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Ranger mine closure and rehab to cost \$1b

ASHLEY MANICAROS



THE \$1 billion plan for the closure and rehabilitation of Australia's oldest operating uranium mine has been released by Energy Resources of Australia.

But the future of Jabiru, just 8km from Ranger mine and part of a larger lease arrangement, is still unknown.

Ranger mine will close by 2021.

ERA chief executive Paul Arnold said the plan was specifically for the Ranger Project Area. "Jabiru is located on a separate lease held by the Jabiru Town Development Authority," he said.

"ERA holds subleases in the town and is required to undertake rehabilitation under separate arrangements from the Ranger Project Area.

"ERA is working with governments and key stakeholders to plan for the transition of Jabiru.

"We are preparing a stand-alone plan for rehabilitation of Jabiru. We have a number of legal obligations for the rehabilitation of Jabiru (to the extent rehabilitation is required) including the decommissioning and/or removal of assets.

"These are detailed in the Head Lease held by the Jabiru Town Development Authority

under the Jabiru Town Development Act (1978). These are not a part of the Ranger Closure Plan."

Mr Arnold said the plan built on more than 20 years of

scientific work undertaken on progressive rehabilitation at Ranger, with more than \$452 million spent on water and rehabilitation activities since 2012.

ERA chairman Peter Mansell told the company's annual general meeting earlier this year rehabilitation could cost a billion dollars. "With rehabilitation activities set to continue

to 2026, the estimated cost of the entire rehabilitation project will be around a billion dollars," he said.

"It is a mammoth undertaking and one that ERA is committed to completing to the highest standard. That, to us, is not something that we do grudgingly. We do it enthusiastically, because it is the right thing to do. And, if well done,

our licence to operate as a miner is protected. More than ever, our words will be judged by our deeds — and all of our stakeholders will be paying very close attention to our deeds."

The Northern Land Council and Gundjehmi Aboriginal Corporation welcomed the plan, saying it was decades overdue.



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