

NT MINING PROJECTS WORTH \$1.25 BILLION



Mining developments continue to drive a surging Northern Territory economy.

THE NORTHERN TERRITORY has nine mining projects worth \$1.25 billion nearing completion in the biggest national mining boom for 25 years, an economics research house reports.

The Australia Bureau of Agriculture and Resource Economics released a report listing the nation's major mining developments.

It revealed that the Territory has five mining projects worth \$930 million which are in an advanced stage.

The Territory also has four mineral projects worth \$328 million nearing completion.

New \$183m Timor Sea oil well begins production

TWO WELLS at Australian Energy Development's Puffin Project began producing 27 000 barrels of oil a day last month.

The oil is being extracted by a converted floating production storage and offloading vessel, and the first shipment of 333 300 barrels has already been exported to refineries in New South Wales and Queensland.

Puffin is 700km west of Darwin in the Ashmore region and is expected to have a life of up to ten years.

The Puffin and nearby Talbot fields have an estimated oil reserve of 100 million barrels.

The company is using Darwin as their supply base, providing work for engineering and supply companies.

Record cattle shipment sent to Indonesia

MORE than 22 000 steers and heifers have been unloaded in Indonesia, in a shipment described as the largest live cattle shipment in the world.

The *MV Deneb* loaded with cattle last week in Darwin, beating the previous record set by a cattle shipment from Cairns.

Religious festivals are said to be behind the current demand for beef.

Jobs for Indigenous apprentices

TWENTY-EIGHT Indigenous Territorians from 17 remote communities across the Top End have graduated from a vocational training course with skills needed to work for Power and Water in their own communities.

Employment and Training Minister Paul Henderson hosted the graduation for 22 of the students at Parliament House, congratulating them on receiving their Certificate II in Remote Essential Operations through the Essential Services Operator program.

The program is a joint partnership between Group Training NT, Power and Water, the NT and Australian Governments, and Charles Darwin University.

"Central to the program's success is that it is delivered on the ground in remote communities, rather than requiring Indigenous Territorians to leave their community and come in to town for study," Mr Henderson said.

"That's seen about 90% retention rate through the program, and 60 Indigenous Territorians have already graduated from the program since it began in 2003."

NuPower office opens in Darwin

MINES AND ENERGY MINISTER Chris Natt said the opening of NuPower Resources Limited's first Darwin office was a vote of confidence in the Territory's mining future.

"NuPower is a large uranium explorer with extensive tenements covering six projects across 10,000 square kilometres of central and eastern Northern Territory," Mr Natt said.

"The opening of NuPower's first Darwin office comes on the back of my recent trip to China, where several companies I met with expressed interest in either exploring the Territory for uranium or entering into joint venture agreements with companies already on the ground."

In 2006-07, the total value of mineral and energy production (extraction) and processing (manufacturing) is estimated to exceed \$6 billion due to expanded production volumes and commodity prices for minerals and energy.