The Health Minister needs to clarify whether an airline that walked away from the Territory with $1million in unpaid bills still has links with the aeromedical provider CareFlight.

Shadow Minister, Matt Conlan, said a subsidiary company of Australasian Jet closed its doors in the Territory in September 2008 leaving debts in excess of $1.3million.

When CareFlight was appointed last year as the Territory’s interim aeromedical provider, it was revealed they had formed an alliance with Australasian Jet to deliver the service.

At the time the Health Department refused to comment on the link, but a manager at Australasian Jet said the company would work with CareFlight to put together a bid for the 10 year contract.

“With the announcement yesterday that CareFlight has now been confirmed as the full time provider of the aeromedical contract, Minister Vatskalis should respond to a number of outstanding questions including:

• Whether Australasian Jet is involved in the CareFlight consortium?
• The extent, if any, of Australasian Jet's involvement with CareFlight?
• The connections between Australasian Jet and the subsidiary company that left the Territory?
• Whether creditors were ever repaid the money they were owed by Australasian Jet?
• How much money, if any, is still owed to creditors?

“Mr Vatskalis should also say whether it’s appropriate that any company that has left Territory businesses out of pocket should be able to do business with the Territory Government without recourse.”

Mr Conlan said he is concerned that CareFlight’s retrieval record has been lacklustre at best during its nearly 12 months as interim aeromedical provider.

“Serious concerns have been raised by medical experts about CareFlight’s capacity to deliver the aeromedical service,” he said.

“These concerns include the length of time for evacuations, issues with patient care, the number of planes available, staff turnover and efficiency.”

Further comment: Matt Conlan 0408 805 338