MEDIA RELEASE

GOVERNMENT ON AUTO-PILOT

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The Chief Minister’s carriage of the Kenbi Land Trust Bill and his failure to grasp the details of this very important issue are of deep concern and bring into question who is actually running Government in the Northern Territory.

“Yesterday Paul Henderson was twice forced to admit that he’d misled the Territory Parliament, one of the most serious breaches a politician can make,” says Opposition Leader, Terry Mills.

“On the first occasion he tried to blame a public servant, claiming he had been ‘misadvised’. On the second he had nobody to blame but himself.

“Whether both mistakes were a result of incompetence or deceit isn’t clear, but either way they are of great concern.

“The Kenbi Land Trust Bill has been the subject of considerable debate over the past two months and Paul Henderson’s failure to be on top of the details of this legislation is appalling.

“Last week, under questioning from the Member for Fong Lim, the Chief Minister showed he didn’t understand the contents of the In-Principle Agreement and Heads of Agreement, both critical components of the Kenbi Land Trust Bill.

“He was eventually forced into an embarrassing retraction, but then gagged Opposition attempts to debate this blunder.

“But to compound that failure, during Question Time yesterday he denied signing the Kenbi Heads of Agreement and said that he didn’t know who signed the document on behalf of Government.

“Some hours later he was forced to front Parliament and admit he did sign the document after all.

“What these incidents show is that Labor is a Government on auto-pilot; lazy, aloof, out of touch and operating at arm’s length from the decisions that are being made on behalf of Territorians.

“The Kenbi land claim has been bubbling away in the Territory for decades and with a long-sought after resolution within sight, the Chief Minister has been busted dumping responsibility for decision-making onto the bureaucrats.

“To mislead the Parliament once is bad enough. To do it twice in two days is atrocious. By his actions and lack of understanding of the details, the Chief Minister has shown his Labor Government has abandoned Territorians and is now governing only for itself.”

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