



# NORTHERN TERRITORY GOVERNMENT MEDIA RELEASE

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## **DR PETER TOYNE MLA** Minister for Justice

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### **INDIGENOUS LIAISON OFFICER JOINS CONSUMER AFFAIRS**

Consumer and Business Affairs has recruited local Territorian Patrick (Paddy) Stephensen to provide consumer assistance and advice to Indigenous people throughout the Territory.

Dr Toyne said “This reinforces the Martin Government’s commitment to consumer protection for Indigenous people in urban, rural and remote areas of the Territory.”

“It follows on the very successful multi-media education campaign featuring Territory AFL Football legend Michael Long” he said.

Paddy was born in Darwin into the Stephensen/Jeffrey families and comes to us from the Health and Community Services Complaints Commission.

Dr Toyne said “28% of Territorians are Indigenous and are vulnerable to unscrupulous traders especially in the area of car sales by unlicensed salesmen and in the area of ‘book-up’ where stores keep consumer’s debit cards and pin-numbers as security.

Consumer Affairs has had success in reducing the unlicensed car dealing in communities such as Ampilatwatja, Ti-Tree, Hermannsberg, Santa Theresa, Palumpa, Kintore, Mutitjulu, Docker River and Lajamanu”.

He said “Having an Indigenous officer on board, will give Indigenous consumers the confidence to bring issues of concern forward, to ensure that these dodgy activities are fully investigated.”

“Paddy will be working with key stakeholder groups, councils, Aboriginal organisations and will be travelling to communities to talk to those people who have been directly affected or ‘ripped-off’. He will also be providing education throughout the community as a prevention measure, empowering Indigenous people with knowledge of their consumer rights and giving them the confidence to assert themselves”. Dr Toyne said.

Indigenous consumers are encouraged to contact Paddy Stephensen on 8999 1999 for assistance or information on any consumer or trader issue.