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MARION SCRYMGOUR MLA

Minister for Family and Community Services

ESANDA SEMINAR TO IMPROVE LENDING TO TERRITORIANS

Family and Community Services Minister Marion Scrymgour today opened a cultural awareness seminar developed by Consumer Affairs and lending company ESANDA to enhance understanding of Territory Indigenous consumers.

The seminar is aimed at improving lending practices and understanding of finance staff and indigenous consumers when entering into vehicle finance contracts.

“Good transport is essential for Territorians living in remote communities, and in most instances they turn to a financier to provide assistance and sufficient cash for the car they want,” Ms Scrymgour said.

“It is important to ensure that Territory consumers are protected and are aware of what they are signing up for as well as ensuring protection for the financier.

“This training will go a long way to ensure a better understanding of Indigenous consumers.”

Ms Scrymgour said the seminar – which is being attended by senior ESANDA management from interstate as well as local employees – was the result of 18 months work between the Northern Territory Office of Consumer Affairs, the Australian Securities and Investments Commission (ASIC) and ESANDA.

“The Northern Territory is already leading the way in developing a national approach to indigenous consumer affairs by establishing a national working party to prepare a five-year Indigenous Consumer Strategy,” Ms Scrymgour said.

“This is a good example of the NT Government’s firm commitment to work closely with business and industry sector to achieve better outcomes for all Territorians.”

Part of the awareness seminar involves a visit to Bathurst Island to see first hand life in a remote community and to gain a better understanding of the conditions faced on a daily basis by Indigenous Territorians.

ESANDA managing director Elizabeth Proust said: “We want to ensure that our staff and dealers provide the best possible service to all our customers in the Northern Territory.

“It is important that our staff and dealers understand local culture so that they can provide the right finance to each customer. Most of the participants who are attending this training live locally and it is essential that they understand the unique characteristics of the Territory and its diverse community.”