

Remote Pools

2010

A Royal Life Saving review of Swimming Pools
in Remote Areas of the Northern Territory.



Remote Pools

“Royal Life Saving is dedicated to maximising the health, social and economic benefits of swimming pools in remote Indigenous communities...”

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Royal Life Saving Society – Australia (RLSSA) has a long standing commitment to working to achieve the health, social and economic benefits of swimming pools in remote areas. Our track record includes a strong partnership with all levels of government and supportive relationships with communities across the Northern Territory.

This report was commissioned by the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA) and seeks to investigate the issues and opportunities relating to swimming pools in remote areas of the Northern Territory.

There are 18 swimming pools in remote areas across the Northern Territory. These swimming pools service a population exceeding 19,000 people in mainly remote Indigenous communities, but some are also located in small regional towns.

There is considerable evidence that swimming pools have significant health benefits for Indigenous children living in remote communities. Further work is needed to quantify the social and economic benefits that most feel exist.

Through the implementation of strategies including: key stakeholder interviews; formal and informal meetings; as well as workshops and conferences, many of which were conducted in the 18 communities with swimming pools, RLSSA sought to identify strategies for improving the management and operation of those swimming pools.

Additionally, RLSSA conducted swimming pool safety assessments to ascertain safety compliance against relevant standards and guidelines. The results of these assessments provide many insights including a high rate of non-compliance against safety benchmarks, an absence of business or risk management planning, and large gaps in workforce development strategies.

The overriding feel of those who participated in this investigation was that without a coordinated response to managing swimming pools in remote areas, talk of health, social or economic benefits was largely academic, as swimming pools must be accessible, functioning and well integrated into community life for any such benefits to be realised. This report makes 19 separate recommendations across each of the key areas. RLSSA intends to work with all key stakeholders to achieve the outcomes sought through these recommendations.

As a general overriding principle RLSSA believes that swimming pools must be considered a core community service, with potential benefits that reach beyond the simple provision of recreational swimming opportunities for children and interested adults.

A shift in mindset is required to realise the view that swimming pools are a social asset, with strong links to a range of outcomes in areas of health, employment, youth leadership and family relations.

Swimming pools require a budget allocation from all levels of government that values them beyond their basic ongoing maintenance cost, and includes the costs of service provision, community engagement and infrastructure revitalisation. User pays and other cost recovering systems need urgent investigation to ensure that all parties, including community members contribute to sustainable swimming pool plans.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Royal Life Saving Society – Australia in Remote Communities

The Royal Life Saving Society - Australia (RLSSA) has been working with remote Indigenous communities for many years. Our focus has been on:

“Maximising the health, social and economic benefits of swimming pools in remote Indigenous communities...”

Our work in this area is driven by our vision that:

- Remote swimming pools are managed by Indigenous people who perform a variety of roles including facility management, supervision, instruction and health promotion.
- Remote swimming pools are the hub of community activity including effective use by the school, sport and recreation, health clinic, child care, aged care and council.
- Remote swimming pools are providing a range of community development activities including supporting community leadership, youth development, family relationships and health.

RLSSA aims to ensure that the primary outcomes of improved child health and school attendance are achieved, and the opportunities to influence a broad range of social, health and economic outcomes are identified and strategies implemented to address them.

RLSSA has led a range of initiatives over the past six years which aim to support remote communities. Since 2003, RLSSA through the Remote Pools Program has advocated the benefits of swimming pools in remote areas and worked towards building more sustainable practice in communities across the Northern Territory.

The Remote Pools program supports remote communities striving towards maximising the benefits of the community swimming pool by:

- Engaging and developing links between Shire Council and community agencies
- Building community leadership, employability, skills and training
- Facilitating strong networks across remote Indigenous communities
- Promoting community events, programs and physical activity
- Safety and risk management practices

In addition to the Remote Pools Program, RLSSA has implemented the following programs:

- Facilitation of Remote Swimming Pool Conferences in 2005, 2007 & 2009
- Nuiyu Aquatic Recreation Project 2006 – 2009 – a community development program aimed at increasing community wide physical activity
- Maningrida Capacity Planning Project – aimed at supporting the community in the first six months of swimming pool operation
- Various training and participation based initiatives

1.2. Project Rationale

In May 2009, RLSSA was engaged by FaHCSIA to conduct an investigation into the needs and issues being faced by remote Northern Territory communities with swimming pools.

The specific objectives of the project were:

1. Engagement with community and key stakeholders to conduct an appraisal of remote swimming pools.
2. Conduct a national conference for people working within remote swimming pools, funding bodies, community members, government representatives and other stakeholders to identify key issues and barriers to sustainability.
3. Support for remote swimming pool staff in collaboration with employers. Areas to be covered include technical operations, skill development and community engagement.
4. Provide education, training and leadership programs as negotiated with stakeholders, including exploring opportunities to implement a Pool Operations Course.
5. Seek to develop a Memorandum of Understanding between RLSSA, the Shire Councils and the Local Government Association of the Northern Territory (LGANT) to facilitate a whole-of-government approach to remote swimming pools in the Northern Territory.

The rationale for the project included the notion that all three tiers of Government and the private sector have contributed varying amounts of time, funds and management expertise to the construction and management of swimming pools in remote Indigenous communities.

The project sought to establish the current situation with respect to key issues of safety, management and usage of all 18 swimming pools in the Northern Territory (Appendix 1). These swimming pools support a remote population of over 19,000 people.

1.3. Methodology

RLSSA conducted research into the operational state of swimming pools in remote and regional communities in the Northern Territory. Research strategies included:

- Key Stakeholder Interviews
- Formal and Informal Meetings
- Aquatic Facility Safety Assessments
- Facilitation of a Workshop of Key Stakeholders
- Consideration of Related Literature
- Conduct of a Remote Pools Conference

A list of the organisations consulted is at Appendix 2.

This approach provided for the collation of information related to key areas including: the current state of swimming pool infrastructure, safety considerations, extension of community usage, education and training needs, identification of good practice, and more generally raising awareness among key stakeholders of the potential benefits of a coordinated approach to swimming pool management.

In 2009, RLSSA conducted community surveys which included stakeholder interviews, formal and informal meetings, and aquatic facility safety assessments at 18 remote swimming pools to identify key issues. The 18 communities targeted in this component of the investigation were:

- Alyangula
- Batchelor
- Gunbalanya
- Kintore
- Nauiyu Nambiyu
- Ngukurr
- Peppimenarti
- Santa Teresa
- Wadeye
- Areyonga
- Borroloola
- Jabiru
- Maningrida
- Nguiu
- Nhulunbuy
- Pirlangimpi
- Tennant Creek
- Yuendumu

Aquatic facility safety assessments were conducted at each of the community swimming pools, monitoring compliance with the Royal Life Saving Guidelines for Safe Pool Operation. The Assessment covers key elements such as safety signage, operational and emergency planning and supervision strategies. It is intended to provide feedback and improvement plans to swimming pool managers.

Information collected from these community surveys was discussed in further detail at stakeholder meetings including those conducted with key management at Shire Council level, workshoped throughout the Remote Pools Conference in Darwin September 2009 and analysed by the project team.

This report makes 19 recommendations for consideration by key stakeholders. These are provided within each section, and in summary form at the end of this document. The intended audience for these recommendations spans all tiers of government; non-government organisations, business, and the communities themselves.

Case studies are used in short form throughout the report to reinforce key points and to link to stakeholder experience. These case studies represent best practice and/or ideas that merit further consideration.

THREE LONG MONTHS ON THE ROAD

Royal Life Saving Society – Northern Territory Executive Director, Annette ‘Floss’ Roberts didn’t quite realise the scale of the task set in the three months between July and September 2009.

The research project demanded that she travel to 18 communities, spread across the NT to build relationships, conduct meetings, assessments and to collect information on how swimming pools were performing.

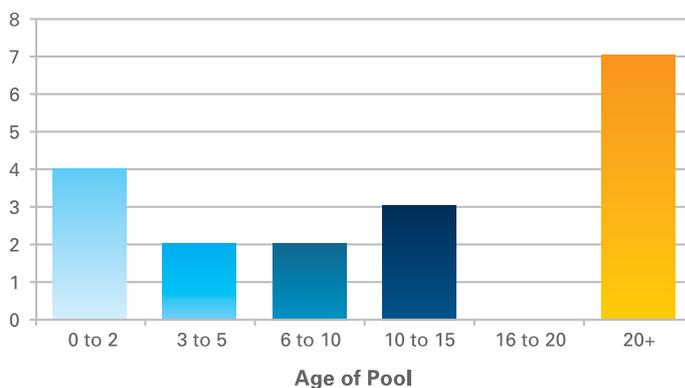
Whilst the conditions were generally cooler, tracking down key people during a time when most Territorians are making the most of the dry proved as challenging as the 10,000’s of KM travelled.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1. Remote Swimming Pools in the Northern Territory

The management complexity and benefits of swimming pools in remote communities has been an issue for policy makers in the Northern Territory for many years. Seven of the 18 pools in the study were built over 20 years ago, with five of those older than 35 years. Santa Teresa swimming pool, built in 1972, was the first built in a remote Indigenous community. [Table 1]

Table 1: Age of Swimming Pools in the Northern Territory



In recent years, the jointly funded Australian and Northern Territory Governments’ *Pools in Remote Areas* program resulted in the construction of three new swimming pools and further debate on sustainable swimming pool management. Whilst the construction of these swimming pools reinforce their value to communities in the eyes of many internal and external stakeholders, their ongoing sustainability and the challenges of managing other aged or deteriorating swimming pool assets make further work in this area vital.

Several Federal and Territory Government policies and initiatives offer opportunities to improve the services and sustainability of swimming pools in remote areas. Initiatives such as Closing the Gap, National Remote Service Delivery Partnership and the Northern Territory Shire reforms must be considered in designing and implementing remote swimming pool strategies in the Northern Territory.

Another relevant Government initiative is the Northern Territory Government’s Territory Growth Town Plan that seeks to develop the 20 largest remote communities into strong towns boasting services and amenities like those found in similar sized towns elsewhere in Australia.

2.2. Closing the Gap on Indigenous Disadvantage

In 2008, the Australian Government adopted the Closing the Gap policy in response to overwhelming evidence of significant disadvantage among Indigenous Australians in terms of life expectancy, employment, health, education and economic outcomes. Closing the Gap is a significant collaboration among Government agencies, community groups and the business sector.

The Council of Australian Governments (COAG) is the principal forum through which Australia's Commonwealth, State and Territory governments are advancing their partnership towards Closing the Gap.

Through COAG, Governments have committed to the six Closing the Gap targets to address Indigenous disadvantage across urban, rural and remote areas. To support this work, COAG agreed to seven strategic platforms or 'building blocks' as a means of meeting these targets:

- Early childhood
- Schooling
- Health
- Economic participation
- Healthy home
- Safe communities
- Governance and leadership

A key component of the Australian Government's response to Closing the Gap is the National Partnership Agreement on Remote Service Delivery. This program will support improvements to the delivery of services across 29 remote locations with the largest concentrations of Indigenous Australians in remote Australia. A bilateral agreement between the Federal and the Northern Territory Governments covers remote service delivery in 15 communities, of which six have existing swimming pools. [Table 2]

Table 2: Fifteen Northern Territory Remote Service Delivery communities

| Community | Shire Council | Swimming pool |
|--------------|----------------|---------------|
| Hermannsburg | MacDonnell | No |
| Yuendumu | Central Desert | Yes |
| Lajamanu | Central Desert | No |
| Ngukurr | Roper Gulf | Yes |
| Numbulwar | Roper Gulf | No |
| Angurugu | East Arnhem | No |
| Umbakumba | East Arnhem | No |
| Yirrkala | East Arnhem | No |
| Gapuwiyak | East Arnhem | No |
| Galiwin'ku | East Arnhem | No |
| Milingimbi | East Arnhem | No |
| Maningrida | West Arnhem | Yes |
| Gunbalanya | West Arnhem | Yes |
| Nguiu | Tiwi Islands | Yes |
| Wadeye | Victoria Daly | Yes |

Convincing all levels of Government that swimming pools support outcomes in each of these strategic platforms is critical to securing a more sustainable future for communities with existing swimming pools. Strengthening the performance of existing swimming pools may also outline the case for the construction of new swimming pools.

2.3. Shire Reform in the Northern Territory

Prior to 2008, swimming pools in remote communities were managed by a collection of community government councils, small business and community groups. Following the reform of local government in the Northern Territory, responsibility for many of the swimming pools has fallen to respective Shire Councils and their local boards.

Stakeholder meetings established a high degree of concern about sustainability, infrastructure costs and future business plans for swimming pools among Shire Council staff.

2.4. Literature

As part of this research, RLSSA sought to clarify the benefits of swimming pools to Indigenous people living in remote areas. The following is an overview of the available literature, including extracts from a piece of work completed by RLSSA in 2008.

In an earlier paper titled Facilities, Programs and Services for Water Safety of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders in Rural and Remote Australia¹ RLSSA conducted a literature review. This review provided strong insights into the literature covering the areas of impacts of swimming pools in indigenous populations.

Water Safety for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People

Swimming pools in communities across Australia are used to teach children skills in swimming, water safety and lifesaving. RLSSA plays a lead role in drowning prevention and water safety in Australia, and is extremely concerned that the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander drowning rate is up to four times higher than that of the general Australian population.²

In the case of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders living in remote areas, the risk of drowning is 1.9 times higher for males and 10.5 times higher for females than for their counterparts in metropolitan areas of Australia³. This may be explained by increased exposure to water hazards, but also through the lack of availability in educational program to build water safety awareness and basic skills in survival swimming. The issue is broader than swimming pools, as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in remote communities are known to swim in nearly any available water source for recreation and entertainment. This has serious implications for their health and safety⁴ and is identified as a key issue in the Australian Water Safety Strategy 2008-2011, which states that the water safety needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people must be met through the provision of facilities and water safety programs and services.²

¹ Rubin T, Franklin RC, Scarr J, Peden A (2008). Issues Paper. Facilities, Programs and Services for the Water Safety of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders in Rural and Remote Australia. Australian Water Safety Council: Sydney [Secretariat: Royal Life Saving Society Australia, PO Box 558, Broadway NSW 2007, Australia].

² National Public Health Partnership. The National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Safety Promotion Strategy. Canberra: Department of Health and Ageing, 2005:28

³ Australian Water Safety Council. National Water Safety Plan 2004-2007. Sydney: Australian Water Safety Council, 2004.

⁴ Peart A, Szoeko C. Recreational Water Use in Remote Indigenous Communities: Co-operative Research Centre for Water Quality and Treatment, 1998:47.

In response to high rates of child drowning, the Northern Territory Government introduced a system where residents have access to five free swimming and water safety lessons. This program is designed to improve access to and raise awareness of the importance of such lessons and is one area in which swimming pool operators can secure necessary funding. More information can be found at www.watersafety.nt.gov.au.

Benefits of Pools in Remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities

Benefits to child and community health have been the key justification of the construction of swimming pools in remote communities. Much of this evidence stems from the work of the Telethon Institute for Child Health Research which looked at a number of communities in Western Australia.

Key benefits to health found in the literature include:

- Regular access to chlorinated swimming pools had a number of health benefits, including a reduction in the prevalence of skin sores (pyoderma), eye problems, and ear disease (otitis media and associated tympanic membrane perforations)⁵.
- Skin sores are known to be related to glomerulonephritis (kidney disease) and rheumatic heart disease, both very common in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population⁵.
- A study in 1999 documented significant reductions in the prevalence of pyoderma when children swam at least once a week⁶.
- In the first three years of the study the incidence of pyoderma dropped from more than 60% to about 20%. Other less prevalent skin infections included abscesses, fungal infections and scabies.⁶
- A child health study conducted in a remote community in Western Australia between 2001-2005 after construction of a swimming pool found the following:
 - 51% decrease in skin disease in children between 2001-2005 that was attributed to swimming pool exposure
 - 44% decrease in the incidence of ear infections
 - 41% reduction in antibiotic prescriptions in the years following the opening of the swimming pool
 - 63% decrease in respiratory diseases
- Swimming pools provide opportunities for increased physical activity in remote communities; important where changes in lifestyle and diet have made Indigenous people more susceptible to conditions such as obesity, type 2 diabetes and cardiovascular disease.⁷

An evaluation of the sustainability and benefits of swimming pools in the Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara Lands (APY Lands) in South Australia⁸ completed in 2009 found that the three newly built swimming pools had had a positive impact on children's skin, but had not yet had an impact on ear health.

⁵ Telethon Institute for Child Health Research. The Swimming Pool Study 2000-2006: Telethon Institute for Child Health Research, 2006:12.

⁶ Audera C. Swimming Pools in Aboriginal Communities: Health Related Issues. Swimming pools in remote Indigenous communities: Some basic information for planning a pool: National Centre for Epidemiology and Population Health, 1999:15

⁷ Chester L, Gibbs T. Media Release - Remote pools boost Aboriginal child health: Telethon Institute of Child Health Research, 2006.

⁸ An evaluation of the sustainability and benefits of swimming pools in the Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara Lands (APY Lands) in South Australia. Department of Health and Ageing, 2009

The report further recommended that funding be allocated for training, employment and housing of swimming pools managers to provide for more consistent and sustainable service provision. This evaluation also looked closely at the impact of 'No School, No Pool' and found that whilst it was a policy well supported by community members, there was little or no evidence to suggest that it impacted directly on school attendance.

It is important to note that all the identified studies reinforce that swimming pools in remote Indigenous communities can assist in reducing the enormous burden of infectious disease on the assumption that they are well managed, well maintained and are accessible to community members for extended periods throughout the year.

There have been limited studies into the social and economic benefits of swimming pools in remote communities, with the key issue being their contribution to employment and leadership development and well being, particularly of young people.

In a report published by the Education and Health Standing Committee of the Western Australian Legislative Assembly in 2006⁹ training and employment opportunities are explored. The report states that... "Swimming pool management training courses are an ideal employment pathway allowing an individual to obtain portable work skills and qualifications that can be used in mainstream society".

A report commissioned by Department of Education, Science and Training in 2004 found significant gaps between the literacy and numeracy outcomes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and the general student population. Fewer students living in remote areas of Australia reach national benchmarks for literacy and numeracy than those in metropolitan areas.¹⁰

Current educational discourse identifies the need for flexible educational practices that reflect the cultural and linguistic diversity of communities and engage students in the learning experience.¹¹ Use of the community swimming pool in education is one such practice that may be beneficial for school attendance, retention rates, and student learning and engagement.

An investigation conducted by RLSSA into the links between educational programs and swimming pools by Northern Territory schools, and specifically the notion of 'No School, No Pool' found that there is no uniform approach to strengthening the link between educational outcomes and swimming pool use.

The report recommended that the ideal model for the successful implementation of 'No School, No Pool' is characterised by:

- Whole of community support (monetary resourcing and support of parents, teachers, schools, swimming pool operators, community leadership);
- Regular opening hours of swimming pool facilities during the week and on weekends;
- Well-maintained swimming pool facilities;
- Appropriately trained local staff to implement, manage and enforce the program consistently;
- Incorporation of 'No School, No Pool' into broader school attendance strategies;

- Understanding of the ethical implications of restricting swimming pool access and the application of a considered and cautious approach to ensuring all students are treated fairly; and
- Locally interpreted programs to ensure specific needs of individual communities are addressed.

The link between health outcomes in children and swimming pool use has been identified earlier in this report. In order for these outcomes to be realised, children require regular access. This access may be achieved during school, after hours and weekends, and requires a more systematic approach than is currently evidenced in Northern Territory communities.

Further work in the area of quantifying the economic and social benefits of swimming pools to Indigenous people living in remote areas must be supported. Given the cost of building and maintaining such facilities, economic models that seek to show the impact of improvements in health and wellbeing on costs in other areas may assist in justifying expanding funding and revenue.

3. SUSTAINABILITY AND FUNDING

Sustainability and funding is central to the debate about the future of swimming pools in remote areas. With the exception of Western Australia (WA), where the State government funds all operational and staffing costs for swimming pools in remote communities, it is clear that communities, Shire Councils and associated organisations are in great need of assistance, both technical and funding.

3.1. Existing Funding for Swimming Pools

Current funding for swimming pools can be divided into three areas:

1. Funds identified in Shire Council management plans
2. Funds secured from Government, State and Federal, for infrastructure and safety improvements
3. Funds secured for programs, services and equipment

All parties in the research believed that swimming pools were underfunded and under resourced, although there was no consensus on where and how further funds were to be secured. Community members felt it was the role of the Shire Council, the Shire Council looked to Northern Territory or Federal Government, and the Northern Territory Government looked to the Federal Government or placed responsibility back on the Shire Council.

What is clear is that swimming pools in remote areas are in desperate need of both funding and assistance towards more sustainable business practices. However, random and ad hoc funding is known to be counterproductive to the long term sustainability of swimming pools. The research identified the need to link any future funding to more specific objectives in sustainability, safety and community outcomes.

Other sources of funding and resources that can supplement or support the swimming pool operational budget must be identified at a National, Territory, and Shire Council level. A good example is the Northern Territory Government Free Water Safety Lessons program which could be used more effectively to increase program provision.

3.2. Viewing the Swimming Pool as a Core Community Service

Swimming pools in the Northern Territory suffer from ambiguity in terms of the contribution to community wellbeing and as a venue capable of delivering a range of services across all community demographics. Currently rated as a 'non-core' service, the management of a swimming pool that provides for this layered approach to community outcomes requires a reprioritisation. Shifting the swimming pool to 'core or essential service', including a designated budget allocation that values a range of outcomes will do much to remove barriers to achieving more sustainable outcomes.

All participants in the research were asked the question "Is the swimming pool an essential service in your community, and explain your reason?". Responses to this question were overwhelmingly positive, particularly from community members and swimming pool workers. However, one cohort that struggled with this question was Shire Council Chief Executive Officers (CEO) and senior management.

⁹ Education and Health Standing Committee. Swimming Pools Program in Remote Communities. Perth: Education and Health Standing Committee, 2006:56.

¹⁰ Department of Education, Science, Training. National Report to Parliament on Indigenous Education and Training, 2004. In: Department of Education Science and Training, editor: Australian Government, 2006:187.

¹¹ Ministerial Council on Education Employment, Training, Youth Affairs. Australian Directions in Indigenous Education 2005-2008: Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs, 2006:34.

¹² Rubin, T, Franklin, R.C, Scarr, J, & Peden, A, 'No School No Pool': Utilising the community pool for effective health promotion, 2008, The Royal Life Saving Society Australia

3.3. Valuing the impact on other Government Budgets

Earlier in this report the authors identified the evidence in support of improved health outcomes for children. While it appears logical that improved health outcomes result in lower costs in providing individual and population health services, research is required to quantify such gains. These savings may come indirectly via reduced demand for primary health services, or more directly through reductions in the costs for treatment, medication and therapy.

3.4. User Pays and other Funding Models

User pays or other commercial activities are two methods often cited in discussions around increasing the sustainability of swimming pools. The most often mentioned examples of this include fees charged for recreational swimming or the establishment of a canteen to sell food to swimming pool users and/or wider customer groups.

The research identified that 12 of the 16 swimming pools charge entry fees to various groups. These fees ranged from \$1.00 to \$4.40 per visit. Schools have been identified as a major user group. In many cases schools contributed to swimming pool upkeep or maintenance, rather than contributing a per user per visit basis. Recreational swimmers, generally from the adult population, were most often charged fees for use, and were often provided with opportunities to do this outside of standard operational hours.

Whilst half of the swimming pools have a canteen amenity, only four were in good working order. Discussions with stakeholders about the barriers to successfully delivering this type of service, found that it may be counterproductive to the health agenda, distracted the swimming pool workforce from their core responsibility, and created problems with stock control and money handling.

Business planning processes will assist swimming pool operators to identify specific strategies to generate income from their activities. These strategies may or may not include user pays and other commercial activities, but need to be established, monitored and evaluated in the context of business planning in order to ensure that sustainable models are developed in the future. This is discussed in more detail at section 4.2.

3.5. Recommendations

It is recommended that:

1. Governments work together with key stakeholders including community members, Shire Councils, peak bodies and non-government organisations to develop a coordinated approach to the sustainable management and safe operation of swimming pools in remote Indigenous communities across the Northern Territory.
2. Shire Councils reprioritise the swimming pool as a core community service and reflect this in planning and budgetary processes.
3. Territory and Federal Governments identify funding streams that encourage increased service levels, building local capacity to manage and utilise swimming pools.
4. A cost benefit analysis assessing the potential social and health impact that swimming pools in remote Indigenous communities have on government expenditure is undertaken.

4. MANAGEMENT AND PLANNING

Management and planning, particularly safety planning, remains a key area for improvement in swimming pools in the Northern Territory. Clarity in the management and resourcing of swimming pools was found to be a significant issue that impacts on availability, usage and impact on community outcomes.

The research identified the following key areas:

- Weaknesses in Business Planning
- Strengthening Operational Planning
- Benefits of Regular Aquatic Facility Safety Assessments
- Supporting Sustainable Practice
- Fostering Workforce Development Strategies

Prior to the discussion of these areas, a snapshot is provided of key points identified in the community surveys and stakeholder meetings.

4.1. Snapshot of Community Surveys and Stakeholder Meetings

Feedback from community surveys and stakeholder meetings in relation to management and planning highlighted the following:

- Only 2/18 swimming pools have a business plan
- Only 4/18 swimming pools have a full-time manager
- A further 4/18 have part-time managers
- Only 9/18 swimming pools have an operational budget
- Four major issues were reported by key stakeholders:
 - A lack of funding and budgets
 - An absence of business planning
 - Large gaps in reporting systems
 - A lack of budget for designated staff

Many of the problems described by stakeholders are generally linked in part to an absence of adequate resourcing or sustainable business planning. Responsibility for this is commonly identified as belonging to the Shire Council, although there is a general tendency to reinforce the need for external funding and grants in areas such as infrastructure improvement, maintenance and staffing.

Full-time swimming pool managers are absent in 14/18 communities, indicating large gaps in human resource capacity at many facilities. Many stakeholders pointed to the problems when responsibility rests with a workforce already overloaded with responsibilities in sport and recreation.

4.2. Weaknesses in Business Planning

A lack of business planning or weaknesses in current planning systems was identified consistently by key stakeholders throughout the research process. Community Leaders, Administrators and Swimming Pool Workers are known to be concerned with methods and models to support the efficient management of swimming pools.

The stated barriers to achieving stronger outcomes in business planning included: ambiguity in reporting systems; gaps in business planning skills and knowledge; and limitations in the availability of human resources.

Much of this may be a factor influenced by recent local government changes, and uncertainty concerning the swimming pool as an essential community service. A greater focus on planning for best practice operation and workforce planning, and other business planning strategies may contribute greatly to improving outcomes.

4.3. Strengthening Operational Planning

Operational plans are distinct from business plans in that they guide key functional activities that are implemented by the swimming pool workforce. They are seen as essential tools in safety, but also support succession planning and the building of deeper community level skills in swimming pool management.

The research identified significant gaps in the suitability and availability of operational plans in the majority of swimming pools. Quality and useability of the documentation impacted on skill development, caused prolonged periods of inoperability and in some case consisted solely of manufacturer guidelines for plant and equipment.

4.4. Benefits of Regular Aquatic Facility Pool Safety Assessments

RLSSA provides key safety advice to the managers and operators of Aquatic Facilities in Australia. Through programs such as the Guidelines for Safe Pool Operation, and the Aquatic Facility Safety Assessments, RLSSA seeks to monitor and lift standards in key areas including signage, chemical storage, supervision and emergency procedures.

Aquatic Facility Safety Assessments were conducted at each of the 18 swimming pools in this report. The Swimming Pool Safety Assessment is a facility auditing system developed by RLSSA and used to benchmark safety compliance and management efficiency against a set of key criteria. This approach has widespread industry acceptance as providing a basis for facility improvement.

These findings show significant barriers to wider usage of existing swimming pools in all but the most recently constructed.

Further, none of the 18 swimming pools had a risk management plan in place. Risk management plans are a key component of the swimming pool's operational plan and identify specific strategies to ensure safety and security of the swimming pool patrons, workforce and those living and working in close proximity. Government and other donor funding should be contingent on swimming pool owner/operators meeting a set of safety standards. The RLSSA Aquatic Facility Safety Assessment is one strategy to monitor and improve safety standards. But a balance must be found.

4.5. Supporting Sustainable Practice

Water and energy conservation will become increasingly important as swimming pools across the Northern Territory face increased costs, as well as an obligation to meet 'Green' targets set by an increasingly environmentally aware set of stakeholders.

Research identified several issues in terms of water and energy use. In their current format, and with likely changes in water and energy costs, swimming pools have the potential to add to the financial burden of the changing regulatory environment, as well as impact negatively on sustainability more generally.

In more than one case, the misuse of water was leading to inefficient practice, as well as some potential environmental damage due to grey water being dumped into the local river system.

'Green' swimming pools utilise a range of technologies to minimise their environmental impact. These strategies include water saving devices such as reticulation systems and solar energy systems for heating. Investment in such devices provides dual benefits of contribution to more sustainable practice, as well as reducing long term costs of water and energy.

4.6. Fostering Workforce Development Strategies

Commonly the swimming pool workforce consists of: swimming pool management; staff directly employed in roles such as lifeguards, swimming and water safety instructors; ground maintenance; and those working directly for other agencies and indirectly contributing to swimming pool outcomes.

In remote communities these roles were found to be performed commonly by the same individual, and in many cases they performed additional community roles including Sport and Recreation Managers and Youth Diversion Officers.

Shortages in qualified staff are identified as a key barrier, with many swimming pools having untrained staff or a single qualified worker. This not only places considerable pressure on those resources but poses significant safety risks to swimming pool patrons.

The research found significant gaps in the training and induction plans of swimming pool employees. This, coupled with high rates of staff turn-over, presented many challenges to expanding the paid and volunteer workforce.

Training the local workforce in lifeguarding, instructing and technical swimming pool operations remains a key challenge, and more sustainable systems must be investigated including the use of community mentors, and longer term programs such as traineeships.

INNOVATION IN NGUKURR

The community of Ngukurr has found an innovative way to extend the range and quality of services provided to residents. Using the Community Development Employment Program (CDEP), the Roper Gulf Shire Council's workforce at the Ngukurr sport and recreation service has been expanded to provide transitional experiences in key swimming pool activities such as supervision, instruction and operation.

Community Stakeholders reported that the system of mentoring and workplace learning has helped young Indigenous community members develop practical skills, as well as highly valuable skills in confidence, communication and basic leadership. The Roper Gulf Shire Council rotates CDEP participants through the sport and recreation service, as did several other Shire Councils, the difference appears to be in the mentoring that takes place by both the services and swimming pool managers.

4.7. Recommendations

It is recommended that:

5. Governments/Peak bodies work collaboratively with key stakeholders to develop templates and processes that facilitate business and operational planning in a manner that reduces barriers due to weaknesses in literacy.
6. Business and operational plans be developed, implemented and monitored in each of the Shire Councils where swimming pools exist.
7. Shire Councils, swimming pool owners/operators undertake annual Aquatic Facility Safety Assessments, and implement swimming pool improvement plans as part of a safety maintenance program.
8. Governments fund the investigation of innovative water and energy saving technologies, community education and awareness in order to improve sustainable practice and reduce ongoing operational expenses.

5. INFRASTRUCTURE

Swimming pool and associated infrastructure was a key component of the investigation. Facilities range in age from those built in the 1950's to several less than two years of age.

Key components of this section are:

- Asset Management Planning
- Ensuring Safety Compliance
- Guidelines for Remote Swimming Pools
- Construction Guidelines for Swimming Pools in Remote Areas

Prior to the discussion of these points, a snapshot is provided of key points identified in the community surveys and stakeholder meetings.

5.1. Snapshot of Community Surveys and Stakeholder Meetings

In the area of infrastructure the key points from community surveys, stakeholder meetings and Aquatic Facility Safety Assessments are highlighted below in Table 3.

Table 3: Aquatic Facility Safety Assessments Findings Summary

| Key Area | Summary of Findings |
|--------------------------------|--|
| Age | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 7/18 swimming pools are older than 20 years - 6/18 have been built in the past five years |
| Responsibility | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 14/18 swimming pools are the responsibility of the local Shire Council - 1/18 - Yuendumu is soon to be transferred to the Shire Council - The remaining three are run by local organisations and clubs |
| Overall Condition (Scale 1-10) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 3/18 swimming pools were rated at eight or higher where 10 is the highest (all newly built) - 11/18 swimming pools were rated six or less, where six is considered to be requiring a medium degree of remedial work - 3/18 swimming pools were found to have significant structural issues |
| Specific Issues | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 12/18 swimming pools rated less than 50% in the aquatic facility safety assessment conducted by RLSS-NT (where 60% is considered an acceptable pass rate) - 0/18 swimming pools reported risk management plans - Toilets and shower facilities were found to be a major issue at 7 swimming pools - Red dust was found to be a problem at all sites in the central desert - 4/18 swimming pools had inadequate fencing, a significant safety issue - 15/18 swimming pools had significant deficiencies in safety signage - Half of the swimming pools do not have a maintenance plan - 7/18 swimming pools have poor chemical storage - 11/18 swimming pools have been subject to infrastructure improvement over the past 5 years - 1/18 swimming pools schedules and completes an annual aquatic facility safety assessment |

5.2. Focusing on Asset Management Planning

The research uncovered a significant amount of operational stress on swimming pool infrastructure across the Northern Territory. In many cases the infrastructure was in poor condition, suffering from a range of short and medium term maintenance problems. In some cases, swimming pool management had adjusted work practices in an attempt to keep it open for community access, and in other cases the swimming pool was or had been closed for extended periods.

While the responsibility of general maintenance and small equipment or plant upgrades commonly falls to the Shire Council, the Australian and Northern Territory governments commonly contribute to larger scale upgrades and replacement of plant and equipment. This is mainly due to the costs of such upgrades, and in many cases the absence of long term asset management plans. This places significant pressures on all parties and could be relieved in part through the creation and implementation of improved asset management systems.

Findings highlight the lack of clarity around ownership, particularly in terms of Shire Councils' perspectives on their long term obligations with respect to swimming pools. Further consideration and support to achieve a culture and practice of asset planning for swimming pools is needed in order to strengthen capacity in this area.

5.3. Ensuring Safety Compliance

Research indicates that a high proportion of existing swimming pools fail to comply with basic safety standards. Deficiencies range from failures in appropriate storage of chemicals to absence of safety signage and amenities blocks that have the potential to endanger swimming pool users.

Research also indicates that in many cases poor design and/or construction methods contribute to increasing cost and complexity to the community throughout the swimming pool's operational life. Newly built swimming pools, using substandard plant and equipment, have resulted in considerable additional infrastructure as well as operational costs. This places further burden on both the workforce and the community.

Participants in the research were highly supportive of the simple notion that swimming pools in remote communities must be considered 'commercial' facilities and that the supplementation of home swimming pool plant and equipment during the design and construction process should be eliminated.

5.4. Guidelines for Remote Swimming Pools

Key Stakeholders questioned the need for specific guidelines covering the context and the sustainability of swimming pools in remote areas. The current version of the Guidelines for Safe Pool Operation provides an important basis for safety and operation, although some advantages in having a contextualised version were identified.

A tailored set of Guidelines for Remote Swimming Pools would provide supportive mechanisms for those managing swimming pools in remote areas. While the core content of these documents should be based on the current Guidelines for Safe Pool Operation, a degree of contextualisation that looks at factors such as the operational environment, user profiles and service delivery should be considered.

5.5. Construction Guidelines for Swimming Pools in Remote Areas

Lessons learned from a number of recently constructed swimming pools, as well as issues expressed by key stakeholders, point to the need for better planning of all future design, construction and tendering arrangements. There is also a need to collaborate across jurisdictions, as work in the area of remote swimming pool construction continues in Queensland, South Australia and Western Australia.

Long delays in construction and in some cases the immediate requirement for significant retro-fitting of newly constructed swimming pools places considerable pressure on community, Shire Council and Government resources. These delays have also been responsible for eroding wider community support.

The harsh operational environment, coupled with the remoteness of some swimming pools, necessitates more than the construction of a domestic swimming pool solution in the overwhelming majority of situations. Failures and/or excessive running costs impact significantly on the sustainability of these and future swimming pools.

Construction guidelines would greatly assist key stakeholders, particularly those at Shire Council and local community levels, throughout the process of planning and monitoring the construction of a new swimming pool. Consideration to the development of an approved or preferred supplier panel to guide communities in the selection of the range of suppliers required to construct and maintain these swimming pools should be given.

5.6. Recommendations

It is recommended that:

9. Governments facilitate the development of asset management planning systems, tools and training to enhance Shire Council abilities to manage the short, medium and long term requirements of swimming pools in remote areas.
10. Funding is allocated to bring all existing swimming pools up to a designated safety standard, including safety signage, chemical storage, security, surveillance and amenities.
11. Specific Guidelines for the Management of Swimming Pools in Remote Areas be developed.
12. Specific guidelines for the Design and Construction of Swimming Pools in Remote Areas are developed as a high priority.
13. A panel of approved suppliers of swimming pool related services be identified to ease the burden and create efficient service provision.
14. Funding for swimming pools is linked to safety benchmarks, as well as commercial construction standards.

6. SOCIAL CAPACITY

Swimming pools are known to contribute to community wellbeing and the development of social infrastructure through the provision of programs, recreational activities, events and employment pathways for young people.

Several programs have attempted to support community outcomes beyond those directly attributable to swimming pool programming.

These include:

- Knowledge Transfer and Exchange across Communities
- Supporting Community Role in Decision Making
- Delivering Support Programs
- Youth, Family and Aged Specific Programming
- Employment Pathways

One such program was the Nauiyu Aquatic Recreation Project that was conducted from 2007 to 2009 in the community of Nauiyu Nambiyu. The project was funded by the Department of Health and Ageing Building Healthy Communities Program and sought to increase physical activity through swimming pool use. Key strategies included the employment of a local person to facilitate a community based project committee and stimulate collaboration across key community agencies. Whilst a range of external factors impacted negatively on the project, there was strong community support for the program.

Prior to the discussion of these points, a snapshot is provided of key points identified in the community surveys and stakeholder meetings.

6.1. Snapshot of Community Surveys and Stakeholder Meetings

In the area of social capacity the following points are highlighted from the community surveys and stakeholder meetings:

- 0/18 swimming pools have training and development plans
- 6/18 swimming pools did not have qualified staff
- 10/18 swimming pools are sole operators, and have no access to relief staff
- The most commonly mentioned barrier to more sustainable practice was access to qualified staff, followed by irregular operating hours and poor signage
- School groups are the primary users in 9/18 swimming pools
- 1/18 swimming pool is accessed by the health clinic

6.2. Knowledge Transfer and Exchange across Communities

Over the past five years, RLSSA has facilitated a network of swimming pool managers and other interested parties. This remote swimming pools network aims to increase support and exchange information across the Territory wide swimming pool workforce, including those contributing to the swimming pool through community governance, health, education and youth programming.

Having facilitated the 3rd Remote Pools Conference as part of this research, RLSSA and attendees see value in continuing to support such activities.

Key benefits include: identification of good practice case studies; fostering of formal and informal networks across communities; and targeting of specific skills and programs.

6.3. Supporting Community Roles in Decision Making

Many participants in the research cited a shift in community decision making away from those directly involved in or benefiting from the swimming pool. Much of this is a factor of recent local government changes, and will likely be rectified in the coming year with the involvement of local boards to facilitate communication and decision making.

Community participation in decision making impacts on swimming pool outcomes, and incorporating the swimming pool into local board agendas should be facilitated. Strategies to increase participation of representatives from key community demographics may also support wider success in this area.

6.4. Delivering Support Programs

Patterns of operation for swimming pools varied greatly from those which are almost never open, to those which provide a full program targeting all aspects of their community. Some swimming pool opening times are limited to those connected to school or sport and recreation program use, while others provide wider activities targeting vacation, families and aged care.

Formal learn to swim is a traditional but important function that swimming pools provide to communities across Australia. Only four of the 18 swimming pools provide for this activity outside of those lessons provided by the school or as part of the after school sport and recreation program.

Communities gave many examples of groups that visited the community, in some cases using the swimming pool, for short term activities. While these activities are always well received, work must be undertaken to increase more sustainable systems that expand everyday service provision to community members.

6.5. Youth, Family and Aged Specific Programming

Where a community has a youth or specific population based program, the swimming pool can provide a convenient venue for diversionary, celebratory or learning based activities. There is limited evidence to show that these facilities are being used by all such groups, although there are several very positive model programs identified throughout the research.

These programs include:

- Strategies to involve members of the aged care program in Wadeye
- Aqua aerobics program in Wadeye
- Youth initiatives implemented by the Royal Life Saving Society – Northern Territory
- Various Children’s water safety programs and swimming carnivals
- Family fun days conducted as part of the Naiiyu Aquatic Recreation program

6.6. Leadership and Employment Pathways

Swimming pools represent an underutilised learning environment for those entering, participating in or re-entering the workforce. While it must be recognised that ongoing funding for full and part-time positions remains a difficult issue, there are many examples where swimming pools have provided a pathway to more positive employment outcomes for Indigenous people.

Two such examples are the leadership program being implemented in Ngukurr, where individuals participate in a mentoring based program and in Nguiu where previously employed local people have been mentored into specific swimming pool management roles with the support of the Tiwi Islands Shire Council, and its previous iterations.

INDIGENOUS POOL MANAGERS

Most communities strive towards filling positions such as swimming pool manager with local labour. The communities on the Tiwi islands are fortunate enough to have a number of local people involved as swimming workers, including pool management responsibilities at the swimming pools in Nguiu and Pirlangimpi.

This system follows a targeted strategy of succession planning by local government authorities since the swimming pool was first opened in Nguiu. This strategy carried the goal of ensuring an employment pathway for local people at the swimming pool and resulted in the first remote Indigenous swimming pool manager in Australia.

Critical to their success is the support provided by the local Shire Council staff. Ensuring that employment pathways are provided for local people into a range of swimming pool roles is critical to continuity of service

Other opportunities were identified in areas to build leadership focused partnerships linking school and early childhood education to swimming pool services. As these two areas come under the auspice of the Northern Territory Government, key stakeholders, including RLSSA must work with government to strengthen social infrastructure between these important groups at a regional and community level.

6.7. Recommendations

It is recommended that:

15. Informal and formal networking and knowledge sharing activities be facilitated to increase focus on good practice, support positive solution making and wider Shire Council and community support for swimming pool outcomes.
16. Local boards and/or service delivery groups take a greater or rigorous interest in swimming pools to their utilisation and ensure that it meets community needs.
17. Community development service providers and swimming pool operators work together to utilise swimming pools in targeting and collaborating across areas such as youth outreach, education, early childhood, leadership, disability, aged care, health and wellbeing.
18. Further research be undertaken into the social and economic benefits of swimming pools in remote Indigenous communities and how they can be realised, including through identification and sharing of best practice models, pilot projects and participatory research.
19. Operational plans and related workforce development strategies are developed in such a way as to maximise local employment in the swimming pool. Options could include funding for mentoring programs and development of innovative employment pathway programs.

7. CONCLUSION

All participants in this research supported the overarching principle there was great potential for swimming pools in remote communities to positively impact upon the health, social and economic well being of Indigenous Territorians.

While further research will assist to strengthen this position, data collected in this investigation illustrates that there is a willingness among stakeholders to identify and implement strategies that strengthen the sustainability and impact of swimming pools in remote areas.

A coordinated approach to managing swimming pools across the Northern Territory is not only urgently required but also widely supported by participants in this investigation. Coordination in key areas such as the facilitation of business and operational planning, improvement of safety and risk management compliance, and development of programs that build employment pathways, support educational outcomes and strengthen social capacity.

This report makes 19 separate recommendations across the key areas of Sustainability and Funding, Management and Planning, Infrastructure and Social Capacity. RLSSA intends to work with all key stakeholders towards achieving these recommendations.

8. SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations are listed within each section below, or can be considered in detail as part of the discussion contained previously in this report.

Recommendations relating to Sustainability and Funding

1. Governments work together with key stakeholders including community members, Shire Councils, peak bodies and non-government organisations to develop a coordinated approach to the sustainable management and safe operation of swimming pools in remote Indigenous communities across the Northern Territory.
2. Shire Councils reprioritise the swimming pool as a core community service and reflect this in planning and budgetary processes.
3. Territory and Federal Governments identify funding streams that encourage increased service levels, building local capacity to manage and utilise swimming pools.
4. A cost benefit analysis assessing the potential social and health impact that swimming pools in remote Indigenous communities have on government expenditure is undertaken.

Recommendations relating to Management and Planning

5. Governments/Peak bodies work in collaboration with key stakeholders to develop templates and processes that facilitate business and operational planning in a manner that reduces barriers due to weaknesses in literacy.
6. Business and operational plans be developed, implemented and monitored in each of the Shire Councils where swimming pools exist.
7. Shire Councils, swimming pool owners/operators undertake annual Aquatic Facility Safety Assessments, and implement swimming pool improvement plans as part of a safety maintenance program.
8. Governments fund the investigation of innovative water and energy saving technologies, community education and awareness in order to improve sustainable practice and reduce ongoing operational expenses.

Recommendations relating to Infrastructure

9. Governments facilitate the development of asset management planning systems, tools and training to enhance Shire Council abilities to manage the short, medium and long term requirements of swimming pools in remote areas.
10. Funding is allocated to bring all existing swimming pools up to a designated safety standard, including safety signage, chemical storage, security, surveillance and amenities.
11. Specific Guidelines for the Management of Swimming Pools in Remote Areas be developed.
12. Specific guidelines for the Design and Construction of Swimming Pools in Remote Areas are developed as a high priority.

13. A panel of approved suppliers of swimming pool related services be identified to ease the burden and create efficient service provision.
14. Funding for swimming pools is linked to safety benchmarks, as well as commercial construction standards.

Recommendations relating to Social Capacity

15. Informal and formal networking and knowledge sharing activities be facilitated to increase focus on good practice, support positive solution making and wider Shire Council and community support for swimming pool outcomes.
16. Local boards and/or service delivery groups take a greater or rigorous interest in swimming pools to their utilisation and ensure that it meets community needs.
17. Community development service providers and swimming pool operators work together to utilise swimming pools in targeting and collaborating across areas such as youth outreach, education, early childhood, leadership, disability, aged care, health and wellbeing.
18. Further research be undertaken into the social and economic benefits of swimming pools in remote Indigenous communities and how they can be realised, including through identification and sharing of best practice models, pilot projects and participatory research.
19. Operational plans and related workforce development strategies are developed in such a way as to maximise local employment in the swimming pool. Options could include funding for mentoring programs and development of innovative employment pathway programs.

9. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The authors of this report wish to acknowledge the support of all participants in this research, including those who gave up their time to participate in meetings, workshops and to explain the issues that impacted on their ability to achieve best practice.

Thank you also to the staff at the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs who have assisted in this project.

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11. APPENDIX 1 – Community Data

| Community | Shire Council | Age of Pool - yrs | Population |
|---------------|----------------|-------------------|---------------|
| Alyangula | East Arnhem | 20 - 45 | 956 |
| Areyonga | MacDonnell | 10 | 247 |
| Batchelor | Coomalie | 53 | 481 |
| Borrooloola | Roper Gulf | 0 | 773 |
| Gunbalanya | West Arnhem | 14 | 881 |
| Jabiru | West Arnhem | 27 | 1,135 |
| Kintore | MacDonnell | 1 | 350 |
| Maningrida | West Arnhem | 2 | 2,068 |
| Naiyu Nambiyu | Victoria Daly | 21 | 395 |
| Nguiu | Tiwi Island | 8 | 1,265 |
| Ngukurr | Roper Gulf | 11 | 916 |
| Nhulunbuy | East Arnhem | 38 | 4,112 |
| Peppimenarti | Victoria Daly | 3 | 185 |
| Pirlangimpi | Tiwi Island | 14 | 368 |
| Santa Teresa | MacDonnell | 37 | 542 |
| Tennant Creek | Barkly | 42 | 2,919 |
| Wadeye | Victoria Daly | 4 | 1,627 |
| Yuendumu | Central Desert | 0 | 686 |
| Total | | | 19,906 |

APPENDIX 2 - List of Organisations Consulted

Alyangula
GEMCO
ESS Support Services
East Arnhem Shire Council (EASC)
Alyangula Area School
Angurugu Clinic
Angurugu School
Umbakumba School
MacDonnell Shire Council (MDSC)
Areyonga School
Coomalie Council
Roper Gulf Shire Council
Macarthur River Mine
West Arnhem Shire Council (WASC)
Naiyu Nambiyu
Victoria Daly Shire Council (VDSC)
Tiwi Islands Shire Council (TISC)
Xavier College
Murrupurtiyanuwu Catholic School
Roper Gulf Shire Council (RGSC)
Nhulunbuy Corporation
Nhulunby Primary School
Yirrakala School
Yirrakala Homeland school
Barkly Shire Council (BSC)
ITEC Employment
Tennant Creek High School
Tennant Creek Primary School
Our Lady Sacred Heart School, Wadeye
Gunbalanya Sports and Social Club
Mt Theo Program / Warlpiri Youth Development
Aboriginal Corporation

APPENDIX 3 - List of Acronyms

| | |
|----------------|--|
| AFSA | Aquatic Facility Safety Assessment |
| CEC | Community Education Centre |
| CEO | Chief Executive Office |
| DEEWR | Department of Education Employment and Workplace Relations |
| DET | Department of Education and Training |
| DoHA | Department of Health and Ageing |
| DHF | Department of Health and Families |
| EASC | East Arnhem Shire Council |
| FaHCSIA | Dept of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs |
| GBM | Government Business Manager |
| GSPO | Guidelines for Safe Pool Operations |
| KPI | Key Performance Indicator |
| LGANT | Local Government Association of the Northern Territory |
| MDSC | MacDonnell Shire Council |
| MSDS | Material Safety Data Sheet |
| NT | Northern Territory |
| PIRA | Pools In Remote Area |
| RGSC | Roper Gulf Shire Council |
| RLSSA | Royal Lifesaving Society of Australia |
| TISC | Tiwi Islands Shire Council |
| VDSC | Victoria Daly Shire Council |
| WASC | West Arnhem Shire Council |



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