

## **RECEPTION FOR DELEGATES TO THE INDIGENOUS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FORUM**

### **WELCOME**

- Acknowledge Larrakia Nation the traditional owners.
- Welcome everyone to this reception leading up to the Indigenous Economic Development Forum that is to be held over the next two days.
- My name is Matthew Bonson and I'm the Labour Member for Milner in the Legislative Assembly and I'm here representing John Ah Kit the Minister for Community Development and the Minister Assisting the Chief Minister for Indigenous Affairs.
- The Minister apologises that he can't be here at this reception as he is in Alice Springs attending a Cabinet Meeting.
- However both he and the Chief Minister, Clare Martin, will be present at the Forum tomorrow.
- Many of you have travelled long distances to be here for this important Forum on Indigenous Economic Development. Some of you are from interstate. Some from the various regions of the Northern Territory. And some are from the local Darwin community.
- No matter where you are from, it is very good to see you here and you are all most welcome.
- The reception this evening is both a welcome to the Forum and also an opportunity for you to meet and greet each other before we get down to more serious matters tomorrow.
- The Forum program over the next two days is most exciting. We will be hearing from speakers who are running or supporting successful Indigenous businesses and others who are involved in running successful Indigenous employment programs.
- They will be sharing their insights on how they have achieved success, what risks they had to overcome and how they have sustained what they are doing.
- There will be an opportunity in the break-out groups following each group of speakers to share ideas and to learn from each other.
- This is the second Indigenous Economic Development Forum to be held in the Northern Territory. The first was held in Alice Springs in 2003. Many of the recommendations of that Forum have been adopted by the Government, including the establishment of a high level Indigenous Economic Development Task Force.

- This Task Force is made up of representatives of peak Indigenous organisations, the private sector and governments. The Task Force has met five times to date and has guided the development of the Northern Territory Government's Indigenous Economic Development Strategy that will be formally launched by the Chief Minister at the Forum tomorrow morning.
- But this reception tonight is intended to be a relaxed gathering to allow you time to get to know each other and perhaps to catch up with old friends.
- Please enjoy yourselves.