Community Profile

Utopia (Urapuntja)

1st edition
September 2009

Funded by the Australian Government
This Community Profile provides you with information specific to the Alywarra-Anmatjere Region of the Northern Territory.

The information has been compiled though a number of text and internet resources, and consultations with members of the local communities.

The first version of this Community Profile was prepared for RAHC by The Echidna Group and we acknowledge and thank Dr Terri Farrelly and Ms Bronwyn Lumby for their contribution.

Other sources include:

RAHC would also like to acknowledge and express gratitude to the Aboriginal people of the Alywarra-Anmatjere Region who have so generously shared aspects of their culture and communities for use in this Profile.

*Please note: The information provided in this community profile is correct, to the best of RAHC’s knowledge, at the time of printing.
This community profile will be regularly updated as new information comes to hand.

If you have any further information about this community that would be useful to add to this profile please contact RAHC via: enquiries@rahc.com.au
or call 1300 MYRAHC.
This map of the Northern Territory, divided into regions, has been adapted from the Office for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health (OATSIH) Program Management & Implementation Section (2008) Map of the Northern Territory.

The depicted areas are for the purpose of the Remote Area Health Corps Community Profiles alone, and do not represent any Aboriginal language group, land or cultural group boundaries.
Alywarra-Anmatjere Area Profile

This map of the Central Australia – Alywarra Anmatjere Area has been taken from the map of the Northern Territory, adapted from the OATSIH Program Management & Implementation Section (2008) Map of the Northern Territory.

Languages in the Region

The below languages are present in the Alywarra-Anmatjere region. However, it should be noted that as a result of colonisation, the growth of towns, and the transient nature of some Aboriginal peoples, there may be many different Aboriginal languages evident in a given area.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Resource Centre</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alyawarre</td>
<td>Kutkatja</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anmatyerre</td>
<td>Mudbarra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central Arrernte</td>
<td>Luritja</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastern Arrernte</td>
<td>Nganyaajarra</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jingili</td>
<td>Pintubi</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kaityi</td>
<td>Pitjantjatjara</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ngaatjatajarra</td>
<td>Southern Arrernte</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pertame</td>
<td>Wambaya</td>
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<tr>
<td>Warlpiri</td>
<td>Warnmanpa</td>
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<tr>
<td>Warnmanpa</td>
<td>Warrumungu</td>
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<tr>
<td>Western Arrernte</td>
<td>Yankunytjatjara</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wuriaki</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Aboriginal Interpreter Service

www.dlghs.nt.gov.au/ais
NT Dept of Local Govt & Housing
Central booking service 08 8999 8353

The AIS Provides 24 hours 7 days a week central booking service.
Utopia / Urapuntja

The community of Utopia is a region with 16 outstations (homeland centres), geographically separate but with a common administrative and service delivery structure. Utopia is located 270km northeast of Alice Springs via Sandover Highway on the eastern perimeter of the Western Desert adjacent to the traditional land of the Eastern Anmatyerre and Alyawarre people.

History
Land to the north east of Alice Springs remained largely unknown to Europeans until the South Australian Government commissioned a survey of the region in the 1870’s. By 1872 the telegraph line between Darwin and Alice Springs had been completed providing access to Europeans through many traditional lands. Pastoralism gradually grew, occupying the better watered land surrounding the Alyawarre, before finally occupying the entire land through the Sandover subdivision in 1947.

The Anmatyerre were less fortunate, as their lands lay on both sides of the telegraph line. Once again the pastoralists occupied the better watered land, but by 1910 had taken up much of the land around Harts Range and the Davonport Range north of the Sandover River. Thus came into existence the stations which were to dominate local life for many decades: Alcoota, Woodgreen, Utopia, and MacDonald Downs to name but a few. In the 1970’s the Chalmers Family sold the lease to Utopia Station to the Aboriginal Land Fund Commission; and in 1978 the station was claimed under the Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act 1976. Five patri-clans (one Anmatyerre and four Alyawarre) became legal owners of the station.

Utopia has an extreme desert climate. The summer is hot with temperatures often exceeding forty degrees Celsius. In winter the nights are cold, often sub-zero and frosts occur from June to August. After the (infrequent) rain the desert landscape is transformed. The dried out spinifex flowers can resemble a field of wheat and the mulga shrub bears green dense foliage and masses of bright yellow flowers. Growing amongst these plants is an abundance of wildflowers that turns the deep red coloured desert floor into a utopian garden.

Governance
Urapuntja Council Aboriginal Corporation is the administrative body responsible for service delivery to the Anmatyerre and Alyawarre speaking people who live on the Angarapa and Alyawarra Land Trusts. There are sixteen outstations within the community covering some 3,230 km², 250 km north east of Alice Springs.

Infrastructure and Community Life
Utopia actually refers to a region encompassing 16 smaller communities referred to as outstations. The larger community of Alparra, 10 kilometres south of the Utopia Clinic, has a store that sells the usual items found in a small community supermarket, along with hot take away food. Alparra is also where there is a police station that serves the region along with a primary school & a campus of the Batchelor Aboriginal Institute. Some other outstations serviced by the Utopia Clinic include, Antarrengey, Ngkwarlerlaner, Arnkawwenyerr & Amengernternenh (Where the Utopia Clinic is situated). Outstation populations can vary from 20 to 100. The Utopia Clinic is situated 10kms north of Alparra & is its own small community with plenty of housing available for clinic staff & a small clinic school, which is a primary school whose pupils are drawn from the health workers families of Utopia & some of the surrounding outstations.

Access
Access is by road via Alice Springs. The road is sealed for 100km and there is 170 km unsealed. The trip takes approximately 3.5 hours from Alice Springs in dry conditions, firstly on the sealed Stuart Highway & then on the unsealed Sandover Highway. A Four Wheel Drive is required to make the journey after rain. Heavy rain will close the road. Be very careful of feral horses, camels, cattle & donkeys when on the road. Try to avoid being on the road from dusk until dawn.
The Clinic
The Utopia Clinic is situated at Amengerternenh & services many remote outstations & is well equipped with six 4WD vehicles for this purpose. Staffing levels are subject to availability. Generally 1GP & 3 RANs along with the Clinic Manager a RAN.

**NB** Always check current staffing levels with RAHC staff prior to deployment.

Accommodation & Vehicles
There is plenty of accommodation available for staff in the Utopia Clinic Community. All options have telephone connections, TV, fridge/freezer & linen is provided. Due to the nature of the outreach, the Clinic is well equipped with six 4WD vehicles.

Keeping the Peace
The Utopia region is served by the Police station at Alparra 10kms to the south. There is also an Indigenous night patrol operated by the Urapuntja Council. Alparra & the Utopia region is a dry area.

*Anyone* found in possession of alcohol is liable to severe penalties.
Getting Advice

The following organisations and contact numbers may be useful in locating sources of advice about Utopia. Care has been taken to ensure these details are correct, however unfortunately some may change or be unattended.

Central Land Council – Arlparra (Utopia)
Sandover Hwy PMB 1 via Alice Springs NT 0872
Ph: 08 8956 9955

Utopia/Urapapuntja Health Centre
Ph: (08) 8956 9994

Ampilatwatja Health Centre Aboriginal Corporation
Ammaroo Rd Ampilatwatja Community PMB 202 via Alice Springs NT 0872
Ph: 08 8956 9935

*Primary health care service which also provides a 24-hour emergency service and is accessible to residents from Ampilatwatja, Irrultja, Atnwengerrp, Welere and others passing through the region.*

*Staff include Medical Officer, Nurse, Aboriginal Health Workers at Ampilatwatja and at outstations*

Barkly Shire Council
58 Peko Rd Tennant Creek
Ph: 08 8962 0000

Ali Curung 08 8964 1955
Alpurrurrulam 07 4748 4800
Arlparra 08 8956 9850
Ampilatwatja 08 8956 9966
Elliott District 08 8969 2056
Community Services 08 8962 0003
Night Patrol 08 8962 0000