Airstrip upgrades ready to take off

Upgrades to the Yarralin airstrip will benefit the region.

The airstrip in the remote community of Yarralin will become an important link for the region, with a $2.5 million upgrade boosting services.

The NT Government is funding a project to improve and seal the existing airstrip, making it safer for all air operations, including delivery of freight, passenger transport and medical evacuations.

Design work was completed earlier this year and the project tender has been advertised.

Works will include extending the length of the runway, sealing the aerodrome to include proper apron facilities for aircraft, fencing and the latest traffic control devices.

Construction is expected to commence in August and be completed by the end of 2015.
Bath Bliss for mums-to-be

Expectant mums will soon be able to take advantage of a bath birthing suite at the Katherine District Hospital maternity ward.

The bath birthing suite will be a welcome addition to the range of options currently available to mums-to-be.

The $90,000 works are expected to be finished later this month.

When complete, the bath birthing suite will be the first of its kind for the Big Rivers region.

Construction is underway at the Katherine District Hospital maternity ward.
Big Rivers was a winner in the latest NT Budget, with the region allocated $299 million.

Projects to be funded include $7.6 million to relocate the ambulance station outside of the Katherine flood zone, $3.71 million for Katherine School of the Air and $2.65 million allocated to Kintore Street School to complete the final stage of the special school development and expansion.

Katherine and Victoria River Research Stations have received $900,000 to support research programs.

Katherine Motor Club will have $1 million to go towards the race track, as well as a new crash wall and fencing.

Katherine Country Club will get an $820,000 capital grant that will go towards the redevelopment of the club.

The regions cultural scene will benefit too, with Godinymayin Yijard Rivers Arts and Cultural Centre receiving $500,000.

Book lovers will benefit from $400,000 of funding for local public library services while $290,000 will go towards Katherine Town Council visitor information services.

The NT Government has also reaffirmed its commitment to Katherine’s Defence community with $720,000 for the Royal Australian Air Force Base Tindal to operate as an alternate destination for international carriers servicing Darwin.

For more information on funding for the Big Rivers region visit www.budget.nt.gov.au
The DriveSafe NT has helped Territorians get their driver licences.

Residents in Barunga, Beswick and Binjari have taken part in a driver education program to help them get behind the wheel. During the April program, 36 learner licences were issued and 21 learners successfully obtained their provisional licence. This has meant another 57 people in the Big Rivers Region now have improved access to jobs, training, education and services.

Many residents of remote Territory towns and communities have difficulty accessing licensing and registration services. The NT Government’s DriveSafe NT Remote program has been designed to assist Territorians in accessing these services.
Improvements made to Lajamanu Road

A section of the Lajamanu Road will be sealed, making the road safer.

Driver safety has improved in Lajamanu, after a 2km section of road was sealed.

A stretch of Lajamanu Road, from Buntine Highway towards the town of Lajamanu, has been upgraded by the NT Government.

The government is spending $10 million over four years to seal more than 13km of road.

Progressive sealing of Lajamanu Road will improve conditions and increase productivity for local residents and industry.

It will also reduce maintenance costs for vehicles which travel this road, due to reduced wear and tear.
Katherine Regional Mining and Exploration Forum

Senior Workplace Safety Inspector Ken Davidson provided information at the Katherine Regional Mining and Exploration Forum.

The third annual Katherine Regional Mining Exploration Forum was held recently, providing support to businesses servicing the mining and oil and gas sector.

The two day forum was held at the Godinymayin Yijard Rivers Arts & Culture Centre on the 26-27 May.

NT Government staff provided information on a range of programs, services and grants designed to assist business owners at all stages of their business development.

Inspectors from NT WorkSafe provided information on how to maintain a safe workplace, including Risk Management Plans, remote or isolated work and heat stress.

Anyone unable to attend the forum and/or would like more information on business development can email businessinfo@nt.gov.au

For information on Risk Management Plans, remote or isolated work and heat stress, email ntworksafe@nt.gov.au
Rejuvenating Territory roads

Leight Creek Crossing is one of several Big Rivers roads identified for upgrades.

Roads in the Big Rivers region will be improved with $2.75 million of dedicated funding from the NT Government.

Leight Creek Crossing is one of the roads identified for work. During the Wet residents have found the road to be difficult to cross due to heavy rainfall. The NT Government will now provide better access.

Design will commence later this year with works to follow in the 2016 dry season.

Sections of the Carbeen Park and Gundagai Roads will also be upgraded.
Road Freight Transport Campaign

Keith Jhowry from DirectHaul with Maria Staunton and Allan Fischer from NT Worksafe.

The NT Government is working together with road freight transport companies in Katherine as part of a new campaign. NT Worksafe is providing information and advice to the industry on a range of safety topics including traffic management, load restraint and maintenance management.

Principal Workplace Health and Safety Inspector in Katherine, Martin Clive-Griffin said the campaign was about raising awareness of the main hazards facing the industry and having an open discussion with companies about safety measures they have in place to protect their workers.

"This campaign is about raising awareness and sharing information that has been developed across the country to help make every workplace safe. My team will be calling businesses to arrange a suitable time for us to come and visit," Mr Clive-Griffin said.

For more information visit www.worksafe.nt.gov.au
Snappy crocs removed by rangers

*Parks and Wildlife Commission NT ranger Joey Buckerfield was part of the team who caught a 3.5 metre saltie.*

Parks and Wildlife Commission NT rangers in Katherine are reducing the risk of crocodiles in Top End swimming spots. This work includes putting croc traps along the Katherine River inside and outside Nitmiluk National Park, which is one of the Territory's most popular tourist attractions.

There have been two saltwater crocs caught in Katherine so far this year, including a 3.5 metre male caught in the Katherine River at Novus Quarries and a 2.8 metre female caught in the Flora River at the Flora Nature Park.

Another three crocs were caught in the wider Big Rivers region, with two caught in King Ash Bay at Borroloola and one at Roper Bar.

A total of 14 croc traps have been placed in and around the Katherine region, which are baited and checked regularly.

Rangers conduct spotlight surveys at the end of every wet season before determining whether a particular waterhole can be opened to the public.

Territorians are urged to always Be Crocwise in and around Territory waters.

For more information visit [www.nt.gov.au/becrocwise](http://www.nt.gov.au/becrocwise)
Department of the Chief Minister

Natural attractions get infrastructure upgrades

The thermal pools in Elsey National Park will now be more accessible after $400,000 upgrades are completed.

The NT Government is investing in Territory parks to make them more accessible and improve the visitor experience. This funding includes $400,000 to improve access at the thermal pools within Elsey National Park, near Mataranka. Nitmiluk National Park will also become more accessible, with $300,000 to be invested in establishing new campgrounds along the Jatbula Trail.

These upgrades to tourist attractions in the Big Rivers region will mean Territorians and tourists are able to better explore the NT’s natural assets.

The NT Government is committed to supporting the Territory’s outdoor lifestyle by investing in infrastructure.