

foreword

“For many years non-Islanders have worked with Islanders to resolve issues of disadvantage, and to improve the level of services and the standard of living in this distinctive part of Australia.

While there has been a good deal of success, it needs to be stated that on far too many occasions projects and programs did not reach their full potential. This was due not so much to a lack of material resources, but to a lack of understanding on the part of those not familiar with Islander ways.

At the heart of the problem of relationship and communication breakdown is the dissimilar world views of Islander and non-Islander societies. If social and cultural values and historical experiences are not understood and respected, there is enormous scope for misunderstanding, disappointment and resentment on both sides.

Mina Mir Lo Ailan Mun provides insight and background to cultural and historical factors that affect the way Torres Strait Islanders live today. It offers practical guidance to improving communication between Islanders and non-Islanders, and will be of great assistance to newcomers who wish to establish relations with Torres Strait Islanders. It will also assist non-Islanders who are already familiar to us.

I therefore highly recommend *Mina Mir Lo Ailan Mun* as a guide to improving understanding and communication between us all. I look forward to seeing the benefits of this document unfold in the future”.



Getano Lui AM
Chairperson
Island Co-ordinating Council

