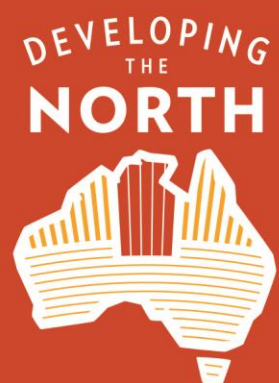




Our North, Our Future – White Paper on Northern Australia Development



The White Paper

The Northern Territory Government welcomes 'Our North, Our Future: White Paper on Developing Northern Australia' and looks forward to working cooperatively with the Commonwealth Western Australia and Queensland governments to see its implementation.

We endorse Prime Minister's statement of 18 June 2015 that developing the north will "maximise the potential of this country."

The Northern Territory has been unwavering in calling for sensible and long-term development. It's good for North Australia and it's good for the entire nation – present and future.

A lack of economic and social infrastructure and investment continues to constrain us.

In terms of critical infrastructure development, the White Paper makes a start but the task is long-term in nature and requires sustained effort.

What is in the White Paper for the Territory?

The Territory Government is pleased that the Commonwealth has committed to a \$600 million roads package across northern jurisdictions with the Tanami Road, Arnhem Highway and the Outback Way identified as priority roads.

Similarly the \$100 million commitment to improve northern cattle supply chains through the Northern Australia Beef Roads Fund is welcomed, although we note that a much larger investment will be required to ensure the Territory cattle industry has secure access to markets all year round. The Territory Government will continue to negotiate for further funding.

Asian demand for beef and other products will increase sharply in the coming years and the supply chain and supporting infrastructure is critical to Australia benefitting from this development.

The establishment of a National Water Infrastructure Development Fund with \$200 million to facilitate greater investment in northern Australia water infrastructure is a timely investment.

Securing our water sources in the north will underpin our future development and access to this fund is crucial to success.

In announcing \$5 million for detailed examination of the economic feasibility of Ord Stage 3 the White Paper acknowledges the crucial role this project will play in unlocking the huge agricultural potential of the surrounding region. A further \$5 million has been dedicated to scientific research to support water storage in the greater Darwin area.

Private investment is integral to northern development.

The previously announced \$5 billion Northern Australia Infrastructure Facility offers a unique opportunity for investors to partner with government to build key infrastructure in the north. We look forward to seeing how this can be used in the Northern Territory for projects such as the Northern Gas Pipeline, rail links and port development to name a few.

The NT Government has consistently contended that the processes around gaining approval to engage in economic activity on Indigenous land were stifling development. It is pleasing that the White Paper has gone some way toward expediting these processes in terms of land held under Native Title and the Aboriginal Land Rights (NT) Act by devoting funding to both areas and by a number of other measures.

There are exciting possibilities around the announcement of a new \$75 million Cooperative Research Centre focusing on agriculture, food and tropical medicine in the context of northern development.

On balance the White Paper has resulted in a positive policy framework for working with the Commonwealth to fully develop the north to its potential.

The Northern Territory has a vibrant future full of opportunity with a huge potential for jobs and business through significantly improved port capacity

What is the Territory Government doing?

The White Paper is a useful start but is in no way the end of the Northern Australia development story. The Northern Territory has a vibrant future full of opportunity with a huge potential for jobs and business through significantly improved port capacity to handle ever-increasing exports, a gas pipeline supplying the rest of Australia, a booming marine industry park, improved and expanded rail links, steadily increasing agribusiness production and exports based on state-of-the-art research scientific and market, a tourism industry valued at over \$2 billion per year, a thriving international grammar school and the list goes on.

To this end the Territory Government will continue to send business and trade missions into Asia to stimulate economic opportunities and strengthen our already strong networks. We strongly believe building a strong business case is essential for the development of the north. The Territory Government has a plan that recognises the importance of working with our regional, remote and urban communities; protects our environment and builds our future together.

In this context of a strong business case we welcome the White Paper announcements of:

- \$2.5 million to foster business links with Indonesia, Papua New Guinea and Timor-Leste.
- Opening a \$2 million 'single point of entry' office in Darwin with the Territory Government to minimise red tape and facilitate major project development.
- A major northern investment forum in Darwin held in late 2015 to bring together national international investors.
- Development of a \$3.7 million co-jurisdictional infrastructure pipeline to give investors information on potential infrastructure needs to see more build happen quicker and cheaper.

Importantly, we need to see Territorians front and centre in the Northern Territory's development.

We also understand that it is not just about the economics – that our lifestyle, our natural resources, our people, our regions and our environment are equally important. This balanced approach recognises that with increased economic independence we are growing our ability to create jobs, support business and importantly make more of our own choices.

Of equal importance is the active involvement of Indigenous Territorians. Indigenous Territorians were the backbone of early Territory industries and with their land and cultural assets are well placed to greatly benefit from accelerated development on their terms.

The Territory has not been sitting back waiting for development to happen. We have progressed significantly in our efforts to move forward.

Examples of the Territory's proactive drive include:

- Developing a 30 year Regional Infrastructure Plan that can be taken to public or private

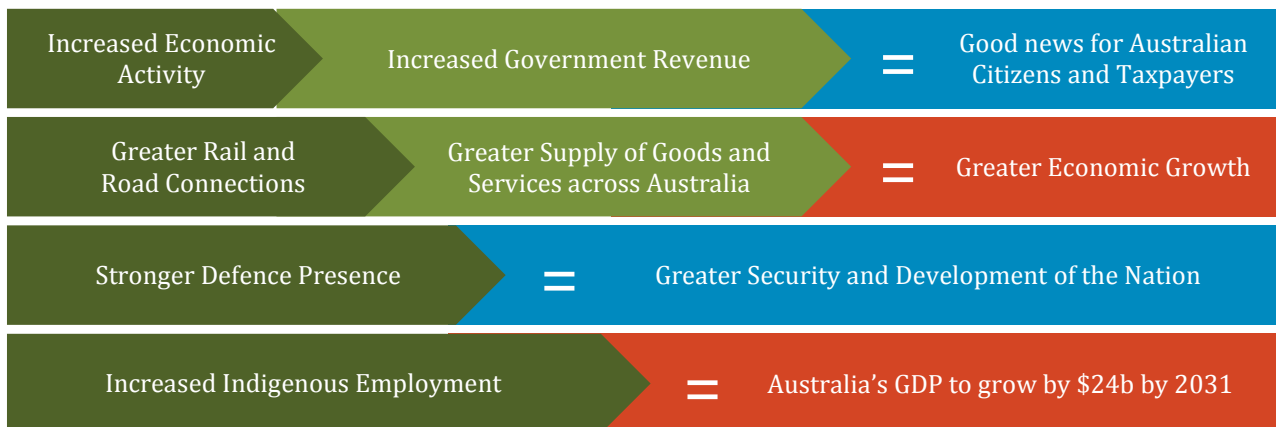
investment market.

- Preparedness to contribute up to \$82 million to sealing the Tanami Road to add to Commonwealth funding and devoting \$587 million to the priority area of transport infrastructure in the 2015-16 budget.
- Committing \$1 million over two years to a feasibility study for a potential new rail line linking Tennant Creek to Mount Isa.
- \$9.2 million to drive private sector development of a gas pipeline connecting the Territory to the national pipeline grid.
- \$9 million over three years to expand mobile phone services and broadband into communities.
- \$2.4 million for the second year of a four year program for land and water assessments to determine new agricultural precincts throughout the Territory.
- \$1 million towards implementing the 10 year strategic plan for international education, including the operation of the international education and training hub in the Territory.

The case for Developing Northern Australia

The case for Developing Northern Australia is more than just about Northern Australia itself. This is a nation-building exercise that will deliver benefits for all of Australia. Unlocking and developing the full potential of Northern Australia will boost Australia's prosperity - increasing exports, employment, national Gross Domestic Product, terms of trade and ensure we protect Australia's position among the world's top economies.

Developing Northern Australia: Good News for All Australians



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