

GRAM TIMES

NOVEMBER 2013 ADDITION

QUEENSLAND Remote ABORIGINAL MEDIA

VAST BLACK STAR ROLLOUT COMPLETE

GRAM and NG media are the last REMO's to join the satellite club. We completed our roll out of the VAST satellite decoders to the communities with a final long road trip to Woorabinda recently.

Our thanks to all of the people who assisted GRAM in this milestone. IBP Bill McGinnis, Daniel Featherstone from IRCA, Chairman of GRAM Aaron Teddy and the GRAM board, who showed real dignity, amazing strength and patience against all odds to wait for 5 years to get the service to communities.

Special thanks to Gerry Pyne for his work and ingenuity in establishing a 2 way highway of satellite interfacing with the Wide Area Network (WAN). The WAN design, a first for Indigenous media, allowed GRAM to keep the communities functioning with program content and community closing the gap in information and above all training, which allowed the communities a voice in their communities.

The satellite service will open up the community to new programming with some exciting exchange of programs from our program alliance partners of TEABB, CAAMA, Radio Larrakia, Goolarri Media Broome, NG Media and Torres Strait Radio. Programs in the pipe line are the Bush bands Bash, the NIMA awards, Tamworth this January and many more cultural and music programs.

Sport has a big listener audience, and with our innovated satellite switching service we can bring NRL, in next season also available will be other sport like AFL and local finals footy games.



Satellite service programming is well under way network coordinator Gilmore Johnson is on the ball and has some great programs on offer. Beginning with breakfast, with new Brekkie announcer Paul James 6am 10am, followed by Russell Gibson from Hopevale with a music talk program, Amy McGowan NPA followed by Sticks from Pormpuraaw are all on deck to come following the launch of breakfast in December.

Gilmore will produce a program guide on the web site and communities just tell us what they want and we can set the commands to switch automatically. Our thanks to the IBP department for assisting with funding to roll out the satellite service and switching equipment.

Broadcasters Meet in Darwin



Darwin hospitality was on show for the opening of Larrakia TV recently. Larrakia and Goolarri TV in Broome introduce a diversity into Australian television that represents the broad aspirations for the future of Australian indigenous television. This view is far from the Governments centralised SBS model of editorial control of indigenous content t

hat is broadcast to an Australian wide audience. Larrakia TV and Goolarri TV and a degree ICTV and Imparja. have walked the walk and can be very proud of their achievements against all odds and all opposition to provide what audiences want from Indigenous television.

You wont see an overseas program broadcast on either network or meaningless programs to fill program schedules. The opening was a good opportunity for members of the Indigenous Broadcasting Australia alliance to meet in Darwin.

The alliance is primarily a marketing and content-sharing group of like-minded Indigenous media organisations from Northern and Central Australia. Each of the alliance members bring a wealth of knowledge to the table, gained from more than 30 years in the Indigenous media business.



Meeting with Broadcasting Australia

The alliance members collectively have experience in marketing, content, production, strategic planning, engineering, information technology, training, human resources, news and current affairs, cultural understanding and issues surrounding Closing the Gap initiatives.

The alliance partners have personal skills gained from years of working and living among the Indigenous people on their country, and listening to them.

The discussions centred on the key areas of content sharing, closing the Gap campaigns, and technical innovations for mechanisms to delivery content. IBA members see the roll out of the NBN as a game-changer in terms of content sharing between providers, communities and the Hub network centres. The NBN will be cost effective more so than satellite . Satellite operates on volume the more you have on the more cost effective.

Which raise the issue of do we need the number of satellites we have now to operate an effective indigenous broadcasting industry . . That's another discussion for another day.

WE DO THE CAIRNS SHOW

The Cairns show was a great promotion for us, we had so many inquiries and so many people visit our promotional stand that we were overwhelmed by the public and community support.

Lacey and Gilmore, organised the whole event they were supported by volunteers Marcus Smith, and Napsi, and also 3 other volunteers. We thank them so much, we could not have done it without them and we appreciate their help. Its all go for next show as the show society liked us so much that they have asked



us to come again with a

bigger promotion. Lacey has already been active organising the event next year we will have a bigger presence, with twice the space, an OB from the show site and broadcasters from the communities will be invited to come down and to do a shift.



Black Star will sponsor the indigenous art exhibition for the first time, it is focused on schools and adult artists. We have a sponsor interest in place for the art prizes.

Gilmore got into the show spirit and took a hair raising car ride around the arena at speeds of 120 k an hour he was stoked and wanted to go again.

NAIDOC at Yarrabah .

Black Star joined in the NAIDOC celebrations at Yarrabah.

The day was full of community events and things for the

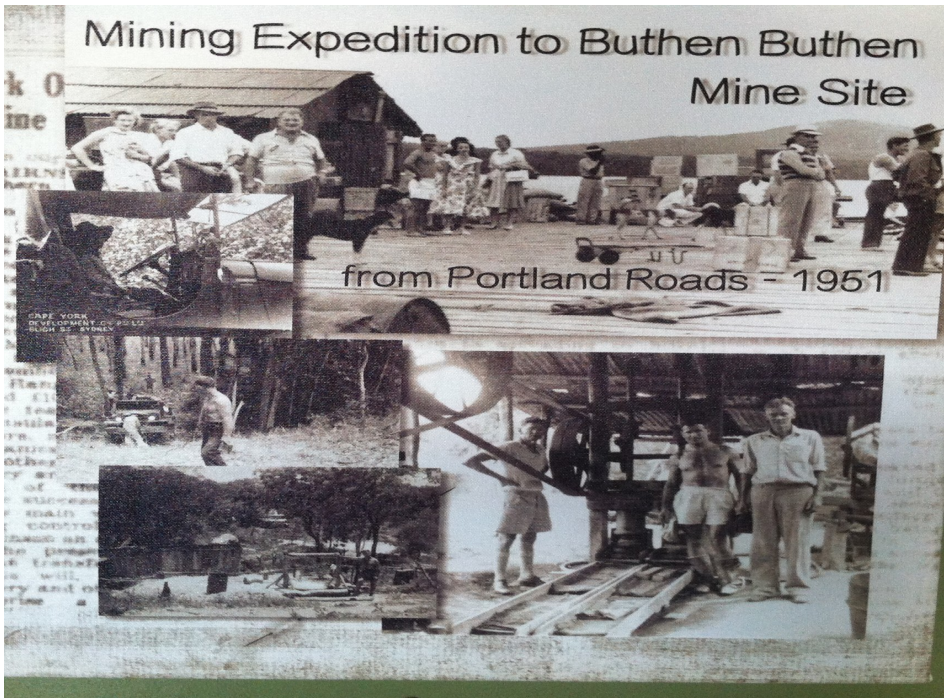


kids to do, lots of dancing and entertainment kept the crowd interested.

The night finished with a big feed and a band. Will we be there next yeah? Hell Yeah! we sure will.

PORTLAND ROADS A FRONTIER HISTORY

Portland Roads is north of Lockhart River and through some of the best undisturbed rain forest you will ever see. On the way you can stop at the famous Chilli beach and watch the waves roll in from the Coral sea. Its 800 K from Cairns on some good road but be prepared for some bone shattering parts.



Its said, that the name is taken from a term "roadstead" meaning Roads, a safe harbour for boats to lay up. Don't know about the Portland, sounds awfully English. Cook found the safe harbour when he was hooked up on a reef he anchored close by at Weymouth Bay and Captain Bligh, remember him? from the Bounty, he also made landfall close by. On restoration Island.

It doesn't take long to stroll around here its no Gold Coast and you don't

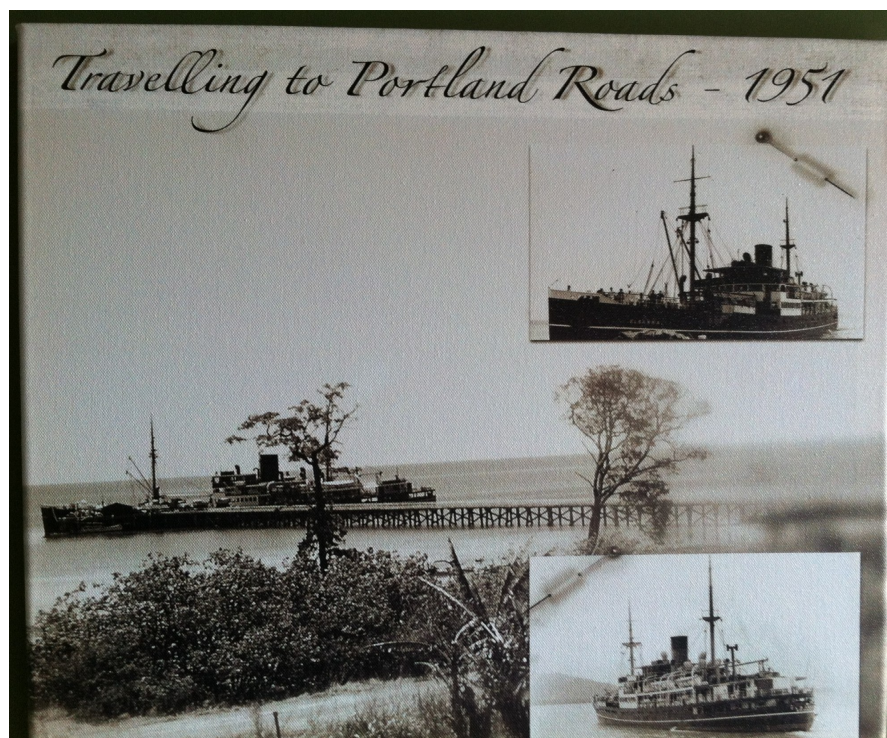
risk getting run over, but it has much more and is a more beautiful place There is so much history here, there is a strong Indigenous and Torres Strait island history here from the old pearling days to the present,

There is the historical story of explorer Kennedy and his loyal Aboriginal Guide who was from Maitland area in NSW and joined Kennedy as a young lad and was with him when he died in his arms after being speared by the To's There is a monument to Kennedy not far from the end of the road. (story next page)

The establishment of a wharf as Portland Roads to service a thriving mining boom and port until abandoned in the 1950's

There is a lot of history surrounding the second world war and the battle of the Coral sea where aircraft were stationed at nearby Lockhart River, and the movement of over 50,000 troops through the area.

On our recent visit to Lockhart River we stayed overnight at Portland Roads and I couldn't help it I had to throw in a like, the people told me that the fish jump on to the line there, so I couldn't resist to sit back after a hard day. Did I catch anything well there is always that fish story about the one that got away.



Kennedys ill fated expedition to the Cape

Edmund Kennedy was born on the Channel Island in England in 1818. He was one of eight children and his father was an army colonel. Kennedy migrated to Australia in 1840 where he worked as a surveyor. Kennedy was a good bushman, a fine leader and a talented surveyor.

In 1845, Kennedy was second-in-command to Sir Thomas Mitchell when he went on an expedition to find an overland route to the Gulf of Carpentaria. Mitchell did not reach the Gulf but discovered a river in western Queensland, which he named the Victoria. He was sure that this river flowed into the Gulf.

When Kennedy returned to Sydney, Mitchell sent him on an expedition to follow the Victoria River until it reached the Gulf of Carpentaria. He left Sydney on 13 March 1847 and by August, he had proved that the Victoria River flowed into Cooper Creek. He renamed the river the Barcoo River. During this expedition, he also discovered and named the Thomson River. He had intended to continue on to the Gulf, but when the aborigines mixed his flour with dirt he was forced to turn back.

The New South Wales government decided to send Kennedy on another expedition to explore the east coast of Cape York Peninsula to its most northern point. He was to be met by a supply ship here and would continue exploring the west coast of Cape York Peninsula. Supply ships were supposed to meet them at various intervals along the coast.

A ship landed Kennedy and his party at Rockingham Bay (halfway between Cairns and Townsville) and from the very beginning, things started to go wrong. Their way was blocked by dense rainforest, deep gullies and mangrove swamps. It was very slow going and the carts and drays had to be abandoned in the steep country. The men became ill and weak with fever. At Weymouth Bay, Kennedy left most of his men behind because they were too weak and exhausted to carry on. During the next few weeks, all but two of these men died.



The men were becoming weaker from the heat, lack of food and the hard work. Further on, Kennedy was forced to leave three more men behind when one of the men accidentally shot himself. He left him behind at Shelburne River in the care of the two other men and continued with a young aboriginal named Jacky Jacky.

Early in December, Kennedy and Jacky Jacky reached Escape River. They found it hard going due to the thick scrub and crocodile-infested mangrove swamps. Their horse died and their food ran out. To add to their problems, they were being followed by a group of hostile aboriginals who had to be driven off many times. The aboriginals followed for days. They also set grass fires and often hurled spears into the camp.

Finally, in the second week of December, the aboriginals attacked, surrounding the two men in a swamp, spearing Kennedy in the legs, back and side. The aborigines retreated and Jacky Jacky carried Kennedy into the bush, where Kennedy tried to write a letter to the Governor. He later died in Jacky Jacky's arms. Jacky Jacky dug a shallow grave and buried him. The aborigines followed him and he was nearly speared on many occasions. However, he was able to escape by walking down a creek with only his head above the water. He spent 10 days trying to avoid his attackers and crocodiles. Most of the time he had no food.

Jacky Jacky was eventually picked up by the supply ship the Ariel. The Ariel sailed back along the coast looking for the three men left at Shelburne Bay, but unfortunately could find no trace of them. When the Ariel reached Weymouth Bay, only two of the eight men had survived. The other six had died of fever.

Fortunately, Jacky Jacky managed to save Kennedy's maps and notes. His bravery made him a hero and in 1849, he was asked to join an expedition to recover Kennedy's body. Jacky Jacky died in 1854.

Dust and Fires a Dangerous Combination

Huge dust clouds on the Kowanyama Road bring passing cars to a standstill



As the roll out of satellite digital decoders nears completion QRAM travelled to communities across the Cape and Gulf to bring the RIBS stations on to the Black Star satellite service. Sometimes its better to fly to these remote locations as driving can be dangerous. The dust clouds thrown up by the trucks on the Kowanyama Road brings the vehicle to a complete stop and you have to wait for the dust to clear.

Some of the bull dust holes were 300 yards long and 2 to 3 feet deep. The dust was a real concern as we drove through it the dust came up like waves and covered the vehicle across the bonnet and windscreen. We had to slow down to a crawl so the dust would not come up and cover the snorkel on the patrol and ruin the motor. The trip back to Mareeba usually 4 hours took 7 hours.

We were stuck behind a B double pulling 3 dogs, and we could not get past him until Chillagoe, the driver didn't help by pulling over and giving us a go, so much for old fashioned hospitality. The trucks destroyed the road to Kowanyama carting material for the repair of the airport washed out last wet season.



Dry season fires near Lockhart

which is one of the great scenic trips up north, there were lots of fires and we were held up in a few places. On our recent visit to Lockhart River we stayed overnight at Portland Roads and

I couldn't help it I had to throw in a like, the people told me that the fish jump on to the line there, so I couldn't resist to sit back after a hard day. Did I catch anything well there is always that fish story about the one that got away.

The Kowanyama visit came at the end of a round trip to Doomadgee Burketown and Normanton, at Normanton we discussed the location of the new radio service with Council and looked over a site on the water tower and also the BA site. Either of the sites will give good coverage to the population of indigenous people in the region.

Our roll out also included Lockhart River,

What's not to like about this place



Broadcast Talent Unearthed

GRAM unearthed loads of talent during the recent accredited Broadcasting certificate training in Cairns. With our RTO training partners TAFE in Cairns we had a great success rate with 7 community broadcasters stepping up and getting their Cert III Cert II in creative industries.



Heads down in the training

Also on hand was new trainer Juanita Soaper. Listeners to Cairns radio would know Juanita as she is the broadcaster on 4CA Cairns Breakfast.

Juanita put the broadcasters through their paces and the students had a very good rapport with her.

Juanita replaced well known Michael O'Lauchlan known as "Locco". The certificates open new pathways for the guys, giving them other options and opportunities to move to other jobs on

the communities. The training and skills learnt are a great building block; for some it was the first time since they left school that they received this level of formal accredited training. Community life has its ups and downs and not always possible to achieve such outcomes.

The success of this model is based on engaging with industry people involved in day to day communications. The model builds confidence, self esteem and meets national training strategies. I can imagine the look on their faces when they receive their certificates and from GRAM well done to the broadcasters and the training staff and all of our partners.

Post Office Boy Howdy stranger you're not from round these parts are you?. Legend has it that he was a rodeo bull and he survived a truck roll over on his way to another rodeo.



This boy is big and mean

He has now made Kowanyama his home, as he wanders the town going from house to house, getting a green pick where ever he can.

But don't let his friendly nature fool you he still has that old rodeo meanness, he will put the head down paw the ground as he sizes you up. He goes by the handle of "Post Office Boy" In his prime no one could ride him, a lot of men tried and only a few are left to tell the tale, they still talk about him around the camp fires of the Cape and Gulf as the greatest bull ever.

He got his handle from his favourite spot outside the post office, where he met a young fresh heifer one day, she fled his advances and retreated to safer pastures. Heart broken he returns to the post office every day in the hope

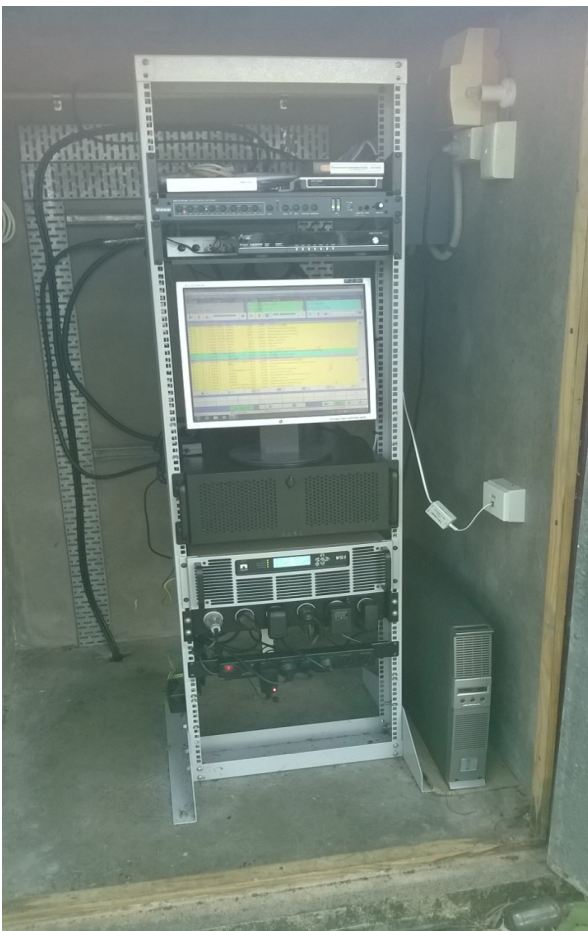
that he will see her again, and they can go to the long paddock together, but until that day comes he will continue to wander the house yards and streets of Kowanyama.

YARRI RETRANSMISSION SITE

On first appearances it is just a concrete box in the middle of a paddock. But don't be deceived by first appearances what's inside that concrete box could be the future of indigenous radio in some parts of remote Australia.

That concrete box houses the Yarrabah Radio service. There is state of the art infrastructure installed in a small rack that punches way above its weight.

What is unique about the service is that it is a radio station complete with all of the logging and scheduling hardware and software needed to run a country or city station. What makes it really stand alone is the capacity to take and switch automatically from 2 separate satellite program sources and the Wide Area network broadband service.



The station in a box concept is made possible by the advent of technology, and the capacity to monitor and maintain the service from great distances over a broadband connection.

The transmitter can be monitored for efficiency can be lowered to minimum power overnight or in times of heavy lightning storms completely turned off.

QRAM has had 3 lightning hits and we have just started the wet season. The IRRR desks are poorly designed and prone to blowing chips. Stations need proper surge protection as UPS's are not sufficient to prevent serious damage to the equipment. The wet season has 4 months to run no cyclones yet.

You can now get Black Star at home on your TV

For those that can't get enough of Black Star driving around on the car radio, well there is now the opportunity to get it on the TV in the house. All you need to do is select menu and radio and search down the list until you reach channel 920 and bingo that's Black Star.



Black Star Radio presents
MUSIC on **YOUR** TV
Tune your TV to 'radio'
then select channel
920 and sit back
and enjoy
the music

The program's available may be different to the local Black Star Radio, because we will be offering different programs on the Black Star satellite, such as NRL, AFL, other sports, also available will be a variety and range of music for example take 40 Australia, also cultural festivals and special music programs. So switch on sit back relax and listen to Black star on your TV.

Xmas lights competition



QRAM are getting into the XMAS mood, and are running a Christmas lights competition with some great sponsor prizes.

All you have to do is dress up your house or RIBS station with Christmas lights you may even dress up your tower with

lights to get into the spirit or even dress up your favourite car bike or boat. Our sponsors are offering a great prize of accommodation to Cairns for a weekend at the Colonial Club.

You will fly our corporate airline Sponsor Skytrans to Cairns return. The prize is open for 6 months so if you want to save your prize and come down for a special event you can. So what are you waiting for get moving and get those photos in to us at www.qram.com.au with your name and community.

Hopevale gets better coverage



Old mate Gerry and I hit the to Hopevale, Cooktown and Wujal Wujal. We took the scenic route up through the Gillis Range to the tablelands to Hopevale and the scenic route back through Cooktown old Bloomfield, Wujal Wujal, Cape Tribulation across the Daintree ferry .

We caught up with Hopevale broadcaster Russell Gibson.

Russell took us on a hairy ride up to the transmitter site through some of the most beautiful country. People would only dream of such a trip, but for old mate and me it's a normal part of the job.

At Hopevale, we put the finishing touches to the new satellite network, which will allow the local broadcaster Russell Gibson, to broadcast a 2 hour daily program on the Black Star network, which will go across 14 stations in the Cape Gulf and western Queensland.

Following the Black star breakfast program, the new Hopevale program will be the first ever daily program broadcast by a RIBS service in Queensland.

The program breaks new ground after a long and drawn out struggle to get a stand alone satellite service and to have program coming from other sources will make the Black Star network a premier service for the remote Queensland communities.



The Hope vale service will add localism to the Black Star network and will also be available anywhere in the country to people with a VAST black box the service is also available on Remote TV on channel 920. The service is also available for other Indigenous Stations in Queensland to add variety to their local broadcasts by taking the program off the satellite and re broadcasting on their own networks. When complete the service will reach almost to Cooktown.

WE MARKET OURSELVES IN SYDNEY

In a first in Australia for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander media, 126 guests came along the inaugural Voice of the Community event hosted by the Northern Indigenous Media Alliance, and media representatives Spots & Space and Production Company I&G Pty Ltd, the show was held at the famous Belvoir theatre in Surrey Hills

The event was to show case and promote the remote indigenous media radio and television companies, with a view to show them who we are what we got and the governments investment in indigenous media.

The broad view is that we are community radio, we play country music and we are unprofessional. The promotion changed those perceptions as it showed the industry that we have come of age and that we are a serious participant in the Australian media landscape., and we are open for business.

Representatives from the corporate sector including Deloitte, Qantas, Barangaroo Authority, AFL, News Limited, Australia Post and Telstra were keen to take up the opportunity to meet the media at what was a the first gathering in of indigenous media in Sydney. They were joined by many government communications experts, and advertising industry professionals.

Highlights included show reels of indigenous culture and our media companies. The

CAAMA contingent included Warren H Williams and Goolarri had the famous Steve Pigram Having artists of this calibre was like being in a concert so good was the performances, and a big thank you to Goolari and CAAMA for adding them to their promotion.

Alliance Partners Robin Ragatien TEABB, Michael Robinson CEO CAAMA, Jim Remedio , Manager QRAM, GMan CAAMA Radio



Gman with Warren H Williams and Steve Pigram

New Breakfast on Black Star

Black Star has a new Breakfast announcer, after an exhaustive advertising campaign we finally came up with a brekky announcer that has the experience to do a up market news type breakfast show.

Paul James is an announcer who has worked in the commercial industry for close on 20 years, his recent Gig was at 4KZ in Innisfail . The drive down to Innisfail every day was a deciding factor that made Paul make the final decision to come over to Black Star.

The show is scheduled to take off on Monday the 2nd of December and already the show is beginning to look impressive. The show will feature localism and interviews with everyday people who live in remote Cape York the Gulf and western Queensland.

Pauls show will be followed by a program from Hopevale with Russell Gibson, and then a program from Amy McGowan at NPA and finishing with John Sticks Holrod from Pormpuraaw. All programs will run on Black Star satellite, and will have all of the news and weather reports. The satellite service will also carry sport and current affairs program the Wire.

The experience of Paul James will also be used in any future training of broadcasters looking to get employment outside in the mainstream.

Ray Wallace Joins the team



QRAM rapidly expanding radio service now has appointed a commission only salesperson, Ray Wallace Ray has many years of experience in the sales area and has hit the ground running with Harvey Norman sales package and also others in the pipe line. Welcome to Black Star Ray.

We are finalists in CBAA Digital Award



GRAM made the final 3 in a recent Digital radio award. The award part of the CBAA annual awards is for excellence in Digital innovation and we were among the finalists but did not win the big one.

There's always next year but we got a piece of paper a sort of encouragement award.

CAAMA won the Excellence in training award.

Congratulations to CAAMA on receiving 4 nominations .

Woorabinda The Long Road

Woorabinda to Cairns by road is equivalent to a Cairns to Bendigo outside Melbourne, This trip highlights the long haul trips that RIMOS have to do to provide services to the remote radio stations. Its time to ask the question is it all worth while, is there some other way of ensuring that stations stay switched on.

The answer to these questions and other remote servicing of Indigenous communities continues to be asked by service providers faced with long distance trips with hardly enough resources to do the job properly.



With RIBS servicing the Woorabinda trip highlighted the problems more so than usual. Outback Queensland is warming up this time of the year is unusually hot causing the vehicle to over heat more than usual the air conditioner working overtime failed, we lost the driving lights on rough road, and fuel was 1.75 a litre for diesel.

This visit was to install equipment as part of the VAST roll out and repair existing equipment hit by a lightning strike, and also give training to a new broadcaster. Dianne Hasell has left Woori to move

to Toowoomba outside Brisbane,. Dianne worked at Woori for 2 years and re established the station after a long period of stagnation, following Uncle Bills retirement. Good Luck Dianne. From everyone at QRAM staff , board and broadcasters. And mates from across the network.

CAAMA LOOK US OVER,

It is not often that CAAMA leave home in Alice Springs especially when it is to look at another organisation work systems. CAAMA have been the leading broadcaster and innovator in the indigenous sector since the beginning of indigenous media and to some indigenous broadcasters visiting CAAMA for the first time,.



It was said to me ,when I was manager of CAAMA, that it was like a visit to the holy Grail of indigenous broadcasting.

So it was a good feeling when the CAAMA CEO Michael Robertson, and CAAMA radio Manager Gerry Tietra Lyons (AKA) the G man (don't ask him how he got that handle) came over to Cairns to look first hand at how the Black Star network managed by QRAM worked.

Gerry Pyne was on hand to work them through the mechanics of the Wide Area network, and the connectivity with the RIBS stations, the way we

deliver program and network

news and music was of interest to Gman from a radio delivery perspective and delivery of news services.



CAAMA are always looking for efficiencies in technology how they deliver their product, how to engage with the remote communities of central Australia. CAAMA

was the first indigenous station to broadcast to a multi region over the satellite. CAAMA has the biggest legitimate indigenous broadcast area in the country it mirrors itself on the imparja footprint. The first station to run a jute box for overnight programming, and the first to use Automation in a commercial way, with traffic and billing.