

Michael Gunner  
Chief Minister of the Northern Territory



Media Statement

## THE TERRITORY'S JOBS RESCUE & RECOVERY PLAN

18 March 2020

The Territory Labor Government will deliver a \$65 million *Jobs Rescue & Recovery Plan* to protect Territorians from the deep economic impacts of the coronavirus.

Our plan is all about keeping shops open, cash flowing and Territorians working.

We acted fast by delivering Australia's first stimulus package last month – a \$2 million Tourism Resilience Plan to protect tourism businesses and jobs.

Now we are going further to save jobs, protect businesses and keep the Territory's economy on the road to recovery.

The best way to protect the economy is to save local jobs, not bring in deep cuts.

This is our second package and we are actively considering more options to support local businesses in the short-term and get Territorians spending more locally.

Our plan's number one focus is jobs – protecting existing jobs and creating new jobs. The experts have told us the best way to do that is to get money into the pockets of Territorians that can be spent in local businesses – so that's exactly what we are doing.

The Territory Labor Government will keep doing everything it can to protect Territory jobs, but we know we can't do it alone.

We've been working with industry and small business owners to develop this economic package. And we will continue to partner with the private sector and NGOs to protect Territorians as much as possible from the impacts from the coronavirus.

When times get tough, Territorians need to stick together and work together. That's what we'll keep doing.

All measures will begin within approximately two weeks and money is expected to be spent within six months. More information can be found out: [business.nt.gov.au/recovery](https://business.nt.gov.au/recovery)

### HELPING TERRITORY BUSINESSES AND FAMILIES

#### \$20 million Business Improvement Scheme

- **This is aimed at helping businesses get customers back into premises by undertaking improvements to a Territory business.** All eligible businesses will receive \$10,000. If the recipient also wants to put in their own \$10,000, they will then get an additional \$10,000 from the Government. This creates a \$30,000 grant (with

business pitching in \$10,000 of their own money). The upgrades and purchases have to be from another Territory business. This could include buying new equipment, new shop fit-outs and physical changes to attract customers

### **\$5 million Business Structural Adjustment package**

- This package will assist businesses who need to physically adjust to the 100 person rule or to establish or upgrade their online presence to adjust to changing behaviours of consumption. The Chief Minister has directed public servants to personally speak with affected local businesses. All businesses can apply, but the Department will be focusing on the hospitality sector first (such as restaurants). Terms and conditions and a hotline will be released soon.

### **\$5 million Immediate Works Grants Package**

- This package reintroduces the Immediate Works Grant for incorporated not-for-profit and community organisations – including clubs - to undertake repairs, renovations and upgrades to their premises/facilities. Applicants can apply for grants of up to \$50,000, which will then be matched dollar-for-dollar if the organisation also puts in their own \$50,000. Up to \$100,000 on a dollar-for-dollar matching basis for amounts above \$50,000

### **Freezing Government Fees and Charges and Electricity Prices**

- All Government fees and charges – including electricity, water and car registration will be frozen (no increase due to indexation) until 1 July 2021. Electricity prices for small and medium businesses (those paying regulated tariffs) will be frozen from 1 July 2020 (no increase due to indexation) until 1 July 2021.

### **\$30 million Home Improvement Scheme**

- \$6000 grant for Territory homeowners and landlords who also contribute \$2000, and a \$4000 grant with a \$1000 contribution.

## **SUPPORTING TERRITORY TOURISM**

- We are supporting our local tourism, hospitality and retail operators by encouraging Territorians to get out and explore their own backyard, with a dedicated intra-Territory campaign developed by local creatives and rolled out via local media channels.
- The Government will also boost investment into marketing to encourage tourism as an opportunity to help disperse visitors through the Territory over the coming months, motivating Australian's to take a self-drive trip is a great way to experience our destination.

## **RESCUE AND RECOVERY PACKAGE PRINCIPLES**

In addition to the announced stimulus packages, the Territory Labor Government response to the coronavirus will operate, to the extent possible, under the following action principles:

1. Our focus is on jobs NOT cuts
2. Our approach is to work together with Territorians, the private sector, and Territory organisations - we cannot do this alone
3. Our financial support needs to be spent, not banked
4. Our public service will be responsive and flexible to requests for help

5. Our contracting and procurement decisions need to be fast and fair
6. Our employees will be encouraged to buy locally and holiday in the Territory
7. Our sponsorship of events that have been cancelled or deferred will still be used to support that organisation's work - as agreed/in negotiation with Government.
8. Our employees will be encouraged to cash out their recreational leave and spend money locally

We will work with the private sector and Territory organisations to encourage their continued contribution to our economic recovery. This includes encouraging:

1. Banks to be more flexible in their dealings with businesses, particularly in regards to loan repayments
2. Landlords to reduce or defer rent payments from businesses
3. The Federal Government to defer or cease FBT on entertainment
4. The private sector to be more flexible in their contract arrangements with each other
5. Local governments to undertake their own stimulus packages
6. Federal Government employees to buy in the NT and holiday in the NT
7. Federal Government employees to cash out their recreational leave and spend money locally

#### **Quotes from Chief Minister, Michael Gunner**

"I will do whatever it takes to save jobs and protect Territorians from the impacts of the coronavirus.

"We are investing in our people and our Territory businesses through the Business Improvement Scheme. This scheme is assisting Territorians throughout the Coronavirus crisis and beyond.

"This spend is literally about jobs, not cuts. This is about saving people's jobs.

"We know we can't stop the virus and we can't stop the economic hit that's coming, but we can make sure we're still standing at the end.

"Cuts would kill our economy and kill jobs. Now would be the worst possible time to cut. That's why we won't go back to cuts.

"When times get tough, Territorians stick together.

"Right now we need to stick together and do everything possible to protect the economy and protect jobs."

**Media Contact:** Gerard Richardson 0438 693 898