Northern Territory Police, Fire and Emergency Services Minister Paul Henderson announced today a strengthening of the fire safety preparedness at Yulara.

A $210,000 package of improvements, to be included the Territory’s Budget 2005, will enable a new Emergency Operations Centre to be fitted-out, an additional grass fire unit to be permanently put in place and an second fire fighter from the NT Fire and Rescue Service to be stationed at Yulara for the first time.

“I commend the Ayers Rock Resort owners, Voyages, for constructively working with the NT Fire and Rescue Service and the NT Government to improve emergency preparedness at Yulara,” Mr Henderson said.

“I saw first-hand the bushfires that hit the Ayers Rock Resort in October 2003, and following that incident a review was conducted, with the involvement of Voyages and other stakeholders, into how to improve preparedness in the event of future bushfires.

“Much work has been done since then – including the allocation of a $300,000 fire appliance for to replace the one destroyed by the 2003 bushfire – and I am pleased to announce this further boost to community safety today.”

The $210,000 will deliver on the recommendations of the review, including:

- Fitting out the Yulara NTES Headquarters as an Emergency Operations Centre, including installing additional telephones, radio equipment and cabling;
- a second, full-time fire fighter to be stationed at Yulara; and
- purchasing and fitting out an additional grass fire unit (expected to arrive in June).

“The volunteers, police, fire auxiliaries, airport staff, resort staff and Parks and Wildlife rangers who responded to the October 2003 did a tremendous job in preventing serious injuries and restricting the damage, and I thank them for their efforts,” said Mr Henderson.

“I would like to acknowledge Voyages’ key role in the review of fire preparedness at their resort and thank them for their ongoing commitment to building a safer community at Yulara.

“This boost in fire safety will not only benefit the staff at Yulara but the many thousands of visitors who visit the community each year.”

Contact: Rebecca Cass 0401 110 389