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**Tuesday, 4 December 2007**

## **MANAGEMENT CENTRE OPENS**

Darwin International Airport's Management Centre has just enjoyed a \$1.5 million refurbishment and will be opened today by Minister for Business, Economic and Regional Development and Minister for Tourism Kon Vatskalis.

The opening coincides with the announcement of a second hotel, the Airport Inn, due to open next July, and the appointment of new Chairman of the Airport Development Group, Chris Barlow.

"It's a time of rapid growth for the airport, both at the terminal and with our commercial developments, that reflects the prosperity of Darwin," said the airport's Chief Executive Officer Ian Kew.

The new Airport Inn will be a six-storey, three-star facility and will be built by the owners and operators of the existing Darwin Airport Resort. It incorporates a pool, three conference rooms and a mini-mart shop. The 121 rooms will include 31 standard suites, 63 business suites, 25 family suites, two executive suites and six dormitory rooms with a total of 50 beds.

"The dormitory set-up will cater for travelling sports teams and should also relieve some of the 'sleepovers' by transiting passengers in the terminal," said Darwin Airport Resort Director John 'Foxy' Robinson.

The current Darwin Airport Resort, which won the 2006 Territory Construction Association Award, has 181 rooms, the award-winning Essence Restaurant, and popular conference facilities.

The airport's new management centre was designed with involvement from staff focus groups and incorporates modern contemporary design, special Territory features such as pandanus grass designs on the glass panels, and special energy saving elements such as a 'Sky Cool' roof that better reflects heat to reduce airconditioning costs.

"This was a complex refurbishment of our old building designed to provide a better working environment for our staff and a modern facility that reflects the airport's rapid growth," said Ian Kew.

"It also projects a better corporate image as we move forward with our airport expansion program and commercial activities," he said.

The management centre was designed by Darwin's Group 1 Consulting and built by PW Baxter in two stages, which allowed staff to stay in the building during the refurbishment.

Features include:

- glass panels from the airport terminal have been modified and reused in the reception area;
- a conference room with sophisticated videoconferencing facilities and touch screens, to reduce the need for Alice Springs and Darwin staff to travel to internal meetings;

3/12/2007

- a subtle aeronautical theme throughout the building, captured in modern imagery and the colours of the different airport logos;
- a courtyard and barbecue area off the communal staff kitchen to provide a retreat for lunches and breaks;
- a bike shed after the staff focus group revealed that many staff, including several who are triathletes, wanted somewhere to store their bikes.

### **Background on new Airport Development Group Chairman Chris Barlow**

Chris Barlow retired earlier this year as Chief Executive Officer and Managing Director of Australia Pacific Airports Corporation, operator of Melbourne and Launceston Airports. He was also appointed last week as the new Chairman of the Board of the Melbourne Convention Visitors Bureau.

Mr Barlow was named Australian Aviation Personality of the Year at the 2006 Australian Airports Association Awards after 35 years in the aviation industry in Australia, Canada and the United Kingdom.

His time with the Australia Pacific Airports Corporation saw a five year, \$500 million expansion and upgrade of Melbourne Airport.

Mr Barlow joined BAA (formerly the British Airports Authority) in 1969 as an Engineering Project Manager. He has a BSc (Honours) in Civil Engineering and is a member of the Institute of Civil Engineers and the Institute of Transport.

### **The Airport Development Group**

The Airport Development Group is majority Australian-owned and comprises shareholder companies:

- Hastings Funds Management (Australian Infrastructure Funds),
- Industry Funds Management (Nominees 2) Pty Ltd
- Perpetual Investments
- JP Morgan Nominees Australia Ltd
- AAJC 3 Pty Ltd

More than 50,000 Territorians are investors in the airport through these superannuation/managed investment funds.

### **Media inquiries**

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