Minister for Local Government Adam Giles today said it is apparent the former Labor Government focused more on announcements than on funding the programs it was spruiking.

Mr Giles has exposed in Parliament how the former Government put no extra funding into expanding the Animal Welfare Branch in reaction to the Mataranka cattle deaths, despite stating it had.

In 2009 and 2010, between 124 and 800 cattle suffered agonising deaths caused by starvation at Mataranka Station.

Despite a public outcry, no prosecutions for animal cruelty were sought by the former Labor Government, but an announcement was made in reaction to the incident that “significant additional resources have been allocated to the Animal Welfare Branch”.

Mr Giles said this action blew a huge hole in the budget because none of the supposed increase in resources and functions of the Animal Welfare Branch were funded.

“Not a single dollar was provided to fund any of it,” Mr Giles said.

Mr Giles said the Animal Welfare Branch at the time was expanded by 8.5 positions and associated operational costs totalled nearly $900,000.

“While staff costs were absorbed within the existing department budget at the expense of other programs and initiatives, there was also an additional $300,000 in direct expenses for vet bills, animal food, vehicle, travel and legal costs, that were all totally unfunded,” Mr Giles said.

“The previous Labor Government’s so called increased resources is in effect an unfunded action that left the Budget with a further $300,000 black hole.

“How can we best administer animal welfare when no money has been provided to put petrol in the car for investigators?

“Labor’s practice of ‘the work stops when the announcement is made’ and not funding its promises is why we have such budget problems. Labor, after the fact promised more without funding it.

“The Country Liberals Government will achieve more with less. It’s what Territorians expect.”

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