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

SIHIP DECEITS A NATIONAL SCANDAL

March 13th, 2012

Shadow Minister for Indigenous Policy, Adam Giles, said a significant deceit has been exposed with revelations Aboriginal people working on SIHIP projects were used in menial roles such as collecting rubbish and cleaning up after contractors.

Mr Giles said the latest controversy surrounding SIHIP is a national scandal and an indication of the lengths both the Henderson and Gillard Labor governments are prepared to go to mislead Aboriginal people by tricking taxpayers about the success of Aboriginal employment programs.

But the Government knows these employees help achieve their employment targets so failings in the system are swept under the carpet.

“I am advised that Aboriginal workers were recruited two years ago and after receiving training on two houses at Larapinta and two at Little Sisters most workers were given menial tasks,” Mr Giles said.

“Instead of gaining technical expertise in trades such as carpentry, electrical or plumbing, the workers were directed to pick up rubbish, whipper snipper edges and clean up after the tradies.

“The employees were used in a photo opportunity with Prime Minister, Julia Gillard.

“You would think that in a $1.7billion housing program like SIHIP, it would be easy to find more meaningful work that provided career building opportunities – other than picking up rubbish – for Aboriginal people.

“I am told that the Territory Government wanted these same employees accredited as having completed some trade certificate qualifications, even though they were only completing menial tasks.

< p>“Fortunately, someone involved with the program had the integrity to refuse to sign the incorrect accreditations because the required training had
not been completed.

“Clearly the Territory and Federal Labor governments have reached new lows. Worse, they have manipulated lives through raised expectations and appalling returns.

“Housing Minister, Chris Burns, should apologise to the workers involved in this scandalous conduct and for his Government’s political manipulation of Aboriginal people.”

Further comment: Adam Giles 0421 588 118