



YOUR VOICE FOR NT PUBLIC EDUCATION

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **Schools Urgently Need School Based Constables Returned**

Tabby Fudge, President of the NT Council of Government School Organisations (NT COGSO), explains the important history of our School Based Constables, “In the early 1980's the Northern Territory introduced a School Based Constable Program which was so highly regarded within Australia and overseas, it was replicated throughout Australia and adopted overseas, notably in New Zealand.”

“The entire concept revolved around proactive policing, rather than the financially and socially expensive traditional model of punitive policing. The program was incredibly beneficial to our children and consequently to the greater community.”

“A school-based drug use prevention program was taught by police officers in school with Drug Abuse Resistance Education (DARE) program which mapped to the Health and Physical Education curriculum is sorely missed by schools. Other programs such as ‘Stranger Danger’, ‘Safety House’, ‘Neighbourhood Watch’ and ‘School Watch’ remain very relevant to our children today.”

“School Based Constables were trusted adults, advisers and confidants of our children. We were once leading the way in crime prevention and positive relationship building between the community and our police.”

“Sadly, successive Northern Territory Governments have allowed this program to diminish to the point where we see a reversal in the fantastic outcomes this program was achieving. We are experiencing escalating bad behaviour in our schools and in our communities.”

“School communities across the Northern Territory both at secondary and primary level, are reporting undesirable behaviours escalating as a direct result of the winding down of this program.”

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**NT COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENT SCHOOL ORGANISATIONS**

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“School communities have instructed the Northern Territory Council of Government Schools Organisation (NTCOGSO) to lobby all relevant Government Ministers and Departments to reinstate the School Based Constable Program.”

“I am pleased to advise that the Honourable Minister for Education Eva Lawler, as well as CEO Department of Education, Vicki Baylis both support our request for the School Based Constable program to be fully reinstated.”

“Police resourcing sits with Chief Minister, Minister for Police Michael Gunner and on behalf of schools we requested a meeting in September 2017. This has now been confirmed for April 12.”

“It is timely that the Royal Commission in to the Detention of Youth in the Northern Territory hands down Recommendation 25.1 which specifically notes that a "*specialist highly trained Youth Division similar to New Zealand Police Youth Aid be established*" and that the "*position of Aboriginal Community Police Officers be expanded and include the position of Youth Diversion Officers.*"

“If this Government is truly putting children at the fore of decision making, I feel confident our meeting with the Chief Minister on April 12 will result in an announcement that the School Based Constable Program will not only be reinstated, but expanded to encompass all 5 points of the Royal Commission's Recommendation 25.1”

“An ounce of prevention, is worth a pound of cure.”

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The Council of Government School Organisations represents 19,000 Northern Territory families, their 34,000 children and our 154 government schools which support them.

### CONTACTS

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15 March 2018

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