



**AIG** Aboriginal  
Investment  
Group

BUILDING **STRONGER** COMMUNITIES

**Annual Report**  
2022-2023

## Our vision

To engage in sustainable development to enable prosperity for Aboriginal people in the seven northern regions of the Northern Territory.

## Our values

**Be reliable and consistent.**

**Succeed in having strong moral principles.**

**Take responsibility for the Aboriginal communities we service.**

**Care about people before profits.**

## Strategic objectives

Three strategic objectives drive everything we do:

**Economic development**

**Ecological development and sustainability**

**Social dividend and community benefit**

## Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the country on which we work and live and recognise their continuing connection to land, sea and community. We pay our respect to their Elders past and present and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

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AIG Board members Matthew Cooper, Lachlan McKenzie, Margetta Avlonitis, Brian Pedwell and Elizabeth Gillett, CEO, Liz Morgan-Brett, and COO, Alexa Gutenberger with Mabunji ARIC Secretary Samuel Evans, Chairperson, Annie Roberts and CEO Robert Wendl, during the board's Borroloola region visit.

## Board report

The 2022-23 financial year has been a big year for the newly elected AIG Board of Directors. Our focus was to secure AIG's future financial viability and improve our liquidity to enable our commercial property redevelopments, the financial powerhouse of AIG. We are pleased to present this annual report to our AIG stakeholders, staff and supporters.

### The first year of an independent and autonomous board for AIG

It has been exciting to lead the first independent and autonomous board in the history of AIG. The new directors brought renewed eagerness to be involved and to advocate for services that benefit their region to assist AIG in fulfilling the mandate of building stronger communities.

This year, we identified that holding board meetings across our regions was a valuable tool to further develop meaningful connections to the communities that we serve, commencing with our May board meeting in Borroloola.

### A new strategic direction

The board provided valuable insight into the key challenges facing Aboriginal people who live across the seven northern regions of

the NT, providing the focus for the development of Our Strategy: AIG 2025, AIG's new strategic plan for 2022-2025. We are impressed by the progress made in the first year of the plan and commend the staff of AIG for their communication with the board, continually keeping us informed about projects whilst incorporating our board's advice.

### Keeping our focus

In 2022-23, large strides were made to achieve three out of our four strategic delivery areas -property management, business support services and the Remote Laundries project. We are most proud of the progress on the redevelopment of our Katherine property, the first new office premises in the Katherine CBD for over a decade, which is two months ahead of schedule to be completed.

A challenge for the next year will be to make progress with our fourth strategic delivery area, the AIG Member Buying Group. The AIG Member Buying Group will further improve food security and ensure lower prices in remote community stores that are more widely available to all.

### AIG Board





## CEO report

This annual report speaks to our continued capability of engaging in sustainable development for Aboriginal people in the seven northern regions of the Northern Territory. The projects and business AIG delivered across 2022-23 highlight why we are such a successful Aboriginal Corporation; one whose strategy is set by strong Aboriginal leaders and delivered by a highly skilled and capable team.

I am thrilled with the big-ticket items that our team delivered this year whilst providing business support services to the communities we serve, including:

- Working with our newly elected board to drive existing business whilst implementing new strategies to engage and expand in the seven regions that we represent.
- Securing \$3.1 million in funding to redevelop Katherine Terrace and starting construction after a competitive tender process. At the time of writing this report, the project was two months ahead of schedule and on budget.
- Engaging with new partners for the Remote Laundries project and commencing a potential scope-changing partnership with the National Heart Foundation of Australia and working with Flinders University to undertake the development of a Social Impact Framework for the project.
- Supporting the Bagala Aboriginal Corporation in the delivery of the largest-ever Barunga Festival, including the single largest week of trading in history for the Bagala Store.
- Achieving a surplus of \$2 million above budget leaving AIG in a strong financial position.

### Balancing act

It was a year for AIG to find that sweet spot between delivering on our mandate and financial sustainability. We positioned ourselves in areas where we have known capability, while establishing and cementing partnerships with strong organisations to ensure future success, specifically in the Remote Laundries space. Internally, we undertook steps to minimise our own expenses, including reducing the number of staff within the company. Without a doubt this put a significant strain on the team;

however, finishing the year in a strong financial position and securing funding for two positions, we have returned to an acceptable workload for the team.

AIG will continue to focus on our viability for the coming three to four years as the need to invest in our revenue-generating assets reaches a critical point. As a consequence of delivering heavily on the mandate for the past 10 years, AIG did not put aside sufficient funds to maintain its core assets and also allowed these to deteriorate to a point where rectification in some instances was critical. Going forward, the board has a clear path for asset redevelopment as well as the acquisition and retention of sufficient funds to maintain AIG assets appropriately.

### Partnerships are key

AIG couldn't achieve what we do without the support of our partners. Our commitment to improving communication and knowledge sharing across multiple sectors has resulted in two key partners joining forces with AIG this year: the National Heart Foundation of Australia and Flinders University.

Our emerging partnership with the National Heart Foundation of Australia is a game changer for AIG's Remote Laundries project.

I want to thank the AIG Board for their leadership and guidance on all matters related to our service delivery this year. This was AIG's first year of operation with our newly elected board, following our divestment from the Northern Land Council. Our board is a wonderful mix of experience, youth, diverse skill sets, and deep knowledge and care for the regions they represent.

**Liz Morgan-Brett OLY**

Chief Executive Officer



# COO report

This year AIG continued to outperform itself. Being a small Indigenous organisation with a head office count of 10 employees, our mandate to deliver economic and social outcomes in the seven regions of the NT is a challenging goal to deliver. This is only possible due to our strong and focused board and our incredible team of professionals.

## AIG's unique team allows us to deliver

People think we are a big group, but we are only a small team. Most of us perform multiple roles and continuously learn, grow, and adapt to the challenges we are presented with daily. Our passion unites and drives us every single day. It's important to recognise the commitment and resilience of the team that lets AIG and the communities we serve succeed. I am proud to be part of such an incredible team that never loses sight of our greater goals.

It takes considerable thought and planning from the executive team to maintain our balance so we can meet our internal and external demands and provide our team with support and tools to manage our daily workload. Technology and a curious mindset are our most important assets to stay efficient and effective, always driven to find ways to work smarter, not harder.

## Building sound foundations that last for years to come

AIG spent a considerable amount of time defining and implementing a strategy to safeguard our own business foundations. Our financial independence is at the core of what we do to maintain our agility in this sector. 2023 was focused on "what must go right" concentrating on processes, resources and investment, creating a clear path to strengthen our business foundations. But this didn't stop us from delivering for the communities we service. We applied successfully for over \$5.2 million in grant funding for community organisations, managed the Barunga Festival and supported the Bagala Aboriginal Corporation on their path to self-determination, to name only a few.

## Getting it right

AIG always works at a fast pace, inherent to the size of our organisation. However, getting it right sometimes requires slowing down to stop and think. It gives room for innovation and creativity, which there is never enough of. This year we re-learned to take our time and that it is okay to do so.

AIG and the way we work continued to benefit from the fresh views and new approach that our CEO brings to the organisation, being in her second year with AIG and more importantly in the Indigenous space.

## Strong results

The results of refining and implementing a new strategy for building strong foundations are demonstrated by our above-budget financial surplus of over \$2 million for the group. Both entities delivered above-budget surpluses, despite property devaluation expenses due to the demolition of our Katherine building and the ageing of our commercial property in Darwin City. Management focused on creating new asset wealth for AIG securing \$3.1 million in grant funding for the re-build of our Katherine property. The returns of that investment will allow AIG to deliver on our mandate for years to come and mitigate investment income shortfalls when AIG re-develops our Mitchell Street, Darwin property in a few years' time.

## Alexa Gutenberg

Chief Operating Officer







About  
**AIG**



# What we do

AIG is a financially autonomous, 100% Indigenous-owned organisation. We operate using a unique model funded by returns from our property portfolio. This model provides AIG with agility when it comes to the development and delivery of our strategic direction.

# Our point of difference

AIG is unique and successful for three reasons:



## AIG property management

Rental income from our property portfolio supports our core business and our projects. *Refer to page 21.*

## Core business



# Our Strategy: AIG 2025

We support and serve communities to thrive economically, socially and culturally, and we believe that working together is the key to our success.

**Our board has identified four key delivery areas for AIG across 2022-2025.**

The first is AIG’s financial stability. When AIG is strong, we can deliver for our regions. The other three delivery areas are in response to challenges facing Aboriginal people living across the seven northern regions of the NT which our board represents. They are common to every remote community in the NT: a lack of local decision-making, lack of food security and high prices and lack of healthy living/wellbeing.

AIG is equipped to deliver solutions to these issues, thanks to our highly skilled and agile team, coupled with our committed and engaged board of directors.



**Find out how we are tracking against our strategy targets in the following sections.**

# Partners and supporters

In a sector where diverse skills and agility are needed to be successful, it has been vital for AIG to nurture authentic and mutually beneficial relationships with our partners and supporters. We love working with like-minded organisations to deliver solutions that are driven by innovation and care.

Thank you to those who share our vision for building stronger communities.



NT PHN is AIG's largest financial supporter of the Remote Laundries project.

The Heart Foundation is our newest and strongest partner. We share a vision of eradicating rheumatic heart disease (RHD) in the NT by 2031.



KELLY FAMILY  
FOUNDATION

KWM provided pro bono legal assistance for AIG and was instrumental in the successful progression of the Katherine Terrace redevelopment build contract.

Major financial supporter of the Remote Laundries project.



Supporter of the Remote Laundries project through awarding a grant via their Serve Your Community promotion.



Support for AIG in the food security space through in-kind donations.



Three outstanding Katherine-based businesses, responsible for the construction and maintenance of our Remote Laundries.



**Liberty**  
Specialty Markets

Supporter of the Remote Laundries through grant funding.



Always going above and beyond to assist AIG and its clients with insurance advice addressing challenges in Indigenous communities.



A long-standing supporter of the Remote Laundries project with financial and in-kind donations.



Support for the 2022 and 2023 Barunga Festival providing free of charge and discounted service rates.

***“We have a role to play. We work in trusted partnerships with community-led organisations to further strengthen communities. We know that it is often the smaller organisations making the biggest impact, so at the end of the day, it is our privilege to work with and alongside our community partners. We are grateful to be part of the journey!”***

**KWM Solicitor, Shelby Koh.**





AIG CEO Liz Morgan-Brett receiving the Nestlé Professional Australia Serve Your Community grant for our Remote Laundries project.



In early 2023, AIG CEO Liz Morgan-Brett showcased the Barunga laundry to the Heart Foundation team, including CEO David Lloyd and NT General Manager Le Smith. Our laundry team members, Freddie Scrubby and Fini Coleman were on site to walk through the operation and talk about the impact the laundry has had on the community.

# Our board

At AIG we foster an engaged and proactive relationship with our board, they are our most valuable asset. Our board drives our projects, how we work, where we work and who we work with. While AIG is based in Darwin, almost all our work is done in the seven northern regions of the NT. Through our board we maintain knowledge of what is happening at the ground level in communities.

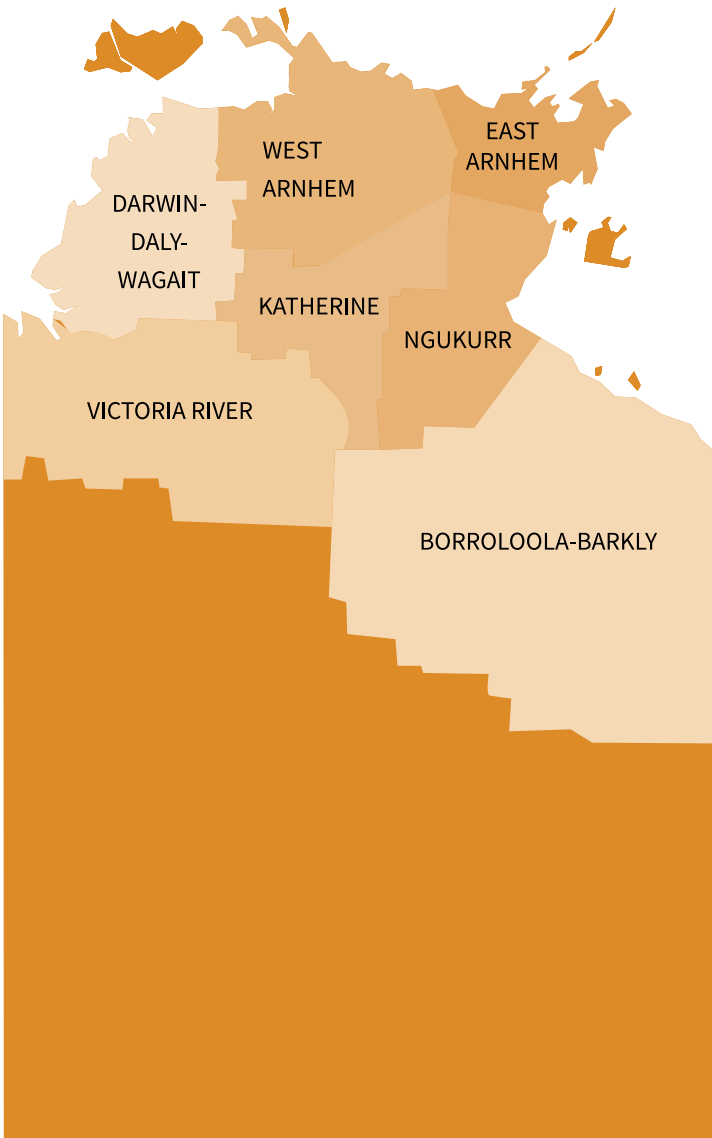
## New board, new energy

At the commencement of the 2022-23 financial year, AIG elected a new board, which was exciting for two reasons:

- 1. This is the first board in the history of AIG to be autonomous of the Northern Land Council (NLC). This autonomy has provided the opportunity for community leaders outside of the NLC Executive Council to be involved in working with AIG.
- 2. Our new board has been elected via a competitive electoral process. This new process drives a renewed eagerness to be involved and to advocate for services that benefit the respective region. Our new board has swiftly aligned itself with assisting AIG to fulfil our mandate of building stronger communities.

We rely on our board members to be cultural regulators of the organisation. They have the knowledge of what will work and what will not work in community. They know where the real needs are, and who should benefit from AIG support. They have the influence to facilitate engagement with relevant stakeholders to enable success in the delivery of our projects. This insight is vital to our business model, and we cannot do the work we do without them.

## The seven northern regions of the Northern Territory





**Margetta Avlonitis**  
**Darwin-Daly-Wagait Region**  
**Director**

Margetta is a proud Koongarakan woman with family connections to Warrumungu - Northern Territory. Margetta has over 23 years of experience in the fields of education, retail, business development, and corporate governance largely in Indigenous community and government sectors.

Margetta has recent experience in Indigenous corporate regulation, undertaking engagement and compliance.

In 2016, she graduated with a Bachelor of Applied Science - Indigenous Community Management and Development from Curtin University of Technology in Western Australia.

Margetta's work has allowed her to travel Australia-wide and she has had the privilege of working with many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander regional and remote communities.



**Brian Pedwell**  
**Victoria River District**  
**Director**

Brian is a Ngarinyman on his grandfather's side and Gurindji on his grandmother's side. Brian has been a director since 2020.

Brian has a diverse background, having worked in essential services and as an Aboriginal health practitioner for more than 15 years. He was previously an executive member of the Katherine West Health Board, and Northern Land Council representing the Victoria River District and is currently the Mayor of the Victoria Daly Regional Council.



**Elizabeth Gillett**  
**Borroloola-Barkly Region**  
**Director**

Elizabeth (Buffy) is a proud Yanuma/Garawa woman who lives in the Borroloola region.

She is a director for the Mabunji Resource Centre, Community Benefits Trust McArthur River Mine, Advisory for Child & Family Centre, and Ngardara Sun project and chairperson for MAWA Borroloola.

Elizabeth is a strong woman who works closely with community members to resolve issues concerning youth, health, culture and wellbeing.



**Matthew Cooper**  
**(Nagarlbin)**  
**West Arnhem Region**  
**Director**

Matthew currently lives in Minjilang and is affiliated with the Mangalara clan. He is an active community member, currently holding positions with West Arnhem Shire Council, Red Lily Health Board and TEABBA Broadcasting.

He is passionate about moving the West Arnhem and broader Aboriginal communities forward towards self-determination.

He has been a member of the Northern Land Council since 2016 and was elected as an Executive Council representative for West Arnhem in 2021.



**Helen Lee**  
**Katherine Region**  
**Director**

Helen is affiliated with the Ngalkban clan and lives in Barunga. She has been a director on the AIG Board since 2004 and was chair between 2021 – 2022.

Helen has a strong administrative background, having worked with the Jawoyn Association and Burridj Aboriginal Group Training and is the Deputy Mayor of the Roper Gulf Regional Council. Helen is keen to promote women's issues and wants to help Aboriginal people develop economic enterprises on Homelands.



**Lachlan McKenzie**  
**Independent**  
**Director**

Lachlan is Warlpiri on his grandfather's side and Warumungu on his grandmother's side. He has been an AIG director since 2022.

Lachlan was born and raised on Larrakia country. After completing high school he moved to remote communities across the Territory giving back to youth and helping to empower Aboriginal people from West Arnhem down to the Western Desert and across to the Groote Archipelago. Lachlan now works for Brother 2 Another, a First Nations-led service supporting young people and families across the Top End.



**Brendan Makungun Marika**  
**East Arnhem Region**  
**Director**

Brendan is a Rirratjingu man from Yirrkala, East Arnhem. Brendan now lives on his mother's homeland, Blue Mud Bay, where he works as a ranger and cultural advisor and performs in the Garrangali Band.

Brendan also represents Blue Mud Bay on the Northern Land Council.





***United in determination to drive change, we are a small group of diverse professionals and specialists who support the social and economic advancement of Aboriginal people.***

## **Our team**

AlG's delivery capability would suggest we have a large team; however, the reality is our head office employs just 10 people who drive and deliver our ambitious strategy.

While we have a small workforce, our staff are passionate and have a clear and united vision which enables us to be effective and brave in our approach to finding new solutions to old problems.

Our ability to transform ideas into reality is impressive, and this wouldn't be possible without the diversity and core competencies within the team. We have professional qualifications in economics, finance, governance and strategy, public relations, administration, and chartered accounting and bookkeeping.

## AIG Executive



**Liz Morgan-Brett OLY**  
Chief Executive Officer

Liz's core skills in finance, governance and strategy were finessed during her studies for the Executive MBA and ongoing training and development in governance.

She has a proven record of successfully engaging multiple stakeholders and aligning their values and beliefs towards a common goal while fostering a culture of excellence and inspiring continuous improvement for all.

Liz is a commercially astute and forward-thinking leader with 23 years of experience in business, mentoring and supporting others.

In 2021, Liz moved to the Northern Territory to join AIG and is excited by the opportunity to find new solutions to old problems.



**Alexa Gutenberger**  
Chief Operating Officer

Alexa joined AIG as the Chief Operating Officer in September 2018 after working with AIG for nearly two years in a consultancy role. She has a strong passion for sharing her knowledge to empower Indigenous people to make the right decisions and create a future for their families, community, and businesses.

Alexa is a Chartered Accountant and has a Master of Business Economics. She has over 12 years of professional experience with Deloitte in the Northern Territory specialising in the Indigenous and not-for-profit sector where she provided a wide range of services, particularly in audit, governance, accounting and business advisory.

## Projects



**James Poppleton**  
General Manager, Projects and Operations

James joined AIG in 2019 as Stores Coordinator before commencing as General Manager, Projects and Operations where he oversees the AIG property portfolio and major projects.

James has worked across private enterprise, government and not-for-profit in people and business management, training and advocacy. He thrives on working with people to find solutions to complex problems.



**Candice Basham**  
Remote Laundries Program Manager

Candice joined AIG as the Remote Laundries Program Manager in March 2023. In her role, Candice is responsible for overseeing the construction and delivery of our remote laundries, training staff, and management of the laundry unit operations.

Candice has a passion for sustainable economic development in remote communities and supporting Aboriginal organisations to achieve their goals.

Candice has a Bachelor of Science (Fisheries) and over 15 years of experience in economic development with state and territory governments.

## Projects



**Elouise Calma**  
Remote Laundries Project  
Officer

Elouise is a proud Aboriginal woman from the Central Australia and Daly River Regions with a strong connection to community, culture and family who is passionate about quality of life, health, and wellbeing.

Elouise joined AIG as the Remote Laundries Project Officer in May 2023.

## Finance



**Talia Henriques**  
Finance Manager

Talia started with the group in 2019. As Finance Manager Talia oversees the financial management of AIG and its clients.

Growing up in Darwin has fostered a passion for using her Bachelor of Accounting to help local organisations grow and succeed. For six years she worked with Deloitte Private where she specialised in local not-for-profit organisations.



**Jolene Peacock**  
Finance and Operations  
Manager

Jolene joined the AIG team in August 2015 and is heavily involved in the business support side of AIG products, which provides vital bookkeeping services and efficiency support to Aboriginal organisations to aid business growth.

She has a Diploma in Business and over 10 years of experience working in finance in the commercial sector. Her training and experience give her a strong background in managing the financial side of AIG.



**La Kyung Kwon**  
Bookkeeper

La Kyung Kwon had a successful career in corporate sales in her home South Korea when she moved to the Northern Territory in 2012 and started work as a bookkeeper.

Since then, she has assisted with the finances of Aboriginal organisations in remote communities throughout the Northern Territory and in the Ngaanyatjarra Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara Lands.

Media and communications



**Claire Loughman**  
Marketing Coordinator

Claire is passionate about communicating to make a difference.

Claire has a Bachelor of Arts – Public Relations and over 20 years of experience in the communications sector, having worked across the health, research, education, government, finance, events and mining sectors.

Claire joined AIG in January 2023.

Administration



**Naomi Klauze**  
Receptionist

Naomi joined AIG in 2023.

With a background in property management and community services, having provided care for the aged care, disability, and mental health sectors, and fostering young Indigenous children, Naomi was looking for a new opportunity to continue to make a difference.



**Sam Autio**  
Office Support

Sam has worked as a laundry team member in our Casuarina laundry since it opened in 2020.

He also provides support to the AIG office and recently designed a new label for our Remote Laundries branded water.





## Vale Dominic Robbie

It was with great sadness that we farewelled Dom Robbie in February after a long battle with cancer.

Dom started with AIG in 2018, to assist the organisation with its new area of delivery, Remote Community Stores. Dom's knowledge, skills and expertise in retail were instrumental in AIG's delivery of food security for Barunga, Timber Creek, Yarralin and Balgo. Dom's supplier networks, combined with his dogged determination to secure products at the lowest possible price, meant that AIG was able to deliver essential goods for Aboriginal people living in remote communities at price points that disrupted the market significantly.

Dom came to work every day with a smile and a great story. He also regularly came to work with something delicious that he'd baked over the weekend... his carrot cake was legendary! He was a true team player who worked tirelessly in the remote store space. Dom was always first to put his hand up to go out on the road when a relief manager was needed, and we know the communities absolutely loved his visits.

Dom's commitment to AIG was unwavering, his love for retail was unquestionable and his values and true moral compass came through in everything he did for AIG and the communities we serve.

We'll miss you mate.



Building

**stronger  
communities**

# Performance report

## Delivery area 1: Property management

What we will do: Future-proof AIG’s financial position by appropriately maintaining AIG’s key assets	Measure of success	2022-23 progress	What’s left
Redevelop three main properties across 2022-2025			
<b>32 Dripstone Road, Casuarina:</b>  Delivering on our vision of a Darwin Aboriginal hub	32 Dripstone Road, Casuarina maintains 100% rental occupancy	Since May 2022, 32 Dripstone Road is 100% occupied by Indigenous corporations	Maintain the status
<b>29 Katherine Terrace, Katherine:</b>  Complete redevelopment of the site, providing new office space which will drive much- needed revenue for AIG	29 Katherine Terrace redevelopment completed by March 2024	At the end of the 22-23 financial year, the redevelopment is two months ahead of schedule. This is due to the detailed scoping exercise undertaken by the board in 2022, as well as the exceptional work being done by Ray Laurence Construction and Louw Group.	Completion of the build by December 2023 with leasing starting from February 2024
<b>45 Mitchell Street, Darwin:</b>  Refreshment and repurposing of the building to provide housing for young people engaging in study or vocational education	45 Mitchell Street, Darwin: redevelopment completed by March 2026	Research was undertaken as to the different development options for the building. Based on this, the board has decided to develop 45 Mitchell Street into an A-grade office building	Design and concept work to begin in 2024

## AIG property portfolio

After years of heavily investing in our clients' success, it is now time for AIG to direct our focus on our long-term financial viability.

AIG's ability to deliver our mandate, while remaining autonomous and agile, is wholly linked to creating wealth through our diverse property portfolio. With 52% of our income generated via our property assets, it is critical that we focus on improving and maintaining our portfolio so property assets can deliver maximum returns.

By strengthening our asset base, we will be in a solid position to expand our service delivery offerings to communities for many years to come.

**Rent:**  
**\$1,422,283**

**Net rentable  
space:**  
**5648<sub>sqm</sub>**

**No of  
tenants:**  
**8**

**Commercial  
premises  
100%  
leased to  
Indigenous  
corporations**

**Total discounted  
rent provided to  
our Indigenous  
client base  
per annum:**  
**\$200,000**



# 2022-23 property portfolio



**45 Mitchell Street, Darwin**

Value: \$6 million

Occupancy: full



**32 Dripstone Road, Casuarina**

Value \$5.5 million

Occupancy: full



**29 Katherine Terrace, Katherine**

Value: \$660,000

Occupancy: under redevelopment



**15-19 Bradshaw Crescent, Katherine**

Value: \$1,740,000 (\$580,000 each) Occupancy: full



### Katherine Terrace redevelopment (2022 – 2024)

In April 2023, work formally commenced on site to redevelop 29 Katherine Terrace. With the program two months ahead of schedule, the property will be ready for lease in early 2024, with a projected 300% increase in rental return.

The \$4.3 million redevelopment includes the total demolition of the existing building and the development of a new two-storey office building and car park increasing the net lettable space from 642sqm of office and warehouse space to 1084sqm office space.

In addition, the AIG team is to be acknowledged for their ability to secure funding of \$3.1 million, provided by the Aboriginal Benefit Account (ABA), to enable the project to get underway. The funding was a crucial step in stabilising the financial viability of our property portfolio and securing AIG's ability to provide discounted and free-of-charge service provision for the communities we serve.

Ray Laurence Construction (RLC) and the Louw Group have been engaged to complete the project, following an open and competitive tender process, drafted by the CEO and driven by the AIG Board in 2021-22. This process unequivocally demonstrated that RLC were the right builder for AIG. This was again demonstrated by the smooth delivery of the design and documentation process that took us through to January 2023. Supported by King & Wood Mallesons, AIG was able to sign off on the construction contract and formally kick off the redevelopment on site in April 2023. At the time of writing this report, the project is two months ahead of schedule.

**Not only is this new building a key revenue driver for AIG, but it will also be the newest office space created for the Katherine city centre business precinct in many years. The NT Government is promoting Katherine as a key location for industry opportunities requiring suitable infrastructure to drive new growth.**

The success of this project is a credit to the strength of our board's vision, foreseeing the importance of this vital asset to the future of AIG's capability to continue to deliver our support services to the regions which we serve.

### Dripstone Road, Casuarina

We continue to celebrate the establishment of an Indigenous hub in our Casuarina property, a place where like-minded Aboriginal-

centered organisations can create a hub of service delivery, with the bonus being – our ability to offer under-market rent to their business. The total cost savings per annum for our Indigenous clients are \$200,000, money that can be spent on community benefits. The hub comprises Territory Credit Union, North Australia Aboriginal Family Legal Service, APO NT, AIG and our Darwin-based Remote Laundries project unit. In addition to the financial benefits, our tenants see value in our hub being a safe and harmonious space for Indigenous people in Casuarina.

Our Dripstone Road property has remained fully tenanted throughout the year and much attention has been given to upgrading and future-proofing the building.

Excitingly, ABA grant funding was finalised allowing the installation of solar panels on the property to service all our tenants, satisfying our strategic objective of ecological development and sustainability while lowering overheads for our tenants. This financial year alone, over \$29,000 in electricity cost savings have been achieved for all occupants of 32 Dripstone Road, money that can be spent on achieving outcomes in community.

Continuing our focus on future-proofing the property, \$250,000 worth of upgrades to the property will commence in the 2023-24 financial year.

### Mitchell Street, Darwin

Our Mitchell Street commercial property continues to be tenanted by the Northern Land Council. This landmark property is next on our list for rectification works with design and concept work to commence in 2024 with the aim to develop the property into an A-Grade office building. The property is leased until August 2024 with negotiations to renew the lease with the NLC for another sixteen months to allow sufficient time for AIG to scope the redevelopment while also allowing time for the NLC to develop their new commercial asset in Berrimah.

### 17-19 Bradshaw Crescent, Katherine

Our residential properties are fully tenanted with long-term leases, supported by our property managers at LJ Hooker Katherine. The Katherine rental market is tight with a strong demand for newly built executive-style residential properties like those owned by AIG in Bradshaw Crescent.

# Performance report

## Delivery area 2: Business support services

What we will do: Enabler for local decision making through strong Aboriginal corporations	Measure of success	2022-23 progress	What's left
Successfully deliver our transition model, effectively supporting Bagala and Wirib Aboriginal Corporations reach self-determination and resume managerial oversight of all business operations	AIG successfully transitions the Bagala Aboriginal Corporation (BAC) in 2022-23.	Transition to the interim General Manager occurred with the reduction of some of AIG services. Interviews have been conducted to select the new General Manager for BAC with the expectation for the position to be appointed in August.	Finalisation of the transition with the handover to the new General Manager and completion of record transfer.
	AIG successfully transition the Wirib and Gunamu Aboriginal Corporation in 2023-24.	<p>The Wirib and Gunamu Board ceased its agreement with AIG on 28 March 2023 prior to completing the transition process as determined by their board in 2022.</p> <p>Unfortunately, the challenges of the earlier transition were understated by the board of WAC / GAC resulting in the closure of their store in May 2023.</p>	Assisting Wirib and Gunamu with the transition of ledgers and documents once a new accounting firm has been appointed and recruitment of a new Store Manager has occurred with the recruitment of the General Manager pending.
ABA funding application for other Aboriginal corporations including a provision of financial recovery for AIG, specifically in the project management space	AIG maintains our grant application success rate of >80%	Grant success rate for 2022-23 was 99%	

What we will do: Enabler for local decision making through strong Aboriginal corporations	Measure of success	2022-23 progress	What's left
Discounted service, compared with other providers in the market	AIG effectively recovers all costs associated with business support services	<p>In the 2022-23 financial year, the business support service unit has broken even due to AIG's ability to self-fund through cost management, seeking funding support and other cost-saving measures across the business.</p> <p>AIG also increased the number of business support clients across our seven regions.</p> <p>Compared to business support services provided through professional firms our clients had estimated cost savings of \$1.1 million.</p>	Continue to seek ongoing grant funding for clients, where possible.
Expanding our support services to a broader market			Develop a framework for assessing to whom AIG is best placed to provide support to, brought about by the high influx of inquiries that AIG is unable to fulfil due to size and funding constraints.

Local decision-making and self-determination underpin AIG’s reasons for providing business support services. The uniqueness of our business support is twofold:

- we too are an Aboriginal corporation, and we understand the complexities and challenges of the sector we work in.
- we have a team of highly skilled individuals as found in professional firms but at a discounted or free of charge service rate.

**The cost savings across our client base are estimated to be over \$1.1 million, in comparison to a professional firm.**

We ensure that our skills and experience are imparted to build capacity for the Aboriginal corporations and businesses we serve.

When ready to take the reins, they do so with enhanced skills, knowledge and expertise underpinned by strong processes and robust systems.

Our business support services are an exciting arm of our business and critical to the communities that we serve. However, it is a challenging space due to our inability to meet the demand.

To date, AIG has been self-funding our business support services, although this impacts our ability to remain financially viable. To continue to offer our services free of charge or at heavily discounted prices, we are actively seeking funding to support this important service. This will ensure that we have appropriate financial resources for the time, service, and skills we provide.

**Business support services clients 2022-23**

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Bagala Aboriginal Corporation</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Elite 4x4</li></ul>                          |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Bagala Community Store</li></ul>        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Motlop Cleaning Services</li></ul>           |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Wirib Tourism Park</li></ul>            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• House of Darwin</li></ul>                    |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Gunamu Aboriginal Corporation</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Nova Peris Foundation</li></ul>              |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Coota Bees</li></ul>                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Kulumindini Aboriginal Corporation</li></ul> |
|   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Arnhem Crows</li></ul>                       |

**Our business support services fall into five categories:**





Grant writing services

A feather in the cap of business support services is our grant writing. AIG has a reputation for preparing grant applications with a high success rate, and 2022-23 was no different. Ninety-nine per cent of our grant applications were successful, securing \$5,165,797 in funding for a range of projects, with the remaining 1% still awaiting assessment.

Applying for government and third-party grants is a complicated and lengthy process. We believe assistance with grant writing is an essential form of support for Aboriginal businesses, giving them the collateral needed to start businesses in remote NT.

Grants secured by AIG from July 2022 to June 2023

Organisation	Project	Amount secured \$ excl GST
BAC	Barunga Festival	703,700
BAC	Coaster Bus for the local football club, point of sale system for the store, and a vehicle for the Corporation	175,888
BAC	Transition funding for self-determination	139,000
AIG	Commercial office redevelopment in Katherine	3,160,000
AIG	Remote Laundries operation in communities	20,000
WAC	Staff accommodation at the Tourist Park in Wirib	496,814
WAC	Funding for General Manager for Wirib Aboriginal Corporation	444,395
WAC	Wirib support for engagement of structural engineer	20,000
WAC	Wirib support post Ex-Tropical Cyclone Ellie	6,000



## Governance training

We train leaders in Aboriginal-controlled businesses and organisations to run their operations effectively. Our training topics include director duties, human resource management, financial management, strategy, risk and contract management, laws and regulations, business planning, conflict resolution and reporting.

When training leaders, our goal is to one day see them lead without support. While it can take time, the end goal is always for AIG to step away leaving behind strong, well-run businesses that make money for Aboriginal people to live the way they choose.

## Bookkeeping

Business in the bush can be challenging. Through years of supporting remotely located Indigenous organisations, AIG understands this intimately. One challenge for our clients is to source and retain bookkeeping staff remotely, so we work with Aboriginal businesses and organisations to provide real-time financial data which is critical for informed decision-making.

AIG uses cloud-based systems and state-of-the-art technology and software to ensure all processes are efficient, transparent with a control focus, and cost-effective. Our finance team have exceptional skills in knowledge transfer to our clients, providing training and mentoring in the use of accounting software as well as implementing controls that provide boards and owners with trust but not at the cost of the efficiency of the business.

AIG's success in this space is measured by the success of the organisations we support.

**Managed  
29  
bank accounts with  
10,312  
transactions**

**7,471  
invoices  
processed  
totalling  
\$21 million**

**99%  
success  
of grant  
applications**

**\$5.2 million  
secured in  
grants for  
clients**

## **Outsourcing CEO, CFO and COO**

A significant barrier for remote-based businesses is finding the right staff at the right time. AIG outsources CEO, COO and CFO services from our Darwin office.

This unique delivery capability between our CEO and COO's experience is their ability to balance consultancy skills with business needs and the understanding of the challenges for Aboriginal corporations to deliver a tangible product that will work for communities.

## **Project management**

AIG is dedicated to creating sustainable employment opportunities for Aboriginal people through our projects. Our project ideas are formed through our relationships with people on the ground and talking with them about what they want for their people and their community.

Knowing what communities are capable of and their ambitions for local employment is the start of all our projects. The endpoint must be economic growth through employment and assets.

Below we highlight some of our projects undertaken while providing project management services to BAC.

**Management of  
174  
employees**

**\$1.7 million  
in wages**

**11  
projects  
managed by  
AIG in  
2022-23**

### Bagala Aboriginal Corporation transition

Local decision-making and self-determination underpin our reasons for providing our business support services and our enduring goal is to have clients transition to self-management.

Our business support services model ensures our experience and skill are imparted in such a way that we build capability for the Aboriginal-controlled organisations we serve. When they are ready to take the reins, they do so with an enhanced set of skills, knowledge and expertise, underpinned by strong processes and robust systems.

AIG commenced discussion about the transition to self-management with BAC in early 2022. Since then, BAC has employed an Interim Manager while recruitment of a permanent General Manager is on the way, with the expectation to be appointed in early August. The Interim Manager has been handling all community-related business including day-to-day decision making with the support of AIG. Assets have been purchased including office equipment for the interim at the Sybil Ranch and vehicles for the General Manager. AIG expects the transition to be finalised by August 2023 with AIG reducing its service provision to bookkeeping support to allow the new incoming manager to focus on business and project development.



BAC board members  
Esther Bulumbara and Helen Lee.



Bus driver, Gregory Jackson.

### Bagala Remote Community Bus

Until recently, people living in Barunga and Beswick were paying up to \$250 return in a taxi to get into Katherine. Looking for a solution to the limited public transport options, the Bagala Aboriginal Corporation (BAC) asked AIG for help finding a reliable and affordable solution.

We looked outside the box, and the result was the delivery of the Bagala Remote Community Bus, which has been in operation since April 2021.

Managed by AIG, and owned by BAC, the nine-seater bus travels five days a week between Barunga, Beswick and Katherine.

The bus is a busy little project that has exceeded expectations.

**The project has delivered savings of over \$241,650 to the community, based on a \$25 bus ride, versus a \$250 taxi ride to Katherine.**

The bus operation is a valuable source of employment for locals in the region and has the potential to employ four drivers part-time.





### Remote Laundries project branded water

In 2019 AIG launched Remote Laundries project branded water to create a reliable income stream for the project.

Fifty per cent of sale profits go back to the store where the water was bought, and 50% goes into the Remote Laundries project. AIG's ability to do this would not be possible without the support of Akuna Springs, a Darwin-based water company, and we are grateful for our longstanding relationship.

Sales of the water remain strong and will continue as a revenue stream for our Remote Laundries project.

### Beswick demountables and duplexes

In March 2022, BAC obtained confirmation for the funding of the Beswick residential housing totalling \$5.6 million. The funding would provide capacity for BAC to build three new residential dwellings in Beswick, to be leased to BAC employees, external service agencies or locals. The project would not only reduce the housing shortage in Beswick but also provide a reliable income stream for BAC. BAC is in the final stages of negotiating the contract with the National Indigenous Australians Agency (NIAA) for the build which is expected to commence in 2024.

In addition, BAC received funding two years ago for two office demountables to be built in Barunga and Beswick.

Frustratingly, the project has experienced major delays due to the inability to find a suitable property in Beswick, obtaining the section 19 leases required, and Power and Water constraints in Barunga as well as Beswick which to date remain unresolved. BAC with the assistance of AIG continues to work hard to navigate this challenging space and hopes to commence the build in 2024.







AIG team members  
at the Barunga Festival: Liz Morgan-Brett,  
Sam Autio, James Poppleton and  
Alexa Gutenberger (back row), Elouise Calma  
and Candice Basham (front row).

## Barunga Festival 2023

The overwhelming success of this event was a shining example of what can be achieved by strong Aboriginal Corporations and their key partners.

The AIG team's passion, drive, and determination behind the scenes prior and during the festival, again demonstrated our ability to deliver incredible outputs, despite being a small team.

AIG assisted not only with all festival funding applications, coordination of the event organiser, Campaign Edge Sprout, and financial record keeping and reporting but also relocated our entire AIG team to the Barunga community to assist the Bagala Community Store and Laundry throughout the event.

The store experienced record sales, with over \$143,000 worth of stock sold throughout the festival and the laundry was inundated with free washing offered to all festival goers along with the normal community demand. It was impressive to watch the operation continue to run smoothly at full capacity.

The laundry also provided a health promotion hub as we joined forces with our partner, the National Heart Foundation of Australia. Together we shared knowledge about the importance of skin health for heart health.

## Bulla Food Truck

In 2021, AIG was contacted by the community of Bulla to advise that their store had closed with the departure of the store managers. Due to the small size of the community, the store was not financially viable and impossible for AIG to manage and even the government-funded organisation, Outback Stores, declined to step in.

The National Indigenous Australians Agency (NIAA) approached AIG to apply for grant funding to secure a food truck for Bulla, which could be operated out of the Wirib Store managed by AIG at the time. Funding was approved in late 2022 through ABA, and within the same month, the required truck design, suitable for food deliveries in a remote environment, was decided on and a truck was purchased. The truck was delivered in early 2023, which unfortunately coincided with the decision by the Wirib and Gunamu Board to cease their service agreement with AIG.

At the time of writing this report, AIG is waiting to receive confirmation from Wirib and Gunamu about the handing over of the food truck including the operational funding for three years.





# Performance report

## Delivery area 3: AIG Member Buying Group

What we will do: Improving food security and ensuring lower prices in remote community stores	Measure of success	2022-23 progress	What's left
Develop the AIG Member Buying Group in 2022-23 financial year, building buying power for remote community stores and ultimately driving down price points in remote stores for Aboriginal people	Engage with and buy for eight stores in year one	The ABA funding submission to start the Member Buying Group was unsuccessful despite the solid business case prepared by Deloitte and ongoing food security issues in community.	AIG is undertaking more research into this space, noting the board's continued interest.  The next steps involve various options to either re-submit or secure the interest of existing buying groups from other states or market players in the NT.
	16 stores by year two		
	24 stores by year three		

The concept of affordable essentials sits at the centre of AIG's store management model which advocates for social benefits while maintaining the business viability of the store. Since making healthy essentials more affordable, fruit and vegetable sales have increased by up to 148%.

Driven by food security issues and high price points across the seven regions of the NT, AIG began managing community stores in 2019 with the aim to disrupt the remote community stores sector.

Since then, we have managed stores in Timber Creek, Barunga, Yarralin and Wirrimanu, working to ensure these communities have access to food, beverages and essential items at the lowest possible price points.



## AIG's store management progression

### Step 1

Development of a social enterprise community store model that focuses on social outcomes over profits

### Step 2

Transitioning of the store to a model of self-management with the option of reduced back-office support and supply chain access for best pricing

### Step 3

Operation of AIG's Member Buying Group to provide access to cheaper pricing for independent stores in the NT

## Social outcomes over profits

Our commitment to people before profit has seen price points drop for the communities we serve.

Our store management philosophy is to encourage healthy choices through pricing, keeping fruit, vegetables, eggs and meat at cost price and incorporating our Mob's Choice range. Mob's Choice includes a range of essential products discounted to be affordable for families to buy what they need. Unhealthier products are then priced higher to ensure the social outcome over profit strategy is possible and financially viable.

A recent example from the Bagala Store in Barunga showcased our pricing success, with a shopping basket with 16 essential items equating to only \$6.49 more expensive than Coles/Woolworths pricing.

In addition to providing more affordable essential items, our store management model provides important employment and training opportunities including Certificate IV in Retail for community members.

## Stores we manage

In 2022-23 AIG's community store engagement was with the Bagala (BAC) and Wirib (WAC) Aboriginal Corporations to manage and support stores in Timber Creek and Barunga.

With local decision-making and self-determination underpinning our store management model, AIG supports store owners to one day be managers themselves. It has never been our intention to manage stores long-term, rather we see our role to ensure the Aboriginal corporations that own the stores build their capability so that they can ultimately manage the day-to-day operations of their store.

### Bagala Community Store

We expect the transition to self-management for the Bagala Community Store back to the BAC to be finalised by June 2024 after working hard to build their capacity to take over the day-to-day operations of their store. A recent audit of the store pricing against Coles/Woolworths showed comparable price points, an achievement the BAC Board should be immensely proud of and a reflection of the support of AIG provided to achieve this success.



## Wirib Store, Café and Tourism Park

In February, the Wirib (WAC) and Gunamu (GAC) Aboriginal Corporation's Board took back operational and strategic management of the Wirib Store, Café and Tourism Park in Timber Creek. This decision was made by the board ahead of the planned approach for AIG to transition out of Wirib by June 2023, coinciding with funding AIG secured for WAC/GAC to employ a General Manager, who would be trained by AIG and endorsed under a local decision-making pathway.

The early transition was not an easy process for AIG as it became clear that the board had understated the enormity of the earlier transition and the entities suffering as a result. Having a vested interest in the store and park succeeding and seeing years of hard work diminished because of the early transition has been extremely disappointing. Disappointing also is the large debt WAC/ GAC now have with AIG.

**AIG prides itself on delivering simple solutions to complex issues. A Member Buying Group is a proven model that allows ease of access to deliver a significant impact on price points for the greatest number of Aboriginal people.**

## The future of food security for AIG

With steps 1 and 2 underway, we now look to step 3 of our store management progression, the AIG Member Buying Group to further increase the impact we can have on food security and price points across the NT.

Access for Independent stores to a member buying group will build access to buying power, driving social, economic and financial benefits for remote Aboriginal communities and ultimately leading to lower prices in remote community stores for Aboriginal people.

### Member Buying Group

Since 2020, AIG has been exploring avenues to increase the impact we can have on food security and price points across the NT via a Member Buying Group.



In 2022, Deloitte supported our business case, confirming that the Member Buying Group was indeed a financially viable option for AIG to move into, with significant benefits set to flow to remote community stores and ultimately Aboriginal people living in those communities.

The key benefits of the Member Buying Group include:

- Health and wellbeing outcomes associated with reliable supply chains, improved nutritional access, and low-priced foods.
- Enhanced agency and local empowerment among remote communities, through increased control in decision-making and influence on supply outcomes in the community.
- Potential social and economic development (such as jobs, training, skilling, and social initiatives) arising from the reinvestment of surplus funds achieved from supply chain efficiencies in remote community stores.
- Social and economic development benefits arising from increased consumer purchasing power through increased discretionary spending by individuals in communities enabled by lower-priced goods in stores.
- Benefits arising from enhanced opportunities for the reinvestment of funds in AIG's operating activities and wealth distribution programs.



## Where are we at?

In the 2022-23 financial year, AIG submitted a funding application to employ a contract manager and purchase a vehicle to enable the Member Buying Group to establish itself across the first two years.



However, the funding was knocked back by the ABA funding committee citing:

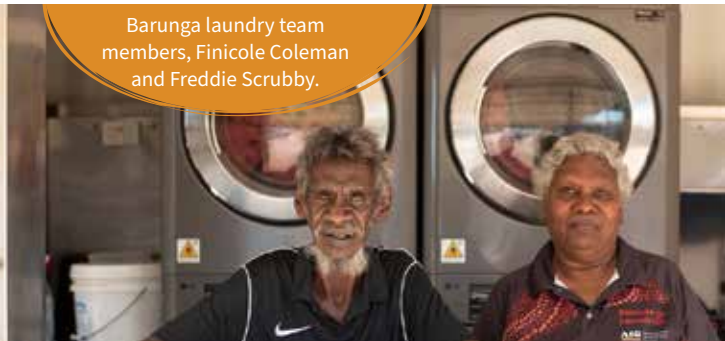
- This space was adequately covered (in their minds) by Outback Stores and ALPA
- This model was attempted some years ago and failed
- AIG did not undertake sufficient consultation with independent store owners to adequately assess demand for a buying group.

The AIG Board continues to see the importance of us pursuing our presence in this space. To strengthen funding applications in the future, we will undertake more research into the viability and demand for this buying group, while also assessing if as an organisation, we are still best placed to operate in this area. With more research and information, the board will be able to decide on whether AIG applies again for funding to deliver the buying group, link with an existing player in this space to deliver the group, or simply move out of the food security space.



# Performance report

Delivery area 4: Remote Laundries project



What we will do: Improving health and wellbeing in remote Aboriginal Communities	Measure of success	2022-23 progress	What's left
Build and deliver four new laundries for Umbakumba, Ngukurr, Gunbalanya and Yarralin	Successful rollout of all laundry sites by the end of 2024	Finalisation of the contract negotiation with NIAA and the first release of funding after a change in site from Yarralin to Borroloola.  Four sites were secured for the builds.	Project management of the build for all sites with the estimated opening dates in the 23-24 financial year:  October/ November – Gunbalanya and Umbakumba  December – Borroloola  June - Ngukurr
Seek further funding for capital infrastructure to complete the rollout in all of AIG's seven regions	Long-term partnership funding 2023 and beyond	Retained funding with major partner, NT PHN and secured ongoing funding from NT PHN for 2023-24.	Formal partnership with Heart Foundation to be completed.
Ensure there is financial support to sustain each site through sponsorship and partnerships		AIG's emerging partnership with the Heart Foundation strives to secure funding such that AIG can roll out laundries across 40 more communities in the coming five to seven years.	Development of pitch for funding for \$50 million to build and deliver 40 units across the coming four to six years.
Ensure support is continually provided to every site, ensuring community members have access to this essential service			Eradication of rheumatic heart disease from the NT by 2031, in conjunction with the Heart Foundation and other key partners.

***“\$23 million would prepare the ground for the complete removal of RHD in the NT within the next five to six years.”***

**David Lloyd, Heart Foundation CEO.**

The Remote Laundries project is a simple yet effective solution to address the health issues associated with overcrowding and a lack of washing facilities in remote Aboriginal communities in the NT. The project provides communities with a purpose-built, free laundry facility while also creating employment opportunities.

While we often state that the beauty of the Remote Laundries project is its simplicity, the work that has gone into the design of the unit has been immense. The environment where the laundries operate is unusual and we needed to be particularly creative about how we made sure our units gave users the experience they needed and wanted.

The new design introduced last year offers rear access points to aid in regular maintenance and innovative locking mechanisms to ensure the container remained completely secure.

The filter system was redesigned, which allows us to safely deposit wastewater into the sewage system. More importantly, we also made improvements to staff ergonomics. The new design allows

staff to safely undertake daily maintenance from a standing position, an upgrade from other machines which require filter access from the bottom.

These clever changes in our design qualified for an innovation patent.

FB Rice, champions of innovation and change, drove the patent process on behalf of AIG, free of charge. In a statement, FB Rice explained why they supported our project: “FB Rice is committed to the environment and the communities in which they work. We saw this as an opportunity to support an initiative that is making a real difference to our communities and were pleased to offer our specialist services pro bono.” We are extremely grateful for their support.

Further opportunities for innovative design are in development, including solar and greywater treatment. While these two design additions may take some time, they are critical when considering the environments where laundries will be delivered in the future, environments where water is lacking and regular access to power is limited.

## **Year snapshot**

**1 new  
laundry  
opened  
on Bickerton  
Island**

**44  
Aboriginal  
staff employed  
across all  
laundries**

**12,813  
cycles across  
all sites**

**\$185,000  
wages for  
locally  
employed staff**

Relationships key to our success

Across the 2022-23 financial year, the project gained traction with the addition of key partnerships with the National Heart Foundation of Australia, Nestlé Professional and the Kelly Foundation bringing greater recognition and interest aligned with our ambitious vision to expand the project across the NT.

We continued to operate laundries in Barunga, Darwin, and Angurugu and launched our second Groote Eylandt facility on Bickerton Island in July 2022. The Milyakburra laundry on Bickerton Island has been embraced by the community.

Four local jobs have been created by the laundry on Bickerton and it is helping to improve the health and quality of life for residents through better access to washing. Excitingly, the laundry is our first to run off a rainwater tank, a clear example of our solutions-based approach and care for the environment.

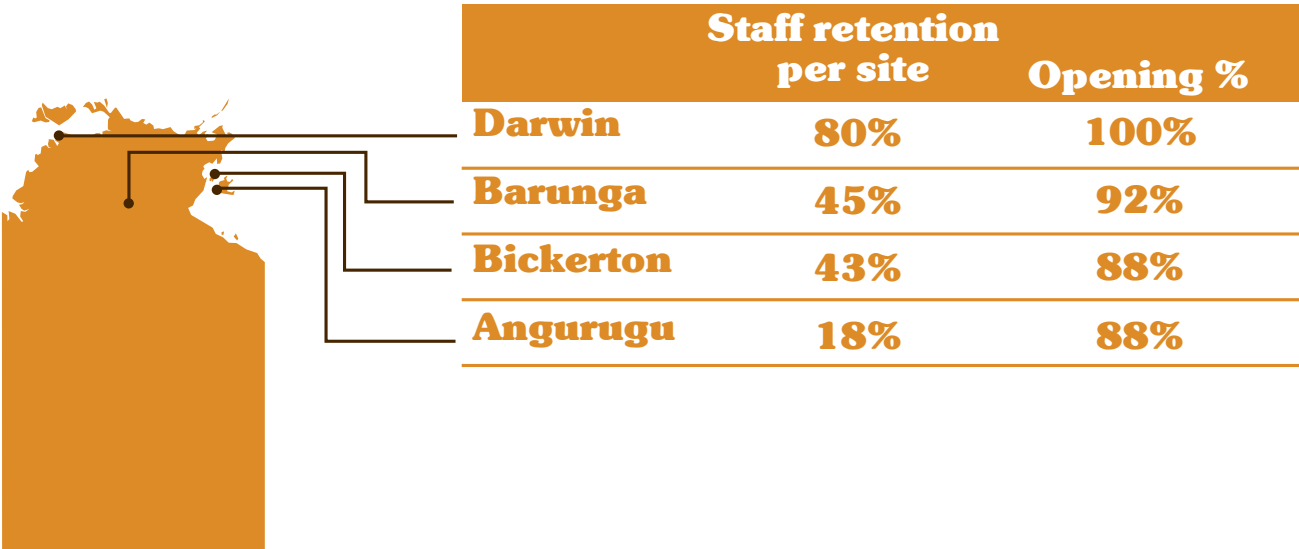
NT PHN continued to be our largest partner in 2022-23 and their support will continue in the next financial year, specifically for the Barunga and Darwin laundries.

In addition, funding was secured for three new laundries to be completed in the 2023-24 financial year: Gunbalanya, Ngukurr and

Borroloola and the continued development of the third Groote Eylandt laundry, in Umbakumba.

Excitingly, we also commenced a social impact framework in conjunction with Flinders University and the National Heart Foundation of Australia. The framework which expands cost-benefit analysis from KMPG will ultimately allow AIG to collect meaningful data on the impact our laundries have on the health and wellbeing of the communities where they operate. This data will be critically important for AIG when approaching the government and other funding bodies for extended funding agreements. The framework will be finalised early in the 2023-24 financial year.

With the project growing, so is our team, with a funded ABA position enabling the recruitment of a project officer to support the Remote Laundries Program Manager.



## Goals of the project

The Remote Laundries project focuses on achieving three outcomes:



**Improved health**



**Improved quality of life**



**Improved social and economic outcomes**

As per KPMG's cost-benefit analysis of the Remote Laundries project, one laundry over five years provides \$3.7 million worth of net savings to government. These are incredible outcomes. The full report is accessible through our Remote Laundries website: [www.remotelaudries.org.au](http://www.remotelaudries.org.au)

### Improved health and quality of life in 2022-23

Eight out of 10 Aboriginal babies who live in remote communities will get scabies before their first birthday. It is a staggering statistic. And one that continually drives us to expand the impact that our Remote Laundries project can provide.

Access to laundry facilities reduces the incidence of primary and secondary medical conditions associated with skin infections and the related costs of medical treatments.

Scabies infestation is a chronic and widespread issue in remote communities. The itchy scabies mite creates skin sores that become infected and lead to serious diseases such as rheumatic heart disease (RHD) and kidney disease.

Tackling scabies is a powerful tool in improving health and quality of life. Since its inception (in Barunga), the project has had a phenomenal impact, reducing scabies infections by up to 60%, a crucial step in reducing the prevalence of RHD, a 100% preventable condition in remote communities.

We are excited to be partnering with the Heart Foundation to help secure funding to enable us to spread the impact of the laundries more widely and to completely eradicate RHD from the NT.

### Improved social and economic outcomes for 2022-23

Our laundries were open for 92% of scheduled operating hours. Staff come to work because they are proud of their jobs and the service they provide to the community.

Improved social and economic outcomes are driven by the direct employment of local staff. Creating jobs in the community is a key priority of the Remote Laundries project and is linked to our project goals.

We are proud of the high success we have had in recruiting, training and retaining staff. There are 44 local staff employed by the project who were paid a total of \$185,000 in wages last year.



## Meet our laundries

Our laundries are all a little bit different because they are designed to meet the needs of the community. It is standard practice for communities to be involved in the size of the unit, shade and seating options, trading hours, location and setting. It is also common for locals to design the uniforms and laundry artwork which encourages community ownership and usage of the laundries. We are also extremely proud to mention that none of the laundries placed in communities have been damaged, which demonstrates how highly regarded this asset is to all community members.



**Barunga** | Opened in 2019, employs 10 people.



**Casuarina** | Opened in northern Darwin in 2020, employs 6 people.



**Angurugu** | Opened in 2021 on Groote Eylandt, employs 12 people.



**Bickerton Island (Milyakburra)** | Opened in 2022 on Groote Eylandt, employs 14 people.

# Evolution of the project

## Barunga Festival 2023

At this year's festival, the Barunga laundry was inundated, with free washing offered to all festival goers along with the normal community demand. It was impressive to watch the operation continue to run smoothly at full capacity.

The laundry also provided a health promotion hub as we joined forces with our partner, the National Heart Foundation of Australia (NHF). Together we shared knowledge about the importance of skin health for heart health.

AIG CEO, Liz Morgan-Brett and David Lloyd, CEO of the NHF, were also delighted to spend time with visiting ministers Linda Burney, Minister for Indigenous Australians and Senator Malarndirri McCarthy to show first-hand the impact of our Remote Laundries project.

A huge thanks must go to the Heart Foundation for their support in engaging cardiologists to volunteer their time to provide an incredible opportunity for attendees to receive personalised advice to better care for their skin and heart health.



AIG CEO, Liz Morgan-Brett and David Lloyd, CEO of the National Heart Foundation of Australia, with Linda Burney, Minister for Indigenous Australians and Senator Malarndirri McCarthy.

# Donor spotlight | Rare generosity surprises

## Remote Laundries project

In 2022, three blokes from Melbourne, affectionately known as the Larapinta boys, raised \$35,510 for the Remote Laundries project.

By way of background, in 2021 we were approached by Tom, Zac and Griff who wanted to undertake a 140km run through the Central Australian desert and raise money for our project in the process.

To help the runners reach their fundraising goal of \$10,000 we set up a donations page on our Remote Laundries website. The page had a blurb about the guys and why they cared about supporting laundries in remote Aboriginal communities in the NT. Donations started to trickle in early in the year and then it gained serious momentum. At the final count, 140 people sponsored them – incredible.





## Our donors

Our incredible individual donors continue to prove that a little bit can make a big difference to help challenge barriers to health for people living in overcrowded houses by providing free washing services. This year, the equivalent of electricity for 460 families to receive free washing at a remote laundry was donated.

In 2022-23, we received donations from 101 donors.

### A special thank you to the following donors who donated over \$1000:

- David Bertholini
- Frances Duffy
- Brett Straatemeier
- Tom Hutton
- Griff Loughnan
- Zac Haines



Remote Laundries donor, Brett Straatemeier with laundry team member, Russell Williams, AIG CEO Liz Morgan-Brett and Remote Laundries Program Manager, Candice Basham.



# Finance



## **Our corporate structure**

Aboriginal Investment Group (AIG) is our registered business name and represents multiple entities that operate under this banner. The two main entities that define our day-to-day operations are our Office of the Registrar of Indigenous Corporations (ORIC)-registered entity North Australia Aboriginal Corporation (NAAC) and the Northern Australian Aboriginal Charitable Trust (our Trust). Both are registered not-for-profit entities with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC). NAAC holds 100% of the shares in the Trustee company of our Trust. The share transfer of the Trustee shares from the Northern Land Council to NAAC occurred on 1 July 2022 as part of AIG's divestment from the NLC, making NAAC now the parent entity of the AIG Group.

NAAC is the main operational arm of AIG. It owns revenue-generating assets, employs all our back-office staff, and provides services such as business support services and store management.

Our Trust is the charitable arm of AIG that operates our Remote Laundries project. It is through our Trust that AIG can offer tax deductions for donations to the Remote Laundries project.

## **Financial position**

AIG's net assets of \$16.1 million are mainly driven by our property portfolio. Overall, the net asset position remains strong despite some movements in the property portfolio. The work in progress of the co-funded redevelopment of our AIG Katherine building totalling \$1.9 million is offsetting the devaluation of our investment properties due to the demolition of the Katherine building and the ageing of our Mitchell Street property totalling \$1.5 million.

Cash has increased to \$4.8 million, partly driven by the grants and income held in advance totalling \$2.2 million. Despite heavy investments, the overall current asset ratio remains desirable at 1.4.

AIG made further repayments to our bank loan, reducing the balance by \$250,000 to \$1.8 million.

## **Financial performance**

The results of refining and implementing a new strategy for building strong foundations are demonstrated in our above-budget financial surplus for the group of over \$2 million.

Both entities delivered above-budget surpluses, despite property devaluation expenses of \$1.5 million due to the demolition of our Katherine building and the ageing of our commercial property in Darwin City. Overall income generated in 2023 was \$6.5 million of which \$1.7 million was related to capital grant funding.

Our recurring revenue is mainly generated through our rental properties (52%), followed by business support service income (16%) and Remote Laundry-related income (32%).

Employee costs are AIG's greatest expense at \$1.3 million, a reduction of 15% compared to the prior year as part of our cost minimisation strategy. Overall, AIG's overheads are very lean at 11% compared to an average indirect cost of NFPs in Australia of 33%.

## **Find our full audited financials**

Further details on our financial position and performance are provided in our entities' Financial Statements which can be viewed publicly for NAAC on the ORIC's website and for the Trust on the ACNC webpage.





BUILDING **STRONGER** COMMUNITIES

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