

Penalty amnesty for developers expires 30 June 2006

Developers are being given a second chance to notify NT Build and pay the construction levy or face serious penalties, warns the NT Build Board.

Thirty developers have already notified NT Build and the levies received will see the majority of private sector Territory construction workers paid for long service leave for the first time in the NT. Many other developers are yet to notify NT Build of their projects and could face fines or even worksite shut downs.

NT Build registrar Theo Tsikouris said many small businesses may not realise they are covered by the new levy. "A developer is not just classified as a big multi-national company or someone doing a big multi-story apartment building or refinery," Mr Tsikouris said. "A developer can also be a small family business building a duplex or a large industrial shed."

The NT Build Board, which oversees the portable long service leave legislation, has declared an amnesty to allow developers to notify NT Build of their projects and pay the levy without incurring extra interest penalties.

The 0.5 percent levy was introduced on July 1 last year, as part of a package of reforms to improve the Territory's construction industry and attract more workers to the NT. Under the *Construction Industry Long Service Leave and Benefits Act*, The money raised through the levy is held and invested by NT Build for the payment of workers long service leave.

Have you started a construction or maintenance project anywhere in the Northern Territory after **1 July 2005** (whether completed or not) that:

- cost more than \$200,000 (including GST)
- was other than a single detached dwelling?

If so, the compulsory levy applies. The current levy rate is calculated at 0.5% of the total cost of construction.

Mr Tsikouris said almost 3500 construction workers and 200 employers had already registered with the scheme, while 30 developers had already notified NT Build of their projects.

Pay your levy before **30 June 2006** and avoid an extra interest penalty.

After the amnesty, interest will be charged and fines could be applicable.

Under the legislation the NT Build Board could charge approximately 7.75 percent interest on late payments, and developers could face fines of between \$11,000 and \$55,000.

The Act also provides NT Build with the power to issue a stop work order, if necessary, on a project until the levy has been paid.

Mr Tsikouris urged developers who need to pay the levy to do the "right thing" and notify NT Build of their projects and levy amount before the amnesty ended on June 30. "If a developer doesn't pay the levy on an applicable project, we will be monitoring building sites and planning notices and we will catch up with them."

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