Opposition sports spokesman Terry Mills has demonstrated a complete incapacity to understand international cricket, let alone the Northern Territory’s proud role within it, Sports Minister John Ah Kit said today.


“The simple fact is that we have obtained Cricket Australia support for international games until at least 2007.

“It would never have happened unless we committed the resources to bringing Marrara Oval up to international standards—standards which were endorsed by Clive Lloyd back in 2002.

“There was never going to be a Test match in 2005—for the simple fact that the mighty Aussie team will be playing for the Ashes during the English winter. Surely even Mr Mills understands the notion of a bye in sporting schedules,” said Mr Ah Kit.

“It was always agreed between the government and Cricket Australia that there would be a mix of Test games, One Day Games, “A” Team series and international representative sides—and that is exactly what is happening.

“We all know what happened to the possible Zimbabwe matches next year—is Mr Mills really suggesting I should have gone to Harare to sort out Mugabe?—or does he know something about international diplomacy no one else in the world knows about?

“We are looking to international cricket being part of next year’s Arafura Games 2005—re-introducing this great code to the Games after an absence of some years.

“In 2006 it will again be international cricket—just as expected—with Australia A playing a limited overs tournament with at least three other international sides. Territory cricket fans—as well as visiting tourists—will have a feast of international cricket.

“In three years this is the first time Mr Mills has padded up to try and seriously discuss international cricket—and he has knocked off his bails with his first ball.”