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Item 16 of the provisional agenda

**Activities relating to the Working Group on Geographical
Names as Cultural Heritage**

The Difference a Single Name Can Make*

Submitted by Australia

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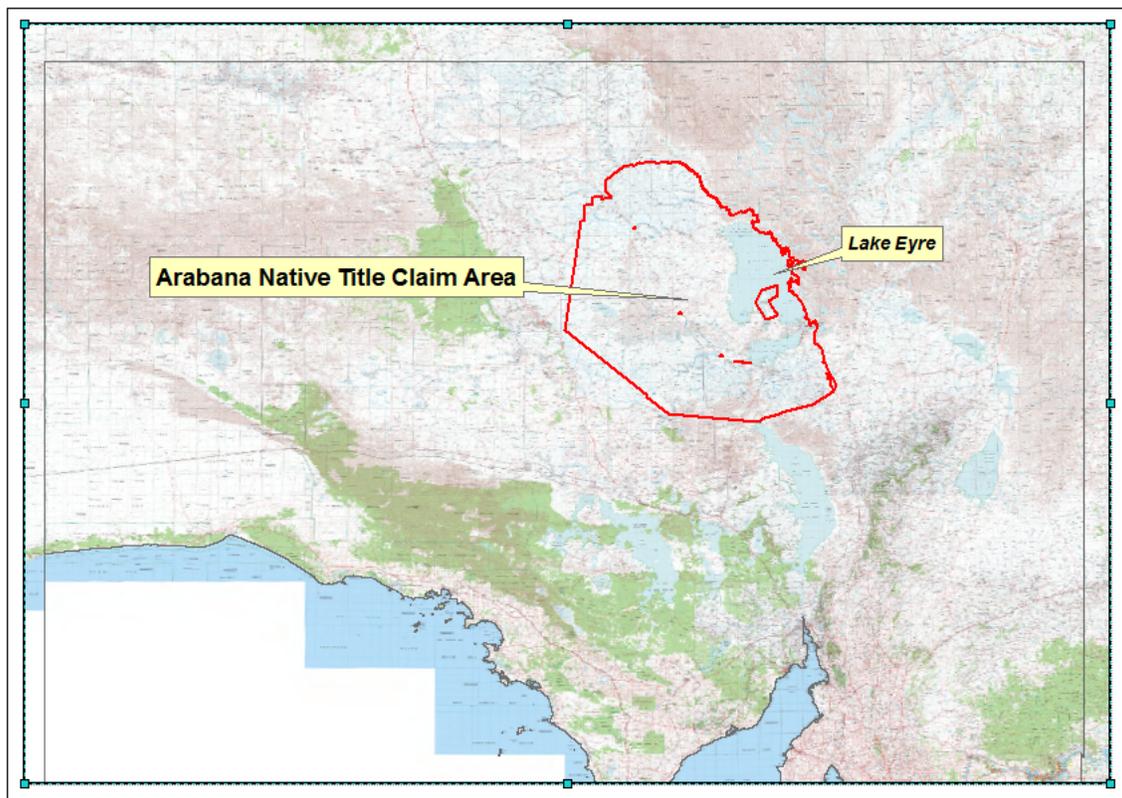
Summary

This paper provide a summary of the process involved in the dual naming of Lake Eyre in the far north of South Australia and the results that have flowed from the reintroduction of one indigenous name into the general State nomenclature.

Of particular interest was the level of excitement and interest shown by the indigenous community upon the recognition of one of their names.

Background

On the 22 May 2012, the Arabana People of South Australia were granted non-exclusive native title rights to approximately 68, 823 square kilometres in northern South Australia



Included within the boundaries of this area is Lake Eyre, a generally dry lake covering approximately 9, 500 square kilometres. The lake was named after Edward John Eyre, a noted South Australian explorer, by Governor MacDonnell in October 1860.

Following the granting of Native Title, the Arabana People made an application to rename Lake Eyre.

The Process

The proposal to rename the lake to the Arabana name of Kati Thanda was not deemed appropriate as Edward John Eyre was the first white person to see the lake and a prominent South Australia in his own right.

A counter proposal was put forward to dual name the lake as Lake Eyre / Kati Thanda.

This proposal was seen as acceptable to the Arabana people.

Consultation was entered into with the Dieri people whose traditional land adjoins the eastern boundary of Lake Eyre. The Dieri people know this lake as Kati Thandra, but also recognise that the lake is within the Arabana country and were happy to use the Arabana form of the name for the dual naming purpose.

The Result

Following the acceptance from the Arabana people and the advice from the Dieri people, the Lake was officially dual named as Lake Eyre / Kati Thanda on 3 January 2013.

The Dieri form of the name, Kati Thandra was also recorded in the South Australian Gazetteer as an alternative name for the lake.

After the official dual naming of the lake itself, the following actions took place:

- The Lake Eyre National Park was renamed as the Kati Thanda – Lake Eyre National Park.
- The general use of the dual name has grown quickly showing a wide acceptance of the dual name among the general community, being referred to in tourism and press on a regular basis.

The most pleasing result from my perspective was to see the level of excitement amount the Arabana people. To celebrate the official naming, a meeting was held on the shores of the lake where approximately 80 Arabana people and some others meet to commemorate the dual naming. One of the Arabana elders, Mr Syd Stangways addressed to gather and reflected in his words the excitement of the Arabana people that one of their names had been restored in this manner.

His words were reinforced in conversations with many other Arabana people I spoke to who advised how pleased they were to see aspects of their heritage being accepted and given value by the wider community. This level of excitement was evident in all age levels of the community in attendance and was used as a teaching opportunity by the elders as the younger people sought to understand the meaning of the name and its importance to their culture.

The Arabana community leaders also noted this and have indicated that there are a number of other features that they will wish to have dual named to further promote their heritage and association with the land over which their traditional rights have been recognised. To assist

in this we have provided then mapping and tabular data showing all the place names information we have available and they, as a community, are considering their next approach.