CHIEF MINISTER WEARS ROSE COLOURED GLASSES

The Chief Minister’s first Ministerial Statement in Parliament for 2007 offers Territorians more of the same, says the Territory Opposition.

“That is, high petrol prices, galloping inflation, a continued shortage of nurses and a lack of police on the beat,” says Jodeen Carney, Leader of the Opposition.

“What isn’t said is often more instructive than the text of Ministerial Statements and this effort is a masterpiece of avoidance.

“The Chief Minister can’t bring herself to even mention the ‘I’ word; let alone propose any solutions to the fact Darwin is the inflation capital of Australia.

“The Chief Minister doesn’t touch on petrol prices, nor bother offering hope of reducing the high retail margins being extracted from Territory motorists.

“It’s as if the Chief Minister has no idea being able to put food on the table and petrol in the car are major concerns for Territory families.

“When it comes to the nursing issue we are told of a highly successful recruiting campaign in 2006, but there isn’t a word about the 1100 nursing shifts Royal Darwin Hospital is short this month, nor the ongoing industrial dispute.

“The Chief Minister is apparently unconcerned that nurses are working dangerously long hours to keep our public hospitals operating.

“As for keeping our streets safe the Chief Minister is the latest Government Minister to resile from the promise to put 200 extra police on the beat by the end of last year.

“Like Minister Burns, the Chief Minister now pretends the promise was only 200 extra police.

“It wasn’t: it was 200 extra police on the beat and I doubt that promise will ever be kept.”

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