



OUTBACK  
*Stores*  
*Working With Communities*

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**CORPORATE PLAN**  
**2025 - 2028**  
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# INTRODUCTION

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This Corporate Plan for Outback Stores Pty Ltd was prepared during 2024-25 and covers through to 2027-28, as required under subsection 95<sup>(1)</sup> of the Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013. The Corporate Plan incorporates and will build on Outback Stores' strategic and operational plans.

Outback Stores is an Australian government-owned Commonwealth company with an independent Board of Directors, providing retail management and support services to Indigenous-owned stores.

The Corporate Plan is developed to meet the expectations of the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet and National Indigenous Australians Agency (NIAA) that Outback Stores will maintain food security in remote communities.

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# ABOUT OUTBACK STORES

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## OUR PURPOSE

To be a sustainable business that makes a positive difference to the health, employment and economies of remote Indigenous communities by improving food affordability and availability, nutrition and community services.

## OUR VALUES

### INTEGRITY

We are ethical in everything we do and people trust us to deliver on our promises

### EMPOWERMENT

We provide the tools for communities and employees to achieve their own goals

### RESPECT

We show respect for all and treat others with dignity, valuing their views and cultures

### EXCELLENCE

What we do, we do to the best standards possible

### COLLABORATION

We work with our customers, employees and stakeholders to achieve our aligned purpose

## ORGANISATION HISTORY

Outback Stores was established in November 2006. It emerged from a need to improve the health of Indigenous people in remote Australia by addressing nutrition-related health problems, unreliable food supplies and store closures.

Outback Stores was set up as a Commonwealth company with an independent board of directors. The company's primary focus is on delivering food security while operating on sound commercial principles to deliver sustainable social outcomes.

Over the past 17 years the business has assisted 68 remote community stores.

It has halted the closure of 17 stores, managed 13 of these stores out of administration, 4 out of liquidation and a further 16 stores through significant financial challenges.

Outback Stores has invested \$11.4 m in infrastructure improvements and \$24.6 m in ongoing financial support to maintain food security.



Mimiri Store in Ali Curung (NT) credit Crissy Cooper.





Tjuntjuntjara (WA) credit Tyler Sandercock.

# KEY ACTIVITIES

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## STORE MANAGEMENT AND SERVICES

Outback Stores provides retail store management and support services on a transparent fee for service basis to Indigenous-owned community stores, working with people in a holistic way to improve health, nutrition, employment, training and economic outcomes.

## HEALTH AND NUTRITION

Outback Stores encourages healthier purchases by promoting good nutrition and providing affordable pricing, while not restricting individual choice. Success is measured by reduced sales of sugary drinks and tobacco, while increasing the sale of water, fruit and vegetables.

The company is focused on improving affordability of healthy food, with fruit and vegetable prices kept as close as possible to major metropolitan retailers, with a pricing policy that contains mechanisms to keep healthy product prices as low as possible.

Outback Stores supports the Australian Government's commitment to providing meals to school children in the Northern Territory through the School Nutrition Programme (SNP). Outback Stores' involvement in the SNP includes working with schools to ensure quality meals are prepared and delivered daily throughout the school terms.

## TRAINING

Outback Stores is a Registered Training Organisation (RTO Code 70040) offering nationally recognised qualifications in retail services. We offer Certificate II, III and IV in Retail to all eligible store staff and store managers. Since 2022 Outback Stores has also offered school-based retail traineeships in remote communities.

Our goal is to increase the level of employment of Indigenous employees and provide pathways for career progression.



# OPERATING CONTEXT

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## ENVIRONMENT

Outback Stores operates in unique, complex and remote environments, which brings significant internal and external environmental challenges. Managing stakeholder expectations is the key internal challenge, while the geographic inaccessibility of remote communities is one of the significant external challenges.

Our communities in which Outback Stores work are some of the most remote in Australia, with the closest regional centres sometimes hundreds of kilometres away. It is not uncommon for communities to be inaccessible by road for weeks or even months during wet season. Stock often has to be flown in by light plane or helicopter. Despite this, the range and quality of fresh fruit, vegetables and other healthy staples remains at a consistently high standard all year round.

Working in a cross-cultural environment with diverse values, obligations and priorities can present many challenges. Communities have comparatively small, transient populations due to seasonal movement and cultural obligations.

Outback Stores works closely with communities to forge strong long-term relationships built on trust, respect and integrity. Contemporary retail practice is adapted to incorporate and embrace Aboriginal culture and values.

## STORE LOCATIONS

Outback Stores manages 54 stores across 5 states and territories, supported by two offices in Darwin and Alice Springs.



# CAPABILITIES

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## FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Over the past 5 years Outback Stores has seen the following invested in ongoing financial support to maintain food security:

FUNDING TO SUPPORTED STORES	\$6.32 M
FUNDING FOR INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS	\$1.84 M
LOCAL EMPLOYMENT WAGES	\$29.2 M

## PEOPLE

- ▶ 54 stores across Northern Territory, Western Australia, South Australia, New South Wales and Queensland employing 445 local staff in remote communities
- ▶ 107 store managers
- ▶ Workforce of 56 highly skilled employees in our Darwin and Alice Springs support offices
- ▶ 85% Indigenous employees in remote communities

To successfully deliver Outback Stores' strategic priorities, a diverse, skilled, talented and highly engaged team is required to drive the strategic direction of the business.

The Senior Leadership Team is led by the Chief Executive Officer. The group is responsible for implementing the strategic directions of the business and ensuring key objectives are delivered.

To maximise the ability of staff to contribute to organisational objectives, Outback Stores seeks to:

- ▶ provide clear and obtainable career pathways for aspiring staff
- ▶ retain and develop its workforce
- ▶ attract skilled staff, whose values align with the company's objectives.

## CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

Outback Stores is a wholly-owned Australian Government company with an independent board of directors, sitting within the Prime Minister and Cabinet Portfolio.

Outback Stores' board is comprised of non-executive directors who control and monitor the framework of the business and act to ensure it operates in line with corporate governance requirements and Outback Stores' objectives.

The board members bring strong experience and expertise in retail, legal, logistics, supply chain, finance, health and understanding of Indigenous culture. They meet quarterly to discuss progress and strategy. Each director is appointed by the Minister for Indigenous Australians.

# STRATEGIC FOCUS

## STRATEGIC PILLARS

Guiding principles for delivering our purpose.



## STRATEGIC PRIORITIES FOR 2025-2028

What we will do to achieve our purpose.

- 1 Strive to provide **best practice** in remote retail management
- 2 Focus on improving the **health and nutrition** outcomes for Indigenous Australians
- 3 Deliver positive **economic results** for remote communities
- 4 Deliver **employment, training and personal development** opportunities for local community members
- 5 Work with **commercial principles** to support the longevity of the Outback Stores business



# COOPERATION

## KEY PARTNERSHIPS IN 2024 - 2025

FOOD SECURITY	TRAINING
<p><b>OBJECTIVE</b> Maintain supply of essential goods throughout the year</p> <p><b>APPROACH</b> Ongoing engagement with representatives from communities, suppliers, freight providers, state/territory and national governments. Ongoing assessment and planning for weather and other environmental impacts</p> <p><b>STAKEHOLDERS</b> Individual remote community stores NT Government SA Government WA Government NSW Government QLD Government National Indigenous Australians Agency (NIAA) Suppliers Freight providers</p>	<p><b>OBJECTIVE</b> Offer meaningful employment and career pathways</p> <p><b>APPROACH</b> Provide accredited training as RTO and opportunities for career development</p> <p><b>STAKEHOLDERS</b> Australian Government: - Australian Skills Quality Authority - Department of Education - Department of Employment and Workplace Relations NT Government of Australia: - Department of Industry, Tourism and Trade - Department of Education WA Government: - Department of Training and Workforce Development. Group Training Northern Territory (GTNT) Group</p>
HEALTH & NUTRITION	INFRASTRUCTURE
<p><b>OBJECTIVE</b> Reduced sugar and tobacco consumption and increased sales of fresh fruit, vegetables and water</p> <p><b>APPROACH</b> Promote healthy lifestyle choices and improve the affordability of nutritious food</p> <p><b>STAKEHOLDERS</b> Fruit and vegetable suppliers Indigenous Eye Health/Melbourne University Menzies School of Health Research Monash University Uncle Jimmy Thumbs Up! University of Queensland Sunrise Health</p>	<p><b>OBJECTIVE</b> Help local communities to maintain and improve store infrastructure</p> <p><b>APPROACH</b> Ongoing assessment and investment in identified infrastructure projects. Help stores in carry out regular refurbishment and maintenance work</p> <p><b>STAKEHOLDERS</b> Individual remote community store owners State and Australian governments NIAA Equipment suppliers Building and maintenance contractors</p>





# PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Outback Stores manages retail services on behalf of remote communities. Our key goal is to provide a range of nutritious and affordable food.

We improve the performance of stores by offering sound retail management and Indigenous employment and training.

We achieve our objectives by working closely with our stakeholders, understanding the environments in which we operate, while empowering communities to achieve improved outcomes. The performance criteria in this Corporate Plan will be reported on in Outback Stores' Annual Report for 2023-24.

## STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

The table below outlines Outback Stores' strategic priorities, their accompanying objectives, and the strategic pillars to which they relate. The corporate performance indicators and measures of success relate to our broader strategic priorities and provide a clear way to remain focused on our strategy and track outcomes.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES	OBJECTIVES	SOCIAL	CULTURAL	COMMERCIAL	CORPORATE PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	MEASURES
1. BEST PRACTICE	Continue to develop effective pricing strategies to ensure we lead the remote retail industry in affordability				Engage and assist new remote communities in retail management	3 new store partnerships annually
	Provide a safe and secure work environment for both Outback Stores staff, contractors and the community				Lead pricing affordability in remote community stores	Relevant Basket check
	Develop a culturally connected workforce within our organisation that resonates with the retail stores we support and manage					
2. HEALTH AND NUTRITION	Ensure continuous monitoring and improvement of our existing Health and Nutrition Policy				Reduce the proportion of full sugar soft drinks sold in community stores	2.5% reduction annually
	Improve communication of key social benefits to all stakeholders, regarding health and nutrition outcomes				Reduce the rate of tobacco sales in community stores	5% reduction annually
	Partner with industry stakeholders to enhance our contribution to broader health outcomes in remote communities					
3. ECONOMIC RESULTS	Work with supported and managed stores to reinvest profits from their organisations back into their businesses, in line with their objectives				Deliver financial outcomes as agreed and approved by store board/directors in community stores	85% of stores
	Develop and offer financial services tailored for remote community organisations to assist with record-keeping and governance					
4. EMPLOYMENT, TRAINING AND PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT	Maintain "RTO" status with a view to expand our qualifications and maintain career pathways for our staff				Employ Indigenous team members in remote retail stores in communities	85% of the total staffing
	Continue to provide store employees with career development opportunities, to foster leadership potential within remote communities				Enroll permanent Indigenous employees in accredited training programmes	60% of permanent Indigenous employees
5. COMMERCIAL PRINCIPLES	Seek financial investment opportunities that will maximise commercial benefits for the business				Deliver budgeted outcomes	Exceed or meet operating profit/loss number
	Continually improve business processes to maintain efficiency while reducing operating costs					



# RISK MANAGEMENT

Outback Stores integrates risk management practices into all business processes and operations.

Outback Stores recognises that risk is dynamic and inherent in external and internal operating environments. The company manages this risk by ensuring compatibility between the business strategy, business plan and risk management framework.

## RISK OVERSIGHT

The Audit and Risk Committee supports the board to fulfill its obligations under the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* by providing independent advice to the board on risk appetite, oversight and management. The committee is comprised of Outback Stores board members.

Outback Stores requires all directors, management, employees, volunteers, contractors, consultants, and suppliers acting on its behalf to apply risk management principles and practices in their work areas and to report any risk issues identified.

Within an Enterprise Risk Management (ERM) framework, the following provides a high-level overview of the roles and responsibilities relating to risk management within Outback Stores:

- ▶ Outback Stores board - Overall responsibility for risk management
- ▶ Audit and Risk Committee (A&R) - Provide independent advice to the board on risk management
- ▶ CEO - Compliance with Outback Stores Risk Management Policy and Outback Stores Risk Management Plan
- ▶ CFO - Monitoring of compliance with the risk framework and process
- ▶ All Outback Stores staff - Active management of risk in accordance with Outback Stores Risk Management Policy and Risk Management Plan

SENIOR LEADERSHIP TEAM	AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE	BOARD
Risk identification and documentation	Annual reassessment	Annual reporting from A&R
Monitoring, review and report on register (including identification of emergency risks)	Quarterly review at A&R meetings	Quarterly reporting from A&R
Outcomes of risk identification to inform inputs to internal audit and compliance activities	Quarterly review and monitoring of internal audit plan and reports	Quarterly monitoring from A&R



## ENTERPRISE RISK MANAGEMENT

Outback Stores works within its Enterprise Risk Management (ERM) framework to minimise the effect of uncertainty on its business and objectives.

Outback Stores' risk appetite is articulated through its risk appetite statement, its descriptions of consequence and likelihood, and its matrix for rating risk and its risk register.

Risk tolerances are set at an appropriate level for the company with reference to the company's Risk Management Plan, which outlines the process for monitoring compliance with risk tolerances and any breaches.

ERM is a structured, consistent and continuous process used across Outback Stores at the strategic level, the operational level and the project areas. It is used to identify, assess, decide, respond and report on opportunities and threats that affect the achievement of Outback Stores business objectives (see figure below). Outback Stores risk management activities fit within all quadrants.



## MONITORING AND REVIEW

Outback Stores' ERM framework provides a structured approach to the management of risk, ensuring appropriate systems and processes for ongoing monitoring and review of business risks. This process also ensures that Outback Stores' adopts and maintains continuous improvement in its risk management systems and processes.

The risk register is reviewed quarterly by the Senior Leadership Team and the Audit and Risk Committee, who provide support in the assurance process to the board.

Outback Stores' risk management process is reviewed annually as part of continuous improvement in line with AS/NZS ISO 31000.

The Audit and Risk committee regularly updates the board of risk mitigation plans and activity. It also provides independent advice that satisfactory plans are in place and mitigation activity is being completed in line with the risk register.



# RELEVANT LEGISLATION

## KEY STRATEGIC RISKS 2025-2028

AREA	RISK	MITIGATION	EFFECTS ON OUTBACK STORES (IF UNMITIGATED)
HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELLBEING	* Internal and external safety hazards	* Regular safety incident reporting, including near misses and accidents	* Critical incidents * Closure of stores
LOGISTICS	* Seasonal transport difficulties and inaccessibility	* Advance planning and ordering ahead of wet season * Partnerships with state governments for emergency situations	* Insufficient stock * Food security compromise
GOVERNANCE, LEGAL AND COMPLIANCE	* Fraudulent and corrupt behaviour	* Robust internal governance processes	* Damage to brand and reputation
PEOPLE AND CAPABILITIES	* Failure of employees to meet operational requirements	* Comprehensive induction process and regular skills development training	* Poor performance and disruption of services
COMMUNITY & STAKEHOLDERS	* Failure to meet stakeholder expectations	* Clearly defined expectations and deliverables * Clear and regular communication on outcomes	* Reputational damage
CYBER SECURITY	* Harm or loss resulting from breaches of, or attacks on information systems	* Tactical cybersecurity management plan	* Financial loss * Data loss * Disruption to support services

## The Outback Stores Corporate Plan 2025-2028 aligns with the:

*Corporations Act 2001 (Cth)*

*Competition and Consumer Act 2010 (CCA)*

*Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (EPBC Act)*

*Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Act 2005 (Cth)*

*Public Service Act 1999 (Cth)*

*Auditor-General Act 1997*

*Privacy Act 1988*

*Fair Work Act 2009 (Cth)*

*Safety, Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 1988*

*Work Health and Safety Act 2011*

*Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013*



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