Fay Miller
Shadow Minister for Tourism, Housing, and Youth

Fears ban could be expanded

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The alarm bells are ringing for tourism operators that do business in Territory parks CLP Shadow Tourism Minister Fay Miller said today.

Mrs Miller said the swimming bans put in place in Kakadu has now caused concern about similar bans being applied in Territory Parks when the Martin Government turns 20 of the Territory's major parks into Aboriginal owned land later this year.

“There is genuine concern from some members of the tourism industry regarding the decision taken over the Kakadu ban and its implications. So much so that industry members have been invited to attend a meeting at the Mirambeena Resort on Tuesday to discuss the issue,” Mrs. Miller said.

Mrs. Miller said reports that all Territory parks are the subject of safety audits has many tourist operators fearing the bans will be extended beyond bans on swimming holes.

“When these parks are given away by the Chief Minister there is no guarantee that what has happened in Kakadu will not also happen in those currently under Territory management,” Mrs. Miller said.

“Quite apart from swimming holes being shut, fears have been expressed that walking trails could be closed, popular climbs stopped and so on.

“The huge West MacDonnell National Park stretching west from Alice Springs, Elsey National Park near Mataranka, Gregory National Park southwest of Katherine, and the proposed Davenport Range National Park, south of Tennant Creek could be affected.

“Many tourism operators feel this could be just the tip of the iceberg.

“Banning swimming in popular water holes is going to have an impact on tourism. If the bans extend beyond this the implications are a frightening prospect for our struggling tourism industry.”

Mrs. Miller said it is for reasons such as what has happened in Kakadu that the CLP has been critical of the Government giving away parks that “are the heritage of all Territorians” under the cover of claims about legal issues.

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