



# NORTHERN TERRITORY GOVERNMENT MEDIA RELEASE

4 August 2002

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## **DR PETER TOYNE MLA** Minister for Justice and Attorney-General

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### **NT TO LEAD AUSTRALIA IN INDIGENOUS CONSUMER PROTECTION**

The Territory is set to lead all Australian jurisdictions in developing strategies to combat unfair trading practices targeted at Indigenous people.

Minister for Justice and Attorney-General Dr Peter Toyne said it was agreed at the Ministerial Council on Consumer Affairs in Adelaide on Friday that the Northern Territory Department of Justice will lead all jurisdictions on the issue of consumer protection for Indigenous Australians.

“This decision is a positive reinforcement of the work the Department of Justice has been progressing in the area of consumer protection for Indigenous Territorians, particularly the sale of dodgy vehicles by unlicensed traders,” said Dr Toyne.

“I am pleased the Territory will lead consumer protection strategies for Indigenous people as here in the Territory we face particular consumer issues in remote Aboriginal communities that are not experienced to the same extent elsewhere in Australia.”

“Action from this decision will commence this coming week with a meeting of a number of State and Territory fair trading officers in Alice Springs,” said Dr Toyne.

“This meeting will discuss the paper trail unfolding on unlicensed traders selling cars in Territory communities and the cooperation that can occur across states to target the practice.”

“The dodgy vehicles sold in Territory communities often brought in from interstate, so a coordinated approach will greatly enhance efforts to prosecute and stamp out this practice.”

“Further to the meeting in Alice Springs, the interstate officers will have an opportunity to visit the Aboriginal community of Yuendumu. This visit will allow officers to hear first-hand the consumer experiences of Aboriginal people with community stores and practices such as book-up (the holding of pin-numbers and debit cards),” said Dr Toyne.

The working group is expected to report back to the Territory Consumer Affairs Commissioner Richard O’Sullivan by the end of this month.

The Ministerial Council also moved on the issue of scam mail, agreeing on the development of a national strategy to combat this problem that affects consumers across all jurisdictions.

“Territory is currently experiencing a proliferation of Nigerian type scam mail and I welcome a national approach to this problem, a problem that has resulted in many Australian being scammed out of large sums of money,” said Dr Toyne.

The Ministerial Council noted that this was a national issue and urged the Commonwealth to work with Australia Post on intercepting such mail.