

## New president leads Congress into the future

For the first time in its 35 year history, the Central Australian Aboriginal Congress an Aboriginal community controlled health organisation in Alice Springs has a female President.

Mrs Helen Kantawara was voted in as President at the Congress AGM in January.

Mrs Kantawara is a well-known local Arrernte woman with strong links to her culture. She has been active on the board of Congress for the last seven years.

"My hope is that strong leadership will bring more Aboriginal community involvement in this organisation," Mrs Kantawara said.

"My father, Benno Davis, was involved in setting Congress up



and I see myself as carrying on his dream. It has so far exceeded all of his expectations as a successful Aboriginal health service organisation. He would be very proud of it today.

"I think electing a woman to the position is extremely significant. It was always such a traditionally male position. But the community has come a long way and it wants change and modern leadership and that is very positive," she said.

## NEW COP SHOP FOR GALIWINKU

A permanent, fully operational police station is to be built in the remote Arnhem Land community of Galiwinku as part of a joint agreement between the federal and Northern Territory government's.

Almost \$8 million has been committed to a project that will not only see the building of a new police facility, but four staff houses as well.

The new facilities will be a first for the community who, prior to the federal government's intervention program, had no permanent police presence. The introduction of a temporary facility and three full-time officers in November 2007 has improved community safety.

Funds will also be directed towards the supply of transport and technical gear, with a boat being provided to officers along with breath analysis equipment and electronic interview recording equipment.

Work on the new facility is expected to start in April this year, with completion scheduled for January 2009.

Galiwinku is home to some 2000 people.

## Rare desert skink find good start for IPA

Long, hot days this summer didn't stop the Kaltukatjara Rangers and traditional owners getting out and about on country where they discovered a new colony of the

of different ages since the last burn.

The discovery came as the traditional owners were out on a planning trip for a proposed Indigenous Protected



Unearthed - the Great Desert Skink

These trips are part of the feasibility planning for the IPA and these discoveries are just some of the rare plants and animals which exist in the area.

The proposed IPA boundary extends around the Katiti and Petermann Aboriginal Land Trusts which are rich in biodiversity and cultural importance.

The IPA will give regional conservation efforts a boost as the proposed boundary completely surrounds Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park, and butts on to the Watarrka National Park and the Ngaanyatjarra IPA on the West Australian border.

The Katiti-Petermann IPA proposal is also bounded to the



endangered *tjakura* (Great Desert Skink). No scientific records existed for *tjakura* in this area, but people could remember seeing them in the past.

The area is said to be ideal *tjakura* habitat, with plenty of spinifex and mulga

Area with the CLC and government representatives

They also found some old *ninu* (Greater Bilby) burrows and some evidence of the *way-urta* (Brushtail possum) in a large rock overhang.



Above: Nyinku found it difficult not to eat the rare reptile

south by areas of APY land currently undergoing IPA feasibility planning.

An IPA was declared over a large area around Lajamanu last year.

Indigenous Protected Areas attract government funding for groups such as rangers to look after country.

## DRY SUBURBS FOR DARWIN

In a sign that residents and governments at all levels are becoming increasingly frustrated with anti-social behaviour, the Northern Territory Licensing Commission has approved an application from the Darwin City Council calling for selected suburbs within the city of Darwin to be designated as "dry areas."

Recreational areas along the foreshore in the Darwin suburbs of Nightcliff, Coconut Grove and Rapid Creek are now "dry," with the consumption

of alcohol and inappropriate behaviour no longer tolerated by authorities.

NT Government Minister for Alcohol Policy, Dr Chris Burns, welcomed the decision, saying that alcohol plans should be done on a region by region basis.

"In other towns such as Alice Springs and Katherine, the local councils pushed for the whole town to go dry," Mr Burns said. "Darwin is different from Alice Springs, Katherine and Tennant Creek."

"If Darwin were to be declared dry there could be displacement to other areas in the Darwin and Palmerston region without any significant benefit."

Mr Burns' comments come as the Darwin City Council seeks a ban across the whole of Darwin's public areas.

But the NT licensing Commission's Richard O'Sullivan says the matter is complex and a thorough analysis needs to be conducted before such a decision can be made.