

NORTHERN ROCKS

Numerous sectors are on the lookout for new recruits in Australia's Northern Territory, writes **Leanne Short**



Darwin's newly developed waterfront and harbour

Skilled British workers, with their strong work ethic, are highly regarded and sought after by many Australian businesses. None more so than in the Northern Territory of Australia, where numerous sectors are on the lookout for new recruits wanting to emigrate Down Under.

Nicknamed 'The Top End', or 'The NT', the territory is situated in the north, between Western Australia and Queensland. Each state is very different and the NT feels very Australian; it's known for its cosmopolitan atmosphere and its rich indigenous population and culture.

Darwin, the state capital, has a population made up of 60 different nationalities from 70 different ethnic backgrounds. Whilst it is a city, it has the feel of a big country town.

The culture is very laid back where drinking and fishing is the norm. Friday night markets and outdoor cinemas take place at the weekend and from 3pm most afternoons pubs on Mitchell Street in Darwin are often pretty busy. If you want something a little bit different, then the

expansive wilds and diverse climate of Northern Territory may be just for you.

JOB OPPORTUNITIES

The Northern Territory isn't usually the first choice for new migrants when moving to Australia, so the positive news is a massive range of job opportunities await those who do, so there is bound to be something to suit you.

The Territory's economy has had a positive boost, since a huge LNG project

modernisation of the fragmented design of the suburbs, environmental impacts, enhancing of retail outlets, social facilities and services to improve neighbourhoods, districts and the city as a whole. As with any new industry coming to town, there has been a knock-on effect for supporting businesses, leading to the abundant opportunities currently available.

If you can't find your job listed on the SOL (Skilled Occupations List) try the Consolidated Sponsored Occupations List

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was commissioned back in 2013. This project has involved laying a 889 kilometre-long, deep water gas export pipeline, with first production due to start around the end of 2016.

The project has created a demand for additional residential and commercial property, as well as management of increased densification in current urban areas. Also being addressed is transport, power and water infrastructure,

(CSOL). It may be possible to get sponsorship from the NT Government, if your job is on their list. Each Australian state publishes its own State Nominated Occupations List (SNOL), so you can check out where your working talents are in demand.

There's also the possibility of employer sponsorship if you can secure a job offer. Some of the roles on NT's SNOL include ambulance officers and avionics engineers,

to prison officers and hairdressers. Some of the skills on the SOL for independent migration may also be in demand but are uncommonly known about, such as locksmiths, plasterers and painting trades workers. In addition, there is also the option of the Regional Sponsored Migration Scheme (RSMS), which applies to all of NT including Darwin, South Australia and all of Western Australia, so long as the occupation is either Skill Level 1, 2 or 3.

WHATEVER THE WEATHER

As you'll find out, residents of the Northern Territory are known simply as 'Territorians', 'Centralians' and 'Top Enders'. The territory has something of a split personality because of its two distinct climate zones.

The northern part of the country, including Darwin, has a tropical climate, due to its high humidity. Its year splits into two seasons – the wet (October to April) and the dry (May to September).

The dry season is warm and sunny, with afternoon humidity averaging 30 per cent, so your leisure time can be spent totally outdoors for the dry season. In June and July, the daily temperature can dip as low as 14 degrees Celsius, but very rarely lower. It's amazing to think that not

one instance of frost has ever been recorded in the Northern Territory. In absolute contrast, during the wet season the territory is doused with tropical cyclones and monsoon rains.

The majority of rain falls between December and March, when thunderstorms are common and afternoon humidity averages over 70 per cent during the wettest period. The central region is semi-arid desert and

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includes such Australian icons as Alice Springs and Uluru (it's Aboriginal name), previously known as Ayers Rock. There's hardly any rain here during the hottest months, with less than 9.8 inches falling from October to March.

FAMILY AND SCHOOLS

If you're looking to migrate to Australia with your family and children of any age, rest assured that Northern Territory has childcare and an educational system to satisfy your needs. All types of childcare are on offer including long day care, outside school hours and flexible,

occasional care. If you're thinking about when would be best to move to Northern Territory with children of school age, for primary and secondary schools, the year begins in late January and is divided into four terms, each 10 weeks in length.

School holidays are a one-week break at the end of Term 1, a four week break at the end of Term 2, another one-week break at the end of Term 3 and a six week break at the end of the school year in

December and January. Education is compulsory for children aged between six and 15 years.

Beyond that, Charles Darwin University offers a wide variety of higher education courses, Vocational Education and Training (VET), and other courses.

In fact, the Northern Territory has more students enrolled in higher education per capita than anywhere else in Australia. Offering a comprehensive range of education and training opportunities, from apprenticeships and VET courses, to undergraduate and postgraduate degree programmes. The University has campuses in Alice Springs, Katherine, Palmerston and Darwin, as well as several regional study centres.

ON THE MOVE

It's easy to get around Northern Territory. Anyone living and working in the major towns can be home within 15 or 20 minutes, with commuting even quicker in regional areas.

Darwin itself has regular international and national shipping connections and is a popular port of call for luxury cruise liners. Northern Territory's international airport is in Darwin, with further airports at Alice Springs and Yulara (Uluru).

All regional towns have airports and remote communities rely heavily on their air service. There's a great public bus service and AustralAsia Railways provide efficient freight and passenger services between Darwin and Adelaide, with connections to the east and west coasts.

Every year, thousands of visitors climb aboard The Ghan for an exhilarating outback travel experience. It is regarded as one of the world's great train journeys.



Sunset over tropical Darwin's Mindil Beach

The Northern Territory has its own 'Road Users' Handbook, similar to the Highway Code. It's a guide to the road rules, as the Northern Territory outback road network consists of sealed highways and unsealed secondary roads and bush tracks that can be affected by flooding in the wet season.

If you're renting a car – especially when you first arrive Down Under – hire suppliers will restrict where you can drive your rented vehicle. The majority state that their rental vehicles are not to be driven on unsealed roads.

The Stuart Highway connects Darwin and the central towns in the Northern Territory with South Australia. The highway, known as 'The Track', stretches all the way from Darwin in the Northern Territory, to Port Augusta in South Australia – a distance of 1,761 miles.

The Royal Flying Doctor Service (the Flying Doctors) even use parts of the highway as an emergency landing strip when they need to.

HOUSING

There's something for everyone in the Northern Territory and accommodation and housing styles vary throughout the region. In the tropical northern area, elevated houses with louvered windows and ceiling fans are the traditional housing style, which enables airflow and welcome breezes to relieve residents from the tropical humidity. As the weather is so good for large parts of the year, large

outdoor living areas are typical, with verandas, decking and swimming pools in most backyards. Tropical gardens and dense rich foliage reflect the tropical climate and nature is abundant in the cities and towns.

Like the climate, as you head south, the architecture changes to more traditional Australian style homes. In places like Alice Springs, ground-built, brick properties have wide verandas to provide shade in the diverse climate throughout the year.

The comparatively small population in the Northern Territory and long transportation distances do sometimes mean higher prices for groceries and other produce. However, these are balanced by shorter distances and less travelling time to and from work and for socialising.

A PEOPLE COUNTRY

There are abundant opportunities for employment in the Northern Territory. If you're thinking of taking the plunge and migrating Down Under, make sure you look at all you options before you decide where to settle and what career to pursue.

Northern Territory draws people from all over Australia and from all over the

world, resulting in a rich and varied culture. Darwin's estimated population is 120,000 people, while the total population of the Northern Territory is over 230,000. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders account for 27 per cent of the population.

Northern Territory is also the youngest population in Australia, with 23.2 per cent under 15 years of age and only 5.7 per cent aged 65 and over.

Your first steps towards moving Down Under will be to look at how you can obtain a working visa and what types of visa or nominated sponsorship you are eligible for. You can take a quick online visa assessment test, which will give you an immediate idea of how likely you are to be able to secure an independent (permanent) skilled visa.

There are many companies which can help you though the process, as obtaining a visa can be lengthy and complex. It's important that you weigh up all your options and pick the best fit for you.

If you're looking for diversity coupled with a new challenge, then looking North could be just the ticket. One thing to remember though – be prepared for a big Northern Territory welcome.



Plasterers are in demand in the Northern Territory

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