A national forum to discuss vital remote and regional infrastructure issues is to be held in Alice Springs next year.

The Remote and Regional Transport Infrastructure and Services Forum will be held in May, to coincide with the Standing Council on Transport and Infrastructure meeting (SCOTI).

Minister for Transport Peter Styles said the forum would bring together transport ministers from every Australian jurisdiction, including the Deputy Prime Minister, transport and infrastructure industry leaders and key national stakeholders.

“I expect the forum to firmly place remote and regional transport issues on the national agenda,” Mr Styles said.

“We will be looking at discussing transport infrastructure, transport services, regulation, governance and a number of local issues.

“The forum will be a key facilitator for all jurisdictions to input into the Australian Government’s White Paper on Developing Northern Australia.

“We need to see the provision of basic transport services, similar to those that most of us take for granted in our day to day lives, such as registration and licensing services and public transport, which are most often non-existent in remote communities.

“We will continue to grow transport services in our regional areas, providing sustainable economic growth and new business opportunities in remote communities.”

Mr Styles said at his first SCOTI meeting, the issue was brought to attention regarding moving single national regulators for marine and rail safety and heavy vehicles.

“I am pleased that both the national rail and marine regulators are currently operating in the Territory, however, Delia Lawrie’s previous Government was quick to sign up to the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator reform without any detail on the benefit to the Territory.

“The Heavy Vehicle Regulator’s own Economic Report identifies that the Northern Territory could benefit as little as $1.3 million over 22 years.

“Industry has also raised concerns about the National Fatigue Management Regime, and as such, we will not participate in the scheme as there are no demonstrable benefits for the Territory.”

The SCOTI meeting and the Remote and Regional Transport Infrastructure and Services Forum will be held in May 2014, Alice Springs.
Media Contact:
Lucy Buhr 0417 977 322