Chief Minister Adam Giles and Mines Minister Willem Westra Van Holthe have today attended the APPEA conference in Adelaide where they've been discussing Australia's energy future including the huge potential of onshore gas.

"Onshore gas is a potential game-changer in the Northern Territory and I am determined to ensure we maximise the benefits for the economy including jobs and infrastructure," Mr Giles said.

"Offshore gas has already become an integral part of the Territory economy with ConocoPhillips and INPEX investing heavily in processing infrastructure on Darwin Harbour. But investors are now increasingly looking onshore as well.

"The Northern Territory's potential reserves of unconventional gas total approximately 240 trillion cubic feet spread across six basins and I am excited by the huge potential onshore gas presents to the growth and development of North Australia.

"The Government is committed to pursuing an onshore gas industry, in balance with other land uses, to diversify the economy.

"To accelerate this process, the Territory Government has developed a 'use it or lose it' policy which encourages exploration companies to progress their gas finds through to development.

"We want companies to develop gas fields, not just explore and our new 'use it or lose it' policy will stop explorers locking up prospective land without the intention of development.

"Guidelines are being developed and have already been distributed for comment to all active oil and gas companies in the Northern Territory. These will form a more competitive assessment procedure to select the best application on merit to a grant over that land.

"Onshore gas reserves could hold the key not only to the Territory's long term energy security but to the whole country's. Other jurisdictions are desperate for more gas and we want to be part of a national pipeline network that can transport our gas to customers in other parts of the country."

Minister for Mines and Energy, Willem Westra van Holthe, said the development of the gas industry in the Territory was about jobs for Territorians and regional development.

"The Territory is poised to capitalise from our huge onshore gas resource potential. We want to ensure that all Territorians benefit from this development," Mr Westra van Holthe said.

"We are working with our interstate and federal colleagues to build industry infrastructure that will connect the Territory's gas supplies to the rest of Australia."

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