Territory to reap millions in Budget

By CAMDEN SMITH

Territorians would benefit in the areas of health, defence, infrastructure and jobs from the Federal Budget, NT Treasurer Mike Reed claimed yesterday.

Mr Reed said the Budget included the underlying strength of the Australian economy.

The Federal Treasurer Peter Costello’s fifth Budget, announced on Tuesday, contained a number of Territory-friendly initiatives.

They included:

- Construction of a 500-bed detention centre in Darwin for illegal immigrants.
- More funds to train doctors in regional communities.
- $20 million over three years for juvenile diversionary programs.

Defence

- $40 million for the Alice Springs to Darwin railway.
- $53 million in defence spending in the Territory.

Mr Reed told Parliament the detention centre for illegal immigrants would have spin-off effects for the Territory.

He said: “There is also the requirement for security personnel and the business opportunities in feeding 600 people.”

Mr Reed also welcomed the Government’s $20 million contribution to juvenile diversionary programs.

He said: “Obviously the Federal Government is looking at funding over a period of time, not just one year, which was pleasing.”

Mr Reed ... economic strength

Senator Tambling ... spending

Ms Martin ... ‘big killer’

Mr Snowdon ... ‘It’s a con’

Labor finds no cheer for NT

By CAMDEN SMITH

Opposition Leader Clare Martin claimed the Budget “contained little cheer”, with only a handful of additional projects slated for the Territory.

She told Parliament: “The big killer in the Budget is the revelation that the GST impact will be a CPI rise.”

Territory MLA Warren Snowdon said the Budget was “a con”.

He said: “There’s absolutely no sign of a serious attempt to address the regional disadvantage that Territorians suffer in education and in additional resources for much-needed transport or communication infrastructure to support communities.”

Help

Crime Stoppers board deputy chairman Greg Constantine said that from the 1439 calls to Crime Stoppers, six people had received rewards for their help and 290 arrests have been made.

Assistant Police Commissioner John Datley said Crime Stoppers had brought a new side to policing.

Mr Datley said: “The community does not often feel comfortable reporting information.”