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Building Certification Assistance for Regions

Planning Minister Delia Lawrie today released the result of the audit into Tennant Creek building certifications - and announced measures to improve certification rates in the Territory’s regional areas.

Ms Lawrie said the first key measure would be a rapid, independent assessment of Territory certification requirements and recommendations to further streamline regional certification processes.

This work will be undertaken by a respected team of Phil Breeze, a senior officer in the Queensland Master Builders’ Association, and Lance Glare, Manager of Building Standards of Building Codes Queensland.

“Mr Breeze and Mr Glare will provide recommendations to improve our certification and investigation processes from both builders’ and regulators’ perspectives,” Ms Lawrie said.

The DPI audit of construction over the past five years shows that 43 non-government and 19 government buildings in Tennant Creek have outstanding certification requirements.

Of the 43 non-government assets, 7 are residential, 22 are sheds and 14 are commercial buildings (table attached).

“These figures demonstrate there is a need to improve availability and access to building certification services in many of our regional areas.

“That is why I am declaring a 24 month building certification moratorium across the Territory’s regional towns, including Tennant Creek and Katherine.”

During this period Government will supplement the availability of certification services and assist owners to access appropriate certification services to achieve certification of existing building works.

For non-government commercial assets, the review team will work with DPI to establish a process for buildings to meet a substantial, safe level of compliance without owners incurring any unnecessary costs.

For Government assets, there will be an immediate pursuit of any outstanding certifications for buildings owned or leased by Northern Territory Government agencies.
Other measures the Northern Territory Government will introduce to make it easy and simple to meet all certification requirements include:

- Engagement of a private certifier through a contract of services arrangement during the moratorium to provide building certification services in regional areas;
- Launch of a community education and awareness program on where to source private certifiers; and
- Negotiation with the private certification industry to subsidise a building certifier cadet program.

“We recognise there has been a failure of the market to provide these necessary services in our regional centres,” Ms Lawrie said.

“The Northern Territory Government will address this market failure by ensuring certification services are available in regional areas for engagement by industry and the community.”

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