

SYD STIRLING
MEMBER FOR NHULUNBUY

3 May 2005

BUDGET BOOST FOR EAST ARNHAM

Budget 2005 backs the East Arnhem region, with tax cuts for local businesses and families, more local jobs, more funding for skills development and strong infrastructure spending, Member for Nhulunbuy Syd Stirling announced today.

“Budget 2005 delivers strong Territory wide infrastructure spending, including roads spending, of \$476 million. Combined with the continued expansion of the Alcan Refinery at Gove, this will mean more work for local Nhulunbuy businesses and a lot more local jobs,” Mr Stirling said.

“East Arnhem residents will also benefit from the Martin Government’s continuing strong investment in skills development, with a record 10,000 Territorians to be supported in training over the next four years.

“Budget 2005 also includes funding for Gove District Hospital, as well as local roads and schools.

“There will also be more funding for our commitment to put more police on the beat and a stronger investment in community crime fighting initiatives.

“Budget 2005 is backing East Arnhem residents and helping to drive economic growth in the region.”

LESS TAX FOR NHULUNBUY BUSINESSES, FAMILIES

Nhulunbuy households and businesses will benefit from nearly \$40 million in tax cuts outlined in Budget 2005, making the Territory the lowest taxing jurisdiction for locally-based Territory businesses with up to 100 staff from 1 July 2006.

The cuts make the Martin Government the most tax reforming Government in the Territory history.

Budget 2005 highlights include:

- The payroll tax-free threshold will rise to \$1 million on 1 July 2005 and then to \$1.25 million on 1 July 2006. From 1 July 2004 to 1 July 2006, the payroll tax changes will mean 215 Territory businesses will no longer pay payroll tax. Territory businesses continuing to pay the tax will save on average \$31,900 a year.
- From 3 May 2005, the stamp duty threshold for first home buyers will be increased to \$200,000, almost doubling the first home owner stamp duty concession to a maximum \$6800. Around 1400 Territorians will benefit from the threshold increase. It means Territorians will save around \$2.7 million a year.
- Electronic Debit Transaction Duty and Debits Tax will be abolished from 1 July 2005, saving a local business with around 20 employees \$1430 a year.

Government has committed to a further \$40 million in tax cuts over the next five years, including cuts to stamp duty and other business taxes. Less tax for business means more jobs for Territorians.

INFRASTRUCTURE SPENDING IN EAST ARNHEM REGION

Further spending on tourism infrastructure, roads and strategic development projects in Budget 2005 will back the local tourism and construction industries, as well as the wider East Arnhem community.

Highlights include:

- \$700,000 to complete upgrades at Shepherdson College
- \$1 million to complete the new police post at Numbulwar
- \$9.86 million to complete 21 Government employee housing at Alyangula
- \$1 million to upgrade Maparru Homeland Centre School
- \$750,000 to upgrade Donyddji Homeland Centre School
- \$260,000 to complete upgrades to health centres in Galiwinku, Umbakumba and Ramingining
- \$1.47 million for upgrades to the Central Arnhem Road
- \$570,000 to upgrade fuel storage at Numbulwar
- \$1.1 million to complete additional sewerage ponds and rising mains at Milingimbi
- \$1.09 million to relocate sewerage ponds and redirect rising mains at Gapuwiyak
- \$500,000 to upgrade the Ngukurr to Numbulwar road and causeway at Rose River
- \$370,000 for repairs to Government assets in Nhulunbuy following Cyclone Ingrid

MORE FUNDS FOR JOBS AND TRAINING

East Arnhem residents will benefit from the Martin Government's commitment to support the training of a record 10,000 Territorians over the next four years.

New apprentices and trainees are now able to access up to \$500 for a WorkWear WorkGear cash bonus.

Nhulunbuy employers will be able to access incentives worth \$3000 for putting on a trainee or \$7000 for putting on an apprentices in a hard-to-fill trade.

Budget 2005 delivers a range of other job and training initiatives for the East Arnhem region including \$700,000 in Flexible Response Funding for training in remote communities

BUILDING SAFER COMMUNITIES IN EAST ARNHEM

To build safer communities in the East Arnhem region, Budget 2005 includes:

- \$7.6 million for police, fire and emergency services in the East Arnhem region
- \$300,000 for repairs, maintenance and minor works to the East Arnhem region police, fire and emergency services facilities
- \$560,000 for Groote Eyelandt and Nhulunbuy community corrections
- \$170,000 to deliver court services in remote communities
- \$150,000 additional funding for a community patrol at Nhulunbuy
- \$210,000 ongoing support for the Arnhem Fire Control District
- ongoing funding for the Community Harmony Strategy to address anti-social behaviour

MORE HEALTH FUNDING

The East Arnhem region will benefit from record Health spending of \$687 million in Budget 2005, including \$15.7 million for Gove District Hospital.

Highlights include:

- \$19 million for acute care services in the region
- \$12.5 million for non-acute health and community services in the region
- \$500,000 for renal dialysis services
- \$430,000 additional funding for the Nhulunbuy Special Care Centre
- \$72,000 for Volatile Substance Abuse rehabilitation services

BUILDING BETTER SCHOOLS IN THE EAST ARNHEM

Budget 2005 includes a record budget for Employment, Education and Training.

East Arnhem will benefit from the investment with:

- \$27.4 million for primary, post primary and early childhood education in eleven remote East Arnhem schools
- \$5.1 million for primary and early childhood education at Nhulunbuy Primary School
- \$4.3 million for secondary education at Nhulunbuy High School
- \$1.2 million for assistance to non-government schools

There will also be more funding for works projects, including:

- \$700,000 to complete upgrades at Shepherdson College
- \$1 million to upgrade Mapurru Homeland Centre School
- \$750,000 for Donyddji Homeland Centre School
- replacing shade sail and other repairs to Nhulunbuy High School after Cyclone Ingrid
- replacing shade sail, repairs to fences and walkways at Nhulunbuy Primary School after Cyclone Ingrid

OTHER INITIATIVES IN BUDGET 2005

The East Arnhem region will also benefit from a range of other initiatives included in Budget 2005, including:

- an extra \$42 million over four years for secondary education
- 19 counsellors for Territory high schools above staffing formula
- an extra \$500,000 for teacher housing furniture
- \$4.4 million for VET in Schools
- Increasing spending on minor new works by 40% or an extra \$8 million meaning more work for local small business and more local jobs
- indexing grants to health and community services non-government organisations to help them meet the real cost of services. This means an increase in grant payments of \$1.13 million in Budget 2005, increasing by a further \$500,000 each year ongoing

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