Small to medium businesses consider the Northern Territory Government the most supportive government in the nation, according to the latest Sensis Business Index.

Treasurer David Tollner said the Sensis Business Index’s findings showing support for the government rose by 10 percentage points in the last quarter, is further evidence that the Adam Giles Country Liberals Government is heading in the right economic direction.

“The 10 percentage point increase in support for the Territory Government was the largest increase of any state or territory government,” Mr Tollner said.

“Overall, Territory business confidence grew by six percentage points to 26%, the second-highest in the nation and well above the national average of 17%, which actually declined five percentage points over the quarter.

“The Territory recorded the highest regional business confidence in the nation at 47%.

“Territory businesses also performed better than all other states or territories in sales, employment, prices and profitability.”

Mr Tollner said the Sensis Business Index findings followed a recent Deloitte survey which found almost a fifth of businesses in the Northern Territory expects growth of over 30% within the next 12 months.

“This all comes on the back of other economic indicators showing the Country Liberals Government is on the right track to framing an economy that creates wealth and jobs for Territory families,” Mr Tollner said.

“Trend employment in August was up almost 2 per cent compared to August last year. The Territory led the nation with the strongest monthly and annual growth.

“The workforce participation is at its highest level since 2009. It has risen to 75.2 per cent with an extra 520 fulltime workers in the Territory last month.
“In annual terms, retail trade turnover in the Territory increased by 2.9 per cent in August 2013 compared to a year ago, the second highest growth rate of the jurisdictions, behind Queensland (up by 3.1 per cent).

“Also in August 2013, the trend number of residential building approvals in the Territory increased by 1.4 per cent rising from 146 to 148 compared to July 2013.

“This is the highest monthly number of building approvals since December 1999.

“Nationally, the trend number of residential building approvals increased by just 0.1 per cent over the same period.

“In the year to August 2013, the number of residential building approvals in the Territory increased by 29.9 per cent jumping from 1,614 to 2096, the second highest growth rate nationally.

“Given the $5.5 billion Labor debt the Territory is burden with we are making strong inroads into fixing the Labor mess we inherited.”

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