

Annual Report

2019-20

About ARDS

We are an Indigenous corporation and for nearly fifty years we have been working with Indigenous communities, government agencies and other bodies in the Northern Territory and beyond to build understanding across cultures. Our skilled cultural and language consultants are uniquely placed to listen to Indigenous voices, understand their aspirations and the challenges they experience.

Our vision is for Indigenous people to be able to engage on equal terms with the wider Australian society, its organisations and systems. We “span the gap” that often exists between mainstream services and the information they typically share, and the information Indigenous communities want and need.

Contents

Chair Report - Gawura	4
CEO Report - Brendan	5
Response to COVID-19	6
Cultural Competency Training	8
Community Development	10
Health	11
Economic Development	12
Asbestos Education	12
Exploration Consultations Support	12
Language and Cultural Sustainability	13
Radio and Creative Media	17
Awards	22
Supporters, Donors and Sponsors	23
Financial Reports	24
Independent Auditor's Report	26

Chair Report – Gawura

Yo nhämirr bukmaḱ, ḱarrany yäku Gawura Waḱambi ga Raymaḱgirr ḱarraku wäḱany. Bäpurruny ḱarra Marraḱu ga bundurrnydja ḱarra Gatjinydji, ḱalthaḱu, Muwuḱu, Binygurrḱu, Dhaliyali.

Hi all, my name is Gawura Waḱambi. My home is Raymaḱgirr. My clan-nation is Marraḱu. My mäḱk' is Gamarraḱ. My bundurr¹ is Gatjinydji, ḱalthaḱu, Muwuḱu, Binygurrḱu and Dhaliyali. I am now the Chair of ARDS Aboriginal Corporation.

Firstly, I want to welcome new ARDS board member, Freddy Ganambar. Freddy is a ḱaymil man and an emerging leader from Gapuwiyak. Freddy brings a wealth of experience and knowledge to ARDS and has already made an impact on the Board and ARDS' direction.

Over the course of this year, ARDS had three CEOs. Johanna Ward's time in the role ended in August 2019. Our Corporate Member Representative, Haloti Kailahi, stepped in as Interim CEO before handing the role to Brendan Ferguson in April 2020. I want to acknowledge the work of each and thank them for their efforts.

Johanna served as ARDS CEO since 2015 and amongst her achievements, Jo's most enduring legacy will be the Cultural Competency Training (CCT) program she devised and set up. With our CCT program now operational and providing a new, ongoing income stream, ARDS will be in a much better position thanks to Jo's vision and hard work.

Haloti Kailahi served as Interim CEO during a difficult time for us. The onset of COVID-19 meant the postponement or cancellation of projects involving community consultation, greatly affecting our financial situation.

In collaboration with the Board, Haloti led the reorganisation of ARDS, giving the Board more say in our strategic direction, which has greatly encouraged board members.

When Brendan Ferguson was appointed Interim CEO in April, ARDS was in a very difficult

financial situation. It is testimony to Brendan's great work that ARDS' financial situation has stabilised and our outlook has become increasingly optimistic.

There were several steps that led to the improvement of ARDS's financial situation, one of which was the successful negotiation between ARDS and our funders to repurpose existing grant funds towards COVID-19 messaging work. I want to acknowledge and thank Brendan for achieving this outcome.

Finally, I want to take this opportunity to thank ARDS staff for their hard work over the past twelve months under some of the most challenging circumstances I have seen.

I look forward to the coming year with excitement as we look to resume many of our projects and take on new projects for the benefit of Aboriginal people across the Top End.



CEO Report – Brendan

I want to begin by thanking the ARDS Board for the opportunity to work with our Yolŋu Directors and staff and to learn about Yolŋu culture, language and Rom. I am at the very beginning of my learning journey and the Board has been extremely patient with me at each step.

Our Chair, and my wäwa, Gamarran, has explained in his report that ARDS was in a difficult situation when I joined. I'm extremely proud of the way in which ARDS staff have responded to those challenges and excited about the trajectory that ARDS is now on.

The year may have been challenging, but we have a lot to celebrate:

- Our Yolŋu ga Balanda staff adapted overnight to changing priorities when **COVID-19** threatened the health of Yolŋu across the East Arnhem region. ARDS led the development of Yolŋu matha resources to help Yolŋu understand the virus and plan a response.
- We delivered **East Arnhem Live** in partnership with Developing East Arnhem Limited, Rirratjingu Aboriginal Corporation, NITV and Fed Square showcasing the best Yolŋu musical talent, performing on-country in a series of concerts viewed by over 400,000 people globally.
- We launched our **Cultural Competence Training (CCT)** at our Nhulunbuy office with local member, Yingiya Guyula, and Chief Minister, Michael Gunner, who announced that NT Government staff working in the region will complete the ARDS CCT, with construction of our new training room to be completed later in the 2020 calendar year.

We're incredibly excited by the future growth of our CCT offering and a range of other exciting projects planned for the 2021 financial year, including:

- our growing language maintenance and preservation work funded through the Indigenous Languages and Arts Program; and

- our role in facilitating a series of workshops in support of the Yolŋu Region Local Decision Making Partnership.

In recognition of the big workload ahead, we have proactively invested in the recruitment and development of Yolŋu ga Balanda staff. We have created a Training and Capability Coordinator role which is critical to the development of a strong and highly skilled team.

In reflecting on our year, I have been reminded of just how critical an institution ARDS is in the East Arnhem region. ARDS provides a bridge between mainstream organisations and services and Indigenous communities, ensuring that those communities have access to the information that they want and need. We see this in action every day through our Yolŋu Radio broadcasting service, the work of our language and resources team in supporting the continuation of local languages and culture and in the brokerage role that we play across many community development projects.

As I prepare to hand over to ARDS' new CEO, Ben Grimes, I am confident that ARDS will only get stronger in the years ahead.



Response to COVID-19

COVID-19 had a profound effect on ARDS Aboriginal Corporation, our staff and the communities we work with.

In the knowledge that the COVID-19 pandemic would affect Indigenous people more than Balanda (non-Indigenous people), we knew that we had to change the way we worked.

Our first priority was the health of the Yolŋu communities we work with, and so we paused our projects that involved community consultation. We closed our offices in Darwin and Nhulunbuy in March. Staff continued to work from home, with the exception of occasional visits to the studios and shopping runs for those more vulnerable Yolŋu board members and staff.

While video conferencing was already part of the work we do, “zoom” became a key word in our vocabulary as we began holding meetings online from our homes.. COVID-19 also affected Yolŋu Radio’s regular shows with presenters at times unable to leave their communities to record their programs.

First Nations Media Australia provided funding for the additional production work we required to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. Some of this funding was used to purchase Adobe suite licences so Yolŋu Radio producers could edit radio programs from home.

Many events in which ARDS would normally play a part were cancelled. In past years, the Yolŋu Radio Rirrakay Mala (sound group) were busy during the dry season providing sound and technical expertise at community events around Arnhem Land but 2020 saw our sound equipment packed away in storage.

Outback Spirit Tours, for which ARDS has organised Welcome to Country, bungul and women’s healing workshops in recent years, cancelled its 2020 season.

But while COVID-19 caused untold grief around the world, ARDS staff members successfully adapted to the abrupt change in work conditions. We set ourselves up to effectively continue our work supporting the aspirations of Yolŋu, and have played a crucial role in supporting communities and service organisations to respond to the pandemic in north-east Arnhem Land.



ARDS Chair Gawura Wanambi following Australian and Northern Territory Government COVID-19 guidelines by sanitising the front door handle of ARDS’ Darwin office.

Coronavirus Public Communications

ARDS is playing a pivotal role keeping Yolŋu informed and prepared for COVID-19.

In mid-March, we rapidly switched into emergency mode, dedicating almost all our capacity to broadcasting Yolŋu Matha communications about COVID-19 on-air and online.

Working closely with the Northern Territory Government, East Arnhem service providers and Yolŋu community organisations, ARDS developed a range of COVID-19 education resources.

This included a daily news bulletin in the initial stages of the pandemic, presented by Sylvia Nulpinditj on Yolŋu Radio throughout East Arnhem Land, Greater Darwin, and online.

Meanwhile, Yolŋu and Balanda cross-cultural facilitators in Darwin and Nhulunbuy developed a range of audio programs designed to reduce confusion. Programs like “Learning about COVID-19 with Dr. Jamie Mapleson” (*Gunḡa'yunaramirri dhäwu COVID-19-puy Dr. Jamie-wuŋu*), featuring Dr Jamie Mapleson and Yolŋu elders, aimed to answer common Yolŋu questions about COVID-19 and reduce confusion about it.

Other programs explained the frequently changing laws around travelling to and around Arnhem Land, quarantining, and other impacts on people's lives like restrictions for funerals. We also created a series of health messages:

“Advice to Protect Ourselves and Our Families” (*Nhaltjan ŋayi dhu yolŋu djäga nhanŋuwuy ŋayi, ga nhaltjan dhu djäga nhanŋukalanaw gurruŋumirriw*); and hosted and filmed a Q&A special in Yirrkala to address community questions and concerns.

Our resources have been widely praised by organisations involved in NT pandemic planning and response, and several have been adapted for use in other regions and languages.

All of our resources were uploaded to a dedicated online information portal. Yolŋu Radio broadcasted 360 hours of COVID-19 material between mid-March and the end of June alone. Our social media channels attracted tens of thousands of visitors each week, with some posts reaching over 5,000 people.

As the Northern Territory transitioned to ‘the New Normal’, ARDS continued to produce up-to-date resources and engage with local Yolŋu stakeholders. A key focus was supporting Yolŋu leaders to inform their local communities about Local Pandemic Plans.

Check out our COVID-19 resources at ards.com.au/covid-19/



Yolŋu Radio presenter Sylvia Nulpinditj played a vital role in COVID-19 news updates.



ARDS CCT facilitator Mayalil Marika provides an overview of the CCT workshops for Chief Minister Michael Gunner.

Cultural Competency Training

This year marked the launch of ARDS' East Arnhem Cultural Competency Training (CCT) program.

Announced by Northern Territory Chief Minister Michael Gunner during a visit to our Nhulunbuy studios in June, our CCT program is a major milestone for ARDS and, we believe, for the region.

Our program comprises both an online program and face-to-face workshops.

The 10 modules of the online program are the result of contributions from many staff members – particularly Yolŋu staff, directors and consultants – who shaped the training program and recorded incredible stories for the modules.

The online CCT program is already being used by clients such as the Arnhem Land Progress Association (ALPA) to support new staff training.

Launching the program, the Chief Minister announced that undertaking ARDS' East Arnhem Cultural Competency Training would become mandatory for all Northern Territory Government employees working in northeast Arnhem Land from 2020.

ARDS successfully piloted the face-to-face workshops in partnership with NTG employees in December. The one-day workshops, facilitated by Yolŋu leaders, will be available in Darwin and Nhulunbuy.

ARDS chair Gawura Waŋambi said current and previous directors had long identified the need for Cultural Competency Training.

"Yolŋu and Balanda – these are two worlds," he said.

"There is a small space somewhere in between these worlds where we can meet in the middle. A place of understanding. And with this understanding, we can work together."

"This Cultural Competency Training program will help us meet in the middle and build a better future in East Arnhem Land," Gawura said.



ARDS CCT facilitators (left to right) Mayalil Marika, Dipililŋa Marika and Gawura Wanambi (ARDS Chair) with participants of the December face-to-face workshop, Ryley Heap and Sarah Mitchell.

We would like to acknowledge the support of the Department of the Chief Minister and Cabinet, who provided crucial start-up support for CCT, including initial product development and capital works at our Nhulunbuy office to build a CCT training space.

We would also like to thank Keogh Bay Consultants, who supported the project development with their significant cross-cultural training program expertise.

For more information or to sign up to Cultural Competency Training, go to ards.com.au/cultural-competency-training/



A screenshot from the CCT online program.

Community Development

Local Decision Making

In recent years, the Northern Territory Government has introduced a policy called Local Decision Making, or LDM. The Northern Territory Government wants to support Indigenous people in each part of the NT to make decisions about things that affect them. The policy aims to move power from government agencies in Darwin or Canberra and share power with Aboriginal leaders and communities. Governments are working with Yolŋu to decide how to help Yolŋu make more decisions about many services in Yolŋu communities and homelands.

In 2019, the Australian Government, the Northern Territory Government and Regional Council wrote a Partnership Commitment with representatives of Yolŋu organisations – like Miwatj Health, ARDS, ALPA, Laynhapuy Homelands and others – to work on local decision making in the Yolŋu Region. Together, these groups and the three levels of government form the LDM Working Group.

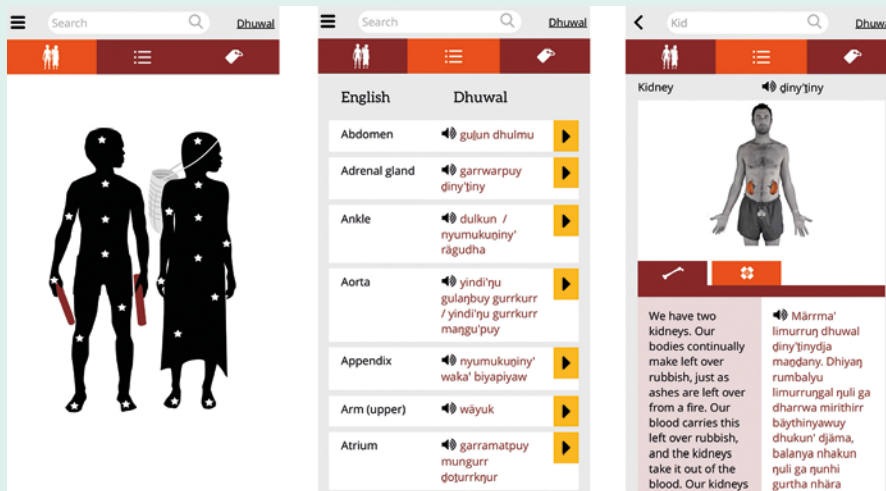
The governments and the LDM Working Group want to talk about Yolŋu and Balanda ways of making decisions and sharing power. Everyone wants to think about how to join these different ways of making decisions together in a way that respects both systems. In February, the LDM Working Group and the NT Department of the Chief Minister and Cabinet commissioned ARDS to prepare a workshop to bring everyone together and work on Local Decision Making. ARDS Facilitators planned a workshop that would help everyone to share openly about the special strengths of Yolŋu

and Balanda governance. Unfortunately, that workshop was postponed due to Coronavirus related travel restrictions, but ARDS is still working with the Working Group to find other ways of continuing this important work.

Yolŋu have many different ways of doing things. Some steps in the local decision-making process may be quick and easy. Other steps may be slow. In future, the Northern Territory Government might make different pathways and agreements around the Yolŋu region to share decision-making with Yolŋu around the region. The Board and management of ARDS Aboriginal Corporation are committed to this process and will continue this work into 2021.

Health

New multi-lingual ARDS' Rumbalpu Dhäwu Dictionary of Anatomy app



Screenshot from the Rumbalpu Dhäwu app.

ARDS' Rumbalpu Dhäwu Dictionary of Anatomy app was officially released in late 2019. One of the biggest Aboriginal language apps in existence, and certainly the biggest resource in anatomy available in an Australian Aboriginal language, Rumbalpu Dhäwu covers four different languages; Dhuwal, Dhanu, Dhuwala and Plain English, and features:

- Over 200 entries
- Audio recordings in three languages: Dhuwal (Djambarrpuynu), Dhuwala (Gumatj) and Dhanu (Gälpu)
- Text definitions in Plain English, Dhuwal, Dhuwala and Dhanu
- Over 140 pictures
- Password-protected men's health and women's health sections
- Browsible picture-search capability
- Alphabetical list and category finder
- Predictive text search.

The Plain English content also makes this information accessible to people from other non-English-speaking backgrounds.

Rumbalpu Dhäwu can be used by medical professionals, interpreters, patients,

and friends of those trying to understand and access mainstream health care. The audio content enables health professionals to play entries to their patients in their patients' first languages, and make the content accessible to those Yolŋu-matha speakers who don't read in their languages. The app is designed to include new and revised entries as they are completed, and expanded following user feedback.

Many people have contributed to the Rumbalpu Dhäwu Dictionary of Anatomy app over the last 15 years; visionaries, translators, linguists, health professionals, and we pay our respects to all those people. We are proud of what has been achieved in this app and we hope that the work will continue long into the future.

The app runs on Apple iOS and Android mobile phones, as well as on Mac and PC via an internet browser, and is available for download at api.ards.com.au/app/ or your favorite app store (Search for "Rumbalpu Dhawu" at Google Play or the App Store).

The app is a product of two Australian Government Indigenous Language and Arts projects.

Economic Development

ARDS supported the planning of a major economic development project by Developing East Arnhem Limited (DEAL).

DEAL's East Arnhem Landowner Prospectus project aims to identify and support opportunities for Yolŋu homelands and communities to be involved in business and industry development.

ARDS contributed to planning for this project with other project stakeholders. We also developed a Project Overview storyline and recording in Yolŋu Matha to provide awareness about the project and an introduction to the economic concepts involved.

Asbestos Education

ARDS travelled to Galiwin'ku, and completed a series of radio programs, to provide education about asbestos in Yolŋu matha.

The word 'asbestos' is foreign to many Yolŋu, and lack of information in language has caused fear for some residents. On our second trip for this project, ARDS worked with two local Yolŋu facilitators, James Garawirrtja and Joanne Djimbuluku Dhurrkay, as well as a facilitator from asbestos management company OCTIEF. We provided residents from over 15 households with information about what asbestos is, how it can make you sick, and how to protect yourself from it.

We also completed a series of radio programs with this information, for broadcast on Yolŋu Radio and online. We also began work on an animated film, to be produced in Plain English for distribution across the Top End.

This work was funded by the Northern Territory Government, as part of an asbestos management plan for Elcho Island.

Exploration Consultations Support

Ahead of consultations with Yolŋu landowners, ARDS provided support to aluminium miner Alcoa for the development of clear, meaningful communication materials.

Alcoa was scheduled to present to landowners about exploring for bauxite in north-east Arnhem Land in late 2020. ARDS recognises the importance of Yolŋu receiving clear information during consultations like these, where Yolŋu will make important decisions about the use of their land.

Working with Yolŋu staff and directors, and with input from the Northern Land Council,

ARDS began developing a Plain English storyline for use by Alcoa and a Yolŋu interpreter during the consultations. The storyline unpacks concepts that will help landowners make an informed decision – such as what exploration and mining will involve, and the meaning and process of concepts like rehabilitation.

Language and Cultural Sustainability

Minjilang Language and Culture Project

ARDS project members have been busy in Minjilang on Croker Island, working on a project to maintain and revitalise language, stories and songs in Iwaidja and Marrku, two local languages in danger of being lost.

Iwaidja is one of the traditional languages of the Cobourg Peninsula and Croker Island while Marrku is the ancestral language of Croker Island, yet Iwaidja is now spoken only by elderly residents and no one speaks Marrku at all.

ARDS community linguist Dr Aung Si worked with locals, including ARDS Board member Isobel Lami Lami, to document traditional knowledge in Iwaidja as well as the Iwaidja terms for the seasons, plants and other information central to Iwaidja culture.

Dr Aung Si was based at Mamaruni School, and helped local teachers on a weekly basis in the delivery of Language and Culture lessons. Seven lesson plans on 'Land and Country', with activity sheets and teacher's guides in English and Iwaidja, were produced for use in classrooms. Topics covered included Iwaidja traditional knowledge of the environment, plants and animals, traditional artefacts, and the seasonal cycle.

A workshop was held with two facilitators from the organisation Living Languages working with three Iwaidja speakers to train them in skills that helped them teach Iwaidja to children.

We also produced a range of language-related products, including nine posters on topics like the Iwaidja alphabet, body parts, turtle and dugong meat, and a map of Croker island with local place names. The posters were laminated, and distributed to the school, clinic, and interested community members.

A bilingual Iwaidja-English book *Mangkuldalkuj/ Croker Island* with illustrations by local artists

was produced, containing information in the seasonal cycle on Croker Island, and the different foods that are available at different times of the year. Additionally, two existing English language children's books, *Look See, Look at Me* and *Heads and Tails* were also translated into Iwaidja for use by younger pupils.

We also recorded and transcribed into English an important Dreaming story about the Jurtjurt (Brahminy Kite) and Djurtbirrk love songs recorded with two groups of performers.

The project has also raised the profile of Iwaidja online, with the inclusion of Iwaidja in a University of Melbourne language database and the creation of four short videos shot on an iPad supplied by ICTV. The videos were uploaded to the Minjilang Language and Culture YouTube page.

The Minjilang project was funded through the Australian Government's Indigenous Language and the Arts program.



Local language consultants Ronnie Waraludj (left) and Isobel Lami Lami, and ARDS community linguist Aung Si in Minjilang.

Ancient Languages, New Skills



ARDS Board Vice Chair [Dipililŋa Marika](#), Ancient Languages project workers [Bananaki Yunupinju](#) and [Djimbuluku Dhurrkay](#) with [Djobala](#) and baby [Narritjan](#) at [Dhălinybuy](#) homeland.

In an exciting first for us, ARDS has received funding from the Australian Government's Indigenous Languages and Arts (ILA) program to systematically plan future language work. 2022 will begin the United Nations' International Decade of Indigenous Languages and our planning in 2020-21 looks forward to the next ten years of language documentation, maintenance and promotion.

Previously, ILA have funded ARDS for language projects with specific resource or other deliverables like our award winning Ancient Languages project series. This new funding will include extra training and support for language workers throughout northeast Arnhem Land and Minjilang, while conducting the planning and consultation activities.

The funding allows ARDS' language workers to spend time in Minjilang and Yolŋu communities and homelands, listening to locals' ideas about how we can serve the needs of language communities, as well as professional training for more people in areas like radio and recording to produce programs for Yolŋu Radio, including our popular *Gurraŋay Matha on Radio* language series.

Our decades of working in northeast Arnhem Land have shown that the needs of remote, multilingual communities outweigh the capacity of any one organisation to resource. The ILA funding will give us the time to map possible partnerships with other relevant organisations and individuals involved in language activities. It will also give us the time to maintain collections and continue work on dictionaries in Yolŋu languages.

The funding recognises the many decades of work that ARDS language workers and linguists have undertaken with communities to record and preserve endangered languages.



*Shepherdson College students Martha Hewett, Joshua Garrawurra and Kiki Gawla display their artwork for *Badurru*.*

Badurru

One of the great success stories to come out of ARDS's Ancient Languages, New Skills project is our new children's book *Badurru*.

Badurru is a traditional children's story recorded in the Djambarrpuyŋu Luŋgurrpuy language about a cat and a crow travelling through the Milky Way, and how clans traded with each other. An elderly Yolŋu lady recorded the story fifteen years ago as part of ARDS' Gurraŋay language project. Now, thanks to Australian Government support, *Badurru* has finally been published with illustrations by students from Shepherdson College in Galiwin'ku.

Joy Bulkanhawuy realised that it would be fitting for children to illustrate the story. She and ARDS' linguist Hannah Harper worked with the primary school students and staff in Galiwin'ku and Batchelor Press to produce the quality end work.

Sadly the elderly storyteller passed away shortly after *Badurru* was printed so the book is particularly meaningful for Shirley Gundumawuy, the daughter of *Badurru*'s storyteller.

SkyCamp podcast

Last year, our ARDS Nhulunbuy team recorded some interviews about the use of social media and Yolŋu ways of life. Staff at RMIT used some of this information in a podcast called 'Sky Camp', accessible here:

<https://podcasts.apple.com/au/podcast/disconnect/id1473568047> (search for the episode "Sky Camp - the sharing of images of people who have passed away on Facebook").

ARDS at the Puliima Language and Technology conference

Members of our Darwin team attended the Puliima Language and Technology conference at the Darwin Convention Centre in August 2019, presenting our new multilingual dictionary of anatomy app, "Rumbalpu Dhäwu".

In the Puliima workshop sessions, we learned about morphology and how words in different languages change shape depending on how we use them. It was fun to see other people's languages on the whiteboard and our team enjoyed sharing examples from Djambarrpuyŋu grammar. There were other workshop sessions on the use of online platforms to share language learning resources, the many ways that Aboriginal languages talk about wellbeing and the body, practical use of recording devices and many other topics.

Small contracts/ Translating work –

Once again, ARDS teams have been busy with a wide range of fee-for-service language work. Sylvia and Hannah conducted a Yolŋu language learning workshop for *Pioneers* team members who are living in several major Yolŋu communities. ARDS collaborated with the Aboriginal Interpreter Service and Groote Eylandt Language Centre to produce information for East Arnhem Regional Council

in Yolŋu and Anindilyakwan languages about Local Laws. ARDS translators enjoyed the vibes of Baker Boy's tracks while transcribing and translating lyrics for his debut album. What a thrill to see Baker Boy win three NIMAs with *Meditjin!*

ARDS also consulted on an important new resource about Radiation Therapy to "buyu-yolŋukum" – to make it more authentic and appropriate for Yolŋu. Dr Lorraine Bell, Project Coordinator from Menzies School of Health Research wrote, "Gail and I greatly value the contribution from Hannah and the team of Yolŋu consultants DikuJ, Sylvia and Biritjalawuy in helping us to improve this resource. We hope it will become a resource that will help many people with cancer and their families to understand radiation therapy. Thank you very much."

Through this small contract stream of work, we see different clients seeking to use Yolŋu languages and resources in many domains of life and work. Our teams learn and practice translation principles and literacy techniques that are also useful in many other ARDS projects. We are looking forward to a new year of translation services with a wide range of clients.



The ARDS team at the 2019 Puliima Language and Technology conference (left to right: Gawura Wanambi, Salome Harris, Joy Bulkhanawuy, Yinin Dhurrkay and Hannah Harper).

Radio and Creative Media

Yolŋu Radio

Yolŋu Radio has had one of its most challenging but also successful years as we became the key source of information on COVID-19 and developed and delivered the incredibly popular East Arnhem Live series. It is a tribute to our staff that Yolŋu Radio has greatly enhanced its reputation over this period.

Yolŋu Radio's extensive coverage of COVID-19 received a lot of positive feedback from listeners, health sector workers and government officials and reminded people of the importance of community radio.

Throughout March and April Yolŋu Radio ran daily news programs in Yolŋu Matha with all the latest COVID-19 news and information. Working with medical professionals we produced programs in Yolŋu Matha explaining COVID-19, dispelling myths, and sharing advice about how to combat the virus and slow its spread. This information was also shared on our social media channels, leading to a sharp increase in followers.

There were also programs on the new rules and restrictions for travelling and quarantining, visiting hospitals, funerals and other gatherings and changes to legal services. All this information was also made available in Yolŋu Matha and Plain English on the ARDS website.

This was very challenging for us as information on COVID-19 was constantly changing and we needed to regularly review our programs, removing them when required to keep information current.

With the dangers of COVID-19 still prevalent and an outbreak in East Arnhem Land possible we are continuing to work with health workers and government officials to ensure our listeners get the latest news and expert medical advice.

East Arnhem Live

Yolŋu Radio's biggest event of the year was the East Arnhem Live series of streamed concerts. The concerts began in April after the COVID-19 pandemic caused the cancellation of Arnhem Land festivals, the lifeblood of local artists. They showcased some of the best Yolŋu musical talent from across East Arnhem. The concerts were viewed by hundreds of thousands of people around the world.

We thought that people under lockdown would enjoy escaping to East Arnhem Land while listening to local acts performing traditional and modern music. Developing East Arnhem Limited (DEAL) and Rirratjŋu Aboriginal Corporation agreed and came on as sponsors and Melbourne's Federation Square offered an East Arnhem Land experience valued at over \$9 000 for two viewers.

After the first week's performance by Yirrŋa Yunupiŋu, we hosted many of East Arnhem's top acts such as Yothu Yindi, the Andrew Gurruwiwi Band, Yirmal, Dhapanbal Yunupiŋu, Djakapurra Munyarryun, Eazy 5 and East Journey, as well as a buŋgul (a traditional dance and song ceremony) by the Rirratjŋu clan.

After attracting 60 000 viewers for the inaugural concert, we saw up to 120 000 views for some shows and we reached a worldwide audience of over 300 million, eager to learn more about Yolŋu culture and country.



East Journey performing during our East Arnhem Live series.

All the regular show

With the threat of cyclones a regular problem in Arnhem Land, locals look to Yolŋu Radio as a vital source of information, particularly after the 24/7 coverage we provided during Category Three Tropical Cyclone Nora's trail of damage throughout Arnhem Land in 2018.

We were on standby for a cyclone in early 2020 and while fortunately none eventuated, we used the opportunity to perform a drill to ensure we were ready for the next extreme weather event. We have also been getting more regular updates from the Bureau of Meteorology (BOM) about forthcoming weather conditions which will assist us in giving advance warning to our listeners.

Yolŋu Radio celebrated NAIDOC Week 2019 with two specials exploring that year's NAIDOC Week theme "Voice. Treaty. Truth".

In "Giving Longgrassers a voice", we spoke to Darwin longgrassers about their thoughts on Treaty, and what they wanted from the Treaty process.

In "Talking about Treaty", leading public figures talked to us about Treaty, including Treaty Commissioner Mick Dodson, then Minister for Aboriginal Affairs Selena Uibo, author and ALPA Chair Reverend Dr Djiniyini Gondarra OAM (in Yolŋu Matha), Yothu Yindi band member Witiyana Marika, and then ARDS Chair Maratja Dhamarraŋdji and then Vice-Chair Gawura Waŋambi in conversation (in Yolŋu Matha).

The programs ran twice a day on Yolŋu Radio throughout NAIDOC Week.



Yolŋu Radio's Sylvia Nulpinditj (in red) talks to Nungalingya College students at our Winnellie studio.

An important part of Yolŋu Radio's remit is hosting student groups. Students from Nungalingya College's media course visited the Darwin studio, keen to learn the ins and outs of our recording studio from Yolŋu Radio's star presenter Sylvia Nulpinditj. It was encouraging to see their interest in working with us in the future to record and preserve Aboriginal cultures.

Our Nhulunbuy studio worked with students from Yirrkala's Clontarf Academy over the last year on a program called the Clontarf Footy Show. The aim of the Clontarf Footy Show is to introduce young men to public speaking and presenting to improve their confidence and employment prospects. Some of the students were naturals and have a bright future in the media if they want their career to head in that direction.

The most played song on Yolŋu Radio in the last year was "Lukunhirranmirri (Feet Firmly on the Ground)" by the Ski Beach Gang of Gunyaŋara, a catchy tune about Yolŋu kids knowing that Gunyaŋara belongs to them. Written and performed by local children, be sure to check out the music video on Youtube.

Garma 2019

ARS Aboriginal Corporation and Yolŋu Radio have been closely associated with the Garma Festival since 2015 and Garma 2019 was clearly our most successful and rewarding festival.

As a Garma delivery partner, Yolŋu Radio covered and broadcast forums and key speeches, as well as the buŋguls and musical acts. Our coverage was enlivened by the commentary of senior Gälpu man Andrew Gurruwiwi, who was able to provide in-depth inside information on the meanings of the buŋgul events.

We received Northern Territory Government funding to provide training prior to Garma for local youth in media skills, including Yolŋu Radio technology, and research and preparation for conducting interviews. Some of these budding journalists and producers are showing interest in forging a long term media career.



Yolŋu Radio's Sylvia Nulpinditj with Senator Pat Dodson at Garma.

Yolŋu Radio reporters interviewed senior federal and territory political figures, including the Minister for Indigenous Australians, Ken Wyatt, Leader of the Opposition, Anthony Albanese, Senator Pat Dodson, Northern Territory Minister for Indigenous Affairs Selena Uibo, heads of major Aboriginal organisations, musicians and members of the public.

ARDS Chair Gawura Waŋambi spoke at Garma's Economic Development Forum, addressing how cultural differences in northeast Arnhem Land can lead to misunderstanding between Yolŋu and Balanda. His call for more empathy between Balanda and Yolŋu, and better understanding of Yolŋu culture for government employees was well received by the audience.

We greatly appreciate the ongoing support of the Yothu Yindi Foundation, allowing our involvement in this nationally significant event.

Working with NITV

We continued to build on our relationship with National Indigenous Television (NITV), producing quality broadcast content for them, including coverage of the Gove Australian Football League (GAFL), complete with expert commentary and analysis by Yolŋu Radio's

broadcast team, as well as transmission of our East Arnhem Live shows.

We are planning further collaborations with NITV so watch this space.



NITV's Natalie Ahmat and ARDS's Adam Waŋambi in the Yolŋu Radio Nhulunbuy studio.

Praise for the ARDS' produced album *Buku-waŋthunawuy Nininyŋu Rom*

"I ordered this extraordinary double CD of recordings of songs and chants from Arnhem Land in preparation for teaching a Year 8 unit on Aboriginal texts. I want my students to engage with a range of Aboriginal texts and respond to them creatively and through research. I want them also to think about how they can engage creatively with Aboriginal culture without 'appropriating'. The Arnhem Land cultures did not have their traditions destroyed by pastoralist invaders, and their languages, traditions and relationships with nature give an impression of the richness of culture which was assailed by European imperialism all over the country. Some of the chants are sustained, rapturous observations of the natural world. They sing of seagulls, curlews and oystercatchers, stringybark trees which harbour bees' nests, tides meeting over sand-bars, the motherhood of the olive python, the naming of clouds, the gull playing with the dolphin, long journeys clad in feathers, the coming of crows to the sugar bag..."

– Giles Watson, Secondary English teacher



Outback Spirit Tours

In 2019 ARDS continued its association with leading tour company, Outback Spirit Tours, organising Welcome to Country bunguls and Bush Medicine and Women's Healing experiences on Outback Spirit's Arnhem Land Wilderness Adventure Tour.

Running from May to mid-September each year, the experiences provide visitors with a positive world view of strong Yolŋu culture and help build a bridge of understanding and connection between Yolŋu and Balanda people, as well as employment for more than 15 Yolŋu people.

COVID-19 restrictions led Outback Spirit Tours to cancel their 2020 program but we expect it to be back bigger than ever in 2021.

Other events

While COVID-19 meant that many major Arnhem Land events did not take place, our Yolŋu Radio team spent much of the last year busy out and around northeast Arnhem Land.

Live broadcasts in the last year include:

- Gove AFL (GAFL) Women's and Men's Grand Final in Nhulunbuy,
- the Miwatj Health 'World No Tobacco Day' in Yirrkala,
- the Miwatj Health Event in Milingimbi,
- the Yirrkala Yarrapay Festival.

This work provides young Yolŋu workers with regular employment and experience in the exciting world of event production.

We were worried that the move of our star sound technician Michael Hunter to Darwin would leave a large hole in our capabilities but a group of Yolŋu from around northeast Arnhem Land have grabbed the opportunity to learn about sound and have become key members of our team.

National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters (NAATI) videos



Action from one of the training videos we produced for the National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters (NAATI).

ARDS produced a set of training films for the National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters (NAATI). Filmed in and around Nhulunbuy, the films illustrate some of the ethical principles of the Australian Institute of Interpreters and Translators (AUSIT) Code of Ethics and Code of Conduct for translators and interpreters.

Working with Mulka, a local Aboriginal-owned media organisation, and Yolŋu producer Rosie Grimes, we produced films illustrating challenging interpreting situations involving everything from less than professional service providers to inquiring relatives of clients.

We have received some great feedback about the training films from NAATI, who are using them in workshops with Aboriginal interpreters.

Social Media

The vital role ARDS and Yolŋu Radio played during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic and the popularity of East Arnhem Live was illustrated by the huge increase in popularity of our social media channels. As COVID-19 case numbers began to grow in early 2020 people flocked to our social media platforms in record numbers to learn the latest developments around Arnhem Land and beyond.

On 18 March 2020, over 6 500 people engaged with our post on Nhulunbuy Woolworths response to COVID-19, an impressive number considering it is twice the population of Nhulunbuy.

We announced the East Arnhem Live concerts in April and by early May our East Arnhem Live Facebook posts were reaching over 20 000 people a week, with over 3 000 people engaging with our post on the ABC *Weekend* interview with Andrew Gurruwiwi.

Additionally, with Delivering East Arnhem Land streaming Yolŋu Radio's East Arnhem Live, we reached a worldwide audience of over 300 million, as everyone from the *New York Times* to the BBC to a range of Pakistani news outlets talked about East Arnhem Live and Yolŋu Radio.

Across our social media channels we now have over 5 000 followers, more than double the number of followers at the end of June 2019.

Follow our ARDS and Yolŋu Radio Facebook pages, and our Instagram, Twitter, You Tube, SoundCloud and Vimeo channels to keep abreast of our latest initiatives and breaking East Arnhem news.



ARDS and Yolŋu Radio had a large increase in followers after Federation Square in Melbourne began broadcasting our East Arnhem Live concerts.

Awards

ARDS was once again recognised nationally this year for our work, winning a prestigious award and receiving a further nomination.

Yolŋu Radio's star presenter Sylvia Nulpinditj was honoured, winning the Broadcaster of the Year Award at the 20th Remote Indigenous Media Festival, in Alice Springs in late 2019. The award adds to Sylvia's long list of national and international honours since joining Yolŋu Radio.

ARDS was a finalist in the "Best Language/Culture Production" category at the 2019 First Nations Media Awards in Alice Springs for the Gurraŋay Matha on Radio series (Ancient Languages project). The core project team of Joy Bulkanhawuy, Yirriŋiŋba Dhurkay, Djimbuluku Dhurrkay, Gawura Waŋambi, Bananaki Yunupiŋu and Hannah Harper have been recording Yolŋu stories and women's songs with elders throughout northeast Arnhem Land since 2016. An earlier release from the Ancient Languages project series, *Buku-waŋthunawuy Nininyŋu Rom*, won the Traditional Music Award at the National Indigenous Music Awards (2018).



Sylvia Nulpinditj with her Broadcaster of the Year Award from the 20th Remote Indigenous Media Festival.

Supporters, Donors and Sponsors

We rely on your support to make a real and lasting contribution to closing the gap for Indigenous Australians. ARDS would like to thank all the individuals, government and non-government organisations that supported our work in 2019-2020, including:

National Indigenous Australians Agency
niaa.gov.au

Australian Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications
arts.gov.au

NT Department of the Chief Minister and Cabinet
dcm.nt.gov.au

Developing East Arnhem Limited (DEAL)
developingeastarnhem.com.au

Alcoa
alcoa.com/australia/en/

Arnhem Land Progress Aboriginal Corporation (ALPA)
alpa.asn.au

East Arnhem Regional Council
eastarnhem.nt.gov.au

Laynhapuy Homelands Aboriginal Corporation
laynhapuy.com.au

Northern Synod, Uniting Church in Australia
ns.uca.org.au

National Indigenous Television (NITV)
sbs.com.au/nitv

NT Primary Health Network (NT PHN)
ntphn.org.au

Outback Spirit Tours
outbackspirittours.com.au

Power and Water Corporation
powerwater.com.au

Rio Tinto
riotinto.com

Yolngu Business Enterprises
ybe.com.au

Yothu Yindi Foundation
yyf.com.au

Financial Reports

Statement of Profit or Loss and Other Comprehensive Income

For The Year Ended 30 June 2020

	NOTE	2020 \$	2019 \$
Revenue			
Government grants - operating		1,600,499	2,266,836
Interest received		11,719	15,082
Net sales		73,079	36,572
Rental income		28,467	82,883
Donations		5,843	4,045
Other income		654,311	431,050
Total Revenue and Other Income		2,373,918	2,836,468
Expenses			
Depreciation expenses	2a	107,807	159,708
Employee benefit expenses	2b	1,235,226	1,200,934
Consultants, audit, accountancy and legal		740,904	673,763
Insurance expenses		40,049	25,248
Property operating costs		74,708	139,212
Repairs, maintenance and vehicle running expenses		94,576	88,182
Travel and accommodation		158,817	259,441
Other expenses		234,590	275,588
Total expenses		2,686,677	2,822,076
Net current year profit/ (loss)		(312,759)	14,392
Other comprehensive income			
Total other comprehensive income/ (loss)		-	-
Total Comprehensive income / (loss) for the year		(312,759)	14,392
PROFIT/ (LOSS) ATTRIBUTABLE TO MEMBERS OF THE CORPORATION		(312,759)	14,392
TOTAL COMPREHENSIVE INCOME (LOSS) ATTRIBUTABLE TO MEMBERS OF THE CORPORATION		(312,759)	14,392

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

Statement of Financial Position as at 30 June 2020

	NOTE	2020 \$	2019 \$
ASSETS			
CURRENT ASSETS			
Cash and Cash. Equivalents	3	1,128,054	986,366
Trade and Other Receivables	4	124,012	390,500
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS		1,252,066	1,376,866
NON-CURRENT ASSETS			
Property, plant and equipment	5	1,152,564	1,260,371
TOTAL NON-CURRENT ASSETS		1,152,564	1,260,371
TOTAL ASSETS		2,404,630	2,637,237
LIABILITIES			
CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Trade and Other Payables	6	869,600	794,282
Employee Provisions	7	50,994	47,441
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES		920,594	841,723
NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Employee Provisions	7	10,247	8,966
TOTAL NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES		10,247	8,966
TOTAL LIABILITIES		930,841	850,689
NET ASSETS		1,473,789	1,786,548
EQUITY			
Retained Earnings (Accumulated Losses)		1,473,789	1,786,548
TOTAL EQUITY		1,473,789	1,786,548

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

Independent Auditor's Report

Report on the Audit of the Financial Report

Opinion

We have audited the financial report of Aboriginal Resource and Development Services Aboriginal Corporation (ARDS) (the Corporation), which comprises the statement of financial position as at 30 June 2020, the statement of comprehensive income, statement of changes in equity and cash flow statement for the year then ended, and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies, and the director's declaration.

In our opinion, the accompanying financial report of Aboriginal Resource and Development Services Aboriginal Corporation (ARDS) is in accordance with the CATSI Act 2006, including:

- (a) giving a true and fair view of the Corporation's financial position as at 30 June 2020 and of its performance for the year then ended; and
- (b) complying with Australian Accounting Standards to the extent described in Note 1.

Basis for Opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report section of our report. We are independent of the Corporation in accordance with the auditor independence requirements of the CATSI Act 2006 and the ethical requirements of the Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's APES 110 Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants (the Code) that are relevant to our audit of the financial report in Australia. We have also fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the Code.

We confirm that the independence declaration required by the CATSI Act 2006, which has been given to the director of the Corporation, would be in the same terms if given to the director as at the time of this auditor's report.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Emphasis - Basis of Accounting

We draw attention to Note 1 to the financial report, which describes the basis of accounting. The financial report has been prepared for the purpose of fulfilling the director's financial reporting responsibilities under the CATSI Act 2006. As a result, the financial report may not be suitable for another purpose. Our opinion is not modified in respect of this matter.

Responsibilities of the Director for the Financial Report

The director of the Corporation is responsible for the preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view and has determined that the basis of preparation described in Note 1 to the financial report is appropriate to meet the requirements of the CATSI Act 2006 and is appropriate to meet the needs of the members. The director's responsibility also includes such internal control as the director determines is necessary to enable the preparation of a financial report that gives a true and fair view and is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error:

In preparing the financial report, the director is responsible for assessing the Corporation's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters relating to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the director either intends to liquidate the Corporation or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial report as a whole is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of this financial report.

As part of an audit in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards, we exercise professional judgment and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. We also:

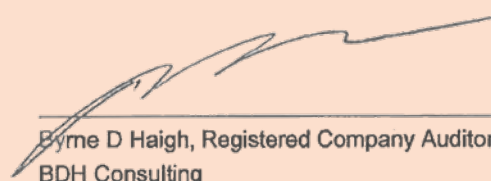
- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Corporation's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the director.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of the director's use of the going concern basis

of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the Corporation's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial report or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the Corporation to cease to continue as a going concern.

- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial report, including the disclosures, and whether the financial report represents the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

We communicate with the director regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

Signed on : 29/01/2021



Byrne D Haigh, Registered Company Auditor
BDH Consulting
7 Crinum Court, Moulden NT 0830

*Published by ARDS Aboriginal Corporation ©2020
Thank you to all staff for their assistance*

Phone (08) 8984 4174

Fax (08) 8984 4192

PO Box 36921, Winnellie NT 0821