

CATSI rules— make them your own!

New legislation launched

The CATSI Act was officially launched at a ceremony on 5 July in the gardens of the Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory in Darwin. Entertainer and activist Mary G joined the Minister for Community Services, Senator Nigel Scullion, and the Registrar, Laura Beacroft, in launching the new Act. After the Welcome to Country by Jocelyn Archer of the Larrakia Nation, the Kenbi dance group performed an impressive traditional dance and Mary G sang a song or two with Senator Scullion.



What's in a name?

You may have noticed that we now have a different name—ORAC has become ORATSIC—as we are now the Office of the Registrar of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Corporations. The name change occurs in our new legislation, and acknowledges the important place Torres Strait Islanders hold in Australian society and culture.

Why a new law?

Our previous law, the Aboriginal Councils and Associations Act (the ACA Act), had been in place since 1976. In 2001–02 an independent review of the Act found that it was out-of-date, and should be replaced with legislation that allows for the special incorporation needs of Indigenous people. The CATSI Act is larger than its predecessor as it includes provisions from the *Corporations Act 2001*, contains new rights and allows for greater flexibility for corporations.

Please help us to help you

All corporations formerly registered under the ACA Act will have received in August a package in the mail from ORATSIC to help them make the transition over to the new legislation. In this package is:

1. A 'Getting ready for CATSI' form to fill out with details about your corporation
2. A flyer which explains our name change
3. A reply-paid envelope
4. An 18-month desk calendar with pictures of Mary G and a governance tip for each month.

PLEASE MAKE SURE YOU FILL IN THE FORM. It can be filled in online, which is the easiest way to do it, or you can fill in the printed form and send back to us. If you don't send us the information, the registered size of your corporation may stay as MEDIUM which has more reporting requirements than small corporations.

FURTHER INFORMATION:

www.oratsic.gov.au

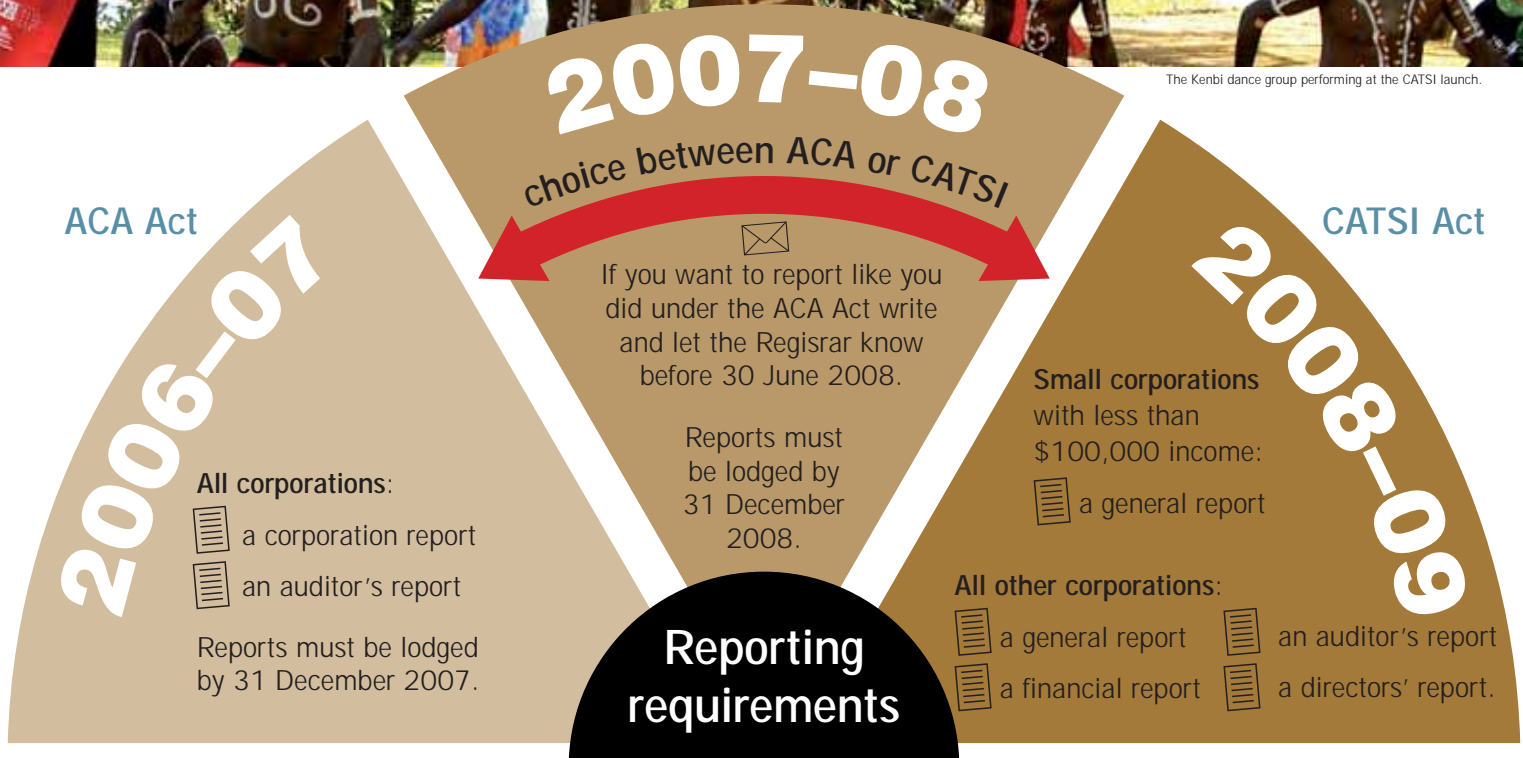
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The Kenbi dance group performing at the CATSI launch.



2006-07

All corporations report like they did **under the ACA Act**. The corporation report and auditor's report must be lodged by 31 December 2007.

2007-08

Corporations can choose how they report. If they want to report in a familiar way, they may again report like they did **under the ACA Act**. To do so they must write and let the Registrar know before 30 June 2008. The corporation report and auditor's report must be lodged by 31 December 2008.

Or corporations can choose to report **under the CATSI Act**. There is no need to inform the Registrar. The corporation's financial report and auditor's report must be lodged by 31 December 2008. A general report and a directors' report must also be lodged by the same date.

2008-09

There is no choice and all corporations must report **under the CATSI Act**.

Corporations have been classed as large, medium or small, depending on their income, assets and employees.

All corporations must lodge a general report.

Small corporations with less than \$100,000 income, only have to lodge the general report.

All other corporations must lodge the general report plus:

- a financial report
- an auditor's report
- a directors' report.

Some small and medium corporations may submit a report based on financial reports prepared for public funding bodies. This will avoid duplication of financial reporting.

What do corporations need to do to move to the CATSI Act?

- o start putting their ICN (Indigenous Corporation Number) on all their important documents
- o start using new terminology (governing committee members—*directors*, public officers—*secretaries* or *contact persons*)
- o change their rule book (constitution).

ORATSIC has developed a tool to help corporations change their rules so that they comply with the CATSI Act. This tool is available on the website, or it can be used as a printed copy.

Most importantly, **don't panic**: corporations have until 30 June 2009 to fully move over to the new legislation.

What's in a general report under CATSI?

- names and addresses of members and directors
- name and address of corporate secretary and address of registered office (if large)
- name and address of contact person and document access address (if small or medium)
- total gross operating income, total gross assets, and number of employees
- associated trusts and subsidiaries
- land owned by the corporation.