



Unity Through Enterprise

The Arnhem Land Progress Aboriginal Corporation

ICN:7137

Owned by the Yolngu residents of Minjilang, Milingimbi, Ramingining, Galiwin'ku and Gapuwiyak Communities NT

MEDIA RELEASE

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Locally produced beds now sold in ALPA Milingimbi Store

ALPA is now stocking locally produced beds in their Milingimbi store in north east Arnhem Land, made by a local furniture business. Located in Milingimbi, MAYKU is providing training and real jobs for local yolngu people. The MAYKU venture is being developed by the ALPA RJCP (Remote Jobs Community Program) with industry support from RAMVEK, to create furniture for local communities. Training for the local indigenous staff has been undertaken by Swinburne Tafe through ALPA RJCP, providing nationally recognised qualifications. This initiative is a vital step to keep jobs and money in the local community.

Selling furniture through the ALPA store is a vital according to local MAYKU supervisor Robert Yurruwuy Baker, "This way people don't have to pay cash, they can pay with basics card as well. It makes it easier for everybody. Above all, the money stays in the community, because the guys are working and making the designs and selling it to ALPA, at a cheaper cost than furniture imported to the community."

MAYKU also produces cupboards, wardrobes, picnic tables and chairs, side tables and coffins for the Milingimbi community. There are also plans for the MAYKU enterprise to expand to providing furniture for other communities in the Arnhem Land region, as well as a separate product line of high-end products designed for sale in major cities around Australia. A furniture factory is planned for construction, with the existing workshop to be used as a training facility for the factory, with ongoing training provided by Swinburne Tafe through ALPA RJCP.

The production of beds that raise mattresses off the floor can also have vital health benefits for the community, as MAYKU supervisor Robert Yurruwuy Baker points out: "Every house in the community needs at least a bed just to get off the ground, because there are a number of skin diseases forming such as scabies, and it's not healthy for old people to get up from the floor and especially pregnant women. So it's a good thing that we are making beds health-wise"

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