15th March 2006

**Government Must Get Out of Xstrata’s Way**

The Arrival of Xstrata’s CEO, San Diego Zaldumbide, in Darwin to talk to the Chief Minister and to local businesses should be sending alarm bells ringing across the Territory’s Business Community and in Government Circles.

The McArthur River Mine represents about 1% of Xstrata’s Global interests but fully 4% of the Territory’s Gross State Product, (GSP).

“In short, we need Xstrata more than Xstrata needs us.” Jodeen Carney said in Darwin today.

“The arrival of Mr Zaldumbide is something that should make us sit up and pay attention. He comes from a no nonsense business back ground.

“He will be here to deliver a very clear message and extract a commitment.

“The message will be, ’either let the open cut pit go ahead or we’ll shut down the mine’.

“I am satisfied that the Environmental Impact Statement by Xstrata was sufficient to protect the environment and it appears the EPA deliberately raised the bar too high in an effort to halt the project.

“There is concern that Government will try put new demands on Xstrata. I am worried that if too many obstacles are placed in the way, Xstrata will walk away from the Territory.

“The EPA has tried to flex its muscle with the support of Government and now things are balanced on a knife edge.

“Xstrata has been an excellent corporate citizen and that citizenship should be rewarded with an ongoing trust that will see winners all around.

“Two thousand jobs are on the line here and this Government should listen to what Mr Zaldumbide has to say for the sake of those jobs and for the sake of the reputation of the Territory as a good place to invest.”

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