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Part 1 - Central Desert Shire Council Business Plan

Introduction

The Central Desert Shire Council came into existence on the 1st of July 2008. The Northern Territory Government announced the structural reform of local government in the Northern Territory on the 31st of January 2007.

Local Government reform will change the way local government services are delivered to people living in remote communities. Eleven new Shire Councils have been established. The four existing municipal councils (Alice Springs Town Council, Darwin City Council, Katherine Town Council, and Palmerston City Council) will continue to operate, and Litchfield Council will join them as a new municipal council.

The first draft of the Central Desert Shire Plan was released in December 2007. The plan was compiled following extensive consultation with key stakeholders including the Central Desert Transition Committee made up of representatives from the nine major communities in the region, existing Community Government Councils, residents of the new Shire, industry groups, and key government and non-government organisations.

This final version of the Central Desert Shire Strategic and Business Plan and has been revised following 6 months of consultations with key stakeholders to obtain comment and feedback.

The new Central Desert Shire includes a large area of unincorporated land and the existing local government bodies of;

- Anmatjere Community Government Council
- Yuelamu Community Inc
- Arltarlpilta Community Government Council
- Nyirripi Community Inc
- Lajamanu Community Government Council
- Yuendumu Community Government Council

This final version strives to reflect the aspirations and operations of the new Shire and will guide the work of the Central Desert Shire for the first 3 years of its life. Part 1 of the Plan provides an insight into the Central Desert Shire region and the spirit in which the Shire intends to work, we hope you enjoy it.





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The Central Desert Shire

Our Vision

Two Ways – One Outcome (Indigenous and non-Indigenous working together for the best outcomes)

Eastern Arrernte - Atherrele ularreke – ularre anerremele mpwaretyeke.

Anmatjere - Atherr ankwerr - anyent arrarteme

Warlpiri - Yapa manu kardia jintangka nyinawyjaku

Our Mission

To collaborate in one spirit together guided by strong leadership and good management to provide high quality services across the Central Desert Shire.

Eastern Arrernte - Apurte – irreyeke utnenge anyente arnte-arnte aremele iwerre arratentyele imperne anthurre ampere ahelhe anteke nhenhe arnte alkentye shire nhenhe areyenge.

Anmatjere - Inkerrek le kwerrenhe le nwerne mpwaretyeke. Tyerreye purte le pmwaretyeke arnte arnte aremele anthemele rkarlthe services Central Desert Shire.

Warlpiri - Jukurrpala kirda manu kurdungurlu Warrijarinyjaku jungu ngurrangka



Goals of the Central Desert Shire

Goal 1

Maintain and improve the health and culture and well being of the community.

*Eastern Arrernte - Mwantyele rikerte akerte arnte-arnte aremele akangkentyele aknangentyele tyerriye Ingkerreke mwarre anenhewerreye akert arke aremele.
Arnte-arnte aremele interre iteremele rikerte kenge akerte arke akngantyeye arke tyerriye akerteke ampere itne kenhe itne arle anemeke arke.*

Anmatjere - Tyerreye mwarre arrkwetyeke, pmere mwarre arrkwetyeke, angketyeke mwarre arrkwetyeke, kwerrenhe mwarre arrkwetyeke, Ingkerreke mwarre anetyeke.

Warlpiri - Jukurrpala mawyungka palypuru nyinanjaku ngurrangka

Goal 2

Well managed and maintained physical infrastructure.

Eastern Arrernte - Mwantyele arnte-arnte areme ampere iwenhe apeke renhe ingkerreke-ke alakenhe akwele.

Anmatjere - Mwarre arnte arnte areme, atemele, mpwareme, mwarre arrkwete anetyeke.

Warlpiri - Murlparly warra-warra kanjaku. Warrki kirlangu nyiya karti-karti

Goal 3

A dynamic and growing economy with strong local employment.

Eastern Arrernte - Ilyempenye anthurre amangele arle aneme mane mpwarelte anemele warrke arke atningke akertele.

Anmatjere - Kwenhe yanhe akwete arrkwetyeke. Economy amangke le leme. Warreke amangke le leme, tyerreye ke.

Warlpiri - Nguru warlaljala warrki jarrinyjaku. Wirri mantujaku ngurra



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Goal 4

A region that respects, protects and looks after its natural and built environment.

Eastern Arrernte - Ahelhe anteke ingkerrekele arle arnte-arnte anthurre renhe, mwantyele ampere ahelhe anteke arerlte anemele.

Anmatjere - Pmere atemele, pmere nhenhe arnte arnte aremele. Rubetye kwetyemele iwetyeke, pmere mwarre arrkwetyeke.

Warlpiri - Murlparlu warra-warra kanjaku nguru walalja

Goal 5

Good leadership, effective advocacy and high quality services supported by good management practices.

Eastern Arrernte - Ilyenpenye anthurrele akwele arnte-arnte arerlte anetyenhele mwantyele iterremele ilemele anthemele arke services mwerre anthurre renhe itne apurtele nhenhe ikwerele arle warrke – irreme itne ingkerrekele.

Anmatjere - Tyerretye mwarre atningkele angketye, anyinte awemele mpwareme, nhenge rkarlhe mpwareme. Tyerretye mwarre arnte arnte aremele akaltyele.

Warlpiri – Nguru walalja pirjirdili martaka



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The Central Desert Shire Region

The Central Desert Shire covers an area of 282,093 square kilometres and has a population of 4,591 people living within the shires boundaries. The region takes in the nine major communities of Atitjere (Hart Range), Engawala, Ti-Tree, Laramba, Yuelamu, Nyirripi, Willowra, Yuendumu, Lajamanu and numerous outstations.



As well as these communities there are many pastoralists who began settling in the region in the latter part of the 19th century. These groups have had a long history with each other and remain linked as neighbours, employers and employees, and in some cases as business partners.

Mining and other business enterprises including roadhouses, the horticultural and tourism industries have also developed in the region. These industries will continue to grow and the Central Desert Shire will support the economic development of the region.

Aboriginal Languages

There are three major Aboriginal languages spoken in the Central Desert Shire region being Warlpiri, Anmatjere and Eastern Arrernte. English is commonly spoken as a third or fourth language. This culturally strong and linguistically diverse region highlights the importance of maintaining strong



connections to country and healthy family relationships. Whilst each language is different, nearly all Aboriginal people can understand each other and are normally fluent in two to three languages.

Skin Groups

There are up to eight male and female skins groups that Warlpiri, Anmatjere and Eastern Arrernte maintain, which determine the kinship systems that operates in Central Australian Aboriginal society. The kinship system is an important way in which Aboriginal society is organised around family relationships.

It is a system that underpins how people relate to one another and determines people roles, responsibilities and obligations to each other, to ceremonial business and to country.

Marriage, ceremonial relationships, funeral roles and the type of behaviour appropriate between family members are all determined by the kinship system. Although there are an increasing number of 'wrong skin' marriages, families find ways to accommodate these contradictions. There are particular 'avoidance relationships' that require a strict social distance to be maintained, such as the relationship between mother in law and son in law.

The kinship system varies between different regions and is expressed through the use of 'skin names' which divide societies into named categories that relate to one another through the kinship system. A person gains a skin name at birth based of the skin names of his or her parents, the skin name they are given will indicate the skin group (section/subsection) that the person belongs to (Central Land Council, 2008).

History of the Region

There is no single event that one can point to that gives a general explanation of first contact between Aboriginal and Europeans who travelled to the Central Desert region. Aboriginal people have lived in this region for thousands of years as distinct groups with clearly defined boundaries, not unlike a country with borders. First contact therefore occurred at different times with different tribes or language groups.

First Contact

East

The eastern part of the region was first explored by John Ross who travelled through the area in 1870-71, following the Waite River to Barrow Creek and then onto Central Mt Stuart. Hart Range was named in 1870 by Ross, after the then Premier of South Australia, John Hart.

In 1877 and 1878 Henry Barclay, with Charles Winnecke as his second in command led an expedition to explore and survey the country east of Alice Springs to the Queensland border. Barclay traveled east along a route that took him to what is now known as the Herbert River, to the Jervois Range and the Hay River, and reached the edge of what would later be called the Simpson Desert before returning back due to water shortages and ill health after falling from his horse. Barclay returned to Adelaide and Winnecke was appointed to continue the survey. Later in 1887, David Lindsay went through the area on the way to the Queensland gulf. It is from this time that non-Aboriginal people began arriving in the Hart Range area.



Willowra Road

Central

John McDouall Stuart was the first white man to enter Anmatjere country in 1860. Between 1860 and 1862 Stuart made 3 journeys northward through the centre of the Northern Territory. During these journeys Stuart marked the route for the Overland Telegraph Line. The Stuart Highway followed the telegraph line.

Speculators began to take out leases in the Anmatjere area in the late 1800's following favourable reports about Central Australian land from Stuart. The next groups of visitors to pass through the area were prospectors travelling northwest to the Tanami and Granites goldfield. Many of these prospectors began doing stock work and took out grazing licenses on Anmatjere country.

West and North West

First contact with non-Aboriginal people in Warlpiri country occurred around Yuendumu in 1856. The explorer Geoff Ryan was the first white man to visit the area and came by camel out into the Tanami Desert. He died on the return trip near Yuendumu.

In 1873 another explorer called Peter Egerton Warburton travelled close to the area. His route led him from Ethel Creek north to Waterloo Wells and west through Nanalpi to W.A. The explorer and geologist

Alan A. Davidson travelled north across the region in 1900. He found gold at Tanami and Granites and an influx of prospectors to the region followed.

European Settlement

European settlement in the Central Desert region has occurred along the routes travelled by early explorers. The success or failure of these expeditions was dependent upon the availability water to sustain the journey. Water has also been the determining factor in the establishment of the pastoral and mining industries in the region.

Aboriginal people living in Central Australia have always known where to find soakage's and permanent water sources essential for survival. The stock routes travelled by pastoralists and livestock opened up with the help of Aboriginal people who knew the country, where to find precious water, and worked on many of the properties operated by pastoralists.



Meeting at Laramba

What was once known as the North West stock route that travelled from Alice Springs and is now the Tanami Road. The Sandover stock route that travelled northeast of Alice Springs headed east along the Plenty Highway, which was previously known as the Jervois Stock Route. The pastoral industry has been established for over 100 years in the region, and the mining industry is well established with mining exploration expected to increase in the future.

Establishment of Communities

Warlpiri

Communities such as Yuendumu and Lajamanu were initially set up as government settlements. Yuendumu was established by the Native Affairs Branch in 1946 as a rationing and welfare station. In 1947, a Baptist Mission was established in Yuendumu and by 1955 many local Warlpiri groups were settling in the community.

Lajamanu was formed in 1949 when government policies lead to Warlpiri people being moved north from Yuendumu to what was formerly known as Hooker Creek station, located on Kalkaringi country. On the first three attempts to settle people in Lajamanu they walked south back to their own country across

400 kilometres of desert. There are now approximately 900 people living at Lajamanu, many of whom are descendents of the families that settled in Lajamanu in the 1940's and 1950's.

Whilst Lajamanu community still has strong ties to Yuendumu and other Warlpiri communities such as Willowra, it is also linked to Daguragu, 110 kilometres north of Lajamanu. The traditional lands of the community extend beyond the immediate boundaries of Lajamanu south of the Tanami Highway and west towards Tennant Creek.

Nyirripi was established in the late 1970s as an outstation from Yuendumu as part of a movement by Aboriginal people to return to their traditional lands. It has since developed into a community in its own right. Although a predominantly Warlpiri community, there are a number of Pintubi, Luritja and Kukatja speakers. Nyirripi is located on Warlpiri land, close to the south western border of Warlpiri country.

Willowra is situated on Warlpiri country and the main language spoken is Warlpiri. Willowra was first established as a cattle station in the 1920s. In 1973 the Department of Aboriginal Affairs bought the property and held it in trust for the community. Willowra community took over the management of the cattle station in 1974 under the name of the Willowra Cattle Company, and a land claim under the Aboriginal Land Rights was lodged in 1978. The land was handed back to its traditional owners in 1983. Willowra currently manages cattle grazing operations under contract from a nearby pastoral property.

Anmatjere

The Anmatjere region is centred around the town of Ti Tree nearly two hundred kilometres north of Alice Springs, and has always been a focal point for Anmatjere people. The area takes in the settlements of Laramba, Engawala, Mt Stirling, Nturiya Station, Pmara Jutunta, and Alyuen, and is on the edge of the Tanami desert. Ti-Tree station was established in 1919 when W.J Heffernan was granted a lease over the Connor's Well Subdivision. Heffernan had informally occupied country in the area from about 1913.



PICTURED RIGHT: Ti Tree Roadhouse

He built a homestead in 1921 across from the Ti-Tree roadhouse. During World War II it was used as a refuelling stop, and by the end of the century the town had changed to a large regional centre. Approximately 60% of the population throughout the Anmatjere region speak 'Anmatjere' as their first language.

Laramba is situated on a freehold excision on Napperby Station. The community was established in 1983 and moved from Napperby Station to its present location in 1984. In 1992 local people gained title to the land. Many Laramba residents are former station workers and are mainly Anmatjere speaking people.



Yuelamu is located 270 km northwest of Alice Springs. Title to Mt Allan cattle station, now known as Yuelamu, was purchased by the Aboriginal Development Foundation in 1976. In 1979 a claim was lodged under the Aboriginal Land Rights (NT) Act 1976. The claim was granted and title deeds handed over to traditional owners in 1988. Traditional owners are from the Anmatjere group and languages spoken include Anmatjere, Arrernte and Warlpiri.

East Arrernte

The community of Hart Range or Atijere as it is known by local aboriginal people is a permanent settlement that has been an important area for people from Tobernoy, Ammaroo and Lake Nash. Most Aboriginal people are Eastern Arrernte but there are a few Western Arrernte and Alyawarr speakers.

The Eastern Arrernte people saw title to their traditional lands in the North and North West Simpson Desert returned in 1994, when some 23 000 square kilometres of Simpson Desert land was handed back by the Federal Government at a ceremony at Akarnenhe Well, east of Alice Springs.

At the turn of the last century pastoral settlement occurred in the area and prospectors found mica and gems. Pastoralists and miners quickly established leases covering much of the Eastern Arrernte's land. The picturesque mountain ranges nearby are popular with tourists and fossickers, with garnets and zircons particularly valued. The district includes 25 cattle stations, six major Aboriginal communities, two major highways, the Plenty and Sandover and the Arltunga National Park.

Outstations and Homelands

An Outstation or Homeland is a piece of land (big or small) belonging to indigenous people and is where they live (most commonly in family groups). There are some 58 Outstations and Homelands located in the Central Desert Shire region. A list of these can be found in Appendix 2 – Communities and Localities in the Central Desert Shire Business Plan.

The land areas known as Outstations and Homelands do not fall under the jurisdiction of the Shire Council, however the Shire Council has been provided with limited funding to provide some essential services to 38 of the 58 Outstations and Homelands in the Shire.

The Central Desert Shire Council views Outstations and Homelands as an important part of life to indigenous people living in them within the Shire. The Central Desert Shire Council will provide as much direct support to the 38 Outstations and Homelands they are funded for as the money will allow.

In addition the Shire Council will advocate for building stronger and more sustainable futures for people living on all Outstations and Homelands through forming ongoing partnerships between people living on and managing the Outstations and Homelands, Government and non-Government agencies and the Shire Council.



Coniston Massacre

(Extracted from Central Land Council's *"Making Peace with the Past – The Coniston Massacre"* copyright Central Land Council)

The story of the Coniston killings is well known to many Central Australian Aboriginal people. It has been told and re-told to generations of Aboriginal children by their parents and grandparents but most Australians are still unaware that such a brutal event happened in our recent past.

What is now known as the Coniston Massacre was in fact a series of raids following two key events. The first began after the murder of Frederick Brooks on 7 August 1928 at Yurrkuru (Brooks Soak). Brooks, a friend of Randall Stafford who ran Coniston, had set out with camels from Coniston in the hope of improving his fortune trapping a few dingos. He set up camp at the soakage and was by many accounts well-liked by the local Aboriginal people.

Many innocent Aboriginal people were caught up in the violence that followed.

There are many stories told about Bullfrog (Japanangka) and the man who killed Brooks – some say he had one wife staying with Brooks, some say he had two. Most agree that Bullfrog was angry about his wife staying with Brooks and that perhaps Brooks didn't pay him enough in rations. A reprisal party led by Constable George Murray, who was already on his way to investigate cattle killings at Pine Hill and Coniston, set out from Coniston Station on the 16 August and killed five people that day. By the time they returned to Coniston Station on the 30 August at least 17 people were dead.

People still visit the cave where Bullfrog hid from the revenge party with his little dog. Bullfrog blocked the entrance of the cave with a stone or spinifex to hide himself. He lived to an old age until he died peacefully at Yuendumu.

Meanwhile, at Boomerang Waterhole, up on the Lander River, Nugget Morton was attacked by a group of Aboriginal men. He was a very strong man and fought them off and killed one man. He then went for help and eventually sent off a letter from Ti Tree to the police at Alice Springs. Constable Murray arrived in late September and the killings continued around the Lander and Hanson Rivers until mid-October. During August and September 1928 there were a minimum of six sites where massacres are known to have taken place.

The Board of Enquiry which began in late 1928 found that 31 Aboriginal people had been killed by Constable George Murray and others following the murder of Brooks and the attack on Nugget Morton, but it seems likely that there were many more. TGH Strehlow, FW Albrecht, MC Hartwig and even Randall Stafford estimate the death toll was likely to be have been at least double that. The Board of Enquiry also found that Murray and his party had acted in self-defence. The Board and its findings were widely criticised for having no Aboriginal witnesses except the tracker Paddy, no counsel for Aboriginal people, and that the evidence was not made public.



The loss of so many people has long been a cause of deep sadness to Aboriginal people in the region and the lack of acknowledgement by the non-Aboriginal community of what occurred during those fateful months of 1928 increased the despair felt by people about this black moment in our history.

As time has passed most of the Aboriginal people who were present have passed away, although there are still some elderly survivors. However, there are still many accounts told by people in land claim evidence in the 1980s and in other publications such as Warlpiri Womens Voices, Kayteye Country and Long Time Olden Time (WWV:p36).

The story still remains vivid and painful to the descendants.

Many people still talk about their uncles, fathers and grandfathers who were gunned down during ceremony or hunting. The effect of the Coniston killings is felt widely in Central Australia scattering people far to the north-west and north-east. Many have never returned since that time 75 years ago.

Economic Potential of the Region

For a long time people living in the Central Desert communities have talked about the importance of building stronger economies to increase employment and business opportunities. The beautiful country that makes up the Central Desert region boasts a thriving art and tourism industry with further potential for growth. In addition to opportunities for industry growth the region offers an enjoyable lifestyle, a great climate and breathtaking country.

With good planning the Central Desert region can contribute to building a strong economy and a good future that all residents can enjoy. Pastoralism, tourism, mining and horticulture are the source of this growth, and much of the growth is from Aboriginal owned projects and joint partnership arrangements. Several communities have already developed a vision for their future which provides the Shire with a strategic approach in developing the region. These initiatives include the Anmatjere Regional Development Plan and the Yuendumu 5 Year Plan, which outline the many strengths of the communities and provide a direction from which to build upon strengths and create employment and wealth in the Central Desert region.

Regional Economic Development

In the Anmatjere region local people have been talking about regional economic development for many years. In 2005 this led to the development of the Anmatjere Regional Development Plan, and in January 2007 the Anmatjere Economic Development Committee (AEDC) was formed.

Members of the AEDC live in the region and have an interest in economic development, in particular jobs and business development. They include members of the local communities, representatives from the pastoral, horticulture, retail and tourism industries as well as local government, the chamber of commerce, NT and Federal governments. The Anmatjere Economic Development Committee is one of

9 Economic Development Committees across the Territory representing local and regional business, community and government sectors.

The Committees are responsible to the Minister for Regional Development through the Chief Executive of DBERD, which plays a key role in identifying and informing Government about economic development priorities within communities of interest. They also have a hand in guiding and monitoring economic development planning to achieve sustainable job creation and business growth opportunities. The Central Desert Shire is keen to continue participating in the Regional Economic Committee as part of its strong commitment to regional development across the range of horticultural, pastoral, mining and tourism industry initiatives in the Shire.

Art Centres

The Central Desert has a thriving art industry with artists drawn from all corners of the region. The Warlukurlangu Artists Association is one such business that has been operating successfully since 1986. It is a not for profit organisation and has more than 600 members, all of whom are Aboriginal artists. The art centre is a popular enterprise activity, and provides social, cultural and economic rewards for artists and their families.

Warlukurlangu is a cooperative and provides members with materials to produce their art. The income from sales is shared between the artist and the Warlukurlangu Art Centre. The art centre's share pays for business operations, special projects such as bush trips - where artists and family members go out to visit their country (Jukurpa sites) up to 300kms away. Warlukurlangu has also started its own community development initiatives and contributes funds to projects such as the dog program.



PICTURED LEFT: Judy Napangardi Watson in front of Warlukurlangu Art Centre, Yuendumu. Courtesy of Warlukurlangu Arts Centre

Warlukurlangu has grown since it began in 1986 when artists worked at the Adult Education Building. In 1987 the art centre moved to a humble one-bedroom house west of the current Warlukurlangu art centre, and in 1991 the artists moved to the current building which was renovated in 2005. The centre is described as the social and cultural 'hub' of the community.

The Akngerrekenhe Art Centre in Hart Range has been operating for nine years. It is a fledging arts centre that caters to a tourist market made up of amateur mining prospectors and fossickers, and people travelling through the Plenty Highway on their way to Alice Springs and western Queensland. The artists are from the region and have recently begun holding workshops in different art mediums to develop a range of art techniques.



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The most successful models for horticulture have been displayed through partnership programs where Aboriginal landowners provide land, water, equity and labour and a joint venture partner brings investment, technical expertise, management and marketing.

Centrefarm Aboriginal Horticulture Limited successfully operates as an interface between Aboriginal land owners and the Horticulture Industry within the Central Desert Shire region. The lead organisation behind Centrefarm is the Central Land Council. Their current industry focus is on production of early maturing table grapes however research by NT Department's responsible for primary industries (DPIFM) has identified citrus, mangoes, tomatoes, asparagus, dates and other commercial crops as suitable. Water basins in the Central Desert Shire region currently identified as appropriate for the ongoing development of the horticulture industry by Centrefarm are the Ti Tree Basin and Willowra Basin.

Mining

There is a long history of mining in the Central Desert Shire region around the Hart Range and Arltunga region. In 1887, gold, rubies and garnets were discovered in Arltunga. Later garnets and mica were mined nearby to Hart Range.

During the Second World War, Hart Ranges operated the world's largest mica mines. Mica is an important metal that doesn't burn and was used to make electrical items such as radios. Around 1900, gold was first discovered in the Tanami region around what was later to become the Granites gold mine. Today, the Granites mine is an operational mine 531 kilometres North West of Alice Springs and is the 2nd largest producing underground goldmine in Australia.

Newmont, who owns and manages the Granites mine, is partnering with local agencies and ranger groups to monitor the impact of mining activities on land, flora and fauna. Part of their efforts to use environmentally sustainable practices has led the mine to identify ways to reduce, reuse and recycle water wherever possible. The mine recycles solid wastes when possible and manages hazardous and non-hazardous waste streams.

Newmont maintain strong partnerships with key NGOs operating in the Tanami region, including the Mt Theo organisation, Warlukurlangu Artists Aboriginal Corporation, the Warlpiri Education and Training Trust. Newmont is a major supporter of the Milpirri Festival in partnership with the Rio Tinto Aboriginal Foundation. Recognising the numerous benefits that swimming pools have created in various remote Aboriginal communities around Australia, Newmont is pledging \$150,000 over 3 years towards the operation of the new community swimming pool at Yuendumu.



PICTURED ABOVE: Aerial view of Granites Gold Mine, Courtesy Newmont

The mine has a workforce of around 600 people, and maintains approximately 13% Aboriginal employment. In partnership with the Central Land Council, Newmont provides tailored employment and training programs to help local Aboriginal people achieved sustained job outcomes. Promoting greater economic independence in the region in turn improves the livelihoods and wellbeing of individuals, families and communities.

Over the past year the mining company Olympia Resources Limited has been consulting with the Hart Range community and the Central Land Council about developing two new mine sites in the areas around Hart Range and Moly Hill. The resources to be mined include garnets and alumino magnesio hornblende, which is an abrasive, used in the blast cleaning and water filtration industries.

The potential establishment of two new mines will create greater employment and career opportunities, in the Mining Industry, for the local community residents of Hart Ranges and the surrounding Outstations.

Mt Theo

The Mt Theo Program started in Yuendumu Community in 1993 to address chronic petrol sniffing in the community. The program has grown in nature and scope and now provides programs that include youth diversion, treatment, aftercare, leadership and development across the Warlpiri region.

In 1993 elders from Yuendumu Community started up the program with additional support from local organisations. Through the program the community successfully fought petrol sniffing. The first step involved moving young people sniffing petrol to Mt Theo Outstation, 160km from Yuendumu community. At Mt Theo elders from Yuendumu cared for youth as part of a cultural rehabilitation program. Young people were then lead through a comprehensive 7-day youth program in Yuendumu that engaged them in interesting and challenging activities outside of school hours.



Excursion run by Mt Theo (photo Courtesy of Mt Theo)

In 2003 petrol sniffing stopped in Yuendumu and the Jaru Pirrjirdi (Strong Voices) Project started up. The Jaru Pirrjirdi project is a youth leadership and development project that works with young aged 16-25 who have been through the Mt Theo program. Members move through a six-step journey that provides meaningful life and career pathways. Participants begin to work in the program with other young people, and run a youth night club, projects and bush trips, and mentor other young people into meaning pathways.

In 2004-5 the Mt Theo Program began working closely with the Willowra Community and its Elders after an outbreak of petrol sniffing in the community. As with Yuendumu this involved sending 'at risk' youth to Mt Theo Outstation and the development of a comprehensive youth program in Willowra. As with Yuendumu, this resulted in an end to petrol sniffing in Willowra, the youth program continues to be successfully.

Following requests from elders in other Warlpiri communities the Mt Theo Program has started up youth programs in Nyirripi and Lajamanu communities. All programs are supported by the Warlpiri Education Training Trust (WETT) which is in part funded by royalty payments from the Granites Goldmine. The youth programs also work in partnership with P.A.W. Media and provide training to youth in a wide range of media related skills.



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The success of the program is largely due to its close working relationship with elders and families who established the program. In 2007, the programs founders were awarded the Order of Australia Medal (OAM) for their tireless and wonderful efforts in caring for Warlpiri youth.

People living throughout Central Australia are concerned that their young people have the opportunities and life choices that will build strong, healthy and prosperous futures for families and communities. The Shire is keen to learn from the knowledge and experience of Mt Theo and the elders who established the service so the Shire can learn to deliver good youth, sport and recreation services to young people using a culturally appropriate model.



The Central Desert Shire is committed to improving youth, sport and recreation infrastructure and will look to the successful service model used by Mt Theo and other partners such as the Central Australian Youth Linked Up Service (CAYLUS) to develop and deliver high quality, responsive and culturally appropriate services to young people.

PICTURED LEFT: Jampijinpa Watson (Aboriginal Community Police Officer and Jaru Graduate with Mt Theo's Assistant Manager Bett Badger (photo courtesy Mt Theo)

Local Media Organisations

In the early 1980s, before television was accessible to most of remote Australia, residents of some remote Aboriginal communities began experimenting with video production. For Aboriginal people this was an exciting way to produce local content and became a popular way to record the stories that local people were interested in telling and listening to. Yuendumu was one township where video and media production was occurring, and was home to a population of some 900 Warlpiri-speaking Aboriginal people and 100 non-Aboriginal people.

Warlpiri Media was established in 1985 to support growing local video production and also began live-to-air broadcasting. The organisations establishment coincided with the launch of the first Australian owned satellite AUSSAT, which for the first time brought national television to much of remote Australia.

From 2001 with the advent of the PAW Radio Network Warlpiri Media Association became increasingly associated with communities in the Tanami. In 2006 Warlpiri Media Association took on the trading name PAW Media and Communications to reflect its work across



paw
PINTUBI ANMATJERE WARLPIRI
MEDIA AND COMMUNICATIONS



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Pintubi, Anmatjere and Warlpiri lands.

The organisation has been a local voice that has expressed the concerns and interests of Aboriginal people in the region in relation to the challenges, achievements and interests of local communities. Within the Central Desert region PAW Media provides services to Yuendumu, Laramba, Wilora, Engawala, Willowra, Nturiya, Yuelamu, Nyirripi, Pmara Jutunta and Lajamanu.

CAAMA Radio also provides remote Aboriginal broadcasting services to the community of Hart Range in the Central Desert region, and to communities to the north and east of the Shire. Both Remote Aboriginal Media Organisations (RIMO's) have served the interests of local Aboriginal communities over many years and will continue to do so into the future.

The Central Desert Shire has made a commitment to work with PAW Media and CAAMA to ensure the infrastructure and licensing requirements of communities are looked after. This commitment will enable communities to continue to receive radio and television broadcasts. There are many opportunities for the Central Desert Shire and local RIMO's to work collaboratively in the future to inform local communities about the Shire and its activities in local and English languages, and to train and develop local media talent and skill.

Sporting and Cultural Events

The Central Desert Shire promotes and supports sporting and cultural events as a positive way for communities and residents within the Shire to interact with one another.

Communities within the Shire use these events as ways to celebrate their love of sport and embrace their culture. Major events held in Alice Springs, such as the Lightning Cup Football Carnival and the AFL Grand Final weekend, are also supported and attended by communities and sporting clubs across the Central Desert Shire region.

The Central Desert Shire will ensure established community events such as the Yuendumu Sports Carnival, Hart Range Races, Lajamanu Sports Carnival and NAIDOC Week celebrations continue to be supported and upheld.

The Central Desert Shire is also committed to supporting and encouraging the growth of future civic events in all Shire communities that help Shire residents celebrate their community interests, history and culture.



two ways :: one outcome

Summary

The Central Desert Shire along with the 10 other Shires being established throughout the Northern Territory are being introduced to build strong local government in the Northern Territory. The new Local Government framework will achieve success through:

- Strong local and regional representation from Shire Councils, and Local Boards in communities;
- Good financial management practices, accountability and the ability to secure funding to deliver a higher standard of local government services;
- Strong governance and management structures guided a vision, mission and core values and a plan to best achieve our goals of delivering an agreed standard of services to our communities;
- Increased employment of local Aboriginal people in the deliver of local government services;
- Local Boards that provide a local voice, involve communities in local planning, and build governance capacity and leadership within communities.

The Central Desert Shire has a strong commitment to improve local government services, develop partnerships that contribute to better outcomes for Shire residents and build a stronger region.

Part 2 of this Strategic and Business Plan provides specific details about the Central Desert Shires management, governance, service delivery and financial planning into the future. We hope that you will find this document enlightening and welcome your interest, comments and feedback. The final draft of the Central Desert Plan will be available on the 30th of June 2008.



two ways :: one outcome

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