MEDIA RELEASE
Delia Lawrie & Lynne Walker

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CALL FOR TASKFORCE TO MANAGE REFINERY CLOSURE FALLOUT

Leader of the Opposition, Delia Lawrie and Member for Nhulunbuy, Lynne Walker expressed their deep disappointment in Rio Tinto’s decision to suspend alumina refinery operations in Nhulunbuy.

“This is a very sad day, not just for the people of Nhulunbuy, but for the entire Territory,” Ms Lawrie said.

“The flow on effect of this closure will take its toll on both the economic and social fabric of all of the Northern Territory and North East Arnhem Land.”

Ms Walker is working with a community in shock tinged with anger to find a way through what will be an incredibly difficult time ahead for families. She has called for the establishment of a Nhulunbuy Taskforce to represent the diverse interests in the town.

“We will continue to work tirelessly for the people of Nhulunbuy and the surrounding region to ensure the Government takes notice of their concerns regarding the future of their housing, education, health, transport and other vital services,” Ms Walker said.

“This is my community, so I know how important and devastating today’s decision is,” Ms Walker said.

“Rio’s input into this community was substantial and the fallout of this decision is going to reach far and wide with impacts to be felt by everyone in the region, not only those set to lose their jobs when the refinery closes.

“I know there are a lot of people worried with questions about what happens next for us here in Nhulunbuy.

“That is why I have called for the Government to engage a taskforce reference group to make sure all the impacts of this change are being addressed and the interests of our community are protected.

“I will continue to advocate for the people of this region, as I have been doing, to make sure we are not forgotten.

“The responsibility of ensuring the continuation of a viable Gove community and economy falls in the hands of the Northern Territory Government.

“Gove is not just a mining town; it is an important regional centre.”

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