Media Release

JENNY MACKLIN MP
Minister for Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs

PAUL HENDERSON
NT Chief Minister

KARL HAMPTON
NT Minister for Central Australia

WARREN SNOWDON MP
Minister for Indigenous Health and Member for Lingiari

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Supporting the community in Alice Springs

The Federal Minister for Indigenous Affairs, Jenny Macklin, and the Northern Territory Chief Minister, Paul Henderson, today announced a $4.1 million package of initiatives to support the community of Alice Springs as part of the Alice Springs Transformation Plan.

The package includes funding for extra street lighting in problem areas, as well as more support for young people and families.

“The safety and security of children and families continues to be our primary focus in Alice Springs,” Ms Macklin said.

“We are funding a $1.35 million expansion and transformation of the Gap Youth Centre, so that it becomes a Community and Youth Centre, providing extra services to a wider section of the community.

“During the day, the Centre will connect parents and young children with parenting, education and early childhood programs, as well as access and referrals to family support programs.

“During the evening, youth activities including dance, music and sports programs will be expanded, and links to organised sport will be developed.”

The Chief Minister Paul Henderson said the range of measures being put in place would help to tackle some of the complex social issues in Alice Springs.

“The Alice Springs Town Council will receive $340,000 funding for additional lighting, which will be installed in a number of problem areas in the town, including the laneways behind the Melankassite and Bojangles nightclub which are known hotspots as well as the area behind the toilets at Flynn Park.

“This will help to reduce crime and tackle the issues of anti-social behaviour and drinking in the area.”

Minister for Central Australia Karl Hampton said extra temporary lighting will be installed in other identified hotspots, such as the lawns opposite the Royal Flying Doctor Service.
“The community identified the need for immediate lighting of hotspots in recent meetings with myself and the Chief Minister.

“As well as the RFDS lawns, we will be providing temporary lighting structures at the Melanka’s site, the vacant block adjacent to KFC and the riverbank carpark between Gregory and Stott Tce.

“The temporary lights will be in place until the Alice Springs Town Council works through processes to get permanent lighting installed in some of these hotspots.

“We are also continuing negotiations with the Aboriginal Areas Protection Authority about appropriate protection being put in place at Billygoat Hill.”

Ms Macklin said both governments had consulted widely as they seek to improve community safety in Alice Springs.

“All levels of government are committed to continue to work for improvements in Alice Springs. I have also been consulting with the Federal Opposition about these new initiatives so that we take a bi-partisan approach, and they are also committed to improving lives in Alice Springs.”

Other initiatives announced today include:

- $1.28 million for a Housing Support program;
- $1.2 million for an additional 100 CDEP places in Alice Springs;

Mr Hampton said the Housing Support program would help people in the town camps to make the transition into public housing.

“It will focus on helping people to make the transition into public housing, as well as offering family mediation, alcohol and other drugs counselling, and links to education and employment opportunities,” Mr Hampton said.

“This is an important reform of the transformation plan to ensure that tenants are supported as they move into their new or refurbished homes.”

Mr Snowdon said the additional CDEP places will be offered to two distinct groups – disengaged young people, and those who have been unsuccessful in obtaining employment.

“They will be offered training, as well as the opportunity to take part in community works, including landscaping, painting over graffiti and preparing the town camps for postal services by installing letterboxes.”

The Alice Springs Transformation Plan is a joint initiative from the Australian and Northern Territory Governments to reduce overcrowding and disadvantage in town camps and improve services throughout the town.

The Australian and Northern Territory Governments continue to work with the Alice Springs community to ensure that children are safe and to improve health, education and employment opportunities for all people in Alice Springs.