"Loans scheme a risk"

CLP to scrap home plan

BY ALYSSA BETTS

A SCHEME that gives Territorians deposit-free home loans without lenders’ insurance will be scrapped if the CLP wins the election.

Leader Terry Mills said Labor’s My New Home policy — which gives Territorians access to loans up to $750,000 — was too risky for individuals, the government and taxpayers.

“By ALISON BEVEGE

HARRY Maschke says small businesses are usually ignored at election time.

“IT’S YOUR ELECTION

Issues not on pollie radars”

HARRY Maschke says small businesses are hamstrung by safety bureaucracy and are ignored at election time.

Mr Maschke, 80, built up a staff of 20 over many years at his Darwin-based business Action Sheetmetal.

But eight months ago he had to hire a full-time occupational health and safety (OH&S) administrator for $40,000 a year to deal with the bureaucracy.

“We hired him to make sure everything is recorded,” he said.

“OH&S creates a great hamper to productivity. All politicians talk about law and order, but we’re concerned about OH&S,” he said.

Where does small business benefit from either of the parties?”, Mr Maschke said.

Mr Maschke said he wasn’t objecting to safety, just the waste of time spent recording everything and doing unnecessary site induction courses.

“Every person has to do an onsite two-hour induction course,” he said. “If there’s four or five people there that’s 10 hours lost.”

"For every job wherever you go you have to do an induction course — even if it’s in the same building, you still have to do it.”

Mr Maschke said he could understand the point of doing the induction if you went from a building site to a chemical plant, for example, “but from one building site to another?”

He also said all workers had to get a white card, which they could only get by doing an eight-hour course on industry safety, or they weren’t allowed on sites.

Action Sheetmetal’s Harry Maschke says small business is usually ignored at election time.

"I had a look around and NAC was the best. Best Quality, Best Product and Best Value."

Jim Buckley

— 13 Mander Rd, Finslers.

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"This has to be a broken system because of the lack of capacity in the Northern Territory."

A NEW cardiac unit was promised by the CLP yesterday to cut the flow of patients heading south for angioplasty procedures.

Leader Terry Mills yesterday promised $12 million to set up the unit, which would also get $1.5 million for yearly operational costs.

He said such a service had long been needed in the Northern Territiory, pointing to the findings from the 2006 Frommer Review into NT cardiac services.

“According to the 2006 figures approximately 150 patients were flown south to undertake coronary angioplasty surgery,” Mr Mills said.

“In the same year it is anticipated there were up to 290 patients who did not undergo this important procedure because of the lack of capacity in the Northern Territory.”

"Fishos fear new closures"

COMMERCIAL fishos have hung their hopes at election rumours of more barramundi fishing closures.

NT Seafood Council chief executive Katherine Sarneckis said the potential closures could affect Chambers and Finke bays.

NT Fisheries Minister Kon Vatskalis said in June that the NT Government would buy back more commercial barramundi licenses “voluntarily”, including on key creeks in the two bays.

Ms Sarneckis said the fishery was reliant on its fishing grounds to keep up with demand for local wild-caught seafood. "Closures to Chambers and Finke Bay will immediately reduce the amount of fresh wild-caught barramundi available," he said.

WHEN the CLP and Labor produced the exact same policy yesterday, it was like two women turning up in the exact same dress at Ladies Day.

There was a bit of awkwardness, a few red faces and poorly concealed happiness.

Both parties announced within about an hour of each other that the value of the Back to School voucher scheme would be doubled — from $75 to $150.

Neither party was willing to whack on an extra 50c just to get that crucial nose out in front.

Leader Paul Henderson said the Christmas period was a drag on families’ pockets.

“To get that extra help to get your kids to school at the start of the new year ... has been very well received,” he said.

CLP leader Terry Mills said his party would double the amount because of cost of living pressures.

There are so many extra costs being placed upon families — particularly the payment of rents and mortgages,” Mr Mills said.

Labor had two other announcements.

It promises to have a miniature version of the Building the Education Revolution — committing $92 million worth of upgrades to schools.

The cash would be shared between every school in the NT. Mr Henderson said, with funds between $100,000 and $300,000 per school.

But Darwin’s Milner Primary — which sits in a seat Labor needs to win — is getting up to 10 times more than other schools.

Mr Henderson announced it would get $1 million out of the $2 million because it was an electorate that voted for Labor in the 1960s. Labor also revealed plans to introduce a “Life Skills” program for Year 9 students — focusing on practical skills.

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