New $300 million Homelands Policy provides certainty

Over the next ten years, $300 million will be invested into the management and maintenance of existing homeland infrastructure, including houses, roads, and essential services, at homelands across the Territory under the Territory Government’s new Homelands Policy.

Chief Minister, Paul Henderson and Indigenous Development Minister, Malarndirri McCarthy today launched the Government’s Homelands Policy at the homeland town of Gangan, south of Nhulunbuy in north east Arnhem Land.

"Under our Homelands Policy we’re committing to investing upto $20,000 for each homeland dwelling for power, essential services, repairs and maintenance, and to giving homeland residents more say in how funding is spent,” Henderson said.

“This Homelands Policy reconfirms my Government’s commitment to provide long-term certainty and clarity for homelands residents.”

Indigenous Development Minister, Malarndirri McCarthy said that during 2012 the Government will work with residents and service providers to transition to the new arrangements which will commence on 1 July 2013.

“Homelands funding includes $200 million from the the Australian Government and at least $100 million more from the Territory Government,” said McCarthy.”

“Importantly, homelands will benefit from three-year funding agreements which will give certainty to both residents and service providers.

“Homelands dwellings used as a principal place of residence or for a recognised community program will be eligible.

“In addition to funding certainty, residents will now have an opportunity to be more actively involved in how funding is spent in accordance with an annual Homeland Management Plan agreed between residents and service providers.

“Homelands will continue to receive a wide range of government services and programs in the future – including education, health, employment, and community safety and ranger programs.

“Providing access to education is a key priority and we will work with families to ensure that school age children living on Homelands are getting a good education.
“This Government will continue to assist homelands become environmentally, socially, culturally and economically sustainable including support for jobs on homelands through service providers and Shire Councils.

“We will also assist homeland residents to develop their own economic development opportunities and help create employment for outstation/homeland residents.

“We recognise Aboriginal people’s relationship to their country and the benefits to their overall well being associated with residing on their homelands.”

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