Terry Mills
Leader of the Opposition

Leadership needed now

17 January 2005

There is an urgent need for the Martin Government to show some leadership to negotiate the shipment and distribution of Territory aid donated by the people of the Northern Territory to the victims of the Asian Tsunami, CLP Leader Terry Mills said today.

"We are now into our second week and still the many tons of donated medical supplies and perishable goods, like infant formula with a limited shelf life, are sitting in a Winnellie warehouse waiting for shipment to Tsunami affected areas," Mr Mills said.

"The Government did the right thing when it donated $450 000 to the Tsunami victims, but since then there has been a leadership vacuum over the distribution of the huge amount of aid donated by Territorians.

"There is a growing sense of frustration among volunteers who have been on the ground packing donations into essential and non essential needs. They are not getting the support and assistance they need to solve the major logistical issues.

"Some one needs to stick their hand up and get this Territory aid to those who Territorians intended it for.

"If Government is incapable of doing it, I will," Mr Mills said.

Mr Mills said a decision needs to be made urgently on where the Northern Territory relief aid should go and how and when it will reach the Tsunami victims?

"We need a steering committee to be up and running as quickly as possible to coordinate the aid distribution," Mr Mills said.

"My number one priority is to get the Northern Territory relief aid consigned to a destination ASAP, before time renders many of the donations useless.

"We need to identify a destination for the goods, how and when we are going to ship it out and who will handle the aid distribution when it arrives at its destination."
"None of this has yet been organised and time is quickly running out."

Ends