30 June 2004
$10M Windfall for Territory's Beef Roads

The Northern Territory Government today announced an extra $10 million will be spent on upgrading the Northern Territory’s beef roads.

Transport and Infrastructure Minister Dr Chris Burns said he had listened closely to the arguments presented by the Northern Territory Cattlemen’s Association.

“Theyir roads have been neglected for decades,” Dr Burns said.

“We’ve been arguing the cattlemen’s case with Canberra, but they’ve come up with nothing but empty promises.

“[Deputy Prime Minister] John Anderson told the cattlemen to expect $20 million or $40 million in Federal funds. And what did they hand over? A measly $1 million.”

The $10 million will come from the NT Government’s $36 million in increased GST payments in 2003/04.

“We promised to spend the extra money on strategic investment infrastructure, and not fritter it away,” Dr Burns said.

The $10 million will be spent over the next two years. It will pay for upgrades to roads which have been prioritised with the assistance of the NTCA.

The biggest beneficiaries are the Plenty Highway ($2m), the Point Stuart Road ($1.6m), the Buntine Highway ($1m), the Barkly Stock Route ($800,000), the Buchanan Highway ($800,000) and the Maryvale Road ($800,000).

The Central Arnhem Road, the Ranken Road, the Sandover Highway, the Finke Road and the Roper Highway will each receive $500,000.

A further $300,000 will be spent on the Ringwood Road, while $200,000 will go to the Larrimah West Creek Link Road.

Primary Industry Minister Kon Vatskalis joined Dr Burns in hailing the good news.

“Together, we have been fighting for more roads funds for the Territory, Mr Vatskalis said.

“This is a big win for Territory pastoralists who rely on the roads for their livelihood.

“It’s a shame the Federal Government doesn’t take Territory roads as
seriously as the Martin Government.”