The Territory is attracting increasing interest from overseas media, keen to promote a destination with a difference Chief Minister and Tourism Minister, Clare Martin, said today.

During October the Government, through the NT Tourist Commission (NTTC), will host nine international media and travel trade group visits to help increase overseas visits in 2005/06.

Visitors include a German documentary crew, a UK travel agents delegation, freelance travel writers from France and Sweden, two New Zealand writers travelling the Savannah Way from Darwin to Broome, a Singapore TV crew and a Japanese group on a Ghan theme tour.

Ms Martin said it was vital, in the highly competitive travel industry, for the NT to actively pursue overseas markets and promote our advantages as a leading nature/cultural destination.

“Hosting media visits is an important part of our overseas marketing activities as they reach huge audiences and have high impact and credibility,” she said.

“The German film crew, for example, is from ZDF, one of Europe’s largest broadcasters and is similar to the ABC.

“While here they will be filming in Darwin, Kakadu, Katherine and Alice Springs with the two-part documentary due to go to air in May 2005 to an audience of over 5.5 million.

“Next month the NTTC will also bring to the Territory our International Managers and their PR representatives based in America, Asia, Europe and New Zealand.

“They will meet with travel industry partners in Sydney and get product updates from local tour operators in Alice Springs and Darwin.

“We will also be hosting special farewell dinners in Alice Springs and Darwin for Rudi Heymann, who is retiring as NTTC manager in Germany, after being the face and the voice of the NT in Europe for over 20 years.”

Over the last five years around 40% of German visitors to Australia have come to the NT.

Ms Martin said that the latest ABS statistics for overseas arrivals to Australia in August was positive news for the NT with a 12% increase in 2004 compared to 2003 - this is the 12th continuous month-on-month increase.