



Aboriginal Heritage Council Quarterly Update

April to June 2024

The Aboriginal Heritage Council's (AHC) Quarterly Update provides a concise overview of the Council's key priorities, activities, actions, advice and key decisions over a three-month period. The intent of the Quarterly Update is to raise awareness and transparency around the work that the Council undertakes, increase awareness and promotion of Tasmania's Aboriginal cultural values and provide information for Tasmanian Aboriginal people, and the general public, on the activities of the Council.

Key AHC decisions and actions

- In June the AHC lodged a submission regarding Tasmania Parks and Wildlife's draft West Coast Off-Road Vehicle Strategy. The AHC were strongly opposed to the strategy and detailed several key concerns relating to appropriate management and protection for Aboriginal cultural values. The AHC emphasised their willingness to work with Tasmanian Parks and Wildlife Service (PWS) to identify alternative options for off-road driving that do not impact Aboriginal cultural heritage.
- In April and June, the AHC contacted the Department of State Growth and the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs (June) regarding the destruction and removal of natural ochre deposits during development works in the Kingston and Huntingfield areas. The AHC Chair and Council members arranged for the ochre to be returned and made available to community.

Regulatory process

- No new processes or expectations were set during the quarter with all past AHC position statements are listed on the [Aboriginal Heritage Council's website "Resources" page](#).
- Table 1 provides an overview of Aboriginal Heritage Desktop Reviews, Aboriginal Heritage Assessment Report and Permit applications between April – June 2024. The Table demonstrates how specialist assessment, critical analysis and collaboration by Aboriginal Heritage Tasmania reduces the potential number of permit applications from proponents.

Table 1. Overview of AH Desktop Reviews, Assessments and Permits

REGULATORY STEP/STAGE	NUMBER (April – June 2024)
Aboriginal Heritage Desktop Reviews	311
Aboriginal Heritage Assessment Reports	24
Permit applications received	13

- Table 2 provides a summary of permitting activities between April – June 2023 including permits considered by AHC, permits not supported and permits granted by the Minister.

Table 2. Overview of Permitting Activities (April – June 2023)*

REGULATORY STEP/STAGE	NUMBER (April – June 2024)
Applications considered by AHC	12
Applications not supported	0
Permits granted by Minister	10

*Note, due the time it takes to process permit applications, in any given quarter the number received by AHT will not necessarily equal the number reviewed by AHC or the number considered by the Minister.

TWWHA projects update

AHT currently manages a Program of Works (PoW) which includes projects within the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area (TWWHA). The AHC contributes to and provides advice regarding the Aboriginal cultural values within the TWWHA.

Table 3 below provides an overview of the key projects and achievements between April – June 2024 as well as upcoming actions/activities currently being undertaken in the TWWHA.

Table 3. Overview of AHT TWWHA Projects

PROJECT	DESCRIPTION	ACTIONS (April – June 2024)	ACTIVITIES (July – September 2024)
The Southern Lacuna – Aboriginal occupation in the Southern Valleys Project	The Project aims to improve our understanding of the management, use and occupation of inland areas of the TWWHA by Aboriginal people.	Survey and recording of Marble Hill Karst (cave) system. Reconnaissance of New River and Weld River areas for upcoming field season.	Field work scheduling/planning. Data analysis and recording for Aboriginal Heritage Register. Ongoing engagement, consultation and input from Aboriginal community organisations and people.
From the Highlands to the Lakes Project	The Project aims to improve our understanding of the management, use and occupation of highland lakes by Aboriginal people including identifying their adaptive responses to climatic changes.	Survey and recording at Lake MacKenzie and Yingina / Great Lake, Miena.	Field work scheduling/planning. Data analysis and recording for Aboriginal Heritage Register. Ongoing engagement, consultation and input from Aboriginal community organisations and people.
Assistant Aboriginal Heritage Adviser Program	The Assistant Aboriginal Heritage Adviser Program within AHT provides training, education, and employment in cultural heritage management for Aboriginal people.	Completion of TAFE qualification and ongoing involvement in field work.	Planning and completion of targeted placements (internal/external).
Aboriginal Community Access to the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area Project	The Project provides opportunities for Aboriginal people to visit the diverse sites, places, and landscapes in the TWWHA, and discuss and facilitate opportunities for Aboriginal people to	Two trips completed for Aboriginal people to the Highlands/Miena	Ongoing engagement, consultation and input from Aboriginal community organisations and people.

PROJECT	DESCRIPTION	ACTIONS (April – June 2024)	ACTIVITIES (July – September 2024)
	provide input on the management of its Aboriginal cultural values.		Trip scheduling / planning.
Management of At risk Cultural Heritage sites in the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area Project	The Project aims to identify at-risk Aboriginal cultural heritage sites and landscapes within the TWWHA and determine and provide advice on appropriate actions for their effective ongoing management.	UAV/Drone photogrammetry recording completed at Wreck Bay, Louisa Bay, Sandblow Bay and Towterer Beach.	Ongoing development of GIS model for 'At risk sites' – coastal and inland. Data analysis of condition of sites and risks. Trip scheduling / planning.