

# It's safe to look down, now

by John Malone

**IMPROVEMENTS** in public safety at viewing lookouts in Karijini National Park (formerly Hamersley Range National Park) have been made with the installation of handrails and platforms at various locations within the park.

With the funds available, viewing platforms have been provided at Knox and Joffre Gorges, Circular Pool and Three Way Junction lookouts, enabling visitors a safer, closer view of the magnificent scenery.

The layout and design of each handrail platform became a well-planned team effort by Karratha office, park rangers and Engineering Branch staff.

Work began last November with an on-site survey, combined with a thorough examination of the flaking, laminated cliff face at each designated lookout.

With all design work, budget and fund allocation approved, the tight production, transport and site installation program was evaluated and closely monitored throughout.

Works were successfully completed by mid April. The project was entirely successful, being completed inside budget allocation, and within the on-site time span allowed.

During the installation work, an awkward transport problem at Knox Gorge was solved innovatively. Automotive hubs, rims and tyres were fitted to the bulky 350 kg

Knox platform, converting it to an oversize garden trolley. This, in turn, was connected by a cable to the ranger's vehicle winch.

The platform was then lowered slowly and safely down the 100 metres of rugged, sloping terrain from the unloading area to the final site location.

After much pushing, pulling and shoving, the platform was located in its designated position on the edge of the 80 metre deep cliff face.

Finally, rocks topped with concrete were added to the rear section to meet the design ballast requirements for the cantilevered platform.

Platforms at the three other locations had been fabricated in bolt-together sections, and were a lot simpler to manhandle into position, before bolting down.

Anchors were used to hold down the structures and to offset damage to the cliff edges, caused by the thermal expansion of the structures, due to the wide-ranging temperatures of the Pilbara.

With at least two more lookouts still to be upgraded, it is hoped additional funds can be made available in the coming financial year.



*Sections of the safety railing being fitted on-site at Joffre Gorge in the Karijini National Park.*

