

SMI **CSRM**

Centre for Social
Responsibility in Mining

Social aspects of the closure of Century Mine

Report on community consultations

SUPPLEMENT A



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The CSRSM is grateful to Doomadgee artist Pietta Aplin for permission to use a close up of part of her painting on the title page of this report and for the permission given by the owner Bob Grack, Doomadgee Roadhouse.

All other photos are taken by the Researchers.

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Acronyms

ADBT	Aboriginal Development Benefits Trust
ASIC	Australian Securities and Investments Commission
CDEP	Community Development Employment Program
CEC	Century Environment Committee
CETC	Century Employment and Training Committee
CLAC	Century Liaison Advisory Committee
CLCAC	Carpentaria Land Council Aboriginal Corporation
CLC	Carpentaria Land Council
CLO	Community Liaison Officer
CSP	Community and Stakeholder Partnerships
CSR	Centre for Social Responsibility in Mining
DAFF	Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry
DATSIMA	Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Multicultural Affairs
DEHP	Department of Environment and Heritage Protection
DNRM	Department Natural Resources and Mines
FaHCSIA	Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs
GACSDT	Gulf Area Community Social Development Trust
GADC	Gulf Aboriginal Development Corporation
GRAC	Gulf Region Aboriginal Corporation
GCA	Gulf Communities Agreement
KAC	Kurtijar Aboriginal Corporation
LHRPHC	Lawn Hill and Riversleigh Pastoral Holding Company
LIP	Local Implementation Plan
MMG	Minerals and Metals Group Limited
NAIDOC	National Aborigines and Islanders Day Observance Committee
NPC	Northern Project Contracting
PBC	Prescribed Body Corporate
PCYC	Police Citizens Youth Club
RFDS	Royal Flying Doctor Service
ROC	Regional Operations Centre
RSD	Remote Service Delivery
SIA	Social Impact Assessment
TAFE	Technical and Further Education
TAP	Titans Achievement Program
WNAC	Waanyi Nation Aboriginal Corporation

Executive summary

Aim, purpose, scope and objectives of community consultations

This report documents research undertaken with residents of the communities of the Lower Gulf of Carpentaria, North West Queensland. It is part of a broader study which aims to establish the social impacts of completion of mining at Century Mine and provide input into the deliberations over the 15-year review of the Gulf Communities Agreement (GCA) by the agreement monitoring body the Century Liaison Advisory Committee (CLAC). As such the report includes a mix of looking back at how the aspirations contained in the GCA have been met, understanding the contribution the mine is making from a community perspective, and looking forward at opportunities for leaving a positive legacy.

The report begins by outlining project methodology and the overarching themes that emerged in discussions of the GCA aspirations. The following sections provide detailed findings, organised under the four aspirations discussed below. Later sections record issues particular to some communities, along with submissions from State Government Ministers and Departments. The report concludes with a discussion of opportunities for leaving a positive legacy.

Aspirations of the Gulf Communities Agreement

The research concentrated in large part on the broad aspirations outlined in the GCA to assist interviewees to think about opportunities for Century to leave a positive legacy as well as to review Century's social impacts and the extent of progress towards achieving these changes or conditions for the Lower Gulf communities. Native Title holders' and Gulf communities' broad aspirations are recorded in the GCA as:

- **Economic improvements:** Remove dependency on welfare, promote economic self-sufficiency and participate as fully as possible in Century Mine and related ventures.
- **Keeping Aboriginal culture and traditions strong:** Be able to live on their traditional lands, identify and protect sites of cultural significance, and have community and cultural development initiatives.
- **Protecting the land and environment:** Ensure their natural environment and its resources are fully protected.
- **Social improvements and stronger communities:** Achieve standards of health, employment rates, education opportunities and other social indices of Native Title Groups and other members of the Communities that are comparable to ordinary Australian standards.

In making the agreement with Native Title holders, the original holding company, Century Zinc Ltd, acknowledged and respected these aspirations and agreed to measures that aimed to support them. A series of committees and other organisations were established under the agreement to manage the intended benefits. The Gulf Aboriginal Development Corporation (GADC) was the lynchpin organisation which was intended to have a role across the range of functional areas of the agreement.

Methodology

A total of 46 interviews with individuals and groups were undertaken in Bidunggu, Lawn Hill, Doomadgee, Burketown, Normanton, Karumba, Mornington Island and Mount Isa, involving a total of 147 individuals and representing some 45 organisations. The majority of participants were Aboriginal (78%). Most interviews were conducted by two researchers from the Centre for Social Responsibility in Mining (CSR/M), during three weeks of field work undertaken over July and August 2012. Century's Community and Stakeholder Partnerships (CSP) team, including the Senior Community Partnerships Advisor and Century Community Liaison Officers (CLOs), were involved in identifying participants and setting up interviews.

Overarching themes and key messages of community consultations

Community expectations for positive change have been high from the outset of the GCA. While the benefits of employment at the mine and access to Century flights are acknowledged, benefits to the wider communities are generally perceived as not having been fully realised. The following key themes and messages cut across the economic, cultural, social and environmental dimensions of the GCA.

- **Unrealised benefits**

Significant benefits from economic participation were expected alongside continuation of the strength of engagement with communities experienced at the outset of the GCA and during the development of the mine. The Native Title Groups, in particular, pictured high levels of local employment, Aboriginal supervisors and prosperous local businesses supplying the mine. Many participants in the community consultations, particularly Aboriginal people at Doomadgee and on Mornington Island, expressed disappointment in their level of participation in Century Mine and its related ventures. In addition, aspirations for broader community participation in land management have been unmet.

- **Quality of community engagement**

The quality and depth of the engagement between the mine and the communities is considered to have varied over the life of the GCA. Some past practices which were appreciated no longer happen, and examples provided by community members included school and community visits to Century. Communities partly attribute this to the sequence of ownership of the mine and loss of continuity as personnel change, particularly managers.

- **The need for tangible benefits in the communities**

While Century's Aboriginal employment and access to Century flights were acknowledged positively, the absence of any significant tangible examples of positive impact in the communities directly attributable to Century often provoked a bleak assessment of the overall contribution the GCA has made in the Lower Gulf communities.

- **Feedback on the 15-year review**

Community responses revealed a level of scepticism regarding whether the outcomes of this research will have any impact. The previous GCA reviews were often cited but dismissed as not having led to discernible changes from the community perspective.

- **Communication and information for communities**

There was a clear and consistent call from communities for more information on what is going on at Century generally as well as closure plans in particular. Interviewees from across the communities said that they would benefit from knowing more about developments and changes at the mine site as well as updates and briefings on training and employment initiatives.

Many interviewees did not have good knowledge of the contents of the agreement or what has been delivered, limiting the communities' ability to assess accurately the GCA contributions and, in particular, the implications of the mine closing.

- **Implications of closure**

The immediate implications of potential mine closure from the community perspective primarily revolve around questions about the future intentions of those employed at Century and, in particular, possible effects on community infrastructure and services if people choose to return to live in their communities of origin. The potential gap left by Century flights ceasing was a prominent and common concern across the communities.

The need for information on mine closure including criteria, scope and plans for rehabilitation, timing, and opportunities for involvement was highlighted in this regard. A keen interest exists over the fate of key infrastructure at the mine, particularly Darimah Village.

- **Communities keen to engage with Century**

Despite perceiving a lack of engagement to date, community members are highly interested in engaging with Century during its remaining years in order to deliver sustainable positive legacies. Indeed the prospects of closure (or the mine otherwise reconfiguring) are focusing community attention on how such positive legacies could be achieved. These are discussed in [Section 10: Opportunities for leaving a positive legacy](#).

- **Action Planning**

The merit of an 'Action Planning' approach signalled by Century and the CLAC was viewed positively by the communities, provided they were actively engaged in reviewing the priorities. The communities consider feedback from this research as critical. Wider community involvement in the Action Planning would be an effective feedback mechanism as well as a way to satisfy the community members' desire to have ongoing input to GCA processes.

Leaving a lasting legacy is seen as a process that needs to consolidate and build on successes under the GCA to date and develop strategies collaboratively to extend benefits more broadly through the communities and beyond the life of the mine.

Economic Improvements

Employment at Century

There are limited options for employment in communities due to the absence of significant markets and private sector economies. The main options for employment are with government-funded services, pastoral stations and the few businesses operating in the region, including Century.

Within this context, employment at the mine was commonly cited as the main benefit that Century has provided. While employment at Century was very beneficial, disappointment was expressed that more people from the Lower Gulf communities and Native Title Groups in particular hadn't gained employment at Century. Furthermore opportunities for career progression and attaining qualifications were considered not as forthcoming as expected. There is concern that GCA employees might not be able to gain employment elsewhere after mine closure.

Broader community economic benefits distributed under the GCA

Benefits to Aboriginal people under the GCA are structured around a number of committees and organisations established by the agreement. Community awareness and views are mixed about the effectiveness of these bodies. For some, the representation of Native Title holders under the GCA is perceived to have suffered from bodies not working in a coherent or strategic way to create benefit in the communities. A range of opinions were expressed with suggestions for changes in the structures and accountability of the responsible bodies, from a complete overhaul to leave alone and concentrate on outcomes.

Community business development

Significant interest was expressed in the concept of running businesses in the communities, however, many risks and challenges were found in pursuing this approach as the Gulf is recognised as a tough business environment. Aboriginal Development Benefits Trust (ADBT) is recognised as providing business support but perceptions are that outcomes from ADBT's programme of business support are patchy, with acknowledgement that some businesses have made significant positive contribution to the community while others have failed.

Aboriginal contracting

The existence of the GCA has been invaluable to securing both Aboriginal employment and contracts for Aboriginal businesses so as to ensure Lower Gulf residents participate as fully as possible in Century Mine and related ventures. Increased Aboriginal employment; high levels of self-esteem and pride; and increased capacity and skills in running businesses have resulted from Aboriginal-owned contracting businesses. Consolidating and increasing opportunities for more contracts to be given to Aboriginal enterprises is seen as a major means of enhancing economic gains from the GCA. Experienced Aboriginal contractors are seen as a desirable and lasting positive legacy.

Keeping Aboriginal culture and traditions strong

Keeping Aboriginal culture strong remains a high priority for Aboriginal communities yet evidence of significant progress under this aspiration is lacking. Maintaining and enhancing culture was mentioned in several contexts relevant to the GCA, including cultural heritage management; on-country visits; art and culture centres; specific cultural programs; and cultural awareness instruction.

Formal management of cultural sites through a program of ongoing monitoring demonstrates respect of cultural interests and recognises the importance of culture and traditional interests in the land. Through undertaking monitoring activities at Century there has been an opportunity for knowledgeable people to pass on cultural knowledge to others particularly the younger generations. The archaeological surveys undertaken for the mine have resulted in the collection of artefacts which need to be housed. Aboriginal owners want to see progress on a 'Keeping Place' for artefacts collected from mine site and Lawn Hill National Park. The Waanyi Prescribed Body Corporate (PBC) is said to be active in regard to the 'Keeping Place' initiative.

Protecting the land and environment

The majority of Aboriginal participants in the community consultations identified as owners of various parcels of land that are affected by the mine operations. Aboriginal interests in land lie at the most fundamental level in the GCA and are dealt with through a series of transfers of interest in certain land and the establishment of mechanisms for assuring environmental protection from the effects of the operation of the mine.

Major outcomes of the GCA include Aboriginal ownership of Lawn Hill and Riversleigh pastoral leases, grants of land to Aboriginal people at Bidunggu and Karumba, and attainment of recognition of Native Title over the Lawn Hill National Park. In addition, the GCA facilitated development applications and funding towards the provision of infrastructure and services on Gkuthaarn and Kukatj land in Normanton. The Century project also stimulated Native Title claims around the mine, the Waanyi Native Title determination as well as determinations of Native Title over the Wellesley Islands in the Gulf of Carpentaria. There now exists a substantial Indigenous estate in the Lower Gulf which lays a solid foundation for potential positive legacies from the mine.

Protection of land and environment is discussed in relation to land management, environmental monitoring, reporting, and ranger groups. Some specific environmental concerns were also raised.

Social improvements and stronger communities

Some questions in the interviews focused on changes in the communities since the advent of Century mine, particularly in the last five years, and how the parties to the GCA could contribute to social improvements and stronger communities in the Lower Gulf leading up to mine closure. Many interviewees emphasised the importance of employment, training and education in building stronger communities, and Century's role in these three areas is considered vital. It isn't clear to interviewees that indicators in the areas of health and education in the Lower Gulf communities have improved since the advent of Century mine, although employment at Century is reported to contribute to improved health and education outcomes.

Employability

- A paradox exists in that high Aboriginal employment at Century relative to other mine sites has not necessarily translated into on the ground community support for the company or recognition that Century has contributed to the social and human capital in the Lower Gulf.

- In an environment of limited employment opportunities in the Lower Gulf, Century's proximity to Gulf communities provides a unique opportunity for people to gain well-paid employment and continue to live in their communities and maintain their connection to their families.
- A variety of social and cultural issues impact on the ability for Aboriginal people in the Lower Gulf, particularly in Doomadgee and on Mornington Island, to take up opportunities and maintain employment including: literacy and numeracy; levels of confidence, motivation and exposure to mainstream culture; family and cultural obligations; drugs and alcohol.
- Given the significance of employment, the potential for job losses approaching closure is of concern.

Training

- Training was consistently mentioned in terms of what Century could do to ensure a positive legacy. It was suggested that Century could partner with State and Federal governments to support locally relevant training programs.
- Re-training or new opportunities should be provided to Century employees to assist them in gaining employment post-closure. Training in roles that would be relevant back in the Lower Gulf communities was emphasised as important leading up to closure.

Education

- Poor outcomes in terms of literacy and numeracy are tied to low attendance rates and the quality and quantity of educational infrastructure and services available, including difficulties in recruiting long-term teachers in the Lower Gulf communities.
- Opportunities exist for Century to establish stronger relationships or partnerships with Lower Gulf schools, through providing work experience and visits to the mine, or having employees come to speak at the schools.

Health

- The social determinants of health need to be addressed to improve overall health outcomes. Good health is essential in all areas of life, including emotional and social wellbeing, culture and spirituality.
- A number of health benefits from working at Century were mentioned in the community consultations.
- While the infrastructure for establishing culturally appropriate birthing services in Doomadgee and Mornington Island as per the Queensland Government undertaking in the GCA was built, legal ramifications surrounding the absence of an obstetrician mean they cannot be used as birthing suites.

Philanthropic activities

- Access to Century flights allows many Lower Gulf residents a level of mobility which would be unobtainable otherwise. Concern was expressed by some interviewees that Century is attempting to cut back on community access to flights.
- The processes around Century's sponsorship of community activities are not clear to the communities and there is a sense that donations are piecemeal and intermittent.

- It was suggested that Century take a more strategic, planned and sustainable approach to community investments. Characteristics of such an approach and specific examples are detailed in the body of this report especially in [Section 10: Opportunities for leaving a positive legacy](#).

Community infrastructure

- Affordability and availability of housing has changed since Century's advent and may be affected again during the closure phase.
- It was reported that many roads in the Lower Gulf are in poor state and prone to flooding and long-term arrangements in terms of their maintenance are necessary.
- Gregory Downs, Bidunggu and Doomadgee are not connected to the power grid and rely on generators. Century could work with the State Government and community authorities to assist these communities in connecting to mains electricity or even investigate the possibility of solar power.

Specific issues raised by the communities

Century's closure is expected to have significant impacts on the Lower Gulf, and interviewees raised particular concerns regarding Bidunggu, Karumba and the Shire Councils as outlined in [Section 8](#) of this report.

State Government submissions

The Queensland Government has its own direct information-sharing arrangements with both Century and the CLAC. However input was solicited from relevant State Government Ministers for this research. The written responses from Ministers and Departments are reported in [Section 9](#).

Opportunities for leaving a positive legacy

Many suggestions were made regarding ways Century could improve the opportunities for leaving a positive legacy and these are listed in the body of this report. Maximum effect will be achieved where initiatives are designed to contribute across the range of Native Titleholder aspirations. The following provide some examples as to how such initiatives could be configured.

Aboriginal participation in mine rehabilitation and environmental monitoring

Significant opportunity exists for creating a sustainable legacy through use and development of Aboriginal capacity to plan, undertake and monitor the mine rehabilitation and ongoing environmental monitoring program on the mine site. A strategic approach would aim to build on existing Aboriginal capacity as well as introduce additional skills and expertise and stimulate the formation of new Aboriginal groups to undertake environmental work.

Three broad areas of interaction were identified through the community consultations that generated significant interest and enthusiasm:

- Traditional owner participation in rehabilitation and closure planning
- Aboriginal contracting for mine site rehabilitation work
- Aboriginal environmental and rehabilitation monitoring

Supporting community development initiatives

An array of government and non-government agencies are working in each of the communities delivering a myriad of services and programs. It is open to Century to engage at the community level through partnering with certain key organisations that would align with Century's objectives for improved community relations and social outcomes. Concentrating efforts and resources on one or two key projects in each of the main communities would be a significant step.

GCA capital fund

The GCA provides annual payments to eligible Native Title bodies and the extent to which these benefits have translated into community benefit is variable across the corporations. There is particular interest in the Gulf communities in seeing agreement moneys used, partly at least, to assist with: education and related costs, such as school excursions, boarding school fees and family visits; away-from-community visits (including for health reasons); funeral expenses; and sport and associated travel.

Community business development

Two areas of significant economic opportunity exist for long term sustainable business enterprise in the region. This is in the area of housing and construction, and in visitor accommodation, such as that at Gununa on Mornington Island. An assessment is warranted to identify the potential for the establishment of an Aboriginal Housing and Construction company, with the eventual aim to take on construction in the Remote Service Delivery (RSD) communities (Doomadgee and Gununa) which are the target for substantial Commonwealth housing funding.

Cultural heritage management

Significant opportunity exists for Century to leave a lasting legacy consistent with Native Title aspirations for maintaining culture through initiating cultural heritage projects with relevant Native Title organisations. The Waanyi PBC is said to be active in this regard.

Archaeological surveys undertaken for Century have resulted in the collection of artefacts which need to be housed. The GCA anticipates a 'Keeping Place' for artefacts collected from mine site and specifies a Century contribution of \$100,000 towards its planning and construction.

Art centres

In other regions of Australia, Aboriginal Art and Craft provide important alternate livelihood options, particularly for Aboriginal people with limited capacity to engage in mainstream jobs or business. Stimulating the Lower Gulf Art movement would create positive long term outcomes. An initial exercise could be Century commissioning pieces for its corporate offices or offices overseas.

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Social aspects of the closure of Century Mine: Report on community consultations

1. Introduction

Aim, purpose, scope and objectives of community consultations

This report documents research undertaken with residents of the communities of the Lower Gulf of Carpentaria, North West Queensland. It is part of a broader study which aims to establish the social impacts of completion of mining at Century Mine and provide input into the agreement monitoring body the Century Liaison Advisory Committee's (CLAC's) deliberations over the 15-year review of the Gulf Communities Agreement (GCA). The report includes a mix of looking back at how the aspirations contained in the GCA have been met, understanding the contribution the mine is making from a community perspective, and looking forward at opportunities for leaving a positive legacy.

Aspirations of the Gulf Communities Agreement

The research concentrated in large part on the broad aspirations outlined in the GCA to assist interviewees to think about opportunities for Century to leave a positive legacy as well as to review the extent of progress towards achieving these changes or conditions for the Lower Gulf communities. Native Title holders' and Gulf communities' broad aspirations are recorded in the GCA as:

Economic improvements

Remove dependency on welfare and promote economic self-sufficiency and participate as fully as possible in Century Mine and related ventures.

Keeping Aboriginal culture and traditions strong

Be able to live on their traditional lands, identify and protect sites of cultural significance, and "ensure that the material benefits do not corrupt indigenous cultures but enable people to re-affirm the cultures and enhance the lifestyles of the members of the Native Title Groups and other members of the Communities through community and cultural development initiatives."

Protecting the land and the environment

Protect fully their natural environment and its resources.

Social improvements and stronger communities

Ensure that the standard of health, employment rates, education opportunities and other social indices of Native Title Groups and other members of the Communities is comparable to ordinary Australian standards.

In making the agreement with Native Title holders the original holding company, Century Zinc Ltd, acknowledged and respected these aspirations and agreed to measures that were aimed to offer support through:

- education and training;
- environmental protection;
- protection of Aboriginal heritage and culture; and
- regional development and business opportunities.¹

In return for their agreement and support of the project and commitment to a cooperative relationship with Century, the Native Title holders received a range of benefits including:

- jobs in the mine and training;
- assurances over the environment;
- process for identification and protection of Aboriginal sacred sites;
- interest in pastoral leases;
- payments to Native Title Groups; and
- payments for establishing small business and contracting enterprises.

A series of committees and other organisations were established under the agreement to manage the intended benefits. The Gulf Aboriginal Development Corporation (GADC) was the lynchpin organisation which was intended to have a role across the range of functional areas of the agreement.

The Lower Gulf communities

Aboriginal communities

Bidunggu is the closest Aboriginal community to Century Mine located at Gregory around half way along the Burketown to Camooweal Road some 70 km along well maintained gravel road from the Mine. It consists of some seven dwellings constructed as a result of negotiations over the agreement for Century.

Doomadgee is the largest mainland Aboriginal community in the Lower Gulf region with around 1200 people. Originally a Brethren Mission, Doomadgee was established in its present location in 1936. In 1987 the Queensland Government passed responsibility to a community council following transfer of a special form of title called a Deed of Grant in Trust. Subsequent changes in local administration resulted in the establishment of Doomadgee Shire Council. Under the Council of Australian Governments' agreements Doomadgee is a Remote Service Delivery (RSD)² site where there are Local Implementation Plans (LIPs)³ instigated with the community by the Commonwealth Government as part of its *Closing the Gap* strategy at RSD priority sites.⁴

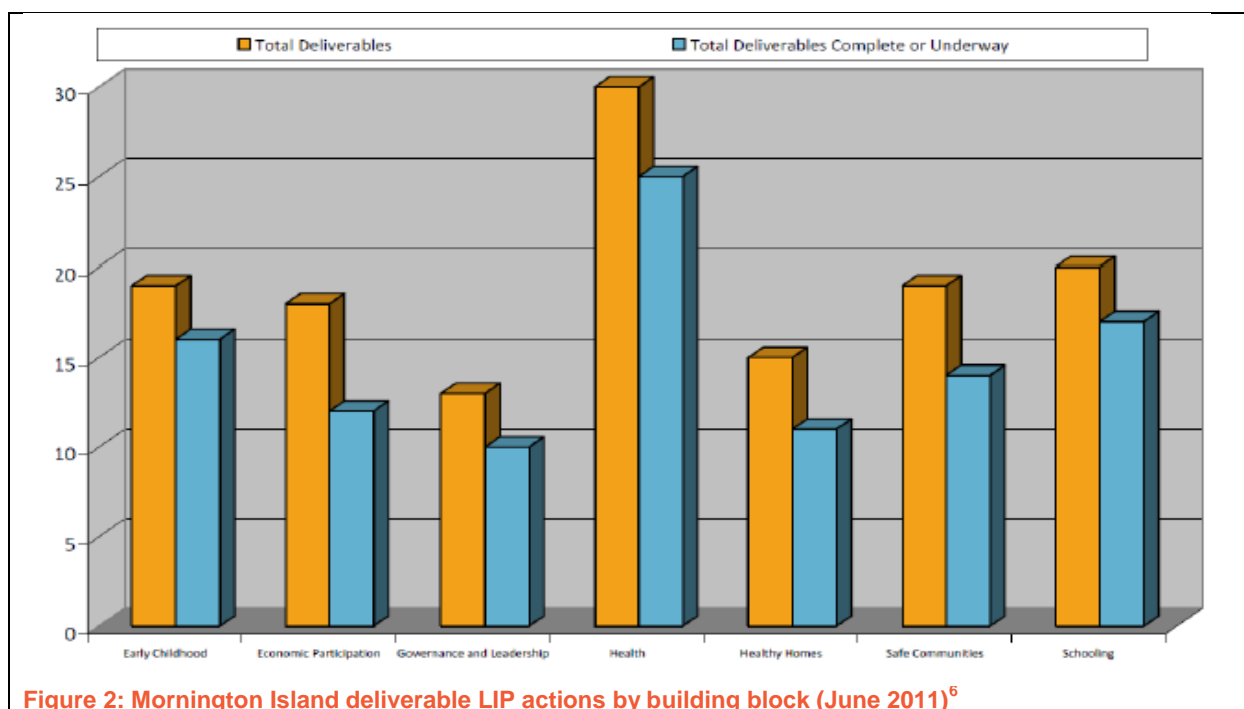
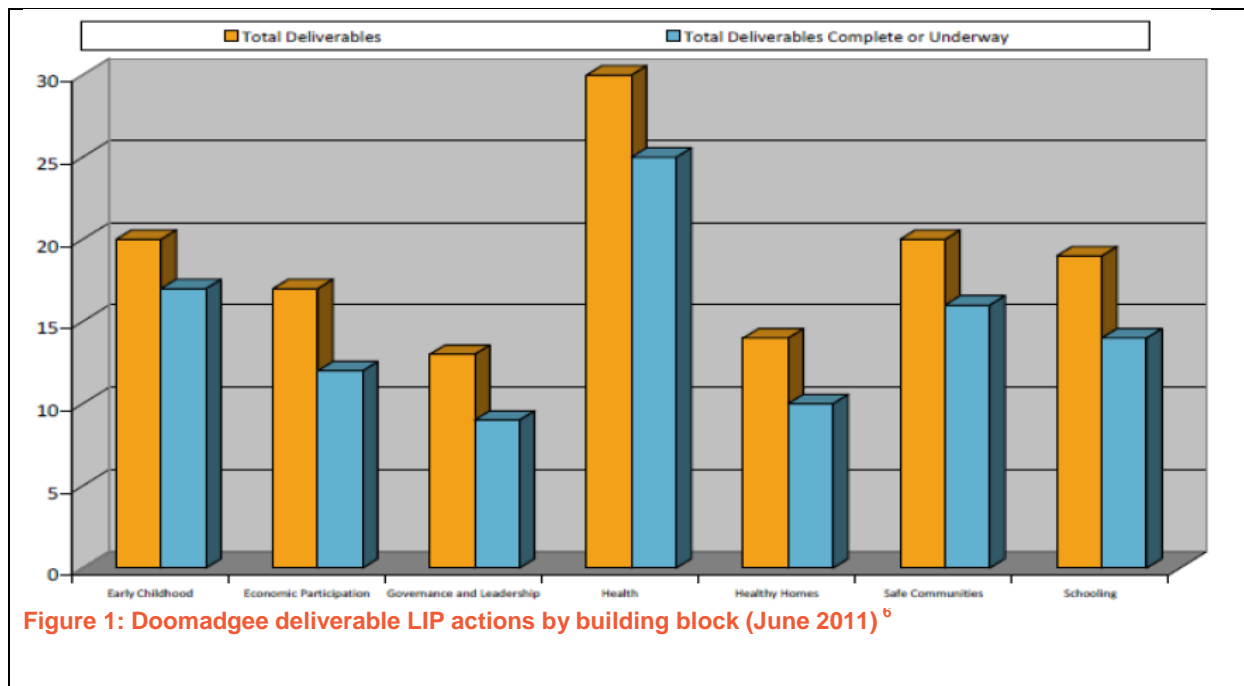
¹ Gulf Community Agreement, 1997 (Introduction, Recital P, page 7)

² Brief overview of Remote Service Delivery strategy <http://www.cgris.gov.au/site/faq.asp>.

³ Government investment in the RSD communities is guided by Local Implementation Plans developed in partnership with local Indigenous communities and, where relevant, non-government and private sector organisations. They set out agreed targets, actions and associated milestones and timelines and are publicly available documents. Joint reports on progress against the measures in the Local Implementation Plans are published annually. The Doomadgee and Mornington Island LIPs were signed in July 2010.

⁴ The Closing the Gap Strategy is based around seven 'building blocks' 1. Early Childhood; 2. Schooling; 3. Health; 4. Economic Participation; 5. Healthy Homes; 6. Safe Communities; 7. Governance and Leadership see <http://www.fahcsia.gov.au/our-responsibilities/indigenous-australians/programs-services/closing-the-gap>.

Progress against the seven building blocks of the LIPs is reported annually to COAG and brief summaries of the reports for Doomadgee and Mornington Island as at the end of June 2011 are provided in Figures 1 and 2.⁵



⁵ For further information refer to Remote Service Delivery National Partnership Agreement: 2010-11 Annual Report to COAG. Jurisdictional Report Cards, available at [http://archive.coag.gov.au/coag_meeting_outcomes/2012-04-13/docs/remote_service_delivery_NPA_jurisdictionReport_cards2010-11\(Part%201\).pdf](http://archive.coag.gov.au/coag_meeting_outcomes/2012-04-13/docs/remote_service_delivery_NPA_jurisdictionReport_cards2010-11(Part%201).pdf)

⁶ Remote Service Delivery National Partnership Agreement: 2010-11 Annual Report to COAG. Jurisdictional Report Cards (Clause 26). Part 2: page 103 (Fig.1), 107 (Fig. 2), available at [http://archive.coag.gov.au/coag_meeting_outcomes/2012-04-13/docs/remote_service_delivery_NPA_jurisdictionReport_cards2010-11\(Part%201\).pdf](http://archive.coag.gov.au/coag_meeting_outcomes/2012-04-13/docs/remote_service_delivery_NPA_jurisdictionReport_cards2010-11(Part%201).pdf)

Both Doomadgee and Mornington Island have Regional Operations Centres (ROCs) operated jointly by the Commonwealth (Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs – FaHCSIA) and Queensland Government. Since 2002 both communities have been subject to Alcohol Management Plans imposed under the Queensland Liquor Act.

Gununa is the Aboriginal township of about 1100 situated on the southern end of Mornington Island in the Gulf of Carpentaria. Like Doomadgee, Mornington was set up as a mission (Presbyterian) and in 1978 responsibility for local government was transferred to a community council. In 2008 the Gulf Region Aboriginal Corporation (GRAC) was incorporated to act as a prescribed body corporate following a Native Title determination over the greater Wellesley Island Group, but not including Gununa township, which is administered by the Mornington Shire Council. Like Doomadgee Mornington Island is also an RSD site and has a detailed LIP.

The Queensland Government’s Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island policy framework was introduced to draw together all Government services for Indigenous people. This has resulted in Local Indigenous Partnership Agreements (LIPAs) between the Queensland Government and both Doomadgee and Mornington Island Indigenous Councils. LIPAs specify targets for housing, health and education initiatives and are therefore a further performance framework for Government in these Lower Gulf communities.⁷

The population for each local government area according to Census data for 2011 is shown in Figure 1. Carpentaria shire includes the towns of Normanton and Karumba.

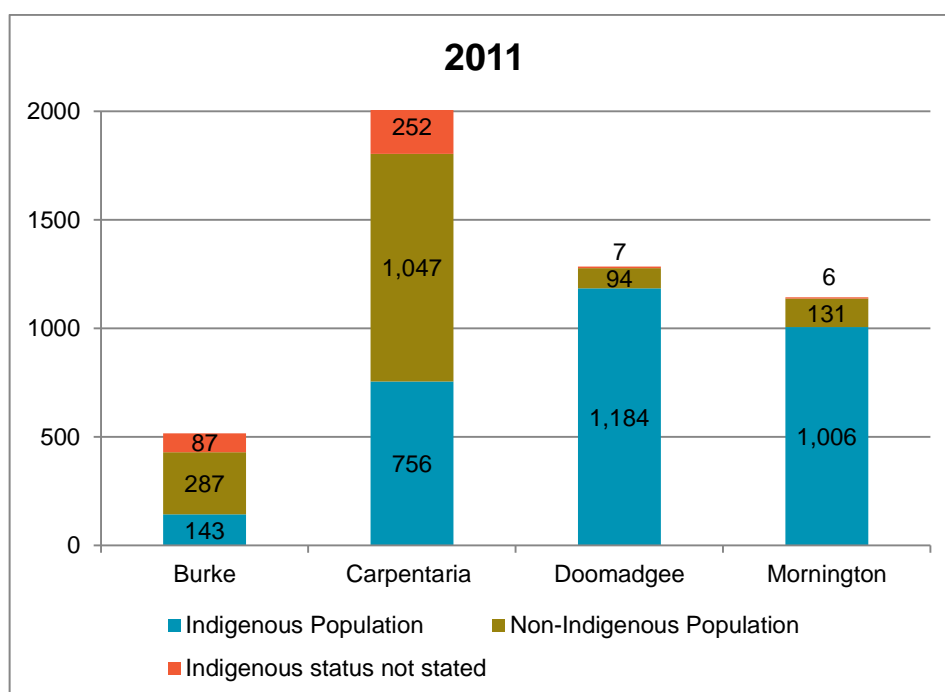


Figure 3: Population of local government areas according to 2011 Census data

⁷ For further information see <http://www.atns.net.au/agreement.asp?EntityID=3764>

Towns

Normanton is a gazetted town established in 1867 as a commercial port on the Norman River. Normanton services the predominantly pastoral districts east of Century Mine. The pipeline from Century passes near Normanton on its way to Karumba. The Carpentaria Shire which includes Karumba has a population of around 2000.

Karumba is small town that services the port facilities established by Century to receive mineral concentrate from the mine. De-watering of the concentrate and loading onto a barge for transfer to freight ships in deeper water at sea in the Gulf of Carpentaria occurs at Karumba.

Burketown is a small town of around 500 people being mostly Aboriginal residents. Burke Shire was established in 1885 and Century Mine lies within the Burke Shire boundaries. Burketown was originally set up as a port town to service frontier pastoral development however it was eventually eclipsed by Normanton as the main port servicing the Gulf of Carpentaria.

2. Research Methods

The CSRSM developed field work protocols to ensure clarity of project objectives and the role of CSRSM researchers, Century personnel, and the CLAC. The protocol recorded the main research questions of the overall project and in particular the community consultations.

Century's CSP team and Century CLOs played a critical role in the community consultations. The Senior CSP Advisor and the community-based CLOs identified relevant people and agencies in the community and set up interviews.

Fieldwork

The community consultations consisted of two main field trips in July and August 2012, one of 12 days duration and one of five days duration. The research team for the community consultations comprised a male researcher and a female researcher from the CSRSM. Between the team the researchers had over 20 years' experience working with Indigenous communities in Australia.

In order to promote good communication and a level of familiarity with the researchers and the aims and purpose of the project, as well as acquaint the research team, an introductory five-day visit was undertaken by the male researcher two weeks ahead of the commencement of the main consultation. The introductory visit enabled the researcher to meet key stakeholders and assisted in scoping the main consultations.

Not all interview schedules went precisely to plan due to a range of reasons. Follow-up interviews were afforded in a fourth round of fieldwork by the female CSRSM researcher as part of the Business Survey component of the study in October 2012. Some additional interviews were conducted in Brisbane and the CSRSM also received written submissions from some stakeholders.

Sample group

A total of 46 individual and group interviews were undertaken involving a total of 147 individuals. The interviewees represented over 45 organisations, which included the GCA Native Title Groups, organisations set up under the GCA, community based educational and health providers, employment providers, other locally-based government and non-government service providers, local businesses and cooperatives, not-for-profit and community organisations, local government councils and other Indigenous organisations.

The majority of interviewees were Aboriginal (78%), although not all interviewees who identified as Aboriginal were from the GCA Native Title Groups (Waanyi, Gkuthaarn, Kukatj or Mingginda). The composition of the individuals interviewed in terms of Aboriginality and gender is outlined in Table 1.

Interviews were also conducted with a number of businesses throughout the Lower Gulf as part of the CSRSM business survey, including a week-long field trip focussing on Karumba. These numbers have not been included in Table 1 however some information raised in business interviews pertinent to the community perspective has been included in the analysis in this report. In addition, some written submissions received from Queensland Government Ministers/Departments and community organisations were taken into account.

Table 1: Breakdown of interviewees by location, gender and identification as Aboriginal/non-Aboriginal

Location	No. of interviewees	Male	Female	Aboriginal	non-Aboriginal
Lawn Hill	6	4	2	1	5
Mornington Island	55	32	23	45	10
Doomadgee	28	17	11	21	7
Burketown	2	2	0	2	0
Normanton	30	12	18	25	5
Bidunggu	6	4	2	6	0
Mount Isa	13	8	5	12	1
Karumba	4	1	3	0	4
Brisbane	3	1	2	2	1
Total	147	81	66	114	33
Percentage of total		55%	45%	78%	22%

Interviews

Interviews were arranged by the CLOs in the communities of Gununa on Mornington Island, Doomadgee and Normanton, and by a member of the CSP team from Century mine in the other locations.

Project information was provided to participants through formal information sheets prepared by the CSRSM and distributed and explained to participants prior to each interview (see Appendix 2). An information poster was also prepared that represented diagrammatically the role of the CSRSM, MMG and the CLAC in terms of the 15-year GCA review and the Social Impact Assessment (SIA) of possible closure (see Appendix 3).

Explanation of the information sheets formed the basis of obtaining informed consent of the participants prior to commencing interviews. Each individual's consent was recorded on a signed consent form.

Semi-structured individual and group interviews were conducted by the researchers with questions framed around themes related to the aspirations of the agreements. The focus was on forward-looking strategies, and 'open-ended' questions invited responses on:

- contribution and impact of GCA;
- social trends in communities and aspirations; and
- consideration of effects of production ceasing.

Ethical considerations

Participants from the community who took part in the community consultations were advised of the implications of their participation (contributing to the discussion) prior to the consultations taking place. Information included the details about the collection and analysis of data, the publication of reports, the overall objectives of the research, and the mechanisms available to community members should they have any queries or complaints.

A member of Century's CSP team provided introductory information to the interviewees about the nature of the research but was not present during the interviews.

Contact details of the researchers involved in the community consultations, The University of Queensland's ethics committee and the lead researchers on the project at the CSRSM were made available to all interviewees.

Feedback was promised to participants as part of ethical considerations for the project.

Limitations of the research

With the researchers spending only a total of around 40 person days in the communities, there was a relatively short time to cover the range of issues and geographical locations. Participant availability, despite prior notice and planning, was ultimately determined for each interview by the immediate demands on the day, which was out of the control of the researchers. Due to such circumstances some key interviews didn't eventuate at the scheduled time. Some interviews had to be rescheduled and some groups were interviewed as part of business survey involving one researcher rather than during community consultations.

Other than the preliminary visit, the researchers were not known personally to community members so there was generally a level of shyness that had to be overcome to encourage participants to talk freely. This was generally achieved as the interviews progressed. The work was commissioned by MMG so although participants were encouraged to express their views without favour it remained that the researchers were ultimately conducting the interviews at the behest of the mining company, although for the broader purposes of the CLAC. The lack familiarity with the role and functioning of the CLAC limited the extent the research was seen by participants to be driven by all parties of the GCA acting together through the CLAC, as distinct from being instigated and managed by MMG itself.

3. Overarching themes and key messages

Community responses were framed by long-held expectations that the advent of mining at Century would lead to significant improvements in the affected communities. The intensity of consultations and the promises made at the time of settling the GCA created expectations for positive change that are generally perceived as not having been fully realised.

In reflecting on recent trends people acknowledge that Century has been a major source of employment for residents of the Lower Gulf and ancillary benefits such as flights have been significant. However they feel their expectations for economic benefits and other aspirations have not been fully realised; employment and training opportunities have not always been directed in accordance with the spirit of the GCA; and engagement and communication between company and community needs improvement.

Unrealised benefits

There were high expectations about the economic benefits that Century would deliver following early discussions about the Gulf communities' aspirations and many interviewees, particularly Native Title holders at Doomadgee and on Mornington Island, expressed great disappointment in the level of participation in Century Mine and its related ventures:

"When the mine was starting, you go to a meeting, they say it's there for all the Waanyi, but it's not there for all the Waanyi" (Doomadgee interview).

There could have been a lot of stuff to help us Mornington Island Waanyi people. We're really isolated. And we've got nothing out of it from what I can see" (Mornington Island interview).

The groups owning the mine site land in particular pictured high levels of local employment, Aboriginal supervisors and prosperous local businesses supplying the mine. Significant benefits from economic participation were expected alongside continuation of the strength of engagement with communities experienced at the outset of the GCA and during the development of the mine. Consequently a broad perception exists that less focus is placed on the agreement now than in the beginning:

"The Century mine is not going by the agreement – helped me at the beginning of the agreement, but then it started getting slack. Where the agreement was supposed to be held, it wasn't held" (Doomadgee interview).

Quality of community engagement

The quality and depth of the engagement between the mine and the communities over the life of the GCA is widely considered to have varied over the period. Past practices that were appreciated but were said to no longer happen were visits to the mine by old people, as well as by the community schools, site maintenance undertaken by local Community Development Employment Projects (CDEP) workers, as well as mine managers visiting communities and community councils.

The communities partly attribute this situation to the sequence of ownership of the mine and loss of continuity as personnel change, particularly managers. Frustration was expressed

over the need to familiarise new managers and incoming personnel to the existence, history, intent and working of the GCA. At issue is the turnover and induction of mine managers:

“When they start they don’t know about the GCA. There’s nothing written down for new managers about the agreement. People [new personnel] don’t know about the agreement...With changeover of managers nobody knows about anything”
(Burketown interview).

“Communication is a problem, plain and simple. We get no feedback whatsoever. We see you guys here, the next mob appear... we get someone else in two or three months’ time. From the reps we’ve got there’s no community feedback whatsoever”
(Normanton Interview).

The need for tangible benefits in the communities

As mentioned, Century’s accomplishment in regard to providing Aboriginal employment was one area widely recognised amongst the communities and the other frequently acknowledged and much appreciated contribution of Century is access to flights on its charters to and from the mine site. Indeed the extent to which Century has contributed to individual capacity building to date is evidenced by the fact that nearly all the Aboriginal people interviewed who were in lead positions in their respective organisations had worked or had training stints at Century Mine. While some consider they brought skills to the mine others definitely see their time at Century as beneficial to their career development.

The absence, however, of any significant tangible examples of positive impact in the communities directly attributable to Century often provoked a bleak assessment of the overall contribution the GCA has made in the Gulf communities.

While benefits from employment were acknowledged, these are considered to mainly sit with the individuals and families of those fortunate to obtain a jobs. The flow-on benefits to the communities from members having good income is potentially diminished when those, once employed, move away to larger regional centres. Another fundamental issue affecting the reach of the benefits from employment is that not everyone wants to work on the mine or wants to leave the community for work.

Feedback on the 15-year review

Community responses revealed a level of scepticism regarding whether the outcomes of this research will have any impact:

“I reckon it’s too late in time now. It’s all going to be digged out... But they’re [Century] looking for the community help I suppose. To give them good feedback, make them look good. But that shouldn’t be on” (Doomadgee interview).

The previous GCA reviews were often cited but dismissed as not having led to discernible changes from the community perspective:

“Nothing came out of the last review, what’s going to come out of this review?”
(Mornington Island interview).

“Why would they bother [with the review]? Done nothing about the last one, [it was] nothing other than a token exercise” (Burketown interview).

On the other hand there were suggestions for more frequent reviews:

“One other thing I have to bring up here. You have here that the GCA is reviewed every five years. That should be every year. So people know what is going on” (Doomadgee interview).

Communication and information for communities

There was a clear and consistent call from communities and key stakeholders (e.g. councils) for more information on what is going on at Century generally and closure plans in particular. Across the Lower Gulf it was said that communities would benefit from knowing more about developments and changes at the mine site and also updates and briefings on training and employment initiatives. This could also address a general lack of knowledge about Government and company contribution under the GCA. Many interviewees did not have good knowledge of the contents of the agreement or what has been delivered. This limits the communities’ ability to assess accurately the GCA contributions and in particular the implications of the mine closing or otherwise transitioning from its current configuration:

“We would like to get some feedback about all of this. Because we don’t get no feedback. No one comes here to explain nothing to us. We get left out in the dark, because we’re so isolated... There’s that many organisations under the GCA that we don’t know what the committees are and who’s on the committee. We don’t get informed about nothing. Nobody comes and informs us what’s going on, there’s supposed to be a GCA Rep, but they’ve only just got in there. Why has it taken so many years?” (Morningson Island interview).

Communication channels to Century were not clear to many community members. For example, instances were mentioned where community members had tried to call Century regarding an issue and been redirected to MMG’s head office in Melbourne. This and other observations during the field trip suggested the value of a Century contact point in the communities. However the lack of a Century office on Morningson Island meant the CLO was working from her residence, which is not ideal considering the tendency of community members to make impromptu visits to the Century offices. The researchers observed several drop-by visits to Century offices in the communities during the community consultations. All in all, the role of the CLOs as an intermediary between the company and the community could be strengthened. The committee structures (e.g. the CETC, CEC and the CLAC) also provide forums for discussion on some issues related to Century, but how the information is disseminated beyond the committees to the community is an issue and a formal communication strategy that is well publicised could be worthwhile.

Implications of closure

The immediate implications from the community perspective of potential mine closure therefore primarily revolves around questions about the future intentions of those employed at Century and in particular possible effects on community infrastructure and services if people chose to return to live in their communities of origin. The potential gap left from Century flights ceasing was a prominent and common concern across the communities.

Overall, however, the overwhelming sentiment was:

“Why do I bother with them? They don’t do anything for us... They never helped us”
(Doomadgee interview).

Given the call for more information, the fact that Century is moving into a closure phase was surprisingly widely known and came as no surprise for any of the interview participants. Clearly informal communication channels work effectively through the Lower Gulf communities. However, this raises issues around accuracy, detail and consistency of information and who it is reaching. As was often said in relation to a number of key areas of the agreement *“It is not what you know it is who you know”*.

The need for information on closure including criteria, scope and plans for rehabilitation, timing, and opportunities for involvement was highlighted in this regard. A keen interest exists over the fate of key infrastructure at the mine, particularly Darimah Village.

Communities keen to engage with Century

Despite having confronted less than positive assessments in the communities of progress to date, with the forward looking focus of this research there was a high degree of interest on the part of the communities to engage with Century for its remaining years to deliver sustainable positive legacies. Indeed the prospects of closure or the mine otherwise reconfiguring is focussing community attention on how such positive legacies could be achieved given the remaining time frames.

A heightened interest now exists in what happens next. A range of suggestions were offered by the communities which are captured comprehensively in Appendix 1. This table does not attempt to address the merit of the suggestions. Moreover it:

- conveys the scope of community concerns and opportunities for engagement;
- indicates the level of enthusiasm in the communities to engage with Century; and
- offers a tool to develop strategic approaches and linkages between issues that can be address in a collaborative way.

Picking up on a range of the community suggestions and in light of comments made during the interviews, the researchers have drawn together a number of examples of a strategic approach that could possibly be adopted to address the issues raised in the community consultations. There are discussed in [Section 10: Opportunities for leaving a positive legacy](#) and provided to illustrate how this may occur.

Action Planning

The merit of an ‘Action Planning’ approach signalled by Century and the CLAC was viewed positively by the communities, provided they were actively engaged in reviewing the priorities. The communities consider feedback from this research as critical. Wider community involvement in the Action Planning would be an effective feedback mechanism as well as a way to satisfy the community members’ desire to have ongoing input to GCA processes.

Leaving a lasting legacy is seen as process that needs to consolidate and build on successes under the GCA to date and develop strategies collaboratively to extend benefits

more broadly through the communities and beyond the life of the mine. Tracking action planning against the aspirations outlined in the GCA could be one way forward:

“I think that from this action plan, some of the community aspirations should really be... They were Native Title people’s aspirations that’s in that agreement, and I seriously think we need to know what is the status of those listed... say with health, what’s the status with it now?” (Normanton interview).

A lasting benefit is said to be that lessons learned from the GCA will better equip Native Title parties to design and implement future agreements, either with MMG or other companies in the region. A key development in recent times in this regard is the establishment of the Waanyi Prescribed Body Corporate (PBC) in 2010 under the *Native Title Act 1993* following determination of the Waanyi Native Title claim. Also relevant is the maturing of the Carpentaria Land Council into an effective representative body for groups in other areas of the Lower Gulf. Working with these organisations offers useful platforms and structures to engage communities, for example through the existing Carpentaria Land Council Aboriginal Corporation (CLCAC) Ranger Program, which in turn could assist those organisations to retain experience and build capacity.

4. Economic improvements

Employment at Century

There are limited options for employment in the Lower Gulf communities due to the absence of significant markets and private sector economies. The main options for employment are with government-funded services, pastoral stations and the few businesses operating in the region, including Century.

Within this context, employment at the mine was commonly cited as the main benefit that Century has provided. While employment at Century was very beneficial, disappointment was expressed that more people from the Gulf communities and Native Title Groups in particular hadn't gained employment at Century. Furthermore, opportunities for career progression and attaining qualifications were considered not as forthcoming as expected. There is concern that GCA employees might not be able to gain employment elsewhere after mine closure.

Contribution to the GCA aspirations in the area of employment

The Lower Gulf communities face issues common to remote Indigenous communities in terms of physical isolation from major service centres, small populations, lack of infrastructure and corresponding absence of significant market or private sector economies, resulting in reliance on government-funded programs and welfare dependency.⁸

Employment at Century has assisted a large number of individuals from the Lower Gulf communities to move off welfare and increase their employability more generally. Those individuals working at Century provide a positive example to other community members by showing that full-time employment is achievable and beneficial. However, the extent to which employment at Century has contributed to the Gulf communities' aspiration to move towards economic self-sufficiency is difficult to gauge due to limited longitudinal data on how employees at Century have saved or invested their wages in property or other longer-term investments. There are limited opportunities for investment in property in the Lower Gulf itself as housing is mainly government-owned and the small private market is inflated.

Many people from the Gulf communities who have gained employment with Century have subsequently moved away from the Lower Gulf to larger centres such as Cairns and Townsville. This is seen as positive for those individuals and their immediate families, providing opportunities for a different lifestyle, accumulation of assets and access to better education opportunities. While cases were cited where employees who had moved away directed financial assistance back to family in the communities, this pattern has potentially reduced the direct flow-on effects of increased incomes in the Lower Gulf communities themselves.

A reliable estimate of how many people from the different communities have been or are currently employed with Century was difficult to obtain from the interviews. Community members on Mornington Island and Doomadgee expected employment levels from these

⁸ ANAO Audit Report No.26 2011–12, *Capacity Development for Indigenous Service Delivery* (available from <http://www.anao.gov.au/~media/Uploads/Audit%20Reports/2011%2012/201112%20Audit%20Report%20No26.pdf>); Altman (2003), *Economic Development and Participation for Remote Indigenous Communities: Best Practice, Evident Barriers, and Innovative Solutions in the Hybrid Economy*, Presentation to Ministerial Council for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs (MCATSIA), Sydney, 28 November 2003 (available from http://caep.r.anu.edu.au/sites/default/files/Publications/topical/altman_mcatsia.pdf)

communities to be higher and many interviewees were under the impression that most Aboriginal employees either came from Normanton or outside of the Lower Gulf. It was reported throughout the Lower Gulf communities that during its early phase of operations Century made more effort to employ local Aboriginal people, but that local recruitment has subsequently slowed down.

This perception led to negative comments by some community members around how 'GCA' employees are identified. It was mentioned several times that some successful applicants returned or visited relations in the communities in order to gain 'GCA status'. It was also understood that the longstanding priority at Century is to employ local people (both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal) over non-local people. Similarly, one contractor considers non-Aboriginal local people/Aboriginal people in the same light. However, many community members believe that Native Title holders should be given preferential treatment for employment, considering that Century mine and the pipeline is on their land. The tensions around these issues may be unavoidable but lack of resolution of such differences at the outset still affects perceptions of the progress achieved under the GCA. Clarification around who is considered a 'GCA employee' or 'local' by both contractors and Century, as well as clear and transparent processes may assist.

Conversely, a number of interviewees believed that Century had made substantial effort to employ people from these communities but social and cultural issues impede greater outcomes. The fact that other organisations in the Gulf communities report very high turnover of Aboriginal employees points to the overall success of Century's efforts to retain its Aboriginal workforce, including additional support in areas such as literacy and numeracy, mentoring and pre-vocational programs, all of which were mentioned by the communities as positive initiatives.

Longitudinal data on employment from the communities – e.g. how many people have been employed from the communities, who has moved away after employment, where they went after Century – would be valuable for communities to understand the extent of Century's positive impacts in terms of employment and career development. Easier access to such information was requested by communities.

Career advancement & salaries for GCA employees

Some community members commented that there are instances of Aboriginal employees who believe they are on lower pay rates than their non-Aboriginal colleagues working in similar positions, and the reasons behind this are not clear to these employees. The perceived difference in pay scales may be connected to some employees being directly employed by MMG while others are employed by contractors. It was reported that a large number of Aboriginal employees working at Century are employed by Northern Project Contracting (NPC), which apparently means that they are contracted on a casual/temporary basis rather than permanently employed at Century (although in some instances this was said to be a number of years).

Career advancement of Aboriginal employees was also mentioned in community consultations. A perception exists that there is different treatment for Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal employees when considering promotions or career opportunities. Interviewees cited examples where non-Aboriginal employees with lesser tenure obtained career

advancement ahead of Aboriginal people with longer tenure. Again, the fact that a number of Aboriginal employees are not directly employed with MMG but rather through contractors may be a contributing factor. It was also reported that earlier in the life of the GCA, broader employment options were offered, including positions in business development, administration, industrial relations and more technical positions, compared to the current period, which predominantly employs Aboriginal people as haul truck drivers. Communities would like regular and clear communication about the number and nature of roles that will be available at Century as closure approaches and suggest Century provide support for a wider range of employment and career options for employees.

Financial management

Some issues were raised around the lack of assistance for employees in financial management. It was suggested that Century provide inductions for new employees to understand pay cycles and how to set up direct debits for bills and loan payments and to encourage saving. Comments were made about employees investing their incomes in new cars, boats or whitegoods, with concern that some may actually increase their level of debt rather than saving. This is a critical issue to address as closure approaches to ensure that these employees do not end up in a worse financial position if their employment ceases. It was reported that NPC provides a program assisting their employees to save income using high interest accounts and was suggested that Century initiate a similar program.

Implications of mine closure

In terms of closure, many people, including local councils and contractors, believed that Aboriginal employees at the mine would have difficulty gaining employment outside of the mining industry should Century close. Century offers mine-specific experience (mainly haul truck driving), and interviewees believed that this would limit alternate work options. For example, one contractor reported that because most GCA employees were trained to operate machinery but not to maintain and repair vehicles, they would be difficult to employ outside of the mine:

“All those ones in the pit [are] not good out of the mine. The skills that they’re learning over there they couldn’t bring back to the communities. It a good job, but it’s no good for you unless you follow the mine” (Burketown interview).

In preparation for closure, community members would like Century to assist individuals to gain employment on other mines or re-skill/re-train into areas that would enable them to gain employment back in the Gulf communities. For example, prioritising local employees for work on bulldozers or graders – that is, machinery that could be applicable for council works – rather than dump trucks was suggested:

“...we know there’re graders out there and we know there are dozers – okay, there might be 40 dump trucks and one grader, but we asked for the local guys to get priority on those machines that they can learn skills on to come up, but it’s never been implemented” (Normanton interview).

Loss of employment for local employees from Normanton and Karumba was noted as a concern as was the impact of closure on businesses in Karumba, which are largely reliant on Century:⁹

“If you take 60 people out who are on a wage of \$100,000, you take that out of any region, there’s going to be impacts.” (Normanton interview)¹⁰

Similar sentiment was expressed in Burketown:

“Rightly or wrongly, Century changed the whole attitude of the people in the Gulf... not [just] a monetary thing. But the problem will be the fact that these people who are gainfully employed, they will return to the communities and what do they do? What do you do?” (Burketown interview)

Communities were hopeful about Century’s ability to train and employ more people from the Lower Gulf communities in its last years of operation and emphasised wanting to be prioritised for any rehabilitation works associated with mine closure. They emphasised that this would require clear guidelines, information and preparation to build their capacity, which would need to start immediately.

Native Title benefits distributed under the GCA

Benefits to Aboriginal people under the GCA are structured around a number of committees and organisations established by the agreement. While the mining company has taken on the employment initiatives and utilised the Century Employment and Training Committee (CETC) to engender recognised employment outcomes, the clear intent was that benefits would flow to Native Title holders and communities predominantly via payments to eligible bodies and through funds to Aboriginal Benefits Development Trust (ABDT) that was set up to assist Aboriginal people to develop businesses.

GADC and eligible bodies

Community awareness and views were mixed about the effectiveness of these bodies. Perceptions exist that payments tend to benefit certain families and those interviewed were generally of the view that the eligible bodies that have received money need to give more regard to investing money in sustainable, income-generating activities. A common view as far as the Waanyi groups were concerned was that representation under the GCA is through a number of eligible bodies that appear not to work together in a coherent or strategic way to create benefit in the local communities.

The establishment of the Waanyi PBC in 2010 was noted by participants and some Waanyi people had had involvement in the PBC, which they indicated was in its embryonic stages. A ‘let’s wait and see’ attitude was pervasive when people mentioned the PBC in the communities:

“The PBC is good for Waanyi people but they got to represent everyone, got to be neutral. [It’s an] important role” (Burketown interview).

⁹ The impact of mine closure on businesses in Karumba is covered in detail in Supplement C: Impacts and Future Prospects for Gulf Businesses and the Regional Economy.

¹⁰ The number of employees from Normanton and Karumba was estimated by this interviewee to be around 60.



Figure 4: Gkuthaarn and Kukatj building in Normanton rented by Century as a CLO office at the time of the community consultations in 2012.

A notable effort for creating sustainable benefit was investment by the eligible body for the Gkuthaarn and Kukatj Native Title Groups in property in Normanton to rent out.¹¹ Waanyi Nation Aboriginal Corporation (WNAC), which set up NPC, was recognised in Doomadgee for doing exciting work with children from Doomadgee State School through the “You show me your world, I’ll show you mine” program where 12 children go on a two-week exchange down south and experience life away from the community. The program has run in 2011 and 2012 and plans to run every year.¹² The other program mentioned enthusiastically in community consultations was the Waanyi language project, sponsored by WNAC and involving Waanyi speakers working with linguists to create a Waanyi Dictionary.¹³ At the time of the community consultations in July 2012, this programme was running a language camp hosted by Adel’s Grove. The owners of this project saw this as being a result of the efforts of NPC/WNAC and not necessarily a direct consequence of the GCA.

For their part the Native Title bodies interviewed indicated they receive minimal external support with running their corporations. Some indicate that the mining company used to offer support to eligible bodies, but not anymore. The Office of Register of Aboriginal Corporations was identified as a possible source of assistance such as organising meetings and financial reporting. It remains that some eligible bodies would like assistance. Under the GCA the GADC was established to assist eligible organisations however indications were that this has not happened effectively.

While community members were aware of the intended role of the GADC, many saw it as not functioning beyond being a clearing house for money paid to the eligible bodies.

¹¹ At the time of the community consultations in Jul-Aug 2012, this building was partly rented by MMG as a CLO office. The company has since advised the researchers that the CLO offices in Doomadgee and Normanton have closed.

¹² Further information available at <http://www.northernprojectcontracting.com.au/Downloads/DoomadgeeSchoolExchangeBrochurefromWaanyiWireDecem.aspx> and <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qvbjopo0gKM&feature=youtu.be>

¹³ Further information available at NPC’s Community Projects web page: <http://www.northernprojectcontracting.com.au/Our-Community/Community-Projects.aspx>

Participants complained that the GADC was not working as a regional forum representing Native Title holders. Other functions said not to be happening include providing assistance to eligible bodies and overseeing strategic investments, as well as receiving reports from ADBT:

“There’s talk about ADBT living beyond the closure of the mines but we need to talk about that because when you read through the agreement ADBT is feeding up to GADC, and GADC is the beneficiary of ADBT. But all the time I’ve been on GADC they’ve never given us a report about what projects they’re doing around the Gulf. I’ve had to pay \$18 off the ASIC website just to see what they’ve been doing. It’s written in the agreement that GADC is the beneficiary of ADBT” (Normanton interview).

The functioning of GADC and other agreement bodies was the focus of considerable attention in the report on the 10-year review, with several associated recommendations being made. Given that many of comments in the report of the 10-year review resonate with community impressions of the GCA bodies expressed in this research, it would appear that it is very difficult to address the complexity of the various bodies involved – structures, responsibilities, priorities and operations – all of which has contributed to less economic and social benefit than was intended. Various opinions were expressed, including suggestions for changes in the structures and accountability of the responsible bodies; priorities for directing funding; and processes for accessing and allocating funding. The following specific suggestions for improvements were made:

- More neutral people could assist in the governance and management of these organisations.
- GCA organisations, including ADBT, need to communicate more with the communities they represent, for example through a regular newsletter or activity reports.
- More transparency and efficiency in running these organisations professionally and ensuring action is taken over decisions that are made:

“I think we need to ensure from here on in that GADC is functioning. It’s been left on the shoulders of the Native Title [Groups], and I don’t think that’s right. When a solicitor finds out that the director listed on ASIC website is the same as the ones from 15 years ago, that’s pretty bad. We’re GADC directors but we’re not even listed on ASIC website” (Normanton interview).

- More attention to investing money in sustainable, income-generating activities.
- The establishment of a community fund for common expenses. Waanyi elders on Mornington Island particularly raised concerns (which they have discussed directly with Century) about lack of arrangements to access agreement moneys. Their vision is to have funds available to assist with the cost of funerals, assistance with emergency travel, and support of community schooling, including scholarships and costs of boarding fees. These are actually common priorities for Aboriginal people across the Lower Gulf communities and many people lamented that a fund that has capital growth was not a product of the GCA to date, particularly in the context of the possible closure of the mine.
- Easier and equitable access to the Gulf Area Community Social Development Trust (GACS DT) for the priorities of Aboriginal people. The GACS DT comprises the Social Impact Assessment (SIA) moneys from the Queensland Government and only the

interest of this fund (\$380,000 in 2012) is divided up between all Gulf communities – not just Aboriginal people, but mainstream communities in the Lower Gulf as well.¹⁴ As such there is an impression that accessing those funds and competing with mainstream applicants is difficult for Aboriginal people. The Aboriginal priorities for these moneys related to cultural aspects of funerals, desire to live on country and special measures needed to get children a good education.

Despite these suggestions, some people were sceptical about the chances for improvement. Given the situation has existed for 15 years they expressed doubt about the ability of the eligible bodies to engender sustainable benefits particularly once the end of the economic life of the project is reached. They said it is *“too broke and not worth fixing”*.

Community business development

Lawn Hill and Riversleigh Pastoral Holding Company

Lawn Hill and Riversleigh Pastoral Holding Company (LHRPHC) runs cattle across the two pastoral stations transferred to Aboriginal control under the GCA. The operations are said to be profitable and employ both non-Aboriginal and Aboriginal people. The pastoral company turns off its own cattle and also receives income from allowing grazing in areas by neighbouring stations. LHRPHC is an exciting development under the GCA not only because of its functional business activity but also because it is used to host pastoral training for young people from the nearby communities such as Doomadgee. While the mining company continues to own a 49% share in LHRPHC, this is looked at as being beneficial for good corporate governance. Being on Waanyi country, Aboriginal ownership can enhance access to country by Waanyi people and potential exists to spawn related ventures such as cultural tourism tied to other visitor experiences such as the Riversleigh fossils and Lawn Hill National Park.



Figure 5: Aboriginal trainees at Lawn Hill Station

¹⁴ Information, including funding guidelines, available at <http://www.datsima.qld.gov.au/atsis/aboriginal-torres-strait-islander-peoples/grants-and-funding/gulf-area-community-social-development-trust>

Aboriginal Development Benefits Trust

The ADBT is the GCA organisation created to lead the aspiration for moving away from welfare dependency and getting Aboriginal people into business. Significant interest was expressed in the concept of running businesses in the communities however many risks and challenges were found in pursuing this approach. Those with experience running businesses identified the reality that the Lower Gulf presents a tough business environment. Issues were said to include the seasonal nature of access (floods, fires) limiting markets such as tourism, and a small base population. There is also a general lack of infrastructure to support business in communities, including basic facilities like accommodation for workers and advisers and limited banking facilities:

“Black, white or purple, it’s difficult to run a business in the Gulf. Even running a corner shop is not easy. Then when you throw in factors like business owners have been on CDEP environment for 10 years and all of a sudden you’re expecting them to be business owners, there are a whole lot of challenges” (Lawn Hill interview).

For Aboriginal businesses additional obstacles were mentioned, such as the cultural environment (for example family pressures), limited business experience and capacity, including administration and management expertise, financial acumen, as well as sometimes fluctuating interest. These factors combine with competition from welfare:

“Once someone starts making money as a business, the family is there to drain them – you’ve got money and have to give it to them. If the business wanted to bank the money, so they can say to families that they don’t have anything on them, they can’t. If there’s money on the trading account, there’s pressure on the person to pull it out. It’s a big social issue because there’s a lot of pressure from families” (Lawn Hill interview).

ADBT is recognised as providing business support in the form of advice and assistance as well as finance to identified community businesses. ADBT’s assistance to identified businesses includes accessing finance either from loans or from mainstream financial institutions and regular visits by business development consultants. Their policy is to provide sustained support and engender a focus on business opportunities and “not just come in and then run away.” However, some reservations were expressed by interviewees regarding the level of ongoing support provided by ADBT:

“Pretty much the same as the way white people used to treat us... With ADBT they’ll fund you to do this business, but they don’t have proper systems in place to provide ongoing support. Business development is new to people. They’re quick to come in when it’s about to collapse to put more pressure on those people. They just engaged Phil – business advisor. It was too late then. They come in behind time, they don’t do any planning. You never see any statistics around the money that they’ve approved to provide financial... I’m sure there’s quite a few people out there that have gone [to] ADBT for business development, but you don’t know who has been successful or who has failed” (Mount Isa interview).



Figure 6: Doomadgee Roadhouse

While outcomes from the program of business support are patchy, participants cited examples of businesses making significant positive contribution to the community. For example the Doomadgee Roadhouse is not only the single source of retail fuel in the community but also provides goods and equipment at competitive prices to the community store. It has increased turnover with the new managers and is looking to expand into providing accommodation. Many local Aboriginal people were said to have benefitted from employment at the roadhouse. Another business at Doomadgee is the 'bakery' that sells food, but does not make bread. The original community vision was to sell bread to Century, which would be a steady and substantial daily market. Normanton Traders is a key retail business in Normanton and is run by Aboriginal managers. An ADBT supported car rental business has developed independently to manage the impressive visitor accommodation now available at Gununa, Mornington Island.

Businesses supported by ADBT are not all run by Aboriginal management, though they are all Aboriginal-owned in different ways, some privately and others by an association or company. It was recognised that the commercial reality demands getting the management right and finding a balance between developing capacity with local people versus employing experience from outside. Although not related to the GCA or Century, the store at Gununa on Mornington Island was held out as an example of a successful Aboriginal-run business. It has a majority local workforce, with high staff retention rates related to staffing policies that allow some flexibility in recognition of the demands of community on workers as well as the provision of a senior Aboriginal man as mentor for the staff.

Potential businesses models for ADBT to consider in the future include the development of 'social enterprises', which can return social benefits to the community from successful commercial ventures.

Community members observing the operations of ADBT from a distance said they were not clear how to access support or how to pursue an interest in setting up a business. Some people would simply like to know what activities ADBT is conducting and how it is helping. There was some confusion expressed by impressions that ADBT gives loans to some

people and grants to others. This calls for an easily accessible report on activities to be given regularly to all Lower Gulf communities and the GADC.

More cooperation and collaboration between the ADBT and MMG was regarded as particularly vital for putting in place a plan to sustain the operations post-closure. Century has a member on the ADBT board who could facilitate this. The ADBT doesn't have an office or base in the communities which community members could come to when the financial experts are visiting.

ADBT is currently looking into sustainable business strategies for post mine closure. This includes securing income through investment and investigating partners or joint ventures to take on significant business ventures such as housing construction.

Aboriginal contractors

Contracting services to the mine continue to be held as a priority for meeting the communities' economic development aspirations. Aboriginal contractors were seen as a successful means to leaving a lasting positive legacy. Two main Aboriginal-owned businesses were often cited as success stories resulting from the GCA – Hookey Contracting and NPC, owned by WNAC. In the case of Hookey Contracting, being a family business is one factor contributing to its successful functioning. Both of these businesses appear to be well established and, having gained traction through their work at Century mine, are now extending their businesses into other areas (work for councils etc.). Both these companies hope to gain work in the rehabilitation of the mine site post-closure.

Community leaders and the Aboriginal contractors themselves saw enormous opportunity for Aboriginal organisations, groups, and companies to come together to undertake the rehabilitation work at Century and ongoing environmental monitoring. The possibility of Joint Venture partners were mentioned as a method to secure the necessary capacity and professional advice on rehabilitation techniques.

However the consultations highlighted some challenges both in gaining contracts with the mine and in extending work beyond being a supplier to Century which will be necessary for businesses to continue to thrive post-closure.

One such challenge is the difficult negotiations required for Aboriginal people to work on land that is not their own:

“There are more politics of blackfella going on other blackfellas' land than a whitefella going on blackfellas' land” (Burketown interview).

Securing and retaining contracts with Century remains a fiercely competitive commercial environment where margins are said to be tight and keeping a contract requires constant effort. For instance, it was reported that a number of smaller contracts around the mine site that existed previously for the camp, grounds, cleaning and laundry, were subsequently aggregated into one contract. This made it too difficult for smaller locally-based Aboriginal contractors to compete with larger companies for the contract.

There were also challenges for contractors seeking to have a high number of Aboriginal employees. One contractor interviewed said that they couldn't employ more Aboriginal people because of issues around cultural obligations (e.g. funerals) and needing to have a

stable workforce. Similarly, contractors often require workers to be more skilled than the mine (e.g. to work for a contractor, employees need to be able to do more than drive a truck – they also need to know how to maintain and repair vehicles).

Such factors constrain the employment opportunities for Aboriginal people with contractors and prompted some suggestions. While there are Aboriginal contractors on the mine site, it was reported there could also be more positive support and encouragement from Century management by recognising the benefits that Aboriginal contractors contribute to the community more generally. It was also suggested that the CSP manager could help educate new managers in the mine about contractors and priorities for Aboriginal businesses, particularly the contract manager:

“It’s a shame that the new managers don’t fully understand the GCA agreement. Problem when you get a new manager. Every new manager that comes on you have to re-educate them” (Burketown interview).

“We could have written something like that in the agreement that all contracts would be joint ventures with Aboriginal people” (Burketown interview).

Despite such wisdom of hindsight, the existence of the GCA has been invaluable to securing both Aboriginal employment and contracts for Aboriginal businesses so as to ensure Lower Gulf residents participate as fully as possible in Century Mine and related ventures:

“I personally say for all Aboriginal people, if that GCA agreement wasn’t on Century, there’d be no black people working on there. It wouldn’t be many anyway. There wouldn’t be Aboriginal contractors I can tell you right now” (Burketown interview).

Increased Aboriginal employment, high levels of self-esteem and pride, increased capacity and skills in running businesses are said to be some of the benefits of Aboriginal-owned contracting businesses. Consolidating and increasing opportunities for more contracts to be given to Aboriginal enterprises was seen as a major means for enhancing economic gains from the GCA.



Figure 7: Hookey Contracting Truck

5. Keeping Aboriginal culture and traditions strong

The GCA recorded “the desire of Aboriginal people to revitalise their cultures and societies”. Keeping Aboriginal culture strong remains a high priority for Aboriginal communities yet evidence was lacking to indicate significant progress under this aspiration. Maintaining and enhancing culture was mentioned in several contexts relevant to the GCA, including cultural heritage management, on-country visits, art and culture centres, specific cultural programs and cultural awareness instruction.

Cultural heritage management

From the outset of mining, cultural monitors have been engaged on the mine site to manage the red ochre in the pit and other cultural site issues. The GCA anticipates an Aboriginal Site Management Plan will be prepared in relation to significant Aboriginal sites within the project area. Formal management of cultural sites through a program of ongoing monitoring demonstrates respect of cultural interests and recognises the importance of culture and traditional interests in the land. Through undertaking monitoring activities there is an opportunity for knowledgeable people to pass on cultural knowledge to others particularly the younger generations.

The archaeological surveys undertaken for the mine have resulted in the collection of artefacts that need to be housed. Aboriginal owners want to see progress on a ‘Keeping Place’ for artefacts collected from mine site and also Lawn Hill National Park. The Waanyi PBC was said to be active in this regard.

In both cultural monitoring and archaeological surveys it is presumed that significant amounts of cultural data have been collected. Opportunities exist to develop projects around sorting, preserving and identifying cultural aspects that could be shared to increase cultural knowledge in younger generations. Such projects could be interlinked to other initiatives mentioned such as the building of the Keeping Place and focus on creating active engagement with the material.

It was mentioned that artefacts at Lawn Hill National Park are stored there and they should have a proper place. There are differing views over the ‘Keeping Place’ and cultural centre being either open to public versus a closed facility:

“The Keeping Place process has bounced around for 15 years. [Lawn Hill National Park are] custodians of artefacts that come from the mine and feel uncomfortable about that... The [Keeping Place cultural centre] initiative is coming from the PBC... [The] main concern is infrastructure - capital investment – that may not attract people. [What is important is] doing it right, not over-capitalising” (Lawn Hill interview).

“If you had a lands officer or a natural resource officer, who was assigned to looking after that, it would be a safer way to keep it over time. For example, [if the] lands officer is part of local government [and] they manage the park and Keeping Place” (Lawn Hill interview).

Participants involved in Waanyi cultural and language programs also pointed to work done over a decade ago on recording Waanyi rock art sites. Professionals involved in this work have noted a general lack of protection and care for local rock art and heritage sites in the

region and opportunities exist to build on this work in terms of management and protection of the sites. Cultural programs could also be linked to school excursions to give an added value the desire of school communities to have more interaction with the mine.

On country visits

Aboriginal ownership of the Lawn Hill and Riversleigh pastoral leases has enhanced accessibility to traditional Waanyi lands. This could be enhanced further through a program of school visits or management of high value cultural or environmental sites through groups such as the CDEP or Aboriginal Rangers. Engaging old people as part of the visits would further open opportunities for cultural maintenance.

Cultural programs

There are a few examples of funds controlled under the Aboriginal domain by virtue of the GCA that have been used to vitalise Aboriginal culture and heritage. For example, WNAC are using funds from the dividends from NPC's contracting work as well as eligible body payments to conduct culture and language programs.¹⁵ The Waanyi language program, which was running a language camp using the facilities at Adel's Grove at the time of the community consultations in July 2012, was said to be highly valued by Waanyi people. Waanyi language resources produced under this program will be used in schools as a learning tool and way to increase knowledge and appreciation of Waanyi language:

"And even that language and culture camp which was just a really significant. Even for Waanyi and Waanyi people to have a dictionary and have the linguists there, the fact that there were children there that knew that they were at a Waanyi language camp was reward enough. And seeing six or seven Waanyi women with our Waanyi linguist talking language and laughing about language and getting involved in language is some sign of success and progress for Waanyi Nation" (Brisbane interview).

Arts Centres

Aboriginal cultural identity and traditions can be enhanced by the development and support of Art Centres in the communities. At Mornington Island there is an active art centre, Mirndiyan Gununa Arts Centre, which supports up-and-coming and established artists that have works in the collection of the Queensland Art Gallery. The central vision of Mirndiyan Gununa is to maintain, develop and promote the cultures of the Lardil, Kaiadilt and Yangkal people and provide assistance to other Gulf cultures and communities to do the same. The recently established art studio attracts a regular cohort of mostly women artists. Since 1973, the Mornington Island Dancers have undertaken many performances in Australia and overseas. The Art Centre also interacts with the school by providing cultural dance lessons. The Art Centre says funding has become increasingly difficult and sales have slowed since the global financial crisis. It has received assistance from Century with flights for dancers to attend performances off the island, but this appears to be *ad hoc* rather than a regular commitment.

¹⁵ Further information available at <http://www.northernprojectcontracting.com.au/Our-Community/Community-Projects.aspx>

At Normanton, Bynoe¹⁶ recently established the 'Three Tribes Gallery' (Gkuthaarn, Kukatj and Kurtijar) which comprises a workshop and a retail art gallery. The art gallery runs workshops where professional tuition is offered. Several local Indigenous artists are employed to produce a wide variety of art pieces from hand-painted coffee mugs and oil-on-canvas paintings to more traditional items such as hand-crafted Indigenous musical instruments. These items are then displayed and available to buy from the Three Tribes Gallery located on the main street at Normanton. The social, cultural and educational value of such a facility is illustrated by the community arts program that was hosted in 2010 which worked with Indigenous students who had disengaged from school to reconnect them to formal learning through film, script writing, storyboarding, editing and acting.

In outstanding contrast, Doomadgee does not have an arts centre, although there was clearly many artists as evidenced by the pieces of art housed in various offices and locations across the community. Paintings were also evident at the Doomadgee Roadhouse which reports that there is considerable interest in Doomadgee art from passing tourist traffic but no ready mechanism for purchasing the art. NPC, through its community development initiatives, has invested in some Doomadgee art works for its offices and promotes artists through its newsletter, the *Waanyi Wire*, as a proactive measure in lieu of an organised art centre. The community members suggested an art centre would be a good initiative and would have support from the community.

Backing Indigenous Art is a Queensland Government initiative which started in 2007 and aims to develop a sustainable and ethical Indigenous arts industry in Queensland. While Mornington Island is linked into the Indigenous Art Centre network and hubs, with a specific focus on Far North Queensland programs, Doomadgee and Normanton are not. The key showcase event, the Cairns Indigenous Art Fair, featured works from 14 Indigenous arts centres in August 2012 and the absence of works from Doomadgee and Normanton was notable particularly given the aspirations for keeping culture strong under the GCA.

Cultural awareness programs

Cultural awareness programs were mentioned as a means not only to create a commercial enterprise but also as a means to enhance cultural knowledge. For example Mirndiyan Gununa has developed a Cultural Awareness Program that was designed to assist newcomers to the island with understanding and appreciating Aboriginal culture and equipping them with skills to improve communication. Opportunities exist around Century's employee induction which currently highlights Aboriginal cultural attachment to the project area as part of the broader site induction. In a manner common in other mine sites in remote Australia on land with strong Aboriginal cultural interests there could be more done to involve local Aboriginal people at Century in conducting cultural awareness programs. The purpose would be two-fold, to equip outsiders with awareness and skills to promote positive interactions between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal workers on site, and also to create awareness and appreciation of the cultural interests Aboriginal people have in the land affected by the mines operations. In some ways this awareness is created by the significant proportion of Aboriginal employees on site but in a casual and *ad hoc* way. Formalising some cross cultural learning would enhance and extend the informal interactions that currently occur.

¹⁶ Bynoe Community Advancement Co-operative Society Ltd was incorporated in 1979 as an Indigenous housing provider and has subsequently expanded its activities to many community development initiatives and social enterprises.

6. Protecting the land and environment



Figure 8: Waanyi PBC sign near the entry to the Century mining lease

Outcomes of the GCA to date

The majority of Aboriginal participants in the community consultations identified as owners of various parcels of land which are affected by the mine operations. Land was said to be at the heart of Aboriginal culture and source of their identity. Aboriginal interests in land lies at the most fundamental level in the GCA and is dealt with through a series of transfers of interest in certain land and establishment of mechanisms for assuring environmental protection from the effects of the operation of the mine. Major outcomes of the GCA include Aboriginal ownership of Lawn Hill and Riversleigh pastoral leases, grants of land to Aboriginal people at Bidunggu and Karumba, and attainment of recognition of Native Title over the Lawn Hill National Park. In addition, the GCA facilitated development applications and funding towards the provision of infrastructure and services on Gkuthaarn and Kukatj land in Normanton. The Century project also stimulated Native Title claims around the mine, the Waanyi Native Title determination as well as determinations of Native Title over the Wellesley Islands in the Gulf of Carpentaria. There now exists a substantial Indigenous estate in the Lower Gulf which lays a solid foundation for potential positive legacies from the mine.

Land management and environmental protection

Century conducts a range of land management and environmental activities which could be leveraged to assist the development of more regional and sustainable land and environmental management programs involving Aboriginal people. Shifting the focus to creating benefits for Aboriginal people in managing land use presents major opportunities.

Under the GCA, the Native Title parties hold substantial rights to participate in the environmental management regime at Century. This involvement is governed mainly through the Century Environment Committee (CEC) which employs an Aboriginal Environmental Liaison Officer ostensibly as an agent of the GADC on behalf of Native Title holders.

However in practice the Liaison Officer is paid directly by Century, possibly as a result of the limited way the GADC has functioned throughout the life of the agreement. Substantive functions of the CEC involve monitoring, reporting and reviews.

From the community perspective there is a sense that while Century manages the environmental effects of the mine and there is a program of environmental monitoring, this information is not fed back to stakeholders in a regular, consistent and meaningful way. For example, water monitoring of affected creeks around the mine site and Lawn Hill National Park is said to occur. While the lack of feedback can be assumed to mean that no environmental effects are discernible, in the absence of an explanation of the monitoring program and results, concerns persist and anecdotal evidence of reduced water flows and effects on biota take on an elevated status. Similar comments were made in relation to environmental monitoring around Karumba Port and in the Gulf of Carpentaria. Assurances by Century that loads of lead and zinc concentrate are causing no cumulative environmental harm were requested.

Not only do communities want to be engaged more in receiving results, the growth of Aboriginal ranger groups have boosted (and equipped) an interest and desire to participate in various parts of the environmental management regime. There are Aboriginal people working in the Environment Department at Century including the Aboriginal Environmental Liaison Officer. Participants indicated that more Aboriginal people working in that area of the mine would be desirable. Building on that were suggestions that Aboriginal ranger groups in particular could be involved with land and environment management activities at Century such as weed and feral animal control, fencing, water, and fauna and flora monitoring.

With the talk of closure and rehabilitation, the potential for increasing direct Aboriginal participation in these activities was seen as a major incentive for a renewed and expanded form of engagement between Aboriginal people and the mine. An underlying objective is not only employment of groups but increasing the confidence in the environmental protections measures and bolstering the assurances promised under the GCA that the land and environment would be looked after. Specifically the consultations recorded that:

- Aboriginal traditional owners are keen for ongoing involvement in environmental monitoring (and heritage protection) of the mine's activities, including the mine site, pipeline, and loading facilities at the port of Karumba.
- Native Title holders want to be involved in the design of the rehabilitation and receive priority for rehabilitation work (both current and future) on their country.
- Seed collecting, weed and feral animal control, and environmental monitoring are activities that are seen to have both economic and cultural value.
- Early planning is considered necessary to make this happen.

Ranger groups

While ranger groups exist at Normanton, Burketown and on Mornington Island, funded through Wild Rivers initiative and the Commonwealth's Indigenous protected area program, the absence of a Waanyi ranger group stood out as a significant shortfall. At Doomadgee there was an understanding that four ranger positions were designated for Waanyi people and indications were that some attempts to enlist Waanyi rangers had occurred. Suggestions from the existing ranger groups were couched in the form of exchange,

whereby assistance was on offer to impart skills in things such as weed control and biological monitoring to any fledging Waanyi group via working together on the mine. At least one ex-CEC Aboriginal Environmental Officer works as a ranger coordinator so there was seen to be good points of engagement to develop these ideas further. The Waanyi PBC also expressed interest in hosting a ranger group.

Specific environmental issues raised

Many of the participant responses in relation to the environment expressed concern over specific and sometimes long standing environmental issues associated with Century. These are recorded below and mentioned briefly as it likely that Century is well acquainted with the detail of the issues. Seeking resolution to the concerns would clearly improve community perceptions of Century as a good manager of environmental impacts.

- The cyclone mooring buoy at Bentinck Island causing is of acute concern for Aboriginal owners. It was said the buoy was place on an area of cultural significance with no consultation. A strong case was made by Native Title holders that the buoy should be shifted away from the sacred site and apparently this request is long standing and certainly is a current source of grievance. The community do not want the buoy where it is currently located.
- Water from the evaporation ponds from concentrate dewatering is potentially affecting the quality of Kurtijar Aboriginal Corporation (KAC) land at Karumba and concerns exist over run-off from the ponds (see Appendix 5 for photos): *"[I]t's more or less the maintenance of where they've run the pipeline and they've got trenches there to run the water to. All that there is just filled up with slurry at the bottom, it has just sealed it in and it's just running over everything. We've been there with shovels trying to dam it back up"* (Normanton Interview). While the evaporation ponds are on Kurtijar land, it was reported that Kurtijar people don't receive any compensation and were not included in the Agreement: *"[T]he mine didn't look no further than those individuals. They overlooked Kurtijar. Yet they can use our piece of land down there for their waste and yet none of us have got anything to say"* (Normanton interview). The evaporation ponds don't seem to be providing benefit for KAC land as it is unclear whether the water can be used by stock or for irrigation purposes. Results of water monitoring are not adequately communicated back to the landowners. Concerns were also expressed about how to manage the evaporation ponds after closure: *"If the dam runs dry when they leave, it's no good us pumping water into it, because we don't know what's in the dirt underneath it"*. (Normanton interview). Further engagement between Century and Kurtijar Aboriginal people and clarification around monitoring of the evaporation ponds and run-off is required.
- Pipeline spillages were mentioned and issues with the pace, adequacy and method of clean up in relation to their impact on cattle stations.
- The effect on marine biota at the loading facility, particularly with respect to the cumulative effects of small spillages associated with loading as well as accidental spillage events that have occurred.
- Whether there is pollution of waterways and creeks around the mine for example Page Creek and possible downstream effects as well as possible effects on groundwater drawdown.

A submission received by the Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection in 2012 included an attachment outlining many of the environment events mentioned by community members (refer to [Section 9: State Government Submissions: Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection](#)). The fact that the Department has raised these matters combined with community perceptions around these issue points to areas worth substantial ongoing attention.

7. Social improvements and stronger communities

Employability

Interviewees in the Lower Gulf communities pointed to a variety of social and cultural issues that impact on employability of Aboriginal people, particularly in Doomadgee and on Mornington Island. These include: low levels of literacy and numeracy; lack of confidence; family and cultural obligations (e.g. pressure to share income and ‘sorry business’ which may require leave at short notice); lack of exposure to mainstream culture (and lack of understanding on the part of non-Aboriginal people of Aboriginal family and cultural obligations); lack of work experience and corresponding work ethic; and lack of career aspirations and understanding of different career options.

Alcohol and other drugs are also a problem and can affect an individual’s performance (e.g. absenteeism not related to cultural obligations). Additionally because many people (particularly men) have minor offences, obtaining ‘blue cards’ is difficult and these are required for many of the positions in community services:

“You’ve got to remember that everybody that lives in an Aboriginal community has a criminal record. And you have to have a blue card to get that job” (Mornington Island interview).

Experience working at Century is appreciated because to some extent it breaks this cycle. It is regarded as benefiting a number of individuals in more than financial ways and as producing benefits that flow to the wider community. Some benefits noted in the community consultations included: increased self-esteem and confidence; increased work ethic and motivation; leadership capacity; health benefits, including motivating people to move away from drug and alcohol dependencies; experience communicating and socialising with other Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people; and more responsible behaviours generally, including less interpersonal conflicts and incentives for people to keep out of trouble with the law.

While employment has been very positive for those individuals who have had the opportunity, there is a general perception by community members both on Mornington Island and in Doomadgee that they have not had as many employment opportunities offered to them as other communities such as Normanton. Mixed opinions were expressed as to the reasons for this and a common complaint was “it’s not what you know, it’s who you know”.

Community members from Mornington Island and Doomadgee were generally of the opinion that Century should put in extra effort to address the social issues affecting employability and to assist community members to gain employment. Limited educational opportunities and exposure to non-Aboriginal culture are two factors affecting the employability of people throughout the Lower Gulf communities, but particularly in Doomadgee and Mornington Island. This underpins perceptions of a number of interviewees (most from outside of Normanton) that Aboriginal people from Normanton had an advantage over people from Doomadgee or Mornington Island in terms of gaining employment:

“That’s the whole problem. Our people got poor education. Normanton people lived around whitefella all their life. They know how to address anything across the table to a whitefella. Our people here we live among ourselves. We live together and we talk and communicate against one another... We don’t go and [talk] when whitefella

come. Our mob are shy, my people. When I first started over there [at Century] I didn't talk to any whitefella. But one old whitefella said to me if you want to do this, you have to get the shyness out of you, start lifting yourself up and ask a lot of questions. You're here to learn something. He lifted me up this old whitefella...The Normanton mob they really built with that education, they mix in with a lot of whitefella. Our mob, we just one mob, stay together" (Doomadgee interview).

A number of individuals spoke of Century being a supportive workplace for Aboriginal employees who have limited contact with non-Aboriginal society, because it provides mentors and other programs to deal with the challenges of a new and very different environment and pressures of work. Century has also provided opportunities to people with low literacy and numeracy skills. However, further assistance to gain and maintain employment would be appreciated such as more flexible working hours and accommodation of specific local circumstances. In terms of the latter, Mornington Island people suggested having a mentor at Century from Mornington Island who understands the dynamics of the community and issues that employees from Mornington Island may face would be helpful.

Job providers also stressed the value of extra support to many people in the Lower Gulf communities when they're beginning a job:

"Those that have been unemployed long-time, we have to hold their hand. Even getting them up to go to work, telling them, if you can't talk to [your employer], talk to us, and building their confidence – holding their hands every step of the way until they can do it themselves" (Normanton interview).

Century is one of the major employers that local job providers use to refer their clients, and it was noted that the mine's proximity to the community is a positive factor as it enables people to live in their communities and maintain their connection to their families, which is considered very important. Pastoral stations are another workplace where local people are referred for employment through job providers, but some of these are located far away. Century recently used an organisation called Beyond Billabong as a component of their 12-week pre-vocational program ("pre-vocs" would spend four weeks with Beyond Billabong undertaking station work and other life skills training before starting their program at the mine), and this was noted by a job provider in Normanton as a very positive initiative. Examples were provided to the research team of young people throughout the Lower Gulf communities, struggling with issues such as alcohol and drug dependency, whose lives had completely turned around after undertaking the Beyond Billabong program and subsequently gaining employment at Century.

A number of people working in positions of leadership in the communities had worked at Century mine at some stage and often as their first ongoing full-time job. Presumably, this experience has contributed positively to the career progression and livelihood options of individuals, although in most cases this was not explicitly acknowledged or only acknowledged after prompting. Some participants were adamant that they were sufficiently skilled prior to gaining employment at Century and that Century simply used their existing expertise. Many interviewees, however, acknowledged that their employment at Century helped them to pursue their career goals:

“I seriously believe that if I didn’t have that experience at Century mine, I wouldn’t be here where I am” (Mornington Island interview).

A paradox exists in that high Aboriginal employment at Century relative to other mine sites has not necessarily translated into on the ground community support for the company or recognition that Century has contributed to the social and human capital in the Lower Gulf.

Many community members said that opportunities at Century were not advertised as broadly in the communities as they could be. More advertisement around the communities about pre-vocational programs, traineeships, apprenticeships and other positions was consistently recommended. Increased communication may help to garner community support and recognition of the effort Century has made to train and employ local people:

“I don’t think there’s enough promotion, particularly around the training and development stuff... They’re really good courses and they get to mix with people from all over the world when you go to Century for these things. And I can’t praise the program I was involved in enough... [But there were] no signs saying, “Sign up for this course” etc. And it’s a shame, because they do really good stuff. And I only know because I went through it (Doomadgee interview).

Similarly there was reportedly a lack of feedback from Century to people who had applied for work or made enquiries about employment that left a sense that local people had to be very persistent in order to gain employment, which affects motivation.

Given the significance of this employment, the loss of a job can be very difficult for individuals and community members in terms of both income loss and self-esteem, increased support was recommended for community members who lose their jobs (because of family pressures or other reasons):

“Losing a job from Century is like losing a family member. With their pay they’re supporting a 20-member family group” (Mornington Island interview).

“When people stop working it affects their self-esteem and affects the health of the whole family, and eventually the community” (Mornington Island interview).

These concerns are very pertinent to an approaching time of transition to closure. As the workforce contracts there may be many individuals, and even multiple members of particular families, who face the prospect of losing their jobs.

Training

Training was consistently mentioned in interviews across the Lower Gulf in terms of what signatories to the GCA could do to ensure the mine leaves a positive legacy. It was suggested that Century could partner with State and Federal governments to support a straightforward, locally relevant training program with general as well as individual benefits.

There is a lack of employment opportunities across the Lower Gulf generally, and where positions are available, there is limited local capacity to fill them. Recent Federal Government initiatives have substantially altered the embedded CDEP schemes and left many people confused regarding the function and operation of job service providers and new arrangements with Centrelink, resulting in even less incentive to work.



Figure 9: Pre-vocational trainees with the researchers

There is a lack of opportunities for training on Mornington Island as with other Lower Gulf communities. It was suggested that Government programs should build the capacity of local people to fill positions likely to become available in the communities. For example, a new childcare centre has been built on Mornington Island, with a number of vacant childcare positions to be advertised shortly, but the likelihood of being able to fill these positions is low.

Similarly, schools and health centres emphasised the difficulty in recruiting employees (both local and non-local) into positions. There is also a dearth of skills in the trades in the Lower Gulf communities, such as carpentry, electricians, plumbing, as well as administration and business management. In such areas where local expertise is currently missing, many community members believed GCA signatories could make a positive long-term contribution by providing training that would be relevant to skills required in Lower Gulf communities.

For example, it was suggested that Century currently has training and/or employment on site in activities that would be relevant back on the communities. Specific activities mentioned included light vehicle maintenance, refrigeration mechanics, machinery operation relevant to council works (e.g. bulldozers and graders), boiler-making, carpentry, hospitality, mechanics and paramedics. It was suggested that re-training or new opportunities be provided to Century employees living in the Lower Gulf to assist them in gaining employment in the communities post-closure. A list of potential training areas that were suggested during the community consultations is included in Appendix 1.

There were reports that many people employed by Century have not received the necessary training or tickets to enable them to gain employment elsewhere:

“They say you have to sit in the dump truck for five years and then they can put you back on another machine. It’s hard for anyone to come back to get a job in the communities because they don’t have a ticket” (Doomadgee interview).

It was also suggested that some training opportunities sponsored by Century could take place the Lower Gulf communities themselves, rather than at the mine site. However, there

were conflicting opinions as to the value of this. On the one hand it might be successful for those who are not ready to be away from their families for weeks and bound by stringent rules. However, it was also reported that training in the communities can encourage absenteeism and may present more distractions than training conducted away from the communities:

“The biggest problem is kids have no incentive to work, and there’s no work in the communities. Community elements prevent them from coming to classes. We had TAFE at Normanton, but are not using it anymore –people wouldn’t turn up to classes because of ‘after-hours activities’” (Burketown interview).

Beyond Billabong was generally perceived as a very positive training initiative in providing ‘life experience’ for young people. The potential for a comparable program at Lawn Hill/ Riversleigh pastoral stations and possibly on Mornington Island was equally enthusiastically received.

Education

Low levels of literacy and numeracy are found throughout the Lower Gulf communities. These limits to human capital are linked to the quality and quantity of educational infrastructure and services available. Children in Bidunggu face particular challenges in gaining an education. The Gregory Education Facility (a sub-campus of Doomadgee State School), catering for students from Prep to Year 7, was closed in December 2012 due to low student numbers (which tend to fluctuate according to the movements of the local Aboriginal population). There were fears that facilities would not be able to be used by communities, for example by parents and children taking part in School of the Air.

Issues around student numbers at Karumba State School, which goes up to Year 7, were emphasised in a number of interviews. The school has lost a large number of students in recent years due to families moving to larger centres, and the school may have to employ fewer teachers in 2013. The Queensland Government initiative to move Year 7 into high school across the state in 2015 was noted as a factor in more families moving away from Karumba for their children’s high school education. Further reduction in student numbers may result from closure of the port facility and flow-on impacts on local businesses.

While Mornington Island State School and Doomadgee State School¹⁷ provide classes up to Year 10, there were few students enrolled in the higher grades. Difficulties in recruiting long-term teachers (those that would stay in the communities longer than two years, which was said to be beneficial for students and their families) were noted in Doomadgee and Mornington Island, however, this situation has recently improved. Achievement was noted to have improved at Doomadgee State School, but is still far from mainstream achievement levels.¹⁸

¹⁷ Interviews with Normanton and Burketown State Schools were not undertaken as part of the community consultations due to time restrictions. See general school data in the combined report for further information.

¹⁸ The interviews with Mornington Island State School and Karumba State School did not comment on achievement levels however this information can be gained through the Department of Education, Training and Employment or <http://www.myschool.edu.au/>.



Figure 10: Mural at Karumba State School

Attendance at schools in the Lower Gulf, which is strongly tied to literacy and numeracy outcomes, does not match mainstream standards. Attendance is said to be improving slowly and schools are specifically focussed on this agenda in line with *Closing the Gap* targets for education and the Queensland Government's education strategy.¹⁹ Illness and funerals were said to contribute to non-attendance, but there is also a high percentage of unexplained absences.

The employment of a number of local Aboriginal teacher aides at Mornington Island was noted as a positive initiative in encouraging attendance, as it fosters a connection between the school and the community, and this was noted as important in Doomadgee too:

"Ultimately what is going to make the real difference is how the school is connected to the community" (Doomadgee interview).

If students in the Lower Gulf do achieve well and wish to continue their studies beyond Year 10, they must go to boarding schools in the major centres such as Townsville, Cairns, Mount Isa, Brisbane and Charters Towers. Many of those individuals the researchers spoke with in the community consultations that worked in positions of leadership or had a history of stable employment in the Lower Gulf communities had been educated outside of the communities. This was acknowledged by individuals working in education as influential, and students were generally encouraged to leave the communities for boarding school at the commencement of high school, despite some Lower Gulf schools offering up to Year 10.

The costs associated with boarding school are difficult for many families and a number of interviewees suggested that Century or eligible bodies under the GCA provide financial assistance towards scholarships for boarding school or funding for educational programs (although the difficulty that might arise in selecting students for scholarships was also noted). It appears that Century has provided some scholarships in the past, but it's not clear if they are still offered. NPC fund boarding school scholarships in partnership with other organisations with experience in this area.

¹⁹ Available at <http://deta.qld.gov.au/indigenous/pdfs/closing-gap-13072011.pdf>.

Opportunities exist for Century to establish stronger relationships or partnerships with Lower Gulf schools, through providing work experience and visits to the mine, or having employees come to speak at the schools. Work experience and exposure to employment for school-aged children was considered important to motivate children to study and show them employment opportunities it might lead to:

“It’s about showing them there is a pathway. If you put that into Year 8, 9, and 10, the younger ones are going to think there’s something there for me too” (Doomadgee interview).

“Why should I do it? Because it’s good. Why is it good? Because we do it. It seems very much like a mouse running around a wheel” (Doomadgee interview).

The annual school exchange program run by WNAC has been well-received by community members. The program is in its second year and is called “You show me your world, I’ll show you mine”.²⁰ It is about encouraging school-aged children nearing high school to further their education, and showing them possibilities and opportunities that may not be immediately apparent back in Doomadgee by taking them on a trip to visit schools in Brisbane, the Gold Coast, and Stradbroke Island, among others:

“The whole concept is that these children do a presentation that they take to the other different schools, and the other schools also have one. So there’s that relationship-building. So they get to see that the kids in the city aren’t scary, and aren’t that different, and that’s why we pick schools with a high Indigenous clientele” (Doomadgee interview).

The flights that Century has provided for this program were acknowledged as invaluable as the costs of such extracurricular activities would be prohibitive. A similar program is offered on Mornington Island called the Titans Achievement Program (TAP). TAP runs programs which are aimed at broadening the perspectives of youth and assisting them into the workforce.

For students in the higher year levels it was suggested that more work experience programs would be particularly beneficial. However, young people need to be 16 to participate in training or apprenticeship programs and so many who leave school before 16 get ‘lost’ in the gap between finishing school and being able to gain work experience.

The importance of a good education is increasing. For the next generation, education and further training will need to be more formal and lead to qualifications rather than obtained on-the-job (including at Century) as in the past:

“I would always advocate for more academic involvement for our mob. We get tonnes of support for sports people, we get tonnes of support for things like rodeo and all these major events, but I always feel that there’s not enough support for people who want to go on to academic achievements. [People are definitely capable]. It’s just because there’s not that encouragement there. I’m not just meaning Century, I mean locally – there isn’t that push. I’m biased because I did good at school and I wanted to do it. The difference now is that a lot of the services that are here encourage

²⁰ More information about how this program was run in 2011 is available at <http://www.northernprojectcontracting.com.au/Downloads/DoomadgeeSchoolExchangeBrochurefromWaanyiWireDecem.aspx>

further training and the qualification – so they pay for that once you're employed for them. These guys there now, they've done things backwards – their jobs have trained them up” (Doomadgee interview).

Health

Health issues in the Lower Gulf

Health was seen to be linked to all areas of life, including emotional and social wellbeing, culture and spirituality. There was also recognition that the social determinants of health need to be addressed to improve overall health outcomes. The main health issues in the Lower Gulf communities raised during the community consultations were the following:

- Chronic health issues, e.g. diabetes (a major health issue for Aboriginal people; connected to foot health), heart disease, and renal failure (dialysis), as increasing in the communities.
- The need for early medical testing to catch chronic health issues and illness early.
- Alcohol, tobacco and other drugs (ATODs).
- Mental health issues, including high incidences of suicide and incarceration.
- Issues around nutrition and access to fresh health food: *“The thing is here that we get a barge once a week, but that runs out. People might buy healthy food, but when you live in an overcrowded house and you don't have much money, it doesn't go very far”* (Mornington Island interview).
- Sedentary lifestyles and a lack of regular recreational/sporting activities accessed by Aboriginal people in the communities.
- Medication issues – e.g. there is no pharmacy in Normanton (only Karumba) so people might be subscribed medication but can't get it immediately, or can't afford it.

Health services in the Lower Gulf

There are three main health service providers in the Lower Gulf:

- Queensland Health – funds hospitals (including emergency departments) and community health centres (which run health clinics and provide some diagnoses and referrals to specialists).
- The Royal Flying Doctor Service (RFDS) – provides emergency services, medical air transport, conducts consultations and provides advice to other health providers, patients and carers; runs a General Practice service and women and children's health clinics.
- Medicare Local – Central and North West Queensland²¹ (previously North and West Queensland Primary Health Care). Medicare Local is a private practice based in Normanton and funded by the Commonwealth Government health program to deliver health services in regions. Medicare Local works in conjunction with health professionals based in the community forming a network of primary health care organisations established to coordinate primary health care delivery and tackle local health care needs and service gaps.

Most centres in the Lower Gulf have a Primary Health Care Centre or Community Health Centre. The community health centres are involved primarily in preventative health, health

²¹ See <http://www.cnwqml.com.au> for further information.

education, and assisting community members to access health and support services. Health workers at the health centres can undertake general health checks but provide more of a support role, referring people to see specialists for particular health conditions. The health centres in most communities also have outpatients' clinics, emergency services and visiting health services. See Appendix 4 for further details.

However, there are limitations to the health infrastructure and services in the Lower Gulf. Key issues to note include the following:

- Difficulty attracting and recruiting health professionals to work in remote regions (accommodation is also an issue in Doomadgee and Mornington Island).
- Difficulty in getting local people to health services due to lack of knowledge of their existence, irregularity of some visiting health services, literacy issues, lack of culturally appropriate promotion of health services, and other cultural issues.
- Deficiency in some health services, e.g. dental care; the absence of doctor on the weekends was identified as an issue in Mornington.
- Challenges for women having to travel away from the communities to give birth (e.g. to Mount Isa). The establishment of culturally appropriate birthing services ("Aboriginal Women's Business Centres") in Doomadgee and Mornington Island was written into the GCA. While the infrastructure was built, legal ramifications surrounding the absence of an obstetrician have resulted in them not being able to be used birthing suites.
- Issues around mobility. There is a clear link between transport and health in terms of accessing health care and having time away from the communities, which assisted mental health issues: *"I often say to people, don't talk about health, talk about transport"*. (Mornington Island interview).
- Further education of community on health issues needed; effort is being made in this area.

There has been significant Commonwealth Government funding invested in primary and allied health provision in remote communities, as well recent changes which have moved health provision towards regionalisation. The potential for more engagement between health providers and local health councils as well as the Yippiippi Gulf Indigenous Health Council was noted, which would encourage more local community involvement and control in the provision of health services:

"In the local engagement strategy we have a template for them to report back to the local health council – e.g. what programs, what services, what allied health services coming into the community... What we really need to work on is services engaging with the community... At the end of the day, [we did] a survey around this community, and they want community control... There are these providers, let's look at that mapping of what is coming into our community. It's having Indigenous people engaged and feedback going to community... [E]nsure that there's job opportunities for local Indigenous people. If community is blocked out, you're going to get all these Indigenous workers but they're going to sitting down the bottom of the organisation... We want to see a pathway for local people to advance. They're getting training, but we want to see them advance. The opportunities need to be open to people" (Normanton interview).

Due to the difficulty of recruiting health professionals to work in the communities, there are numerous mobile health clinics²² that travel to the Lower Gulf communities on a regular basis (for example, there are approximately 25 that visit Mornington Island), however, getting people to attend these clinics is still problematic. The Wellbeing Centre in Doomadgee has attempted to address issues around awareness of and access to these services through the development of a community health calendar:

“An initiative of the health council through this office was creating a community health calendar. Before that it was hard to know when services were in town, and if you didn’t go to community health the week before, you wouldn’t know they would be there. So we started collating the information monthly and putting out a calendar. We leave a big pile at the shop. There’s a big picture of a foot the days [the podiatrist] will be there, a picture of a pregnant lady for the midwife. It used to be a lot more confusing” (Doomadgee interview).

As well as facilitating the community’s access to visiting specialist services, Wellbeing Centres provide support for clients who have problems with alcohol, tobacco and other drugs (ATODs) and mental health issues.

Contribution to the GCA aspirations in the area of health

Interviewees in the area of health services could not clearly identify a clear improvement in the overall health in the Lower Gulf communities since the advent of Century mine, but employment and health were noted to be strongly interlinked:

“When people look at health they don’t take employment into it. Employment is a very important part of health” (Mornington Island interview).

Furthermore, a number of health benefits from working at Century were mentioned in the community consultations:

- Health checks at Century have picked up on chronic illnesses that can be managed but that might not have been picked up otherwise.
- Provision of a clinical nurse at Century is beneficial considering the shortage of healthcare professionals in the Lower Gulf communities.
- General health education and alcohol and drug awareness programs and counselling provided in pre-vocational programs and at the mine site can bring lasting changes in behaviour.
- People working at Century have more self-esteem and more awareness of health and fitness and as such are more likely to adopt healthy lifestyles and less likely to engage in “self-destructive behaviour”.
- The gym and sporting facilities at Darimah Village encourage exercise and recreational activities.
- Century employees have access to a range of nutritious food.

²² Visiting health services to the Lower Gulf communities include, the Royal Flying Doctor’s Service, Dietetics, Obstetrics and Gynaecology; Paediatrics; Podiatry, Psychiatry; Respiratory Physician, Social Work; Podiatry; Hearing Health; Women’s Health; Oral Health; Physiotherapy; Pharmacy; Palliative Care and Aged Care Assessment; Renal Nurse, and Speech Therapy. From <http://www.health.qld.gov.au/wwwprofiles/mtisa.asp>.

- Employment at Century has enabled some people to purchase cars and boats so they can get out onto country and go fishing and hunting (this can benefit their families as well).
- Access to Century flights allows community members to travel to larger centres to access healthcare or visit sick relatives (and recently assisted patients undergoing dialysis in Townsville to come back and visit their families) (another benefit not exclusive to employees).

An issue was raised around mine closure and how this would affect those community members living on dry communities:

“It’s going to be a big issue with the local people that live in dry communities. Because out [at Century] they can get alcohol. When that closes down they’ve got to go back to their community and they don’t have it. And they like to have that six-pack at night, so that’s going to affect them health-wise. When they go back, they’ve got nothing, so what are they going to go to? Homebrew? Marijuana?” (Normanton interview).

One interviewee in the health sector on Mornington Island suggested that people are becoming more aware of health issues and more confident in asking questions related to their health; this has been encouraged through a number of health campaigns. However these health campaigns were said to be linked to *Closing the Gap* strategies rather than commitments in the GCA:

“...they’ve got employment and training written into the GCA...They [mention] health, but it’s not a big issue [in the GCA]...Which it should be because it is a big issue in this community” (Normanton interview).

Recommendations from community members in the area of health included:

- Further engagement between Federal Government, Queensland Government, health providers, and Aboriginal health councils, e.g. Queensland Government to host forum with regional health providers to continue to improve coordination and avoid duplication;
- Century could work with community members to educate them about health issues and create awareness of the need for good health to get a job;
- Greater focus on health issues in communities needed (including social determinants of health);
- There is a dire need for training of health professionals, including health workers, paramedics etc. There could be opportunities for Century to provide this training on site.
- The establishment of a dialysis centre in the Lower Gulf (people currently have to travel to Townsville and be away from their families for significant periods of time).
- More monitoring of health indicators in the Lower Gulf communities in line with the aspiration of the GCA.

Philanthropic activities

Access to Century flights by community members was widely acknowledged throughout the Lower Gulf communities as very beneficial, permitting many Lower Gulf residents a level of mobility which would be unobtainable otherwise. In fact flights were commonly considered the main benefit Century provides to communities. The withdrawal of the benefit of free

flights and possible reduction in numbers of scheduled flights or increased costs of commercial flights upon mine closure will impact some communities significantly. Some communities appear to access flights more often than others. For example, it was reported that Normanton and Karumba residents don't access flights to the extent of Doomadgee or Mornington Island residents. There also appeared to be widespread confusion about the flights available to community members – both commercially and on Century charters – and the procedures for accessing these. A range of concerns was expressed some of which may have been unfounded but which indicate the need for unambiguous information to be widely available. For instance it was reported by some community members in Karumba that they only request subsidised flights under exceptional circumstances and have to pay relatively high prices for flights. They understand that relatives of Century employees can access flights for free, whilst other community members cannot. Concern was expressed by a number of interviewees (particularly those on Mornington Island, due to its level of isolation) that Century is already attempting to cut back on community access to flights. They understand that there are new processes in place for the booking of community flights which, it is feared, may limit community access to flights. This was a particular concern in relation to accessing flights for funerals. Community members felt that Century provides less support to families for funerals than it has in the past.

Century's philanthropic activities were widely acknowledged in Karumba (e.g. building of recreation centre, assistance with maintenance of the school, school visits, support of charity events, and support to Karumba Progress Association), but people in Doomadgee and Mornington Island often expressed the view that they had received nothing from Century, despite Century also having supported a number of activities in these locales. There was some knowledge of Century having contributed to the construction of recreation centres and sponsorship of community sporting events.

The processes around MMG's sponsorship of community activities are not clear to many community members and organisations and there is a sense that the donations that Century provides are somewhat piecemeal. While some organisational representatives were aware of a sponsorship form, it appeared that many community donations were managed on an *ad hoc* or reactive basis. A number of interviewees suggested that the processes and criteria around community sponsorship and donations should be clearer, as they weren't sure who to approach if they wanted funding from Century for a community initiative.

It was suggested that Century:

- take a more strategic and planned approach to community investments, for example, by supporting regular events with wide community participation, such as Doomadgee rodeo or Mornington Island Cultural Festival;
- support ongoing long-term programs that have results that can be seen in the communities to assist community members to recognise Century's contribution and attribute a particular initiative to MMG;
- fund existing community programs that have proved to be successful but may not have guaranteed Government or Eligible Body funding in the future (e.g. programs run by Save the Children on Mornington Island and Doomadgee, or those run by WNAC);
- invest in a fund which could be used to support community programs and events in the future;

- provide clear guidelines on sponsorship or philanthropic activities; and
- promote its philanthropic activities to a greater extent to create awareness of Century's contribution in the communities.

As an example, the social programs and sponsorships undertaken by WNAC (with funding from NPC) in Doomadgee were noted positively by many community members, although not recognised as associated with Century.²³ The Doomadgee rodeo was perceived to be a major community event which helps build social capital, and NPC is currently the major sponsor and widely recognised as such, while resentment was expressed towards Century for not having contributed sufficiently towards this event.

There's a sense that some of the activities that were initiated by Century for the communities' benefit when the mine was owned by other companies have not continued, and some community members believe this is because the "novelty wore off".

"Initially they wanted to be part of the region or the community and now they just do their own thing because they've got their mine lease and licence to operate"
(Doomadgee interview).

There are a number of signs referencing Century's support (e.g. Lawn Hill National Park recycling collection, Doomadgee rodeo, Doomadgee kids' club) where activities are irregular or have ceased (for example, the rubbish collection at Lawn Hill National Park hasn't occurred in months and the bins are overflowing; community members have reportedly torn down an MMG sign related to sponsorship of the Doomadgee rodeo). It would be good to work out what has happened to these activities and either remove the signs, or resume the activities again, with a view to transitioning to sustainable community management. Currently they create a negative impression in the communities:

"You look at Century, when we have our rodeo, they're supposed to be our main supporter, but they gave us nothing. They just give us a box of sausages or something. And here you're talking about a multi-million dollar company. Kids club, has a big sign "Century mine... rah rah rah" but the kids club is appalling. Kids club is a building, council owns it – it's a local volunteer. But Century mine has a big sign saying "supported by Century mine" but it's in such an appalling state that no one can do activities there. [The organiser] actually goes to his home and does the activities there" (Doomadgee interview).

Conversely, some company initiatives have not been labelled as such. Karumba State School, as an example, would like MMG to provide signage to signal that the company assisted with the construction of the library courtyard (see Figure 11).

²³ More information about NPC's community projects is available at <http://www.northernprojectcontracting.com.au/Our-Community/Community-Projects.aspx>



Figure 11: Library courtyard at Karumba State School, constructed with the assistance of MMG .

Community infrastructure

Many interviewees (community members, National park, pastoral companies) expressed interest in the mine infrastructure, particularly Darimah Village and the dongas, after mine closure. It was suggested that they could be used for tourism or accommodation for staff from Lawn Hill National Park, or that the dongas could be transferred to other locations to be used for staff accommodation for businesses and pastoral companies in the region or as tourist accommodation in the communities. There is keen interest in the prospect that priority be given to transferring (donating or selling) these to local businesses or communities, considering the high costs of transportation of materials for construction in the Lower Gulf.

Housing

Affordability and availability of housing has changed since Century's advent and may be affected again during the closure phase, so this is another aspect of community infrastructure that was widely discussed in the community consultations. Because housing in most of the Lower Gulf communities is government-owned, and most communities either do not have a private housing market or have a very limited private housing market with inflated prices. Due to these complex land tenure issues, most Century employees living in the communities cannot invest in property in the Lower Gulf. In addition, banks will not provide home loans for properties in the Lower Gulf without a large deposit (reportedly up to 70%).

Government housing is means-tested, which means that people that are employed at Century may be pushed out of community housing without an alternative. This has possibly contributed to the migration of families out of the Lower Gulf. It was noted as an issue for younger people in particular, as the Government shows some leniency in its means-testing for long-term residents, but not for people recently employed and wanting to obtain their own house. Bynoe Housing Cooperative has assisted a number of individuals working at Century to obtain rental properties in Normanton as it does not use means-testing but provides rental properties at reasonable prices.

The housing market in Karumba is currently highly inflated, and there are a number of houses on the market. Rental was also noted to be high in Karumba, which provides a disincentive for people to live in the community. Housing prices went up in the early stages of Century, as the mine bought houses in Karumba at inflated prices to accommodate employees. Century currently owns a number of houses and concern was expressed that prices in Karumba (and Normanton) may deflate if Century does not properly manage its disposal of the houses it owns upon mine closure.

Overcrowding is still an issue in the communities, but was reported to be improving. The housing built by government in the communities is not designed in consultation with Aboriginal people, which is said to exacerbate health issues resulting from overcrowding.

Roads

While not raised consistently in the community consultations, it was reported that many roads in the Lower Gulf are in poor state and prone to flooding:

“I’m not sure if you would know, but one of the things that gets brought up is our roads conditions, and I don’t know if that was promised in the GCA, but I know there were promises about infrastructure. But when people complain about the roads, they say, we’ve got that big Century there, but they can’t even fix our roads” (Doomadgee interview).

There was interest in what would happen to the mine access road if Century closed, as well as whether existing public roads would be maintained to the same extent as they currently are, as this may impact tourist access to the region, particularly Lawn Hill National Park.

The community of Bidunggu has raised a specific issue directed at the Queensland Government’s commitment to road infrastructure in Gregory Downs and the Bidunggu outstation, which is covered in more detail in the following section.

Similarly, roads to access outstations on Mornington Island were said to be deteriorating.

Power

There was interest in what would happen to the power line that runs from Mount Isa to Century should the mine close.

In addition, Gregory Downs, Bidunggu and Doomadgee are not connected to the power grid and rely on generators. In regard to leaving a positive legacy in the Lower Gulf, it was suggested that Century could assist these communities in connecting to mains electricity or even investigate the possibility of solar power:

“That’s where the State government needs to step up and say if this mine is bringing that amount of infrastructure here, they should be putting it into these communities. Doomadgee’s got 1500 people that still rely on generated power” (Normanton interview).

8. Specific issues raised by the communities

Bidunggu

Bidunggu is an important symbol and tangible evidence of the Waanyi peoples' aspiration to live on country. Its existence is directly attributable to the GCA however grievances exist in relation to commitments to an Outstation Resource Centre that was intended to support the infrastructure and services of the community. Sustainability of the community requires a structure that enables maintenance of housing and reduced dependence on the mine for the power supply.

As part of the GCA, the Queensland Government committed to the development of the Gregory Outstation (Bidunggu).²⁴ While the Government provided this funding, the Bidunggu Aboriginal Corporation engaged a project manager to organise to build the seven houses currently in the community. According to information gained during the community consultations, there are 20 permanent residents in the community. However, this number may increase significantly at different points in the year, and more people would move to the community if there was the infrastructure to support them:

"The bottom line is bringing them home. Our people want to come back to their country" (Bidunggu interview).

The community of Bidunggu clearly articulates its desire to be self-sufficient and sustainable in the long-term, through business development and the collection of rents from community members to fund the accumulation and ongoing maintenance of community assets via a trust. These activities are not currently happening, and strong criticism was directed towards the Queensland Government as well as ADBT due to a perceived lack of assistance in building the community's capacity towards sustainability:

"They [the Queensland Government] threw money at Bidunggu, washed their hands and walked away. Nobody is listening to us" (Bidunggu interview).

"As traditional owners living on their land, we are left for last. Sometimes we're even forgotten" (Bidunggu interview).

Century currently delivers fuel to Bidunggu on a regular basis (around every six weeks²⁵) to fuel the generator which supplies the community with electricity (neither Bidunggu nor adjacent Gregory Downs are connected to the power grid). It appears that Century has also assisted with maintenance of the houses and other community infrastructure in the past.²⁶ It was reported to the interviewers that Century currently services the generator regularly and has also replaced the generator in the past, but has reduced its level of assistance with other services.²⁷ From the perspective of the community, there has been little outside assistance with maintenance of the houses over the past 12 years:

²⁴ The financial contribution for the development of Gregory Outstation was capped at \$3,000,000.

²⁵ Information not formally verified with MMG.

²⁶ The 10 year Review reported evidence of considerable support from Zinifex, including dry hire of a generator, repairs to the community generator and water infrastructure.

²⁷ Information not formally verified with MMG. The data contained in community sponsorship spreadsheets from 2004 only outlines one service provided to Bidunggu, which was to assist with the removal of wasps nest in April 2012 (valued at \$282).

“We are thankful for the minimum support we get, but it’s just band aid” (Bidunggu interview).

The houses currently have plumbing issues, which have arisen since the last GCA Review, and the cost of repairing these is more than what the community says it can currently afford out of its annual compensation moneys (considering the remoteness of the community and the amount of money it already puts towards paying for fuel, which is estimated to be around \$20,000-30,000 out of a total of \$70,000 per year²⁸). At least one house has had to be vacated because there is water leaking onto a power box. There are also reportedly mosquitoes in the septic tanks, which is a health risk.

According to a community leader, the community spent \$500,000 of its compensation moneys to build an access bridge and to bitumen the outstation road. They understood that the Queensland Government would reimburse this money in line with its commitment in the GCA to “contribute not more than \$15,000,000 for the cost of upgrading the Fiery Creek to Gregory Road (including access to Gregory Outstation)” and “not more than \$500,000 for the cost of upgrading the Gregory River Bridge.” However, this has not happened and clarification around this is required. Bidunggu Aboriginal Corporation has reportedly had some financial difficulties and there were also some issues around how payments to Century were managed in the early days. The community has apparently requested an advance of its compensation moneys for 2013 – 2016, which needs to be approved by the GADC. Details around the current financial status of Bidunggu Aboriginal Land Trust/Bidunggu Aboriginal Corporation would need to be clarified with the community.

The community emphasises wanting to have a “long talk with government” about how they’re going to sustain the community after mine closure:

“If they [State Government] sat down to talk to us, we’d come up with a scenario that would work for both government and the community” (Bidunggu interview).

The community looks after all its own services, including rubbish disposal and as such does not pay rates to Burke Shire Council, which provides services to Gregory Downs but not Bidunggu. Without compensation moneys, the community would not have funds to buy fuel for the electricity generator or be able to maintain the houses. However, it was made clear by a community leader during the community consultations that Bidunggu doesn’t want to give the houses over to government to maintain or have to rely on services from the Government or Council. Instead, they would like to have their own electricians, plumbers and carpenters to maintain the houses, as well as their own business/es and collection of rents/rates to maintain community infrastructure and provide services. Their vision is to be their “own little Shire”. The community is dissatisfied with the outcomes of previous reviews, expressing that they feel like they have “repeated the same thing over and over but no action has happened”.

The 10 year Review recommended that the Queensland Government establish a clear policy in respect to Outstations and in particular the resolution of the situation at Bidunggu. The establishment of an Outstation Resource Centre in the Lower Gulf region was written into the GCA.

²⁸ Information not formally verified with MMG or fuel suppliers.

The following aspirations and opportunities were expressed by the community at Bidunggu:

- A sustainable business/es to support the community – this was emphasised, i.e. “we don’t want it, we *need* it”. The community expressed specific interest in starting their own roadhouse/store by purchasing existing land/infrastructure from a local owner of a store that used to operate near Bidunggu. They believe this would be a viable business considering the number of tourists who pass through each year (30,000-40,000) and the fact that the nearest store is in Burketown and not accessible in the wet season. Other possible business opportunities mentioned were a garage to service vehicles and a road construction business.²⁹
- A process/infrastructure set up in the community to collect rent from residents (e.g. an office).
- Community members trained in the trades (plumbers, electricians, carpenters). There are some people from Bidunggu who have gained some tickets working for the council and four people from Bidunggu are currently employed at Century, including 2-3 apprentices. The community would like to see more people from Bidunggu gain employment and training through Century.
- Upgraded power supply (currently relies on a generator which runs on diesel).
- More houses for additional community members.
- Additional community infrastructure, such as a school and sports/recreational facilities. The education facility at Gregory Downs was closing at the time of the researcher’s visit which leaves Bidunggu without a nearby school.
- Improvement of the aesthetics of the community (landscaping etc.).
- A community cemetery (currently no cemetery in Bidunggu).
- The use of compensation moneys to assist families beyond maintenance of community infrastructure (for funerals etc.).

Karumba

Century’s closure is expected to have specific impacts on Karumba due to the number of businesses operating in the township which are largely reliant on Century. The Report from the Business survey details the extent of these impacts. Other possible impacts of Century’s closure on Karumba to be noted include:

- impacts related to the dredging of the Norman River, which may affect the live cattle export and fishing industries;
- impacts on housing market (such as deflation of housing prices);
- impacts on mail and freight services, depending on whether they intend to continue servicing Karumba post-closure;
- impacts related to discontinuation of flights to Karumba, which are chartered by MMG, including community/business access to paid flights for special circumstances and maintenance of the air strip; and
- issues around the rehabilitation of the port site infrastructure and dewatering facility/evaporation ponds.

²⁹ This idea was apparently presented to ADBT but the community had not received feedback at the time of the interview conducted in October 2012.

Other specific issues raised during the business and community consultations in regard to current challenges in Karumba include:

- the need for further engagement between the Century and Kurtjar Aboriginal people and clarification around the monitoring of the evaporation ponds and run-off (noted in [Specific Environmental Issues Raised](#));
- issues around lead in rainwater tanks (Century does testing of rainwater tanks now, which was reported positively by community members); and
- families moving out of Karumba due to lack of affordable housing as well as the Government's decision to make Year 7 part of high school.

Impacts of closure on Shire Councils

Burke Shire Council will be the most impacted by Century's closure. Burke Shire receives approximately \$2.3 million in rates (two thirds of its rate base) from Century, the loss of which will have huge implications.

Century is also the Carpentaria Shire Council's single biggest rate payer, contributing approximately \$850,000 out of a rate base of \$3 to 3.5 million, which will also represent a significant impact upon mine closure.

Both councils are seeking closer engagement with Century and adequate warning in terms of closure plans so that they can undertake their own planning.

Carpentaria Shire Council also emphasised its concerns around land and infrastructure rehabilitation, particularly the shed at Karumba, the pipeline and contaminated land. It does not want to be left with the responsibility of dealing with environmental issues or degrading infrastructure associated with the mine. While the Council is not interested in obtaining the shed at Karumba post-closure, it would be interested in the houses owned by the mine in that town. Other issues raised were the impact of mine closure on road infrastructure and airstrips in the region. The Carpentaria Shire Council, for example, currently collects landing fees from Century, which are used to reseal airstrips every six to eight years.

In addition, Carpentaria Shire Council raised some issues around MMG's access to the pipeline, as recently the protocol around access wasn't followed. Another issue raised was that in 2002, there was damage to one of the main roads in Karumba town, and the compensation has only recently been paid (which means the Council has to fix the road with compensation money calculated at 2002 prices).

9. State Government Submissions

The Queensland Government is a signatory to the GCA and has made specific commitments as part of the Agreement. Some of these are consistent with other undertakings related to the COAG agreements about *Closing the Gap* as expressed in Local Implementation Plans for Doomadgee and Mornington Island as well as to the performance targets set in Local Indigenous Partnership Agreements between the State Government and these two communities. Under current administrative arrangements of the State Government, five Ministers hold responsibilities in relation to the Century Zinc Act:

1. Premier (Department of the Premier and Cabinet)
2. Deputy Premier, Minister for State Development, Infrastructure and Planning (Department of State Development, Infrastructure and Planning)
3. Minister for Transport and Main Roads (Department of Transport and Main Roads)
4. Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection (Department of Environment and Heritage Protection)
5. Minister for Natural Resources and Mines (Department of Natural Resources and Mines)

The Queensland Government also has its own direct information-sharing arrangements with both Century and the CLAC. However input was solicited from relevant State Government Ministers for this research. CSRSM received five submissions from Queensland Government Ministers/Departments:

1. Minister for Natural Resources and Mines;
2. The Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Multicultural Affairs (DATSIMA);
3. Office of the Minister for Education, Training and Employment;
4. Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection; and
5. Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry.

The key points raised in these submissions are outlined in the following sections.

Minister for Natural Resources and Mines

Current status of DNRM commitments under the GCA

- Freehold land at Karumba is now held by the Barlawink & Warrmithc Land Trust.
- Land at Normanton is now held by the Normanton Aboriginal Land Trust.
- Title for Turn Off Lagoons is now in the name of Turn Off Lagoon Pastoral Holding Company and Riversleigh Station and Lawn Hill Station are now in the name of Lawn Hill & Riversleigh Pastoral Holding Company.
- The Department of Natural Resources and Mines (DNRM) has contributed \$400,000 towards the determination of claims of Lawn Hill National Park and intends to contribute a further \$200,000 towards claims processes and negotiation of management arrangements, pending the finalisation of claims.
- Right, title and interest in Pendine and Konka have not been transferred to the Ganggalida people (still in company name).

Rehabilitation

- The Century site has approximately 3000 hectares of disturbed land that requires rehabilitation under the closure plan.
- Conditions placed on project development will mean that monitoring environmental performance post production and rehabilitation would be required for a number of years.
- Identifying the correct labour skills required now, for the future closure and decommissioning are critical to providing a suitable lead in time to assist with re-skilling and training the local Indigenous workforce. This will help to ensure that opportunities for Indigenous employment continue as long as possible post production and provide a source of income for local communities in the Gulf region.
- Century, with support from the Queensland Government, has established a number of effective Indigenous training programs which support pathways into full time employment for traditional owners.
- Indigenous employees have received a number of national and regional training awards including the 2008 Australian Mining Trainee/Apprentice of the Year. Further, in 2011 employees received three awards at the regional NAIDOC awards including Indigenous Employee of the year.

Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Multicultural Affairs

- Concerns have been raised with the Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Multicultural Affairs (DATSIMA) regional office that traditional owners wishing to move back to the land will have no funding options available to them.
- MMG sponsors various community organisations and sporting clubs and the impact of losing this funding on the broader community is unknown.
- The publican of Gregory Downs Hotel has raised concerns about the economic impact that the closure of the mine will have on the premises which is currently considered an important meeting point and coordination point for various services in the community.
- MMG needs to ensure that any cultural heritage places impacted by the mine during its operation have been appropriately managed and that any mitigation works committed will be fulfilled.
- The main opportunities for partners to focus on in the remaining years of the mine:
 - Increasing the number of people trained to take up new opportunities.
 - Setting up infrastructure for life after Century.
 - Investigating opportunities in the area that they can partner to.
 - Preparing people for job readiness with skills such as resume development and investigating barriers that hinder people from being job ready.
 - Working with employees for six months prior to them ceasing work to help them manage any debt and ensure they can economically live on a lower wage and manage their budget.
- Problems that could worsen when production stops:
 - Lack of employment opportunity if people do not move on to other employment.
 - Individual debt could worsen.
- Strategies to keep a strong local economy, culture and looking after country:
 - Training to ensure individuals are job ready for the uranium mine.

- Setting up infrastructure to increase employment opportunities for current and future population of workers.
- Working with government to set up ongoing training.
- Strong accountable groups that could work together:
 - Traditional Owner groups.

Office of the Minister for Education, Training and Employment

- The GCA, registered in 1997, committed the Queensland Government to provide financial support for training and employment in the first two years of operation of the mine.
- While there is currently no legal obligation for the State to continue this financial support, the GCA stipulates that Century, Native Title Groups and the GADC would cooperate to encourage governments to provide a significant contribution for employment and training of local Indigenous people in association with the project.
- The Department of Education, Training and Employment (DETE) has continued to support training programs at the mine site due to the potential for employment outcomes for Indigenous people in Lower Gulf communities.
- Currently Century employs 38 apprentices and 16 trainees, who are local Indigenous people.
- There is a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between DETE, Skills Queensland, MMG Century Limited and the GADC which focuses on the delivery of programs that prepare members of Native Title Groups for entry into apprenticeships and traineeships.
- Under the current MoU, DETE has funded one program which was completed on 31 August 2012 with nine out of the 15 participants securing apprenticeships and traineeships.

Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection

- The Department of Environment and Heritage Protection (DEHP) continues to engage actively with MMG in order to ensure compliance with their environmental performance requirements under the *Environmental Protection Act 1994*.
- DEHP undertakes inspections to assess compliance and has recently revised the financial assurance of the mine to ensure it has the funds to implement rehabilitation measures should MMG be unable to do so.
- DEHP engages regularly with MMG and community members through the CEC.
- As a result of environmental assessment conducted following the releases of mine affected water, the company has introduced the following on-site water management improvements at its own expense:
 - construction of a new sediment dam and expansion of two existing sediment dams to increase contaminated water capacity and minimise the risks of releases into the environment;
 - upgrade of contaminated water pumping and ancillary infrastructure;
 - construction of diversion structure at the evaporation dam to maximise contaminated water storage capacity;
 - development and implementation of an improved water balance and model to provide a better understanding of water management at the mine;

- undertaking of annual environmental impact studies of waterways potentially impacted by the mine;
- commencement of rehabilitation on the southern waste rock dump to minimise the generation of contaminated water and to prepare for mine closure; and
- development of a mine site rehabilitation plan.
- Specific prosecutions/evaluation notes issued by the DEHP:
 - Contaminated water releases (2009).
 - Pipeline failure in which zinc concentrate was released to land (2009).
 - Release of contaminated water into various creeks during the 2008/2009 wet season.
 - Release of zinc slurry caused by rupture of the Lawn Hill to Karumba pipeline (2012).
 - Release of contaminated water into Page Creek (2011).

Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

- Cessation of Century Mine operations will mean the end of a significant economic driver in the region, which may have significant flow on implications for employment, skills development and business opportunities, particularly as it related to Traditional Owners and communities in the Gulf.
- It may be opportune for the CLAC to give consideration to broader regional development opportunities such as improved extensive grazing systems and intensified agricultural development, similar to that currently being investigated in the neighbouring catchments of the Flinders and Gilbert Rivers.
- A strategy to explore agricultural opportunities through LHRPHC over the next three to five years may be worthwhile pursuing.

10. Opportunities for leaving a positive legacy

Aboriginal participation in mine rehabilitation and environmental monitoring

Significant opportunity exists for creating a sustainable legacy through use and development of Aboriginal capacity to plan, undertake and monitor the mine rehabilitation and ongoing environmental monitoring program on the mine site.

A strategic approach would aim to build on existing Aboriginal capacity as well as introduce additional skills and expertise and stimulate the formation of new Aboriginal groups to undertake environmental work not just for the mine, but for other agencies such as National Parks or the region's Shire Councils.

Considerable interest exists across all of the communities consulted for involvement in the rehabilitation and environmental monitoring. Strategic Aboriginal involvement would serve a range of aspirations

- information and knowledge of what is happening on country;
- assurances of environmental protection;
- participation in business opportunities;
- individual skill and corporate capacity development; and
- sustainable Aboriginal environmental agency.

Three broad areas of interaction were identified through the community consultations that generated significant interest and enthusiasm.

Traditional owner participation in rehabilitation and closure planning

Establishing a process to engage a broad group of Aboriginal people with traditional responsibility of the area of the mine site in the development of closure plans and rehabilitation would:

- ensure traditional owners' views are incorporated into mine closure including appropriate attention to any cultural sites and issues;
- provide an opportunity to resolve issues early, reducing risk of mismatched expectations;
- obtain veracity and validation of plans with the Aboriginal community ; and
- open a proactive point of engagement with traditional owners currently feeling excluded.

A participatory model would work best, perhaps a series of meetings/workshops incorporating mine site inspection and planning sessions that would convey design criteria and share problems to be solved. This is distinct to a unilateral information giving session. To be effective, participation would necessarily involve some of the elder Aboriginal owners from locations including Mornington Island. As reported above, a high level of engagement by mine personnel was experienced by Aboriginal Native Title holders of the mine site in approval process which is perceived to have diminished or disappeared as the mine was developed.

While it is understood closure planning has been discussed by some of the GCA committees, and a tour to a rehabilitated mine in the Northern Territory has taken place,

limitations on the committee structure with respect to achieving wider reach of Aboriginal stakeholders would be addressed through implementing such a process.

Concurrent or parallel processes relating to the pipeline and Karumba port could also be instigated with the relevant traditional owners and affected Aboriginal groups.

Aboriginal contracting for mine site rehabilitation work

Aboriginal groups and enterprises recognise potential contracting work opportunities that will be available as part of mine closure or transitioning to different minerals. Considerable civil and construction work is expected to occur, including reshaping waste dumps, spreading top-soil, constructing drainage control, bunding of pits, access roads etc.

Within the current Aboriginal contracting enterprises, there exists a basis for engagement over rehabilitation works. Areas of capacity development could be identified to build on existing capacity or equipment, such as tynes and ripping techniques and contouring of slopes. Experience could be garnered from other mine sites that have undergone closure.

Where an Aboriginal consortium could be established that developed particular rehabilitation expertise, such capacity would be in demand and highly transferable and sought after other areas, particularly where there are mining operations closing.

Aboriginal environmental and rehabilitation monitoring

A major development that distinguishes the past five years of the agreement with previous years is the development of functional Aboriginal ranger groups. Enormous opportunity exists to engage with these groups over aspects of the environmental management and monitoring, particularly with the rehabilitation which offers a long-life commercial opportunity. As reported above, ranger groups exist under the auspices of the CLC at Burketown, Normanton and the Wellesley Islands based on Mornington Island. These groups have a range of expertise including fauna and flora surveying, weed control, feral animal control, and fencing, all of which would be relevant to ongoing monitoring requirements of the mine. Gaps such as water quality monitoring would be areas to work with to obtain expertise and use professionals to engage with Aboriginal ranger groups to further enhance capacity.

Scope exists therefore for Century to spawn an environmental group through the CEC or within MMG. Initial efforts would be directed at identifying Aboriginal people with existing qualifications or aspiring Aboriginal land managers and recruiting these people as the nucleus for further development into a Waanyi ranger group. From the community consultations, the existing ranger groups identified opportunities for exchange of work and skills around rehabilitation and monitoring, not only for rehabilitation, but for monitoring of current operations such as at the Karumba port.

Supporting community development initiatives

The community consultations revealed a wide spread view that Century has not contributed tangibly to improvements in each of the affected communities however revealed a high level of interest amongst community members and organisations in working with Century to achieve lasting positive legacy in the communities themselves.

An array of government and non-government agencies are working in each of the communities servicing a myriad of programs. It is open to Century to engage at the community level through partnering with certain key organisations that would align with Century's objectives for improved community relations and social outcomes.

Concentrating effort and resources on one or two key projects in each of the main communities would be a significant step. Similarly, there would be value in adopting a community development framework with an emphasis on:

- community engagement and participation;
- building capacity and avoiding dependence;
- leveraging government input rather than substitution; and
- a long term outlook recognising that there's no quick fix.

Recent developments have seen the more progressive mining companies moving to stimulate or partake in community development initiatives in Indigenous communities in Australia. This is the case particularly where traditional approaches to benefit sharing, such as financial transfers and employment and training, are being found to have limited impact on improving social conditions.

Examples of community development

By way of illustration, there is a swimming pool within the school at Doomadgee which is closed. The consultations did not canvas in-depth the reasons for it not operating, although the school principal indicated it was a valuable asset with potential to encourage pupil attendance. Pools in Aboriginal communities are widely considered by experts to improve certain health issues particularly related eyes, ears and nose complaints. Substantive issues are likely to span a range of problems including: infrastructure in need of repair; responsibility for and cost of ongoing maintenance; and supervision of swimmers and liability. Initial engagement would be to ascertain level of interest to seek solutions to issues to reinstate the pool. Century's contribution could be focussed on repair of infrastructure and sharing its expertise in pool maintenance with parties identified with maintenance of the pool during participatory engagement with stakeholders. Presumably it is not the teachers that want to supervise swimmers, which opens up alternative options to seek collaboration with existing programs, for example the Duke of Edinburgh program run through the Police Citizens Youth Club (PCYC) or other relevant youth programs whose interested members could participate in lifesaver training and appropriate certification. While training would be auspiced by the relevant community organisation, Century could, for example, offer to host lifesaving practicals at its pool back at the mine village. While improving educational outcomes at Doomadgee school through better attendance is the overall objective, such a community development approach would also have created new skills and capacity development in pool maintenance and supervision in the wider community as well. Where such positive outcomes can be demonstrated, it would be expected that government funding and Shire assistance would be forthcoming.

A further illustration of how developing such an approach might work at Century is the issue with respect to Century's GCA employees who have limited asset accumulation and management of finances for long term security. Rather than saving, research shows there is a tendency for employees to spend income. Working with particular interested employees to

engender saving and long term financial strategies would be a valuable legacy from Century. With a community development approach in mind, Century could partner with community based organisations to deliver small group or individual workshops on managing finances with expertise to be brought in by Century. For example, the Men's Group and Save the Children program Mornington Island both deliver a range of programs for youth and men on the island, including family finances and health. Save the Children runs a financial health program in both Mornington Island and Doomadgee. Similarly, NPC runs a program for its employees whereby they can invest their money in a group saving account which earns higher interest.

Such organisations or similar agencies could be engaged to host workshops that aim to assist Century employees with financial management. If these workshops were open to other community members then the benefit would be spread further. Using a community organisation would be ideal to specifically increase their knowledge and capacity in the field. Again, partnering with government and shires could uncover program funds for this purpose.

In summary there is enormous potential to engage communities in a participatory and collaborative way on a few strategic issues which would extend and expand Century's contribution to sustainable and positive social outcomes.

GCA capital fund

The GCA provides annual payments to eligible Native Title bodies and the extent to which these benefits have translated into community benefit is variable across the corporations. How the eligible bodies spend their moneys is not well understood from the community consultations, and it is not obvious that structures or use of funds will provide broad sustainable benefit in the communities, particularly after the mine closes.

Under to the GCA, moneys are paid to eligible bodies through the GADC, which can, upon request, invest and manage funds. Indeed in establishing the GADC, the GCA required consideration of "whether to require that an agreed portion of distributable funds will be invested to preserve the capital and provide an income stream beyond the End of the Economic Life of the Project".

In practice GADC appears to have acted simply as a financial clearing house for Native Title holder compensation payments. Whether consideration of a capital fund was ever given or not, it is now timely to explore this measure. How the mine could engage or facilitate such an outcome is open, however, the possibility of the end of the economic life does provide a good impetus for parties to come together to discuss the option. It is noted that within the GCA the concept of the mine matching dollar-for-dollar funds raised by Native Title holders is discussed with respect to sport, and this style of incentive could be explored as way to engender thinking around this issue. There is of particular interest in the Lower Gulf communities in seeing Agreement moneys used, partly at least, to assist with: education, such as school excursions, boarding school fees and family visits; away from community visits (including for health reasons); funeral expenses; and sport and associated travel.

Community business development

Significant resources and effort are being directed through the ADBT to assist Aboriginal people to develop business in the communities, including stores, car hire, and concrete

supply. Capacity in communities to manage business is hindering sustained benefit, however, other limiting factors include small markets, seasonal constraints such as the wet season, and cultural issues.

Two areas of significant economic opportunity exist for long term sustainable business enterprise in the region. This is in the area of housing and construction, and in visitor accommodation, such as that already established on Mornington Island. An assessment is warranted to identify the potential for the establishment of an Aboriginal Housing and Construction company, with the eventual aim to take on construction in the RSD identified communities, which are the target for substantial Commonwealth housing funding. How this would be pursued would require wider discussion and involve the ABDT and Commonwealth Government. Century could play an important stimulus role by focussing on a specific project. For example, an outstanding GCA commitment was the construction of the cultural Keeping Place for artefacts recovered from the mine site. Another stimulus project could, for example, be a purpose-built office/meeting facility in Doomadgee, replacing the current dongas. Such a facility could be utilised by Century whilst it is operating the mine with a plan to handover to an organisation working to benefit the community or an enterprise spawned by Century such as an Art Centre (see below).

As mentioned previously, the other area of significant economic opportunity that exists is the supply of accommodation to visitors in the communities. There is clearly a large market for short- to medium-term accommodation at Doomadgee. Mornington Island has already built a series of cabins for visitors to service this market. If the Action Planning can stimulate progress at Doomadgee for visitor's accommodation or 'a central government business centre' then this would be a lasting positive legacy.

Keeping culture strong

Cultural heritage management

Significant opportunity exists for Century to leave a lasting legacy consistent with Native Title aspirations for maintaining culture through initiating cultural heritage projects with relevant Native Title organisations. The Waanyi PBC was mentioned in this regard.

The archaeological surveys undertaken for Century have resulted in collection of artefacts which need to be housed and the GCA a 'Keeping Place' for artefacts collected from mine site. There is also said to be artefacts at Lawn Hill National Park. In both cultural monitoring and archaeological surveys it is presumed that significant amounts of cultural data have been collected.

Opportunities exist to collaborate with appropriate Aboriginal organisations to develop projects around sorting, preserving and identifying cultural aspects that could be shared to increase cultural knowledge in younger generations. This could entail, for example, assistance with covering fees for a professional curator or other relevant professional.

If such a Keeping Place or Cultural Centre were to be established, other cultural activities and initiatives could be added, for example, a program to care and protect Waanyi rock art and heritage sites in the region. Cultural programs could also be linked to schools with excursions and educational trips. Capacity could also be developed to deliver cultural

awareness programs as part of Century's employee inductions or to develop cross cultural competencies for supervisors in charge of Aboriginal employees.

Art centres

In other regions of Australia, Aboriginal Art and Craft provide important alternate livelihood option, particularly for Aboriginal people with limited capacity to engage with the mainstream through jobs or business. The Mornington Island Arts Centre, Mirndiyan Gununa, and a fledgling local art store at Normanton, the Three Tribes, are existing points of engagement for exploring opportunities for Century to stimulate an economy around art and traditional crafts.

In contrast, Doomadgee does not have an art centre, although there are many artists. The community members suggested that an art centre would be a good initiative and would have support from the community. Investing in art works and promoting local artists through exhibitions or prizes is another area mentioned that Century could be helping to stimulate the region's Aboriginal art economy.

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Appendix 1: Suggestions of initiatives by community members

The community for which a specific suggestion was made has been noted in the table, but while some are specific to particular communities, the majority could be applied more generally as ideas that could be of value to the Lower Gulf communities more broadly. It should also be noted a number of suggestions were made multiple times by different stakeholders. For example, initiatives related alternative forms of training and employment were emphasised through the community consultations, particularly on Mornington Island and Doomadgee.

Area	Community	Suggestion	
Education	Mornington Island	Funding around education, e.g. scholarships to boarding school, support of school activities etc.	
	Mornington Island	Partnerships with local schools (beyond funding), e.g. visits from Century employees to local schools and follow-up visits by students to mine site; exchanges of information.	
	Mornington Island	Visits from Century mine employees to local school to talk to students about careers and different pathways.	
	Mornington Island	School visits to Century mine (focus on Year 9 and 10) .	
	Doomadgee	Continued assistance with flights for school programs.	
	Doomadgee	Sponsorship for School of the Air.	
	Gregory Downs	Support/assistance to keep Gregory Downs school open (was set to close down in November 2012).	
	Normanton	Programs for youth when they home for school holidays to prevent unhealthy and anti-social behaviour.	
	Training	Mornington Island	Training/apprenticeships on Mornington Island or at the mine in activities that are needed on Mornington Island and could represent an alternative economic activity post-closure (e.g. works related to maintaining outstations and outstation roads, administration, construction, carpentry, hospitality etc.).
		Mornington Island	Training in business development, capacity building, governance and financial accountability.
Mornington Island		Training back on the mine for council-related trades, e.g. boiler making and light vehicle maintenance.	
Mornington Island		Training in health-related professions – paramedics (with ambulance service at Century), health workers etc.	
Mornington Island		Training/tickets for light machinery (machinery that would be relevant back in the communities).	
Mornington Island		Training for rangers (mentioned that Century used to have a program around this).	
Doomadgee		Traineeships in landscaping, carpentry, plumbing, electricians, business courses.	
Doomadgee		Training opportunities at Century for CDEP workers.	
Normanton		Re-training in operating machinery that would be valuable for council works and enable re-employment post-closure.	
Employment		All communities	Involvement in rehabilitation work for Century – waste dumps, seed collecting, planting trees, establishment of a nursery etc.
	Mornington Island	Better and broader advertisement of positions at Century – e.g. website, job board or other centralised source for job vacancies, pre-vocational programs, traineeships, apprenticeships etc.	
	Mornington Island	Centralised advertisement of positions available on Mornington Island (not Century-related) e.g. job board.	
	Mornington Island	More support for Mornington Island people for gaining and maintaining employment at the mine (e.g. more flexible working hours, possibilities around a slower transition to full-time employment, a mentor from Mornington Island itself that understands the dynamics of the	

		community and the issues that employees from Mornington Island face, some training on Mornington Island).
	Mornington Island	Men's group or other already established social groups to offer assistance to workers at the mine – help with the transition to work, support around family issues etc.
	Mornington Island	Increased support for those employees that cease employment at Century.
	Doomadgee	Reinstate CDEP workers at the mine for activities such as landscaping, gardening or cleaning dongas.
	Normanton	Financial management programs.
Community Development	All communities	More strategic support of community events – e.g. annual events like the Doomadgee rodeo and Mornington Cultural Festival.
	All communities	Clearer guidelines on sponsorship or philanthropic activities, as well as promotion of what the company has provided.
	Mornington Island	Commercial investments which generate income/regular returns could be used for community development projects/social programs.
	Mornington Island	Continual funding for programs rather than one-off sponsorship.
	Mornington Island	Support of already existing programs that do not have secure funding, e.g. Save the Children projects in childcare and financial literacy, or the Men's Group.
	Mornington Island	Investments off-island (e.g. real estate) which generate regular returns could be used to fund social programs.
	Doomadgee	A trust to ensure continued community and social development programs in the area – possibly established with the PBC.
	Doomadgee	Programs towards improving the community's aesthetics, e.g. landscaping.
	Doomadgee	More ongoing, long-term community projects.
Sports /Recreation	Mornington Island	More sponsorship/funding for outdoor recreational activities – e.g. football team, recreational programs.
	Mornington Island	Building of sports/recreational facilities.
	Mornington Island	Assistance with off-island sports trips for individuals and sports teams.
	Mornington Island	Sports scholarships.
	Doomadgee	Assistance in getting the school pool back up and running (currently not used – requires maintenance).
	Normanton	A sports day or touch football game between the mine and communities.
	Karumba	Water park for the community.
	Karumba	Replace school pool with a 25m pool so that children can compete in swimming competitions.
Business Development	All communities	Assistance from Century/ADBT in identifying business opportunities and alternative industries– e.g. housing construction and maintenance, crocodile/barramundi/oyster farming, tourism etc.
	Mornington Island	Art provision to tourist industry in other parts of the Lower Gulf (taking into account that Waanyi might not want Lardil art sold at establishments on their land, but a combined centre might be possible).
	Mornington Island	Handover of visitor accommodation on Mornington Island to local ownership.
	Mornington Island	Development of oyster farming or other alternative economic activities.
	Doomadgee	Give preference and support to local Indigenous contractors (or any Indigenous contractors) to undertake rehabilitation works.
	Doomadgee	An Aboriginal business that could provide cultural training to government workers and undertake cultural inductions at Century.
	Doomadgee/Lawn Hill	The long-term vision of the owners of Adel's Grove is to pass the business on a local Aboriginal group, using a transitional model/slow handover to help build their capacity.
	Doomadgee/Lawn Hill	The possibility of revisiting a pre-existing arrangement whereby mine tours and the Century airstrip were used to bring tourists for mine tours and cultural tours of the Lawn Hill National Park.
	Normanton/Karumba	Development of a crocodile farm or further development of the barramundi farm at Karumba.

Culture	All communities	Regional Art network.
	Mornington Island	Support the Mornington Island Cultural Festival and other cultural activities on Mornington Island.
	Mornington Island	Mirndiyan Gununa (arts centre) runs a cultural training program for government employees – Century could look into opportunities to link into this program.
	Mornington Island	Assistance to rangers to be involved in or provide feedback to any cultural heritage monitoring or cultural studies currently underway around Mornington Island.
	Doomadgee	Assist with the establishment of an Art Centre in Doomadgee.
	Lawn Hill	Develop/fund programs to facilitate the protection, management and care of Waanyi rock art sites and other places of cultural significance (recent problems around graffiti and a general lack of protection and care for local rock art and heritage sites in the region).
	Lawn Hill	Opportunities for cultural tours in Lawn Hill National Park, including possibility of using Century flights to have weekend cultural tours for tourists (taking advantage of flights that are not full with FIFO workers).
	Normanton	Art and music programs in the communities.
Health	All communities	Queensland Government to host forum with regional health providers to continue to improve coordination and avoid duplication.
	Mornington Island	Accommodation support for patients and families in Mount Isa.
	Mornington Island	Financial assistance for a dialysis centre.
	Mornington Island	Assistance for Aboriginal health boards.
	Mornington Island	Health education programs.
	Normanton	Health and drug and alcohol awareness program with community.
	Normanton	Work with community to educate and create awareness of the need for good health to get a job.
Environment	Mornington Island	Involve the rangers at Mornington Island in environmental monitoring programs undertaken by MMG, which would 1) provide additional training for rangers; 2) increase level of confidence the community has in MMG's environmental monitoring processes.
	Lawn Hill	Involvement of local people with seed collecting, planting and any rehabilitation works currently taking place or due to take place in the future.
Infrastructure	All communities	A process for donating or selling the dongas at Darimah Village at a lower cost to local businesses, inc. pastoral companies, or community members (for accommodation, tourism, employee accommodation etc.).
	All communities	Assistant to get Doomadgee, Burketown and Gregory Downs linked to the electricity grid.
	Mornington Island	Discuss with council any infrastructure that would be useful to the community.
	Mornington Island	Solar power and freezers for at community store.
	Karumba	Donation of houses owned by MMG to community members or Native Title Groups.
	Bidunggu	Solar power for Bidunggu houses.
Transport	Mornington Island	More assistance with flights.
	Mornington Island	Alternative air transport as Century flights finish.
	Mornington Island	Public transport on Island.
	Doomadgee	Donation of old cars and buses from mine – would like to use for spare parts/training in mechanics (e.g. for use for training at Isa Skills on vehicle repair). Issues around contamination/safety, but would like to work out how to clean them or at least obtain the spare parts so that they could be used rather than discarded.
	Doomadgee	Job provider interested in running bus service at the mine – to provide employment for local people/CDEP workers.
	Doomadgee	A way of prioritising community flights in terms of need, to ensure that those wanting to fly for medical appointments, funerals or education are given priority over recreational trips.
	Normanton	Bus service to Mount Isa for people to access health services, shopping etc.
Communication	All communities	A centralised channel of communication for Lower Gulf Communities to contact Century regarding specific issues or employment.
	Mornington Island	Community newsletter.

Eligible Bodies	All communities	Assistance to the GADC to function well.
		Assistance to eligible bodies to invest compensation money in income-generating/sustainable ways.
		Some assistance/capacity building or mediation from “neutral” people in the running of organisations under the GCA.
		Better communication of organisations under the GCA with the community members they represent – e.g. regular newsletter on initiatives undertaken with moneys received as part of the GCA.

Appendix 2: Information Sheet



Social study of the closure of Century Mine and assistance with GCA 15 year review

BACKGROUND

The Gulf Communities Agreement (GCA) was signed in 1997 and the Century Mine was commissioned in 2000. It is currently owned by MMG. Completion of mining and production is approaching and MMG is making plans to ensure Century Mine leaves a positive legacy and contributes to the sustainable development of the Gulf region.

The GCA guides Century Mine's relationship with traditional Aboriginal owners. A review every 5 years is required under the agreement and the 15 Year review is scheduled for 2012. The Century Liaison and Advisory Committee (CLAC) made up of MMG, native title representatives and government is undertaking this review.

The GCA states the following aspirations:

- a. *to remove the Native Title Groups and the other members of the Communities from welfare dependency and, to the greatest extent possible, promote economic self-sufficiency;*
- b. *to participate as fully as possible in the Project and mine related ventures;*
- c. *to be able to live on their traditional lands;*
- d. *to protect fully their natural environment and its resources;*
- e. *to identify and protect sites of significance to the Native Title Groups;*
- f. *to ensure that the material benefits do not corrupt indigenous cultures but enable people to re-affirm the cultures and enhance the lifestyles of the members of the Native Title Groups and other members of the Communities through community and cultural development initiatives; and*
- g. *to ensure that the standard of health, employment rates, education opportunities and other social indices of Native Title Groups and other members of the Communities is comparable to ordinary Australian standards.*

ABOUT THIS PROJECT

This project is being undertaken by the Centre for Social Responsibility in Mining (CSR) at The University of Queensland. It is designed to inform both the closure planning process and the 15 Year Review of the GCA.

To do this CSR will interview managers of Century mine, conduct surveys and interviews with Century employees; undertake consultations with affected Gulf communities including Normanton, Doomadgee, Mornington Is, Burketown, Karumba and Gregory Downs; interview key regional businesses; and analyse company and government sourced data.

WHO IS INVOLVED?

This research is funded by MMG Century and will receive in-kind support, in the form of information and assistance with consultations, from all members of the Century Liaison Advisory Committee (CLAC) – the Native Title Groups, MMG Century and the Queensland Government.

TIMELINE

March 2012: Scoping of community consultations with CLAC.

April 2012: Consultation and data collection with Century managers.

June 2012: Interviews, focus groups, surveys of GCA employees.

July 2012: Community consultations and stakeholder interviews.

August 2012: Preliminary report back to CLAC.

August – September 2012: General workforce surveys, stakeholder consultations, business interviews.

October 2012: Report key findings of Closure Study to Century managers.

December 2012: Final reports and recommendations.

WHAT IS INVOLVED?

Researchers from the CSRSM will be visiting communities to talk to community members and organisations. We are interested to hear the community views and opinions on the progress to date towards achieving the aspirations of the GCA. The CSRSM is also interested to hear about priorities and ideas for the Gulf communities over the next five years and after the mine finishes production.

The consultations will be held in a convenient location in your community and the local CLOs will be able to assist. The CSRSM researchers will explain the process and ask questions and seek views on community expectations and aspirations in relation to the GCA and Century Mine.

WHAT WILL CSRSM DO WITH THIS INFORMATION?

We will keep a detailed record of the interviews, which will be kept confidential. These will be analysed along with all other information collected to build an overall picture.

Data files will be stored securely at The University of Queensland. Only the project team will have access. Public reports and publications related to this study will report results in aggregate and not name individuals.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Your comments in the community consultations are obviously shared with the others in attendance. As such, your comments are not anonymous to the members of the group. In fact there is no more confidentiality than in any conversation in a public place.

From a research point of view, the discussion is kept confidential to the researchers in the study. We do not repeat what individuals here have said to others, though the general points made are reported in overall findings of the consultations and many of the specific details will be identifiable as relating to particular communities.

If you would rather provide your views privately you can do so by email, telephone, or in writing. Use the contact details at the end of this sheet or using the reply paid envelopes available from CLOs.

VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION

Participation is completely voluntary and not paid. Interview participants do not have to answer all questions or queries, you can provide information

'off the record' and you can stop at any time. There are no risks to individuals from being involved in the research, or from withdrawing from the research.

CAN PARTICIPANTS FIND OUT WHAT THE RESULTS OF THE STUDY ARE?

The CSRSM is due to report back to MMG on the outcomes the study in December 2012. Around this time CSRSM will produce a summary of findings and feedback to study participants in newsletter form. This will be widely distributed through company and community networks.

ETHICAL ISSUES

This study adheres to the Guidelines of the ethical review process of The University of Queensland (ethics clearance 2006000932). If there is anything you would like to discuss about participating you can talk with the researchers and you are welcome to contact the Project Manager.

If you want to speak to somebody at the University not connected to this study about any questions or concerns, contact the Human Ethics Office: humanethics@research.uq.edu.au, Ph. 3365 4584.

WHO IS CSRSM?

The CSRSM is the Centre for Social Responsibility in Mining and is a leading research centre committed to improving the social performance of the resources industry globally. Our focus is on the social, economic and political challenges that occur when change is brought about by resource extraction and development. You can find out more about the CSRSM from our website: www.csrsm.uq.edu.au

KEY CONTACTS:

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Appendix 3: Poster



Century Mine Social study of closure and GCA 15 year review



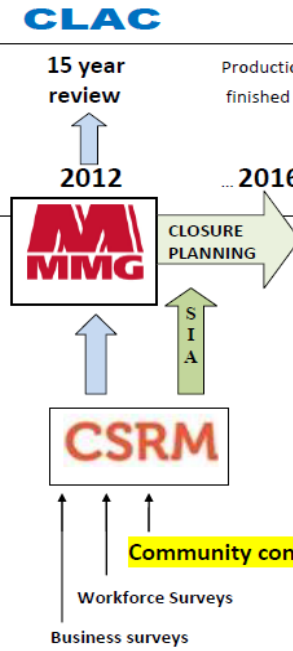
CLAC					
GULF	5 year	10 year	15 year	Production	Rehabilitation
Communities	review	review	review	finished ???	Environmental
Agreement					Monitoring
1997	2002	2007	2012	... 2016???	2030???

The Gulf Communities Agreement was signed in 1997. It is reviewed every 5 years and the Century Liaison and Advisory Committee (CLAC) is undertaking the current review.

Zinc ore will run out in a few years time and the mine will then stop production. MMG owns the Century Mine and wants to make sure it leaves a positive legacy and contributes to sustainable development in the Gulf Region.

The Centre for Social Responsibility in Mining at The University of Queensland is helping MMG and the CLAC with the 15 year review and with social aspects for the planning for closure.

The CSRM will be in the GULF communities to talk to people and organisations. We want to hear the community views about the GCA and find out what are the priorities of the communities over the next five years and after the mine closes.



For more information about the project:

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You can find out more about the CSRM from our website: www.csrsm.uq.edu.au

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Appendix 4: Main health facilities in the Lower Gulf

Facility	Hospital Services	Visiting Services	Other
Burketown Primary Health Care Centre	Primary health outpatients, emergency services and observation capacity.	Royal Flying Doctor Service General Practice and Child Health Clinics; Mobile Women's Health; Paediatrics; Mental Health; Pharmacy; Dietetics; Aged Care Assessment Team; Physiotherapy; endocrinologist; Women's Health General Practitioner; Optometrist; Occupational Therapist; Dementia Services; Continence Services; Podiatrist; Prince Charles Cardiac Outreach Service.	
Doomadgee Hospital	Primary Health; Outpatients; Emergency Services; Observation Capacity; Pharmacy.	Royal Flying Doctors Service; Paediatrics; Dietetics; Oral Health; Speech Therapy; Midwifery Services.	
Karumba Health Centre	Nurse led facility providing Primary Health Care; Emergency Stabilisation; Pathology Collection. Pharmacy limited.	Dietician; Physiotherapist; Podiatrist; Psychologist; Occupational Therapist.	Clinics Available: A General Practitioner (twice a week).
Mornington Island Primary Health Care Centre	Primary Health; Emergency; Community Health; Pharmacy.	Obstetrics and Gynaecology; Paediatrics; Psychiatry; Social Work; Podiatry; Royal Flying Doctor Service Child Health; Hearing Health; Women's Health; Oral Health; Physiotherapy; Palliative Care; Aged Care Assessment Team; Renal Nurse.	Complimentary Services: Indigenous Health Program provides outreach services to surrounding homeland communities.
Normanton Hospital	Emergency; Outpatients (1hr daily); Baby Health Clinic; Pharmacy (restricted).	Royal Flying Doctor Service Child Health; Psychiatrist; Respiratory Physician; Paediatrician; Obstetrician; Dietician; Oral Health; Mental Health; Aged Care Assessment Team (via videolink); Palliative Care Services; Cardiac Health; Endocrinologist; Optometrist; Diabetic Educator.	
Normanton Community Health Centre		Antenatal Services; Podiatrist; Palliative Care Services; Psychologist; Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drugs Service.	Community Health: Primary Health; HACC; Aged Care Assessment Team; Meals on Wheels; Day Care; HACC transport for appointments; Home Visit Health Checks; Mobile Women's Health Clinic.
Information from http://www.healthier.qld.gov.au/			

Appendix 5: Photos of run-off from evaporation ponds on Kurtijar freehold land in Karumba

