The record number of cruise ships arriving into Darwin this month will bring up to 13,000 visitors to Darwin during a traditionally quiet time of the year. Minister for Business and Industry, Paul Henderson, said today.

Mr Henderson said that the ships had capacity to carry approximately 10,000 tourists and 3,000 staff that would frequent local hotels, pubs, restaurants, shops and other businesses.

The SS Adonia, which arrived today, has a capacity of 2600 passengers and 875 staff. On Saturday the SS Star Princess, one of the world’s biggest cruise ships, will arrive with its 3300 passenger capacity and 900 staff. Five more cruise ships will dock in town over the next 10 days.

“This is a huge month for local tourism, with The Ghan now operating through the Territory and cruise ships bringing an impressive influx of visitors,” he said.

“The Ghan has carried more than 2,000 passengers through the Territory already with the third train pulling into Darwin yesterday and up to 13,000 people will arrive off these 8 ships.

“This will provide a significant and timely injection into the economy keeping the Territory moving ahead during what is normally a quiet time of year for tourism.”

Mr Henderson said that Darwin is increasingly being seen as a safe and fascinating place for cruise ships to visit and that many tourists were ending or starting their cruise in Darwin and taking the opportunity to explore other parts of the Territory.

“The benefits of The Ghan and the cruise ships will be felt across the Territory and my Government is determined to build on the current interest in this plane, train and ship Territory experience,” he said.

“An important offshoot of these ships arriving is that Territory companies - including supplier Sealanes Albatross - are winning contracts and doing good business.

“Sealanes Albatross is a well known Territory company and will be supplying high quality food and supplies to all eight cruise ships coming into town this month.

“Importantly, they will be sourcing their supplies from local operators, so the trickle down effect will see a range of companies doing good business.”

Mr Henderson said that The Ghan - which will bring up to 30,000 passengers through the NT annually - is expected to inject $28 million into the local economy while the cruise ships will add at least $4 million.