



# Tiwi Islands Shire Council

ANNUAL REPORT 2008-2009

## INSIDE COVER

### Contact Us

Please include your relevant contact details (full name and post or e-mail address) when contacting us.

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## Mayor's Foreword

In late October 2008 the first elections for the new Tiwi Islands Shire Council were held. As a result of these elections we now have 11 new Councillors with myself as Mayor. It is our great privilege to represent all residents of the Tiwi Islands and on behalf of the Council I would like to thank everyone for the support and encouragement throughout this last year.

I am pleased to report that the Council is working hard for all residents of the Tiwi Islands.

The last year has had many challenges for the Shire to confront. This first year has been very much a year of establishing the new Shire and of building momentum. The Council has greatly appreciated the dedication and hard work of Council staff in achieving all that we have throughout this year.

Regretfully, the Northern Territory Government has decided to halve the operational funding for the Shire over the next four years. This drastic

cut to our core operational grant strikes at the heart of the Shire being able to remain viable and to be able to carry on our core services to the community. Further cuts and changes in a range of other grant funding will only further exacerbate this issue for the Shire. The Tiwi's require a 'whole of government' co-ordinated funding approach and a complete re-think of current Government policy insofar as it relates to the Tiwi Shire.

I remain committed to ensuring that the residents of the Tiwi Islands are provided with the quality and range of Shire services that all Shire residents in the Northern Territory require and expect.

Sincerely,

**Lynette DeSantis**  
**Mayor**



Lynette DeSantis

# Acting CEO's Foreword



Alan Hudson



David Bond

## List of Councillors



**Mayor:** Lynette DeSantis

**Deputy Mayor:** Barry Puruntatameri

**Councillors:** Raelene Mungatopi, Marius Puruntatameri, , Kathleen Tipungwuti, Richard Tungutalum, David Boyd, Teresita Puruntatameri, Walter Kerinauia (Jnr) and Maralampuwi Kurrupuwu

**Absent:** Emmanuel Rioli, Henry Dunn





Lynette DeSantis



Barry Puruntatameri



Raelene Mungatopi



Marius Puruntatameri



Kathleen Tipungwuti



Richard Tungutalum



David Boyd



Teresita Puruntatameri



Walter Kerinauia (Jnr)



Maralampuwi Kurrupuwu



Emmanuel Rioli



Henry Dunn

## Shire Boundaries:

The boundaries of the Shire are shown in the following map.



## Relevant Facts:

### Area

The new Tiwi Islands Shire Council covers an area of approximately 7,522 km<sup>2</sup> of land.





## Population

The total estimated resident population\* of the Shire is 2,512. The estimated resident population of the major localities within the Shire are shown in Table 1 below.

**Table 1: Estimated Resident Population by locality (ABS Census 2006)**

Locality	Population
Nguiu	1495
Pirlangimpi	434
Milikapiti	449
Wuankuwu**	85
Other Communities	49
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,512</b>

\* The Australian Bureau of Statistics uses a number of methods to represent population, including Usual Resident Population and Estimated Resident Population. The Northern Territory Government and the Northern Territory Grants Commission use Estimated Resident Population figures when representing population. Where Estimated Resident Population figures at the locality or Shire level are not available through the 2006 Census Data, the Northern Territory Government has developed a formula to calculate these figures. This formula is undergoing constant refinement and as such the figures in Table 1 are subject to change.

\*\* This figure includes Wurankuwu and 4 Mile Camp.

The following representation model for the Shire has been approved by the Minister and was formally gazetted on 30 June 2008:

Members of the Tiwi Islands Shire Council			
Nguiu	Milikapiti	Wurankuwu	Pirlangimpi
Barry Puruntatameri	Lynette De Santis	Kathleen Tipungwuti	Emmanuel Rioli
Teresita Puruntatameri	Raelene Mungatopi		Henry Dunn
Francis Xavier Kurrupuwu	David Boyd		Marius Puruntatameri
Richard Tungutalum			

Ward	No. of Members
Nguiu	3
Pirlangimpi	5
Milikapiti	3
Wuankuwu**	1
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>12</b>

## Annual Performance Assessment

In adherence with NT Local Government Act 2008, section 199, Tiwi Islands Shire Council hereby presents the following report as an assessment of performance during the financial year ended 30 June, 2009.

### Governance

Council Elections took place on Saturday, 25th October 2008. The Elected Council Members are listed on page ### of this report.

A Strategic Plan, Code of Conduct, Records Management Policy and Procedure for Committee Meetings were all endorsed by the Council in November 2008.

In February 2009 Executive Council Members attended a two day workshop at Milikapiti, presented by the Department of Local Government and Housing. The result was the development of two draft policies:

- The Code of Conduct
- The Role of Mayor

Also in February Council Members attended a Governance Seminar. Seminar topics addressed understanding the role and responsibility of members; finances of organization and reading the signs of possible problems within the organization. The seminar re-enforced the roles of elected members and employees of the organisation.

The Council have established improved procedures and guidelines for the CEO recruitment process. Recruitment is currently underway through the Council.

At the invitation of the Council, senior students, Grade 7 and up, from Tiwi College and Milikapiti Primary attended a Council Sitting.

### Community Employment & Development

Compared to the other newly created Northern Territory shires, Tiwi Shire has amongst the highest proportion of indigenous versus non-indigenous employment along with high levels of indigenous supervisors and team leaders.

During the year ninety new permanent jobs were created for Tiwi staff from employees previously on CDEP. These appointments were made across all Directorates: Corporate Services, Employment Services, Community Services, Community Development and Infrastructure. All employees from TILG have retained employment. Professional staff are being relocated in the three major communities to provide a spread of management and capacity building; specifically payroll staff and the function has now been relocated to Pirlangimpi.

The Shire Council has a number of staff engaged in training through TITEB in the areas of Carpentry, Civil (Plan), Sport and Recreation, Business and Essential Services Officer. Some students graduated in September this year, and many have re-enrolled in the next level of their training along with staff who have had no previous training.

## Community Health & Safety

A plan was implemented this year to eradicate feral pigs. As a result of this program all feral pigs in Nguiu have now been destroyed. A dog management program has also been introduced which has resulted in 400 dogs being destroyed and a further 200 dogs being sterilized. Consequently the numbers of dog and pig bites have greatly reduced and this has had a positive effect on the community.



*The last of the pigs being removed*

The Community Safety Committee has commenced a curfew of 9.30pm for all children in Nguiu. In addition, a Night Patrol has been operating in the area under the Youth Diversion Program. These combined programs have had good success resulting in a reduction in the number of children walking around at night. Night patrols also operate in Milikapiti and Pirlangimpi. Night Patrol Leaders attended a four day workshop in Darwin in February 2009. The workshop educated Night Patrol workers in handling difficult client situations/issues.

Three Safe Houses, funded by NT Government, opened in the communities of Nguiu, Pirlangimpi and Milikapiti in early 2009. The Safe Houses work closely with Police, Night Patrol and the Youth Diversion Program.

## Community Services

Tiwi Youth Diversion & Development Unit (TYDDU) run a number of programs, incorporating the assistance of other service providers such as the Red Cross and Catholic Care in order to bring people together and collectively perform a better service for the community. They operate with a team of twelve CDP participants and six full-time staff. Their programs greatly assist the community:

- Attendance Program - absent students are picked up before and during school hours and returned to the classroom. This program has returned an average of 445 children to the classroom each month.
- TYDDU Youth Workers assist teachers in the classroom and help deal with behavioural problems.
- TYDDU Youth Workers supervise schoolchildren during recess.
- Pre-Schoolers are taken home by Youth Workers after 11am.
- Intervention/behaviour program - Youth Workers assist with maintaining good behaviour amongst students and assist staff/teachers with Interventions/Counselling when required.

- After School Care and Vacation Care Programs which include: a Nutrition Program providing 80-110 children per day with a nutritious meal; and After School Sports, supervising children at the Pool and Recreation Hall each afternoon Monday to Friday.
- Men's Meetings run in Nguiu and Milikapiti to improve the health and well-being of men in the community.
- Counselling and Family Mediation/Intervention: provided on an 'as needed' basis by TYDDU Youth Workers encouraging family members to resolve conflicts peacefully through negotiations and discussion.
- Skin Group Leaders Meetings held to empower and encourage Nguiu residents to participate in community issues.

Recycling has been introduced in the form of two can crushing machines; one on Bathurst Island and one on Melville Island. Training has been implemented and the machines are now operational. The crushed aluminium cans are to be sold, however they are currently stock-piled as the price of aluminium has dropped significantly.



*Can Crushing Machine & Crushed Cans*





*Nguiu Pool*

The Shire endeavours to collect garbage on a daily basis and this has resulted in a great reduction in the amount of litter in and around the townships.

The Nguiu pool has been renovated and new shade sails installed at a cost of \$160k. The Pirlangimpi pool has also been upgraded and both pools are now operational. In Nguiu a Sports and Recreation Program (part of the TYDDU After School Care Program) now operates on a daily basis subsequent to being out of operation for the past 2-3 years.

The ferry service is operating on a regular basis. The CDU are contracted to provide training on an ongoing basis for coxswains certificates in order to assist with ferry operations. Seven people currently participate in this program.

Heavy ridged drivers licence training took place in March 2009 under TITEB.

Construction of the Stanley Tipiloura Oval in Nguiu was completed in December 2008. FaHCSIA increased funding for the construction from \$850k to \$1.2m. The Oval was officially



*Ferry Service*

opened in February 2009. Federal Government representatives and Traditional Owners were part of the official opening ceremony. The Tiwi Islands Grand Final, following the ceremony, was the first official game to be played on the Tiwi Oval.

Renovation of the Nguiu Cemetery has been carried out during the year.



## Civil & Infrastructure

Roads have been much improved during the year and stayed open during the entire wet season. Pirlangimpi town streets have been resealed and in the Nguiu Township civil works have painted new road lines and installed a pedestrian crossing and traffic signals. The Shire received a \$2m ABA Grant for the purchase of new road making equipment as well as receiving letters of exemption from both the NT and Federal Governments from going to tender for the purchase of earthworks plant and equipment. Plant to the value of \$2m has now been purchased and is in place.

As a result of the above mentioned grant, the Shire has a top quality fleet of equipment. However there is still a difficulty in getting enough skilled operators for the equipment.

Ten people are currently participating in ongoing operator training.

The Shire continues to lobby for additional road funding, including the mining and forestry organisations.

In Nguiu three wooden walk bridges over main drains have been replaced with bridges constructed in steel with hardwood decking.

In Nguiu the old tip has been closed and a new tip opened. In Milikapiti and Pirlangimpi the existing tips have been extended.



*New Plant and Equipment*

The three airports at Nguiu, Snake Bay and Milikapiti have been renovated, including new fencing and lighting.



*Staff in refurbished Nguiu Council Office*

During the year two grants were signed with DLGH: a Housing Management Services – Management Grant for \$40k and a Housing Repairs and Maintenance – Special Purpose Grant for \$110k. As a result of the Management Grant a Housing Supervisor and a Housing Manager were each appointed in January. Systems have since been set in place making the whole operation run more smoothly and making the housing operation more profitable and accountable. The Special Purpose Grant has resulted in a much improved housing maintenance program, as outlined below.

Of the many renovations undertaken this year:

- Major Council Office refurbishment at Nguiu at a cost of \$550k
- Council Offices at Milikapiti and Pirlangimpi repainted
- Recreation Halls at Nguiu and Pirlangimpi refurbished
- Milikapiti Shire Contractors Quarters refurbished
- Six staff houses have been refurbished and newly furnished

- An upgrade has carried out on the Pirlangimpi Child Care Centre which included the building of a new kitchen.

New buildings include the following additions to staff housing:

- Four new homes in Nguiu
- Four new units
- One new shared accommodation centre

Also:

- A new major workshop shed has been installed at Nguiu
- A new vehicle lock-up at Milikapiti
- Construction of a community house at Pirlangimpi is complete
- Two kit homes are under construction in Nguiu
- Two kit homes have been delivered to Melville and are awaiting construction

As a result of the above the community housing backlog has reduced and housing maintenance in the community is vastly improved.

A plan to provide public transport across the Tiwi Islands is being developed by the Shire and Tiwi Land Council and is still in discussion. The

proposal is to provide public transport for the whole shire: buses, boats and ferries. For the project to develop it requires funding and suitably qualified people to operate the system. The project has the capacity to generate employment and training for Tiwi Islander's as well as provide a good and reliable service for the general population of the islands.



*New 4 bedroom staff accommodation*



*New 1 bedroom Staff Quarters*



*The New Shed*



*Kit Home Verandah*



## Business Development

Farm projects have been developed at Milikapiti, Nguiu and Pirlangimpi and employ a total of seventeen people. The farm at Milikapiti had a visit from the ABC Landline program reporting on the progress of farm projects which resulted in good PR. Produce is currently being sold on Melville Island and, as the harvests increase, produce will also be sold at Bathurst Island. Workers at the farm are studying for their CDU Horticultural Certificates I & II.

Hydroponic units have been commissioned at Milikapiti and Nguiu and these are now operational and producing high quality produce. A further hydroponic unit is in process at Pirlangimpi.

A nursery at Milikapiti is providing seedlings for the rehabilitation of an old mining area. This is an ongoing project with Tiwi Enterprises.

The Milikapiti Crèche building is finished and ready for operation.



*Farm Workers*



*Hydroponics Exterior*



*Farm Workers - Bananas*



*Hydroponics Exterior*



*Tiwi Islands Football*

## **Sport & Recreation**

A sporting highlight during the year was the drafting of community member Ross Tungatulum into the St Kilda Football Club.

A ladies softball team represented the Tiwi Islands at the NT Championships held in Darwin in August 2009.

As already noted, holiday programs ran throughout the year with the help and support of TYDDU and the Red Cross in training local workers in the townships. The After School Care Program includes a Sports and Recreation Program supervising children at the pool, and evening supervision at the Recreation Hall.



## Finance

During the year the Tiwi Shire, along with all of the other regional shires, wrestled with the implementation process of the new accounting database, TechOne. TechOne struggled to deliver even basic core financial services and until the commencement of the new financial year 2009/10, accurate financial reporting was impossible. The Oplus Remediation Project has recently been appointed to fix the remaining issues with the accounting database and they are now in the final stages of this project. A flow-on effect of these difficulties is that there is a large amount of ineffectual accounting data and the work to attempt to correct this data has been a further significant drain on the resources of the Shire.

We are hopeful that many of the challenges faced throughout the last financial year are now behind us and that 2009/10 will be a year of consolidation and continuous improvement.

The Shire's Finance Committee, chaired by Mike Baxter, met several times throughout the year and our thanks go to the members of the Committee who gave their time and expertise to help in this important area of financial governance.

The Shire is currently, at time of writing, budgeted to effectively have an operational deficit of \$638,620. The Shire is applying an anticipated net operational surplus from 2008/09 to offset this deficit to ensure compliance with the Local Government Act (to in effect balance the budget). The Shire's budget is currently undergoing significant revision which should see the projected deficit either resolved or reduced significantly.

A significant amount of effort was spent this year dealing with the former Tiwi Islands Local Government's (TILG) financial legacy issues stretching as far back as 2003. These issues have now been resolved.

The recorded assets of the Shire have undergone continuous review throughout the year owing to the assets list inherited from TILG being inaccurate. The Shire's assets have also undergone a valuation during this last year and this work has resulted in the insurance costs of the Shire being



*Finance Department Nguuu*

significantly reduced as assets are able to be correctly identified. This is a significant ongoing cost saving for the Shire.

The Shire has been working on a Risk Management Strategy which is yet to be finalised.

The Shared Finance Service (with East and West Arnhem Shires) as provided through CouncilBiz has worked well for the Shire and has the ability to provide a much more stable finance facility to the Shire and mitigate the significant risks associated with the delivery of technical / specialist services that have historically been island based.

## Information Technology

Currently the Shire spends an inordinate amount on the provision of ICT services due to current leasing arrangements provided through the NT Government. As part of the establishment of the new regional shires, the NT Government committed all of the new Shires to the government's own ICT supplier contracts (CSG & Fujitsu). These costs are well above what is available in the market place and have nearly doubled the costs of supplying these services compared to those previously supplied through the Local Government Association of the Northern Territory (LGANT).

The ShiresNet Project, whose aim is to upgrade the Information Technology systems in all Shire Service Delivery Centres (SSDC), has struggled to deliver the appropriate upgrades on time and as a result the ability for Shire's subsidiary SSDC's in Pirlangimpi and Milikapiti to be fully



functional within the new CouncilBiz network has been significantly hindered. We anticipate that these upgrades will be complete by the end of December 2009, some 18 months after the new Shire commenced operations.

## Records Management

After some refining of the new Records Management service delivered through CouncilBiz, the Shire now has a greatly enhanced professional records management service (including the recording, storage and public accessibility of Council working papers through 'InfoCouncil'). This system safeguards the corporate records of the organisation and is another example of why the CouncilBiz shared service model for remote communities works so well.

## Human Resources

The Tiwi Shire has continued to deal with the effects of high staff turnover at every level of the organisation. Whilst in some areas the turnover has not been as high as in previous years, this lack of employment stability continues to be a major drain on the organisation because of the loss of corporate knowledge and lost momentum. Each new staff member requires time to up-skill and acquire the requisite corporate knowledge.

In conjunction with the Tiwi Islands Training and Education Board (TITEB) there has been a large number of opportunities for staff to undertake professional development with their training achievements celebrated throughout the year.

## Future Financial Challenges

The Tiwi Islands Shire Council faces significant financial and therefore operational challenges in the immediate and medium term future, none the least because the Shire is effectively operating on a deficit budget.

Five main pillars of challenge for the Shire include the following:

- That the NT Government has advised that core operational funding for the Shire will be halved over the next four years commencing in 2010/11. This will reduce the current annual Operational Grant from \$1.6 million to just \$800 thousand per annum.
- The exceptionally high ICT Costs (as per above).
- The costs associated with the Office of Township Leasing are projected to be close to \$250 thousand per annum once Wurankuwu, Pirlangimpi and Milikapiti have all agreed to these Head leases (Nguiu already has). This extra cost is largely unable to be offset by any form of increased revenue or funding. The Federal Government has provided an undertaking that they will match each extra dollar of lease expense with increases in funding of related direct Federal grant activities, but to date the Territory Government (where the largest impact will be felt) have given no such undertaking.
- The current re-structuring of the CDEP program will mean that the Shire will no longer be able to fund a range of Shire services through CDEP which will only create a further funding burden on the Shire's core operational grant (and consolidated un-tied revenue).
- The ceasing of the Matching Funds grant program at the end of Financial Year 2008/09 will mean that the Shire would have to absorb the extra 50% cost of these subsidised wages (some \$600,000 per annum) which will only exacerbate the financial challenges of the Shire.

INSERT AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
HERE