MEDIA RELEASE

Lynne Walker
Shadow Minister for Indigenous Policy

11 October 2012

Labor welcomes community meetings

Shadow Minister for Indigenous Policy Lynne Walker has welcomed Olga Havnen’s decision to go ahead with community briefings on her work as the Northern Territory’s Coordinator General for Remote Services.

“The CLP’s decision to sack Olga Havnen has not deterred her from holding public meetings to discuss the findings of her report on spending in remote communities at her own cost,” Ms Walker said.

“I am impressed with the decision and I have also met with Ms Havnen and have been equally impressed with the quality of her work.

“Ms Havnen has focused on what has been working, with insightful recommendations for real improvements - moving on from the ‘blame game’ that has often undermined real improvements.

“Terry Mills said he believes the CLP Government can fix the problems that have plagued Territory Indigenous communities. An independent role assessing and recommending the best use of taxpayers funds is crucial.

“The recommendations made in Ms Havnen’s recent report are based on principles shown to work.

“We can see that in the health sector where the previous Labor Government had made significant progress towards meeting National Closing the Gap targets.

“Ms Havnen’s work also highlights important policy gaps that need urgent attention, like issues affecting young Indigenous men.

“It is unbelievable that Alison Anderson is more interested in having her own way without independent review and promoting more grog and mayhem in our remote communities.

“The shameful sacking of Olga Havnen is depriving Territorians of independent scrutiny of government work at all levels.”

Media Contact: Katie Schneider 0439 543 162