

The East Arnhem region is situated in the far north-eastern corner of the Territory and covers East Arnhem Land, Groote Eylandt, Bickerton Island and Elcho Island.

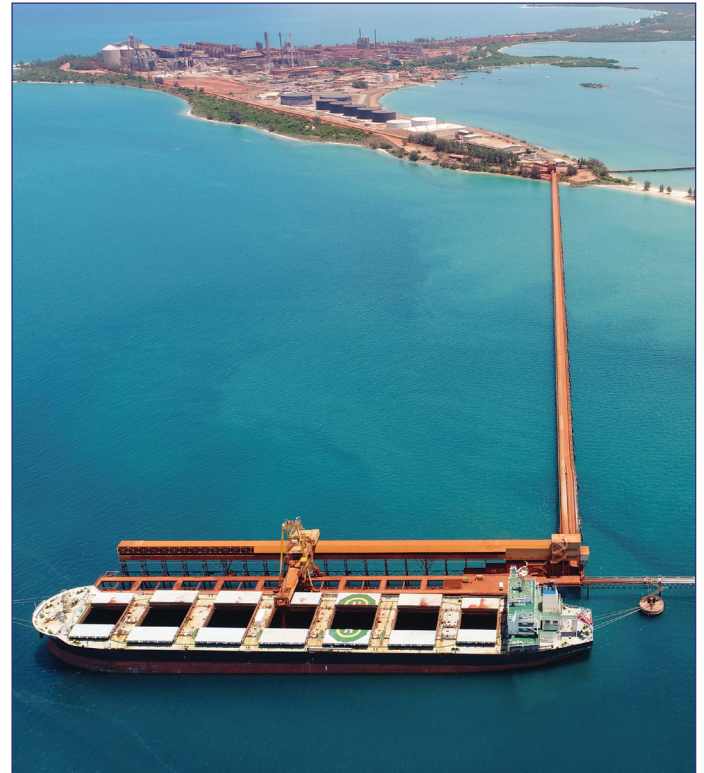
The region is home to around 14,700 people, of whom around 70% are Aboriginal, with major population centres in Nhulunbuy and Alyangula, and several other large communities. The population in East Arnhem is relatively young and dispersed, with around 41% aged 24 years and under and only around 4% aged 65 years and over.

Due to seasonal road accessibility constraints, transport for travellers and freight to East Arnhem is mainly by air or sea. Major industries in the region include mining, buffalo farming, tourism, aquaculture and fishing.

Mining is the main contributor to economic activity in the region, with the production of manganese at the GEMCO mine at Groote Eylandt and bauxite at the Rio Tinto and Gulkula mines on the Gove Peninsula. Traditional Aboriginal cultural experiences, Aboriginal art, and the remote and natural wilderness attract tourists to the region, providing economic and employment opportunities.

Groote Archipelago Regional Council

The Territory Government is committed to returning local decision making (LDM) to Aboriginal communities by empowering Aboriginal people to determine service delivery models that work best for their community and region.



Budget 2024 supports the delivery of the landmark nine-year Groote Archipelago LDM agreement, including establishment of the Groote Archipelago Regional Council. Establishing the new regional council represents a return to local community control of local government services for Anindilyakwa and other community residents in the Groote Archipelago.

Budget 2024 provides \$3 million per annum to support the financial viability of the newly established Groote Archipelago Regional Council and assist other regional and shire councils across the Territory. The funding will strengthen the financial and operational capability and capacity of the Groote Archipelago Regional Council, enabling the council to be community-focused, well governed and sustainable.

Arts trail

Budget 2024 includes \$4 million to commence construction on upgrades and expand the world-renowned Buku-Larrnggay Mulka Centre at Yirrkala and a new building for Gapuwiyak Culture and Arts, through a partnership with the Commonwealth.

The investment is part of the Territory Government's \$30 million Arts Trail Gallery Extension Program.

Yirrkala School upgrades

Budget 2024 invests \$1.5 million for upgrades to secondary school facilities at Yirrkala School to support improved physical learning environments and educational facilities, and delivery of quality middle and secondary education facilities and services in remote areas.

Upgrades include refurbishment of classrooms, outdoor learning areas and the administration block to support delivery of senior secondary school and specialist education facilities such as home economics.

An updated masterplan for future investment at Yirrkala School will also be developed, incorporating this project and other investments in the school's infrastructure since the original masterplan was developed in 2010.

Central Arnhem Road upgrades

The Territory Government is planning for and delivering long-term upgrades along the 685 kilometre Central Arnhem Road corridor that connects the services centre of Nhulunbuy to the Stuart Highway. The road services a number of communities and homelands, and through the dry season is a key tourism drive and freight route for regional industries.

More than 85% of the road is unsealed and road users experience frequent restrictions or closures throughout the wet season. The Commonwealth and Territory governments have committed \$355 million to upgrade the corridor over coming years to improve accessibility and support industry growth. The upgrades include sealing, widening and flood-immunity improvements to priority sections of the route.

Budget 2024 commits \$209 million for new and continuing works along the corridor. Upgrading and sealing Central Arnhem Road will unlock further economic potential in the region and open a range of new long-term economic and social opportunities, with new works anticipated to commence in 2024-25.

Gunyangara Tourism Precinct

The Territory Government is continuing to support economic growth in East Arnhem, with the final construction tender to upgrade marine and landside facilities at Gunyangara (Gove Port) Tourism Precinct recently released.

The new marine facilities will enable ongoing local marine maintenance jobs in Nhulunbuy and provide better facilities for recreational users, charter vessels, small cruise ship operators and other marine operators.

This is the third and final package of works for the \$9 million Gunyangara Tourism Precinct project, which will bolster marine and landside facilities for vessels to dock to enable more visitors to explore the region's natural beauty and rich cultural history. The works include a floating pontoon that will be detachable to enable removal and safe storage in preparation for a cyclone.

Major works overview

	Capital works
	\$000
Transport	217 458
Health	19 985
Recreation, culture and religion	4 000
Housing and community amenities	3 070
Education	2 804
Total East Arnhem	247 316

Photograph courtesy of the Department of the Chief Minister and Cabinet