Andrea Johnston

MORE conferences could be held in Alice Springs after business events planners from across Australia visited the Centre last weekend for the 2016 Alice Stampede.

“Business event attendees will spend an estimated $43 million this year in the Northern Territory making this tourism sector a valuable contributor to our economy,” said Department of Tourism and Culture CEO Alastair Shields.

“Currently in its fifth consecutive year, the Stampede has resulted in business events that have generated an estimated $8.8 million in visitor spend for Alice Springs,” Melbourne-based health-care sector manager Savio D’sa organised a conference last year for the Australian Association of Gerontology, which attracted more than 400 delegates, most of them from interstate.

“It was one of the most magical experiences, both as an organiser and for every single delegate who just left Alice Springs in awe,” Mr D’sa said.

“Although it was the association’s 40th conference, it was the first one ever to be held in the Northern Territory, and the incorporation of indigenous culture ‘blew people’s minds’ Mr D’sa said.

“We involved the community in our conference and created a local arts market, so for people who didn’t have time to elsewhere after the conference we brought that to them,” he said.

“We had a Priscilla meets Dundee themed party where we had the Reptile Centre come with their snakes and lizards and a drag queen on stage, then we unwound at the golf course.

“From an organiser’s perspective a destination like Alice Springs makes your job easy because you don’t have to try hard to make it special, the destination is special.”

The Stampede saw event planners enjoy four days of fun, taking in the inaugural Parrtjima light festival, hot air ballooning, and trips to the Telegraph Station, Simpsons Gap and Anzac Hill.

“The Stampede saw event planners enjoy four days of fun, taking in the inaugural Parrtjima light festival, hot air ballooning, and trips to the Telegraph Station, Simpsons Gap and Anzac Hill. Alice Springs Convention Centre manager Scott Healey said ‘It starts with a warm welcome and beautiful weather.’

“We take them around with jam-packed itineraries so there’s no chance to be bored, we treat them to dinners and fine wine and a whole mix of things,” he said.

“It’s a pretty easy sell.”

For more information on holding business events in the Northern Territory go to www.ntconventions.com.au

‘Mind-blowing’ themes to lure business events