

## Appendix M

# Social Impact Assessment of the Proposed Blacktip Project, Wadeye, Northern Territory prepared by IMpaxSIA Consulting



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**REPORT:  
Social Impact Assessment  
Blacktip Project, Wadeye, Northern Territory**



**Report prepared for  
The Blacktip Joint Venture**

Prepared by  
ImpaxSIA Consulting  
Brisbane, Queensland.

October 2004

Front cover painting from the Wadeye Community Homepage  
[www.indiginet.com.au/wadeye](http://www.indiginet.com.au/wadeye).

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## **Executive summary**

The proposed Blacktip Project involves bringing gas, and possibly condensate, onshore from the Blacktip field via a 120 kilometre export pipeline which would connect to an onshore gas infrastructure located close to the Aboriginal community, Wadeye, in the Thamarrurr Region, west of the Daly River. The Blacktip Project would connect with the proposed Trans Territory Pipeline (TTP), which would deliver the gas to the Alcan alumina refinery at Gove. The TTP, although integral to the proposed Blacktip Project, is also the subject of a social impact assessment undertaken by ImpaxSIA Consulting, the findings of which are contained in a separate report.

Wadeye is the largest Aboriginal community in the Northern Territory, with more than 2,000 residents. This is the first major project west of the Daly River and is generally welcomed by many Traditional Owners and Aboriginal community members as holding the promise of assisting to establish an economic base for the region. At present the region is heavily reliant on state transfers. Description of the existing services, infrastructure and facilities at Wadeye reveal serious under-funding and inadequacy.

### **Information and communication**

Consultations in relation to the potential social impacts of the Blacktip Project were limited in part because representatives of service organisations and residents feel that they do not have enough specific information about the Project. Some Aboriginal people in the affected community were not even aware that a Project is being proposed.

### **Aspirations**

In the absence of any other source of employment, many people expressed high hopes for contracting, employment and training opportunities being derived from the Blacktip Project, if it is approved.

Local indigenous service and enterprise organisations demonstrated interest in, and capacity to, provide environmental services, translation and liaison services, catering services to the construction camp, cultural sensitivity and awareness training to workers and supervisors, transport services, air flights and charters, and cultural tourism services to workers. They are also keen to supply bread and meat to the construction camp and sell take away foods, art and artifacts and alcohol to workers, and sand and gravel to the



Project. Representatives from these local organisations expressed frustration regarding the lack of detail about the specific opportunities.

There is also a widespread belief that the Project will lead to the provision of natural gas for the generation of the community and regional power needs. Some individuals expressed the hope that they would receive free gas to fill up their gas bottles. Our consultations with the Northern Territory Power and Water Corporation indicate that these hopes are misplaced.

A number of Traditional Owners expressed the aspiration that royalty monies (their words) would provide income to purchase vehicles, to build up homelands and, through investment, provide ongoing income streams. Some hopes were expressed that the Project would lead to improved infrastructure and that housing and infrastructure would be left behind that could be used by community members.

Overall, our view is that expectations are high, possibly too high, and there may be a need to improve the management of expectations in relation to the opportunities that the Project might genuinely provide. There is concern that realisation of the benefits that the Project might deliver will require greater lead times than are currently being allowed for, if it is intended that the commencement date currently being proposed of the dry of 2005 is to be met.

### **Concerns**

Issues raised by informants included concerns about negative impacts on the environment and whether the Proponent had the ability to prevent or repair these; damage to roads and road safety issues; vandalism and theft of company property and fuel by local Aboriginal people, particularly youths; the impacts of a non-local workforce on community relations, particularly in regard to workers liaising with local women and unauthorised accessing of country; two way trafficking of drugs and alcohol between construction workers and local community members; fighting and increased domestic violence associated with distribution of cash from compensation; that compensation payments to Traditional Owners directly affected by the Project would result in “the haves and the have-nots” in the community; and concerns about gas explosions, among others.

In our view the Wadeye community, because of its isolation and inexperience of major infrastructure projects such as the proposed Blacktip Project, is highly vulnerable to potential negative impacts. Accordingly, the adoption of a strict Safeguard Policy regime will be vital. Harm prevention is considered to be essential since management of issues after the fact will likely not be possible.

Part of preventing negative social impacts could be the adoption of strategies which insulate the community and isolate the construction workforce. Maximising female employment in the construction workforce could contribute significantly to minimising potential negative impacts.

It is likely that the Proponent will find that engaging with the community is difficult because of language barriers and because traditional authority structures are still strong and their logic not always transparent to outsiders. Therefore, it will be critical that local organisations, (such as the Thamarrurr Regional Council, Police and the Language Centre), as well as senior Traditional Owners and others, are involved in planning various facets of the Project, including Traffic Management Plans, Communication Strategies, Insulation and Isolation Strategies, Alcohol Policies, Cross-Cultural training for supervisors, and other interventions and strategies intended to minimise negative impacts and maximise opportunities that might be associated with the Project.

A major research study is currently being undertaken at Wadeye by the Centre for Aboriginal Economic Policy Research, ANU, Canberra, to monitor the socio-economic impacts of the Indigenous Communities Coordination Pilots. Monitoring and evaluation of the planning and implementation of the Blacktip Project would be best undertaken in collaboration with local stakeholder representatives.

Consideration should be given to developing strategies in relation to the following:

- further communications with the Wadeye community about the Project generally,
- communicating information about training, employment and business development opportunities,

- the development and implementation of training and employment programs for Indigenous people in Wadeye,
- safeguarding members of the Wadeye community from potential negative social impacts relating to the presence of a large construction camp,
- maximisation of female recruitment into the construction workforce,
- reduction of theft and vandalism of company property and the adoption of culturally appropriate responses by the Proponent's security staff,
- sustainable and appropriate responses to informal requests to the construction camp for favours or assistance by local community members,
- the development of positive community relations between the construction camp and the local community,
- a Traffic Management Plan to reduce road accidents and hazards,
- control of alcohol and drugs at construction camps,
- maximisation of contracting opportunities to benefit local communities, including supply of consumables such as alcohol, bread and meat to construction camps,
- communication of accurate information about the future availability of regional gas supply (other than to Alcan),
- support to Traditional Owners and communities to manage any monetary benefits arising from the Project,
- support to local Rangers to engage in environmental monitoring and management activities associated with construction and operation of the roads, sea impacts and gas processing plant, and

- engagement with relevant local and regional stakeholder organisations (e.g., Thamarrurr Regional Council, senior Traditional Owners, Northern Territory Police, Kardu Dari Kardu Family Centre, Wadeye Language Centre, Thamarrurr Rangers and the Northern Land Council), in the design, planning, implementation and monitoring of the above strategies.

## Abbreviations

AQIS	Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service
BRACS	Broadcasting for Remote Aboriginal Communities
CDEP	Community Development Employment Projects Scheme
CFCU	NLC's Caring for Country Unit
ICCP	Indigenous Communities Coordination Pilots
IHANT	indigenous Housing Authority of the Northern Territory
NLC	Northern Land Council
NT	Northern Territory
NTG	Northern Territory Government
PAWC	Power and Water Corporation
SIA	Social Impact Assessment
STIs	Sexually Transmitted Infections
TTP	Trans Territory Pipeline
TCA	Territory Construction Association
WALC	Wadeye Aboriginal Language Centre



## **1 Introduction**

Woodside Energy Ltd, in partnership with ENI Australia, proposes to develop the Blacktip Gas Field located in the Joseph Bonaparte Gulf. The Blacktip development involves bringing gas, and possibly condensate, onshore from the Blacktip field via a 120km export pipeline which would connect to onshore gas infrastructure located close to Wadeye, (formerly known as Port Keats), which lies within the Thamarrurr Aboriginal region (Woodside 2004).

Wadeye is the largest Aboriginal community in the Northern Territory and is situated on the western edge of the Daly River Reserve in the Northern Territory. It is approximately 50 minutes flying time from the capital of the Northern Territory, Darwin, and is not accessible by road for five months of the year, December to May, during the wet season. It is accessible by sea and operates a weekly barge.

Should the Aboriginal Traditional Owners give their consent to the Project, (and subject also to the Proponent's commercial decision to proceed), this will be the first major development in the region. It would be expected that roads would be upgraded as part of the Project, which may also result in a range of impacts in their own right. The Social Impact Assessment (SIA) aims to assess if and how the Wadeye community and wider Thamarrurr Region might be impacted, and how to maximize the potential opportunities offered by the Project and minimise or mitigate any potential negative impacts.

This Report represents the findings of a consultation program conducted at Wadeye with Traditional Owner groups and the wider Aboriginal community likely to be affected. The preparation of the SIA has been undertaken in order to enable the Proponent to meet its requirements to assess and manage social impacts associated with the Project and to provide information to the statutory regulators responsible for undertaking the Project's approvals processes. It is also expected that the findings of the SIA would feed into the Agreement-making process with the Northern Land Council (NLC) on behalf of Traditional Owners.

The proposed Blacktip Project is also linked to the proposed Trans Territory Pipeline Project (the TTP) which would export the gas from Blacktip to Alcan mining facilities at Gove. The TTP and the expansion at Alcan's operations at Gove are subject to separate approval processes. ImpaxSIA Consulting was engaged to conduct the Social Impact Assessment for both the Blacktip and TTP Projects. This Report addresses the potential social impacts associated with the proposed Blacktip gas processing plant. The potential social impacts associated with the proposed TTP are the subject of a separate report, prepared also by the authors of this Report.

The Report has been prepared for Woodside Energy Ltd Petroleum and the Northern Land Council (NLC), with the assistance of Woodside in the provision of information materials used in the consults, and assistance from the NLC in the organisation and conduct of fieldwork.

### **1.1 Role of the Northern Land Council**

The Northern Land Council (the NLC) provided the Consultants with detailed information on the identity and location of traditional Aboriginal Owners, and Native Title claimants

and Indigenous people with strong historical associations who have affiliations with the affected country. The NLC also provided the Consultants with maps of the Project area that identified the location of communities and groups of people associated with the Project area. The maps and identity of titleholders remain confidential and are not included in this Report. The NLC was also responsible for arranging interpreter services as required, and provided competent field officers who took responsibility for logistics and for assisting in setting up interviews with Councils, organisations and individuals. Those field officers, who had ties to the affected country themselves, also attended some consultations.

## **1.2 Blacktip Project overview<sup>1</sup>**

The Blacktip gas development comprises the Blacktip gas reserves located in the Joseph Bonaparte Gulf, approximately 245km south-west of Darwin and is operated by Woodside Energy Ltd on behalf of the Blacktip Joint Venture Partner, Eni Australia Ltd.

The Blacktip reserves were found in 2001 and in June 2003, Alcan Gove Pty Limited and the Blacktip Joint Venture signed a Heads of Agreement to supply Alcan's alumina refinery and bauxite mine at Gove, 40 petajoules of natural gas over a 20 year period from 2007.

Once onshore, and after treatment at the proposed gas processing plant to be constructed near Wadeye, the gas will be piped to Gove (Nhulunbuy) in the Northern Territory (NT) for power generation at Alcan's alumina processing plant. A subsea condensate export pipeline to a swamp mooring, approximately 3-4 kilometres from Yelcherr Beach will also be included alongside the gas export pipeline to export condensate to markets located east of Wadeye. The gas pipeline may also supply other potential customers that have yet to be identified.

The development of the Blacktip Field is intrinsically linked to the proposed gasification plans for Alcan's Aluminum plant at Gove. This development will also provide an alternative gas supply to other potential gas customers in the Northern Territory (Woodside 2004).

The location of the notional development area is presented in Figure 1, overleaf.

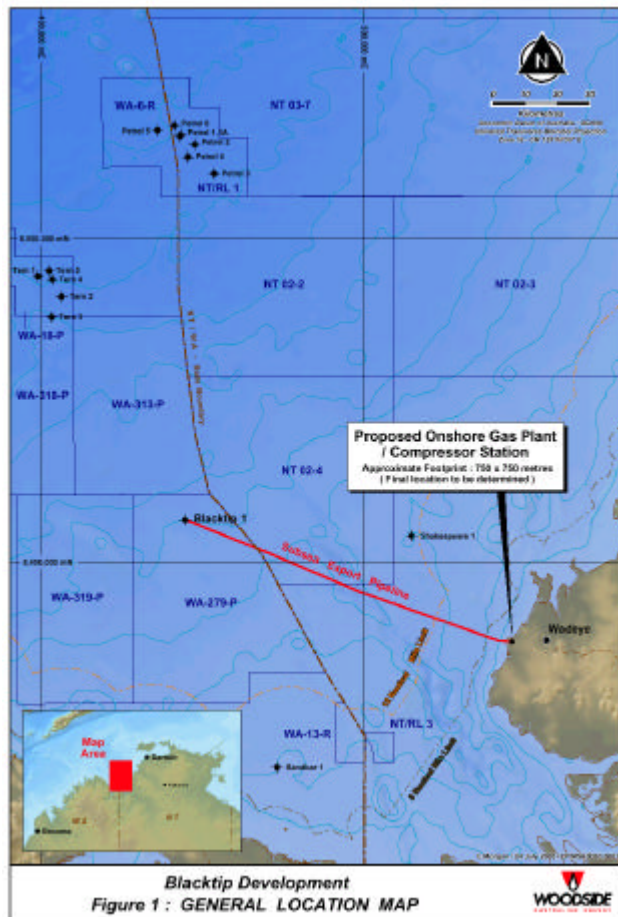
The anticipated capital expenditure for the Blacktip Gas Project is approximately \$450 million over the peak construction period of 2004 to 2006. Expenditure over the 30 year life of the Project will potentially be significantly more than this (ACIL 6:2004).

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<sup>1</sup> *Note that the information contained in this section (and in the ACIL report) rely on Proponent information provided in December 2003, however, since that time, the development concept for Blacktip has evolved and some details may have changed.*



Figure 1: Map showing general location of the Blacktip gas field and proposed onshore processing plant.



The key project milestones, as set out in the Notice of Intent, are as follows:

Table 1: Blacktip Project Proposed Schedule

Concept Selection Dec 2003
Start Basis of Design Jan 2004
Final Investment Decision Oct 2004
Offshore Well Head Platform Installation & well construction commences 2006
Offshore pipeline installation commences 2006
Onshore plant construction commences 2005
Onshore pipeline installation commences 2006
First gas 2007

The activities associated with the facilities include:

- Construction of an onshore workers' camp
- Construction of maintenance and operational accommodation
- Installation and hook-up of the WHP
- Construction of wells, pipelines/flowlines
- Construction of onshore facilities including access and haul routes
- Construction of onshore pipeline and associated systems
- Commissioning and testing of installed facilities
- Production operations
- Decommissioning of facilities at the end of field life (NOI 2003)

The Blacktip project will generate around 430 direct full-time and part-time

jobs during the initial construction period of 2004 to 2006. Approximately 158 of these workers will be located on-site and the remainder will be Perth-based project staff. It is expected that 75 per cent of the on-site jobs will be sourced from the Northern Territory and the remainder from the rest of Australia. During operation, it is anticipated that the Blacktip Project will employ up to 19 workers a year on a fly in–fly out basis from Northern Territory locations (ACIL 7:2004).

### 1.3 Land tenure and maps

The underlying existing land tenure of the site of the proposed Blacktip Project is inalienable Aboriginal freehold (Commonwealth), vested in the Daly River/Port Keats Aboriginal Land Trust.

There are also granted exploration licences (diamonds) in the Land Trust area (held by Rio Tinto Exploration) and a pending application for an onshore petroleum exploration permit. Onshore petroleum exploration has occurred in the area historically.

Figure 2: Map showing land tenure of the Proposed Blacktip Project Area



### 1.4 Legislative framework

The signing of a Heads of Agreement (HOA) between the Blacktip Joint Venture and Alcan has enabled development plans to be put in place for Permit WA-279-P in the Joseph Bonaparte Gulf. The eventual development of this field will act as catalyst for

other potential hydrocarbon developments in the Joseph Bonaparte Gulf which would utilise the Blacktip infrastructure and which may potentially provide long term gas supplies to the Northern Territory (Notice of Intent 2003).

The proposed development will be undertaken in accordance with a range of Territory, State and Commonwealth legislation pertaining to planning, environmental management and Aboriginal Affairs. The primary State, Territory and Commonwealth legislations governing project approvals are:

- Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999.
- Northern Environmental Assessment Act 1994 (Northern Territory).
- Petroleum Submerged Lands Act 1967.
- Petroleum Submerged Lands (Management of Environment) Regulations 1999.
- Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act 1976 - negotiation pursuant to s19 (4A). - (ALRA).
- Native Title Act (Commonwealth) 1993 - compulsory acquisition of, consultations about, or negotiation over impacts on native title rights.
- Lands Acquisition Act (NT) - access for surveys and compulsory acquisition of all privately held interests in land - (LAANT).
- Energy Pipelines Act (NT) - access for surveys and pipeline license - (EPA).
- Sacred Sites Act (NT) 1978 - Authority Certificate to ensure indemnity against inadvertent disturbance of sacred sites - (SSA).
- Heritage Conservation Act (NT) - Ministerial permission to disturb sites of Aboriginal, Macassan or European heritage - (HCA). (Woodside 2004).

### **1.5 SIA background**

ImpaxSIA Consulting was approached by Woodside Energy Limited, with the support of the NLC, to undertake a Social Impact Assessment of the Trans Territory Pipeline and Blacktip Projects in order to assist it to meet its corporate requirements in addition to obligations under the Northern Territory's Environmental Assessment Act 1994 Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (Cwlth). It is highly unusual for an SIA Consultant to be contracted directly to the Proponent when the SIA involves an Aboriginal community within the jurisdiction of a land council. ImpaxSIA agreed to the arrangement with the proviso that the NLC supported it.

A separate Social Impact Assessment has been undertaken by ImpaxSIA in relation to the Trans Territory Pipeline.

It should be noted that a Social Impact Assessment, conducted by Environmental and Engineering Consultants URS Australia, has been undertaken to assess the potential social impacts of the expansion of Alcan's alumina plant at Gove. At the time of writing, the draft Alcan Expansion Social Impact Assessment was already in the public comment phase. Although the Principal of ImpaxSIA Consulting met with the SIA Consultants for the Alcan Expansion Project, the time frames were such that the latter's field work had finished prior to the commencement of ImpaxSIA's work commencing. Therefore, there was no opportunity to liaise in relation to the two impact assessments.

### Blacktip Project SIA terms of reference

Draft terms of reference were prepared in consultation with the Proponent and with the Northern Land Council. Both organisations signed off on the terms of reference in February 2004. The purpose of the Blacktip Project Social Impact Assessment (SIA) is to:

- Identify the nature and magnitude of any potential social impacts, both positive and negative,
- Contribute to a better understanding of the Projects by those potentially affected and those with responsibilities toward potentially affected groups and individuals,
- Facilitate the expression of views, concerns and aspirations about the Projects by those potentially affected,
- Assist the Proponent and potentially affected people, communities and organisations, to plan activities associated with the Projects in such a way as to optimise the potential positive impacts and mitigate any potential adverse impacts on affected communities, and
- Provide the basis for compiling a Social Impact Management Plan for the Projects.

The full text of the terms of reference is provided in the Appendix.

### **1.6 Methodology**

The SIA Team was comprised of Dr Annie Holden, economic anthropologist and team leader, anthropologist Justin Beal, and a social researcher with anthropological training, Gay English. Sensitivity to gender was reflected in the use of male and female consultants on the SIA Team. The NLC advised on the identity of affected Aboriginal people and provided field support in the form of field officers who assisted the SIA Team with setting up meetings, introductions and arranging translation services.

The Social Impact Assessment Team completed two one-week visits to the Wadeye community in the weeks commencing 29 March and 10 May, 2004. In addition interviews were conducted in Darwin with Wadeye Indigenous organisation employees, and other researchers who had conducted field work or spent time in Wadeye who could provide some contextual background or assist us with our project planning. Consultations in relation to the Blacktip Gas Project and the Trans Territory Pipeline (TTP) were conducted at Wadeye simultaneously. The results of the consultations in relation to the TTP are presented in a separate report.

The SIA Consultants were accompanied at all times in Wadeye by Aboriginal field officers from the NLC and, where possible, a local Aboriginal interpreter.

The methodology included:

- Conducting formal interviews and informal discussions with each of the five clan groups resident in Wadeye whose Country is directly affected by the proposed Blacktip and TTP Projects. The team ensured that senior representatives from each of the clan groups were present at each meeting. In total 55 people Traditional Owners attended SIA consultations.

- House to house visits were conducted primarily to disseminate information to Aboriginal community members about the proposed Blacktip and TTP projects.
- Conducting interviews with Aboriginal staff and senior representatives and/or employees of the following local service and enterprise organisations:
  - Thamarrurr Regional Council
  - Thamarrurr Rangers
  - Thamarrurr Housing Authority
  - Mi Patha Takeaway/Bakery
  - Murrinhpatha Nimmipa Store
  - Palumpa Station/Butcher
  - Murin Association (Murin Air & Murin Outstation Resource Centre)
  - Northern Territory Health, Wadeye Health Clinic
  - Northern Territory Police, Wadeye
  - Northern Territory Correctional Services, Wadeye
  - Our Lady of Sacred Heart School, Wadeye
  - Kanamkek-Yile-Ngala Museum
  - Wadeye Aboriginal Language Centre
  - Library/Knowledge Centre
  - Kardu Dari Kardu Family Centre
  - Dirrmu Ngakumarl Art Gallery
  - Top End Women's Legal Service
  - Northern Territory Power and Water Corporation

A number of recent and current studies and reports provided to the SIA Team contain comprehensive and current descriptive information and socio-economic data for the region. The SIA Team, therefore, did not duplicate this research, but instead has relied on secondary sources for the compilation of historical and base line data for this Report. The SIA team focused its research on qualitative consultations with Traditional Owners and other affected Aboriginal people, and service and enterprise organisation employees resident at Wadeye.

The SIA consultations and feedback from respondents were limited by the following circumstances:

- Traditional Owners and Aboriginal community members have no previous experience of, and therefore no point of reference for, a major infrastructure project.
- During the second visit to Wadeye, a follow up consultation was not held, as planned, with a group of senior women who were unavailable due to their cultural and ceremonial commitments for the preparation of a senior woman's funeral.
- People who are not members of Thamarrurr Council or part of the Traditional Owner groups, with few exceptions, told us that they had received no previous information about the Project. Some told us that they were not even aware that a project was being proposed.
- Traditional Owners and community members do not appear to be accustomed to being consulted and engaging in abstract debate.

- Traditional Owners of affected estate groups stated that they did not really want to discuss possible impacts of the proposed Blacktip and TTP Projects until they have been presented with a financial offer by the Proponent and have had time to assess their position and make a decision, and until they have had more information about what other Traditional Owners along the proposed pipeline route are thinking.
- It appeared that some Traditional Owners felt that if they were to enter into discussion about the possible impacts of the Projects, were they to proceed, that this might be construed as agreement in principle to the Projects. Thus some were reluctant to discuss the Projects at all until Traditional Owners had made their decision.
- Aboriginal community members were reluctant to engage in discussions about the proposed Projects unless they were members of directly affected estate groups.
- A number of people told us that the issues were too complex to discuss and needed a lot of thought and consideration before they could provide comment.
- There were a limited number of local interpreters available to support the SIA team.

### **1.7 Acknowledgements**

The SIA Team would like to thank the Northern Land Council field officers and NLC pipeline consultants for their assistance in planning, coordinating and conducting interviews for the SIA, including Patrick Briston, Keith Taylor, John Daly, William Parmbuk, Josephine Hart, Daniel Maher, Terry Piper, Bobby Munurrung Wunumgmurra, Victor Sandy, David Ross and Lyndsay Goodwin. The NLC anthropologists, Robert Graham, Anna Nolan and John Cook also provided invaluable assistance. We would also like to thank Nicole Turner, Emma White, Emily Beresford-Cane, Des Stones and James Kernaghan from Woodside Energy Ltd.

## **2 Description of affected people**

The social region likely to be affected by the Blacktip Project is the Thamarrurr Region, which is governed by the recently established Thamarrurr Regional Council. The Thamarrurr Community Government area covers 3,450 square kilometers and reaches from New Moon Inlet in the south to just south of Cape Scott in the north. The western border is the coastline, including Docherty Island, and Namarluk to the east, excluding Palumpa which is a community government area in its own right (DCDSCA 2003).

The Thamarrurr Region consists of 20 land-owning groups. The township of Wadeye is located on Yek<sup>2</sup> Diminhin land. The proposed gas processing plant is expected to be located on Yek Maning land. Yek Diminhin land is potentially affected by the proposed construction of a new access road from the Wadeye airstrip to the Gas processing plant.

Wadeye is the main community in the Thamarrurr Region with a total resident population of 2,147 (Taylor 14:2003). People in the Thamarrurr Region have socio-cultural links that extend in the north to Belyuen, Darwin and the Tiwi Islands, east to Palumpa, Peppimenarti and Daly River, and south to Timber Creek, Kununurra and Wyndham. There is considerable short-term population movement occurring within the Thamarrurr Region between Wadeye and surrounding outstations. There are 20 clan-based outstations, where 260 people live permanently or seasonally (DCDSCA 2003). In addition there is an estimated 226 persons who are not considered to be usual residents but who use Thamarrurr services, notably housing, and a further 113 non-Aboriginal residents (Taylor 15:2003).

### **2.1 Governance**

The Thamarrurr Regional Council was approved by the Northern Territory Government as a Local Community Government Area on 19 March 2003. The 20 clan groups are represented and all pre-existing organisations, such as the Kardu Numida Council, now come under its authority. Thamarrurr Regional Council has over 200 employees, including CDEP, and an annual budget of \$11 million.

The Thamarrurr Regional Council structure is unique in the Northern Territory, (and therefore Australia), in that it is based on a traditional form of governance and cooperation. The structure is the outcome of seven years of community discussions and planning. It has a constitution which blends customary decision-making and governance with the principles that guide the western democratic system.

Thamarrurr is currently involved in the Indigenous Communities Coordination Pilots (ICCP), which is a component of the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) Reconciliation Framework. There is one pilot in each State or Territory, and Wadeye is the Northern Territory's nominated community. The ICCP Project is consistent with the NT Government's partnership approach and will trial more effective ways of service delivery by establishing improved coordination across and between levels of government. A Sharing Responsibility Agreement was signed in March 2003 by the Thamarrurr Council and the NT and Commonwealth governments, formalising the partnership arrangements. Wadeye action groups made up of government and

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<sup>2</sup> Sometimes written as "Yak".



community members have been established to address three key priority areas as identified by the Wadeye community. These are

- youth,
- women and family, and
- housing and construction  
([www.nt.gov.au/dcm/Indigenous\\_policy/Indigenous\\_policy](http://www.nt.gov.au/dcm/Indigenous_policy/Indigenous_policy)).

In addition, men have recently been identified as a fourth priority (pers comm. Ivory 2004).

The importance of the establishment of the Thamarrurr Regional Government is considered to be pivotal to the re-vitalisation of the region:

“For the Aboriginal people of Wadeye, the past sixty years has seen a growing dislocation between the old and the young, between family groups and landowning groups, between a traditional lifestyle shaped by contemporary technological advances, between an economic system grounded within mutual familial obligations and one commensurate with a common rate of exchange, between traditional political structures that are hereditary and autocratic in nature and contemporary political structures that are, in principle, democratic and egalitarian. This dislocation has resulted in the Aboriginal people growing less responsible for their lives as they are no longer able to express valid cultural, political, economic and spiritual relationships to family and to land ... Addressing this imbalance is paramount to achieving social harmony and justice. The re-emergence of Thamarrurr is the vehicle through which such a balance can be achieved” (Thamarrurr 7:2000)

## **2.2 Demographic profile**

As part of the ICCP Project, a major demographic study has recently been undertaken by the Centre for Aboriginal Economic Policy Research, ANU, Canberra, (Taylor 2003), in order to provide baseline data by which to monitor the outcomes of the ICCP Project. Rather than duplicate that research, our Report makes reference to this study and its findings.

In addition, we have used Australian Bureau of Statistics data to explore some socio-economic indexes not considered in the CAPER Study, which are not relevant to the ICCP Project but which are relevant for our study, namely comparative data in order to establish socio-economic and health status as compared with other Aboriginal communities and the Northern Territory as a whole.

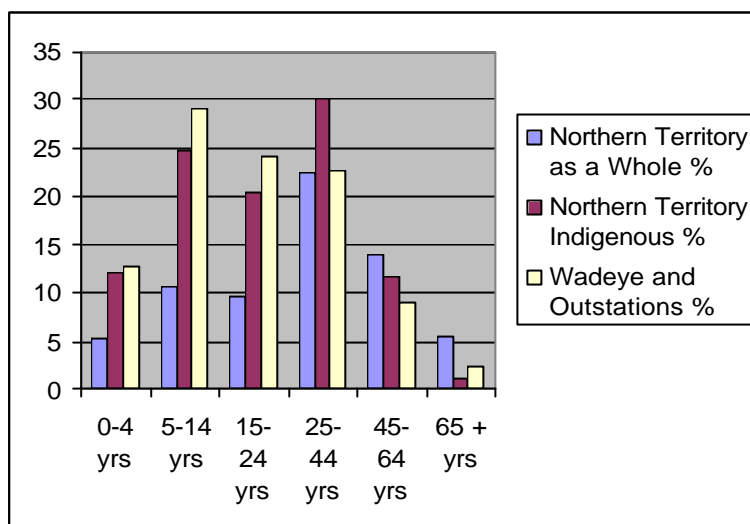
Even by Aboriginal standards, the Wadeye population is comparatively young, Figure 3 below demonstrating proportionally more persons in the 0-4, 5-14 and 15-24 year age groups at Wadeye and outstations, compared to the Indigenous population across the Northern Territory<sup>3</sup>.

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<sup>3</sup> The ABS data sources used here are not completely accurate, as discussed by Taylor 2003. However, for the current purposes of broad comparison with other, larger populations they suffice.

In contrast to the Northern Territory as a whole, where the most populous age group is the 25-44 year age group, at Wadeye, the most populous age group in the charts below is the 5-14 year age group.

Figure 3: Population by Age – Wadeye (and Outstations) compared with Northern Territory Indigenous and Northern Territory Total Populations.



Source: ABS 2001 Census Community Profile Series, Indigenous Profile Wadeye and Outstations. Cat No 2002.0, Indigenous Profile Northern Territory Cat No 2002.0 and Northern Territory Cat No 2001.0

Taylor has calculated a death rate of 24 deaths per thousand which he writes is 18% higher than the equivalent rate of 20 deaths per thousand calculated for Aboriginal people in the Northern Territory as a whole (58:2003). The Figure above demonstrates a higher percentage of people in the 65+ age group at Wadeye and outstations than for the Indigenous people in the Northern Territory as a whole, suggesting that mortality rates in the younger age groups is even higher again, although the small sample size does require that some caution be applied in the interpretation of results.

Taylor’s analysis of age profiles notes that “relatively large numbers of women in the child-bearing ages, and even larger cohorts beneath them, indicates high potential for future growth in numbers, even if the actual fertility rate were to decline” (17:2003). His projections provide for an expected population in the order of 4,045 by the year 2023.

### 2.3 Language

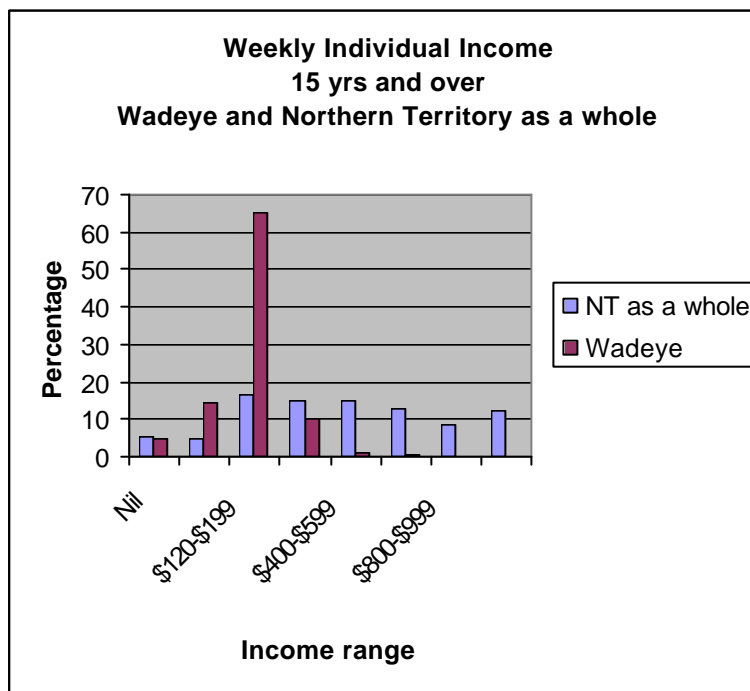
There are seven different languages spoken by the different clans in the Thamarrurr Region: Kardu Diminin people speak Murrinh-Patha, Kardu Piru Panguy speak Murrinh-Nuwanh, Kardu Yek Naninh speak Marti-Ke, Kardu Yek Thinti speak Amor, Kardu Darrinpirr speak Marringarr, Kardu Papa Ngala speak Murrinh Kura, and Kardu Thang Kural people speak Marri Jabin. Most people are fluent in Murrinh-Patha and use this language to communicate with each other at Wadeye; however, most people speak their own language in their homes ([www.indiginet.com.au/wadeye](http://www.indiginet.com.au/wadeye)).

Few people in the Thamarrurr Region are fluent in English. ABS data tend to over-state English language proficiency since some Aboriginal people tend to over-estimate their own English language proficiency. ABS 2001 Census data (Cat No 2002.0) report that 474 of 1,295 people who answered the question on proficiency in spoken English stated that they speak English very well or well, 528 not well, and 227 not at all.

## 2.4 Income

As Figure 4 below demonstrates, at Wadeye the individual weekly income of persons 15 years and over, balloons at the \$199 income barrier. In contrast, income levels in the Northern Territory are relatively even across the income range sets. This reflects the absence of employment opportunities in the Thamarrurr Region, other than CDEP, and demonstrates the relative poverty of Aboriginal people in the region.

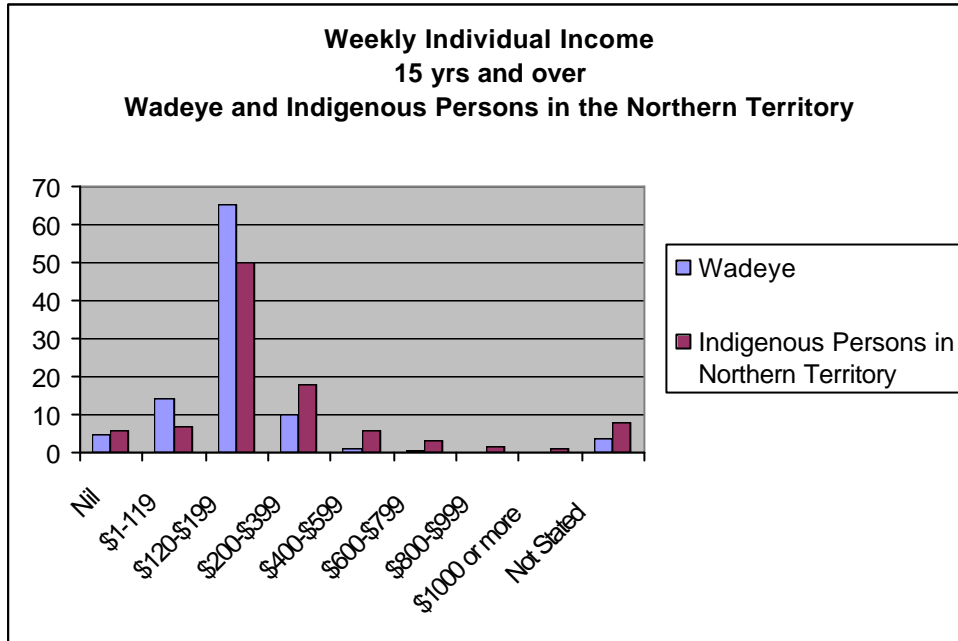
Figure 4: Comparison of Individual Weekly Incomes 15 years and Over, Wadeye and Total Northern Territory Population



Source: ABS 2001 Census Community Profile Series, Indigenous Profile Wadeye and Outstations. Cat No 2002.0 and Northern Territory Cat No 2001.0

As Figure 5 overleaf demonstrates, even by Indigenous standards, Aboriginal people at Wadeye are comparatively poor. The almost exclusive reliance on CDEP for employment means that few individuals are able to move beyond the \$399 income barrier.

Figure 5: Comparison of Weekly Incomes Indigenous Persons at Wadeye and Indigenous Persons Northern Territory as a Whole.



Source: ABS 2001 Census Community Profile Series, Indigenous Profile Wadeye and Outstations. Cat No 2002.0, Indigenous Profile Northern Territory Cat No 2002.0 and Northern Territory Cat No 2001.0

Taylor calculates that the total gross annual personal income accruing to adult residents of the Thamarrurr Region in 2001 amounted to \$10 million but that only two-thirds of this (\$6.6 million) went to Aboriginal residents despite the fact that they accounted for 92% of the adult population. He also notes that only 16% of the total regional income of \$4 million generated by mainstream employment was earned by Aboriginal people.

Taylor (39:2003) reports that there are no data on expenditure patterns at Wadeye, but that a common pattern reported from similar communities is one of cash feast and famine against a background of high costs for essentials such as food and transport, which accords with our own anecdotal evidence gathered during consultations at Wadeye.

**2.5 Health status**

People in Wadeye suffer from the usual diseases of Aboriginal people in Australia – circulatory system, respiratory diseases, endocrine disorders (especially diabetes), neoplasms and external causes (Taylor 58:2003).

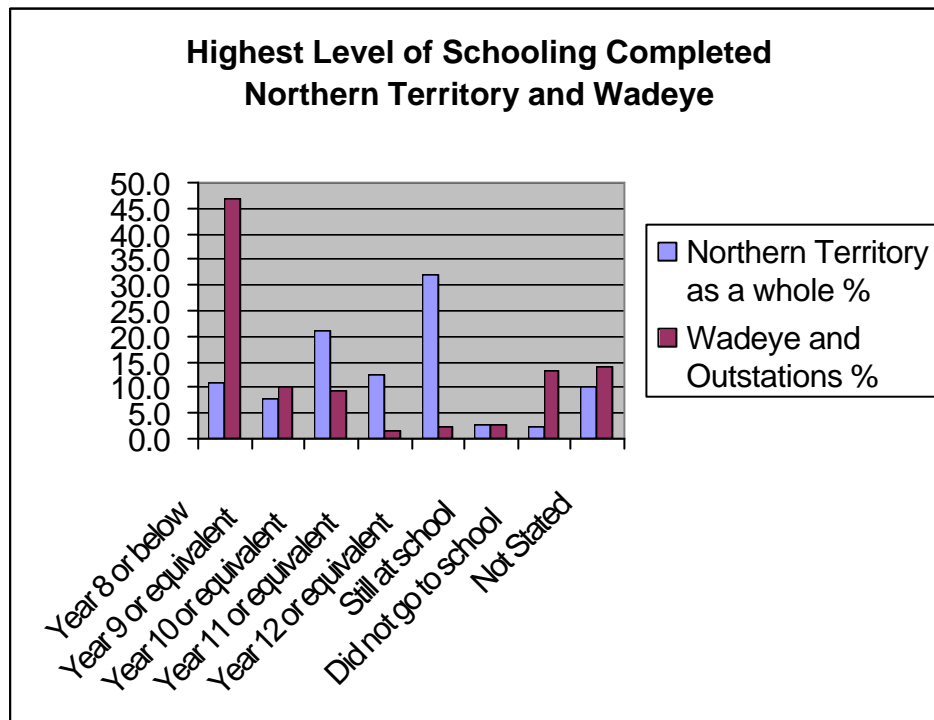
A growth assessment of children aged less than five years undertaken by Wadeye Clinic in 2002 showed an estimated 20% of children stunted in growth, 21% underweight and 10% wasted (Taylor 66:2003).

The community has been unsuccessful in procuring the services of a long-term doctor. Dog control and Environmental Health Services are not funded and morgue, cemetery and funeral expenses are not funded.

## 2.6 Education

Aboriginal people in Wadeye have a comparatively low level of schooling, with over 50% of persons 15 years and over not completing basic secondary education. While this may in part reflect a view by Aboriginal people at Wadeye that formal schooling has little relevance to them, it is also the case that Wadeye does not have a secondary school. As Taylor writes, “given the current size of the school age population (626) and its expected growth over the next 20 years to 1,140 ... this lack of full secondary education facilities at Wadeye is difficult to explain when set against other Northern Territory towns with similar school age numbers” (43:2003).

Figure 6: Highest Levels of Schooling Wadeye (and Outstations) and Total Northern Territory Population as a Whole.



Source: ABS 2001 Census Community Profile Series, Indigenous Profile Wadeye and Outstations. Cat No 2002.0 and Northern Territory Cat No 2001.0

School attendance is very poor, with an estimated 82% of enrolled students being absent for cumulative periods amounting to more than 50 days in the year. The recent construction of a swimming pool and adoption of a “no school, no pool” rule, appears to have an initial impact of improving attendance. Taylor notes that boys are least likely to be enrolled at school and even less likely to attend classes, with this gap widening with age (Taylor 44:2003).

An anticipated benefit of the TTP Project, if it proceeds, is the potential for fibre optic cable to be laid in the pipeline corridor which, it is assumed by community members and administrators, will lead to improved access to the Internet and better telecommunications in the community. In 2001, the Census recorded 12.4% of non-Indigenous residents, and no Indigenous residents accessing the Internet in their homes. Seven percent of non-Indigenous residents stated that they used the Internet at work, in contrast to 0.8% of Indigenous residents. Three percent of Indigenous residents indicated that they accessed the Internet elsewhere (most likely the school or library). Overall 83.6 percent of Indigenous residents and 70.8 of non-Indigenous residents did not access the Internet. At Wadeye twice as many males (n=32) as females (n=16) used the Internet.

Table 2: Internet usage at Wadeye

	Indigenous %	Non-Indigenous %
Used the Internet at home	0	12.4
Used the Internet at work	0.8	6.7
Used the Internet elsewhere	2.7	6.7
Used the Internet at work and at home	0	3.4
Did not use the Internet	83.6	70.8
Not stated	12.9	0

Source: ABS 2001 Census Community Profile Series, Indigenous Profile Wadeye and Outstations. Cat No 2002.0.

## 2.7 Employment

Because of wide discrepancies between ABS Census data and ATSIIC and Centrelink records, the CAPER study undertook a survey of regional employment at Wadeye in November 2003. The survey identified 178 Aboriginal people in the Thamarrurr Region had jobs, of which 133 were funded by the Community Development Employment Projects scheme (CDEP) and 45 were funded from other sources.

According to Taylor,

*“While the regional labour market has grown in both size and complexity in recent decades, as the mission influence has receded and government and market forces have encroached, it can be argued that Aboriginal labour force participation has declined. In effect, the past 30 years in this region have witnessed a shift in Aboriginal employment from an historical association with the private sector, as represented by the pastoral industry, to an almost total reliance on the government sector in the form of CDEP. Beyond the latter, there is very limited Aboriginal engagement with mainstream work with the bulk of the adult population dependent on welfare payment for their incomes.” (25:2003).*

Most CDEP participants are employed in service provision, including the delivery of municipal services, aged care, health work and teacher’s aides, with a further 12 involved in housing construction. Some people are also employed as language workers

at the Wadeye Language Centre. The Dirrmu Ngakumarl art gallery is currently supporting the activities of ten local artists, (four women and six men), and has dealt with as many as 126 artists, weavers and carvers since 1997 (Taylor 27 and 28:2003).

Taylor also speculates that the ABS datum of an available labour force of 630 persons is likely to also be under-numerated. He points out that barely 2% of 15-24 year olds is engaged in non-CDEP work, and only 15% in CDEP. The vast majority (80%) of these young adults are not currently in the labour force (Taylor 28:2003). Presumably they are deriving their income from welfare payments, most particularly Family Income Support.

One consequence of such a young age profile is Wadeye's high childhood dependency ratio (i.e. the ratio of the number of children in the population aged 0-14 years to working age adults). In this case, in the Thamarrurr Region, the childhood dependency ratio is 0.95. This contrasts with that of the Northern Territory as a whole which is only 0.66. Taylor also contrasts the "economic burden" (i.e. the ratio of the number of children and economically inactive persons to employed persons), which is 44 dependents for each working person in the Thamarrurr population, with that of the Aboriginal population of the Northern Territory generally, which is only nine to one. The economic burden at Wadeye is almost five times as great as for the Northern Territory Aboriginal community as a whole.

## **2.8 Recreation and culture**

The Kanamkek Yile-Ngala Museum has been operating since 1994. The Museum takes its name from Kanamkek, who is an ancestral creation being, and Yile-Ngala, the name by which Aboriginal people knew Father Docherty, the Catholic priest who established the mission at Port Keats. The Wadeye Aboriginal Languages Centre (WALC) and the Museum are housed in a building that was constructed by local Aboriginal people in the 1960s. The Museum and WALC are highly valued by community members.

While the Museum is registered with Museums Australia as an archive and small regional museum, it does not receive any funding and relies upon community donations, a volunteer Coordinator and CDEP staff. The WALC is also unfunded and relies on generating some revenue by subcontracting from Batchelor Institute to pay a part-time Coordinator. Aboriginal language workers are employed through CDEP and the Thamarrurr Council assists by maintaining the building.

The Museum is open to the public (tourists and visitors) and used by the local school on culture days. It is a keeping place for artefacts, slides and photographs which date back to the 1930s.

The WALC aims to preserve language and records Indigenous knowledge relating to:

- traditional knowledge about country
- mapping of country and place naming
- bush tucker (in each language)
- traditional stories for different language groups
- educational materials generated for use in the local school
- oral histories

The WALC is working in conjunction with Batchelor Institute to develop a database beginning with a dictionary of each of the languages in the region.

The major obstacle to the operation of the Museum and the WALC is the lack of recurrent funding for:

- Wages for a Coordinator
- Administration and logistical support
- A community mini bus to transport local people involved in language projects
- A dedicated work vehicle that is suitable for bush trips
- Resources used for recording stories from old people

In addition, Wadeye operates a Broadcasting for Remote Aboriginal Communities (BRACS) service which provides two television stations, and is also not funded.

The newly established Knowledge Centre (library) is well used by community members but is not fully funded for operational support. A Northern Territory Libraries Grant was received but cleaning, repairs and maintenance are not funded.

Recreation facilities at Wadeye are limited and inadequate to cater for the recreational and sporting needs of the regional population and particularly the large numbers of youth. Facilities include:

- A recently-built swimming pool. The swimming pool was funded by the Thamarrurr Regional Council, Murrinhpatha Nimmipa Store, Murin Association Incorporated and the local school, Our Lady of the Sacred Heart. Contributions were also made by the Northern Territory Department of Transport and Regional Services and ATSIC. The Thamarrurr Regional Council provides ongoing maintenance and operational funding.
- A poorly equipped recreation hall that is rarely used.
- A grassed football field that is also used for softball. Softball equipment is stored at the school.
- A basketball court with lighting.

A Recreation Officer is jointly funded by the Thamarrurr Regional Council and the local school, Our Lady of the Sacred Heart. Australian Rules football and softball competitions are organised locally and include matches against teams from Palumpa. The Youth Coordinator of the recently established Youth Development Unit, in conjunction with the Juvenile Diversion Program, also aims to provide some recreational programs to Aboriginal youth in the region.

## **2.9 Environmental protection and management**

Protection of natural and cultural resources is paramount to Aboriginal people. Up until three years ago there was little natural resource management activity in the Thamarrurr Region as Aboriginal landowners in the region have limited or no capacity to conduct traditional natural resource management practices and limited understanding of contemporary natural resource management issues.



The Thamarrurr Ranger Program was established, with the assistance of the Northern Land Council's Caring for Country Unit in 2001 (refer to Appendix), to support the involvement of Aboriginal Traditional Owners in natural and cultural resource management activities on their Country with the view to maintaining traditional country in good condition and providing land management conservation and development opportunities to future generations. The Program also aims to support the maintenance of Indigenous natural resource management knowledge in the region.

The Thamarrurr Rangers operate a functional community-owned land and sea management regional program that has the support of senior Aboriginal landowners. The Program currently employs 15 local Aboriginal men and women in land and sea management activities such as mimosa and feral animal eradication, marine species survey, sacred site protection and in ensuring continuity in local environmental knowledge (Taylor 28:2003).

The Thamarrurr Ranger Program has achieved significant environmental, social and economic outcomes (Thamarrurr Regional Council 2:2004). In recognition of the success of the Ranger Program, the Thamarrurr Regional Council is currently proposing to develop a Thamarrurr Natural Resource Management Department within its structure to address the growing natural resource management issues in the region. It also aims to capitalise on possible enterprise opportunities for Aboriginal landowners in the Thamarrurr Region such as eco tourism, provide further employment and mentoring opportunities for young people and become a family based "land and sea management drop in centre".

### **2.10 Transport and communications**

Wadeye is accessed from the Daly River crossing by the Port Keats Road. The Port Keats road is a public road that is maintained by the Northern Territory Government. According to a report prepared by Matchplay Engineering in July 2003, the Thamarrurr Region has a road network of approximately 234 km accessing outstations, 70% of which is in the flat-bladed-track category, and in average to poor condition. The Report estimates that a blanket-upgrade of the network to an acceptable standard of well drained, formed road would cost \$14 million.

The Wadeye community is serviced by a sealed air strip.

### **2.11 Economic base and enterprises**

The Thamarrurr Regional Council's primary objective is to create an economic base in the region so as to develop long-term employment opportunities for local Aboriginal people. Currently, there is no economic base in the Thamarrurr Region, other than service provision, a fledgling Council construction industry being developed by the Council and a small- scale cattle industry based at Palumpa Station. Employment opportunities for local Aboriginal people are extremely limited. Thamarrurr Regional Council, local Indigenous enterprises and the Northern Territory Government provide some employment for local people in the delivery of a range of municipal and social services and in the provision of other goods and services.

Profits generated by the locally-owned Indigenous organisations are channeled back into the Wadeye community and regional homelands for community benefit. The Thamarrurr

Regional Council plays a critical role in providing financial and other support to a range of community infrastructure, training, employment and development projects.

The Mi Patha Takeaway & Bakery was built and is owned by the Wadeye Palngun Wurnangat Association Incorporation and is a financially secure enterprise. The profits generated by the Takeaway and Bakery are controlled by local Aboriginal women and all profits go back into Wadeye projects for community benefit.

The Murrinhpatha Tribal Development owns and operates the Murrinhpatha Nimmipa Store, Remote Area Purchasing Services (i.e. Courier service based in Darwin), the Vegetable shop and the local Dirrmu Ngakumarl Art Gallery. It is owned by Aboriginal community members and is chaired by Boniface Perdjert, a senior Yak Diminhin man, in recognition by local Aboriginal people that Wadeye is built on Yak Diminhin land.

Profits from the Murrinhpatha Tribal Development are used for community benefits. For example, over the last 12 months the Murrinhpatha Nimmipa Store contributed \$560,000 to the building of the new swimming pool at Wadeye. On an annual basis the store distributes an estimated \$200,000 to community members for funerals, ceremonies and other community expenses. Profits from the Murrinhpatha Tribal Development were also used to build the Wadeye Dirrmu Ngakumarl Art Gallery and establish a retail outlet in Darwin. The Art Gallery is not yet profitable and relies on ongoing funding from the store. The retail outlet in Darwin was unsuccessful and is in the process of closing. Failure of the business is attributed to competition in didgeridoos from imported copies from Asia.

Murin Travel and Freight Services provides daily passenger and freight air services between Darwin and Wadeye and provides passenger terminal facilities at Wadeye and Darwin. Murin Travel and Freight Service is owned by Aboriginal people living in the Thamarrurr Region and employs a number of Aboriginal people. Profits are used to support community development and housing projects at the Wadeye community and homelands. For example, the Association contributed \$20,000 to the new swimming pool at Wadeye, sponsors local sporting teams and has built 15 houses in the region over the last 25 years.

The Thamarrurr Regional Council provides a range of subsidised services, most of which are not profitable. For example, the mechanical shop is unable to generate profits due to high demand by Council vehicles during the dry season, while the metal fabrication workshop experiences high rates of vandalism and break and enters, resulting in high costs in repairs that impact heavily on its profitability. The Council also operates a Post Office Agency and Centrelink Agency, neither of which generates sufficient income through fees and sales to cover expenditure.

The Council operates a local motel which has high maintenance costs and is not commercially viable. It is used primarily by staff, consultants and sub-contractors. In 2003 the new Rural Transaction Centre was built by Council to provide new offices for Centrelink, the Post Office, the Library/Knowledge Centre (library), Traditional Credit Union, and an Employment and Training office. The Council provides ongoing funding for the repairs, maintenance and cleaning costs of the Rural Transaction Centre.

## **2.12 Housing, infrastructure and facilities**

The Thamarrurr Housing Authority comes under the Thamarrurr Regional Council and currently operates a housing administrative system and housing repair and maintenance program. The Authority is funded by the Indigenous Housing Authority of the Northern Territory (IHANT) annually for emergency repairs and maintenance. The Authority employs a number of local Aboriginal people and non-Aboriginal tradesmen and contractors including:

- Aboriginal Trainee Manager
- Aboriginal Housing Administration Officer
- 12 local Aboriginal people who are progressing into Stage 2 of general construction training, funded through CDEP and top up funding from Thamarrurr Regional Council
- Non-Aboriginal staff including three carpenters, two electricians and two plumbers

The overall goal of the Thamarrurr Housing Authority is to support people to live at homelands, satellite communities and subdivision arrangements on a permanent basis. The Manager noted the need for homelands to also establish some economic base as well as be provided with a normal level of health, education, power, water, housing and telecommunication services.

At the present time the Thamarrurr Housing Authority manages 217 dwellings in the region, which are in addition to the 39 government-owned dwellings at Wadeye. According to Taylor, these 217 dwellings accommodate on average 11.0 persons each; however, the Manager of Thamarrurr Regional Housing Authority believes that Taylor has seriously under-estimated overcrowding and that their estimates are that on average there are 17 persons per dwelling in the wet season and 14 persons per dwelling in the dry season. In addition, 17 of the existing dwellings are slated for major repairs and 54 have been condemned. Taylor calculates that the average number of persons per bedroom is five (Taylor 53:2003). On this basis, he estimates that the number of extra dwellings needed to adequately meet housing needs by the year 2023 is 465. If the Manager of the Thamarrurr Housing Authority is correct, then Taylor's estimate of an additional requirement of 465 is probably more like 600-700 new dwellings required.

Major limitations to the delivery of healthy housing services by the Housing Authority include

- Lack of funding for new housing
- Lack of serviced land
- Lack of services to homeland communities
- Poor condition of roads which are a major barrier to homeland development
- Inadequate water supply
- Extremely high repairs and maintenance costs of community housing due to wilful damage (Kardu Numida Inc Financial Statements 2003).

Taylor writes that temporary shifts of population contribute to the service population and add substantially to pressure on selected local services (16:2003). His assessment of the services and infrastructure in the Thamarrurr Region is that they are seriously inadequate:

*“Thus within a generation, Wadeye and its associated outstations will have a population greater in size than present day Nhulunbuy... unless a major upgrading occurs, this trajectory means that Wadeye (along with many of predominantly Aboriginal towns across the Top End) will be*

*increasingly anomalous in the Australia settlement hierarchy for being a vibrant and growing medium-sized country town yet with almost none of the basic infrastructure and services normally associated with such places.” (22:2003).*

### **2.13 Social and health services**

Taylor reports that Wadeye was ranked 33<sup>rd</sup> out of 49 Aboriginal communities by Bartlett and Duncan (2000) in terms of the adequacy of its health staff resources (70:2003). At present there are 11 personnel employed at the Wadeye Clinic. Attempts to employ the services of a General Practitioner on a long-term basis have failed despite there being good quality family housing available for a permanent doctor and adequate accommodation for a visiting or second doctor.

A women and family project has been funded by the Family and Community Services (Northern Territory Government) but there have been cost overruns in the establishment, accommodation and operational areas, which the Thamarrurr Regional Council has borne.

In late 1997 health services were withdrawn from Wadeye after damage to the Ambulance and when nursing staff vacated the community for personal safety reasons.

A Respite Centre for the aged and infirmed has been established with no external funding. The Clinic was renovated by the Council with no external funding to accommodate the services of a doctor. A staff Daycare Centre was opened in April 2003, with costs borne by Council. A Meals on Wheels service is in operation at Wadeye.

### **2.14 Law and order**

Discussions with Police at Wadeye confirmed reports of volatility in social relations among community members. The community no longer operates a club and residents travel to Peppimenarti during the dry season to drink alcohol at the Club there. Drinkers return to Wadeye after drinking at Peppimenarti and difficulties arise.

The community does not have a serious petrol sniffing problem, as it uses Avgas as a way of controlling petrol sniffing. Police estimate that there is currently a core group of up to 10 youths who still sniff petrol but consider the issue to be generally under control. Breaking and entering and theft of vehicles, food and equipment by youth are major and ongoing issues at Wadeye.

The statistics demonstrate that law and order is a major issue at Wadeye. Wadeye has the highest per capita juvenile offending rate in the Northern Territory (Taylor 71:2003). In the year 2002, there were 329 reported offences. Of these 17.3% were for unlawful entry of a dwelling or business, 18% were for theft and 35.2% were for property damage or other property offences (Taylor 72:2003).

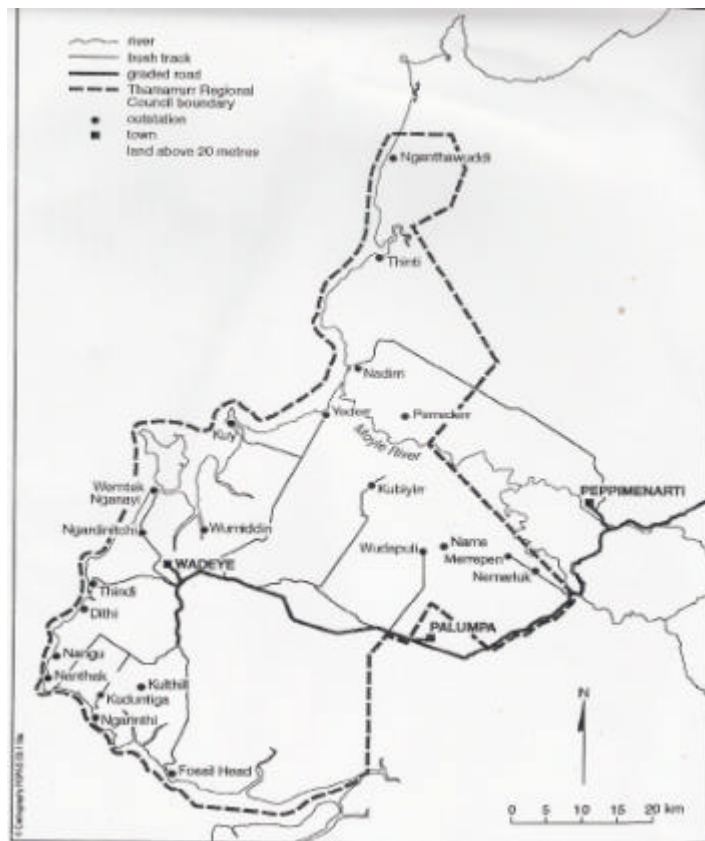
In 2002 ATSIC provided some funds to operate a night patrol service, which operated for a short time. A Juvenile Diversion Unit has been established but its establishment and operational costs are not fully funded. A women's shelter building is operated by local women.

### 2.15 Outstation development

Homelands development is very important to Aboriginal people residing at the Wadeye community and in the Thamarrurr region as they continue to maintain strong connections to their traditional lands. In many cases, people reside at Wadeye only in order to access services. Many people we interviewed described improving access and services to their homelands, and wanting to build these up, as their primary goals.

The Murin Resource Centre currently provides services to 20 outstations located in the Thamarrurr Region and is looking to take two more on in the near future.

Figure 7: Map of settlement distribution in the Thamarrurr Region, 2003.



### **3 Previous external impacts**

The present day community of Wadeye grew from a Catholic mission established at Port Keats in 1935. Prior to this, contact with other non-Aboriginal groups had been restricted to only limited engagements with Europeans, Malays, Javanese and Japanese. In 1938 the mission relocated to its current site, due to water shortages, and established a church, a head of cattle and food crops. In 1947 a dormitory and convent were built. The impact of placing children in the dormitory was to undermine their engagement in ceremonial life.

The Catholic Church managed the community until the early 1970s when the Northern Territory Government introduced self-management with the establishment of an elected local Council. The Aboriginal Council, Kardu Numida Inc, was established and provided services until the 1994 when it encountered financial difficulties. The Catholic Church continues to have a small presence at Wadeye.

Other than this contact with the Catholic Church and, obviously, contact with Australian and Northern Territory Governments, Aboriginal people living at Wadeye and in the Thamarrurr Region have only had some engagement with the cattle industry and have not had any previous experience with mining or major infrastructure projects

#### **3.1 Impacts of contact to date**

Despite missionisation, the relative isolation of people living in the Thamarrurr Region has enabled them to maintain strong continuity with traditional cultural practices and beliefs. Reasons for this continuity include:

- Continued access to traditional hunting and fishing grounds.
- Relative abundance of traditional food sources.
- Continued access to sacred sites and sites of significance.
- Only very limited destruction/modification of the physical environment so that the cultural landscape is relatively intact.
- Limited economic development and so limited engagement with the mainstream economy.
- No previous major projects on Aboriginal land which might provide a cash income stream.
- Maintenance of exchange relations based on reciprocity.
- The development of an economic base founded on community ownership and not on private ownership.
- Relative continuity of place of residence within the region.
- Wadeye people have not been marginalised in their own lands and remain the dominant peoples.
- At the family and language group level, they have largely been able to ensure that their cultural and social values prevail in the region.

Nevertheless, the effects of colonisation are still evident. In particular,

- Introduction of substances and substance abuse, most notably alcohol and marijuana.

- Undermining of cultural values and practices through reduced participation in cultural maintenance activities and breakdown in traditional marriages.
- Some breakdown in cultural transmission between generations.
- Adoption of a more sedentary lifestyle, and corresponding increase in the physical and mental health problems associated with this.
- Some loss of social capital<sup>4</sup>.

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<sup>4</sup> Social capital refers to the immaterial skills and knowledges which facilitate effective participation in social life and contribute to social vitality, political efficacy and economic self sufficiency.

## **4 Aspirations and Concerns**

### **4.1 Understanding of the Project**

A small number of Traditional Owners indicated that they felt they had a strong and thorough understanding of the Project. These individuals had clearly been the attention of a number of information events designed to ensure that they fully understood what was being proposed. Some senior people from Yek Maning had little understanding of the Project. Some Traditional Owners who did have a good understanding of the Project, expressed frustration at a lack of detail enabling them to assess for themselves whether the Project was a good project or not. Many senior people from Yek Diminhin, while they clearly had a keen awareness of the Project, did not appear to have a thorough understanding of the Project, nor of its potential social and environmental impacts. Those few Traditional Owners and community organisation representatives who had had the benefit of one-on-one discussions with company representatives and the NLC were the best informed.

Generally there was very little understanding of the Project among community members, in deed, among some households there was little awareness that a Project of any sort was even being proposed. There was a view that the Project was not only the concern of Traditional Owners, and that information needs to be disseminated more widely. As one Aboriginal informant put it "people need to get the right information, no good rushing it ... tell them the good things and the bad things... everyone needs to hear about what is going on, everyone living in the Region needs to know, the Project affects everyone." (May 2004)

The low level of knowledge and understanding of the Project among Aboriginal community members is a reflection, in part, of the severe language barriers in the community that any outside organisation experiences when attempting to engage with people at Wadeye. It also provides an indication of the high level of effort and resources required to engage effectively with a community of people such as this. A video which had only become available the week prior to our second round of field work and which includes translations in English and Murrin-patha will go some way to redress this problem. It is proposed that this video be shown regularly on BRACs; however, not all households in the community have TVs or VCRs. Copies of the video would no doubt be left at the Knowledge Centre where a VCR is available. A video alone, however, will not adequately engage the community members in developing an informed awareness of the Project and its likely impacts. A number of Aboriginal informants told us that the SIA process, which relied on intense small group and one on one information exchange and interviews was a good process because people "need to have it face to face, so that we have the chance to ask questions and hear the story first hand" (May 2004).

A number of representatives of organisations expressed frustration at a lack of specific information about the Project. They said they needed this information in order to start their planning processes if they are to be ready in time to take up promised potential opportunities and mitigate effectively anticipated negative impacts. Local enterprises sought specific information on commercial opportunities. The NLC Training and Employment Unit requested more specific information on job opportunities and training requirements. In addition, Police at Wadeye said that they were seeking specific information about the location of the construction camp, its security arrangements and policies, particularly in relation to alcohol.



The Thamarrurr Ranger Group expressed disappointment and concern that neither the NLC pipeline consultants nor the Company had provided them with detailed and ongoing information about the proposed Project. The Ranger Coordinator and senior Aboriginal Ranger stated in interviews that rangers and other local people are asking them questions about the Project. They would be happy to assist people with gaining an understanding of the project over time, at a slower pace and in language, but have not been consulted or engaged in discussions with NLC Consultants or Company staff.

The Ranger Group view themselves as a principle community organisation in the region with interests in land and sea management issues. Therefore, any proposed infrastructure projects such as the Blacktip Project, that affect land and sea country, are the concern of the Ranger Group. They believe it is appropriate that they are kept informed by the NLC and the Proponents about the projects and consulted as a lead agency.

Management staff at the Thamarrurr Council and a number of other informants from community organisations who were interviewed also requested that information materials, used by the SIA Consultants, be left with them, since they had no other materials on hand and a number of Aboriginal community members were asking them questions about the Project which they could not answer.

#### **4.2 Attitudes to the Project**

The consultations did not reveal any animosity towards the Proponents or their agents. Generally the people within the Wadeye community are well disposed towards the proposed Blacktip project. There was some frustration expressed over there not yet being a proposal for compensation on the table for Traditional Owners to consider, however, generally speaking, the Traditional Owners, wider community members and community employees and representatives expressed very positive views towards, and high expectations of benefits from, the Project.

#### **4.3 Aspirations**

In the absence of any other source of employment, many people expressed high hopes for contracting, employment and training opportunities being derived from the Blacktip Project, if it is approved. There is also a widespread belief that the Project is capable of and likely to lead to, the provision of natural gas for the generation of the community and regional power needs. Some individuals expressed the hope that they would receive free gas to fill up their gas bottles.

A number of Traditional Owners expressed the aspiration that royalty monies (their words) would provide income to purchase vehicles and develop and “build up” homelands. Some hopes were expressed that the Project Company would leave behind housing and infrastructure associated with the construction of the proposed Project at Wadeye for use by community members.

#### **4.4 Concerns**

Concerns raised by informants included the following:

- Pollution caused by condensate spilling into the sea while it is being pumped to tankers
- Pollution caused by ballast water being emptied into the ocean and polluting local waters
- The Company not taking responsibility for gas, condensate and pollution leaking into the sea
- The effect of Category 4 and 5 cyclones on the gas processing plant and the wellhead platform in the ocean
- The Company not having procedures in place to ensure the gas processing plant is safe at all times, particularly during cyclones and that explosions do not occur
- The effects of traditional burning in the vicinity of the proposed plant
- Construction, operational and maintenance workers using firearms
- Damage to roads by heavy equipment and other company vehicles,
- Theft of company property by local Aboriginal people, particularly youths
- Theft of company fuel by petrol sniffers
- Vandalism by local community members of company property
- The impact of a non-local workforce on community relations, particularly in regard to workers liaising with local women
- The two way trafficking of drugs and alcohol between construction workers and local community members
- The TTP route leading to unauthorised access to Aboriginal land by tourists, pig hunters and other outsiders
- Workers wandering away from the construction camp without permission from Traditional Owners
- Fighting and increased domestic violence associated with distribution of cash from compensation
- Increased road accidents resulting from an increased number of Company vehicles and equipment using local roads and from increased alcohol consumption by local community members associated with cash distributions of compensation monies
- Deaths on the road to Peppimenarti because people walk along the roads at night and often set up camps alongside the road at night and might not be seen by heavy vehicles using the roads at night.
- Concerns that compensation payments to Traditional Owners directly affected by the Project would result in “the haves and the have-nots” in the community.

## **5 Potential socio-economic impacts of the Blacktip Project**

### **5.1 Introduction**

The Project has the potential to create contracting and employment opportunities, and through a compensation arrangement, possibly contribute to the creation of an economic base in the region. In the absence of other real economic development opportunities, beyond service provision and state transfers, the Project is considered by those interviewed to be important for this reason. Supply of goods and services to the construction camp and possible service contracts post construction are highly sought after. The key concern at this stage is whether such opportunities can be realized given the short lead-times currently being proposed.

The potential social impacts of the Project are high risk, high impact during the construction phase and likely to be negligible during the operational phase. Road accidents are another possible concern.

The small area of land that the Project will occupy, and the ability to continue to use Yelcherr Beach, mean that it is not expected that traditional hunting, gathering and fishing activities will be significantly curtailed.

### **5.2 Heritage protection and cultural impacts**

The NLC is particularly sensitive to the protection of sacred and other significant sites located on Aboriginal land and sea country and have consulted, and continue to consult extensively, with affected Traditional Owners to identify new and existing land and marine-based sites to ensure their protection.

### **5.3 Engaging with the community**

Local organisations are well positioned to assist the Proponent to achieve its project aims and to manage impacts. Language barriers, combined with the community's lack of experience in engaging with major projects, are highly likely to create misunderstandings, on both sides. Unusual for a project such as this, neither the company nor the NLC has engaged a local liaison officer, other than on a casual basis, to act as a channel for information into the local community and to assist the company and the NLC to plan their engagements with the community.

The local Wadeye Aboriginal Language Centre has expressed its concern and disappointment that the Proponent had not sought its assistance in developing communication materials for the Project. The Language Centre plays an important role in documenting and preserving local languages and has access to senior Aboriginal people who are experts in translation. The Language Centre does not have recurrent funding and relies solely on income generated from contract work. Hence, contract work associated with the Blacktip and TTP Projects provide a rare and welcome opportunity to supplement the Centre's precarious income base.

Dealing through existing community organisations will reduce the possibility of the Proponent engaging with the community ineffectively, and/or its workers being accused of unfair dealings. For instance, workers who wish to purchase local art should be

instructed to ensure that they purchase art through the Dirrmu Ngakumarl Art Gallery. A number of people expressed concern that local artists may sell paintings to local workers at below market prices in exchange for “quick drinking money”.

#### **5.4 Need for safeguard policies**

Despite, or perhaps because of this positive disposition towards the Project currently being exhibited by the affected community, the Proponent is advised that, from the outset, it should adopt strict safeguard policies as a general principle in all planning associated with the Project. Any mistakes, or insensitive, or culturally uninformed actions may erode positive sentiment.

The use of safeguard policies would have the primary objective of **prevention** of negative social impacts. Prevention, rather than mitigation, is considered essential in this instance, for the following reasons:

1. The Wadeye community members are considered to be highly vulnerable because of their physical and social remoteness and total lack of previous experience with major infrastructure and mining projects.
2. The community is by its nature highly volatile, as evidenced by ongoing and recent violent incidences between its Aboriginal residents. Such incidences appear to stem from historical tensions amongst Aboriginal family groups. They may also be the result of an ongoing reliance on traditional methods of dispute resolution to maintain social relations.
3. Any mistakes which the Proponent might make which may create negative impacts could prove difficult, if not impossible, to manage or mitigate after the fact. Prevention is the key to managing the potential social impacts associated in particular with the Blacktip Project, and thus interactions with the community need to be carefully planned and supervised.

#### **5.5 Community interactions with non-Indigenous workforces**

There were varied opinions amongst those interviewed about whether workers at the construction camp should stay in the camp, or be permitted to visit the community. Some people interviewed were of the view that the construction workers should not be permitted to leave the camp unless accompanied by a Traditional Owner, including visiting the community stores. Others took the view that workers should be encouraged to visit the community, in particular to make purchases at the stores. Strategies which comprehensively insulate community members and isolate the workforce will be critical for the following reasons:

- Aboriginal community members have never been exposed to the range of social impacts that a major infrastructure project with a large construction force can potentially produce.
- Aboriginal community members have no points of reference by which they might anticipate possible impacts. All those interviewed were asked their views on whether they expected there to be any problems with a construction force of around 200 being camped within five kilometers of the community. Amongst

those Aboriginal people interviewed, some responded that they could not foresee any problem with this while others appeared unsure. A smaller number of Aboriginal informants expressed concerns about the potential problems associated with a construction workforce. Generally, the Aboriginal informants responses, or lack of, are cause for concern, as it suggests that community members have no experience of the types of problems that might arise in such a situation, (examples are provided below), and therefore, will be unlikely to take preventative action. They may also be less forgiving of any such problems if they do occur, because these were not anticipated.

- The Proponent may lose its community mandate to operate if only a single incident occurs which the community considers unforgivable and for which the community chooses to hold the Proponent accountable. Wadeye is a community which might be characterised as very trusting but which “does not forgive”. In a worst case scenario, a single incident involving a non-local worker may potentially jeopardise irrevocably the Proponent’s ability to continue to operate in the area. While Bougainville is an extreme example, it nevertheless exemplifies the extent to which loss of local community support can undermine a company’s ability to continue operations in a remote and volatile location.
- Aboriginal women in the community are, in the main, not using contraceptives and would be most unlikely to seek to use contraceptives in the event of choosing to have consensual sex with a non-local construction worker.
- Sexual relations are a “shame” subject and therefore potential problems are unlikely to be discussed openly or be dealt with effectively.
- The incidence of sexually transmitted infections (STIs) is reportedly already high, although no data were available to substantiate this.
- The Peppimenarti Club is only approximately one hour’s drive away. It is understood (and recommended) that workers will not have private vehicles, and so there is the potential for workers to seek to pay Aboriginal people to procure alcohol on their behalf.
- The use of the only road into the community by construction vehicles will create hazards for both local residents using the roads, and for drivers of construction vehicles who may share the roads with drunk drivers returning from the Peppimenarti Club.
- Wadeye is not regarded as a community of people who would be likely to take offence passively. Rather the community members can be expected to react aggressively and swiftly in response to any offence, (intended or unintended), by the Proponent and/or its workers. In some cases community members are not likely to hold back in expressing their anger through violence and/or vandalism.
- For most local Aboriginal people living at Wadeye and surrounding homelands, English is their last language. Language difficulties, combined with local people’s inexperience with major infrastructure projects, may create misunderstandings that may not be easily resolved.

Examples of the sorts of incidents which might lead to violence against the Proponent and/or its workers and property include:

- Non-local workers socialising with Aboriginal women, regardless of whether such encounters are initiated by the Aboriginal women themselves.
- Non-local workers appearing to socialise with Aboriginal women, again regardless of who initiates such interactions or even whether they actually occur. Sexual jealousy can be very strong among people living in remote communities and can arise even when there is no evidence of an actual encounter. The sometimes violent consequences for women, perpetrated by their own men, can also cause serious injury (and death) as well as severely disrupt social relations among local families.
- Non-local workers sharing their alcohol allocation with Aboriginal women or men, or trading their alcohol allocations for sexual favours from Aboriginal women.
- Road incidents involving local community members and company vehicles, regardless of who is at fault. In particular if there is injury to Aboriginal community members.
- Non-local workers travelling away from the construction site or work-site (e.g. sight-seeing) without the express permission of Traditional Owners and/or not in the company of Traditional Owners.
- A perception of unfair treatment of Aboriginal workers by supervisors, or perception of unfair dismissal.

## **5.6 Security**

The Wadeye community is currently experiencing high rates of damage to, and theft of, property and vehicles. There will be a very high and ongoing risk of damage and theft to the company's property and vehicles. Local Police advised that the property of builders brought in to build the new subdivision in recent years had been targeted by youths, which had resulted in the local Police having to spend considerable time attending to petty crime. The Police also advised that construction workers should not be allowed to have firearms or drugs and this would need to be policed carefully. They also stated that only lite beer should be kept on premises to discourage local youth from damaging property in attempts to steal alcohol.

Police stated that local Aboriginal people may potentially beg for food, fuel and other goods. It was suggested that private security guards would be needed to protect property and deal with "humbug". However, security staff would need to be inducted and carefully managed. The local Police and some Traditional Owners suggested that a local planning committee consisting of the Police, Traditional Owners, Council representatives and Woodside representatives should meet to establish a set of rules, policies and procedures for Company security workers to follow in the event of offences involving local community members. All security guards would need to be properly inducted and briefings should include information relating to:

- Living on Aboriginal land
- Specific socio-cultural issues

- Procedures for dealing with particular problems including the maintenance of radio contact with local police
- The benefits of maintaining a close relationship with the local police who have a good understanding of the local politics and social relations

Some Traditional Owners stated that community elders should be involved in resolving any difficulties with youth, particularly if disciplinary action was to be taken. It is critical that mechanisms for dealing with offences by local Aboriginal youth, involving Company property and personnel, are developed by senior community representatives with experienced Company representatives before construction begins.

Both the Police and a number of Traditional Owners said that they felt that if there were any problems at the Blacktip workers construction camp (for instance, involving theft or trafficking), that the Company should always involve local police and identified community elders to deal with such matters.

The Police also advised that their resources at Wadeye are already stretched and that they would need a minimum of three to six months lead time prior to construction work beginning to obtain additional police staff to cope with the expected increase in crime, problems and issues associated with the presence of a large contingent of construction workers near Wadeye.

### **5.7 Female employment**

Gender balance within the construction workforce will likely improve the ability to implement insulation/isolation strategies. The presence of a significant number of female workers will provide a more normal social situation within the work camp.

### **5.8 Access of workers to hunting and fishing areas**

Local Police took the view that there was a need to reduce issues of access and movement of construction workers on Aboriginal land and it was suggested that construction workers should not be able to gain verbal permission from Traditional Owners to access areas for fishing, hunting and sightseeing. Police proposed that designated areas should be identified by Traditional Owners and permits issued through the NLC. It is understood that the NLC is considering establishing an NLC office at Wadeye. Should this occur the NLC's capacity to adequately administer and enforce an appropriate permit arrangement for access by construction workers would be significantly increased.

### **5.9 Granting of favours**

It is advised that the Proponent not grant any small "favours" to local families or individuals, unless it intends to continue to grant these favours indefinitely and to all those individuals and families who might consider themselves to be entitled to such favours, since "drawing a line" will likely meet with anger and resentment. For instance, an exploration camp located near an Aboriginal community further south initially offered assistance to stranded families in vehicles by providing them with fuel when they had run out and spare tyres when they had flats. This, however, set up an expectation that the company would continue to provide such favours. When the demands for such favours increased to an unsustainable level, the company refused. From the company's point of

view its generosity was being abused. From the Aboriginal perspective, the company was now refusing to pay its rent. While the company had initially provided these favours in order to strengthen positive feelings with the community it instead set itself up to create bad feelings down the line.

Granting of favours to the families of Traditional Owners is also not advisable, as it not only sets up expectations but, because the nature and identity of Traditional Ownership is often more complex than it appears, companies have frequently granted favours to families they believe to be members of a Traditional Owner group to the annoyance of other Traditional Owner groups who are not as well recognised by the proponents. Benefits should be delivered at the community level or via representative organisations which can protect the Proponent from accusations of favouritism or bribery.

### **5.10 Alcohol**

Those interviewed were asked their views on whether workers should be allowed to consume alcohol at the construction camp. A common view was that, providing they had a permit, construction workers should be allowed to consume alcohol. Although many also took the view that while it was alright for non-local workers to be provided with alcohol, local Aboriginal co-workers should not be allowed to have alcohol. There is a need to explore, with senior community members, the difficulties and inconsistencies associated with the issue of alcohol being provided to non-local workers and not to local Aboriginal co-workers, in more depth. However, providing limited access to alcohol for workers may have some slight effect in lessening the likelihood of workers seeking to procure illicit alcohol, or bringing unauthorised alcohol into the camp.

The local Police at Wadeye expressed concerns in relation to construction workers and alcohol and advised that there had been incidences of alcohol and drugs being brought in to the community by builders who were building houses at the new subdivision over the last two years.

At Peppimenarti, interviews with the licensee and Council indicated that there was hope that the construction camp would provide business for the Club at Peppimenarti, and so additional revenue, and that they expected the company to take responsibility for the behaviour of workers at the Club and outside the Club after closing hours.

### **5.11 Communication and relationship-building**

Isolating the construction workforce and insulating the community, does not, however, prevent the Proponent from initiating carefully managed interactions between the construction workforce and local community in such a way as to build positive community relations. Some examples of the sorts of managed interactions which might be undertaken with positive effect include:

- Social football and other team games, alcohol free, between workers and community members.
- Managed and regulated visits to the community stores and art centre for purchases by workers.



- “Open Days” at the construction camp where local community members are invited to a barbeque or other event at the construction camp and invited to view the construction progress. Such “Open Days” are especially beneficial for informing the community of progress on the Project and enabling community members to see that there are no “secrets”.
- A comprehensive and carefully planned communication strategy, which might include regular visits (e.g. fortnightly) by the project manager to the community to inform community leaders and interested members on progress of the Project, and regular presentations on the BRACs and posting of photos of the Project progress on a community notice board.
- Sponsoring of community events e.g. art prize, or provision of a community benefit such as a community bus.

## **5.12 Economic impacts**

### **5.12.1 Diseconomies**

It is not expected that there will be any significant diseconomies resulting from the Project with the exception of some limitations on fishing and use of Yelcherr Beach during construction of the pipeline coming from the ocean across Yelcherr Beach to the gas processing plant.

There is a reasonable prospect that “creaming” of the workforce may occur, whereby competent and qualified personnel, which the Thamarrurr Regional Council and other Wadeye organisations rely on for essential work, may be attracted to more lucrative paid positions with the construction workforce.

### **5.12.2 Access to hunting and fishing**

The area affected by the gas processing plant is not significant in contrast to the available lands for hunting and gathering, and it is not anticipated that hunting, gathering or fishing activities will be curtailed as a result of the Projects.

### **5.12.3 Employment, training and recruitment**

Other than the CDEP, there is no existing agency at Wadeye coordinating and facilitating training and employment for local Aboriginal people in the Thamarrurr Region. Training is high on the Thamarrurr Regional Council’s priorities and the Council is currently in the process of negotiating with Group Training Northern Territory for some general training to occur at Wadeye. An Employment and Training Centre has recently been constructed at Wadeye at Council’s expense, and it is hoped that ultimately training costs will be funded.

The NLC’s Indigenous Training and Employment Unit has demonstrated its ability to coordinate and facilitate significant Indigenous training and employment outcomes for a range of major infrastructure projects, including the ADRail Project, in the Top End of the Northern Territory (English 2002). The Unit has taken some initial actions and worked closely with the Territory Construction Association (TCA) as part of taking a proactive role in coordinating the planning for the training and employment of Indigenous people in the Blacktip (and TTP and ALCAN expansion) Projects. The Unit advises that it has already facilitated the involvement of some Indigenous people in relevant training programs such as plant operation, hospitality services,

welding and general construction in Darwin. However, due to staff constraints, the Unit has not engaged with organisations or individuals at Wadeye at all.

The Unit advised that it is acutely aware of the compressed timeframes associated with the planning for, and construction of the Blacktip project, particularly in terms of the lead-time required to identify, train and mentor Aboriginal people. The Unit's project planning and training processes continue to be limited by the lack of information provided by Woodside, and the other Proponents, about the employment opportunities on each of these projects (preconstruction, construction, commissioning and maintenance). To date, the Unit has relied on information generated by the Territory Construction Association and the NLC, neither of which say they have been able to check or confirm their estimates with the Proponents.

The NLC Indigenous Training and Employment Unit, in partnership with the TCA, have the experience, knowledge, networks and methodologies to effectively engage Traditional Owners and other local Aboriginal people in the Thamarrurr Region, in training and employment. However, to successfully facilitate the training and employment of Traditional Owners and local Aboriginal people in the Blacktip Project in the current time-frame (i.e. Oct 2004, preconstruction dry season 2005 & construction during dry season in 2006) the Unit will require additional human and capital resources. The Unit estimates that this would include a Coordinator and two Indigenous Training and Employment Project Officers based at Wadeye. The proposed Coordinator would be responsible for:

- Liaising and coordinating with Job Network providers, Group Training organisations, Centrelink and CDEPs,
- Liaising with the Proponents, subcontractors, supervisors and managers as part of ongoing planning, monitoring, evaluation, problem solving/prevention and mitigation,
- Managing and supporting Project staff, and
- Reporting to the NLC and Proponents.

The NLCTE Unit proposes that the Training and Employment Project Officers would:

- visit communities and outstations to provide information about the training and employment opportunities for the Blacktip and TTP Projects to Traditional Owners and Aboriginal community members living at Wadeye, outstations and other communities in the west TTP region,
- register interested people on the NLC database,
- assist people with their applications for training and employment,
- ascertain individual training needs,
- support people to participate in the appropriate training in accordance with the Unit's culturally appropriate 5 Step Assessment and Referral Process,
- assist people with job applications and their preparations for interviews;, and
- provide ongoing support and mentoring to people employed.

The Unit would also require one to two vehicles over the two to three year period that includes planning, preconstruction and construction phases of the Blacktip and TTP Projects. The NLC Training and Employment Unit suggested that its staff based at Wadeye might potentially share office space and equipment with Group Training NT.

#### 5.12.4 Business development opportunities

There are high hopes and expectations by Traditional Owners, community members, the Thamarrurr Regional Council and local Indigenous organisations that the Blacktip

Project will contribute to the development of an economic base in the immediate region and create training and employment opportunities, particularly through contracts, for local Aboriginal people during the pre-construction, construction and operational phases of the Projects. As discussed above in relation to employment and training, there was frustration expressed by those interviewed in relation to commercial contracting opportunities about the lack of information available to organisations to assist them to initiate training programs and to plan for increased capacity.

The Economic Impact Assessment, prepared by ACIL Economics, writes in relation to Indigenous impacts:

*“The regional location of the Projects provides employment and business development opportunities for local Indigenous people during both construction and operation. Opportunities during construction could include preliminary earth works, road works and site revegetation. During operation they could include site maintenance, security provision and general repairs. During operation, there is also the possibility of flow on opportunities such as tourism ventures that take advantage of improved access to remote areas.” (ACIL 22:2004).*

Our consultations revealed interest in taking up those opportunities identified by ACIL, but also in taking up other opportunities further to those identified. These include:

- supply of bread and meat to the construction camp,
- catering services to the construction camp,
- provision of cultural sensitivity and awareness training to workers and supervisors, cultural tourism services to workers,
- sale of take away foods and sale of art and artifacts to workers,
- provision of translation and liaison services,
- sale of alcohol,
- sale of sand and gravel, and
- provision of transport services, including air flights and charters.

All of the Indigenous enterprises, some community organisations and the Thamarrurr Regional Council have expressed a strong interest in carrying out contracts associated with the Blacktip Project that are commensurate with their capacity. As discussed above, profits generated by the locally-owned Indigenous organisations are channeled back into the Wadeye community and regional homelands for community benefit, thus there are important local multiplier effects of economic benefits capable of being achieved through local supply and service contracts.

Traditional Owners also expressed a keen interest in providing cultural education and cultural tourism services to workers, and artists at the Dirrmu Ngakumarl Art Gallery hope that the Project will provide more clients for art work.

The following is a summary of the interest and capacity of local organisations in the Thamarrurr Region to complete supply and service contracts associated with the Blacktip project.

- The Mi Patha Takeaway & Bakery has a fully equipped and operational bakery that makes fresh bread and rolls every day. The bakery has a capacity to make 1000 loaves of bread per day. Currently, Monday is the peak day with an average of 600 loaves sold. The

- Bakery has the capacity to supply bread to the Blacktip construction camp and to operational and maintenance workers over the next 25 years.
- The Mi Patha Takeaway is also interested in taking on the entire catering contract for the Blacktip construction workforce. The Takeaway has a large full equipped kitchen with a qualified chef and ample local staff as well as substantial storage room, freezers and chillers.
  - The Murrinpatha Nimmipa Store is particularly interested in becoming a major supplier of food and other goods to the Blacktip Construction camp and operational and maintenance crews over the next 25 years. The store has substantial capacity in terms of its access to Darwin Independent Grocers, courier and transport services from Darwin to Wadeye, local storage facilities for dry, chilled and frozen goods.
  - Murin Travel and Freight Services are particularly interested in becoming the primary approved airline carrier of Woodside (and its subcontractors) so they can provide passenger and freight air services for the construction and maintenance workforces associated with the preconstruction, construction and operation of the Blacktip project over the next 25 years. Murin Travel and Freight Services have quality passenger and storage services and facilities at Darwin and are prepared to finance and build a new air conditioned and serviced passenger and freight facility at Wadeye as part of its commitment to providing first class passenger facilities to Blacktip employees.
  - The Thamarrurr Regional Council plays a critical role in the provision of a municipal and community development services in the region. In addition to its core responsibilities the Council provides financial and other support to a range of community infrastructure, training, employment and development projects that would otherwise not be viable. The Thamarrurr Regional Council is in the process of increasing its capacity so it can position itself to carry out minor and major contracts associated with all phases of the Blacktip project. It has indicated a willingness to invest in equipment and machinery in order to be able to take up roadwork and earthmoving contracts, as well as construction activities.
  - The local Wadeye Aboriginal Languages Centre plays an important role in documenting and preserving local languages and has access to senior Aboriginal people who are experts in translation. The Language Centre has the interest, expertise, technology and capacity to complete contracts involving the development of communication materials related to the Blacktip project.
  - The Wadeye Knowledge Centre has the capacity, through BRACS and the Library, to also disseminate information about the Project in a range of mediums.
  - The Palumpa Station is a community-owned enterprise that generates local employment at both Palumpa and Wadeye. The Station operates a fully equipped butchers shop at Wadeye and has the capacity to provide locally grown and butchered beef to the Blacktip construction camp and ongoing operational and maintenance crews.

- The Peppimenarti Club sells alcohol and light meals and consultations with the licensee and Council representatives indicated that they were hopeful that workers from the Blacktip (and TTP) Projects would be using Club facilities.

#### 5.12.5 Environmental management

The Thamarrurr Rangers have particular interest in gaining economic and employment benefits through contract work associated with the preconstruction, construction and operational phases of the Blacktip project. They are able to carry out weed control contracts, participate in fauna and marine survey work and manage and monitor fauna during periods when the TTP trench is open.

The Thamarrurr Rangers are the principle agency in the Thamarrurr Region to assist Aboriginal landowners to understand any minor or major projects affecting land and sea country. They have the network and capacity to disseminate information about the Blacktip project to Aboriginal landowners and their families and other interested community members as well as provide feedback to the NLC and Woodside.

The Thamarrurr Rangers stated, however, that they need timely and specific information about the training & employment and contract opportunities associated with all phases of the Blacktip Project as soon as possible so they can increase their organisational and human resource capacity. The Rangers were particularly keen to understand the Project timeline as they are conscious of the long lead times needed, for organisations such as theirs, to gear themselves up to fully take advantage of any employment and contract opportunities associated with all phases of the Project. They stated that a lot of time is needed to facilitate an understanding by local people of the Project training, employment and contract opportunities.

Funding and additional resources are needed to increase the capacity of the Thamarrurr Rangers, through the development of a Natural Resource Management department within the Council. Such developments would include:

- Developing a ranger base that includes office space, outdoor meeting/planning area and lockup storage space for vehicles and equipment is urgently needed. Currently, the Rangers work from a small room next to the Recreation Hall that is inadequate in terms of size and facilities.
- Upgrading the existing ranger vehicle to a reliable vehicle for transporting rangers and equipment.
- Employing a Ranger Mentor/Supervisor.
- Acquiring equipment for weed control.

The Rangers have made submissions to the ICCP, the Aboriginal Benefits Association, Indigenous Land Corporation and Rio Tinto who have exploration interests in the region, and will be making further submissions to other agencies. However, given that the Project will create work for the Rangers who will have a role in environmental monitoring and communication about impacts of the Project, it would be appropriate that the Proponent give consideration to supporting the Rangers as part of the legitimate project costs, over the life of the project.

#### **5.13 Free gas and/or improved energy infrastructure**

There are high expectations in the community and within the Thamarrurr Regional Council that the Project will result in an upgrading of electricity generation equipment and the provision of

free gas. Council advised that the current generators are located close to community housing and are hopeful that the Project will result in the relocation of these facilities, with an upgrade to equipment using gas supplies. Our interviews with the Northern Territory Power and Water Corporation (PAWC) indicate to us that these expectations are misinformed.

Currently 97% of the electricity generated by PAWC is sourced from natural gas. Since 1986 PAWC has purchased gas from the Amadeus Basin, via the Alice Springs to Darwin pipeline, south west of Alice Springs, to supply gas-fired power to the major Northern Territory centres, including Alice Springs, Tennant Creek, Katherine, Pine Creek (because of the mine) and Darwin. The current contract will cease in 2009 and PAWC expect that the Amadeus gas fields will be unable to deliver the gas requirements of the Northern Territory after 2009.

It is understood that PAWC is currently negotiating with the Proponent of the Blacktip Project, and other gas suppliers, to purchase a supply of gas so the Corporation can continue to generate power by natural gas to the major centres, including Alice Springs, Tennant Creek, Katherine, Pine Creek and Darwin, over the next 15-20 years.

PAWC advised that it is not considering supplying gas-fired generators to communities, including those Aboriginal communities located in the vicinity of the Blacktip Project for the following reasons:

- The supply of gas-fired generators to smaller communities, including Wadeye, is not economically viable as their power needs fall “a long way short of the threshold load to justify such gas plants”. At this point in time there are no communities, outside of the major centres, that have a sufficient power load to achieve the economy of scale required. This situation is likely to remain into the foreseeable future. While the anticipated population growth over the next 25 years at Wadeye is substantial, PAWC states that the estimated increased use of power by residents at Wadeye would still fall short of the required threshold. The development of industry would be needed to substantially increase power needs at Wadeye as population increases do not principally grow electricity demand.
- Diesel generators are a currently an appropriate and flexible source of power for communities. Diesel generators are available in a wide range of sizes to meet the varying power needs of different sized communities. In addition, the purchase of backup diesel generators is considerably cheaper than that of backup gas fired technology.
- Local Indigenous employees of PAWC, who live on remote communities, are familiar with the operation and maintenance of diesel generators and would have to make a “quantum leap” to operate and maintain gas technology.

PAWC currently provides electricity to all of the major centres and 78 major communities in the Northern Territory. The Corporation does not supply power to homelands and outstations which are generally serviced by community organisations. A Community Standard Tariff Equalisation Policy requires the NT Government to ensure, through a Community Service Obligation arrangement, that every resident in the Northern Territory, who is supplied electricity by the PAWC, pays a standard electricity tariff irrespective of where they reside. Thus, irrespective of the cost of the generation of electricity, all consumers pay the same rates. What this means is that, even if cheaper energy were procured, this would not result in any change to the cost of electricity in communities.

Organisations servicing outstations and homelands do pay the real costs of diesel-generated power to remote locations but they would certainly not provide the economy of scale to justify the infrastructure investment to provide them with cheaper gas or electricity supplies.

#### **5.14 Compensation and consideration for land use**

The Traditional Owner Group whose land is directly affected by the gas processing plant is a small group by Aboriginal standards but has extensive and complex obligations to many others in the community and surrounding regions. It is likely therefore, that any compensation payments made to this Traditional Owner Group will be widely distributed as there will be many demands made upon members of this Group by those who consider themselves to have an entitlement to sharing in any benefits.

Concerns were expressed to the SIA Team that the Traditional Owner Group needed to ensure that other Groups along the TTP route also supported the Project before it could give its consent since “when people see us all with four, five new Toyotas and generators for our outstations, and everything, they will come for us with a spear if they don’t want that pipeline”. There is a clear expectation on the part of this Group that any direct benefits likely to come from the Blacktip Project will be considerable to the point where they will make a measurable difference to the disposable income of this extended family group. The potential positive impacts of a compensation payment such as the main affected Traditional Owner Group is anticipating are significant. Informants spoke of achieving greater access to country and to meeting ceremonial obligations through ownership of vehicles, as well as the purchase of furniture and appliances for their new homes recently built in the new subdivision and occupied by this extended family group. Clearly if the Group approves the Project and such benefits are delivered, these types of impacts will be very positive.

The Traditional Owners, wider community and community employees and representatives expressed very positive views towards, and high expectations of direct benefits from, the Project. The two Traditional Owner Groups, whose country is primarily affected by the Blacktip Project, said that they would be looking for independent advisory support to assist the clans to set up a mechanism to receive compensation and to provide ideas about how to plan and invest monies received. They are keen to manage compensation in a clear and straight way so as to stop arguments.

Local Police expressed concerns that compensation payments are likely to contribute to increased alcohol-related accidents, crimes and violence including domestic violence. According to the local Officer in Charge, every available car at Wadeye is currently used to transport people to Peppimenarti on Thursday and Fridays so they can access alcohol from the Club. He expressed concern that compensation in the form of royalties is likely to increase the number of vehicles purchased by community members, and subsequently increase people’s access to and consumption of alcohol and other drugs as well as increase the number of car accidents and injuries.

Healthcare professionals echoed these concerns stating that additional cash circulating in the community may lead to greater consumption of alcohol, with the attendant increases in community violence and injury as a result.

### **5.15 Potential social impacts of upgrades to roads and increased traffic**

There was divided opinion among informants on the benefits of upgrading the road to Daly River. Some people were “worried” that an improved road would increase access to Peppimenarti and result in an increase in alcohol consumption and associated social problems. A small number of community members interviewed stated they did not want a bridge built over the Daly River as “it will bring problems”. Others saw benefits in an upgraded road in terms of improved transport and infrastructure that would enable safer and faster movement of local traffic as well as supporting the development of an economic base in the region.

A number of Traditional Owners and Aboriginal community members expressed concerns about the increased risk of road accidents involving local people travelling to and from Wadeye, Palumpa and Peppimenarti during the Blacktip and TTP construction periods and consider it “to be a very serious matter”. They talked about local Aboriginal people, including those affected by alcohol, commonly sleeping and walking on the road at night time after becoming tired or their cars breaking down.

A number of informants suggested the following ways to reduce the risk of road accidents.

- Address sharp bends and improve sight lines during an upgrade of the Port Keats road
- Ensure that all TTP and Woodside drivers and workers complete orientation courses so they understand the different ways in which local Aboriginal people use roads, particularly the main Port Keats road
- The NT Road Traffic Safety Council, in conjunction with the Wadeye Language Centre could develop and implement a bilingual road safety awareness campaign targeting local Aboriginal road users to warn them about the increased risks during the construction phase of the TTP and Blacktip projects. It was suggested the campaign could include a road safety video in Murrin-patha language shown through BRACS and at the Library/Knowledge Centre to raise awareness among local people.

Police suggested that a Traffic Management Plan would need to be developed and requested that they be involved in the development of same.

### **5.16 Community health and safety impacts**

A number of people interviewed asked about safety risks associated with the gas processing plant and gas pipeline and expressed concerns about the environmental affects of gas leaks and whether they could still carry out traditional burning.

Risks to the health and safety of community members arise most directly in association with extra traffic on the Port Keats Road, as discussed elsewhere in this Report.

A number of people also raised concerns about workers trafficking drugs and about community members selling drugs (in particular marijuana), to non-local workers. The risks associated would be addressed by the implementation of insulation and isolation strategies.



### **5.17 Cumulative impacts**

The proposed Blacktip gas processing plant is not expected to trigger additional projects or developments in the immediate region beyond the TTP. Although it has been speculated that the construction of the plant and attendant pipeline might make viable otherwise marginal mining or processing projects, the authors are not aware of any such proposals in the immediate region of the Blacktip gas processing plant. The SIA Consultants are not aware of any other projects or events likely to occur in the near future which would combine with the impacts of the Blacktip Project to aggravate impacts.

### **5.18 Impacts of the SIA process itself**

The methodology used by the SIA Program focused on consulting with Traditional Owners and Aboriginal community members in small clan and family based settings, either at their homes or at their preferred place. This process allowed the SIA Consultants to spend considerable time providing information, where possible with the assistance of local interpreters, about the Blacktip and TTP projects at an appropriate level and pace. The process allowed Aboriginal informants to ask a range of questions, particularly in relation to safety and environmental aspects (e.g. gas leaks) and for the Consultants to provide information and reassurance.

The SIA process also focused on consulting with Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal representatives of local and regional enterprises and service organizations. There was consistent feedback from these informants that the SIA team was the first group to provide information to their organisations

In our view the SIA consultations generally provided Aboriginal and organisational respondents with an opportunity to state a position about the Project and express concerns and aspirations without the pressure of being asked whether or not they agree with the Project. Overall the response to our presence was positive, although our consultations were limited by the factors cited in our discussion of methodology.

## **6 Capacity to respond to change**

As discussed above, the Wadeye community members are considered to be highly vulnerable because of their physical and social remoteness and lack of previous experience with major infrastructure and mining projects. The Wadeye community is reliant on non-Aboriginal administrators and the Thamarrurr Region's governance arrangements are still being consolidated.

These circumstances suggest that the community's ability to respond to change would be considerably less than that of another Aboriginal community which is accustomed to engaging with projects such as this and where its governance arrangements were firmly established and proven resilient. Wadeye's flexibility and responsiveness is likely to be further compromised by language barriers and poor communication networks for transmitting efficiently the sort of project-related information likely to be generated by the Project.

High expectations in relation to the Project need to be carefully and sensitively managed and it would seem that greater information and resources need to be injected into the community to equip it to:

- Disseminate better information about the Project and its possible impacts to the wider community members
- Allow organisations to respond appropriately and in a timely fashion
- Develop realistic understanding and aspirations about the opportunities the Project is likely or unlikely to provide
- Enable affected Traditional Owners and community members to have a voice in relation to aspirations, concerns and impacts

Clearly the organisations in the community have given a great deal of thought to the types of opportunities which they believe are likely to arrive with the Project, and have commenced intense internal informal planning for how they might position themselves to benefit. There is some concern as to whether their planning is realistic or timely and whether they will be able to effectively engage with the Proponent to ensure their aspirations are met.

Of concern is the relative inexperience of the Aboriginal community members with projects such as this, in particular of the sorts of tensions and problems that can arise with the presence of a construction workforce, in particular in relation to sexual jealousies. The capacity of the community members to respond will be predicated upon the openness with which the Company, community organisations and Traditional Owners and the Council can engage in discussion and strategic planning for the prevention of problems.

Strategies will be required to strengthen the community's capacity to respond positively to change and proactively pre-empt potential negative impacts.

## 7 Monitoring

A major monitoring study is currently underway at Wadeye, being undertaken by the Centre for Aboriginal Economic Policy Research, Australian National University, Canberra. The Study is compiling a baseline data set of social indicators for the Thamarrurr Region and providing ongoing monitoring of those indicators, in order to assist in the monitoring and evaluation of the Indigenous Communities Coordination Pilots (ICCP) protocol. The ICCP is a pilot project currently being implemented between the Thamarrurr Regional Council, the Northern Territory Government and the Commonwealth Government, which has as its first objective “the establishment of partnerships for achieving measurable and sustainable improvements for people living in the region” (Taylor 7:2003).

The purpose and role of the ANU monitoring study is to

*“...identify mutually determined social, economic and service delivery outcomes, together with the means to achieve them and assumed responsibilities... these will be codified in a negotiated regional development plan, and then subject to a regular process of evaluation and monitoring against measurable outcomes.” (1:2003).*

The data to be collected include “demographic structure and residence patterns of the regional population, its labour force status, education and training status, income, welfare, housing and health status, as well as indicators of interaction with the criminal justice system” (Taylor 7:2003). Since these are precisely the indicators which would be included in the selected indicators to monitor impacts of the Blacktip Project, it would be pointless to collect the same data twice.

The ANU study will need to interpret the data to determine the extent to which changes to the indicators it collects are the result of outcomes of intervention and interest by the ICCP or some other factor, or indeed, if such changes can be attributed to the social and economic impacts of the Blacktip Project.

Rather than duplicate the ANU study, consideration should be given as to how the ANU Study can contribute to the monitoring and evaluation of the social and economic impacts of the Blacktip Project. Ideally, the ANU study should be expanded to incorporate monitoring and evaluation of changes to socio-economic indicators as outcomes of the Blacktip Project if it proceeds.

Data that would need to be collected for the purposes of monitoring and evaluating the social and economic impacts of the Blacktip and TTP Projects, additional to that proposed to be collected by the ANU study, include

- traffic accident data,
- qualitative reporting on community disturbances relating to sexual jealousies,
- qualitative reporting on drug and alcohol trafficking,
- expenditure at the local stores by the company and construction workers, and
- the value of contracts let to Council and other local organisations.

Close oversight and monitoring of the planning and implementation of the Blacktip Project would best be conducted by representatives of these relevant organisations.

## **8 Conclusion**

Traditional Owners, members of the community and community organisations clearly have high expectations of benefits from the proposed Blacktip Project and it is not clear how realistic these expectations are. Certainly in relation to the provision of free gas and upgraded electricity generation infrastructure expectations appear unrealistic.

There is concern that realization of the benefits that the Project might deliver will require greater lead times than are currently being allowed for, if it is intended that the commencement date currently being proposed of the dry of 2005 is to be met.

Resources and information clearly need to be injected urgently into the community if this is the case.

As the demographic profiles and other social indicators suggest, the Wadeye community is a highly vulnerable community and engaging with this community will require sensitivity and sophistication on the part of the Proponent. Using existing organisations and involving them in participatory planning to the extent possible will be essential to preventing the potentially serious negative impacts such a vulnerable community might experience, and to maximising the benefits which the community clearly believes it will receive. For the Project to retain its mandate to operate it will need to proceed with caution and with a recognition of the volatility of the community and that there will likely be frequent opportunity for misunderstandings to arise.

## 9 Appendices

### 9.1 *List of people interviewed*

*The names of Traditional Owners and Aboriginal community members interviewed have been provided to the NLC and are not included in this Report for confidentiality reasons. The following people were interviewed in their capacities representing local organisations:*

Terry Bullamore, CEO, Thamarrurr Regional Council

Dale Seaniger, Deputy Council Clerk, Thamarrurr Regional Council

Scott McIntyre, Coordinator, Thamarrurr Rangers

Arthur Karui, Senior Ranger, Thamarrurr Ranger

Rick Blyss, Housing Manager, Housing Authority

Geoff Barker, Housing Management Consultant & Project Manager for “Fixing Houses for Better Health”

Sergeant Dean McMaster, Officer in Charge, Wadeye Police Station

Mark Crocombe, Coordinator, Kanamkek-Yile-Ngala Museum

Aloysius Kungle, CDEP worker, Kanamkek-Yile-Ngala Museum

Theodora Narndu, Coordinator, Kardu Dari Kardu Family Centre

Russell Dejonge, Manager, Murrinhpatha Tribal Development

Rob Baidon, Manager, Mi Patha Takeaway and Bakery

Bob Tedcastle, CEO Murin Travel and Freight Service

John Hardy, Managing Director Hardy Aviation

Robin Files, Manager Murin Resource Centre

Aboriginal members of Murin Resource Centre (monthly meeting)

Noeline Dungul, Coordinator, Ngepan Patha Women's Centre

Peter Bunduck, Correctional Services Officer at Wadeye, NTG Correctional Services

Paul Donald, Manager, Palumpa Station

Kevin Slavin, Butcher based at Wadeye

Julie Reece, Manager, Wadeye Healthy Centre, RNs, AHWs and other Aboriginal staff

Stacey Long, Self Help and Respite Centre

Tobias Nganbe, Deputy Principle Our Lady of the Sacred Heart School , Aboriginal Teachers and non-Aboriginal school staff.

John Tarca, General Manager Gas Business Unit, Power and Water Corporation

Bertrum Birk, General Manager Remote Operations, Power and Water Corporation

Sean Lange, Manager NLC Indigenous Training and Employment Unit

Paul Josif, Manager NLC Land and Sea Management Branch

Michael Storrs, NLC Caring for Country Coordinator

Kimberley Bott, Solicitor, Top End Women's Legal Service

Vicky Brogan, Aboriginal Community Development Worker, Top End Women's Legal Service

## 9.2 Terms of reference

# Blacktip Project Social Impact Assessment Terms of Reference 28 January 2004

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### **Objectives**

The purpose of the proposed Social Impact Assessment (SIA) is to:

- Identify the nature and magnitude of any potential social impacts, both positive and negative,
- Contribute to a better understanding of the Projects by those potentially affected and those with responsibilities towards potentially affected groups and individuals,
- Facilitate the expression of views, concerns and aspirations about the Projects by those potentially affected,
- Assist the Proponent and potentially affected people, communities and organisations, to plan activities associated with the Projects in such a way as to optimise the potential positive impacts and mitigate any potential adverse impacts on affected communities, and
- Provide the basis for compiling a Social Impact Management Plan for the Projects.

The preparation of the SIA will meet the requirements of the proponent in managing social impacts and in addition, will provide valuable information to the statutory regulators responsible for undertaking the Projects' approvals processes.

### **Tasks associated with the Impact Assessment**

Profile the affected communities.

Undertake a stakeholder analysis, identifying all relevant organisational stakeholders in the affected areas.

Describe affected communities in terms of:

- a) Governance arrangements
- b) Land tenure
- c) Community and social relations overview
- d) Economic base
- e) Enterprises
- f) Infrastructure, services and facilities
- g) Law and order
- h) Social and health services
- i) Outstation development
- j) Capacity of existing infrastructure, services and facilities to meet people's current needs and aspirations in relation to the future of their communities.



Prepare a base-line data set for the affected communities, Indigenous and non-Indigenous.

- a) Demographic profiles including age, gender and language.
- b) Overview of the residential arrangements, the location and nature of the communities and their socio-economic status.
- c) Health, education and employment status, access to a motor vehicle, housing density, economic status and traditional hunting and gathering activities. (Data to be drawn from existing studies where available).

***Historical and legislative context***

- a. Provide a brief overview of the settlement and development history of the Northern Territory to provide an historical context within which to understand this current Project.
- b. Document the broad history of the affected Aboriginal communities and Aboriginal associations within the Project region, including past engagement with outside economic and social forces, and in particular experiences with linear projects and onshore gas processing facilities.
- c. Provide an overview of relevant mining-related income and other benefits received by communities to date from development in the region, and evaluate the social and economic impact of those benefits and the effectiveness of their method of distribution.
- d. Outline the relevant legislative regimes affecting both Projects.

***Attitudes to the Project***

Assess the attitudes of affected people to the Projects, including whether they approve/disapprove or are neutral to the Projects. This is to be achieved through direct consultations with potentially affected people and communities and key community representatives in the areas associated with the Projects. In addition, a broad telephone survey of residents of Darwin and the Katherine region will be undertaken, as discussed above.

***Identify impacts***

Identify potential impacts, if any, in relation to pre-construction, construction, operation and/or maintenance and decommissioning in relation to:

- a) The impacts of the potential interaction of the workforces with the existing Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities in the region.
- b) Demographic shifts likely to result.
- c) Potential impacts on social relations.
- d) Community development.
- e) Diseconomies.
- f) Possible dissipation of benefits through cash distributions.
- g) Impacts on the use of, and access to, culturally important sites, landscapes and the traditional economic resources of the Project area.
- h) Maintenance of cultural knowledge.
- i) Possibilities of increased availability and consumption of alcohol and other substance abuse and means of mitigating existing and potential future substance abuse problems.

- j) Potential for infrastructure enhancement (medical facilities, communications, etc).
- k) Potential for access to enhanced services (including to information and consumer goods) and general economic activity in the region.
- l) Increased employment and business opportunities.
- m) Changes to lifestyle.
- n) Employment, training and recruitment opportunities and capacities.
- o) Business development opportunities.
- p) Likely impacts of upgrades to roads and increased traffic.
- q) Possible health impacts.
- r) Impacts of compensation benefits that may be negotiated.
- s) Cumulative impacts.
- t) Likely impacts in the event of the Project not proceeding.
- u) Concerns about and impacts arising from emergency events.
- v) Impacts of the SIA process itself.

Identify any other impacts likely to result from the Projects.

#### ***Need for management strategies***

After identification of the potential impacts, recommendations regarding which of these should require specific mitigation or optimisation, management strategies. These may include:

- a) Impacts on the environment;
- b) Impacts on sacred site and other places of cultural importance;
- c) Opportunities for training, employment and business development.
- d) Communication and management structures and policies to maximise information flows to and from the Projects.
- e) Preferred policies regarding the availability of alcohol.
- f) Insulation and isolation strategies to manage the presence and potential negative intrusion of large workforces in the vicinity of the Projects;
- g) The provision of cultural awareness programs and behavioral guidelines for Project employees; and
- h) The need, or otherwise, for a Social Impact Management Plan.

#### ***Capacity to respond***

- a) Assess the capacity of affected people to respond to the impacts of the Projects.
- b) Recommend where capacity-building interventions are required.
- c) Evaluate the capacity of contemporary structures of traditional Aboriginal owners and their communities to make the decisions necessary to manage future impacts and opportunities.
- d) Summarise the benefits and disadvantages from an Indigenous and non-Indigenous community perspective for proceeding with the Project.

#### ***Monitoring and Evaluation***

The following should be devised following the identification of any potential social impacts:

- a) Suggest monitoring and evaluation strategies.
- b) Identify appropriate indicators for monitoring.
- c) Advise on issues pertaining to, and possibly suitable models, for governance of monitoring and mitigation management.

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