MINISTER BROUGHS CALLS FOR A TALKFEST

Indigenous Affairs Minister Mal Brough has offered more talk rather than action to tackle the problems in Aboriginal communities.

Chief Minister Clare Martin said Minister Brough’s call for a summit on Aboriginal violence ignores the fact there is already a national forum to deal with this issue.

“I’ll join the country’s other leaders in less than a month at COAG where we’ll continue to tackle these problems,” Ms Martin said.

“Indigenous affairs is a standing item at COAG – and this is the appropriate place to deal with these issues.

“Each state and territory has a range of problems they are working on – and matters this important should be discussed at COAG with the Prime Minister.

“If Mr Brough wants to do something constructive he should convince his Treasurer to provide the money needed to reduce the housing backlog in remote communities.

“The Commonwealth should provide an extra $50 million a year over the next decade – that’s just a fraction of the Federal Government’s $10 billion budget surplus.

“The Minister should also reverse his own Department’s decision to walk away from the successful Men’s Violence Program at Titjikala.

“If the Minister is serious about addressing problems in Aboriginal communities he could also push his Federal colleagues to restore funding for the juvenile diversion scheme, women’s refuge centres in communities, the night patrol at Laramba and other centres, the Elders visiting program in jails, the Safe Families project with Tangentyere, and child care/family day care in remote areas.

“The Martin Government is working hard to address the problems that face Aboriginal communities.

We have quadrupled the budget for child protection from under $8 million to nearly $32 million, increased funding for Employment, Education and Training by 33% and the Police, Fire and Emergency Services budget has risen by 55%.

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