Boot camps to make lasting changes to the lives of troubled youths

20 June 2014

The Northern Territory Government’s first ever Early Intervention Youth Boot Camp has been held in Central Australia with seven male youths completing the 10 day course.

The program is aimed at youths who have been identified as at risk of entering into the justice system.

Minister for Correctional Services John Elferink said this could be the intervention that troubled youths need to turn their lives around.

“Ten males aged 12-14 were the first to be identified for the first boot camp,” Mr Elferink said.

“Local organisation, Tangentyere Council, was one of two successful providers to be chosen to deliver the camps, and was the first to hold a camp for at risk youths.

“The youths have spent the past 10 days in a remote wilderness environment around 300km south of Alice Springs.

“They are put into both mentally and physically challenging situations in an attempt to break the cycle of negative behaviour, which, if not addressed, could see the youths engage in destructive behaviour.

“The individuals must learn to make positive decisions and take responsibility for their actions and behaviour and be encouraged to engage in learning and education.”

A mother of a 13 year old male who participated in the program said she hoped the boot camp would change her son’s behaviour before it was too late.

“I want to remove the concerning behaviour I have seen from my son over the past 12 months, which includes bullying and a disregard for following the rules,” she said.

“The youth boot camp is the circuit breaker that my son needs to correct his behaviour and put control and direction into his life.”

The next two youth boot camp will be held next month by Tangentyere Council, and the second successful provider, Operation Flinders, who will have their first intake of youths.
Operation Flinders will conduct camps from the Flinders Rangers in South Australia until they set up a permanent facility in the Northern Territory next year.

It is expected that 80 youths will participate in an Early Intervention Boot Camp this year, with $2.2 million allocated in Budget 2014 for the rollout of the camps.

Mr Elferink said this is yet another election commitment the Country Liberals Government has delivered, proving that we are dedicated to being tough on law and order.

**Media Contact:** Danielle Lede 0404 515 414