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Ngukurr flooded with food after big wet

The remote community of Ngukurr this week received road transport deliveries of food for the first time since flooding closed roads to the Roper community on 28 January.

Outback Stores had stocked an extra six weeks' worth of dry and frozen goods as a precaution against localised flooding.

However, this wet season has been the heaviest in recent years, with the first road closures due to flooding since two new bridges were built across the Wilton and Roper Rivers in 2017.

On 24 February Ngukurr's independently owned takeaway shop closed, placing additional pressure on the community store.

Yugul Mangi Development Aboriginal Corporation (YMDAC) and Outback Stores worked together to maintain food security, resorting to air freight to keep the community stocked with essential supplies.

Since 8 February, the community has received 28 chartered plane deliveries at a cost of almost \$59,000.

As waters started to recede this week, YMDAC and Outback Stores coordinated with Minister for Aboriginal Affairs Selena Uibo to deliver 64 pallets of groceries by road freight.

YMDAC supported the efforts by preparing the road to handle light trucks, and contributing a truck and driver to meet the triple road train on the Roper Highway.

"There was so much excitement to see the food truck arriving. The community couldn't wait to see the shelves well-stocked again," said Ngukurr Store Manager Hemantha Podithuwakku Arachchige.

Outback Stores congratulates the collaborative efforts of all stakeholders for ensuring that the community never ran out of essential supplies.

"This wet season has been a challenge but we have made it through and we thank the community for its patience, as well as Ian Mason, Michael Thompson and the rest of the team at YMDAC for their tireless work," said CEO of Outback Stores Michael Borg.

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Photo details:

Ngukurr customers enjoying newly stocked store. Photo by Manjula Kalatuwage.