ATTORNEY-GENERAL

NORTHERN TERRITORY CRACKDOWN ON UNPAID FINES

01 May 2014

The Northern Territory Government is cracking down on people who refuse to pay their fines by introducing a suite of fine recovery measures.

As of last financial year, there were $43.2 million in unpaid fines with this figure expected to increase to more than $49 million this financial year.

Attorney-General John Elferink said the changes are targeted at people who continue to disregard fines and evade the law by failing to pay up.

"Deterrents must be put in place for serial offenders and it is time for them to realise that there will be consequences for them failing to pay their fines," Mr Elferink said.

"The measures are aimed at those who blatantly disregard their obligation to pay, despite being more than capable to do so.

"This is about a person taking responsibility for their actions and being held accountable for their wrong doings which may include committing traffic infringements and receiving parking fines.

"It is simple; people who do the right thing will have nothing to worry about, however those who commit an offence and refuse to pay will face penalties."

The Northern Territory Government will roll out several new measures over the next 12 months including:

• Name and shame the Northern Territory’s top fine defaulters on a website
• Wheel clamping of motor vehicles owned or used by people who continue to evade the FRU or drive unlicensed or unregistered
• Community Work Orders for those who owe in excess of around $10,000 and do not enter into arrangements with the FRU to pay their fines. A person who fails to comply with a Community Work Order will be sent to prison
• Harsher penalties for people who drive after having their licence suspended or disqualified for failing to pay fines. A maximum penalty of six months imprisonment will apply for a first offence and two years imprisonment for a subsequent offence
• Refusing to allow fine defaulters to exercise certain functions including registering a vehicle or and receive number plates

From today, any person who is unable to pay their fines, or does not agree to a payment management plan, can be issued with a Community Work Order by the FRU.

www.nt.gov.au
GPO Box 3146, Darwin NT 0801
“The FRU deals daily with people who can afford to pay yet constantly refuse,” Mr Elferink said.

“The community expects that those who commit an offence are punished and are not simply let off due to their complete disregard for the justice system.

“Fines can be repaid through flexible and reasonable payment plans – so there is no excuse for not paying up.”

The FRU also collects outstanding fines on behalf of local councils, including the City of Darwin and Alice Springs Town Council.

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