



Centre for Appropriate
Technology Limited



Strategic Plan

2016 / 2021

Our Vision

Sustainable and enterprising communities of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People underpinned by appropriate 'fit for purpose' technology.

Our Mission

Through our unique knowledge of and engagement with remote people and place we will deliver practical, integrated project design, technical innovation, training and infrastructure products and services — supporting livelihoods and growth in economic opportunities across remote areas.



Who we are

The Centre for Appropriate Technology (CAT) Ltd is an ASIC incorporated not-for-profit Company limited by guarantee. We operate under a 'Company Group' structure comprising the parent company CAT Ltd and a wholly owned commercial engineering consultancy Ekistica Pty Ltd, trading as CAT Projects which operates across multiple sectors nationally and internationally (www.catprojects.com.au). Both parent and subsidiary companies share a broadly similar mission and set of values around 'engagement and people, innovation and excellence'.

CAT Ltd is an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) controlled business with a majority ATSI membership, Board and Chairman. CAT has a core commitment to providing employment opportunities for Aboriginal people who currently comprise 40% of parent company employees. Based on a 38 hectare site in Alice Springs with offices in Darwin and Cairns CAT has a national focus, currently undertaking projects across central and northern regions of the Northern Territory and in Western Australia, Queensland and South Australia. CAT works with Aboriginal communities and organisations, Aboriginal Land Councils, Federal, State, Territory and Local Government jurisdictions, tertiary and VET educational institutions, the private sector, NGOs and philanthropic organisations.

In 2014/15 we engaged with 209 separate communities and organisations from these sectors. The CAT Company Group is a going concern with an asset portfolio of \$12M, 65 Staff and an \$8M annual turnover.



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Ekistica Pty Ltd, trading as CAT Projects evolved as a commercial engineering services arm of CAT in 2008, specialising in supplying renewable energy services to remote communities, pursuing opportunities that utilise CAT's intellectual property in commercial and international settings. The entity is a limited Pty with CAT Ltd as the sole shareholder, and specialises in providing services including power systems and renewable energy engineering, advice, project management and feasibility studies.

Our role

From its establishment in 1980 CAT Ltd has grown to become a leading Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander science and technology business specialising in providing appropriate technology and service delivery solutions across remote Australia. We combine our unique understanding of remote contexts and their development challenges with technical expertise to deliver the enabling technology platforms, local skills and capacity that support social and economic empowerment.

Remote Australia, with its vast landscapes, small dispersed populations and distance from services, requires tailored and locally adaptive approaches to deliver the technical reliability and local capacity to leverage economic opportunity.

The scope of CAT's activities ranges from local engagement with people and place to delivering robust technical advice, design and project implementation, specialist infrastructure fabrication and installation. We link Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with knowledge and skills to stimulate innovation and enable sustainable solutions. Our work spans the fields of water, renewable and isolated energy systems, engineering, telecommunications and community infrastructure. We engage with people to problem-solve solutions that work. We maximise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment on the projects by reorganising the way we work and embed training on the job.



Our core activities fall under six key business areas:

1. Technology innovation and application.
2. Applied project design, management and professional services.
3. Community engagement, planning and facilitation.
4. Place based accredited training, skills development and capacity building.
5. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander enterprise and jobs.
6. Infrastructure design, engineering, construction and fabrication.



“We recognise that many of the technology solutions developed in partnership with Aboriginal people to address their needs, have application in non-aboriginal remote situations both in Australia and internationally. We are increasingly capitalising on demand driven opportunities in this field whilst ensuring benefits continue to be derived by ATSI people, notably through employment and training opportunities.”

Our strategy

This strategic plan is focused on the business and operations of CAT Ltd the 'parent company'.

CAT Ltd is an organisation that until recently has been reliant on federal government funding to support its core operations. Core funding will no longer be provided by the federal government. CAT also operates in a sector that is going through rapid structural and policy change. This presents CAT with both a challenge and an opportunity.

This Strategic Plan defines how the organisation will transition over the next five years. It describes the organisational and business strategies that will be put in place. This will ensure that CAT is a sustainable entity that will grow its role and influence as a leading Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander science and technology business, specialising in providing appropriate technology and infrastructure solutions across remote communities and regions. It details how CAT will deliver the appropriate technology, training and workforce development solutions that address challenges and issues identified by Aboriginal people.

CAT core values

BENEFIT: We deliver meaningful benefit to ATSI peoples and clients through knowledge generation, provision of appropriate technology solutions, provision of accredited training and employment.

RESPONSIVE: We are driven by the aspirations of ATSI peoples. We appreciate what people have and do before we act. We respect the views of people, communities and ATSI organisations as we work together to achieve appropriate solutions.

KNOWLEDGE: We apply design thinking and technical expertise to challenges and opportunities to generate and test new ideas, approaches and solutions.

SAFE: We embrace an organisational culture of best practice work health and safety. We ensure the Health and Safety of all staff, students, contractors and partners is met in all our workplaces. Our goal is zero Lost Time through Injury (LTI).

INDEPENDENT: CAT is independent of governments, Aboriginal corporations, NGO's and the private sector. We deliver honest, unbiased, transparent advice in our trusted advisor role to partners, clients and end-users.

COLLABORATIVE: We partner with organisations through formal joint ventures and informal partnerships and recognise the mutual benefits that arise from collaboration.

INNOVATIVE: Our reputation is based on the development and delivery of innovative and practical technology solutions. We foster a culture of innovation and invest in developing the next generation of technologies and service models that meet the requirements identified by people in remote communities.

QUALITY: We deliver high quality outcomes to our stakeholders, on time, on budget and on scope. The quality of our delivery is demonstrated by the significant 'repeat business' awarded by our stakeholders and partners.

Priorities & challenges

There is increasing dialogue about and questioning of the sustainability of remote ATSI communities. This is shifting the paradigm towards providing alternative solutions to delivering services through new appropriate technology and new approaches.

Remote ATSI communities are increasingly investing their own money in infrastructure development, with a view to community self-sufficiency. There is a desire to develop skills and maintain capability and institutional infrastructure in community and reduce reliance on external resources. Allied to this is the rise in Native Title Corporations as more claims are determined.

Many communities have aging infrastructure and there is some uncertainty regarding resources available for infrastructure replacement.

In most remote regions community infrastructure maintenance and municipal services provision has been transferred from Federal to State and Territory jurisdictions.

Some communities are facing questions around responsibility for future capital investment in infrastructure assets. In addition there is a move to 'user pays' models for essential service provision, that potentially drives the need for more efficient and cost effective technology solutions.

There is a clear desire by remote communities for the development of enterprise opportunities for ATSI landholdings across northern and central Australia, and recognition by landholders that appropriate infrastructure, skills development and training is needed to underpin enterprise development. The Australian Government's Developing the North White Paper* details specific support for the objective of broadening economic activity on land.

Remote communities desire long term sustainable employment and economic opportunity. ATSI people and governments recognise that there is significant opportunity to provide long term ATSI job opportunities in the provision of infrastructure, ongoing servicing of that technology and infrastructure and in the smarter models of service delivery new technologies can enable.

The ATSI and remote Australia policy environment is a dynamic arena. Significant changes in policy, investment models, and resourcing have occurred in recent years and will continue to do so into the future.

* 2015 Australian Government: 'Our North, Our Future: White paper on Developing Northern Australia'.
<http://industry.gov.au/ona/whitePaper/Paper/index.html>



The CAT Enterprise delivers employment and skills development for ATSI people in metal fabrication, construction, bush hardy & designer products, facilities maintenance services, cleaning and grounds maintenance.



CAT strategic goals

CAT has identified four higher level strategic goals that underpin achieving our Vision and Mission over the next five years.

Our Core Values underpin all the strategic initiatives articulated in this document.

STRATEGIC GOAL 1

Transition to a successful enterprise based NFP business:

CAT will transition to a not-for-profit enterprise based on contestable activity/project based funding, with a focus on making the most efficient use of available resources that is sustainable in the long term and maintains our core operations. Given the environment in which we operate, CAT will need to develop business systems that enable us to respond flexibly and rapidly to the needs of our core stakeholders and end-users.

This will be achieved through:

- Greater operational integration of CAT Ltd and CAT Projects under a 'CAT Group' company structure to achieve a more effective utilisation of governance, capacity and capability across the two companies.
- Investing in our human capital to add value to our capacity through tailored staff development programs and prioritising quality WHS practices.
- Introducing mechanisms to maximise our return from fixed assets.
- Executing robust business development planning and market analysis to inform internal investment decisions.
- Improving internal business systems to allow the organisation to rapidly respond to new opportunities and drive improved efficiency and effectiveness.
- Investing in organisational rebranding and strategic marketing activities that articulate our value proposition for our stakeholders and end-users.
- Developing strategic partnerships and preferred provider relationships that enhance our reputation and role as an independent third party 'trusted advisor'.
- Expanding the geographical footprint of our operations and consolidating our relationships with State and Territory governments and agencies across the Northern Territory, Western Australia (Pilbara and Kimberley) Queensland and South Australia in order to seek opportunities for growth across all six of CAT's core business areas.
- Diversifying our business base into ATSI remote agriculture and aquaculture projects and re-invigorating CAT capacity and capability in water infrastructure and water security.
- Actively promoting the technology solutions developed in partnership with Aboriginal people to non-Aboriginal remote markets both in Australia and internationally.



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We will immediately invest in developing the next generation of the CAT Mobile Phone HotSpot technology.

STRATEGIC GOAL 2

Further establish CAT as remote technology innovation leader

From its establishment in 1980 CAT Ltd has grown to become a leading ATSI science and technology business specialising in providing appropriate technology and service delivery solutions across remote Australia. We combine our unique understanding of remote contexts and their development challenges with technical expertise to deliver the enabling technology platforms that support social economic empowerment. In order to meet the ongoing and future appropriate technology needs of remote communities, CAT must develop a more strategic approach to technology development and investment in capacity and capability.

This will be achieved through:

- Strengthening our culture of engagement with people, technical excellence, research, innovation and application of appropriate technologies to remote environments.
- Actively disseminating ideas and analyses to reframe the issues facing remote ATSI people and stimulate investments in innovation for sustainability and development.
- Investing in the development of the next generation of appropriate technology innovation through the CAT Innovation Fund and co-investment projects with government innovation programs, academia, NGOs and the private sector.
- Developing a pipeline of practical technology products and applications that stretches from initial concept development and proof of concept through to market ready products.
- Developing the support processes that underpin the technology pipeline — managing concept and feasibility studies, resourcing, prototype development, business case analysis and field trialling.
- Investing in expanding our telecommunications capability and understanding of digital applications in remote areas.
- Developing our capability and influence in remote water management water supply sustainability.
- Demonstrating our credentials in the innovation and design of remote infrastructure.
- Establishing CAT leadership in remote infrastructure investment decision support and prioritisation methodology through the development of innovative ‘decision support tools’.
- Consolidating our leadership in remote, isolated, renewable power systems.
- Undertaking independent third party impact/ benefit assessments of CAT’s flagship programs including ‘Bushlight’.
- Actively promoting and investing in CAT technical advisory and consultancy services.
- Growing CAT’s profile through attendance at relevant national and international conferences, seminars and symposia.

STRATEGIC GOAL 3

Maximising ATSI employment

Working with ATSI people to establish and develop long term, sustainable employment opportunities both within CAT's operations in Alice Springs through the CAT Enterprise business and as part of our technology and infrastructure programs in remote communities, is core to the future strategic vision of CAT. In order to achieve this goal CAT needs to develop approaches that maximize ATSI employment across all its operations and individual projects.

This will be achieved through:

- Applying a new commercially focused business model for the CAT Enterprise Workshop, maximizing integration into technology fabrication and infrastructure projects and developing product and market diversification.
- Developing a facilities management commercial enterprise.
- Minimising sub-contract 'outsourcing' of fabrication and construction projects, through investment in the required skills development and capability internally.
- Providing a career pathway and relevant accredited training to CAT Enterprise staff.
- Increasing ATSI representation in the professional employment streams in CAT.
- Developing a program of ATSI professional 'tertiary' internships.
- Establishing a formal CAT ATSI apprenticeship program.
- Further developing and maximizing the application of the CAT's community based enterprise, employment and training model to community infrastructure and government infrastructure projects, as well as technology programs.
- Promoting and replicating the CAT Enterprise model with other Aboriginal organisations and across remote regions.



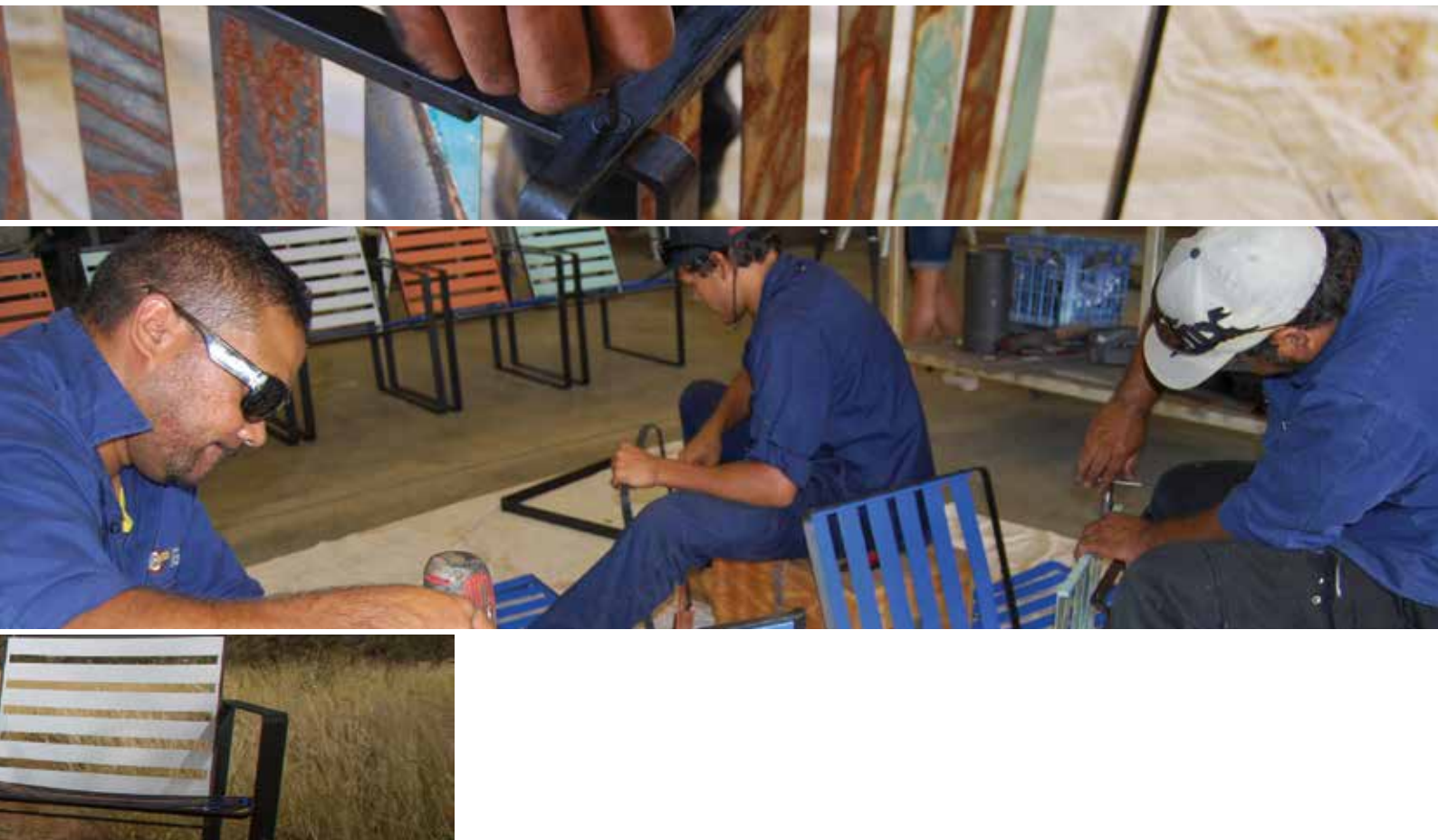
STRATEGIC GOAL 4

Building training and skills development outcomes

Providing people in remote communities with the skills, training and capability to actively engage in the workforce is a core component of CAT's operations. CAT has developed a clear niche in the delivery of technical training 'in place', based on a 'demand driven' business model. This is a highly competitive environment where CAT will position itself to respond to the changing demand driven needs of the market.

This will be achieved through:

- Maintaining our independent RTO status.
- Additional investment in administrative and program compliance capacity and business systems.
- Further developing our training niche provider value proposition, offering custom design of accredited training packages to ATSI organisations and others working with remote ATSI communities.
- Examining the demand and opportunities with our ATSI end users for developing additional accredited training programs on scope, including digital and advanced manufacturing streams.
- Developing training Joint Venture partnerships with ATSI organisations outside central Australia.
- Further development and expansion of our 'in place' training model to Queensland, Western Australia and South Australia.
- Further developing innovative skills recognition and accreditation approaches applicable to ATSI employees in enterprise settings, including in the CAT Enterprise, remote infrastructure and construction projects and associated enterprise initiatives.



Key Performance Indicators (KPI) for the next five years

By 2021 we will have:

CAT operating as a successful contestable funding based enterprise that is financially secure.

Successfully integrated the operations of CAT Ltd and CAT Projects under a Company Group Structure and realised operational efficiencies.

Re-marketed and branded CAT with resulting increase in CAT's profile as a knowledge and innovation business leading to expanded business and funding opportunities.

Established preferred provider status with key ATSI organisations in central and northern Australia.

Established regular operations and projects in Northern NT and Queensland and be in the process of expanding operations in WA and SA.

Have invested in and established new capability in telecommunications and remote water technology innovation with projects in remote communities.

Delivered new appropriate technology platforms through CAT Innovation Fund investment.

Re-established our leadership in remote isolated renewable power systems under the 'Bushlight' brand, with projects established.

Doubled the number of permanent and casual ATSI staff employed in the CAT Enterprise Workshop.

Established a tertiary internships program and successfully employed ATSI staff into professional positions in the organisation.

Established CAT as the 'provider of choice' for managing employment and enterprise programs in remote community infrastructure and technology projects.

Established CAT as the 'RTO of choice' for the development and delivery of custom, accredited technical training programs in remote regions.

Expanded our 'in place' training model in ATSI communities across remote Northern Australia.



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There is clear evidence that accessible, affordable, practical & reliable technology, developed in collaboration with end-users, is a ‘turn-key’ investment that stimulates enterprise, opportunity & economic development & improves community health & well-being.



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