

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

# **COMMISSIONER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS**

28 March 2013

### **DONT BE FOOLED BY TRAVELLING CONMEN THIS DRY SEASON**

As the Dry Season fast approaches, Territory residents are again being warned to be on their guard against travelling con men.

Commissioner of Consumer Affairs Gary Clements said these rip off merchants would again be heading north to escape the southern winter in order to continue their illegitimate practices.

“These are people who knock on your door and offer cheap, ‘today only’ deals on jobs such as bitumen laying, paving, painting, roof repairs and gardening,” Mr Clements said.

Mr Clements said the Northern Territory was part of a national campaign to stop travelling con men ripping off consumers and harming legitimate business. The campaign has been particularly successful but Territorians should not become complacent.

Since the campaign commenced in October 2011, 50 individuals have been prosecuted for 168 offences. About \$450,000 in fines and costs have been imposed and 46 people have left the country as a direct result of the campaign.

“Warn your family, friends and neighbours, especially the elderly and those living in isolated and remote areas, as these groups are often targets for travelling con men,” she said.

Consumer Affairs is asking residents to be wary of people who knock on your door unexpectedly, offer cheap deals for ‘today only’, or use high pressure sales tactics, such as offering to drive you to the bank to get your money.

“I strongly suggest if you need home repairs you should shop around, get several written quotes and only use established local tradespeople who can provide references from previous clients,” Mr Clements said.

To report a suspected travelling con-men, call NT Consumer Affairs on 1800 019 319 or by email [consumer@nt.gov.au](mailto:consumer@nt.gov.au)