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# NORTHERN TERRITORY GOVERNMENT MEDIA RELEASE

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**DR PETER TOYNE MLA**

Attorney-General

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## **REFORMS FOR MOTOR TRADERS ON AGENDA**

Proposed reforms to legislation covering the motor trading industry are up for public discussion with a paper due to be released by the Territory Government tomorrow.

Attorney-General Dr Peter Toyne said the comments are being sought on the paper from industry, stakeholders and the general community on changes to the *Consumer Affairs and Fair Trading Act* aimed at improving regulation and providing more protection for motor traders and consumers.

“The Government is seeking to update the legislation and incorporate industry concerns about regulation so we have an improved and modern operating environment for the motor trading industry.”

“Most significantly the proposed reforms include establishing a co-regulatory model where an Advisory committee would investigate and provide advice to the Minister and the Commissioner for Consumer Affairs on important issues affecting the motor trading industry.”

The discussion paper proposes that the Advisory Committee consist of an independent Chairperson, a consumer based member and one industry based member.

Issues that could be addressed by such a body include providing advice on establishing policies or criteria in areas such as:

- ‘fit and proper to trade tests’ for motor vehicle traders and,
- criteria for determining whether a trader has sufficient financial capacity to operate a trading licence.

Dr Toyne said other proposed reforms include legislating a 2-day cooling-off period for all purchases of vehicles, both new and used, to reduce unfair pressure on consumers.

“A 2 day cooling off period is a significant added protection for consumers and is in response to concerns raised regularly by consumers to the Office of Consumer Affairs.”

“Consumers have reported instances where they have felt pressured or influenced into signing a purchase contract they have later regretted.”

“We recognise that purchasing a vehicle is a sizeable financial commitment so we are aiming to offer the most legislative protection possible for consumers while balancing the interests of business operators,” Dr Toyne said.

The discussion paper will be open for public comment for one month with submissions to close on 10 October 2003. Copies of the paper can be obtained from [www.nt.gov.au](http://www.nt.gov.au) or phone 8999 7466.

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