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High price of petrol a threat to new tourism campaign aimed at drive market

The Territory Government’s $375 000 campaign aimed at the tourism drive market could be scuttled by the Territory’s high petrol costs, CLP Leader Terry Mills warned today.

Mr Mills said with petrol in the Territory 10 to 15 cents more expensive than other Australian States there is a risk that the Martin Government’s campaign may sadly prove an expensive waste of money and effort.

The average price of unleaded petrol in Darwin today is 1.08 a litre whilst in Victoria the cost of petrol is 95.6, in Queensland 89.3, in Western Australia 91.0, in NSW 94.7 and in South Australia 98.4.

“The Government’s campaign is specifically aimed at the cost conscious interstate holidaying drive market,” Mr Mills said.

“This campaign started at the weekend and my fear is that with petrol anywhere from 10 to 18 cents cheaper along the eastern seaboard these interstate destinations will be a far more attractive proposition to the cash conscious drive market.

“The Territory is a long haul destination and the high cost of petrol will add considerable cost for those on drive holidays.

“Raising the awareness of remote regions such as Tennant Creek and Katherine and their surrounds is a worthy initiative, but when people plan their drive holiday’s the cost of petrol along the way is an issue.

“It would be a pity for people to miss out on a full Territory experience because the high cost of petrol was a deterrent.”

Mr Mills has called on the Chief Minister to tell Territorians what she is doing about lowering the high cost of Territory petrol.

“As the Chief Minister said when announcing this drive market campaign ‘Tourism helps to employ over ten thousand Territorians.’ Surely then the Chief Minister cares about the impact high petrol prices have on a business, Territory families and just about every part of Territory life.

“The importance of the drive market to Territory centres such as Tennant Creek and Katherine is reinforced when you consider that in 2003/04 over 80%, or 76,500 visitors to Tennant Creek were self drive travellers, and during the same period Katherine attracted 65,893 self drive travellers which was 65% of all their visitors.”

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