

## *Greetings!*

We hope this email finds you well. This is a special update to share with you where MAF have decided to place us overseas. Thank you to all those that have been praying for us as we have waited on this news, we have really been encouraged by your prayerful support.



## **Arnhem Land**

MAF shared with us last week that they would like us to serve in Arnhem Land, an indigenous territory in Northern Australia, for two years starting in October. It came as a little bit of a surprise, but we are trusting God in it all and are looking forward to the opportunity we will have to serve Him there. Before we share more about how this came about, we have prepared a small fact file so you can learn more about this part of the globe.

### **Arnhem Land, Northern Territory, Australia**

Land Area: 37,450 Sq Miles

Population: 16,230 of which majority are Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People Climate: Tropical

monsoon/savannah with one long rainy season

Language: English and many indigenous languages

Religion: Although there is no mainstream belief system, Arnhem Land is animistic and spiritually quite dark - curses, demonic ceremonies, are common.

Arnhem Land is connected by a few dirt roads making it incredibly isolated, it would take at least 28 hours to reach Darwin, the closest city, by car. If this distance was driven on roads in the UK or USA it would take about 7 hours.

The largest settlement in the region is Nhulunbuy where MAF have their operating base with about 10 aircraft.

MAF Arnhem Land operate the GA8 Airvan and the Cessna Caravan, these can carry 7 - 9 passengers, with removable seats for cargo or stretcher space.

MAF fly to 56 airstrips across the region, partnering with 91 organisations.



*Top: GA8 Airvan at a dirt airstrip in Arnhem Land*

*Bottom Left: The Arnhem Land Region; Bottom Right: Mainland Australia*

MAF's mission is to reach isolated communities, meeting the physical and spiritual needs of remote people groups. In Arnhem Land MAF flights support the work of bible translators and evangelists, and MAF staff are often asked to lead evangelistic outreach in the small communities. Physically, MAF are supporting healthcare and education initiatives, particularly those that focus on locally grown food. There has been an epidemic of deaths caused by Type 2 Diabetes due to the sugarcane, alcohol, and processed products eaten by many in this region. MAF are also the provider for Medevacs, transporting the sick and injured to the major hospital in Darwin, the nearest city outside of Arnhem Land. In the fact file we mention it taking 28 hours to reach Darwin by car, it only takes 2 hours and 30 minutes by airplane.



**Arnhem Land Landscape**

## Why Arnhem Land?

It may have taken you by surprise that we are headed to this part of the world, it was a surprise for us too. Those that know us well will be aware that both Danielle and I have a heart for East Africa, as we both spent much of our childhood in Kenya as missionary kids. We both would agree that we have felt the Lord preparing us to return somewhere in that East Africa region, so why then Australia?

There are several reasons, the first major one is a lack of openings in low hour programs. James is a low hour pilot, he does not have lots of aviation experience. Several programs in East Africa would suit him fine, it just happens to be that right now all positions in these areas are full. So that leaves a couple of options in South East Asia, but the most logical one is Arnhem Land. It should be quite straightforward for James to get stuck in quickly and build his experience whilst serving in this area, which will then equip him to fly in a broader range of MAF programs. The other, is that the MAF Board believe we will be an asset to the team there, and despite it being a surprise to us, we are seeing the Lord work in this. He is giving us a heart for this area, particularly the Yolngu people who we will be living amongst. We are getting excited about the opportunity we will have in Arnhem Land.

There are still a number of things we need to figure out, but we are very thankful for the discernment MAF have had when thinking about an appropriate place with the options available. The plan for now is to leave in October, and then see how the Lord leads us from there!



View from the cockpit as an MAF pilot lines up for an approach into a dirt strip in Arnhem Land.

## Next Steps and the MAF Podcast

We currently are still in two different countries, but Danielle will return to the UK in early March. We have several tasks to complete that month in preparation for our departure. In April we will head to All Nations Bible College in Hertfordshire, UK. We will finish All Nations at the end of June and the following months will be spent between the USA and UK. During this time we hope to speak at all our supporting churches, and then say goodbye to family.

The final thing to share with you, is something we promised in our last update. James had an opportunity along with Marco Koffeman (Director at MATC) to be interviewed for the MAF podcast series. It is something we think you will really enjoying listening to as it outlines the training James has gone through, and the incredible things God has been doing in our lives these past years. Search MAF Podcast where you get yours.

### How can you pray for us?

- Praise God for the completion of James' flight training, and for God's gracious hand in our lives throughout this training season.
- Praise God that Danielle has found a doula to shadow in the USA. Please pray that this will be really helpful experience for Danielle.
- **There are ongoing discussions about what Danielle will do in Arnhem Land, there may be several medical opportunities. Please pray that in the coming weeks we will determine what the Lord has in store for her, and make the necessary preparations for that.**
- **Pray that the many practicalities will come together so that we can make it on to the mission field in October!**
- **Finally, pray that we will be fully at peace with this decision to go to Arnhem Land, that we will become more and more excited by the opportunity to serve there.**

### Supporting us financially:

Each year we have to raise £25,000 (\$32,000) for our work with MAF in Arnhem Land. **We are not yet fully fundraised for this year**, so if you would like to support us financially, please go to the link below which will take you to our page on the MAF UK website. If you are a UK tax payer, please select Gift Aid when you donate.

[www.maf-uk.org/gullett](http://www.maf-uk.org/gullett)

It is such a blessing to be able to reach out and tell you more about our work with MAF, if you have any questions, please do email us at [james.gullett@mafint.org](mailto:james.gullett@mafint.org)

It is also really encouraging to know that you are praying for us, please do let us know how you are and how we can be praying for you.

Every blessing, James and Danielle