STRONG MARCH QUARTER FOR TOURIST ACCOMMODATION

Accommodation figures for the 2005 March quarter show healthy increases for the Territory in room occupancy rates, nights and employment rates with gross revenue (takings) up by 14%, the highest increase Australia wide.

The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Survey of Tourist Accommodation covers the hotel, motel, guest house and serviced apartment sectors across all states and territories.

Chief Minister and Tourism Minster, Clare Martin said although the January to March period is traditionally a low period for visitation to the Territory, the survey revealed a 10% increase in the number of room nights occupied across the NT compared to the March 2004 quarter.

“The rise reveals good increases across most regions – Darwin increased 14%, Katherine was up 11% and Alice Springs rose by 2%. Our only concern was to see a 4% decrease in Kakadu,” she said.

“Although the NT recorded the lowest overall room occupancy rate of 46.3%, (March quarter is high season for most states) the result showed a healthy increase from the 41.8% recorded in 2004.”

Room occupancy rates rose by 6 percentage points in both Alice Springs and Katherine, to 48.5% and 32.3% respectively. For Alice Springs this was the best March quarter since 2000.

Importantly gross revenue from the accommodation sector increased by over $3.8 million, or 14%, to $30.9 million in March 2005 quarter, compared to 2004. Most tourism regions reported continued growth.

There were 2,845 people employed in Territory accommodation establishments for the March 2005 quarter, an increase of 4.4% (or 121 people), compared to March 2004.

Below are interstate and national comparisons for March quarter 2005 compared to March quarter 2004:

**Room nights occupied (demand):**
- NT +10%, Australia +4%, VIC +9%, WA +5%, NSW +4%.

**Room occupancy:**
- NT +4.5%, Australia +2.0%, VIC +4.7%, WA +3.2%.

**Guest nights:**
- NT +8%, Australia +4%, VIC +10%, NSW +5%, WA +4%.

**Accommodation takings:**
- NT +14%, Australia +9%, VIC +12%, NSW +11%, WA +10%.

**Employment:**
- NT +4%, Australia +1%, TAS +6%, WA +2%.

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