



MEDIA RELEASE

9 January 2004

TENT SEVERELY DAMAGED BUT THE SHOW WILL GO ON

Despite major damage to the main public area tent, next Saturday's ceremony to mark the Darwin arrival of the first train on the new AustralAsia Railway will go ahead.

AustralAsia Railway Corporation Deputy CEO Brendan Lawson today said that wind gusts caused extensive damage to the main tent but that the show would go on.

"Unfortunately, due to this damage it is likely there will now be less space under cover for the public however the event will proceed and Territorians will still be able to witness history," he said.

"In many respects we are fortunate that this has occurred in time to enable us to make alternate arrangements ahead of the event."

Mr Lawson said that the public is encouraged to monitor weather conditions closer to the day and if necessary bring protection from the weather.

"Territorians understand that the weather can be a problem at this time of the year and I don't believe it will dampen their enthusiasm for this historical Territory event," he said.

"The AustralAsia Railway Corporation has contractual arrangements with local company Top End Sounds for the provision of infrastructure for the Darwin First Train Celebrations.

The Contractor, NT Work Safe, engineers and insurance assessors today surveyed the site to determine the cause of the incident.

"We are currently in discussions with our contractor and are considering arrangements to ensure facilities are in place on the day. The celebrations will continue to go ahead, and everyone is welcome to participate in the celebrations."

Two vehicles also incurred minor damage in the incident.

PRESS CONFERENCE AT 2PM
AUSTRALASIA RAILWAY CORPORATION
GROUND FLOOR
TOURISM HOUSE
43 MITCHELL STREET