



ERA

# Sustainable Development Report 2006



Chief Executive of ERA  
Mr Chris Salisbury

## CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S MESSAGE

Sustainable developments are those that meet the needs of present generations without undermining the capacity of future generations to meet theirs. ERA believes that excellence in health and safety performance, respect for the environment, and constructive relations with local communities underpin our business success.

A commitment to sustainable development is a key part of our operations, and has been since the Ranger mine began in 1980. Our unique regulatory environment, with regular stakeholder scrutiny and consultation, ensures that we take into account the region's future and community concerns in every major decision we make. ▶▶▶



# CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S MESSAGE

▶▶▶ This is the first time ERA has reported its social and environment activities under the heading of sustainable development and it is part of a move to encourage our own employees and the broader community to see our operational future in terms of sustainability.

ERA contributes to sustainable development in many ways, from providing uranium to meet global energy demands, to providing direct and indirect benefits to the local region, and the Northern Territory and national economies.

In terms of direct community benefits, ERA makes royalty payments to the Commonwealth Government that are then distributed to Northern Territory-based Aboriginal groups, including the Traditional Owners of the Ranger mine and surrounds, the Mirarr Gundjehmi people.

Uranium oxide exported from ERA's Ranger mine is subject to a system of safeguards administered by the United Nations' International Atomic Energy Agency, as well as additional protocols and bilateral agreements to ensure that Australian uranium is only used in the production of electricity. As people become more concerned about greenhouse gas emissions from fossil fuel sources, nuclear energy is becoming more attractive, and many countries are renewing their interest in this option.

The way the organisation manages health and safety at its operations is a key indicator of our sustainability and we are pleased to report a 28 per cent improvement in safety as measured by the All Injury Frequency Rate in 2006. A further effort was made to improve our management systems and standards during the year and we retained certification of our health, safety and environment systems to AS 4801 and ISO 14001.



The company experienced an intense wet season in 2006, with cyclone Monica bringing strong winds and heavy rain to the region in April. There were no adverse environmental impacts from the cyclone at the mine site, and no injuries recorded, reflecting excellent safety behaviour from all employees and our strong environmental management systems.

The water treatment plant, constructed in 2005, was used to successfully treat mine water, allowing it to be safely released back into the environment. Water treatment will continue to be an important part of our ongoing rehabilitation efforts.

The company was able to announce an increase in reserves at the Ranger mine of 11,100 tonnes leading to a six year extension to operations with processing life now planned to continue to 2020. Potential for further extension to the mine life is being investigated. The screening of low grade material allows the company to extract more value from stockpiles, assisting our sustainability aims.

The company continued to develop its closure model, in parallel with development plans. The company meets regularly with stakeholders to refine the details of how the operation will be closed, and to review rehabilitation obligations.

Efforts continued in 2006 to strengthen relations with the Mirarr people, with several new initiatives on cultural heritage and cross-cultural exchanges, as well as improved cooperation on rehabilitation planning.

ERA retains its lease on the Jabiluka deposit, to the north of Ranger, and it remains on long term care and maintenance following an agreement in 2005 giving the Mirarr the right of consent over future development.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C. Salisbury'.

Chris Salisbury  
Chief Executive

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**ERA in the Northern Territory**

ERA's Code of Business Conduct, incorporating values of Rio Tinto's *The Way We Work*, states:

We will work with key stakeholders to develop and sustain long-term relationships with ERA. We build partnerships with our customers and strive to exceed

their expectations. We will support the communities around our operations to achieve their aspirations. In particular we will seek to establish stronger relationships with Aboriginal people, particularly the Traditional Owners of our leases, as the basis of a long-term partnership.

Since 1980, the company has mined uranium ore and produced uranium oxide at the Ranger mine, 250 kilometres east of Darwin. ERA is listed on the Australian Securities Exchange, and is 68.4 per cent owned by Rio Tinto, with the balance of shares publicly held.

ERA sells its products to power utilities in Asia, Europe and North America under strict international safeguards, overseen by the Australian Safeguards and Non-Proliferation Office (ASNO), part of the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

ASNO ensures that Australia's international obligations are met under the *Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT)*, Australia's NPT safeguards agreement with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the *Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material (CPPNM)* and Australia's various bilateral safeguards agreements. ASNO provides the framework under which ERA is able to transport its product safely to international customers, as well as monitoring the Australian material to ensure it is properly disposed of, and does not contribute to weapons proliferation. (For further information see [www.asno.dfat.gov.au](http://www.asno.dfat.gov.au))

The company plans to produce uranium oxide from its Ranger open pit and ore stockpiles until at least 2020. ERA also holds title to the Jabiluka deposit, 22 kilometres north of Ranger. Jabiluka is currently under long-term care and maintenance giving the Mirarr people the right of consent over any future development on the lease.

The Ranger Project Area and the Jabiluka Mineral Lease are located on Aboriginal land, with the landowners, the Mirarr Gundjeihmi people, mostly living in the surrounding region. Conditions for mining on Aboriginal land are laid down in agreements with the representative body, the Northern Land Council, under the terms of the Aboriginal Land Rights (NT) Act 1976. The Northern Territory Government is responsible for the day-to-day regulation of the Ranger mine under the Mining Act and the Mining Management Act.

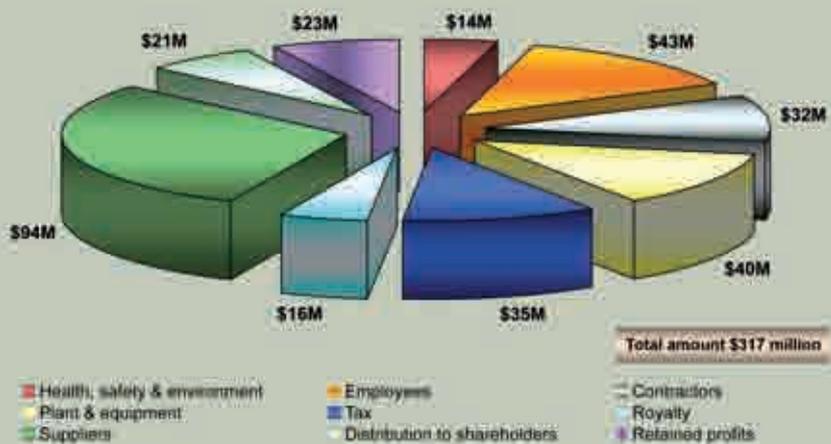
The Commonwealth Minister for Industry, Tourism and Resources has a regulatory role over Ranger under the Atomic Energy Act, and the Commonwealth Environment and Water Resources Department's Supervising Scientist Division has specific environmental reporting responsibilities over the mine sites. (See [www.deh.gov.au/ssd](http://www.deh.gov.au/ssd))

ERA's operations are serviced by the town of Jabiru, established principally as a mining town, but now accommodating many other people, organisations and businesses, including Aboriginal Traditional Owners.

ERA has a wholly-owned subsidiary, Earth Water Life Sciences (EWLS), a specialist commercial environmental consulting business based in Darwin. EWLS provides long term strategic environmental advice to both ERA and external parties. EWLS website: [www.ewlsciences.com.au](http://www.ewlsciences.com.au).

**2006 Economic contribution**

ERA is the major employer in the West Arnhem region of the Northern Territory as well as being one of the largest mining operations in the Territory. Revenue in 2006 totalled \$317 million and was allocated in the following ways:



## The community around us



The Commonwealth Director of National Parks owns the land on which the town of Jabiru is located. The town is subject to a native title claim by the Mirarr Traditional Owners, still being reviewed through the judicial process.

ERA supports an outcome that recognises Aboriginal ownership, while providing security of tenure for existing businesses and services.

ERA, whose employees make up a substantial proportion of the population of Jabiru, has been a strong supporter of both the local and Territory community. The company's employees and their families play an active role in many community groups and forums.

While future land tenure arrangements are still being negotiated, the township itself is administered under the Jabiru Town Development Act 1978 (NT) by the Jabiru Town Development Authority (JTDA). The JTDA is a statutory body responsible to the Northern Territory Minister for Local Government and made up of representatives of ERA and the NT Government. As Jabiru is also within the Kakadu National Park it is regulated by the Commonwealth's *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*, and the Kakadu National Park Plan of Management.

Municipal services within the town are provided by the Jabiru Town Council (JTC), which was established in 1984 under the Northern Territory's Jabiru Town Development Act. Since that time the JTDA, which was established to "develop and manage the town of Jabiru", has gradually delegated responsibility for almost all of its local government service functions to the JTC.

In 2006, the company broadened the scope of its community efforts, collaborating with local organisations to foster a stronger sense of community across stakeholder groups. Successful examples of this approach included the initiation of a Welcome to Jabiru program, the expansion of the town's Youth Centre activities, and the ongoing sponsorship of the Mahbilil festival. ERA also participated in a number of important joint initiatives which have the potential to contribute significantly to the achievement of Aboriginal community sustainability in the long term.

## Aboriginal groups

Aboriginal representative bodies associated with ERA's activities in the Northern Territory, include:

- ▶ Gundjeihmi Aboriginal Corporation, representing the Mirarr Gundjeihmi Traditional Owners
- ▶ Djabulukgu Association
- ▶ Gagudju Association
- ▶ Northern Land Council
- ▶ Warnbi

## Jabiru Youth Centre

The town's Youth Centre received a well-needed boost, when ERA joined forces with the Jabiru Town Council and the Gundjeihmi Aboriginal Corporation to provide a dedicated staff member.

ERA employed the youth worker, contributing more than half of her time to run the Youth Centre. The centre was able to extend its hours to four afternoons. Activities and programs operating out of the centre have expanded, including the introduction of a school vacation youth activity program

The Two Worlds Together program for Indigenous youth was initiated by Kakadu Health in mid-year. It was an effective intervention well-received by Indigenous youth. The program was able to continue running on an interim basis with support from ERA and its youth worker.



## 2006 Sponsorships and donations

ERA contributed more than \$200,000 in sponsorships and donations throughout the year to the community, assisting in a broad spectrum of programs and events. Additionally, employees volunteered their time to help promote or assist with particular events. Some of the major events and programs to which ERA contributed are highlighted below:

- ▶ For the third year, ERA has provided \$25,000 to the Kakadu Health Service (KHS) towards the employment of a maternal health educator, as part of a the Rio Tinto Child Health Partnership focusing on reducing the health risks to newborn infants by improving maternal health and lifestyles during the pre-natal period.
- ▶ ERA donated \$50,000 to Tourism NT for the Kakadu National Park Indigenous Tourism Development Fund 2006. This program assists Indigenous enterprises in Kakadu to establish or upgrade their infrastructure, or to facilitate start-up or promotion. Two existing and one start-up business, based on cultural tourism and the promotion of Indigenous arts, were assisted by the grants.
- ▶ ERA for the first time co-sponsored the Northern Territory Indigenous Music Awards in Darwin. ERA presented the award for best musical act of the year to the Yilila band from south-east Arnhem Land.
- ▶ ERA increased its level of support, both cash and in-kind to assist the Gundjeihmi Aboriginal Corporation (GAC) with the Mahbilil Festival. A highlight of the Jabiru community calendar, it promotes and showcases local Indigenous talent in the musical and fabric arts. ERA also assisted the neighbouring Indigenous community of Oenpelli with its Open Day.
- ▶ The company also provided smaller donations to a range of recreational, sporting and cultural activities, including environmental clean-ups, nature conservation efforts, and assisting Indigenous people with ceremony and funeral attendance.



## Mahbilil Festival

In early September, the Jabiru community and visitors celebrated the Kakadu Mahbilil Festival. The festival is an important annual event organised and supported by key community groups, including the GAC, JTC, Parks Australia North, eriss and ERA.

Mahbilil means 'afternoon breeze' in the Gundjeihmi language. It was started 20 years ago by a group of local people flying kites and sharing a social occasion around the lake. Today the festival highlights the arts and artistry of Indigenous musicians and craftspeople and promotes cross cultural appreciation. It has become an event of local and regional significance, attracting the participation as well as attendance of people from within and outside the region.

The 2006 event showcased Indigenous musicians and dancers - Wildflower, Rock Wallaby and Narbalek, Kakadu's Mimi Dancers, and Lucky Oceans. The special guest artist was Deborah Conway. More than 1000 people attended the event, the highest number ever.

## ERA Community Open Day

In August 2006 ERA hosted a Community Open Day in Jabiru. The purpose of the day was to give members of the community, their families and tourists the opportunity to visit the mine and gain an understanding of the Ranger operation. Displays were set up in the Jabiru town hall staffed by ERA employees who provided explanations of the different environmental and production activities that occur at Ranger. While parents explored the exhibition, children participated in their own mine-related art activities.

More than 200 people took advantage of the mine tours which featured a look at the large mining trucks, a visit to the processing plant, and a look at operations from the viewing platform. Up to 400 people attended the event in total, and it is now proposed as an annual event.



## ERA and the Jabiru Area School

ERA worked with the local school assisting with programs in sports, arts and science, among others. The company supported a Darwin-Jabiru school football competition, and brought to Jabiru a group of Western Bulldogs Australian Football League players, who ran a clinic for students. As well, the company invested staff time and other resources to assist with the school's science fair.

The highly successful collaboration with the school on the production of the ERA Safety calendar continued in 2006. ERA employees delivered short talks to the students on safety topics. The 2007 calendar was published and distributed to all ERA employees, students, families and to the local community.

The company also participated in the school-based apprenticeship program, taking on four students in 2006. Following the success of this program, ERA committed to sponsoring up to six apprenticeships in 2007.

A highlight of the school year was the honouring of the first year 12 graduating class. ERA's General Manager, Operations, formally recognised the graduates' achievements presenting each with a graduation award on behalf of the company.



## Welcome to Jabiru

In 2006 the company co-ordinated the preparation of a "Welcome to Jabiru" handbook in partnership with a range of organisations in Jabiru. The handbook contains information ranging from emergency procedures to shopping, community and recreational services. The handbook, which has been reprinted and updated three times during its first year, has become the standard reference guide for residents and new arrivals.

The company also coordinated a series of quarterly welcoming events, providing opportunities for community residents, particularly non-working partners, to get together and learn more about their community. Welcoming events included a visit to Nourlangie Rock art sites, a women's luncheon event and several guest speakers.

## Gunbang (alcohol) Action Group - Alcohol Management Plan

The Kakadu / West Arnhem Gunbang Action Group (GAG) comprises representatives from health service providers, local licensees, employers such as ERA, community organisations, Northern Territory Government, local Government and other interested stakeholders. The GAG is currently chaired by the manager of the community-controlled Kakadu Health Service. The focus of the group is on harm minimisation and better coordination of strategies and activities related to alcohol supply and demand, as well as service delivery.

During the year, the GAG undertook to engage a consultant to assist with the preparation of an Alcohol Management Program. This work is being jointly funded by ERA and the Northern Territory Government. Its work will include:

- ▶ Liaison with local stakeholders relevant to the management of alcohol in the region
- ▶ Canvassing the views of stakeholder groups
- ▶ Liaison with community service providers and related NT and other Government departments, which have a role in addressing alcohol-related problems
- ▶ Collation of stakeholder feedback and analysis of key concerns
- ▶ Facilitation of community-based workshops.

The key deliverables will be a comprehensive strategy for the Kakadu West Arnhem region, with widespread buy-in from all parts of the community.

## Cultural heritage management and archaeological clearances

Following rehabilitation work at the old mining site of Djarr Djarr, the company has been working with Traditional Owners to set up protocols for land disturbance. This has led to an opportunity to negotiate a full Cultural Heritage Management Plan for the Ranger area in the future.

During the year, an interim protocol on cultural heritage was signed by the Gundjehmi Aboriginal Corporation and ERA. Two archaeological surveys were completed. The archaeologist's recommendations were implemented and compliance internally audited.

The protocol calls for "ERA and the Mirarr Traditional Owners to work cooperatively to improve the protection of cultural heritage on the Ranger Project Area (RPA)". It provides for a process whereby ERA and the GAC can work together to complete cultural heritage surveys prior to the disturbance of new ground. This includes any types of land disturbance such as selective clearing, irrigation, grading, trenching, drilling for exploration, or monitoring.

ERA and the GAC have agreed to implement two additional initiatives in the area of cultural heritage management during 2007. This will be the Access to Country for cultural activity, and Fire Management program facilitated by EWLS. Both of these initiatives will be conducted on the RPA.

## Cross cultural awareness education

An additional initiative in the area of cultural appreciation will be the implementation in March 2007 of a revised cross cultural awareness training course which has been constructed with the input and participation of the Mirarr Traditional Owners. To date there has been considerable community interest in the course and the program may be extended to the rest of the community at a later date.

## Kakadu Artists Printmaking Workshop

The second Kakadu Artists Printmaking Workshop was held in Darwin between 27 November and 1 December. The first workshop was held at Murrudjurl earlier in the year. Funding for the workshop was provided by ERA and Charles Darwin University.

The workshop was coordinated by Social Justice Communications Pty Ltd through Kakadu Community Development, and delivered by Charles Darwin University (CDU) Casuarina campus with Master Printmaker Leon Stainer.

The 11 participants are young, emerging and established artists, enrolled part-time in the Certificate III in Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander Cultural Arts, through CDU. The artists come from a range of locations including Cannon Hill, Cooinda, Madjinbardi (Mudjinberri) and Manaburduma (Jabiru Town Camp).

As a result of this workshop, the artists have completed at least one print (etching of a zinc plate). A number of outstanding prints of national and international standard were developed. These include notably works by experienced artists Abel Naborlhborlh and Ivan Namarnyilk.

The work will be exhibited at CDU Gallery in April 2007 and the artists have specifically requested direct involvement in the hanging and presentation of the exhibition.

By negotiation with CDU, the exhibition will be part of further training within the certificate. Marketing and business development units within the certificate will also provide artists with the skills to approach retail outlets or sell their works direct to tourists.

The workshop has been an important step towards facilitating further education and paving the way for business development by independent artists. The training through CDU, coupled with support in administration and business development by Social Justice Communications has provided strong basis for the future of Kakadu artists who wish to take the opportunity for their own future development in education, training and self-employment.

## Public interest in uranium mining

In 2006 ERA participated in several Commonwealth Government inquiries aimed at strengthening Australia's uranium mining industry, including playing a leadership role in the ongoing Uranium Industry Framework(UIF) dialogue. ERA is chairing the UIF implementation group on improving Indigenous employment in the uranium mining industry, and has played a role in its royalties, regulation, and communications sub-groups.

The company also welcomed the final report of the House of Representatives inquiry into the strategic importance of Australia's uranium reserves, and the Uranium Mining, Processing and Nuclear Energy Review. The increasing interest in uranium mining and the renewed global investment in nuclear power as an alternative to fossil fuel power sources, has led to a large increase in visits to the Ranger mine site by a variety of interest groups, and high demand for company speakers at conferences. ERA was involved in the establishment of the Australian Uranium Association in 2006 to play an advocacy role for the industry, building on the work of the Uranium Information Centre.

For full details of government reports visit:

<http://www.industry.gov.au/content/itrinternet/cmscontent.cfm?objectId=9D8CB957-65BF-4956-B689FE67052B7D23&searchID=203992>

<http://www.dpmpc.gov.au/umpner/reports.cfm>

<http://www.aph.gov.au/house/committee/isr/uranium/report.htm>



## 2007

### *Madjinbardi (Mudjinberri)*

In late 2006, ERA reached an agreement with Warnbi Aboriginal Corporation and the GAC representing the Mirarr to complete the construction of a building at the Indigenous outstation of Madjinbardi. The building will be used as a women's meeting and activity centre.

ERA has donated \$ 40,000 to the project, and has provided technical support for the installation of services. This project is important because it involves the participation of the community in the design and finishing of its own asset, which can become a focus for community meetings, decision-making and cultural learning.

### *Indigenous All Stars vs Essendon*

ERA and Rio Tinto were proud sponsors of the AFL Indigenous All Stars for the fourth time in the recent clash with Essendon, 9 February at Mararra stadium in Darwin.

While the All Stars were beaten for the first time in their history, all observers admitted that the Bombers played great football, with many talented Indigenous players in their own ranks. The All Stars suffered from very limited time to train together, and the absence of some key team members, although still displaying dazzling ball handling skills.

ERA chief executive, Chris Salisbury, presented the award to the winning Bombers' side after the game, and later made a speech to all the footballers thanking them for the great crowd-pleasing event. Chris said the importance of the event to ERA was the way it assisted players to travel around the Top End, helping to improve young footballers' skills, and providing positive role models for the Indigenous youth.

Bombers coach Kevin Sheedy praised the All Stars and the great Indigenous players of the past, many like Michael Long, who played with the Bombers had done so much to encourage young players in the Northern Territory. A team of young Jabiru players were privileged to play at half time before the large crowd of onlookers.

The AFL is attempting to promote Australian Rules in other countries, and an associated event to the major All Stars game was the promotion of a young South African team which played the warm up event against the young (under 16) All Stars.

Earlier in the week this team visited Jabiru, for a rehearsal game against the young All Stars. It was a game of high standards as the tourists showed excellent defensive skills, and a good standard of kicking, although they were defeated by the more experienced Indigenous players.

The game was followed by a well attended community event at the Bowali Centre where the winners were presented with a trophy by General Manager Operations Suresh Rajapakse, and the touring side received a didgeridoo which they proceeded to master quickly.

The young South Africans delighted the community with their songs and dances into the night, and showed great interest in the basket weaving skills of local Aboriginal women, and artefacts on display in the Bowali museum.



### *Stakeholder consultation*

Community views were sought from local organisations on ERA's 2006 performance, and some extracts are included below:

*"As the Youth Services Team Leader and Local Community Partnership Coordinator I have worked closely with ERA on several youth programs, the most significant outcome is that of ERA employing a Youth Worker which enabled the reopening of the youth centre...as an ongoing request from the young people of Kakadu. The youth centre is a great example of how ERA has worked in collaboration with other local stakeholders on community projects, this example sends a message of support that the community is committed to the young people of Kakadu. ERA has committed to the support of school based apprenticeships with students working both on site and within the community. I look forward to continued support from ERA in the area of improving Youth employment and particularly Indigenous employment which also needs to be a whole of community approach."*

Janine Mewburn  
Local Community Partnership Coordinator  
Jabiru Town Council

*"Jabiru is a unique area of Australia that faces many social issues that reflect upon how well the town manages its population turnover/growth. Past endeavours have included discussions at cabinet level, to make Jabiru an open community where residents could be encouraged to settle more permanently in and around the town boundaries.*

*Currently this situation in the short term impacts upon who either resides or works within Jabiru, all to do with the mine's continual sustainability. This sustainability has and will always have an impact upon which businesses are in town to service the mine and the town's residents. Charles Darwin University Jabiru Centre is one of those businesses that rely upon the mine for continual support both in kind and through student/employee enrolments to substantiate the existence of the centre. The mine has shown past commitment to CDU with their employees, and both organisations are currently working together to maximise the shared benefits."*

Geoff White  
Centre Leader  
CDU Jabiru



*"Running a large business in Jabiru is very hard when there is a shortage of housing on offer. To run our supermarket we need at least 5 key staff members, at the moment we have housing for 2 (one house and one unit). This means that we have to draw from the employment pool of Jabiru. There seems to be a lot of families leaving Jabiru at the moment and the question that every business has to ask is – are they going to be replaced with other families or 'fly in fly out' contractors? As the families leave so do the youth of Jabiru who can play a major role in the employment chain.*

*The recent flooding of Jabiru and surrounding areas has shown how much can be achieved when people from different organisations work together as one. We are very grateful for the help that ERA offered., I think that there is definitely an opportunity for ERA to work closer with the businesses of Jabiru for when the mini disasters like floods, cyclones, water scares and road repairs occur."*

Martin Montgomery  
Foodland  
Jabiru

*"As a long term resident with a newly established small business in Jabiru I am appreciative of the involvement and willingness ERA has demonstrated in not only Jabiru but in the surrounding Indigenous Communities.*

*It is good to see the programs being established and supported by not only ERA but also in collaboration with other stakeholders ie: Youth Program / School to work program and ERA's support in the engagement of a Youth Coordinator for the Community, to name a couple.*

*I think that I can speak for the Community and acknowledge not only the support from ERA after Monica and more recently the Floods where assistance was extended into the Outstations.*

*As one that has made Jabiru home and recently established a small business I am appreciative of the commitment that ERA has shown and given to not only improve our Community but also to improve the long term sustainability of Jabiru.*

*I look forward to working with all parties into the future."*

Ralph F Blyth  
West Arnhem Cultural & Tourism Services  
and long term resident

*Since 1985, Jabiru Town Council has provided the essential infrastructure, human and maintenance services necessary to provide residents of Jabiru with a quality lifestyle. During all of that time, on behalf of our parent body the Jabiru Town Development Authority we have tried to provide residents with easy access to decision making processes.*

*Until recently we have shared that political process with Energy Resources of Australia through their Appointed Member. In January this year that practice ceased and the Minister for Local Government allowed Jabiru Town Council to be fully democratically elected for the first time in its history. We still extend the hand of welcome to an ERA official observer at our monthly meetings and rely on the special guidance afforded by that person.*

*By 30th June 2008, Jabiru Town Council will fade into history and become part of the West Arnhem Shire. That process will provide a hugely boosted resource base and skills pool to all of the people of West Arnhem and Kakadu National Park and the Region will enjoy a far more equitable share of Australian Government and Northern Territory Government Services. Greater job opportunities, higher service levels and guaranteed outcomes will sit alongside land ownership justice as the jewels in the crown as we move forward into the next chapter of Jabiru's existence.*

*Our job has been to make life normal and enjoyable for all those who have chosen to bring their families to this remote and beautiful place regardless of which organization they work for. We have had fun doing so and we recognize and applaud the provision by ERA of all of those facilities which would not normally have been possible to provide in a remote location.*

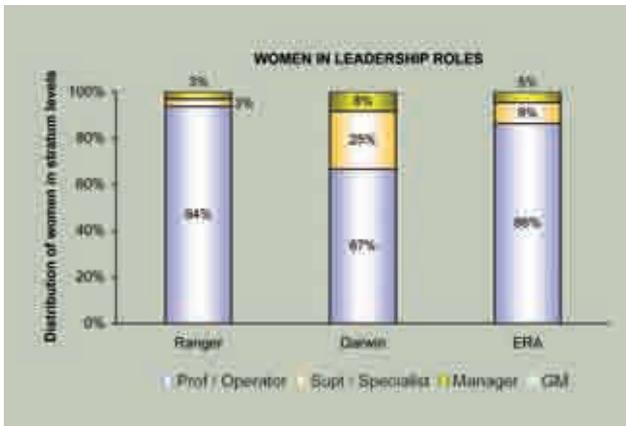
Jeff Colver  
Chief Executive Officer  
Jabiru Town Council



## Employees

Permanent employees of ERA (including EWLS) increased from 354 at the end of 2006 to 385 at the end of 2006. Employee turnover increased from 14 per cent at the end of 2005 to 18 per cent at the end of 2006. In light of the company's location and the tightness of the external labour market, this turnover rate is considered reasonable.

ERA has paid special attention to attracting and retaining women, as part of its diversity strategy. Some 53 percent of all graduates employed by the company are women. As well, there has been a five per cent increase in the number of women employed in the processing department. ERA has obtained a citation as Employer of Choice for Women from the Commonwealth Department of Employment and Workplace Relations.



At the end of 2006, ERA employed 46 Indigenous employees, including four Indigenous trade apprentices. There were also six Aboriginal Trainees and two Indigenous School Based Apprentices. There were a further two Aboriginal people employed under the Commonwealth's Community Development Employment Program (CDEP). The Aboriginal participation rate at ERA was 12 per cent, a slight decrease from December 2005 (13 per cent), amid higher overall ERA numbers.

Recruitment continued to be a challenge due to a tight labour market for mining professionals across Australia as well as accommodation shortages in the Jabiru township, which services the Ranger operation.

The company will continue to offer competitive employment conditions in order to attract and retain employees in the Northern Territory. The company has been assisted by Rio Tinto to access the broader market for mining professionals.



## Health and safety

ERA supports a healthy work environment. Our safety and health policy states: "Our goal is to ensure that no-one comes to any harm while working for ERA." To view ERA's safety and health policy, visit: [http://www.energyres.com.au/sustainability/safety\\_and\\_health](http://www.energyres.com.au/sustainability/safety_and_health).

In 2006 the focus was on reducing the number of injuries to contractor staff, but the improved overall outcome was significant across all areas of occupational health and safety.

In 2006, the number of reportable injuries dropped from 14 (2005) to 10. This represents a drop of 28 per cent in the all injuries frequency rate (AIFR). Also pleasing was an 80 per cent reduction in the rolling injury severity rate, the measure of injury significance.

ERA successfully maintained compliance with corporate health and safety standards and certification of its health and safety management system to Australian Standard 4801. An external audit in February 2007 found that ERA's environment management system and occupational health and safety management system continue to comply with the requirements of AS/NZS ISO 14001:2004 and AS/NZS 4801:2001.

An audit of the disaster management and recovery plan (DMR) by Rio Tinto Group risk management, resulted in a score of 97 per cent – best practice standard for Rio Tinto and a marked improvement on previous years.



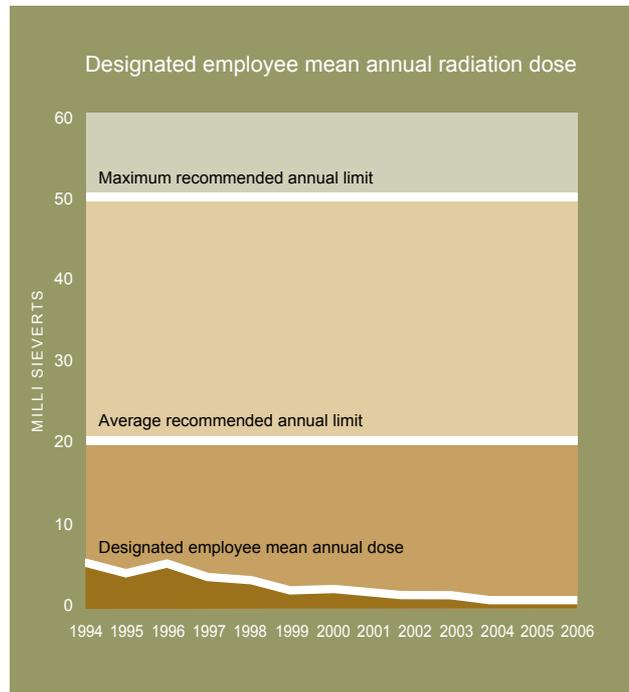
## Health and work survey

In April, an impressive 74 per cent of the total ERA workforce participated in an online health and work survey, launched by Rio Tinto. ERA was one of eight Australian-based Rio Tinto Group businesses, to participate in the survey. Some of the key findings for ERA included:

- ▶ 66 per cent of employees exercised less than the National Heart Foundation guidelines.
- ▶ 63 per cent of employees were identified as overweight or obese compared to 48 per cent of the Australian workforce.
- ▶ 20 per cent of ERA employees reported suffering from fatigue and low energy.
- ▶ 40 per cent of males and 30 per cent of females had not seen a doctor for a check up in the last 12 months.
- ▶ 13 per cent reported the presence of asthma and high blood pressure.

The survey found that factors for poor health were linked with increased workplace absenteeism. Also, the majority of ERA employees have at least one risk factor for poor health.

The outcome of the survey has provided ERA with the basis to develop and implement wellness programs that target sedentary lifestyles, nutrition, pain management, and smoking cessation, among other issues. A wellness strategy, which is based on the Rio Tinto guidelines, is currently in preparation.



## Radiation management

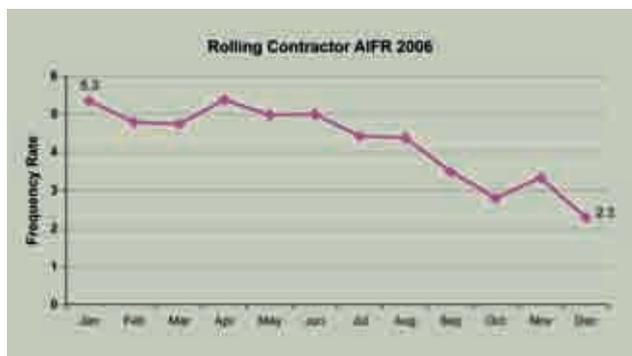
An important component of health and safety is the radiation management system, also certified to Australian Standard 4801 in September 2005. The radiation management system was also subject to the Rio Tinto review process and there were no adverse findings.

The radiation exposure pathways at ERA's operations are comprehensively measured and reported throughout the year. The results of this monitoring are compared to limits recommended by the International Commission on Radiological Protection (ICRP). These limits are 100 millisieverts (mSv) over five years (average of 20 mSv per year) or a maximum of 50 mSv in any one year for occupational exposure excluding natural background radiation and medical exposures.

Employees at the Ranger operation received a mean radiation dose of 1.1 mSv during 2006. The following graph depicts the mean annual radiation dose assessed for designated workers working throughout the operation in comparison with the recommended limits.

## Contractor safety

Contractor safety showed significant improvement in 2006. There was a 60 per cent reduction in the contractor all injury frequency rate (AIFR) over the period January to December. Quarterly safety meetings were held with key site contractor principals to improve communications, increase contractor involvement in key areas, raise awareness of safety issues on site, and develop improvement plans.



### **Ergonomics and injury management**

As part of ERA's commitment to improved health and safety, the company employed an occupational therapist at Ranger during 2006. Since the introduction of this new role, there have been some significant and positive outcomes for all employees, including:

- ▶ The roll-out of an injury management and rehabilitation system.
- ▶ One-on-one mentoring for work related and non-work related injuries.
- ▶ A decrease in lost time injury rolling severity rate (LTISR) to December 2006, attributed to improved rehabilitation practices leading to the reduction in the amount of time off employees require after injury and before returning to work.
- ▶ An ergonomic design review of the on-site 60 tonne crane, purchased in 1979. The review which included contractors and employees of the maintenance service crew, ranked hazards and risks associated with operating the crane, using a risk assessment process. Based on the findings of the review, the age of the crane and difficulty sourcing parts to make adequate repairs, it was recommended that the crane be replaced. Practical and innovative solutions, acceptable to employees and contractors were documented to ensure safe use of the machinery while a new crane is being purchased.



### **Hearing conservation**

In an effort to eliminate noise induced hearing loss, hearing conservation has been adopted by ERA as a component of the Rio Tinto health standards. ERA has developed a program that complies with national legislation and includes noise hazard evaluation, implementing noise exposure controls, and monitoring the effectiveness of these controls.

Noise hazard evaluation completed in 2006 indicated that the average noise exposure ranges from 79 dB(A) for services personnel to 90 dB(A) for boilermakers.

Findings from site wide monitoring found that the exposure standard was an average of 85 dB(A) per shift. The following control mechanisms have been adopted to minimise exposure levels:

- ▶ Occupational Health staff were trained in the implementation of Sonomax custom moulded hearing protection. The Sonomax product provides guaranteed noise attenuation according to the noise exposure of the individual and is fitted in the ear within half an hour. All personnel and Category 1 contractors are eligible for the hearing protectors.
- ▶ Work quiet methods: A noise level indicator, known as the SoundEar, was trialed in the boilermakers' workshop. The device measures noise levels in the immediate area and provides a visual cue indicating when the noise level is too high. Further methods will be rolled out across the site in 2007.

### **Awards**

ERA's commitment to health and safety was further demonstrated and recognised at the NT Minerals Council Awards of Excellence and the 2006 Mines Rescue competition.

#### ***NT Minerals Council Awards of Excellence***

Early in 2006, ERA was awarded first place in the category of Health and Safety Innovations at the Northern Territory Minerals Council Awards of Excellence, held in conjunction with the annual Health and Safety Conference, held in Darwin. The innovation reduces the hazards associated with horizontal drilling in the pit.

#### ***2006 NT Mines Rescue Competition***

ERA hosted and competed in the 10th annual NT Mines Rescue Competition in Darwin on 25 August. Seven teams from the Top End and northwest WA, entered three days of competition across a range of disciplines including first aid, hazmat, fire fighting, vehicle extrication, vertical rescue, search and rescue in smoke, theory and individual skills.

The 2006 event was a successful competition for ERA, the company winning the first aid event convincingly for the second year running and finishing second overall.

The mine rescue competition has a reputation for benchmarking and showcasing standards in emergency response and mine rescue skills. It has also become a practical vehicle for exchange of occupational health and safety, and rescue knowledge in the mining industry.

## Environmental management

"One of ERA's core values is that the natural and cultural values of the surrounding World Heritage listed Kakadu National Park must continue to be protected." To view ERA's environment policy, visit: <http://www.energyres.com.au/sustainability/environment>.

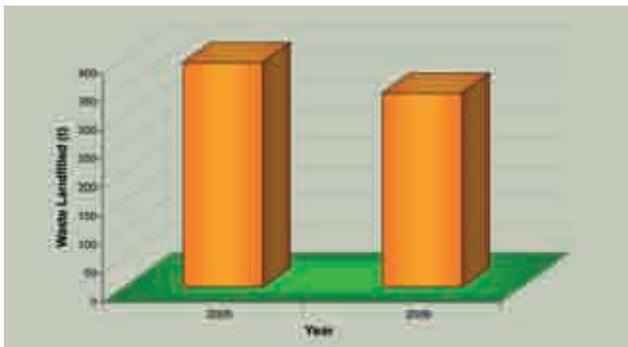
To achieve this goal, ERA manages and maintains a strict environmental management system, certified to international standard ISO 14001, and subject to two annual surveillance audits by external auditors. Environmental management covers a variety of projects and these are highlighted below.

### Waste management

A total waste tracking system was established at Ranger in 2005. Materials for waste disposal are segregated at their source to aid in the recycling process. Large volume wastes are kept in skips which are collected and sorted via forklift.

Small volume wastes are separated and collected in corresponding wheelie bins across site and stored in bulky bags waiting crushing. A machine is used to crush cardboard, aluminium, plastic and newspaper before it is transported offsite for recycling. Other materials sent off site for recycling include waste oil, oil filters, clean steel, batteries, drums and some chemicals.

**Overall, landfill waste generated by Ranger reduced by 54 tonnes in 2006.**



Large volume waste segregation



Small volume waste segregation



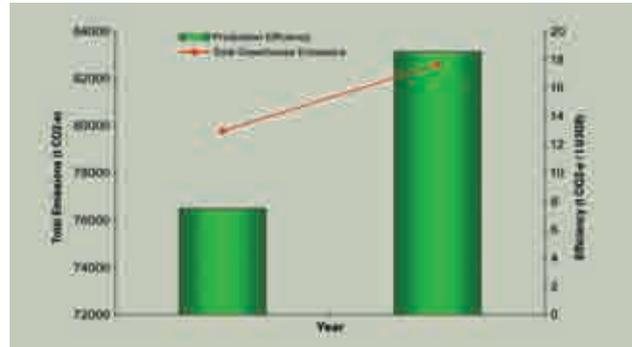
Bulky bag storage



Crusher and ...



... end product



### Greenhouse gas management

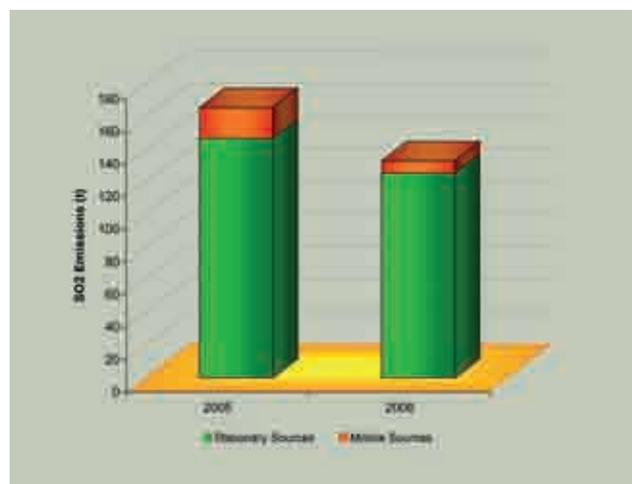
In 2006, the total greenhouse gas emissions from Ranger operations were 17.7 tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalents per tonne of uranium oxide produced. This was an increase from emissions in 2005 which totalled at 13.0 tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalents per tonne of uranium oxide produced.

Due to an unexpectedly severe wet season in early 2006, access to high grade ore throughout the year was restricted. This led to a drop in the milling grade and lower uranium oxide production, although mill throughput and electricity consumption remained constant.

In 2006 an energy efficiency audit was conducted by Rio Tinto Operational and Technical Services which identified a range of technical and non technical projects requiring assessment. These projects included looking into options for alternative power supplies, optimising current onsite electricity and fuel systems, and setting line accountabilities for energy use. These projects will be progressed in 2007. A Climate Change Action plan was developed in 2006 in line with Rio Tinto requirements. Actions from this plan will also be progressed in 2007.

ERA is subject to third party audits of its environmental management system including its greenhouse gas management activities. An energy efficiency audit as part of the Commonwealth's Energy Efficiency Opportunities Act requirements is planned to be undertaken at Ranger in 2008.

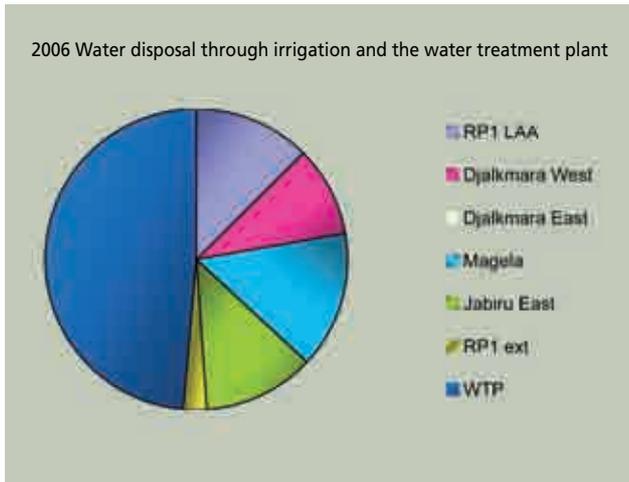
While carbon dioxide emissions increased in 2006, sulphur dioxide emissions decreased by more than 20 per cent to 133.2 tonnes over the same period. A reduction in the sulphur content of the diesel used at Ranger from 1300 ppm in 2005 to 425 ppm in 2006 contributed to the decrease in these emissions on site.



### Water management

Managing water at Ranger is one of the key challenges for protecting the environment and the surrounding Kakadu National Park. In 2006, the mine experienced a long wet season a 1 in 33 year event, some of which was associated with cyclone Monica. As a result there was a significant increase in the volume of water on site requiring increased management and disposal.

A total of 3100 megalitres (ML) were disposed of or transferred in 2006; 1400 ML to irrigation areas, 1300 ML through the water treatment plant (WTP), and 400 ML through dust suppression.



### Mineral waste management

In March 2006, ERA's mining department began a major initiative to develop an acid rock drainage (ARD) management plan for the mine. The aim was to improve environmental management within the mine.

A working group was established incorporating key staff and managers from mining, processing, environment, safety, health, water management and EWLS. A key objective was to raise awareness of these issues across the company and to provide a forum for interdepartmental discussion on mineral waste issues.

A major initiative has been the establishment of a monitoring program to detect sulphide concentration in the operational pit. One area of concentration has been found to be close to the boundaries between different geological formations. Once located, this material is separated after mining from 'clean' waste rock. This will assist with the company's rehabilitation efforts, as well as its stockpile management.

ERA is well on the way towards a complete mineral waste and ARD management strategy. One indication of success was Rio Tinto's commendation of the company in late 2006 for the major improvement in conforming to Rio Tinto environmental standards in this area.

**WEST**

Boundary of geological change

Increasing sulphide concentration detected

**EAST**






Initial mapping of ARD producing sulphides in Pit 3, one of the more detailed initiatives in the mineral waste management program. The sulphides often occur where boundaries exist between geological formations.



## ***Good land management: a shared goal between ERA and Aboriginal people***

My name is Mark Gardener and I lead the ecology group at EWL Sciences, a wholly owned subsidiary of ERA. We help with long term planning and operational land management issues on the ERA leases. I would like to share our journey in the development of some land management initiatives. These include work towards a shared vision of what the land will look like when mining finishes, revegetation of disturbed land, a fire plan that integrates burning on the lease with that of the surrounding National Park and the monitoring and management of weeds.

The ERA mining areas and the Jabiru township are geographically surrounded by Kakadu National Park without any physical barriers between them. Hence a regional approach is needed if land management is to be successful. One of the keys to success is strong collaboration between those with regional land interests including ERA, the Mirarr Traditional Owners and other Aboriginal people, Parks Australia North and the Jabiru Town Council. The focus of the rest of this story will be on one part of that collaboration- between ERA and the Aboriginal people in 2006.

Step one in best practice land management is to develop a shared vision between stakeholders. Ian Hollingsworth from EWL Sciences has been developing a vision with the Mirarr people for the last five years on how the landform above the backfilled pits will look once mining has finished at ERA's Ranger operation.

Initially in 2002, Ian took Mirarr to an area south of the mine called the Georgetown analogue which consists of low rises, slopes and low lying areas. The vegetation and physical appearance of the final landform is expected to be similar to that at Georgetown. The Mirarr approved of this approach but added that they wanted no pit lake, a brown soil appearance, and a surface that was easy to traverse. Between 2002 and 2005 the final landform details were further developed. Two formal consultations between ERA/EWL Sciences and Mirarr were held in late 2005 (at Mula) and late 2006 (at Manaburduma) to demonstrate how these landforms would be built, what vegetation would be established and other land management issues. The Mirarr gave feedback and this will help steer future planning. A good day was had by all at these consultations, and most of the Mirarr clan - from senior Traditional Owners to small children - came along.

As well as participation in long-term planning, the Mirarr and other Aboriginal people have also helped on-ground revegetation activities over the last two years. In late 2005, Mirarr senior Traditional Owner, Yvonne Margarula, visited one site called Djarr Djarr camp and commented that this area used to have many white apple trees, a native 'bush tucker'. A local Aboriginal enterprise, Kakadu Native Plant Supplies, produced 1600 seedlings, including white apples, for plantation at Djarr Djarr. A team comprising ERA/EWL Sciences, Aboriginal people and Greening Australia planted seedlings and spread seed during the wet season, late January 2006. At Djarr Djarr there was a survival rate of more than 80 per cent for the seedlings after 6 months and many seed became established in the swampy areas. My favourite moment was relaxing under a shady remnant white apple tree eating lunch in the rain and cracking jokes with Junior, Colin and Willow (Aboriginal men).

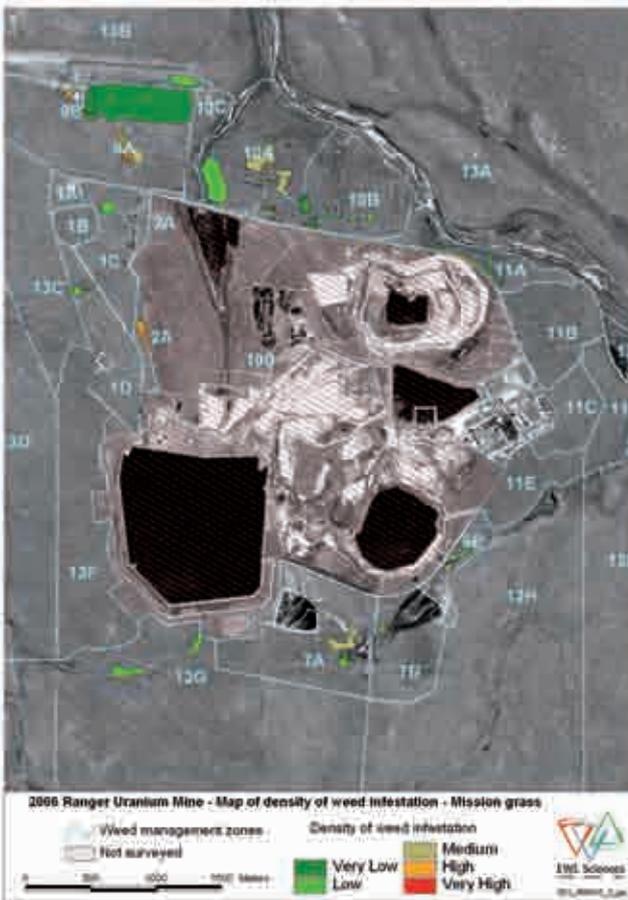


## Weed management

There are currently 71 weed species found on ERA's properties, of which one is a weed of national significance and nine are listed under the *NT Weed Management Act 2001*. The company spent a total of more than 500 hours spraying weeds and engaging in other weed management practices in 2006.

ERA's weed management plan sets out a series of measures to manage and control weed-infested areas on the Ranger project area and Jabiluka mineral lease. The plan was developed in accordance with the guidelines provided in NT legislation. The objective of the plan is to ensure adequate preparation prior to the wet season when most weed control work is undertaken.

Weed mapping (shown below) has been an invaluable tool in planning weed management and evaluating its success. A clear picture exists of weed distribution on the Ranger project area and Jabiluka lease. Fine scale weed mapping has occurred between April and May each year on Ranger and Jabiluka areas since 2003. This has resulted in a series of maps showing numbers of species, area and density.



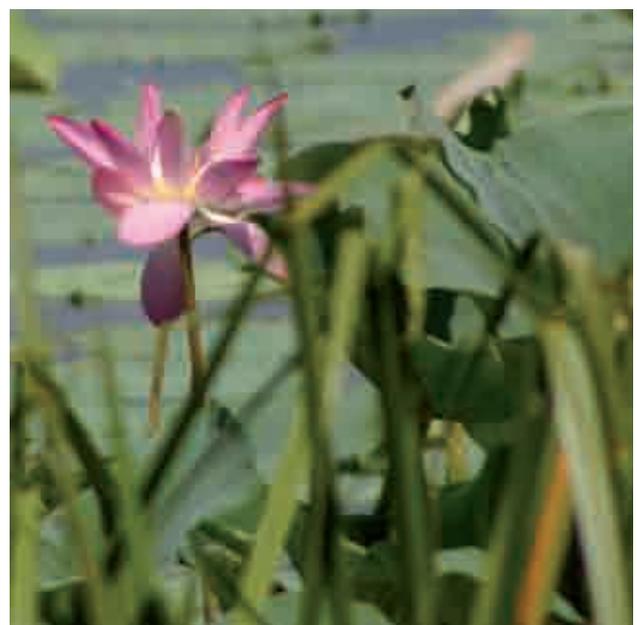
Weed locations, species and intensity data are recorded 'on the ground' using a palmtop computer and GPS. The maps produced are accurate to less than 10 metres. ERA has adopted a system to prioritise weed control areas developed by Kakadu National Park.

Chemical spraying is the main method of weed control. Diluted Glyphosate is applied using a mounted spray unit on the back of a utility, or from a back-pack, depending on the size of the infestation. Helicopter spraying is also used for the largest areas. Removal of weeds by hand and seed head cutting is used in some instances.

Prior to any land disturbance activities in weed areas, such as driving or mobilising machinery, the area is burnt to reduce the chance of weeds being spread. The company also plans a trial of traditional (Aboriginal) fire management practices as part of an integrated approach to weed management.

Preventative measures are important in minimising weed spread. Areas of high weed infestation, detected by mapping, are to be sign posted for restricted access. ERA employees and contractors are educated about weeds using a range of learning tools including inductions, self-paced learning modules, notice boards, communication meetings and articles in internal publications.

Weed management on the lease areas has had mixed results to date. In 2005 about half of the weed management areas on Ranger and Jabiluka showed a reduction in weeds as a result of control work. The results from the 2006 weed survey were also mixed. Areas that received regular weed management showed a good reduction in weed density and area. These included decreases at high priority sites including 47 per cent at area 7b and 24 per cent at 10c (see map above). However due to an extended wet season and the impact of cyclone Monica, access was limited to weed management areas during the critical timeframe before annual seeding. This meant the overall area covered by weed species increased by 21 per cent compared with 2005.



Article courtesy of the NT QMagazine

# greening RANGER

In an area that's been at the centre of some of the most controversial issues in modern Australia's history, it's perhaps ironic that an Indigenous flora producer would be given the job of rehabilitating areas disturbed by uranium mining. But Kakadu is a land of contradictions, and it was in that spirit that Peter Christopher and his partner Sushila McGregor's Kakadu Native Plant Supplies were engaged by Energy Resources of Australia's Environmental Services team to propagate tens of thousands of native trees and plant them in mining-affected areas near Kakadu National Park.



Left - Sushila McGregor and Peter Christopher near Kakadu



Left - Native seedlings are grown for mining rehabilitation.

Peter and Sandra were already well known in the region for their advocacy of traditional burning techniques to encourage a productive landscape, as well as trying to get a native plant business off the ground when destiny intervened. Energy Resources of Australia's (ERA) Environmental Services team was seeking a more comprehensive mining rehabilitation program when they were brought together by Jabiru Community Development Officer Matt Fagan.

Now, two years later, the collaboration is in full swing. Thousands of seedlings native to the disturbed areas have been propagated and replanted, and thanks to loads of TLC plus last year's surging wet season, the seedlings took hold. In the old Djarr Djarr exploration camp more than 80% of the trees replanted have reportedly taken root.

Today Peter and Sandra stand looking out over the green Djarr Djarr area with enormous satisfaction. "We were going to take three years to decide whether we would stay in the game or not, and it's only been a year and we already think we will," smiles Sandra McGregor. "It's still a battle. Lots of things to learn about. But it's challenging and we are being paid for putting our knowledge into practice."

Propagation of native trees is not easy. ERA's Environmental Services team knows how difficult it is, with the group forced to buy plants from Darwin, 200 kilometres away. They had always planned on sourcing seed from inside a 50 kilometre radius around their mining lease, insuring their affinity with

the ecosystem. But each species seems to require its own technique for propagation.

The ERA/Kakadu Native Planters collaboration began in 2004, with ERA offering the pair financial support to get their business up and running, plus a contract. "We were looking at a one year trial and Andrew [Speechly] sat down and said we really need two or three years to get our heads around it and to work out your capacity. So we walked out with a three year contract," recalls Mr Christophersen.

The fledgling company needed a premises so they spoke with the Australian Government's Environmental Research Institute of the Supervising Scientist (ERISS) about using their old experimental nursery. They got a five year agreement with ERISS for sheds with potting mix, hardening area and storage. The next step was the one that had troubled all before them - seed germination.

While one method of germination may work with one species of eucalypt or pandanus, it won't work for others. Trial and error and patience was helped by some training from Greening Australia's Aboriginal Land

Management Education Program. "Some we smoke, some we scout, and others need hot water treatment or rainwater washing," says Peter Christophersen. "We knew how seeding took place in the bush after a fire went through so we tried to replicate that here."

The persistence paid off and the plants began to take over the back of their facility. "They actually got some product out in the first year and that was a real feat. We were impressed," remembers ERA's Andrew Speechly. "The great thing about Peter and Sandra is that they're self-motivated. They really want to provide growth and longevity to their business."

Today Kakadu Native Plant Supplies is, well, bigger than Ben Hur. The learning curve is still there but a number of new players have joined the cast. With much still unknown about seed germination Charles Darwin University (CDU) has become involved. The plan is, as 'Christo' and Sandra come across species that are recalcitrant or hard to store or collect, they turn them over to the CDU scientists to study the biology of those seeds. Once they work out the answers, they feed that back to the collectors to share the knowledge with the industry.

Now they've outgrown their ERISS facility, a space not suited to commercial nursery work with production limited to just 15,000 plants a year. Looking to the future, Sandra and Christo want to develop a nursery that's capable of producing 70,000 to 100,000 seedlings per annum on their Kakadu outstation.

They also want to meet with other traditional owners about paying them to collect seed. "If we can set up a cooperative with groups in Arnhemland that have access to endemic ornamental plants," postulates Christo. "That would be indigenous collecting, indigenous sales, and marketing. That's the future for us."



## Research and development

Environmental research and development plays a key part in the ongoing management of the mine site, and demonstrates ERA's commitment to protecting the environment. A number of projects were conducted during 2006 including investigations into groundwater, weed mapping, rehabilitation and contaminated sites. Many of the projects involved collaboration with local and regional groups including, but not limited to, Greening Australia, Kakadu Native Plant Supplies, Gundjeihmi Aboriginal Corporation and Charles Darwin University.

Examples of some of the rehabilitation projects include:

- ▶ Revegetation of Djarr Djarr, Jabiluka and Ranger sites,
- ▶ Charles Darwin University seed biology project,
- ▶ Weed mapping and strategic planning
- ▶ Seedling survival trials after fire.

Some of these projects will be continued in 2007 to assist ERA in producing management tools for operational purposes.



Amber Hooke with a 12 month old *Corymbia* sp seedling at Djarr Djarr.

## Closure

The ERA Closure team comprising ERA and EWLS staff continued its work on key closure issues in 2006. With the possibility of an expansion in Ranger's operations, and the extension of processing life, the closure team was particularly focused on water and tailings management. Operational decisions can be managed with mine closure in mind, helping to shorten time to be taken in rehabilitation efforts, and reducing the cost of closure.

A geotechnical and geochemical investigation was completed on the tailings in Pit 1. This information will be used in the development of a tailings consolidation model. A Water Balance Model (WBM) for use in both short term operational water management and the development of long term water strategy was also completed. Work also continued on studies into storage of tailings in the pits, groundwater, final landform, and revegetation.

Stakeholder comments were received on the 2006 Closure Model. A second round of talks was held with the Mirarr Traditional Owners and *eriss* at Manaburduma as follow up to the Mula talks in 2005 with the focus being on access, land usage and final landform.



## Performance targets

Targets are an efficient means of driving improvement in health, safety and environment in ERA. Some of the key performance targets of 2006 are summarised below:

Target	Performance against 2006	Comment
<b>Management System and Leadership</b>		
Zero statutory infringements (arising from incidents in 2006).	●	
Zero critical incidence.	●	As of the end of 2006, no critical incidents had been recorded.
Reduce unsafe behaviours – Target areas show improvement in behavioural non-conformance post intervention.	●	Safety focus areas for year include eye injuries, housekeeping, isolation, reversing, distracters.
<b>Radiation and health management</b>		
Zero incidents of unauthorised contaminated items leaving Ranger.	●	No incidents
No employee exposed to noise at the ear of more than 82 decibels (dB) (averaged over 8 hours) using hearing protection.	●	Hearing conservation program implemented.
A 5% reduction in employees per 10,000 exposed to less than 85 dB (averaged over 8 hours) from 2005 baseline.	●	Decrease from 96 to 25 directly related to 1 dB(A) decrease in noise exposure of mine equipment operators.
A 15% reduction in new cases of occupational disease per 10,000 employees.	○	Baseline was not set in 2005 – one case of occupational illness reported.
<b>Environmental – Operational Excellence</b>		
Compliance with closure plan.	○	Closure planning team was formed November 2005. Closure Model was updated March 2006. Closure planning is still to be fully imbedded.
1500 ML of water disposed of during year.	●	Disposed of over 1500 ML in the dry season.
Achieve a 5% reduction in potable water per tonne of uranium oxide by 2008 (from 2003 baseline).	●	39% increase from 2003 baseline. Increase due to more team members and lower than planned production. In addition, the flow meter was identified as faulty at the end of 2006. Only a small amount of real data was used to extrapolate fully year volume.
Diesel used in powerhouse per MWhr generated is reduced by 2% (from 2003 baseline).	●	Increase of 5% in 2006 compared to 2003 baseline (265L/MWh to 278.5L/MWh).
Decrease disposal to landfill by 15%.	○	Decrease of 13.7% in 2006 from 2005 (RT S&E Survey). Project to improve waste tracking data in plan 2007.
Draft closure criteria for weeds on RPA and JML accepted by ARRTC and MTC.	●	Closure criteria for weeds are being developed in conjunction with major stakeholders. Expected delivery of whole package is Q4 2007.
Progressive rehabilitation using locally sourced plant species.	●	Local business Kakadu Native Plant Supplies raised 5000 local, native seedlings from locally sourced seed for progressive rehabilitation of approximately 11ha disturbed land at Ranger and Jabiluka in Q1 2006.

- Target met or significant progress against target
- Considerable improvement
- Target not met

## Targets for 2007

### Safety targets

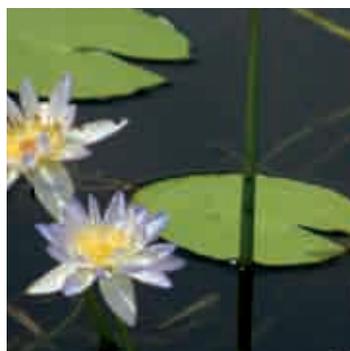
- ▶ Commence a new risk assessment measure to identify any gaps in existing risk prevention and mitigation strategies. Incorporate actions identified into ESH improvement plans.
- ▶ Achieve a 50 per cent reduction in Lost Time Injury Frequency Rate and 50 per cent reduction in All Injury Frequency Rate (AIFR) from end 2006.
- ▶ Achieve a contractor AIFR equal to or better than the employee AIFR rate.

### Occupational health standards

- ▶ Complete a review of the radiation monitoring program and obtain approval from stakeholders for a new program.
- ▶ Implement radiation exposures that are as low as reasonably achievable at ERA's new laterite and radiometric sorting plants.
- ▶ All ergonomic assessments for critical and high risk tasks to be completed in 2007 and action plans developed for incorporation into ESH improvement plans.
- ▶ Commence development and implementation of an ERA wellness program in line with the Rio Tinto global wellness strategy and ERA specific needs.

### Environmental targets

- ▶ Develop potable water consumption reduction targets to align with Rio Tinto Group targets.
- ▶ Implement the ERA three year climate change work program for energy / greenhouse gas reduction.
- ▶ Sustain or further reduce volumes of landfill waste produced from volumes produced in 2006.



# WILDLIFE CONSERVATION

Collaboration on environmental projects between ERA and community groups is an important measure of our sustainability. ERA is committed to playing an active role in assisting local communities protect wildlife in our unique region. ERA has been involved in several successful community conservation projects, and several are highlighted here.

## ***Cane toad eradication***

In February 2006, a joint project including ERA, FrogWatch and Jabiru Town Development Authority (JTDA) funded the placement of three cane toad traps around the town lake in Jabiru. This is part of the effort to control the introduced species which is harming native wildlife across northern Australia.

With permission from Parks Australia North, assistance from FrogWatch to install the traps, and \$1000 each from ERA and the JTDA the project proceeded. Amber Hooke, an ERA laboratory technician in processing, took the lead role on this community project. An information night was held, attended by 30 people, to outline the program and attract volunteers.

The Jabiru community proceeded to form a conservation group called "Friends of Kakadu". The group averages between 20-40 attendees at a fortnightly 'toad bust'. In order to cover a larger area of the township, the group has split into teams. Each toad caught is measured and sexed and the data recorded. Since the first toad collection night, the group has caught an impressive 720 cane toads with a combined length of 49 metres.

Several team competitions will operate during the trapping season (April – November), with prizes awarded for the largest female and male toads caught, as well a prize for the greatest combined toad length recorded in the trapping season.

During the year, two of the three traps were damaged and had to be repaired. The traps will now be used in the off season, December to March, to complement the efforts of the *Friends of Kakadu*.

This group also plans to undertake several other conservation projects in 2007, including weed removal, planting of native trees, as well as improving the recreation area around the Jabiru lake.



## ***Dingo management project***

In February 2006, EWLS undertook a project to manage the dingo population around a mining community in Western Australia. With ERA's Ranger mine also surrounded by a national park in the Territory the learnings have been shared.

The project at Telfer Gold Mine in Western Australia involved EWLS Principal Ecologist, Laurie Corbett. Dingoes, both 'original' type and hybrid are numerous at Telfer. Many dingoes regularly visit Telfer facilities seeking food and water. Food is easily available at BBQ facilities, rubbish bins and the landfill with water also readily available. As a result, dingoes are becoming increasingly accustomed to the close presence of humans and increasingly reliant on, and protective of introduced food sources.

The major consequences include increased risk of dingo attack and human injuries as well as 'knee-jerk' management reaction to reduce the local dingo population. The recommended immediate management action is to provide effective physical barriers to communal food sites in the village. Another recommendation is to develop and conduct regular dingo information sessions for staff and to install appropriate signage to promote dingo awareness. Other longer-term actions include the standard use of 'dingo-proof' wheelie bins, and monitoring programs to estimate and maintain dingo numbers and activity.



Photo-David Kozak



### **Birdwatch 2006**

The ERA Ranger site participated in the seventh Annual Rio Tinto Birdwatching Event during October. Birdwatch is a Rio Tinto-wide event conducted annually to assess birdlife at Rio Tinto mines and generally increase education about birds.

Monitoring the environment is an important part of ERA's overall environmental management program. Kakadu supports more than 280 species of birds within a diversity of habitats. The floodplain and wetland of Kakadu are important refuges and feeding grounds for many Australian and migratory waterbirds.

A total of 44 birdwatchers participated, including eight juniors and two very enthusiastic tourists.

Some 49 species were sighted at Georgetown Billabong, 45 at Coonjimba Billabong, and 33 at Retention Pond 1 at Ranger. At least ten new species were added to the list of sightings from previous Birdwatch events, including a flock of Crimson finches and a White-browed Crake, both first-time sightings at Coonjimba Billabong. Overall, 67 species were identified.



# REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

ERA's operations are strictly regulated and monitored reflecting their location adjacent to the World Heritage listed Kakadu National Park, on Aboriginal land granted under Commonwealth law. Both the Northern Territory and the Commonwealth Governments have regulatory powers over the mine sites. The following groups have responsibilities for administering regulations, and also act as advisory and communications forums.

- ▶ Minesite Technical Committees
  - ▶ Ranger Minesite Technical Committee (MTC)
  - ▶ Jabiluka Minesite Technical Committee
  - ▶ The Ranger Minesite Technical Committee (MTC) and the Jabiluka Minesite Technical Committee are the key forums for approvals on environmental matters relating to Ranger and Jabiluka. The MTCs were established under a set of working arrangements agreed between the Commonwealth Government and the Northern Territory Government.
  - ▶ Both Committees are chaired by the NT Government (Department of Primary Industry, Fisheries and Mines or DPIFM) and include representatives from ERA, the Northern Land Council (NLC) and the Commonwealth Government's Office of the Supervising Scientist (OSS). Each year the company must submit an Annual Amended Plan of Rehabilitation for approval by stakeholders in the MTC. This covers arrangements for immediate rehabilitation should the mine close. In 2005 ERA produced the first pass of a comprehensive Closure Model, presented to the MTC, which will guide the company through final and detailed rehabilitation planning.

Alligator Rivers Region Advisory Committee (ARRAC)

- ▶ <http://www.environment.gov.au/ssd/communication/committees/arrac/index.html>

Alligator Rivers Region Technical Committee (ARRTC)

- ▶ <http://www.environment.gov.au/ssd/communication/committees/arrtc/index.html>



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