Enabling the economy through transport infrastructure and services

24 May 2016

The Country Liberals Government will invest $36.1 million into critical transport infrastructure as part of Budget 2016.

A total of $19.4 million has been allocated to new investment in transport, with $14.2 million to be spent on capital works and $5.2 million on minor new works.

Minister for Transport Peter Chandler said "The investment would result in critical upgrades to six regional aerodromes; several barge landings; improvements to the safety and operation of the Cullen Bay navigational channel; facilitate upgrades to the Parap Road Safety Centre as well as improvements to bus shelters.

“The funding will support the development of local industry, improves access to health and other essential services and enhances tourism traffic and job creation.”

Key projects include:

**Cullen Bay Channel dredging**

**Commitment:** $8 million, fully funded by the Country Liberals Government.

Dredging works will be undertaken to remove navigational hazards obstructing vessel access to the Cullen Bay channel.

Due to the build-up of silt over time, the entrance channel has become extremely shallow, particularly on low tides.

The current situation is causing safety issues as well as operational issues such as ferry service cancellation.

The Cullen Bay ferry service (operated by Sealink) provides an essential, economical method of transport for Mandorah and Tiwi residents and tourists.

**Remote Aerodrome Upgrades**

**Commitment:** $4.25 million Regional Aviation Access Program (RAAP) jointly funded by the Territory Government and Commonwealth Government.
The Northern Territory Government maintains 70 remote aerodromes under the Transport Assets program including 50 on Aboriginal land.

Six priority projects have been selected for additional upgrades in 2016-17, including:

- $500,000 Napperby runway extension
- $250,000 Haast Bluff transvers grade correction
- $600,000 Kalkgurung runway reseal
- $650,000 Ngukurr runway reseal
- $1.5 million Areyonga runway upgrade and seal
- $1.5 million Finke runway extension and seal

The work will be supplemented by a number of smaller projects to be undertaken through the Transport Assets Minor New Works Program.

**Barge Landing Upgrades**

**Commitment:** $7.8 million fully funded by NT Government.

Various capital upgrades will be undertaken at barge landings in remote areas which provide a vital transport link to remote communities year-round.

Works will include continued upgrades at Maningrida, Gapuwiyak, Galiwinku and Ramingining.

A new, $2 million upgrade will take place at Wadeye – one of the largest remote communities in the Northern Territory. It will include the barge landing, hardstand and access road.

The work will be supplemented by a number of smaller projects to be undertaken through the Transport Assets Minor New Works Program.

**Public Transport Infrastructure Upgrades:**

**Commitment:** Various projects as part of the Minor New Works Program.

- $160,000 to install CCTV at the Woolworths Darwin City bus stop to deter antisocial behaviour and assist police investigations.
- $25,000 installation of bike racks at bus stops.

**Expanding Regional Bus Services**
**Commitment:** Government has provided $1 million, and an additional $1.4 million over 3 years for operational costs.

The Tuparipiya Bus Service will operate on Melville Island each weekday, providing a regular service between Pirlangimpi, Paru, Pickertaramoor and Milikapiti.

The service will also be available to operate on the weekends when community events are scheduled and will do so in conjunction with other Tiwi organisations such as the Tiwi Islands Regional Council who will also have their ferry service operating for those events.

The operations will be based in Milikapiti and will initially be managed by Bodhi Bus.

Bodhi Bus is a remote area passenger bus service provider with significant experience in the operation of remote and regional bus services to Top End communities.

Bodhi will provide a cost structure, promote the bus operation (including interaction and growth of the tourism market) and train local Indigenous drivers to become professional bus operators.

Initially five locals will be employed in the bus operations. However, 10 are being trained.

Bus operations will consist of three Isuzu buses of 28 seats each. Two of these buses are 4x4.

The cost per person per trip is $15.

The transport service will serve as a catalyst for significant future economic development for the Tiwi Islands and provide a significant enabler to the Tiwi Islands social and economic development initiative.

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**Parap Road Safety Centre Upgrades**

**Commitment:** $100 000

The Parap Road Safety Centre which provides bike safety education for students and the general public will receive an upgrade under the Minor New Works Program including painting of the main headquarters and new shade structures over the bike track.

“This investments in our infrastructure and services are part of the Country Liberals Government commitment to building a prosperous economy by delivering critical infrastructure and improving access to goods and services for remote Territorians as well as enhancing our unique Territory lifestyle the community values greatly.”

“The Country Liberals Government recognises transport access is an economic enabler. Increased transport connectivity creates jobs, community, and prosperity for the Territory,” Mr Chandler said.

The work is being undertaken through the Minor New Works program.

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