

Airport Development Group

# Indigenous Engagement Report

January 2022 – April 30 2023



**Airport**  
Development Group

[www.adgnt.com.au](http://www.adgnt.com.au)

*Reimagining new territory.*





**The Larrakia Rangers are ADG's primary contractor to maintain and preserve the Gurumbai Trail, located within the Rapid Creek Reserve.**



# Contents

<b>Foreword</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Message from the Chair</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Indigenous Engagement Milestones</b>	<b>4</b>
ADG's Indigenous Engagement Journey	4
<b>ADG's Future Indigenous Engagement Strategy</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Indigenous Participation</b>	<b>8</b>
Indigenous Employment and Training	8
- Indigenous Mentoring and Support	11
- Indigenous Trainee Development	11
- Awards for Excellence	12
- Indigenous Training Academy Polo Shirts	12
- Indigenous Employment	14
- Indigenous Employment – Roles	16
- School Tours and Career Days	17
- Indigenous Cricket Engagement Program	17
Indigenous Procurement	17
<b>Tourism Enhancement</b>	<b>18</b>
Darwin Airport water tower, now named Mamilima	18
Hotel Villa Honourees	20
Gurumbai Cultural Trail	22
Hotel theming	22
Cricket 365	23
<b>Cultural Engagement and Relationships</b>	<b>24</b>
Indigenous Advisory Committee (IAC)	24
Aboriginal Tourism	25
Larrakia Nation Aboriginal Corporation	25
Larrakia Rangers Partnership	26
NT Indigenous Business Network (NTIBN)	26
Cultural Education	27
Tennant Creek Airport Authority Certificate	27
IFM First Nations Working Group	27
Community	28

**The Airport Development Group acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander people as Traditional Custodians of the Larrakia, Arrernte and Warumungu lands on which it operates and pays respect to Elders past present and emerging.**

## **Terms Used**

According to Northern Territory Government convention please note that the use of the Term Aboriginal in this report is inclusive of Torres Strait Islander people.

According to Elder guidance, Airport Development Group uses the term Aboriginal when referencing people, culture and Government programs as so named.

Indigenous is used when referencing programs or groups such as Indigenous Training Academy, Indigenous Engagement Report, Indigenous Advisory Committee and Indigenous businesses.

# Foreword



I take great pride in presenting our second Indigenous Engagement Report which highlights the progress of Airport Development Group's (ADG) Indigenous Engagement Program. This progress builds on our 2021 commitment to refocus, recommit and purposely move to affirmative action for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander inclusion and involvement in our future.

The past year we've demonstrated this through launching and growing our Indigenous Training Academy; consolidating ADG's Indigenous Advisory Committee; increasing ADG employment and opportunities; creating a new Indigenous Mentoring Program; expanding the number of Hotel Villa Honourees; celebrating Aboriginal people, culture and art through the creation of a Larrakia Welcome to Country landmark; and continuing our commitment to leveling the playing field through the great unifier of sport.

From our first intake of trainees in April last year, combining vocational training with employment and tailored mentoring has proven to have a positive impact on the trainees' learning journey. Twelve months on, these seven trainees are ready to graduate with a Certificate III in Hospitality and continue their employment with ADG in hospitality positions within our two hotels. Three of these trainees were also finalists in Northern Territory award programs including the NT Young Achiever Awards and Hospitality NT Awards, which is not only a great personal achievement for these exceptional young people, but also an encouraging endorsement of our program.

Building on this success, we've expanded the Academy certificate program this year to include business, horticulture, information technology and cookery and welcomed 13 new trainees in our second enrolment.

Key to our commitment of listening and engagement has been the appointment of three founding members to ADG's Indigenous Advisory Committee (IAC). I am honoured to welcome Chair Eddie Fry and members David Kurnoth and Charlie King to the IAC which provides high-level advice on projects and initiatives of our Indigenous Engagement Strategy.

While we celebrate the milestones we have achieved in the past year, we are cognisant that this is just the beginning of our venture toward creating and supporting Aboriginal employment and educational opportunities, and building a better and fairer Australia for all.

We welcome you to join us on this journey.

**Tony Edmonstone**  
Chief Executive Officer  
Airport Development Group

# Message from the Chair

## ADG Indigenous Advisory Committee

It is my absolute pleasure to have been invited to Chair the Airport Development Group Indigenous Advisory Committee. Whilst we are at the early stages of our journey, I am very confident that the undertakings and commitment by the ADG Group family will see the strengthening of its Corporate and Operational engagement with Indigenous peoples of the Northern Territory.

Our strategy deployed and measured by the foundation three pillars upon which we hold ourselves accountable is a clear sign of not just the words and goodwill of many people but the combined effort of all to make a genuine and real positive impact that will build lasting relationships, respect and provide opportunities to those who are in our sphere of engagement.

Time will judge our connectedness to our work and it will provide opportunity for Indigenous people of the Northern Territory to participate in our journey.



**Eddie Fry**

Chair

Airport Development Group Indigenous Advisory Committee



# Indigenous Engagement Milestones

## ADG's Indigenous Engagement Journey

Since the lease acquisition of Darwin, Alice Springs and Tennant Creek airports in 1998, ADG has initiated an unwavering commitment to preserve and uphold Aboriginal culture through investment in the Arts for programs, festivals and individual artists; sponsorship of community health and environmental programs; and the contracting of Indigenous businesses to grow employment opportunities.

In 2018, ADG's first Indigenous Engagement Strategy provided a significant step forward in realising, among other goals, targeted Indigenous engagement and participation in the workforce.

In 2021, a new commitment was launched, providing tangible and affirmative action for Indigenous inclusion in ADG's future as outlined in the 2022 Indigenous Engagement Report.

Fifteen months on, this 2023 Indigenous Engagement Report documents the progress on these goals and the important milestones that have been achieved within this reporting year.

### Inaugural 2021-2022 Report



**JANUARY**

- Appointment of Indigenous and Community Projects Manager
- ADG's renewed commitment is defined with the 2021 Indigenous Engagement Strategy.



**APRIL**

ADG partner with NT Cricket to establish the Cricket 365 Program and launch its Indigenous Cricket Engagement program.



**NOVEMBER**

**5.7%**

of ADG's FTE employees are Indigenous.

**NOVEMBER**

Establishment of Indigenous Advisory Committee (IAC).

**MARCH**

The first six renovated hotel villas are each named in honour of an incredible Aboriginal who has significantly contributed to the fabric of the NT.

## 2021

**FEBRUARY**

Acquisition of the Novotel Darwin Airport and Mercure Airport Resort.

**JUNE – AUGUST**

More than 500 students engaged with Cricket 365.

**JANUARY**

- Inaugural meeting of the IAC
- Inaugural Indigenous Engagement Report published.



**FEBRUARY**

**1.9%**

of ADG's FTE employees are Indigenous.

**SEPTEMBER**

Inaugural Cross-Cultural Education undertaken by

**49%**

of ADG airport staff.



In 2021 more than

**130**

NT students attended airport hotel employment tours.

## 2022-23 Report

### APRIL

- Eight applicants qualify to become the first students of the Indigenous Training Academy
- Two part-time hotel employees and now Academy trainees are named Award finalists – one in the NT Young Achiever Awards and one in the Hospitality NT Excellence Awards.

### JULY

570 students participate in the Indigenous Cricket Engagement Program.

### JANUARY

Indigenous Training Academy Manager appointed.



### MARCH

- 13 new trainees enter the Indigenous Training Academy, from 72 applicants.
- ADG's Indigenous Engagement Strategy completed.



### APRIL

**7%**  
of ADG's FTE employees are Indigenous.

## Future milestones



### 2023/24

- Hotel and Airport Theming plan
- Appointment of Procurement Manager to increase Indigenous procurement across our supply chain.



**2024 GOAL**  
Further increase ADG's Indigenous FTE employees.

## 2022

**SEPTEMBER**  
Cross-Cultural Education undertaken by a further

**27**

ADG staff.



The launch of ADG's Indigenous Training Academy.

### FEBRUARY

- A further eight Hotel Villa Honourees are unveiled with a special smoking ceremony
- A Larrakia Welcome to Country landmark is created and its mural, named Mamilima, wins Silver at the Australian Street Art Awards.



### APRIL

Indigenous Training Academy trainee Steven Ferreira and the Academy are named finalists in the 2023 Hospitality NT Awards for Excellence.



**100%**  
retention for all seven inaugural hospitality students at ADG's Indigenous Training Academy.

## 2023



**NOVEMBER**  
Gurambai Cultural Trail opens.



**2023**  
The first Academy Trainees graduate with Certificates III.

## Future

### GOAL

- Implement Employment Plan to increase Indigenous employment levels
- Establish cultural training framework to grow cultural competency across ADG.

# ADG's Future Indigenous Engagement Strategy

In March 2023, a new ADG Indigenous Engagement Strategy was completed and endorsed by ADG's Board. This strategy builds on the foundation ADG has created and solidifies its long-term goals towards education, employment, mentoring, retention, partnerships and tourism to enable opportunities for Indigenous Australians.

The Strategy includes an expanded purpose and three key intersecting pillars of:

- Indigenous Participation
- Tourism Enhancement
- Cultural Engagement and Relationships.

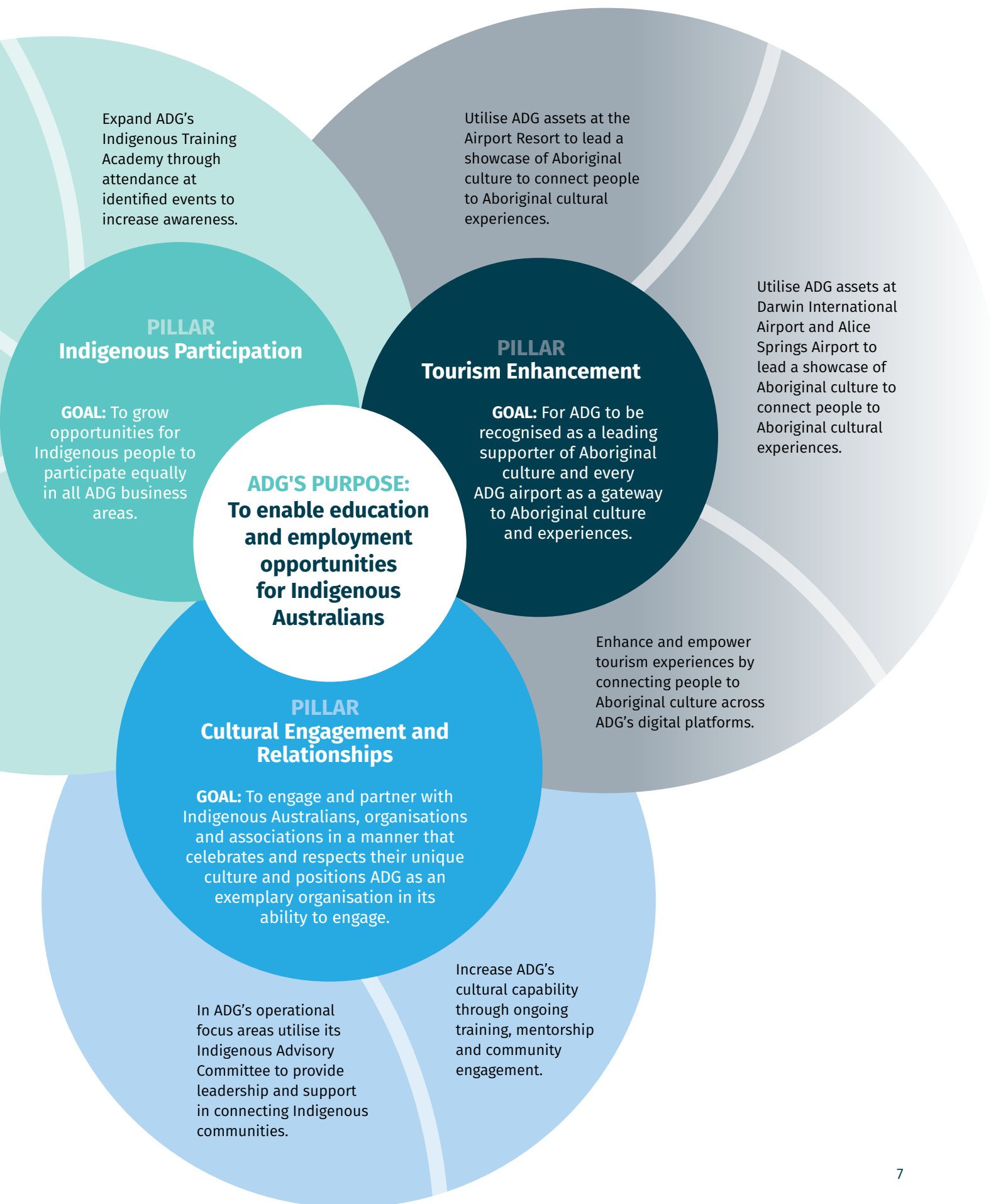
While ADG celebrates the year's milestones, it also looks to the future as it continuously moves forward to the next chapter of Indigenous inclusion and involvement as outlined in this graphic.

Promote pathways toward ADG's Academy by developing relationships with schools and students.

Increase equity in employment through the development of an Indigenous Employment Plan.

Increase Indigenous Procurement through Supply Chain Networks.





# Indigenous Participation

## Indigenous Employment and Training

ADG's Indigenous Training Academy was launched in April 2022 with the goal of empowering its trainees with meaningful skills through the delivery of nationally recognised qualifications in hospitality, tourism, aviation, and construction.

In the Academy's inaugural operating year, positions for 10 students were created across ADG's business and hotel operations. An impressive 130 applications were received to study and train at the Academy. After a comprehensive evaluation process, including orientation and induction procedures, 10 positions were offered. Eight of these applicants took up the positions and commenced with the Academy – seven for Hospitality training and one for a Certificate in Business. Four months into training, the Certificate in Business trainee found employment elsewhere.

The Academy's first year has been a success on three core levels. Firstly, in the number of positions created, a significant investment in people and resources. Secondly, in the 100 per cent retention rate of the seven hospitality students, and thirdly, in the overwhelmingly positive and supportive environment created within the group. A group who often refer to themselves as 'family'.

The success of the program is undoubtedly attributable to the alignment of several factors, but the forethought and consideration of a number of intentional decisions has been influential. For example, the decision by ADG to offer 10 Academy places instead of the externally recommended number of two positions. Although 10 was considered too ambitious, by having a greater number of students all studying the same subject brought together every week for more than a year, ADG believed it stood to reason that those participants would feel a bond, all the more important when belonging to a minority group. The strength of the bond, of course, is a determinant of individual participants and how they fit together (also a factor of the evaluation process), however, initiatives that were implemented also played a factor. These initiatives included: group mentoring sessions led by an Indigenous facilitator; providing a culturally safe environment to speak openly; discussing challenges and employing strategies to overcome them; and identifying with fellow participants.

The result of these processes and strategies in combination with the commitment and positive attitudes of the participants themselves, have proved effective with all seven hospitality trainees still engaged and on track to complete their Certificate III in Hospitality qualification mid-2023. This is an exceptional outcome. As part of their Academy training, the seven trainees are also employed within ADG's hotel precinct in a variety of part-time and full-time positions.

---

**The Academy's  
first year has  
been a success on  
three core levels.**

---





One year on,  
all seven of the  
Academy's inaugural  
hospitality students are  
engaged and on track for  
graduation in mid-2023.



In March 2023

**13**

new trainees entered the Indigenous Training Academy.

To deliver the goals of the Indigenous Training Academy and further assist trainees, an Indigenous Training Academy Manager role was created and filled in January 2023.

In March 2023, ADG expanded the Academy by increasing the number of employment positions. ADG received applications for these positions by connecting with local Indigenous agencies that included Clontarf, Stars Academy, The Smith Family and local secondary colleges.

The 2022 trainees led information tours and discussed the opportunities available through the Academy. They were instrumental in educating applicants on what to expect from the program and answering questions. They have taken great pride in becoming mentors for the Academy's second intake of trainees.

After evaluation, 13 new trainees were welcomed into the Academy in the following areas:

Area of Study	Number of Indigenous Trainees		Work Area
Certificate III Hospitality	6		Food and Beverage Banqueting/Conferencing Housekeeping
Certificate III Business	2		Front office/Administration
Certificate III Commercial Cookery	1		Kitchen
Certificate IV Business	2		Wirraway Business Centre
Certificate III Horticulture	1		Grounds Operations
Certificate III Information Technology and Support	1		Corporate Services

All 2023 trainees attended an induction week where they engaged with each other and their team leaders, with the 2022 trainees providing valuable peer support. The induction week included a mentoring workshop focusing on work ethics, positive thinking and managing challenges in a work environment. It also included a comprehensive first aid course.

For all other applicants who applied, ADG created pathways and assisted with referrals to other potential employment opportunities through local recruitment organisations, Indigenous business groups and other stakeholders within its professional network.





### Indigenous Mentoring and Support

ADG has engaged Tanyah Nasir Consulting Service to deliver its Rise Up program, as well as develop and deliver an Indigenous mentoring program to connect and support Academy trainees. The aim of the program is to help trainees succeed by equipping them with tools to understand and manage personal issues and challenges in the workplace.

Mentors provide trainees with one-on-one support to develop work performance and build positive personal growth. Trainees also attend fortnightly group mentoring sessions, which has created a supportive network that assists them in navigating potential roadblocks.

Feedback from trainees is that they feel safe in the mentoring environment and hotel team leaders have reported a notable increase in their confidence.

Annual reporting from Tanyah Nasir Consulting states that the continuity of mentoring sessions, combined with the creation of a safe and supportive environment, results in positive outcomes through sessions that are both interactive and engaging.

ADG's goal is to provide holistic support for trainees to build job satisfaction and maximise retention of all Indigenous trainees.

### Indigenous Trainee Development

Development opportunities are continually being explored to support trainee growth and develop skills and knowledge across all areas of ADG's operations.

Recently, Academy trainee Chloe Quill took up the challenge to train in the Transport Operations Coordinator role for the Property and Terminal Team. Once fully trained, Chloe will be skilled to provide support for this busy team.



Top: Regular mentoring sessions are well attended.  
Bottom: Chloe Quill (centre) at work in the airport's Terminal Control Centre.

---

**The mentoring program has been embraced by the trainees and lifted their confidence.**

---

---

## The story of the polo shirt art

The Kulama ceremony occurs around the months of April and May. It is a celebration of life and involves three days and two nights of ritual body paintings, singing and dancing. Songs are composed to tell of the sad and happy events that have occurred. Concentric circles often appear as the main element of contemporary Tiwi patterns, representing the Kulama circle of ceremonial ground.

- Lulu Coombes

---

### Awards for Excellence

Three Academy trainees from the inaugural year of operation have achieved recognition for their work and performance through selection as finalists in coveted Northern Territory industry awards.

Chloe Quill was a finalist in the 2022 NT Young Achiever Awards in the Travel Tourism and Hospitality Sector, and Cain Kurnoth was a finalist in the 2022 Hospitality NT Awards for Excellence Apprentice/Trainee of the Year.

Both Chloe and Cain were part-time employees of ADG hotels before being accepted into the Academy. Chloe had been employed for nearly one year and Cain for five months. Their outstanding work at the hotel formed part of their award nomination. Being selected from 130 candidates into the Academy was also part of their nomination and was reflective of their dedication and commitment to their work.

Another of the Academy's inaugural trainees, Steven Ferreira attained finalist selection as Apprentice/Trainee of the Year in the 2023 Hospitality NT Awards for Excellence.

All three trainees are exceptional representatives of the Academy. Not only have they been recognised as award finalists, but also by hotel guests who regularly acknowledge their commitment to outstanding service. Their dedication and work ethic establish them as excellent candidates for future leadership roles.

In addition to the trainees, the Academy itself has also been announced as a finalist in the category of Outstanding Achievement in Training. Judging is based on the contribution to professionalism in the hospitality industry, training initiatives that meet industry needs, and the levels of multi-skilled staff as a direct result of training. The Hospitality NT Awards will be announced in May 2023.

### Indigenous Training Academy Polo Shirts

ADG commissioned Tiwi Artist Jennifer (Lulu) Coombes to design ADG's polo shirt uniform for the Indigenous Training Academy. Her artwork is an interpretation of the traditional Tiwi Kulama ceremony.

Lulu also designed Hawthorn Football Club's Indigenous Guernsey for the 2018/2019 AFL's Sir Doug Nicholls Round, AFLNT's staff uniforms and NAIDOC shirts for Larrakia Nation Aboriginal Corporation.





**ADG Indigenous  
Training Academy  
students, 2022 and 2023.**





**7%**

of ADG's FTE employees  
are Indigenous  
(as at 30 April 2023).

## Indigenous Employment

With 21 Indigenous employees, ADG's Indigenous employment record as of 30 April 2023 has increased to 7 per cent of full-time equivalent (FTE) employees (excluding casuals). This is up from 1.9 per cent following the acquisition of the hotels in February 2021.

The breakdown of employment types is as follows:



A key goal of ADG's Indigenous Engagement Strategy, under the pillar of Indigenous Participation, is to continue to increase Indigenous employment levels across all areas of its business. To enable this goal, development of a targeted Indigenous Employment Plan will be created.

This future focus will help identify and map pathways to engage, attract and retain Indigenous staff across all levels of the business by increasing professional development opportunities and identifying best practices. This will include developing pathways and training for Indigenous employees into senior roles including management positions.



**A targeted  
Indigenous  
Employment Plan  
will help identify and  
map pathways to retain  
Indigenous staff.**

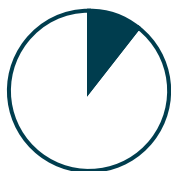




ADG has

**21**

Indigenous employees working FT, PT and in casual positions across airport operations and hotels.



**9.3%**

of ADG's hotel workforce are Indigenous.

## Indigenous Employment – Roles

ADG has 21 Indigenous employees working in full-time, part-time and casual positions across airport operations and hotels.

### Hotels

Indigenous employees work across all areas of the hotels, including in food and beverage, housekeeping, banqueting and functions, and front of house. The FTE of Indigenous employees (excluding casuals) is 8.8, representing 9.3 per cent of the current 95 FTE hotel workforce.

The number of employees and their area of employment is listed below.

Area of Employment	Number of Indigenous Employees
Banqueting and Functions	1
Food and Beverage	4
Housekeeping (including 2 x casuals)	8
Front of House/Administration	2
Restaurant/Kitchen	1

### ADG

Airport Development Group has placed five Indigenous trainees into airport operation roles, with trainees based across administration, corporate services, and grounds operations.

Area of Employment	Number of Indigenous Employees
Administration – Wirraway Business Centre	1
Groundsman – Grounds Operations	3
IT Officer – Corporate Services	1



### School Tours and Career Days

As a key action of ADG's Pillar goal of Indigenous Participation, pathways into ADG's Indigenous Training Academy have been developed and nurtured since 2021 through relationships with various schools and groups, employment service provider agencies and the Smith Family.

Led by ADG staff and supported by current Indigenous Academy trainees and hotel staff, frequent orientation tours of the Airport's operations and hotel precinct continue to be coordinated for schools and groups. These include both planned tours and tours on request.

For example, through its support of the Cricket 365 Program, ADG has facilitated more than 10 employment tours across the Hotel precinct for Clontarf and Stars groups. Two current Indigenous Training Academy trainees joined the augural program via this pathway and are on track to complete their Certificate III in Hospitality in 2023.

ADG's Indigenous Engagement Managers also attend annual Careers Days at local schools, promoting pathways into the Indigenous Academy to prospective students and recognition for the Academy continues to grow.

### Indigenous Cricket Engagement Program

The Indigenous Cricket Engagement Program provides opportunities for Indigenous students to develop cricket skills and a hands-on understanding of the game. Participants enjoy coaching sessions with elite state representatives who play in the Cricket 365 Program in Darwin from June through to August each year.

ADG partnered with NT Cricket to launch its Indigenous Cricket Engagement Program in 2021 in conjunction with Cricket 365. This initiative has forged strong relationships with NT schools, Indigenous programs, as well ADG's partnership with NT Cricket.

In 2022, the Indigenous Cricket Program, which consisted of school workshops and interschool gala days, were held over three weeks. Five hundred and seventy participants from 12 schools across Darwin and the Katherine region as well as the Don Dale Youth Detention Centre, took part.

## Indigenous Procurement

As part of ADG's procurement strategy, in mid-2023, ADG will appoint a Procurement Manager and increase the capacity of the Projects Team to develop and implement an Indigenous Procurement Charter.

This Charter, among other initiatives, will embed reporting across all areas of the business and will build on procurement reporting tools established in 2021.



**Top: Frequent orientation tours of ADG's operations are held to attract new trainees. Bottom: 9.3% of ADG's hotel employees are Indigenous.**

# Tourism Enhancement

## Darwin Airport water tower, now named Mamilima

Winning Silver at the 2022 Australian Street Art Awards was the icing on the cake for this ambitious and highly anticipated project at Darwin International Airport (DIA).

Transforming the 41-metre disused water tower into a prominent Aboriginal cultural landmark was the culmination of many months of work and partnerships with Larrakia Nation, leading Larrakia artist Anthony Duwan Lee, and Proper Creative.

Located at the entry to the Mercure Darwin Airport Resort and completed in 2022, the mural, originally created on a didgeridoo, is named Mamilima, the Larrakia term for didgeridoo.

Anthony Duwan Lee created the design and Proper Creative applied and installed the mural on the water tower. The artwork incorporates three Larrakia dreamtime stories, which have been audio recorded by the artist, and will be used as part of a light and sound experience upon completion of the hotel redevelopment.

Recognised as the Northern Territory's foremost gateway, DIA provides visitors with their first (and last) impression of the region. Mamilima's sheer size and visual prominence within the airport precinct, draws visitors to stop, look, and acknowledge where they are. For many visitors, this is their first connection to the Larrakia people and Larrakia culture and is an important acknowledgement to the traditional owners of the land which the airport, hotels, and Darwin itself is built on.

As well as Larrakia Nation, support for the project also came from the Northern Land Council and the Aboriginal Tourism sector within Tourism NT.

---

**Larrakia artist  
Anthony Duwan  
Lee created the  
design.**

---





**The Larrakia  
Welcome to  
Country landmark,  
named Mamilima,  
won Silver at the 2022  
Australian Street  
Art Awards.**



Photos: A traditional smoking ceremony was held to celebrate the opening of eight new hotel villas and the outstanding Territorians they were each named after.

## Hotel Villa Honourees

Eight more high-achieving past and present Territorians who've made outstanding contributions to the preservation and celebration of Indigenous culture have been unveiled as Hotel Villa Honourees with a traditional smoking ceremony at the Mercure Darwin Airport Resort.

ADG's Indigenous and Community Projects Manager worked with local Territory historians, Peter and Sheila Forrest, to select eight recipients from across the Northern Territory to be honoured by having the new villas named after them.

The eight new pool villas were completed in early 2023. The Honourees or descendants of the Honourees and their families were invited to attend the smoking ceremony to celebrate the unveiling.

The eight new Honourees are:

- Robert Tudawali
- Sister Anne Gardner
- George Man Fong
- Brother John Pye
- Mick Markham
- Geoffrey Mungatopi
- Miriam-Rose Ungunmerr Baumann
- Neighbour

They join the six Honourees from 2021 – Billiamook, Matthias Ulungura, Robert Shepherd, Professor MaryAnn Bin-Sallik, Linda Jackson and Tjeyenga Mathias Namarluk.

Scan the code below to learn more about the remarkable achievements of the Hotel Villa Honourees.







## TUDAWALI

Robert Tudawali challenged the white world when he played the traditional Aboriginal man, Marbuck, in the 1955 film *Jedda*. The film had as its central theme the tensions arising out of the transition of Aboriginal people from the traditional world to the modern. Tudawali was a sensation and the film was a great success. It was the first Australian feature film to be produced in full colour and it was the first to put Aboriginal people into the leading roles.

Tudawali, a Tha'man, was born on Melville Island in about 1929. In the late 1930s he was taken to Darwin by his parents. He soon came to know in Darwin as 'Bobby Wilson' - a name derived from his parents' employers.

Tudawali received a rudimentary formal education at the Native Affairs Branch school at Melville. Rudeimentary or not, he acquired a rich English vocabulary and spoke in beautifully modulated tones. He later became an excellent footballer - one opponent, Ted Egan, recalled trying, unsuccessfully, to get past him. As Ted picked himself up after a hard tackle, Tudawali said 'Well played, old chap'.

Later in 1941 Tudawali became a medical orderly at an RAAF medical aid post; then, after the first air raids on Darwin, he was moved to Mataranka to work in a mechanical workshop. Late in the war he was moved back to Darwin to work as a steward at Linskey's military barracks - proof of his style and self-assurance.

After *Jedda*, Tudawali appeared in the television production *Whaparr*, and in several films. But his was a troubled life - his first marriage collapsed and he was afflicted by both tuberculosis and alcoholism.

However, Tudawali's life was given new purpose in 1966 when he became Vice-President of the NT Council for Aboriginal Rights. His passion for equality and self-determination for Aboriginal people and people advocated in supporting the people who had 'walked off' Wave Hill station.

In July 1967 he was severely burned in a fire at Bagot's in Darwin. He died of the burns and of tuberculosis on 26 July 1967.



Tudawali, Tha'man - born into the Tha'man world, Melville Island.



As the traditional warrior Marbuck, in the film *Jedda*.



Tudawali carries Jedda off - defying demands that she should live like a white woman.



Bobby Wilson - supporting the Wave Hill people in their struggle for a 'fair go'.

Robert Tudawali's descendant stands next to the plaque in the villa that honours Robert, also known as Bobby Wilson, who was in the first Australian feature film to have Aboriginal lead roles.



---

## **Aboriginal theming will showcase and celebrate Aboriginal art and culture and its unique place in the Northern Territory, Australia and the world.**

---

### **Gurumbai Cultural Trail**

ADG has partnered with Larrakia Nation Aboriginal Corporation's cultural consultants to develop materials for the Gurumbai Cultural Trail in the Rapid Creek Conservation Reserve, located just 500 metres from the airport terminal and directly behind the Mercure Darwin Airport Resort.

Guided tours will include information about the unique features of the trail including the importance of Larrakia sites as well as the names of Larrakia flora and fauna as advised by the Larrakia cultural consultants. Signage and pamphlets for self-guided tours are also being developed.

In conjunction, ADG has developed a trail training manual for students from the Indigenous Training Academy who will lead the tours.

ADG will invest in upgrades to the Gurumbai Cultural Trail to enhance the existing 3.5-kilometres return walking trail including improvements to the path, the creation of a small group seating area, and a presentation stage. These projects are expected to be completed in the latter part of the 2023 dry season. The new signage will also be installed at this time in preparation for the inaugural Gurumbai Cultural Trail tour.

### **Hotel theming**

Just as the Hotel Villas are named in honour of incredible Territorians who've made significant contributions to the fabric of the NT, Aboriginal theming throughout the hotel and at DIA will showcase and celebrate Aboriginal art and culture and its unique place in the Northern Territory, Australia and the world.

The Hotel and DIA Theming Plan will connect people to Aboriginal culture and art and provide a gateway to Aboriginal cultural experiences and are one of the major pillars to ADG's purpose of education, employment and opportunities for Indigenous Australians.

The Theming Plan will provide visitors with an immersive cultural experience that will showcase Aboriginal art and culture, history and storytelling.

Work is also underway at Alice Springs Airport to further grow relationships with community leaders to complement the established cultural themes and public art displayed in and around the terminal.



**365 Cricket coaches  
with participants from  
ADG's Indigenous Cricket  
Engagement Program.**

## Cricket 365

The Cricket 365 Program aims to raise the standard of cricket in the Northern Territory and provide pathways to elite cricket for Territorians. In 2021, ADG partnered with NT Cricket to create the 365 Program in conjunction with its Indigenous Cricket Engagement program.

The Cricket 365 Program not only brings 30 of Australia's best young cricketers and 30 of the Territory's best cricketers to live and play in Darwin and Palmerston during the dry season, it also broadcasts to millions of viewers worldwide.

The broadcast showcases Australian cricket, but it also creates a platform to present Indigenous culture to the world and promote the Northern Territory as a holiday destination.

# Cultural Engagement and Relationships

## Indigenous Advisory Committee (IAC)

ADG established its IAC to:

- Provide advice to ADG regarding the organisations' Indigenous engagement initiatives.
- Ensure appropriate protocols are followed in the acknowledgement and celebration of Indigenous culture.
- Represent Indigenous people across the Northern Territory in relation to ADG projects.
- Where appropriate, assist ADG with connections to local Indigenous stakeholders.

---

**ADG strive to be recognised as an exemplary organisation that respects Aboriginal culture.**

---

The Indigenous Advisory Committee first met in January 2022. A second meeting was held in October 2022. The group will next meet in May 2023 in Alice Springs, where ADG is actively seeking Central Australian advocates to join the committee. Meetings are attended by Indigenous Advisory Committee members, invited guests, and ADG and IFM representatives.

Current Indigenous Advisory Committee members are:

### **Eddie Fry (Chairman)**

Mr Fry has extensive experience with the Australian resource sector and is a specialist in Indigenous and Native title issues.

During his career he has consulted to a number of Australian Listed Corporations and also held senior executives roles with Normandy Mining Ltd, where he established the company's Traditional Owner policy, and later was the manager of international logistics and marketing of Normandy's base-metal portfolio and Investor Relations. His early employment included involvement with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC) and also the Aboriginal Development Commission and the Department of Aviation.

### **David Kurnoth**

David is the Outreach Liaison Manager for Larrakia Nation Aboriginal Development Corporation (LNAC) and is a proud Larrakia man. David is a member of the local Fejo Family, and their totem is the green tree frog, known as 'peacekeepers'.

David's current role includes promoting cultural understanding between the Larrakia, visitors and those who reside on Larrakia Country.





From Left to Right: Kym Nolan, Director of Aboriginal Tourism; David Kurnoth, committee member; Rychelle Vines, ADG Indigenous and Community Projects Manager; Tony Edmonstone, ADG CEO; Charlie King, committee member; Leanne Coburn, ADG EGM People Culture and Community.

### Charlie King

Charlie is a recipient of the Order of Australia Medal and Australia Medal in recognition of his decades-long work in community development, juvenile justice and family violence prevention across the Northern Territory.

A Gurindji man, whose mother was born in Limbunya Station and grew up in Darwin's Kahlin compound, Charlie carries the legacy of the stolen generation.

He has been a sports commentator on the ABC since 1994 and was the first Indigenous Australian to commentate an Olympic games.

## Aboriginal Tourism

ADG has fostered a strong working relationship with the Director of Aboriginal Tourism who leads the implementation of the Northern Territory Aboriginal Tourism Strategy, supported by the Aboriginal Tourism Committee (ATC). The ATC's vision is to see the NT recognised as Australia's undeniable leader in Aboriginal tourism.

The Director has been a guest attendee at each meeting of ADG's Indigenous Advisory Committee. ADG also hosted a tour of the Airport hotels for the ATC to outline its vision of transforming the site into a cultural precinct.

## Larrakia Nation Aboriginal Corporation

ADG continues to grow its positive and successful partnership with Larrakia Nation Aboriginal Corporation.

Developing this relationship is fundamental to ADG's Pillar goal of engaging and partnering with Indigenous Australians, organisations and associations in a manner that celebrates and respects their unique culture. This partnership will also better inform decision-making across ADG.



ADG's partnership with the Larrakia Rangers continues to strengthen and grow. The Rangers are now the primary contractor for environmental management of the Rapid Creek Reserve.

## Larrakia Rangers Partnership

Established in 2019, ADG's Larrakia Ranger program engages more than 30 local Indigenous people. The Larrakia Rangers support the preservation and protection of fragile and important ecosystems within the Rapid Creek Conservation Reserve, located within the DIA precinct.

ADG's partnership with the Larrakia Rangers has grown during the past year. The Larrakia Rangers are now the primary contractor for environmental management of the Rapid Creek Reserve. A team of Larrakia Rangers conduct weekly site visits to maintain the health and amenity of Rapid Creek and the surrounding environment. The primary focus is weed and fuel load management, firebreak maintenance, brush cutting, trail maintenance and litter collection. They also conduct controlled burns and revegetation where necessary.

After being identified within some drainage channels and bushland in the middle and upper sections of Rapid Creek, the main target weed species in the early months of the 2023 year, included the declared weeds of gamba grass, mission grass, hyptis and snakeweed. The weeds were sprayed and hand pulled, then removed from the site before they could seed.

Frequent thunderstorms and higher than average rainfall in February 2023 (501mm compared to an average 370mm) also resulted in the Larrakia Rangers conducting priority works to cut and remove fallen trees and branches from the Gurumbai Trail.

## NT Indigenous Business Network (NTIBN)

The NTIBN has been operating in the Northern Territory as a peak body for Indigenous businesses for more than ten years.

At the 2022 NTIBN Industry awards, Airport Development Group sponsored the Indigenous Ally Award, which was presented to JLL, an Indigenous owned real estate company specialising in tech start-ups and commercial assets.

ADG also provided NTIBN discounted rent on premium office space in the Wirraway Business Centre to support the development of the organisation.

## Cultural Education

Cultural education of staff is seen as key to ADG's commitment to Indigenous engagement to help staff develop cultural awareness and understanding. Cross-cultural training teaches how to recognise and appreciate the unique cultural perspective of Aboriginal people and discusses how different cultural perspectives can influence doing business, competing for opportunity, making decisions and viewing time. This training is provided by external contractors.

In the 2021/22 year, 49 per cent of ADG staff completed cultural training. In September 2022, a further 27 ADG staff completed the three-hour training course. For the first time, hotel management also attended.

All incoming ADG staff members also receive an overview of the Indigenous Engagement Strategy as part of their induction.



Hotel management and a further

**27**

ADG staff completed Aboriginal cultural training.

## Tennant Creek Airport Authority Certificate

ADG applied to the Aboriginal Area's Protection Authority (AAPA) for an Authority Certificate for two land parcels under ADG's lease in Tennant Creek.

Recognising the cultural significance of the smaller plot of land, ADG reduced the application to include only the Airport site. After the completion of both research and fieldwork it has been confirmed there are no registered or recorded sacred sites at Tennant Creek Airport lease area. An Authority Certificate from the AAPA will be issued in the near future.

## IFM First Nations Working Group

In April 2023, ADG's Indigenous and Community Projects Manager and Indigenous Training Academy Manager along with the Indigenous Training Academy students hosted a workshop attended by IFM Investors (ADG's owners) asset representatives. Growing and sustaining meaningful Indigenous opportunities and employment were two of the key topics discussed.

ADG staff presented an overview of its Indigenous Engagement Strategy, which included the challenges and successes of the Indigenous Training Academy. In recognition of its benefits, the workshop will now be an ongoing event that aims to share knowledge and experience between the organisations.



---

## ADG take great pride in empowering community partnerships.

---

## Community

### Larrakia Nation Housing Tenancy Support

Surplus goods including miscellaneous furniture and electrical items from ADG's two hotels, the Mercure Darwin Airport Resort and Novotel Darwin Airport, were donated to Larrakia Nation Tenancy Services in April 2023. The items were passed onto Larrakia Nation housing tenants who are setting up new homes in the Darwin Region.

### NAIDOC Week 2022

ADG's 2022 NAIDOC week celebrated the establishment of the Indigenous Training Academy. A mentoring workshop was held for the Academy's trainees where they learned the origins of NAIDOC week and also designed a banner for their march in the NAIDOC parade alongside other ADG and hotel team members.

### Desert Song Festival

ADG supported the Desert Song Festival based in Alice Springs (Mparntwe) in September 2022. The Festival celebrates the living languages and vibrant cultures of Central Australia. It was themed 'Our Climate, Our Planet, Our Future' to inspire participants with knowledge and actions toward a safe, sustainable climate for our planet.

### Workplace Giving

ADG staff raised \$8,000 through the Workplace Giving Program, with these funds matched dollar-for-dollar by ADG for a total of \$16,000.

The Workplace Giving Committee agreed to donate these funds to NT Foodbank's School Breakfast Program to help with the cost of transporting food items by barge out to remote Northern Territory communities.



**ADG celebrated NAIDOC week and marched in the annual parade with a banner created by trainees at the Indigenous Training Academy.**



## About Airport Development Group

Airport Development Group (ADG) has been a leading contributor to the Northern Territory community for more than two decades.

Under Australia's airport privatisation program, ADG acquired leases from the Australian Government for three Northern Territory airports in June 1998 — Darwin International Airport (DIA), Alice Springs Airport (ASA) and Tennant Creek Airport (TCA).

Each lease is for 50 years, with an option of a further 49 years. ADG now owns and operates the three airports, and is custodian to more than 4,000 hectares of land surrounding the airports.

ADG also has significant investments across hotels, property, and utilities.

ADG is proud of the successful partnerships it has developed that aim to support economic and social programs to empower the lives of Indigenous Territorians.

The company is proudly 100 per cent Australian, owned by superannuation fund managers, IFM Investors (77.4%) and Palisade Investment Partners Limited (22.6%), that grow the retirement savings of around 75,000 Territorians.

Tel: 08 8920 1811  
PO Box 40996  
Casuarina NT 0811

[www.adgnt.com.au](http://www.adgnt.com.au)