

THE NT MINERAL EXPLORER NEWS

JANUARY 2025

**GEOLOGICAL, EXPLORATION AND MINING
SERVICES ASSOCIATION NT INC.**
Supporting Mineral Explorers in Australia's Northern Territory



Next Virtual Committee Meeting: Thursday, 13 February 2025, 4.30pm

Chair Report:

It's great to write to members again at the start of 2025. Each new year is an accomplishment when we repeat the celebration as often as I have. A time for Baby Boomers to go through the Contacts file and make the necessary adjustments, reflecting on those that have left us, and farewelling them from the file.

I don't think I'm being a killjoy (well no more than the opening paragraph) to say that 2024 has been a tough year for explorers and those who depend on their support. It has been a year of massive change, and it's still not clear just where it is all heading. We can be sure that the changes are not over. I'm writing this on the weekend before Donald Trump becomes the leader of the Western World. I'm one who has hope that this is a positive for civilisation, though I know many people do not, and they think they never will be. One thing we have learned from the stunning events of 2024 is that it is hard to believe all that you hear and read, and I will be trying to keep an open mind as incumbents continue to do their best to counter President Trump's executive orders and sabotage his agenda for change. He has earned the opportunity to be allowed to try.

There was a decadal shift in NT politics as well. A burnt-out ALP facing failure in almost every sector of NT authority could not convince angry voters to give them yet another go at fixing the NT's problems. The CLP has returned convincingly to government, and I hope to see the revitalisation of NT life that I was lucky enough to experience living here when Paul Everingham and his able successors began self-government for the Territory. Let us hope that our new government will revive the spirit of '78 and not descend into the shambles that obliterated the Party in 2016. I have hopes that they know what is best for the NT and not just for themselves.

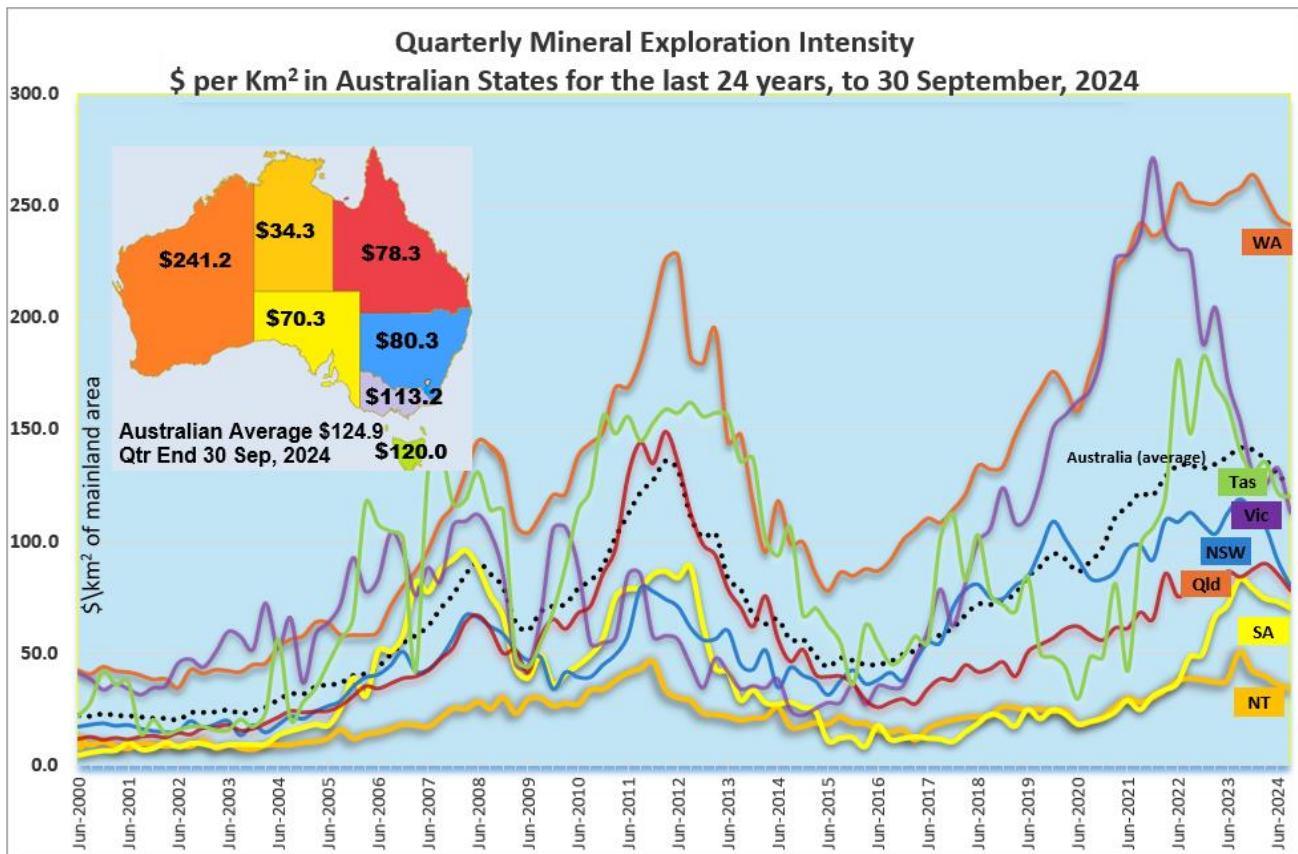
GEMSA NT is certainly looking forward to having our first meeting with the Minister for Mining and Energy. We wrote to congratulate him in early October and offered to meet to present GEMSA NT's suggestions on what can be done to improve the NT's dreadful Mineral Exploration Intensity which shows that the NT is least attractive place to invest in Australia (see our latest graph over the page). Things don't seem to have improved yet. This chart reflects the difference in actual activity between our jurisdictions in Australia, and there is much to see in it. Global influences don't much affect these differences: it is most influenced by local factors in each jurisdiction. As we said to our Minister in our letter, just to be average, we need to **treble exploration expenditure in the NT**.

While we greatly appreciate the efforts of successive NT governments to stimulate exploration activity (and the Feds also try), what is being done to stimulate activity is yet to turn the trend. We think that to reverse the differences, we need to look deeper into our predicament and formulate strong actions from government to address the impediments to a healthy exploration sector, which ultimately benefits all Territorians. I don't think the current intention is for the Territory Coordinator to address such problems, and maybe he could add it to his list. But governments do need to accept that there is a problem worth addressing before it will be addressed, and I don't see that is the case yet in today's NT. Your committee is still heavily engaged in running their own businesses, but please be assured this matter is on our Bucket List. We look forward to passing our views on to our Minister.

MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

CHAIR: Geoff Eupene
DEPUTY CHAIR: Lance Martin
SECRETARY: Peter Harris
TREASURER: Tanya Cole
GENERAL COMMITTEE:
Ray Woolridge
Nick Johansen
Jerry Amato

FOUNDING MEMBERS: Geoff Eupene,
Lance Martin, Gary Price, Geoff Farnell,
Ray Woolridge



GEMSA NT's Mineral Exploration Intensity graph for Australia and its jurisdictions for the 21st Century: sharing the pain...

AMEC MEMBERSHIP

GEMSA NT is a 2025 member of AMEC (the Association of Mining and Exploration Companies), the leading national Association representing mineral explorers and miners across Australia. AMEC membership allows GEMSA NT to remain abreast of issues that have the potential to impact mineral exploration in the NT and in turn negatively impact member's businesses. While GEMSA NT may place higher importance on some issue from a local view, AMEC represents a credible voice and collaborator to GEMSA NT member goals. With representatives on the AMEC NT Liaison Committee, GEMSA NT is able to provide a brief outline on the most recent NT discussion, as well as provide input to AMEC policy directions.

Territory Coordinator consultation In January, GEMSA NT attended a briefing by the Territory Coordinator. It was unclear from the briefing as to whether the role would enhance mineral exploration activity in the NT and concern was raised that the prioritising of major project approvals could even negatively impact exploration approvals if competing for the same DPLE resources. From a major project view, it is said that equivalent roles in Qld and SA have worked well to provide clearer pathways through complex approval processes at least for major renewable energy projects.

Drilling and other approvals GEMSA NT remains focused squarely on ensuring that delays to drilling approvals do not continue into 2025 after learning that in 2024, some explorers did not get their work programs underway before the end of the field season due to approvals processing delays. The follow-on effect was that supporting services and suppliers across the broader NT community were also impacted. Some members and friends of GEMSA NT reported a significant drop in activity and some were left to seek work outside of the NT.

GEMSA NT will stand on its own for members on important local issues but also looks to AMEC for supporting advocacy where goals are common.



IMPORTANT UPDATES AND REMINDERS

Water licensing under an environmental (mining) licence for exploration - Reminder

- All water bore drilling must be completed by a licensed driller.
- Interference with a waterway and bore work no longer require permits granted under the *Water Act 1992* (NT) in circumstances where those activities are conditioned on an associated environmental (mining) licence. If not, permits and approvals under the *Water Act 1992* (NT) are still required.
- The deadline to obtain a water licence is approaching. By 1 August 2025, a water licence under the *Water Act 1992* (NT) is required for all surface water or groundwater use for a mining activity, which includes mineral exploration. Any water extraction without a water licence after 1 August 2025 will be unauthorised and may result in enforcement action. Water users are encouraged to apply for a water licence as soon as possible, to ensure a licence is obtained prior to 1 August 2025.
- An exemption from the need to obtain a water licence remains current for the use of groundwater not exceeding 5ML/year from a bore on a mineral title under the *Mineral Titles Act 2010* (NT). This exemption does not apply to the former Darwin River Water Control District.
- If unsure of your requirements, contact Water Licensing NT.

Deemed Environmental (Mining) Licences – Things you should know

- All deemed environmental (mining) licences will cease to have effect from 30th June 2028 unless cancelled, revoked or superseded by a replacement/new environmental mining licence sooner.
- Operators can apply for a replacement/new licence in advance of the deadline.
- A replacement licence is “like for like” and would include previously approved activities/disturbance only.
- A new licence is required for new proposed activities/disturbance and/or previously approved activities/disturbance (with or without any changes).
- Replacement/new licences may be standard, modified or tailored.
- Public notice requirements apply for applications for a new modified or new tailored licence. Applications for any type of replacement or standard licence do not require notification.
- To discuss your particular circumstances, contact the Mining Division of the Department of Lands, Planning and Environment.

Amendments to the *Mineral Titles Act 2010* (NT) and *Mineral Regulation 2011* (NT)

- Submissions were made separately by both GEMSA NT and AMEC on the proposed amendments to the *Mineral Titles Act 2010* (NT). Consultations closed in August 2024.
- Amendments that have already commenced from 1 July 2024 as a consequence of the environmental reforms include:

Fit and proper person test criteria

Technical work programs for mineral lease applications and renewals

Authority to commence or continue activities on receipt of security payment by DME on approval of environmental (mining) licences

Legacy mine site reservation provisions

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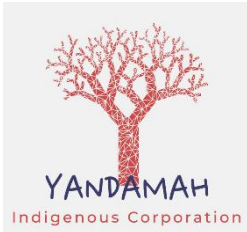
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Committee Member Profile

We want to take the opportunity to introduce the management committee over the next few editions of the newsletter. For members that would like to join the management committee, we would greatly appreciate the additional support. The committee aims to meet once every couple of months or more often as new developments in the industry bring us together to discuss how GEMSA NT may be able to make a difference.



Jerry Amato joined the management committee in 2022. Jerry has a long history associated with the Resources Industry. You can read his full profile on the GEMSA NT website. Jerry is based in Katherine, NT, and is the Founding Director of Yandamah Indigenous Corporation.

Yandamah was established in 2020 and became a member of GEMSA NT soon after. Two reasons for joining: we identified a void in the NT when it came to Indigenous Corporations positively involved in the resources sector and the fact that Yandamah see the potential returns for all of the NT and Australia on a broader scale. Although we provide other services outside of the industry, exploration and mining are still our focus.

My position as Yandamah's Projects Manager comes after many years of experience in major Oil and Gas projects and coal mining predominately in Qld's Surat and Bowen basins. During this time, I have been responsible for a number of requirements including Land Access, Code of Conduct and Compensation Agreements with various land holders and state Government, Rig Management, Social Performance and Contracts, and Procurement Management. My main two focusses in this time have been negotiating Land Access and Contracts, and Procurement Management.

We see a very bright future for exploration services in the Territory. GEMSA NT helps foster this by providing a strong membership base that knows the importance of connecting the right suppliers to potential clients and how these relationships reduce risk to the project.

MEMBER REFERRALS

Member referrals are very important to the growth of GEMSA NT. If you know of other support services or suppliers that would benefit from membership with GEMSA NT, we would greatly appreciate the referral.



Upcoming Events:

GEMSA NT will have a booth at AGES again this year and look forward to catching up with members that can attend.

APRIL 8-9, 2025 AGES Conference



URANIUM: is it the NT's inconvenient legacy, or the salvation of the planet?

(Some personal views by Geoff Eupene)

I came to live in the NT in early 1970, when uranium had just been discovered in what became known as the Alligator Rivers Uranium Province. This discovery stunned mining circles, and the rate of discovery in the area between 1969 and 1973 quickly established the Province as the world's premier resource of high-grade uranium ore. Another area, in the Athabasca Basin of Saskatchewan, was also recognised as having similar deposits and potential for greatness but could not match those rates of early discovery that we managed to achieve in the ARUP in those early years. There were comparisons of the energy reserves with those of Saudi Arabia, and it helped cement the claim that Australia, particularly the ARUP, was home to the world's largest reserves of uranium. Those claims are still made. But are they still realistic?

This could be a long and detailed story that would not fit in GEMSA NT's annual report, let alone a box in this newsletter, but it is a serious matter that I think needs to be squarely addressed in this nation. Yes, we probably can still lay claim to having a very high potential for large deposits of high-grade uranium- After all, look at Jabiluka, which, with dimensions still not closed off by drilling, must still be in the world's top ten deposits by value, even though it has not seen a drill rig in a quarter of a century, and could be much bigger than is currently thought. We may never know, given the aims to assume the Jabiluka Lease into Kakadu National Park.

Statistical modelling of the potential uranium endowment of undiscovered deposits in the ARUP suggests that between 300 and 4,700 Mlbs U₃O₈ are yet to be found, with a likely total of around 1,400 Mlbs U₃O₈, which is more than 4 times the NT's uranium production to date.

There are other poorly defined discoveries surrounding the exhausted Ranger pits that are being sterilised from development or resource expansion by the thorough rehabilitation of that site; Koongarra, without consideration of its energy value to Australia or indeed the World, has been absorbed into World Heritage Listed Kakadu while it too has large untested prospective geological settings, and deposits hidden beneath the Magela floodplains in Kakadu Stage II that were discovered but never defined. Across the East Alligator River where explorers continue to conduct exploration, known uranium discoveries in Arnhem Land keep looking better, and it seems that some Traditional Owners have a helpful view of uranium exploration as a result of their positive perceptions from past mining and exploration, work is going on slowly, producing exciting results in a permitting environment that does not encourage intense activity. That's a summary of what is now the situation in our NT's claim to uranium fame. I won't continue this story to Central Australia, which also has uranium potential, here.

My point is that any new uranium production from what is our premier identified low-cost uranium supply source needs massive policy changes if any more is going to be produced, and its real potential is ever to be realised. While I know politicians of different stripes that are convinced of the importance of these resources, there is a deafening silence from most of them in the face of decisions that will keep uranium in the ground, that are not in the NT's, Australia's, or even the World's best interests.

Key to this potential is its contribution to the economic fate of the NT, which currently runs an unsustainable fiscal position. The expenditure that would be associated with the exploration, development, and production of this inventory would deliver thousands of NT-bound secure jobs and go a long way toward balancing the books and help re-establish a range of locally- based service providers that have deserted the NT since the turn of the century.

On a more global scale, the production of between 10 and 20 Mlbs of U₃O₈ per annum from ARUP would allow the world (or Australia, possibly) to offset the greenhouse gas emission equivalent of about 165 to 330 Mt CO₂ equivalent per annum, or about 35 to 70% of Australia's annual direct emissions when displacing coal power baseload generation. Based upon those resources we are aware of, this need not be a pipedream.

The state of the nuclear debate in Australia is out of step with what is being rapidly realised elsewhere: without nuclear power, there will be no transition from carbon-based energy; the laws of physics and engineering have long told us that an electrical grid will saturate and become unstable and unreliable once intermittent renewable energy reaches about 40% of total grid power generation, something that the disastrous real-life experiments in California and Germany are now demonstrating in real-time. If that transition was to miraculously overcome those hurdles, it would result in a quaint post-industrial artisanal economy and living standards a far cry from what we now enjoy.

Parties opposed to uranium mining and nuclear energy have taken every opportunity over the last 50 years to sterilise known deposits from development that would, if utilised for power production, keep huge quantities of greenhouse gases out of our atmosphere, and to lock up thousands of square kilometres of prospective land that might host even more planet- saving uranium. This cannot be in Australia's real national interest. Do they not

realise that they may have robbed today's young and future generations of their own choices and taken control of their destiny?

As the connection between utilising this amazingly apt source of energy for the problems the world faces and the preservation of future economies, and possibly even civilisations, becomes clearer, the value of the obstacles they have created may have to be re-evaluated in the light of what has been stifled.

It is essential for known precious resources of uranium not to be locked up by "permanent" decisions by mortals who should not be prepared to make such decisions that will affect the quality of life of future generations, not themselves. Who will speak out to ensure that at least our known uranium resources remain available to those who will need them, and preserve the fantastic value demonstrated decades ago, but not yet realised?

MEMBER STORIES OF INTEREST

If members have news items for future newsletters, or newsworthy recounts of historical events or experiences, GEMSA NT would be interested to share them in future editions of the newsletter. We want this newsletter to not only bring you news but allow members to connect with other members for mutual benefit.



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The image shows a rugged, rocky landscape with a river or stream. Below the text, there are two smaller images: one showing a truck with a trailer carrying equipment, and another showing two workers in high-visibility gear looking at a laptop on a table.

Gold Projects
Gold projects required for
Tribute or Joint Venture.
Hard rock – Alluvials – Mill Sites
Tennant Creek is the current
focus, but all areas considered.

Redstone Metals Pty Ltd
Contact Ken Watson
+61 433152152
kfwatson@bigpond.com

Mineral Explorers Proudly Supporting GEMSA NT

BOWGAN MINERALS LIMITED



Scriven Exploration Pty Ltd

While GEMSA NT has a strong membership of services and suppliers that continues to expand, and a great network of friendships with exploration companies, GEMSA NT encourages more explorers to take up membership to support the GEMSA NT goals.

There are over 200 entities with granted exploration tenure in the NT of which a handful are based in the NT, a statement which itself highlights the need for an association such as GEMSA NT to provide a platform for NT based businesses and those that operate here to connect with those entities. Important to this aim, is the underlying need for a healthy mineral exploration sector, which GEMSA NT will do its best to continue to advocate for on behalf of member businesses and individuals, and explorers of the NT.

Feedback We are interested to hear your feedback and ideas for future newsletters or promotional opportunities. You may be an individual that seeks annual contract work, a drilling company with availability in the coming field season or supplier with specialty goods. You may have services you wish to promote at the upcoming AGES conference, or you may be able to assist with preparing a promotional member flyer for display. We want to ensure your membership provides value to your business. Please feel free to email us at gemsa.nt2020@gmail.com.

Serious business...

Mining Lightbulbs.

How many Geologists does it take to change a lightbulb?

Somewhere between 2.2 and 3.1

How many Metallurgists does it take to change a lightbulb?

Somewhere between 0.3 and 0.9 less than Geologists said.

How many Surveyors does it take to change a lightbulb?

1, but doing the grid conversion to change the lightbulb location from AGD66 to GDA94 is going to take a couple of hours.

How many Engineers does it take to change a lightbulb?

1 to hold the bulb still and 40 others to rotate the house round the fixture.

How many Mill Managers does it take to change a lightbulb?

2, 1 to change the lightbulb and one to tax the gravity circuit.

How many government mining bureaucrats does it take to change a lightbulb?

87 in total: 7 to organise a meeting about changing the legislation related to lightbulbs, 20 to attend the meeting about lightbulbs and split the tasks up into sub committees, utilizing 50 people to determine who will switch the light switch off? Is that a role that can be assigned preferentially to a minority of disadvantaged member of the community? Will a stepladder or alternative means of elevation be required for the vertically challenged? 9 people to write and review the tender document for public issue to parties who may wish to quote on the job and one finally to award the contract to the mate of whichever politician is currently calling the shots. ☐

AI Overview (not fact checked) – In the news 20 Years Ago

In 2005, the Northern Territory News (NT News) reported on a number of stories, including the arrival of cane toads in Darwin after crossing the Qld/NT border in around 1982, the filming of Rogue in Katherine Gorge inspired by the true story of Sweetheart the famous croc, and the announcement of an AC/DC concert in Darwin!