Matt Conlan  
Minister for Central Australia, Minister for Tourism

**The Centre set to cash in on Geocaching**

13 June 2014

Alice Springs has been chosen as the site for an international GPS treasure hunt event which will attract up to 1,500 people from around the world.

Minister for Tourism Matt Conlan said he was excited to announce the Geocaching Mega Event will be held at Easter in 2017.

“This will be a fantastic event that will bring more tourists to the Centre while also providing invaluable international exposure for our region,” he said.

Geocaching is a worldwide phenomenon where participants use GPS technology on smart phones and apps to locate caches of various items at different locations on a type of treasure hunt.

Mr Conlan said that there were more than six million geocachers worldwide and 62,000 of those are in Australia.

“Tourism organisations around the world are encouraging geocaching to attract visitors and increase engagement with destinations and attractions,” he said.

“Not only does a treasure hunt encourage visitation, it also enriches a visitor experience and extends the length of stay.

“Alice Springs is quickly becoming a hot spot for geocaching and in addition to the announcement of the Mega Event to be held in 2017 was recently the site of the 2,000,000th worldwide ‘geocache’.

“All up there are 240 geocaches placed in Alice Springs and surrounds and about 1500 in the NT. The Territory has some extremely active geocachers – but in this slightly secretive sport, there are three teams in Alice Springs – known as **2 lost souls, Griff90** and **Redcentredazza** – that are particularly prominent.

“Geocachers are known to love the outdoors – which means walking, trekking, 4WDing, camping, caravanning and fishing all help in the pursuit of tracking and finding the geocaches.

“Many of the people coming to Alice Springs for this event will spend a lot of time travelling around the NT, and seeing a side of the Territory that few people appreciate. These people will become the
perfect ambassadors for telling the world about their unique Territory experience – which is often the best kind of advertising.”

Oz Mega Event Organising Committee member Greg Shaw said a group from the organising committee went to Alice Springs last week to inspect facilities.

“The home base will be at Blatherskite Park – which is a brilliant site and the facilities are excellent,” Mr Shaw said.

“On top of that, the scenery is spectacular around Central Australia, which is perfect to appreciate and explore for people involved in this sport. This sport is growing at a rapid rate and we know those who come to the NT from will have an unforgettable experience.”

Mayor Damien Ryan said: “With its specular natural landscapes and top class tourism facilities, Alice Springs is the perfect host for the Geocaching Mega Event. We look forward to welcoming participants in 2017 to our iconic outback town.”

For information on Geocaching visit [www.geocaching.com.au](http://www.geocaching.com.au)

In Australia, the Outback Way has 34 caches on the route from Cairns to Perth (outbackway.org.au) called the Outback Way-Finder Trail.

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