The Northern Territory Government has delivered on its election promise to undertake an evidence based investigation into speed limits.

A 200 kilometre stretch of the Stuart Highway between Barrow Creek and Alice Springs will undergo a one year trial on revised speed limits from February 1, 2014.

Minister for Transport Peter Styles said the Northern Territory Government was committed to the bush and was following through on its election commitment to undertake an evidence based approach on the return of open speed limits.

Mr Styles said the Territory Government were continually undertaking audits and assessments on the major highways of the NT and had recommended a section for the trial that had no identified road geometry issues and low crash numbers.

“The Territory has a unique road network with a low traffic volume and this section of road has been identified as an appropriate trial section,” he said.

“In the ten years between 2001-2011 there wasn’t any speed related fatalities on this stretch of road.

“We are bringing responsibility back to motorists – they need to be able to drive to the road conditions and their capabilities.”

Mr Styles reminded motorists that this trial of revised speed limits was not a licence to drive recklessly, dangerously or without due care.

“Open speed limits mean driving to the road conditions - everyone should drive within their own capabilities, the condition of the road, prevailing weather conditions and the standard of their vehicle,” he said.

“Learner and provisional drivers and heavy vehicles will continue to be speed limited as they are now.

“Be warned police will continue to prosecute those who drive in a dangerous manner, and will be increasing enforcement of the non-wearing of seatbelts and drink driving which remain the major causes of fatalities and serious injuries on Territory roads.”

Mr Styles said government would also be implementing a new policy for setting speed limits near road houses on major highways.

“Speed at road houses will be determined based on access arrangements, visibility, set backs from roads and level of pedestrian activity,” he said.
MEDIA RELEASE

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