Terry Mills
Leader of the Opposition
Media Release

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NO TIME FOR HOLIDAYS

The Territory Opposition is demanding that the Chief Minister, Paul Henderson, cuts short his holidays and takes charge of the Territory Government’s response to the legal shut down of McArthur River Mine.

“The Chief Minister needs to get on the first plane to Canberra and impress upon the Federal Environment Minister, Peter Garrett, the urgency of the situation for the Territory,” says Terry Mills, Leader of the Opposition.

“Should the Federal Environment Minister dither regarding fixing this bureaucratic bungle the future of the McArthur River Mine and hundreds of jobs will be at risk.

“I’m astonished that the Acting Minister for Mines, Chris Burns, has issued a statement claiming – It is now a matter for MRM and the Federal Government to determine the next course of action.

“MRM is far too important for the Territory economy for the Territory Government to sit idle whilst its future is determined.

“Hundreds of direct jobs and tens of millions of dollars invested in the local economy will be lost if the mine closes. Just last year MRM invested $110 million in the upgrade of the mine.

“I’m also concerned that divisions within Territory Labor are at the heart of minister Burn’s hand washing exercise.

“It’s notable that in the absence of both the Chief minister and the Minister for Mines and Energy the Government’s Deputy Leader Marion Scrymgour has failed to take responsibility for the matter.

“It needs to be remembered that Minister Scrymgour ducked voting on the legislation that overcame the Territory Government’s own bureaucratic bungle.

“Three other current Ministers, Alison Anderson, Malarndirri McCarthy and Karl Hampton, crossed the floor to vote against the legislation when they were back benchers.

“With the resources sector in freefall now is not the time to lose another mining operation.

“For the Territory Government to look ambivalent about the future of the McArthur River mine sends the worst possible message to companies considering investing in the Territory’s resources sector.”

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