

MEDIA RELEASE

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### **Beswick Store gives back to community**

The Beswick Store board of directors last week approved its largest social development distribution to the community, worth \$150,000.

Each of the 75 houses in the community received a white goods package including fridge/freezer, microwave, electric frypan, rice cooker, kettle, toaster and a choice of a TV or chest freezer.

Beswick community members now have a 14-seater commuter bus to drive them around the community free of charge. The ongoing maintenance of the bus and wage of the driver will be paid by Wuduluk Progress Aboriginal Corporation, owners of Beswick Store.

Wugularr Primary School received a \$20,000 cheque to support improved school attendance efforts.

"The school is grateful for the money, which we'll spend on extra equipment for our re-engagement program. We're looking at purchasing our own 4WD vehicle, and more pool tables or other equipment, to encourage school attendance," said Stephen Hill, Principal of Wugularr Primary School.

Peter Lindsay is the chairperson of Wuduluk Progress Aboriginal Corporation and is proud of what the community has achieved.

"Thirteen years ago we didn't have any food on the shelves and the store was in debt. It has been an amazing journey with Outback Stores to get to this point. I got goosebumps seeing all this going out to our community. It was the talk of the town," Mr Lindsay said.

Outback Stores started providing retail services to Beswick in 2008, when at first the store was recording losses. The past 13 years have seen the store rise out of administration and build up its financial position each year to allow this year's distribution.

"The board and I would like to thank the store managers, as well as the community for its support. The community can see that when you buy from the store, this is what you get in return. It's your store. You own it," Mr Lindsay said.

Further projects to be funded by store profits this year include another community bus specifically for women, landscaping for the community cemetery, and renovations to the community club.

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**About Us:** Outback Stores provides retail store management and support services on a transparent fee for service basis to Indigenous owned community stores. We work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in a holistic way to improve health, nutrition, employment, training and economic outcomes in remote communities.

Over the past fourteen years Outback Stores has assisted 52 remote community stores in total. Of those it has halted the closure of 14 stores, managing 11 of these stores out of administration, 3 out of liquidation and a further 10 stores through significant financial challenges.