10am Wednesday 9 February 2022

Guest Speaker

Mr Blair Exell

Blair Exell is the acting Chief Executive Officer at the National Indigenous Australians Agency (NIAA).

Blair is responsible for leading policy, program and delivery reform in line with the Government’s commitment to improving the lives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians. This includes responsibility for over 1200 staff right across Australia. Blair was previously the Deputy Chief Executive Officer, Policy and Programs at NIAA.

Blair has been working in Indigenous policy for the last four years in NIAA and prior to that in the Indigenous Affairs Group in the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet. This followed 25 years in the international aid and development sector, including working with indigenous peoples in the Asia-Pacific region.

He began his career in non-government organisations in Cambodia and Vietnam and later moved across to the Australian Public Service. Blair has held senior policy, program and emergency roles for AusAID and then the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, working across the Asia Pacific region and managing UN and global related positions. Blair was Australia’s most senior aid representative while posted to Cambodia, Solomon Islands and Indonesia. Blair was the inaugural Australian Ambassador for Regional Health Security (2017-2018) and served as Australia’s Board member to the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunisation (GAVI).

Blair graduated in Economics from the Australian National University.