Budget 2009 Developing Our Regions

Budget 2009 will deliver for Territory families in remote and regional areas by protecting jobs, building vital infrastructure and boosting investment in core services.

Minister for Regional Development, Karl Hampton, said Budget 2009 delivers a record $1.3 billion infrastructure investment to protect Territory jobs delivering many projects across the regions.

“Record infrastructure funding protects jobs, including jobs in regional areas,” Mr Hampton said.

“Core services are also boosted to improve health, education and police, including police in remote areas.”

INFRASTRUCTURE – REBUILDING SCHOOLS

“Budget 2009 delivers a record $1.3 billion infrastructure investment, bringing the total investment in infrastructure by the Henderson Government since 2001 to $5.6 billion,” Mr Hampton said.

“This is in addition to investing a record $808 million in education and training as part of Budget 2009, up 70% since 2001.

“Budget 2009 will continue to focus on getting our kids to school so Territory children get the education they deserve.”

Some Budget 2009 highlights include delivering $1.25 million each for school upgrades at Gapuwiyak, Gunbalanya, Lajamanu, Numbulwar and Angurugu.

Budget 2009 also delivers $300,000 each for school upgrades at Umbakumba, Ntaria, Alyangula, Elliott and Canteen Creek.

STRATEGIC INDIGENOUS HOUSING INFRASTRUCTURE PROGRAM

Budget 2009 delivers $191.7 million under the Strategic Indigenous Housing and Infrastructure Program for new and refurbished homes in Indigenous communities. It also commits $33.1 million to for government employee housing works – providing accommodation for more police, teachers and nurses in the bush.
INVESTING IN ROADS

Mr Hampton said Budget 2009 delivers a record $322 million infrastructure program for Territory roads and national highways, including a $6 million increase in repairs and maintenance to a total of $77 million.

Budget 2009 highlights include:

- Joint Northern Territory and Commonwealth funding of $19 million for community, beef and mining roads, including the Buntine, Plenty and Tanami highways, Maryvale Road and Wollogorang road bridge over the McArthur River;
- $5 million for overtaking lanes on the Stuart Highway between Darwin and Katherine;
- $5 million for road safety initiatives on the Stuart, Barkly and Victoria highways; and
- $2.2 million for level crossing upgrades.

SUPPORTING BUSINESSES IN THE REGIONS

Budget 2009 supports business in the bush by delivering:

- $19.86 million to support and train apprentices and trainees;
- $5.6 million to facilitate major economic development projects;
- $5.8 million to provide new generation geoscience data, promote mining investment and increase the intensity of exploration drilling and geophysics in greenfields areas under Bringing Forward Discovery;
- $1.4 million to provide operational and program support for the Territory’s peak business-related organisations;
- $600,000 for the Indigenous Business Development Program;
- $340,000 to support Indigenous tourism operators; and
- $500,000 to establish job hubs in Nhulunbuy and Tennant Creek.

RESEARCH FOR THE REGIONS

“Budget 2009 invests more into research in our regions to help protect jobs and deliver more to support primary industries,” Mr Hampton said.

Some Budget 2009 highlights include:

- $1.95 million to support plant industries with entomology, plant pathology and agricultural chemistry services;
- $1.8 million for veterinary laboratory services providing animal health testing to livestock industries; and
- $460,000 to prepare for, and respond to, incursions of pests and diseases of plants and animals.
LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The Northern Territory Government will provide ongoing support to Local Government in Budget 2009 delivering $51 million for financial assistance grants for local government services.

“Budget 2009 will deliver $1.7 million under closing the gap of Indigenous disadvantage to allow community representation in local government and provide infrastructure to support local community governance,” Mr Hampton said.

“Commonwealth funding of $10 million will be delivered to help build and retain a skilled workforce in regional and remote communities. The funding will support the transitioning of Indigenous Territorians working in local governments under the previous Community Development Employment Program into fully-funded jobs.”

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