Chief Minister Welcomes Go Ahead for Stimulus Package

Chief Minister Paul Henderson today welcomed the passing of the Rudd Government’s economic stimulus package, saying it was a great day for the Territory.

Mr Henderson, who will host a business summit about the package on Sunday, said it would boost economic activity in the Territory and support thousands of jobs for Territorians.

“We will also see a great boost for school infrastructure, housing stock, road maintenance, railway crossings, local infrastructure and tax breaks for business,” Mr Henderson said.

“It will mean an estimated $450 million in funds flowing to the Territory – at a time when our economy will be impacted by the global financial crisis.”

Mr Henderson said he would be hosting a summit of up to 100 members of the business community and other stakeholders on Sunday to discuss the package and how it can be best implemented in the Territory.

“The infrastructure funding represents a fantastic opportunity for our construction industry and the wider Territory economy,” he said.

“I have a five point plan to fast-track the work, and if more needs to be done it will be done.”

Operation Stimulus

- The Development Consent Authority to meet every fortnight instead of every month (recruitment of five more staff to start immediately);
- A Summit to be held on Sunday to brief industry and get all ideas on the table;
- Dedicated Stimulus Action Squads set up in Government Departments to get these projects up-and-running as fast as possible;
- We’ll make it even easier for local companies to get local projects – we lead the country but will strive to become even better; and
- A short and sharp review of procurement to streamline development processes and cut red tape – including raising the threshold before you need to go to tender and getting contractors involved earlier in the processes.

Mr Henderson said it was shameful that the CLP Opposition had opposed the package.

“Terry Mills should have shown leadership and rejected the stance of Nigel Scullion and his Liberal mates in Canberra.”
Under the stimulus package, every primary school will have a large scale infrastructure project, such as a library or hall, built or upgraded. There will also be 500 new science labs and language centres across Australia and up to $200,000 for every school for upgrades and maintenance.

The Territory will also benefit from the other measures in the package including road maintenance, energy efficiency for houses, tax breaks for business, public and defence housing and $900 one-off bonus payments for Territorians.

Contact: Geoff Fraser 0407 360 256