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

Darwin set for major new tourism attraction

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Wartime Darwin will be brought to life in a never-before-seen virtual reality and holographic experience taking people into the battlefront during the Bombing of Darwin.

Chief Minister and Tourism Minister Adam Giles said the Northern Territory Government was calling for Expressions of Interest to fit out, lease and operate a major new wartime tourism attraction at Stokes Hill Wharf.

“This will be an incredible experience where people will essentially be part of history,” Mr Giles said.

“Military tourism is a growing trend with more and more people visiting war memorials, exhibitions and events in Australia and around the world.

“The Territory’s WWII heritage is an important and significant tourism asset and the new Bombing of Darwin virtual reality and holographic experience will make it more accessible to visitors, taking this fascinating chapter of Australian history to the next level.

“The virtual reality headsets will allow visitors to be taken back in time to experience the bombing of Darwin as if they were actually there.

“The holographic technology will be used to tell the previously unknown story of a commanding officer of a US ship to allow visitors to learn about the experience and see the attack through his eyes.

“The new attraction will be both educational and entertaining and will complement many of the existing WWII experiences already available in Darwin. I’ve no doubt it will be a huge hit with locals as well as visitors from all over the world.

“With competition fierce for the tourism dollar around the world, we need to be innovative and this new high tech attraction – believed to be a world-first - will help us stand out from the crowd and put the Territory on the map as a must visit holiday attraction.”

Tourism NT will develop the virtual reality and holographic content for the new attraction with the successful operator encouraged to value-add to the new facility by providing additional tourism and entertainment products and services.
The new attraction will be located within the function centre building at Stokes Hill Wharf, placing it in close proximity to the Waterfront precinct, cruise ship terminal and city.

Mr Giles said the Wharf was where the first bombs fell on 19 February 1942 and was the ideal location to share the moving stories behind this important piece of Australian history.

“The attraction may also be a focal point for the 75th anniversary Bombing of Darwin commemorations scheduled for February 2017 as part of the NT Government’s Territory Remembers program,” he said.

The EOI process should be finalised by the end of February 2016 with the view to the successful proponent having the facility operational by July 2016.

Mr Giles said a thriving tourism industry helped boost local business, create jobs and grow the Territory economy.

“It’s all part of the Country Liberal Government’s plan to drive the development of North Australia and build a $2.2 billion visitor economy by 2020,” he said.

Watch a preview of what the proposed new tourist attraction could look like here:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DaPArbnAijk

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*Photos attached: Artist impressions of proposed Bombing of Darwin Wharf Experience*