

Indigenous Engagement Report

May 2023 - June 2024





Front cover: Tree planting Gurumbai Cultural Trail opening day

Above: Smoking ceremony at opening of Darwin Airport Resort

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		According to Elder guidance, ADG 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

ADG Chief Executive Officer



It is with pride and optimism that I present this, our third Indigenous Engagement Report for the Airport Development Group. Since reaffirming our commitment to Indigenous engagement and inclusion through education and employment, this year we are beginning to see real and positive impacts on the lives of Indigenous Australians.

With combined effort and endeavour, our first cohort of trainees have graduated from our Indigenous Training Academy. This remarkable, enthusiastic and committed group have now transitioned to full-time employment, mostly within our airport and resorts, and four of them, identified as future leaders and mentors, are now furthering their studies so they can help other Indigenous trainees on their journey. The success of our training program relies on several interdependent factors including the number of program participants, mentoring and support, and the appointment of a dedicated training manager. It's this combination of factors, among others, that has seen both our trainees and our Academy recognised in excellence awards.

Our Indigenous tourism initiatives continue to receive accolades, like our Gurumbai Cultural Trail which won an Airports Council International environmental award, and our new Indigenous murals and bespoke hotel villas which helped Darwin Airport Resort win a remarkable hat-trick of excellence awards. Along with Mamilima, our 41-metre-tall Welcome to Country, these murals and villas help highlight and promote the importance and uniqueness of Aboriginal culture to the world.

With positive outcomes in these areas, and in community relationships and culture building, as a major contributor

to the Northern Territory economy, our next commitment is toward increasing Indigenous procurement. With the appointment of a procurement manager, we are developing a procurement policy, creating an Indigenous reporting data system and establishing processes to fully connect our team with Indigenous business networks. In one project this year we awarded a five-million-dollar contract to a majority Indigenous-owned business with circa 9 per cent of the project undertaken by Indigenous employees.

While ADG is heartened by this year's progress and acknowledge that this has been our most successful year to date for achieving our Indigenous purpose, we also recognise there is still so much more to do. Year on year we need to improve and keep improving until Indigenous inclusion and equity is an everyday fact and not something to strive toward.

As always, we hope you'll join us on this journey.

Tony Edmondstone
Chief Executive Officer
Airport Development Group

Message from the Chair

ADG Indigenous Advisory Committee



I want to begin by saying that my optimism and confidence in ADG delivering on their commitment reported in last year's Indigenous Engagement Report is well founded.

We are still in our early years of our work, however when you take the time to read the report and visualise the engagement, and consider the effort and outcomes that have been sought and achieved to date, I hope that you, the reader, would agree with me that ADG means what it says and does so because Indigenous Engagement is a natural fit into "why ADG exists – namely people".

We are witness to an Australian Corporation that has expanded its brief to include Indigenous people into its profile. Airports are about people and ADG understands this very well. They also know the importance and inseparable links between country and Indigenous peoples. Without ADG saying it, it resonates with me by their actions they know this connection to Country, Culture and Community is inherent within our First Nations values, worldviews and genealogy, which I see as a blueprint for sustainable relationships and development.

It would be remiss of me to not mention my fellow committee members and the ADG team who have all contributed to this effort. I thank them immensely for the time and consideration given on all the matters that you see in the report.

I also want to say to the entire ADG team, to mean everyone who is engaged in whatever capacity – thank you for being a member of this workforce. It all starts with you; every day you turn up to begin work, and when you close off the day. You are part of the urgency to be one nation of people.

To the ADG Board of Directors. Thank you for believing that this is a natural fit with the very reasons why the corporation exists.

For the reader, I trust you will celebrate with me ADG as a whole, its commitment and its successes.

Eddie Fry
Indigenous Advisory Chair
Airport Development Group

Indigenous Engagement Milestones

2023

ADG's Indigenous Engagement Journey

Since 1998 and the acquisition of leases for Darwin, Alice Springs and Tennant Creek airports, ADG has invested and preserved Aboriginal culture and art through programs, festivals and individual artists; sponsored Aboriginal community health and environmental programs; and contracted Indigenous businesses to grow employment.

In 2021, following ADG's first Indigenous Engagement Strategy in 2018, a new commitment and Strategy were launched, providing tangible and affirmative action for Indigenous inclusion in ADG's future.

Since then, as outlined in the 2022 and 2023 Indigenous Engagement Reports (IER), and now this, ADG's third IER covering the past 14 months, the progress of ADG's Indigenous Engagement Strategy's goals and important milestones achieved are documented.

ACI = Airports Council International
ADG = Airport Development Group
ASA = Alice Springs Airport
DAR = Darwin Airport Resort
DIA = Darwin International Airport
IAC = Indigenous Advisory Committee
ITA = Indigenous Training Academy
LNAC = Larrakia Nation Aboriginal Corporation

May



The ITA program at DAR wins **Outstanding Achievement in Training Award** at the 2023 Hospitality NT Aristocrat Technologies Awards for Excellence.

An **Aboriginal Areas Protection Authority** certificate is issued to the Tennant Creek Airport lease area.

June

To **promote Indigenous culture** all Territorian schools are sent the **ADG Water Tower** colouring-in competition for prizes in preparation for **NAIDOC Week**.

ADG sponsor the **Barunga Festival**, in 2023 celebrating the **35-year anniversary** of the Barunga Statement.

July



Certificate III in Electrotechnology is added to course options at the ITA.

ADG is a **bronze sponsor** of 2023 **NAIDOC Week** celebrations, participating in various events.

2024

April



The upgraded **Gurumbai Cultural Trail** officially opens with a tree planting ceremony.

Cultural Training is made **mandatory** and has been to delivered to all **ADG staff** and offered to all **ADG consultants**.

Following the IAC meeting, **Arernte Walpiri Warungu man David Curtis Senior** joins as an IAC member.



May

An ITA graduate and ADG employee wins the **Rising Star Commendation Award** at the 2024 GTNT Awards for Excellence.

DIA receives the **Gold Award** at the ACI Asia-Pacific & Middle East Green Airports Recognition Awards for the **Gurumbai Cultural Trail**.

DAR wins
Best Superior Accommodation
Best Overall Accommodation Hotel
Best Developed Accommodation Hotel

at the **2024 Hospitality NT Aristocrat Technologies Awards for Excellence**.

An **ITA trainee** wins the prestigious **2023 Service Excellence Award** at the Hospitality NT Australian Marketers Gold Plate Awards.



Six Indigenous artists are shortlisted for creating two large murals at DAR.

August



Five Academy graduates start **full-time employment** with ADG.

Six ADG's inaugural trainees graduate from the ITA with a **Certificate III in Hospitality**.



Two Indigenous artists win selection for creating the DAR murals.

October



DAR **officially opens** its **\$30 million** integration and facelift, joining three hotels into one **423-room resort** with two Indigenous murals and a **57-metre pool** as its centrepiece.

December

The **first Larrakia-led** tour of the **Gurumbai Cultural Trail** occurs, marking the beginning of the initiative in **collaboration with LNAC Rangers**.



13 trainees aged between 17 and 53 years continue at the Academy across **five areas of study**.

4

Indigenous employees and ITA graduates begin a **6-month mentoring and leadership qualification**.

June

Indigenous Engagement Strategy

Endorsed by the ADG Board in 2023, Airport Development Group's (ADG) Indigenous Engagement Strategy provides a clear and defined purpose for its long-term goals of enabling education and employment opportunities for Indigenous Australians.

ADG's strategy is measured by the three intersecting pillars of intent:

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

With improvements in these tangible goals and targets this year, resulting in real and positive impacts on Indigenous Australians, ADG celebrates these milestones but acknowledges the journey of improvement is a continuous one.

ADG recognises there are many more targets – individually and collectively – of inclusion and improvement ahead.



Indigenous Participation

Indigenous Training Academy

Since inception in April 2022, it has been a phenomenal 26 months for ADG's Indigenous Training Academy (ITA) and for its first-year intakes, most of whom graduated in October 2023. These graduates have gone on to secure full-time employment, been nominated for a host of excellence awards, and are moving toward leadership and mentoring roles within ADG.

In addition, the ITA program itself has been recognised, winning a major NT Hospitality Award for Outstanding Achievement in Training. For the 2023-2024 year, it's also grown, expanding both its number of students and the courses on offer.

Six of the seven 2022 hospitality trainees graduated in October 2023 with a Certificate III in Hospitality. Five of these graduating trainees are now in full-time (FT) positions at ADG airports or hotels, and the remaining graduate transferred to FT employment at another organisation. Many of the graduates have been finalists or have won excellence awards including the prestigious 2023 Service Excellence Gold Plate Award at the NT Hospitality Awards.

Significantly, after graduation, this FT employment has included higher roles with more responsibility and pay. For example, before attending the ITA, one graduate was a part-time (PT) receptionist for Darwin Airport Resort, colloquially as known as 'The Resorts'.

Right: ITA Certificate III
Commercial Cookery trainee





When they began their hospitality course, they were employed in a Front of House role at hotel reception. One of the goals of the ITA is to try and expose the trainees to a range of jobs and opportunities, a benefit of being within the larger ADG group. As such, just before graduation, the trainee was offered a three-week temporary role at Darwin International Airport (DIA) Operations for another team member on leave. Following graduation, they returned to hotel reception, but when the DIA operations role opened up permanently and was advertised, this graduate applied. Winning the role over 12 other applicants, they are now DIA's Transport Operations Coordinator and managing a demanding job incredibly well. They are also one of four Indigenous graduate employees to be identified as a future leader and mentor, and as such has enrolled in a mentoring course as part of ADG's plans to provide in-house mentoring support (see 'Mentoring and Support' section).

Another graduate has started FT employment as an administration assistant within DIA's terminal control centre while furthering their studies at the ITA with a Certificate IV in Business. They are accompanied in both FT employment as an administration assistant and in

their business course with another trainee in the business centre. This type of parallelism helps provide support and identification with others and normalises the Indigenous work experience, which is also an objective of mentoring. The other three graduates have FT permanent roles with ACCOR at The Resorts in Food and Beverage (F&B) and housekeeping positions.

The remaining 2022 trainee yet to graduate remains in PT employment at the resort and continues to work toward completing their qualification.

The intentional decisions by ADG including the number of positions offered, the cohesive team environment, the in-house training and support, the individual and group mentoring sessions led by an Indigenous facilitator, the provision of a culturally safe environment to discuss challenges and find strategies to overcome them, as well as the commitment and positive attitudes of the trainees themselves, have all contributed to the success of the program.

As too has the appointment of a dedicated ITA Training Manager in January 2023 with the objective of planning,

managing and coordinating the Academy and an employment pathways program within ADG. This role also provides leadership, mentoring and support to the trainees while developing further opportunities for them within all areas of ADG, like the fill-in position, as mentioned above, which provided exposure to this role and a platform to achieve its permanent acquisition. The training manager is committed to the trainees' well-being and needs during their training and employment.

Furthering these intentional decisions, in a careful, considered and impactful manner the second year of ITA was extended in the number of students and areas of study, as reported in the last IER. Thirteen ITA trainees were accepted in March 2023 to study certificate qualifications in a range of areas including hospitality, business, commercial cookery, horticulture, and information technology and support.

The second intake of trainees range in age from 17 to 53 years. Hospitality trainees study one day a week and work a minimum of 26 hours per week, paid at award rates, not trainee rates. During peak times, those that opt to, can work more hours. Other trainees, in business areas, for example, prefer to work full-time. These

trainees are provided study leave blocks as most of their study is at campuses off-site in two-to-three-week blocks at a time.

Participation rates and commitment for these trainees continued during 2023 as they settled into their new work roles and training schedules. All trainees obtained their Advanced First Aid qualifications, and the hospitality trainees completed barista training and requirements for Responsible Service of Alcohol accreditation.

By April 2024, three of the trainees transitioned out of the program, one of them into FT employment with another business, before they completed their qualifications. Trainees who otherwise exited the program were provided with extensive support, including connections to appropriate services, facilitated by ADG's ITA Training Manager.

These vacated trainee positions were filled quickly by new trainees, identified through Indigenous employment agencies. Having a comprehensive selection process, a dedicated ITA training manager, as well as individual and group mentoring sessions have, among other strategies,

In addition, the ITA program itself has been recognised, winning a major NT Hospitality Award for Outstanding Achievement in Training.

Many graduates have been finalists and won excellence awards

85%

completion rate for Certificate III in Hospitality - Graduating in October 2023

ADG provides employment pathways to ADG, DIA and DAR

5

ITA graduates are now in FT positions with ADG

The second intake of trainees range from 17 to 53 years of age

5

areas of study including hospitality, commercial cookery, IT, business and electrotechnology



Above: ADG's Indigenous Staff and Training Academy students

helped ensure these new trainees were positively integrated with the current group, their training and work roles.

Although some of the participants and study courses have changed, including the addition of a new field of study in electrotechnology, there are still 13 trainees at ITA undertaking a range of study. The completion times for courses are now vastly different. Hospitality, for instance, is generally between 12 and 18 months, whereas commercial cookery and electrotechnology are both three-year courses. Therefore, unlike the inaugural year, when all the trainees studied the same course and started and finished together, the second-year intake will graduate at different times due to their variable start dates and areas of study.

Regardless of these now staggered start times, each trainee completes an induction either at ACCOR or ADG, depending on their area of study, and is part of the group mentoring (see later section).

ADG is committed to having a minimum of ten trainees at any time. Both graduating and current trainees have started recommending the ITA to their family and friends, the ultimate endorsement. In fact, a younger family member of a graduating trainee was recently successful in applying for one of the hospitality traineeships. This type of word of mouth is powerful in any community or region, and in Indigenous communities this is no exception. Positive endorsements have occurred to the point where the ITA is sought after and advertisements for future positions at the Academy in Darwin are no longer required.

As of 30 June 2024, the number of students, study and work areas can be viewed below:

Area of Study	Number of ITA trainees	Work Area
Certificate III Hospitality	8	Hotels – Food & Beverage and Housekeeping
Certificate III Commercial Cookery	1	Hotels – Kitchen
Certificate IV Information Technology	1	ADG – Information Technology
Certificate IV Business	2	ADG – Terminal Control Centre and Business Centre
Certificate IV Electrotechnology	1	ADG – Technical Team

Alice Springs Airport Trainees

ADG aims to place an Indigenous trainee at Alice Springs Airport (ASA) operations, but due to small staff sizes, the need for trainee supervision and the fact that several new ASA employees are still completing their training this is currently unviable

However, as this remains an important objective, ITA's Training Manager met with several Alice Springs stakeholders to develop Indigenous trainee solutions for the ASA precinct.

In positive news, several solutions are in development:

1. Saltbush Social Enterprises (not-for-profit) is actively recruiting to find a suitable trainee to commence in the ASA Grounds team and complete a Certificate II in Horticulture.
2. AWPL (retail tenant) has guaranteed two school-based Indigenous trainee positions to study a Certificate II in Retail/Finance for their ASA operations.
3. St Philip's College in Alice Springs will support training by providing/identifying suitable students for school-based traineeships.
4. Discussions are ongoing for a PT Indigenous trainee through ASA's F&B contractors.
5. Discussions are ongoing with several large Alice Springs contractors who complete works at ASA to gauge the capacity for trainees.
6. Saltbush will provide mentoring services for all Indigenous trainees based at ASA. Funding for mentoring will be provided through ADG's current grant (see next section).



Above: ADG Leadership and Mentoring Program participants

Mentoring and Support



Helps to overcome barriers to work retention and, in building skills

4

Indigenous ITA graduates have been identified as future leaders



ADG received a grant from NT TARP to enable trainees and employees to access culturally appropriate support

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

Mentoring is a valuable tool in normalising the Indigenous work experience, helping to overcome barriers to work retention and, in building skills for employment resilience. It also can help an employer's cultural understanding of those whose transition into employment is from a place of little or no prior work experience.

As well as mentoring and support provided by the ITA Training Manager, all trainees have continued to attend regular individual and group mentoring support sessions with Tanyah Nasir Consulting. The overlap of trainees beginning in 2022 with those starting in 2023 provided a valuable opportunity to extend group mentoring with a cohesive and inclusive environment. With both years sharing their experiences, it also provided the opportunity for mentorship and role models within the trainees.

Further exploring this, ADG was successful in receiving a grant from the NT Department of Industry, Tourism and Trade's Targeted and Responsive Programs (TARP) funding round for 2024/2025. This funding will enable ADG Indigenous trainees and employees to continue to access culturally appropriate support from an external, professional consultant for group sessions, one on one mentoring and additional support as required. The grant

also includes funding to train four identified Indigenous employees in leadership and mentoring, creating an in-house mentoring support system. This will help enable ADG to maintain trainee attendance, enhance further employment options, and create new career pathways for Indigenous employees.

A mentoring qualification, specifically for Aboriginal mentors to mentor Aboriginal employees has been identified through Saltbush Enterprises. This six-month course has several essential outcomes including normalising the work experience, facilitating the navigation of barriers to work retention, building skills for resilience, providing support to maintain work attendance, and being a cultural bridge between employee and employer.

This leadership and mentoring training begun in late June 2024 for four ITA graduates who are all very capable and dedicated learners. ADG is thrilled with their enthusiasm for this new development program and believe these individuals will continue to be positive role models, ambassadors for the ITA program, and valuable members of the ADG organisation well into the future.

Awards for Excellence

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. Within two years, the Academy has delivered these national standards for its hospitality trainees who've graduated and been recognised in numerous awards for excellence. The ITA has also been recognised in delivering excellence for the program itself.

In May 2023, the ITA program won the Outstanding Achievement in Training Award for the Novotel and Mercure Darwin Airport at the 2023 Hospitality NT Aristocrat Technologies Awards for Excellence. Judging was based on the contribution of professionalism in the hospitality industry, training initiatives that met industry standards, and the level of multi-skilled staff as a direct result of training. Winning this industry award is further proof the ITA is achieving its goals.

In August, another trainee won the prestigious 2023 Service Excellence Award at the Hospitality NT Australian Marketers Gold Plate Awards, a remarkable achievement, service being the cornerstone of these NT Hospitality Awards.

The 2022 intake of trainees, now graduates, are an exceptional group. Two trainees were named as finalists for the Northern Territory Young Achiever and Hospitality NT Excellence Awards in 2022. Another was named as a finalist in April 2023 for the Hospitality NT Aristocrat Technologies Awards for Excellence.

In August, another trainee won the prestigious 2023 Service Excellence Award at the Hospitality NT Australian Marketers Gold Plate Awards, a remarkable achievement, service being the cornerstone of these NT Hospitality Awards.

As reported above, one graduate moved from hospitality into operations after applying for an advertised role within the ADG operations team. Now the Transport Operations Coordinator at DIA, they also won the Rising Star Commendation Award at the GTNT 2024 Awards. They are one of four Indigenous employees to be identified as a future leader and mentor.

A trainee was also a finalist in the Student of the Year category at the GTNT Australian Training Awards in February 2024 and another was nominated for Indigenous Trainee of the Year at the Hospitality NT Awards for Excellence.

In a further nod to awards of excellence involving Indigenous engagement, The Resorts won Best Superior Accommodation at the 2024 Hospitality NT Aristocrat Technologies Awards for Excellence with its tropical pool villas which pay homage to past and current high-achieving Indigenous Territorians.

In future news, ADG has nominated mentors Tanyah Nasir Consulting in the 2024 Blak Business Awards for their exceptional work with ADG during the past 24 months. Finalists will be announced at the end of July.



ITA graduate and GTNT 2024 Rising Star Commendation Award winner

Indigenous Employment

The real gains in Indigenous employment this past year has been in full-time (FT) employment. Last year's Indigenous Engagement Report (IER) had the breakdown of FT positions at six. As of end of June 2024, the breakdown is as follows:

	Full-time	Part-time	Casual	Total
ADG	5	1	0	6
Hotels	3	9	0	12

Although the increase in FT employees from the year previous is only two, it is an increase of 25 per cent and is significant for several reasons.


Firstly, the roles and responsibilities of these employees have improved. For instance, after graduating from the ITA, one employee who used to be in a part-time (PT) operations role moved from graduating in hospitality back into a FT operations role as a co-ordinator, a higher-level role with more responsibility and pay.

Secondly, the changes don't reflect the gains made in the transition from trainee to graduation to employment. All the graduating trainees from the inaugural year transitioned to FT employment after graduation, five with ADG in airport and hotel employment and the other in FT employment elsewhere. The main change to FT employment between the years is in grounds operations. Two Indigenous FT grounds personal left ADG and another transitioned to PT employment. This was due to changing circumstances. If graduates continue into FT work, not just at ADG, but at other

workforces, the Indigenous work experience (for participants and those around them) will continue to normalise.

Thirdly, there are intrinsic benefits to working full-time as opposed to part-time or casual work. Although it does not suit everyone, full-time permanent employment has many benefits including the security of income, the stability of an ongoing role and the opportunity of career progression. This then can provide other opportunities where proof of income is needed, such as access to housing and loans.

Overall, the 18 employees constitute 5.25 per cent of full-time equivalent (FTE) employees. As employment can change due to circumstance, these numbers do fluctuate. In April, for instance, Indigenous FTE employees were at seven per cent.




ADG provide pathways to employment from the ADG Academy

7%

of ADG full-time staff are Indigenous (April 2024)

18

Indigenous employees across ADG and DAR



ADG offers full-time, part-time and casual positions to cater for everyone

The roles of these employees, including trainees are as follows:

Number of Employees/ Trainers	Area of Work	Location of Work	Full-time (FT) Part-time (PT)	Area of Study
1	Ground Transport Operations	ADG – Terminal Control Centre	FT	GRADUATED now studying Leadership and Mentoring
2	Food and Beverage	ACCOR – Darwin Airport Resort	FT	GRADUATED now studying Leadership and Mentoring
1	Housekeeping	ACCOR – Darwin Airport Resort	FT	GRADUATED now studying Leadership and Mentoring
1	Admin Assistant	ADG – Terminal Control Centre	FT	GRADUATED now studying CERT IV Business
1	Admin Assistant	ADG – Business Centre	FT	Cert IV Business
1	Electrical Apprentice	ADG – Technical Team	FT	Cert III – Electrotechnology
1	Information Technology	ADG – Information Technology	FT	Cert IV – Information Technology and Cybersecurity Currently Completing
1	Cookery	ACCOR – Kitchen	PT – minimum of 26 hours	Cert III Cookery
5	Housekeeping	ACCOR – Darwin Airport Resort	PT – minimum of 26 hours	Cert III – Hospitality
3	Food and Beverage	ACCOR – Darwin Airport Resort	PT – minimum of 26 hours	Cert III – Hospitality
1	Grounds	ADG – Grounds Operations	PT – minimum of 26 hours	

Employment Tours

13

participants attended an interactive day gaining an overview of ADG



ADG provide education and employment tours of the airport precinct

ADG continue to provide education and employment tours of the airport precinct and ITA.

As part of an ongoing relationship, Melbourne Indigenous Transition School (MITS) mentors and their students attend sessions on the opportunities available at ADG's Academy. ITA's Training Manager also regularly meets with staff who accompany NT remote students back to Darwin from MITS boarding at the end of each term.

The idea of the ITA sessions is to expose the current Year 11 and 12 MITS students to what's on offer at the Academy and introduce them to current trainees. This way, the trainees can first-hand share their experiences, as well as answer questions the MITS students have. The last visit included six students and their mentors. As a result, two MITS students are interested in joining the Academy in 2025 and it's hoped these students can participate in some work experience at The Resorts at the end of Term 3 in September 2024.

As part of the employability program called IntoJobs, specifically designed for Indigenous participants looking to re-enter the workforce, ITA worked alongside the Institute of Skills Australia to provide 13 participants with an overview of ADG. This interactive day included presentations from Indigenous, Environmental, HR and Project Manager members of the ADG team, as well as from a current ITA trainee and DIA employee who provided direct feedback and answered questions from a trainee's perspective.



Indigenous Procurement

As part of a broader strategy of increasing Indigenous participation, ADG is committed to increasing procurement from Indigenous-owned businesses. ADG's goal is to achieve 2.5 per cent of contracts awarded to Indigenous-owned businesses by June 2025.

This year, ADG awarded a \$5m contract to a majority Indigenous-owned company for the installation of two 2400KW water-cooled chillers. This new system, providing all the air cooling for the terminal and the security x-ray machines, represents a 40 per cent improvement in operation efficiency, consuming less energy and emitting 950 fewer tons of carbon per year compared to the old system. This saving is the equivalent of 127 households' power usage for one year and contributes to ADG's goal of net zero emissions by 2030. Although this project was within the major work costs for the contractor, constructing a new mechanical plant room is uncommon, and the contractors were enthusiastic about tackling this project to expand their expertise. The project included 3,170 hours of labour with 8.8 per cent delivered by Indigenous staff across management and apprentice roles. It engaged more than 225 employees equating to 200 FT jobs throughout the 10-month project. It is due for completion in August 2024.

With the appointment of a procurement manager in August 2023, ADG is in the process of developing a procurement policy, creating an Indigenous reporting data system, and establishing ways in which to fully connect ADG teams with Indigenous business and networks.

To this end, ADG has become an Ally Member with the Northern Territory Indigenous Business Network (NTIBN), the peak body representing Indigenous businesses in the Territory. It has also joined Industry Capability Network (ICN), a procurement and supply chain network with a database that includes a separate Aboriginal Content Locator (NTACL).

Other initiatives include establishing a quality assurance process of verifying Indigenous business status, incorporating reporting obligations into all successful contracts, and ensuring processes allow segments of recordable data and validation of this data.

Left: ADG's new 2400KW water-cooled chillers

Tourism Enhancement

Darwin Airport Resort, known as The Resorts, is the new name for DIA's hotel offerings and was officially opened on 5 December 2023.

In a \$30 million integration and facelift, The Resorts joined three hotels into one sprawling 423-room resort, catering for 12 types of accommodation needs with a single reception area and a tropical-style 57-metre resort pool as its centrepiece. As a result, in a showcase of innovation and merit, at the 2024 Hospitality NT Aristocrat Technologies Awards for Excellence The Resorts won three awards: Best Superior Accommodation, Best Redeveloped Accommodation Hotel and Best Overall Accommodation Hotel.

Indigenous tourism and culture are at the heart of The Resorts. This year there are numerous accomplishments to celebrate including transformative hotel murals, the opening of the Gurumbai Cultural Trail, and hotel theming, wayfinding and signage plans.

\$30m

integration and
facelift

423

room resort
with 12
accommodation
types

57

metre centrepiece,
tropical-style pool

Below: Darwin Airport Resort opening ceremony, showcasing the new pool, bar and cafe and Indigenous murals





Learn more about the ADG's
Indigenous and Community Projects



Indigenous Murals

In 2022, the transformed 41-metre-tall former water tower into a Larrakia Welcome to Country landmark, called Mamilima, set a creative and definitive acknowledgement of the connection to the Larrakia people and Larrakia culture, the traditional owners of the land that DIA resides on.

Carrying this forward, Expressions of Interest (EIO) were launched in early September 2023 from Aboriginal artists for designs for two large exterior walls at The Resorts. Eleven EIOs were received and reviewed by a panel including ADG's IAC Chair and ADG's Executive General Manager of Airport Hotels. Six artists were shortlisted and paid to present a design of their work for the project. In early October two artists were commissioned for the murals with painting beginning later that month. The results are stunning.

Journey of Travellers, created by artist Joanne Nasir, who was born and raised in Darwin, is a celebration of her Garrawa grandmother's dreaming of the Nygabaya or Spirit People. She says it "connects with travellers" as "Nygabaya or Spirit People dreaming is about where the Spirit People travel over Country. They sing, tell stories, sometimes they stay in that country, or they pass through, very much like we travel around today."

Larrakia artist Jason Lee's *Gunamidjindawa Dirula* (Saltwater Dreaming) mural depicts the jellyfish and stingray, creatures who hold significant cultural and ecological importance for the Larrakia and are intertwined with their spiritual beliefs and Dreamtime stories. Jason says: "The jellyfish dreaming tells the story of how the jellyfish came to inhabit the waters and teach us about the importance of harmony and balance in nature. The stingray dreaming, on the other hand,

carries spiritual significance and symbolises strength, adaptability and protection." The colours represent the seven seasons of the Larrakia People, the Larrakia calendar being a circular one in which the seasons intertwine.

Both artists have expressed pride at being part of an initiative that celebrates Aboriginal culture and exposes it to a wide-reaching audience.

ADG has created a digital platform which includes all its cultural assets including the mural artists' stories and video descriptions of their work, profiles of the Hotel Villa Honourees, information about the Gurumbai Trail (next section), and an overview of the Indigenous Training Academy. In addition to showcasing these features, the site connects guests to a range of NT Tourism experiences through links to the NT tourism website including specific Aboriginal cultural experiences to support their travel planning.

ADG's cultural information website can currently be accessed via QR codes located on each mural's signage boards. Plans are in place to increase the visibility of this platform by adding the QR codes to other hotel marketing collateral such as room keys, coasters and other items as identified. Links to ADG's travel gateway site can also be found which provides tailor-made packages to regions across the NT.

Left: Artist Joanne Nasir with her
Journey of Travellers mural

Gurumbai Cultural Trail

Two years in the making, the cultural, signage and infrastructure upgrades on the Gurumbai trail pay tribute to Larrakia sites and its flora and fauna while opening it up to a wide range of purposes.

The Gurumbai Cultural Trail officially opened 19 April 2024 with a tree planting ceremony attended by the deputy CEO of Larrakia Nation, NT Government Ministers and approximately 50 guests.

Working with Larrakia Nation Aboriginal Corporation (LNAC), the importance of the cultural significance of the area to Larrakia, as well as the names of Larrakia flora and fauna are now incorporated in a range of information materials. These include signage on the walks, access to a QR code as listed below, as well as pamphlets, available at DIA terminal and at The Resorts.

Between them, these give a rich and informative history of the area and the Larrakia people, including the Larrakia Dreaming Story, the Larrakia seasonal calendar, and the significant flora and fauna. The Gurumbai creek is the only freshwater waterway in the Darwin region and winds its way through a diverse range of habitats including mangroves, woodlands, grasslands, and monsoon forests.

The infrastructure upgrades included replacing the 650-metre stretch of trail between Henry Wrigley Drive and the flood mitigation weir with a two-metre-wide wheelchair accessible concrete path and disability access ramp. The works also included upgrades of the trail to the Woodland Loop, the installation of a

25-person seating and stage area adjacent to the creek, a water access point, three new bin enclosures and the planting of 370 native plants.

The trail which exists within the Rapid Creek Reserve is managed by ADG's environmental team with the assistance of Larrakia rangers. The trail itself traverses four land boundaries including City of Darwin, NT Department of Infrastructure Planning and Logistics, Defence and ADG. Permission was sought from each of these entities to implement these upgrades.

At the end of June, DIA hosted the Inter-Airport Environment, Sustainability, Culture and Heritage Forum, bringing together a network of environmental scientists, heritage and sustainability specialists, and planners. The Inter-Airport Environment Forum was formed 20 years ago and includes more than 30 airports from Australia and New Zealand. The network aims to ensure the environmentally sustainable operation of airports, and collaboratively shares learnings and strategies to better environmental, sustainable and cultural outcomes.

The first ever Larrakia-led guided tour of the Gurumbai Cultural Trail was experienced by participants. After lengthy preparation, including the development of a trail training manual, this first tour marked the beginning of the initiative in collaboration with LNAC Rangers. This

inaugural tour was well received by participants and invited guests. Later, it's hoped ITA students may be involved in helping on these tours, and that tours be available to school and other groups.

One of the first extended purposes this upgrade will support is the First Nations Land and Sea Management Forum on 27 August 2024. In May, DIA received the Gold Award at the Airports Council International Asia-Pacific & Middle East Green Airports Recognition Awards (less than 8 million passengers per annum category) for the Gurumbai Cultural Trail.

ADG has invested \$550,000 in this project, with \$116,000 secured through two community grants: the NT Tourism Visitor Enhancement Experience Program (VEEP) and an IFM Community Grant. LNAC also provided the support of Professor Bilawara Lee to help finalise the Larrakia language element of the project, and community members contributed to planting trees.



Learn more about the Gurumbai Cultural Trail

Right: Gurumbai Cultural Trail

Larrakia Rangers Gurumbai Trail Opening Day

Hotel Theming, Wayfinding and Signage

In line with ADG's vision to develop a cultural precinct across its assets and see Darwin acknowledged as the gateway to Aboriginal culture, The Resorts' new hotel theming has been unveiled.

Seven accommodation buildings within the Mercure hotel at The Resorts will be named after the NT tourism regions as described in Tourism NT's global marketing campaign. These areas are **Darwin, Kakadu, Arnhem Land, Barkly, Katherine, Alice Springs and Uluru**. Further, the three Ibis accommodation buildings at The Resorts will be named after the three key locations of the Greater Darwin Region Destination Management Plan, which are Litchfield, Mary River and Tiwi Islands.

Other initiatives for theming include signage to The Resorts at key exit points from DIA and within the resort itself, and the installation of information boards showing the NT Tourism map, with descriptions of each region. These information boards, as well as showcasing each region, will include links to NT Tourism websites, ADG's Travel Gateway websites and The Resorts' cultural asset platform.

Hotel theming forms part of the new wayfinding and signage strategy to redefine and clarify how guests and visitors move through the The Resorts. As expected, this needs substantial upgrades since the integration of three hotels into one, the addition of new restaurants and bars, and the launch of the new multifunctional resort pool.

It was hoped that a grant from Round 8 of the Visitor Experience Enhancement Program (VEEP) would contribute to this project, however, submissions to VEEP were unsuccessful. Timing for the implementation of theming and signage is still to be confirmed.

In other signage news, upgraded cultural recognition artwork for Alice Springs Airport arrival and departure walkways has begun. Once completed, it will undergo a series of approvals before being ready for installation in late 2024.

Right: Tourism NT's Regions Map and The Resorts proposed Regional sign boards



DARWIN AIRPORT RESORTS



Explore by region

- Darwin & Surrounds
- Alice Springs & Surrounds
- Uluru & Surrounds
- Kakadu & Surrounds
- Katherine & Surrounds
- Arnhem Land
- Tennant Creek & Barkly Region

EXPLORE THE REGION Kakadu

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EXPLORE THE REGION Katherine

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Cultural Engagement and Relationships

Indigenous Advisory Committee

Since its inaugural meeting in January 2022, ADG's Indigenous Advisory Committee (IAC) continues to meet at least twice a year to advise on and discuss a broad range of cultural, social and community topics to assist ADG improve Indigenous education and employment outcomes, activate Indigenous tourism, and adhere to cultural sensitivities, as well as health and well-being protocols.

The IAC also helps ADG continue to grow positive and successful partnerships with Aboriginal Corporations, Traditional Owners and community leaders in all regions in which ADG operate. These connections help inform ADG in its decision-making in order to fulfil the purpose and pillars of its Indigenous Engagement Strategy.

Continuing in the role of Chair is Eddie Fry, a Dagoman Wardaman man and specialist in Indigenous and Native title issues who has extensive experience with the Australian resource sector. Two continuing members are Larrakia man, David Kurnoth, the Outreach Liaison Manager for LNAC; and Gurindji man, Charlie King, recipient of the Order of Australia Medal and Australia Medal. ADG is immensely honoured to have these three highly experienced and regarded representatives on the committee.

Above: ADG Indigenous Advisory Committee and ADG and IFM representatives



Cross-Cultural Training

These men are now joined by David Curtis Senior, an Arrernte Walpiri Warungu man who comes to the IAC representing the region around Tennant Creek. David was a guest at the April 2024 meeting and is now a member.

Indigenous Advisory Committee meetings include IAC members, representatives from ADG including ADG's CEO, ADG's EGM of PC&C, Indigenous Engagement team members, IFM representatives (ADG's majority owner) and invited guests. Thus demonstrating the importance and commitment of ADG toward Indigenous education, employment and inclusion. It is aimed to have member or guest representation from areas where ADG operates in order to better reflect the views of those Indigenous communities. ADG would like to explore more IAC female member representation and potentially, a youthful voice.

Meeting guests have included Director of Aboriginal Tourism, Kym Nolan, who has attended or been engaged with all meetings since the IAC's inception; Alyawarre man Michael Liddle, who has many years of experience working in a broad range of Indigenous community leadership roles across the Central Australian region; Larrakia woman and social activist, Nicole Brown; and Warungu and Luritja woman of Yaya Bath and body products, Melissa Cole.

Cross-Cultural Training was made mandatory for all staff in April 2023. Over the past 12 months, 56% of ADG staff completed this training, bringing the total number of staff who have engaged in cultural training to 82%.

ADG's cultural training includes three-hour face-to-face sessions facilitated by Cross-Cultural Consultants (CCC) and two online training sessions. In April 2024, staff working in roles directly connected to the public participated in face-to-face cultural training. All other staff were enrolled to complete one online training module before June 30 and a second by the end of August.

Although owned by ADG, The Resorts are managed by ACCOR which require management to complete Blak Card training online. This year CCC also delivered face-face-training to all Resorts' managers. The value of providing this in-person training, tailored more specifically to the NT, was recognised and the feedback from the session was very positive. Cultural training was also offered to seven consultants with two taking up the opportunity and engaging in the face-to-face sessions.

ADG will continue to provide a six-monthly program of cultural awareness training for new staff, via a blend of online and in-person sessions, as well as additional training for existing staff when the need arises.

ADG would like to explore more IAC female member representation, and potentially, a youthful voice.

82%

of ADG staff have engaged in cross-cultural training



ADG will continue to provide **cultural awareness training** for new staff and current staff as required

Right: Cross-cultural training for ADG staff



Tennant Creek Airport Authority Certification

ADG has held an Aboriginal Areas Protection Authority (AAPA) certificate for DIA and ASA since 2004 and operates in accordance with these provided parameters.

During the process of applying for an AAPA certificate at Tennant Creek in 2023, a smaller land parcel in the area also leased by ADG was questioned for its cultural significance. Therefore, under request from the AAPA, ADG, acknowledging that they had no development plans for this other small parcel of land, reduced their application to only include the airport site.

Following the completion of both research and fieldwork it was confirmed that there were no registered or recorded sacred sites within the Tennant Creek Airport lease area. An Authority certificate for this area was issued in May 2023

NAIDOC Week 2023

ADG was a bronze sponsor of the 2023 NAIDOC Week Celebrations in the NT from 2 to 9 July with the theme 'For Our Elders'. ADG and ACCOR staff, and ITA students attended the NAIDOC march in Darwin city. Members of ADG's Executive, the IAC, the Indigenous Engagement Team and ADG's Indigenous mentoring partners also attended the NAIDOC ball.

At ADG, NAIDOC celebrations included a quiz for ADG staff based around general knowledge of NAIDOC week including the theme, and a calendar of local events. Mamilima artist, Anthony (Duwun) Lee, joined ADG for a lunch and learn session, sharing first-hand the three stories depicted on the former water tower –

The Rainbow Serpent, Mamilima – the Digeridoo, and Kenbi Kenbi. Temporary signage illustrating these stories was placed in the resorts' foyers for guests. See below for details.

As part of broader NAIDOC week celebrations, ADG's water tower colouring-in competition was distributed to all schools across the Territory. More than 500 entries were received. Prizes were awarded to an 8-year-old student in Darwin for the water tower colouring, and a 12-year-old student in Alice Springs for her depiction of honey ants travelling along the river on Arrernte Country. Each prize winner received a \$100 gift voucher, and their school received a \$500 sports voucher.

Mamilima Didgeridoo

Star
Creation



Rainbow
Serpant



Kenbi
Kenbi



Mamilima artist, Anthony (Duwun) Lee, joined ADG for a lunch and learn session, sharing first-hand the three stories depicted on the former water tower.



Left: Budjerah – Darwin Festival 2023

Community Engagement

ADG's Sponsorship program provides more than \$600,000 annually through cash and in-kind contributions. ADG's Sponsorship Strategy Focuses on four main categories. Sponsorship that supports enhancing the lives of Indigenous Territorians is a key factor in the decision making for all grants.

A list of recipients for the 2023 – 2024 year is listed below.

- 1. Tourism events that attract more than 10,000 participants or initiatives that support visitation. These include:**
- Darwin Festival
 - Parrtjima
 - Bass in the Grass
 - Supercars
 - NRL
 - Red Centre NATS
 - Million Dollar Fish
 - *Off the Leash* publication
 - Cricket 365
 - Fab Alice
 - Finke Desert Racing
 - Henley on Todd
 - Desert Festival (Red Hot Arts)
 - Desert Song Festival
 - Browns Mart
 - Darwin Symphony Orchestra Outreach Program.

- 2. ADG workplace giving – funds donated by staff and matched dollar for dollar by ADG. These include:**
- Sikh Family Food Van (Darwin)
 - Butterfly Connection (Alice Springs)
- 3. Community Giving Program – run biannually for grass roots organisations for grants between \$500 and \$2,000. In addition to those already mentioned, these include:**
- PINT Football Club
 - Aboriginal Education Forum
 - Barca Football Academy
 - Yilli Rreung Aboriginal Housing Corporation
 - Lutheran Care
 - NT Writers Festival
 - Beanie Festival
 - Alice Springs Show
 - Arid Lands Environment Centre
 - Darwin Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Women's Shelter
 - Darwin Men's Shed
 - Epenarra School
 - Football Northern Territory
 - Milner Primary School
 - Neighbour Hoot Watch Northern Territory
 - Riding for the Disabled Association Top End
 - Wanderers Football Club
 - Under 17 Alice Springs ASNA Netball team
 - Yilli Rreung Aboriginal Housing Corporation.

- 4. Stakeholder events and initiatives. In addition to those already mentioned, these include:**
- Qantas Australian Tourism Awards
 - Top End Tourism – TerritoryQ
 - Chamber of Commerce – Business at Sunset & ASA Golf Day
 - NT Major Projects Conference
 - Tourism Towards 2030
 - Brolga Awards Tourism NT
 - Royal Flying Doctors Service long table
 - Starlight Children's Foundation Star Ball.



Tourism events that attract more than **10,000** participants and visitors



We match our staff donations **dollar for dollar** to local organisations



ADG's Sponsorship program provides more than **\$600,000** annually



ADG supports community giving programs to grass roots organisations

Barunga Festival 2023

Eighty kilometres southeast of Katherine on the Central Arnhem Highway, The Barunga Festival is a major Indigenous tourism and cultural event attracting more than 4,000 people, and held annually on the Queen's Birthday, now the King's Birthday, long weekend. Within the Roper Gulf Regional Council area, in 2023 the Barunga Festival celebrated the 35-year anniversary of the Barunga Statement, a document created in 1988 at the Barunga Festival. It was signed by the then Prime Minister Bob Hawke and is a statement of commitment to Indigenous rights and self-determination.

To support this historic celebration, ADG supported the festival with a \$5,000 donation and \$10,000 worth of in-kind advertising. Six ADG staff attended the event and manned a stall to provide awareness of ADG's Indigenous education programs, employment opportunities, and tourism and community engagement initiatives. They also ran another colouring competition, and prior to the event sent the competition to all schools in the region. Prizes were awarded to students, including one for a colouring of a favourite cultural or holiday destination. More than 100 students interacted with this. In addition, the two prize winner's schools were awarded a \$500 sport voucher. Lajamanu School were also awarded 10 Wild North comics and 20 ADG hats for their class entry.



Cricket 365

Since 2021, the Cricket 365 Program has continued to go from strength to strength. This year, again, ADG were major sponsors of the event which was broadcast to 15 million viewers through various targeted platforms in India, the Pacific Islands and New Zealand, including FanCode (with 120 million users), Digicel and SKY. For Australian and Japanese fans, Cricket 365 was broadcast through dedicated cricket YouTube channels via NT Cricket and Japan Cricket Association. The NT Cricket YouTube channel was also made available for fans across the world unable to access via other platforms.

ADG's tourism advertisements and promotion of Indigenous culture as part of this overall tourism strategy – to visit the NT, ADG accommodation, cultural and other activities available in the NT – were broadcast on these platforms.

ADG provided accommodation for Cricket 365 participants and officials, which was a significant in-kind sponsorship valued at \$250,000.

ADG & ACCOR Community Engagement

In July 2023, ADG staff worked with ACCOR hotels to redistribute prepackaged toiletry items to local Darwin homeless shelters.

Items were delivered to Silas Roberts Hostel, Red Shield Hostel, and the Sunset Soup Kitchen so they could be handed out to community members requiring emergency temporary accommodation.

Aboriginal Education Forum

In July 2023, the Aboriginal Education Forum reflected on 30 years of NT Aboriginal Education.

ADG's Indigenous Mentoring consultant Tanyah Nasir hosted the event which strongly advocated for Aboriginal education, programs, and mentorships to assist the next generation. Several lifelong educators took to the stage to share their wealth of knowledge. ADG was honoured to be able to attend the forum and provide \$2,000 sponsorship.

Yilli Rreung Aboriginal Housing Corporation

ADG provided \$2,000 toward children's entertainment at the Christmas party for YiSSA residents, a short-stay accommodation program where two of ADG's Indigenous trainees are housed.

Barca Football Academy

ADG provided \$500 for two Indigenous Darwin boys, aged 8 and 12, to attend the Barca Football Academy in Spain. The program was a 10-day experience held at the exclusive FC Barcelona Headquarters and included training sessions, friendly games, interactions with FC Barcelona players and the opportunity to attend a professional LaLiga game.

Sikh Family Food Van

A volunteer organisation focusing on the community by providing free food to disadvantaged families in need. ADG's workplace giving supported the 'Good DEEDS on WHEELS' project which aims to extend the organisation's services to more remote and underserved areas ensuring that everyone, irrespective of their location, has access to a hearty meal.



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.

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