NEW REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT ORGANISATION FOR THE INDIAN OCEAN TERRITORIES

Australia’s Indian Ocean Territories (IOT) will soon be represented by a new Regional Development Organisation.

Regional Australia Minister, Simon Crean has agreed to establish the organisation to lead regional development on Christmas and Cocos (Keeling) Islands. It will be an incorporated body with the ability to apply for grant funding and undertake local regional development project work.

“The new Regional Development Organisation will be the peak body for identifying regional development opportunities in the Indian Ocean Territories,” Mr Crean said.

“It will work with local businesses, community organisations and individuals to develop strategic priorities for economic diversification, proposals for economic development and funding applications.

“This work will build on existing Australian Government initiatives, including $440,000 we have invested during the past two years in local projects under the IOT Economic Development Funding Program.

“The Regional Development Organisation will be chaired by the Administrator of the Indian Ocean Territories, and will be made up of dedicated local community members who have extensive knowledge of the development issues and challenges facing the IOT,” he said.

The announcement was made by current IOT Administrator, Brian Lacy, at the 2012 IOT Regional Summit.

“The establishment of a Regional Development Organisation for the Indian Ocean Territories provides a focal point for regional and economic planning and will strengthen local decision making,” Mr Lacy said.

“It will open up new economic development opportunities for the Territories and tap not only the wealth of social, economic and environmental expertise held by local people, but also their community mindedness.

“The organisation will also provide opportunities for these people to grow their leadership, management and representational skills,” he said.

The Regional Development Organisation will complement the work of the Regional Development Australia committee for the Midwest Gascoyne region.

The strengthened leadership and strategic planning opportunities created through the new arrangement will benefit regional development and the local communities in the IOT.

Brian Lacy
Administrator