



**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY**

**COUNCIL OF TERRITORY CO-OPERATION**

**PUBLIC HEARING, WEDNESDAY 12 MAY 2010, ALICE SPRINGS**

Witnesses:

Alice Springs Transformation Plan, represented by:

Mr Peter McDonald, Executive Director, Alice Springs Transformation Plan  
(Department of the Chief Minister)

Mr Mark Coffey, Executive Director, Alice Springs Transformation Plan (FaHCSIA)

**Ms CAMPBELL:** Mr Chairman, just before we start Mark Coffey was saying (inaudible).

**Mr COFFEY:** Yes, that is right, so that house belongs to a fellow called Don. His wife died a couple of weeks ago and the funeral is on tomorrow and we are not going there when Minister Macklin is here, so I would suggest that you probably should not.

**Mr CHAIRMAN:** (Inaudible).

**Mr COFFEY:** Whilst ...

**Mr CHAIRMAN:** She tries to keep us out of trouble (inaudible).

**Mr COFFEY:** Yes.

**Mr CHAIRMAN:** No, that is okay. (Inaudible) stick to protocol and (inaudible).

**Mr COFFEY:** Yes.

**Ms CAMPBELL:** Thank you, Mark.

**Mr CHAIRMAN:** All right. So we might (inaudible). I have just got to give the formal bit.

I declare open this meeting of the Council of Territory Cooperation and welcome the following witnesses, and that is Mr Peter McDonald and Mr Mark Coffey, who are appearing before the council to brief it in relation to its terms of reference. This hearing is open to the public and is being recorded. A transcript will be produced and will be available to the public. In certain circumstances, the committee may decide that evidence, or part thereof, can be taken in camera and remain confidential. Please advise me if you wish any part of your evidence to be in camera, but I remind you that this is at the discretion of the committee. You are reminded that evidence given to the committee is protected by parliamentary privilege. For the purpose of the *Hansard* record, I ask that you state your full name and the capacity in which you are appearing today. I also ask that you state your name each time you speak.

So, Peter, would you like to state your name, please.

**Mr McDONALD:** Yes, Peter Stewart McDonald. I am employed as the Executive Director of the Alice Springs Transformation Plan. I am employed by the Department of the Chief Minister in the Northern Territory. My counterpart, Mark, is the – well, in fact, Mark can introduce himself, but I will, just in terms of context, I have kindly accepted Mark's offer to come along today because I am actually only engaged for a period of three months with the Department of the Chief Minister. I have, in fact, been retired for the last couple of years, but the plan found itself without an ED, at relatively short notice I was asked to come in and Mark, who is my counterpart, employed by the Australian government, very kindly offered to come in with me this morning because he has a much deeper grasp of the project than I have, but it is appropriate now that I allow Mark to introduce himself, I think.

**Mr CHAIRMAN:** Thank you, Peter.

**Mr COFFEY:** Okay, Mark Anthony Coffey. I am employed by the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs and my role is the Executive Director of the Alice Springs Transformation Plan, which is a joint Northern Territory government and Australian government initiative.

**Mr CHAIRMAN:** Thank you very much. (Inaudible) at the beginning (inaudible) could you give us a brief overview of what the plan (inaudible) is, because I must admit I may have heard of it but probably have no idea what (inaudible).

**Mr McDONALD:** And, unfortunately, probably not enough people are familiar with what we are doing, but I believe as the program rolls out and gains momentum, as it is starting to do now I think certainly people in the Northern Territory will be very much aware of it.

The plan was put in place, really established in May 2009. It is a partnership between the Australian and Northern Territory governments. Our objective is to improve the life outcomes for Aboriginal residents and visitors in Alice Springs, particularly in town camps, and reduce homelessness through housing and infrastructure upgrades and the provision of suitable support services.

We are delivering this improved life outcome through three strategies. Firstly, we are dealing with social issues in the town and particularly town camps; secondly, we intend to transform the town camps, mainly through a building program; and, thirdly, we intend to reduce the incidence of homelessness in Alice Springs through the provision of accommodation. We have adopted an integrated approach, not only from the Australian government and Northern Territory government's point of view, but also at the local government level we have very much involved the local council.

We have a joint steering committee which meets monthly with representatives of each level of government plus Lhere Artepe Aboriginal Corporation, which is the native title body, and representatives of Tangentyere Council as well. Additionally, we have a local implementation group. This is effectively agency based, both Australian government and Territory government agencies, which meets regularly and we have seven action groups, mainly of agency people and relevant NGOs that are involved in delivering some of these services, particularly the social services program.

In terms of the Alice Springs Transformation Plan team, we are a group of people that are dedicated to facilitating government policy and programs in relation these strategies. I said it was a joint approach. I head up a small team of Northern Territory government staff, all employed by the Department of the Chief Minister. We operate from within the Indigenous Coordination Centre in the Jock Nelson Building in Alice Springs, hosted by the Australian government in their premises, and we work on a team approach where we have got a bit of a mix and match people delivering a range of services and we back each other up on the delivery of these programs.

And if you like, I can go on to talk now about what we are delivering in each of those strategies. Our first strategy, as I said, is based on dealing with social issues. We have funding of some \$25m to deliver this, provided essentially by the Australian government through FAHCSIA. It is a project based delivery in which we have sought submissions from people that are able to deliver programs that are consistent with our objectives, remembering a lot of these people are involved through the action groups, the people that can deliver these sorts of things.

Just some of the projects that we have been able to get running already, I will just run through them. We have funded the transitional accommodation fitout at Arrernte House in Alice Springs to the sum of some \$80 000. We assisted Tangentyere to complete their upgrade on a youth facility at Brown Street - \$56 000. We have funded Communities for Children program; we attracted some additional funding to our \$25m from FAHCSIA for this. Anglicare is running it. This is a program to the tune ...

**Ms SCRYMGOUR:** Can I ask you (inaudible) what (inaudible)?

**Mr McDONALD:** \$3m in total. \$750 000 from our Transformation Plan funds and FAHCSIA topped that up to the tune of \$2.25m. We are funding a Desert Leadership program, which has taken a couple of town camp young people and Desert Knowledge are running a leadership program and they are included. We have just recently topped up money that we had provided to the Alice Springs Town Council for dog control in the town camps.

**Ms SCRYMGOUR:** How much (inaudible)?

**Mr McDONALD:** The original funding was for \$87 000 and that runs out at the end of June this year, but we have recently granted them another \$449 000 to roll out the program for another two years. That is effectively removal of some of the dogs, a sterilisation program, and registration program – although the residents pay for the registration of their own dogs – and ...

**Ms SCRYMGOUR:** Does that come under the Chief Minister's Department – sorry, Mr Chairman, but I am ...

**Mr CHAIRMAN:** That's all right.

**Mr McDONALD:** It comes out of our Alice Springs Transformation Plan funds which are held by Chief Minister's Department, but the funding was originally provided by FAHCSIA. Correct?

**Mr COFFEY:** Yes, that is right. Yes.

**Mr McDONALD:** We have a family group conferencing project which is being run by the Department of Health and Families, Northern Territory Department of Health and Families.

**Mr CHAIRMAN:** (Inaudible).

**Mr McDONALD:** Family group conferencing is facilitating counselling, I would say is probably the right word, facilitating counselling where families are in conflict and it provides a structured program for resolution of those, particularly when there is substance abuse and violence etc and it is meant to, I think, divert some of these people into safer behaviours.

Please correct me if you want to add anything, Mark.

**Mr COFFEY:** No, it is ...

**Mr McDONALD:** We are currently finalising the granting of funding for a Reading and Willing for School program that Central Australian Aboriginal Congress will deliver, which is to take three and four year olds, assess their readiness for school, their ability to go to school and have a meaningful learning program at school, that is both health and in terms of behavioural issues, to redirect those children if they have special needs and also to address their family circumstances where that may not be appropriate for the schooling of these children. There is something like, I think, 320 Aboriginal children in Alice Springs that fit into this age category and all of those children, I believe, are to be assessed.

**Ms WALKER:** (Inaudible).

**Mr McDONALD:** Three to four, yes. It is an attempt to identify kids that may have a problem with schooling and trying to address these before it is too late and make sure that they will be at school.

We have a Safe and Sober Alcohol Rehabilitation program, again run by the Central Australian Aboriginal Congress, to the tune of in total \$5.4m over the next two and a half years. There is a targeted family support service enhancement program – again, Aboriginal Congress – that is approximately \$1.5m.

As I said, in addition to the \$25m we have been able to get some additional funding from FAHCSIA, but we have uncommitted funds for the next two years. We are currently assessing a number of proposals, but I am not in a position to talk about those this morning because they are still in train, but we have funding, subject to the current round, that is probably in excess of \$10m uncommitted at the moment.

Strategy 2, which is transforming the town camps, we have land tenure issues resolved in terms of a lease that has been signed by all of the camps transferring the camps which were effectively privately owned, Crown leases, to the Executive Director Township Leasing which is effectively Commonwealth government. That land in turn has been leased back to the Northern Territory which in turn has been leased back to the Chief Executive Officer Housing to provide housing for the people that previously lived in the houses. And as you ...

**Ms SCRYMGOUR:** The end result is we are going get some new housing.

**Mr McDONALD:** The end result is effectively that those houses are now public housing and can be administered as such and that enables us to deliver \$100m worth of housing and probably it would be appropriate to hand over to Mark to talk about this because fundamentally he has got, from our team's point of view, he has got the primary responsibility for that, so perhaps if I was to ...

**Mr COFFEY:** Yes.

**Mr McDONALD:** If you were to talk about that, Mark?

**Mr COFFEY:** Yes.

**Mr CHAIRMAN:** Before you (inaudible), what is the length of the leases?

**Mr McDONALD:** The leases – the head lease which is, if I can call it that, which is the lease from the Housing Associations to the Executive Director Township Leasing is for 40 years. That has been leased back to the Northern Territory of Australia for only three years.

**Ms WALKER:** For how long?

**Mr McDONALD:** Three.

**Mr CHAIRMAN:** (Inaudible) to some of the houses that have (inaudible)?

**Mr McDONALD:** Unless arrangements are put in place, but there are arrangements built into the leasing so that before the lease terminates there will be some sort of a substitute arrangement put in place. There is an elaborate mechanism put in place in the lease for it to be reviewed and new arrangements put in place before ...

**Ms SCRYMGOUR:** Technically (inaudible), I mean if the Office of Township Leasing has 40 years and the Northern Territory government has only got a sublease of three years ...

**Mr McDONALD:** Exactly.

**Ms SCRYMGOUR:** ... it will revert back to the Commonwealth.

**Mr McDONALD:** Yes.

**Mr COFFEY:** Yes, it would default back to the Commonwealth.

**Ms SCRYMGOUR:** So (inaudible) (inaudible) if the Northern Territory government (inaudible) this three year tenure (inaudible) (inaudible) is the Commonwealth going to take responsibility for that (inaudible)? Has anyone thought about well what is the plan within this three year period to try and – because I thought the whole process was to try and normalise the situation ...

**Mr COFFEY:** Yes.

**Ms SCRYMGOUR:** ... in the Alice Springs town camps rather than ...

**Mr COFFEY:** It is, and under the term – during the negotiations for the 40 year sublease, agreement was reached between the parties to put in an arrangement where the Northern Territory government would look after it for three years and then there would be a process to determine what would happen with the land for the remainder of the time, but the Australian government's view is that the Northern Territory government would continue to maintain the public housing as it does now, but there is a process in the sublease that we need to go through for that and have further discussions.

**Mr CHAIRMAN:** (Inaudible) for a 40 year lease and (inaudible) houses after 40 years and the Territory government is going to own those houses, so do you think the matter will be settled at the beginning (inaudible) event?

**Mr COFFEY:** As I say, it was done during the negotiations ...

**Mr CHAIRMAN:** Yes.

**Mr COFFEY:** ... to get a 40 year lease and there are reasons why it was done and it was to do with the negotiations. They were very complex negotiations that went over a number of years and Tangentyere wanted the ability to tender to look after the houses at a later date and that was one of the reasons that this was put in there.

**Ms SCRYMGOUR:** Mark – sorry.

**Mr COFFEY:** But the Australian government's view is that Territory Housing or the department that looks after normal public housing would continue to look after public housing on town camps whilst we have a 40 year sublease.

**Ms SCRYMGOUR:** Mark, we took evidence from – we had a meeting with Tangentyere in November last year. One of the points or evidence or what they put to the CTC was that there were negotiations between them as an organisation and the federal government to establish a housing co-op or a housing association.

**Mr COFFEY:** A housing company...

**Ms SCRYMGOUR:** Or a housing company.

**Mr COFFEY:** Central Australian Affordable Housing Company.

**Ms SCRYMGOUR:** Affordable housing company.

**Mr COFFEY:** Yes.

**Ms SCRYMGOUR:** So is it the plan that during this three year process that that housing company or co-op, that those houses were transitioned to that housing co-op or ...

**Mr COFFEY:** No, there is no plan for that to occur. However, the housing company will have the opportunity to deliver some of the services into town camps, whether it be tenancy management or repairs and maintenance or even some of the arrangements that we have currently got, but that will be an open process.

**Ms SCRYMGOUR:** So it will go out to tender and they will be able to tender?

**Mr COFFEY:** That is right. Yes, so under the terms of the sublease within three years of the sublease being signed there has to be a tender that goes out, run by the Northern Territory government.

**Ms SCRYMGOUR:** Mark, are we able to – is the committee able to get information on the – because as I understand each of the town camps was controlled and auspiced by a separate housing association?

**Mr COFFEY:** That is correct, yes.

**Ms SCRYMGOUR:** Was there issues of compensation to each of those housing associations or what was the outcome of those negotiations to reach the point of a 40 year lease transferred to the Office of Township Leasing?

**Mr COFFEY:** Okay, so, maybe if I just let you know, there are 18 town camps that were negotiated with in terms of land tenure. 17 of those town camps signed up to a 40 year lease. One of those town camps, being Ilpeye Ilpeye or Golders did not sign up to a 40 year lease and the Minister acquired that land under the *Northern Territory National Emergency Response Act*. Now, under the act, the traditional owners of that land or the housing association, are entitled to compensation and we are working through that process at the moment, but the 17 town camps that signed up to a 40 year sublease are not entitled to compensation and that was never part of the negotiations.

In terms of the negotiations to get to a 40 year lease, you know, it is a bit hard, people had different views. Some people did not want to lease, other people did want to lease, and some people would have preferred acquisition. In fact, Trucking Yards did not sign up to a lease until after everyone else did and they were saying that they wanted acquisition. Then the housing association changed and then they decided to sign a lease. So it varied from camp to camp.

**Ms SCRYMGOUR:** Yes.

**Mr COFFEY:** But they were all dealt with separately. We had separate negotiations, we had separate consultations with them as a group, but Tangentyere were representing them during the negotiations.

**Ms SCRYMGOUR:** Thank you, Mark. I do not think any of us dispute the need – the work that needed to be done. I think it was important and essential for it to be done, but are we able to get what – now that you have signed the lease – what the program is that is going to roll – I know we have got some – and that is quite substantial funding that is going into each of the camps and to deal with this.

**Mr COFFEY:** Well, I can tell you a little bit about that now, if you like.

**Mr CHAIRMAN:** (Inaudible). Maybe you can give us a rundown (inaudible).

**Mr COFFEY:** That is right. So, after we secured land tenure over those town camps which 16 signed leases on 3 December, another one signed a lease at the end of December and then Ilpeye Ilpeye was acquired in February of this year. As soon as we got land tenure we implemented a camp clean up in all the town camps. We removed quite substantial amounts of rubbish. We started a fix and make safe program where we went in and fixed up any urgent safety issues in the town camps. We also did a scoping exercise about the quality of the houses, what was required for rebuilds and refurbishments in the town camps.

**Ms WALKER:** Can I asked Mark, with that scoping, did you scope every house ...

**Mr COFFEY:** We did.

**Ms WALKER:** ... or did you sample houses.

**Mr COFFEY:** We scoped 199 houses in all the town camps.

**Mr CHAIRMAN:** Can I just ask, the scoping had nothing to do with SIHIP?

**Mr COFFEY:** It is done under the SIHIP program.

**Mr CHAIRMAN:** So it was not the Transformation Committee that did that?

**Mr COFFEY:** No.

**Mr CHAIRMAN:** It has got its own funding, it was SIHIP spending.

**Mr COFFEY:** Okay, so the funding allocated for Stream 2, which is the work on town camps is \$100m. That is \$100m of SIHIP funding.

**Mr WESTRA van HOLTHE:** And the clean up and scoping work was also under SIHIP?

**Mr COFFEY:** No, the fix and make safe – the clean up was not.

**Mr WESTRA van HOLTHE:** Right.

**Mr COFFEY:** The Alice Springs Transformation Plan will play for the clean up. The fix and make safe and the scoping and that work, which is SIHIP work, will be paid for out of the SIHIP program.

**Mr CHAIRMAN:** Do you know if that is a separate fund, the money, the 690 (inaudible)?

**Ms SCRYMGOUR:** No, it is the same.

**Mr COFFEY:** No, it is the same.

**Mr CHAIRMAN:** Same fund – it is out of the (inaudible). Yes.

**Mr COFFEY:** It is out of the SIHIP money. Yes.

And so out of the \$100m we did the fix and make safe and the scoping. We are building 85 houses, new houses on town camps out of that \$100m. We are going to refurbish all the houses that require refurbishment because there are some houses that have been refurbished recently through the Tangentyere Housing program and, in fact, during our



negotiations to get land tenure, we provided Tangentyere, through the Northern Territory government, with \$5.3m to continue their upgrade program.

So there is about 50 or 60 houses that have been refurbished recently that we will not have to refurbish. The remainder we will refurbish, so we will do 85 new houses, we will refurbish probably about 140 houses and we will also upgrade the civil works in those town camps to a standard similar to the rest of Alice Springs.

**Mr WESTRA van HOLTHE:** Where did the \$5.3m come from?

**Mr COFFEY:** Not out of the SIHIP money. It came from FAHCSIA.

**Ms SCRYMGOUR:** So that was separate money that was for part of the clean up there. So the \$5.3m was used by Tangentyere to refurbish – did you say 60 houses?

**Mr COFFEY:** No, to continue with their refurbishment program. I think at the end of it there will be about 50 houses that have been refurbished, not just during that \$5.3m program but prior to that, so in the last couple of years, that does not actually need any further refurbishments.

**Ms SCRYMGOUR:** So under SIHIP that we have been well aware of when the review came through, so was the \$5.3m, was it based on the original scoping of refurbishments or ...

**Mr COFFEY:** It was not done under the SIHIP program at all.

**Ms SCRYMGOUR:** Okay.

**Mr COFFEY:** It was separate, completely separate.

**Ms SCRYMGOUR:** So completely at Tangentyere's ...

**Mr COFFEY:** It was just – well, it was done through their normal upgrade program, so in accordance with their upgrade program that they have been running for a number of years and been funded through FAHCSIA, that program continued.

Now, for the remaining houses that they are still to refurb, we are trying to match that to the SIHIP refurb, so that they are similar, of a similar standard.

**Ms SCRYMGOUR:** Okay and just bear with me – sorry, Mark.

**Mr COFFEY:** Yes, all right.

**Ms SCRYMGOUR:** I am just trying to – so under the SIHIP program now and what you are doing through the refurb program within this Transformation Plan for the town camps are we going to see two different sets of standards for refurbishments or are they going to be at the same level? That is what I – because under SIHIP and under the existing program it is set at \$75 000 and the requirements under that is to bring those houses up to functionality which whether the \$5.3m which Tangentyere was using as part of its ongoing program, that people in those town camps might think 'Well, Jesus, how come our refurbishment set under SIHIP is 'X' and yet these people that were under this original program 'Y' gave them a better standard.

**Mr COFFEY:** Yes.

**Ms SCRYMGOUR:** So what is the Northern Territory and the Commonwealth, with the Office of Township Leasing, doing to make sure that we do not see those two sets of standards which ...

**Mr COFFEY:** You are right, that was a concern that we did not want two different standards and we did not want some houses getting airconditioning and others not and all of those sorts of things, so we have met and we have discussed both the programs to ensure that they are linked in, to ensure that we get the best economies of scale out of both and that they are similar in terms of standards and so Tangentyere have agreed to that and we will be proceeding on that line, and it will be done in accordance with the SIHIP guidelines as the currently exist. So there are refurbishments, there are rebuilds and there are new houses that will be coming at the average costs that is set under the SIHIP guidelines.

**Ms WALKER:** If I could just ask, Mark, where you are looking at refurb in town camps, does that include airconditioning that what I have learned recently are called swampies.

**Mr COFFEY:** We are certainly considering that, but there has been no decision taken on that. One of the other things we are trying to do is make the houses on town camps consistent with other public housing in Alice Springs and so my understanding is other public housing in Alice Springs have airconditioning and so we are considering that for town camps, but there has been no decision there because obviously there is a cost implication and we are not at a point yet where the package or program development report has been completed, but we are considering it.

**Ms SCRYMGOUR:** Can I ask you something which is probably outside of the scope of Alice Springs, but given you are the manager for the whole of Central, is that (inaudible) or ...

**Mr COFFEY:** Well, at the moment I am just doing the Alice Springs Transformation Plan. There is someone else doing my normal job.

**Ms SCRYMGOUR:** Are we able to find out whether, within the SIHIP and the refurb – and just for Central Australia – because we are finding communities outside of Alice Springs within the same environment, the extreme heat, extreme cold, that these swampies will be evaporative airconditioning which is in all public housing in Alice Springs is not going to occur in some of the remote communities? Are we able to get some ...

**Mr COFFEY:** I mean, Ian Boyson and Andrew Kirkman would be the people there to talk about what is happening in the other package. I am just really involved in package 12 which is the town camps.

**Mr CHAIRMAN:** Willem, have you got a question?

**Mr WESTRA van HOLTHE:** Yes, on the \$5.3m going to Tangentyere (inaudible) ...

**Mr COFFEY:** Yes.

**Mr WESTRA van HOLTHE:** ... is that just for an ongoing program of refurbishments that they have planned?

**Mr COFFEY:** Yes. So \$2.9m was released some time ago and my understanding is that has been expended and then the remainder of the money is about to or has been released by the Northern Territory government to enable them to continue their program. So SIHIP will do the remainder of the houses and then at the end of it, all of the houses on town camps would have been refurbished in the last two or three years.

**Mr WESTRA van HOLTHE:** Do you know how many houses will be refurbished under that Tangentyere program?

**Mr COFFEY:** I think it might be about 50. About 50, I think ...

**Mr WESTRA van HOLTHE:** 50.

**Mr COFFEY:** ...but I do not know for sure, because obviously there are refurbishments and rebuilds, so there was negotiation about who did what, what should SIHIP do and what should Tangentyere do and so I think Tangentyere were asked to do some of the minor refurbishments as opposed to the rebuilds.

**Mr WESTRA van HOLTHE:** And so about 50 refurbishments for \$5.3m.

**Mr COFFEY:** Something like that, yes.

**Mr CHAIRMAN:** The question we get asked and we got asked at Santa Teresa is basically when a house was scoped was the \$75 000 sufficient to bring the house up to a standard we are not quite sure of yet, but that is one of the questions we get asked – what is that standard? Like in the case in Santa Teresa there were verandahs that did not have concrete on them and you had to walk to the toilet and shower across sandy ground, there was no tiling on the floor. So if we are talking about what standards of houses should occur from a Territory Housing perspective and we would be comparing houses in Alice Springs, are your houses – well, for instance, would they have concrete verandahs, will they have tiles on the floor? They are the sorts of things we would be interested in to see whether we are getting same for same in different communities.

**Mr COFFEY:** Yes. We have not – the package development report, which is the report that talks about the scope of works, the cost of works and that entire sort of information is yet to be finalised. So I cannot tell you exactly what is going to be in the final package development report. I can tell you; however, that under the early works program we are building eight new houses in town camps. One of those houses is due to be finished on Friday and that house is at Larapinta Valley and I understand that you might be going to visit there, perhaps. It has got tiles on the floor, it has got airconditioning, and it does not have a verandah, but will have an outdoor shaded area. It has got landscaping, it has got two toilets, it has got a sleepout area and it is disabled accessed, the doors are wider, the corridor or the hallways are wide for disabled access.

**Mr CHAIRMAN:** That is a new house, of course.

**Mr COFFEY:** Yes.

**Mr CHAIRMAN:** The ones at Santa Teresa will be refurbished and the question we are being asked there 'Why are not our floors being brought up to say a standard that is the same as Alice Springs', because we presume a tiled floor – and I did not know whether your refurbishments on those houses, on your houses would have the same tiled floors.

**Mr COFFEY:** As I say, until the development report is done I cannot answer that, but it will be done in accordance with the SIHIP guidelines, so the average cost for refurbishments have to meet that amount and the rebuilds have to be averaged out at that amount.

**Mr CHAIRMAN:** I suppose what we are getting is whether that would be enough money, because you know it was cut in half and we are getting complaints that it is not quite enough money to do what people thought was going to happen. That is the issue we have to look at.

**Mr COFFEY:** Yes.

**Mr WESTRA van HOLTHER:** Can I just ask, just hanging around that \$5.3m issue at the moment, were you a part of the negotiations with the Tangentyere in determining that standard of the refurb under SIHIP and the standard of the refurb (inaudible) \$5.3m Tangentyere (inaudible) are we going to be a similar (inaudible) part of that.

**Mr COFFEY:** Yes, but only on the periphery. I mean it is not my job to get involved in that.

**Mr WESTRA van HOLTHER:** I mean (inaudible) the question I have is that the SIHIP refurb are averaged out at \$75 000 each yet if I use the figures you have given me Tangentyere refurb come to roughly \$100 000 each. How do you reconcile the \$25 000 difference in the quality of the work or the amount of money that is going to be spent on each? What (inaudible) you (inaudible)?

**Mr COFFEY:** Okay, the first point is you are making an assumption that all the houses that they are doing are a refurb. There are refurb and rebuilds and there are varying levels of refurb within the refurb program. So some refurb might only cost \$25 000 because they only need minimal work, others might cost \$100 000 and so it depends on the houses that Tangentyere were allocated for their program as to how much it was going to cost.

**Mr WESTRA van HOLTHER:** So they are doing rebuilds as well?

**Mr COFFEY:** Refurb and rebuilds are under the SIHIP program and it is just a term that they use. Tangentyere do not use those terms.

**Mr WESTRA van HOLTHER:** (Inaudible), yes.

**Mr COFFEY:** They are doing refurbishments of houses ...

**Mr CHAIRMAN:** Would it be better if they were renovations?

**Mr COFFEY:** Well, I mean ...

**Mr CHAIRMAN:** Which covers a lot? I mean that is what you do (inaudible) renovation (inaudible).

**Mr COFFEY:** But some probably are quite substantial refurb, almost similar to a rebuild, whereas others are probably very minimum, but as Willem does, if you do the maths, it probably averages out to about \$100 000.

**Mr WESTRA van HOLTHER:** The problem we have as a committee is that we can only go on averages because no-one thus far has been able to provide us with a breakdown of how much a house is going to cost to refurbish, they cannot or will not give us that information. So the only information – well the only – the premise we can use for making assumptions is averages. So there is a \$25 000 difference between a Tangentyere average and the SIHIP average, now is a Tangentyere refurb going to be a better quality than a SIHIP one? If you have worked those in together so that they are going to be the same, is what you alluded to, well how do you reconcile it? How does the government sell that to the public?

**Mr COFFEY:** It is hard to work on average because every house is different. At the end of the day – you know there are some houses that were built 30 years ago on the town camps; there are others that were built ten years on town camps. So a refurb on a 30 year

house as opposed to a ten is going to be completely different, so you cannot – my view is you cannot compare apples with oranges.

I mean in terms of the breakdown of how much each house costs, I cannot give you that. I do not have that information.

**Mr WESTRA van HOLTHE:** (Inaudible).

**Ms SCRYMGOUR:** Yes, and that is what I was asking – you know, your two sets of standards of houses within these town camps, but surely Tangentyere is part of the \$5.3m and their acquittals of the \$5.3m back to the Commonwealth, at some point somebody should be able to average out – you should be able to say ‘X’ house in ‘X’ town camp – and bearing in mind – and you are right, Mark, a 30 year house compared to a ten year House there is going to be substantial differences, but surely at some stage the Commonwealth and the Northern Territory governments should be able to come up with, on average, in these town camps for these houses at 30 years of age, on average, cost is ‘X’. Ten years ago these houses cost – you know, so you should be able – surely someone should be able to average out what that cost is.

**Mr COFFEY:** No doubt you probably could, but ...

**Ms SCRYMGOUR:** But that is not being done?

**Mr COFFEY:** Well, no. I mean we do not know. At the moment we do not know for the package how much our refurbis are going to cost, how much our rebuilds are going to cost. We do not know, and we are not doing analysis on how much a 30 year old house is costing as opposed to a 20 year old house as opposed to a ten year old house. It is not something that we have done, but in terms of the \$5.3m can I make this point? The Northern Territory government have that contract with Tangentyere for that ...

**Ms SCRYMGOUR:** All right.

**Mr COFFEY:** ... for that scope of works.

**Ms SCRYMGOUR:** So from the Northern Territory government's point of view and the scoping project, surely as part of that scoping and from the \$5.3m and the data that should be getting – I mean is it being collected?

**Mr McDONALD:** I have absolutely no idea, I am afraid.

**Ms SCRYMGOUR:** I mean is the Northern Territory government scoping to be able to know ...

**Mr McDONALD:** No. Look, I am not able to speak, I am afraid, on that level of detail about the program, simply because I have had no exposure or familiarity with the Tangentyere program at all.

**Mr CHAIRMAN:** Lynne has a question.

**Ms WALKER:** Just a quick one, this is hopefully a bit simpler. You said, Mark, that the package development report is being finalised. When is it expected that that report will be out and is it a report with recommendations which is then waiting for sign off from, is it the minister or CEO of the agency?

**Mr COFFEY:** That report is a normal report that is done through any of the SIHIP packages. That report goes to the SIHIP directors and there are some commercial negotiations that occur over that period where they hopefully will come to an agreement and sign off on that package of works, on that scope of works for that cost, so it will be done by the SIHIP directors.

**Ms WALKER:** Okay, and do you think that is a month away, six weeks away?

**Mr COFFEY:** It is some time away. The issue for us is not the housing that is relatively simple; it is the civil works which is problematic. You know, we are trying to retrofit an estate, I suppose, that has got civil works in there at varying standards and we are trying to establish exactly what standard we need to bring it up to, how we are going to do that, how much it is going to cost, etc etc.

**Mr CHAIRMAN:** Is it internal infrastructure or external?

**Mr COFFEY:** Internal.

**Mr CHAIRMAN:** (Inaudible).

**Mr COFFEY:** So the \$100m – under the terms of the sublease \$100m must be spent inside of the town camps.

**Mr CHAIRMAN:** This might be a technical question. Now, the town camps is an area, it has got a fence around it, there are roads inside that. Are those roads regarded as roads that are supplying external infrastructure or internal infrastructure?

**Mr COFFEY:** The roads are internal, so the infrastructure funding will be spent on those roads.

**Mr CHAIRMAN:** I have been checking with (inaudible) under the changes that happened there was going to be a new pot of money being supplied out of the National Partnership Agreement. External infrastructure was going to be removed from the SIHIP program and funded differently. Now, in the case of a normal town you would say that once you hit – well, I know (inaudible) this was raised at Wadeye – the SIHIP program funded the infrastructure to the fenceline and then when you got to the public road that was regarded as the money that came out of the other bucket. What you are saying is that your program covers everything including infrastructure on the road out of the SIHIP funding, not out of the other funding. Does that make sense?

**Mr COFFEY:** Up to the boundary of the town camp.

**Mr CHAIRMAN:** So what is the status of the roads in there? I mean I have seen the roads go in, are they public roads?

**Mr COFFEY:** Well, they are public roads in terms of there is no restriction from anyone going in there, but if you are talking about are they public roads owned by the council or the Northern Territory government then, no, they are not, because there is an underlying lease, either a special purpose lease or a Crown lease in perpetuity given to the Housing Association who have ultimate ownership of that.

**Mr CHAIRMAN:** So the Housing Association will have to maintain the roads?

**Mr COFFEY:** Not during the 40 year sublease. The Executive Director of Township Leasing has a 40 year sublease so then it is up to government during that period to maintain the assets within the town camp.

**Mr CHAIRMAN:** Just (inaudible) there, so the actual house block which has to be surveyed where the house has gone, that will be Territory Housing, then the roads within that lease again would be owned by the Commonwealth; is that correct?

**Ms SCRYMGOUR:** No.

**Mr McDONALD:** If I can step in there.

**Mr CHAIRMAN:** Yes.

**Mr McDONALD:** They are in fact owned by, under the terms of the lease, to the Northern Territory of Australia, which will be the Department of Lands and Planning, currently. However, during the course of the SIHIP building program that will effectively mean that they are part of a construction site for a good deal of the time. So you can say if there is an ownership here it is between the Alice Springs Transformation Plan and SIHIP in terms of the works that need to be undertaken.

**Ms SCRYMGOUR:** But that is only relevant (inaudible) to achieve these three years?

**Mr McDONALD:** Yes

**Ms SCRYMGOUR:** So what happens after that because that was my question at the start? What has been done in that time?

**Mr McDONALD:** And you did ask a query member is there anybody thinking about it? Well yes in terms is anybody thinking about it yes very much so but as Mark went on to talk about the (inaudible) example there are tenure issues that need to be developed and there is a working group looking at that and maybe by the time we get down the road three years there might be some other camps that might want to go down this we do not know but this needs to be explored and the three years gives us time, gives both governments time to think about what alternative arrangements might be better suited to the town camps for their normalisation and that can be talked through with the residents of the camps because as you know people's wishes and aspirations on those camps are very different from place to place. And you know what suits one camp may not suit other camps (inaudible) is perhaps further down the road than any of the others and that is why they preferred a different acquisition process and that is why the Commonwealth has acquired the land freehold and they will move on to something else and that will give us time to think about all those other issues.

**Mr CHAIRMAN:** Can I ask it is a slightly philosophical question but you are going to have a community like this suburb and it is going to have a road owned by Northern Territory government not by the camps and you are going to have houses that are going to be Territory Housing houses and you are saying it is going to be a normalised community? Then what happens to in a normal community the Council would own the road, the Council would rate the properties and I could ask could I move into one of those houses in that community, put my name on the Housing Commission Tenancy list that would not occur. The Commonwealth would own the road there would not be any racism and I would not be likely to get a house in that community.

**Mr McDONALD:** Hypothetical questions and all of that need to be worked through, through this normalisation process.

**Mr COFFEY:** But I can tell you now all the properties are rated and they are being rated from the time that we obtained land tenure the properties are rated. There is a process and the sublease outlines a number of these processes about consultation about who would be on the waitlist for housing within those town camps and we have undertaken to consult with town camp residents through their housing reference groups about who would be on the wait list but ultimately it is a matter for government to make that decision. It is public housing like anywhere else so that if there is a demonstrated need that someone requires a house but there is no housing on their town camp then they may be offered a house on another town camp. But obviously we need to take into account whether that would cause other issues are we going to mix one group with another that traditionally do not get on and is that going to cause problems and should we do it or not and that is a matter for Territory Housing.

**Mr CHAIRMAN:** But who would maintain the roads and (inaudible) rates will they?

**Mr COFFEY:** Once again that is up for negotiations. Under a normal subdivision you would excise the roads and the Council would take it up. We can not do that here because there is still the underlining ownership by the Housing Association.

**Mr CHAIRMAN:** Could not lease the road to the Council?

**Mr COFFEY:** Well we could. We could enter into an agreement with the Council where by they look after it but of course we would have to negotiate the terms of that agreement and so that is an option.

**Mr CHAIRMAN:** I just think it is like so complicated sometimes we are trying to do things but in the process we get (inaudible) levels of complexity.

**Mr McDONALD:** And of course you have got to see this as a work in process all of these issues need to be worked through I mean you talk about the roads for example and in a normal subdivision yes the Council would be looking after the roads but the Council's position would be that they already look after the road to a private estate because that is what these are. It is like if you think of the town camp as a block of units if you like a multi dwelling block of units, well the Council only looks after the road up to the kerb and then any internal roads within there the Body Corporate looks after.

**Mr CHAIRMAN:** But then NT Housing would own the lot?

**Mr McDONALD:** Yes.

**Mr CHAIRMAN:** What the difference is, you have got another group, the Commonwealth running the road.

**Mr McDONALD:** Yes.

**Mr CHAIRMAN:** (Inaudible) the Northern Territory government and so it is not – and then if you say an organisation if you are saying is a suburb more or less, that is what I am saying is a housing estate?

**Mr McDONALD:** Yes, and part of our job, how I see it, is to disentangle this stuff and come up with workable arrangements.

**Ms SCRYMGOUR:** I mean with the Commonwealth (inaudible) compulsory (inaudible) under the NTER which further leads to ...



**Mr CHAIRMAN:** I am just looking at the practicalities of what is happening because it seems like in the past you had the ghettos, you might say, on the outskirts or even in the middle of Alice Springs which is sort of not being regarded as part of the community to some extent, but there are pockets here that you are trying to bring into the community as whole I suppose is not as simple as it sounds.

**Mr COFFEY:** Well, there are some complexities because of the underlying land tenure. It is different to other parts of Alice Springs, but for the average person looking in there should be no difference. There is public housing looked after by government, there are roads that are looked after the government or council, there are public areas that will be looked after by government or maybe the residents, so for all intent and purposes we are trying to make it as standard as possible compared with the rest of Alice Springs.

**Mr CHAIRMAN:** So the roads you will be able to drive on?

**Mr COFFEY:** Yes, and you still can. You could always drive into those camps.

**Mr CHAIRMAN:** (Inaudible) there was always an important philosophy behind – a council can only fund a public road, not a private road. When you say this is only a little private estate or this is (inaudible), the council cannot interfere with what they doing on that road, unless it is its road.

**Mr McDONALD:** Well, expect that the council can do any road it likes if it has got the agreement and funding from the land owner. I mean, you know, they can deliver that as a service provider and that is one option that we will need to pursue.

**Mr COFFEY:** And, for instance, the Northern Territory government have funded the Alice Springs Town Council to deliver normalised rubbish services on the town camps. Now, that was just through an agreement that was done – council do not have to deliver those services, but it was a fee for service and it is happening.

**Mr CHAIRMAN:** Yes, I know (inaudible) that normal – with (inaudible) local government funding through the federal assistance grants for roads, they cannot use that money for (inaudible). That is what I am saying. If someone wants to give them a donation for something that is fine, but I just – I know this sounds a little bit micro in what I am looking at, but I think there are some important issues there from trying to formalise a town and trying to see where rates money goes and what the role of the local council is in relation to these areas are (inaudible).

I will let you get on, sorry. I got sidetracked a bit.

**Mr COFFEY:** So maybe I should just finish up about Action Strategy 2 because there are some other initiatives that we are doing. So the \$100m out of SIHIP money it covers civil works, it covers 85 new houses, it covers refurbishes of houses and rebuilds of those houses that require it. At the moment we are doing an early works package in those town camps which entails building eight new houses, the first one will be completed this Friday. We are refurbishing all existing houses in two town camps, being Palmers Camp and Ilparpa Camp which total 16 houses. The first of those refurbishments is completed on Friday and that is the one at Palmers Camp, and we are progressing the package development report to complete the rest of the works.

Now, that program under the terms of the sublease must be completed within five years of the sublease being signed and we are reasonably confident that once we get the full package approved that the works would probably take somewhere between two and three years.

**Mr WESTRA van HOLTHE:** Can you just remind me where Palmers Camp is?

**Mr COFFEY:** It is north end of town near the old Indoor Cricket Centre, so it is opposite Mt Nancy Camp. It is a very small camp; there are only five houses in there. Most of the Palmers live there.

**Mr CHAIRMAN:** Can we see any refurbishments?

**Mr COFFEY:** That refurbishment is the one where there has been a death. I mean it would be a great refurbishment to have a look at because they have done some really good work and it is completed. Iparpa are not yet complete and my understanding is they are a week or two away. I mean there is a possibility that you could look at them.

**Mr CHAIRMAN:** What are you doing with the people who have moved out of houses for your refurbishments?

**Mr COFFEY:** Territory Housing is working with them on various options whether they go and stay with family, whether they go out bush, whether they require additional accommodation so they work with them to see what is best to suit them.

**Mr McDONALD:** Yes they have set aside some houses in town to put people in on a temporary basis while their houses are being refurbished. They have reserved some of their urban housing for this. But not the same houses all the time I mean they do not want problems they are reserving some stock for this purpose on a rolling program.

**Mr COFFEY:** And some of the new houses that we are building now may well be used for that type of accommodation so that we rotate people through them as we refurbishing their houses. So there are a number of options.

**Mr CHAIRMAN:** (inaudible)

**Mr COFFEY:** So that is Action Strategy 2 under the Alice Springs Transformation Plan but there is another important Action Strategy 3 which Peter can get.

**Mr McDONALD:** And things are happening on that I mean our Action Strategy 3 is in regards to homelessness recognising that we have a lot of Aboriginal visitors to town that looks like increasing greatly over the next few years particular....

**Ms SCRYMGOUR:** What is that (inaudible)?

**Mr McDONALD:** I can not tell you at any given time what the numbers are. Numbers that you would be interested in I think are alarming a number of us is for example with regard to renal patients I understand that it is about 140 at the moment that need to either come to town regularly or be in town all of the time for treatment. The statistics show that they usually bring about four people in with them that came from bush the Health Department are anticipating that within the next 12 months to 2 years I think that number may increase to up to 500 based on their early diagnosis and that should be alarming everybody (inaudible)

**Ms WALKER:** 500 patients

**Mr McDONALD:** 500 patients. And is they all bring in four people then we have nowhere in this town to accommodate those people.

**Ms SCRYMGOUR:** (inaudible)

**Mr WESTRA van HOLTHE:** Just visitors

**Mr McDONALD:** That is health based visitors particularly for renal treatment.

**Ms SCRYMGOUR:** Do you exclude (inaudible) is the only government own housing or with the influx and we have got in most of the regions where there is an increase I mean the separate the renal patients but other visitors from the regions coming in to say it has impacted on Alice Springs both the houses but also the (inaudible) issue

**Mr McDONALD:** Well I can tell you what we are doing is part of this program but I do not really believe that it is going to address the numbers that we are going to be dealing with in town. We are building what we are calling at this point until we can come up with perhaps a more appropriate name the Alice Springs Accommodation Park the transformation plan has \$11m to construction and to provide for the operation of this facility for the next two years. This is to go on the site of the old (inaudible) club opposite the old times and in the showgrounds construction is already under way. Sitzler have been appointed to construct this facility they are already on site when we went to tender and they were awarded the successful contract. We have already got the fence up, we are engaging Aboriginal hostels to manage the facility for the first couple off years and we will be funding that from the funds that we have.

**Ms SCRYMGOUR:** How many places (inaudible)

**Mr McDONALD:** 150. It will accommodate 150.

**Ms SCRYMGOUR:** And it is temporary accommodation?

**Mr McDONALD:** Temporary accommodation. And we are looking particular at people with children and older people we are going to have a mixture of cabins sort of open air type camping shelters and some tents and the model for this come from successful operation that they had Shell running South Australia where the tents proved the very successful and I believe very popular for people for out bush.

**Ms SCRYMGOUR:** What is going to stop that (inaudible)

**Mr McDONALD:** It will be managed.

**Mr COFFEY:** Can I just clarify something you asked whether it was temporary accommodation the accommodation is not temporary it is for short term visitor accommodation. The accommodation is permanent there so the structures that we are putting in there are permanent structures...

**Ms SCRYMGOUR:** Yes, they will be permanent, but I am worried more about the actual visitation to the camp ...

**Mr COFFEY:** Yes.

**Ms SCRYMGOUR:** ... whether it is temporary or ...

**Mr McDONALD:** It is temporary. It has got to be temporary otherwise it will just fill up ...

**Ms SCRYMGOUR:** So it will deal with that transient movement from communities into Alice Springs and back again?

**Mr McDONALD:** Well, it will be run by AHL according to the sort of guidelines that they operate from and people will not be able to stay their permanently.

**Mr WESTRA van HOLTHE:** Cabins and tents?

**Mr McDONALD:** Cabins, shelters and tents.

**Mr WESTRA van HOLTHE:** Shelters.

**Mr McDONALD:** The sort of shelters we have in mind are the sort of thing that you see in a lot of camping areas where there are some low tables, there is an overhead to keep people out of the sun and the rain and there will be basic cooking facilities. There will also be meals provided as part of this, but people will be able to prepare their own meals if they wish.

**Mr COFFEY:** So there will be four standards of accommodation. There will be somewhere where people can go and just throw their swags down under a shelter and that will be pretty cheap, then there will be tents, then there will be some – like a bungalow, cabin type accommodation, then there will be some self-contained units, mainly for older people to stay at which will have self-contained facilities. So there are four different types of accommodation to try and cater for various needs.

But managed by Aboriginal Hostels, fully secure fence, CCTV security, fee for service, alcohol free, drug free. Run similar to Aboriginal Hostels hostels in town. No-one allowed in there that is drunk. All those sorts of facilities.

**Mr McDONALD:** And a public bus to the door.

**Mr WESTRA van HOLTHE:** And people will need to be qualified to stay there? There will be – (inaudible) people that (inaudible) ...

**Mr COFFEY:** Sure.

**Mr WESTRA van HOLTHE:** I mean a reason to be in town, a legitimate reason to be in town for medical reasons ...

**Mr COFFEY:** No.

**Mr WESTRA van HOLTHE:** ... or just someone that wants to come and visit and go drinking.

**Mr McDONALD:** No, I do not think that will promote ...

**Mr COFFEY:** No, it will be available for anyone that wants to stay there, as long as they comply with the rules that apply to that facility then anyone can stay there.

**Ms SCRYMGOUR:** So ...

**Mr WESTRA van HOLTHE:** And the \$11m – sorry, Marion, I was going ...

**Ms SCRYMGOUR:** No, you go.

**Mr WESTRA van HOLTHE:** The \$11m is for construction?

**Mr McDONALD:** \$11m, it covers the construction, the equipping of the place. We have funded AHL to set the place up and that includes everything including the plates and the bed

linen, if you like, and the operation of the facility for the first couple of years. Now, obviously, people are going to pay to stay there, but that does not cover the costs.

**Mr WESTRA van HOLTHE:** No. So two years with operational funding.

**Mr McDONALD:** Yes.

**Ms SCRYMGOUR:** Peter, I am not – sorry, Mr Chairman – and when you were saying before about renal patients and the almost (inaudible) of the numbers coming from remote communities into Alice Springs and that impact, how much work is being done within the Transformation group or that involves, I suppose, the Health Department, because one of the dangers of a place like this, that a lot of those beds will then be overtaken by just the emerging issues of the renal patients rather than (inaudible) (inaudible) holidays.

**Mr McDONALD:** They will not be set up specifically to look after people with medical needs in that regard, it will just be a place for people to camp and there will be no prequalification in terms of the medical condition and I do not think they do that anywhere else, but ...

**Ms SCRYMGOUR:** Yes. I think – but a lot of the Aboriginal Hostels ...

**Mr McDONALD:** Yes, but there are a couple of other proposals that are actually underway. One of them – and I mean we are also able to have funding, though we did not manage the funding directly, but there is something like \$13.4m under the National Economic Stimulus Package for a couple of other proposals, one of which is to rehabilitate the Anglicare Lodge, I think it is in Bath Street, which has been closed, I think, for the last 12 months, and that will be refurbished specifically to accommodate people with medical needs and will actually be run by the Health Department and I think by their own staff.

**Ms SCRYMGOUR:** So that will deal with short and long-term accommodation for renal patients or ...

**Mr McDONALD:** Well, no, that will be – I think that will provide about 35 rooms, I think, for people with medical needs and it will be run as an adjunct to the medical treatment that they receive in town. I still do not think it is going to address the numbers, but it is a good start.

We are also going to shortly commence construction when I say we the Northern Territory government will be managing the construction of transitional village at Percy Court which is just out past (inaudible) as you have passed the Old Timers there is a turn off on Percy Court and that will be a transitional village for high level support and cleaning wide skills training for people so people can go in there and receive training before they go into public housing. That is due for completion in December this year and the

**Mr WESTRA van HOLTHE:** And that is called?

**Mr COFFEY:** I am not sure what it will be called we are just calling it Percy Court Transitional Village (inaudible) I am sure it will get a name in due course but and the Salvation Army Hostel is boosting their capacity that there facility at (inaudible) Street and (inaudible) Street (inaudible) Avenue which is getting an extra eight beds and that when constructed should be finished in December and I think that is eight beds for homeless indigenous men.

**Mr CHAIRMAN:** You are saying in reality that this (inaudible) and on top of that (inaudible) Alice Springs ready to attract people in because it is (inaudible) major centre in a

rural community (inaudible) they do not have a place to stay so although this is a really interesting concept and I would be interested to see how it goes because I think here in Darwin maybe other places (inaudible) the reality is you are going to have a lot more visitors getting anywhere near (inaudible)

**Mr COFFEY:** But we are building 85 new houses if you leave them (inaudible) there is another 250 odd beds if you just have three people per house. I mean some of those houses may have five or six because there is capacity for additional people in the (inaudible) so that is going to cater for a lot then there is nearly 100 beds under those three projects we just talked about they are bringing on line. Then there are some other projects that we are assisting Territory government with to bring some other beds on line. (inaudible) Hostel that we want to use as transitional accommodation when we are moving people in and out of town camps while we are doing refurbishments so what we are doing is trying to compliment what we are doing on the town camps. And provide people with accommodation when they are visiting Alice Springs.

**Mr CHAIRMAN:** I think you should also be saying the positive side is that there is something happening this is a new concept (inaudible) on the surface you can say it is pretty cheap accommodation but if it actually gives some people security they have got a toilet, shower handy and you have got some security for people constructing their sleep or staying there. Aboriginal hostel seem to have legal reputation and I know the one in Tennant Creek always seems to be pretty well, keeps a pretty secure place all neat and tidy. And it will be interesting to see I suppose well only time can tell but I know we have got another group coming in but just quickly I know that you use it is about transformation for social issues, transformation town camps, homelessness what about jobs? Have you got any sort of long term targetal (inaudible) that people that are coming to this town (inaudible) have got nothing to do and there is no jobs is employment part of the big picture?

**Mr McDONALD:** Not in terms of our plan directly no. We do not have an employment component other than the requirement for instance through the SIHIP program where they maintain high levels of indigenous trainees throughout the process. There is no specific component in the transformation of land that involves employment.

**Mr COFFEY:** Can I just find out as well when the Alice Springs Transformation Plan was announced that priorities were set by Minister MacLean in terms of what, where our funding would be directed under the social support services, in terms of the visitor accommodation, in terms of the SIHIP Program and so that is our (inaudible) and there is a plan on page which we done from the concept of the Alice Springs Transformation Plan, happy to provide that to you, which outlines our priorities, what we are trying to achieve and who is involved.

**Mr WESTRA van HOLTHE:** Is there information – you have given us a lot of information about the (inaudible) is that included in this paper and it has got some details, because I have written a few things down that ...

**Mr COFFEY:** There is no – I mean this is like a strategic plan; it is more high level about what we are trying to achieve and some of the priority areas. It does not actually drill down about what we are doing specifically in different areas or anything like that.

**Ms WALKER:** As I understand at the outset you said that there are seven strategies that you are working across and I know we are running out of time fast (inaudible) three.

**Mr McDONALD:** No, there are three strategies.

**Ms WALKER:** Okay, so we have covered the three this morning ...

**Mr McDONALD:** Yes.

**Ms WALKER:** ... even though we have not ...

**Mr McDONALD:** Yes.

**Mr COFFEY:** Yes, there are three streams, but under the social support services ...

**Ms WALKER:** Seven groups or taskforces, did you say?

**Mr COFFEY:** ... there are seven action groups that are providing us with advice around our priority areas. So under the social issues our priority areas are alcohol rehabilitation, family support, family violence, early childhood, tenancy management, intensive case management. They were the priorities set by the Minister. Now, we have expanded those a little because obviously safety and security is a big thing and then alcohol comes into it, the actual consumption of alcohol and so there is a lot – and policing comes in, so there is a lot of interrelated activities that we are also trying to coordinate to complement what we are doing on the town camps.

**Ms SCRYMGOUR:** How does that coordination and – because, I mean you guys have not been doing it all, but you do have a number of groups set up – how is that – do you both coordinate those issues across those different working groups to make sure that people are actually implementing issues and are there barriers to that?

**Mr McDONALD:** Well, yes and yes. I mean, yes, we are coordinating it and I see our role as getting in there to inject some coordination and energy and to make sure that the funding which I see as largely as a one off opportunity from the Australian government for this, you know, has the most plug in value to the sort of things we are already delivering and we are using those focus groups to see where we can tack on to existing programs, where there are gaps and there are new programs and we can use this money to create a filler for those gaps and bring in people.

In some places we have been able to increase the resources available to them to deliver those programs and I think we also have to be a little careful that we do not go creating things that are all going to fall over in two years where the funding stops. So we are trying, if you like, to accelerate the programs, build on them, and use that momentum to carry forward and get the maximum value out of it and we coordinate across this. I mean, effectively there are two of us, two Executive Directors, to make sure that we have got coordination between the agencies of both the Commonwealth and the Northern Territory in this.

**Ms SCRYMGOUR:** Mr Chairman, if I ...

**Mr CHAIRMAN:** (Inaudible).

**Ms SCRYMGOUR:** Yes, I know, and I am conscious that we have got our next lot of witnesses, but I just want to ask you, Peter, and you, Mark, one of the – and I think it is substantial funding from the Commonwealth and it is fantastic, so we have got to try and get the outcome. There are a number of camps in Alice Springs – I mean one of the biggest issues is child protection and we look at the social issues – you are saying \$3m a community for children and the family through conferencing, that money that is going in – so out of the \$25m that is not to the Northern Territory government that is to Tangentyere?

**Mr McDONALD:** No, it is not Tangentyere.

**Mr COFFEY:** No, it goes to the best ...

**Mr McDONALD:** Yes.

**Mr COFFEY:** ... service provider. So there is a process where people can apply for funding and it is assessed and then ...

**Ms SCRYMGOUR:** Okay, so you put it all out to open tender and people apply to the tender?

**Mr McDONALD:** Well, not to tender so much, no. No, we are simply asking for submissions and we put out a set of guidelines of what we are looking at in terms of our strategic direction and the term of it.

**Ms SCRYMGOUR:** All right. So who – okay, so who provides that service into those town camps to deal with the social issues in terms of children – who deals with – can we get ...

**Mr McDONALD:** In this case?

**Ms SCRYMGOUR:** Can you take that on notice if you want to, but if we could get ...

**Mr McDONALD:** Yes, well – no, depending on which particular program, who is actually delivering it. For example, the Communities for Children thing is being run by Anglicare under the funding they have got, the family group conferencing by the Northern Territory Department of Health and Families and we have added on to their ...

**Ms SCRYMGOUR:** So I am trying to get the connection between Anglicare, NT government and the whole child protection – is that working, are we seeing the outcomes in terms of fixing our social issues on the town camps for those kids?

**Mr McDONALD:** Well, it is probably a bit early to say, given that we have only been up and running on these for about six months, but – and, in fact, they would not have had their money even for six months, I would not think, so I am not sure that I can confidently sit here and say that we can see the outcomes, but that is certainly something that we have got built into the projects and that there is a feedback process and we have to take that back to our steering committee – and remember that these agencies also have got – I do not know about Anglicare in this case, but certainly in terms of the government agencies, have got a reporting structure for their departmental outcomes.

**Mr COFFEY:** And can I just say this is not just for town camp residents. We are getting away from services just for town camp residents. It is a service for Indigenous people in Alice Springs which includes town camp residents and one of these, like the targeted family support services, that is to target those kids that are at risk of going into the child protection system and so Congress have been funded to do that, but they have to work with the Department of Health and Families and more particularly with FACS around identifying those children and working with them early so that they do not end up in the child protection system.

**Ms SCRYMGOUR:** And that is true, Mark, but what we are trying to ascertain is that – I mean you often get the criticism that government is not funding these programs or there is not enough funding on the ground in these communities to deal with this, so all I am trying to ascertain is, yes, there is substantial funding going in, who is it going to, who is ultimately responsible for this maze that we see on the ground. So the end goal is to stop or prevent children from getting into the child protection system, but how do we strengthen families to be able to – you know, so that kids are safe and happy? Who is getting that funding, how is



it happening, what is the coordination across government so that we can try and sort this out, because ...

**Mr COFFEY:** Yes.

**Ms SCRYMGOUR:** I mean at the end of the day it is all taxpayers' dollars. It does not belong to the Northern Territory or Commonwealth governments it is taxpayers' dollars and people have to be accountable. That is all we are trying to – we are not trying to point the finger at anyone, it is just trying to find the road map through this maze.

**Mr McDONALD:** But in terms of coordination, remember that the people involved in receiving these funds and the people in the agencies that have mainstream responsibility for these outcomes are on the same action group, so that there is a working arrangement for the coordination of this within our project and I am sure that those agencies have other forums as well where they regularly review these things.

**Ms SCRYMGOUR:** That is all.

**Mr COFFEY:** And as part of the funding agreement we stipulate in there that there needs to be that coordination and so we tie it with the funding and then the Department of the Chief Minister will oversee those funding agreements.

**Mr CHAIRMAN:** Look, we better wind it up there. Thank you very much for all that information. I am sure if we now know what has been given I might ask you to see where you are going.

**Mr McDONALD:** You do not have to.

**Mr CHAIRMAN:** I mean I think one of our problems was say you have said this at this meeting, six months down the track, well, have you done it (inaudible).

**Mr WESTRA van HOLTHE:** (Inaudible).

**Mr COFFEY:** Yes, both on FAHCSIA and DCM.

**Mr McDONALD:** Yes.

**Mr CHAIRMAN:** I have learnt a lot more about something that I hardly even knew existed and just ...

**Mr COFFEY:** The locals know it is here. The locals know about it.

**Ms SCRYMGOUR:** And that is good.

**Mr CHAIRMAN:** That is right.

**Mr COFFEY:** We will be at the show so come and visit us.

**Mr CHAIRMAN:** All right. Well, you can come and visit me at the Freds Pass Show this weekend. Some of the issues you are talking about are not entirely Central Australia.

**Mr COFFEY:** No.

**Mr CHAIRMAN:** I mean the same issue is happening in Katherine and probably Tennant Creek, but it is certainly happening in Darwin because people drift into the towns. I am really

interested in this accommodation model because it is probably going to come up for some criticism. I do not think people ...

**Ms SCRYMGOUR:** But it is a good start on, is it Nhulunbuy, it is (inaudible) ...

**Mr CHAIRMAN:** Well, that is true. I should have said the whole of the Territory and it would have saved me any criticism, but I think what you are doing is interesting and I think well worth us following up on.

So thank you very much for your time today and we appreciate it very much.

Meeting ends.