The Territory Opposition have condemned the Martin Government for refusing to introduce a permit system exempting motor vehicle manufacturers from the open road speed limit.

"By failing to issue permits for registered manufacturers to test their cars, the Martin Government has killed an estimated $9 million industry in Central Australia," says Fay Miller, Shadow Minister for Transport.

"This is another bitter blow for the people and the economy of Central Australia.

"The struggle to make ends meet for many people in Central Australia just became more difficult as a consequence of this short sighted decision.

"It's typical of a Government that so often ignores the needs of the many Territorians living outside Darwin.

"In the past, there have been up to 15 engineering teams testing vehicles between Alice Springs and Tennant Creek during the summer period.

"Nor have any incidents occurred during the 20 years that testing has been taking place in Central Australia.

"I understand that industry was only looking to use a 100 kilometres of the open road for testing.

"The introduction of open road speed limits slammed the brakes on that local industry, today’s decision killed it.

"The business that previously flowed into Alice Springs and Tennant Creek will now be lost to South Africa and the Middle East.

"The introduction of a permit system for bona fide vehicle testing would have allowed Central Australia to keep that business.

"It would also allow the Territory to play its part in the development of safer cars for travelling at high speed in hot weather."

Further comment: Fay Miller 0407 720 511