MEDIA RELEASE

EXODUS OF HONESTY

Terry Mills MLA
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Opposition Leader, Terry Mills, says the Chief Minister is out of touch when it comes to the needs of Territory families and businesses.

Responding to a question during last week’s Alice Springs sittings about the Territory’s negative interstate migration, Paul Henderson claimed it was the first quarter of negative migration after eight quarters of growth.

“This was wrong – and shows the gulf between the views held by the Chief Minister and the hardships faced by Territorians struggling with extraordinary cost of living pressures,” Mr Mills said.

“The Chief Minister should have known that in every quarter for the 12 months to September 2010, 1163 more people left the Territory for interstate than migrated here from other jurisdictions.

“In the September quarter negative interstate migration was 288, 168 in the June quarter, 375 in the March quarter and 332 in the December quarter 2009.

“For the Chief Minister to down-play these important statistics highlights his shaky grip on reality and complete disregard for the facts.

“This isn’t a one off demographic oddity – it is a trend that shows people are looking elsewhere to set up a home and raise a family.

“For years now Territorians have laboured under the cost of record housing and the highest capital city rents in the country.

“They’ve also had to endure a 25% hike in the price of electricity over the past two years and pay the most of any capital city residents for a basket of groceries.

“Territory businesses are struggling to find skilled workers and as a result of the Government’s failed housing policies, the problem will only get worse.

“The Territory’s interstate migration and skills crisis will come under further pressure when rebuilding in Victoria and Queensland following the devastating floods and Cyclone Yasi gets into full swing.”

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