



**Paul Henderson**  
CHIEF MINISTER

**20 May 2009**

## **A Working Future: Real Towns, Real Jobs, Real Opportunities**

The Northern Territory Government today unveiled a targeted strategy to improve the lives of Territorians living in remote areas by encouraging real towns, real jobs and real opportunities.

The Chief Minister Paul Henderson and Indigenous Policy Minister Alison Anderson said *A Working Future* is a visionary six-part plan that will develop 20 large service towns, set a new path for homelands and outstations, and focus and coordinate the delivery of infrastructure, services and development in the remote Territory.

"*A Working Future* will provide real towns, real jobs and real opportunities," Mr Henderson said.

"Towns in the bush will have proper town plans, private investment, targeted Government infrastructure and commercial centres," Mr Henderson said.

"They will be towns like anywhere else in Australia and, like elsewhere, they will service the surrounding areas of smaller communities, properties, outstations and homelands."

Ms Anderson said the launch of *A Working Future* will see a fundamental shift in the delivery of services and infrastructure in remote communities.

It will lift development, create jobs and bring Indigenous Territorians into the Territory's broader economic development.

"*A Working Future* means exactly that – a future for Indigenous Territorians living in remote communities," she said.

"It is about a decent lifestyle, jobs, education for our kids, better health and services that are equal with the rest of country Australia," Ms Anderson said.

*A Working Future* will refocus the Government's Indigenous funding and will see more than \$160m invested over the next five years through the Remote Service Delivery National Partnership Agreement with the Federal Government.

The NT Government's investment of \$300m to Close the Gap will continue to be rolled out and funding to outstations and homelands will be maintained at \$36m a year.

The six parts of the plan are:

### **Territory Growth Towns**

20 of our largest remote communities will be developed into strong towns boasting services and amenities like any other similar-sized towns elsewhere in Australia. The towns are: Maningrida, Wadeye, Borroloola, Galiwin'ku, Nguiu, Gunbalanya, Milingimbi, Ngukurr, Numbulwar, Angurugu/Umbakumba, Gapuwiyak, Yuendumu, Yirrkala, Lajamanu, Daguragu/Kalkarindji, Ramingining, Hermannsburg, Papunya, Elliott and Ali Curung.

### **Outstations and Homelands**

The Government will not develop any new outstations and homelands.

Funding will remain at current levels to existing outstations provided they are occupied for at least 8 months of the year. A Statement of Expectation of Service Delivery will be developed to inform outstation and homeland residents how much Government help they can expect.

### **Remote Service Delivery**

One-stop shops will also be established in 15 of the Territory Growth Towns for both Territory and Australian government services. A Territory Co-ordinator General for Indigenous services has been appointed to work alongside the Federal Government to ensure the delivery of remote services is occurring in an effective and targeted way.

### **Employment and Economic Development**

Local people will be helped to plan the future development of their local economy and we'll put in place strategies to encourage and support new businesses. This will include encouraging local people to own homes and businesses, and giving them the tools to help them do it.

- Territory Growth Towns will need private investment to enable them to grow. We'll work with land owners to secure leases on Aboriginal land to facilitate private investment.

### **Remote Transport Strategy**

People living in smaller communities will need reliable and regular transport to get to jobs, schools, clinics and other services in larger towns. *A Working Future* will:

- Implement stronger transport links between remote towns and urban centres, making it easier to get around
- Develop a new integrated public transport system that will include road and air transport to ensure services can get in and out

### **Closing the Gap Targets and Evaluation**

The Territory Government's *Closing the Gap* program will be refocused to be the targets, goals and evaluation mechanism for *A Working Future*. The targets will be aligned with the Federal Government's *Closing the Gap* program and also include commitments made by the Territory Government in our broader response to the *Little Children are Sacred* report.

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