



MINISTER FOR INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS

Reference: C15/65483

The Hon Adam Giles MLA
Chief Minister of the Northern Territory
GPO Box 3146
DARWIN NT 0801


Dear Chief Minister

Thank you for your letter of 30 June 2015 in response to my concerns about support for victims and sentencing in relation to violent crimes in the Northern Territory.

I appreciate your advice about your Government's current reviews of legislation and policy relating to domestic and family violence. I am glad to hear that this will include consideration of the specific issues I raised in my earlier correspondence.

The law must provide an effective deterrent to violent crime. People who commit violence must be appropriately sanctioned. Perpetrators of violence, particularly domestic and family violence and sexual assault, must be given sentences which reflect the severity and impact of their crimes. This is critical to ensuring the impact of violence is not minimised, especially violence within the family home.

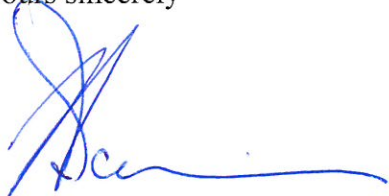
We need to find ways to better support victims and address the range of issues that might lead victims to not report abuse to police or to choose not to actively participate in prosecutions. Victims need to be confident that when they report violence, they will be safe and the perpetrator will be brought to account.

Ensuring the legal system provides an effective deterrent to violence and that victims are safe and feel able to assist in bringing perpetrators to account will go some way to stopping the normalisation of violence we see in many Indigenous communities. Education about the impacts of violence as well as activities to prevent people from offending are also key to challenging entrenched social norms within which violence is seen as a part of everyday life.

I urge you to consider these issues as part of your Government's review of the NT *Domestic and Family Violence Act* and policy.

I am forwarding this letter to the NT Department of Attorney-General and Justice for inclusion as a submission in the review of the NT *Domestic and Family Violence Act*.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Nigel Scullion', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

NIGEL SCULLION

28 / 7 / 2015