Nicole Manison
Treasurer

Tough but fair savings for the Territory

30 March 2017

Treasurer Nicole Manison today said Government is taking tough but fair action to address the economic challenges facing the Territory – made worse by the $2 billion Federal Government GST cuts.

Ms Manison today announced the Territory’s public sector will be making savings but reassured staff that there will be no forced redundancies or cuts to front-line workers.

She said the Territory’s future is bright but that Government has to deal with challenges ahead in a fair way and support Territorians.

“This will be a tough but fair NT budget to get us through the next 12-18 months,” she said.

“As any responsible Government does, we have asked our NT public sector department Chief Executives to find savings and run as efficiently as they can.

“They need to find savings of $55 million next financial year which will increase to $95 million the following year, through measures such as natural attrition cutting waste, duplication and programs that aren’t delivering or are non-critical.

“We will also apply a strict wages policy to better align future wage increases to CPI.

“There will be no cuts to front-line services and no forced redundancies. We need a strong public service to keep delivering programs that make a difference to the lives of Territorians.

“This Government remains focused on creating jobs, keeping our election promises and keeping people here in the Territory for the long term. Our budget will reflect these goals.

“Unlike the previous CLP Government, we will not raise power, water and sewerage prices above CPI, nor spend a million dollars on a ‘renewal management board’ to cut the public service.

“I was disappointed that the CLP Opposition questioned NT Treasury’s own numbers and backed the Federal Treasurers’ $2 billion GST cuts. I was even more surprised the CLP called on us to scrap
tourism and construction job-creating projects like the $100 million Arts Trail and Warren Park Rugby League ground.

“The focus needs to be on getting a better deal for the NT, not trying to downplay the actions of their Canberra colleague’s. Either you are backing Territorians and working with us to get us a better deal or you are not.

“The Federal Government has delivered brutal GST cuts that will hurt Territorians. We are seeking a meeting with the Prime Minister to discuss options for a better deal and we want to work constructively with them. We need to work together.

“There is an opportunity here for the Federal Government to invest in projects that develop the north and close the gap on Indigenous disadvantage – two key platforms that will transform the lives of all Territorians, indeed all Australians.”

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