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Push For New Trade Links Will Continue

Asian Relations and Trade Minister Paul Henderson said the Government will continue to work with industry to bring new air freight carriers into the Territory, despite MAS Kargo today formally advising of the early cessation of the air freight trial between Darwin and Kuala Lumpur.

“It is disappointing for everyone that MAS Kargo has ended the trial early after having flown only three trial flights, but we will continue to work to attract new air freight services into the Territory to support Territory exporters,” Mr Henderson said.

“Combined, the NT Government and NT Airports put forward $10,000 a flight in financial assistance, at a total of $30,000 for the three-flight trial.

“More than 56 tonnes of freight was flown out of Darwin and 26 tonnes of inbound parcel freight was brought into Darwin over the three trial flights.

“The trial with MAS Kargo was about backing Territory business by supporting a new trade link in and out of the Territory, and the initiative has had the support of freight forwarders, growers, exporters and industry bodies.

“Unfortunately, a change of personnel and a subsequent breakdown in communication at MAS Kargo saw the first planned flight pulled, and this saw a decline in confidence the service amongst industry.

“I’d like to thank all involved in this trial, including NT Airports, and growers, freight forwarders and exporters for getting behind the MAS Kargo initiative.”

“Industries ranging from perishables such as mangoes right through to the heavy equipment users in the mining, oil and gas industries continue to call for a dedicated freight service through Darwin.

“The Department of Business, Industry and Resource Development and NT Airports will continue to work with the Air Freight Working Group, exporters, freight forwarders and growers to attract new services.”

Paul Henderson MLA
Minister for Asian Relations and Trade

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