An NT Government proposal to rotate child protection staff to the Territory on short-term secondments has been widely endorsed at the Community and Disability Services Ministers Conference in Melbourne today.

Children and Families Minister Kon Vatskalis today presented a Territory paper at the Ministerial Conference, seeking support from State and Territory Ministers for jurisdictions to provide experienced Child Protection staff to the Territory.

“The NT Government has committed an additional $130 million over five years to help rebuild our Child Protection system and to implement the recommendations of the most comprehensive-ever Inquiry into this area,” Mr Vatskalis said.

“However a major challenge to child protection systems all over the world is the issue of recruiting professional child protection workers.

“Earlier this year the NT Government requested the assistance of other interstate and New Zealand Child Protection workers to be seconded on a short term basis. The Remote Area Rotation Initiative (RARI) has been developed as a consequence of that request for assistance.”

Mr Vatskalis said nine highly experienced New Zealand secondees had already arrived in the Territory.

“The NT Government’s idea for remote rotation will increase the workforce of experienced Child Protection professionals to assist in better meeting the demand for child protection services.

“All State and Territory Ministers supported this initiative and recognised the importance of giving frontline workers training and experience – particularly given the increased number of indigenous children in care in other states.

“These workers will gain valuable experience in working with remote and indigenous communities and take their experience and learning back to their home – but at the same time and importantly, will gain accreditation for professional development purposes.”

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