

## Thursday Island Workshop Presentation

In May 2010, AMRRIC EO, Julia Hardaker and PM, Jan Allen, attended a Training Workshop on Thursday Island, in order to present AMRRIC's new manual "*Dog Health Programs in Indigenous Communities- an Environmental Health Practitioners Guide.*" AMRRIC was requested by the Working Group for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders Environmental Health (WGATSIEH) to present the manual in WA and Qld. This workshop was organised by Queensland Health and Torres Strait Island Regional Council (TSIRC). During one afternoon of the 3 day workshop, the AMRRIC



team explained the layout of the manual. Then a brief workshop involved the attendees nominating 3 topics of particular concern in their communities (for example, treatment of dogs with sickness or injury between vet visits) and workshopping how to address these issues using the manual.

Thursday Island (TI) is one of 17 permanently inhabited islands of the Torres Strait. It is the seat of governance for the area. The most northern Torres Island, Saiba, is only 3-4 kilometres, depending on the tide, away from New Guinea ("easily swum by a feral deer" according to AQIS)! The islands are in fact an "extension of the Great Dividing Range". The beautiful opaque turquoise waters around TI are deceptive as they are fraught with threats: stingers - both box jellyfish AND Irukandji- as well as crocs AND turbulent, racing currents.

Approximately 24 Environmental Health Workers and Animal Management Workers attended the workshop. Most of the inhabited Torres Islands are fortunate to be serviced by them. Some have been "working in the field since Adam"!! Certainly a scenario to aim for in the NT! One of the EHWs stated in reference to animal management "it's fun and it's yuk"!



The 3 days were a memorable educational experience all round. AMRRIC has been invited back to present the manual at the mainland workshop in Cairns in June.

