

EAST ARNHEM

Regional fact sheet

FOR ALL OF US

The East Arnhem region is situated in the far north-eastern corner of the Territory and covers East Arnhem Land, Groote Eylandt and Elcho Island. Due to seasonal road accessibility constraints, transport for travellers and freight is mainly by air or sea.

The region is home to about 14,600 people, of whom around 73% are Aboriginal, with major population centres in Nhulunbuy and Alyangula. The population in East Arnhem is relatively young and dispersed, with about 44% aged 24 years and under and only around 4% aged 65 years and over.

Major industries in the East Arnhem 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 opportunities and employment activity.

Gove Port investment

Construction will commence in the dry season of 2022 on the joint Territory Government, Developing East Arnhem Limited (DEAL) and Commonwealth Government funded \$8 million upgrade to the marine and land side facilities at the Gove Port tourism precinct.

Budget 2022 also includes a further \$10 million commitment to support public-private investment to improve the commercial wharf and landside facilities at the Gove deep water port to support and attract new and diversified industry, including fisheries and aquaculture, marine services and larger tourism vessels.

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Arnhem Space Centre

The Arnhem Space Centre is a commercial launch facility being developed by Equatorial Launch Australia, in partnership with the Gumatj Corporation, near Nhulunbuy. The site is uniquely positioned to offer equatorial launch as its proximity to the equator, coastline and relatively sparse population makes it ideal to support safe and efficient space launches.

The establishment of this launch facility will open up supply chain, training and workforce development opportunities in the region, and help attract further investment in the sector. The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) is working with Equatorial Launch Australia to launch a sounding rocket campaign from the Arnhem Space Centre in mid 2022.

Telecommunications upgrades

The Territory and Commonwealth governments, Telstra and DEAL have jointly committed \$8 million to upgrade the Arnhem optic fibre backbone which services all the communities from Jabiru to Nhulunbuy.

These upgrades will significantly alleviate network congestion for regional communities and provide the improved broadband needed for the Arnhem Space Centre on the Gove Peninsula.

The extension of the fibre network to the Arnhem Space Centre is complete and network upgrades will commence in 2022. Telecommunications upgrades to a number of homelands through co-investment agreements will also commence in 2022-23.

Arts Trail investment

Budget 2022 supports the upgrade and expansion of the world renowned Buku-Larrnggay Mulka centre at Yirrkala and support the construction of a new building for Gapuwiyak Culture and Arts through a partnership with the Commonwealth Government. Work commenced on these transformative projects in the dry season of 2022 and, once complete, will support growth in the arts and tourism sector.

Housing investment

Over 200 houses in East Arnhem communities will be built in the next five years as part of the Territory's HomeBuildNT program. Infrastructure and land servicing works are well advanced and over \$60 million of long-term housing contracts have been awarded to Yolŋu and Anindilyakwa construction firms to deliver housing, jobs and apprenticeships in the coming three to five years.

Future of the Gove Peninsula

Gove Peninsula traditional owners have released *A New Journey Together, Traditional Owner Vision for the Gove Peninsula*, which sets out the aspirations of Traditional Owners for a vibrant, diverse and successful economy and community beyond mining.

Following the closure of the bauxite processing facility, the Territory and Commonwealth governments, Rio Tinto and the Northern Land Council have committed to this vision and are working with traditional owners to address priorities through the Gove Peninsula Futures Reference Group.

The Territory Government has committed \$2.1 million over three years to advance key transition work streams including land tenure and master planning, economic development, essential services and infrastructure, town governance and community and government services.

Regional investment and local decision making

The Territory Government has also joined with the Commonwealth Government and the Arnhem Land Progress Aboriginal Corporation to extend the innovative East Arnhem Land Youth Model with a \$2 million commitment over the next five years to support Yolŋu-led youth development programs in the communities of Galiwin'ku, Gapuwiyak, Ramingining and Milingimbi.

The landmark Groote Archipelago Local Decision Making (LDM) agreement continues to deliver significant service transitions and local jobs growth to the Anindilyakwa people and organisations in housing, education, justice and rehabilitation, health and local government. The Djalkiripuyngu LDM agreement is expected to be signed in the dry season of 2022.

Budget 2022 provides \$1.5 million over three years in co-investment and co-commitments for key projects in the Blue Mud Bay homelands identified through the Djalkiripuyngu LDM agreement, including homeland infrastructure and services to support sustainable living and development and jobs creation on country. Negotiations for agreements in other parts of the region will also continue throughout 2022 and 2023.

Homeland learning centre upgrades

Budget 2022 commits \$2.35 million to continue upgrades to homeland learning centres in East Arnhem to ensure the delivery of education in homeland settings in modern and fit-for-purpose environments.

Central Arnhem Road upgrades

The Central Arnhem Road is a key link road connecting Nhulunbuy to Katherine. The route also links Nhulunbuy to the Stuart Highway and the national highway network, services a number of Aboriginal communities and is a key tourism drive and freight route for the mining and pastoral industries.

The Commonwealth and Territory governments are investing \$225 million, including \$120.5 million in 2022-23, to upgrade the Central Arnhem Road from the Stuart Highway to Nhulunbuy, which will involve sealing, widening and flood-immunity improvements to priority sections of the route. Early works packages include upgrades near Beswick and the Goyder River.