



Message from the Mayor & Councillors

Dear Aurukun Community,

As we gather to celebrate the festive season, we are excited to share the highlights and achievements of 2024 in this special edition of our Christmas Newsletter.

Reflecting on 2024, we are filled with pride and gratitude for our community's remarkable achievements. Together, we have made significant strides in health promotion, community safety, roads and infrastructure, sports and recreation, and social services, greatly enhancing the quality of life in Aurukun.

As we approach the festive season, we extend our warmest wishes to all families and people of Aurukun. May this season be filled with joy, peace, and togetherness. Let us celebrate our accomplishments and look forward to a new year filled with hope and continued progress.

Getting involved in upcoming initiatives is a fantastic way to contribute to our community's growth and well-being. Here are some ways you can participate:

- 1. Attend Community Meetings:** Stay informed about new projects and share your ideas.
- 2. Volunteer:** Support programs like health promotion campaigns and community events.
- 3. Participate:** Engage in sports events, cultural festivals, and health workshops.
- 4. Provide Feedback:** Share your thoughts on current and upcoming projects through the Aurukun Shire Council website or public forums.

Thank you for your unwavering support and dedication. Together, we will continue to build a brighter future for Aurukun.

Regards, Mayor Barbara Bandicootcha, Deputy Mayor Craig Koomeeta and Councillors Jayden Marrott, Eloise Yunkaporta and Leona Yunkaporta.

Be Prepared For Storm Season



**INAN KAN-NGUL AAK
MA'YALMATHNAK.**

KE' NGAATHAM AKAN KUUPAN.

- Yukwaymin aak nungkaram anpala maayan keengk-keengk ngak'an ukow
- Wik-min yuman ngeenan kampan nungkaramant wiynath wunt pi'anang uwiw a ngak-chur pi'an ukiw
- Wik yuman Council'antang wantakan nint ma'yalmath ma'erkaman

**Merry
CHRISTMAS
and
HAPPY NEW
YEAR**



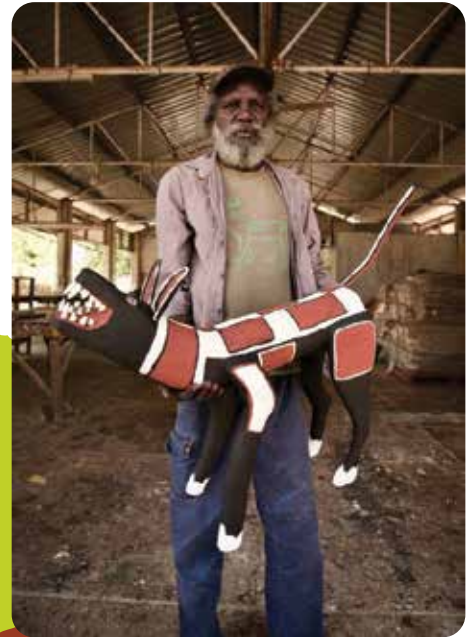
Aurukun - 2024 Wrap-Up

As we reflect on 2024, it's clear that Aurukun has had a vibrant and eventful year. Join us in celebrating the incredible achievements of our community members, and groups who have worked tirelessly to make Aurukun a better place. Here are some of the highlights that brought our community together and showcased our unique culture and spirit:



February: Community Awards

February's community awards presented by Deputy Mayor Craig Koomeeta recognised the outstanding achievements and contributions of our residents. The awards ceremony celebrated individuals and groups who have made a significant impact in community.



February - March:

Celebrating Aurukun Artists

We were proud to celebrate local artists, including Telstra Art Award Winner Keith Wikmunea, who displayed their art at the Aak Ngench Thayan (Strong Country) installation at the Melbourne Art Fair and D'Laan Contemporary gallery.

March: Council Elections

In March, we bid farewell to our previous Mayor and Councillors, celebrating their contributions to our community over their 4-year term. We thank them for all their hard work making Aurukun a great place to live.

April: ANZAC Day

ANZAC Day commemorations were a solemn and respectful tribute to those who served and sacrificed. The ceremony included a dawn service, a march through the town, and a wreath-laying ceremony with Deputy Mayor Craig Koomeeta reading the Ode, Cr Jayden Marrott doing the Welcome to Country and Cr Eloise Yunkaporta talking about the Aurukun residents who served. It was a poignant reminder of the bravery and sacrifice of our servicemen and women.



April: New Council Inauguration

April marked the inauguration of our new Council, ushering in a new era of leadership for Aurukun. The ceremony was attended by community members and dignitaries who welcomed the new Council members.



May: Wik Women's Week

Wik Women's Week highlighted the contributions and achievements of the women in our community with a community march, group activities, and a family day – all aimed at empowering and celebrating the women of Aurukun.



July: NAIDOC Week

NAIDOC Week was a time to honour the history, culture, and achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. The community gathered at the landing to dance, participate in cultural activities, and celebrate the strong culture of the Wik, Wik Way and Kugu people. The week was a powerful reminder of the importance of preserving and celebrating our cultural heritage.



August: Photo Competition

We launched our community photo competition, capturing the beauty and spirit of Aurukun through the lenses of our talented residents. The competition encouraged everyone to showcase their photography skills, and the entries were nothing short of spectacular.



August: Ngangk Min Festival

The Ngangk Min Festival was an opportunity for community to come together for a meal and enjoy a relaxing day at the Landing. We were treated to a performance by Justin Wellington and had a great time getting up to have a boogie.



August: Aurukun Day

We gathered at the Landing to celebrate Aurukun Day. The event was a celebration of our rich culture and heritage, featuring traditional performances, local crafts, and community activities. The jumping castle was a huge hit!



September: Aak Ngampram Day

On 18 September, the Aurukun community came together to celebrate Aak Ngampram Day, recognising the historic Wik Decision. Cr Eloise Yunkaporta spoke passionately about this significant part of our history. The event featured displays from the Wik and Kugu Arts Centre, historical documentaries from the IKC, and stalls from Ergon Energy, Rio Tinto, Cape York Employment, and Queensland Health. Molly and Si from Black Star Radio conducted interviews on the day. A big thank you to FareShare for the delicious meals and to Skytrans for their sponsorship.



As we look back on these moments, we are reminded of the strength, resilience, and vibrant spirit of Aurukun. Here's to another year of community, culture, and celebration!

Merry Christmas



Technical Services Update

The Technical Services team have been enjoying wearing their TradeMutt shirts. These bright shirts aim to spark conversation about mental health and wellbeing in the community.

Consultations began with community to support a new housing development in Aurukun. Feedback gathered will help to understand the types of homes that community members want to live in.



Community Services Update

Aurukun Shire Council's Community Services Team delivered a range of programs that have significantly benefited our community with our social services programs continuing to support the most vulnerable members. The Chivaree Aged Care Centre has provided essential services to our elderly and disabled residents, ensuring they receive the care and support they need. Additionally, the Koolkan Childcare Centre and Family Support team have offered crucial support to families, helping to create a nurturing environment for our children.

Community Development and Health Promotion

Our health promotion initiatives have focused on improving the wellbeing of our residents. This year, we partnered in several health awareness campaigns, including:

- Fareshare food relief
- Immunisation pop-ups and
- Health and community safety consultations.

Community Safety

We received more than 140 survey responses from residents and agencies, informing the development of the 2025 Aurukun Community Safety Plan.



Sports and Recreation

The Sports and Recreation Program has seen tremendous growth, with better use of facilities and programs encouraging active lifestyles. The active pop up in the park program has provided our young people with more opportunities to engage in physical activities. Highlights include:



Recreational Activities:

Weekly recreational activities such as social volleyball and netball have seen great participation by community.



Interagency Group Operations:

The Interagency Group has played a crucial role in coordinating efforts across various sectors to address community needs more effectively. Regular interagency meetings have facilitated better communication and collaboration between government and non-government agencies. Council looks forward to continuing to work collaboratively with agencies in the community into the future.

FNQ Regional Futsal Titles:

Aurukun Shire Council proudly supported the U11 Active Boys and U11 United Girls participated for the first time in the FNQ Regional Futsal Titles in Cairns.



AURUKUN RIVER TO BOAT RAMP FUN RUN

More than 60 people ran and walked from Obon beach to the Landing in September.

School Sessions:

Through regular visits to the Koolkan School, we've successfully formed teams and actively engaged young players in various sports activities.



Koolkan News



Bernadette Chevathun, Shiantha Peinkinna, Sherlana Wolmby, Shosa Pootchemunka, and Zoe Wolmby have joined the team at the Koolkan Early Childhood Centre and Family Support Hub. Many thanks to the people who have been working all year to make sure we can look after the children. We are still looking for more qualified people from outside community to work with us so we can always stay open for the children.

Next year many of our older children will spend their time at School Kindy so we hope to have more of the children on the waiting list come to stay with us each day.

Chivaree Aged Care Centre Services Update

Aurukun Shire Council has informed Chivaree Centre clients about the decision to transition to a new aged care service provider which was made in close collaboration with the Department of Health and Aged Care.

All clients and their families can be assured that there will be no changes to the care and support they receive. All essential services, including meals, transport, and basic personal care, will continue to be delivered uninterrupted.

Council remains committed to the well-being of our community and will work diligently to ensure that the transition is smooth and that the standards of care are maintained.

Thank you for your continued support.



Philip Marpoondin receiving his award from Nica Olivetto for his record of reading the most books at the library



Martin playing with a laptop donated by Sydney Scott College

IKC – Respecting Aurukun’s History

Highlights from 2024

Our holiday programs focused on learning through digital platforms. E-Sports was a huge success, alongside activities like Treasure Hunts that brought joy and engagement to participants.

We’ve begun working with the community on a strategy for the future of Aurukun’s cultural knowledge by exploring ways to preserve, revive, and make it accessible for everyone.

This year, the IKC became a space of comfort during Sorry Business. Families used our computers to create picture slideshows, design totems, prepare church pamphlets, and write heartfelt eulogies.

We were very excited to announce that Black Star Radio was back in operation, reconnecting the community through music and stories.

The IKC continues to be a safe, calm environment where people gather to enjoy a cup of tea, share yarns, watch documentaries, play with computers and explore books.



Kids in the front line watching Aurukun dancers’ videos from the Lockhart Dance Festival

Wik and Kugu Art Achievements and Upcoming Exhibitions



The Wik and Kugu Arts Centre had a great year of exhibitions and events with some of Aurukun's top artists taking trips to Sydney, Cairns, Melbourne and Darwin. We farewelled one of our own, Waal Waal Bell, who will be sorely missed at the centre and around the community. Waal Waal gave one of his last speeches in Melbourne this year to a keen audience at our major exhibition with D'Laan Contemporary. Here is a short back story to Wik and Kugu's sold out exhibition earlier this year:

Aak Ngench Thayan | Strong Country is a concept that was brought to life by senior Wik and Kugu artists. The exhibition was created as an immersive cultural experience for collectors and art enthusiasts to grasp the depth of Aurukun's sculptural traditions. Keith Wikmunea's cockatoos in a tree, a pack of camp dogs and Alair Pambegan's flying foxes are just some of the works that have gone into creating one of Wik and Kugu Arts Centre's most refined installations. Owls by Leigh Namponan have also been hung from the ceiling to signify in-flight movement, and a single-channel film installation sets the tone for a deep dive into the ceremonial heritage of the five clans living in Aurukun.

Council Positions Available

Recruitment of the best possible staff has been a priority during the year and Council has been excited to recruit some highly experienced staff to their team. We have welcomed a new CEO, Director, Finance Manager and Cleaning Supervisor, among many other roles.

Council prioritises the **employment of local staff**. All roles are advertised on the local social media sites, on its public webpage, in addition to working closely with local agencies. The Reception and Cleaning departments are building a casual pool of officers. This will enable officers to assist in these areas across all departments and get exposure and new skills in council systems.

We've got some exciting new roles at Council in 2025 with apprenticeships available in plumbing, carpentry, painting, and electrical. Ask for an application pack at the Aurukun Shire Council office.

Positions Available

- Cleaners
- Trainee in Administration & Reception
- Business Services Manager
- Environmental Health Workers
- Assistant Animal Control Officer
- Plant Operators

Requires Working with Children Blue Card

- Group Leader – Koolkan Childcare Centre
- Family Support Worker
- Playgroup Coordinator

Requires NDIS Workers Screening Yellow Card

- Administration/ Reception Assistant
- Chivaree Manager
- Clinical Coordinator
- Assistant Cook & Trainee Assistant Cook
- Support Worker & Trainee Support Worker



Corporate Services Update

The Corporate Services Department cover a range of functions within Council including being an agent for **Skytrans**. Community members can book flights at the both the Aurukun and Cairns Office with the reception staff. They also have application forms for the **Local Fare Scheme**, an airfare subsidy to make air travel to neighbouring communities more affordable.

Have you got your **Community ID**? These are available to purchase for \$10 at reception.

Our **Post Office** offers a range of Australia Post products and services, including mail acceptance and processing, postage stamps, money orders, bill payment and banking after upgrading to the Australia-wide Post+ this year.

Wuungkam Lodge has been managed by RESET for more than 12 months now. The RESET team have done an exceptional job ensuring the Lodge is well managed, including reception, housekeeping, and maintaining the gardens.



Deadly Award Winners 1st & 2nd Quarter 2024

Deadly Safety Award Winners

1. Jarrod Ausburn
2. Moses Kaitap
3. Colin Henaway

Deadly Employee Award Winners

1. Colin Henaway
2. Selena Wolmby
3. Dai English



Deadly Safety Award first place winner, Jarrod Ausburn



Deadly Award first place and third place Deadly Safety Award winner Colin Henaway



Snakes Alive!

Our staff have been busy upskilling and training this year, including eight staff who attended a snake handling course in Napranum.

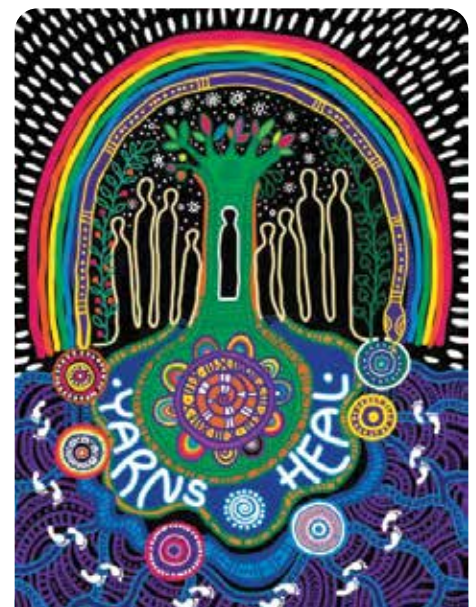
Above left: Lauren Quigley Animal Control Officer

Above right: Anton Wolmby Town Services labourer, bravely show us how it's done!

My Community Directory



Council is Council is excited to be working with My Community Directory to provide a one-stop shop for community to access services and events are in Aurukun. We ask all agencies to sign up to the Directory by visiting the website to learn how. We look forward to expanding the Directory in 2025.



Indigenous Knowledge Centre (IKC) upgrades:

Next year, the IKC is set to grow! We're thrilled to introduce exciting new equipment that will transform the centre into a vibrant hub for sharing knowledge and learning through digital technology.

Friendly Gala Day:

We plan to organize a friendly Gala Day between May and October 2025 (dry season) to further encourage community participation in sports. This event will also serve as an opportunity to collaborate with other communities and expand sports programs.

Pathway Development:

In 2025, The Sport and Rec team will select teams to participate in Regional, State, and National Futsal competitions. This initiative will provide young players with pathways to explore careers in sports and better understand the opportunities available through active involvement.

Community Yarning with your Councillors

Councillors are keen to kick off regular pop-up community Yarning sessions throughout 2025. Stay tuned for dates and information on how to get involved.



To read this newsletter online, or for more information on any of the articles, visit www.aurukun.qld.gov.au or call 07 4060 6800



www.facebook.com/AurukunShireCouncil

Welcome to the latest edition of **Wik Kath**, your community newsletter highlighting all the positive news and achievements happening in Aurukun. 'Wik Kath' means 'the story' in English. If you would like to suggest stories for the next edition of Wik Kath, please email liz@lizinglismedia.com