

Torres Strait Elections, 2000 and 2004: Changes in Political Leadership and Style?

W. Sanders

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December 2004

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ANU	The Australian National University
ATSIC	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission
CAEPR	Centre for Aboriginal Economic Policy Research
GASC	Greater Autonomy Steering Committee
GATF	Greater Autonomy Task Force
ICC	Island Coordinating Council
TSRA	Torres Strait Regional Authority

ABSTRACT

Torres Strait has 18 local governments, elections for which were held in March of both 2000 and 2004 in conjunction with other local government elections in Queensland. Elections were also held at these times for additional positions on two regional representative bodies for Torres Strait, the Island Co-ordinating Council and the Torres Strait Regional Authority. This paper examines all these elections, focusing on changes in political leadership and also a possible emerging change in political style in Torres Strait.

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INTRODUCTION

Torres Strait has 18 local governments which, in line with local governments elsewhere in Queensland, held elections in March of both 2000 and 2004. Only one of Torres Strait's local governments, however, is established under the Queensland *Local Government Act*. The other 17 are established under the Queensland *Community Services (Torres Strait) Act 1984*. This dual local government system has its roots in early twentieth century attempts to separate the governance of settler and Indigenous people in Torres Strait. The Torres Shire Council, focused on Thursday Island, the centre of colonial and now regional settlement in the Strait, was once primarily the domain of settler interests. The 17 Island Councils, on the other hand, have been strongly Islander domains, with few non-Indigenous people, other than transient service personnel, living in their small outlying communities (see map, Appendix A and table, Appendix B). While Island Councils are still strongly Islander domains, Torres Shire has changed considerably in recent years. The Shire now attracts considerable Islander participation and interest, having had an Islander Mayor since 1994 and many Islander councillors since 1991.

The purpose of this paper is not, however, to explore the colonial heritage of Torres Strait's dual local governance structure, nor the recent breaking down within that structure of the separation of Islander and settler interests. Rather it is to focus on the two most recent elections for these governance structures and to argue that they have involved some significant leadership changes among Islanders plus one notable consolidation of leadership. The paper also suggests that the period between the 2000 and 2004 elections may possibly have involved a development in political style, towards a more adversarial politics.

My original intention was to write a piece solely on the 2004 Torres Strait elections, which I had the opportunity to observe first hand. However, in attempting to do so, it became clear that the 2004 elections were better analysed in conjunction with the 2000 elections and events since. What follows is a review of structures and leadership in Torres Strait governance in recent years, followed by a discussion of the possibility of an emerging change in political style.

STRUCTURES AND LEADERSHIP IN RECENT TORRES STRAIT GOVERNANCE

As well as giving the 17 Island Councils local government status, the *Community Services (Torres Strait) Act 1984 (Old)* also established a new regional representative body for Islanders, the Island Co-ordinating Council (ICC). This brought together the 17 chairpersons of the Island Councils, plus one elected representative of Indigenous people living on the north side of Thursday Island. This area, known as Tamwoy, had been set aside in the mid twentieth century for Islanders who wished to live in the regional centre. By the 1980s, the number of such Islanders had grown to the extent that it was felt they needed a representative on the new regional representative body for Islanders, even though it was also felt that they did not need an Island Council as Torres Shire serviced all of Thursday Island. Hence elections for the Tamwoy representative on the

ICC are also held in conjunction with Queensland local government elections. These elections previously took place every three years in March, but after the 2000 elections a four-yearly cycle was instituted.

One further structural development in the late 1980s was the Commonwealth government's creation of a Torres Strait Regional Council within the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC). Islanders pushed successfully for the members of the ICC also to be members of this regional representative body, along with two additional elected members representing Indigenous residents of the south side of Thursday Island and the adjacent Horn Island and Prince of Wales Island combined. These latter islands are also serviced by Torres Shire, rather than having Island Councils of their own (see map, Appendix A). Elections for these two additional positions were to be held just a week after Queensland local government elections and from 1994 they became elections for the enhanced Torres Strait Regional Authority (TSRA) which replaced the Torres Strait Regional Council within ATSIC (Sanders 1995).

Hence, every third or fourth March, in recent years, Torres Strait has had something of an electoral extravaganza. Not only has it had 18 local governments to elect, but also an additional representative for the ICC and two additional representatives for the TSRA alongside the 17 Island Council chairpersons. In 2004, approximately 170 people competed for 70 elected positions in the Torres Strait elections. The local weekly newspaper, the *Torres News*, had election stories running for many weeks. The local radio station devoted an hour and half of talkback each day of the week leading up to polling day to the elections, and then had an extended broadcast of results on election night. Electoral processes have thus been heartily embraced in Torres Strait.

The key leadership positions to emerge from these electoral processes are, in many ways, threefold: the Mayor of Torres Shire, the chairperson of the ICC and the chairperson of the TSRA. This is not to undervalue the positions of the chairpersons of individual Island Councils, but some Island Councils service and represent very small populations and the three more regional leadership positions, representing larger populations, have gained a higher public profile (see Appendix B for population information).

The chairperson of the ICC from 1988 to 2000 was Getano Lui Jnr, who was also the chair of Yam Island Council. Lui also chaired the Torres Strait Regional Council of ATSIC from 1991 to 1994 and the Torres Strait Regional Authority from 1994 to 1997. Lui was, without a doubt, the dominant Torres Strait Islander politician of his generation, gaining a degree of Australia-wide as well as regional prominence (see e.g. Lui 1994). However, in the late 1990s Lui's dominance began to wane. In 1997 he lost the chair of the TSRA to John Abednego, the Tamwoy representative on ICC and TSRA. Then after the 2000 elections, he lost the chair of the ICC, amid allegations of mismanagement in the Islander Board of Industry and Service, another body which Lui had chaired during the 1990s. After the 2000 election Lui remained on the ICC and the TSRA as simply as an Island Council chairperson, having been chair of one or both of these larger regional organisations for over a decade. This could be likened, in the wider Australian context, to becoming a back bencher after having been Prime Minister.

Lui's dominance of Torres Strait political leadership from the late 1980s to the late 1990s can be contrasted with what has happened since. The new chair of the TSRA after the 1997 elections, John Abednego, only served one term. He was replaced as TSRA chair after the 2000 elections by the long-serving chair of Saibai Island Council, Terry Waia, who from 1997 to 2000 had also been the national ATSIC commissioner for Torres Strait. This last position has been something of a fourth leadership opportunity for Torres Strait Islanders in recent years, though a somewhat unusual and uncomfortable one; it has given the occupant little additional profile in Torres Strait itself but has involved them in Australia-wide work alongside Aboriginal people and with Torres Strait Islanders living outside the Strait, of whom there are now many. Waia too only served one term as TSRA chair before being subject to an electoral system change in Saibai Island Council which rendered him unable to serve as its chairperson after the 2004 elections, and hence also unable to serve as an ICC and TSRA member. The new chairperson of the ICC after the 2000 elections, Henry Garnier, also only served one term, retiring altogether from both the ICC and the Hammond Island Council in 2004 due to advancing years and health concerns.

The two new chairs of the TSRA and ICC after the 2004 elections are John Toshie Kris of St Pauls Island Council for the TSRA and the Tamwoy representative Robert Sagigi for the ICC. Kris was first elected chairperson of St Pauls Island Council in 2000, while Sagigi was first elected as the Tamwoy representative on the ICC in 2004, defeating in the process the long serving representative and former TSRA chair, John Abednego. Hence the leadership of the TSRA and ICC has been a passing parade of single term chairs since the waning of Getano Lui's power, with no new leader yet establishing themselves with anything like his authority and longevity.

By contrast, leadership of the Torres Shire has been consolidated in the 2000 and 2004 elections around the Torres Strait Islander mayor, Pedro Stephen, who is now serving his fourth term. Dominant long-term mayors are reasonably common in Queensland local government, encouraged by the system of direct election-at-large of mayors (Tucker 1981: 394–5). Stephen certainly now falls into this category, having also campaigned in 2000 on the basis of the Torres Shire mayoralty becoming a full-time salaried position—which it subsequently did.

Stephen's other achievement in the 2000 elections was to be elected as the southern Thursday Island, or Port Kennedy, representative on the TSRA. This he did to create a link between the TSRA and Torres Shire and to enhance his capacity to push for greater autonomy for Torres Strait within the larger Australian governmental system (see Sanders 2000; Sanders & Arthur 2001). By the 2004 elections, however, Stephen had become frustrated with TSRA's contribution on the greater autonomy issue and decided not to stand again for TSRA office.

I will return to the greater autonomy issue in my discussion of political style. Suffice it to say at this stage that Stephen had not found the TSRA as conducive to his leadership aspirations as the Torres Shire and retreated at the 2004 elections to the more receptive environment of the Shire. Nevertheless, in 2004,

Stephen is by far the most well-established of current Torres Strait Islander political leaders. His reign as mayor seems almost unchallengeable, as his former deputy mayor, Leo Ah Kee, learnt at the 2004 elections.

Ah Kee took the difficult decision in 2004 of running against Stephen in the election-at-large for mayor, thereby also forgoing the possibility of being re-elected in the separate elections for Torres Shire councillors. Stephen won easily, with over half the votes in a four candidate contest; Ah Kee ran a respectable but distant second. The conundrum which faced Ah Kee—whether to risk all and go for the top job or to play it safe and probably be re-elected as a councillor—is one of the less desirable aspects of the Queensland system of directly electing mayors at large and excluding mayoral candidates from also standing for election as councillors.¹ It is also a conundrum that faces councillors of the 17 Island Councils, which have increasingly adopted this electoral system in recent years.

In the 2004 Torres Strait elections, 14 of the 17 incumbent Island Council chairpersons sought re-election, and all but one had challengers. However of the 26 candidates who stood for election against these incumbent chairs only four were serving councillors. The vast majority of these challengers were council outsiders. Ten of the 14 Island Council chairpersons who sought re-election in 2004 were successful, but four lost, one to an existing councillor and three to outsider challengers.

Two prominent Island Council chairpersons, Getano Lui Jnr and Henry Garnier, retired at the 2004 elections. This allowed serving councillors in two Island Councils to stand for election as chairperson without having to risk an all or nothing challenge to a serving chairperson. Three serving councillors did so, two against each other and one against a council outsider, and two were elected. This accounts for chairperson elections in 16 of the 17 Island Councils at the 2004 elections. In the seventeenth case, Saibai, electoral system change made it impossible for the serving Island Council chairperson to be re-elected. I will briefly discuss this before addressing the issue of political style.

In 1999 Saibai was developing a body corporate for the holding of its newly-recognised native title and decided to adopt a seven-clan electoral structure for the new body. It was also decided that a similar electoral structure might be useful for Saibai Island Council, which had previously had a chairperson and two councillors elected at large. Under the seven-clan electoral structure, the chairperson was no longer to be elected at large, but was to alternate between two groupings of the seven elected clan representatives organised into a group of three and a group of four. Terry Waia, the chairperson of Saibai Island Council since 1988, served as the first chairperson under this new electoral system, from 2000 to 2004. However, it was inevitable under this system that he would not be chairperson after the 2004 elections. The new chair of Saibai Island Council in 2004 is Jensen Warusam, while Waia is his deputy. And, of course, under the new electoral system, Warusam will, initially at least, only be chairperson for one term until 2008, at which point Waia will have a chance of regaining the chair. Only time will tell whether particular individuals can regain the chair of Saibai Island Council in alternating electoral terms.²

The general point to be taken from this discussion is that Torres Strait political leadership is perhaps more open, changeable and competitive at present than it has been for some time. Since the waning of Getano

Lui Jnr's power, no-one has yet emerged within the ICC and the TSRA as a multi-term chairperson of these regional bodies. Within Island Council leadership, there has also been considerable recent change, with nine multi-term chairpersons coming to the end of their reign at the 2000 or 2004 elections, either by retirement, challenge or electoral system change. Conversely there are now just six Island Council chairpersons who have been in that position since before the 2000 elections and none of these is chair of a regional body. There are now also two female chairs of Island Councils, one who has been in office since 1997 and one who was first elected in 2004. In the Torres Shire, by contrast, the 2000 and 2004 elections have been a period of leadership consolidation for fourth-term mayor, Pedro Stephen. Stephen is now clearly the most well-established and entrenched of current Torres Strait political leaders.³

CHANGING POLITICAL STYLE?

Can changing political leadership in Torres Strait, be linked to a change in political style? This section of the paper is more tentative and speculative, but the possibility of an emerging change in political style is, I believe, worth thinking about.

In the past the style of Torres Strait politics has been both developmental and distributive; Torres Strait political leaders have focused on gaining benefits for the development of their region from the larger Australian political and economic systems and distributing these benefits to their followers. Another terminology to describe this political style might be political clientelism and patronage (Eisenstadt & Lemarchand 1981). But the precise terminology matters less than the general idea.

This style of politics can be very effective for local and regional leaders. It can secure for them multi-term political careers through the loyalty of benefited followers. It can also be seen as a style of not just Torres Strait politics, but of Australian local and state/territory politics more generally. However, in Australian politics more generally this developmental and distributive political style is combined with an adversarial party politics which sets leaders against each other in competition for political office and in the process exposes them to some degree of scrutiny from peers. In Torres Strait, in the past, adversarial party politics among leaders has not been greatly evident. Party affiliations have not been prominent and leaders have focused on fighting hard for benefits for their particular island or region, while eschewing public criticism of either opponents or other leaders from other islands.⁴ Developmental and distributive politics without this adversarial accompaniment can at times be accused of being too closed and nepotistic—and some such accusations were made of Island Councils in the early 1990s (Criminal Justice Commission 1994). In recent years, however, there has been something of a new willingness to engage in debate among Torres Strait Islander leaders which, while still not cast in overtly party political terms, is more adversarial in style. To illustrate this point, I will return to the 2000 Torres Strait elections and to events since that relate largely, though not exclusively, to the issue of greater autonomy for Torres Strait within the Australian political system.

The idea of Torres Strait gaining greater autonomy within the Australian political system is a long-standing theme in Torres Strait politics (Beckett 1987; Sanders & Arthur 2001). A Commonwealth Parliamentary inquiry on the issue, published in 1997, helped to rekindle interest in this theme in recent years (House of Representatives Standing Committee on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs 1997). In 1999 a group called the Greater Autonomy Task Force (GATF) was formed, comprising the chairs of the TSRA and the ICC, the mayor of Torres Shire and several other community representatives. In the months leading up to the 2000 elections, this group conducted consultations with Islanders on progressing the case for greater autonomy (Sanders 2000; and see 'Autonomy Task Force consults with Torres Straits communities', *TSRA News* January 2000). However, after the 2000 elections, both John Abednego and Getano Lui Jnr found themselves out of the chairpersons positions within the ICC and TSRA, thereby also losing their membership of the GATF. Pedro Stephen, on the other hand, for the first time found himself within the TSRA, as well as being Torres Shire mayor. The new occupants of the ICC and TSRA chairs were perhaps less interested or less well versed in the greater autonomy issue than Lui, Abednego and Stephen. They found themselves facing an unofficial opposition within the TSRA, focusing on Stephen and the two former chairs.

This opposition emerged on both greater autonomy and other matters. The first matter on which opposition became evident was not the question of greater autonomy, but the appointment in late 2000 of a new General Manager of the TSRA. The unofficial opposition pushed hard for an Islander to be appointed to this position, but chairman Waia and the majority within the TSRA eventually backed a non-Indigenous Queensland public servant.

On the autonomy issue, there was a show of unity in October 2001 when, at a three-day meeting in Bamaga, the TSRA, and by implication the GATF, produced an agreed model for a new Regional Assembly (see 'A Torres Strait territory government', *TSRA News* October 2001). However, at a public meeting in May 2002 this show of unity around the Bamaga Accord fell apart. The GATF was disbanded and a new structure, the Greater Autonomy Steering Committee (GASC), was established. The GASC was to have no ex-officio members from other bodies and, when nominations were called for, the chairpersons of both the ICC and the TSRA, Garnier and Waia, declined nomination. The mayor of Torres Shire, Pedro Stephen, on the other hand, accepted nomination. Alongside Stephen on the new GASC were, among others, Getano Lui Jnr and George Mye—the latter being the dominant Torres Strait Islander politician of the generation before Lui's. Hence the greater autonomy issue was being taken over from the current political leadership by those who had driven it both immediately before the 2000 elections and back in the 1980s.

A new portfolio position called Regional Governance and Legislative Reform was also created within the TSRA in 2002, which Lui came to occupy. Through the GASC and this new portfolio Lui developed a strategy for greater autonomy, which the TSRA endorsed in February 2003. This strategy called for the Commonwealth Parliament to pass legislation which separated the TSRA from ATSIC and provided for the direct election of TSRA members from six island clusters, plus the election-at-large of a TSRA chairperson. Draft legislation for the separation of the TSRA from ATSIC had been around for some time, but these suggested electoral arrangements were new and quite different from the existing 20-member TSRA.

During the first half of 2003, a submission was made by the TSRA to the Commonwealth Minister for Immigration, Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs, Philip Ruddock, asking him to enact this strategy. However, the Minister declined to do so arguing that all community members and other stakeholders' needed to 'have an opportunity to fully articulate their views on the Bill' and that: '[the] process involved in having amended legislation drafted and passed by Parliament means that it is unlikely that any new arrangements would be in place in time for the 2004 TSRA elections' (letter from Minister Ruddock to TSRA received 20 June 2004 and quoted in *Torres News* 19–25 December 2003).

The new Commonwealth Minister for Immigration, Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs after August 2003, Amanda Vanstone, also declined to act on the submission despite another approach from the TSRA. This then led to an outbreak of debate and recriminations among Islander leaders.

TSRA chair Terry Waia accepted Vanstone's response and argued that reform of the TSRA and its electoral system was still possible, but after the 2004 elections. Getano Lui Jnr, however, was less accepting and argued that the TSRA Board was 'sending conflicting messages to the Federal Government' (*Torres News* 19–25 December 2003). George Mye's contribution was to write to Minister Vanstone on behalf of the GASC arguing strongly for 'democratic elections' for the TSRA Board. He wrote, *inter alia*:

I move a vote of no confidence with the electoral system of elected island chairpersons being appointed by the federal minister.

We feel the whole system of the TSRA elections needs restructuring (letter from Mye to Vanstone 9 December 2003, quoted in *Torres News* 19–25 December 2003)

By January 2004, Mye and Lui were advocating the possibility that ICC representatives elected under the *Community Service (Torres Strait) Act* might boycott their appointments across to the TSRA. Stephen too indicated his support for the idea of a boycott arguing that: 'when I supported TSRA elections I supported TSRA elections for all of the region' (*Torres News* 16–22 January 2004).

Two months later, Stephen announced that he would not be standing again for TSRA office and was asked why by the *Torres News*. He was quoted as saying:

It's a protest... My disappointment, after four years of lobbying and different discussions regarding a proper regional authority being established, is that there still has been no real outcome from these discussions... (*Torres News* 12–18 March 2004)

This provoked a response from Waia, who accused Stephen, Lui and the GASC of being the ones who had failed to progress regional governance reform and asked Stephen to apologise for 'spreading allegations' about the workings of the outgoing TSRA Board (*Torres News* 19–25 March 2004). The response from Stephen a week later was not an apology but focused its criticisms on the administration of the TSRA rather than on Waia (*Torres News* 26 March–1 April 2004).

To anyone steeped in the adversarial party politics of the larger Australian political system, this exchange of views between Islander leaders on alternative electoral systems for the TSRA and who was, or was not,

facilitating progress towards greater autonomy in Torres Strait regional governance was both fairly mild mannered and unexceptional. However, in Torres Strait it was a moment of unusually overt political conflict, at the culmination of an unusually fractious term within the TSRA. Never before had the TSRA had an unofficial internal opposition and never before had its outgoing members been quite so openly critical of each other at the end of a term. However, talkback radio in the week leading up to the 2004 elections still resounded with congratulations all round to candidates for standing, plus litanies of personal values and achievements as reasons to vote for the speaker, rather than criticism of other candidates and policies.

The root cause of the conflict during the 2000–2004 term of the TSRA was a growing difference of opinion in Torres Strait over the merits of the existing electoral system for the ICC and TSRA, which focuses both local and regional political power on Island Council chairpersons. Criticism of this system has grown in recent years, with critics not only asking for separate elections for local and regional representatives, but often also suggesting a reduction in the number of regional representatives by the grouping of island electorates into clusters (see table, Appendix B). The existing electoral arrangements also, however, have their defenders. Perhaps more than opposing direct elections of regional representatives per se, these defenders doubt that Islanders elected from one island could adequately represent other islands. One captain for each ship, one clear leader for each island community is their idea of a good representative structure.

An irony of this outbreak of political debate in the lead up to the 2004 elections was that the main players in the debate were not seeking re-election to regional office. Getano Lui Jnr was retiring from both Yam Island Council and higher regional office, Terry Waia was destined through electoral system change to be, at best, Saibai Island Council deputy chair, and Pedro Stephen was retreating from the TSRA to just the mayoralty of Torres Shire Council. Elder statesman politician George Mye came out of retirement to recontest a councillor's position on the Darnley Island Council, but did so primarily, I would argue, to promote direct elections for the TSRA and his boycott idea. Mye was never going to re-emerge as a regional political leader and was in fact unsuccessful even in being re-elected as a councillor on Darnley Island Council. Mye's boycott idea effectively got nowhere, as Island Council chairpersons elected in 2004 took up their positions on the ICC and TSRA in the usual way.

Whether the fractiousness of the 2000–2004 term of the TSRA will prove to be anything more than an aberration must remain an open question. A change in political style towards a more adversarial approach may be emerging in Torres Strait, but it is also possible that the current TSRA will retreat to a less overtly conflictual style. Change in any political style probably takes longer than one electoral term to emerge. So my findings here can only be tentative and suggestive.

CONCLUSION

Changes in political leadership in Torres Strait were evident as a result of the 2000 and 2004 elections. The majority of Island Councils have chairpersons who were elected for the first time at one or other of these elections. The ICC and TSRA have been experiencing a series of one-term leaders, none of whom has yet achieved the pre-eminence or dominance of past multi-term leaders like Getano Lui Jnr and George Mye. The Torres Shire, on the other hand, has a well entrenched multi-term leader in Mayor Pedro Stephen. However, Stephen's involvement with the TSRA did not meet with the same success. So there is perhaps more openness, change and competition among Torres Strait political leaders than there has been for some time.

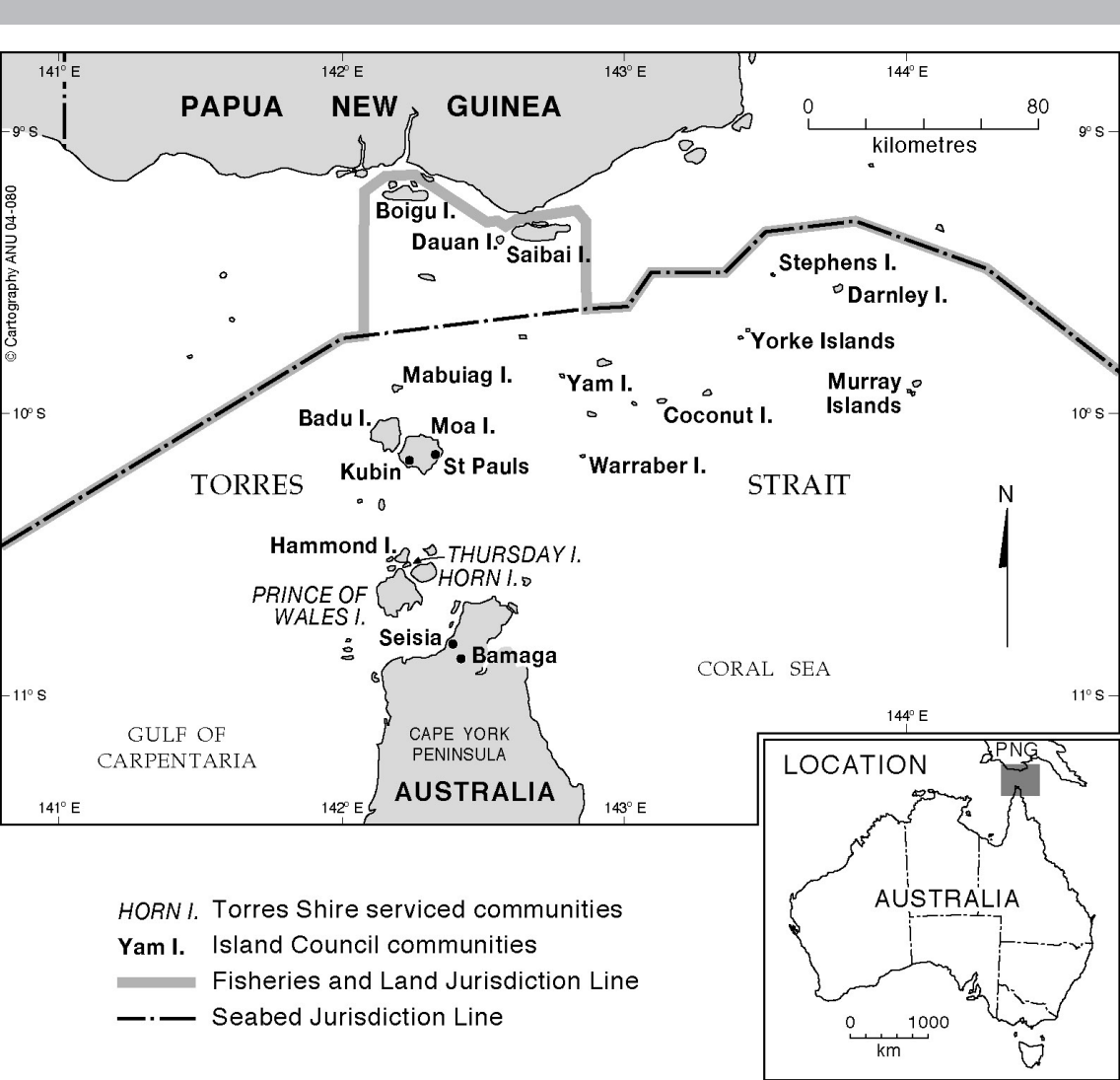
Change in political style in Torres Strait is somewhat less clearly established. A move toward a more adversarial political style was evident during the 2000–2004 term of the TSRA, but may as yet prove to be a one-term phenomenon rather than a longer term trend. However, if Torres Strait Islanders are seeking more openness and competition in their political leadership, a greater degree of adversarial politics might well be a useful development. Developmental and distributive politics, with its predominant dynamic of leader–follower loyalty, could be usefully supplemented by greater competition and adversarial debate between leaders.

Finally, it should be noted that there are other ways to encourage greater competition among Torres Strait political leaders via electoral systems than just the direct separate election of local and regional representatives. At the local level, candidates for chairperson or mayor could also be allowed to run for election as councillors, though this would require legislative change as currently neither the Queensland *Local Government Act* nor the Regulations under the *Community Services (Torres Strait) Act* allow such dual candidature.⁵ If dual candidature were allowed, more challengers to chairpersons or mayors might emerge from within councils and losers of such challenges would not be relegated to being council outsiders for the next electoral term. In small local governments, where the pool of potential political leaders is restricted, strong arguments for allowing dual candidature can certainly be made.

NOTES

1. Section 299 of the Queensland *Local Government Act* prohibits dual candidature between elections for mayor and councillor. Section 7 (1A) (i) of the regulations under the *Community Services (Torres Strait) Act* prohibits dual candidature between elections for chairperson and councillor in Island Councils, if those Councils have opted for direct election of a chairperson. However, under these regulations Island Councils can opt for the direct popular election of just councillors, who then elect a chairperson from among themselves.
2. It is now common for Island Council deputy chairs to attend ICC meetings as proxies for their chairpersons, while the chairpersons themselves focus on TSRA meetings. Waia is doing this for Saibai, so he is not as far removed from power as it might seem. However deputies cannot hold higher office in the ICC, and nor can they attend TSRA meetings, as proxies are not provided for.
3. It should be noted in passing that while the TSRA was part of the ATSIC system, it will not be affected by the Commonwealth *ATSIC Amendment Bill 2004* which seeks to abolish ATSIC. The TSRA will outlive ATSIC and indeed may stand as a beacon for new regional structures in Indigenous affairs more generally.
4. Party affiliations have occasionally come to the surface in Torres Strait politics in the past, for example when Getano Lui Jnr stood as a National Party candidate in the Queensland State election of 1986 (see Beckett 1987: 198). Also, in the past, adversarial politics among Torres Strait Islanders has often focused on Islanders living away from Torres Strait, like Eddie Mabo, and their struggles to still have some say in the affairs of their homeland.
5. See note 1 above.

APPENDIX A. TORRES STRAIT COMMUNITIES



APPENDIX B. POPULATIONS OF TORRES STRAIT, 2001 CENSUS

Locality	Indigenous	Total	Indigenous/total
Torres Shire serviced communities			
Thursday Island (Waiben)	1645	2680	0.61
Horn Island (Ngurapai)	284	582	0.49
Prince of Wales Island (Muralug)	178	241	0.74
Island Councils communities			
Hammond Island (Keriri)	195	203	0.96
<i>North Western group</i>			
Boigu Island	245	270	0.91
Dauan Island	105	120	0.88
Saibai Island	229	320	0.72
<i>Western group</i>			
Badu Island	516	686	0.75
St Pauls, Moa Island	186	200	0.93
Kubin, Moa Island	166	194	0.86
Mabuiag Island	198	213	0.93
<i>Central group</i>			
Yorke Islands (Masig, Kodal)	244	292	0.84
Warraber Island	207	213	0.97
Yam Island (Iama) combined with Coconut Island (Poruma)	275	340	0.81
<i>Eastern group</i>			
Murray Islands (Mer, Waier, Dowar)	408	427	0.96
Darnley Island (Erub)	278	307	0.91
Stephens Island (Ugar)	61	64	0.95
<i>Cape York group</i>			
Bamaga	638	774	0.82
Seisia	110	175	0.63
Total	6,168	8,301	0.74
Source: 2001 Census.			

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