2 May 2006

BUILDING THE FUTURE OF THE BARKLY

Budget 2006 will build the future of Barkly region residents by creating jobs, growing the economic base and building a stronger Territory, Member for Barkly, Elliot McAdam announced today.

“This year, the Martin Government’s budget delivers economic growth and creates thousands of jobs for Territorians.

“It delivers on the Martin Government’s priorities of:

• growing and supporting business
• improving educational outcomes
• building a healthier Territory
• providing a safer community; and
• enhancing our great lifestyle.

“It delivers these goals within sound and sustainable fiscal parameters,” Mr McAdam said.

“The Government is growing the Territory and creating jobs through:

• continuing tax cuts for business
• investing $482 million in infrastructure spending
• significant investment in tourism marketing; and
• record budgets for Education, Health and Police.”

TAX CUTS CONTINUE IN BUDGET 2006 - BACKING BUSINESS TO GROW INTO THE FUTURE

Barkly businesses will benefit from continuing tax reform by the Martin Government that makes the Territory the lowest taxing jurisdiction for small business and businesses with up to 100 staff.

In Budget 2006, the payroll tax free threshold will be raised to $1.25 million and two further stamp duties will be cut from business.

INFRASTRUCTURE SPENDING REMAINS HIGH - MORE JOBS FOR LOCALS

Mr McAdam said that $482 million would be spent on infrastructure projects across the Territory during 2006-07. In the Barkly region, spending includes:

• $2 million for Indigenous Community Housing Organisations to construct and upgrade Indigenous housing
$1.3 million to replace the power station at Canteen Creek
$1.3 million to redevelop the Blain Street housing complex
$1.2 million for ongoing works at the Alpurrurulam aerodrome
$750 000 for ongoing works to upgrade fire safety in the main block of Tennant Creek Hospital
$180 000 to lift the pavement and install two culverts along Wollgororang Road
$150 000 to extend culverts at various locations along the Carpentaria Highway
$150 000 to create a passing opportunity on the Tablelands Highway between Ch96 and Ch99
$130 000 to realign the road at King Ash Bay Fishing Club in Borroloola
$300 000 to upgrade the air conditioning at the Tennant Creek High School gymnasium
$13 000 to upgrade the camp ground at Policeman’s Waterhole
$10 000 to upgrade visitor facilities at Devil’s Marbles

MAIN STREET INVESTMENT

Mr McAdam said that significant investment would occur in the main street of Tennant Creek.

“During the last election the Territory Government promised to spend $1.4 million on main street redevelopment, and $750 000 on a pastoral tourism initiative. These two programs are being combined to provide a significant upgrade to the Tennant Creek main street.

“This year the Urban Enhancement budget will provide $350 00 for this project.”

STRATEGIC INVESTMENT IN TOURISM MARKETING- BUILDING A STRONGER ECONOMIC BASE FOR THE FUTURE

In response to the tourism crisis of 2003, the Martin Government injected $27.5 million into tourism over three years.

“Budget 2006 makes that an ongoing commitment, with $10 million per year added to the tourism budget,” said Mr McAdam.

In 2006, $27.6 million will be spent on marketing. $38.3 million will be provided for the Tourism Budget as a whole.

BUILDING A SAFER COMMUNITY

Budget 2006 delivers record spending of $212 million on Police, Fire and Emergency Services to build safer futures for Territory communities.

Barkly residents will benefit from the funding with:
- $6.6 million for Police, Fire and Emergency services, including five police stations, one fire station and six volunteer groups
- $330 000 for Tennant Creek community corrections
- $130 000 for courts to administer justice for regional and remote communities including Elliott, Ali Curung and Borroloola
- $80 000 for the Community Harmony Strategy
LIFTING EDUCATION OUTCOMES AND SKILLS IN THE TERRITORY

As part of a record Employment, Education and Training budget of $630.7 million, Barkly will receive:

- $4.8 million for primary and early childhood education at Tennant Creek Primary School
- $6.4 million for secondary education for students at Tennant Creek High School
- $7.8 million for early childhood, primary and secondary education in 15 remote schools
- $4.5 million for Indigenous Education Strategic initiatives
- $780,000 for student and school support services including curricular for schools and special needs support
- $620,000 for literacy and numeracy programs and drug education
- $190,000 to support students with a disability
- $37,000 for the Junior Ranger program

BUILDING A HEALTHIER TERRITORY FUTURE

Budget 2006 sees a high level of investment in Health and Community Services, with a record $788.6 million. This brings spending in this critical area up by 64% since the Martin Government was elected to office in 2001.

“This investment is critical in overcoming ill health and its causes,” Mr McAdam said.

Barkly will receive:

- $9.7 million for acute care services in the region
- $6.2 million for non-acute health and community services
- $1 million for renal dialysis services to support patients at home
- $300,000 to investigate and design alternative water disinfection systems
- $200,000 to establish a new family support service in Tennant Creek
- $60,000 to extend the Life Promotions Program, including suicide prevention activities and support to families and communities when a suicide occurs

ENHANCING A GREAT LIFESTYLE

The Territory Government is investing in the future of all Territorians by building on and enhancing our unique lifestyle.

“This type of investment not only attracts people to our community, but it supports Territory families,” said Mr McAdam.

Budget 2006 includes:

- $3.1 million for the continued development of an Environmental Protection Agency in the Territory
- $27.4 million for Territory parks
- $6 million for sporting grants
- $6.8 million for the Thoroughbred Racing industry to support racing in Tennant Creek and other centres
- $740,000 for the Multicultural Affairs Sponsorship Grant, and $400,000 for the Multicultural Facilities Development Program.
- $1 million for heritage area repairs and maintenance; and
- $5.1 million for arts sponsorship

“Budget 2006 is about building the Territory’s future. It builds on the successful economic and social policies of the Martin Government over the last five years and provides for a stronger future by developing our economic base.

“It is about jobs, growth and a stronger Territory,” Mr McAdam said.

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