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GOVERNMENT CALLS TENDERS FOR 48KM STRETCH OF WEST MACDONNELL RANGE TOURIST LOOP ROAD

The Government has called tenders for the sealing and upgrading of a 48km stretch of Namatjira Drive in Central Australia, as part of its West MacDonnell Range Tourist Loop Roads project.

With the works estimated to cost around $12 million, Infrastructure and Transport Minister Dr Chris Burns said the tender should lead to the award of one of the biggest road construction contracts in the Northern Territory since Self Government in 1978.

“The tender is for the upgrading and sealing of Namatjira Drive from the 86km mark near Glen Helen through Tylers Pass to the 134km mark,” Dr Burns said.

“This stretch of road passes by some stunning country, including Mount Sonder and Redbank Gorge.”

A pre-tender meeting will be held on 24 July at Glen Helen, with tenders closing on 16 August.

Dr Burns said the project to upgrade the loop roads is part of the Government’s plans to enhance the tourism industry in Central Australia.

“These roads go through some of the most spectacular scenery in the Territory,” Dr Burns said.

“By upgrading them to sealed standard, more Territorians and tourists will visit to enjoy this experience.

“The new roads will also drive economic development by creating jobs and business opportunities for Territorians, and will inject millions of dollars into the local economy.”

As part of the loop roads project, the Government has already widened a 27km stretch of narrow seal on Larapinta Drive between Namatjira Drive and Hermannsburg (Ntaria), and sealed a 14km stretch of Larapinta Drive from Kings Canyon Lodge towards Alice Springs.

In May 2006, the Government awarded a $4m contract to Larapinta Constructions (a joint venture between Ntaria Council and DAC Enterprises) to provide gravel for the loop roads project.

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