Northern Territory Family and Community Services Minister, Delia Lawrie, will officially open this year’s National Foster Care Conference in Alice Springs this afternoon.

Ms Lawrie is the Patron of this year’s conference, which will be held at the Alice Springs Convention Centre from 29 to 31 July 2005.

“Alice Springs is the ideal location to hold this national conference, with a strong focus on Indigenous out-of-home care issues,” said Ms Lawrie.

“There are approximately 200 registered carers in the Northern Territory. In 2004, the NT Foster Care Association was established and funded $53,000 by Family and Children’s Services (FACS).”

Ms Lawrie said the annual conference is also used as an opportunity to present the National Foster Carer Recognition Awards.

“Carers are very special people in our community who volunteer huge commitment, time and energy to ensure our children and young people are given the opportunity to live in safe and nurturing environments, and recognition is well deserved,” said Ms Lawrie.

**MEDIA NOTE:**

The National Foster Care Conference will be officially opened at 4pm this afternoon.

The National Foster Carer Recognition Awards will be held tomorrow night (Saturday 30 July 2005) at the Alice Springs Convention Centre from 7:30pm.

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