

## Darwin City Waterfront

The Darwin City Waterfront Redevelopment project will drive economic growth, create jobs for locals and be an important addition to the Territory lifestyle.

Darwin Cove Consortium is the preferred developer for the \$1 billion project. It consists of ABN Amro Australia Ltd, Sitzler Brothers Pty Ltd and Barclay Mowlem in a joint venture capacity, Toga Pty Ltd and convention centre operator Ogden IFC.



### Darwin Convention and Exhibition Centre

The world-class Darwin Convention and Exhibition Centre, which will seat 1500 people and provide 4000m<sup>2</sup> of exhibition space, is the centrepiece of the redevelopment project.

Designed to provide an extensive area able to adapt to accommodate a wide range of activities, it is estimated the centre will attract about 70 events per year that would not otherwise be held in the Territory. With average spending at these events of \$250 per person per day, this potentially means an extra \$10 million per year will be injected into the economy. It is also expected that the centre will help generate an additional \$190 million (in today's dollars) in tourism expenditure over the next 20 years.

The aim is to complete the Darwin Convention and Exhibition Centre by April 2008, though earlier completion in late 2007 is being targeted.

In addition to the creation of new public infrastructure and tourism expenditure, the Darwin Convention and Exhibition Centre is expected to create the equivalent of 160 full-time tourism jobs for Territorians by year four of its operation, growing to over 200 new full-time jobs by year ten.

Stage 1 of the 10 to 15 year redevelopment, due to begin in 2005 and be completed in late 2008, involves:

- construction of most public buildings and spaces, such as a sea wall and wave pool;
- opening of the Darwin Convention and Exhibition Centre; and
- connection of the Waterfront by the Avenue of Honour via Smith Street and The Esplanade to Darwin's central business district.

### Backing Local Business

The Darwin City Waterfront and Convention and Exhibition Centre development will:

- be a community asset which will attract Darwin residents, Territorians and tourists to a world-class, sophisticated waterfront precinct – injecting an estimated \$260 million into the local economy over the first three years and generating about 1000 jobs along the way;
- create numerous opportunities for businesses in the civil, marine and construction areas of the economy, and also in supply, services and architecture design fields – the commitment to local content will exceed 85 per cent, benefiting Territory contractors, sub-contractors, suppliers and workers;
- firmly place Darwin on the map and drive the economy into the next decade, growing tourism, small business and recreational facilities for the future – tourism is one of our major income earners, with holiday visitors contributing more than \$738 million to the local economy in 2003-04, as well as being one of our major employers, directly employing over 7500 people across the Territory; and
- continue to attract more people to live, work and experience the great lifestyle enjoyed in the Top End – more than 200 000 people now live in the Northern Territory. Growing the population by an additional 10 000 people would inject about \$70 million a year of extra retail spending into the economy, and result in more jobs for Territorians.

# Projects

Major projects, continuing activity in the Territory's construction industry and the improving tourism outlook provide local businesses with significant opportunities associated with the strengthening economy.

## Gas Onshore

The positive effects of gas onshore on the economy are continuing. The Wickham Point LNG plant (capital cost \$1.6 billion) is more than 50 per cent complete and will begin commercial production during the first half of 2006. The peak construction workforce reached more than 1750 workers, of whom 1440 were tradespersons and around 700 were Territorians.

More than 250 local businesses have already received substantial benefits as a result of the project, with over 3500 purchasing activities undertaken and 18 major sub-contracts awarded to Territory companies.

A consequence of the establishment of the plant is the proposal to build a \$33 million helium plant in the LNG plant area. If approved, this would be the first such plant in the southern hemisphere and would produce around 150 million cubic feet, or 896 tonnes, of helium per year. One-third of the helium produced would supply all Australia's current needs and the remainder would be exported. The plant is expected to commence construction in mid 2006 and be operational in the first half of 2007.

Work continues on a number of fronts to secure other gas supplies for the expansion of the LNG plant and for other uses such as power generation and new gas-based industries.

## Alcan Gove Expansion, Blacktip and Trans-Territory Pipeline

Alcan is proceeding with the \$2 billion expansion of its alumina refinery to increase production from 2 million to 3.8 million tonnes per annum. The refinery currently provides employment for a workforce of more than 1100 and, once fully operational, the expanded refinery will require a larger workforce, potentially providing employment for up to 120 additional workers on site.

Construction work began in November 2004, with the expanded facilities expected to be operational by late 2006. A peak construction workforce of 1700 people is expected in May 2006.

The Blacktip gas field development, situated in the Joseph Bonaparte Gulf, will cost around \$500 million and is expected to be approved for commencement by mid 2005. It will involve an offshore production platform, a 110 kilometre offshore pipeline to Wadeye and a gas processing plant.

The Trans-Territory Pipeline (TTP), when approved, will run from Wadeye to Gove to carry gas from the Blacktip field to power the Alcan development. The pipeline's capital cost is estimated at \$500 million and will involve up to 800 workers during construction and provide direct employment for around 30 people when operational at the end of 2007.

Opportunities for Territory businesses as a result of the TTP construction and operation include site preparation and revegetation, provision of airline and accommodation services, pipeline construction and logistics.

## Skills Recruitment Campaign

The Northern Territory Government undertook a major advertising campaign in February and March 2005 to attract skilled workers and professionals to the Territory.

The campaign called for skilled tradespeople in fields such as metal trades, construction, electrical, hairdressing, automotive and hospitality (chefs). For professionals, the campaign targeted engineers, doctors, dentists, nurses, specialist teachers and community workers.

The campaign attracted strong responses with more than 1700 enquiries from around Australia and New Zealand.

For more information:  
[www.nt.gov.au/skilled](http://www.nt.gov.au/skilled) and  
[www.theterritory.com.au](http://www.theterritory.com.au)



## Bootu Creek

Government and the Northern Land Council are conducting a scoping study of the opportunities for Indigenous business operators that could arise from the Bootu Creek manganese mine, north of Tennant Creek. A joint venture, including an Indigenous partner, was recently awarded the catering contract for the mine workers.

Bootu Creek Resources gives first preference to local Indigenous people as job vacancies arise, with a target of 30 per cent of the workforce by the time the mine is in full production. Most jobs will involve machinery operators and general trades.

## AustralAsia Trade Route

17 January 2005 marked the first anniversary of the commencement of rail services on the Adelaide to Darwin rail link. The success of the railway has surpassed railway operator FreightLink's own expectations, with almost 600 000 tonnes of freight delivered. This equates to more than 43 000 containers on 261 northbound and 259 southbound services, at an average of 33 wagons per trip.

The railway has acted as a catalyst for regional development, enabling such ventures as the Bootu Creek mine, north of Tennant Creek, to become commercially viable. Bootu Creek mine alone will export some 600 000 tonnes per annum of manganese ore to China once export operations commence in June 2005.

## Tourist Loop Roads

The Litchfield Loop is a tourist-related drive which will provide a continuous link from Batchelor, through Litchfield National Park, to Berry Springs. When completed, it will provide benefits to businesses along the route from the increased number of travelling tourists and locals.

The \$15 million, three year project involves upgrading 44 kilometres of gravel road to two-lane sealed standard, including a new bridge over the lower Finniss River.

Tourists, local Indigenous communities and the travelling public will benefit from the sealing of the Mereenie Loop. Tourist resorts at Glen Helen and Kings Canyon are expected to significantly increase bed numbers following its completion. Local Indigenous communities are also planning commercial activities in conjunction with the sealing of the route.

The project, worth an estimated \$43 million, includes upgrading 250 kilometres of gravel road to two-lane sealed standard and widening of 25 kilometres of narrow seal to 7 metre two-lane sealed standard. Stage 1 of work on Larapinta Drive was completed in mid July 2004 and Stage 2 of the construction works commences in May 2005.

Tender specifications for work on the project include a requirement for employment and training of local Indigenous workers.



## Global Freight Conference

The Global Freight Connect Conference will be held in October 2005. This international conference will be staged on the Ghan, en route from Darwin to Adelaide, and will directly promote and market the Territory's growing trade and transport capabilities to key senior executives of major international companies and political counterparts in the AustralAsia region.

## Defence Housing

The relocation of large numbers of defence personnel and their families to the Top End has resulted in a significant and permanent increase in the Territory's population, and demand for housing and other goods and services. Although the major impact of the defence relocation on housing construction occurred in the mid to late 1990s, a major round of construction is scheduled to commence in late 2005.

In Darwin, the Defence Housing Authority (DHA) plans to invest around \$70 million in the Lee Point (Lyons) suburban development. In conjunction with its joint venture partner, Canberra Investment Corporation (CIC), the DHA is expected to commence a \$42 million civil works program in the third quarter of 2005, with construction of dwellings to follow, at the rate of 75 houses a year for the next four years. A further 350 allotments will be available for public sale.

In Alice Springs, the primary focus for DHA over the next two years will be on upgrading existing housing stock to increase the amenity for defence personnel and their families. In Katherine, the focus of DHA activity has also shifted from acquisition to upgrading existing homes, with \$18 million to be spent over the next three years upgrading more than 200 homes.

# Projects

## Desert Knowledge Precinct

The Desert Knowledge Precinct, located on the Stuart Highway 7 kilometres south of the Alice Springs central business district, will be a learning, networking and scientific community that actively promotes the development and sharing of desert knowledge both within Australia and overseas. The precinct will be an exciting national and international focal point for business, education and research activities to build social and economic opportunities in desert Australia.

The precinct will house the headquarters of the Desert Knowledge Cooperative Research Centre and the Desert People's Centre, and will provide teaching and research facilities for the Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education and the Centre for Appropriate Technology.

Stage 1 of the headworks are already complete and work on the Desert People's Centre will begin in June 2005 and continue throughout 2005-06. Development of the \$4.03 million Desert Knowledge Business and Innovation Centre is also scheduled in the next phase. Over \$21 million is included on the 2005-06 Capital Works Program with further works planned in future years.

The development will be packaged to enable Alice Springs-based construction contractors and sub-contractors with the appropriate accreditation to tender for work. Around 70 local people are likely to be employed at any one time in the construction phase over the next four years. Indigenous landscaping apprentices have started work on the precinct, undertaking a range of projects in conjunction with formal training.

## Tourism Initiatives

In 2003, additional funding of \$27.5 million over three years was allocated to boost tourism marketing and industry development and address the downturn in the industry.

In 2004-05, the Northern Territory Tourist Commission adopted a destination marketing approach, promoting six priority destinations (Darwin, Alice Springs, Katherine, Tennant Creek, Uluru and Kakadu) in the Territory. This approach will continue throughout 2005-06.

The \$10 million allocated for 2005-06 will be used to increase the marketing of the Territory in domestic and international markets and for tourism development in the Territory. Activities include destination marketing, branding campaigns, cooperative advertising and the development of tourism products to expand the variety of visitor experiences available. A new suite of marketing tools with a new 'look and feel' have been tailored for each of the six priority destinations.

In 2005-06, the Indigenous Tourism Development Strategy will continue to be implemented. The strategy focuses on building strong relationships between all stakeholders, comprehensive research, education and training and additional work on issues of quality, authenticity and integrity. The capacity for Indigenous people to secure capital and operational funding for viable business proposals, and to protect and use assets on their land for tourism purposes, are key aims of the strategy.

