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A lesson for Govt in Morse report

The Morse Report and proposed tourism strategies serve to highlight the shortcomings of the Territory Government’s own master plan for our parks estate, CLP Shadow Tourism Minister Terry Mills said today.

“The Martin Government’s Parks Master Plan makes little reference to tourism while this report clearly recognises that by developing commercial operations through tourism social objectives can be achieved.” Mr Mills said.

“Kakadu National Park could become the role model for tourism in other parks.

“The CLP Opposition welcomes the Morse Report. The report provides a good analysis of the challenges facing Kakadu and proposes a way forward through greater practical cooperation between Traditional Owners and the tourism industry.”

Mr Mills said the report sets out a new and welcome approach that should move us from describing problems to achieving real progress.

“We all share an obligation to work this out but it will not occur without visionary leadership,” he said.

“I particularly support the recommendation that tour operators be provided with greater security of tenure by extending and strengthening the permit system. Greater security of tenure for operators should lead to innovative commercial joint venture partnerships with traditional owners. Through this approach solutions can be found to use the vast sections of the park that are currently under utilised.

“Ultimately of course the shared vision should include the transfer of Kakadu from Commonwealth to Territory control.

“We know tourists are over Crocodile Dundee and the modern tourist seeks more that wildlife and scenery. This report proposes strategies to reposition the park to appeal to the travellers who are after authentic and individual experiences. Recommendation like walking trails and cabins, night wildlife tours and low impact eco-camping are welcome.”

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