25 April 2005

RECORD EDUCATION SPENDING

Budget 2005 will deliver record spending of $581 million for employment, education and training.

Minister for Employment, Education and Training Syd Stirling said this was a $109 million increase since 2001, or 23%.

“The Martin Government’s increased investment means more resources and upgrades for schools, more teaching staff, improved education for Territory students and enhanced training opportunities for Territorians,” Mr Stirling said.

“Budget 2005 particularly supports the Government’s ongoing initiatives in education such as the employment of 100 extra teachers above allocation to better back classroom teaching. Other ongoing initiatives include:

- providing 19 high school counsellors above staffing formula
- employing eight attendance officers
- introducing Professional Learning communities for teachers
- providing additional professional development for teachers
- providing laptops to every classroom teacher
- increasing Information Technology services in schools
- establishing Interactive Distance Learning units in Alice Springs and Katherine

“Budget 2005 also continues the Martin Government’s focus on improving education infrastructure with a close to $50 million works program, including:

- $23.95 million for capital works
- $6 million for minor new works
- $19.5 million for repairs and maintenance

“Capital projects already announced include funding support for school upgrades at Essington School, O’Loughlin College and St John’s College; a $1.2 million airconditioning upgrade at Ross Park Primary School; $145,000 for upgrades at Nightcliff High School; and $5.5 million for a major upgrade at Wadeye school.

“The Martin Government will also continue to provide more funding for school equipment and furniture for teacher housing in Budget 2005, with:

- $500,000 for school equipment, bringing to $2 million the total amount of extra funding provided by the Martin Government for this purpose since February 2004
- There will be a further $500,000 extra for teacher housing furniture – bringing to $2.25 million the additional funding provided for this program over the past two Budgets.

“The Martin Government is backing Territory students and teachers by providing better education resources and infrastructure,” Mr Stirling said.

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