A Martin Government trade grant is helping a backpacker group to grow their business turnover to $4million from the European market, Asian Relations and Trade Minister Paul Henderson said.

Chilli’s Backpackers secured a $3,800 grant and the under-construction Melaleuca on Mitchell a $4,200 grant under the Government’s Trade Support Scheme (TSS).

The backpacker group used the grants to travel to London to participate in the Independent Travellers and World Expo in February and have already seen the returns with an increase in bookings.

“The Martin Government developed the Trade Support Scheme to assist Territory businesses to break into and develop new trade partnerships and opportunities,” Mr Henderson said.

“ Its first year of operation has been so successful that the Government has increased funding from $330,000 in 2003-04 to $358,000 in Budget 2004.

“Chilli’s and Melaleuca on Mitchell are a great example of how Territory businesses can use these Trade Support Scheme grants to market a business for great return.

“With the assistance of $8000 from the Martin Government, the group expect to grow their business turnover to $4million – and more visitors to Darwin will of course benefit other small businesses around the City.”

The Scheme, which came into effect on 1 July 2003, gives businesses access to taxable grants of up to $50,000 on an up to dollar-for-dollar basis to help cover the costs of promoting their business overseas.

As of the start of June, 100 applications had already been processed, injecting more than $330,000 into the Territory business community.

“The Trade Support Scheme offers practical, financial assistance that is helping Territory businesses target new opportunities and create jobs for Territorians,” said Mr Henderson.