Alice Springs convention centre catalyst for Central Australian business growth

Ms Martin said the Convention Centre, which will be open for business at the end of this month and will be officially opened on May 25, will position Alice Springs as a "new" business tourism destination.

Ms Martin said since the Convention Centre began taking bookings about six months ago, 10,000 delegate reservations have been made, with bookings for as late as 2009. In 2002, 2200 delegates are booked.

"A recent federal Bureau of Tourism Research study, Meetings Make Their Mark, estimated a four-day convention with 6000 delegates generates $1 million for the local economy," Ms Martin said.

"This extends to local small businesses such as florists, coach companies, taxis, restaurants, dry cleaners, printers and so on.

"The same size convention is also estimated to create or sustain the employment of 12 people directly, and six people indirectly."

Ms Martin said the Convention Centre will host a real coup for Central Australia in September.

"The Convention Centre will host the Australian Tourist Commission’s Dreamtime business trade show in September, a real coup for the local economy," Ms Martin said.

"Although selected Dreamtime participants have toured Central Australia in previous years, this is the first time the Tradeshow itself will be held there.

"It will be a fantastic opportunity for the Convention Centre and Central Australia as a whole to promote themselves to a whole range of international business travel wholesalers."

Ms Martin said the Convention Centre will be good news for the Territory’s tourism industry.

"The Alice Springs Convention Centre will help shape the growth of tourism in the Centre over the next few years," Ms Martin said.

"I would like to congratulate the Convention Centre team at Lasseter’s Casino, who are a highly efficient and effective team and are doing an extremely good job of showing the conventions and incentives market throughout the world and what a good job Alice Springs can do."