

# Gina grows cattle empire

## Willeroo Station boosts Darwin Port expansion plans

**GARY SHIPWAY**

THE NT's largest land owner, Gina Rinehart, has added to her vast empire with the purchase of the 171,000 hectare Willeroo pastoral property 100km west of Katherine.

Willeroo takes the number of Territory cattle stations Ms Rinehart has a stake in to six.

The owner of Hancock Pastoral – and Australia's richest person, worth an estimated

\$19.4 billion – Mrs Rinehart has spent more than \$200 million on stations in Western Australia's Kimberley Region and in the Northern Territory.

It is not known what Mrs Rinehart paid for Willeroo, but it was previously on the market for \$12 million before being sold by the Sultan of Brunei for an undisclosed sum to Indonesian feedlotting company Great Giant Livestock.

Mrs Rinehart has made no secret of her ambitious expansions plans for her growing cattle empire with the Darwin port to have a key role.

Earlier this year she signed a deal that will see 150,000 head of cattle shipped to China from Darwin.

Mrs Rinehart said the purchase of Willeroo was a strategic investment because of its proximity to Aroona Cattle station, which she purchased in March.

Aroona is on 150,000 hectares and holds 15,000 head of Brahman cattle and Willeroo is directly adjacent and runs 20,000 head.

"We secured Willeroo because we believe we can add improvements and value to the station," Ms Rinehart said.

"We will copy what we have introduced successfully on our other Hancock stations, and are currently rolling out across Kidman properties.

"Willeroo will well complement our existing investments in the north. It is adjacent to Aroona, which we acquired earlier this year, allowing us to operate the two stations as a combined unit.

"Also being near to the Phoenix Park export depot it will assist part of the wet season growing program for Riveren and Inverway as well as help to provide better market timing opportunities for some of Hancock Beef's Kimberley cattle stations."