The Alice Springs Town Council should be ashamed of its miserly support for the Brolga Tourism Awards which will be hosted in the town next month, Minister for Tourism Paul Henderson said today.

Mr Henderson said the Council’s reluctance to fork out dollars for the Territory’s premier tourism gala event is an indication that tourism is not high on the Council’s agenda.

"Tourism is absolutely vital to the economy of Alice Springs, with 10.4% of jobs in the town generated by the tourism industry,’ Mr Henderson said.

"I am disappointed that the Alice Springs Council – which generates a huge amount of its revenue from local tourism operators – can only find a meagre $5000 to put towards the Brolgas.

"This effort is not only tight-fisted but it really does defy logic, given Council’s grasp of how crucial this industry is to its economy – both directly and indirectly."

Mr Henderson challenged Alice Springs Council to match Darwin City Council’s contribution of $15,000 contribution last time the Brolgas were held in Darwin.

"Industry asked for $15,000, hoped for $10,000 at worse, and have been offered $5000. The NT Government has had to make up these extra funds, putting in $80,000 to sponsor this major showcase.

"The Alice Springs Town Council is cashed up and shouldn’t be tight when supporting an event that supports a vital local industry.

"I challenge the Alice Springs Town Council to match the effort of Darwin City Council, and show the Territory just how much this industry means to them.

"The Brolgas acknowledge the quality and professionalism of our tourism industry. Central Australia is at the forefront of that excellence, with 4 national winners emerging from the last Brolgas."