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Cover: Richard Gandawuy in Galiwin'ku with participatory workshop community governance diagram 2020. Image with permission from Gandawuy and Danny Burton (photographer) 2020.



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## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

NAILSMA and ARPNet wish to acknowledge the dedication and courage of Yolngu and Bininj (Aboriginal people from north east and west Arnhem Land respectively) involved in this 'partnerships project' over the last few years. The local Indigenous research and leadership groups took on this work for their own purposes with their communities and kin in consideration of persistent and increasing imposition of 'external', non-Indigenous influence over and behavioural expectations of Indigenous people in their Remote communities.

Many key Yolngu and Bininj have passed away during the course of this project. We acknowledge their influence and importance to this work and its vision to change the nature of community governance and the relationships between their communities and the myriad of agencies offering services. This homegrown leadership favours local knowledge, capability, values and interests to ensure stronger relationships and better outcomes in EM and other sectors.

NAILSMA and ARPNet also acknowledge the BNHCRC for critical support provided to this project, our engaging key End User Ken Baulch and unwavering comradery from CDU's Darwin Centre for Bushfire Research.



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Natural hazards in the remote Northern Territory such as cyclones have arguably been managed as best as possible given the typical relationships emergency management agencies have with traditional Aboriginal landowners and their wider communities. Preparation and response to the two cyclones, Nathan and Lam, that struck east and central Arnhem Land in 2015 are a case in point. This report refers to 2 projects, conducted using NAILSMA support with Yolngu in Galiwinku and ARPNet with Bininj in Ramingining.

Most Yolngu interviewed at Galiwin'ku (which was hit directly) after the cyclones commented that the emergency teams did a good job restoring services and rendering the community safe and habitable in the aftermath and that the response was fairly swift and efficient. The research undertaken by Yolngu in the months after Nathan and Lam was keenly sought because of underlying issues effecting Yolngu authority in their own community, including poor consideration of community members as core players and as assets to preparation, response and reconstruction.

The Yolngu research focused on the cyclone scenario but quickly developed into a frank discussion amongst Yolngu in the community about the status of Yolngu leadership, authority and decision-making and the processes they felt are eroding Yolngu values and community wellbeing. Whilst the influences on Yolngu management of their community are highly complex (cultural, economic and historical) the research confirmed a core of issues around colonial agency virtually unanimously expressed by all respondents. Despite natural right and legal land tenure (Aboriginal land held in fee simple under the ALR(NT) Act 1976)<sup>1</sup> government and NGO services and activities in Galiwin'ku are increasingly undertaken with external mandate only and prosecuted by non-Yolngu agents in English (still a subornitate language locally to the Yolngu lingua franca), guided by external agendas and success criteria<sup>2</sup>.

Community leaders concluded that they needed to reinstate Yolngu authority based in Yolngu law to provide a forum through which emergency management and other agencies can offer and deliver services more effectively. Whilst not a new idea, the structure they settled on (named the Dalkarra and Djirikay Authority - DDA) developed without hosting or direction from non-Yolngu organisations. The CRC northern hub projects enabled NAILSMA to provide basic financial, logistical and administrative support, as requested by community leaders, playing a crucial role in buttressing culturally appropriate Yolngu-controlled participatory research and resilience building activities since the 2015 cyclones.

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<sup>1</sup> The Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act, 1976 is Federal Government legislation granting communal freehold title to traditional Aboriginal land-owners in the form of Land Trusts (managed by the relevant NT Land Councils created under that legislation) in the Northern Territory only. Aboriginal Land Trusts are inalienable freehold.

<sup>2</sup> Whilst Yolngu acknowledge the need for many of the services provided it's the manner in which they are designed and provided that they feel disempowers them and at times contradicts the services and embeds bad protocol – for example, complex community emergency response plans in English, kept at the police station; de-funding homelands; privileging English over the natural language in schools; arbitrary and disconnected creation of Yolngu steering committees or reference groups to support government agency work; or the formation of a community committees such as to discuss COVID 19 issues and responses, a'priori made up of non-Yolngu community agents. . . Whether constituted in the ways thus described, the strong perception by and effect on Yolngu is of deliberate dis-enfranchisement in their own community.



The DDA has been a forum in which community tensions have been sensitively managed in order to engage effectively with service providers including emergency management agencies. The DDA has many challenges (internal and external) but has recently engaged with a CRC supported 'sister' initiative at Ramingining to share experiences and discuss views on ways forward. Despite operating independently, the Galiwin'ku and Ramingining groups identified common concerns, and expressed an interest in obtaining mutual support and developing an agreed approach to anticipated face to face communication with the NT Commissioner for Police Jamie Chalker.

For Ramingining, the focus was placed on why communities felt the response to Cyclones Lam and Nathan had not worked as well as they would have wanted. The community owned research at Ramingining was undertaken by the Aboriginal Research Practitioners Network (ARPNNet). ARPNNet considered how the Bininj system can link up with the Balandra decision making system in a way that would improve on-ground engagement and developed a comprehensive list of protocols (see Utilisation and and impact section below)

Yolngu and Bininj experiences post cyclones Nathan and Lam challenge the current models for disaster response which focus on volunteer assistance. Yolngu/Bininj have a great deal to offer hazard assessment, preparation and response. Equitable and authoritative involvement for Yolngu/Bininj in all aspects of EM management is the only way to maximize positive EM outcomes. Local knowledge, skills and assets could be properly investigated, supported and developed to involve Yolngu/Bininj in producing more effective EM outcomes. This is demonstrated, for example, in environmental services by paid ranger groups undertaking complex land and sea management activities.

NAILSMA, ARPNNet and CDU have also been working in parallel across other jurisdictions of northern Australia, and in government spheres in the NT, to understand and help progress more equitable and functional relationships in the emergency management space. This 'global' part of the project story is of significant interest to the Galiwin'ku and Ramingining groups who seek the opportunity for the NT Partnership projects to engage directly with emergency management leadership. It has also given them a sense of common interest and comradery with countrymen interstate and raised an awareness for future possibilities in their own endeavours.

This BNHCRC research project is near complete, but for Indigenous leaders of Galiwin'ku and Ramingining this important effort over the last few years has created a foundation for real change. They are at the beginning and with some clarity now about what needs to be done. Their research has identified key issues impeding efficiency in emergency management and response and the delivery of more desirable outcomes for remote Indigenous communities. In order to progress the dialogue created by this research toward more practical and tangible end use outcomes, the 'next steps' of a broader project need to be realised.



The next steps:

Priority	Item/activity	Est. 000	Break down	timeframe
high	Two meetings between Galiwin'ku and Ramingining groups to discuss and plan for a face to face meeting (round table) with Police Commissioner (Jamie Chalker) et al	20	-Charters, -fees for participants ~20, acknowledging that many will be leaving paid work for the day(s) -catering and other meeting supplies -venue hire	Imminent
high	Round table meeting (possibly in Darwin) with J Chalker et al, tabling Yolngu/Bininj work and perspective on desirable change and negotiating/discussing plausible steps to equitable, effective, empowering partnerships	15	-Charter and other flights -Fees as above (~10pp) -Accommodation in Dwn -preparatory meetings	Before Dec 2020
high	On-ground support - organisational, logistical and administrative	30	-Contract fees for on-ground support services -local vehicle hire -small meeting supplies	In line with above (~15 days in each community)
high	NAILSMA, ARPNet costs -	?	Staff, consultants, admin fees, trans and accom . . .	Now to Dec and then beyond
Mod - high	Secure and dedicated meeting place for the DDA. The DDA cannot function effectively without a dedicated space.	50	-up-grade existing shelter (eg concrete slab, kitchenette, toilet, furniture etc	ASAP for 12-24 months
Mod-high	DDA administration capability. DDA has a secretary whose funding is running with the NTG project that supports it.	50	DDA needs a secretariat – p/t for now	From now on
Mod-high	Ramingining project EM tools finalisation	20	-On-line interactive community EM Plan -finalise hazard Rapid assessment tool consider applicability to Gal. -Community consultation	Before Dec
Mod-high	Connecting the story to Govt. . . Including opportunity for scaling up.	?	NTG level discussion with partners (CDU, RCA, NAILSMA, DDA, ARPNet, BFNT)	Complementary to Yolngu development
Mod-high	DDA capacity building	?		On-going
Mod-high	Explore in detail future investment ideas and models for these communities to sustain and develop their initiatives. Consider NT wide models for same.	?		
Mod	Communications strategy and material within community	5	Accessible information, including community emergency plan	Late 2020
Mod	Scenario planning to explore potential for community groups (like the DDA and rangers) providing contracted local services to EM. <i>Note N Qld model supporting gulf communities as first responders etc.</i>	50	CDU team with Yolngu/Bininj researchers, facilitators	Early 2021



## END-USER PROJECT IMPACT STATEMENT

**Ken Baulch**, *Bushfires NT, Northern Territory Government, NT.*

This project was necessarily delayed and unable to be completed by June 2020; the planned completion date was subsequently extended to December 2020. The projects have been highly successful in engaging with community members at Galiwin'ku and Ramingining and the potential impact for these communities is profound. For Indigenous, or any, small communities to assume such levels of responsibility for building more effective partnerships with emergency management leaders is unusual; this project has great potential to inspire similar partnership building processes in other small communities. These communities have certainly taken the lead and established the basis for developing effective partnerships with Bushfires NT and other emergency management agencies in future.

I look forward to working with these community leaders to realise our collective aspirations about how we can do things better.



## YEAR THREE PROJECT DISCUSSION

Erosion of Yolngu authority recognized in the research was manifest in the impacts from the mission era, the creation of NT Shires and the Commonwealth government's NT emergency response ('the Intervention'). Ambient and entrenched characteristics of Territory and National agency in Galiwin'ku were variously identified as:

- Inadequate recognition of Yolngu knowledge and capability
- Systemic lack of trust of Yolngu
- Manipulation (often inadvertent) of Yolngu bapurr (clan) leaders through the control of resources in the economically impoverished Yolngu community
- ethnocentrism
- Short cycle policy changes
- Disjuncture amongst inter-agency service provision.

Working through these discussions as a community is far more complex than simply recognizing these things in a general and disconnected sense.

The relative dysfunction of service delivery to the community creates;

- Lack of transparency and insecurity around effective community leadership
- Disempowerment, disenfranchisement and disengagement
- Conflict and competition for resources amongst Yolngu.

Yolngu leaders, grasping the significance of their effective ownership of this research, began (again) to think beyond the problems, to the steps needed for developing solutions in this 'two way' or cross-cultural life space.

The following corresponding outcomes were identified by community researchers at Galiwin'ku and Ramingining:

- Decision making should be negotiated by the 'right people'<sup>3</sup>. This is a fundamental pillar for good engagement with all outside agencies. Knowing how to identify and engage with the 'right people' is not obvious to most service agencies however, there is a network of decision makers in place, organized firstly around Traditional Yolngu/Bininj law and culture and, secondly, around the contemporary organization and needs of the Yolngu/Bininj societies of Galiwin'ku and Ramingining. There are well developed protocols for decision making in communities that should be recognized. For example, individual family and clan leaders have people and areas they are responsible for and must work with others to address community wide or landscape scale concerns. It is important to understand this and seek to empower this system and its

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<sup>3</sup> Sithole B., Campbell D., Sutton S., Sutton I., with Campion O., Campion M., Brown C., Daniels G., Daniels A., Brian C, Campion J., Yibarbuk, D, Phillips E., Daniels G., Daniels D., Daniels P., Daniels K., Campion M., Hedley B., Radford M., Campion A., Campion S., Hunter -Xenie H; and Pickering S. (accepted for publication). Blackfella way, our way of managing fires and disasters bin ignored but im still here - Indigenous governance structures for fire emergency management to be published in ed H. James et al the APRU series Vol 1 Palgrave. Presented at AFAC 2017. Sydney, Australia



representatives to get more effective participation and decision-making for emergency response.

- Agencies need to adequately resource the engagement process on the ground. There needs to be a recognition that engagement costs time and money. The current business as usual model puts the responsibility of engagement with service agencies and grossly undervalues the resources and local knowledge required to engage well. Engaging 'with the minimum' should not be accepted as enough. Imperatives must be in place to create conditions necessary for agencies to engage with the right people to the right degree.
- Both community research groups emphasise the need for outside agencies to undertake cultural orientation and accept guidance from community leaders under the authority of traditional laws and protocols. Countrymen<sup>4</sup> argue that all agencies offering services to the community should enable local Indigenous knowledge and systems to create favorable conditions for effective engagement. This includes practical support for the communities to hold essential ceremonies as required by their obligations to kin and country<sup>5</sup>. This has been developed at Ramingining around a five-day cultural course<sup>6</sup> to be delivered by elders on country to agency staff. This critical reinvestment in cultural knowledge, work and education is foundational for stronger Yolngu/Bininj identity and functional partnerships with service agencies. Current requirements/emphasis on conditions of western employment/unemployment and school attendance limit the value of and participation by community members in important activities on country. This is a pertinent comment regarding current cultural un-awareness of agency staff and the need for and relevance of cultural awareness training in these remote Indigenous contexts.
- Recognition that the unique skills and knowledge of local people in communities are not being acknowledged or utilized adequately in ER. The communities want local capability recognized and integrated into all emergency response plans and activities. The potential exists to invest in local ER teams and groups strategically located in Arnhem land communities to address concerns including cultural literacy.
- The development of appropriate training materials must incorporate local knowledge and practices and build local capacity as done with the BNHCRC Training Project. The Training Project collaboration<sup>7</sup> demonstrated a new model for training delivery and focus that

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<sup>4</sup> A colloquial term for women and men used by Indigenous people to generically recognize Indigenous identity and familiarity

<sup>5</sup> Buergelt P., Sithole B, Sangha K, et al (2017). Resilience: Integrating Indigenous worldviews, knowledges, sensitivities and practices in building adaptive capacities, In D. Paton & D. Johnston (Eds.), Disaster resilience: An integrated approach (2nd ed.). Springfield, Illinois: Charles C. Thomas.

<sup>6</sup> Outline of the course has been developed based on discussions with the elders and will be finalized in March 2020

<sup>7</sup> Operational leadership - A field guide. Produced in collaboration with the BNHCRC Training project.



underlined the importance of working together to develop materials fit for purpose.

- The need to develop simple tools that can be used in the community to aid in the response is crucial to getting things done in relation to the operational manual for Emergency Management. Bininj have developed a local rapid assessment tool for natural hazard based on a 3D model of Ramingining which was developed as a visual tool to aid the emergency management. The tool uses a network of trained community-based individuals to provide quick information about hazard impact as soon as possible that will inform EM agencies and help organize Bininj responders and families to immediate needs and action.
- EM is an inter-agency effort and yet there is no space in the community designated for countrymen to meet and discuss EM outside the formal arrangements. Agencies in remote communities are hesitant to allow countrymen to meet on their premises and some place difficult conditions making it impossible for countrymen to meet there. Up to now they have relied on the good manners of local champions in the community, but this status of affairs eats up project budgets undermining the consultation and engagement efforts that we try and have.

Building on strong foundational work by Yolngu at Galiwin'ku, Yolngu/Bininj at Ramingining and the CDU/ARNet/NAILMSA project team, the 2019-20 project year (final) has seen some important developments paving the way to direct effective discussions with the NT EM hierarchy.

In terms of the CRC contracts, CDU, ARNet and NAILMSA have overseen the completion of all the milestones up to and including the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter. Milestones 3.4.1, 3.4.2 and 3.4.3 are progressing, though incomplete due to COVID 19 circumstances. These include the Final EM Partnering Protocol Framework, agreed recommendations for local resilience, and the final report (see Milestone table below). Whilst communications amongst parties around the draft protocol framework occurred without being able to hold a face to face workshop, as reported in March, a further exercise is planned for later in 2020, otherwise referred to as a 'round table' discussion with EM leaders (see NEXT STEPS below).

The set of protocols for effective engagement were developed to guide EM and other agencies. Tools for improved action in emergency management and a decision making pathway have also been developed.

## PROJECT OUTCOMES AND EXPECTATIONS

Yolngu and Bininj expectations for project outcomes naturally vary from the prescribed outcomes of the contract as they are conceived in a different cross-cultural space and are the product of effective Yolngu/Bininj project ownership and ongoing practical importance locally. As discussed in previous reports and identified above, the concerns of the community leaders at Galiwin'ku are for redressing erosion of local authority in the management of community affairs. This is the important backdrop to improving relationships with emergency



management agencies because it applies internally to Yolngu capability and externally to EM agency engagement. The success of agreed protocols and partnership outcomes will depend upon practical support for redressing top down, disaggregated and disempowering trends in community management, in favour of (re)centered Yolngu leadership.

Over this last project year, the DDA gathered significant support within Galiwin'ku and began to project itself as the representative community authority with explanatory brochures for both the community and external agencies. Support for the DDA was also expressed locally by several key community agencies, such as the Aboriginal Resource Development Service (ARDS) and the Australian Red Cross (ARC). Important collaborations emerged with NAILSMA, ARC and ARDS for example, and a Community Reference Group supported by the DDA was formed to engage with police in community policing and justice issues.

A key practical issue with engagement identified by Ramingining participants was the limited access to the town's EM plan - access issues include its restrictive physical location and its use of (not easily understood) language. They sat down to develop a Bininj-led response plan<sup>8</sup> that would allow them to participate more effectively in response. The plan recognizes the need for collaboration with government and is clear on the obligations to the community. However, actioning the plan requires additional support and the community have started talking about how the plan could be financed.

Ramingining project leaders further defined their outcomes and expectations as incorporating:

- ✚ *Stronger interest and engagement on ER and other hazard related issues.*

Although there is interest and some leaders are talking, there is no indication whether they will take concrete steps to change how things are done. The COVID-19 pandemic saw Ramingining elders feeling more aware and empowered to talk about response and related issues but still unsure as to how EM agencies might engage with them in planning, decision-making and action

- ✚ *Learning platform for stronger leadership in communities;*

The project provided a platform for elders to sit and reflect on their roles not just for ER but also in other areas of Indigenous Policy including land management and fire abatement programs. The importance of including families and clans was emphasised. There is a shift from focus on rangers to more involvement by the wider community. The rangers welcome the broadening of participation and engagement and saw some of the opportunities that are presented in a future where families also actively take part.

- ✚ *Valuing of indigenous knowledge and ceremony;*

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<sup>8</sup> Sithole B. Campion O. B., and Hunter-Xenie H (2018). Hazard smart remote communities in Northern Australia – community led response to disaster preparedness. AJEM Volume 31, No. 4, October 2016 ISSN: 1324 1540



The project presented a platform to consider how Indigenous knowledge can be incorporated in the response programs. The importance of continuous practice of ceremony as a management tool on country was emphasised. As well as identifying the importance of IK and ceremony, communities identified the importance of intergenerational transfer of knowledge and practice and that's underscored the importance of community to community bonds.

✚ *New models of leadership training for ER in remote communities;*

We worked with the BNHCRC Training project to pilot test their training materials over the project period. The project demonstrated that existing materials for leadership training needed to be adapted with IK and delivery of training should be co-delivery while targeting of training should be community focused. At least 3 communities received the training in Western Arnhem. Some of the outcomes of the training model have been adopted by AIRD when they invited ARPNet members to co-facilitate the workshop.

✚ *Products and tools produced through the project that have wider relevance or application beyond the project;*

Some of the products have ignited some excitement among local organisations and there are plans to produce some of these as posters that can be distributed easily. A road trip by the ARPNet team leader in Ramingining and a few of the elder will mean that some other communities in the region will also hear about this project and maybe adopt some of the products.

## CHALLENGES

As might be expected, the development of a Yolngu based authority such as the DDA has its complications. With very limited resources to develop and prove-up its functionality, the DDA has been subject to the impacts of local politics as well as a lack of widespread awareness from service providers. In spite of any real financial support or administrative framework, a secretariat for the (informal) DDA was employed during 2019, providing an important contact point and basic services to the DDA. The DDA continues at this formative stage however, without even the most basic resources it remains relatively non-functioning. Consideration is being given by community leaders for strategies that might provide independent financial capacity and ongoing capability for the DDA, including an administrative framework and a dedicated space to work from and conduct meetings.

A significant challenge to the project from the CRC and Yolngu perspectives has of course been the COVID 19 pandemic. This has seen access to and from Aboriginal communities shut down until tentatively re-opening in July 2020. Other protocols and restrictions that apply during this pandemic have also meant that occasion for meetings and group discussions have been significantly interrupted.



As well as presenting operational challenges, the COVID pandemic has exposed yet again the very paternalistic tendencies of responsible agents in response to crisis. Yolngu leaders at Galiwin'ku continue to express dismay and anger at the lack of adequate engagement with the Yolngu community through Yolngu leaders and families about important issues. Poor dissemination of accessible information about the COVID 19 crisis or consideration of response from community residents about management strategies demonstrate to Yolngu leaders that they are unseen by controlling agencies at the centre of the community response group. This was reiterated strongly by Ramingining leaders when they met with Galiwin'ku leaders in July 2020. The challenge is therefore also embedded attitude and practice consistently demonstrated by servicing agencies. Equity for the Yolngu/Bininj community in local governance and decision-making is not resolveable in the short term or with limited, sporadic agency interest in systemic change.

Specific challenges ahead identified by the Ramingining research project included:

- ✚ Passing of elders being a big constraint on crafting actions and processes to effectively engage in EM
- ✚ Continued lack of interest by EM agencies to engage and participate in conversations about working together
- ✚ Continued restrictions on access to spaces conducive for Bininj community members to engage and act in their own interests, for their own safety, especially the composition of the EM committee.

## KEY MILESTONES

Contract Milestone delivery dates for the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> quarters of the project have been extended to December 2020 in response to COVID 19 imposed challenges, as per the following tables and associated notes.

Year	Milestones	Milestone Date	# of Milestones
19-20	<b>Quarter 1 (Jul-Sep)</b>		
3	Knowledge and experience sharing exercise amongst participating community researchers / leaders, facilitated by project research groups	30-Sep-19	3.1.1
3	Report providing synthesis of community-based resilience and engagement research disseminated to all participating communities	30-Sep-19	3.1.2
3	Posters and Conference Papers for BNHCRC Conference	30-Sep-19	3.1.3
3	Quarterly Report	30-Sep-19	3.1.4
3	Milestone Payment	30-Sep-19	
	<b>Quarter 2 (Oct-Dec)</b>		
3	Workshop undertaken with participating communities to prepare synthetic draft 'EM partnering protocol framework'	31-Dec-19	3.2.1
3	Draft synthetic 'EM partnering protocol framework' disseminated to project end-users for feedback	31-Dec-19	3.2.2
3	Quarterly Report	31-Dec-19	3.2.3
3	Payment	31-Dec-19	
	<b>Quarter 3 (Jan-Mar)</b>		
3	Feedback received on draft synthetic 'EM partnering protocol framework' and final draft synthesis document prepared and disseminated to all participating project parties	31-Mar-20	3.3.1
3	Workshop with community and EM agency partners undertaken to develop final 'EM partnering protocol framework' and consider long term investment in community resilience and prosperity building.	31-Mar-20	3.3.2
3	Quarterly Report	31-Mar-20	3.3.3
3	Milestone Payment	31-Mar-20	
	<b>Quarter 4 (Mar-Jun)</b>		
3	Final 'EM partnering protocol framework' document prepared and disseminated. Recommendations from participating communities about investment in local resilience/prosperity.	30-Jun-20	3.4.1
3	Paper prepared for publication addressing processes involved, and preparation of, 'EM partnering protocol framework'	30-Jun-20	3.4.2
3	Final report	30-Jun-20	3.4.3

CDU – BNHCRC 2018 CONTRACT MILESTONE TABLE



Milestone #	Milestone	Original Due Date	Revised Due Date
3.3.2	Workshop with community and EM agency partners undertaken to develop final 'EM partnering protocol framework' and consider long term investment in community resilience and prosperity building.	31/03/2020	30/12/2020
3.4.1	Final 'EM partnering protocol framework' document prepared and disseminated. Recommendations from participating communities about investment in local resilience/prosperity.	30/06/2020	30/12/2020
3.4.2	Paper prepared for publication addressing processes involved, and preparation of, 'EM partnering protocol framework'	30/06/2020	30/12/2020
3.4.3	Contribute to Synthesis Report summarising all project activities, Quarterly Report, Self-Assessment Matrix	30/06/2020	30/12/2020
3.4.4	Quarterly Report, Annual report, Self-Assessment Matrix	30/06/2020	30/12/2020

CDU-BNHCRC CONTRACT EXTENSION MILESTONE TABLE

## PROJECT COMPLETION - NOTES ON MILESTONE DELIVERY

Milestones for the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> quarters have been completed, as reported in previous quarterly reports.

- ❖ Milestone 3.4.1 – the protocol frameworks for Galiwin'ku and Ramingining projects have been drafted and disseminated and feedback sought. The Protocol Framework will not be finalized until later in 2020 because of the need to extend the project timeframe (see below) and capture opportunities to; re-engage stakeholders in a (previously postponed) Research Advisory Forum and Utilisation Workshop (mooted for August 25-27); and hold the 'round table' discussion between Yolngu and EM leaders.
- ❖ Milestone 3.4.1 – As with the above, new opportunities to engage directly with EM managers will enable recommendations about investment to be better formulated in direct discussion with EM agencies and Department of the Chief Minister (DCM).
- ❖ Milestone 3.4.2 – Whilst this publication is in draft form, its completion is subject to the outcomes of the several direct discussions and workshop mentioned above.
- ❖ Milestone 3.4.3 – The Final Report is also subject to activities planned in the extended timeframe of this CRC contract and will be completed by December 31<sup>st</sup> 2020.

## CONTRACT EXTENSION

As noted above, the COVID 19 pandemic has forced a number of restrictions on gatherings and people movement. The impact on this Partnerships project has



been considerable, particularly given the additional vulnerability faced in remote Aboriginal communities. Aboriginal Land Councils restricted movement of people into communities on Land Trusts through their permit system and maintained closure to visitation beyond the time frames set by governments quite appropriately.

This meant that the RAF and Utilisation workshop initially planned for June had to be postponed until further notice as did the Galiwin'ku and Ramingining leaders' discussions at Ramingining. These discussions are considered pivotal to achieving practical outcomes as reflected in the contract milestones and expected by EM agency, Yolngu and Bininj end users.

CDU and NAILSMA therefore applied to the CRC for an extension to the Northern Hub Head and subordinate contracts until December 31<sup>st</sup> 2020, which was granted and now reflected in the amended contract milestone table above.



## UTILISATION AND IMPACT

### SUMMARY

Project outputs and their utilisation and impact are recorded separately below, as relevant to Galiwin'ku and Raminigining based projects. The development of outputs such as tools and local governance structures are of necessity, in these projects, products of local community research, aspiration and ownership. They are all in their infancy and the communities themselves are the target end-users as (potential) partners with formal end-users (ie, Ken Baulch of BFNT) and others (NTES, Redcross, Police, NT health et al).

### PART 1. Galiwin'ku outputs

#### Output 1: EM partnering protocols

##### Output Description

Draft Engagement Protocols between Emergency Services Agencies and the Galiwin'ku community.

The DDA requires a formal agreement between the Service Provider and the DDA that acknowledges the relevance and authority of the DDA at Galiwin'ku. The agreement would prescribe that:

1. Service Providers will follow agreed Communication Protocols to pro-actively support effective communication;
  - All meetings at Galiwin'ku where there are a greater number of Yolngu present will be conducted in Djambarrpuyngu and SPs will use and pay for local interpreters to enable communication.
  - All written communication from SPs will be easily accessible i.e. written in plain, easy to read English.
2. Service Providers Managers and staff undertake Cultural Orientation designed and administered by the DDA at Galiwink'ku.
3. Service Providers understand and accept that Yolngu are guided by and are often required to comply with Traditional laws and protocols and so must at all times operate respectfully and in accordance with this understanding.
4. Service Providers negotiate with the DDA when developing agreements to include practical measures of support for Yolngu in the partnership delivery of services, so the Yolngu community and SPs can effectively prosecute an agreed agenda and build trust. Some examples of practical support measures;
  - Follow agreed communication protocols
  - Conduct meeting out of hours to avoid conflict with local employers
  - Funding and support of an effective engagement process (local wages for committee members, meals for out of hours meetings, transport to and from meetings for participants, meeting resources and materials, qualified facilitation etc)
5. Dedicated support from the Service Providers to the community prioritising utilization, development and sustainability of Yolngu capability for EM preparation, response and recovery both focused at Galiwin'ku and potentially for collaboration in their broader region. Such support would be



negotiated to include gender equity and practical mechanisms for Yolngu engagement in planning, training and employment relevant to ES plans, networks and activities at Galiwin'ku

6. Free Prior Informed Yolngu decision making
7. 5 year EM and DDA partnership development plan with review milestones

### Extent of Use

The aim is for these protocols (when finalised after the 'round table' meeting with NTES et al) to apply to all service providers active in Galiwin'ku, including EM agencies. To date, these protocols have been applied in part to a DDA project with the NT Police and ARDS addressing issues around youth justice.

The protocols will be an important subject at the anticipated round table discussion with the NT Police Commissioners and others later in 2020.

### Utilisation Potential

Once agencies start to follow the protocols the confusion and conflicts will be reduced and the community management and service delivery space will be more cooperative, effective and empowering. The potential benefits from formal and active uptake of the final protocol package are enormous – covering practical service delivery, improved local capability, improved social capital and well-being and underpinning a broad movement to address community governance issues.

### Utilisation Impact

Not yet formalised and adopted, though the acceptance of draft protocols in the NT Police – DDA – ARDS project has been (anecdotally at least) highly successful with a DDA created Yolngu reference group dedicated to the youth justice agenda.

### Utilisation and Impact Evidence

Several agencies both at Galiwin'ku and based elsewhere have expressed interest and support in the adoption of Yolngu generated and management protocols, though there is as yet no evidence of their impact.

**Output 2:** Strong Yolngu governance institution for strong partnerships and communications outputs

### Output Description

Over the course of this BNHCRC project Yolngu researchers and broader community leadership at Galiwin'ku realized that challenges for more effective preparation, response and recovery relating to natural hazards ran much deeper than with just the hazard itself. The erosion of respect for Yolngu cultural governance and overall capabilities was a manifest problem needing to be



addressed if EM and other agency interactions with Galiwin'ku community are to improve and improve Yolngu well-being.

Yolngu leaders from all the bapuru (clan groups) at Galiwin'ku worked on a contemporary and inclusive model for local authority, integrally connected with Yolngu law and culture. The Dalkarra Djirrikay Authority has emerged as a key tenet of Galiwin'ku community governance – a representative group of leaders managing the important space at the interface of the community with outside service providers and other agencies. The DDA is in its infancy and highly vulnerable to financial deprivation and non-Yolngu agency respect and patronage.

The DDA is described in a simple brochure:





## Extent of Use

This preliminary local communique has been distributed and discussed widely in the community and with several local agencies. The brochure was presented with other project materials by the DDA at the BNHCRC research forum in Darwin, March 2019

## Utilisation Potential

Huge potential for this model to work at Galiwin'ku - versions of it incorporating some of its principles are in place at Wadeye, Ngukurr and Ramingining where Indigenous governance structures are recognised to a greater extent. Communications outputs like this (and others ongoing) are critical for both community scrutiny and maintaining support for the DDA.

## Utilisation Impact

The potential for the development of similar structures in other communities is enormous and transformative. At the Ramingining workshop with Galiwin'ku and Ramingining reserachers/leaders the experience sharing and combined intent to build on this work were inspiring. There is a clear and growing sense that this model could be highly useful useful for scaling up indigenous co-management of service delivery to their communities, particularly relating to emergency management.

## Utilisation and Impact Evidence

*Not yet available.*

### **Output 3:** Workshop with Endusers (Postponed from March 2020)

#### Output Description

Enduser workshop was planned for March and had to be postponed because of COVID 19 restrictions. An attempt has been made to find other platforms to host the meeting but connectivity issues in remote areas make this a big challenge.

#### Extent of Use

Postponed.

#### Utilisation Potential

Not yet assessed.

#### Utilisation Impact

Not yet assessed.



## Utilisation and Impact Evidence

Not yet available

### PART 2. Ramingining outputs

Bininj have produced a number of outputs and in places where more than one closely related outputs were produced they have been numbered 'a' and 'b', etc.

This section lists outputs from ARPNet working with Bininj in Ramingining.

#### ARPNet output 1a: Living smart with hazards – an online community planning response tool/handbook

##### Output Description

We asked the Bininj respondents what they would you put into a response plan? We received some diverse replies discussed in the paper (see Sithole et al 2018). We have produced a model plan for ER which we have called *Living Smart With Hazards*. The schema presents a model ER plan that brings government and community together for ER. It shows that the community and ER agencies could walk together side by side for stronger ER.

##### Extent of Use

The plan is not yet finalized although the components have been defined and explained (see paper published in Ajem). Due to COVID 19 restrictions finalizing the completion of the plan is delayed.



##### Utilisation Potential

This could be used as a complement of the existing Ramingining EM plan.

There is clear possibility to replicate the process and the framework with other remote communities.

##### Utilisation Impact

More community involvement in EM with potential gains for the government in terms of improved performance and buy in from communities.

potential to scale up model to other communities and jurisdictions



## Utilisation and Impact Evidence

Not yet able to provide evidence until plan is completed.

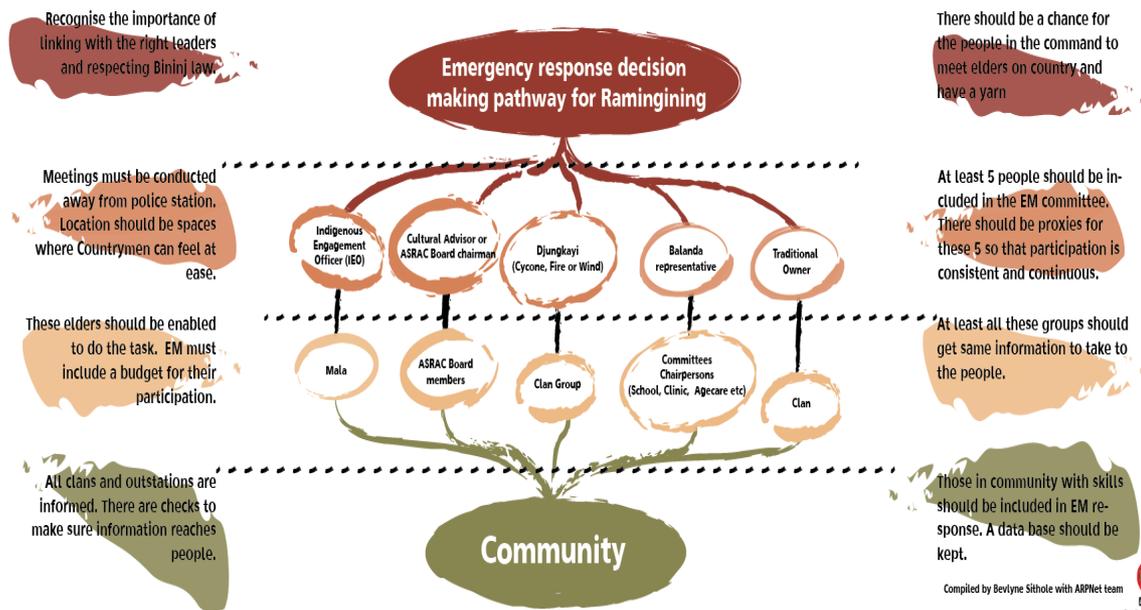
**Output 1b:** Model of pathways to collaborative leadership and decision making

### Output Description

Agencies are right to ask communities these questions – “how do you want us to work with you? . . . How do we connect with your structures?” The reality is that few agencies out there ever ask this type of question or are ready for the answer when it comes. The poster for Output 1b (see attached) presents the answer for this question from the community elders around Ramingining. The important thing is that their answer is clear on who and how they need to be connected to the current system of decision making.

Who should agencies be engaging with in communities? This is an important question, one where there are no clear answers as different communities will have different preferences. Under the current model, EM agencies were engaging with the Indigenous Engagement Officer and one other elder (now passed). By the admission of this elder, this was wrong and placed the burden of communicating messages on one individual. It also amongst elders in the community who perhaps felt he was not right for the role ... Its not clear how the late elder ended up in the role, but it is important to caution against ignoring existing systems that are already in place. Of course, this means investing some time finding out about them and in some cases finding that even when one feels they have followed the process, these individuals may still be contested.

There can also be alternative decision-making pathways proposed. In the consultations we found that the command center is understood to be the heart of the operation, but this command group needs to be clear on who in the community is their link and through what pathways do they operate.



Emergency Response Decision Making Pathway (ARPNet 2020)

It is suggested the IEO remains as command centre figure, given their access to the Mala leader group, and the board of the Arafura Swamp Ranger Aboriginal Corporation (ASRAC) – the ASRAC board is representative of the key clans found in Ramingining. There is also recognition, that the Balanda (non-Indigenous residents) in the community need a representative that links with the multiple committees found in the community.

There are Djungkayi (ceremonial managers) related to elemental hazards such as fire and cyclones. they are of crucial importance as they are the link with the clan that 'own' the hazard. Concomittantly, traditional owners of Ramingining must be recognized and involved - Their presence is crucial for intra-clan relationships. These individuals (currently 5 identified) must be connected to the command center.

TOs or their appointed representatives must travel with the police when emergency announcements are being made in the community or be given resources to make sure they are able to perform communication roles easily. Too often agencies assume, that passing on a message to one person means that person transmits the message. This is not always the case.

Government needs to make enough room for Bininj to participate. Making room means engaging with more Bininj, it also means setting aside resources to support their participation.

Based on this the decision- making pathway/model,

- Brings together the Bininj and balanda system for EM
- Identifies at least 5 Bininj who should be involved to ensure everyone and all the right people are included.

## Extent of Use

- The decision-making model is clear on the level of Bininj involvement needed in EM. Communities will also argue for a broader based participation for EM decision making in the interfaces planned with EM agencies.

## Utilisation Potential

- This could be used be adopted as the model to follow not just by Ramingining community but by other communities too.
- There is clear possibility to replicate the process and adapt the model for use in other remote communities.

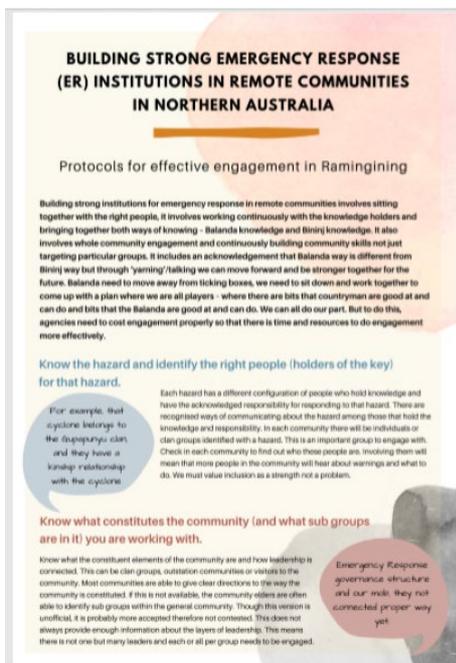
## Utilisation Impact

- The model developed here is useful and directly addresses a question that some EM agencies have asked. Communities hope the agencies listen and adopt their recommendation.
- potential to scale up model to other communities and jurisdictions

## Utilisation and Impact Evidence

Not yet able to provide evidence of use until the model has been presented to the agencies.

## Output 2: Producing Protocols for effective engagement in ER



### Output Description

For communities to work with agencies, what needs to happen? We focused on not listing all the problems that communities are experiencing with outside agencies. For each issue or problem, we asked the community to say what and how things should happen. Out of these conversations we came up with a list of protocols that communities believe will be a good guide to stronger engagement with remote communities (see attached draft).

In the absence of knowledge and awareness of existing structures and protocols EM agencies have relied on created structures (committees) that lack legitimacy locally and are there for the convenience of the Balanda (non-Indigenous people).

These structures have created a negative dynamic in the community that has seen the following:

- Outside agencies relying on convenience rather than real representation



- The privileging of individuals by placing them in decision making and leadership roles that they have no right to be in or desire to play. As well as burden these individuals, its alienated them from the people they are meant to be informing.
- Ignorance of community dynamics, interclan/family dynamics means that outside agencies persist with a model where they think an individual can represent/or access all.
- Outside agencies have ignored for too long the lack of alignment between their business and Bininj business on country. We need to move the two towards each other.
- Agencies are unaware of the burden of meetings and the burnout resulting from this engagement. Especially for individuals who sit on multiple committees.

### Extent of Use

- The protocols have been distributed in the community. There is excitement about the protocols and the Mala has expressed interest to share with all agencies coming into Ramingining.
- The protocols have been shared with the community of Galiwinku through elders that came for a sharing meeting.

### Utilisation Potential

- This could be used as a complement of the existing protocols or be adopted as the protocols to follow not just by Ramingining community but by other communities too.
- There is clear possibility to replicate the process and adapt the protocols for use in other remote communities.

### Utilisation Impact

- Both for agencies and the community the protocols clearly instruct what needs to happen for effective engagement.
- potential to scale up model to other communities and jurisdictions

### Utilisation and Impact Evidence

Not yet able to provide evidence until the protocols have been checked and endorsed by the wider community.

**Output 3a:** Joint NAILSMA ARPnet paper for the AFAC research forum 2020 (now postponed to 2021).



### Output Description

Joint paper bringing the two components of the project together. An abstract was submitted to AFAC.

#### **ABSTRACT AFAC 2020**

*Moving together to move forward: Lessons in effective on-ground engagement in emergency management from Arnhem land, Australia*

B. Sithole., O. Champion., S. Sutton and H. Hunter-Xenie, D. Burton., G. James.

How can and why should EM agencies rethink relationships with remote communities across Northern Australia, accommodating diversity of place, circumstance, history and knowledges? In 2015 cyclones Lam and Nathan decimated the towns of Galiwin'ku and Ramingining in the NT. Traditional owners sought practical support to investigate community-wide views on impact, response effectiveness and opportunities to improve. The ensuing CRC funded project had a rich source of experience of what works and what does not work in remote communities in Arnhem land. By adopting a participatory action research approach, the project has been able to explore some of the key issues with emergency response in remote communities and facilitate the communities to come up with ideas and actions to address those issues.

Research participants emphasised the need for revised governance model for ER that supports traditional authority, local skills and knowledge – a co-delivery model that responds to the unique circumstances of each place. Narratives from the research - post cyclones Lam and Nathan - indicate a fundamental desire for an improved engagement model in EM, emphasising respect and equity for local culture, capability and opportunity. Ramingining and Galiwin'ku are separate towns (mainland and island) though culturally close. Their aspirations for greater involvement in EM are similar but their pathways to change reflect different though entirely complementary priorities. Whilst Ramingining participants argued for a more nuanced delivery model, including for example a local rapid assessment tool and front line response support, Galiwin'ku participants felt it critical to address local authority issues as a foundation for increasing response capability, co-developing accessible community EM plans and ensuring agency staff have improved cultural understanding for example.

Though unique, their assessment of debilitating issues with previous and existing EM relationships and their ideas for effective change will resonate with other communities, even in other jurisdictions. The common plea for change in agency relationships with Indigenous communities challenges them to rethink engagement strategies toward collaborative action, agreed practical goals and appropriate measures of success. There is no doubt in project participants' minds as to the improved outcomes possible from having a stronger place in the EM equation, but it will require long term commitment and investment to embrace the lessons learned through this project and navigate the pathways forward.

### Extent of Use

AFAC research forum has been postponed, so writing in progress.

### Utilisation Potential

AFAC research forum has been postponed.

## Utilisation Impact

AFAC research forum has been postponed.

## Utilisation and Impact Evidence

AFAC research forum has been postponed.

### Output 3b: Poster for the AFAC research forum 2020 (submitted 29 July 2020)

#### Output Description

#### Conference Poster

**"Time to find those 'hidden' Bininj structures, they are not hidden and EM gotta connect with us!"**  
**A pathway for effective community level decision-making for emergency response in central Arnhem Land.**

Bev Sihole\*, Otto Campion\*, Robert Bununagur, Charlie Brison, Stephen Sulton with ARFnet Team\*

WITH 'SHARED RESPONSIBILITY' EM AGENCIES SHOULD ASK: **"HOW DO YOU WANT US TO WORK WITH YOU?"**  
 BUT THE REALITY IS THAT 'AT THE COALFACE' FEW EVER ASK THE QUESTION AND EVEN LESS ARE READY FOR THE ANSWER!  
 THIS POSTER PRESENTS A **MODEL** AS AN ANSWER TO THIS QUESTION FROM THE **COMMUNITY ELDERS AROUND RAMINGINING. THEY ARE CLEAR ON WHO AND HOW THEY NEED TO BE CONNECTED TO THE CURRENT SYSTEM OF DECISION-MAKING.**

**Up till now...**  
 Without knowing about the existing structures and protocols for decision making in Aboriginal societies EM agencies have created structures based on their own culture (committees) which then lack local legitimacy. Committees are convenient for Balanda but have created a negative dynamic in the community that has seen the following:

- Outside agencies failing to achieve real representation.
- The privileging of individuals by placing them in decision-making/leadership roles they have no cultural right to and don't want. This burdens these individuals, alienates them from their own people and undermines the primary objective; community resilience.
- Ignorance of community dynamics, intertan/family dynamics means that outside agencies persist with a model where they think an individual can represent/or access all.
- Outside agencies have ignored for too long the lack of alignment between their business and Bininj business on country. We need to move the two towards each other.
- Agencies are unaware of the burden of meetings and the burnout resulting therefrom especially for individuals who sit on multiple committees.
- Bininj want to be strong actors in delivering Aboriginal safety.
- Communities vary and they will want different models. This notion has been said before and should be accepted.

**Emergency response decision making pathway for Ramingining**

**What needs to happen from now...**  
 Government needs to make enough room for Bininj to participate. Making room means engaging with more Bininj, it also means setting aside resources to support their participation. This decision-making pathway/model:

1. Brings together the Bininj and Balanda systems for EM and identifies at least 5 Bininj who should be involved ,
2. Gives guidance on the preferred spaces for meetings and working together and what is required to make this structure viable.
3. Associated with this pathway is the requirement for easy access to simple and effective messaging. The 3D model of Ramingining makes planning and visioning of EM more visual for country
4. Inclusion of people with skills in response is crucial to this new way.

Logos: Australian Government Business, CHARLES DARWIN UNIVERSITY, RIEL, bnhrc.com.au

#### Extent of Use

Poster was submitted but no feedback yet on circulation and dissemination.

#### Utilisation Potential

AFAC collection of posters.

#### Utilisation and Impact Evidence

Evidence not yet available.



## Output 4 - ARPNet/NAILSMA: Community to community sharing and learning platform

### Description

A meeting was held for the research groups in Ramingining and Galiwinku to come together and share learnings. What the project had set out to do all those months ago was to assist bringing the two groups together to share stories and experiences with the work they'd been doing in parallel around EM. The morning conversation was around Bininj research, emphasising in a number of ways key values embedded in this ARPNet-type approach, such as cultural strength and credibility, standing together, understanding and talking together about the nature of community challenges etc. This kind of conversation resonated strongly with the Galiwin'ku group and the meeting as a whole, being reiterated with a range of examples throughout the day. The Galiwin'ku participants were keen to use their 'governance of the interface' (intersecting circle) diagram that was drawn for the RAF last year to describe their work. This worked very well emanating a very clear sense of ownership and pride amongst the meeting as to what they had collectively worked through . . . and a perhaps equally strong sense of unfinished business yet to be tackled. Participants had an obvious boost to their confidence when they realised their kin (from the other community) were 'on the same page', working in parallel -This aspect of the day was perhaps the most satisfying.

### Extent of Use

This project experience sharing platform was very influential for the groups and is intended to be reproduced should resources allow, with particular purpose being preparation for a planned 'round table' discussion with the NT Police Commissioner. Observations . . .:

- seeing the other group working on the same themes seemed to inspire confidence in the journey - common appreciation of 'outsider' impact on community and family well-being - albeit acted on differently
- common general appreciation of the challenges to better working relationships with EM agencies
- realising the different paths taken and their complementarity was also reassuring and interesting - ARPNet remaining the fulcrum and DDA becoming the centre of practical project and community governance aspirations
- recognising the significance of the common Yolngu/Bininj research foundation to the work was an empowering element, notwithstanding some challenges around Yolngu research organisation and future support

Planning from the experience sharing platform:

- support ongoing communications between the two groups
- need communications with all meeting participants to draft a plan for the round table and re-visit the idea of selecting a workable representative group to attend
- further any ideas/plans for financial support for the respective and collaborating group(s) to keep going



- develop a budget and secure money the round table with Commission Chalker anticipated for later in the year.

### Utilisation Potential

- The meeting at Ramingining was an emphatic success. There is clear possibility to replicate the process and initiate conversations in other remote communities.
- Though entirely Yolngu/Bininj managed, the meeting allowed and sought input from others about relevant activities and development in the EM space going on elsewhere. The meeting was keen to hear briefly about the Qld Gulf experience with QFES supporting some ranger group's First Response capability, the conversations going on in the background with EM leaders across the north and in particular about initial correspondence made with the NT Commissioner for Police, Jamie Chalker, to set up a conversation directly with them. Given the manifest interest in working together in the future (however that may look) the meeting felt they'd like to take their experiences and perspective to the Commissioner face to face and that they thought about 'picking a team' to do that. The idea of meeting Jamie Chalker and other EM leaders was met with enthusiasm and the notion of somehow selecting a workable representative group from amongst the two communities was also seen as a good idea

### Utilisation Impact

- Platforms for communities to share experience and knowledge on EM are powerful and can be focal points for regionwide EM actions.
- potential to extend the platform to other communities and jurisdictions

### Utilisation and Impact Evidence

Everyone in the large group contributed, including some strong and enthusiastic senior women. The groups represented (as it happens) a good spread of bapurru or clan groups, which is testament to people working together putting differences aside and to the perceived importance of the challenge - leaving any conflict at the door was for the DDA's and ARPNet's work gratefully and unanimously recognised on the day.

There is no evidence as yet for the impact of this or this type of inter-community collaboration in the EM space on EM outcomes.



## NEXT STEPS

### FINALISING THE CURRENT (EXTENDED) PROJECT

- **Round table discussions between Yolngu/Bininj and the NT Commissioner for Police and other EM leaders**
  - Support Yolngu and Bininj meetings in preparation for round table
  - Provide logistical and other support for the round table
- Protocols Framework – Using the results from the Round Table discussion, review and finalise protocols framework with Yolngu/Bininj
- Community resilience investment strategy – Subsequent to the Round Table, review and finalise recommendations for a development and sustainable investment strategy
- write final report and project paper for publication
- **Completion and access to useful visual tools** - Although these tools have been drafted, we are seeking additional funding to finalise, translate and distribute them:
  - Model of an inclusive decision making pathway for Emergency management (Poster)
  - Community Emergency Response Plan – a Living handbook (Under preparation, will need additional funding to teach key agencies and community members how to update the plan)
  - Rapid Assessment and planning tool using 3D model map of Ramingining (needs to be mounted and finalized)
  - 3 day training on country cultural training course outline (still needs to be prepared with countryman)

### BNHCRC NORTHERN HUB ACTIVITY

- Research Advisory Forum – (August 25?)
- Utilisation Workshop – (August 26?)

### PROJECTED EM AGENCIES' ENGAGEMENT

- EM agencies commit to locally guided engagement and consider and adopt the protocols developed in the project
- EM agencies realistically cost engagement and provide adequate funding for planned and agreed participants, EM activities, skills and structures.
- EM agencies support the development of simple and effective messaging for EM in communities that will make information flows more consistent and understood. One suggestion (Ramingining) was to colour code messaging as they do with warning letters from centerlink
- EM agencies send their staff for cultural courses on country (Ramingining)

### AREAS OF FURTHER RESEARCH/EFFORT

- `Cost' the community-based plan and study its effectiveness with the possibility of upscaling the plan if it works well. May be useful to look at the



current plan and this new plan to see how they compare on a number of important issues.

- Study the real cost of effective collaboration/engagement. It seems to me that agencies are reluctant to engage because of the perceived costs of engagement. Are these costs real or imagined?
- Develop a targeted training program that is focused on building capacity for the on ground, in community response.
- Compare and contrast community focused response versus homeland focus response. Communities feel if they got a little bit of support, they would be much happier, safer in homelands than in the community. Is this really true? What are they talking about here?

## ADDRESSING ISSUES TO DO WITH SUSTAINABILITY

The involvement of the community rather than targeting small groups has been key to getting interest and participation sustained through the project. Even with limited or no interest from agencies, there are indications that the communities are now interested and talking about devising and planning for their safety. During COVID 19 lockdown, some of the elders came together and questioned how the agencies were dealing with the community. Although there was no organized response there are indications that there is heightened awareness. This is a really good outcome as we have been able to harness the interest of those individuals who have in the past 'assisted in EM but behind the fence' - now they know what to do and where to go to move past that fence.

From the beginning of these BNHCRC supported projects, a sense of ownership and hope for significant change has driven Yolngu/Bininj leaders forward. The projects adopted approaches that allowed the communities to identify problems with current engagement and then to develop homegrown tools to address these. The production of the brochure allowing them to state clearly in a local voice how agencies should engage was a big part of restoring faith in the project. The Indigenous Engagement Officer in the Australian Government office was excited to see the protocols and resolved to discuss them at the Mala (clan leaders) meeting and adopt them. This local uptake means the protocols are being entertained more broadly than in EM - A really good outcome that bodes well for wider use by the community.

The hand drawn ven-diagram showing how EM could be connected with different groups in the community through reference groups in the community 'interface', managed by the DDA, was also very welcomed. Simple but effective tools are much needed and have a wider application beyond EM.

The connection with the BNHCRC Training project and the AIRD Training project meant those leaders in the community who wanted training were able to get it. This improved capability is surely going to impact future EM in the communities.

## ONGOING/PERMANENT EFFORT



It is time agencies demonstrated real commitment to community engagement and create conducive spaces for communities to engage. Such a shift requires substantial investment in time and money, but it is the only way to engage in a real and effective way (See Sithole et al 2020). The benefits of co-delivery are demonstrably significant, and the agencies really need to trust their instincts and go all in to see these benefits.

Both Galiwin'ku and Ramingining are in position to potentially be seen and invested in as a combined or as individual test case(s). The Ramingining group is already proposing that engagement be tried in the ways described in the project, properly documented and everything costed with a view to looking at the viability of this kind of model as well as potential replicability of appropriate characteristics of the approach elsewhere.

### **Scaling-up with other communities**

When the project started Ngukurr and Gumbalanya were involved. There is a strong desire from the elders in Ramingining to grab their tools and outputs and go to visit other communities to talk about the project. Invitations have been received from countryman in the Roper Gulf who are keen to engage and become strong for country. Although most of the researchers involved in both Galiwin'ku and Ramingining see the projects as first and foremost about their respective places, about their families and their communities, they also see and aspire to carry the initiative further afield, in Arnhem Land and possibly interstate.

The interest in scaling-up has also been a pillar of the NAILSMA and Charles Darwin University strategic approach, though resources have not as yet been captured to set plans for cross-jurisdictional scaling in train.



## PUBLICATIONS LIST

### PEER-REVIEWED JOURNAL ARTICLES AND BOOK CHAPTERS

Buergelt P., Hikuroa D., Paradies Y., Sithole B., Sutton S., Powys Whyte K., (under preparation). Transforming Western worldviews and knowledge systems through engaging two-way with Indigenous peoples to reduce the risk of disasters and enhance adaptation to climate change. Chapter to be published in The Palgrave Handbook of Learning for Transformation.

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Sithole B., Campbell D., Sutton S., Sutton I., with Campion O., Campion M., Brown C., Daniels G., Daniels A., Brian C, Campion J., Yibarbuk, D, Phillips E., Daniels G., Daniels D., Daniels P., Daniels K., Campion M., Hedley B., Radford M., Campion A., Campion S., Hunter -Xenie H; and Pickering S. (accepted for publication). Blackfella way, our way of managing fires and disasters bin ignored but im still here - Indigenous governance structures for fire emergency management to be published in ed H. James et al the APRU series Vol 1 Palgrave. Presented at AFAC 2017. Sydney, Australia (New series editor to be announced).

Sithole B. (2018) Lost and found among the Aboriginal people of Arnhem Land, Australia. Issue on Education, Journal for Research and Debate. 3

Sithole B. Campion O. B., and Hunter-Xenie H (2018). Hazard smart remote communities in Northern Australia – community led response to disaster preparedness. AJEM Volume 31, No. 4, October 2016 ISSN: 1324 1540

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## CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

Sithole B and ARPNet 2020. The future in our own hands - effective pathways for disaster risk reduction in remote communities in Northern Australia. Australian Disaster Risk Conference. 25 August 2020.

Sithole et al 2020. Are disasters really transformative opportunities in remote and poor communities in Arnhem land and southern Africa. Panelists for the DRSI panel. ANU. 12 August 2020 [<https://anu.zoom.us/j/95799645003>]

B. Sithole., O. Champion., D. Burton., S. Sutton., G. James., and H. Hunter-Xenie **(Postponed to 2021)**  
Moving together to move forward: Lessons in effective on-ground engagement in emergency management from Arnhem land, Australia. Abstract submitted for the AFAC research forum)

Sithole B with ARPNet 2019. Hazard smart remote communities in Northern Australia – Community led preparedness. Presented at the APRU Conference, 2019, ANU, Australia.

Sithole B, Hunter Xenie, H with the ARPNet 2019. Hazard smart remote communities in Northern Australia. Presentation at the AFAC research forum 2019, Perth. (see paper in AJEM)



Sutton S., Sithole B., Sutton I., Campbell, D., Cameron M., Campion O.B., Campion M., Brian R., 2017. Training as Research and Research as Training in remote north Australia.,

Sithole B., Hunter Xenie H., Sutton S., Sutton I., Campbell D., Yibarbuk D., Campion O., Brian C., Redford M., Campion J., Campion M., and Brian H., 2017 Time to get the balance right with them government mob – building resilience in BNH management through stronger community participation. AFAC 2017, Sydney Australia.

## PROJECT RELATED INTERVIEWS

Interview with BNHCRC Researchers Hmalan Hunter Xenie and Steve Sutton.  
<https://www.bnhcrc.com.au/resources/presentation-audio-video/5734>

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Sithole B, Campion B.M., Brian C., Bununggu J, and Sutton S with ARPnet team. 2020. Unmasking the hidden structures within – A pathway for effective community level decision-making for emergency response in central Arnhem land. AFAC 2020.

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## TEAM MEMBERS

**Galiwinku** – (This is a list of the lead researchers for this project. This is not a list of DDA secretariat or DDA full council participants who contributed significantly to the research over time)

Elaine Lawurrpa, James Bayung, Ted Gondarra, James Mawutarri (dec), Alan Maratja, Joanne Gargalkpuy, Miturrandi, Valery Bulkunu, Rosemary Gundjarrangbuy

### **NAILSMA –**

Glenn James and Danny Burton

### **Ramingining**

#### **ARPNet –**

Sithole Bev, Hunter-Xenie H, Champion O.Bulmaniya., Brown Christine., Tolbert Dharramaba, Joy Burruna, Joy Borruwa and with Hmalan Hunter-Xénié, with contributions from Brian C, Brian H, Champion J, Bunnunggu R, Champion M, Redford M, and Brian R. and Cameron M.

## RESEARCH TEAM

The research team in Ramingining is the Aboriginal research Practitioners Network or ARPNet. ARPNet is a community-based research group with Bininj member researchers in Ngukurr, Ramingining, Maningrida, Gunbalunya, Darwin, Broome and Toorak. ARPNet trains, develops appropriate tools for and equips Aboriginal researchers to undertake nuanced work in local language and are very highly regarded for their expertise and exceptional achievements in contracted local research.

Yalu Marnggithinyaraw Aboriginal Corporation (Yalu) is a longstanding and widely respected local Yolngu research organization based at Galiwin'ku. Yalu hosted the early research at Galiwin'ku post cyclones Nathen and Lam. As the research effort began to inform and influence Yolngu leadership in the community, particularly in relation to community resilience and EM partnership issues, the research effort broadened. A key focus of the current conversation is about the structures and strategies needed to improve engagement between the Yolngu community and non-Yolngu agencies to improve Yolngu influence in community governance and local decision making.

NAILSMA Ltd is an Indigenous owned and operated NFP organization that provides services to Indigenous people throughout northern Australia and further afield. Formed in 2004, NAILSMA has run many research and development projects with Indigenous groups, ranging from trans-jurisdictional to highly localized projects, aimed at improved Indigenous livelihoods, effective management and greater autonomy. NAILSMA works with many partners at all levels of influence, from local families through technical, science, business and



NGO resource providers/stakeholders to Territory, State and Federal policy agents and ministers.

## END-USERS

Whilst there is a single formal End User for the project, Yolngu and Bininj people of Galiwin'ku and Ramingining communities are the key drivers, owners and therefore end users.

End-user organisation	End-user representative	Extent of engagement (Describe type of engagement)
Bushfires NT, Northern Territory Government	Ken Baulch	Ongoing engagement with the project team, review of project outputs and input into strategic engagement with relevant government services and decision makers.



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Russell-Smith J., James G., Pedersen H. and Sangha K. (eds.) (2019). Sustainable Land Sector development in Northern Australia: Indigenous rights, aspirations, and cultural responsibilities. CRC Press, Boca Raton, FL, USA.

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