

# 2021 AMRRIC IMPACT REPORT



Animal Management in Rural and  
Remote Indigenous Communities



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FY 2020/2021

# Outbreaks & Opportunities

## Paw-prints of the Year



COMMUNITY MEMBERS  
ENGAGED IN EDUCATION

**5139**



SCHOOLS  
VISITED

**15**



**700**

ANIMALS DESEXED



**10.5K**

ANTI-PARASITIC DOSES  
MADE AVAILABLE IN  
COMMUNITY STORES



**95**

COMMUNITIES  
SERVICED



**34**

VETERINARY  
PROGRAMS



DELIVERED

**5.8K**

DOSES OF  
DONATED STOCK



## Our Vision

.....

We work toward Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities that are healthy and safe for people and their companion animals.

## Our Approach

From the very beginning, AMRRIC's unique approach to its work has been founded on a deep respect for the cultures of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. We promote a model of service delivery, developed over years of dialogue and engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, that recognises companion animals as being intrinsic to the fabric of the community and acknowledges the inseparable link between the health and wellbeing of companion animals and that of their owners and their communities.

## Our Values

### RESPECT

- For the communities with whom we work, our supporters and our colleagues
- For Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and traditional knowledge
- For the diversity and individuality of all people
- For the environment in which we work

### ACCOUNTABILITY

- We work to clearly articulated objectives and goals in a transparent manner
- We seek to achieve the best use of resources

### INTEGRITY

- We are honest, open and transparent.
- We avoid real, or apparent conflicts of interest.

### OUTCOMES FOCUS

- All our decisions are framed around the question "How will this help the communities with whom we work?"

### INTERCONNECTEDNESS

- We work collaboratively with communities
- We integrate our programs and work with others

## One Health One Wellbeing

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One Health One Wellbeing is an international movement, and an approach to designing and implementing programmes, policies, legislation and research in which multiple disciplines collaborate to achieve better health outcomes for humans, animals and the environment. One Health One Wellbeing recognises the positive relationships between humans, animals and the environment too.

In remote Indigenous communities that AMRRIC serves, there has long been an understanding of the importance of One Health One Wellbeing principles, which align with the interconnectedness inherent within Indigenous

world views. When country is sick, people and animals are sick.

While AMRRIC's work has a veterinary focus, all AMRRIC's activities are underpinned by One Health One Wellbeing values, leading to collaboration with medical, public health, environmental health and conservation professionals, for better outcomes for communities and their companion animals.

AMRRIC calls for further funding and support for ethical, co-designed One Health One Wellbeing focused research which will benefit the health of communities, companion animals and country.

## Outbreaks: Ehrlichiosis

Ehrlichiosis (pronounced Err-lick-ee-o-sis) is a tick-borne disease caused by the bacteria *Ehrlichia canis*. The bacteria lives in blood of infected dogs, and is spread by Brown Dog Ticks. This new disease has been sweeping through remote Indigenous communities and beyond.

Since the first detections of *Ehrlichia canis* in May 2020, AMRRIC has recognised the significance of ehrlichiosis for remote communities and dedicated substantial resources in response.

### Impact

Ticks and other parasites that can transmit disease, have long been a challenge for remote communities due to:

- Favourable climatic conditions for large tick populations;
- Limited and highly inconsistent environmental health resourcing resulting in poor household pest management; and,
- Limited access to effective and affordable anti-parasitic treatments for animals.

AMRRIC's advocacy for improved parasite control via animal and environmental health services is ongoing. While some states within Australia have community-based animal management or environmental health workers who deliver anti-parasitic treatments between veterinary visits, these roles don't exist in all remote communities and limited resourcing means that the anti-parasitic treatments being delivered, while beneficial for other parasite control, are not usually effective in the prevention of Ehrlichiosis. With limited tick control, ehrlichiosis is able to spread very rapidly.

While treatment for dogs with acute ehrlichiosis may be an option in more accessible areas, for dogs and their owners in remote communities, physical and financial access to veterinary services is challenging. Many of the communities where canine ehrlichiosis is being detected are hundreds, if not thousands of kilometres, via unsealed roads, from the nearest vet clinic or animal health supply store. Many communities are cut off by flooding in the wet season – the same period during which peak tick populations occur. The socioeconomics of these communities are such that disadvantage and poverty are



## Outbreaks: Ehrlichiosis

sadly very common, and even where community residents may have reasonable geographic access to local veterinary clinics and animal health products, financial barriers often prevent them accessing these products and services. AMRRIC works tirelessly to assist communities to have improved access to veterinary services, but additional funding is always required.

The emotional impact of the ehrlichiosis outbreak on both vets and community residents is palpable - dogs are both valued companions but also often serve important cultural and/or spiritual roles in some remote Indigenous communities. For those dogs that survive the acute infection, AMRRIC and our networks hold grave concerns for the potential of these cases to transition into the chronic phase of the disease resulting in significant animal welfare concerns. In these regions where animal welfare authorities are few and far between, and limited funding results in infrequent veterinary services, the lack of ability to rapidly respond to both acute and chronic cases of canine Ehrlichiosis is deeply concerning.

### Advocacy

As a coordinating body with the unique space of remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community animal health and management, AMRRIC has advocated and provided advice on how government-led response efforts can cater to the unique context of remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and associated resource deficits. We have encouraged a One Health approach, promoting transdisciplinary connections, particularly between animal health, human health and environmental health stakeholders, and have stepped into the role of knowledge broker, assisting the various jurisdictions to identify many of the stakeholders required to be engaged as part of the government-led *Ehrlichia canis* responses.

With the disease continuing to have a devastating impact on dog populations across large regions of Australia, AMRRIC's advocacy is ongoing, working with our networks to identify and advocate research needs, facilitating workshops on animal health impacts and One Health risks, commissioning expert literature reviews and formulating contextually appropriate tick prevention advice.

### Resource Development

Recognising the need for culturally and contextually appropriate educational resources to raise awareness of ehrlichiosis and its prevention, throughout 2020-2021 AMRRIC worked collaboratively with a number of government stakeholders to produce a variety of educational resources targeting remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, including an animation, posters and school lessons plans. These resource have been shared widely, including the animation on the Australian Government's Outbreak website. AMRRIC staff have also contributed to a number of media articles, raising awareness of the disease and its impacts.

### Direct Assistance

AMRRIC has been actively fundraising to put preventative anti-parasitic treatments in the hands of rural and remote communities who need it the most. We are extremely grateful to our supporters, who have provided generous donations to support this initiative.

With a long term view, AMRRIC is pleased to be working with pharmaceutical companies and animal health retailers, collaborating on a project to try to ensure that all remote community stores are stocking effective anti-parasitic treatments at affordable prices, and that through targeted education programs, residents are aware of these products and their benefits. With hundreds of remote communities nationally, this is no small task!

# Chair's Report



**Dr. Kate Blaszk**

AMRRIC Director  
Board Chair

I am delighted to provide this Chair's Report as part of the AMRRIC 2020/21 Annual Report.

Not only have the staff withstood the ongoing challenges of COVID-19 but the organisation has generally thrived in the past 12 months. AMRRIC staff, Board and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities have played safe, and stayed safe. I would like to thank the CEO and all staff for their ongoing resilience, commitment and achievements. We acknowledge through this time that wellbeing is a nationally highlighted concern, and as an organisation we continually seek to improve our monitoring and support of the wellbeing of those we work with.

The directors had the opportunity to meet staff in Darwin in May 2021 as the board hosted the second strategic meeting for the year, otherwise governance was primarily conducted remotely for a second year. The Board welcomed two new directors in April, Yuwaalaraay woman, Emma-Jane Cook, and Karl Dyason. We are delighted to have their fresh insight, skills, and experience which include NT and national government roles, accounting, legal, and industrial relations. The Board farewelled Sabina Shugg after 10 years of dedicated service including as Board Secretary. Additionally, Scott Gorrington stepped down from the Board but continues his role on the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Committee (Advisory Committee). Director and Ngarluma woman, Joanne Abraham now Chairs this committee, and we thank all members for their ongoing service and advice to AMRRIC's Board.

The organisation was proud to launch the 2020-2025 Strategic Plan on 07/07/2020 at a webinar event led by the CEO, inviting stakeholders to learn a little more about Healthy Animals, Healthy Communities – What does AMRRIC do? The plan is centred on three key pillars of Self-determining Communities, Quality Needs-based Services, and Sustainable Resourcing. The latter has been a focus of board support over the past twelve months with bold fundraising initiatives being introduced by the new fundraising team, and the organisation looking forward to November 2021 in hosting Empowered Communities – a virtual event with a difference (stay tuned for updates)!

AMRRIC took on a key facilitative and educative role in its advocacy of a new tick-borne disease affecting dogs, extending across much of northern and central Australia - Ehrlichiosis. Efforts have produced collaborative workshops, media coverage and academic support highlighting the spread and impact of this disease. Communities have also shared valuable data on the

disease impact, as have veterinary teams.

Demonstrating significant initiative and leadership, AMRRIC has been responsive to the complexity Ehrlichiosis brings to companion animal management services in remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. Building into AMRRIC's Quality Needs-Based Services strategic pillar, this disease outbreak along with the outcomes from the COVID-19 pandemic have identified the need for ongoing community engagement building the capacity and capability within communities for management of companion animal health and wellbeing; a key area for AMRRIC for ongoing advocacy and development of appropriate supportive resources.

Increasing AMRRIC's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander governance and engagement is one of the components of AMRRIC's strategic Self-determining Communities pillar, and an ongoing focus of the Board, particularly in its recruitment of Directors and members of the Advisory Committee, also initiating a Board co-Chair structure supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander governance experience and leadership. The Board increased its collective governance qualifications and skills with three new graduates of the Australian Institute Company Directors course. Phil Pogson has continued to provide invaluable pro-bono governance support as an advisor to the AMRRIC board during the year. His support throughout the life of AMRRIC is sincerely appreciated.

Looking to the year ahead, the board will prioritise consolidating the Director team and organisational culture, supporting ongoing governance opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Directors and Advisory Committee members, supporting the CEO in operationalising the Business Development Plan, staff wellbeing and measuring AMRRIC impact.

Finally, I thank all Directors for their ongoing voluntary commitment to AMRRIC's governance and strategic direction. In particular, Dr Ann Margret Withers, who has served for over 13 years on the board including as vice-president and long-standing Chair of the Finance and Risk Committee. Her dedicated and diligent service is greatly valued and enabled the Board and organisation to mature in its financial responsibility and reporting. Thank you.

On behalf of the board, we look forward to a dynamic and exciting 12 months ahead as we continue to evolve and thrive, with your valuable support.

## CEO's Report



**Dr. Brooke Rankmore**

AMRRIC CEO

I think many of us have experienced times over the last year and a half when the bond we have with our beloved companion animals has been integral in maintaining stability and reminding us of the value they provide to our lives.

The unconditional love provided by our companions is unwavering, as has been the support from our donors over the past year. Given that it has been a difficult time for many, we are very humbled and truly grateful for your continued support/commitment.

If 2020 has highlighted anything for me, it's that AMRRIC has proven itself to be a highly adaptable organisation, continuing to thrive during these difficult times, delivering and supporting remote communities to achieve great outcomes, and evaluating our strategic direction and impact, turning outbreaks into opportunities. We were thrilled in June 2021 to receive recognition for our work, by winning a Special Recognition Award as part of the UK Kennel Club Charitable Trust International Canine Health Awards, the largest and most distinguished veterinary awards in the world, for our contributions to dog health and welfare.

In the past year with the help of our partners, we have supported 95 remote communities to improve the health and wellbeing of their companion animals and in turn the safety, health, and wellbeing of their communities. We hope you enjoy reviewing AMRRIC's achievements detailed throughout this report, for the 2021 financial year, which we share and recognise with the communities we work with.

We have big hopes for 2022 and to reach them we will need to work together.



It is a privilege to bring an annual reflection on the preceding 12 months activities for the AMRRIC Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Advisory Committee.

As was common across all sectors of Australian life, AMRRIC's services continued to be impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Localised and state border restrictions took effect leading to our staff being restricted from connecting with the people and their companion animals in communities across northern and central Australia. Additionally, field trip volunteers were not able to travel to service locations.

An additional impact from the changing Australian societal landscape has been several changes to the make-up of the AMRRIC Advisory Committee. We thank departing inaugural member Christine Ross immensely for her contribution and leadership to the committee, particularly in her role as co-chair. Concurrently Scott Gorringer's availability has been impacted and so he decided to step down from a co-chair role; we thank Scott for his wonderful leadership to the group, particularly heartfelt was his sharing of the Dreamtime story relating to dogs. This explanation of the story has been very well received by our donors, and in fact there have been many requests for similar education. Thank you, Scott, for sharing the story.

As well a number of committee members have indicated their changed availability and hence have resigned during this past year, acknowledging Sandra Creamer and inaugural member, Julie Owen. Both talented, impactful women in their own rights. We thank them for their previous contributions and efforts in advancing the common cause of health and wellbeing for Indigenous Communities and their companion animals.

Emma-Jane Cook has joined the AMRRIC board and is connected to the Indigenous people of the Yuwaalaraay nation. Emma-Jane comes from a

professional HR/legal background and provides valuable guidance to the organisation. We welcome Emma-Jane and the voice she brings.

The joint coming together of the full Board and the Advisory Committee in Darwin in May 2021 was a highlight of the year. It was beneficial for a large number to come together and meet in person as some are reasonably new to the organisation. The Advisory Committee participated in the board strategic meetings and provided high value insights to guide future organisational direction.

AMRRIC has endorsed the Uluru Statement and supports its practical applications across its business. In practice, this means moving towards Self-determination and greater elevation of Indigenous voices across the organisation. To this end, there are moves for a co-chair arrangement of the full board, with the role being shared between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Chairs. This is more than a symbolic gesture and reflects an organisation in transition from where it has been to where it is going.

Of note, it was encouraging to see one of our committee member's provide nimble and professional service, assisting AMRRIC in the face of the travel restrictions. Bindee Davis delivered vet nursing expertise for a regional South Australian program. Bindee's professional skills and indigenous ties were welcome in the communities we serve, plus she was available to without the need for quarantine. It is my hope and focus to see more Indigenous people engaged with AMRRIC in a business or employment sense in the future.

Finally, whilst we have said goodbye to some inaugural Advisory Committee members, we now look forward to rebuilding the team and moving towards greater Indigenous representation and involvement across the organisation.

## Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Committee Chair Report



Joanne Abraham

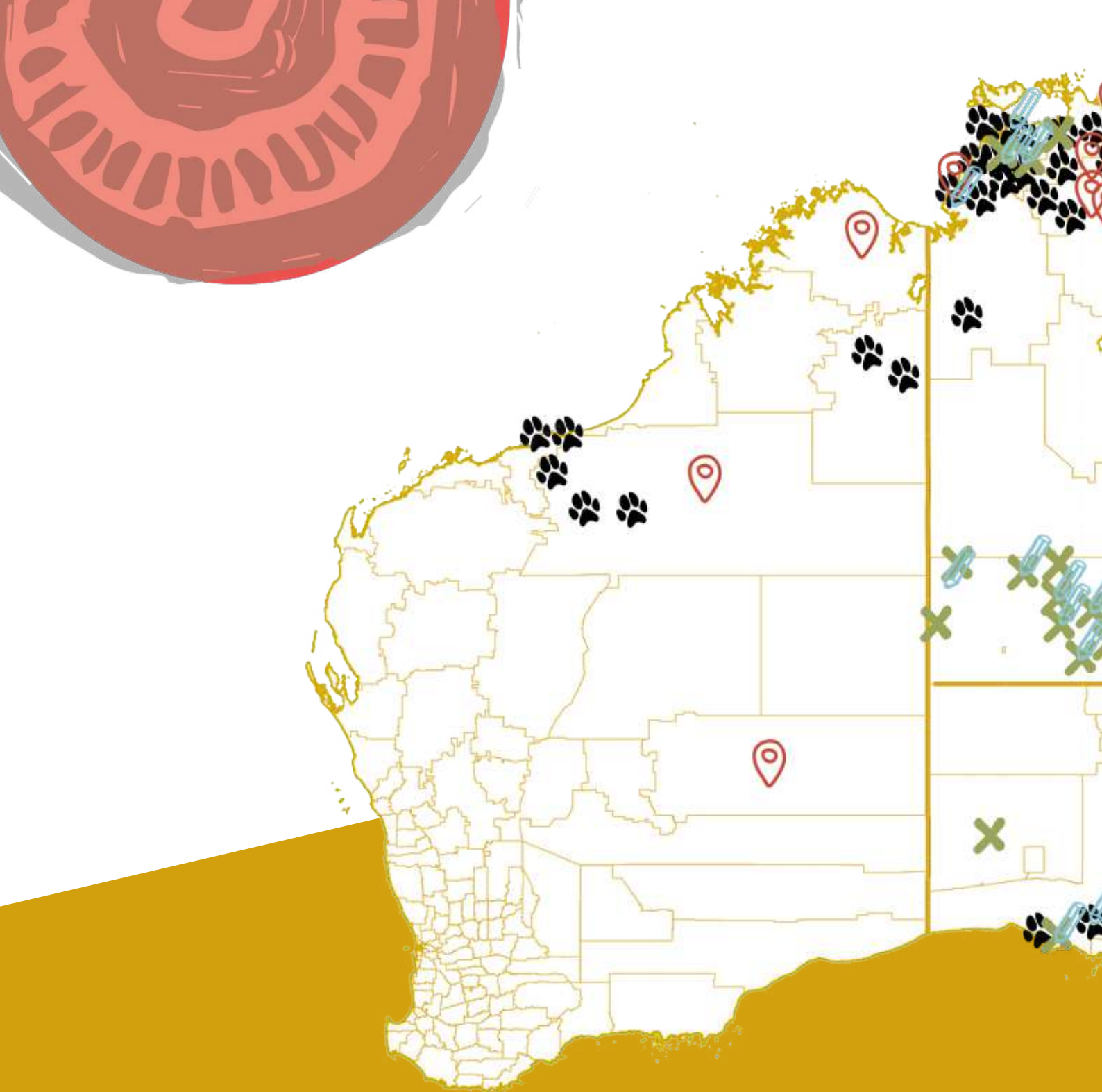
AMRRIC Director  
Advisory Committee Chair



A photograph of a young Indigenous man with dark, curly hair, smiling warmly at the camera. He is sitting on a dark green plastic chair outdoors. He is wearing a dark green t-shirt and black shorts. He is holding a light-colored, medium-sized dog (possibly a Weimaraner or similar breed) on his lap. The dog is looking up at him with its mouth open, showing its teeth. The background is a blurred outdoor setting with green foliage and a red birdhouse hanging from a tree. In the bottom right corner, there is a large, stylized red circular graphic with concentric circles and radiating lines, resembling a traditional Indigenous pattern.

**“What I really love about AMRRIC is their willingness to partner with Indigenous communities, to listen to one other, and to respect the cultural significance of animals in Indigenous culture.”**

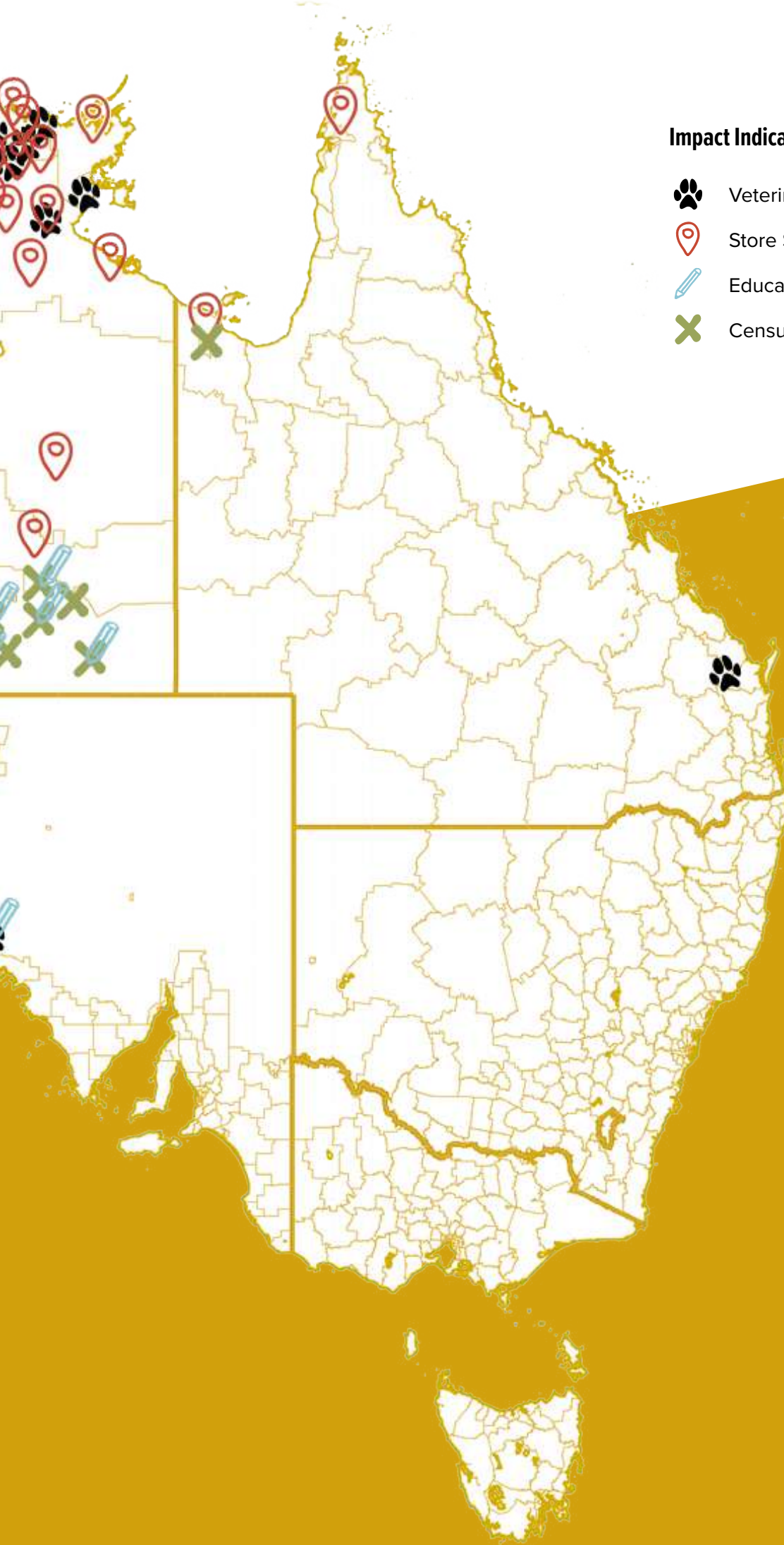
**Rev. B Allen (AMRRIC Supporter)**







## Our Reach

AMRRIC values collaborative relationships wherever we are invited to provide assistance with companion animal management in remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. Our impact is visually defined on this map to acknowledge where we work directly or indirectly with communities and their service providers, providing support through program delivery, education resources, data management, planning, research and advocacy. We look forward to continuing demonstration of our national impact through our collaborations with partners and communities.

**95**   
COMMUNITIES REACHED



### Impact Indicators

-  Veterinary program
-  Store Supply
-  Education Program
-  Census Program

## Your Support in Action

Out in community, our staff have the privilege of witnessing first-hand the impact of your contributions. Donations support our education and veterinary programs, and assist with the supply of necessary treatments and resources.

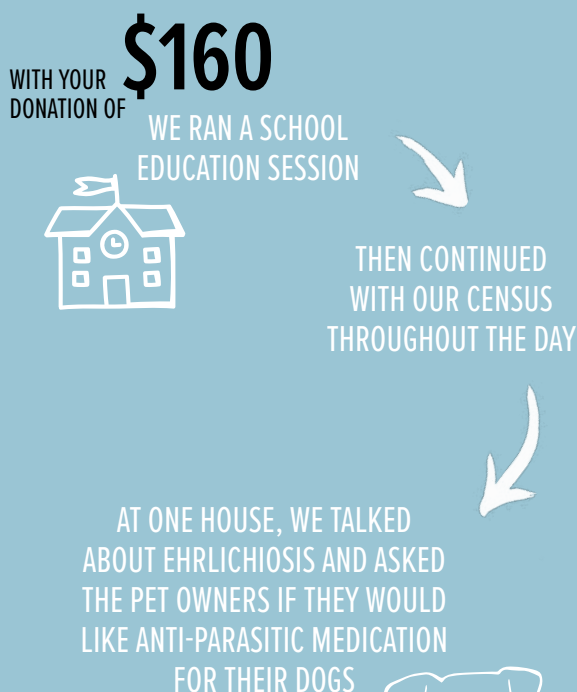
Read about the experience our Vet Nurse, Michelle, had while working in the MacDonnell Ranges. She was able to see our One Health, One Wellbeing approach in action, benefiting community members and animals together.

We were working in MacDonnell Ranges communities, undertaking a companion animal census and providing door-to-door education around ehrlichiosis, the new tick-borne disease for Australia .

With owner permission, we were distributing anti-parasitic medication to dogs to prevent external parasites, including ticks – the vectors for this new disease.

We were also delivering education program in the schools, with lessons centred around students understanding medicine as the best way to prevent tick-borne diseases in their dogs.

See how your donations are making impact.



THIS PROMPTED A MORE DETAILED CONVERSATION WITH ADULTS AT THE HOUSE ABOUT EHRLICHIOSIS, TICKS, SPREAD OF THE DISEASE, AND WHY AND HOW THEY CAN GET TICK PREVENTATIVE MEDICATION FOR THEIR DOGS

### MICHELLE REFLECTS:

"I SAW HOW EDUCATION IMPROVED INTERACTION WITH COMMUNITY MEMBERS, ENGAGED MORE PEOPLE, AND ALLOWED FOR COMMUNITY MEMBERS TO MAKE INFORMED DECISIONS ON THE HEALTH OF THEIR PET. IT WAS A VERY 'FEEL-GOOD' MOMENT, SEEING AN ALMOST IMMEDIATE AND DIRECT IMPACT OF THE EDUCATION PROGRAM!"



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## Our Actions

Existing and emerging challenges are complex and interrelated, requiring coordinated and committed action by national, state, territory and local government, policy makers, funders and communities. AMRRIC remains adaptive to ensure our community engagement and wholistic program approach, including tailored education, meets the needs of the communities we work with. We continue to address the public health, wellbeing and

environmental implications of companion animal population management which not only recognise dogs, but with increasing popularity, cats and other larger domestic animals as pets. We also remain committed to our involvement in disaster and emergency animal disease preparedness and response, helping build solutions in critical remote situations.

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## Our Goals



**Safe, happy and healthy animals in communities – companion animals are healthy, animal populations are in control, communities and owners are safe and well educated in animal care and empowered for self-determining good animal management.**

## Self-determining Communities



Above: Resident Matthew carrying his dog after surgery

Left: Halls Creek Ranger Emily with local resident Fiona and her companions



### Educational Resource Highlights

- Parvovirus Lesson Plan 1

Parvovirus, Vaccinations, and Germs

This lesson plan is suitable for Year 3 – Adults. With a One Health focus, it aims to share the knowledge and value of the parvovirus vaccination for dogs and the ease and means by which germs spread through the environment. Lesson content is hands-on and engaging.

<https://www.amrric.org/resources/view/parvovirus-lesson-plan-1-vaccinations-germs/>

- Ehrlichiosis Lesson Plan 1

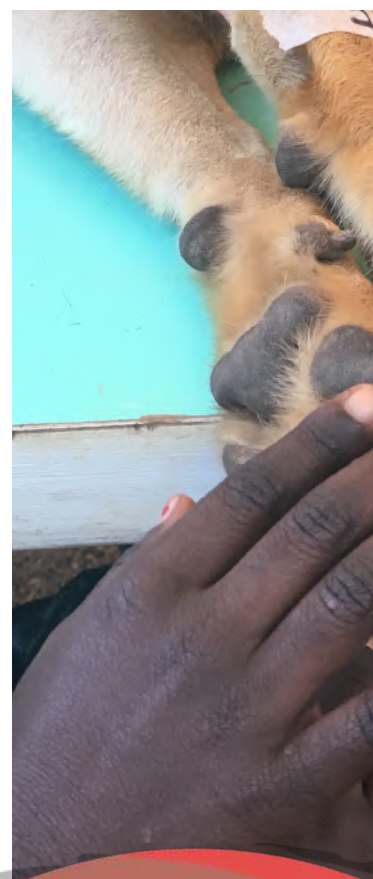
Aimed at children in years two to five, this resource aim to improve the knowledge and awareness of Ehrlichiosis and the signs of sickness that it causes. This resource is a fun interactive game focusing on the signs of Ehrlichiosis using a video and printed images. Participants must match the pictures of the dog to the corresponding category (a healthy or sick dog). The lesson plan contains instructions and templates for all necessary materials.

<https://www.amrric.org/resources/view/good-one-sick-one-ehrlichiosis-lesson-plan/>

- Monitoring and Evaluation Activity for Cat Breeding

This PowerPoint can be used for monitoring and evaluating the achievement of desired understandings of the participants from the lesson content. Monitoring and evaluation activities are incorporated as games into this lesson plan and PowerPoint. The lesson plan is focused on Cat Breeding potential and aims to have students understand the substantial breeding capacity of cats and the impacts this has on people and communities through interactive activities and an animation video. All necessary resources are supplied.

<https://www.amrric.org/resources/view/cat-breeding-reproduction-monitoring-and-evaluation-lesson-plan/>



**13**  
TRAINING COURSES  
DELIVERED



**5139**  
COMMUNITY  
MEMBERS  
ENGAGED



**3**  
COVID  
RESOURCES  
DEVELOPED

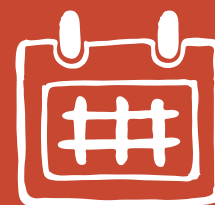


EDUCATION  
DELIVERED TO  
**405**  
CHILDREN

**21**  
EDUCATION  
RESOURCES  
DEVELOPED



**2**  
COMMUNITY  
EVENTS HELD



### Key Highlights

- Increased remote training for animal management knowledge in communities through the following organisations: Cairns Regional Council; Torres Strait Island Regional Council; Catholic Education NT; and Pilbara Metamaya Aboriginal Corporation.
- Engaged in education through census and antiparasitic medication delivery programs to the following locations: Wadeye; Peppimenarti; Nganmarriyanga; Adelaide River & Batchelor; Lajamanu; Yalata; Koonibba; Kintore; Mt Liebig; Titjikala; Amoonguna; Santa Teresa; Wallace Rockhole; Areyonga; Imanpa; Haast's Bluff; Docker River; Hermannsberg; Finke; and Papunya.

**“Thank you Michelle and Chelsea. You ran a wonderful programme for the students. It was very relevant and presented in a way that the children found interesting and understandable. You are very welcome to come back any time in the future. Many thanks.”**

**Mark (Ltyentye Apurte  
Catholic School, Santa Teresa)**

Left: Dog surgery in Maningrida

## Quality Needs Based Services

Right top:  
*Dr Cutter with a  
beloved patient*

Right bottom:  
*Tommy introducing his pet to  
staff during the MacDonnell  
Regional Council census*



KEY HIGHLIGHTS



NT ANIMAL WELFARE GRANT  
TO WORK WITH MACDONNELL  
REGIONAL COUNCIL ACROSS  
**13** COMMUNITIES IN  
THE REGION

### Regional Planning

In 2020, AMRRIC secured a NT Animal Welfare Grant in partnership with MacDonnell Regional Council to undertake a census and education program for 13 communities across their region. This on-ground program was completed in the first half of 2021. The data report from the census has been completed and AMRRIC will continue to work with MacDonnell Regional Council staff to develop their first strategic animal management plan for their region that can be integrated and budgeted into their annual planning.

**5** COMPANION ANIMAL  
CENSUS PROGRAMS  
DELIVERED ACROSS **19**  
COMMUNITIES





**35** VETERINARY PROGRAMS

### Veterinary services and preventative care outputs

In our efforts to improve community health and wellbeing by improving the health and welfare of animals in communities, we continuously aim to broaden our reach and frequency of veterinary service access. Despite border closures and COVID-19 related restrictions, in the past year AMRRIC has been flexible and nimble to mobilise staff and volunteers or contractors where possible, to continue responding to requests for assistance and providing companion animal desexing through veterinary programs.

AMRRIC has established new programs for four areas previously not serviced, and continues to strengthen relationships with existing partner communities.

#### KEY HIGHLIGHTS

★ **643**  
DOGS DESEXED

★ **79** COMMUNITIES VISITED  
THROUGH VETERINARY PROGRAMS IN **NT, WA,  
SA & QLD**

★ **187** REQUESTS FOR  
ASSISTANCE



Left:  
*The Halls Creek  
Veterinary Blitz team*



## Quality Needs Based Services



**15** SCHOOLS VISITED

## School and community education

AMRRIC education programs are run in remote classrooms and communities, directly providing information and resources regarding the health of their companion animals.


Supported through grants, this past year AMRRIC led two Science Week programs in Daly River, West Arnhem and East Arnhem (NT) communities. These programs delivered information on the emerging tick-borne disease Ehrlichiosis. In the climate of the current global health crisis, AMRRIC has developed a “COVID-19 and our animals” poster, factsheet and video.

**“Wonderful resources,  
very interactive and  
great for the class”**

## Imanpa School, NT

## KEY HIGHLIGHTS

★ **2** SUCCESSFUL  
EDUCATION GRANTS  
TOTTALLING **\$13K**

 DELIVERED EHRLICHIOSIS & CAT RELATED EDUCATION TO SCHOOLS DURING CENSUS IN MACDONNELL REGIONAL COUNCIL 9



Left:  
*AMRRIC Education Kit*

## AMRRIC calls for research into connections between human, animal, and environmental health

November 9, 2020

1014



AMRRIC (Animal Management in Remote and Rural Indigenous Communities) was featured on the occasion of International Day of the Girl, highlighting the importance of understanding the connections between human, animal, and environmental health.

Above left:  
AMRRIC's advocacy efforts  
featured in peer-related  
publication.

Above right:  
A resident of Bagot Community  
with her companion



### KEY HIGHLIGHTS



**2** STAKEHOLDER  
EVENTS HOSTED



CONTRIBUTED SUBMISSIONS  
TO **5** PUBLIC POLICY  
DISCUSSION PAPERS



OUR WORK WAS FEATURED  
IN **16** EXTERNAL NEWS ARTICLES  
& 2 RADIO INTERVIEWS

**29**  
E-NEWS  
ARTICLES  
PUBLISHED



### Advocacy

AMRRIC operates as a knowledge broker, working with, sharing knowledge and catalysing relationships between a complex array of stakeholders, as well as highlighting to decision makers and members of the public, the challenges and opportunities that remote community face in terms of effective and sustainable animal health and management. This year, AMRRIC's advocacy has largely been in response to the devastating Ehrlichiosis outbreak. As part of this advocacy, we hosted an Ehrlichiosis Impacts Workshop, and a Vector Borne Zoonoses Workshop; both of these

seeking to engage dialogue and transdisciplinary collaboration to address current issues in remote community animal management. Our staff have delivered 11 presentations to audiences including environmental health and animal management professionals, veterinary students, pharmaceutical companies and professionals involved with emergency animal diseases responses. We have additionally contributed commentary to public policy discussion papers including the Australian Government's Biosecurity 2030 roadmap, as well as various state and territory veterinary, animal welfare and management legislative reviews.

## Sustainable Resourcing: Funding

### Donors

AMRRIC is extremely grateful for the ongoing philanthropic support of our regular donors and proudly acknowledge those here along with our new supporters; to Isaacson Davis Foundation, Seaton Foundation and others who wish to maintain anonymity, “thank you”, we are pleased to report your combined contribution of over \$41,000 assists AMRRIC in providing companion animal management programs directly benefiting remote communities.

### Grants – Up to \$50K

- Roper Gulf Regional Council Community Benefit Grant – Support for Outstations Vet Program
- Charles Darwin University Science Week Grant – One Health in Remote Communities school education
- Charles Darwin University Inspired NT Grant – Cats & Communities school education
- Northern Territory Animal Welfare Grant Program – MacDonnell Regional Council census and education

### Grants – Over \$100K

- Australian Government’s Indigenous Advancement Strategy – Companion Animal Program

### Pro Bono

- The Leading Partnership, Philip Pogson, Sydney – governance advisor
- Miwatj Aboriginal Health Corporation – collaborator Ehrlichiosis Animation Project

### Sponsor & Product Donors

AMRRIC’s work is enhanced through collaborative support and sponsorship of companion animal care products, service and pricing and AMRRIC wishes to acknowledge through this twelve-month period the support of **Boehringer Ingelheim** for animal health products including **Nexgard®**, **MSD Animal Health for Bravecto®** and **PETstock** for **Glow** pet foods and **Nexgard®**. This support gratefully provided relief to many communities impacted by the pandemic and Ehrlichiosis.

In addition, we would like to acknowledge the team at **Crazy Critterz Toy Box** for their support by promotion of the **Remote Communities Essentials Box** and **AMRRIC Tuggie** providing toys and care products for communities.

AMRRIC wishes to acknowledge the ongoing support of **Aboriginal Broadcasting Australia** who continue screening the “**Pets are Family, Treat ‘em Good**” series of education video messages to remote communities.



### Volunteers

There were significant challenges in providing volunteer opportunities due the ongoing uncertainties and travel restrictions associated with the pandemic. Where possible, volunteers were sourced from within the same state/territory as the community. We are ongoingly grateful to the many volunteers who continue to give their time to support AMRRIC’s work and who remain flexible and understanding in the face of these unprecedented challenges, and often barriers, to contributing to our work.



**80** VOLUNTEER  
DAYS IN FIELD/OFFICE



**10** PROGRAMS THAT TOOK  
VOLUNTEERS IN 2020/2021 FY



**442** SUPPORTERS REGISTERED  
TO RECEIVE NOTICE OF UPCOMING  
VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

## Sustainable Resourcing: People & Partnerships

### Research Partnerships

By linking researchers to communities, advising on ethical research design, providing logistic support for sample collection and contributing to culturally appropriate knowledge translation, AMRRIC acts as a knowledge broker, connecting researchers and communities and helping to build the evidence base for One Health One Wellbeing linkages.

This financial year we have:

- Supported two Indigenous PhD students with their respective projects
  - > Dr Tamara Riley – Tamara Riley is a Wiradjuri woman with family ties to Western NSW. Tamara is a PhD Candidate and Research Associate within the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Program at the National Centre for Epidemiology and Population Health (NCEPH). Tamara's research focuses on One Health (the relationship between animal, human and environmental health) within Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

> Dr Cameron Raw – Cam Raw is a Palawa man with Lyluequonny ancestry from southern lutruwita (Tasmania). Graduating from the University of Melbourne with a BVSc (Hons) in 2013, Cam has several years' experience working with Bininj, Maung and Yolngu communities across Arnhem Land in various clinical roles. This work has led to an interest in One Health and undertaking a PhD at the University of Melbourne in the zoonotic potential of soil-transmitted helminths in remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. Cam also delivers lectures, teaches practical classes and supervises clinical placements with veterinary and One Health students at the University of Melbourne.

- Assisted two research institutes with One Health focused grant applications
- Contributed to research examining:
  - > The impact of COVID on the veterinary industry – see paper: <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S235277142100104X>
  - > Antimicrobial resistance and stewardship in the veterinary industry
  - > The management of animals in disasters – see report: <https://researchnow.flinders.edu.au/en/publications/animals-in-disasters-an-updated-assessment-of-australias-animal-r/fingerprints/>
- Undertaken extensive *Ehrlichia canis* sampling and surveillance during remote community veterinary programs
- With research partners, developed a pilot project proposal to examine the zoonotic potential of *Ehrlichia canis* and *Anaplasma platys*

“I am inspired at the efforts of people and organisations that demonstrate through action and stories the need for continual change. I am happy to have helped in my own small way and will continue to support various initiatives wherever possible.”

Dallys Young  
(AMRRIC Supporter)

Far left & below : *Bagot Community resident Helen Fejo-Firth with her beloved companions and talking with AMRRIC staff.*



COLLABORATION WITH 2 INDIGENOUS  
VETERINARIANS & PHD STUDENTS ON  
ONE HEALTH FOCUSED RESEARCH

## Our People: The Board

Kate has a base in Melbourne and Asia where she previously managed the regional companion animal programmes for a global animal protection organisation, with a focus on dog welfare, rabies and population management. Kate brings a broad range of animal welfare, strategy and one health project, policy, training and management experience. She is committed to leading AMRRIC to better and more broadly work with others to serve local communities and their animals.



**Kate Blaszak**  
Chairperson



**Dr. Ann-Margret Withers**  
Vice-Chair, Chair of Finance  
and Risk Committee

Ann-Margret Withers is the Senior Manager Outreach Programs for RSPCA NSW, where she has worked since 2002. As well as being a general practice vet and supporting Inspectorate work for the RSPCA, she has been significantly involved in the development and delivery of their social support and outreach programs to disadvantaged, rural and Aboriginal communities in NSW since the mid-2000s. These programs provide access to important basic veterinary services and education, and are aimed at supporting the human-animal bond and recognising its importance in the health, welfare and safety of people and their pets. She has been on the AMRRIC board since 2007.

Rosalie grew up in Perth, and has worked as a medical doctor and researcher in Aboriginal communities in remote regions of NT and WA since 1997. She has also ventured to work in rural Solomon Islands, East Timor and during the Ebola outbreak in Sierra Leone. She has specialised training in public health and general practice. Rosalie believes that health arises from how people live. She would like to see promotion of children's well-being, quality education, employment, housing and transport. She sees animal and human well-being as interconnected, and believes in the fundamental importance of ecosystems and the environment.



**Dr. Rosalie Schultz**  
Board Member



**Dr. Steve Rogers**  
Board Member

Dr Steve Rogers is the CEO of The Centre for Appropriate Technology Ltd (CfAT Ltd), an Aboriginal controlled not for profit company based in Alice Springs. An experienced company director currently holding Directorships with Ekistica Pty Ltd, CfAT Satellite Enterprises Pty Ltd, CfATMP Pty Ltd and Territory NRM. He has led the transition of CfAT Ltd from a government grant, block funded NGO to a sustainable commercial company, with a remit to deliver technology innovation required to stimulate economic development across remote Indigenous Australia.





**Dr. Alison Taylor**  
Board Member

Dr Alison Taylor has been a practicing veterinarian for 20 years and has been a partner in a small animal practice in Canberra since 2004. Following introductions by AMRRIC, Alison has been involved in delivering animal (mainly dog) health programs in the Northern Territory since 2008. Since 2010, she and the organisation that she co-founded have been providing the service consistently to the same 25 communities in the Barkly and Central Desert regions. During this time, there has been much collaboration with AMRRIC.

Joanne is passionate about changing the underlying causes of Aboriginal disadvantage and building awareness of intragenerational trauma experienced by Aboriginal people, and previously held the role of Operations Manager at the West Australian Stolen Generations Aboriginal Corporation. Prior to her commitment to alleviating Aboriginal disadvantage, she worked as a processing engineer across a broad range of minerals and mineral processing operations. Her experience encompasses large scale mining and smelting operations to bench scale test work programs and feasibility studies. At present, she is pursuing a long-held dream to author her first book. Joanne knows the value of education to deliver life-long benefits and the power of storytelling to share diverse voices.



**Joanne Abraham**  
Board Member, Chair of Advisory  
Committee



**Karl Dyason**  
Board Member

Karl works for Parks Australia and oversees the Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park which is jointly managed by Anangu traditional owners and the Director of National Parks. Karl has had nine years working and living in remote communities in the Northern Territory, the last three years as Chief Executive Officer of the Bawinanga Aboriginal Corporation in Maningrida. Karl has had extensive experience in engaging with Indigenous communities, working with traditional owners, ranger groups and other stakeholders to achieve social, economic, health and environmental outcomes for Indigenous people. In the past Karl has worked for both the Northern Territory and Australian governments in a range of roles including business management, accounting, system implementation, strategic planning and corporate services.

Emma-Jane has a strong desire and passion for the absolute best outcomes for all First Nation communities across Australia. She honours and respects to their connection with their homeland, environment and animals. She identifies as being a Yuwaalaraay woman. Emma-Jane holds a position with Charles Darwin University as the Senior Employee Relations Consultant and is a registered Legal Practitioner in the Northern Territory, and is currently undertaking a Master of Business Administration. She was initially attracted to become involved with AMRRIC seeking to further her learnings about the connections on a holistic level between animals, the environment, and First Nation Communities. As a member of the Board of Directors for AMRRIC, she is firmly committed to the realisation of quality and sustainable outcomes that are aligned with the overarching strategic business objectives of the organisation.



**Emma-Jane Cook**  
Board Member

## Our People: Aboriginal and Torres Straight Islander Advisory Committee



**Alex Blackman**  
Committee Member

Alex is a Kalkadoon man from Mount Isa, Queensland, but has spent most of his life in the Wadjuk country of Perth. A life-long animal lover, he has a Biology Degree majoring in Wildlife Conservation. Alex became involved in dog management through a role with the Department of Health where he was part of dog health programs. Alex is passionate about both animal management and Aboriginal welfare, and hopes to use his knowledge and experience to positively influence both areas.

**Wayne Bynder**  
Committee Member



Born into one of the largest southwest families, Wayne has lived much of his life in Perth. He has enjoyed working and learning in remote regional areas of the Kimberley and in the Northern Territory, deciding early in life to work in both broadcasting and teaching. Wayne most enjoys Indigenous broadcasting for which he has built up over 30 years of experience in all areas including training, broadcasting and managing. Wayne follows a philosophy of “Be respectful to other people and always be ready to learn”.



**Julie Owen**  
Committee Member

Julie is an Aboriginal woman with family ties to the Narungga and Ngarrindjeri Nations of South Australia, whose love for the Kimberley and its people have captured her heart and spirit. Julie was awarded a Fulbright Scholarship to travel, work and learn and live for nine months with Native American Nations across Midwest, USA in 2007 was a highlight of her academic career. Over the last 30 years, Julie has lived and worked across several states in regional, remote and rural areas, in Aboriginal health, community development and education.

**Bindee Davis**  
Committee Member



Bindee grew up in Darwin and calls it home, but is enjoying living in Adelaide while she works her way through university study to become a veterinarian. Bindee is a qualified and experienced Veterinary Nurse that has experience working in general practices, emergency centres and remote Indigenous communities. Whenever possible Bindee likes to travel to experience different cultures and ways of life. She also has an interest in working with education and dog health



**Scott Gorrige**  
Committee Member

Scott Gorrige has worked in Indigenous Education since 1998, first with Education Queensland and then as Director of Murrimatters Consulting. Scott co-developed Engoori with David Spillman in 2007 to change the way in which school communities perceive, talk and think about teaching and learning in the context of Indigenous Education and has delivered this process to numerous organisations and schools across Australia, in particular within the Stronger Smarter Leadership Program. Scott is a Mithaka man with obligations to take the lead on Native Title processes and secure the permanent protection of traditional waters and country through negotiations with government, pastoralists, mining, and other key stakeholders.

# Our Members

NSW: 27	VIC: 29	SA: 10	ACT: 7
NT: 18	QLD: 15	WA: 17	TAS: 1



A special thanks and acknowledgement to the following board Directors who resigned their positions during the year.



Peter Stephenson



Sabina Shugg



Scott Gorringer

## Our people: looking forward

*Below top: Michelle visiting a home during community census in MacDonnell Regional Council*  
*Below bottom: A morning sunrise in a beautiful remote setting*



**Lauren McDonald**  
General Manager  
Company Secretary

“AMRRIC has shown great maturity as an organisation to continue to adapt in the pandemic climate and lead in discussion and advocacy of other key issues impacting companion animal management in remote communities; I look forward to success in supporting our team, management and board so that AMRRIC continues to work with communities and our partners to collaboratively deliver outcomes in remote community companion animal management.”

*A note of thanks to Vicky Wellman and Robyn Purtill who assisted during my maternity leave.*



**Dr. Bonny Cumming**  
Program Manager:  
Strategic Delivery

“While devastating, the Ehrlichiosis outbreak has shone a spotlight on the challenges of, and need for regular and effective remote community animal health and management programs. My focus for the coming year will be on leveraging this momentum for sustained improvements for communities and their animals.”



**Dr. Chelsea Smart**  
Program Manager:  
Operational Delivery

“Growing our team of contracted and volunteer veterinarians so that we have the team members to service more communities in need than ever before, and hoping that COVID safety in remote communities is less of a concern and we are able to travel more freely.”



**Katrina Doody**  
Project Officer

“I am passionate to continue being part of a team that works so hard to provide animal health and education services to remote communities in need. Specifically through ongoing projects such as our remote community antiparasitic supply program and the impactful work we have undertaken within extremely remote outstation and homeland communities, the significant, positive effects of our ability to provide collaborative, sustainable and appropriate solutions is such an important aspect of AMRRIC's approach which I hope will continue to flourish into the future.”



**Michelle Hayes**  
Education Officer

"My aim is for AMRRIC Education to grow its number of education programs, establish regular education programs in communities, and continue to develop highly impactful resources for all age groups."



**Jane Crouch**  
National Fundraising & Corporate Partnerships Manager

"My wish for AMRRIC in the year ahead is that we continue to grow support from the public, the corporate and philanthropic sectors, so that we're suitably resourced to increase our impact."



**Frances Grant**  
Communications & Marketing Officer

I am looking forward to increasing AMRRIC's awareness through communications and exploring new and innovative ways to engage with our audiences.



**Natasha Duncan**  
National Fundraising & Corporate Partnerships Manager

Tash has moved on from AMRRIC late in 2021, but her enthusiasm, ideas and the creativity which she brought to AMRRIC's fundraising efforts during her fourteen months with the team will have lasting impact.



**Courtney Falls**  
Education Officer

AMRRIC (tearfully) farewelled Courtney on 30/10/2021 after almost five years in the role of Education Officer. Courtney had a creative, engaging, and endearing personality which resulted in her creating so many positive relationships with community members and program partners alike. Courtney has true respect of two-way learning and holds in high value knowledge sharing.

A special thanks and acknowledgement to the following staff who worked with AMRRIC during the year, and congratulations to Kit who completed her Business Administration traineeship



**Kit Reed**



**Angela Hammond**



## Mindfulness Corner

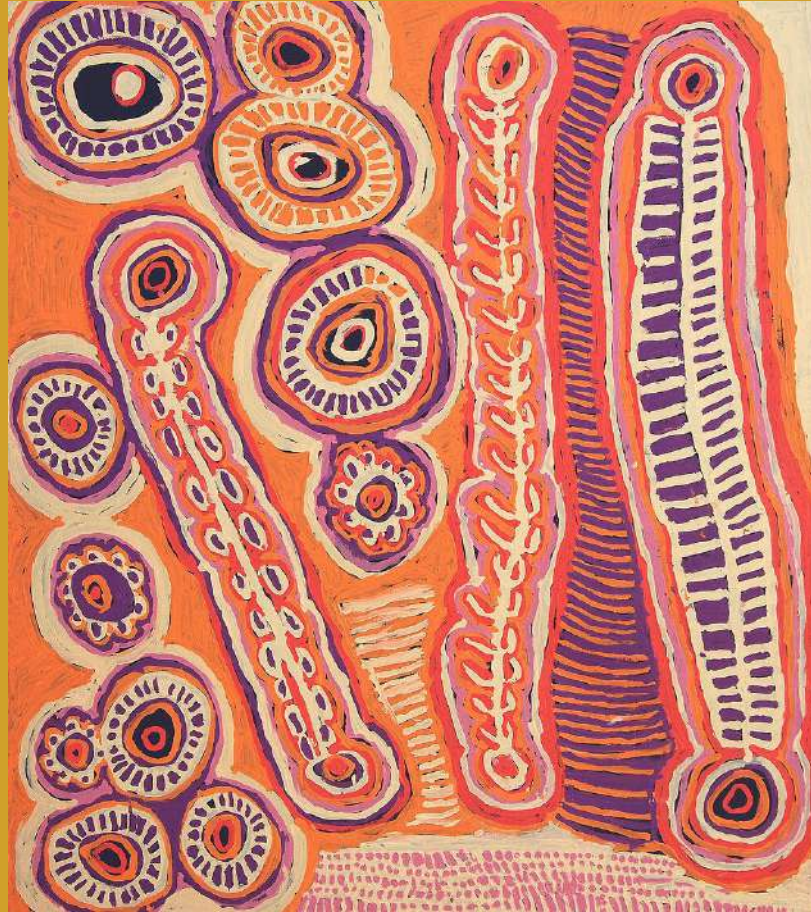
Thank you for coming on this journey with us, tracing our impact this past year as we turned outbreaks into opportunities. We'd like to offer you some time now to reflect on your impact and take a moment for your wellbeing with this mindfulness activity. You can share your creations and reflections with us on social media with #AMRRICimpact and tagging us [@AMRRIC](#).



My impact  
this year:

## ‘malikijarra Jukurrpa’ (two dogs Dreaming)

Murdie (Maudie)  
Nampijinpa Morris



The ‘kirda’ (owners) of this Dreaming are Nampijinpa/Nangala women and Jampijinpa/Jangala men. This Dreaming comes from country adjacent to the windmill at Warlarla (Rabbit Flat). This site is part of a long Dreaming track that stretches from Yarrajalpa in the extreme west of Warlpiri country to Warlaku (Ali Curung) in the east. In this Dreaming story, two dog ancestors, a Jampijinpa and a Napangardi, travelled from the west to the east. They began at Yarrajalpa (a waterhole) and travelled through Wirninginpa, Jinarli, Karljawnu (a rockhole), Jilwirrpa, and Waanjurna (a rockhole). They dug holes in the ground and created ‘warnirri’ (rockholes) and ‘ngapa’ (waterholes) as they went.

At Tapu (a rockhole), the two dogs separated. The female dog, Napangardi, went to the south towards Ngamarnawarnu. The male dog, Jampijinpa, went to the north through Mukirri and Paruwu. Eventually he became lonely and howled for Napangardi in the south. She came running to him, and they married each other at Ngarnka. They wore men’s and women’s marriage headdresses, and Jampijinpa painted himself with white clay for the ceremony. After the wedding, they continued on slowly to the east through Kurduwijawija, Warlarla (Rabbit Flat), and Yurlpuwarnu (rockholes). At Yurlpuwarnu they started a fire using a ‘jimanypa’ (stick), a spear-

thrower, and ‘yinirnti’ (bat-wing coral tree [*Erythrina vespertilio*]) wood for firewood. The dogs then continued east through Kulpurlunu (a waterhole) and Ngumurlungu, where they encountered some other dogs. However, these dogs sent them away while they performed a sacred ceremony.

The two dogs continued running east, past Jarramarda and Yankirrikirlangu, before arriving in Warlaku (Ali Curung). Many other dogs were living in Warlaku when they arrived. There were many families of dogs, mothers and fathers and children and uncles all living together. Jampijinpa and Napangardi made a burrow to rest in and started a big family of dogs there. They chose to stay in Warlaku and live with all the other dogs. In this way, the ‘malikijarra Jukurrpa’ (two dogs Dreaming) tells the story of proper conduct in families and marriages.

In Warlpiri paintings, traditional iconography is used to represent the Jukurrpa and other elements. The ribcages of the Jampijinpa, Napangardi, and their family of dogs are depicted in this work. Their ribs can also be seen as features in the landscape in the Yankirrikirlangu area. Concentric circles are used to represent the ‘ngapa’ (waterholes) around Yankirrikirlangu.



**“Our best wishes to all at  
AMRRIC, for the wonderful  
work you do”**

**Denise, Secretary/Treasurer of  
Scots UCA Mission, Hobart**

