MILLS PREPARES FOR FIRST COAG

December 6th, 2012

Chief Minister, Terry Mills, said he would be fighting for the interests of all Territorians at his first Council of Australian Governments (COAG) in Canberra tomorrow.

Mr Mills said the top item on the agenda for the meeting between State and Territory leaders would be the Commonwealth’s National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).

“While the Northern Territory is not involved in the launch of the NDIS, we are watching and observing with interest,” Mr Mills said.

“Before we commit to the full roll out of the scheme we need to understand the issues involved and learn what is needed in the Territory in order for us to play a successful part.

“With 30 per cent of our population Indigenous, the scheme could have a profound impact on the Territory and the impost this could pose on our finances is a serious concern.

“I will also be looking for more detail and substance from the Commonwealth at tomorrow’s COAG on their Asian Century White Paper.

“While the idea to engage Asia is obvious in the Paper, Commonwealth funding, investment and infrastructure is not.

“If the Commonwealth truly want this to work it needs to recognise the strategic position of the Northern Territory and commit funding for infrastructure like the upgrade of the Darwin Port.”

Also discussed at tomorrow’s COAG will be the Schools Funding Reform and the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse.

Today, Mr Mills attended the Business Advisory Forum with the Prime Minister, his State and Territory counterparts and key business leaders.

The meeting discussed the progress of major reforms designed to lower costs for businesses and improve productivity, which all participants, including Mr Mills, agreed to continue.

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