

**ERA****Energy Resources of Australia Ltd**

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Aboriginal consultations on Jabiluka concept finalised

Energy Resources of Australia Ltd (ERA) late last week completed its current consultations with the Northern Land Council (NLC), which acts on behalf of the Aboriginal people, regarding the Jabiluka development. These consultations considered the change in concept of design and operation of ERA's current proposal for the development of Jabiluka compared with that contemplated in 1982.

The original 1982 Agreement with the Aboriginal owners to mine Jabiluka, an agreement which was assigned to ERA in 1991, allowed for a Committee to be formed to decide if changes to the original proposal would be accepted. The Committee consisted of representatives of the Northern Territory and Commonwealth Governments, the Company, the Northern Land Council and the local Kakadu Bininj (Aboriginal) Working Committee.

The decision of the Committee to allow development at Jabiluka completes the Aboriginal approvals process under the change in concept provisions of the 1982 Agreement.

The decision of the Aboriginal people on where the processing is to take place - at the existing Ranger plant or at a new plant at Jabiluka (which does not yet have environmental approvals) is still to be finalised. ERA would prefer to process the ore at Ranger, however some Traditional Owners have expressed their opposition to this proposal.

ERA is currently awaiting a decision on approvals from the Northern Territory Government before it can commence construction of the Jabiluka mine itself.

Following the consultations with the Northern Land Council, the Company has agreed to provide additional benefits to the local Aboriginal community over and above the \$210 million in royalties the Jabiluka mine is expected to generate for the Northern Territory Aboriginal community.

These benefits include:

- Employment and training opportunities for local Aboriginals with approximately 20 per cent of people working on the Jabiluka project being Aboriginal;
- Provision of new housing for approximately 65 Aboriginal families;
- Assistance for Aboriginal businesses;
- Funding of a Women's Resource Centre;
- Funding for a bridging education unit for local Aboriginal children;
- Traineeships and university scholarships for Aboriginal students and funding for adult education.

These programs are aimed at realising the vision of the Aboriginal Elders as expressed in the 1982 Agreement to mine Jabiluka and the vision of the current Aboriginal community contained in the recommendations of the Kakadu Region Social Impact Study (1997) - that vision being for Aboriginal people to control their own future through economic development in the region.