

**Bawinanga Aboriginal
Corporation**

Maningrida

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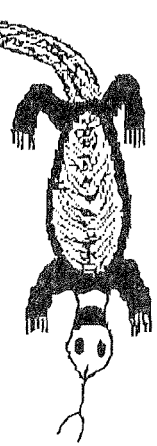
Submission No

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RECEIVED
14 AUG 2009

BY: ATSLA



Attention: Loes Slattery Senior Research Officer

**Standing Committee on Aboriginal and Torres Islander
Affairs**

RE: Inquiry into Remote Community Stores

Dear Loes,

Bawinanga Good Food Kitchen has been operating in Maningrida for the past 5 years, with the specific emphasis on healthy food. During this time it has expanded quite dramatically (especially in the last 3 years) to be a leading exponent of freshly cooked meals which are all prepared on the premises.

Fresh vegetables, meat from the Darwin butcher, chickens and fruit are either barged or trucked in, to our store where they are chopped sliced and cooked into tasty home cooked meals for the public. For example, we sell prawn and salmon wraps, fresh meat and salad sandwiches, salads, homemade pies and quiches, sausage rolls, hot roast rolls, toasted sandwiches, breakfast plates which you can enjoy with a real coffee or tea, curries, stews, casseroles, roast dinners, local mud crabs, fresh healthy snack packs for kids and gourmet pizzas. Nothing in the Good Food Kitchen is deep fried. We stock juices, low sugar drinks, and light milk, instead of coca cola and other sugary drinks. Lollies are banned and we offer fresh fruits, boiled eggs, nuts and salty plums in their place.

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The Good Food Kitchen also supplies meals for Meals on Wheels and children who have eating disorders or are malnourished. Currently our staff comprises of a Non-Indigenous Manager and Assistant Manager [Non- Indigenous] one Supervisor [Indigenous] and 3 other Indigenous staff who have all been here for the last 18 months. All local (Indigenous) staff have completed their Certificate 1 (Food Handling) and Certificate 2 (Hospitality and Kitchen Operations) and I am currently in the process of organizing them to participate in their Certificate 3 (Hospitality and Kitchen Operations). On the job training is continuous and we all share the load. No one is exempt from the basic chores and I encourage all staff to step up to the mark.

Financially, GFK is a healthy business. In the 2007-2008 financial year we grossed over \$400,000.00 with a net profit of over \$80,000.00. The whole plan of the Good Food Kitchen is not to be a money making enterprise but to encourage indigenous people to change their eating habits from introduced deep fried, greasy, prepackaged food that has no nutritional value to healthy food that is tasty and affordable. I am very proud to be a part of a corporation that has the peoples' best interests as its primary goal and not the almighty dollar.

Although the indigenous staff are all on CDEP, we do pay a substantial top up from our revenue which enables indigenous staff to work and also attend ceremonies and funerals without losing pay, combining culture and the so-called modern world. I am concerned that when CDEP is finally abolished we will have to increase our prices to be able to employ our staff yet enable them to participate in their customs without any monetary losses.

I believe that since the Government has decided to abolish the CDEP any other help that they could instigate in remote stores would only benefit the Aboriginal and Torres Island Communities.

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GOOD FOOD KITCHEN

Grants that would help spiraling freight costs, tax incentives lowering GST on fresh fruit, eggs, meat and vegetables and then maybe increasing costs on deep fried items to ensure a healthier and more affordable life.

As the Good Food Kitchen is now known as the Benchmark of Food Outlets in Remote Communities the government should ensure that this is achieved in other places. The Good Food Kitchen in Maningrida has proved that it is possible to make and sell high quality, nutritional food that is affordable and most importantly highly sort after by the local Indigenous population.

Yours sincerely,

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