Northern Territory Transport and Parks and Wildlife Minister Chris Burns today announced that a high level delegation of Northern Territory representatives will fly to Canberra next week to lobby the Federal Government about crocodile safari hunting and a range of environmental and road transport issues.

Accompanied by Dr Burns and Territory Environment Minister, Marion Scrymgour, the delegation, consisting of indigenous representatives, cattlemen and crocodile experts, will seek to discuss the Territory’s plan to allow limited crocodile safari hunting in the Territory.

“Limited safari hunting of 25 adult crocodiles will not have a negative impact on the Territory’s highly successful crocodile management program, which has seen crocodile populations in the Territory grow significantly in recent years,” Dr Burns said.

Dr Burns said the provision for safari hunting of 25 adult crocodiles to be harvested each year would not increase the current quota of 600 adult crocodiles.

“The NT Government received overwhelmingly positive submissions to the plan supportive of the introduction of safari hunting - which will not affect the current quota of crocodiles removed from the wild for safety reasons each year.”

“I am disappointed that the Federal Environment Minister Dr Kemp appears to have concerns over the safari hunting proposal as part of the plan, so Ms Scrymgour and I are now taking a six person team to Canberra to reiterate the objectives of this idea,” Dr Burns said.

“The Commonwealth cannot blatantly disregard a proposal that won’t have any adverse affect on current numbers of crocodiles being harvested, but will provide enormous economic spin-offs, particularly for Aboriginal communities and pastoral lessees.

Dr Burns said that he would also be seeking a meeting with the Commonwealth to discuss the serious impact on the Territory’s pastoral and tourism industries caused by the closure of the National Highway due to flooding, and ongoing concerns over the $20million shortfall in Territory road funding under the Federal Roads to Recovery scheme.

Minister Scrymgour stated that she would be holding meetings with various groups and agencies on a number of environmental issues, including discussions about greenhouse strategies.

“I will be seeking to discuss better bushfire management in savannah areas with the Commonwealth while in Canberra , and will provide an update on projects that have started with the Tropical Savannas CRC and others here
in the Territory.

“I will also be seeking to discuss with the Commonwealth infrastructure issues relating to services to some of the Territory’s offshore islands,” Ms Scyrmgour said.