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Connecting Neighbours: $10 million Essential Services boost for Town Camps

Over 3,500 Territorians will benefit from an historic move to upgrade essential services to residents of Aboriginal Urban Living Areas in the Northern Territory in the joint ATSIC-Northern Territory Government “Connecting Neighbours” program launched today.

Minister for Community Development John Ah Kit, joining with ATSIC Commissioners Hill and Anderson and Regional Council Chairpersons from around the Territory in Alice Springs this morning, said the essential services program would overcome decades of neglect.

“Aboriginal Urban Living Areas—town camps—have been the poor neighbours of our towns and cities for many years. This is about supplying the same levels of power, water and sewerage services as are provided to other urban residents in the Territory.

“The standardisation of services to the 40-odd urban living areas in the Territory is part of a push by this government to work in partnership with different levels of government as well as a range of non-government organisations,” said Mr Ah Kit. “The work will be coordinated through a joint Northern Territory Government-ATSIC steering committee.”

“The $10 million contribution from ATSIC will be rolled out across the living areas, starting this year in Borroloola, and will bring services up to Power Water Corporation standards.

“This will have direct benefits to people's living conditions, and hence health outcomes.

“Ongoing recurrent funding for the standardised services will be met through a $2 million a year contribution to the Power Water Corporation's Community Service Obligations,” said Mr Ah Kit.

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