

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY**WRITTEN QUESTION**

Mr Wood

to Department of Health & Community Services

‘A New Start Towards Independence’ – Breakdown of Vehicle

1. Why was ANSTI (A New Start Towards Independence) left struggling recently to meet the needs of itinerant groups after its 12 year old vehicle had broken down?
2. Why was this organisation unable to obtain help with a short term loan of a bus, despite appealing to four Ministers of the Northern Territory Government for help?

ANSWER

ANSTI is funded by the Department of Health and Community Services to provide an accommodation and support service for single men who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. ANSTI has a good record in assisting many of their clients to achieve good outcomes in employment and rehabilitation. ANSTI is currently participating with other Government and non-Government service providers in the Itinerants Project being co-ordinated by the Department of Community Development, Sport and Cultural Affairs.

From 1 July 2002 responsibility for meeting the costs associated with the gifting and loan vehicle transferred from the Department of Corporate and Information Services to sponsoring Government agencies. However, in late 2002 a new process for approving the gifting of vehicles was introduced when Community Services Obligations were reinstated. As a result of these policy changes, a sponsoring Government agency is responsible for assessing the request for the gift. The final decision is made by the Treasurer.

In September 2002, ANSTI requested a replacement vehicle when their previously gifted 12-seater bus was deemed beyond repair. On 21 November 2002 the Department of the Chief Minister loaned ANSTI a 22-seater bus pending a final decision about the gifting of a vehicle.

Under the new process the Department of Health and Community Services assessed and strongly supported ANSTI's request for a replacement vehicle. Funding for the 2002/2003 financial period was fully expended, therefore, Treasury is preparing a request for gifting of a vehicle under the 2003/04 budget if approved.