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Media release

Ngukurr celebrates \$3.75 million community driven project

Ngukurr community celebrated the opening of one of the best remote stores in the Territory on Monday 4 July.

The store replaces a building so old it had outlived its useful life and is the result of a community drive for a replacement. The old store was riddled with white ants, was dusty, had no air conditioning and the roof was caving in.

Outback Stores' board member Bess Price, Minister Malarndirri McCarthy and NT Manager of FaHCSIA Dave Chalmers attended the opening of the new store.

Northern Land Council senior project officer Bobby Nunggumajbarr said the community contributed \$1.5 million, with the rest of the money coming from the Aboriginal Benefits Account after the community of 1600 applied for funding.

"People are very excited, Indigenous and non-Indigenous are celebrating the new shop opening," he said.

Mr Nunggumajbarr has lived in Ngukurr for more than 20 years.

"The new store accommodates the community very well. It's a better shop and helps make better living standards," he said.

Ngukurr resident Laura Blitner worked in the old store and has taken some time off to have a baby.

"When my daughter is old enough, I would like to go back and work in the new store," she said.

"I think it's a good store for the community. There is disability and wheel-chair access the other store didn't have.

"We don't have to travel as far now because we have a wider range of goods to choose from," Ms Blitner said.

Creating healthier communities

Outback Stores 67 Pruen Rd Berrimah NT 0801 **P:** (08) 8982 1900 **F:** (08) 8982 190 **E:** info@outbackstores.com.au

Outback Stores CEO Steve Moore says the new store is one of the largest and best fitted remote stores in the Northern Territory.

“Outback Stores started managing the store in March 2009,” he said.

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“The team worked with the Ngukurr Progress Aboriginal Corporation (NPAC) to coordinate the project and provide advice to meet the design and equipment standards of a commercial supermarket.

“The new store has a large warehouse and is modern and easy to operate with CCTV equipment, two 61000 litre fuel storage tanks (total of 122,000 litres) that will ensure supplies last through the Wet season, and back-up generators for the fridges.

“It has 400 square metres of trading space just like a city supermarket,” Mr Moore said.

The store’s 14 local staff are excited to start work in the new store, said Store Manager Sandra McDermott.

“A take-away store is part of the new building, offering business opportunities for a local family,” she said.

“Two JLG Compact telehandlers have been purchased with the funding provided from the Aboriginal Benefit Account. This makes it easier to unload goods from the barge and improves food security for the community,” Ms McDermott said.

Ms Blitner says she considers Sandra and her husband Ross McDermott to be a part of the community.

“They are respected. I feel they have worked with the community,” she said.

For further information contact:

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Outback Stores is a company that manages remote stores on behalf of remote Indigenous communities. It was set up in 2006 in response to a growing need for functional and viable shops that were able to meet the health and nutritional requirements of Indigenous populations. It has been successful because it builds strong relationships with the communities it works with, resulting in stores that people can take pride in and feel part of.

Outback Stores is a government initiative with an independent board. www.outbackstores.com.au

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