The potential establishment of two new mines will create greater employment and career opportunities in the mining industry for local residents of Harts Range community and the surrounding Outstations.

**MT THEO**

The Mt Theo Program started in Yuendumu in 1993 to address chronic petrol sniffing in the community. The program has grown in nature and scope and now provides programs that include youth diversion, treatment, aftercare, leadership and youth development across the Warlpiri region.

In 1993 elders from Yuendumu Community started up the program with additional support from local organisations. Through the program Yuendumu Community successfully fought petrol sniffing. The first step involved moving young people sniffing petrol to Mt Theo Outstation, 160km from Yuendumu community. At Mt Theo elders from Yuendumu cared for young people as part of a cultural rehabilitation program. Young people were then lead through a comprehensive 7 day youth program in Yuendumu that engaged them in interesting and challenging activities outside of school hours.

In 2003 petrol sniffing stopped in Yuendumu and the Jaru Pirrijirdi (Strong Voices) Project started up. The Jaru Pirrijirdi Project is a youth leadership and development project that works with young aged 16-25 who have been through the Mt Theo program. Members move through a six-step journey that provides meaningful life and career pathways. Participants begin to work in the program with other young people, and run a youth night club, projects and bush trips, and mentor other young people into meaning pathways.

In 2004-5 the Mt Theo Program began working closely with the Willowra Community and its elders after an outbreak of petrol sniffing in the community. As with Yuendumu this involved sending ‘at risk’ young people to Mt Theo Outstation and the development of a comprehensive youth program in Willowra.

As with Yuendumu, this resulted in an end to petrol sniffing in Willowra, the youth program continues to be successful.
Following requests from elders in other Warlpiri communities the Mt Theo Program has started up youth programs in Nyirripi and Lajamanu communities. All programs are supported by the Warlpiri Education Training Trust (WETT) which is in part funded by royalty payments from the Granites Goldmine.

The youth programs also work in partnership with P.A.W. Media and provide training to youth in a wide range of media related skills.

The success of the program is largely due to its close working relationship with elders and families who established the program. In 2007, the programs founders were awarded the Order of Australia Medal (OAM) for their tireless and wonderful efforts in caring for Warlpiri youth.

People living throughout Central Australia are concerned that their young people have opportunities and life choices that will build strong, healthy and prosperous futures for families and communities. The Shire is keen to learn from the knowledge and experience of Mt Theo and the elders who established the service so the Shire can learn to deliver good youth, sport and recreation services to young people using a culturally appropriate model.

The Central Desert Shire Council is committed to improving youth, sport and recreation infrastructure and will look to the successful service model used by Mt Theo and other partners such as the Central Australian Youth Linked Up Service (CAYLUS) to develop and deliver high quality, responsive and culturally appropriate services to young people.
LOCAL MEDIA ORGANISATIONS

In the early 1980s, before television was accessible to most of remote Australia, residents of some remote Aboriginal communities began experimenting with video production. For Aboriginal people this was an exciting way to produce local content and became a popular way to record the stories that local people were interested in telling and listening to. Yuendumu was one township where video and media production was occurring, and was home to a population of some 900 Warlpiri-speaking Aboriginal people and 100 non-Aboriginal people.

Warlpiri Media was established in 1985 to support growing local video production and also began live-to-air broadcasting. The organisation’s establishment coincided with the launch of the first Australian owned satellite AUSSAT, which for the first time brought national television to much of remote Australia.

From 2001 with the advent of the PAW Radio Network, Warlpiri Media Association became increasingly associated with communities in the Tanami. In 2006 Warlpiri Media Association took on the trading name PAW Media and Communications to reflect its work across Pintubi, Anmatjere and Warlpiri lands.

The organisation is a local voice for Aboriginal people in the region and has been able to express the challenges, interests and achievements of local communities. Within the Central Desert region PAW Media and Communications provides services to Yuendumu, Laramba, Wilora, Engawala, Wilrowra, Nturiya, Yuelamu, Nyirrpi, Pmara Jutunta and Lajamanu.

CAAMA Radio also operates in the eastern part of the Central Desert region and provides remote Aboriginal broadcasting services to the community of Harts Range and communities to the north and east of the Shire. Both Remote Aboriginal Media Organisations (RIMO’s) have served the interests of local Aboriginal communities over many years and will continue to do so into the future.

The Central Desert Shire has made a commitment to work with PAW Media and CAAMA to ensure the infrastructure and licensing requirements of communities are met. This commitment will enable communities to continue to receive radio and television broadcasts. There are many opportunities for the Central Desert Shire Council and local RIMO’s to work collaboratively in the future to inform local communities about the Shire and its activities in local and English languages, and to train and develop local media talent and skill.
SPORTING AND CULTURAL EVENTS

Sporting and cultural events are an important part of life in Aboriginal communities. The Central Desert Shire will promote and support sporting and cultural events as a positive way for communities and residents within the Shire to interact with one another. Communities use these events as ways to celebrate their love of sport and embrace their culture.

Major events held in Alice Springs, such as the Lightning Cup Football Carnival and the CAFL Grand Final weekend are supported and attended by communities and sporting clubs across the Central Desert Shire region. The Central Desert Shire Council will support these established community events, which include the Yuendumu Sports Carnival, Harts Range Races, Lajamanu Sports Carnival, Anmatjere Sports Carnival and NAIDOC Week celebrations.

The Central Desert Shire Council is committed to supporting and encouraging the growth of future civic events in all Shire communities that celebrate community interests, history and culture.

SUMMARY

The Central Desert Shire, along with the ten other Shires being established throughout the Northern Territory, is being introduced to build strong Local Government in the Northern Territory.

The new Local Government framework will achieve success through:

- Strong regional and local representation from Shire Councils, and community based Local Boards;
- Good financial management practices, accountability and the ability to secure funding to deliver an agreed standard of Local Government services;
- Strong governance and management structures guided by a vision, mission, core values;
- A strategic and business plan that outlines how to best achieve our goal of delivering an agreed standard of services to our communities;
- Increased employment of local Aboriginal people in the delivery of local government services;
- Local Boards that provide a local voice, involve communities in local planning, and build governance capacity and leadership within communities.

The Central Desert Shire has a strong commitment to improve Local Government services, develop partnerships that contribute to better outcomes for Shire residents and build a stronger region.
The Central Desert Shire Strategic and Business Plan provides specific details about the Central Desert Shire Council’s management, governance, service delivery and financial planning into the future. We hope that you will find this document enlightening and welcome your interest, comments and feedback.

For a copy of the Central Desert Shire Strategic and Business Plan go to:

www.centraldesert.nt.gov.au
www.dlghs.nt.gov.au
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