$100,000 Upgrade Secures Finke’s Future

This year’s Finke Desert Race has been given a vital boost in the form of a $100,000 upgrade to the 230 kilometre track.

Sport and Recreation Minister Karl Hampton said the upgrade would deliver repairs to a 15km stretch of the course.

Mr Hampton said the $100,000 upgrade was necessary because there was considerable damage to a new section of track adjacent to the Maryvale Road.

“This new section of track was introduced last year to complete the relocation of the race off all sections of the Old South Road,” Mr Hampton said.

“The Finke Desert Race is an icon on the Territory sports and tourism calendars and is the greatest desert race in the world.

“The repairs will focus on sections of the course between Deep Well and Rodinga to recover track surface and washouts due to flood and erosion damage.

“Repairs include general grading of sections and gravel re-sheeting of bulldust priority sections.

“Access to Titjikala Community and Chambers Pillar will not be disrupted during race weekend and emergency services vehicles have easier access to all points of the course without having to stop the race.

“Not only is the Finke Desert Race a great sporting event and a big part of our Central Australian lifestyle – the Finke provides a boost to the local Central Australian economy with an estimated spend of $3 million by visiting competitors in the town each year.

“The race is run successfully by a strong local committee and assisted by over 300 volunteers with more than 10,000 spectators coming along to watch 500 bikes and 78 cars compete over two days of thrilling racing.

“This latest investment by this Government in this icon event comes on top of $1.5 million invested since 2001 to further support the ongoing success of this iconic event, including permanent toilet blocks and relocation of the start/finish line to its current location.”

Finke Desert Race Committee President Antony Yoffa thanked the Territory Government for its $100,000 in extra funding to support the 36th annual running of the richest off road race in the Southern Hemisphere.
“This funding will see the Finke track upgraded, improve competitor and spectator safety, and ensure we are supporting the growth of the race into the future,” Mr Yoffa said.

The 36th annual Tattersall’s Finke Desert Race will again be held during the Queen’s Birthday long weekend with the prologue on Saturday 11 June and racing held during the next two days.

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