

MEDIA RELEASE

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For immediate circulation

Country Liberal Government will strengthen commitment to ‘Buy Local’

A new Country Liberal Government will make it a top priority to ensure local businesses are able to tender for and win government construction, procurement and service contracts by strengthening the Government’s ‘Buy Local’ policy, Opposition Leader Lia Finocchiaro said today.

“A genuine Territory Government should be committed to using services and products sold by local Territory businesses to support our local economy where it can. That is why we will strengthen the power of the Buy Local policy,” Mrs Finocchiaro said.

A CLP Government will improve the ‘Buy Local’ policy by:

- Increasing the power of the Buy Local Advocate to influence changes in government procurement policy by creating the independent statutory office of the Buy Local Advocate, giving teeth the role.
- Legislating the power of the Buy Local Advocate to require the responsible Minister to either: (a) accept recommendations made by the Advocate; or (b) table a response to recommendations made by the Advocate in Parliament within three sitting days of receiving the report explaining why recommendations will not be accepted.
- Standardising the criteria for determining ‘local content’ to provide a more objective framework across government procurement activities while retaining the 30 per cent weighting towards local content.
- Reinstating the Local Benefit Advisory Panel to review tenders of greater than \$5 million and advise the Buy Local Advocate of any irregularities or matters that should be investigated in order to ensure that local content requirements are being met and that tender processes are transparent, fair and accountable for all stakeholders.
- Retain the current Procurement Review Board to serve as the primary policy development body and appeals panel.

The previous CLP Government introduced the Buy Local Plan in 2015, including the creation of the Local Benefit Advisory Panel (LBAP), made up of 20 independent stakeholder representatives from across industries and geographical locations in the Territory. It was tasked with reviewing all tenders with a value of \$5 million or more to ensure compliance with local content and local benefit requirements.

Leader of the Opposition
LIA FINOCCHIARO MLA

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The Gunner Government disbanded the LBAP in 2017, replacing it with the Procurement Review Board (PRB). Unlike the LBAP, half of the 10 members of the PRB are government representatives. The PRB reform included the creation of the Buy Local Industry Advocate position, intended to be an independent link between local business and the Territory Government. **A new CLP Government will strengthen it by making it a statutory office.**

“The Territory Government should be geared as much as possible towards using local products and services and supporting Territory businesses. Strengthening the Buy Local policy will make sure government spending is invested in local businesses, resulting in more benefits for the Territory,” Mrs Finocchiaro concluded.

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