

Ninti One welcomes Tom Calma as new Chair

Distinguished Aboriginal leader and lifelong campaigner for human rights, education, health and social justice Dr Tom Calma, has been appointed Chair of Ninti One, remote Australia's leading research management enterprise.



Credit: Curtin University

NintiOne Ltd was established in 2003 to conduct research, training and research application in remote Australia. It manages the intellectual property from the former Desert Knowledge CRC and administers the CRC for Remote Economic Participation and the Australian Feral Camel Management Program.

Dr Calma, who was previously the deputy chair, replaces Mr Paul Wand, who has stepped down as Chair after nine years.

'We warmly welcome the vision, wisdom and guidance which Dr Calma brings to our activities and, at the same time, pay tribute to Paul Wand, who has been our Chair since 2003,' said Managing Director of Ninti One, Jan Ferguson.

'Paul is a quiet man of strongly held convictions that have guided him over the years as one of the most effective advocates for a better future and a fairer go for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, and a staunch advocate for all the communities, industries and citizens of desert and remote Australia.'

Dr Calma is an elder of the Kungarakana people and a member of the Northern Territory's Iwaidja tribal group. He has been a leader in Indigenous affairs at a local, community, state, national and international level, worked in the public sector for 40 years and currently serves on many boards and committees focussing on rural and remote Australia, health and education.

Dr Calma was appointed National Coordinator, Tackling Indigenous Smoking, in March 2010, leading the fight against tobacco use by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Before that he served as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner at the Australian Human Rights Commission from 2004-10 and as Race Discrimination Commissioner from 2004-09.

In his 2005 Social Justice Report, Dr Calma called for the life expectancy gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people to be closed within a generation.

This has brought national attention to the goal of achieving health equality for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people by 2030 and laid the ground for the COAG Closing the Gap campaign. Dr Calma recently retired as Co-Chair of the Close the Gap steering committee.

He has served as Senior Adviser to the Minister of Immigration, Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs, and has also worked as a senior Australian diplomat in India and Vietnam from 1995 to 2002.

In 2007 he was named by the *Bulletin* as the Most Influential Indigenous Person in Australia and in 2008 he was named *GQ*'s 2008 Man of Inspiration for his work in Indigenous affairs.

In 2010, Dr Calma was awarded an honorary doctorate from Charles Darwin University in recognition of decades of public service, particularly in relation to his work in education, training and employment in Indigenous communities. The same year, he was named by *Australian Doctor* as one of the 50 Most Influential People in medicine in Australia.

In 2011, Dr Calma was awarded an honorary doctorate from Curtin University in recognition of his work, advocacy and leadership in Indigenous health reform and Indigenous affairs.

Source: NintiOne

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