28th April 2003
Government announces $600,000 tourism plan

The Territory Government has thrown its full support behind the local tourism industry - following the cancellation of the 2003 Arafura Games - today announcing plan to spend up to $600,000 on travel initiatives.

Chief Minister, Clare Martin, said the money would be used to attract new tourists and those people who had planned to come to Darwin for the Games.

"To assist the tourism industry during this difficult period we have been actively developing incentives to attract interstate travellers," she said.

"The tourism industry is a huge employer in our community and needs the support of Government."

Tourism Minister, Dr Chris Burns, said that details about the package would be finalised this week.

"We believe that there are market opportunities to be capitalised on and Government is working with the tourism sector to deliver on that," he said.

"The new deals will target people who are looking for a holiday during the month of May and, in particular, those people who were expecting to be here for Arafura 2003."

The $600,000 will be made up of funding for joint marketing of low cost flight and accommodation packages and includes provision for an additional voucher incentive.

"Approximately 1400 interstate athletes and officials that were expected into Darwin have been offered a $200 voucher which can be used on accommodation and tourism product," Dr Burns said.

"When combined with the packages being developed we believe there will be a very strong case being made for people to come to the Territory for a holiday."

Dr Burns paid special tribute to QANTAS on their announcement to refund interstate booking for 2003 Games participants.

"While the Games participants would naturally be disappointed at the cancellation, as we all are, they have recreation leave booked and holiday funds saved," he said.

"The Government is determined to lessen the blow and assist tourism by attracting them to town for a May holiday and an exciting Territory..."