



ICPA NT State Conference and AGM

Tue 4th March 2025

KATHERINE

www.icpa.com.au/nt/conference



ICPA NT 2025 State Conference

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Please also see our revised **Policy Documents** that will be presented at this year's conference. The Policy Statement will become ICPA NT Policy (updated only via full Constitutional Process). All Policy Objectives are determined by resolved motions from conference and referenced with year and motion number.

Allowances (8 motions)

1. MOTION: Alice Springs Branch:

Carried/Lost

That ICPA NT lobbies the Northern Territory Department of Education to change the way they measure zones to allocate financial assistance under the Student Assistance Schemes Guidelines and Procedures from the current radius method to actual distance travelled.

Explanation:

Currently the Student Assistance Schemes Guidelines and Procedures use a radius method via CalcMaps to determine how far a student resides from their nearest distance education institution. Financial assistance is then split into 4 Zones and the amount of assistance a student receives is determined by the Zone they fall into. This is not an accurate indication of the real distance families travel to their nearest distance education institution. The easy use of Google Maps can verify distance travelled to substantiate a claim and determine the appropriate Zone and eligibility.

Case study 1

A student resides 350 km from Alice Springs and travels a 700 km return trip to access their nearest distance education institution. They should be classed as Zone 3: 251 km+ and be eligible to receive \$2,040 in financial assistance. However, using the CalcMaps radius method the student falls into Zone 2 being 151 km to 250 km to their nearest distance education institution and receives \$1,660 in financial assistance.

2. MOTION: Alice Springs Branch:

Carried/Lost

That ICPA NT requests that the Department of Education share their findings on their recent review of the "Back to School Payment Scheme" and how distance education students can make the most of this scheme.

Explanation

We would like the Department of Education to acknowledge that distance education students require different educational goods and services than other students. The current scheme allows distance education students to only purchase items from their school. It is difficult for schools to be able to offer a variety of goods and services aside from uniforms. Distance education students only wear uniforms 20 days a year and therefore they do not need to replace them annually.

We would like the Back to School Payment Scheme Policy to allow more flexibility so that distance education students can choose to purchase items directly from their school or another supplier like home school students are able to under the current scheme.

3. MOTION: Alice Springs Branch:

Carried/Lost

That ICPA NT lobbies the NT Department of Education, to adapt the Distance and Correspondence Education Conditions, under the Student Assistance Scheme Guidelines and Procedures, to allow for students that do not reside in the Northern Territory but are enrolled in a Northern Territory Distance Education school to make a special application for benefits through a Director of Financial Services.

Explanation

A condition of the current scheme is that students must both be attending a distance education school and be a permanent resident of the NT.

We have seven students enrolled with Alice Springs School of Air that reside interstate but attend Alice Springs School of the Air as Alice Springs is their closest community and service centre. They are not eligible for financial assistance from the South Australian Government due to not being enrolled in a South Australian School. Under the current scheme there is a condition that states “students who attend interstate correspondence schools may make special applications for benefit through a director of financial Service. We ask that this condition is expanded to allow non-resident students who attend an NT school the same benefit. The Back to School Payment Scheme is based on enrolment, yet the Student Assistance Scheme is not.

4. MOTION: Alice Springs Branch:

Carried/Lost

That ICPA NT lobbies the Department of Education to increase the maximum reimbursement amount of their internet subsidy scheme from \$174 a month to \$195 a month, in line with the current costs of the internet.

Explanation:

Under the Better and Fairer Schools Agreement it states that “all students are provided access to high-quality evidence-based teaching that is inclusive, where young Australians of all backgrounds and levels of need are supported to achieve their full educational potential’.

Without access to internet, it isn’t possible for distance education students to achieve the equity and excellence outcomes of this agreement. It is the Department of Education responsibility to provide students with access to reliable internet, so they are able to achieve their learning and wellbeing goals.

The current Northern Territory internet subsidy scheme has been in place for some years, it recently underwent a review however the review failed to increase the maximum reimbursement amount in line with the current cost of internet. Whilst not all families require access to portable internet, many do due to the nature of their business requiring them to work and live in multiple locations throughout the year.

5. MOTION: Katherine Branch

Carried/Lost

That ICPA NT requests that the Department of Education and Training annually review the Student Assistance Scheme - Boarding Allowance, including the zone methodology and allowance amounts, to ensure all geographically isolated boarding students are adequately and fairly, financially supported to complete their compulsory schooling.

Explanation:

The NT Student Assistance Boarding Allowances (Intrastate & Interstate) must adequately support families of isolated Territory students completing their compulsory secondary education through boarding. The NT Education Act states that access to education must be free, yet the cost of educating geographically isolated students through boarding, which is the only option for many students, is a huge and often overwhelming expense for families to cover.

The Dept of Education has refined the Allowance to subsidize both the cost of education, and any travel to and from their place of study, and they have an obligation to ensure this subsidy aligns with cost-of-living increases. Each year, the boarding fees, uniforms, equipment, and travel expenses increase, and the NT Student Assistance Boarding Allowances must reflect this.

The Zone Methodology must be equitable – it must reflect distance and difficulty in travel, and

support itinerant working families that do not have a permanent fixed address due to varied worksites throughout the school year.

6. MOTION: Katherine Branch

Carried/Lost

That ICPA NT request that the Department of Education and Training extend the Back-to-School voucher scheme to all Northern Territory Geographically Isolated students that are required to Board Interstate to complete their compulsory schooling.

Explanation:

Currently, the Department of Education offer a Back-to-School voucher to NT students either

- *enrolled in a Northern Territory (NT) school or*
- *registered for home-schooling as described*

“You are entitled to receive \$200 of educational goods and services for each child enrolled in a government or non-government NT school or preschool. If your child is in transition to year 12, you will receive the entitlement in term 1 each year. The entitlement must be used by the end of term 1.” We request that due to the need for some Geographically Isolated students to board interstate, the Department of Education should extend this program by way of a Back-to-School Voucher Allowance. These children are still Northern Territory residents, and they are slipping through the net of support by way of exclusion. They cannot access financial support for back-to-school items in the state they are being educated in.

7. MOTION: Katherine Branch

Carried/Lost

That ICPA NT encourage the NT Department of Education and Training to annually review and improve the Student Assistance Scheme application, re-application and processing systems and ensure the scheme subsidies and assistance is appropriate to the needs of isolated students.

Explanation:

ICPA acknowledges the Grants NT online platform is a significant improvement, however, ICPA members continue to have issues with the Student Assistance Office in relation to applications, re-applying in subsequent years, and changes of circumstances during the school year.

The Student Assistance Scheme must continue to be current and in line with the needs of users, cost of living, and currently, in comparison with other States, the Territory is falling short of coming anywhere near actual costs.

8. MOTION: Katherine Branch


Carried/Lost

That ICPA NT request the NT Student Assistance Scheme includes all students eligible for the Federal Assistance for Isolated Children Scheme - under the 'Isolated Conditions - No reasonable Access to School' Clause, where families are required to work onsite at various geographically isolated locations throughout the school year preventing them from being able to enroll in a conventional public school.

Explanation:

Currently contracting families that are travelling around the NT to service Geographically Isolated areas, where their child does not have access to school for more than 100 days (as per AIC Guidelines), or 20 days, as per Katherine School of the Air Requirements, have no provision for assistance under the NT Student Assistance Scheme. These families are vital to providing skilled labor and services to remote areas and should have support to educate their children like all geographically isolated NT Students.

Families affected by this are already covered by the rigorous AIC application, therefore they should be eligible for the NT Student Assistance Scheme given this is a requirement for the NT Student Assistance Scheme.



GEOGRAPHICALLY ISOLATED

For over 57 years, Katherine School of the Air has provided exceptional distance education to families residing in remote areas. The programs are designed for students in the home classroom from Preschool through to Year 9.


Eligibility

- Remote residents living in the top half of the NT and along the WA board

Meet one of the below criteria:

- 56kms from the nearest government school, or
- 4.5km to the nearest transport to a government school and 16km to the school via the shortest route, or
- No reasonable access to a government school for at least 20 days of the school year

Confident. Resilient. Independent



Boarding (2 motions)

9. Motion: ICPA NT State Council

Carried/Lost

That ICPA NT works with relevant stakeholders and providers to investigate trade focussed secondary options with appropriate and affordable boarding for our GI students within the NT.

Explanation:

Despite the NT being in drastic need of tradespeople, there are few, if any, solely trade based secondary options within the NT. Many highschools are offering VET and certificate options in Secondary school but these are alongside mainstream other subjects. A trade focused school, with conceptualised English and Maths where the subjects are able to be related directly to a practical trade application is overdue. This will help to keep teenagers engaged, less disruptive to other students and increase their chance to become productive members of society.

Equally important, is the current lack of boarding facilities - appropriate and affordable - to match those schools who do offer such subjects.

Potential models from across Australia: TecNQ in Townsville www.tecnq.com.au

Potential stakeholders: NT Dept of Education & Training; Charles Darwin University (CDU) - Katherine

Rural Campus; NT Chamber of Commerce; Calistimone Boarding House (Katherine); NT public and private secondary schools; NT registered Training Organisations (GTNT etc); Apprenticeships Australia and Trade Associations, SEDA

10. Motion: ICPA NT State Council

Carried/Lost

That ICPA NT supports the Australian Boarding Standard and its adoption and continual improvement in all boarding schools.

Explanation:

The Australian Boarding Standard was published on 23 July, 2015, and is published through the affiliate of Standards Australia, SAI Global.

Excerpt from the Standard: "This Standard is designed for application in boarding services operated by Australian state and territory government agencies, by non-government schools and systems and by local government and community committees. This Standard is designed to promote and safeguard the welfare of students for whom boarding accommodation is provided.

Legislative requirements affecting boarding services in Australia vary from state to state and between states and territories. This Standard provides a common framework across all jurisdictions and is intended to be of benefit to service providers and users.

Experience in other countries suggests that a national boarding standard is effective in promoting quality boarding services.

Many sections of this Standard may align with policies and procedures that already exist and are documented."

Distance Education & Communications (6 motions)

11. Motion Katherine Branch

Carried/Lost

That ICPA NT ensure the NT Department of Education and Training subsidises the full amount of school room internet to families, and remains a key participant and advisor to the Department of Education and Training regarding the provision required for distance education.

Explanation:

As all Katherine School of the Air students have now transitioned to private internet providers in their home schoolrooms, it is imperative that families are able to afford adequate internet packages for their students' needs. The NT Education Act states that access to a public education must be free, and for Distance Education Students, access to reliable internet is crucial to enabling delivery of a standard public-school education. The cost of schoolroom internet must be met by the Territory Government. Every classroom is unique, and families need flexibility to find the most appropriate internet solution for their situation. The cost of schoolroom internet, startup costs and monthly fees must be met by the NT Government. Starlink is recommended by Katherine School of the Air IT Department and the startup cost for families is currently \$349 + \$34 shipping, it was \$599 + \$30 shipping in December 2024. The hardware cost fluctuates throughout the year.

Case Study: Jenna Trevenen, Larrizona Station

We are located at Larrizona Station, my husband and I manage the property for a corporate. Our eldest son commenced Preschool this year through KSA. We were unable to apply for the reimbursement for internet services as the internet at the Station is provided to us as part of our salary package therefore is in the company name. We also have no control as to the internet package that is provided, currently it's a limited service that is also shared with other staff, therefore continually running out of data. We made a financial decision at the commencement of the year that we wouldn't take out our own Starlink service as the setup costs weren't included in the reimbursements offered and it was an additional cost we couldn't afford at the time along with the cost of setting up a school room. This year we have had continual issues with our current internet situation with our son missing lessons due to poor connection or no connection.

12. MOTION: Katherine Branch

Carried/Lost

That ICPA NT requests the NT Department of Education to ensure all Geographically Isolated students receive a laptop at no cost to the families, through Katherine School of the Air. Either through the form of a bond, or no cost.

Explanation:

The costs associated with setting up a Geographically Isolated school room include compulsory costs, as per the Katherine School of the Air enrolment and essential costs associated with the reality of living in a Geographically Isolated area. These costs obviously fluctuate between each enrolment, but it is an overwhelming process. For example, purchasing and installing internet hardware, age-appropriate tables and chairs for students and staff. Classroom consumables not supplied by the school, i.e. Folders, Stapler, Extra Art & Craft supplies, especially Early Years, STEM Resources, storage, Brain Break Resources and extra sporting equipment.

It is considered compulsory for a School of the Air online student to attend each online lesson, to ensure their attendance is recorded. To meet full engagement with the School of the Air learning program. Therefore the NT Department of Education should deem Laptops an essential material item for Distance Education students and supply them at no cost.

13. MOTION: Alice Springs

Carried/Lost

That ICPA NT express to the Department of Education the importance of continued regular communication between Distance Education Schools and the Department of Corporate and Digital Development. We understand these meetings have been planned to commence in 2025. We want to ensure they occur regularly and are ongoing.

Explanation

In 2024 Alice Springs School of the Air experienced significant connectivity issues that prevented students from engaging in their online learning for more than a week. Regular meetings are vital to ensure IT issues can be resolved as a priority quickly and are in line with the unique context of Distance Education.

14. MOTION: ICPA NT State Council

Carried/Lost

That ICPA NT requests the Education Minister and Department of Education to conduct a comprehensive review of the NT Schools of Distance Education and Schools of the Air to ensure that they remain cutting edge, contemporary and are an appropriate custom-fit, for Geographically Isolated students.

Explanation:

Our Schools of Distance Education and Schools of the Air are very unique institutions. They pioneered distance learning and for a very long time were at the forefront in the delivery of it. With the rapid rise in technology and communication systems combined with necessity brought about during the Covid 19 Pandemic, virtual learning has accelerated at an unprecedented pace. This has brought great advancements in methodologies, pedagogy and mindsets and opened up opportunities to many more individuals.

As part of the review, we would like to ensure that the Geographically Isolated students' unique needs are never overlooked and that there is always cutting-age space for them to have access to a quality public education from their geographically isolated family home. Funding models and an increasing move away from main stream schools has meant that many institutions are taking an ever increasing number of non-geographic isolated enrollments.

An equally important part of this review would be to determine a funding mechanism for the essential home supervisor to be remunerated.

15. Motion: ICPA NT State Council

Carried/Lost

That ICPA NT requests the NT Education Minister and Dept of Education & Training support the campaign by ICPA (Aust) to the Federal Government to add an additional loading category to the School Resourcing Model for Geographic Isolated students.

Explanation:

Education funding from the Federal Government to the States is calculated by the School Resource Standards (SRS).

<https://www.education.gov.au/recurrent-funding-schools/schooling-resource-standard>

At present there are 4 SRS loadings. The SRS loadings provide additional funding for student priority cohorts and disadvantaged schools. A school's SRS can include up to 4 student-based loadings and 2 school-based loadings. Loadings are not affected by capacity to contribute.

The 4 student-based loadings are the:

- *student with disability loading*
- *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander loading*
- *socio-educational disadvantage loading*
- *low-English proficiency loading.*

A student may attract funding under more than one loading.

The 2 school-based loadings are for:

- *School size*
- *School location.*

The Department calculates the loadings for each school each year.

ICPA (Aus) are advocating that there be a 5th student-based loading for Geographically Isolated students. This would then provide additional funding to the states to cover the higher costs of supporting Geographically Isolated students in the Distance Education journey - travel to contact events, appropriate technology, funding towards compulsory supervisor etc.

If successful, this would mean an increase in funding for NT Distance Education schools.

16. MOTION: ICPA NT State Council

Carried/Lost

That ICPA NT works with the Department of Education and Training and all other relevant stakeholders for the formation of a Distance Education Supervision subsidy (name is not important) to assist GI families whose only choice for their children is Distance Education.

Explanation:

The ICPA has been advocating for many many years for an allowance or subsidy to support Geographically Isolated families with the ongoing costs of Distance Education. This has been occurring at State and Federal levels of ICPA. Unfortunately with little traction and being bounced between state and federal governments.

Distance education enrolment – guidelines and procedures (NT Government Publication)

“ All distance education enrolments require children and young people to:

- meet the requirements for enrolment in an NT Government school as detailed in the Enrolment procedures*
- be enrolled for a minimum of one semester for preschool to year 9 enrolment, and by negotiation for years 10 to 12*
- have access to a telephone, computer and the internet. Provision of information technology equipment may be facilitated by the department*
- be provided with an appropriate learning space and environment. This includes a well-lit, ventilated space, absence of unwanted distractions to learning, and access to learning materials and resources*
- be suitably supervised and supported by an adult each school day to complete their learning, including any requirement to attend the distance education centre or another place.*

Division 2 of the NT Education Act 2015 states:

Cost of Government school education 75 Government school education to be free

(1) This section applies in relation to a student:

(a) whose usual place of residence is in the Territory; and

(b) who is an Australian citizen or permanent resident in Australia or a child of such a citizen or resident; and

(c) who is enrolled in a Government school.

(2) The cost of providing the following at the Government school to the student must be met by the Territory:

(a) instruction that forms part of the program that is prescribed by regulation (the standard curriculum program);

(b) any materials or administrative or other services or facilities provided as part of the standard curriculum program.”

With this legislation and policy in mind, consider the following.

Most mothers are able to return to work when their children start school, but it is mostly the mothers of Geographically Isolated Families are either unable to work, or have an increased workload due to the supervision responsibilities required by the enrolment policies for Distance Education which requires that students undertaking Distance Education have adequate supervision in the classroom and an appropriate space or the child to undertake their learning, free of distractions etc. (see above)

The choices for these DE families are:

One parent (usually the mother) must either forgo an income or time working in the business to supervise the children in the classroom.

The family or the employers of the family engage a home tutor – firstly recruiting and then providing a salary or day rate for this employee.

Even when the family or business has employed a home tutor, one parent carries an increased workload by taking on the management of the home tutor and classroom activities. Its never a simple drop and go solution like those familiar to non-GI families.

Furthermore, due to the isolation, the family or the remote businesses who employ these families need to house and feed their home tutors. All of which comes at a cost to the private business and not to the government. The costs vary between families but no matter the circumstance, huge cost or sacrifices are made by our GI families in pursuit of a government funded education, which for all Territorians – is supposed to be “FREE”.

Further to these ongoing costs, there is the cost of the initial setup of an appropriate study environment for the students, desks, chairs and the installation of the appropriate internet connection being the very bare minimum. Laptops and ICT equipment are available for hire and purchase from the school, still at a further cost to the family. The back to school voucher scheme does subsidise the cost but at \$200 per year, this amount doesn’t really touch the sides of the initial set up or ongoing replenishment of resources required.

All of these costs do not even take into account the face to face events that are optional but also integral for the children's social and emotional learning, which for those attending Katherine School of the Air comes in at approx. \$2,000 + per term if you factor in the cost of accommodating a family for the time in town, travel, food for the family for the week, the potential loss of income for the week that one caregiver has to be away from the business for. The subsidy for attending an inschool event is approx. \$100 per student per event. Although we are thankful for it, this wouldn’t even cover the cost of the fuel to attend these events.

The AIC and NT Student Assistance Scheme does allow some relief but does not even come close to covering the total cost of education for those GI families.

Case Study: Costs of setting up and maintaining a home classroom.

Wood Family, Wave Hill Station

Family Outlay	Amount	Assistance Received	Amount
Classroom setup Purchase 2 desk \$100 each, 2 chairs \$100, Rugs for the schoolroom - \$50 each x 3 = \$150, Laptop Initial hire: \$400 upfront and \$100 a year thereafter. (\$500); Headsets \$165 each; School uniforms \$30 per shirt x 3 shirts \$90; Storage Drawers \$100	\$1,605	Back to School Voucher	\$200

<i>each x 2. \$200; Shelving \$200</i>			
<i>Home Tutor Salary \$198 per day (10 school weeks per term, 5 days of school x 4 terms)</i>	<i>\$40,000</i>	<i>AIC - Distance Ed \$3,741.79 (Preschool not eligible)</i>	<i>0</i>
<i>In School Accomodation and Food P.A</i>	<i>\$8,000</i>	<i>NT - Distance Ed (PreSchool ineligible in 2022 \$2,080 per student per year)</i>	<i>\$0</i>
<i>Internet (Per Annum)</i>	<i>\$2,160</i>	<i>Connellan Airways Grant (in-school)</i>	<i>330</i>
<i>Internet Hardware (Starlink)</i>	<i>\$300</i>	<i>internet subsidy (\$174 per month)</i>	<i>\$2,088</i>
Total Outlay Preschool 2022	\$52,065	Total Subsidies in 2022	\$2,618
Total Cost to Family for our first year of Distance Education <u>\$49,447</u>			

Note: At the time of setting up the student was in preschool, in 2022 and was ineligible for AIC assistance and NT SAS Distance Ed Grant. Since setting up our classroom in 2022, preschool students are now eligible for the NT Student Assistance Scheme, but still ineligible for AIC until they are in transition.

The family has since incurred more outlay with the inclusion of 3 more early years students, and another home tutor as of 2025.

Stationery such as pencils, whiteboard markers, art supplies, paper for printing, ink have not been included in this estimate, nor have the board and keep or annual leave and superannuation for the home tutor, or the costs of renovating an existing old building to make it fit-for-purpose.

Early Childhood (1 motion)

17. MOTION: Alice Springs Branch:

Carried/Lost

ICPA NT thanks the Department of Education and Training FaFT program for continuing to deliver playgroups during in -school weeks in Alice Springs. We request that the Department of Education and training develop and implement new early learning programs for geographically isolated children In Central Australia.

Explanation

Geographically isolated children in Central Australia have been without access to regularly early learning programs for more than two decades. We have been advocating for change with the Department of Education and Training for some time without little change. We would like the Department to review their current programs and look for ways they can expand their current programs to geographically isolated children In Central Australia.

Roads & Travel (3 motions)

18. MOTION: Katherine Branch

Carried/Lost

That ICPA NT implore the Minister for Logistics and Infrastructure to increase maintenance of roads to ensure safe conditions for families travelling to attend for educational purposes and school staff.

Explanation:

Many Families need to travel vast distances over NT Roads to attend to the educational needs of their children, and there is concern over funding not being available for adequate road maintenance.

Case Study:

The current maintenance program on the Central Arnhem Road cannot keep up with the high volume of heavy vehicles/road trains using the road to access Nhulunbuy, cattle stations, communities, and mining exploration sites, leaving the road in an unsafe condition only weeks after a maintenance grade. This affects families when the road becomes so poor that they need to consider whether their children can attend a school contact event or assessment, or travel to collect or return school resources or unit work. If the road is deemed to be in an unacceptable state for Department of Education Teachers to travel, or a longer travel time is needed due to road conditions, there can be a delay or school patrols can be cancelled, leaving students without the valuable contact time with teaching staff and health services.

Case Study: Jenna Trevenen, Larrizona Station

We are located at Larrizona Station on the Gorrie Dry River Road. We have 100km of gravel out to the Victoria Highway or 100km of gravel out to the Stuart Highway. For the last 2 years our road has flooded in both directions, leaving us landlocked for months on end. This year we were land locked for 3.5 months from January to April. With our son commencing Preschool this year we were unable to get to town for the first term in the lead up to Inschool to familiarize him with his teacher and school. We managed to get out via boat for the Inschool week at the end of term 1 but the week proved to be very difficult for him to be left in unfamiliar surroundings.

19. MOTION: NT State Council

Carried/Lost

“That ICPA NT lobbies Qantas to extend their Resident Fares Scheme for travel for geographically isolated students.”

Explanation:

The Northern Territory has a large number of geographically isolated students living remotely with their families who need to attend educational institutions interstate to complete their education. The Northern Territory has a very limited number of boarding school places available for students, therefore, a large number of families have no choice but to send their children to boarding schools interstate. Choices for tertiary and trade training are equally limited.

NT residents can access the Qantas Resident Fares but only for flights from Alice Springs to Darwin (return) or Alice Springs to Adelaide (return). These are useful and much appreciated but more options are needed. There are a large number of families not even living close to Darwin (up to approx. 1,000km away) that have children studying interstate in locations such as Townsville, Charters Towers, Rockhampton, Toowoomba, Brisbane, Gold Coast, Sydney, Adelaide, and Melbourne who need to drive up to 1,000km and then fly from Darwin but have no access to resident fares.

There are two/three airlines operating from Darwin, and during the hugely popular ‘dry season,’ parents are competing with tourists for flights that can range from \$300 - \$3,000 one way to get

children to and from boarding school. There is no consistency for reasonable fares for parents, particularly during the peak dry season. Children are boarding a long way from home and travel for parents to visit during the term is often unaffordable.

Many other states receive significant assistance for travel.

20. Motion: ICPA NT State Council

Carried/Lost

That ICPA NT works with the major airlines to determine a more consistent and fairer pricing structure for geographically isolated students who must travel to attend educational institutions.

Explanation:

There is no consistency for reasonable fares for students when they must travel interstate to attend educational institutions, particularly during the peak dry season. To enable a choice between different airlines flying out of the Northern Territory to other states, all major airlines should be encouraged to offer discounted and affordable student fares.

Special Needs (1 motion)

21. MOTION: Katherine Branch:

Carried/Lost

That ICPA NT requests that the Dept of Education and Training provides targeted support and funding to the Additional Needs team at Schools of the Air to educate and support Home Tutors and families of students who are Geographically Isolated and have recognised additional needs.

Explanation:

In recent years the NT Government has introduced "Inclusion and Well being Teams" into Public Schools, which has certainly improved support for enrolled students and their families. There is still a gap for remote and Geographically Isolated students between identifying an issue and obtaining a timely diagnosis. The role of an Educational Psychologist within the Schools of the Air would greatly improve the diagnosis pathway and outcomes for these students.

Most geographically isolated parents and Home Tutors of students with learning difficulties are not trained teachers. Their role is to assist the student with their learning, supporting the School of the Air curriculum. Due to the 'satellite' nature of distance education classrooms, it is greatly difficult for the teachers to get an understanding of a student's capabilities and challenges through an online learning platform.

The key areas that need funding are:

- *Long waiting times for student assessments, due to lack of staffing in the education Department in remote towns of Katherine, Tennant Creek and Alice Springs.*
- *Limited access to online, or face-to-face support and training, for the Home Tutor. Due to waiting times on assessments and lack of skilled staff in Dept of Education who support the "Special Needs Teacher" in a Distance Ed context.*
- *Easier access to Tele-health options for children living in Geographically Isolated areas.*
- *Lack of personnel and financial resources for teachers to be able to conduct Patrols annually or as required to support Home Tutors.*

It is so important that families and Home Tutors can be armed with the right tools to educate students with learning difficulties in Geographically Isolated areas. An ongoing support network, online training and family patrols to remote areas are a lifeline to the student, home tutor and parents.

Tertiary & Training (1 motion)

22. **Motion: ICPA NT State Council**

Carried/Lost

That ICPA NT advocate for the continuation and expansion of the Home Tutor Program through Charles Darwin University.

Explanation:

The Home Tutor Program began in 2024 and was offered through Charles Darwin University to Home Tutors in the Alice Springs/Barkly region. The program was completed by four Home Tutors and three of the students were awarded travel grants through ICPA NT. The six month course covers 8 units to increase the skills and knowledge of home tutors. In order to ensure that NT based families can recruit and retain competent Home Tutors the Home Tutor Program must continue and be offered to Home Tutors across all areas of the Northern Territory.