TOURISM SPEND VITAL TO ECONOMY

Acting Tourism Minister Chris Burns made no apology for the Territory Government’s $38.1 million spend on tourism which helps inject $740 million into the local economy each year.

The Government’s $1.8 million Global Kakadu marketing campaign spend helps attract over 200,000 visitors to the Territory and brings around $58 million into the NT economy.

Dr Burns said tourism is the third largest industry in the Territory and investment in tourism marketing is money well spent.

“The Territory tourism industry is more important to our economy than tourism is to any other State or Territory economies in Australia. Government tourism marketing activities attracted over 700,000 tourists to the NT in the year to September 2007,” he said.

“11,135 or 11.7% of people in the Territory are employed through tourism and it contributes 7.8% to our gross state product compared to 4.2% nationally.

“In Kakadu alone we saw the takings of hotel, motels and serviced apartments increased by 20.4% to $10.2 million in the year to September 2007.

“In the Territory the Government works in partnership with the tourism industry to fund marketing activities to ensure domestic and international tourists visit.

“Unlike the southern states the Northern Territory is further away and comparatively more expensive than the closer east-coast destinations. Our visitors must make extra effort to come to the Territory and we work hard to ensure that effort occurs in competition with those other destinations.

“Our tours operators are generally small businesses and the levies would not be able to fund the types of campaigns we need to make the Territory a top tourism destination.

“However we will continue to encourage operators to leverage our tourism marketing efforts through cooperative advertising activities. The additional $300,000 spent on the Kakadu campaign is a great example of cooperative advertising between the Northern Territory Government and the tourism industry.

“Tourism funding is money well spent as it is a significant contributor to the Territory economy,” Dr Burns said.

Media contact: Nicole Manison 0448 693 279