Media Release

Adam Giles
Chief Minister of the Northern Territory, Minister for Tourism

Building new tourism infrastructure in Alice Springs

30 March 2015

Visitors to the Royal Flying Doctor Service Tourist Facility in Alice Springs will be able to see a life-sized hologram of the organisation’s founder as part of a major upgrade supported by the Territory Government.

“I was honoured to officially unveil this state of the art addition to the RFDS Tourist Facility in Alice Springs which is certain to become a must-do attraction for visitors to the Red Centre,” Chief Minister Adam Giles said.

“The life-sized hologram of RFDS founder John Flynn is a first for the Northern Territory and is the centrepiece of a revamped display at the hugely popular tourist facility.”

The high-tech upgrade has been made possible with the help of a $55 000 grant from a $1.3 million dollar pool of NT and Commonwealth funding for tourism infrastructure and product development projects.

“For 87 years, the Royal Flying Doctor Service has been a much loved and necessary feature of outback life and the hologram is a great way for visitors and locals alike to learn more about the RFDS’ valuable work,” Mr Giles said.

An actor has been recruited to play the role of John Flynn in the hologram. He tells the story of the RFDS from its humble beginnings through to today’s organisation which assists more than 280 000 people each year. The whole display cost $188 000.

“Bringing our founder, John Flynn, back to life as a hologram will enhance the storytelling experience for visitors to the RFDS Tourist Facility in Alice Springs,” RFDS Central Operations Chief Executive Officer, John Lynch, said.

Local Alice Springs multi-media company Redback Productions produced the script, sourced the imagery and worked with the Sydney company that developed the hologram technology to create the display.

“I want to congratulate the RFDS on listening to feedback from their 60 0000 visitors every year who said they wanted more information about the history of the organisation,” Mr Giles said.
“The RFDS has found a different way to deliver that information through the use of this hologram and I’m confident it will be a hit with visitors.

“This is exactly the kind of innovation and product redevelopment I want to encourage across our tourism industry, enhancing the experience for visitors when they come to the Red Centre.”

The unveiling follows this morning’s festivities for the arrival of Virgin Australia’s new Adelaide-Alice Springs- Darwin flights.

“Tourism in Central Australia is on the road to recovery after some lean years under the former Labor Government,” Mr Giles said.

“The most recent domestic visitor statistics from Tourism Research Australia show that in 2014 total visitors were up 4.6 per cent in Central Australia and up 8.8 per cent in Alice Springs and MacDonnell.

“Total domestic visitor expenditure was up more than 50 per cent in both regions over the year as these extra visitors stay longer and spend more.”

“We are optimistic that Virgin Australia’s new service will help improve these figures even further, particularly in the holiday market, which is great news for attractions like the RFDS Tourist Facility.”

Media Contact: Danielle Parry 0413 081 801