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DEFENCE HUB TO DRIVE JOBS AND BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

The Territory Government today unveiled a proposal for the development of a Defence Support Hub and Industrial Park near Robertson Barracks, continuing its campaign to attract Defence prime contractors to the Territory and local businesses secure more Defence related contracts.

Defence Support Minister Paul Henderson said the 60 hectare site on Thorngate Road, Holtze, would give the Territory a strong competitive edge to target through-life support and maintenance contracts for the Army’s new Abrams Tanks and other Defence equipment.

As with the Darwin Business Park, the Land Development Corporation will promote the new Industrial Park and Defence Support Hub and pursue commercial options with businesses to build, own and operate from the site.

“There are currently about 1100 armoured and non-armoured vehicles based at Robertson Barracks and historically many of these vehicles have been transported south for major repairs and through-life support work, seeing Territory businesses miss out,” Mr Henderson said.

“Sending vehicles interstate for repairs presents security issues for Defence and is very costly, both in terms of transportation costs and potential damage - a more strategic and cost-effective solution is for equipment to be repaired and maintained as close as possible to where it is based.

“Defence contracts much of its through-life-support work to large prime contractors, and it is important the NT attracts these companies to set up and carry out this work here to see economic benefit flow to the Territory.

“The release of land close to Robertson Barracks for industrial development presents a significant investment attraction for prime contractors, and holds great potential for Territory businesses to develop industry clusters and work in partnership with prime contractors on through life support contracts.”

Mr Henderson said the arrival of 41 new Abrams Tanks at Robertson Barracks from 2007 was an ideal platform from which to develop the Defence Support Hub.

“Defence estimates about $17 million would be injected into the Territory economy each year for 15 years if the through-life-support for the Abrams Tanks was carried out here, creating about 100 new jobs and opportunities for Territory business,” he said. “Construction of a suitable facility to carry out the work on the Abrams Tanks alone would create in the order of 80 new jobs and economic benefit to local companies.

“I will be meeting with each prime contractor who tenders for the through life support contract of the Abrams tanks to promote the economic advantages of carrying out this work in the new Defence Support Hub, as well as the capabilities of Territory business to meet Defence needs.”

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