The enormous cost blow-outs associated with the SIHIP program are a disaster for taxpayers and Indigenous Territorians – but vindication for the program’s former boss Jim Davidson.

Shadow Indigenous Policy Minister, Adam Giles, said Mr Davidson predicted last year that to meet the program’s targets, the Government would have to spend more than $1billion – considerably more than the $672million originally budgeted.

Mr Davidson said under the previous funding arrangements, only 300 of the 750 promised homes would be built.

“The Commonwealth and Territory governments denied this was the case and Jim Davidson was sacked from the project,” Mr Giles said.

“Jim Davidson was a scapegoat sacrificed by the Labor Party to shield the abysmal failure to meet the SIHIP targets.

“When Jim Davidson was sacked, more than $50million had been spent without a single house being built.

“Three years into the 5 year program, only 88 homes have been built and an estimated $500million has been spent.

“But despite this appalling delivery failure, Federal Minister Jenny Macklin, Chief Minister Paul Henderson and Housing Minister Rob Knight maintained they’d meet SIHIP’s target to build 750 new houses, upgrade 230 homes, refurbish 2500 homes and develop desperately needed infrastructure within the previous $672million allocated budget.

“In a recent briefing, Government confirmed the targeted 2500 refurbishments wouldn’t be met.

“As well we’ve seen the size of new homes shrink substantially, the definition of rebuilds changed, an admission the 2500 refurbishments would not be completed, the ‘infrastructure’ component dropped from the scheme and the injection of an extra $330million just to try to meet some of the old targets.

“Jim Davidson was right, Labor was wrong and Territorians are being sold seriously short.”

Further comment: Adam Giles 0421 588 118