Public Employment Minister Dr Chris Burns has congratulated 32 Indigenous public sector employees after they graduated from the Government’s leadership development program with a Diploma of Business (Frontline Management).

“The leadership programs offer Indigenous men and women the opportunity to gain the knowledge and skills required for career development,” Dr Burns said.

“The programs are part of the Government’s efforts to redress the lack of representation of Indigenous men and women in senior management positions in the Northern Territory Public Sector.

“The programs also aim to improve the use of government services by having a workforce profile that more closely matches the population profile of the Northern Territory.”

Dr Burns said the Government is committed to improving Indigenous employment rates in the Northern Territory Public Sector.

“There has been a 55 per cent increase in Indigenous employment in the NTPS since the Indigenous Employment and Career Development Strategy 2002—2006 was implemented,” Dr Burns said.

A pilot Kigaruk Indigenous Men’s Leadership Development Program was developed in 2003 following consultation with Indigenous men who identified the need for an accredited course to be run in a culturally appropriate learning environment. All 25 Indigenous male participants graduated in 2004.

A second Kigaruk program and a pilot Lookrukin Indigenous Women’s Leadership Development Program recently concluded, with 32 participants receiving their diplomas at Charles Darwin University on Friday 26 May. A further 14 participants are due to graduate in October 2006.

Commissioner for Public Employment, John Kirwan, also congratulated the 32 Kigaruk and Lookrukin graduands on their academic achievements.

“These programs continue to produce positive outcomes for the NTPS, and I congratulate each participant for their commitment to the program and for making it through to the end,” Mr Kirwan said.

“To date, more than 50 Indigenous employees have successfully gained a qualification to enhance their careers and leadership capabilities. Some will go on to study for a Bachelor of Business degree at CDU. Support from the agencies has been outstanding; their encouragement has made all the difference.”

Contact: James Hook 0401 119 592