The Roe Creek facility near Alice Springs is now certified for the trans-shipment, monitoring, feeding and dispatching of organic cattle – or receiving, spelling, and selling of certified organic livestock both for domestic and USDA markets.

The NTCA went through an audit process, soil test, and an assessment of operating procedures to ensure that organic cattle are segregated to maintain their organic integrity.

Bohning Yards Operations Manager Noel Cuffe has been running the yards as an organic operation for some time but NTCA Executive Officer Tom Ryan says the latest development opens up significant opportunities for Central Australian pastoralists.

He says the yards will now be able to sell and spell cattle that are NCO and USDA NOP accredited, thereby catering for an increasing number of Central Australian stations turning to organic cattle production: “For pastoralists in Central Australia who are already organic accredited, this gives them another market and greater access to these [organic] markets that are quite lucrative at the moment.

“As it stood previously, someone whose property was USDA NOP accredited, but then trucked cattle south and needed to spell them, wasn’t able to keep those cattle in those [organic] programs, because as soon as they’re unloaded in a non-accredited facility they lose that status.

“It really gives another option to those producers and encourages more people in the region to become accredited.”

The accreditation for the yards was expected to increase buyer numbers at the scheduled Alice Springs cattle sales in July.

The yards have organic hay on hand, but cattle producers looking to spell significant numbers are advised to call a few weeks prior to ensure enough certified feed is on hand.

For more information, contact Bohning Yards Manager, Noel Cuffe on: Ph: 0488 955 550 E: operations.manager@ntca.org.au
The latest group of Indonesian students to graduate from NTCA Indonesia Australia Pastoral Program (NIAPP) have returned home, inspired by their experiences and eager to pursue careers in agriculture.

Program Coordinator Carley Bidstrup says the students finished their station placements on 24 May then undertook a commercial preg-testing course, the same done by station and industry people to gain accreditation. The students also participated in a new element added to the program this year, a one-day “Breeder Management Workshop”, aiming to educate tropical beef breeding cow management, as well as initiate discussion and forward thinking on Indonesia’s breeder importation programs now and into the future.

At the completion of their station placements and extra training, the students returned to Katherine Rural College for a CDU-sponsored formal dinner and presentation night, also attended by host station representatives and the university’s Pro Vice Chancellor of Vocational Education and Training (VET), Christine Robertson.

“To round the trip off, they participated in a ‘debriefing’ workshop in Darwin, mostly about their expectations from the overall experience and the influence or clarity it has given to them for future pathways in the cattle industry,” Carley says. “This involved discussions and feedback on what worked well and areas where the program could be enhanced next year and for alumni engagement”.

“From what they said, the experience was overwhelmingly better than what they expected. There was a lot more depth in regards to personal challenges such as the isolation, being out of their comfort zone, personal growth and character building, as well as renewed motivation for a career in agriculture.”

Prior to flying home, the 2016 students were guests at a special Darwin farewell dinner and presentation ceremony hosted by the Indonesian Consul Andre Omer Siregar at the Indonesian Consulate, and attended by several dignitaries and other special guests from the Red Meat Partnership.

Carley says the traditional reciprocal trip to Indonesia for host station delegates is scheduled for the first week in October. This will begin with formal events in Jakarta, greeting the now-74 alumni members and connecting with industry, government, and education representatives from both Indonesia and Australia. Visits to different provinces are then planned; providing the opportunity for participants to immerse in local culture and follow the supply chains of NT beef cattle. This will involve tours of feedlots, abattoirs and wet markets supplied by Australian live export, and the more recently initiated breeder importation programs and associated grazing management strategies.

NIAPP has been running since 2012 and involves Indonesian animal husbandry students spending 10 weeks in the Territory, participating in preliminary training then a six-week placement at host stations. A group from the NT cattle industry then travels to Indonesia to learn about Indonesian culture and industry, completing the 360 degree learning syllabus.
The NTCA Follows the NT Show Circuit!

NTCA Staff have been busy during the month of July visiting each of the NT’s rural shows to promote the NTCA and meet and greet the urban populations of Alice Springs, Tennant Creek, Katherine and Darwin.

CEO Tracey Hayes was assisting in the livestock section in her home town of Alice Springs at show time. Tom Ryan (NTCA EO) attended the Tennant Creek Show and MC’d the famous Barkly Beef Dinner.

At the Katherine Show the NTCA hosted a stand where staff spent the day talking to members and town folk about the Real Jobs Program and other NTCA initiatives.

NTCA staff in Katherine were: Tara Fulwood (Real Jobs Program Snr Field Officer), Jason Craigie (Real Jobs Program Field Officer), Tom Ryan (EO) & Carley Bidstrup (Project Manager).

The final show of the circuit was Darwin, where the NTCA held their annual free BBQ. Markus Rathsmann (Top End Chairman), Carley Bidstrup, and Jo Shearn (Office Manager) handed out NT grass-fed beef sausages and steak sandwiches to the public and the hungry students from Taminmin College and CDU Rural Campus who had been working hard all day on their show cattle.

Thankyou to ILC’s Gunbalanya Meats for providing the meat for the BBQ, which was a huge hit with show-goers.

The NTCA has some big plans for the 2017 show circuit and looks forward to seeing everyone again next year!
The Territory pastoral community has been shocked by the tragic loss of Deep Well Station’s Billy Hayes in mid-July.

The well-known cattleman died in an aerial mustering accident on New Crown Station.

“This is a tragic event for the Hayes family and our heartfelt condolences are extended to them”, NTCA President Tom Stockwell said.

“The association, as always, stands ready to help in whatever way necessary, but I know that the close pastoral community of Central Australia will provide every support required during this sorry time.

Billy was farewelled in Alice Springs by more than 1,500 friends and family at a moving ceremony that proved his popularity throughout the Territory and Australia.

Billy was the former husband of NTCA CEO Tracey Hayes and devoted father of their four sons Luke, Tom, Sam and Harry.

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### Real Jobs Program Update

**By Tara Fulwood - Senior Field Officer**

Hello Again!
The 2016 year is flying along, hard to believe we are in August already...

The Pastoral Real Jobs Program is having yet another strong year with 50% of our men still on the job since the start of the year, with 5 of those being with us since the start of 2015. At the end of this year (2016), they will have completed their 2 year journey with the NTCA Real Jobs Program and will be looking for job opportunities for the future.

Each of them will have completed either a Certificate 2 or 3 in Agriculture (on the job assessments conducted by Rural Training Australia), received quality mentoring and training from NTCA staff and 2 years’ experience on a NT Cattle Station receiving endless support from their host stations.

I would recommend keeping an eye out for them. If you would like more information about this please email me at northern.pastoral@ntca.org.au.

NTCA Staff have been busily recruiting and training midyear recruits and we have come across some humdingers!

On the job mentoring and training will continue for the rest of the year and we cannot thank the host stations enough for the ongoing support they show towards improving the work ethic and skill level of our local Indigenous men.

I must not forget to mention the social skills and confidence learnt on a cattle station. We take great pleasure in attending local campdrafts, rodeos and shows catching up with our big smiling men, who we once knew as shy lads. We also get to witness some great competitive riding ability – but I think that is in their blood!

This program is achieving great things for the industry and Indigenous Communities, it would not be possible without the support of our industry people. A sincere THANK YOU to you!

Please watch this space for an announcement of a new Pastoral Real Jobs Program Award, in the name of a respected and missed man.

All the best for the coming months and we hope to see you along the track!

Jason Craigie (NTCA Field Officer) with Auvergne staff branding calves while settling new recruit Taylor Raggett into his new job.

Auvergne headstockman Mick with Auvergne Staff, counting up their end of day tally.
Record Prices at Alice Springs
July Cattle Sales

The 2016 Alice Springs Show Sale was moved from the traditional Show Day date to the 21st of July due to wet weather conditions in the centre.

The date change didn’t deter suppliers or buyers, with 2,660 head of cattle yarded and a top price of $3.54 per kilogram for a run of 165 black baldy steers from Lucy Creek station, north-east of Alice Springs. The steers weighed an average of 360 kilograms and returned an average price $1,275.81 per head.

Top priced heifers were droughtmasters from Wallace Rockhole that fetched $3.42 per kilogram and weighed an averaged of 325 kilograms; an average of $1,111.50 per head.

Total sales amounted to just over $2.6 million and the average price paid was $3.33 per kilogram.

The following Thursday saw more records broken with a yarding of 3,562 and a top price of $3.68 per kilo paid for a run of organic steers from Bond Springs station. The Hereford steers from Bond Springs weighed 335 kilograms on average.

Lucy Creek station also had some success at the second sale in a week with $3.58 per kilogram being paid for a run of Angus-cross steers that weighed an average of 360 kilograms.

NTCA Thanks
Richard Galton for work on Pastoral Land Board

The NTCA has applauded the contribution of outgoing Northern Territory Pastoral Land Board Chairman Richard Galton for his ‘independent and objective approach’ during his time in the position.

The association says the former Head of the NT Primary Industry and Fisheries Department had embraced the support of the Territory cattle sector.

Mr Galton had also won industry support as chair of the 1080 Review Committee, which recommended wide-ranging changes to the Territory approach to wild dog management.

The new Pastoral Land Board Chairman is former long-term Territory cattleman, Paul Zlotkowski, who owned and managed Wollogarang Station in the Gulf district for many years.
New sentinel herds to boost national exotic disease surveillance

Three new sentinel cattle herds, including one at Gunbalanya (Oenpelli) in Arnhem Land, will become critical elements for Australia’s livestock biosecurity by being tested regularly for signs of exotic pests and diseases; the other two are at Merepah in Far North Queensland, and in Papua New Guinea - another is planned for East Timor later this year.

Beth Cookson, Australian Department of Agriculture and Water Resources Director of Animal Health Surveillance, told media this month that the increased surveillance should give confidence to the beef industry and its trading partners.

She said the new sentinel herd locations were identified to bolster surveillance across the north and increase Australia’s surveillance capacity in Papua New Guinea. This gave animal health authorities more information what might be emerging and allowed them to complement strategies to match those risks.

“It’s critically important that we can demonstrate to our trading partners that we have a really good understanding of what our animal health status is, and that we have the ability to recognise new diseases and viruses when they enter the country and also to monitor the distribution of the ones that are currently here,” Beth Cookson said.

She said this was the first time in about 25 years that the department had the opportunity to work so closely with overseas counterpart agencies with sentinel herds.

Australia now has 90 sentinel cattle herds which are monitored regularly for foot and mouth disease (FMD), screw-worm fly, and various strains of blue tongue disease.

Beth Cook said the program was critically important for protecting Australia’s cattle industry and export markets.

Survey uncovers extensive stock thefts

Livestock thefts are a significant problem for Territory pastoralists, according to the feedback the NTCA received in response to its recent industry-wide survey on the issue.

One third of respondents reported stock having been stolen in last calendar year and more than half had killers taken. The operators of one Katherine region property told ABC Country Hour they had lost 800 head of cattle.

At this stage, it’s believed that Northern Queensland has the only fully-fledged stock squad in Australia - “SARCIS” - operating out of Cloncurry. NT Police operated a stock squad for several years until it was disbanded around the 1990s.

The NTCA is now in discussions with the NT Government and NT Police Major Crime Squad to explore the potential for a new Territory stock squad to be set up and properly resourced, in light of the worrying survey findings.

If you have had issues with stock theft please contact your local police station.

New NTCA horses a handy training tool

A plant of eight horses purchased by the NTCA early this year, to be kept at the association’s Bohning Yards, are already earning their keep as a valuable training resource for young people aspiring to work in the pastoral industry.

This year’s participants in the NTCA’s Real Jobs Program were the first to undergo horsemanship training at Bohning Yards to develop riding, handling and other horse skills that are vital for cattle station work. The Department of Education also recently used the horse plant for other training purposes in Alice Springs.
KRISTY-LEE: OUR 2016 NT ‘RISING CHAMPION’

Kristy-Lee Fogarty is the Northern Territory’s finalist in the Cattle Council of Australia’s 2016 NAB Agribusiness Rising Champions Initiative.

Kristy-Lee, who currently manages her family’s organic Angus beef operation on Palmer Valley Station in Central Australia, was selected from a strong line-up of nominees for this years’ honour. She particularly impressed the judges as a passionate supporter of technology in the cattle industry along with market access and the trade and marketing of organic beef.

The NAB Rising Champions Initiative, now in its sixth year, caters for 18-35 year olds and aims to inspire, empower and support young people who are passionate about the Australian beef industry. CCA President, Howard Smith, says the initiative plays an important role in supporting the next generation. “It was created because we want the cattle producers and stakeholders of tomorrow involved in the planning that occurs today.” “We’re identifying future leaders and providing them with an opportunity to network with policy makers and develop the knowledge, political acumen and leadership skills to be a young champion in the beef industry.”

NAB’s Head of Agribusiness in the NT, John Avent, said the bank was delighted to continue supporting the initiative which got bigger and better every year. “Kristy-Lee is a huge advocate for education and she has excellent insight into the beef industry. We’re confident she has a bright future in the agricultural sector,” he said. Kristy-Lee, along with other state finalists will attend a three-day program in Canberra on 22-24 August. They’ll get to network with Department of Agriculture and Water Resources staff, learn effective communication techniques, develop their leadership skills, and participate in Cattle Council committee meetings.

The 2016 national winner will be announced at a gala dinner on 24 August.

INDIAN BUFFALO BEEF IN THE INDONESIAN MARKET

Comment by Dr Ross Ainsworth – South East Asian beef consultant

The Indonesian Government’s new policy of issuing permits for Indian buffalo beef to be imported from 10 approved abattoirs in various locations around India is the most significant event in the Indonesian beef industry since the decision to allow importation of Australian feeder cattle in 1990.

I expect that the medium term result will be a reduction in import demand for Australian live cattle to around 300,000 per year from calendar year 2017 onwards. Indonesian consumers will still require fresh meat for the wet markets so some Australian feeder cattle will still be fattened here while about half of the current market will be captured by Indian beef. The main destination of this frozen product will be the bakso ball (meat ball) market which is quite comfortable using frozen product.

Buffalo beef is reputed to have excellent properties as a manufacturing base product so with an estimated 50% of all Australian wet market beef ending up as bakso balls today, this is likely to be the greatest area for substitution of demand.

By coincidence, the Medan Tribune newspaper reported that on the 13th of June, a unit of the Indonesian army seized about 8 tonnes of smuggled Indian buffalo meat from a domestic premises in Medan.

As I understand it from the press reports, the basis of the Indonesian government’s decision to import Indian beef is that it is importing meat only from abattoirs that slaughter cattle sourced from zones classified as free from Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD). The OIE is the world organisation governing international animal health issues and it has a web site which includes a summary of the FMD countries and zones recognised by them as free from Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD). The OIE is the world organisation governing international animal health issues and it has a web site which includes a summary of the FMD countries and zones recognised by them as free from Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD). The OIE is the world organisation governing international animal health issues and it has a web site which includes a summary of the FMD countries and zones recognised by them as free from Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD). The OIE is the world organisation governing international animal health issues and it has a web site which includes a summary of the FMD countries and zones recognised by them as free from Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD). The OIE is the world organisation governing international animal health issues and it has a web site which includes a summary of the FMD countries and zones recognised by them as free from Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD).
GOURON CREEK Senepol

Gouron Creek Senepol currently has a large number of Senepol bulls for sale.

Senepol cross cattle offer Cattlemen more:
Calves from increased fertility in the retained F1 Females;
Weight at weaning and as yearlings;
Markets with options for Live export or Domestic;
Value for a higher growth, yield & MSA grading carcass;
all while maintaining Heat tolerance and Tropical adaptation.

For more information please contact Trevor Price on:
Tel: +61 2 6783 2227 | Mob: 0429 832228
Email: trevorgprice@bigpond.com
www.gouroncreeksenepol.com.au

Slick, Cool, Calm Cattle

Cattlemen are you sick of the Poll’s?
Here is one poll well worth considering.

The quickest way to move toward a polled herd is to use a naturally polled breed like the Senepol. Not only will Senepol bulls take the horns off, as a completely unrelated tropically adapted Bos Taurus breed they will contribute significantly to the bottom line through: increased meat quality and yield, giving more marketing options; increased growth in progeny and increased fertility in the retained F1 females through hybrid vigour.

A recent advertisement by the Australian Brahman Breeders Association claimed that the world demands the F1 Brahman female. I fully support this principal as the F1 Brahman female is a powerhouse for productive efficiency.

For a limited time Gouron Creek Senepol is offering to NTCA and KPCA members a select group of yearling Senepol bulls for private sale. These bulls are 13-15 months old, average 470kg and have had tick fever vaccines and passed an independent Bull Breeding Soundness Evaluation. Purchasing yearling bulls offers members the chance to buy bulls young to allow for a longer period to adjust to their new environment as well as efficiencies in transport.

For more information please contact Trevor Price at Gouron Creek Senepol on 0429 832 228.
Govt’ offer to share fencing costs to curb collisions with livestock

Territory station owners are urged to take advantage of an ongoing NT Government offer to share the cost of erecting new station fencing along road corridors to prevent motorists colliding with wandering livestock.

The NTCA says the cost-sharing arrangement with the Department of Transport has been in place for some time, but a reminder is timely in light of increasing accidents resulting from motorists colliding with cattle wandering on Territory roads.

The Association says that funding will be granted in consideration of the road safety aspect and that the department will pay for the materials while pastoralists pay for the fencing and be responsible for maintenance. Fences will need to be built to an approved specification.

Members wanting information on how to take advantage of this offer should contact the department’s Civil Assets Management Project Director, David Kerslake:
Ph: 08 8946 5003
M: 0439 648 824
E: david.kerslake@nt.gov.au

Amber shines in northern development promotion

Young Central Australian pastoralist Amber Driver has become one of the positive public faces of a push by the Northern Australia Development Office (NADO) to highlight the wide-ranging industries and opportunities available for investing in the Territory.

NADO interviewed several NTCA members and filmed a number of them, for television promotion and other media purposes.

The link to Amber’s video can be found on the NTCA website.
Northern know-how at Vietnam beef industry conference

NTCA Executive Officer Tom Ryan and South East Asian beef market consultant Dr Ross Ainsworth were among presenters at a recent Vietnam industry seminar focused on building the nation's beef cattle herd, with emphasis on breeding for profit in commercial operations.

The Hanoi event was jointly hosted by MLA and the Vietnamese and Australian Governments, and attracted about 200 industry, government, and research delegates all keen to hear from high profile government and industry speakers who addressed broad-ranging topics of relevance to the Vietnamese situation.

Tom Ryan’s address covered the following:

- The production system throughout Australia with special focus on breeding in the north;
- The types of cattle throughout Australia, with specific focus on the breeds that are suited to the north of Australia and therefore the tropics/Vietnam;
- The cost of production of a calf in Australia;
- Reproductive success in Australia (% calving rate for different age animals).

Tom then toured several abattoirs and feedlots with NACC’s Patrick Underwood to gain further insight into the Vietnamese supply chain.

Still time to apply for your postal vote for NT Election (27 Aug)

visit www.ntec.nt.gov.au or call 1800 698 683

NTCA Executive Officer, Tom Ryan, presenting at the Vietnam beef industry conference.

Dr Ross Ainsworth presenting at the Vietnam beef industry conference.

ADVERTISING IN THE CATTLENEXTS

The Northern Territory Cattlemen’s Association welcomes enquiries from government and industry groups, businesses and individuals interested in advertising in our quarterly newsletter, Cattlenews.

FOR DETAILS PLEASE CONTACT:

JO SHEARN - NTCA Office Manager
Phone: 08 89815976
Email: office.darwin@ntca.org.au

or

KERRY SHARP - Journalist
Phone: 0419 845 714
Email: sharp@octa4.net.au
A CHANCE TO PROMOTE OUR INDUSTRY IMAGE

The hunt continues for willing Territory cattle industry members to share their stories through the NTCA’s ‘Our People’ social media series.

The initiative will showcase 12 NTCA members throughout the year (one every month), by sharing a little about them, the property they own or manage, what they value about working in the Territory beef industry and what their vision is for the future.

Each profile will be published to NTCA’s Facebook page to over 5,000 fans and tweeted via @NTCattlemen profile to over 3,000 followers. “This is the first time we have profiled members in this way, hence our selected approach of 12 members to begin with,” NTCA Executive Officer Tom Ryan says. “If this year goes well, we will continue this series and profile our other valued members.

“We hope the series will not only gain the attention and further support of current industry stakeholders but also extend a positive message to the public about the valued people who are the lifeblood of our association and who form the backbone of the NT cattle industry.”

For the chance for you and/or your family to be featured in this series, simply email the following to the NTCA:

- Background details about you and your property,
- One comment about why you are an NTCA member,
- A quote about the aspect you or your family love most about being part of the Northern Territory beef industry (this could be on the topics of environment, livestock, innovation, technology, challenge, opportunity, people),
- A photo of yourself on a typical day working in the NT beef industry.

FOR MORE DETAILS contact Tom Ryan
Ph: 08 8981 5976
E: tom.ryan@ntca.org.au

NT Cattlemen’s Association
33rd AGM & Industry Conference

Planning is already well underway for the NTCA 2017 AGM & Industry Conference, which promises to attract a groundswell of interest from stakeholders around the country and overseas.

The NTCA has set aside 30-31 March for the conference, which will return to the Top End in 2017. The main events will be staged at the Darwin Convention Centre on the Waterfront, with the venue for the popular Gala Dinner still to be decided.

The program will feature major drawcards including world-class keynote speakers and invigorating topics to spark debate and discussion amongst delegates.

The Ladies’ Luncheon is sure to sell out again, and associated events such as the Welcome Drinks are also likely to attract strong crowds.

The NTCA will keep members updated on developments as conference time gets closer.
Congratulations on a Wright baby girl!

Our warmest congratulations to Heidi and James Wright and their first-born, George, on the recent arrival of their gorgeous baby girl, Kianna Vivienne Wright. Heidi has been the NTCA’s valued social media consultant for the past few years. Her family also runs a cattle property in central NSW.

Fire equipment subsidy on offer

The Territory Government is offering landholders a subsidy of up to 50% on the purchase price of fire mitigation equipment (with a cap of $1,200, ex. GST).

The NTCA has encouraged landholders to take advantage of this subsidy to ensure the funding allocation is being used so it is subsequently renewed each year.

Please visit the NTCA website (under the ‘Resources’ tab) for advice on where to access the subsidy information.

New national Johne’s Disease approach now in play

A new, national approach to Johne’s disease (JD) in cattle officially began on 1 July with the removal of zoning occurring across Australia.

The changed approach, endorsed by the cattle industry and state governments, is guided by the BJD Framework and focuses on managing on-farm biosecurity risk rather than controlling disease through regulation.

“This approach treats JD as just one of many diseases that producers must manage within their business. Supported by more flexible regulation, producers will be able to make informed decisions about the opportunities and risks associated with purchasing livestock,” Animal Health Australia’s Executive Manager of Biosecurity Services, Duncan Rowland said.

Changes to occur under the new framework include:

• deregulation and removal of zoning: most state/territory jurisdictions are on-track to remove regulation by 1 July 2016
• ceasing of quarantining of properties as a control measure
• movement to a market-driven approach where producers undertake practices dependent on market requirements.

“To ensure Australian producers and interested stakeholders are informed and supported throughout this reform process, industry and governments are developing tools and resources to provide guidance.

“We’ve released a useful fact sheet, which clearly outlines what the approach means for the individual producer and also addresses some frequently asked questions,” said Mr Rowland.

AHA will continue to work with industry and government to ensure the framework is implemented as smoothly and quickly as possible to enhance the biosecurity credentials of Australia’s cattle industry.
Katherine School of the Air (KSA) is celebrating its 50th year of bridging the education and social gap between the city and the remote outback - originally by VH radio and today by advanced face-to-face computer technology.

The unique facility broadcast its first radio calls to an original handful of students in 1966 and in half a century, the ‘Largest Classroom in the World’ has stretched its reach to many hundreds of families living and working on far-flung cattle stations, missions and Indigenous communities across the Territory and beyond.

To enrol at the school when it started, families first had to sign up with the South Australian Correspondence School, then fill in a hiring agreement as well as licence application forms – and pay a $20 annual rental – in order to be sent a transceiver by the Department of Education and Science. Radios were scarce and pupils could sometimes be off air for long periods when faulty radios were sent to Darwin for repair.

Veteran NTCA member Ian McBean’s seven children took lessons broadcast from Katherine to VRD stations Innesvale and Bradshaw. Ian’s daughter, Margie McBean, took her first school radio call on Innesvale in 1967. Youngest son Sam and his wife Sarah-Jane (Fletcher), who now operate Ruby Downs Station, met as children via school of the air despite living 600km apart - Sam at Bradshaw Station and Sarah-Jane in Arnhem Land’s Ngukurr community where her mum was a bush nurse.

School of the Air is very different today with modern interactive distance learning which resembles being in an actual classroom with a teacher and fellow students.

Special commemorative celebrations so far this year have included an Open Day in April where hundreds of visitors browsed through the school’s Tourist Centre and the contents of an unearthed time capsule.

A new time capsule has now been buried and if the enormous advances of the last 50 years are any indicator, the next half century holds equally exciting times for ‘The Largest Classroom in the World’.
Dry April turns to wet May-June
After a very dry April, which continued the dry trend apparent from January to April, the start to the 2016 dry season saw much of the Northern Territory receive above-average rainfall totals (fig. 1). Territory-wide, April totals were 79% below the long-term average. In contrast, May saw the highest NT rainfall totals since 2004, the sixth highest on record, more than three times greater than average. June had nearly three times the normal rainfall across the NT, with the greatest departures from average in the southern half of the NT.

El Niño has left us…
The change from below to above-average rainfall was predominantly due to the demise of the very strong 2015-16 El Niño. As El Niño departed, closer to normal weather patterns returned. On top of this, northern Australia is being strongly influenced by the near-record warmth of waters off our coast and in the eastern Indian Ocean (fig. 2). There are two major impacts that are a result of this situation. Firstly, warmer waters mean extra evaporation, so there is more moisture in the air around the Australian north coast. This moisture can then be transported by weather systems to the continent, and fall as rain. The warm waters over the eastern Indian Ocean have a more broadscale impact which typically affect nearly all parts of Australia. We are currently in a climate set-up known as a negative Indian Ocean Dipole (IOD). It’s like a La Niña, but based in the Indian Ocean instead of the Pacific Ocean. When a negative IOD becomes established rainfall is typically above average during the winter to spring months. For the Northern Territory, this usually translates to greater than normal rainfall during the September to November period. Another impact associated with a negative IOD is warmer than average temperatures prior to the wet season. The warmer temperatures due to a negative IOD are related to the above-average sea surface temperatures to our north and northwest. These warm oceanic conditions have been ongoing for several months and, combined with the influence of the lingering El Niño, which typically produces warm conditions in the year following its formation, have produced very warm conditions across northern Australia in 2016; May to June saw the highest-on-record temperatures across nearly the entire northern half of the NT, and well above-average temperatures further south.

Outlook for July to September
With the warm waters set to persist, the outlook is for warmer than normal temperatures to continue over much of the NT. The situation is a little different closer to central Australia due to the above-average rainfall which is expected there. The rainfall in the southern NT has been higher than usual in recent months as regular rain-bearing cloudbands passed over the region. This is set to continue for the July to September period while the warm seas around the country continue to exert an influence (fig. 3).
NTCA LAUNCHES BRAND NEW WEBSITE!

The NTCA has been working on the newly designed website for many months and are very proud to announce that it is now live.

The new site has a sleeker look, is much easier to navigate and has been loaded up with stacks of new information about the NTCA and the NT cattle industry - including a ‘Resources’ section for members.

The NTCA is still working on the ‘members only’ section and the exciting online registration and payment system that members can use to pay their annual membership fees.

A very big thanks goes to Carley Bidstrup in the Darwin office who has worked very hard to get the site up and running and looking so fantastic.

The website address remains the same: www.ntca.org.au

New streamlined UCV process finalised

Northern Territory station owners are hailing the revised process for dealing with property valuations as the most transparent method seen so far.

The new process followed strong lobbying by the NTCA for a streamlined approach for its members.

“Everyone’s happy with the transparency and less stressful process,” NTCA Executive Officer Tom Ryan said, “For the first time, pastoralists have been given the opportunity to comment on their draft valuations”.

The land owners received their revised unimproved capital valuations (UCVs) earlier in the year after assessment by consultants Herron Todd White, and the process then advanced to the 30-day consultation phase.

“We were able to negotiate with the Valuer-General for a consultation period, which benefits all parties. It will make an important difference because with more consultation, there is less likelihood of objections being made. It makes the process more transparent.”, said Tom Ryan.

Some valuations have been overturned in the past but the downside is that they have thrown out the relativity between similar properties.

“That’s what the new consultation period is designed to address,” Tom says. “People can talk through their valuations and if there’s an objection and it’s upheld, it doesn’t throw out the relativity of what’s happening across the board.”

For the first time pastoral land holders were able to talk to the Valuer-General and also go back to the consultant for an explanation of how their valuation was calculated.

For further information contact Tom Ryan:
Ph: (08) 8981 5976
E: tom.ryan@ntca.org.au

NTCA Cattlenews - July 2016