Confidence building as Territorians spend more

Latest economic figures released by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) show Territorians are spending more, indicating a growth in economic confidence in the Northern Territory.

ABS figures show Real State Final Demand – the total amount spent on goods and services within the Territory – increased by 5.4% in 2002/03, with a strong increase of 10.4% in the June quarter.

"The increase of 5.4%, while slightly below the national figure of 5.8%, shows more money is being spent in the Territory – a solid indicator that economic confidence is continuing to build," Business Minister Paul Henderson said.

Consumption increased by 5.4% in 2002/03, and private investment increased by 17.3%, while building and structure investment increased by 57.6% over the same period.

"This increase in structure investment is due in large part to the ongoing Bayu-Undan investment, and with the announcement of the $600 million redevelopment of the Darwin City Waterfront, we can expect this figure to stay strong," said Mr Henderson.

Retail trade figures released by the ABS also show steady growth, registering an increase in turnover of 11.5% for the month of July – an increase of 4.6% on this time last year.

"This increase is another indicator that Territorians are starting to spend more," said Mr Henderson.

"Retail growth continues to be underpinned by low interest rates, an expected improvement in the labour market and positive consumer confidence – all good signs for a growing, strengthening economy.

"As with the recent Sensis Index that showed the Northern Territory recorded the highest increase in business confidence, the Government welcomes these indicators of growing economic confidence, but knows there is still much work to be done.

"The Government is committed to driving economic development and will build on our efforts to attract investment and create more jobs for Territorians."