

# Annual Report 2025



# TABLE OF CONTENT

INTRODUCTION	3
OVERVIEW	4
PROGRAMS	5
SADDLE UP	6
EVENTS	7,8
STAFF	9
VOLUNTEER RECOGNITION	9
VOLUNTEER TRAINING	9
NEWS FROM THE HERD	10
HORSE SPONSORS	11
COMMUNITY PARTNERS	12
PARTNERSHIPS, OTHER HIGHLIGHTS	13
FINANCIAL REPORT – COMMITTEE	14
2026 OUTLOOK	15



# RDA TOP END

Riding for the Disabled Association (RDA) Top End is a not-for-profit community dedicated to providing opportunities for people of all abilities in the greater Darwin area. The centre enables participants to engage in equestrian-related activities, including horse care and riding programs.

We foster, promote and support the integration of people with varying abilities into community activities in a safe and supportive environment. This experience results in an increased quality of life, achievement of personal goals, and improved life skills.

RDA Top End also offers a valuable opportunity for people to contribute to the community through volunteering. Volunteers have opportunities such as supporting people with disabilities, horse care and a range of other general maintenance, events and fundraising activities.

Our equestrian centre is situated on 26 acres of bushland, 25 minutes from Darwin CBD, with a full-size sand-based undercover riding arena.

## WORD FROM THE CHAIR



Hi everyone, I'm pleased to share this overview of what has been an exciting and transformative year for RDA Top End in 2025. It has been a period of growth, change, and major achievements for our organisation.

- We welcomed our new Operations Manager, Ian, a role that has been part of our long-term planning since 2021, and we were finally able to take the leap to make it a reality.
- We farewelled Coach Natasha after six years of dedicated service, leaving some very big boots to fill. Our Level 1 coaches, Daisy and Julie, did an outstanding job keeping the centre and sessions running smoothly, and we are grateful for their commitment.
- Treasa also moved on during the year, thanks to the temporary staff Louisa and Anna who kept the office going. We were pleased to welcome Jennifer into the office team.
- Our Major Community Benefit Fund grant for a new stable complex was approved; an exciting milestone, with the new facilities expected to be operational by the end of 2026.
- We launched weekly fundraisers across several venues in Palmerston and Darwin, and these have already proven to be highly successful.

I would like to extend my sincere thanks to everyone who has contributed to RDA Top End throughout the year: our dedicated management committee volunteers, our hardworking staff, the volunteers who support our programs, our generous sponsors and partners, and the wider community. Your support, energy, and belief in our mission make everything we do possible, and we are truly grateful.

# 2025 OVERVIEW

as at 31/12/2025



8 horses



33 volunteers



20 Participants



1690 hours of equine experiences



5 Staff



3 x Level 1 Coach



1 x Coach in training



54 Saddle Up students



1400 Followers

# PROGRAMS

## Mounted Program

The program includes walking, trotting, games, and trail rides. It is designed to build balance, confidence, and coordination, emphasising fun, freedom, and fitness. The rider is encouraged to become as independent as possible as their riding abilities develop.

## Unmounted Program

Offers participants opportunities to have a close interaction with the horses from the ground. Sessions can include feeding the horses, painting, grooming, leading and other fun activities.

## School Program, Saddle Up

Designed to provide a learning, engagement, and well-being program during school terms for students with disability. The program is designed to be flexible and support individual students in learning about caring for and riding horses.

## Volunteer Opportunities

Volunteers receive training and support for opportunities that include horse husbandry, client support, general maintenance, office duties, event support, social media, and small projects



# SADDLE UP PROGRAM

This program has students from various specialist schools across the territory participate in a School Equine Program funded by NT Government.

Our equine activities provide an alternative, engaging learning environment for students to practice and learn a range of academic, social-emotional and physical skills.

Four Schools from a mix of primary and secondary schools participated in the Program.

In 2025 these schools included:

- : Forrest Parade Primary School
- : Nemarluk School
- : Palmerston College
- : Henbury School



# EVENTS



OPEN DAY 2025



COTA RURAL EXPO



BREKKIE IN THE PARK



VOLUNTEER AWARDS



BALI VIBES BEACH ALIVE



PAINT & PICNIC WITH A PONY

# EVENTS



## VOLUNTEER FUN DAY



## END OF YEAR CELEBRATION

### OTHER EVENTS

DECK CHAIR CINEMA

COTA EXPO

DARWIN DISABILITY EXPO

# STAFF

RDA Top End has dedicated and passionate staff who each bring a unique skill set to the centre.

They all share a love for supporting the community, helping others and of course enjoy working with or near our horses.

## **Ian Harkness**

Operations Manager

## **Daisy Burgoyne**

Coach

## **Jennifer Maguire**

Volunteer and Program Coordinator

## **Julie Cadd**

Coach

## **Julie Bliss**

Caretaker & Horse Manager

## VOLUNTEER RECOGNITION

Our volunteers are all amazing and donate an estimated 4,600 hours to our community. We cannot thank them enough! Each year we nominate a few of them for local and national volunteer awards. Congratulations to the 2025 award nominees.

### **Volunteer NT Awards Nominees**

Tabby Sylvester

Tomiko Sariago

## VOLUNTEER TRAINING

In addition to our standard volunteer training, a number of volunteers participated in First Aid and CPR Training provided by Territory Wide Training.



A set of volunteer training resources were produced through the aid of a grant from Volunteering SA & NT. The resources were produced by the Bel Rose Group and detailed 'how to' for different jobs relating to horse care. Part of the same grant allowed for a website upgrade provided by Captovate.

# NEWS FROM THE HERD

The incredible group of horses at RDA Top End are at the core of what we do. They each hold a special place in the heart of our riders, volunteers and staff. Currently we have 5 working horses assisting us with lessons and 3 retired horses happily living their best life.

Julie, our horse manager, diligently ensures the horses receive top-notch care through veterinary checks, vaccinations, annual dental exams, and visits from the farrier.

## WORKING HORSES



Charm



Cloudy



Mystic



Kinder



Alvin

## RETIRED HORSES



Jo



Dylan



Johnny

# COMMUNITY PARTNERS

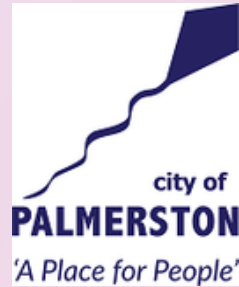
RDA Top End extends heartfelt gratitude to our incredible network of supporters—individuals, local businesses, and organizations who contribute to our mission through diverse and meaningful channels. Our community's generosity manifests in numerous ways, including grant supporters, monetary donations, raffle prizes, pro-bono professional expertise, discounted goods and services, and volunteer labour. These collective contributions are transformative, enabling us to strategically allocate resources and expand our riding programs, ultimately enhancing the lives of participants with diverse abilities.

MONADELPHOUS  
JACANA ENERGY  
ROTARY DARWIN NORTH  
MINDIL BEACH CASINO RESORT  
KEEGAN GROUP  
SAGE AUTOMATION  
FRM REFRIGERATION  
FAIRY FLOSS AND NUTS  
PALMERSTON QUALITY MEATS  
OLD MATE BAKERY  
CAFFEINATED GLORY  
CMAC SERVICES  
MONSTER BALL  
SOFT SERVE FANTASY  
RED DOG DONUT  
CROCODILE COUNTRY  
VTG WASTE RECYCLING  
TOP END MUSTANGS DARWIN  
TERRITORY BUTCHERS  
WAVE EQUESTRIAN

# PARTNERSHIPS

## CITY OF PALMERSTON

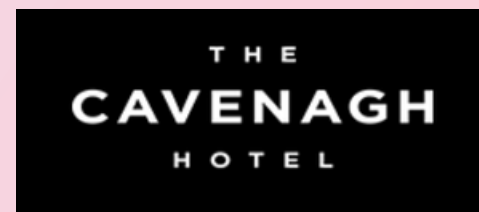
A 3 year partnership that will support us to deliver activities to the Palmerston Community, including our open day.



Councillor Wayne Bayliss from City of Palmerston attended our End of Year Celebration

## OTHER HIGHLIGHTS

Fundraising efforts ramped up from Aug 2025 with regular weekly meat tray raffles being held at popular venues throughout Darwin. Thanks to Cazalys, Palmerston Golf Club, The Cavenagh Hotel and The Buff Club for hosting us and to our volunteers who have been assisting with these successful fundraising efforts.



# FINANCIAL REPORT

Audited Financial Report and Treasurers Report are available as separate documents.

## MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE as at 31/12/2025

Tania Lesneuck - Chair

Luke Roe - Vice Chair

Wendy Young-Smith - Treasurer

Lorraine Hodgson - Public Officer

Nick Prus-Mroczkowski - Committee

Teresa Grove - Committee

Emma Kelly - Committee

James Fuller - Committee

Resigned 2025 - Paul Masten, Amber Harford, Rose Daniel  
and Keshini Renilson

# 2026 OUTLOOK



2026 is set to be another exciting year for the centre - New stables, new paddock, expanded Saddle Up Program and increased collaboration with the Australian Defence Force providing volunteers for the RDA Top End.



We thank our sponsors, supporters, partners, volunteers and clients for supporting us.



We have lots of exciting opportunities and hope you continue to be part of our journey.



If you want to support the centre, please contact the team to discuss opportunities.



0439 444 057



38 Catalina Road,  
Marlow Lagoon



[admin@rdatopend.org.au](mailto:admin@rdatopend.org.au)



[www.rdatopend.org.au](http://www.rdatopend.org.au)

