NEW LAWS TARGET REMOTE DRUG TRAFFICKING

Tougher drug laws will be introduced aimed at making the Territory’s remote communities safer, Chief Minister Paul Henderson announced today.

Mr Henderson said the laws will make bringing cannabis into remote communities an aggravated trafficking offence.

“Substance abuse in the bush continues to be a major issue – the new laws are about tackling the problem where it begins and cracking down on those who supply drugs,” he said.

“The current sentencing standards for remote trafficking are too low - the maximum penalty for trafficking cannabis into a community will be increased from five to nine years imprisonment.

“The message is simple – if you’re caught bringing dope or dealing dope in your community, you’ll face a severe sentence.

“The effect of drugs in our remote communities can be devastating for everyone and we remain committed to battling the problem and increasing health outcomes for Indigenous Territorians.

“We’ve already committed more than $10 million to tackle alcohol and drug abuse, including a licensing identification program and declaring dry areas across the Territory.

“Territory police are targeting known trafficking hotpots across the Territory and have made significant progress since the Substance Abuse Intelligence Desk was formed in 2006.

“Police will continue to work with members of communities to locate those who supply drugs.

“I look forward to working closely with my Federal colleagues to increase our police capacity to deal with drugs in remote areas, including the provision of more detection dogs.

“We want to make our communities safer and healthier and close the gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Territorians.”

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