Representatives of Darwin’s traditional owners, the Larrakia people, will be trained in the management of parks and reserves under a new employment initiative.

Minister for Parks and Wildlife, Kon Vatskalis, said his department would employ Larrakia as rangers within the Parks and Wildlife Service.

"This is a fantastic example of this Government working with the Territory’s indigenous community, to provide real employment opportunities that will also deliver benefits for the wider community," he said.

"The Minister for Employment, Syd Stirling, recently announced the NT Government’s first jobs plan – this is a key component of the $160 million package which sees a commitment to employ an additional 200 trainees in the NT public service.

"From March 2004, there will be two Larrakia Ranger trainees based within Parks and Wildlife, working with both the department and Larrakia Nation.

"There will also be two Larrakia Ranger and Resource Management Co-ordinators employed and based at Larrakia Nation.

"This arrangement has been reached through much discussion with the Larrakia, and addresses their ‘Caring for Country’ approach, which sees their own people undertaking land management practices on their own country.

"This will not only lead to better outcomes for the land, but also for the people, who are gaining new skills and knowledge which they can share with others."