More than six months after Federal and Territory politicians highlighted third world living conditions at Hoppy’s, Scrutton and Hidden Valley camps in Alice Springs, residents are still living under tarpaulins and sheets of tin.

Shadow Minister for Indigenous Policy, Adam Giles, said overcrowding and homelessness is escalating across the Northern Territory yet Labor has failed to find a solution.

“How can we expect families to be effective when there are no amenities or food preparation facilities, toilets, showers or kitchens? We have long known that the conditions in which these people live are a national disgrace. What sort of society are we living in if we can’t even provide proper shelter for our most disadvantaged citizens? Housing supply is the immediate priority, yet Government failure to release land in a timely fashion has prevented a mix of private, community and public housing solutions from filling the gap.

“Meanwhile existing public housing stock continues to deteriorate and there is a very limited budget available for repairs and upgrades. While construction has finally begun under the Strategic Indigenous Housing and Infrastructure Program, millions of dollars have been wasted on consultants and mismanagement. Meanwhile, families are still homeless and living in substandard conditions. SIHIP had its genesis in the 2007 NT Intervention in response to an accommodation crisis in Northern Territory communities and town camps.

Yet so far, only six communities have received any new housing, and no new houses have yet been built in Tennant Creek. It has taken three years for the Labor Government to build 8 houses in Alice Springs.

“Labor’s other approach is to spend $11million erecting a high fence on a block out of town, buying tents and swags and herding homeless Indigenous people to a so-called ‘accommodation park’.

“That isn’t a housing solution.

“The Territory is known for its rich source of Indigenous culture, yet successive Labor governments have failed to provide Indigenous people with even the most basic requirement of shelter.”

Further comment: Adam Giles 0421 588 118