



Australian Government



Memorandum of Understanding on the future of Jabiru Township

between the

The Commonwealth of Australia (the Commonwealth)
and the Northern Territory Government,
Energy Resources of Australia LTD (ERA), and the
Gundjeihmi Aboriginal Corporation (GAC)



This Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) sets out the shared intention and commitments of the Commonwealth, the Northern Territory, ERA and the GAC to work together to support the Jabiru township transition to a post-mining environment in the context of the scheduled closure of the Ranger Uranium Mine and expiry of the Jabiru township head lease in 2021.

This MoU does not create legally binding rights or obligations. The parties intend to use their best endeavours to meet their commitments under the MoU in the timeframe necessary to achieve their shared goals as detailed.





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Background

Jabiru was established in 1982 to support uranium mining in the region including the Ranger Uranium Mine and today also serves as a services and tourism hub for the West Arnhem region. ERA is required to cease processing activities at the Ranger Uranium Mine no later than January 2021 and rehabilitation of the Ranger Project Area is due to be completed by January 2026. The mine is currently the dominant economic base for Jabiru.

ERA will continue to have a significant presence in the Jabiru township as it undertakes rehabilitation of the Ranger Project Area. The transition of Jabiru, and the separate rehabilitation of the Ranger Project Area is a significant task for both ERA and the Commonwealth and will be undertaken so as to protect the World Heritage values and status of Kakadu National Park (KNP).

Land in Jabiru is leased by the Commonwealth Director of National Parks to the Jabiru Town Development Authority, a Northern Territory Government statutory authority. This Head Lease is due to expire in July 2021.

The Mirarr are the Traditional Aboriginal Owners and determined Native Title holders of Jabiru and surrounding lands, including the land covered by the Ranger Uranium Mine and the Jabiluka mineral lease. The Mirarr are represented in this MOU by GAC.

Vision

The parties support the vision of Jabiru as developed by the Mirarr Traditional Owners as a world leading ecologically sustainable, economically and socially vibrant community where traditional Aboriginal culture, all people and nature flourish.

The parties understand that the achievement of the vision will result in Jabiru developing as a National Park town, tourism hub and regional services centre.



Masterplan

The parties will use their best endeavours to work towards the vision by working collaboratively on the following eight goals determined by the Mirarr Traditional Owners as the essential features of the town.

- Mirarr ownership
- National Park town
- Tourism town
- Sustainable and resource efficient town
- Iconic cultural heritage destination
- Indigenous employment and enterprise centre
- Sustainable resident population
- Education and research hub.

GAC will develop with the other parties, a Jabiru Masterplan as the framework for the work of all parties to work towards in relation to these goals.

The Northern Territory will develop a new Jabiru Town Plan¹ in consultation with the Commonwealth and the Traditional Owners.

Remediation

The parties will work together to implement the vision through remediation works and investment in new works. The parties will work together to reach agreements about:

- the specific remediation works required, including removal or repair of buildings and infrastructure, and other agreed civil works such as lake redevelopment and green belt establishment.
- arrangements for the long term management of contamination (asbestos and potentially hazardous substances) to be left in place following the remediation works.
- support for implementing the agreed remediation arrangements through a funding contribution from the Commonwealth and Northern Territory with the funding and delivery process to be agreed.
- arrangements for investment in new works required to implement the vision.

¹The Town Plan for Jabiru is to be made by the relevant Minister under the *Planning Act* (NT) and approved by the Director of National Parks under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Regulations 2000* (Cth).

Establishing Jabiru as Aboriginal Land

The parties will work together towards Jabiru becoming Aboriginal Land under the *Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act 1976*.

The parties commit to working together to resolve the future tenure arrangements of the town before the expiry of the current tenure.

A township lease economic development package will be negotiated with the Mirarr Traditional Owners in the context of new township leasing arrangements.

Ensuring essential and municipal services for the town

The Northern Territory will take ongoing responsibility for town municipal and essential infrastructure and services. In particular the Northern Territory will:

- support the ongoing supply of electricity to Jabiru.
- support the ongoing delivery of water, sewerage, waste disposal, planning and other town essential services.

Continuing Jabiru's role as a regional services hub

The parties will work together to continue services for the West Arnhem region:

The Northern Territory will

- guarantee education, health, police, fire and emergency services at current levels until at least 30 June 2023.
- invest in new town infrastructure, which may include a Government Business Centre, retail centre and medical facilities.
- with GAC support the growth of educational resources within the township.
- with GAC support the establishment of an economic development entity.
- contribute towards a Bininj Resource and Development Centre, to boost economic development and employment opportunities in Jabiru.

The Commonwealth will commit to a defined level and duration of KNP office accommodation and staff housing in Jabiru and will, subject to Director of National Parks and KNP Board of Management discussions, support moving KNP headquarters and housing from Bowali to Jabiru.

ERA will commit to meeting its rehabilitation obligations and will work with the other parties to support a smooth transition for the town with regards to such matters as ERA's residential workforce, services provided by ERA and ERA's town assets.

Growing tourism to Kakadu and Jabiru

The parties will work together to increase tourism visitation to KNP and to position Jabiru as a hub for tourism-related businesses through the following commitments:

- The Commonwealth will contribute (along with private sector investment) to support establishment of a new World Heritage Visitor Centre in Jabiru.
- The Commonwealth will contribute to upgrade roads within KNP, guided by a roads strategy to be jointly developed by the Director of National Parks, relevant Traditional Owners and the Northern Territory.
- The Commonwealth will invest to improve tourism infrastructure and experiences, including improved mobile communications connectivity within Kakadu. Investment will be guided by a Tourism Master Plan to be jointly developed by the Director of National Parks, relevant Traditional Owners and the Northern Territory.
- To strengthen performance of the Kakadu National Park Management Plan 2016-2026, the Commonwealth and the Northern Territory Governments will develop a collaborative working arrangement between KNP and the Parks and Wildlife Commission of the Northern Territory. This collaborative arrangement will, subject to the Management Plan, include consistency of on-ground operations and a collaboration for ranger rotations and staff mobility across both NT and federal reserves to extend existing NT Parks ranger mobility arrangements. The parties will work toward this collaborative approach being developed in 2019 and being implemented by 2021.

Implementation

The parties will continue to meet, as required, to oversee and ensure implementation of this MOU.





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NORTHERN
TERRITORY
GOVERNMENT



Signed for and on behalf of the
Commonwealth of Australia by:

The Hon Sussan Ley MP
Minister for the Environment

Signed for and on behalf of the
Northern Territory Government by:

The Hon Selena Uiibo MLA
Minister for Aboriginal Affairs

Signed for and on behalf of the
Energy Resources of Australia LTD by:

Paul Arnold
Chief Executive and Managing Director

Signed for and on behalf of the
Gundjeihmi Aboriginal Corporation by:

Valerie Balmoore
Chairperson

