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SHADOW MINISTER FOR PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT

MEDIA RELEASE

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LABOR FAILING PUBLIC SERVANTS

A new survey into the Northern Territory public service shows a large number of employees say bullying and harassment is rife within the organisation.

Shadow Minister for Public Employment, John Elferink, says the Northern Territory Public Sector Employee Survey shows that 43% of public servants believe there is bullying and harassment in the workplace and that 22% say they have been bullied or harassed in the past 12 months.

Released today, the survey also shows 43% of public servants believe that leadership shown within the NTPS is not of a high standard.

"This is a serious indictment on the management and leadership shown by the Henderson Government of the public service," Mr Elferink said.

"The leadership vacuum at the top within the Henderson Government appears to be having a direct impact on the morale and performance of the NTPS."

Mr Elferink said aside from the personal cost of bullying to an individual, it's estimated that bullying incidents on average cost $20,000 to an organisation in lost productivity and output.

"This survey indicates the Government isn't doing enough to stamp out bullying within the public service," he said.

"In 2005 the Labor Government released a bullying prevention policy that sheeted responsibility for stamping out bullying onto individual departments and agencies. Given the results of the public sector survey, perhaps it's time Labor adopted a whole-of-Government approach to combating this disturbing issue.

"It's not good enough that ministers release policies as part of a media event – but then do nothing to ensure they're actually implemented.

Mr Elferink said the survey also casts doubts about the internal capacity of the NTPS to deal with employee complaints, with only 42% saying they had confidence in the procedures and process used to resolve grievances and 41% saying they feel confident they won't suffer any negative consequences of making a complaint.

Other key findings include:

- Only 36% of employees believe managers or supervisors deal effectively with employees that perform poorly.
- Only 47% of employees say change is well managed in their workplace.
- 50% said favouritism isn't a factor in employee promotions.

Further comment: John Elferink 0418 406 400