10th March 2005

**Territory Unemployment Rate Still Highest in Australia**

Australian Bureau of Statistics figures released today show that the Northern Territory remains the only jurisdiction in Australia with an unemployment rate over 6%.

Country Liberal Party Leader and Shadow Treasurer Denis Burke said today that the Territory is still falling behind the rest of the States and Territories when it comes to employment growth.

Mr Burke said, “We have now had the highest unemployment rate in Australia for the past eight months. We are the only jurisdiction in Australia to have a higher unemployment rate now than we did in February 2004. Every other state and Territory has reduced their unemployment rate but not here – ours has grown by a whopping 1.5% in just twelve months.

“I would expect the Labor government to claim the figures are suspect but the fact remains – we are still trailing the rest of Australia in job growth.

“The Labor party’s much vaunted jobs plan is just a waste of paper. They claim to be moving the Territory ahead but the only way the Territory is moving ahead now is into the economic doldrums.”