MINISTER FOR NATURAL RESOURCES, ENVIRONMENT & HERITAGE

13 July 2007

New Batchelor Bushfires Office Opening

Environment Minister Marion Scrymgour today officially opened the newly completed $200,000 Bushfires NT Batchelor Office.

The office is home to the Vernon and Arafura Regional Headquarters and accommodates up to eight ongoing field staff, and as many as ten staff members deployed from southern regions during the busy fire season.

“Bushfires NT staff and volunteers do a fantastic job throughout the year – often a thankless and selfless task looking after other people’s property and helping protect lives,” Ms Scrymgour said.

“The new office is a much needed addition to the operations of the Batchelor Bushfires Headquarters and is a huge improvement on the two bedroom demountable and Bessa brick annex built before Cyclone Tracy.”

As a regional headquarters and depot, the complex is a focal point for Bushfires clients in the Top End and the nearly 300 volunteers in the Vernon and Arafura Fire Control Regions.

The Arafura Fire Control Region incorporates some 54,350 sq km, of predominately pastoral and Aboriginal estate and has three very active Volunteer Bushfire Brigades at Pt Stuart, Daly River and Douglas Daly.

The region extends from the western Kakadu boundary through to the coast on the Daly River Reserve, and south to Pine Creek including pastoral stations east of Katherine.

The Vernon Region comprises of approximately 16,500 residents and 11,930 sq km of land.

With an average of 200 early season burns carried out for fuel hazard mitigation and 300-500 wildfires every year, I am sure the staff and operational volunteers of the region welcome the new facilities.”

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