

## GEMCO TO UPGRADE IN \$150M PROJECT



GEMCO's processing plant that is soon to be the focus of the \$150 million upgrade.

**MANGANESE** miner Gemco is planning to spend \$150 million upgrading its ore processing facility on Groote Eylandt.

The company is seeking to replace an ore-feed preparation circuit to remove a processing bottleneck at the plant 640 km east of Darwin.

The new circuit would increase the manganese ore production, over three years, from 3.4 million tonnes per annum to 4.4 million tonnes.

A feasibility study is currently underway with construction to begin by the year's end and completed by the end of 2008.

A fly-in, fly-out workforce of 150 will be required during the construction period.

### Jetstar names Darwin as northern hub

**QANTAS'** budget airline Jetstar announced it would open a regional aviation base in Darwin over the next two years to serve the fast-growing Asian markets.

The announcement came as Qantas signed contracts for tens of billions of dollars worth of new aircraft to maintain its dominance of Australian skies.

The deal, the biggest single order Qantas has placed for new aircraft, will take its fight for air supremacy into Asia.

By signing-off to buy up to 188 new narrow-bodied jets from Airbus and Boeing, the Qantas board sent a clear message that it will vigorously defend its 65 per cent share of the domestic market.

Several of the new jets will be handed to Jetstar Singapore and Pacific Airways, both partially owned by Qantas.

**Laing O'Rourke set for \$10.6m upgrade CONSTRUCTION** giant Laing O'Rourke has won the \$10.6 million contract to upgrade the PowerWater Corporation's operational centre.

PowerWater hopes it will be the first project in the NT to win the Green Star accreditation for environmentally friendly design, with energy and water usage cut by 20 per cent.

Laing will build offices and workshops as part of the stage two upgrade of the Ben Hammond complex in Stuart Park, with work to commence in a fortnight.

### Microsoft and NTG to build an ICT studio

**MICROSOFT** and the Territory Government have signed an MOU to develop a 'Microsoft Studio' in the Northern Territory, costing \$6 million over a three year period.

"Significantly, we are also working with Microsoft to ensure the studio will create three new ICT jobs with Microsoft, including a Graduate Technology specialist, providing a great career opportunity for Territory tertiary students," said Communications Minister Elliot McAdam.

In a related story, Microsoft is joining with the Northern Territory Government and Territory software designers NTICED to take a unique software program, designed and developed in the Territory, to the rest of the world.

"MARVIN is an amazing animation tool which has already proven successful in the Territory at improving learning outcomes for students," said Mr McAdam.

"The simplicity of MARVIN allows anyone to create their own avatar-based animations in minutes, the avatar can speak in any dialect of any language allowing teachers and students to create personalised characters."

### Alice Springs land release

**THE TERRITORY GOVERNMENT** sold the second stage of the Larapinta subdivision and called for the \$1.3 million headworks tenders for the Mt Johns subdivision.

Larapinta stage two will deliver 39 single dwelling blocks to the Alice Springs housing market and Mt Johns is expected to deliver around 70 more blocks.

Six of the blocks will be reserved for first home owners and one multiple dwelling block will be set aside for seniors public housing in Larapinta stage two.

"Negotiations with the Native Title Holders for the Mt Johns land release are progressing well and will hopefully be finalised soon," said Minister for Planning and Lands, Delia Lawrie.