affairs policy were announced in 2004, following a review of the Federal administration of Indigenous affairs (Vanstone, 2005). From July 2005, SRAs were implemented as integral to the delivery of Federal funding in Indigenous communities (Indigenous Coordination Centre, 2005). These changes had implications for all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

In Jubal’s case, prior to July 2005, when Jubal required project funding, they had successfully obtained small grants from ATSIC. However, with the demise of ATSIC in July 2005, it was unclear to the Jubal Board how they were able to access any further funds. This lack of clarity continued for some months until November 2005, at which time Kevin Torrens decided to approach the ICC and find out what programs were available, and how they were able to support Jubal. Kevin asked me to attend a meeting at the ICC office in Coffs Harbour. As Coffs Harbour is a three hours drive from Jubal and a seven hour drive from my home in Sydney. Kevin and I arranged to stay in Coffs Harbour overnight and meet the ICC project officer first thing in the morning. Unfortunately, at the last minute Kevin was unable to attend. Nevertheless, as I was already in Coffs Harbour, having travelled there from Sydney, Kevin Torrens asked me to continue with the meeting and present Jubal’s plans to the ICC and in turn find out more about the ICC’s role and how Jubal could access the ICC resources. I found the meeting I had with the ICC project officer, Darren Kershaw, informative and constructive.

In particular, I was able to find out more about the SRAs and how they would work. Given the level of criticism that had been raised by Indigenous people, and others, about the SRAs (See Chapter Two) I had been sceptical about them and critical of the concept. The explanation of the SRAs at this meeting left me feeling that although I still had some deep objections to the underlying premises of the Government’s concept of “shared responsibility”, in Jubal’s situation, an SRA could be more beneficial, or at least benign, than I had previously believed.
Notes, 22\textsuperscript{nd} November 2005

The aim of the SRA is for the community to go to the ICC and outline what they need. The community has to start a dialogue with them, which he [Darren Kershaw, the ICC project officer] considers started because I am representing the community.

The responsibility side of the SRA is that the community agree to ensure that the project is run properly. He assured me that there wouldn’t be things like washing of faces\textsuperscript{10}. They just wanted to see that there is a commitment from the community to the project.

The ICC would make the agreement with the community not with the Jubal Aboriginal Corporation. It all has to get approved by Canberra which is supposed to ensure that there is no favouritism, or nepotism... [H]owever I think if you don’t have an SRA it is harder and less likely that you will get program funding. Doesn’t this then force communities into taking on an agreement that they may not want, just to ensure they can access future funding?

The thing that struck me the most is that it seems quite reasonable, unlike some of what I have been hearing from elsewhere. You would expect that if the community are applying for funding then they want the project to work. It doesn’t really address the issues that if the community has a problem in implementation what happens then? It also means that communities that are more functional are more likely to get funding; because they have to be organised enough to undertake the application process. If they don’t get an SRA it is less likely that they will have access to further program funding. So what happens to the communities that need help getting organised or developing their planning? Do they just get left behind? Equality is also not implicit in the notion of “shared responsibility” the power is all with the funder. It is the funder who decides who gets funded, for how much and, importantly, for which projects.

\textsuperscript{10}This is a reference to a community which was promised a petrol bowser in return for hygiene commitments such as washing children’s faces (Cooper, 2005).
Another aspect explained to me is that it is the responsibility of the ICC to go to other funders and ask them to put in [funding] for the projects. The idea is that it simplifies the funding process with Jubal putting in a proposal to the ICC, which then takes up the case for Jubal with all the other Government departments which are supposed to be housed within the same office.

As indicated above, I understood SRAs to be essential if communities wanted to obtain long term funding from other Federal agencies. I understood them to be a sort of litmus test; a community would sign an agreement, and how they managed that agreement would influence whether they were to get any further funding. If a community was able to show good governance and prove themselves with the SRA then they would be trusted with further funds from other Federal Government departments. Another important message that I took from the meeting was that the onus was on the community to identify their specific needs and approach the ICC to ask for an agreement rather than wait for the Government to approach them. Questions remained for me about the role of a centralised decision making process and whether this would allow for the required level of understanding of the context of each individual community.

Following this meeting at the ICC, I reported to the Jubal Board members at a community meeting on the 24th November 2005, and explained my interpretation of the SRA process to them. The key point of concern and discussion amongst community members at that meeting was what the Government meant by ‘responsibility’. In particular, concerns were raised by community members about what would be required of Jubal in order to meet the ‘responsibility’ criteria and whether that would mean the community would lose control over Jubal. Having control over the community and its operations was important to Jubal as they wanted to be self sufficient.

There will be a time when there is no more funding and we have to do it for ourselves, so we need to start now (Norm Torrens, 2005).

Therefore, it was important that Jubal was clear about what signing an SRA meant in terms of control over the community and its projects. Following on from that point, I suggested to the members that the process seemed to favour ‘functional’ communities, in that the onus was on the community to approach the ICC and put forward the projects. I suggested
to the Jubal Board that those communities who were perhaps not as cohesive and functional would find it harder to engage with the SRA process, and therefore access program funding. I could see little evidence to suggest that the ICC would have either the capacity or the mandate to work with communities to develop their ideas to take advantage of these new arrangements.

I recommended to the Board that, on balance, I thought it would be beneficial for Jubal to take advantage of their functionality and engage in the SRA process or risk being left out of funding all together. Therefore, in recognition of the understanding that if a community had an SRA it would be easier for them to obtain other funding and with the proviso that conforming to the Government’s agenda of ‘shared responsibility’ was nothing more onerous than agreeing to proper reporting and governance procedures, the Jubal Board decided to submit an application for an SRA (Minutes, 24/11/05). The funding request was for a relatively small amount of $30,000 to enable Jubal to purchase tents and other camping and storage equipment. The tents would allow Jubal to provide accommodation for youth camps and other events, while cabins and permanent accommodation was being built.

In January 2006, following the process that had been outlined at the ICC meeting the previous November, Jubal submitted an overview of its plans together with a request for $30,000 for camping equipment and secure storage (Notes, 22/11/05). I understood the process to be a case of the ICC assessing the proposal, before making a recommendation to the Office of Indigenous Policy Coordination (OIPC) in Canberra. The OIPC would then make a decision as to whether to offer an SRA, and related funding, or not. It seemed a simple and streamlined approach.

However, the process, while fairly simple, did take some time. I submitted the proposal on Jubal’s behalf by email on the 10th January 2006 and received an immediate response from Darren Kershaw, telling me he would try and discuss it with his boss that week (email from Darren Kershaw 11th January 2006). I had further communication with Darren in February when I followed up on the progress of the application. On February 21st 2006, I was informed by Darren via email that there was no progress at the moment as other priorities have taken over i.e. changes to OIPC/ICC announced by the Government and
By July 2006, some seven months after submitting their proposal, Jubal had not had any response to their SRA application. At that point I was the only person who had met the ICC with relation to the SRA; the Jubal Board members were yet to talk to the ICC directly. Consequently, in the hope that he could move the process along, Kevin Torrens invited the ICC project officer to a meeting at Jubal. The aim of this meeting was for the Board members to meet the ICC project officer as well as to comprehensively outline Jubal’s plans to him. The meeting, held on the 20th July 2006, was also timely because the ILC PMP (see Chapter Six) was under way and Jubal members were keen to ensure that there was some coherence to its relationships and project proposals by including the ICC in the PMP process. The meeting in July with the ICC was very productive and resulted in the project officer, Darren Kershaw, expressing a desire to support the PMP process. He subsequently attended the two final PMP meetings in September and October 2006. Darren Kershaw’s presence at the meeting also moved the SRA process along as he forwarded a draft of the schedule of the proposed SRA prior to attending the July meeting, which then enabled discussion at that meeting.

The SRA schedule developed by the ICC, based on the brief proposal Jubal had submitted in June 2006, clearly set out obligations for each party to the agreement. Jubal applied for an SRA to obtain funding to purchase camping equipment in order to start running holiday camps. The resultant agreement developed by the ICC was put forward as stage one of a two stage process which extended the Jubal community’s original vision of being a place of safety and retreat for community members to include support strategies for victims of family violence and sexual assault. Stage one of the process was to purchase the camping equipment and stage two was to develop a permanent safe house facility. The details of the agreement are shown in Table 5.1.

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11 The e-sub application was a reference to the online process for applying for Federal funding for Indigenous programs.
Table 5.1  SRA - Schedule 1- Jubal (youth and families program)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community Priority</th>
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<tr>
<td>▪ Re-instit cultural values and identity for young Aboriginal people.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Develop support strategies for victims of family violence and sexual assault.</td>
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</tbody>
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How we will address it

| ▪ Provide Jubal youth and families program with camping equipment, training/accreditation for camp facilitators and subsidise cost of running camps. |
| ▪ Improve links with other local services and initiatives which support safer families and communities. |

What Governments will do

**Stage one**

- OIPC – $30,000 to purchase camping equipment, subsidise cost of running the camps for 1 month and contribute to camp facilitator training and accreditation.

**Stage two**

- Development of a permanent “safe house” facility and program sustainability. Engage DAA, Families First (DOCS), Premier’s Department, Attorney General’s DCITA, Kyogle Council, ACC, DSRD, ILC in stage 2.

What Communities will do

| ▪ Community members/Elders will: |
| o Implement camps and act as youth mentors. |
| o Undertake training to become accredited youth workers. |
| o Continue to lobby local government and service providers to gain financial support and in kind assistance to implement the “Jubal Country Report.” |
| o Undertake a planning process to map core services in region and forecast future activities for the Jubal Youth and Families program. |
| o Contribute to, and manage, cultural activities. |

What families/individuals will do

| ▪ Support children to attend camps. |
| ▪ Encourage victims of family violence and sexual assault to access Jubal facility. |
| ▪ Assist in implementation of participation in programs and cultural activities. |
| ▪ Work together to improve local planning capacity. |
| ▪ Participate in information sharing sessions, workshops and events. |

Source: ICC

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12 This is a reference to the Community Development Plan (CDP) produced for Jubal in 2000, see Chapter Seven.
Chapter Five: Developing a Shared Responsibility Agreement

The SRA agreement was completed and signed in December 2006, with the grant of $30,000 paid to Jubal later in the same month; almost a year since Jubal had first submitted a proposal. Following the payment of the grant, Jubal had twelve months to spend the money and was required to submit quarterly progress reports and financial statements.

5.3 Outcomes of the SRA for Jubal

The SRA had an immediate benefit for Jubal and provided the funding to buy camping equipment and to build storage. The primary purpose of the camping equipment was for school holiday camps. However, the equipment was also available to use for other groups and Jubal was able to host various groups at the property and provide accommodation, for example for student and church groups. The tents also provided an opportunity for future income generation by expanding the number of groups they could accommodate.

Additionally, Jubal has attracted further funding since signing the SRA. The ICC administers an annual funding round on behalf of various Government departments and Jubal has been successful in receiving grants from the Attorney General’s Department and the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA). In total Jubal received $116,000 over three years from the Attorney General’s department and $33,000 over two years from FaHCSIA. While there is no evidence to prove either way that this funding is directly attributable to the SRA, certainly Jubal has found it relatively easy to obtain funding for projects which fit within the SRA schedule thus supporting the argument that the SRA was useful in establishing a framework for funding. Further, the SRA was useful in establishing the credibility of Jubal as a functioning organisation as they were able to show their ability to provide timely reports, proper accounting and governance measures and positive outcomes from the SRA funded program.

There is, however, no evidence as to the benefit of other components of the SRA beyond that initial funding and establishment of credibility. In fact, since Jubal received the $30,000 for the camping equipment and acquitting that grant I have not heard any of the Jubal Board members mention the SRA. Further, all interaction with the ICC that I have been aware of, has been in relation to reporting requirements for each of the further grants from the Attorney General’s Department and FaHCSIA.
In addition, although Jubal has been successful in obtaining further funding from the Attorney General’s Department and FaHCSIA there has been no progression either in developing the initial ‘holiday camp’ program or developing Stage Two of the SRA. With regard to Stage Two, the SRA states that the ICC will assist Jubal to engage with Government agencies, both State and Federal, to further the development of the permanent safe house facility (ICC, 2006). However, in the two years following the SRA there was no observable activity or progress from the ICC with regard to brokering new relationships that could contribute to enhancing Jubal’s development agenda. The SRA seems to have been largely forgotten with the two major grants now being the focus of the ICC’s attention. The ICC’s relationship to these two grants is to ensure that quarterly finance and progress reports are submitted. Failure to submit reports on time results in delays in the quarterly payments of the grant to Jubal.

Another aspect of the SRA which has seemingly been overlooked is its relationship to Jubal’s plans as identified in the PMP (see Chapter Six). While there are elements contained in the SRA that are also in the PMP, such as providing a place of safety, there are few connections. This is particularly evident with regard to the building of a permanent safe house. This safe house does not appear at all in the PMP and is not included as one of the future projects identified for Jubal. There is, therefore, little practical connection between the SRA and the PMP.

There are also issues with regard to the reporting requirements for the SRA. Included in the schedule were several measurable benchmarks:

- Camps well attended;
- Increased number of community members assist with programs and cultural activities;
- Camp facilitators are trained/accredited;
- Reduction in School truancy rates;
- Reduction in incidents of family violence;
- Reduction in incidents of sexual abuse.

While Jubal has been able to submit adequate quarterly reports for all its funding commitments, the reports have never met all of the above criteria. Certainly the first three
points are easy for Jubal to measure and report on. However, benchmarks four, five and six are beyond Jubal’s capacity to measure. There has been no interaction between any Government department which might be in a position to link attendance to the Jubal camps and monitor outcomes in this regard. To my knowledge the ICC has not made any approach about ensuring these particular benchmarks are monitored and reported on.

Despite the fact that the reports Jubal produced were deemed acceptable by the ICC, this study showed that the SRA process and the ICC structure does little to connect the community to the agency providing the funding. As a result of the streamlined approach to funding, the relationship with all the various government agencies is now filtered through the ICC. The ICC acts as a broker and intermediary between Government and the Community. As well as streamlining the funding process the ICC is placed in a position of gatekeeper. This results in distancing Jubal further from its funding relationships and to make them reliant on their relationship with the ICC, in particular with the ICC project officer. This effectively means that there is one person who is the only ‘face’ to all the Federal funding agencies, and who the community are reliant on to promote their needs. Consequently, there is no connection to any resources, or expertise, other than funding, that the agencies may provide through their service delivery and expertise.

For example, while the ICC administers the funding applications, the money for Jubal’s grants for the school holiday camps program is provided by the Attorney General’s *Family Violence Prevention Legal Services and Early Intervention* program. While an attribute of this funding is that Jubal is able to develop and run its own programs, having control does not exclude the opportunity for Jubal to benefit from input from agencies involved in early intervention program and family violence. Better linkages could be made between existing services and programs with the aim of improving monitoring of the program and to provide increased opportunities for Government agencies to deliver its services more effectively. A closer relationship with these service providers would also assist Jubal in developing the skills of its members. Jubal is seeking self-determination not isolation and would benefit from connecting with existing skills and programs. In turn, Government would benefit from working with Jubal to enhance and strengthen the effectiveness of the school holiday program and thereby maximize the effectiveness of its funding investment.
5.4 Conclusion

Prior to signing the SRA, the Jubal Board members expressed opinions about how they felt they were not treated as well as ex-missions and reserves by Government. They were clear that they did not want to be seen as a mission, however, they perceived an imbalance in the way that they were able to access funding compared to missions. The Board members expressed a desire to be independent and not reliant on Government “handouts”, but also recognised that in the immediate future this was necessary. A certain amount of distrust was also expressed, in particular relating to what was seen as the problems around setting up new organisations to handle different Government policies. This was seen as a source of conflict in the communities and one which was a deliberate Government strategy. There was also some concern expressed about how well Government agencies were able to understand Jubal’s needs and the context in which it was working. Alongside this lack of trust there was a lack of confidence expressed about dealing with Government and being able to adequately express themselves and to understand Government language. The community identified that they needed to better equip themselves with skills. Having relevant skills was shown to make a difference as where there was knowledge, such as in the area of accounts and forestry management, the community were better able to express themselves and create opportunities.

The SRA was signed after a period of uncertainty following the closure of ATSIC in 2005. While the Jubal Board members were concerned that they would lose control over their community by signing an SRA, they committed to do so. While the SRA took some time to complete, the activities associated with completing the process were not cumbersome.

Given the low level of both trust and support displayed by the Jubal Board members signing the SRA was a significant step towards establishing a workable relationship with Government and the SRA provided clear benefits to Jubal. In particular, it established a relationship with the ICC and gave Jubal an opportunity to prove themselves as a viable community and facilitated further funding grants. The funding accessed through the SRA provided a tangible benefit to Jubal, particularly in the short term. The funding helped Jubal develop the school holiday camps program, and also enabled Jubal to host other groups. Additionally, since the SRA was signed they have applied for and received other significant grants from Attorney General’s Department and FaHCSIA.
However, the effects of the SRA were limited in that it did not deliver all that it promised and no progress has been made on developing other aspects of the SRA such as the permanent safe house. Further, there was no linkage between developing this permanent safe house and the Property Management Plan.
Chapter Six  Developing a Property Management Plan

6.0  Introduction

The Jubal Aboriginal Corporation obtained the property from which it operates through a grant from the ILC in 1999 (See Chapter Four). At that time the aims and objectives of the Jubal community were clear and had been written into a Community Development Plan (CDP) (Collaborative Solutions, 2000). However, from 2000 to 2005, Jubal had not engaged in any further formal planning process. In 2005, they were asked to do so by the ILC who required a PMP in order to facilitate further funding of Jubal by the ILC. This request was tied to a commitment, by the ILC, to a $200,000 funding package which had two components (Minutes, 14/07/09). The first component was immediate remedial projects deemed necessary, by Jubal and the ILC, for occupational health and safety reasons. The second component was the remainder of the package and was unallocated but was dependent on the production of the PMP.

The remedial projects already committed to were fencing around the dam used for domestic water to prevent contamination from animals and the construction of a new entrance to Jubal. The existing entrance was a dirt track accessed from the Bruxner Highway which made entering and exiting Jubal difficult and potentially dangerous. The ILC commenced working on these two projects in 2005, and then instigated the development of a PMP in 2006, the purpose of which was to detail future needs and plans for the use of the Jubal property. The terms of reference for the PMP were set by the ILC which engaged consultants directly. Jubal’s role in the PMP was to meet with the consultants and participate in the process set by them. By mid 2006, the ILC had engaged consultants to complete the PMP and expected the plan to be completed by October or November 2006 (Minutes, 14/07/09).

The PMP process was an important component of this study as it highlighted the challenges for the Jubal Community in working with external consultants and engaging in an unfamiliar process. Second, the PMP process enabled an analysis of the relationship between planning processes such as this and the community’s development aspirations. An overview of previous planning efforts by Jubal before the process undertaken to produce
the PMP is examined in this chapter. Included is the community’s experience of engaging in the process and finally some observations about the PMP report are presented.

6.1 Previous Planning by Jubal

Planning was not an entirely new concept to Jubal prior to commencing the PMP. For example, in 2000, Jubal had engaged consultants to complete a CDP (Collaborative Solutions, 2000). The CDP included several areas of potential development which the Jubal community had identified as part of the vision for their future. The development ideas broadly fell under social, economic and occupational, health and safety.

In 2005, Kevin Torrens and I had several conversations about the need to update the CDP and to develop a business plan for Jubal. Over several months Kevin and I talked about what had been in the CDP and other options for Jubal’s future until I was fully conversant with Jubal’s ideas and aspirations. Following on from these conversations Kevin Torrens asked me to facilitate a community meeting to discuss the ideas with the wider community. This meeting, on November 24th 2005, was held to review each of the proposed project areas previously identified in 2000. We discussed whether these ideas were still relevant and canvassed the community for new ideas (Minutes, 24/11/05). The community members, at that meeting, asked Kevin Torrens and I to continue working on a new plan for Jubal, which we both agreed to do (Minutes, 24/11/05). However, in early 2006, we learnt that the ILC were instigating the PMP, so Kevin and I chose to leave further planning activities to the PMP process and to focus our attention instead on the more immediate problem of bringing Jubal’s financial records into order (see Chapter Seven). At that stage I had written up the outcomes of the Jubal planning efforts to date and I later provided these details to the PMP consultants.

6.2 Outline of the PMP Process

In this section of the chapter an outline of the steps that the PMP consultants undertook to develop the PMP is described.

The first meeting with the PMP consultants was on July 14th 2006. The process the consultants instigated at that time was an initial meeting with the whole Jubal community and monthly meetings thereafter with a working party nominated by the community. I was
also asked to participate in the PMP meetings by Kevin Torrens. This process seemed to meet with Jubal community members’ approval as evidenced by the high attendance at all the meetings.

The initial PMP meeting on July 14th 2006 was long, comprehensive and well attended. The meeting was attended by 41 people (Minutes 14/07/06), which was a large turnout for Jubal. Also included were people working with Jubal in various capacities, such as an architect, a building trainer and myself. The meeting was opened by Callum Howell from the ILC, who outlined the PMP and also the remediation work which was being undertaken at Jubal. It was at this meeting that Callum identified the amount of $200,000 which had been earmarked for Jubal. This amount included the remedial works, the cost of producing the PMP and was contingent on its completion (Minutes, 14/07/06). As already identified these remedial works which were considered urgent by the ILC were the new road access and fencing around the dam (Minutes, 14/07/06). There was discussion about other needs that Jubal members identified as being necessary, and thought should be considered as urgent by the ILC, such as rain water tanks, and the construction of fire breaks. Once these other matters had been discussed the meeting moved on to discuss the PMP.

The PMP consultants introduced themselves and the process they would undertake (Minutes, 14/07/06). This process included:

1. Starting with an outline of where Jubal was currently;
2. Identifying Jubal’s physical and human resources;
3. Identifying where Jubal wanted to go;
4. Investigating the commercial viability of Jubal’s ideas;
5. Looking at what Jubal was going to do and how Jubal was going to do it.

The consultants, neither of whom were Indigenous, also explained that one of them was an economist and accountant and the other ran his own property and that these skills would assist in testing the commercial viability of Jubal’s proposed ventures (Minutes, 14/07/06).

Following the introduction of the consultants and the outline of the procedure the community moved to talk about their ideas for development. The PMP consultants were also given the written document we had prepared for them based on the meeting held in
November and the CDP. To add further details, the community also verbally explained each individual project concept to the consultants. As a result of this preparation and existing clarity of ideas, the PMP consultants noted that Jubal was well advanced in their planning which would save them some time in producing the PMP (Minutes, 14/07/06). The Jubal community members asked the PMP consultants to put this ‘time saved’ towards developing a more comprehensive plan which developed the enterprise ideas and which could be used to facilitate funding applications with other agencies. The PMP consultants agreed to use this time in such a way, within the parameters of their terms of reference, which had been set by the ILC. They did note however that the PMP would only provide an outline of a business plan and a full business plan would require further work beyond the scope of their terms of engagement (Minutes, 14/07/06).

The second PMP meeting was held early in September 2006, but I was not able to attend. At the third meeting on the 21st September 2006, which I did attend, we again went through the community’s ideas. This meeting was also attended by representatives from the ICC and the NSW Department of State and Regional Development (DSRD). Inviting these representatives was suggested by the PMP consultants as a way to engage the funding bodies prior to the completion of the PMP. We had also held a separate meeting with the ICC and DSRD representatives in July 2006, so the ICC and DSRD officers were well briefed and already had a detailed knowledge of Jubal’s plans prior to attending the PMP meeting.

The fourth and final meeting was held at Jubal on October 20th 2006. At this meeting there were also representatives from the ICC and the DSRD. Kevin Torrens and Norm Torrens were unable to be at that meeting and but they had nominated somebody to speak on their behalf.

The final PMP report was expected to be delivered in October 2006. However, although the final meeting was held in October, the consultants were unable to finalise the PMP because it was necessary to include financial reports which were not available at that point due to the delays with the audit (see Chapter Seven). The report was therefore delivered early in 2007.
6.3 Comments on the PMP

In this section of the chapter the PMP report itself is discussed and I provide some observations about the content of the PMP. The PMP provided a comprehensive overview of Jubal’s vision. Contained in the plan was a resource assessment which covered the property itself, human resources and operational resources. Included in this section was a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunity and Threat (SWOT) analysis of Jubal as well as a skills audit. The report also presented a summary of Jubal’s vision, aims and aspirations. Strategies and actions were linked to these aims. Another section of the report included financial analysis.

The report was a fair reflection of the current situation at Jubal and outlined their ideas. There were some minor mistakes such as using an incorrect name for Jubal (the Jubal Aboriginal Land Corporation). But for the most part the content about the projects in the final report was an accurate reflection of the discussions and information presented to the consultants at the PMP meetings.

Although the content about projects was accurately represented, I made several observations about other aspects of the report. First, the skills audit was illuminating as it showed that there were significant unused skills held within the community and that several of the community members held certificate level qualifications. These certificates were held across a wide array of trades and included land conservation management; horticulture; welding; carpentry and business administration studies. On paper it appeared that Jubal had the skills necessary to develop viable enterprises in all the areas where interest had been expressed.

A second observation about the PMP report was that the timelines were already out of date by the time the report was submitted, and were clearly not reasonable. For example, according to the PMP report it was expected that by the end of 2006, Jubal would have finalised its Development Application for new buildings with Kyogle Council; found funding to build new cabins; purchased a portable mill (and presumably obtained funding for that); purchased front forks for the tractor; sourced materials to build the first of the cabins; obtained funding to complete Stage Two of the ablutions block (the building of the assembly room) and developed a funding application for a large sports facility. Given that in most cases these project areas had not been started prior to the last meeting with the
Chapter Six: Developing a Property Management Plan

PMP in October 2006 these were unrealistic timelines. These unrealistic expectations then impacted on the financial analysis of the projects. For example, capital expenditure in the 2006/2007 financial year was expected to be $70,000; in the 07/08 financial year $605,826 and in the 08/09 financial year $235,000. These financial projections depended primarily on finding appropriate grants in specific time lines. These funding projections were largely speculative as specific applicable grants were not identified and certainly the time lines for obtaining the funding were unreasonable. A good example of how long funding can take is the process of obtaining funding for a tractor and fire fighting equipment. These items were discussed at the very first PMP meeting with Callum Howell (ILC) in July 2006. At that time they were identified by the community as items which should be included in the urgent priority work (Minutes, 14/07/06). They were not included as urgent then, but later, Jubal was asked to put in a funding application for this equipment in November 2007 (Kevin Torrens, 2007), and finally was granted funding of $60,000 in February 2009 (accounts records February 2009), some two and half years after it was first raised with the ILC.

Another observation of the report was with regard to labour requirements. Much of the labour that Jubal relied on to fund its projects was provided by CDEP. This was a work development program where people were paid to do community work. CDEP is an alternative to receiving income payments, or the dole. Most of the people working at Jubal were on CDEP, and only worked for two days per week. Several projects had been identified which were expected to be completed using CDEP labour in those two days a week. The time lines were unrealistic and did not question Jubal’s capacity to deliver all the projects in the time stated. Also, at that time it was uncertain as to whether the CDEP program would continue, and whether Jubal would therefore have any available paid labour, but this possibility was not addressed in the plan, nor was there a contingency plan in case CDEP was removed by Government.

In summary therefore, the PMP report did provide a detailed overview of the projects that Jubal was hoping to develop. However, it failed to give realistic timelines, resource analysis and financial analysis to achieve the goals outlined.
6.4 The PMP Process

The experiences of the Jubal Board members in their interactions with the PMP are examined in the following section of the chapter. Initially, comments are made about how the process was established and what they expected to be achieved. Further, the experience of participating in the process is discussed.

6.4.1 Expectations and Set Up

The first issue that arose for Jubal Board members was the way in which the ILC approached the PMP; in particular how they engaged the consultants. There was a sense that Jubal had little input or control over who produced the plan.

When we got the consultants we had no rights at all they [the ILC] chose them. We would have known who was capable, we are capable now to read résumés and choose who has the right experience (Kevin Torrens, 2007).

Norm Torrens agreed with Kevin Torrens’ observation that they had no choice about who could produce this PMP.

We had no choice; we just didn’t understand the protocol. People have to put in their résumés and the ILC already had an application (Norm Torrens, 2007).

These comments arose because both Kevin Torrens and Norm Torrens thought that, with the help of people already working with them, they could have produced a PMP themselves, and that the money paid to the consultants could, instead, be paid to Jubal. Kevin Torrens and Norm Torrens did ask me to submit my résumé to the ILC in the hope that I could be chosen as the consultant to do the PMP (Notes, January 2006). However, I chose not to do that for two reasons. First, I thought it was likely that the ILC would have a register of people with more relevant experience than I had. Second, I thought that using the ILC chosen consultants would produce a better outcome for Jubal. I considered that the resultant plan would be seen as more legitimate if it had been produced by external consultants.

Kevin Torrens also had the same thought:
The only thing that might be useful because the ILC wanted it done like that, we might get more money (Kevin Torrens, 2006).

This comment from Kevin also indicated the community’s main reason for participating in the PMP, which was to create a document to assist in obtaining funding. It was therefore in their best interests to engage with the process to maximise their chances for funding. The community expected that the PMP would lead to further funding from other agencies, not just the ILC and they expected to use the same plan to support other funding applications.

There was value in the planning process, for example last week we gave the TAFE guys a look at the report to see where they could fit in (Norm Torrens, 2007).

While there was an appreciation of the usefulness of the plan to facilitate funding applications, there was also frustration at the ILC’s insistence on a PMP before any further ILC funding was released. Kevin Torrens made the observation that at other communities, with which he is familiar, the ILC seemed to have provided much needed equipment, such as tractors, in addition to the property:

We know, as well, that in other places the ILC are buying new vehicles and machinery for properties, but all we’ve got is an old truck (Kevin Torrens, 2006).

This criticism of the ILC was one I heard often from the Jubal Board members as they had always had difficulty obtaining the equipment necessary to run a property of Jubal’s size. The criticism goes back to the beginning of Jubal as the Board members felt that the ILC should have been more supportive in providing the necessary equipment to run the property.

The ILC did support us but they didn’t supply us with equipment, they buy the properties and take the equipment off it, they don’t leave them anything (Norm Torrens, 2007).

Another criticism of the ILC which particularly related to the PMP was the transparency of the ILC process and the information Jubal had access to. For example, not being able to find out how much the contract with the PMP consultants was worth. When Kevin Torrens questioned the ILC, he was told that the contract was between the consultants and the ILC.
and that the terms were confidential (Notes, 2006). Jubal therefore had no role in the contractual relationship, but were merely the subjects of the report. Consequently, the PMP document was owned by the ILC, not Jubal, which raised some interesting questions about the purpose and utility of the report. One question was for whose benefit was the report produced? A second question was whose agenda the PMP was meeting as the terms of reference were set by the ILC. One reason why it was important for Jubal to know how much the PMP was costing was because it formed part of the $200,000 funding package, and therefore could result in funds not being available for other areas which might have been a higher priority for Jubal.

6.4.2 Participating in the Process

In total there were four meetings with the PMP consultants at Jubal between August and October 2006. The meetings were well attended by community members who participated enthusiastically. In fact, although a planning group had been nominated, all meetings were attended by many other community members as well. Kevin Torrens reported to me that Callum Howell (the ILC project worker at that time) had complemented him on how many people had consistently turned up to the meetings. Kevin was told by Callum that the level of interest in the process was extremely high compared to other similar communities.

> Callum said that these are the best roll ups they have had. Quite a few that he goes to only have two there, but quite a few of us have turned up and they have had an input (Kevin Torrens, 2006).

The high attendance at the meetings was also a matter of pride for Board members.

> One of the best things about Jubal is the attendance at meetings, I’m very proud that two or maybe more from each family came, I worry that if they don’t turn up there is no community involvement” (Norm Torrens, 2007).

Despite the high level of interest from the whole Jubal community and an observable commitment to the process, some concerns were raised about how the PMP was undertaken. One key issue was the perception of repetition without progress.

> We were retelling them over again. We didn’t get any benefit (Kevin Torrens, 2006).
Certainly, this was also my observation. At each meeting I attended the proposed projects were presented and then discussed. The first meeting was to outline them to the PMP Consultants. I missed the second meeting but was told that it was similar to the first. I was surprised therefore when at the third meeting the Consultants went through each project again, seemingly with no further additional details. I felt very frustrated as progress seemed stymied by repetition. It was not clear how the repetition was benefiting the progress of the report. It seemed to be reiteration rather than clarification.

The repetition raised questions for me about how well the consultants were listening to Jubal and whether the process was drawing out a more considered approach to enterprises or just mere repetition. While the repetitive process did allow other people such as the ICC and DSRD to make their contributions, it was obvious when a senior bureaucrat from the ICC attended the final meeting that this had not necessarily helped. During the meeting this bureaucrat made several comments which highlighted the fact that she had neither been briefed by her staff nor read the draft plan. This required more repetition as items were described again for her benefit.

Additionally, the bureaucrat’s lack of knowledge and understanding caused some tense moments in the meeting and detracted from the purpose of the meeting which was to give Jubal community members the opportunity to comment on the final draft of the PMP and to provide final input. During the meeting there were several tense exchanges between Jubal’s nominated spokesperson and this bureaucrat about Jubal’s training and building programs (Notes, 20/11/06). However, it was what she said to the women at the meeting which caused me the most concern.

**PMP meeting 20th October 2006**

*I should be used to this by now; but once again I was shocked by the attitude of senior bureaucrats like the one who came to the PMP meeting. I was surprised at how little [name removed] knew about the projects, despite her staff member being present through most of the process – was she not briefed? There were some very tense moments as she made comments about various projects […] I was most upset at the way she spoke to the women. She made several comments about how they could learn to cook for the groups [those coming in for school holiday camps and...*
other groups. I thought her tone, as well as what she was saying, was really patronising. Marj and the other women there have, for many years, catered for large groups of people, sometimes more than 100 on an open fire with virtually no equipment. Listening to this woman, I was really embarrassed that she could be so dismissive of these amazing [Jubal] women. I felt that this bureaucrat had waltzed in without doing any preparation and was patronising and condescending; sadly they have to put up with it because if she doesn’t like what she sees Jubal won’t get any Federal funding.

Despite the distractions this bureaucrat caused, the community were able to discuss their priorities and have final input into the plan at this meeting.

As well as repetition, another area of frustration expressed by community members was with regard to their expectations about what the PMP consultants could deliver. In particular, there was concern about the feasibility of the projects being put forward. There was an expectation from Jubal that part of the PMP process would have been to properly test the feasibility of the proposals. This expectation was raised at the first meeting in July 2006, when we were told by the Consultants that one of them had financial expertise and the other ran his own property (Minutes, 14/07/06). Although in the first meeting the consultants had stated that they were not going to do a full business plan, I certainly expected that the consultants would use their specific skills and expertise to apply proper costs to the project areas and test the financial viability of proposed enterprises. However, this did not happen. In fact, the way in which costs for each project were obtained caused some concern. The process consisted of attendees at a community meeting voicing opinions of costs; which in many cases were nothing more than ‘guesstimates’. In Kevin Torrens’ opinion, the PMP Consultants did not understand many costs themselves:

_I knew more than them – they said a tractor only cost 20 grand, but I know you can’t buy one under $75,000. I think they copied other PMPs and other work_ (Kevin Torrens, 2006).

The way of obtaining facts, such as the costs of items necessary to develop the project areas was just one criticism of the consultant’s skills. Another was that their presentation skills were not very good and further, that they consistently failed to provide summaries of
previous meetings, or any draft documents at each meeting (except just prior to the final meeting), as the Jubal Community had requested.

_They weren’t good presenters, they didn’t have the right material and we had to listen hard to hear what they were saying. They didn’t bring what we wanted; we asked them for copies before the meetings_ (Kevin Torrens, 2006).

When the draft PMP was given to the Jubal community, prior to the final meeting, there were significant details missing; which the Jubal community had to then highlight and insist on being inserted into the final document. These were all project details which had been identified and extensively discussed at PMP meetings.

_There was a hell of a lot of stuff we wanted to be put in but it wasn’t there_ (Kevin Torrens, 2006).

Therefore, although the final PMP did reflect the community’s wishes, the community did have some concerns about some aspects of the process. However, while these issues were discussed, once the PMP document itself was delivered the discussion was generally positive and is discussed in the following section.

### 6.5 Benefits of the PMP

Despite the problems identified in the previous section, the PMP process was perceived by the Jubal Board members to have been beneficial. In particular, the involvement of the Jubal community in the process of producing the report was well regarded and appreciated.

_When it was on we didn’t appreciate it and the way they did it because they were on big bucks and it was over the top of you. When they came back with it we appreciated the document. We just needed the document. It was the first time we experienced this process. We were doing it hands on, whereas in the past someone else would have done it_ (Norm Torrens, 2007).

The PMP report was also perceived to be beneficial to Jubal as they could use it to show other Government agencies that Jubal had a strong foundation to their operation and had solid plans about what they wanted to achieve.
It’s worthwhile. If we got something constructive out of it - if we get people involved [because of the report] we’ve done the ground work. It shows people this is where we’re going and where we want to be (Norm Torrens, 2007).

At least we know where we are and what we’re doing (Robert Caldwell, 2007).

A benefit I observed, but which was not identified by the Board members, was the opportunity provided by the PMP for the Board members to appear to be moving things along at Jubal. In other areas progress was slow and imperceptible to the wider Jubal community. With the PMP however, there was a tangible process that community members could see and participate in. This was a benefit to the Board because they were seen to be active and making progress.

Being seen to be active and making progress was important as managing community perceptions about progress in some project areas had been an ongoing issue for Board members and one which they spoke of often. For example, one such process which was causing problems for the Board was the perception that it was taking too long to obtain a (DA) from Kyogle Council for the proposed buildings at Jubal. Norm Torrens expressed his frustration at the length of time it took to develop the DA to the point that it was submitted to council:

We are still in the process of drawing up plans, it’s almost unbelievable the delays, frustrating delays – the length of time. I’m not feeling like coming along to meetings, hearing one thing over and over, nothing has moved, it’s bureaucracy at its worst. Every new program takes time, it’s been nearly two years – but everybody blames us (Norm Torrens, 2007).

The benefit therefore of the whole community engaging in a process which had tangible outcomes helped the Jubal Board members manage their relationships, and maintain their authority, within the community.

As well as internal relationships the PMP highlighted the benefits the relationship with the ILC brought to Jubal. The ILC had provided the means to the community to own its own land, the significance of which was great. In fact, the ILC program was seen as a quicker
and simpler way for communities to obtain land than other options such as Native Title.

Kevin Torrens made the comment:

> Lots of people are saying we shouldn’t bother with Native Title; we should just stay with the ILC (Kevin Torrens, 2005).

However, towards the end of this study in 2007, problems were looming. At that time the good relationship with the ILC faltered due to changes in the ILC funding criteria. Kevin Torrens was asked, by the ILC, to do an application for land management funds, which he did based on the priority list identified in the PMP. He was then told that Jubal would probably not meet new funding guidelines, thus calling into question the resources that had been invested in the PMP, by both the ILC and Jubal. Kevin Torrens expressed his frustration:

> All that PMP was a waste of time – the money they were paid and everything. Maybe because of the tree money; they think we are making enough to support ourselves. We got into him [the ILC representative] and asked him to send us the new guidelines, it’s been a month and we are still waiting. It’s getting worse. What was the point of doing that PMP if they bring in new guidelines and won’t fund us anymore? (Kevin Torrens, 2007).

A week after we had this conversation Kevin was invited to apply for funding from the ILC, who had now decided that Jubal were eligible (Kevin Torrens, 2007). However, it was February 2009 before Jubal received further funding\(^{13}\).

Finally, although opinions were expressed about some of the frustrations of the process and the acknowledgement that the PMP report was useful, in none of my discussions with the Jubal Board members were opinions expressed about the usefulness of the PMP as a plan. As the comments above indicate, the PMP was seen more as a document that was required to ensure further funding, and to prove Jubal’s credibility, rather than a document to assist them in Jubal’s organisational development. It was seen as a document which explained to

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\(^{13}\) A further $60,000 was provided to Jubal for the purchase of a water truck and fire fighting equipment in February 2009.
external stakeholders what Jubal was aiming to achieve but was not seen as a document that could guide Jubal in its own development and plans, or which could provide a framework for its own focus and priorities. Indeed, other than to give copies to potential funders shortly after its completion, I saw no evidence that the PMP was referred to, or used in any other way, since its completion. In fact, Jubal’s own copy was not opened for several weeks after they received it in the mail, and even then it was me who opened it.

6.6 Conclusion

The PMP process was a mixed and sometimes contradictory experience for Jubal. On one hand, Jubal Board members expressed feelings of exclusion from the process and felt that the appointment of the consultants was one such example of how they were prevented from exercising control over their own lives. On the other hand, they also expressed opinions that the process had been empowering and that they had been able to participate in a way that they had not previously experienced. They appreciated the way in which the PMP consultants held regular meetings and involved as many as wanted to be involved in producing the report. However, there was some concern about the consultant’s manner of conducting the meetings. The report itself was seen as providing a way to show people that they were a strong community with good ideas. It was seen as necessary to ensure future funding from the ILC and other funders.
Chapter Seven Achieving Financial Compliance

7.0 Introduction

One of Jubal’s most challenging and time consuming development issues during this study was the lack of established financial systems. This lack resulted in their non-compliance with ORIC’s regulations. As an Aboriginal Corporation, Jubal needs to adhere to these regulations, which are determined by specific requirements under the Aboriginal Councils and Associations Act 1976 (ACA Act), and, since July 2007, by its replacement the Corporations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) Act 2006 (CATSI Act) (ORATSIC, n.d.). Under this Act, Aboriginal corporations are required to submit to ORIC an annual report and audited financial statements for the organisation. Having received these documents ORIC updates the public register of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Corporations. The register is used by Government agencies when they wish to fund a program. They will check with ORIC and ensure that the Aboriginal Corporation is compliant which means it is up to date with annual audited financial reports and they have been submitted to ORIC. Ongoing failure to comply with ORIC’s regulations would ultimately result in deregistration of the corporation.

In 2005, the Jubal Aboriginal Corporation, which was formed in 1999, had never submitted complete annual financial reports to ORIC. Jubal had received some small grants, each of which had been individually audited and acquitted with the relevant funding agency. Jubal had been partially compliant in that they had kept their public officer details up to date with ORIC. However, Jubal Board members were not aware that they also had to prepare separate annual financial statements, submit them for audit and then send them to ORIC. Further, Jubal had received no governance training and the only help they had received prior to 2005 was from a person who had worked with the community for many years in many capacities but who had no appropriate experience or knowledge in accounting or related governance procedures.

In November 2005, after some discussion between the Jubal Chairperson, Kevin Torrens, the Treasurer, Norm Torrens, and me, a decision was made to train three young women from the Jubal community in administration, particularly in bookkeeping. The women would be in the office for two days a week on CDEP and I committed to attend the office
for a few days every month to undertake training. This decision arose from our many conversations about the need for somebody at Jubal to understand accounts and our desire to ensure that Jubal did not have to pay considerable amounts to an external accountant to do basic bookkeeping work. The issue of paying external accountants had been discussed between Kevin and me after a meeting we had previously attended at another Aboriginal Corporation. As my notes from that meeting show, we had some concern about the cost of an external accountant and the benefit to the Aboriginal Corporation of being reliant on an accountant for all accounting functions, even the most basic.

Notes 29th July 2005

Today I attended the [name removed] Board meeting, which was also attended by their accountant… He is being paid accounting rates to undertake basic bookkeeping, like writing cheques and keeping a record of money spent. Yet, in conversations with Kevin and Uncle Eric afterwards, I found out that in all the time he has been involved there has been no attempt to train anybody from the community in these areas. Surely we can train somebody from the community so that they can save the money, or better yet, pay the community member?

I know this was the first meeting and I am probably making judgements before I know enough about it, but I wonder if he is taking advantage of their lack of business operations experience? … I can see from the financial reports he is being paid a significant amount which may mean that [name removed] has its annual reports filed in a timely manner, but how is it contributing to the development of community members individually or the organisation?

I talked to Kevin about this after the meeting, and it seems to be a bigger issue than simply not having the appropriate skills. It is also about how comfortable Board members feel working with “experts”, or people who they perceive to be in authority, particularly White people. Given the history of their relationship with White people, it must be hard for them to question somebody like this accountant who has spent a long time convincing them of the speciality of his knowledge. If you grew up with a White administrator dictating how you live your life, how difficult must it be to now be on an equal footing, or even be an employer? Also they [community members]
don’t have business experience and so it is easy for somebody to convince them of
the difficulty of some activities. I know, from experience, that a lot of what the
accountant was talking about is pretty basic bookkeeping and anybody who can deal
with basic numeracy and literacy would also be able to do this work, given
appropriate training.

Following on from these concerns, Kevin and I were keen that our work together should
build capacity within the organisation to enable community members to undertake these
tasks themselves. Kevin and I were in agreement that we should ensure that Jubal’s own
people were trained to do the bookkeeping to save them money, as well as to provide
improved job prospects for the individuals. The intention was to ensure that Jubal could do
the day to day bookkeeping in house and then use an accountant for more complex tasks
such as preparing financial reports, as well as to ensure the annual audit was undertaken.

I offered to do the accounts training because I had experience in both Mind Your Own
Business (MYOB) and accounting in general. It is important to state that although my
formal qualifications do include a Master of Business Administration (MBA) I am not a
trained or certified accountant, and was aware of my limitations and obligations in this
regard. I took on the job of training and bookkeeping based on twenty years of practical
experience gained from working in small businesses and non-government organisations. I
have worked at various levels with regard to accounts, from basic bookkeeping to project
managing the implementation of a new accounts system for an organisation with a turnover
of 25 million dollars (Australian) and more than 8,000 stock items. I have also been
involved as a volunteer in several organisations which has given me a good understanding
of the practicalities of implementing financial governance procedures in a community
organisation environment.

What followed this decision to train bookkeepers was the challenge of getting Jubal
compliant which took more than two years with the final issues being resolved in February
2008. This process is detailed in the following section of the Chapter. It is important to
note that this study is about Jubal’s experiences together with my own observations. There

14 The accounting package chosen for Jubal.
was no opportunity for the Accountants involved to contribute their opinions or experiences, or respond to the issues raised in the study. For this reason I have not named the accountants involved and have used a number sequence to identify them.

### 7.1 Achieving Financial Compliance

In November 2005, as previously stated, the situation with regard to compliance and financial systems at Jubal was that individual grants had been audited and acquitted as the money had been used. However, no annual financial reports had been completed, or audited, as required by ORIC. In addition, the record keeping system was virtually non-existent. It transpired that for individual grants receipts had been pasted into a scrap book, but receipts outside the grants, and other financial records, were not in any systematic filing system, even in some cases being found in plastic bags or empty tobacco packets.

*Figure 7.1 An example of Jubal’s ‘filing system’ - a bag of receipts*

At that time Jubal did have a relationship with an auditor (Accountant 1), who had previously audited individual acquitted grants. Jubal decided to change their auditor, primarily for financial reasons as Accountant 1 was perceived to be expensive.

In November 2005, Jubal approached another auditor (Accountant 2) who agreed to take on Jubal as a client. In order to bring matters up to date it was necessary to prepare five years of financial records (2000-2005) and audit these years at once. When Jubal Board members first met with Accountant 2 in November 2005, he was confident that he could
complete the audits in a matter of weeks. This was important because we wanted to apply for further grants, but also because we had a training schedule.

The training schedule had been developed with Gina Roberts who was one of the three women being trained in administration and who was taking on the bookkeeping role (the other two young women being trained were to assist her). Gina had arranged a “top up” through Tursa Employment and Training\textsuperscript{15}. This meant that she was going to be on CDEP for two days and would also receive a Government funded wage subsidy, while she was training, for another three days a week in order for her to gain workplace skills. The timing was good as Tursa were providing a MYOB course in November 2005, for which Gina enrolled. Unfortunately, she was unable to complete the whole course due to the need to attend a funeral; however it was a good start for our training plan. The other two young women were also supposed to receive training; however they were rarely in the office and soon transferred to other projects. One took on another job elsewhere and the other took part in a program to complete her schooling to Year 10.

While Gina was organising her participation in these programs, Kevin Torrens gathered up the financial records and took them to Accountant 2 in early December 2005. In mid January 2006, following Jubal’s enquiries as to the progress of the audits Accountant 2 forwarded a letter advising Jubal that he was still waiting for records from them; this letter gave no specifics as to what he required.

In response to the letter, Kevin Torrens searched for, and found, more records which he took to the accountant. However, in mid February 2006, it became apparent that there was some miscommunication between Jubal and Accountant 2 as the audits were still not underway. This was becoming a frustration for us all.

**Notes 14\textsuperscript{th} February 2006**

*Gina and I went to the Mallanganee office so that I could install MYOB, which I had just purchased for them, onto their computer. There was still no word from*

\textsuperscript{15} Tursa is a not for profit, non-government employment and training organisation which provides government employment programs and training.
[Accountant 2], so Kevin rang him and I spoke to him. He told me that the paperwork Kevin had taken to him was not sufficient; that he had only been given paperwork relating to two grants and their acquittal. This news is extremely frustrating. It is now mid February and despite being promised the audit in weeks we are only now finding out that the paperwork that Kevin gave to [Accountant 2] in November was inadequate. I’m frustrated because I don’t understand why [Accountant 2] couldn’t have informed us much earlier so we could have dealt with it. I am also frustrated with myself because I should have asked more questions of Kevin about what he was taking to the accountant, and then I would have discovered this problem earlier. We were all talking at cross purposes because we had not addressed the underlying presumption we all made, that when Kevin was asked to take financial records to the accountant he knew what that meant. I am still uncertain what role I should play in fixing the accounts, I had agreed to training and mentoring, but how assertive should I be, and how much control I should take over the situation?

The source of the miscommunication appeared to be that Kevin Torrens did not understand what the accountant meant when he asked for the “financial records” because nobody had ever explained this to him. Kevin took what he believed was the extent of the financial records and the accountant offered no advice on this matter.

Later in February 2006, the Accountant was still waiting for the Jubal financial records. In an attempt to make some progress I collected all the records which had been given to Accountant 2 with the intention of examining them to see what was missing. It was obvious on seeing the records what the problem was; there were several missing items such as bank statements; receipts and cheque butts and there were no reconciliations. In other words, it would be impossible to conduct an audit with the records which had been presented to Accountant 2.

Kevin Torrens, Norm Torrens and I discussed the situation and identified three options for action. First, Jubal could gather all the information; receipts, cheque butts, bank statements and invoices and give them to an accountant to prepare company accounts for five years and then submit them for audit. Second, they could give all the information to me and I would take it back to Sydney, prepare the accounts and then submit them for auditing by
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Accountant 2. Third, they could seek exemption for financial reports for those years from ORIC. We discounted option three because we did not think that Jubal would meet the exemption criteria. I recommended the second option because I considered it would be quicker and would avoid the fees that an accountant would charge. This course of action was agreed to.

Another action we took at that time was to write to ORIC to complain about the lack of training in governance provided to Jubal. Kevin felt that he had been let down by ORIC as in the past he had specifically asked them to provide governance training and nothing had come of the request. Kevin felt that the problems they were experiencing now could have been avoided if they had received such training and that the Registrar should have been more helpful in this area.

*The Registrar makes it very hard to do anything, which basically sets us up to fail* (Kevin Torrens, 2006).

In order to complete the accounts, between February 2006 and April 2006, I focused on finding all the available financial records. This proved to be a difficult process due to the lack of proper filing systems and the limited knowledge and practical accounting experience amongst the Jubal Board. This lack of a common language and understanding regarding accounting resulted in significant time being spent explaining basic bookkeeping and accounting concepts and practices to the bookkeeper trainee, the Chairperson and the Treasurer.

By April 2006, the accounts records were at a point where they were as complete as possible. I had installed MYOB on the Jubal computer, which was kept at the office in Mallanganee and had run five years of accounts through that, so we were able to produce appropriate financial reports. There were still a few missing receipts, for minor amounts, but everything was accounted for and the accounts were ready for audit. The five years of accounts were therefore submitted for audit. At that time Accountant 2 alerted us to the fact that the audit might take a few weeks because it was now approaching the end of the financial year and things for him were, understandably, busy.
While understandable, this delay in being able to produce audited accounts was beginning to have an impact on Jubal’s ability to raise funds and progress projects.

Notes, 8th August 2006

Kevin is staying with me in Sydney at the moment, he tells me that there has been no progress in the accounts while I was away [I was overseas]. It’s now August and we still have no indication from [Accountant 2] as to when the audits will be finalised. Now we have been told that the funding we applied for in May for the feasibility study cannot be approved because Jubal is not compliant owing to the failure to submit annual accounts. Others [funding agencies], like the ICC and DSRD, have also indicated that no funding will be granted until Jubal is compliant. The ILC seems to be the only agency able to release funds because all of their grants have been audited and fully acquitted in the past. Kevin and Norm are getting stressed about it all. They want me to go up next week [to Tabulam] for a meeting with [Accountant 2]. I don’t want to go because I can’t really afford the time right now. Anyway, they are quite insistent and have agreed to fly me up so I don’t have to be away from home so long. Hopefully, we can clarify what the accountant needs, it seems like a waste of time though, why can’t he just send us a list, or pick up the phone?

At that meeting with the accountant, on August 16th 2006, Accountant 2 expressed some concern about missing documents and other matters. However, during the course of the meeting we were able to address his queries as almost everything he expressed concern about were in fact in the folder he had in his possession. The only exception was some receipts which were clearly identified, in the folder, as being lost.

At this meeting, Accountant 2 advised that it was necessary for him to consult with his audit specialist to look at the options available as he informed us he would only be able to perform a ‘qualified audit’, due to the missing documents. During this meeting, we explained to him that a qualified audit was not a problem, whereas no audit at all was. We felt that it was clear there had been a progression of compliance over the five years and so we were confident that ORIC would accept a qualified audit. Our confidence arose from the fact that we were able to show that we now had in place new and correct systems and
that all previous grants had been appropriately acquitted and audited. Any discrepancies we had identified were of a minor nature for example, a few missing receipts for small amounts. We tried to impress upon Accountant 2 that this delay was having a detrimental effect on Jubal and was causing them to miss out on funding. We further stressed that even if qualified, it was imperative that Jubal obtained its audits urgently. Accountant 2 made a commitment that he would talk to his audit specialist and have an answer to us on the following Monday, the 21st August 2006, as to how they would proceed and, depending on that conversation would strive to complete the audits by the end of the following week.

The audits were not produced in that time frame and in fact Jubal was not able to obtain the audits for the rest of 2006. Jubal did contact the accountant regularly during this time, but no progress was made, and to my knowledge no satisfactory reason was given for this delay. By December 2006, the situation was causing significant problems for Jubal, as it was getting close to the next funding round through the ICC (in the following February). Without the audits we were not able to apply for that funding.

Notes, 9th December 2006

Kevin tells me that he spoke to [Accountant 2] on December 5th. For some reason [Accountant 2] wants to speak to me, but he did tell Kevin that he would have the accounts ready by yesterday [8th December]. But he also sent Kevin a letter in November saying they would be ready on November 17th, and that didn’t happen either. So today Kevin rang me again, he is getting quite frustrated. The other day he told me that “he would have to swear” at [Accountant 2] if he didn’t get the audits soon. Anyway, he had asked me to phone [Accountant 2] yesterday because he felt that he was unable to do so himself, in case he should say something he would regret. Jokingly I said to Kevin, “and you think I will be polite and patient”? His reply was “no, but you don’t have to live here”!

Today Kevin wanted me to ask [Accountant 2] whether he had any respect for Goories. Kevin is really irate at the continual lack of outcomes from [Accountant 2] and thinks that it shows a complete lack of respect to the community. He asked me, as an ‘outsider’ to put this question to Accountant 2. I don’t really want to but I hesitantly agreed that I would. I rang [Accountant 2] and was told that the audit was
“days away not weeks”. He said that he just needed me to clarify the ownership of the Jubal Property; whether Jubal owned it or the ILC. I thought Jubal held the title to the land, but to make sure I agreed to ring the ILC and asked them to send a letter to detail the ownership details of Jubal and its value at the time of purchase.

I didn’t bother asking [Accountant 2] whether he respected Goories, for two reasons, one being that it seems we were finally going to get our audit, and I didn’t want to jeopardise that and, secondly, it seemed unnecessary as I felt that his question to me spoke volumes. Why did he ask me that question and not Kevin Torrens, the Chairperson of the organisation which owns the property? Kevin had rung him several times in previous weeks, so there was plenty of opportunity, yet he waited until he spoke to me, the White ‘outsider’.

Ten days later the accountant informed me, when I rang him again, that he was still waiting for the ILC to confirm the ownership of the Jubal property, even though the ILC confirmed they had sent it when requested.

Notes, 19th December 2006

I rang [Accountant 2] and asked if I could pick up the accounts as he had already told me it was all ready except for the confirmation of ownership. But when I rang [Accountant 2] told me that he was still waiting for the letter from the ILC. This really surprised me because my experience with the ILC had been that Callum always did what he said he would do on time. I rang the ILC; they assured me the letter had been sent at the time I had rung before. I rang back [Accountant 2] who didn’t believe that the ILC had sent the letter. So now it’s Christmas and nothing is going to be done until January.

It took several more phone calls over the next few weeks to Accountant 2 to obtain the audits. Finally, on February 20th 2007, nearly a year after sending the accounts for audit, and the day before the ICC funding application was due to be submitted I was able to pick up the audited accounts for 2000 to 2005. I took them straight to the Jubal office at Mallanganee, where we were due to meet to finalise our ICC application and, with great gusto, made the announcement. Sadly, my excitement was not reciprocated because the
family were tired and upset as one of the young community members had died in a car crash that previous weekend.

At that point, in February 2007, Jubal had five years of audits completed, but the 2005/2006 financial year was now overdue. This was because when the accounts were first submitted to Accountant 2, in April 2006, the 2006 financial year was still current. In the meantime, as a result of the many delays, Jubal decided to find an alternative auditor and so it was decided to give the 2005/2006 records to the new auditor.

It was not easy to find a new auditor, as there are not many in the region. Jubal did engage a new accountant early in 2007, (Accountant 3), on the recommendation of a person who had been working with them in various capacities for many years. There was however a problem which took some time to come to light, this accountant was not a registered auditor. Shortly after Accountant 3 had been engaged, Norm Torrens, Gina Roberts and I met the Jubal account manager at Accountant 3’s office. During this meeting we spent some time discussing Jubal’s accounts, including their audit needs. However, at no time during that meeting did the account manager mention the fact that no one at the firm was a registered auditor. It was in fact Accountant 2 who drew our attention to this fact as he refused to release any records to Accountant 3.

**Notes, 14th May 2007**

*Jubal sent [Accountant 2] a letter asking him to send all Jubal’s records to Accountant 3. [Accountant 2] wrote back and said that he could not release the documents as there were “outstanding matters”, and also that he did not believe that Accountant 3 was a registered auditor. Because we really need to get the depreciation schedule from him as [Accountant 3] can’t complete the audit until they get it I had to ring [Accountant 2]. I spoke to him on the phone today and was verbally abused by him. He told me that the time taken for the audits was due to our incompetence and that he was angry with me particularly as he thought I had been saying one thing to him and another to Jubal. This was a very unpleasant phone call and I felt bullied. I don’t agree with him at all. It’s not clear what he thinks I have or have not been saying. However, I stand by my claim that he should have done the*
Despite the unpleasant manner in which Accountant 2 had spoken to me I did undertake to investigate Accountant 3’s credentials further. I was concerned because although I had not been involved in recommending Accountant 3, or his appointment, the need for a registered auditor had been raised with me earlier in the year and I had confirmed with the person who had recommended Accountant 3 to Jubal that ORIC did require a registered auditor to audit accounts. Because we had talked about it, I had then made an assumption that this had been addressed with Accountant 3. However, following the phone call with Accountant 2 I made specific enquiries directly with Jubal’s account manager at Accountant 3’s office and discovered that they did not have a registered auditor and therefore could not undertake Jubal’s audits. This misunderstanding meant Jubal was now searching for a new auditor in May and many that we approached were not able to take on Jubal due to their existing end of financial year workload.

This was a critical time in my relationship with Jubal as I was angry that after all the work we had done to get Jubal compliant, this situation had arisen. My relationship with the non-Indigenous person who had recommended Accountant 3 to Jubal was becoming increasingly more difficult as I felt that he was offering advice in an area where he consistently displayed a lack of knowledge and was, in my opinion, causing problems in the accounts area. I had tried to talk to Kevin about this person’s involvement in accounting matters on more than one occasion, but Kevin had a long relationship with this person and trusted him completely. Kevin would therefore not talk about it and would not allow me to address it, either with him, or in the context of this research. It is therefore difficult for me to write about this particular situation. However, I feel that not mentioning this would leave a gap of meaning to the experience at this time. In particular the extent of anger that I felt was more than a response to this particular situation. It was an accumulation of ongoing interactions, and resulted in me giving serious consideration to walking away from the whole project specifically because of this person. My notes regarding this situation were written some days afterwards due to the unexpected death of my father-in-law, however, the emotion is still evident.
Notes, 22nd May 2007

I can’t believe that an accountant had been engaged who wasn’t an auditor. I can’t believe that this hadn’t been the first question asked at the initial conversation with [Accountant 3], even after [name deleted] and I had spoken about it on the phone. I can’t believe I didn’t ask the question later on. But by the time I had met [Jubal’s account manager at Accountant 3’s office], the decision to use him had already been made and as we spent the whole meeting talking about audits and [our account manager] never mentioned they were not registered, it just didn’t occur to me that they were not... I really felt like walking away from it all, but Graeme, ever the mediator, persuaded me to help fix the problem.

So I went through the phone book and rang every auditor in the area, of which there are very few. As it is now May, most that I spoke to were not able to take on Jubal as they were already over committed for the financial year end. During the course of these phone calls several people recommended [Accountant 1], who Jubal had initially used for audits, as that firm was big enough to be able to take on another account at this time of year. While I was doing that, Kevin Torrens and [name deleted] started talking about resurrecting the situation with Accountant 2. After all the problems we had with him. I just thought this was ridiculous and a complete waste of time, we were desperate but not that desperate. I suggested to both Norm and Kevin that either we asked [Accountant 1] to do the audit, or I could take it back to Sydney, where registered auditors were not so hard to find. I had already placed several calls to accountant friends in the hope that they could recommend an auditor. Graeme and I then drove from Tabulam to Lismore to retrieve the financial records from [Accountant 3], and visited [Accountant 1’s] office, which is also in Lismore to ask for help.

At [Accountant 1’s office] we were lucky enough to talk to an auditor who was extremely helpful. He looked at the documents, but said that while they could take it on, they would be too expensive. He could see from the accounts that Jubal did not have much money and thought it would be too much for them to pay. He suggested another auditor. He also rang this person, talked to him and made arrangements for us to take the financial records to this auditor (Accountant 4). We were extremely
grateful to him and went straight to Ballina where we were able to leave the records for the auditor who was out of the office. The next day I spoke to the auditor by phone. He was the first accountant I had spoken to that knew about ORIC and its requirements and understood how Aboriginal Corporations worked. This auditor promised to send me a letter of engagement and a summary of fees, so that Jubal could go through the necessary procedures to appoint him, as per the Jubal Corporation’s rules. So I came home, really fed up and upset by the experience, but at least feeling like we had fixed the problem.

Despite the problems, and after some considerable effort on the part of Graeme and me, Jubal was able to engage a new auditor (Accountant 4). Due to the time of the year (May 2007), it was again approaching the end of the financial year and it was expected that the audit would not be completed for two or three months. In early September 2007, we completed the 06/07 year end and took those records to Accountant 4 as well. At this time Accountant 4 advised that the 2005/2006 audit was almost ready to send on to Jubal. We also had a brief conversation about the fact that Accountant 2 had been slow to forward the relevant records to Accountant 4, but I understood that Accountant 4 was in communication with him and that everything was proceeding.

In November 2007, when I rang Accountant 4 to enquire about the progress of the audits, as the AGM was coming up, I found out that Accountant 2 was refusing to send the Jubal records to Accountant 4. The reason reported to me was that Accountant 2 believed that it was the responsibility of ORIC to appoint and dismiss auditors. Accountant 2 had raised this with Jubal some months previously; however at that time, I had rung ORIC and confirmed that this was not the case, and that appointing the auditor was a responsibility of the Corporation in line with its constitution or rules. I had checked Jubal’s rules and following discussions with Jubal was confident they had dealt with the matter appropriately.

Accountant 2 and Accountant 4 had some communication about this and, in September, Accountant 4 had written to ORIC to seek further clarification. In November he received a response which confirmed Jubal’s understanding of the regulation. Kevin Torrens subsequently wrote to Accountant 2 sending a copy of the ORIC letter to him and asking him to submit his letter of resignation to Jubal and forward all records to Accountant 4. A
very short time line was given to Accountant 2 to complete these tasks as the AGM was at
the end of that week and it was necessary to be able to report to members why audited
financial statements were not available for them to approve. Following the lack of response
to this request, Kevin Torrens went to see Accountant 2 in person who agreed that all was
in order and he would now send the records to Accountant 4.

This took a further two weeks and more phone calls to achieve. In the meantime, Jubal was
not only in arrears with ORIC’s requirements, but also was in breach of its funding
contract with the ICC by not providing audited accounts for the previous financial year. In
November 2007, the ICC was notified of the problem by Jubal who provided a written
explanation. However, Jubal was in the same situation as it had been in the previous year,
despite having improved its own internal processes and preparing end of year accounts in a
timely manner. Applications for the annual ICC funding round were due to be submitted in
February 2008, and until the audits were submitted and the breach was cleared, they would
be unable to obtain more program funding. In addition, questions were being asked, by the
ICC, about Jubal’s capabilities to manage their financial affairs (personal communication
with Darren Kershaw). Their reputation was damaged by the lack of audits.

Finally, the 2005/2006 audit was completed in December 2007 and the 2006/2007 audit in
February 2008. The completion of these audits now meant that Jubal was fully compliant
with its obligations under the CATSI Act.

7.2 Impact of Being ‘Non-compliant’ on the Board Members

Being non-compliant had a negative impact on Jubal’s ability to raise funds and to create
confidence among its funding partners about its ability for effective self-governance. The
lack of compliance not only affected the perception of external stakeholders as to Jubal’s
management ability, but also had a negative impact on the confidence of its own
community members.

For Kevin Torrens and Norm Torrens being non-compliant was a stressful situation. At the
commencement of our work together it was observable that they were both uncomfortable
talking to Accountant 2. They both at various times avoided engaging with him, they
would, for example, suddenly both have to go to the Doctor, rather than attend a pre-
planned meeting. This was not so much a personal issue with the particular accountant, but
more reflects the experience that they have both had throughout their lives of interactions with White people who were often in positions of power over them.

We were more accepting of what White people said, didn’t understand. It’s a catch 22 they have the money, we have to bow down. Goories get emotional. For example, [Accountant 2], we have known him for years, we don’t want to step on any feet, but business isn’t like that. We need to be more business minded. We have to understand what it’s like in the real world (Norm Torrens, 2007).

However, over time it was also observable that Kevin and Norm became far more confident and were more able to take action about the accountant’s inability to act on their behalf.

The training and accountability is good, we know where we’ve made mistakes and now we have had people like you as a mentor, we can work one on one, don’t see that in training. It’s very labour intensive. It’s also been really good having Norm as treasurer he took on responsibility and had to keep checking things, get the books done right (Kevin Torrens, 2006).

When I talked to Norm about my observation that he was more confident he said that understanding more about accounts had been an empowering experience:

Working on the accounts makes me feel - gives me confidence - you know within yourself everything is ok. The part I’m still not knowledgeable about is GST and all that. I didn’t have a clue what I was putting myself into. Didn’t have a clue about it. I was treasurer since we started getting income. I wasn’t worried. There have been times I’ve threatened to quit, but because of your support and because I care for the thing I prefer to suffer it out (Norm Torrens, 2007).

For Gina Roberts becoming competent in accounts was important for Jubal, but also of personal value:

I wanted it properly set up in Jubal, not just the building but with the accounts and all that, if that’s not all done, it’s not properly run, that’s why I wanted to do it. I like it [the administration work], it’s been good experience, I always wanted to learn it
since I was at school, but I got into other things. I always wanted to be a secretary (Gina Roberts, 2007).

After a year of working on the accounts Gina was more confident and capable.

*I’m just noticing now, I’m seeing that it’s working. They [the committee] thought I wasn’t coming back [after her maternity leave] now they can see I was determined* (Gina Roberts, 2007).

The training in accounts had also been an empowering experience more generally for Gina who was voted on to the Board as Secretary by members.

*It’s easier now; I am achieving something. Now I am achieving things within myself. I feel more confident. At the AGM there, all the young ones they were saying you be this, they were saying you do that, you’d be good for that, you’re very determined in what you do. When someone nominated me to be the Secretary, you should have heard all the young ones, they were screaming for me and two of their hands went up!* (Gina Roberts, 2007).

Gina and I also talked about the fact that she was the only woman to be involved in the administration of Jubal in any official capacity. Most of the people undertaking training in other project areas were men. Her observation was that it was a good and necessary step and through her work with the accounts and now becoming Secretary of the Board that she was able to help other young people find a way to become more involved and take on more responsibility.

*I do notice I’m the only woman though and I want to work with the young ones, want them to be involved in Jubal* (Gina Roberts, 2007).

Although we were not able to achieve all that we wanted to in training terms during the life of this study, Gina’s increased self confidence and skills enabled her to obtain a full time paid position for another organization in mid 2008.
7.3 Implications of Achieving Compliance

The experience of ensuring that Jubal was compliant with regard to its obligations to ORIC as described in this chapter highlights several areas of concern. First is the impact on the organisation of a lack of understanding about such things. There was nobody within the Jubal Aboriginal Corporation who was able to undertake these bookkeeping tasks and they received no support or advice to enable them to become compliant. At the commencement of this study this had been the situation for five years and as identified by Jubal Board members did cause some stress and concern.

Although the Board members were willing to learn, in the period of time since its establishment in 1999, until the commencement of this study in 2005, there had been no training available to Jubal. Kevin Torrens reported asking ORIC for training, but at that time it had not been offered to them. The lack of financial records was clearly not due to lack of concern on the part of the Jubal Board members, but was due to a lack of knowledge coupled with a lack of support and appropriate training.

Additionally, the situation could have been helped by better coordination amongst the Government agencies working with them. For example, although it is not the ILC’s responsibility to ensure Jubal’s financial governance, they were aware that they were receiving audited accounts for their grants but not full audited financial statements. They could have provided advice to Jubal about how to rectify this situation.

The accounts experience also highlights the difficulties Jubal had engaging and working with auditors. There was a lack of confidence and understanding expressed by Jubal Board members about accounts processes and this lack of understanding led to the Board members expressing concerns about their ability to perform in this area. In particular, they were at a disadvantage when it came to managing the accountants working for them. From a practical point of view, this study also highlighted the effects of being located in a rural area where professional services are severely limited, thus limiting Jubal’s choices. Jubal Board members also expressed concern that they had to live in close proximity to their auditor and were concerned about the effect of any dissent with that person.

The experience of achieving financial compliance also highlighted the negative impact on the community’s resources. The amount of time and effort it took to work on these issues
created an opportunity cost; the cost of not being able to focus on other things due to being consumed with accounts work. This was particularly highlighted by the experience of Gina Roberts. When we started the process in November 2005, we had intended to use that time to train her on MYOB. However, as the problems with the accounts became obvious, and because creating five years of accounts in those circumstances is quite difficult for somebody new to the field, rather than confuse Gina with the messiness of the current situation, we decided to get everything up to date and start training with a clean slate. Unfortunately, the length of time it took to achieve this was longer than expected. In fact, Gina had a baby and took maternity leave in the time it took Accountant 2 to complete the first set of audits.

A further negative effect of the accounts situation was to limit Jubal’s ability to raise funds to run its projects which therefore meant that they were unable to achieve, or make progress towards their goals during this time. In one instance, Jubal applied for funding to undertake a feasibility study in order to purchase a property that had commercial potential. The funding approval was on hold until an audit was completed, the audit took so long that the vendor, who had given Jubal an option to purchase for several months, had no alternative but to sell the property to somebody else. Therefore the lack of financial compliance was not simply an administrative issue, it also curtailed Jubal’s ability to develop any further projects, they were not able to obtain government funding nor were they commercially competitive as it took so long for them to be able to conduct a feasibility study.

An additional consequence of the lack of financial systems was the damage to Jubal’s reputation of being competent and capable of administering its own affairs. Funding agencies, such as the ICC, were willing to give Jubal some latitude as they had taken the time to develop a relationship with them, and they understood the efforts that Jubal had taken. However, the political situation had changed since 2004 and Government agencies were tightening up their procedures. Aboriginal Corporations had to show their financial management and governance was in order for them to continue to receive funding, and while Jubal had done everything possible to rectify its lack of financial reports, the lack of audits did hurt their reputation during that time.
7.4 Conclusion

The difficulties Jubal experienced while establishing effective accounting systems exemplified the kind of fundamental operational issue that can stymie an Aboriginal Corporation’s efforts to make changes. It also is indicative of the kind of detailed work that often needs to be done before other projects can be effectively established. Additionally, the Jubal experience highlights the consequences of not having such systems in place and the consequence of not having audited financial reports.
Chapter Eight  Analysis

8.0  Introduction
The preceding three chapters have detailed three key activities which were focal points for this research. The detailed description of the activities has been based on field notes and observations from Jubal Board members and me, as a participating observer. The activities provide evidence of the day to day actions and activities undertaken to set Jubal on the path to enterprise development. This chapter will now draw out the implications of the study and provide theoretical analysis of those experiences. The analysis is structured to correspond with the points of entry for capacity development as identified by the UNDP; how the institution develops, how the individual develops and how the broader society enables development (Fukuda-Parr et al., 2002; Hunt, 2005). As identified in Chapter Two, engaging across these three points of entry will most likely lead to successful development because, as Fukuda-Parr et al. (2002) state, in addition to expanding a person’s skills opportunities to use and develop those skills must also be provided. Therefore, it is important to consider how Jubal has addressed its development across all three levels to date. The first level to be considered is the enabling environment.

8.1  The Enabling Environment
The enabling environment is the broad external environment within which an entity operates and incorporates the policy, legal and regulatory framework. This environment includes management of accountability systems as well as such aspects such as communication flows and management of the relationships within the system (Hunt, 2005). The enabling environment can be seen as the big picture, the over-arching systems and the external environment which impacts on the organisation’s ability to develop its capabilities.

8.1.1  Self-determination
A key enabling environment issue discussed in the literature pertaining to Indigenous enterprise development is whether sovereignty is essential for the development of successful Indigenous organisations (Cornell, 2006; Cornell and Kalt, 2004; Finlayson, 2007; Jorgensen and Taylor, 2000; Sullivan, 2006). The Harvard Project for example, found that sovereignty is one of the key factors of success for Native American enterprise
development (Cornell and Kalt, 2004; Jorgensen and Taylor, 2000). The concept of ‘sovereignty’ however, is complex and can have different meanings depending on the context (Philpott, 2009). Sovereignty in the context of the Harvard Project is understood to include the capability of Indigenous peoples to make their own decisions, to have control over the development of their community; to be in control of, and to direct, their own affairs as well as to experience and be accountable for the consequences of their decisions (Cornell and Kalt, 2004). However, in Australia sovereignty is commonly referred to in the context of Indigenous peoples’ relationship to the State as well as ownership of land, and is a politically sensitive issue (Sullivan, 2006). Finlayson (2007) for example, interprets sovereignty to be ownership of, or at least control over, land. Finlayson’s (2007) study found that while sovereignty over land was an aspiration of many Indigenous organisations it was not essential for the development of a successful organisation.

Dodson and Smith (2003) while referring to the Harvard Project have also not used the word sovereignty, but rather refer to “political jurisdiction”. According to their definition political jurisdiction aligns closely with Cornell and Kalt’s (2004) understanding of sovereignty as the community’s ability to be in control of their own affairs. This debate about whether ‘sovereignty’ or ‘political jurisdiction’ encapsulates an element of Indigenous enterprise development is essentially about the extent that self-determination contributes to development. It should not be forgotten that self-determination is a fundamental right of Indigenous peoples as identified and incorporated into the recently ratified United Nation’s Declaration on Indigenous Peoples (UNPFII, 2007: 4-5).

**Article 3**

Indigenous peoples have the right to self-determination. By virtue of that right they freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development.

By virtue of that right Indigenous peoples have a right to develop in a way that ensures self-determination. Relating capacity development to self-determination and the rights which flow on from that set the proper tone and context of any development. Further to that point, taking the definition above it is clear from the vision of the Jubal community,
expressed in Chapter Four, that self-determination, across all aspects of their lives and livelihoods, is what the Jubal community were identifying as their greatest desire.

In order to achieve self-determination and therefore gain more control over their lives and future, the Jubal community always saw a physical place as being essential to their development, as was reported in the CDP.

*Our ideal is to own a large property in the area that some of us can live on, where we can teach our young people about the land, and on which we can make a living* (Collaborative Solutions, 2000).

In this instance therefore, owning the land was integral to Jubal’s ability to move towards self-determination, as Norm Torrens stated in Chapter Four:

*[B]ut eventually when Jubal came along we reunited as one body and as one family... as a body we are making our own decisions for ourselves but in other places the Government tells us what to do* (Norm Torrens, 2007).

As well as providing a physical place for the Jubal community to ‘reunite’, the property brought real opportunities to engage in the market economy such as providing an independent income through its forestry agreement. The forestry agreement was important because the money it provided was the only money Jubal had which was not tied to grants and programs and which was entirely controlled by the community itself. Further, most of the activities developed by Jubal would not have been possible without the physical place. For example, the SRA could not have been developed because Jubal would not have had a suitable place from which to run its holiday camps. Additionally, almost all of the potential enterprise ideas identified in the PMP were reliant on access to the Jubal property. In this case therefore owning the land was integral to the formation and development of both the community and the Jubal Aboriginal Corporation.

However, as found elsewhere (Cornell and Kalt, 2004; Dodson and Smith, 2003; Finlayson, 2007; Jorgensen and Taylor, 2000), the property on its own was not enough to achieve self-determination and to gain the ability to make decisions and be in control. In Jubal’s case the philosophy and policies of the Federal Government was one of the most
significant external factors influencing their ability to be in control of their property and lives during the course of this study. It was only with funding support from the Government that Jubal was able to firstly, obtain the property and secondly, develop any projects. There was certainly potential for income generating ventures, as was evident from the PMP, however, the income from the forestry agreement was not sufficient to provide start up funds for most of the projects. While Jubal members expressed a desire to be independent of Government funding, in the short term this was not possible. Therefore, as Jubal was inextricably linked to Governments in the foreseeable future, its ability to develop productive and strategic relationships and alliances with Government agencies was vital.

8.1.2 Building Alliances

The ability to engage funding agencies is encompassed within the ability to build alliances, which was identified in several studies as being crucial to the success of an Indigenous organisation (Finlayson, 2007; Hunt and Smith, 2007; Morgan, 2006a). Morgan (2006b) expands on this point and identifies the need to relate and build relationships while at the same time foster autonomy and protect the organisation’s vision as a core capability for development. Additionally, it is important that organisations focus on those areas over which they can have the greatest control and where their efforts will have the greatest effect (Dodson and Smith, 2003). The alternative, according to Dodson and Smith (2003), is to lose focus and energy by trying to change things that they have very little control over, for example, starting projects that do not answer community needs or responding to external development agendas. It is far better to focus on those areas over which they have highest control and can achieve the greatest outcome (Dodson and Smith, 2003).

The importance of focusing on the community’s needs and not responding to external challenges was highlighted in this study. Jubal was successful in establishing productive relationships with Government agencies which have resulted in beneficial and tangible funding outcomes. Examples include, signing the SRA, the funding provided to Jubal from the Attorney General’s Department and FaHCSIA; the involvement of the DSRD and the ICC in the PMP and the ongoing relationship with the ILC. However, this study also highlighted tensions between seeking available funding and prioritising the community’s own development agenda.
These tensions were evident, for example, when considering the effect of the SRA on the projects that Jubal was able to develop. The PMP showed that the priority areas for Jubal were building cabins; both for program and family use, as well as extending the ablutions block to include a meeting room. Other priority areas identified in the PMP were market gardens and development of a café. However, while Jubal has now developed two plans (the PMP as well as the CDP in 2000), which clearly state their priorities the projects which operated during this study period clearly reflected Government policy priorities.

One concrete example of this is the funding that Jubal applied for in February 2007, through the ICC. In addition to funding for the holiday camps, they also applied for funding for a women’s project to address family violence issues. Jubal successfully obtained funding for the holiday camps and the women’s project which were both clearly in alignment with the objectives of the SRA. Obtaining funding for family violence related programs results in a greater focus on that area, which meets Government funding priorities and understanding of violence mitigation programs, but neglects Jubal’s other priorities, such as building cabins, as stated in the PMP. The building of cabins is seen by the community as important to fulfil its mandate as a place of safety, thereby contributing to its own vision of violence mitigation programs. For its future success Jubal needs to ensure that it is applying for project funding which relates to its priorities as set out in the PMP rather than responding to external influences.

The Jubal experience highlighted that there is a missing link between the development of plans which identify the community’s aspirations and development agenda and projects they are able to develop because of Government funding priorities. There needs to be a more flexible funding regime which can better accommodate the development priorities of individual communities and recognise and support community responses to issues such as family violence.

8.1.3 Legitimacy

Another important aspect related to developing good relationships with funding agencies is to be recognised as a legitimate entity (Morgan, 2006a). This recognition comes from external sources, such as Governments, partners and the wider community as well as internal stakeholders (Morgan, 2006a). As reported in Chapter Five, the Jubal Board members reported finding it difficult to obtain recognition from external agencies as a
viable community and they felt that Jubal was not as well resourced and supported as former Government missions. During the course of this study however, this changed. The PMP generated much interest from other agencies such as the ICC and the DSRD who attended several PMP meetings. This, in addition to the SRA and the ongoing funding they received is evidence that Jubal has achieved the recognition as a viable Indigenous organisation it desired.

Recognition as a legitimate organisation has been found to be supported by good management of resources and the development of effective accountability systems (Cornell, 2006; Finlayson, 2007; Hunt and Smith, 2007). This study shows that the three activities described in Chapters Five, Six and Seven, contributed to Jubal’s ability to claim legitimacy. The systems that Jubal established such as the financial accounting system, the reporting structure and improved governance procedures contributed to reassuring external stakeholders that Jubal was being effectively managed as well as being compliant with ORIC.

Having gained legitimacy as a viable organisation, Jubal now needs to ensure it maintains its reputation amongst external stakeholders and partners. One way in which Jubal can achieve this is to manage their resources effectively and establish the systems they need to maintain the entity (Morgan, 2006b). The entity is considered in the following section of the chapter.

8.2 The Entity

Analysis of the entity draws attention to aspects of the organisation such as its mission and strategy as well as its culture, structure and processes, for example, human resources, financial processes and infrastructure (Hunt, 2005). The establishment of these types of effective systems is essential at many levels (Cornell and Kalt, 2004; Morgan, 2006b). Such systems will reassure external stakeholders that the resources of the organisation are being managed effectively (Morgan, 2006b). Establishing effective human, financial and institutional procedures will help separate the management of the business from community management and help to protect board members from community politics and competing demands for the use of resources (Cornell and Kalt, 2004; Finlayson, 2007).
8.2.1 Financial Systems

Establishing formal decision making rules and procedures as well as instigating professional personnel and record keeping systems are essential to ensure an enterprise’s success (Cornell and Kalt, 2004; Dodson and Smith, 2003; Hunt and Smith, 2007; Morgan, 2006b).

While it is clear that not being compliant, and a lack of proper financial systems has a negative impact on an organisation’s stakeholder perceptions and confidence (Cornell and Kalt, 2004; Hunt and Smith, 2007; Jorgensen and Taylor, 2000) what is perhaps less understood is the impact of not being compliant on the Board members. This study showed that for the Jubal Board members the lack of compliance was identified as a stressful situation and caused problems for them amongst the wider membership who questioned the Board’s actions and did not understand that the delays in obtaining the audits were not caused by the Board.

In addition, the experience of establishing financial systems at Jubal also supports Hunt and Smiths’ (2007) findings that there is a greater need for long term, place based training and mentoring. Undertaking this research enabled me to be an on-site mentor and trainer as well as to undertake several key tasks myself. The time it took to establish financial systems and training in the accounts area clearly shows that one off, short term training conducted in a class room is not going to ensure long term, sustainable outcomes. Trainers and mentors need to be hands on and involved in the day to day operations in order to really assist the community to develop sustainable systems and processes. As Norm Torrens expressed, it is the “nitty gritty” of day to day operations in which the Jubal community needed training and support.

Of further importance, this study highlighted the need for a particular type of person to work with the community. Jubal members expressed their need to work with people who have a good grasp of what they are trying to achieve. Importantly, there needs to be a long term commitment from the mentor. Norm Torrens identified the lack of continuity as being a problem and highlighted the need for continuity:

But there is a big problem because of the constant changes in people (Norm Torrens, 2007).
Further, any training must involve all stakeholders including Government agencies, accountants and mentors. It is necessary for Aboriginal corporations to have access to skilled people with whom they can build a relationship of trust and who are committed for a long period of time.

As well as highlighting the benefits a skilled mentor could bring to a community, this study also showed the importance of engaging a mentor who will become intimate with the workings of the Corporation and who will take the time to develop a good understanding of the broader context in which the corporation is working. Above all, the person must be able to spend regular and consistent time actually working alongside the Community. This enables trust to develop, but also gives the person a proper understanding of all the various aspects of the Community’s work.

An additional aspect of training and mentoring identified in this study is the need for training which aims to achieve more than transferring technical skills but which can also build confidence amongst the Community members. Building this confidence is a crucial aspect to allowing community members to feel a greater sense of being able to be in control of their own operation.

There needs to be better knowledge and understanding by the various Government agencies about the very real difficulties which are experienced in a community context and for Governments to develop a better understanding of the links between governance, a lack of training and knowledge which then leads to a lack of compliance.

### 8.2.2 Governance Systems

Governance of Indigenous organisations is an increasing area of research focus (Dodson and Smith, 2003; Finlayson, 2007; Hunt and Smith, 2007). This study did not seek to specifically examine governance issues; however the experience at Jubal does support findings in other studies. Hunt and Smith (2007) found that new governance arrangements worked best when aligned with culturally legitimate arrangements, whilst bearing in mind the need for practical outcomes. This has been the case at Jubal where their governance system is based on the key strength, identified in Chapter Four, as the way in which families come together to run Jubal. Congruent with this strength, Jubal has established an effective form of governance by electing Board members from within each family, thus
ensuring that each family is represented at the Board level. The family representatives elected to the Board are generally elected because they are Elders, except where they are elected to fulfil specific roles such as was the case with Gina Roberts who was elected to the position of Secretary. This governance structure is significant in the management of conflict. There is an expectation that the community will deal with any conflict as a group, but additionally each Elder is responsible for dealing with conflict created by, or affecting, their own family. This system of governance is perceived by the Board members as being an appropriate way to manage the community.

*There is nothing we would do differently - we deal with the conflict, we sit down and discuss it, we bring it up at general meeting, and in most cases the committee is supportive of each other. We would have lost control if we’d gone with Government; we feel we’ve done the right thing* (Norm Torrens, 2007).

The Jubal model of management is congruent with ORIC regulations. They have an appropriate and functional system of choosing their Board and have clear functions and responsibilities for those Board members. The Jubal Board members did feel however, that they did not understand the ORIC governance requirements and felt that they should have had more support in this area. As Kevin Torrens said in Chapter Seven:

*The Registrar makes it very hard to do anything, which basically sets us up to fail* (Kevin Torrens, 2006).

Late in 2007, some Jubal members were able to access ILC provided governance training. Gina Roberts reported experiencing the training as helpful, but she found other community members had trouble following it as the trainers went too fast. Gina found it useful because she could relate it to her current work, whereas others could not relate it to their role at Jubal (personal communication 10th March 2008).

Therefore, greater effort needs to be made, firstly to identify the common ground between what the community see as a culturally appropriate form of governance and ORIC’s requirements and governance practice in general. There is also a need to ensure that governance training is broken down into language that is meaningful to the participants and to relate it specifically to the community’s own context, experiences and needs.
This study also highlighted the need for Governments to address their own governance. This was particularly highlighted by the SRA. While the rhetoric of Government was about “mutual responsibility” (Vanstone, 2005), and the role that Government was expected to undertake in response to the development of Jubal, in practice the focus was entirely on Jubal’s activities, responsibilities and development. As expressed in Chapter Five there was no observable change to how Governments engaged with Jubal or addressed their own governance issues. The relationship remained that of funder and fundee. Therefore, a conclusion of this study was that while there was potential for changes in the enabling environment to support the development of Jubal, in practice there was little support for the development of Jubal as a community or as an entity. Developing the entity is discussed in the next section of this chapter.

### 8.2.3 Developing the Entity

This study shows that the Jubal community has focused its greatest effort on factors such as external relationships, seeking funding and establishing financial compliance. They have paid less attention to ensuring sustainable organisational structures and putting in place internal policies and procedures. This study also showed that while the community have undertaken comprehensive planning processes they have not translated those plans into organisational development. Currently, Jubal is focused almost entirely on operating Government funded projects such as the school holiday camps, which leaves them little time and energy for developing and strengthening the organisation itself.

Finlayson (2007) identifies several factors which are essential for successful Aboriginal organisations (see Chapter Two, Table 2.3). These factors cover a range of areas from corporate governance and planning to staff development. Taking these success factors as a benchmark for organisational development it is clear that Jubal has some areas of risk in terms of the entity. A particular need is to develop organisational structures and ways to measure their effectiveness as well as to provide better training of Board members to ensure that they fully understand their responsibilities.

Another area of risk is for Jubal is to be a more proactive organisation which can better link strategic planning to its activities rather than being reactive to external influences and therefore better manage change. While they have undertaken planning, this has been in
response to external factors rather than an internal belief in strategic planning which Finlayson (2007) identifies as being fundamental to successful Aboriginal organisations.

While great improvements have been made to the financial systems, work is still needed to embed those systems within the culture of the organisation as well as implement further governance processes. There is still a lack of adherence to procedures and systems, which leaves their accountability systems vulnerable, particularly when there is a change in the Board membership.

Finlayson (2007) also highlighted the need to develop staff through training and mentoring as well as having strong policies which are referred to, reviewed and updated. This is an area in which Jubal is currently vulnerable and they need to focus on supporting the development of individual community members, utilise their skills more and align training needs more strongly with development proposals and with the individual aspirations of community members. More attention could be paid to individual community members to identify their personal aspirations and training needs. This would encourage the greater involvement of more community members as well as ensure that individual community members are better trained to undertake the many jobs that Jubal will need to establish in order to develop its potential. The individual is discussed in the next section of the chapter.

8.3 The Individual

This section of the chapter is concerned with the individual’s capacity to function within the entity and the broader enabling system, including issues of performance, accountability, incentives and security (Hunt, 2005). This study found that aside from regulatory and financial obligations Jubal has not yet established formal procedures to enhance the individual’s capacity within the organisation. The absence of these areas in this study highlighted the fact that these issues are not yet on the agenda. Two key areas relating to the individual which were evident from this study were Jubal’s reliance on one leader and the related issue of involving younger generations and ensuring succession.

8.3.1 Empowering Individuals for Leadership

Successful organisations have strong leadership (Finlayson, 2007). Hunt and Smith (2007) identified certain characteristics of Indigenous leadership which they found were not so
much about a characteristic of an individual, but more about a process and relationship negotiated between a group of people which focused on consensus building. Leadership may be transmitted to particular people due to their knowledge, personal qualities, experience, and or social place within the community (Hunt and Smith, 2007). However, Hunt and Smith (2007) also make the point that leadership depends largely on networks and relationships.

Where leaders are respected for their cultural attributes as well as their management abilities the organisation is more successful (Hindle et al., 2005). This study showed that leadership at Jubal is largely conferred on its Elders who are also the Board members. Jubal does not have a Chief Executive Officer (CEO) or any paid manager. Kevin Torrens, who has been Chairperson for the life of Jubal, lives on site and his role was to coordinate all the programs that Jubal carried out, as well as manage the property itself.

Although Kevin Torrens took on these leadership roles he was also proud of the way that the community in general were involved in the decision making at Jubal. He attributed the high participation rate to the fact that Board members were constantly telling the rest of the community what was going on and wanted to be inclusive:

> At Jubal people are pulling together now, I think it’s because we have regular meetings and we take the time to explain everything to people. We say to them you are part of here, come to the AGM and make sure we have representatives from each family on the committee. I’m not the boss, I’m there looking after them. They want us, Norm and me, on the committee because we live here (Kevin Torrens, 2006).

Kevin Torrens expanded on the benefits of the regular meetings at Jubal:

> I think people are getting more involved because we have regular meetings. Others have one a year, we will have another update before Christmas, and we update them all the time. It’s been a slow process, but it makes them more active, they are happy, they didn’t even know what a DA is and now they are involved. Callum [ILC] said that these are the best roll ups they have had. Quite a few that he goes to only have two there, but quite a few of us have turned up and they have had an input. That’s
because we have people from each family, it should be stipulated that there has to be one from each family (Kevin Torrens, 2006).

Although Kevin Torrens identified one of Jubal’s strengths as the involvement of people at meetings, in terms of day to day operations he had little practical support. The strongest support came from his immediate family, particularly his partner and his daughter Gina Roberts. It is important to note Kevin was for the most part not paid, despite working at Jubal full time. Kevin did receive some very limited funding for coordination of specific projects. In general though his work was entirely voluntary and unpaid thus highlighting one of the issues of sustainability for Jubal - the need to strengthen the leadership in the wider community and to build on the strength of its family structures to ensure the administration and management of Jubal is sustainable. In order to do this Jubal needs to address its succession planning and make sure that they are training and giving experience to a new generation of leaders.

8.3.2 Succession

The issue of succession was not specifically raised in the context of the activities discussed in the previous three chapters. However, the level of participation from young community members was an issue which was critical to Jubal’s future and which generated a specific response from the study participants, all of whom identified a sense of struggle in their efforts to pass responsibility on to the younger generations.

Succession can be an issue for any organisation, but Hindle et al. (2005) found that Indigenous organisations are more vulnerable to generational changes than others. This vulnerability relates to passing on leadership to successors as well as vulnerability to political succession. For example, annual appointments of Board members can potentially result in a high turnover of board members and lack of consistency (Hindle et al., 2005; Hunt and Smith, 2007).

For Jubal, the political succession during this study was stable. While this allows for consistency and for the continuation of corporate knowledge, it also creates a problem as it does mean that the organisation is very reliant on a small group of people. The Board members all identified concerns about passing on responsibility to the younger generations. This is despite the fact that the motivation for developing Jubal was to ensure that the
Younger generations have ownership of a place and lifestyle to sustain them into the future: socially, culturally and economically. The importance of developing a place of cultural and social significance permeates all talk from the Board members.

We do have concerns about the young ones taking on responsibility we try to stress; you’re children you have to learn to take responsibility (Robert Caldwell, 2007).

We still find it hard for younger ones to take on roles; there is too much drugs and alcohol. They also don’t want to take on responsibility. There is no discipline any more - I blame the law, you can’t discipline by belting them with the broom, like the old days. There is no sense of unity or respect for Elders (Kevin Torrens, 2006).

It worries me, bothers me, who’s going to take over. People are frightened to make commitments - they say I can’t go because I could be drunk or high, so I can’t go. They need geeing up, but they know they can’t do drugs or alcohol if there is a meeting. People know we have rules at Jubal, they know they can’t do drugs and alcohol there, but we need to give them time to buy their own caravan or build their own shack. We’ve told them we will help them do that. But we need to keep Jubal secure, if we find yarndi we tell them pack your swag and piss off. But it’s not up to me, we call a community meeting and we let the community people take action. When it comes to making decisions on Goorie land we want the community meeting to lay down the rules. Now we are closing the shed and locking it up, so nobody can sleep there anymore. If they want to stay they must have their own accommodation. We do our training and meetings there, the shed can’t be a place where it’s dirty – they need to respect this place. They are capable, but goes back to understanding responsibility and that worries me (Kevin Torrens, 2006).

We’ve offered young ones to be on the committee but they just want to live their lives. I feel confident that if we weren’t here they’d step in, but at times we wish we had others… (Norm Torrens, 2007).

What can you do, we can’t grab them! [Name removed] is a good asset, best on the job – if there were a few more like him, but they are just sitting back and letting it happen (Robert Caldwell, 2007).
Despite not being named or acknowledged by the Elders in these comments, there is one younger woman, Gina Roberts, who has taken on a significant and consistent role within Jubal. As shown in Chapter Seven, she is the person who has stayed the course with the accounts and administration. In 2007, she was also voted on to the board as Secretary. Her perspective, as a young person herself, is slightly different to the Elders:

They [the Elders] need to focus on young ones more. Jubal has given them direction in life - because of the drugs and alcohol some of the families need to take on more responsibility to change. The Elders aren’t putting it into action, they are getting things going and then alcohol and drugs thing gets them involved and they sit there with them. They are not changing their ways. Young fellas watch the Elders; maybe see Elders bringing alcohol in there. They have to change if they want the young ones to change. To be an example you have got to show an example. Young ones say why should we have to stop when Elders do it? They don’t get anywhere because of drugs and alcohol. We want to live there; we want it to be a safe place. We want it to be safe for our children, we won’t move there until it’s safer. It’s safe now, but not when alcohol’s involved, personalities change. My children run from them and cry in fear (Gina Roberts, 2007).

Despite the recognition that involving the younger generation is an area that still needs work, there is also much hope.

There are definitely two people listening - who knew all about sites and understand. I am hoping we will all gather and talk about things there. We would love to see young people follow our footsteps. That’s our worry what’s going to happen if we go. But they go away and talk and do what we say. We always try and stress the property is for future generations; look at it now, we’ve just got to look at things in reality (Robert Caldwell, 2007).

All the kids do appreciate it to a certain degree and call it home; they are all just living lives and Jubal’s running last. I think the cabins are the priority; we need to give them an incentive to be on the place, as in home, once we get cabins and homes they’ll want to be there. Cabins are the priority, then we need to work towards
catering to the place, have something to do so they are not there under sufferance, they need things to do (Norm Torrens, 2007).

We are going in the right direction, we’re going places. The young ones will take over, the rest of them will snap out of it. I always talk to them about it. I talk all the time and they sit there and really think. They see there’s nobody else (Gina Roberts, 2007).

The issue of leadership and succession indicate that there is a lack of attention to development at the individual level from which two conclusions can be drawn. One is that developing the individual is simply not yet on the agenda. Jubal has clearly been working through a progression of issues, particularly focusing on governance and compliance issues, and will attend to these other matters, such as succession, in time.

Secondly, the lack of focus on the individual and succession does highlight the community nature of Jubal. The Jubal structure does not focus on the individual and so they are not experienced at finding ways to capitalise on individual peoples’ skills. For example, one observable issue is the way that people tend to do courses that are provided to them through CDEP or other Government funded programs. The number of certificates gained is highlighted in the skills audit undertaken for the PMP. Jubal community members have qualifications in a wide variety of areas from business management to land management, yet Jubal does not draw on those skills. Therefore the training is largely wasted as the community members rarely get experience in the areas in which they are training.

Additionally, I did not hear people expressing a desire to study in an area that perhaps they have always wanted to do. It appears therefore that people are gaining skills from Government run and funded programs simply because the course is there and available or because they have to undertake the programs to ensure their CDEP income. I never heard people say they undertook a particular training program or course because they were following a personal dream or an aspiration.

This is an area which would benefit from greater attention; in particular to identify the areas of skills Jubal requires now and in the future and to identify people to obtain those
skills. Having done a skills audit for the PMP they could work with young people to align their own interests with the future needs of the community.

8.4 Conclusion

This chapter has analysed the study by considering three levels of engagement, the enabling environment, the entity and the individual. The study has found that while Jubal has engaged at all levels to some degree, there is a need to focus on development of the organisational entity as well as support and develop individuals. Attention to these areas will enhance Jubal’s ability to develop a more sustainable organisation.
Chapter Nine  Conclusion

In the Prologue to this thesis I recounted a story about how Kevin Torrens, his brothers and cousins had worked as labourers on the same land which is now incorporated into the Jubal property. For this work they were paid in pumpkins. Not only did this violate their right to be paid a fair wage, such an injustice was particularly poignant as the land they were working had been Bundjalung land since time immemorial and was taken without their consent. The Jubal forebears were dispossessed and their freedom was increasingly curtailed as the colonisers took over traditional Bundjalung country to develop their own economic pursuits. Out of this experience of colonisation and dispossession the Jubal Aboriginal Community decided to reclaim their future. They decided they had the right to self-determination and the right to regain some of what had been taken from them. To achieve their goals they formed the Jubal Aboriginal Corporation and were able to regain some of their traditional lands and start working towards the community’s goals and aspirations.

It was some aspects of these goals and aspirations, namely the desire to develop tourism enterprises, which connected Jubal to this study. The aim of this study was to identify factors necessary to support Bundjalung communities to develop tourism enterprises. An additional objective was to determine the key capabilities which Bundjalung communities need to develop sustainable tourism enterprises. Another objective was to gain insight into the experiences of a Bundjalung community as they engaged in capacity development for tourism enterprise development. Based on analysis and interpretation of the results of this study several conclusions can be drawn, which will be summarised in this concluding chapter.

The need for such a study was identified due to a lack of successful Indigenous tourism product in Australia (Boyle, 2002; Tremblay, 2006), and particularly in the Bundjalung region. Tourism has been a focus for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander economic development in Australia for a number of years (ATSIC, 1997; Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody, 1991). To facilitate such development, there have been concerted efforts by Governments at Federal and State and Territory levels to enhance opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to engage more effectively in the tourism industry, for example the 1997 ATSIC tourism strategy (ATSIC, 1997).
More recently, the Federal Government’s White Paper and establishment of Indigenous Tourism Australia (now called Indigenous Tourism Industry Advisory Panel (ITIAP)), is indicative of the commitment to developing Indigenous tourism in Australia. However, despite years of Indigenous tourism policy the intended beneficiaries have not necessarily benefited (Whitford et al., 2001). Many Indigenous tourism policies have been found to be poorly coordinated and fail to provide appropriate resources to support the vision of a developed Indigenous tourism industry (Buultjens et al., 2005). This was the context in which this study commenced.

As demonstrated in this thesis, it became apparent at the commencement of the research that the Jubal community were not, at that time, in a position to start or focus on a tourism venture. There was certainly potential and several ideas had been put forward to explore in the tourism area. However, what Jubal needed at that time was to establish fundamental operational systems and skills which could support organisational sustainability before it was able to devote time and energy to any one commercial venture. It was apparent that focusing on establishing a particular business was not possible until several other issues had been addressed and the organisation had stabilised its basic operations. This study therefore focused on three key activities which were fundamental to the development of Jubal as a sustainable organisation. Through the examination of these three areas of activity, this study provided evidence of the everyday practicalities of implementing policies, plans and regulatory procedures in an Aboriginal community organisation. Also, insight was gained into possible points of entry for enterprise development efforts which could then support development activities in areas such as tourism development.

The first area discussed in this thesis was the SRA; analysis of which demonstrated that it effectively established a framework for increased Government funding as it contributed to establishing Jubal’s reputation as a credible organisation. In this particular case it was decided to sign an SRA to ensure that Jubal could access funding to assist their program development. The SRA schedule, signed by both the community and the Government set out a clear agenda for development and identified commitment from both parties. However, in reality the SRA did nothing more than provide initial seed funding for camping equipment and ensure that when Jubal applied for program funding they had in place the framework which established their relationship with Government. The results of this study showed that the SRA did not assist the community beyond establishing a
relationship. In particular, the SRA failed to assist Jubal to develop their programs to meet several of the criteria identified as measurable, such as reducing family violence, reducing sexual abuse and school truancy rates. There were no benchmarks established at the outset of the SRA and Jubal does not have the capacity to measure such outcomes. It was therefore extremely difficult to reliably measure whether the stated outcomes of the funding program have been achieved. Further, the SRA identified two stages to the agreement, but which has not been developed beyond the provision of the first round of funding. There was no real evidence that the SRA had any long term benefits for Jubal and did not enhance their ability to develop in any way beyond establishing credibility with Government.

In Chapter Six, the second activity, the Property Management Plan, was discussed. The PMP was instigated by the ILC to assist in further funding decisions for Jubal. The experience of developing the PMP demonstrated that Jubal was unable to exert much control over the process itself. While the Board members agreed that it was necessary and would aid their pursuit of further funding, they felt that they should have had more control over the establishment of the contract, particularly the terms of reference and choosing the consultants. Jubal Board members also expressed frustration at the repetitive nature of the process. On the other hand they also felt that it was the most participatory planning process they had been involved in and that they were proud of the community interest and participation. The Board members did not however, describe the plan as being essential to their development or as a document that could aid them in developing a more sustainable organisation. It was seen primarily as a document that would assist in gaining further funds.

The final area of focus in this study was establishing proper financial accounting systems and obtaining audits to achieve compliance with ORIC. Discussed in Chapter Seven, this was certainly the most demanding and complex of the activities engaged in during this study. The experience highlighted the difficulties that Aboriginal people and corporations face when they come from a low base of technical knowledge in specific areas; have few resources to enable them to hire the necessary skills and, when they are able to engage professionals, to overcome a long history of mistrust of non-Indigenous people. The rural location and lack of professional services available in the region also contributed to the problems encountered. While Jubal’s intention was always to ensure good governance, a
lack of training and understanding of accounting practices and systems led to difficulties in meeting audit requirements. The process to rectify this issue was long and arduous and occasionally fraught with frustration and disappointment. The impact of not having audited accounts had a detrimental effect on the confidence of the Board members who identified they were feeling stressed about the situation. During the course of establishing good procedures and gaining audited accounts their confidence increased and they expressed feeling increasingly empowered knowing that they could rely on the quality of their financial systems. This area of work also took up a disproportionate amount of time which could have been better spent on developing projects and enterprises, but which was spent chasing accountants and explaining the lack of audits to Government funders.

Additionally, Jubal’s reputation was damaged as questions were raised about its ability to manage its own governance. The experience with the accounts highlighted the necessity of ensuring that fundamental organisational processes need to be established to ensure the organisation is sustainable.

Analysis of the results of this study enabled a greater understanding of the challenges Jubal faced and consequently highlighted where they would have benefitted from greater support. The results provided a greater understanding about the community’s needs and also highlighted the factors which would assist in the development of both the capacity and the capabilities of the Jubal organisation and members. Further, this thesis provided analyses with regard to three points of entry for development (Fukuda-Parr et al., 2002; Hunt, 2005); the enabling environment, the entity and the individual.

This thesis demonstrated that the majority of development focus was on the enabling environment, being the broad external environment in which the organisation operates as well as management of the relationships within the systems (Hunt, 2005). One key area that the results of the study did particularly highlight was the importance of ownership of land. As discussed in Chapter Two, sovereignty has been found to be key to successful Indigenous organisations in North America (Cornell, 2006; Cornell and Kalt, 2004; Finlayson, 2007; Jorgenson and Taylor, 2000; Sullivan, 2006). However, in Australia the concept of Sovereignty is politically sensitive (Sullivan, 2006) and less important in terms of developing successful organisations (Finlayson, 2007). The results of this study demonstrated that owning land was essential in this case, and in fact obtaining the land was the most empowering outcome of any Government program. Jubal Board members
expressed the opinion that the ILC program, through which they were able to purchase the Jubal property, provided the greatest benefit to the Jubal community. The ILC program, together with the ongoing funding and support that the ILC provided, was the single most practical and valuable program with which Jubal engaged because it provided the most tangible and long term benefits to Jubal. This thesis has highlighted the very real benefits that owning land provided to the community which included tangible benefits such as a physical place to hold events and develop future projects as well as more intangible benefits such as pride, a connection to their culture and Spirit and a sense of ownership. Most importantly owning the land allowed the community the opportunity to regain some of what had been lost through colonisation.

However, as found in other studies (Cornell and Kalt, 2004; Dodson and Smith, 2003; Finlayson, 2007; Jorgensen and Taylor, 2000) ownership of land was not in itself enough to achieve self determination. Building alliances is also crucial to success (Finlayson, 2007; Hunt and Smith, 2007; Morgan, 2006a) and as identified in this study’s results the most crucial external alliance for Jubal was with the Federal Government. Jubal’s ability to develop and maintain constructive relationships with funding agencies and adapt to the policy agenda was vital. This thesis highlighted some of the challenges Jubal encountered in ensuring these alliances supported Jubal’s vision and aspirations rather than pushing Jubal to meet the Government’s policy agenda. Other challenges highlighted by this thesis were the lack of linkages between areas such as the planning processes instigated by one department and the funding agenda of others. For example, there was little connection between the SRA and the PMP. Further analysis of the current Government’s policies and how they link together would be helpful in identifying ways to better integrate agencies, policies and programs.

In addition to building alliances a successful organisation must be recognised as a legitimate entity (Morgan, 2006a). At the commencement of this study the participants expressed views that described how they felt they were not afforded the same recognition and resources as other established communities, such as former missions and reserves. One way in which legitimacy is achieved is through the establishment of good management and resources and robust systems (Cornell, 2006; Finlayson, 2007; Hunt and Smith, 2007). This thesis demonstrated the effect of establishing such systems. Through the planning, financial governance and establishing the SRA with Government, Jubal was able to ensure
its credibility was recognised by those with funding. Further, these areas of activity established confidence in Jubal from both internal stakeholders (the wider Jubal community) and external stakeholders (government funding bodies). This confidence is recognised as important to sustainable organisations (Cornell and Kalt, 2004; Hunt and Smith, 2007; Jorgensen and Taylor, 2000). An additional finding of this study was the importance of developing Board members’ confidence about their abilities as well as their organisational structures and systems.

Internal systems and processes were only one part of the equation. The role of the mentor and suitable training was also found to be important in the development of Jubal. This study supports Hunt and Smith’s (2007) statement that long term place based training and mentoring is essential for successful organisations. This study showed that working with the community over a relatively long period of time and engaged in a cross section of activities was the only way to achieve positive and sustainable outcomes. Additionally a great degree of flexibility and adaptation is required to address the day to day operations and needs. Clearly providing access to long term quality training and mentoring is an area that is lacking and requires further attention.

In addition to establishing new governance procedures and providing appropriate mentoring and training, there must also be congruence with culturally legitimate practices (Hunt and Smith, 2007). This is certainly true in Jubal’s case where a key governance strength is their reliance on ensuring that each family is represented at Board level. Those family representatives are also responsible for resolving any conflict that may arise within their family. However, identified in this thesis was the gap between the community’s own understanding of what is appropriate governance for their context and their understanding of their obligations under ORIC regulations. While limited training was provided it was not sufficiently tailored to the Jubal context to enable a great comprehension and take up by Board members.

It is not only the Aboriginal community which need to develop better governance skills. The results of this study drew attention to the need for Government agencies to address their own governance issues and not focus solely on the Aboriginal communities if they are intending to achieve true partnerships. As Dodson (2003) states, the Government does have a responsibility to ensure programs and policies are appropriate and support Aboriginal
development. It was clear during the course of this study that Government agencies needed to coordinate better amongst themselves. They also needed to adhere to their own commitments, such as those contained in an SRA. Government agencies also need to ensure that their employees at all levels have a better understanding and sensitivity to the particular culture and the environment in which the community is working.

The final point of entry analysed in this thesis was the level of the individual which Hunt (2007) says is concerned with the individual’s capacity to function within the entity and the broader enabling system. The development of the individual is one of Jubal’s major areas of vulnerability. This was particularly evident in the area of leadership and succession.

Leadership in Aboriginal organisations is dependent on networks and relationships as well as a focus on consensus building (Hunt and Smith, 2007). As Hindle et al. (2005) found elsewhere, much of the success of an Indigenous organisation arises from the cultural credibility of its Board members. In Jubal’s case it was the Chairperson, Kevin Torrens, who particularly provided that cultural credibility. It was also clear that Jubal was overly reliant on one person and that while the Board members expressed hope that others would become more involved, in fact they were not. Kevin was carrying a huge, and unsustainable, load with little support from other members outside his immediate family.

This lack of support and involvement of the wider community points to an issue highlighted by Hindle et al. (2005); Indigenous organisations can be particularly vulnerable to generational change. For Jubal to ensure its long term sustainability it is clearly going to have to find away to involve the broader membership in the day to day operational needs. In particular, Jubal needs to focus on engaging its young members and encourage and allow them to take on greater responsibility for Jubal’s operations.

9.1 Government Support for Bundjalung Community Development

Analysis of the results of this study has identified various challenges, successes and areas where Jubal requires greater support, which enables some conclusions to be drawn about what factors are necessary to enable and empower Indigenous communities to develop enterprises, whether in tourism or other industries.
As discussed in Chapter Two - The Literature Review, there are various programs in place to support Indigenous tourism development (Buultjens et al., 2005). However, in this case Jubal was not yet in a position to access those programs. Rather, the organisation needed to establish itself and develop basic governance and financial systems which took a substantial amount of time and resources. The Indigenous Business Review (2003) found that one of the reasons Government instigated programs to assist business development had failed was because they had not been developed with proper consultation with Indigenous peoples nor had there been a strategic approach to their implementation. The findings of this study support the IBR findings and found that Government programs designed to assist nascent organisations at a very basic level were limited. Available assistance was primarily focused on engaging consultants to conduct feasibility studies and write business/property management plans. There was no program available to Jubal which could have met its needs to develop the organisation itself. There was a need to assist the organisation to develop from a statement of vision and intent to a point where it was able to sustain business systems and activities. Support was necessary to not only develop a business plan but most importantly, to effectively implement the plan. A lack of support in this area is despite a recommendation from the Government’s own review (IBR, 2003), that a more hands on approach is required, which recognises the lack of business skills and in many cases the lack of educational attainment amongst those now developing businesses.

In part, this lack of tailored, long term accessible programs can also be attributed to the lack of recognition and meaningful understanding, by Government, that the context of each individual Aboriginal community is important and that a focus on developing good relationships between all stakeholders is essential to enable a proper understanding of the particular needs of the Aboriginal community. In particular, external agencies such as Government departments must understand that it will take time to develop proper relationships and to properly understand the context of each individual Aboriginal community.

Recognising the individual context of communities will require Governments to genuinely listen to community priorities and aspirations and then (with proper consultation and negotiation) to develop programs flexible enough to accommodate the needs and aspirations of each individual community. Funding regimes must also accommodate the development priorities of individual communities and recognise and support the
Chapter Nine: Conclusion

Many communities are now responding to issues such as family violence, rather than impose a uniform approach to dealing with such issues. While there was an increase in rhetoric about responding to individual needs, through the establishment of policies such as SRAs (Vanstone, 2005), this study showed that there was no real change to the Government’s ability to respond to those specific needs and that, in fact, communities’ development priorities were still being directed to a very large extent by the policy agenda of the Federal Government. This is in contradiction to one of the key elements of Indigenous capacity development; that it should be about regenerating communities, where communities themselves are identifying and using their own assets (Dodson, 2003). Further research, therefore needs to be undertaken to address the best way for Governments to engage with communities at the level and depth required to enable and empower individual communities.

Further research is also required to understand how development efforts by Government agencies can better recognise and support further development of capabilities already held by the community and then to link training programs to the community needs, as identified by the community. As this thesis demonstrated preference should be given to developing community skills rather than bringing in external consultants on short term contracts. Developing community skills is a longer, but ultimately a more sustainable, way to develop the community. Governments would achieve greater outcomes from program funding by taking a more holistic view to development and committing long term funding to support and develop those aspirations including funding administration and coordination of the community itself, rather than focusing only on discrete project funding.

Additionally, Government needs to provide training for skills development that is relevant to the specific needs of the community, is tailored to their operations and incorporates on the job training. On site, long term training is more beneficial than a short course removed from the worksite. More attention needs to be given to facilitate cultural expressions of governance which incorporate general principles of good governance but which also incorporate cultural legitimacy (Dodson and Smith, 2003).

Training needs to be adapted and built around the particular needs and circumstances of the organisation. This study also highlighted that a long term commitment and involvement in the day to day activities of the organisation is essential for trainers and mentors.
As well as skills development, this study also drew attention to the need for confidence building amongst decision makers. Building this confidence in their skills and abilities is crucial to enabling community members to be in control of their own operations. Governments need to acknowledge better the links between a lack of confidence, a lack of training and knowledge which then leads to a lack of compliance.

It is not only the Aboriginal community’s compliance and governance issues which need to be addressed. As demonstrated in this thesis there is a need for Governments to address their own governance issues. Despite pushing the idea of mutual responsibility (Vanstone, 2005), the Federal Government did little to change its own behaviour and procedures and continued to focus on the Aboriginal community’s activities, responsibilities and development without questioning or developing its own responses. More training is required for, not only front line officers, but all decision makers in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and the realities of community development.

Finally, practical commitment is also needed from Governments to assist in the transition from welfare dependency to economic independence. Transition support must include providing certainty about continuing funding for programs even where a community is able to develop some independent income, as in Jubal’s case where they were able to generate independent income from a forestry agreement.

9.2 Community Capabilities Necessary to Support Development

This thesis has demonstrated that Bundjalung Aboriginal organisations need to develop key capabilities themselves, in particular that they need to ascribe adequate importance and focus to the development of the actual organisation, rather than direct all their attention to Government funded projects. This will mean that organisations such as Jubal should focus on those areas over which they can have the greatest control and where their efforts will have the greatest effect (Dodson, 2003) and use their resources more effectively. The consequences of focusing primarily on Government funded projects is that organisational structures, policies and procedures tend to be neglected as the community focuses on delivering program outcomes and generating reports and financial statements for the funding body. The results of this study highlighted that a disproportionate amount of time was spent by Jubal Board members responding to external influences created by pursuing
project based funding opportunities. Less time was spent on issues pertaining to developing the entity itself in line with its vision statement and enabling individual community members to better participate in the running of the organisation. The effect of this was to leave Jubal vulnerable in several areas of governance and internal structures.

In order to focus on the organisation, Bundjalung Aboriginal organisations need to better understand the importance of strategic planning and ensure that such planning is informing their activities (Finlayson, 2007), as opposed to being a necessary, but cumbersome, activity to appease funding agencies. Integrating strategic planning into their core operations will support their efforts to develop their community aspirations rather than spending disproportionate amounts of time and energy responding to external forces.

Bundjalung Aboriginal organisations must also focus on developing specific skills such as bookkeeping, report writing and ensuring that the Board are fully aware of all their regulatory responsibilities. This study showed that failure to do so can result in either too much reliance on people external to the organisations, who are usually non-Indigenous, to undertake the work for them. This can lead to a loss of power and control over the community’s agenda. Not developing these skills also results in a loss of confidence and the ability of the Board members to feel confident and in control of the organisation and its operations. In addition, failure to develop specific skills and train community members means they are more vulnerable to changes in personnel.

This thesis also highlighted that communities, like Governments, need to take a holistic view of their development and link the community’s needs and development agenda to training. Additionally, the community must find ways to encourage support and develop the individual within the community organisation (Hunt and Smith, 2007). In particular, Bundjalung Aboriginal organisations must be proactive about succession (Hindle et al., 2005), and ensure that a broad pool of community members is involved in the organisation and are ready to take on responsibilities.

The results of this study showed that while a community may undertake comprehensive planning processes they may not have the capacity to fully translate those plans into organisational development. Regular assessment of how well it is implementing its development plans and instigating concrete structures and procedures is necessary. In
Jubal’s case, Jubal members carry the vision of Jubal but they are less effective in carrying the day to day practicalities of running it. Currently Jubal is focused almost entirely on operating projects which leaves them little time and effort for developing and strengthening the organisation itself. The Jubal experience shows that for future success Bundjalung Aboriginal communities need to bridge the gap between the strategic plan which sets out the vision and project plans, and implementing policies necessary for successful operational development.

This thesis has particularly demonstrated the challenges that Aboriginal communities in the Bundjalung region face in developing their organisations. The aim of this study was to explore how to develop Indigenous tourism ventures in this region, however, as the results of this study show there is a great deal of work in preparing the ground before such enterprises can be developed. As identified in Chapter Two, there is also a paucity of research that definitively links the benefits of developing Indigenous tourism to community development and poverty reduction (Goodwin, 2006). Further research into the true demand for Indigenous tourism in the western, inland region of the Bundjalung nation would support any future development efforts. Additionally, as Jubal has already engaged in a limited manner with the education and Church sectors, it would make sense to undertake further research to explore the potential of those markets, for which Jubal is better suited than others, such as the international tourist market.

9.3 The Experience of Developing Capacity

The final objective of this research was to gain insight into the experience of a Bundjalung community as it engaged with developing the capacity necessary to develop a tourism enterprise. The methodology used for this study facilitated that outcome. In particular, the unique contribution of this study is that it highlighted the experience of the day to day operations. By focusing on the three areas of activity, insight was gained into the needs, hopes and aspirations of a nascent Bundjalung Aboriginal owned and operated organisation. By understanding the experience of the people involved, and by examining the everyday activities, a better understanding of policy needs can be developed. It is obvious from the results of this study that focusing only on activities such as business planning leaves a large gap in the capabilities of the organisation to implement such plans.
Further, this thesis has highlighted the resilience and commitment of the Jubal community and the success they have created despite the context both current and historical, in which they have developed. By highlighting the experience of the community, this study identified that the essence of Jubal’s strength is its commitment to a better future for the young and a commitment to finding a way to be independent and united. The establishment and development of Jubal was driven by the generation who were excluded from the education system in their youth. The same people who were exploited and whose labour was paid for in pumpkins. These people persevered and were able to bring the families together to develop space for their community to reconnect with each other and their culture, but which also provides a way to connect with the modern world and provide some potential for economic development and security. The most essential aspect of Jubal’s development then is that it retains at its core a commitment to the vision which saw its establishment and continues to centre its operations around its key strength, that of the connection to the land and to each other.

The last word goes to Board member Norm Torrens, who sums up what the experience of Jubal has been for him thus:

> [W]hen Jubal came along we reunited as one body and as family. It brought nearly all the family members together to be one again and working towards the future. As a body we are making our own decisions for ourselves but in other places the Government tells us what to do. Here we make real strong family decisions… (Norm Torrens, 2007).
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