Minister for Business, Industry and Resource Development Paul Henderson today opened Darwin’s inaugural Oil and Gas Expo.

The Expo features 50 oil and gas related displays, and coincides with the South-East Asia-Australia Offshore conference being held at the Carlton Hotel this week.

International, national and local companies are represented at the expo, as well as representatives from Shell, Phillips and the Malaysian, British and the NT Government.

"This is the first time an oil and gas expo of this calibre has been held in the Northern Territory," Minister for Resource Development Paul Henderson said.

"The expo will have an intense focus on gas-related issues, and will allow us to showcase Darwin as a hub for oil and gas industries."

Mr Henderson said the expo would be used as a tool for driving home the message that Sunrise Gas must come onshore in the national interest.

"This Oil and Gas Expo gives Territorians an opportunity to learn about various oil and gas industries around the world, as well as an insight into the issues surrounding the need to have Greater Sunrise developed onshore.

"The economic benefits to the NT and the rest of Australia are enormous, in ways including industrial and regional development, and if we don’t secure Greater Sunrise a window of opportunity will be missed."

Mr Henderson said that more local companies were expanding their capabilities and range of products on offer, and more interstate and overseas companies are recognising the need to establish a presence in Darwin.

"The Territory Government’s vision includes a further expansion of our local capabilities, including provision of industry-specific training program that open the way for young Territorians to qualify for work in the industry.

"We also encourage production companies to realise there are cost and efficiency gains to be made from basing more of their operations in Darwin.

"Expos such as this can help our local industry to grow and ultimately that will help the developers keep the costs of production down and allow these benefits to flow-on to other areas of industry."