Media Release

Matt Conlan
Minister for Housing

Papunya Handyman hits the ground running

15 August 2014

A new Housing Maintenance Officer based in the remote community of Papunya, also delivering services to the communities of Mt Liebig and Haasts Bluff, is helping to deliver quicker response times for housing repairs and maintenance in Central Australia.

Local Indigenous father of two, Clayton Dixon, is among 31 local handymen recently employed by local Indigenous enterprises in the Central Australian region under the Territory Government’s new $26 million remote public housing repairs and tenancy contracts. 17 of the 31 local handymen are Indigenous Territorians.

“The whole aim of these contracts was to provide more employment opportunities for locals like Clayton in remote communities and I’m pleased to see this is occurring,” said Housing Minister Matt Conlan.

“The new contracts allow local Housing Maintenance Officers to carry out minor repairs like fixing doors and painting which is far more cost effective than the fly-in fly-out scenario that was previously in place.

“For example, Housing Maintenance Officers recently fixed a blocked drain in Mt Liebig, saving $1600 in travel expenses that would have been previously charged.

“Having local handymen like Clayton on the ground also provides a familiar face for local people to report their issues to and is delivering quicker response times as well.”

Employed by Ingkerreke Commercial, 28 year old Clayton has been working as a Housing Maintenance Officer in Papunya and surrounding communities since 7 July and said the job was a dream-come-true.

“I feel very happy and proud with myself and all my family are also very proud of me because I am working and have the job of my dreams,” he said.

“I am still training and enjoy it very much long term I would like to get a trade. I am based at Papunya but I also work in Mt Liebig and Haasts Bluff which is good because I also have family in those communities and I get to see them while fixing things and I can show off a bit. People are
starting to stop me when I’m driving past and telling me my sinks blocked or door won’t shut and I fix it or arrange for it to get fixed and that makes me feel very good and proud.”

Mr Conlan said as well as more jobs for local people, five Indigenous trainees had also been taken on under the new contracts in the Central Australian region.

“Because these new contracts are for a longer period of time of four years it allows the contractors to take on trainees, which will lead to even more local jobs down the track,” he said.

“It’s great to hear in Haasts Bluff for example, a Housing Maintenance trainee has been taken on by Ingerreke Commercial and has commenced his Certificate III in Construction through Charles Darwin University.”

**Photos of Housing Maintenance Officer Clayton Dixon attached.**

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Housing Maintenance Officer Clayton Dixon 1.jpg
Housing Maintenance Officer Clayton Dixon 2.jpg
Housing Maintenance Officer Clayton Dixon 3.jpg
Housing Maintenance Officer Clayton Dixon 4.jpg