



## NEW CREMATOR FOR DARWIN

Work has recently been completed at Thorak Regional Cemetery to replace its aging cremator and initiate a major upgrade to the cemetery chapel.

Litchfield Council became the responsible party for the day to day operations of the Thorak Regional Cemetery in 2008 including a crematorium and chapel complex. The challenge for Litchfield was to ensure that the only cremator in Darwin remained operational.

"The cremator was the cause of some heartache for the council last year when the ageing unit started dying. The day before the funeral of fallen Digger Scott Palmer in July, a door fell off. The funeral was attended by more than 500 mourners, including Prime Minister Julia Gillard, Opposition Leader Tony Abbott and Defence heads. Litchfield staff and an engineer worked into the night to fix the problem in time for the cremation the next day. After much lobbying, Local Government Minister Malarndirri McCarthy approved a special purpose grant of \$650,000 to buy and install a replacement cremator at Thorak."  
(NT News August 2nd, 2011)

After an exhaustive tender process it was decided to install an "oversize" Joule cremator and ancillary equipment including coffin trolley doubling as a charge bier, a catafalque, ash processor stainless steel bench and dust extraction system manufactured by engineering company Austeng. The project was fully integrated with the installation of a stand-by generator. The Chapel & Crematorium complex was specifically designed for a Tropical Cyclone Region with the additional installation of a comprehensive lighting protection system.

GEO of Litchfield Council Russell Anderson commented that "We were looking for a cremator with the following minimal features:-

**At least 24 hour capacity that would accommodate possible disasters/emergencies**

Most efficient system because :-

- The fuel is LPG that provides maximum efficiency with diesel generator back-up.
- Two chamber design that promotes efficiency by virtue of its design.
- Efficiently offer at least 5 cremations each working day.

**Most importantly the cremator bed should be constructed with a sequence of hearth tiles that can be replaced individually by local tradesmen.**

**My inquiries with other cremators during site visits and my experience with our former cremator was that most composite beds cracked over time in the heating up/cooling down process and required interstate tradesmen to repair.**

As Thorak is cyclone prone and also prone to lightning strikes other features include:-

- Lightning arrestor located on top of the building and computer, power supply and electrics lighting protected with the best technology available.
- Flue sited only partially above roof line
- Flue designed to withstand wind speeds of up to 270kph.

Russell Anderson further commented "Austeng's proposal complied with all tender criteria and this ensured the final result is aligned with Thorak Regional Cemetery's special needs. We are very pleased with the final result and believe that this Cremator will serve its role in the foreseeable future. This would also address, not only the needs of the Northern Territory but other regions such as the north west of Australia."

For more information contact

**Russell Anderson**  
CEO Litchfield Council

p. (08) 8983 0600

e. russell.anderson@isc.nt.gov.au

