



Clare Martin
CHIEF MINISTER

21 December 2006

NT PITCHES IN TO FIGHT VICTORIAN FIRES

A Northern Territory team of 25 fire fighters will travel to Victoria next week to assist in fighting the fires raging across the state.

Chief Minister Clare Martin and Emergency Services Minister Chris Burns met some of the officers and staff today while inspecting equipment that will be used in the operation.

“ I know that Victorians will welcome the additional manpower and expertise of Territorians,” said Ms Martin.

“ We have a long history of dealing with complex fires in the Territory and I’d like to thank the 25 brave personnel who have volunteered for this duty.

“The team comprises staff from the Northern Territory Fire and Rescue Service and Bushfires NT, many of whom have returned from leave to undertake this trip.

“Equipment including fire fighting vehicles, water storage and personal safety equipment have been loaded on to trucks this week and are on their way south.

“ The combination of NTFRS and Bushfires NT staff and volunteers are taking this equipment so that they can operate as self-contained strike teams.

“ While our thought are with Victorians who have had their entire lives turned upside down by this disaster, we will also be thinking of the Territory’s men and women who will be at the fire front,” said Ms Martin.

The Government also thanked Freight Services for their donation of free transport.

Some staff have been deployed previously and have experience in fighting southern fires including John Whatley, Regional Fire Control Officer who works in the Batchelor area.

“Volunteer fire-fighters fought Top End fires all dry season, now they have put their hands up to do it all again over the new year period. Last time we went we took the rain with us – let’s hope luck is on our side again,” said Mr Whatley.

Media Contact:

Chief Minister Aaron Ross

08 8901 4000