DHARRIWAA ELDERS GROUP

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Important community asset lost to fire & our commitment to rebuild

Walgett, NSW – 11/12/2025

On Tuesday 9 December 2025 at 6:30pm a fire destroyed our Galuma-li ('to care for') building on Fox Street Walgett.

We are relieved that no one was harmed as no one was in the building at the time. All Galuma-li staff and community members are safe. We express our gratitude for the coordinated response[1] of local emergency services.

The Dharriwaa Elders Group have contributed generations of work and leadership – listening to community views and responding to community priorities – to deliver essential services and supports through Galuma-li programs[2].

Since opening 12 months ago, the Galuma-li staff have built from the ground up a welcoming space where everyone is offered support, connection, and belonging[3], but especially for Walgett's children and young people who have embraced Galuma-li as their own.

Since December 2024, Galuma-li has achieved:

- 335 attendances of 9 to 17 year olds in culturally led group activities as part of the Walgett Youth Wellbeing Service
- 121 attendances at the Galuma-li Women's Group
- 55 attendances at the Galuma-li Men's Group
- 101 attendances at Education sessions tailored for Walgett families
- 875+ meals provided at Galuma-li for program participants

The loss of our beautiful Galuma-li space is devastating to us at the Dharriwaa Elders Group, our directors, our staff, the children and families we serve, and the whole Walgett community. We are grieving the loss of this essential place of community connection and belonging, and all our plans for 2026.

We are working with our partners and supporters, including Walgett Shire Council and Walgett Aboriginal Medical Service in this recovery phase. Please keep checking our Facebook page and website for program details for the rest of 2025.

We will keep the community informed as we move forward with temporary site arrangements for 2026 to continue delivering our vital supports and services to the Walgett community.

We appreciate the strength and solidarity of our community. Together we will rebuild and continue our important work.

About the Dharriwaa Elders Group: The Dharriwaa Elders Group is an Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisation (ACCO) and charitable association of Walgett Aboriginal Elders from different Aboriginal Nations who work together for the local community they live in.

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Authorised: Speaker Sandra Suey-Thorne for and on behalf of Dharriwaa Elders Group 11/12/25

[1] https://www.walgett.nsw.gov.au/News-Media/Council-Supports-Emergency-Response-to-Galuma-li-Building-Fire
[2] https://www.dharriwaaeldersgroup.org.au/yuwayangarrali/youth-justice
[3] https://www.dharriwaaeldersgroup.org.au/news/galuma-li-a-new-heart-for-walgett-community