

# New hospital pipes to be ripped out

GARY SHIPWAY, NT News | August 24, 2017 12:30am | Subscriber only

A COSTLY bungle has forced Lend Lease – the key contractor building the \$170 million Palmerston Regional Hospital – to replace substandard pipes installed in the controversial development.

An anonymous tip-off to the *NT News* said contractors were replacing pipes throughout the project because pipes that didn't meet Australian standards were used.

The caller said significant work, which included ripping out walls, was being carried out in a number of buildings and workers were being told to keep quiet about the magnitude of the works.

Lend Lease has confirmed the mistake.

It said as part of its work on quality management it identified that some of the pipework installed on the Palmerston Regional Hospital project “may not last the specified design life”.

“Lend Lease and its subcontractors are working on replacing the pipework and will carry out the work at no cost to the Northern Territory Government,” Lend Lease said.

“This work will not impact on the current completion scheduled of March 2018.”

No cost to replace the pipes has been given, nor why nonconforming pipe was used in the first instance.

The Palmerston Hospital has been plagued by cost blowouts, delays and even a failed media stunt that saw a hole filled in only days after it was used for a fake concrete pour.

The Territory Government's Department of Infrastructure Planning and Logistics' Palmerston Hospital Project Status Report last Friday listed Project Plumbing Pty Ltd carrying out first and second fix works to buildings one, two, four and eight.

Infrastructure, Planning and Logistics Minister Nicole Manison confirmed Lend Lease was working on replacing the pipework and said the 116-bed hospital would be delivered on time in 2018.

“The new works are starting immediately,” Ms Manison said. “Lend Lease recently advised Government that it had identified that some pipes installed on the project may not last the specified design life.

“Importantly for Territory taxpayers, the company has provided assurance that there will be no impact on the project's budget.

“There will also be no additional cost to taxpayers, and no impact on completion time frames as a result of the rectification works.”

The hospital will include 100-bed inpatient facilities, a 16-bay emergency department, pediatrics, operating theatres, outpatient facilities, ambulance bays, maternity services and birthing suites.

Lend Lease was a major partner in the consortium responsible for the construction of the new Darwin prison.

The Federal Government is funding \$110 million of the hospital development.

The company has to use NT companies for 90 per cent of its workforce and materials.