Minister for Arts and Museums, Gerry McCarthy, today announced the public release of the 1981 Territory Government Cabinet records.

Released under the Territory Government Information Act, the records are added to the Northern Territory Archives Service no later than 30 years after they are created.

Mr McCarthy said the documents offered an interesting insight into what Territory life was like 30 years ago.

“In 1981, our first FM radio stations went to air, and the Territory’s first road flyover, at the intersection of Bagot Road and the Stuart Highway, opened to traffic,” said Minister McCarthy.

“The purpose-built Northern Territory Museum of Arts and Sciences also opened at Bullocky Point in September and the Palmerston Development Authority formally began planning for the new satellite city.”

Leader of Government Business Chris Burns said the release of Cabinet records is an opportunity for reflection.

“It’s an insight into the way the Territory has developed over the years - we can see what has been achieved and in some cases, how important opportunities were wasted,” said Dr Burns.

“In 1981, it was recommended that secondary education for Indigenous students be extended to the bush.

“We know now, because of a CLP decision not to extend secondary education to the bush, two generations of Indigenous kids have missed out on vital education opportunities.

“Our Government has set about rectifying that situation.”

Various highlights are featured in the records including:

- The approval of the Cobourg Peninsula Aboriginal Land and Sanctuary Bill – which resulted in the Cobourg Peninsula Sanctuary having national park status
- Amendments to the Building Manual to improve building access for disabled people, in line with 1981 being the Year of the Disabled
- Funding and a proposed design was approved for the Alice Springs Araluen Arts Centre
• A transport corridor was approved in principal from Darwin Port along the Frances Bay/Stuart Park foreshore area, through Winnellie, Coonawarra and Berrimah to the existing railway line near Palmerston
• Various projects including the restoration of the Fannie Bay Goal and a survey of Northern Territory military sites were approved under the Northern Territory National Estate Program

To view the records, go to www.cabinetrecords.nt.gov.au

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