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Strengthening Ties with Timor-Leste

Minister for Education and Training Dr Chris Burns arrives in Timor-Leste today for meetings with the Timorese government to further the cooperative programs and partnerships in place with the Northern Territory Government.

“Since Independence, the Territory Government has developed strong ties with Timor-Leste based on friendship, cooperation and mutual benefit,” Dr Burns said.

“Meetings like these further strengthen our relationship through education, governance, training, sporting and cultural exchange.”

Minister Burns will meet with the Timor-Leste Minister for Education Dr Joao Cancio Freitas, as well as the Secretary of State for Professional Training and Employment, Mr Bendito Freitas.

To further the objectives of the Timor-Leste Civil Service Capacity Building Internship Scheme, Minister Burns will also meet with the Chairman of the Civil Service Commission, Mr Liborio Pereira.

Northern Territory cooperation with Timor-Leste includes a ministerial forum, the internship scheme for civil servants, business development activities and the expansion of sporting links through events such as the Timor Sea Cup soccer tournament and the Darwin- Dili Yacht Rally.

“In Dili, I will also represent the Northern Territory Government at the Official Trophy presentation for the 2011 Darwin to Dili Rally, which set sail last Saturday from Cullen Bay in Darwin,” Dr Burns said.

As part of these official duties, Dr Burns will also meet with the Timor-Leste Minister for Tourism, Commerce and Industry, Mr Gil da Costa Alves, who is a strong supporter of the Rally.

“The re-commencement of this great event in 2010 is a continuing source of pride to the Government of Timor-Leste, the Cruising Yacht Association of the Northern Territory and the Northern Territory Government.

“Lorna Marlise”, skippered by Matthew Baker, set a new Rally record, arriving in Dili at 1710 hrs on Tuesday 12 July (elapsed time of 78.17 hrs).

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