



NORTHERN TERRITORY GOVERNMENT MEDIA RELEASE

18 November 2004

DR PETER TOYNE MLA Attorney-General & Minister for Justice

TAKING ACTION, GAINING TRUST.

A significant document aimed at helping protect Indigenous consumers has been launched in the Northern Territory.

The consultation document *Taking Action, Gaining Trust* sets out a framework for a National Indigenous Consumer Strategy.

Northern Territory Attorney-General and Minister for Justice Dr Peter Toyne launched the document in Alice Springs today, urging all those affected and interested to comment on the proposed framework.

“The rip-offs, the unfair trading – it’s all still happening to Indigenous consumers and it should be a concern to not just the victims but to the honest traders and industries out there who work fairly with Indigenous consumers,” Dr Toyne said.

“This document establishes the objectives and priorities for a five year Indigenous Consumer Strategy and outlines issues and proposed action.

“Consultations will occur across Australia to gauge Indigenous community opinion and that of other stakeholders.

“Feedback will be considered and collated, following which the five year strategy will be presented to the Ministerial Council on Consumer Affairs for endorsement and public release.

“The Northern Territory has done a power of work in this area and I’m proud to be launching it on behalf of the ministerial council in the NT.”

The strategy identifies actions to address the disadvantage experienced by Indigenous consumers under eight key priority areas:

- Financial Management and Banking
- Sale of Motor Vehicles
- Trading Practices in remote communities
- Housing
- Arts/Industry

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- Corporate Governance
- Employment of Indigenous Staff in Consumer Affairs and Fair Trading Offices
- Advocacy of Indigenous Consumers' Interests.

The aim is to identify known consumer or competition related problems in the marketplace and propose a range of actions which might solve the problems.

Dr Toyne said Christine Ross, a Territorian based in Darwin, was appointed as the coordinator of the National Indigenous Consumer Strategy earlier this year.

“Christine has been primarily responsible, in consultation with the working party set-up to write the strategy, for the development of the strategy according the Terms of Reference,” he said.

“This is an important document and one which will set the agenda for improving the consumer conditions for Indigenous people. It addresses the need for culturally appropriate action which is a vital element for any such strategy.”

Copies of the strategy can be obtained from consumer affairs agencies across the nation or through the website www.nt.gov.au/justice as of Monday 22 November 2004.

CONTACTS

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