



NT hostel sparks fiery racism row

By **BEN LANGFORD**

A HOSTEL is at the centre of a racism storm after a group of young leaders said they were kicked out of their rooms because they are black.

Bethany Langdon (*pictured*) said she and her group of women from Yuendumu will make an official discrimination complaint after they were told to leave the Haven hostel in Alice Springs.

Ms Langdon, 19, said the manager told the group it was because they were Aboriginal and they might scare other guests. The group was staying in Alice Springs at the weekend for a Royal Life Saving water safety course when they were told to leave.

Ms Langdon said they had checked in and were deciding what to do for dinner when they were told to leave.

"The manager said, 'You can't stay here because you're Aboriginal, be-



cause you have Aboriginal people staying here with you," she said.

"It's disgusting."

The 16 women, some of them mothers, were preparing for the opening of a pool at Yuendumu, about 260km northwest of Alice. Ms Langdon said this was not an isolated incident.

"Even if you're well dressed and you walk into a casino or nightclub they'll

say, 'Sorry, you're not welcome here, you're not well-fitted,'" she said.

NT Anti-Discrimination Commissioner Tony Fitzgerald said he had heard of several similar cases.

"There seems to be an idea in the hospitality industry that seems to think it's okay to treat people other than on their merits and make assumptions based on people's race about their behaviour," he said.

"It's unfair and it's disgraceful."

Managers at the Haven hostel did not respond to *Northern Territory News* requests for comment yesterday.

In a statement, the hostel's management said: "Haven Hostel is a backpacker hostel catering for international backpacking tourists, which this group was not ... so alternative accommodation was sought and arranged with their consultation on their behalf.

"We also offered to pay for that night's accommodation."



NO-GO AREA: Bethany Langdon (below) and her friends were not welcome at the Haven Resort