MINISTER THERE’S A HOUSING CRISIS – ACT ON IT

The Territory Opposition is calling for an accelerated renovation, rebuilding and tenant replacement program in vacant Territory Housing properties.

The Leader of the Opposition made the call whilst standing in front of a Territory Housing property in Wagaman that has been vacant for at least 6 months.

“Too many Territory Housing properties are sitting vacant for far too long when we have a housing crisis in the Territory,” says Terry Mills, Leader of the Opposition.

“There’s no excuse for this property to sitting idle for 6 months or more in the middle of a housing crisis.

“If the property is in need of repairs it should be repaired, if it has been condemned it should be bulldozed and a new house constructed on the site.

“Territory housing properties should never have been allowed to sit idle for 6 months or more when we have families living in tents and cars because of a lack of public housing.

“The 2007/08 Annual Report of the Department of Local Government, Housing and Sport shows the average number of days it takes to occupy vacant public housing stock is 65 days when its own target is 45.

“Given the crisis in housing in Darwin the Housing Minister should be aiming to reduce that waiting time to well below 45 days.

“The Annual Report also shows that Territory Housing has a 4% vacancy rate in its public housing stock whilst the private rental market has a vacancy of just 1%.
“Given that woeful planning and a sustained sell-off of public housing lies at the heart of the housing crisis the business as usual approach from the Henderson Government is disgraceful.

“The Country Liberals have already put forward a plan to create desperately needed transitional housing before the wet season.

“Improving the usage of existing public housing stock is another sensible approach to easing the acute shortage of housing in the Territory.

“Unfortunately once again the Henderson Government has been caught flat footed in dealing with the housing crisis.”

Further comment: Terry Mills  0418 833 594