

31st March 2008

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Testimonial

**Re: - Charles Darwin University Course – Code: UTE20499 –
Certificate II –Electrotechnology –Remote Area –Essential Services Operations (ESO).**

It has now been approximately five years since Group Training Northern Territory (GTNT) commenced enrolling remote Indigenous students in the above Cert II course and Charles Darwin University (CDU) were chosen as the training provider.

Jon Harris is the Field Officer for GTNT and has been since this program commenced. He not only sources and assesses prospective students but also regularly contacts and mentors these students. In the nearly four years experience I have had with this course, the assisting, mentoring and contacts he has with these students far exceeds his normal duty requirements.

This course covers the general day to day running and basic repairs and maintenance to the Electricity generation and distribution, the Water collection, treatment, storage and distribution and the Waste Water (sewerage and/or septic) collection, treatment and disposal. These ESO duties are important and play a vital role in community health and wellbeing.

The course is delivered on site to the students, in their own surrounds and working environment. In addition to the eight compulsory units specific to electricity, water and sewerage, other units include; First Aid; OH&S practices and procedures; answering the phone; completing paperwork; sending faxes; the knowledge and use of an assortment of hand and power tools; measuring; cutting; screwing; bolting; general repairs and welding.

There is an excellent relationship, not only between Jon Harris, GTNT and Charles Darwin University (CDU) but also with the other partners, being the Power and Water Corporation, the Community Councils and importantly the students.

The remoteness of some of these communities, the access and accommodation, the complexity of arranging for students to be available, the availability or arranging of training facilities, awareness of the cultural differences, the fact that for some of these students English is a second language and numeracy and literacy expectations, are important aspects of which the GTNT Field Officers and the CDU Trainers have to be actively aware.

I commenced with CDU as the Coordinator of this course in late 2004 and in conjunction with Jon's experience and knowledge and my ESO and community experience, this course has been highly successful to the extent that last year students were not only being enrolled in the Northern Area of the NT but also in the Southern NT area, out of Alice Springs.

There are now three full time ESO Trainers employed by CDU, two in Darwin and one in Alice Springs.

To date just over 100 students have completed this course through GTNT and CDU, the results are that quite a number of these local Indigenous students now manage the Essential Services Operations on communities such as Daly River, Minyerri, Jilkminggan, Ngukurr and Robinson River, to name a few. Also nearly all of the approximately 93 remote communities, where ESO staff are employed, have Indigenous staff, who have completed this course, working as the 2IC's or as general staff. This course does relate to jobs in communities.

Charles Darwin University and I am sure, the Power and Water Corporation, the Community Councils and the students commend Group Training and Jon Harris on this most successful program.

Yours sincerely

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