



AUSTRALIA'S UNIQUE TROPICAL HARBOUR CITY

READY TO HOST THE WORLD - 22 April 2008

Darwin is gearing up to become Australia's newest convention city when the Darwin Convention Centre welcomes its guests in June 2008.

This world-class venue is the centrepiece of the Darwin City Waterfront, a 25-hectare lifestyle precinct which will have waterfront promenades, a wave lagoon, wharf apartments, hotels, al fresco restaurants, retail outlets, wide open parklands, a cruise terminal and beach.

"The opening of the Centre means meeting planners will have an exciting new venue option in Australia's Northern Territory," said Ms Malu Barrios, General Manager of Darwin Convention Centre. "Conference organisers are continually impressed by its waterfront location and the scope of the entire Darwin Waterfront development. The Centre will put Darwin City firmly on the local and global map as a top destination for meetings and conferences," she continued.

Barrios and her business development team are very pleased with the progress of bookings at the Centre. To date, 29 major conventions and two exhibitions have been secured as well as numerous banquets, gala events and regional meetings. The international and national conventions alone will bring over 20,000 conference delegates and their families to Darwin City.

"As a vital regional centre with world-class aspirations we are continually looking at ways to reinforce our position on the national and international stage, to bring significant economic benefits to both the Northern Territory and Australia as a whole," said Chief Minister Paul Henderson.

"The development of Darwin Waterfront precinct and Darwin Convention Centre displays the confidence and commitment that my government has in positioning Australia's tropical harbour city as a vibrant, exciting and attractive destination for convention delegates," he added.

Darwin Convention Centre is the missing piece of the city's business and leisure infrastructure jigsaw. Having a world-class convention facility recognises both Darwin's long-standing reputation as a unique destination as well as its emerging status as a dynamic business hub.

And now access to Australia's most northern capital city is even more accessible with Qantas recently announcing an increase of 1,540 seats per week. Qantas offers 68 return services per week to over seven major cities within Australia. Darwin International Airport also has direct flight access to Asia.

“Darwin is Australia's best kept secret ... it's an exciting city in a unique part of the country, and we can't wait to get there,” said Noel Pettersen, Chief Executive of the National Insurance Brokers Association [NIBA]. NIBA is holding its 26th annual convention at the Darwin Convention Centre in September 2008 and expect to attract over 600 of their members to attend.

A recent survey by Nielson Research showed that 91% of visitors expect to meet and interact with Indigenous people and 77% consider this interaction an important part when travelling to Australia's Northern Territory.

There are more than 80 Indigenous tourism businesses operating in the Northern Territory.

Darwin City is the gateway to Australia's natural and cultural treasures. The World Heritage-listed Kakadu National Park, Katherine Gorge and Litchfield are all within driving distance from the city.

“That is what makes Darwin such a unique conference destination and is exactly the point of difference our clients are searching for to enhance the overall delegate experience,” added Ms Barrios.

For further media information or comment, please contact:

Ms Malu Barrios
General Manager
Darwin Convention Centre,
PO Box 735, Darwin NT 0801
T: + 61 8 9823 9000
E: mbarrios@darwinconvention.com.au
www.darwinconvention.com.au

Darwin Convention Centre is a project of Darwin Cove Consortium and the Northern Territory Government and is proudly operated by international venue management specialist, AEG Ogden. www.aegogden.com