

23/24

Annual Report

ARDS ABORIGINAL CORPORATION
CREATIVE MEDIA & COMMUNICATION SPECIALISTS

About ARDS

ARDS is a Yolŋu-controlled organisation that has been working with First Nations communities, government agencies and other organisations across the Northern Territory for over 50 years. We work through Yolŋu languages and Yolŋu Rom (law and culture) and we're uniquely placed to listen deeply to Yolŋu voices, to understand local aspirations and challenges, and to work in collaboration from a ground-up, community-based way. Our approach is to always start with the Yolŋu way first, and build from there. We are committed and passionate about seeing thriving Yolŋu languages and seeing Yolŋu Rom strong and respected, both of which provide the foundation for day-to-day Yolŋu control and decision-making. Our work involves "spanning the gap" that exists between Yolŋu ways of working and knowing and ways that mainstream services typically do their work and share information.

At ARDS, we don't use "manager", we use "djägamirr"; it means the person who looks over or cares for djämamirr mala (employees) and projects in a particular area.



Contents

Chairperson Report 2

CEO Report 4

Community Development 6
A message from Cathryn Moore, Community Development team djägamir
Local Decision Making
Law & Justice team
Families & Healing team
Health & Wellbeing projects
Cultural Competency Training

Language & Resources 20
A message from Ḏikul Baker and Salome Harris, Language & Resources team djägamirr
Fee-for-service translation work
Milkarri sharing and documentation
Language Leadership workshop
Manikay Ŋupan project
Visit to Roper – connecting with other language centres

Creative Media & Yolŋu Radio 26
A message from Will Porter and Sylvia Nulpinditj, Yolŋu Radio & Creative Media djägamirr
Puppet show at Yarrapay Festival
Galiwin'ku Island Festival
Transmission upgrades in homelands
Luku Ngarra Darwin Film Festival Screening

Corporate Services 32
A message from the Corporate Services team
Outback Spirit Tours
Financial statements

Supporters, Donors & Sponsors 37

Chairperson Report

Nhämirr walal, ŋarrany yäku Gawura Waṉambi, Gamarraŋ ŋarra mälkdja ga Marraŋu ŋarra yolŋuny Raymaŋgirrwuy wäŋawuy. Ŋarrany dhuwal Chairperson dhiyak ARDS-gu. Djäma ŋuli wirpuny ŋarra dharrwaŋur projectŋur malaŋuŋur nhakun matha djäma, ŋarrakuwuy Marraŋu dictionary djäma. Wiripuny ŋarra nhakun ŋaḻapal ga marra wurruŋu ḻiya ŋunhi ŋarra ŋuli djäma wanhal malaŋuŋur djämaŋur.

Ŋurruŋuny ŋarra dhu buku gurrupan board members-nha ŋunhi walal nhäkun yapthurra dhipuŋur ARDS-ŋur. Ga buku gurrupan dhu ŋunhi yutany walalany board members-nha ŋunhi walal nhakun wapthurr dhipal.

Dhuwal dhuŋgarra nhunhi djulkthurr nhakun ŋayi mirithirr manymak dhuŋgarra ŋalimurruŋ ARDS-gu. Dharrwa yuṯa djämamirr mala, yolŋu ga balanda ga dharrwa djäma malanynha maḻŋ'maraŋal ga rrupiya maḻŋ'maraŋal ŋurugiyi djämaw malaŋuw.

Nhakun ŋarra ARDS Chairperson, ŋarraka mirithirr marrŋamathirr djämirriw malaŋuw ga mirithirrga buku gurrupan walalaŋgalaŋuw djämaw ga dhiyaŋuyi djämay malaŋuy ŋalimurr ARDS-dja märrmirr yan. Yindi buku gurrupanawuy djämamirriwal malaŋgal yolŋuwal ga balandawal.

Wiripuny ŋarra djäma nhakun gan marrmaŋur community maṉdanyŋur, Gapuwiyak ga Ramanginiŋ. Marrma project maṉday nhakun gan malŋ'thurr ga djäma walalgan, Law and Justice Group ŋunha Ramanginiŋ ga Parenting Project ŋunha Gapuwiyak. Ŋarra ŋunhiliyithi balanyamirriy walay ŋunhi ŋäthiliŋuy gapmathu marr dharaŋar nhakun ŋunhiyithi project maṉdaynha dhurrwara nhakun yindiwnha gämurruw nhakun LDM- gun. Yurrnha yutäy gapmat, marrma yoranhawuy nhakun djorra' yolŋuy mala djäma gaman'gal ŋurukiyi project- gu maṉdaŋuw. Mirithirr manymak ŋunhi marrmaw community-w maṉdaŋuw. Marrŋamathirr ga mirithirr dhiyakuyi.

Nhamaka nhakun ṉhäthinya dhu yuṯany dhuŋgarra, gatjpuyunga ŋayi dhu manymak balanyayi bili dhugarra nhakun dhuwal ŋunhi djul'thun yawungu. Yolŋu ga balanda djämamirr mala dhuka djäma rrambaŋi ga guŋga'yunmirr bala rali'yunmirr. Rrambaŋi djingaryun dhiyak ARDS-gu ga djämaw malaŋuw. Limurr djälthirrga ŋuthanmaranhawuy dhiyak ARDS-gu. Gatjpuyunga nhakun dhu manymak dhugarra dhuwal bala yuṯa wal gapman'gal.

Bulu ŋarra dhu buku gurrupan Dave Pugh ŋunhi ŋayi gan djäma yan wärrigu CEO balanyamirri ŋunhi Wämut Ben Grimmes ṉhinan djämaŋur yan wärrigu, ŋanyany wiripuny ga buku gurrupan Wämutnha Ben-nha. Rrambaŋi maṉda nhakun djäma dhiyaliyithi CEO-ŋur ga ḏalguŋal ŋanya dhwal ARDS-nha.

Bilin dhuwal; Djutjutjnha bukmak!

Hi all, Gawura Waṉambi is my name, Gamarraŋ' is my mälk, and I am a Marraŋu man from Raymaŋgirr. I am the chairperson at ARDS. I also work on many projects. I am involved in language work, creating my own Marraŋu dictionary. I am also a senior cultural advisor and facilitator.

First of all, I would like to thank those board members who finished their time with us. I also want to thank and welcome the new members who have joined us.

This past year has been a really good year for ARDS. We got many new staff, Balanda and Yolŋu, and we created many new projects, with more funding for those projects.
As the ARDS chairperson, I am very happy and want to thank all the staff, both Yolŋu and Balanda, for their efforts. We are solvent and in a strong position, thanks to everyone's hard work.

I have been very involved working on two communities, Gapuwiyak and Raminginiŋ, on the projects that have been happening there: the Law and Justice Group at Raminginiŋ and the parenting project in Gapuwiyak. I have been in there when it came to the stage when the former Northern Territory government recognised it and saw it, that those two projects – one at Gapuwiyak and one at Raminginiŋ – could be a doorway to Local Decision Making. I was on the job with lots of the communities until just before the election. Two agreements have been signed by the minister for those two projects, which was really good for those two communities. And even for ARDS, being there as the facilitation team and me being in there, I feel so proud of that.

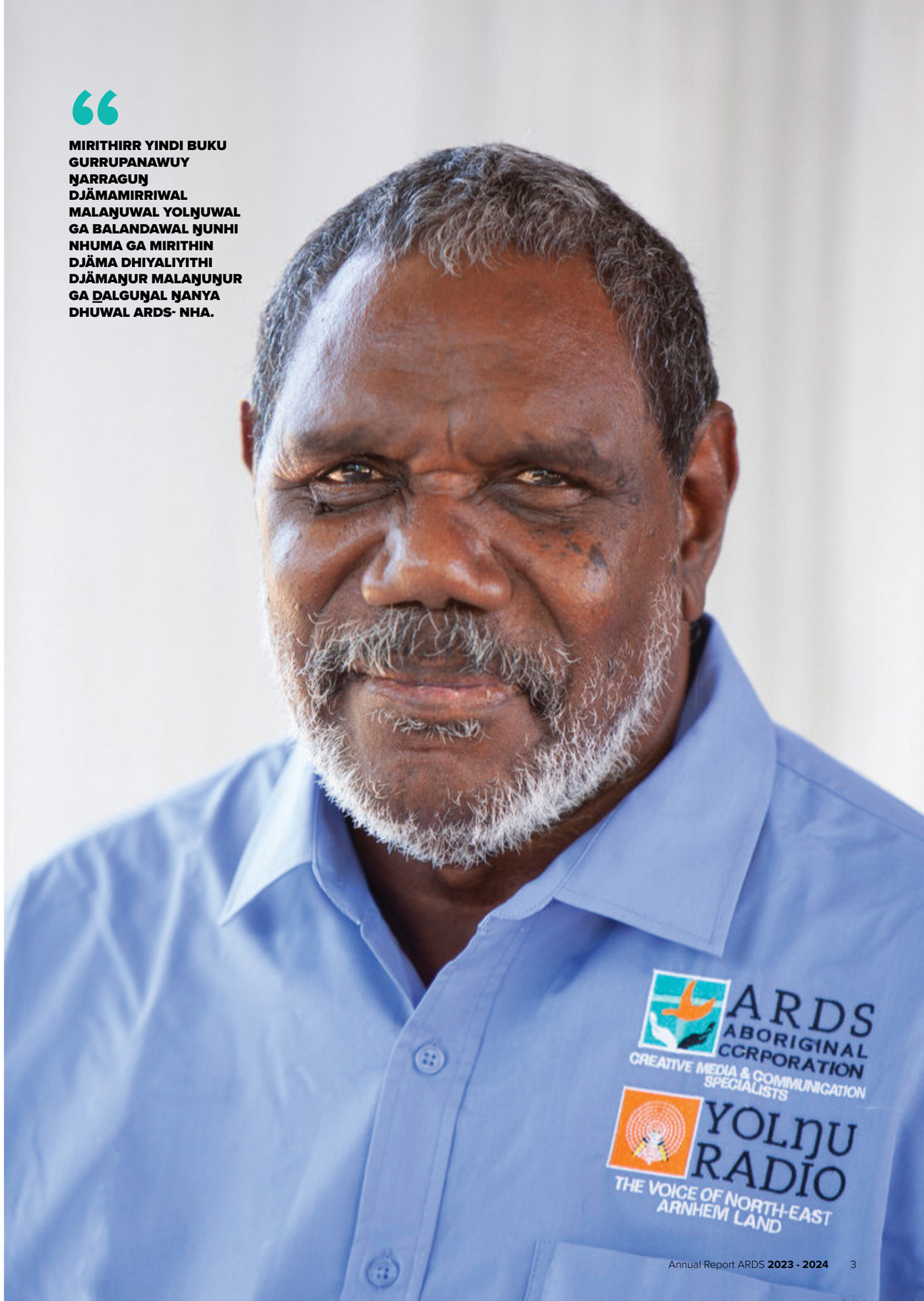
Now, looking ahead, I am hoping for another good year for our work and our staff, for Yolŋu and Balanda staff working together. We will stand together for ARDS. Next year will be another big year of many projects and many new staff. And we hope that the year will be a good year with the new government.

So, finally, to the staff and board, I want to thank you all for your work and for keeping ARDS strong. I want to thank Dave Pugh, who was our interim CEO while Ben Grimes was on his leave. I want to thank our CEO Wämut, Ben Grimes as well. They both work very hard to keep ARDS strong. That's all for now. Djutjtjutjnha.

Ma', djutjdutjnha bukmak!

Gawura Waṉambi

"MIRITHIRR YINDI BUKU GURRUPANAWUY ŊARRAGUŊ DJÄMAMIRRIWAL MALAŊUWAL YOLŊUWAL GA BALANDAWAL ŊUNHI NHUMA GA MIRITHIN DJÄMA DHIYALIYITHI DJÄMAŊUR MALAŊUŊUR GA D̲ALGUŊAL ŊANYA DHUWAL ARDS- NHA.





CEO Report

When the ARDS djägamirr (managers) team meet and do our planning, we usually start by thinking about three things: 1) djämamirr (workers), 2) djäma (work) and 3) rrupiya (money). Our first concern is our people – they must be strong, confident and skilled in order to do good work. Then we think carefully about the right way to do our work and how that work will help Yolŋu families and communities. Then we think about managing our money carefully so that our djämamirr and djäma stays strong. All three of these things must be strong and in balance for us to be a healthy organisation that properly serves Yolŋu families.

This year, I'm pleased that we continue to grow in each of these key areas. Across the organisation, we see people becoming more skilled and confident in their work. We continue to attract high-quality applicants when we advertise, which I see as a sign of ARDS' good reputation for high quality work and being a good place to work.

We had a few changes at our djägamirr level, with Dikuḻ Baker starting as Djägamirr for the Language & Resources team, after Bulkanhawuy's decision to step back from day-to-day management. Gawura and Bulkanhawuy put significant thought into selecting the next generation of leadership for the Language team. Dikuḻ has now been joined by Salome Harris and I'm excited to see the many ways that the ARDS Language Centre will contribute to strong and vibrant Yolŋu languages under Dikuḻ and Salome's leadership. We also had a small restructure this year, with the Radio team and Creative Media team combining into a single team, under the ongoing strong and capable leadership of Sylvia Nulpinditj and Will Porter.

The continued growth of the Community Development team means that we're creating more autonomous teams with special areas of focus. We now have a dedicated Law & Justice team, and a Families & Healing team. I want to thank all the staff who have put time and effort into building these teams.

One area of concern for us at the staffing level, and one that is shared by many Yolŋu organisations, is the health of many senior ŋaḻapaḻ (elders), who have provided crucial leadership and deep knowledge over many decades. This year we have seen a number of key senior staff need to reduce their workloads for health reasons. This has reinforced for us the importance of our work in making sure that Yolŋu dhäruk (languages) and Rom (law) are being passed on to the next generation. Not only do we work to achieve this in homelands and communities, we need to actively create space for this sharing of knowledge between young and old ARDS staff in our day-to-day work.

At the djäma level, I want to highlight the high quality and significant work that has happened in Gapuwiyak, focusing around Yolŋu parenting and increased local control over looking after children, including in difficult Child Protection issues. As part of that work Melody Dale and Wuṯpurrŋu Wunuŋmurra led a team that engaged in deep discussions across families about parenting and impacts of Child Protection services. The report they wrote is insightful and goes to a depth that few reports are able to capture. I recommend it to anyone doing work related to parenting and families. In the pages of this annual report, you'll read many other stories of the ARDS team doing meaningful work that builds on the many strengths of Yolŋu life.

The local decision-making agreements that occurred in both Ramininiŋ and Gapuwiyak are a testament to the amazing outcomes that can be achieved when Yolŋu decision-making processes and structures are given the time and space to plan and reach consensus, with minimal interference from Balanda agendas. I look forward to these stories of strength spreading and creating more confidence in local leaders' ability to set their own agenda with government.

At the rrupiya level, we continue to see an increase in our overall revenue and ability to find suitable grants to match the work we do. I want to highlight the good work of the Radio and Creative Media team in working hard to broaden their income base, which has put the team in a much stronger position for the next few years. Securing long-term multi-year funding for some of our core areas of work does continue to be a challenge. We continue to face the reality that we don't receive core organisational funding and our income is made up of dozens of individual grants and fee-for-service initiatives. Managing all these funding sources requires significant internal time and attention.



Gawura Waŋambi and Joy Bulkanhawuy present about ARDS-ku buyu' as part of the ARDS methodology workshops



The ARDS board at the November 2023 AGM in Nhulunbuy

This year was another strong financial year for us, with a surplus that helps contribute towards our long-term strategic financial goals. One factor that has helped us achieve this result is the increased confidence and ability of our project leaders and djägamirr to manage individual budgets. We're able to increase financial decision-making for people doing day-to-day on-the-ground work, which results in even more precise and innovative use of funds and assets. I see our collective increase in skills in this area as a sign that our internal capacity building efforts are giving us the results we hoped for.

Again, I thank all ARDS staff for their commitment and for working in skilled and ethical ways. You should be proud of the things you have done individually, and the positive impacts we're having as a broader team.

At the board level, I again extend my thanks and respect to the board. The board continues to provide stable and consistent leadership. We've started a process of solidifying our long-term strategic goals and core values and ways of working, which I hope to share with you all in next year's report.

Bilin',
Ben (Wämut)

Community Development

A message from Cathryn Moore, Community Development team djägamirr

The past year for ARDS' Community Development team has seen us continue to grow and deepen our practice and experience in new ways.

This year, our foundational facilitation role has taken on new depth as ARDS was invited by Yolŋu leaders to support in their negotiations with governments. In this report you will read about examples of community-led initiatives ARDS supported – law and justice initiatives in Ramingiṉiŋ and the care and protection of children in Western Miyarrka (near Gapuwiyak) – that saw ŋaḻapaḻ (senior Yolŋu) ask us to adapt our plans to respond to emerging opportunities. We were proud to support those leaders to navigate government policy and processes, and ultimately enter into Local Decision Making agreements with government to advance their respective visions for self-determination.



We also brought this flexibility to other areas of our work. We diversified the delivery modes available through our Cultural Competency Training suite in response to feedback from stakeholders. The new formats increase access for organisations with a broader range of operational requirements, as well as offering more tailored learning outcomes. We took this step in line with the original impetus for developing the program: a call from ŋaḻapaḻ about the need to improve cultural competency of service providers to in turn improve day-to-day experiences of Yolŋu interacting with those services.

Over the past year, we have embraced opportunities for collaboration and partnership with other Yolŋu organisations looking to build and strengthen services in remote communities. We are particularly grateful to Miwatj Health Aboriginal Corporation and Goŋ-Ḏäl Aboriginal Corporation for their commitment to our respective projects (which you can read about in the pages ahead) and collective learning. Together, we have identified opportunities to create stronger pathways for self-determination and service innovation, grounded in the leadership of ŋaḻapaḻ.

The Community Development team itself has continued to grow. We have focused on recruiting and supporting djämamirr living and working in Yolŋu communities throughout Northeast Arnhem. In the past year we have brought eight new djämamirr on board across Galiwin'ku and Gapuwiyak, as well as new team members in Nhulunbuy and Darwin. The range and complexity of our work has also increased, driven by the facilitation and partnership opportunities outlined above – our team has risen to the challenge.

Alongside this growth we have committed to retaining our distinct methodology, and relational approaches to work – rrambaŋi djäma (working together) – in the middle space between the Yolŋu and Balanda worlds. This is a practice of continuous learning to better respect the knowledges and processes of each world through the ways we work together. A core example of this is the concept of the 'djägamirr' (caretaker), which underpins our management practices at ARDS: caretaking for djämamirr, djäma and ARDS' organisational sustainability. This year, I am particularly proud of how both Yolŋu and Balanda djämamirr have stepped forward into formal development pathways to become djägamirr for newly created Law & Justice and Families & Healing teams within the Community Development team. I congratulate Melody Dale, Wutpurrŋu Wununŋmurra, Minay Wununŋmurra and Georgia Hagias for stretching themselves and fostering an environment of collective learning. You'll hear more from these new teams directly in the following pages of this report.



Ian Gumbula mapping out bäpurru

We look forward to working with yet more communities and partners in the coming year. Until then, enjoy these reflections.

Bilin'

Cathryn Moore (Galikali)



Signing of the Ramingiṉiŋ Local Decision Making Agreement in July



ARDS facilitators and local leaders prepare for the signing of a Local Decision Making agreement with NTG

Local Decision making

Law and Justice Work in Ramingiṉiŋ

ARDS has continued supporting local efforts by the Ramingiṉiŋ Biṉipilimirriŋ Djagagiṉiŋ Mala (BDM) Leaders to establish a local Law and Justice Group and support local decision making processes.

On 25 March 2024, the then-NT Attorney General publicly announced Ramingiṉiŋ as an approved place for a Law and Justice Group.

On 8 February 2024, building on many years of work and discussions in Ramingiṉiŋ, the Ramingiṉiŋ BDM group presented the Northern Territory Government senior officials with a draft Local Decision Making (LDM) Agreement. This was signed on 12 July 2024, and significantly is the first LDM Agreement the NT Government have signed directly with clan leaders rather than through an organisation created by Balanda law.

The key purposes of that agreement are to:

- Increase Yolŋu self-determination and control in Ramingiṉiŋ and the surrounding homelands so Yolŋu can determine their own future;
- Document the commitment by NT Government and Ramingiṉiŋ BDM to work together to guide the implementation of the Agreement;
- Document the commitment of relevant NT Government agencies to engaging and collaborating with Ramingiṉiŋ BDM to agree on how the priorities will be achieved and maintained over time; and
- Guide the process for the negotiation and agreement of additional local priorities.

Care and Protection of Children in Western Miyarrka

This year we finalised a report entitled: “Gulkmaram ga Yätj Raki’mala ga Dhä-manapan ga Laṯjuny Raki’ (Decolonising Child Protection: Severing Unhealthy Ties and Restoring Secure Attachments)”. This project took place in Western Miyarrka (Gapuwiyak and surrounding homelands) from 2022-24, however, it built off almost 30 years of work by the community of Gapuwiyak to move towards using gurruṯu as the critical framework for child protection practices in the community.

In last year’s Annual Report, we talked about the Strong Yolŋu Parenting project in Gapuwiyak. A lot of the work this year came from that, as we heard Yolŋu express their concerns about ‘welfare’ (child protection services) taking children away. We started to listen to more stories about this, and also started to learn about what people wanted to change about the child protection system. Ninety-four Yolŋu from 21 bäpurru told us their story, and what action they want to see: how they wanted to see gurruṯu be the way of keeping children safe, rather than welfare and police, who come in and scare the families more than help them.

The report also shared key calls for action from the Western Miyarrka leaders, which emerged from these findings, and from the Participant Stories that were shared. In particular, this project was the ‘key to unlock the gate’ for change, with leaders calling for shared decision-making about the care and protection of Yolŋu children with a view of transitioning to full community control in the future. ARDS was honoured to be asked by Western Miyarrka leaders to continue to play a facilitation role in supporting their negotiations with governments to take this work forward. This is still a work in progress; however, on 29 July 2024, a Statement of Commitment to negotiate a Local Decision Making Agreement was signed between Western Miyarrka leaders and the NT Government.

We could feel confident in this work because we had the shelter and support of the community elders teaching our team and mentoring us. We were able to have the right conversations with people, so they were protected by that shelter too. So, when we published the report, we could be confident that we had been careful with people’s stories, and that we had shared them to help everyone. The report is on the ARDS website at **www.ards.com.au/reports.**



Some of the members of the Law & Justice and Creative Media teams

Law & Justice Team

Over the past year, ARDS' Law & Justice team has continued to grow and support Yolŋu-led peacemaking, spanning wide-ranging local peacemaking or mediation through to Yolŋu approaches in areas like youth restorative justice and family dispute resolution. Two strong indications of this growth and maturity include the team receiving more direct referrals from Yolŋu families, as well as more hours being worked by Yolŋu mediators across the region. To ensure the service remains Yolŋu-led and responsive to needs identified by communities, the team has continued to prioritise two-way learning and monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL).

Direct referrals from Yolŋu

In 2023-24, ARDS observed a significant increase in the number of referrals received directly from Yolŋu families and individuals, without a Balanda intermediary. This tells us that Yolŋu authority and control over the service continues to increase.



Nhulunbuy mediation team



New office space in Galiwin'ku

Growth in Galiwin'ku

A key priority for this year was strengthening our local capacity to be responsive and accessible to Yolŋu communities. Galiwin'ku is a strong example: ARDS recruited four new skilled Yolŋu mediators this year.

This, combined with the relocation of a Balanda facilitator to Galiwin'ku in January and the finalisation of upgraded mediation facilities, saw growth in hours worked by Yolŋu mediators. This growth is reflected in our referral numbers, which since January have increased by 167% when compared to the previous 6 months.

The ARDS mediation work continues to exceed our funding targets. In 2023-24, one of our mediation services had a total 647 engagements focused on dispute resolution, process advocacy and two-way learning about specific topics stemming from conflict and conflict resolution. Referral numbers continue to grow, with 39 specific referrals for mediation and 46 referrals for process advocacy.



The team at the National Mediation Conference in New Zealand

Learning and training opportunities

MONITORING, EVALUATION AND LEARNING (MEL)

In last year's Annual Report, we introduced ARDS' MEL methodology, which also spans across the entire law and justice work. Over the past year, we have continued building this framework and our current Theory of Change, based on Yolŋu metaphors and approaches.

In July 2023, we comprehensively mapped ARDS' Law & Justice work, tracing all the outcome areas and related indicators. Yolŋu and Balanda staff had rigorous conversations about what success looks like from a Yolŋu perspective, and what accountability to project participants (Yolŋu people, families and community) and funding partners looks like in our context.

Since developing the Framework, the team has focused on refining and integrating it into day-to-day work whilst ensuring the foundational Theory of Change and evaluation approaches are adaptive to allow local leaders and communities to refine the relevance according to place and language.

NATIONAL MEDIATION CONFERENCE

In September 2023, five members of the ARDS Law & Justice team presented at the National Mediation Conference in New Zealand. The presentation titled "We See Gurruṭu First" was about the central role of gurruṭu (kinship) in Yolŋu dispute resolution. As well as sharing about our way of working, the conference was a great opportunity for learning.

Mayalil Marika, on behalf of the ARDS Yolŋu mediation team shared:

"The team learned a lot when they were at the Conference. [...] They took back a lot of manymak (good) memories from the conference and what they learnt – so that they can continue to help Yolŋu people back here both ways: marŋgithirri bala ga räli (understanding both ways, Yolŋu and non-Yolŋu, together)."

Advocacy

Advocacy continues to be an important part of our work. Here are a few examples:

- ARDS continued to contribute to the development of Community Court and Law and Justice Group Guidelines.
- ARDS delivered a 'Yolŋu Law intensive' at Charles Darwin University, integrating and promoting the learnings from ARDS mediation and Law & Justice work.
- ARDS contributed to the Review of the Family Relationships Services Program, sharing how support for Yolŋu people in the family law space needs to fit into the mould of already-existing Yolŋu Rom (Yolŋu law), rather than Yolŋu trying to fit within the mould of the formal Australian Family Law system.
- ARDS, with SVA Consulting, finalised the review of the legislative provisions within the Bail Act 1982 (NT), Sentencing Act 1995 (NT), Juries Act 1962 (NT) and Parole Act 1971 (NT) that are unfair, discriminatory and/or detrimental to First Nations people.

HOPES FOR THE FUTURE

Mediator A: In the future I want to see good leaders and more mediation djämamirri-mala (workers) everywhere, to help people in their lives. If we really want to be peace-makers and create peace, we need to start training other young people to be leaders. This is very important. This will help us stop mari (fighting) and stop violence.

Mediator B: We need more young mediators. We need to encourage people and talk and see who is interested. I also hope that in 5 or 10 years the court recognises Yolŋu mediators as mediators. I also hope for greater general recognition of Yolŋu mediators. I hope that in the future there continues to be work with courts and lawyers to recognise gurruṭu. I also hope to continue working with courts, hospitals, as well as communities and families.



Maminydjama, Wayalwanga and Mayalil speaking at the National Mediation Conference

Families & Healing team

Family Healing Program – suicide prevention work

In our djäma we often hear about the need for alternative pathways for mental health supports, for clans and families who would otherwise not access existing mental health services to support people they are worried about.

This year we began developing a pilot program to explore what Yolŋu families would like these alternative pathways to be. We've heard from families that when we talk about suicide prevention, this means helping people to reconnect with life, with kin, with their roots – so that together we can empower them to want to keep living. In the Family Healing Program, we follow Yolŋu processes like: ganydjarr gurrupan bala rali (give power to each other), gurrpanmirr goŋmirr Yolŋu (give kinship to each other), walŋakum manymakkum bala rali (give life and healing to each other), ga wäŋa roŋiyirr (return home).

One of the most important aspects of this djäma is to take time to hear people's stories. We notice that sometimes, some of the ways that people try to help can cause more division and separate people, instead of bringing them back together in a restorative way. That's why it's important for us to not just go in and run an activity or program, but listen to people, so that we can understand their struggles, and know how to best support them.

We also want to hear stories about what is working well in people's lives, so we can talk about how they can find healing, and how best to provide support for families. One important way to support people through the problems they face is to help them return to knowing their roots. In particular, understanding how gurruṯu can bring people back together, and can be the best support system for people.

Families & Healing Project Lead Minay Wununŋmurra described it like this:

"It's like a track, that old track that goes to the hunting place. And after the storms, the wet season, that track – it's still there, but we have to go and look for it. And it doesn't matter where you're going, you have to still try and find your way to that area. And sometimes there's a lot of obstacles, like dharpa mala (trees) lying down ...

So, we need to not remind them of other programs which make them more confused – we need to just tell them, go back to that old track. And they need support, like to go to them and talk to them about what other help, what other activities they need to help them find that track again."



Sylvia and Melody speaking about the importance of gurruṯu to ARDS' work at the 'Sharing and Strengthening Our Practice' conference in Alice Springs. Photo credit: Lisa Hatz

Importantly, when you're clearing the track, you need the old people to remember the way, but you also need the young people and their energy to do the physical work.

The Family Healing Program is led by the families; ARDS takes a supporting role. It is important that Yolŋu families can decide for themselves who are the right people to support someone who's struggling, and get them back onto the old track.



Some of the Families & Healing team at work

Co-design for Gapuwiyak Child and Family Centre

Goŋ-Däl Aboriginal Corporation engaged ARDS (alongside AnglicareNT) as guŋga'yunamirr (helpers) on the co-design of a Child and Family Centre for Gapuwiyak and Homelands. ARDS was proud to bring our strengths to this important community-led process and support a local Yolŋu corporation to develop and deliver services that better appreciate the inherent strengths of Yolŋu parenting.

Our co-design team was consciously built around the strength of gurruṯu and the connections that team members have to all bäpurru (clans) across the region. Gurruṯu and Yolŋu Rom also formed the basis of our unique co-design process, building to yuram (consensus): we went from family to family, from clan to clan, seeking the views of almost 100 Yolŋu. This was done iteratively, starting with ŋaḻapaḻ (elders), going to marr-gaŋga ŋaḻapaḻ (emerging leaders), then speaking with yuṯa Yolŋu (young people), then returning to the elders and whole clan. We also encouraged families to continue the conversation within their clans.

Our efforts included extensive community engagement, integration of traditional knowledge and continuous adaptation, while navigating alignment with external regulations and accreditation frameworks. Through this work, Yolŋu families described key domains that would nourish the foundations of the whole community through a Child and Family Centre. Community members wanted to see increases in care and affection, confidence in skills, empowerment, stronger kinship connections and healing or restoration.

The collaborative efforts of Goŋ-Däl Aboriginal Corporation, AnglicareNT and ARDS reflect a commitment to honouring Yolŋu culture and knowledge while addressing the unique needs of Gapuwiyak community and the surrounding homelands. Integrating traditional practices with contemporary service delivery frameworks can actively create a supportive environment that fosters resilience, empowerment and healing for vulnerable children and families. The Child and Family Centre is expected to be established in 2025.

Trauma Informed Care – Practice Framework Development and Implementation

As ARDS grows, our djäma has become increasingly complex – so have the needs of the djämamirr, individuals, families, clans and communities involved. This year, we set out to develop a comprehensive Yolŋu-led Trauma and Violence-Informed Practice Framework to guide our approach. Working with senior Yolŋu at ARDS, we discovered together the ways that Yolŋu and Balanda approach issues of trauma and violence. We call this work Ŋayaŋu-rur'maranhamirr Rom ga Djäma. Ŋayaŋu-rur'maranhamirr means an 'encourager' who shows commitment to helping, empowering and uplifting others.

The framework incorporates key principles such as mulkamirr (safety), ganydjarr gurrupanmirr (empowerment) and märr-dharaŋanmirr (mutuality and inclusivity), while also integrating strategies for recognising and addressing the complex intersections of trauma and violence. By focusing on both prevention and healing, we are ensuring that ARDS' work fosters resilience, reduces harm and creates safer environments for all.

This work is led by people with lived experience of adversity, hardship and healing from trauma. There is growing recognition of lived experience as a valuable resource across many fields. For ARDS, the firsthand knowledge and personal experience of Lived Experience Experts was essential in shaping the framework, ensuring it is practical, respectful and grounded in real-world insights.



Jodie, Minay, Lisa and Melody with resources for the Practice Framework

Health & Wellbeing projects

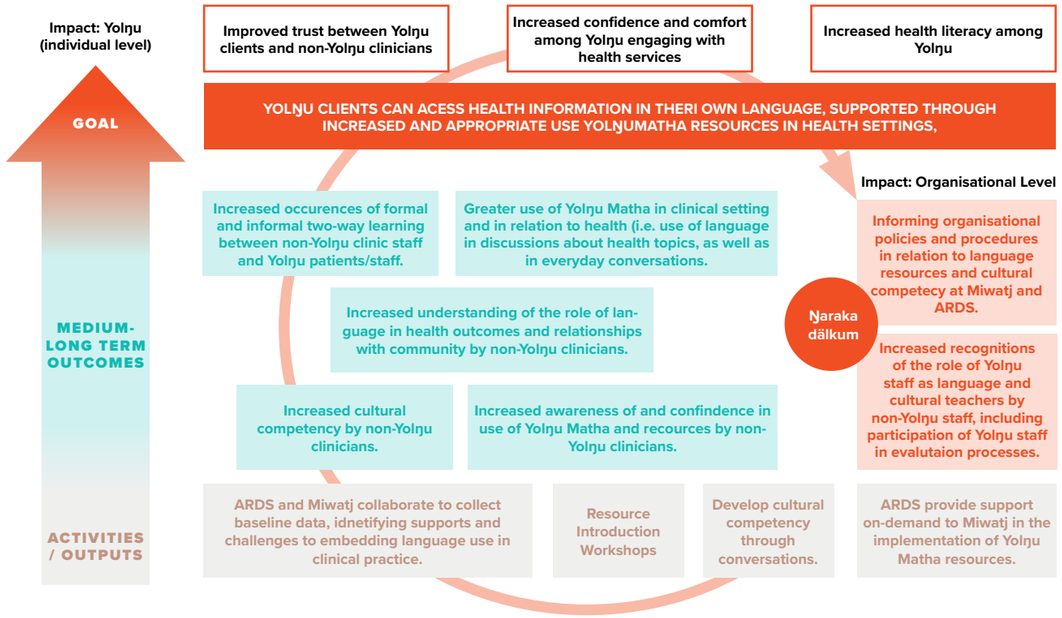
The past year has been an important chapter in ARDS' long history in health education in Yolŋu communities. While we have continued our involvement in resource development, we have had the opportunity to step back and evaluate both the context in which they are created and the ways they are used. We gained invaluable insights along the way.

A significant enabler of this evaluation was a collaborative project between ARDS and Miwatj Health Aboriginal Corporation (Miwatj Health), aimed to assess how Yolŋu language resources are used in clinical settings, and to understand health communication between Yolŋu patients and Miwatj Health staff. In the 18 months to June 2024 the project engaged 121 Miwatj staff across Nhulunbuy and Galiwin'ku through surveys and workshops, gathering insights into how well in-language resources were supporting health outcomes.

The evaluation generated ideas for ARDS and for Miwatj Health, as well as for deepening collaboration. In particular:

1. Yolŋu-led health education, grounded in gurruṭu, was identified as essential for creating long-term, respectful relationships between health staff and clients. ARDS and Miwatj Health are now exploring innovative approaches to resource development projects to put these ideas into practice immediately.

2. Joint advocacy for funding models that support more responsive and locally-led decision-making, in line with Priority Reform 1 of the National Agreement on Closing the Gap. Formal partnerships and shared decision-making will be crucial for ensuring that health education efforts genuinely meet the needs of Yolŋu communities, enabling them to take control of their health and wellbeing.



Monitoring and evaluation framework for collaboration between ARDS and Miwatj Health



Sylvia and Emma delivery Cultural Competency Training

Cultural Competency Training

ARDS was excited to introduce some big changes to our Cultural Competency Training (CCT) program this year. Over the five years of CCT delivery, we have consistently heard great feedback from participants. It is always very satisfying to spend two days sharing stories and insights about Yolŋu Rom and languages, answering interesting questions from participants and hearing them reflect on what changes and learnings they will take back with them after the training. To make sure our workshops are tailored and respectful of – and relevant to – people's experience and work context, we try to meet with Yolŋu and other First Nations people who may be participants in our workshops beforehand. This gives us a good opportunity to hear their perspectives and invite their input into the content and delivery.

From our engagement with clients and stakeholders, we know that putting aside two consecutive days for training is just not feasible for some organisations that want to improve cultural competency across their workforces. We also know that not everyone can travel from remote areas to a central location to join their colleagues for a workshop. So, this year we have spent time designing new delivery modes to take CCT to more people. In addition to our existing packages, this year saw ARDS design our first fully online course, which will deliver the same 10 modules over an eight-week term of weekly webinars with Yolŋu and Balanda facilitators, and readings and activities throughout the week. We are looking forward to welcoming the first online cohort in early 2024-25.

We have also adapted our workshops to allow for more tailored learning outcomes and delivery approaches depending on the operational context of different organisations.

Of course, while developing these new CCT offerings, the team has also been busy delivering face-to-face workshops in both Darwin and Nhulunbuy. With growing demand for ARDS CCT we are looking forward to setting up and growing a dedicated training team in 2024-25 and continuing our commitment to strengthening the quality outcomes for organisations, participants, and the Yolŋu families and communities who interact with them.

Feedback from CCT participants

"Amazing. I am so lucky and grateful I got to be a part of these 2 days. I feel so enriched. Thank you."
— Workshop participant, Darwin, 4-5 December 2023.

"Thank you for facilitating the cultural awareness workshop. Lots of learnings on how to do things better (and) how to make our workplace a culturally safe and welcoming space."
— Workshop participant, Nhulunbuy, 23-24 August 2023.

"Thoroughly enjoyed each module, and found each module useful to support the work I do and my interactions."
— eLearn participant, August 2023.

"Thank you so much. The content was so relevant and I can see how this would be useful in communicating very serious issues with clients."
— Plain English online training, May 2024.



Testing fully online delivery of CCT

Language & Resources

A message from Dikuḻ Baker and Salome Harris, Language & Resources team djägamirr

This has been a big year for the Language & Resources team as we continue to maintain, revitalise and celebrate Yolŋu languages. Räl-manapanmirr or “gathering together” is one of the main ways we are taught to do our work. It creates space for the conversations that guide us, for ŋaḻapaḻ to model the right ways and for the mutual support that gives us confidence in the process. This year we brought people together from throughout the region in all kinds of ways including through workshops, informal gatherings and visits. We worked with many communities over the past year. Our language work took us to Yurrwi, Ramingiṇiṇ, Galiwin’ku, Gapuwiyak, Ngukurr, Yirrkala, Gäṉgaṉ, Waṉḏawuy, Dhälinybuy, Yalaŋbara and Darwin. Our work also brought language workers to Darwin from Mäpuru and Gäwa. We would like to acknowledge the clan groups we have worked with this year and thank them for all their hard work and sharing of knowledge.

As a language centre, we were able to provide support for the following languages: Dhuwal, Dhuwala, Dhaŋu, Yan-nhaŋu, Djinaŋ', Wägilak, Djaŋu, Dhuwaya, Ganalbiŋu and Dhay'yi.

We have been growing our presence as a language centre in the Miwatj region. We have supported intergenerational clan language activities across the region including gunga djäma (weaving) and natural dye workshops, day trips on country, and a very popular puppet show in Yolŋu Matha at the Yarrapay Festival in Yirrkala with the Yolŋu Radio team. We supported Djalkiri Foundation’s Clan Languages Galtha in Nhulunbuy, and were also lucky to attend and support Learning on Country’s Clan Language Galtha at Gäṉgaṉ in May. It’s been a privilege to support Yolŋu-led training and learning in this way. Big thanks to Djalkiri Foundation, Laynhapuy Homelands Aboriginal Corporation, Yirrkala Bilingual School, Laynhapuy Homelands school, and Yirralka and Dhimurru Rangers and Learning on Country programs for collaborating with us on these activities.

Publications this year included ***A First Gupapuyŋu Dictionary: Celebrating 100 years of language work on Galiwin’ku (Elcho Island)***, edited by Howard Amery – an edited and annotated dictionary based on a word list by Rev. J.C. Jennison and Birrinydjawuy Garawirrtja. Other publications included Joy Bulkanhawuy’s ***Gurraŋay wo nininyŋu matha Djambarrpuyŋu***, a picture dictionary of ancient Djambarrpuyŋu words with illustrations by Bulkanhawuy and example sentences, and a translation of ***Raymaŋgirrbuy Dhäwu: When I was a little girl***, a picture book by Kylie Gatjawarrawuy Munuŋgurr, published by Magabala books with generous on-the-ground support from Gapuwiyak Arts.



Dikul Baker



Salome Harris



The ARDS board receiving a presentation from the language team – November 2023

We continued to grow our series of ‘Learning Yolŋu Matha’ posters. These posters are a helpful first introduction to common words and phrases in various Yolŋu languages, and are available for free download or purchase of hard copy via the ARDS website. This financial year, we added posters for learning Gumatj, Djinaŋ', Wangurri, Dhuwaya and Dhaŋu to the already available Gupapuyŋu and Djambarrpuyŋu posters.

Alongside learning and contributing at workshops and conferences, professional development for the team this year included training in own language literacy, translation, writing in Plain English, use of transcription software, language learning and teaching, digital literacy, numeracy and aspects of lexicography.

Another important part of our work is providing language support for other ARDS teams. This includes providing translations, advising on message design and spelling and concept checking. This is important for the whole ARDS team, to help keep Yolŋu languages at the centre of all our work, to ‘walk in the two worlds’. We also continued internal weekly Yolŋu Matha lessons for ARDS staff. It’s important for ARDS’ work that Balanda staff are committed to learning and improving their Yolŋu Matha.

This year saw some changes in the management of the Language & Resources team, Dikuḻ Baker and Salome Harris took over as co-djägamirr from Emma Murphy and Joy Bulkanhawuy. We want to thank Emma and Bulkanhawuy for all their hard work and guidance. Gratitude also to Nathan Evans who took on the role with Dikuḻ for a short time in between.
Like every other part of ARDS, we on the Language team are enriched by being able to provide meaningful livelihoods and an inclusive and supportive workplace for all our staff. A significant proportion of every team’s work is about making this a reality.

Our work has been supported by funding from the Commonwealth Government’s Indigenous Languages and Arts program, through funding of the Manikay Ŋupan project, and for our language centre operational funding, the National Indigenous Australians Agency’s Indigenous Youth Connection to Culture program, and by Living Languages.

Fee-for-service translation work

The Language team continues to offer fee-for-service translations into Yolŋu languages and Plain English.

This work often includes giving our clients guidance on what to communicate and how to communicate effectively with careful consideration of their message intention and audience.

We provide high quality audio and text materials, including radio and online announcements, album liner notes, brochures, film subtitles, and more.



An illustration by Malŋumba from Goyurr ŋayi Ļiya-wolmamirr ŋaku Ḏaymirri (Baḏaypaḏay)



Roslyn Malŋumba, Joy Bulkanhawuy, Rachel Dikuļ and Kathrin Dixon present on Ļiya-Dhalinymirr Milkarri crying songs

Milkarri sharing and documentation

In August 2023, we attended the PULiiMA Indigenous Language and Technology Conference in Darwin, attending a week of workshops to learn about what other groups are doing on their languages and share about our own work.

Our team gave a presentation about Djambarrpuyŋu Milkarri to a large, attentive audience, with Malŋumba giving a live performance. Gawura Waṇambi, our chairperson, gave an opening keynote speech in his language of Marraŋu. Malŋumba has also been generously sharing her knowledge of her Djambarrpuyŋu Milkarri through the making of a book for young people, ***Goyurr ŋayi Ļiya-wolmamirr ŋaku Ḏaymirri (Baḏaypaḏay)***:

The journey of the Ļiya-wolmamirr canoe Ḏaymirri (Baḏaypaḏay). Yiŋiya Guyala has generously helped with checking and approvals, and Dikuļ Baker and Salome Harris with translations.

Language Leadership workshop

In May 2024, the ARDS Language team collaborated with Living Languages to host our first ever Language Leadership workshop at Nungalinya College.

Language workers from Gäwa, Mäpuru, Roper, Yurrwi, the Miwatj region and Darwin came and shared about what work they are doing on their languages, and to make plans for the future. Participants asked important questions, such as “How do we create standards so that we don’t mix up our regional languages?”, and “Who decides on what spelling is correct?” Presentations were given on etymology and projects in production, and workshops explored how to describe word meanings and how to make recordings. Most of all, we were glad to connect with other people from all over the region who share our interest and concerns about our languages.

Manikay Ŋupan project

This year we completed our Manikay Ŋupan project, a multi-year project which organised, documented, catalogued and shared ARDS’ recordings of traditional songlines. Through this project, we discovered a significantly larger collection of Manikay recordings than we originally imagined: during the project, we were able to review and collect metadata for approximately 1400 tracks. The sheer size of ARDS collection of Manikay is both something to celebrate, and a logistical challenge, in terms of ensuring the collection’s security, cultural custodianship and accessibility.

The ultimate goal of the project, as well as safeguarding these precious materials, was to make them available to clans, families and, where appropriate, the broader public. Many people from different clans were involved in this careful work, and many expressed an appreciation of being able to (re)connect with, discuss and share old recordings. A small selection of the Manikay from Manikay Ŋupan is available on the ARDS website (www.ards.com.au/manikay-playlists) and on YouTube.

A new archiving grant through ILA which started in July this year will allow us to create further systems to future-proof ARDS collection of precious recordings and ensure the right people have access into the future.



The Language Leadership workshop

The Language team with the team at Ngukurr Language Centre



Visit to Roper – Connecting with other language centres

The language team travelled to Ngukurr back in November and met with language workers at Ngukurr Language Centre, to learn about how they do things and get some help with Wägilak language.

Creative Media & Yolŋu Radio

YOLŊU RADIO
THE VOICE OF NORTH-EAST ARNHEM LAND

Zowie Bromot filming





A message from Will Porter and Sylvia Nulpinditj, Yolŋu Radio & Creative Media team djägamirr

As we reflect on the past 12 months, it's clear that Yolŋu Radio has continued to grow from the foundation laid out by our ŋaḻapaḻ. We remain strong as a trusted platform for community voices and as a creative force within the region. This has been a transformative year, one marked by key projects, new partnerships, and a united vision for the future.

This year also marked a new chapter for Yolŋu Radio, as we joined forces with the Creative Media department to become one team. Together, we are better positioned than ever to continue to promote Yolŋu identity, language and Rom through various creative outlets.

As we look toward the future of Yolŋu Radio & Creative Media, we see a pathway where we deliver multiple creative functions, encouraging the generational transfer of Yolŋu knowledge, which will serve to foster connection between our audience and continue to celebrate everyday Yolŋu life.

Looking back for a moment, our radio programming has remained eclectic and quintessentially Yolŋu, continuing to reflect the diversity and richness of our culture. A special mention goes to the Andrew Gurruwiwi Show with William Gumbula, which never fails to bring joy and energy to the airwaves. We also take pride in the Bur'wu show, hosted by Jean Gurruwiwi, a staple for music lovers. Our journalistic endeavours, led by the insightful Dhäwu Dhäwu show hosted by Sylvia Nulpinditj, have provided the community with important, timely information and critical perspectives.

Our journey has only just begun, and with the continued support of our listeners, partners, and community, we are confident that Yolŋu Radio will continue to thrive and evolve. Thank you all for being a part of this incredible year. Your support, your voices, and your stories are what make Yolŋu Radio the voice of Northeast Arnhem Land. Together, we will continue to amplify Yolŋu voices, share stories, and celebrate the culture.



Wapit Munungurr field recording



Andrew Gurruwiwi recording



William Gumbula editing at Yolŋu Radio



Galiwin'ku Island Festival 2024

Puppet show at Yarrapay Festival

A highlight of this year was the debut performance of our puppet show “Raypirri Rom”, at Yarrapay Festival 2024 in Yirrkala.

This was a tongue-in-cheek show aimed at young children, with an underlying message around discipline and having respect for elders. This is part of ARDS’ ‘Connection to Culture’ project, and was a creative way to talk about important messages.

The team had a lot of fun developing and performing the show. Starring Baykali Ganambarr, Andrew Gurruwiwi and Marimunuk Gurruwiwi, it was a standout performance, garnering plenty of attention and excitement at the festival. This will certainly not be our last foray into the puppet-performance space!









The team with the puppet show set at Yarrapay Festival

Galiwin'ku Island Festival

Music festivals continue to be a big part of our work: this year, we were proud to present the Galiwin'ku Island Festival in May. This was a two-day event, including contemporary and traditional music, and a dance-competition. There was also a variety of connected events from various stakeholders, such as market stalls and a colour run. The festival was broadcast live on Yolŋu Radio, so that people could tune in throughout the entire region.

Galiwin'ku Island Festival

Transmission upgrades in homelands

This year, Yolŋu Radio completed crucial infrastructure updates in remote homelands, with successful installations in six sites. We will be upgrading another six sites during the dry season in 2025.

These updates have significantly improved the broadcast strength and reliability of the station. In the 15 homelands we broadcast to, Yolŋu Radio is the only media service freely available: making these upgrades especially important.



The Yolŋu Radio team at Galiwin'ku Island Festival

Ḻuku Ngärra Darwin Film Festival Screening

During the 2023 Darwin International Film Festival, Yolŋu Radio broadcast the live screening of Ḻuku Ngärra: The Law of the Land, which was being shown at the Deckchair Cinema.

Ḻuku Ngärra is a powerful documentary about the late Rev. Dr. D. Gondarra, who was ARDS' CEO and then Chair for many years, and oversaw the initial establishment of Yolŋu Radio. Yolŋu Radio took on a bold risk broadcasting a documentary live on radio, but senior members of our team thought it was worth doing to share Rev. Dr. Gondarra's story. Yolŋu Radio would like to thank Rev. Dr. Gondarra for all of the monumental contributions he has given to ARDS and Yolŋu Radio over the years.

Corporate Services

A message from the Corporate Services team

The ability for our staff to deliver amazing outcomes within each of the project areas of the organisation is supported through the behind the scenes work within a small but effective corporate services team. Corporate services ensures that the financial management of the organisation is delivered in a timely and well controlled manner, with financial management facilitating the efficient purchase of necessary goods and services and the invoicing of suppliers to ensure the cash flow of the organisation is well looked after. ARDS has delivered an outstanding financial result in 2023/24 through a collective financial management effort, with administration support provided by the Arnhem Land Progress Aboriginal Corporation.

Our Corporate Services team also oversees the management of our properties, our vehicles and all the computer infrastructure that is required to operate an efficient organisation. During 2023/24, ARDS made great progress in the implementation of SharePoint systems to move into more efficient cloud-based operations, which will reduce our reliance on physical IT infrastructure within the office. The new IT work environment has been adopted throughout the organisation and will be continually enhanced to improve efficient processes and functionality.

Recruitment and retention of great staff is critical to the delivery of ARDS services, and in the Corporate Services team there was a focus on strengthening our recruitment processes to ensure we're responsive to opportunities for the right people to join the ARDS team. We've also focused on building up our induction and training processes so that all new starters feel welcomed and strong in their understanding of the ways that ARDS works and of their opportunities here at ARDS. We are focusing on ensuring all our Yolŋu and Balanda staff feel strong and safe engaging in the workplace and working together.

Corporate services always have a view to the future and will continue to ensure staff welfare is driving our decisions, with policies, procedures and administrative systems all designed to reduce the burden on people while ensuring governance stays strong.



Christmas lunch 2023 at the Winnellie office



Women's Healing and Bush Medicine presentation

Male buŋgul performers for Outback Spirit Tours



Outback Spirit Tours

It was another good year for the collaboration between ARDS, Outback Spirit Tours and Journey Beyond.

ARDS partners with Yolŋu, particularly from the Gälpu clan, to deliver Welcome to Country ceremonies and Bush Medicine and Women's Healing experiences for the Arnhem Land Wilderness Adventure Tours. In the 2024 dry season (from May to September), we delivered 50 Welcome to Country ceremonies and 50 Women's Healing experiences. The ARDS Outback Spirit Tours team of over 40 Yolŋu includes ḏirramu (men) as senior clan leaders, song-men and yiḏaki players, and miyalk (women) as interpreters, healers and dancers.

Through these experiences, Outback Spirit Tour guests are able to see the ongoing strength of Yolŋu Rom, language and gurruṯu. Through this project, we want to empower Yolŋu to have ownership and pride in culture, and to help build a bridge of understanding and connection between Balanda and Yolŋu worlds.



Buŋgul djäma for Outback Spirit Tours

Financial statements

Statement of Profit or Loss and Other Comprehensive Income

for The Year Ended 30 June 2024

	Note	2024	2023
		$	$
Income			
Sale of goods	2A	6,057	52,458
Cost of goods sold	3A	-	26,912
Gross Profit		6,057	25,546
Revenue from grants and contributions	2B	4,404,855	4,053,305
Interest	2C	35,474	16,163
Other revenue	2D	730,245	955,523
Total other revenue		5,170,574	5,024,991
Total income		**5,176,631**	**5,050,537**
Expenses			
Employee benefit expense	3B	3,242,601	2,655,434
Depreciation and amortisation	3C	168,980	187,675
Other expenses	3D	1,676,585	1,836,199
Total expenses		**5,088,166**	**4,679,308**
Surplus from operations		88,465	371,229
Other comprehensive income		(860,976)	-
Total comprehensive income		**(722,511)**	**(371,229)**

During FY24, ARDS did a thorough review of all of its leases, properties and buildings. Following this review, ARDS discussed with our auditors whether the current accounting treatment of Buildings and Leasehold Improvements met the requirements of AASB16 Leases. Both parties agreed that this was no longer the case, and that ARDS should therefore write off the carrying values of all Buildings and Leasehold Improvements on the properties that ARDS holds the leases on at Nhulunbuy, Winnellie and Galiwin'ku.

Statement of Financial Position

As at 30 June 2024

	Note	2024	2023
		$	$
Assets			
Current assets			
Cash and cash equivalents	4	2,211,124	3,332,283
Trade and other receivables	5	883,057	373,169
Other currrent assets	6	52,324	29,929
Total current assets		**3,146,505**	**3,735,381**
Non-currrent assets			
Property, plant and equipment	7	592,658	1,251,839
Total non-current assets		592,658	1,251,839
Total Assets		**3,739,163**	**4,987,220**
Liabilities			
Current liabilities			
Trade and other payables	8	439,959	411,367
İncome in advance	9	617,945	1,141,560
Provisions	10	104,876	113,051
Total current liabilities		**1,162,780**	**1,665,958**
Non-current liabilities			
Provisions	10	84,203	56,571
Total non-current liabilities		84,203	56,571
Total Liabilities		1,246,983	1,722,529
Net Assets		**2,492,180**	**3,264,691**
Accumulated Funds			
Retained earnings		2,492,180	3,264,691
Total Accumulated Funds		**2,492,180**	**3,264,691**

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 (the Corporation), which comprises the statement of financial position as at 30 June 2024, the statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income, the statement of changes in equity and the statement of cash flows for the year then ended, notes to the financial statements including a summary of material accounting information and the directors' declaration.

In our opinion, the accompanying financial report of the Corporation has been prepared in accordance with the Corporations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) Act 2006 and the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commision Act 2012 (the Acts), including:

(i) giving a true and fair view of the Corporation's financial position as at 30 June 2024 and of its financial performance for the year then ended; and
(ii) complying with Australian Accounting Standards, the Corporations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) Regulations 2017 and the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Regulations 2013.

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

Responsibilities of the Director for the Financial Report

The Directors of the Corporation are responsible for the preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view in accordance with the Australian Accounting Standards, the Corporations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) Act 2006 and the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012 and for such internal controls as the Directors determine are necessary to enable the preparation of the 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 Directors are responsible for assessing the Corporation's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the directors either intend to liquidate the Corporation or to cease operation, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Directors are also responsible for overseeing the Corporation's financial reporting process.

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.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial report is located at the Auditing and Assurance Standards Board website (http://www.auasb.gov.au/Home.aspx) at: http://www.auasb.gov.au/auditors responsibilities/ar4.pdf. This description forms part of our auditor's report.

This description forms part of our auditor's report.

LOWRYS AUDIT



Colin James, FCA
Registered Company Auditor

Darwin
Dated: 10 October 2024

Supporters, Donors & Sponsors

ARDS would not be able to do our work without the support and contributions from many individuals, organisations and agencies. We thank everyone who supported and contributed to our work in 2023-2024, including:

Australian Electoral Commission
www.aec.gov.au

Australia Council for the Arts
creative.gov.au

Atomic 212
Atomic212.com.au

Aboriginal Housing NT Aboriginal Corporation
ahnt.com.au

Anglicare NT
anglicare-nt.org.au

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

Australian Government Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications and the Arts; Indigenous Languages and Arts
arts.gov.au

Australian Government Department of Social Services
dss.gov.au

Alcoa of Australia Ltd
www.alcoa.com

Australian Football League
afl.com.au

Buku-larrŋgay Mulka Art Centre
yirrkala.com/buku-larrnggay-mulka

Charles Darwin University
www.cdu.edu.au

Community Broadcasting Foundation
cbf.org.au

Darwin Community Arts Inc
darwincommunityarts.com.au

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

Dhimurru Aboriginal Corporation
dhimurru.com.au

East Arnhem Real Estate
eare.com.au

East Arnhem Regional Council
eastarnhem.nt.gov

First Nations Media
firstnationsmedia.org.au

Goṇ-Däl Aboriginal Corporation
gongdal.com.au

Laynhapuy Homelands Aboriginal Corporation
laynhapuy.com.au

Living Languages
livinglanguages.org.au

Maningrida Arts and Culture Centre
maningrida.com

Mimal Land Management
mimal.org.au

Miwatj Health Aboriginal Corporation
miwatj.com.au

National Indigenous Australians Agency
niaa.gov.au

Northern Land Council
nlc.org.au

NSW Aboriginal Languages Trust
alt.nsw.gov.au

NT Health
health.nt.gov.au

NT Police, Fire & Emergency Services
pfes.nt.gov.au

Northern Territory Government Community Benefits Fund
nt.gov.au

Northern Territory Department of Industry, Tourism and Trade Industry.
nt.gov.au

Northern Territory Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Logistics
dipl.nt.gov.au

Northern Territory Department of Attorney General and Justice
nt.gov.au

Department of Education NT
education.nt.gov.au

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

Department of Territory Families, Housing and Communities NT
tfhc.nt.gov.au

Community Justice Centre NT
nt.gov.au/law/processes/mediation/contact-the-community-justice-centre

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

Miwatj Health Aboriginal Corporation
miwatj.com.au

National Disability Insurance Scheme Quality and Safeguards Commission
ndiscommission.gov.au

North Australian Aboriginal Justice Agency
www.naaja.org.au

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

Outback Spirit Tours
outbackspirittours.com.au

Rio Tinto Alcan
riotinto.com/operations/australia/gove

Spots & Space
spotsandspace.com.au

Telstra
telstra.com.au

WSP Global
wsp.com/en-au

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Thank you to all staff for their assistance

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