

# Cassandra Lang Resume

📍 43 Ferny Way Ferny Hills 📞 0402 229 638 ✉ lang\_cassie@hotmail.com

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I am an Aboriginal woman who grew up in Brisbane. My family are from the Bundjalung nation in Northern New South Wales and we have family connections in South West Queensland. I have spent 14 years specialising in Indigenous law, particularly native title and Indigenous cultural heritage.

For the past 14 years I have represented native title groups and organisations in remote regions of Queensland. I have a deep and thorough understanding of the complexities of native title and an ability to navigate the complex layers of politics between community, native title parties, all levels of government and other stakeholders.

My role as a native title lawyer requires me to constantly communicate and engage with people from different cultural backgrounds, varying levels of education backgrounds and various levels of knowledge and experience with legislation and government entities.

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## Skills

- In all of my roles it has been a priority for me to develop relationships with key stakeholders in order to work collaboratively to achieve results.
- My personal style of communicating and engagement is as unique as each of the communities and the clients I have represented.
- In each of my roles I have supervised junior lawyers, interns and administrative staff.
- As an Aboriginal woman I have an understanding and an awareness of the different cultural sensitivities of Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islanders.

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## Experience

JANUARY 2022 – CURRENT

**Co-Founder and Principal Solicitor** / Parallax Legal Pty Ltd

- Lead and manage the legal practice of Parallax Legal.
- Oversees the operation of Parallax Legal's legal services, supervises all legal staff.
- Hold the role of Responsible Person for the Legal Practice and ensure compliance with all related requirements.

JULY 2020 – CURRENT

**Independent Board Secretary** / Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Protection Peak

- Notifying the directors in writing in advance of a meeting of the board as specified in the constitution.
- Ensuring the agenda and board papers are prepared and forwarded to directors prior to the board meeting as set out in the board charter and any associated policies.
- Recording, maintaining, and distributing the minutes of all board and board committee meetings as required.
- Maintaining a complete set of board papers at the entity's main office.
- Preparing for and attending all annual and extraordinary general meetings of the entity.
- Recording, maintaining, and distributing the minutes of all general meetings of the entity.
- Overseeing the entity's compliance program and ensuring the entity's legislative obligations are met.

- Development, implementation, communication, and maintenance of compliance policies, processes, and procedures.
- Ensuring all requirements of any regulatory body are fully met.
- Providing counsel on corporate governance principles and director liability.
- Maintaining the Conflict of Interest Register and the Register of Related Party Transactions.
- Maintaining a Register of Entity Policies as approved by the board.
- Maintaining, updating, and ensuring that all directors have an up to date copy of the entity's governing instrument and associated governance documentation.
- Maintaining a complete list of the Delegations of Authority.
- Any other services the Chair or board may require.

#### AUGUST 2018 – CURRENT

##### Independent Board Secretary / Aboriginal and Islander Independent School (Murri School)

- Notifying the directors in writing in advance of a meeting of the board as specified in the constitution.
- Ensuring the agenda and board papers are prepared and forwarded to directors prior to the board meeting as set out in the board charter and any associated policies.
- Recording, maintaining, and distributing the minutes of all board and board committee meetings as required.
- Maintaining a complete set of board papers at the entity's main office.
- Preparing for and attending all annual and extraordinary general meetings of the entity.
- Recording, maintaining, and distributing the minutes of all general meetings of the entity.
- Overseeing the entity's compliance program and ensuring the entity's legislative obligations are met.
- Development, implementation, communication, and maintenance of compliance policies, processes, and procedures.
- Ensuring all requirements of any regulatory body are fully met.
- Providing counsel on corporate governance principles and director liability.
- Maintaining the Conflict of Interest Register and the Register of Related Party Transactions.
- Maintaining a Register of Entity Policies as approved by the board.
- Maintaining, updating, and ensuring that all directors have an up to date copy of the entity's governing instrument and associated governance documentation.
- Maintaining a complete list of the Delegations of Authority.
- Any other services the Chair or board may require.

#### JANUARY 2018 – DECEMBER 2021

##### Senior Solicitor / Marrawah Law

- I prepare cultural heritage compliance assessments and provided detailed and complex strategic advice to clients about cultural heritage management; and its interaction with relevant native title issues.
- I also provide written advices in relation to the Cultural Heritage duty of care guidelines; and has drafted exploration agreements and Cultural Heritage Management Plans to enable proponents to comply with their duty of care, and to discharge technical requirements under the Native Title Act.
- Assisting PBCs and RNTBCs in their corporate compliance matters under their Rule Books, the *Corporations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) Act 2006* (Cth), the *Native Title Act 1993* (Cth) and the *Native Title (Prescribed Body Corporates) Regulations 1999* (Cth).
- I provide legal advice to electricity corporations including Powerlink Queensland in respect of native title and Aboriginal cultural heritage compliance for electricity infrastructure projects.

This requires preparing quarterly reports about native title and cultural heritage matters that affect any current or prospective projects.

- I am the legal advisor to an Indigenous community trust. This requires preparing quarterly reports for the Trustees about native title and cultural heritage matters that affect any current or prospective projects and providing advice on complex legal matters affecting the Trust.
- I coordinate and manage the competing demands of stakeholders and the ability of my clients to complete and comply with their statutory obligations in order to achieve outcomes. This requires a level of coordination between all stakeholders to ensure the necessary outcomes are achieved and risks are minimised.
- Undertake research, investigation and analysis of complex issues and provide advice and recommendations. Prepare accurate memoranda on complex legal issues based on high level research, analysis, synthesis and interpretation.
- Maintain file management of large caseload with limited supervision. Achieve early outcomes/resolutions through negotiation.
- I cultivate productive working relationships by identifying, building and sustaining relationships with a network of key people internally and externally. In doing this I recognise and foster shared agendas with stakeholders and partners.
- I am experienced in applied project management for interrelated multidisciplinary tasks.
- I supervise the firm's junior legal staff and any student placements.

FEBRUARY 2016 – DECEMBER 2017

**Senior Legal Officer** /Torres Strait Regional Authority, Native Title Office, Thursday Island

- As a member of the legal team we were responsible for ensuring operational activities align with the strategic direction of the TSRA and the activities being undertaken by the Native Title Office contribute to strategic outcomes.
- Responsible for leading and modelling program work to deliver against the TSRA vision, mission and objectives; lead and contribute to the TSRA governance framework and processes.
- As the only Indigenous Lawyer I was responsible for leading the program area in a culturally congruent manner; managing misunderstandings between the NTO and communities. As a result, I gained an understanding and respect for the political complexities of the Torres Strait communities.
- Supervised staff in assisting PBCs and RNTBCs in their corporate compliance matters under their Rule Books, the *Corporations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) Act 2006* (Cth), the *Native Title Act 1993* (Cth) and the *Native Title (Prescribed Body Corporates) Regulations 1999* (Cth).
- Responsible for achieving results by ensuring the NTO team delivers the best results for the PBCs by allocating resources in a flexible manner. I was responsible for evaluating projects and business processes to ensure the NTO engaged in continuous improvement
- As the Senior Legal Officer, I was required to coordinate and manage the competing demands of stakeholders and the ability of 21 PBCs to complete and comply with their statutory obligations in order to achieve outcomes. This requires a level of coordination between all stakeholders, PBCs and NTO staff to ensure the necessary outcomes are achieved and risks are minimised.
- I was the NTO Project Coordinator for the Moa Tenure Resolution Pilot Project which was funded by Prime Minister and Cabinet's White Paper on Developing the North. This required me to coordinate and liaise with all stakeholders, manage the budget expenditure for the project and prepare status reports outlining how the project was tracking against the key performance indicators set out in the funding agreement.
- This role required me to prepare a variety of reports for the board, executive management of the TSRA and for relevant Ministers visiting the region. These reports included various legal reports about the status of the native title program matters and highlighting community concerns and risks.

- I have worked closely with various Commonwealth and State departments and develop a whole of government approach to deliver sustainable outcomes for the Torres Strait Region. The relationship and coordination between the NTO and the Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders Partnership enabled the successful collaboration on delivery of essential infrastructure for communities throughout the Torres Strait.
- I worked closely with the NTO Program Manager, the Principal Legal Officer and the NTO Practice Manager each year to anticipate upcoming projects in order to develop a proposed operation costing plan and budget for the year ahead.

MARCH 2010 – FEBRUARY 2016

Lawyer/Gilkerson Legal, Brisbane

- I worked closely with the Torres Strait Regional Authority's Native Title Office ("NTO") staff in preparing, lodging necessary documents for the appeal to High Court for the decision in Akiba and also was involved in the preparation work and attendance during NTO submissions to the High Court in Canberra.
- I am experienced in assisting PBCs and RNTBCs in their corporate compliance matters under the *Corporations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) Act 2006* (Cth) and the *Corporations Act 2001* (Cth).
- I worked closely with the NTO staff to assist the Meriam People to successfully have Torres Strait Islander freehold granted under the *Torres Strait Islander Land Act 1991* (Qld) in 2012.
- In this role I provided legal advice to electricity corporations including Powerlink Queensland in respect of native title and Aboriginal cultural heritage compliance for scores of electricity infrastructure projects. This required preparing quarterly reports for the board about native title and cultural heritage matters that affect any current or prospective projects.
- I have assisted numerous Traditional Owner groups negotiate with various proponents Indigenous Land Use Agreements, Right to Negotiate Agreements and Exploration Agreements that address native title under the *Native Title Act 1993* (Cth) and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural heritage compliance.
- I have particular skills in complex legal and policy research across a full range of issues relating to interests in land, particularly Indigenous interests.
- I am experienced in applied project management for interrelated multidisciplinary tasks.
- I supervise the firm's junior legal staff and any student placements.

NOVEMBER 2006 – MARCH 2010

Lawyer/Gadens Lawyers

- I was the firm's inaugural Indigenous cadet as part of the Commonwealth's National Indigenous Cadetship Program. I then played a pivotal role in expanding the cadetship program throughout the firm nationally.
- In this role I assisted Traditional Owner groups in the Surat, Bowen and Galilee regions to negotiate access agreements under the *Native Title Act 1993* (Cth).
- I also helped Traditional Owner groups develop and negotiate agreements that protect their Cultural Heritage under the *Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act 2003* (Qld).

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## Education

### Federal Court of Australia

March 2009

Admitted to practice in the Federal Court of Australia.

### Supreme Court of Queensland

December 2008

Admitted to practice in the Supreme Court of Queensland.

## Queensland University of technology

February 2008 – October 2008

Graduate Diploma in Legal Practice

## Queensland University of technology

February 2005 – December 2007

Bachelor of Laws

## Queensland University of technology

February 2002 – December 2004

Bachelor of Justice

## Mitchelton State High school

Graduated November 2001

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## Other Relevant Experience

- I attended the 2019 UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII) in New York City, USA.
- I presented at the 2018 World Indigenous Law Conference in Windsor, Canada.
- I presented at the 2016 World Indigenous Law Conference in California, USA.
- April 2015 I was the only participant from Australia accepted to participate at the Program on Human Rights and International Advocacy Skills 2015 of the Indigenous Women's Global Leadership School.
- April 2015 I was involved in preparing and making submissions on behalf of the Pacific Caucus during the Fourteenth Session of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII).
- For the past 5 years I have been the Vice President Indigenous Lawyers Association of Queensland.
- I was the Co-Chair of the committee which organised the 2nd World Indigenous Legal conference hosted by the Indigenous Lawyers Association of Queensland in June 2014 which was attended by over 200 delegates.
- Over the past eleven years I have developed excellent communication skills, and have developed the ability to build relationships quickly with organisations, stakeholders, colleagues and clients.
- I have practical experience in Indigenous engagement, resolution of intra-Indigenous dispute and community consultations.

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## References

### Mick Gooda

Former Chairperson

Aboriginal and Islander Independent Community School

0419 971 285

### Ned David

Chairperson

Gur A Baradharawa Kod Torres Strait Sea and Land Council

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