

CONVENTION CENTRE AHEAD OF SCHEDULE



The Darwin Convention Centre under construction at the Waterfront development.

CHIEF MINISTER Paul Henderson has congratulated the builders of the Darwin Convention Centre which is set to be completed two months ahead of schedule.

Mr Henderson inspected progress at the convention centre and said it's already bringing economic benefits to the Territory.

"We insisted most of the work on the Darwin Convention Centre went to locals – and 95 per cent has gone to Territorians," Mr Henderson said.

"That's seen almost \$66 million injected into the economy and about 180 workers on site each day.

The \$115 million Convention Centre will feature:

- a plenary hall catering for 1500 people
- a 4000 sq m exhibition hall which can house 225 exhibition booths or 3000 delegates
- and a number flexible function and meeting rooms

Work is underway on the internal fit out of rooms with carpet, paint, seating, tiles and lighting and installation of equipment in preparation for its official opening in June.

Record cruise ship visits in 2007

DARWIN hosted the largest number of cruise ship passengers on record in 2007.

Figures collated by the Darwin Port Corporation show a dramatic increase from 10,708 passengers in 2006 to 17,012 passengers in 2007.

Ship crews have also increased in number from 6,111 to 9,100 crew members over the 12 month period.

The cruise ship industry generates an estimated \$18 million into the NT economy each year while supporting around 85 jobs.

The number of cruise visitors has continued to grow year on year since 2005, reaching the highest figure on record in 2007.

The escalation is the result of more cruise ships visiting Darwin, with 20% of the cruise ships stopping in Darwin for their first time last year.

Darwin's new cruise ship terminal will open this year, providing better passenger facilities and a more visually friendly transfer point, just one kilometre from the city retail area.

Million dollar properties now common

104 APARTMENTS with prices exceeding \$1million were on sale in the Territory this week.

Experts believe the high end of the NT real estate market has stabilised, with the most expensive apartment for sale being a \$5 million penthouse in the new Evolution development.

The 785 sq m apartment, valued at \$6367 per square metre, has four bathrooms, five living areas two car parking spaces, and city and harbour views.

The most expensive apartment per square metre was a \$1.49million offering at Wharf One, part of the Waterfront Development, at \$11,186 per square metre.

Offshore exploration leases released

NINE NEW petroleum exploration areas are proposed to be released in waters close to the Territory coast this year.

The exploration sites cover 36,200 sq km of the Bonaparte Basin, with Darwin the nearest major centre.

A Federal Department of Resources, Energy, and Tourism spokesman said the department plans to release the areas at the Australian Petroleum Production and Exploration Association conference in April in Perth.

Trade mission to Oz Mining conference

A TERRITORY GOVERNMENT trade mission will participate in Ozmine 2008, a mining exhibition and conference from 16 to 22 February 2008 in Jakarta.

Ozmine's target market is Australian companies capable of supplying mining equipment and technology, mining consulting and engineering services, and mining consumables to a wide variety of Indonesian mining operations.