



Traditional Owners make business a reality at Bradshaw

An agreement between traditional owners and the Australian Defence Force has enabled the setting up of a company to maximise contract work in the Timber Creek area.

The Bradshaw and Timber Creek Contracting and Resourcing Company has completed its first work projects, and is channelling all profits back into the company.

The company is owned and staffed by traditional owners from Kununurra, Darwin, Timber Creek, Wyndham and Katherine.

Traditional owner, Daniel Jones, said local people were excited about the upcoming work opportunities, and were keen to build the company.

"We feel pride in being able to protect our sacred sites, and it is good that we are able to get jobs on our own country," Mr Jones said.

Last year, the ADF contracted the company to open an old existing road to the Fitzmaurice River, which enabled access to a cultural camp site at Mussel Hole.

The construction of 27kms of boundary fences, including gates, and flood gates came next with all the work completed on time and on budget by five traditional owners from Menggan.

This year the next stage for the company is the continuation of old fence removal around the site.

The Bradshaw Indigenous Land Use Agreement allows for the

granting of a Defence Purpose Lease to the Commonwealth over the Bradshaw Station, near Timber Creek – over 8,700 km² of land.

Under the ILUA, set up in 2003 under the Native Title Act, the Traditional Owners have consented to the use of Bradshaw as a field training area for an initial period of 75 years.

The ADF, which has constructed a runway at Bradshaw capable of taking C17 jets, will use the land for defence force exercises.

Future military exercises represent further economic opportunities for the Bradshaw company, including providing laundry services for military personnel, conducting sacred site clearances, erecting signage for protected sites, constructing boundary fences, and identification of exclusion zones.

The Northern Land Council negotiated the agreement on behalf of 800 traditional owners who speak five languages, and is responsible for looking at strategies that maximise Aboriginal employment, including training and business opportunities at Bradshaw.

The agreement ensures continued access to Bradshaw by traditional owners, and, the protection of sacred sites.

New management for Tanami Downs



Above l-r : Board member Steven Craig, new manager Kenny Satour and board member Tony Edwards

A new manager has been appointed to one of Australia's most isolated cattle stations, the Aboriginal-owned Tanami Downs.

Ken Satour has been appointed the new manager of Tanami Downs after the resignation last year of the previous manager.

Ken will be known to many people in the CLC region from his time at the Central Land Council where he worked in several positions including as the pastoral development officer.

Ken has also worked on several stations in the Northern Territory, including Mistake Creek and the old Ngulipi Station in Western Australia and adjacent to Tanami Downs.

Ken and his family are working to ensure Tanami Downs gets back on a good financial footing and provides employment opportunities for traditional owners.

In 2006 traditional owners of the Mungkurupa Land Trust, on which the station operates, decided to revitalise the station, which was declining in productivity and viability, by radically altering the way the pastoral company was governed.

The board was re-structured and its size was reduced. By doing this the company's Aboriginal owners were able to bring in industry and business expertise to ensure the station was progressing as it should.

The current board consists of Tony Edwards (pastoral consultant), Stephen Craig (Mistake Creek Station), Robyn Lawson (traditional owner) and Mary Rockman (tradi-

tional owner).

After a couple of years this new arrangement is starting to produce positive results.

In addition to this the traditional owners have invested their own money back into the station's development.

In 2006 Kurra Aboriginal Corporation invested in a five year infrastructure rebuild for Tanami Downs.

This included fencing and upgrading of watering points.

Wirntiki Aboriginal Corporation also invested in the station by funding the purchase of 44 Drought-master Bulls to improve the calving percentage on the station.

In 2008 Kurra again invested in the station by providing funds to repair the homestead and workers quarters, including plumbing and electrical upgrades.

Unfortunately the machinery on the station was left in a very poor and unsafe state but assistance from Kurra has allowed new machinery to be purchased.

In appreciation of this support the station will undertake remedial and fencing works around the outstation and maintain the outstation's power and water supply.

Other work that has been done includes the fencing of Lake Ruth to provide greater protection to the area from feral animals as well as controlling grazing pressure.