3 March 2015

LEVERAGING LABOR TOURISM LEGACY FOR FUTURE GROWTH

Shadow Minister for Tourism, Lynne Walker, today said a Labor Government would work with local tourism operators to further develop the Top End as a World War 2 heritage tourism destination.

Ms Walker welcomed the influx of visitors to Darwin and said the construction of the Cruise Ship terminal in 2008 was a catalyst in expanding the lucrative cruise ship market and visitor numbers.

“As a result of building a Cruise Ship Terminal and actively working with that sector, it is fantastic to see more tourists visit the Top End, benefiting tour operators and small businesses,” Ms Walker said.

The 10 year Cruise Ship Strategy and supporting Terminal infrastructure was expected to inject up to $60 million into the Territory economy by 2014.

The opening of the $10 million World War 2 Experience in Darwin in 2012 by the former Labor Government created a new opportunity to grow national and international tourism numbers.

“Our military history provides an opportunity to target the experience-seeker tourist, whom research shows stays longer, spends more and is more likely to visit regional areas.

“Across the Territory, we have extensive WW2 heritage sites to attract new visitors interested in Australia’s war history.

“The World War 2 Experience facility at East Point provides a centrepiece of the visual and oral history of the Bombing of Darwin, and is great infrastructure to leverage new tourism opportunities.

“We see this in other nations, like the US promoting Pearl Harbour as a tourism draw-card, and we’d like to create similar opportunities for the Territory.

“Labor will work with tourism operators to fast-track the development of military heritage marketing campaigns to tap into this tourist segment, both nationally and internationally,” Ms Walker said.
“A future Labor Government will also actively work with local cruise ships operators to create more opportunities for Indigenous cultural tourism for the Tiwi Islands, Arnhem and Nhulunbuy regions.”

Presently the Federal Government’s cabotage legislation restricts smaller cruise ship operations by requiring an international stop in-between two Australian ports, adding extra costs and inhibiting cruising tours across the top of Australia.

This legislation requires a cruise ship travelling between Broome and Darwin to port overseas in-between, for example, in East Timor.

“This proposal has been flagged in responses to the Green Paper on Developing the North, but needs to be actively addressed,” Ms Walker said.

Media contact: Louise Connor 0438 241 211