Media Statement

Adam Giles
Chief Minister of the Northern Territory

Malaysian Airlines Disaster

18 July 2014

The World is taking in the news of the terrible disaster that has taken place with the tragic grounding of a Malaysian Airlines plane in the Ukraine overnight.

I am deeply shocked and horrified to learn that 28 Australian passengers on the aircraft are feared dead.

This is a sad and sorry day for our country and for all nations affected.

Unfortunately, indications are that Territory passengers were among the 298 people on board the Malaysian Airlines flight.

Indications are that a teacher who works in a remote community was killed, as was a public servant and her husband who were Palmerston residents.

We are continuing to work closely with Consular officials, and the NT Police Disaster Victim Identification staff remain on standby if needed to assist with identifications.

This is a truly reprehensible and unspeakable criminal act and on behalf of all Territorians, I wish to express my deep condolences and sympathy to all the families and friends of the victims, particularly the Territory families involved.

We realise a tragedy of this nature will affect many Territorians and the NT Government will provide any counselling and support needed for the affected family, friends and work colleagues of those who perished.

The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade has the primary responsibility for notifying the families of victims and Territory Police are doing what they can to assist.

While it is too soon to speculate as to who is responsible for this heinous act, it is now essential that the truth be established as soon as possible, and those responsible are brought to justice.

I am advised the Australian Federal Police will coordinate the investigation response on behalf of the country into what is the highest Australian death toll overseas since the Bali Bombings.

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