



# NORTHERN TERRITORY CATTLEMEN'S ASSOCIATION INC.

*Member - National Farmers' Federation & Cattle Council of Australia*

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

[www.ntca.org.au](http://www.ntca.org.au)

30 October 2008

### **INDIGENOUS JOBS IN THE CATTLE INDUSTRY**

Strong partnerships between the pastoral industry, government and land councils are reaping rewards for Aboriginal people throughout the Territory, Executive Director of the Northern Territory Cattlemen's Association Luke Bowen said today.

The NTCA won the Partnership Award in the Northern Land Council's Employer Excellence Awards on Wednesday night, while several accolades went to the Indigenous Pastoral Program, which Luke helped found during time with the Indigenous Land Corporation.

Luke paid tribute to the Northern and Central Land Councils, the Indigenous Land Corporation, Charles Darwin University, Group Training NT, Northern Territory Government's Department of Primary Industry and the Federal Department of Employment, Education and Workplace Relations for a partnerships approach with the NTCA that has delivered results through the Indigenous Pastoral Program.

"The cattle and mining industries are the key players in regional economic development and employment in the Territory," Luke said.

"Through a partnership approach, the cattle industry has provided jobs, brought land back into production, helped Aboriginal people play a greater role in land management, and increased the number of cattle being turned off land in the Territory.

"The cattle industry believes this is just common sense, at a time of acute skills shortages in the industry, but it also fulfils a moral obligation to help Aboriginal people find work on their own land," he said.

Luke said Tony Freshwater, who works for the NTCA, has been one of the "engine rooms" in building this success, mentoring young Aboriginal people and promoting jobs and training. Tony was a finalist in one of the training awards.

"Tony works with industry to identify the jobs on stations. He then works with them to establish the right working environment, helps recruit young people, mentors them during training, ensures the recruits and employers go through cross-cultural training so they understand each other's expectations, and mentors them as they graduate and go on to jobs in the pastoral industry.

"While this approach has seen a major increase in Aboriginal people working on properties and a strong retention rate, we still have long way to go. We are still learning and an initiative like this needs support. We now know that to be successful we need on property, full time mentors and buddies, something which costs money, as well as a more flexible approach to funding by government " Luke said.



Luke worked for the Indigenous Land Corporation before joining the NTCA this year as Executive Director and helped found the Indigenous Pastoral Program. He was acknowledged for his work with a special mention in last night's Northern Land Council Employer Excellence Awards.

**Pastoral winners from last night (12 awards in total):**

- Doug Jenkins from Charles Darwin University was a finalist in the Top Trainer category for his work with pastoral trainees;
- Charles Darwin University – Katherine Rural College, was a finalised in the Top Registered Training Organisation category;
- The Indigenous Pastoral Program was the overall winner in the Top Project category for improving the participation of Indigenous people in the pastoral industry. The Indigenous Pastoral program has an 80 per cent completion rate, with more than 80 per cent of station hand course participants going into jobs guaranteed before the course by the Northern Territory Cattlemen's Association.
- Executive Director of the NTCA Luke Bowen, Steve McCarthy of the Indigenous Land Corporation, and Stewart Blythe of the Indigenous Pastoral Program were among six individuals to get Special Mentions for their work;
- Tony Freshwater of the NTCA was a finalist in the Top Individual in the Employment Category for his work with the Indigenous Pastoral Program;
- The Indigenous Land Corporation and Waliburru were a finalist in the Top Employer and Top Project categories for development of a pastoral property and training of community members;
- The Indigenous Pastoral Program was the overall winner in the Top Project category: This is a partnership between the NTCA, Northern Land Council, Group Training NT, Northern Territory Government's Department of Primary Industry, Charles Darwin University, Indigenous Land Corporation, and the Department of Employment, Education and Workplace Relations. In 2007 and 2008 it ran four courses with a 90 per cent completion rate, 80 per cent employment rate, and 60 jobs placements;
- The Northern Territory Cattlemen's Association was the overall winner in the partnerships category of the Employer awards for committing to and exceeding job guarantees. The NTCA and NLC have signed a five-year agreement;
- The Chairman's award for the 'best of the best' went to the Indigenous Pastoral Program for outstanding performance in the provision of training, jobs and careers.

**Media inquiries:**

Luke Bowen, Executive Director, NT Cattlemen's Association, 08 8981 5976

Jane Munday, Michels Warren Munday on 0427 880 083