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Media Statement

27 June 2022

A report in *The Advertiser* on 27 June 2022 about the employment of APY's General Manager Richard King contained factual errors and failed to comply with journalistic standards of accuracy and clarity, and fairness and balance.

The Advertiser received a statement from APY in response to questions about an executive performance review two days before publication. Yet *The Advertiser's* sensational and misleading report primarily focused on old and rehashed material which contained various inaccuracies. Disappointingly, *The Advertiser* chose to publish just a few words from one sentence of APY's 140-word statement, in the last paragraph of its highly derogatory article.

No opportunity whatsoever was provided to APY for a right of reply to ensure the bulk of material *The Advertiser* chose to publish was presented accurately and with reasonable fairness and balance.

These are the facts that you will not read in *The Advertiser*:

On 25 October 2021, the APY Executive Board passed a resolution to renew Mr King's contract for a further three years, "subject to agreeing terms and conditions and a satisfactory performance review".

This is standard practice across many organisations, including local government. Indeed, most councils across SA have established Performance Review Committees and engaged independent consultants to undertake periodic reviews of a leader's performance against Key Performance Indicators.

The general manager's periodic performance review is not unusual and ensures that performance expectations align with the strategy of APY. The process also ensures an appropriate and productive collaboration between the general manager and the Board, and an appropriate level of remuneration.

There have not been a "string of scandals", as *The Advertiser* alleged. An erroneous complaint by Dennis and Roxanne Colson to the Australian Human Rights Commission was terminated by the Commission on 17 January 2022.

Mr King was never "sacked by the APY Board", as *The Advertiser* alleged. Nor was Mr King "reappointed" by former premier Steven Marshall, as *The Advertiser* alleged. Mr King has always been appointed by the Executive Board, with the responsible Minister approving the terms and conditions, as required under the APY Land Rights Act.

Mr King is the longest serving and first Indigenous general manager of the APY Lands. Under Mr King's tenure, APY will this year lodge its sixth consecutive unqualified audit. Mr King has won awards for COVID-safe management of the Lands, and overseen numerous reforms including the first modern enterprise agreement for APY staff, life-changing IT and telecommunications upgrades, and the equal inclusion of women onto the APY Executive Board.

APY is proud that performance management from the top down is a core part of the organisation, and commend Mr King for his positive engagement with the process.