MINISTER FOR EDUCATION

SIGNIFICANT INVESTMENT IN DISTANCE LEARNING

8 May 2014

Budget 2014 will include $11.6 million for the construction of a brand new, state-of-the-art NT Open Education Centre (NTOEC) at the grounds of Darwin High School, Bullocky Point.

The Northern Territory Government has partnered with INPEX and its joint venture participants in the Ichthys LNG Project to jointly fund this vital piece of infrastructure that will boost the capacity and diversity of the NTOEC, benefiting students right across the Territory.

Minister for Education Peter Chandler said this funding commitment will see design work start on the new centre in coming weeks with construction to follow shortly.

"The brand new facility will boast world class distance learning equipment while for the first time also providing staff and students with a purpose-built facility on a fully serviced senior school," Mr Chandler said.

"Co-locating the NTOEC with a quality full service senior school means the resources and capacity can be shared, benefiting all students and improving outcomes.

"The NTOEC caters for more than 600 students across the Territory with many of those students taking part in a residential component of their learning, requiring them to visit the school. The new facility will better cater for these students through more general learning areas.

"It is envisaged the facility will be three levels which will provide ample space to meet both schools' needs while also allowing space to expand.

"The government is developing a strategy to build the Northern Territory into an international education hub. The NTOEC will play a vital role in that strategy while also supporting the Territory's links with Asia.

"With the Territory leading a bold new push to drive the development of Northern Australia there will be a renewed focus on what we can offer – education will be pivotal."

"It is also significant that we have the support of INPEX and its partners who are not only contributing to the economy of Darwin and the development of Northern Australian through their LNG project, they are making a valuable contribution to future educational opportunities for all Territory students."

The Ichthys LNG Project has also contributed to the Larrakia Trade Training Centre and Charles Darwin University’s North Australian Centre for Oil and Gas.

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