More than 8000 delegates are already booked to attend conventions and conferences at Darwin’s new Convention Centre, Tourism Minister Paul Henderson said today.

“With just less than a year to go until its official opening, the new Darwin Convention Centre is already playing an important role in building the Territory tourism business market,” Mr Henderson said.

“These 13 bookings stretch as far out as 2011, and include events as diverse as International Alumina Quality workshop with 400 delegates next year, the 700-delegate Australasian College of Dermatologists Conference in 2010, and the Count Financial conference in 2011 with 1200 delegates.”

Mr Henderson said the growing business tourism market was not just benefiting Darwin.

“The NT Government has secured 52 conference and convention bookings for the Territory between 2007 and 2011, with four planned for Uluru and 24 each in Darwin and Alice Springs, injecting about $15.4 million into the economy,” he said.

“The 24 events planned for Alice Springs will attract almost 8000 delegates, and as in Darwin many of these delegates will bring partners and enjoy a pre- or post-conference holiday in the Territory.

“That’s good news for the Territory and presents real opportunities for our tourism and business operators.”

Free workshops being held in Darwin and Alice Springs this week will give business people the chance to find out more about benefiting from business tourism.

Part of the Government’s October Business Month, the sessions are being delivered by Tourism NT and will feature a panel of industry experts offering practical tips and advice on how to get the most benefit from business tourism.

The ‘Value of Business Events’ workshop will be held in Alice Springs on Tuesday at the Crowne Plaza from 8 to 10:30am and in Darwin on Wednesday at SkyCity from 8 to 10:30am.

For more information go to www.nt.gov.au/obm or phone 1800 193 111.

“The Government understands the value strengthening business tourism market because it means jobs for Territorians, and I strongly encourage operators to attend one the workshop and find out how you can get a slice of the convention and conference pie.”

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