

Peppered Black

Des Rogers is the type of person who makes things happen. He has never seen himself in a passive role, rather, he sees himself working steadily towards his goals and ultimately his rewards.

Former owner of Red Centre Produce, over the years Des Rogers has employed 168 Indigenous staff without relying on any Government assistance. His passion for helping his people find a footing in the modern world and his drive are no doubt an inspiration.

Des Rogers is currently managing his new business Peppered Black Security and said it's up to us to use our initiative and skills to achieve our goals.

"The issue of antisocial behaviour in Alice Springs needs a concentrated strategy and I believe Indigenous people can be more effective in addressing this issue. Peppered Black Security is prepared to play a major role."

"The hours are long but the rewards are starting to appear," said Mr Rogers.

With a pool of 12 qualified Indigenous security staff and quite a number of people in training, the employment opportunities for local Indigenous people are starting to open up.

"We have recently secured the contract for the Yeperenye Shopping Centre and three qualified Indigenous staff will be working around the clock," said Mr Rogers.

When asked what advice he would give to someone thinking of starting their own business, Mr Rogers said research is the key.

"I spent 20 months researching and developing this business.

"Owning your own business means living by your own decisions – good or bad. Don't be afraid to ask for support if you need it and don't lose sight of your dream."

Along with the Security company, Peppered Black incorporates a number of enterprises such as the Indigenous Café, Hospitality



Des Rogers

Academy, Dance Troupe, Unearthing Indigenous Cuisine and Peppered Black Art.

The whole concept is to get Indigenous people involved and to provide them with practical experience running their own enterprise. Eventually Mr Rogers aims to have Indigenous people experienced and confident enough to own their own companies.

If you are thinking of starting your own business, your local Territory Business Centre can help, pop in for a chat or visit the website at www.nt.gov.au/business.

Desert Knowledge Symposium - a Smorgasbord of Ideas

Some of the best minds, community entrepreneurs and business brains from the world's deserts gathered at the Alice Springs Convention Centre on November 1-3 to share success stories, new insights and practical lessons.

The *Desert Knowledge Symposium: Global Desert Opportunities* was a rare opportunity to sample the expertise and creativity of desert regions, home to one sixth of humanity.

The event explored and showcased enterprises, innovations, business opportunities, science and technology solutions, culture and collective knowledge thriving in the global desert.

Over 60 national and international presenters, and an audience of over 300 delegates from private and government sectors nationally and internationally, discussed how best to do business in the desert and how to manage and create sustainable livelihoods from natural and cultural desert resources.

