A claim that the CLP has dumped women is rubbish and we're the living proof the CLP's two women candidates endorsed in Darwin at the weekend's CLP annual conference said today.

“And there are another eight women preselected for the CLP to contest the next Territory and Federal elections as further living proof. The CLP has preselected 10 women...there's the proof it does not discriminate against women,” Debra Aloisi and Anna Machado said today.

Debra (Daly) and Anna (Stuart) were endorsed along with Keith Phasey (Goyder) and sitting members Terry Mills, Sue Carter, Denis Burke, Stephen Dunham, Jodeen Carney, Fay Miller, Dr Richard Lim, and John Elferink to complete the CLP’s full team to contest the next Territory election.

Both Debra and Anna bring strong links to the bush and the seats that are contesting.

Debra came to the Territory (Tennant Creek) as a two week old baby in 1958 and has been here ever since. She moved to Katherine in 1984 and was a founding member of the Victoria River branch.

Debra is currently employed by Binjari Community Government Council and believes her well established ties with our Aboriginal community and pastoralists will hold her in good stead.

“It enables me to appreciate and understand the problems that confront the people in the Daly and continue the good work of Tim Baldwin who has been a magnificent representative and advocate for the Daly,” Debra said.

“I'm no different to any other person who has spent their life living in Territory bush and rural centres.

“I want stronger communities and better infrastructure development and service delivery. For three years the Martin Labor Government has all but ignored bush roads and with an election looming is only now making noises about our roads.
“I was particularly angry to see the Government walk away from a commitment it gave to spend more on bush roads in the last Territory Budget. But I was even angrier when I heard Labor Minister Chris Burns scoff at calls for major capital works funding to upgrade the Daly River to Wadeye road following this year's extended Wet Season.

“It's time the Martin Government initiated a study to locate the best site for a major bridge over the Daly River and an appraisal of costs to either substantially lift the Daly causeway or construct a higher level, single lane bridge over the river.

“The lack of any major works over the last few years on a road that services a town (Port Keats) with a population fast rising to that of Tennant Creek and importantly, the proposed Black Tip to Gove gas pipeline are just two reasons the Government needs to act.

“This road serves as the only major road link to approximately 4000 people in the region.

“There is a need for substantial upgrade works to lift the road condition to a standard that is expected by others in regional Australia.

Additional to the poor condition of the road that services the four major communities of Nauiyu, Peppimenarti, Nganmarriyanga and Wadeye, also many outstations and commercial enterprises in the region, is the proposal by Woodside to utilise this road for the construction of their proposed gas pipeline.

“If a decision is made this year to proceed with the pipeline to Gove, construction could be as early as the 2005 Dry Season, but the road is in no condition to support the hundreds upon hundreds of truck movements that will be required.

“Already the road conditions between Nganmarriyanga (Palumpa) and Wadeye has caused great hardship to the Palumpa Store operators who have to consistently transport all the community needs over this stretch of road after delivery by barge at Wadeye.

“The businesses, outstations and communities on the western side of the Daly River were cut for six months because of the wet. It's now time to work on normalising this situation by not only upgrading the road to a good standard in the next financial year (2004/05) but also starting the work on suitable and modern access across the Daly.

“Government must commit to a major upgrade of this important road link and in doing so, coordinate their efforts with Woodside to upgrade the Daly to Wadeye road to an acceptable standard. A standard that would be acceptable to any other region of 4000 people.”

Ends