M E D I A R E L E A S E

CLEAR AS BLUE MUD

March 08th, 2012

The Chief Minister must tell Territorians how much they’re paying for his Daly River Blue Mud Bay settlement.

Opposition Leader, Terry Mills, said the secrecy surrounding today’s announcement is duplicitous as it is disturbing.

Of particular concern is the ambiguity behind the Chief Minister’s claim that individual fishing permits will not be required to access the Daly.

“Why won’t the Chief Minister come clean with Territorians and say how much this deal has cost?” Mr Mills said.

“It’s one thing for the negotiations to be conducted behind closed doors, it’s entirely unacceptable for the expenditure of taxpayers’ money doled out to honor an election commitment to be kept secret.

“Territorians are entitled to know how much of their money has been spent reaching a resolution with the Malak Malak Traditional Owners.

“They should also know how much the Government plans to spend into the future.

“The Chief Minister made a cast-iron commitment during the 2008 election campaign that there would be no fishing permits under Labor.

“This promise fell at the first hurdle when permits were introduced to fish the Tiwi Islands.

“The Chief Minister has led Territorians to believe that his Government has been busy negotiating with TOs and the Land Councils for years, but now claims that consultations ‘have started’ on other key fishing areas.

“This not only suggests negotiations have only just begun, but that fishing areas not considered ‘key’ will be subject to permits.”

Further comment: Terry Mills 0418 833 594