NHULUNBUY RESIDENTS NEED INFORMATION

Following her visit to Nhulunbuy yesterday, Leader of the Opposition, Delia Lawrie, is calling on the CLP Government and Rio Tinto to share information on what plans they have for Nhulunbuy and ease the frustrations of local residents.

"The people of Nhulunbuy are frustrated and concerned that there has been no clear indication from Rio Tinto or the CLP Government about what future plans they have for their town," Ms Lawrie said.

"There is a void of information about what Rio and the Government plan to do with the town and people are expected to make decisions without any knowledge of what a structural adjustment package might look like.

"The CLP Government has a responsibility to explain future plans for the town and region but they are simply sitting on their hands and letting Rio Tinto take the lead."

Local Member, Lynne Walker, said the void of information is creating uncertainty and will lead to more families leaving the region.

"Nhulunbuy is a close-knit community that feels they are being left to fumble in the dark without any real direction from the CLP Government or Rio Tinto," Ms Walker said.

"There are people who have poured their hearts and souls into their businesses and are desperate for answers and assurances.

"Local businesses are having to decide whether to stay in this climate of uncertainty or close their doors and leave town.

"We know that once businesses and residents are gone they won't be coming back."

Ms Lawrie said Rio Tinto employees that have been offered a job for the residual business beyond the transition phase have been contacted over the weekend and have had to make a critical stay or go decision with only a day or two’s notice.
"These families and others in Nhulunbuy are expected to make tough decisions without the information they need," Ms Lawrie said.

Ms Lawrie said what little information that is being shared with the residents of Nhulunbuy by Rio Tinto or the CLP Government is incomplete leaving a lot of questions unanswered.

"There has been talk of a shortlist of about 35 ideas for possible future industry compiled by Rio Tinto and calls to get behind these ideas by the Government - but to date no information on what this shortlist holds has been released," Ms Lawrie said.

"Nhulunbuy residents are concerned about what impact this curtailment will have on essential services like health care.

"Does this shortlist contain Health service development ideas?"

"This region is lacking a Machado Joseph Disease care centre a disease that is prevalent among the Yolngu community.

"Is there any suggestion of capital investment for aquaculture or fisheries industries?"

"Adam Giles touts the idea of being the food bowl of Asia, is he applying this line of thinking to this region where there could be significant benefits for the local community?"

"Disappointingly there has still been no word from either Territory of Federal Government on Structural Adjustment Packages."

"I am again calling on CLP Government and Rio Tinto to be forthcoming and share this vital information with the people of Nhulunbuy so they are able to make informed decisions.

"The Chief Minister's failure to step up and take responsibility and control of this dire situation is an absolute disgrace."

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