



**PETER STYLES** MLA | Member for **SANDERSON**

MINISTER FOR CORPORATE AND INFORMATION SERVICES

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

### **CLP Govt backs local technology to provide critical mobile access**

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The Country Liberals Government has thrown its support behind a sophisticated low tech solution developed by Central Australia's Centre for Appropriate Technology (CAT) to extend critical mobile phone coverage in remote areas.

The mobile signal amplifiers, or hotspots, extend the range of mobile services to approximately 30km.

"This is about twice the existing useable hand held mobile coverage at a fraction of the cost of traditional mobile services," Minister for Corporate and Information Services Peter Styles said today.

"The user places a mobile phone in a fixed cradle which receives the concentrated mobile radio signal allowing for a normal conversation, either through an ear phone or on a speaker.

"The Northern Territory Government will be supporting this local initiative by providing \$360,000 funding over four years to implement 22 mobile hotspots in the Central Australia region.

"At this stage the proposal will be confined to Central Australia as CAT is yet to obtain an engineering certificate for the mobile hotspots in cyclone rated areas.

"The mobile hotspots are being manufactured by CAT's Aboriginal workforce which is welcomed by the Territory Government."

The mobile hotspot is a 1.2m diameter parabolic dish antenna on a post, a base and a pedestal. It uses no electronics, requires no power and has minimal maintenance and associated costs.

Centre for Appropriate Technology manager Metta Young said CAT has installed two mobile hotspots near Hermannsburg to service the road to Finke Gorge National Park.

"These pilot hotspots are operating successfully," she said. "Our technology provides critical mobile access where previously there was none.

"Everything is fabricated and assembled in the CAT Enterprise workshop by our Aboriginal staff. In addition the Aboriginal employees have constructed a purpose built trailer to use for site surveys, testing the signal of the hotspot in the identified rollout locations and ensuring site selection optimizes the signal.

"They will be assisting our telecommunications engineer in the site surveys and also undertaking the installation and ongoing maintenance of the hotspots across central Australia."

CAT is an Aboriginal owned not for profit technology innovation company working across remote Australia.

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