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### **Work Stimulus Package**

#### **Mr HIGGINS to CHIEF MINISTER**

On the weekend the Treasurer announced an immediate work stimulus package that will not benefit a single Territory homeowner and will not generate a single job until the middle of next year. This is a classic case of policy on the run. Over a thousand Territorians have already signed a petition asking your government to reinstate the Home Improvement Scheme, which was getting real money flowing through the economy, creating real work and jobs. When will your government start listening to Territorians?

#### **ANSWER**

Madam Speaker, I thank the Leader of the Opposition for his question because it provides an opportunity to explain the difference between the two parties.

The Leader of the Opposition's priority is whether homeowners are personally getting a benefit to their home. We have said we have to get a benefit to the taxpayer when we invest this money and create this stimulus. We want to see jobs created and supported, and a benefit to the taxpayer. The CLP is looking purely at whether an individual homeowner gets a benefit on their personal property.

We have made a decision to be consistent with our policy approach that we would create stamp duty relief to convince Territorians to stay in the Territory. The renovations scheme is attached to that to reward people for making that choice to stay, and to create a stimulus and drive our policy intention to see more Territorians calling the Territory home. It is a dedicated, consistent and thought-through policy. How can we get Territorians to stay while stimulating the Territory economy at the same time? It is a responsible decision that sees a benefit to the taxpayer because more Territorians are choosing to buy and invest here, and call the Territory home.

On the weekend the Treasurer, very responsibly, announced a stimulus package for Territory jobs, designed to target particular industries, keeping Territorians in jobs, and providing a benefit to the taxpayer. How do we get a responsible and sensible benefit to the taxpayer?

What we hear from the opposition is not, how can you support Territory jobs and the economy, and get a return to the Territory taxpayer, but, very specifically, how can you get a targeted return to an individual homeowner. You have to think more broadly and more responsibly than that. That is what we are doing as a government. How can you get return to the taxpayer and create a stimulus at the same time? That is what we are doing. We are driving our economic agenda very carefully and deliberately. How can we support Territory jobs and get a return to the taxpayer?

Unlike the CLP when it was last in government, and now, we want to be responsible with how we invest Territory taxpayer dollars to create a stimulus, create and support jobs and, at the same time, have the Territory taxpayer be able to point at something and say, 'We got a return. I can see where the taxpayer dollars went and what the return is to the community.'

Community grants—a benefit directly to the community. What I announced today is about a direct benefit to the steel manufacturers of the Northern Territory, who are at risk. How do we target and support them?

The refrain from the CLP is consistent. All it is measuring stimulus by is how it can get a benefit to a person in their own back yard. Reticulation systems—we are thinking bigger and more broadly than that. We will create the stimulus, support jobs and get a return to the Territory taxpayer, because we are a responsible government.

### **SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION Work Stimulus Package**

#### **Mr HIGGINS to CHIEF MINISTER**

From the small business side, Melanie Berard from Paving the Way NT described the Home Improvement Scheme as a godsend. She said, 'I'm a small business and I'm really feeling the pinch now that the scheme has been scrapped. At this time of year our trade normally flourishes. Now that the scheme has been changed over to first home buyers I have not had one inquiry.'

Chief Minister, what do you have to say to Melanie and the many others in small business like her?

## **ANSWER**

We are investing directly to benefit small business. The \$22m stimulus package is much more than the HIS. We have the benefit going directly to first home buyers, and the home renovation scheme. We have works being brought forward. We have a multitude of works happening that are targeted at small, medium and large packages across the Territory and across sectors to make sure we are driving support for Territory jobs.

We are doing it responsibly and making sure Territory taxpayers can see the return on their investment, which is the responsible decision. That is how you create stimulus and get a policy outcome at the same time. We will be responsible about how we invest Territory taxpayer dollars, unlike the irresponsible CLP over the last four years, which sold and spent everything, and then borrowed some more, left the Territory in difficult budget constraints and never planned for the INPEX construction wind down. We are here to clean up the CLP mess, and that is what we will do.

### **Economic Stimulus**

#### **Ms NELSON to MINISTER for INFRASTRUCTURE, PLANNING and LOGISTICS**

Can you inform the House how the NT Government's \$22m package is helping to stimulate the economy and grow jobs? What has been the response to this package?

## **ANSWER**

Madam Speaker, I thank the member for her question. We have had some very positive responses to the announcement we made about the \$22m Immediate Works Stimulus Package, which will have an impact right across the Northern Territory. It will impact places like Katherine, where community groups and not-for-profits will be able to upgrade their facilities. Public housing will get the upgrades it needs so more families in need can get into public housing. We will see steel packages across the Northern Territory to benefit our parks and sporting groups, providing important infrastructure.

This government has made a very deliberate decision to make sure we stick to the commitment we made to Territorians before the election that there will be no handbrakes put on the economy and we will support local jobs and local businesses, and that is exactly what we are doing.

We made changes to the first home owner scheme, including a home renovation grant, to keep more people in the Northern Territory. We have fast-tracked \$120m worth of our election commitments to support a broader sector of the construction industry and more local jobs and businesses when it is most needed, as we know there will be some real challenges in the next 12 to 18 months.

We have also ensured we have given a bigger injection into this financial year to support tradies, small business, jobs and the Territory economy by ensuring we are putting the economic stimulus there. Yes, there is a significant difference between our position on how to do that and the opposition's position on how to do it. They are very supportive of their Home Improvement Scheme, which is short-term stimulus.

We have taken a different approach. We are not only aiming to deliver short-term stimulus to support tradies, jobs and business; it is also about the long-term gain to the broader community of the Territory. This is about ensuring that short-term infrastructure investment—there is a long-term return for Territorians. We will see better community infrastructure, multicultural halls, churches, sporting organisations and not-for-profit groups with more capacity to do important work to support the broader Territory community.

It will be right across the Northern Territory. That is what we are targeting our immediate works stimulus package towards. It is not only a short-term stimulus, but a long-term gain for the Territory.

### **Infrastructure Stimulus Package**

#### **Mrs FINOCCHIARO to MINISTER for HOUSING and COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

Yesterday the Treasurer announced \$5m towards repairs and upgrades to urban public housing. This was after the Treasurer realised that the immediate works stimulus package was, in fact, not so immediate and apparently not so much of a stimulus either. Perhaps, minister, you can tell us when the tender will be released for these works, how long it will take for the tender to be awarded, how many businesses will be

allowed onto the panel, whether they need CAL accreditation, when they will start to be allocated work and when they will start getting paid.

**ANSWER**

Madam Speaker, I thank the Member for Spillett for her question. We acknowledge the \$5m stimulus for public housing as part of the \$22m stimulus package to create jobs. I met with the Department of Housing and Community Development yesterday, and it has already started. We are on the ground running, and we commend the Treasurer for this part of the stimulus package. It is about public housing and addressing waiting times, and improving dwellings for Territorians living in public housing.

As you know, we already have panel contracts. We are already rolling out programs. There is \$4.48m in repairs and maintenance just in Alice Springs under the existing public housing program. It is already happening, and the Treasurer has given Territorians an additional \$5m.

It is not just about the traditional way of doing business. The Treasurer has said that we want to see that spread right across the sector and the community. Yesterday some officials and I spoke with the department about making sure we gathered up all the possible contractors. We can create a new line of panel contractors to make sure more Territorians are involved in the delivery of this very beneficial stimulus, which will create jobs.

Not only is the Treasurer and Michael Gunner's Labor government delivering for Territorians in an infrastructure space and jobs—let us face it, we have much more to say about jobs in this place after the last four years. The only stimulus the CLP left us was the narrative for a new book, called *Crocs in the Cabinet*. I hope that sells well, Member for Spillett, because a local business in the mall is selling it. Territorians need to know the story.

This government is about jobs. It is not just about a stimulus package but people's livelihoods. We know Territorians in better housing have better health outcomes, education outcomes ...

**Mrs FINOCCHIARO:** A point of order, Madam Speaker! Relevance. The minister has not answered any of my questions. How long will it take for the tender to be awarded? How many businesses will be on the panel? Will they need CAL accreditation? When will the work start?

**Madam SPEAKER:** Member for Spillett, it is not a point of order. The minister still has time to answer your questions directly. Minister, you have the call.

**Mr McCARTHY:** Member for Spillett, for your information, once again, it started yesterday when the Treasurer ...

**Mrs Finocchiaro:** What started yesterday?

**Mr McCARTHY:** The planning, the delivery and the work for this. We are already delivering repairs and maintenance programs, and this is an additional \$5m, welcomed by Territorians and the government. It looks like the only person in this Chamber who does not welcome it is the Member for Spillett.

### **Steel Industry – Government Investment**

**Mr KIRBY to CHIEF MINISTER**

Can you explain how the government's \$5m investment in the steel industry will support local jobs and why this is so important to the Territory economy?

**ANSWER**

Madam Speaker, I thank the member for Port Darwin for his question. He was with me when, in opposition, we toured, with the Manufacturers Council, steel manufacturers who were struggling. I appreciate the time he took, with me, to listen to their concerns. The steel manufacturers of the Northern Territory have been talking for a long time about the pressure they are under and that they are currently vulnerable.

Part of the work we have been doing since we came to government is the very deliberate process of making changes to buy local, particularly to capital grants, then restructuring the pipeline of infrastructure works and, now, the immediate stimulus package. It has been very much about making sure we give local

businesses a fair crack and when we provided capital grants locals got a fair crack at that also, getting the infrastructure pipeline worked out. This money we are getting flowing locally now, through the stimulus package, is much more targeted at the small workers.

We want to support and create Territory jobs. It is critical that we do. We were elected on a platform of getting the money flowing locally, which is what we are doing, providing certainty and restoring confidence. We are taking a very deliberate approach to how we do this to make sure the Territory taxpayer gets a return.

One of the returns to the Territory taxpayer is a functioning, viable manufacturing industry in the Northern Territory. We cannot afford to lose our steelies—competition at the market place and having interstaters dictate the price. We have to keep that space in the Territory. We have designed a stimulus package around how we can support steel manufacturers in the Northern Territory, against needs. We said to the departments, 'What are the things you need that are dependent upon steel?', so we can make sure that not only are we stimulating the local economy, creating and supporting jobs and supporting the steel manufacturers, but also getting a return to the taxpayer, which is crucial. We want to be responsible with how we invest taxpayer dollars.

Announced today in this \$5m stimulus package for the steel industry is works bringing forward \$1.2m for more bus shelters, \$300 000 for crocodile traps, \$1.2m for shade structures in parks across the Territory, \$1.25m for shade structures for recreation, \$0.4m for shade shelters on the Larapinta Trail, \$0.3m for picnic tables for parks, \$60 000 for park barbecues, \$20 000 for bike racks, \$200 000 for an equipment shelter, \$8000 for bollards and \$100 000 for fabricated fencing, not off the shelf.

These are works that go out in small packages that benefit small businesses in the NT. Very crucially and deliberately, we are targeting the early part of next year, from 1 February to 30 June, before our budget kicks in on 1 July, to make sure we are providing certainty for small, medium and large businesses about what we are doing.

It is a very deliberate, specifically-targeted policy that gets a return to the taxpayer and helps the industries that we know are vulnerable to keep that manufacturing base here. It is a very carefully thought out, consulted on and considered policy that helps and supports small business in the NT.

### **Indigenous Housing Investment**

#### **Mr GUYULA to MINISTER for HOUSING and COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

Of the \$1.1bn investment in remote housing over 10 years, how much will be allocated to homelands? Will Indigenous leaders be able to decide where those houses are built or will we be subject to decisions from foreigners about what is best for our people?

#### **ANSWER**

Madam Speaker, I thank Member for Nhulunbuy for his question. The \$1.1bn over 10 years will be for Indigenous regional and remote housing on communities. The homeland program is separate. This government provided more money for the Homelands Extra Allowance, to do repairs and maintenance on homeland housing.

You have hit on a very important point. The Commonwealth cashed up a deal with the CLP on homelands in the last term. It gave the CLP a cash sum and then handed the responsibility to the Northern Territory Government. It is a major responsibility, as you would know. This government is working through a process of how we deal with new infrastructure on homelands. We have a plan to maintain existing infrastructure; it is about new infrastructure.

I was very privileged to attend a full meeting of the ABA, along with my colleagues, the Members for Arafura and Stuart, where there was a \$40m investment in homelands on the table. The ABA has come to the table in terms of the Labor government's policy around co-contribution. We have to get smart and think in terms of how we can generate these important funds for new infrastructure in homelands.

Going back to the \$1.1bn, a record investment, do not forget that we want to take this to the table. I have had a letter from the federal minister, Mr Scullion, to meet. I am very pleased that he has made contact, and I will do my best at that table.

Member for Nhulunbuy, it is about leveraging the Commonwealth Government to match the Northern Territory funding, if not provide more, to create the next national partnership agreement on Indigenous housing and take it on over the next 10 years. In parallel will be homelands, and we are serious about working with homelands ...

**Ms LAMBLEY:** A point of order, Madam Speaker! Standing Order 110: relevance. The member asked specifically how much will be spent on homelands housing.

**Mr McCARTHY:** Madam Speaker, the member was talking about the \$1.1bn. That is for Indigenous remote housing. As I was telling you, it is really important that we work out new ways of funding homelands and new infrastructure programs. We are serious about that and doing it in partnership with communities, not dictating, like our \$1.1bn investment.

### **Palliative Care — Alice Springs**

#### **Mr McCONNELL to MINISTER for HEALTH**

How is this government investing in the community of Alice Springs to improve palliative care services and support to families during the end of life?

#### **ANSWER**

Madam Speaker, I thank the member for his question. End-of-life care is a very important time in a person's life, particularly for the family supporting them. It is something many of us do not like to speak about, but we must make sure we have provision for it in the Health sector.

Members will be aware that the Alice Springs community has been formally advocating for a dedicated palliative care facility over the past year, but I think also for a long period before that. It is something a number of members in this House have been involved with. I met with the Alice Springs members of Palliative care in the NT in September to hear their concerns about end-of-life care. They are looking for and their focus is on providing a facility that focuses on addressing the needs of the patient and their family during what will always be a difficult time.

It is more than just bricks and mortar; it is about having a dedicated team of staff who are skilled and accomplished in the specialised area of palliative care, something I saw first-hand when visiting the Darwin facility. Many of my family members, friends and members of my community have utilised the Darwin facility.

We acknowledge that over the term of the former CLP government the funding was secured from the federal government for the palliative care unit, although whether that would be a multipurpose unit was discussed. As I understand, the proposal was to mix palliative care patients with long-stay rehabilitation or possibly elderly patients.

Speaking with the Members for Stuart, Braiting, Namatjira and Araluen, the Central Australia-based members, we believe this facility should be a 10-bed palliative care unit. I have advised the department that is the direction this government would like to take. This is a \$6.3m project, which is jointly funded by the Australian Government. We acknowledge its contribution of \$5.3m. The Northern Territory Government will provide \$1m.

As the Minister for Health, I encourage all members of this House, if they would like to visit the Darwin facility at the Royal Darwin Hospital campus, to come and see what this is like and experience it firsthand. It provides a home-like environment. Each bedroom has outdoor access to a courtyard, there is a communal lounge area and meeting rooms. The palliative care unit in Darwin is located on the hospital campus, but away from busy public areas. It will also be so with the site identified in Alice Springs.

There has been extensive community consultation to find a culturally suitable name for the facility. That is currently being considered by the Central Australian health board. The design has been completed. The exceptional development permit is going through process. We will be looking to a construction tender being released shortly.

I thank every member in this House and acknowledge those members from Central Australia who lobbied the government to ensure the views of those Central Australian representatives were heard.

### **Coolalinga Shopping Centre – Stuart Highway Crossings**

#### **Mr WOOD to MINISTER for INFRASTRUCTURE, PLANNING and LOGISTICS**

With the new shopping centre at Coolalinga due to be opened mid-next year, there is no doubt there will be a lot more traffic travelling along and across the Stuart Highway. The present crossing near the United fuel stop is already a dangerous crossing, as shown by the accidents or near accidents that occur there. Could you please say whether there will be a new signalised crossing constructed before the new shopping complex is opened and, if not, when will it happen? What alternatives are you putting in place in the meantime?

#### **ANSWER**

Madam Speaker, I thank the Member for Nelson for his important question. We all want safe roads, and Coolalinga is a classic example of a fast-paced development. The roads infrastructure has not really kept up with the changes in that area.

There are more changes to come, with the new shopping centre coming online—Coolalinga Central—and there have been some significant issues there, especially in front of the United service station and the service road. Then there is the Stuart Highway and the median strip, and cars are trying to drive across from the service station to the service road. I have seen near accidents there. It is a dangerous intersection.

In 2011 there was one crash; in 2013 there was one crash; in 2014 there were two crashes; in 2015 there were four crashes; and in 2016, from January to May, there have been nine crashes. That is a significant leap, so we need to do something. A permanent change will be made there, and a very big project will roll out in the next Dry Season.

The design of that will be worked through. We will make sure the business community and the broader rural community are spoken to about it to ensure they can feed back into that process with their ideas. There will be a significant roads project that will look how people can use that section of road safely to interact with the businesses and services up and down the Stuart Highway.

Signals and so forth will be part of that discussion, but we will have road engineers informing so we can put the best and safest design in place. In the interim we need something in place, because it is very dangerous there. The department has been working on some changes to that intersection, which will still allow for people travelling south to turn in to United and people travelling north to turn onto the service road. We will stop people crossing cross over into the middle. People will still be able to get to the other side of the road, but they will have to drive an extra couple of hundred metres up the road to turn around and come back. It will be an inconvenience for people, but to allow that to continue action, especially with the rain and knowing the crash statistics and the dangers there, is too much of a risk.

In the meantime there will be a short-term solution to increase safety, but there will be long-term, significant changes to ensure the traffic management in Coolalinga matches the infrastructure. There will be a lot of work there, Member for Nelson. Thank you for your question. It is very important.

### **Housing – Stimulus Package**

#### **Ms AH KIT to MINISTER for HOUSING and COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

The previous government's failure to manage the economy has left Territory businesses facing tough times. How is the government supporting local jobs while investing in public housing?

#### **ANSWER**

Madam Speaker, I thank the Member for Karama for her question. Essentially, the stimulus package is in response to a slowing economy. There is no doubt that slowing economy what was inherited from the previous regime, who were often more focused on their own jobs than the jobs of Territorians.

I am very proud to be part of the government and the Treasurer's announcement of the \$22m stimulus package. Part of that stimulus package is \$5m for repairs and upgrades to urban public housing, which will provide a boost for our local construction industry. The \$5m boost will stimulate the construction sector through repairs and maintenance, and it will be focused on the Territory's urban public housing stock. This

will create a pipeline of work for small to medium contractors. It will create this pipeline of work for Territorians in public housing, to deliver better outcomes in public housing.

It will also be of great assistance to tradies and businesses that want to be in the business of delivering better-quality housing for Territorians. We are very interested in doing business with Territory small to medium businesses and in creating jobs. We are not only interested in the amenity and structure of public housing; we are also focused on reducing waiting times.

**Mrs Finocchiaro** interjecting.

**Mr McCARTHY:** That was part of the conversation I had yesterday, Member for Spillett, when this started in the Department of Housing and Community Development.

Struggling Territory tradies, thanks to four years of chaos and dysfunction of the CLP government, will have the opportunity to deliver new upgrades. They will be focused on things like roofing, fences, bathrooms and kitchens. It will be about public housing stock in the urban areas.

Labor's boost to housing repairs and maintenance will deliver better housing for Territorians. It will be about creating and filling a gap that was created by bad management over the last four years. We are looking forward to being part of that development with Territorians, for Territorians.

### **Warren Park Rugby League Facility Upgrades**

**Mr HIGGINS to MINISTER for TOURISM and CULTURE**

We have seen government policy on the run and scant regard for what Territorians are thinking and saying. We had an announcement in relation to a rugby league facility at Warren Park, one that is to benefit one club only, South Darwin. If this is being fast-tracked, what is the basis of the \$25m? Where is the design? Is there cash allocated to the project? When will it commence and how long will the construction period be? Which rugby league clubs did you consult with and what is the government's plan for Richardson Park?

**ANSWER**

Madam Speaker, I thank the Opposition Leader for his question, one that I am quite surprised to receive from him given the history of this project.

**Mr Higgins:** I know all about it.

**Ms MOSS:** I know you know all about it; we all do. I will say, right off the bat, this is something that will—that was a sport pun but it was the wrong code. You said this will benefit one club; this is about a home for NRL NT. Rugby league is one of our most popular sports and this is a commitment we are very proud of, making sure NRL NT gets an appropriate home in the Territory.

I was very pleased to announce that the government is fast-tracking this piece of sporting infrastructure in time for the Arafura games, a \$25m project, which has been warmly welcomed. It is at Warren Park for the benefit of the rugby league community.

**A member:** At the home of sport.

**Ms MOSS:** It is the home of sport. It will deliver for NRL and our sporting community more broadly. The stadium will be the new home for rugby league in the Northern Territory and an administrative base for NRL NT to grow the code. Importantly, we have been speaking to the peak body, NRL NT, for some time, and Nigel Roy, who joined me at the announcement of the fast-tracking of the Warren Park project, spoke about the consultation within clubs and how the biggest issue they raised was a home for NRL NT. That is exactly what we are committed to and what we will deliver.

We have been speaking to South Darwin sporting club; it is at the table and appreciates the willingness of the peak body and others to come to the table and speak about this project. I have no doubt it will continue to drive up the numbers in this sport, and I believe Warren Park is the natural home for NRL NT.

This went to the PAC after what happened last time, and the submission was very clear that the appropriate home for NRL NT is be Warren Park. It is a brilliant project and it will deliver great things. We are very much looking forward to keeping you informed.



### **Multicultural Community – Funding**

#### **Mrs WORDEN to MINISTER for TERRITORY FAMILIES**

After spending the last few months meeting a large number of local multicultural groups, I am really impressed with their work ethic and collective wish to maintain their rich culture whilst truly embracing the Australian way of life. How will the Territory's multicultural organisations benefit from the community organisation grants program that was announced yesterday as part of the \$22m stimulus package?

#### **ANSWER**

Madam Speaker, I thank the Member for Sanderson for her question. I also take this opportunity to thank her for her hard work in this area. She has been meeting people and attending lots of events in Darwin. I agree that this is a really important group of Territorians who are proud of their culture and identity.

This \$22m stimulus will not only support jobs; it will also support our multicultural communities. There is \$10m of that \$22m available for community and not-for-profit groups, for grants up to the value of \$100 000 for much-needed repairs and upgrades to facilities and existing assets. The NT Government will match, dollar for dollar, up to another \$100 000 on top of this.

How will this benefit our multicultural community? Our multicultural community consists of many community facilities, from cultural clubs, centres and meeting halls to iconic buildings and places of worship, many of which are growing and require new or upgraded facilities. These facilities showcase the contributions of our multicultural community and often provide entertainment, food and events for the broader community.

Many of our multicultural communities in the Territory share their infrastructure with other cultural groups and not-for-profit organisations. These truly are community spaces, and this is about investing in the community for the benefit of the community. These partnerships of sharing infrastructure not only provide space for community groups but enhance our cultural diversity and demonstrate what a cohesive environment we, as Territorians, embrace.

We will sustain existing relationships under this program, but will also work to encourage and foster new ones throughout our multicultural Territory.

I am very proud to be the minister responsible for multicultural affairs. The Territory's multicultural communities are not just an asset to our social inclusivity, but also our economy. Migrants have high employment and participation rates. They bring skills, investment and innovation, and drive consumer demand for the Territory.

We can expect this package to increase opportunity for the tourism sector through increased cultural activities. We believe this fund will create a sense of belonging. As the Chief Minister said, it is about making sure when we spend precious taxpayer dollars we get the best benefit for the whole of the community.

### **Law and Order in Alice Springs**

#### **Mrs LAMBLEY to CHIEF MINISTER**

Law and order is the number one issue of concern for people in Alice Springs. Crime in Alice Springs is skyrocketing. In recent weeks there have been multiple incidents of rock throwing, vandalism, assaults, muggings and antisocial behaviour across the board. Just in the last two weeks my electorate office window was smashed and my 16-year-old daughter was in the mall and her girlfriend had her bag snatched. It is affecting everyone very personally. What will you do to stop crime in Alice Springs?

#### **ANSWER**

Madam Speaker, I thank the Member for Araluen for her question. I am sorry to hear about the personal circumstances. It is not a good thing to hear. This issue should be taken seriously on a number of fronts. As Police minister I take it seriously in the police space, and we are trying to coordinate a response in a number of ways.

We took a promise of \$750 000 extra towards after-hours youth services to the election, which the Minister for Territory Families is working on. We always want to be responsive to antisocial behaviour in Alice Springs.

Something else we are working on, which is being coordinated through my area of the Department of the Chief Minister in Alice Springs, is action with the Alice Springs Town Council, Power and Water, police and other stakeholders—it takes a coordinated response, especially in a small place like Alice, to make sure everyone is talking and working together—to address the blackspot area at the base of Anzac Hill. We are looking at there are additional lights at (inaudible) park, which is being looked at by council. There is a problem area at the back of a nearby business, which DCM is looking at.

This was an area I toured with police when I was last in Alice Springs. I travelled with police to these areas to discuss how we are responding—the installation of CCTV cameras, additional patrols by police and security firm workers, working with department of Transport to see if it can reduce the number of rocks there, which is obviously very difficult. They are some of the fundamental things we are looking at.

It was a good experience to spend four of five hours with police that day, on the different floors, in the patrol car, in the mall on the Segways, talking about the work they are doing and how they try to be agile in response to complaints and concerns they receive. They take it very seriously.

I spent time on the beat with police there. We want to focus on the after-hours youth service work. There are other things we are doing in regard to DV. We have a transition plan to bring in the BDR. I welcomed the Member for Araluen's comment during the campaign about returning to the Banned Drinker Register. We want to have a transition plan. We do not want to scrap things the CLP introduced, go to nothing and then introduce something. We want a transition plan into the Banned Drinker Register and a scheme that works around that.

We are trying to be careful and manage what we do—responsive at the short-term end, working with police and the town council et cetera. I have not touched upon any detail in this answer, but, long-term, we have to make a generational difference in how we invest in kids. That is the long-term answer. We must have responses for the short term, which is the coordinated action directly around incidents; the medium term, to do with youth services and what they do to try to get to troubled kids before they become trouble; and the long term—how we break the cycle with kids and investment in that area.

### **Government Employee Housing in Remote Communities**

#### **Mr HIGGINS to MINISTER for PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT**

Your government has promised to reward government employees who are local to remote communities with access to government employee housing, that is, every local Aboriginal Community Police Officer, nurse, Aboriginal Health Worker, teacher, assistant teacher and so on. Can you tell us the number of government employees who are local to the remote communities they work in?

#### **ANSWER**

Madam Speaker, I thank the Leader of the Opposition for his question. Yes, I can tell you. I also met with the Public Service Commissioner and we started the work on the analysis of the important public servants who work in regional and remote communities, who, for the first time ever, will have access to government employee housing.

Once again, the Leader of the Opposition seems to think it all needs to be addressed yesterday and if you did not address it yesterday, then you are a failing government. After four years sitting very close to that seat, Leader of the Opposition, I could give you 33 minutes on that type of attitude. However, I will be positive, because this policy is positive.

We are not only assessing the infrastructure in regional and remote communities, and assessing and building our knowledge of the capacity of organisations, particularly Indigenous organisations, to deliver the work, we are now assessing the public sector employees in regional and remote communities.

The decision is about the allocation of housing as the stock comes forward. Remember, this is a 10-year program. This is a significant investment; \$200m will be invested in new government employee housing, additional to what the government always spends over 10 years. It will be very important to then consult and get the community making the decisions on who will be allocated the first government employee

houses that roll out. I hope the community acknowledge the long-serving, hard-working assistant teachers, who have worked in that sector for years.

**Mrs FINOCCHIARO:** A point of order, Madam Speaker! Standing Order 110: relevance; it was a very direct and simple question that my colleague asked. How many employees will get housing?

**Madam SPEAKER:** That is not a point of order.

**Mr McCARTHY:** Madam Speaker, I am sorry the Member for Spillett does not comprehend the nature of a 10-year program and a new policy that has never been conducted in the Territory. What did the CLP ever do about government employee housing? What did the CLP do in 27 years? I will take you back before the last dysfunctional four years; let us go back 27 years. I was on the ground. I will provide those details as they come forward and as we start to roll out this program. It is as simple as that, and that is an honest answer.

### Education Funding

#### Ms UIBO to MINISTER for EDUCATION

How will Labor's promise to provide \$300 000 for every school benefit the Northern Territory? When will schools start to receive this funding and how will it support the economy and grow jobs?

#### ANSWER

Madam Speaker, I thank the member for her question. New and improved school infrastructure supports children's education and provides local jobs through a continuous stream of projects to support the Northern Territory's economic growth. This government is providing \$300 000 to every Territory school for upgrades and refurbishments.

Yesterday every government school received advice from the Department of Education on the process and time frames for the program. The timing of the first round application process aligns with school planning for 2017. Expressions of interest have been called for from schools, with the projects ready to be tendered from the beginning of next financial year. The Department of Education is also providing information and support sessions to assist small remote schools applying for the program as well. The Department of Education is working with the non-government school sector to determine the process for its schools and its access to this initiative.

**Mrs FINOCCHIARO:** A point of order, Madam Speaker! Standing Order 241; can the minister table the document she is reading from?

**Madam SPEAKER:** Minister, do you wish to table the document or are they your private notes?

**Ms LAWLER:** It has my private notes on it.

More than 30 projects will be rolled out in round one of the initiative. Schools will look at building renovation work such as tiling, painting, paving, gardening, irrigation, upgrades to front offices, sandpits and water play areas, all the practical things that schools want, which also give employment opportunities to our tradies.

We believe the choice of where to spend the money is best left to the schools, as they understand their students' and community's needs. Schools will also be able to contribute funds from other sources towards larger projects. Schools that fundraise and have additional dollars can put some additional money in so they can undertake a larger project.

To maximise efficiency and assist industry to complete projects, planning will be undertaken to run projects in conjunction with existing planned repairs and maintenance programs. Opportunities to group together projects in regional and remote areas will also be explored. In areas like Yuendumu in Central Australia it might mean linking in with Willowra or Nyirripi schools, which are relatively close.

This initiative is great news for the construction industry and jobs, boosting the local economy in a period when we are facing some real challenges. School communities are excited about this initiative. When I have visited schools, principals and councils have told me it will be beneficial to allow schools to undertake projects that will make a difference to their community, as well as benefit student outcomes.

### **Fishing Investment**

#### **Mr COLLINS to MINISTER for PRIMARY INDUSTRY and RESOURCES**

How is the government delivering on its \$50m commitment to support recreational fishing in the Territory?

#### **ANSWER**

Madam Speaker, I thank the Member for Fong Lim for the question. What a wonderful opportunity to talk about fishing in parliament, especially recreational fishing. What a story we have to tell!

While the CLP, the last government, were fighting amongst themselves, we were fishing and listening to Territorians and recreational fishermen. We took a plan in, and Territorians supported it—a \$50m investment into recreational fishing in the Northern Territory, after listening and planning what is needed to give this precious opportunity to visit the Territory—to lure people to the Territory, catch the tourism market and net some real dollars for the Territory.

**Mr WOOD:** A point of order, Madam Speaker! There is an overabundance of puns.

**Mr VOWLES:** I have many more in this story but I will stop there.

Last week we very proud to issue a press release about how we are fast-tracking, as part of our stimulus package, \$6m worth of infrastructure work. We will upgrade the car park at Middle Arm boat ram. We are commencing Channel Island ramp upgrades. We are installing new security cameras at Dinah Beach, as well as a new toilet block. We are conducting a study to identify land-based fishing platform opportunities for all Territorians. We are establishing an artificial reef from a fishing aggregate device program for NT waters to enhance productivity and fishing opportunities.

Also, the department is breeding barra fingerlings for residential lakes, giving opportunities for every Territorian to get a rod and chuck it in the water, wherever they are and whatever their capabilities, and have a go at fishing.

What does this mean? It is not just about fishing; it is about tourism and the opportunities this presents. We have the Million Dollar Fish, the previous government's initiative, which we support—bringing Territorians here.

This is a commitment we took to Territorians. It is a fantastic commitment of \$50m. We are fast-tracking \$6m so people have the opportunity, as soon as possible, to enjoy fishing. We are government that will build the boat ramp at Dundee, and that is working hard to deliver quality fishing infrastructure for all Territorians. This is a great initiative, fast-tracking \$6m.

The CLP killed the economy. We are getting it back on track and we will deliver.

### **Waste Management**

#### **Mr MILLS to MINISTER for INFRASTRUCTURE, PLANNING and LOGISTICS**

My question relates to risk management and long-term planning. It flows from some briefings with local councils.

Major weather events, such as severe storms and cyclones, are more likely, rather than less, in the Top End. As Shoal Bay is the current site for waste management for Darwin, Palmerston, Litchfield and Wagait councils, a regional waste facility is now long overdue, not only to meet the increased population in the areas, but the potential disaster response. Will a regional waste facility be in place during the term of this government?

#### **ANSWER**

Madam Speaker, I thank the member for his question. It is very important to have appropriate waste facilities, and we need to see them right across the Northern Territory. Some of the things you are raising regarding the briefings you have had are concerning. As an incoming minister I have not had the level of briefings you have had with regard to this matter. I am more than happy to sit down with you and have a chat about it so I can understand your concerns, and to speak directly to the councils about their concerns.

People may sit as Independents or in the opposition, but, ultimately, we are all here for the same reason, which is to see a better Northern Territory, and we can do it by working together. I am more than happy to sit down with you, get a better understanding and speak to the critical stakeholders.

The wind blows; we get some pretty rough natural disaster events with cyclones. I think we are all crossing our fingers and hoping we will not see many of those come across the Northern Territory this Wet Season. It is important that we plan and are as ready as possible for when those situations occur. Thank you, Member for Blain, for raising it. I will catch up with you after Question Time. Let us arrange to go through it.

### **Gove District Hospital**

#### **Mr COSTA to MINISTER for HEALTH**

How is the government improving the care and safety of Territorians at the Gove District Hospital and supporting the economy and jobs?

#### **ANSWER**

Madam Speaker, I thank the honourable member for his question. He is particularly passionate, not only about the Territory and remote Territorians, but health. I am pleased to provide an update on the ongoing investment that this government is making to ensure the care and safety of the community is of high quality.

The emergency department is undergoing a \$12.7m redevelopment. I acknowledge that this project is jointly funded by the Australian and Northern Territory Governments, a breakdown of \$7.7m from the Australian Government and \$5m from the Northern Territory Government.

The project will modernise and improve the functionality of the existing emergency department building, with upgraded entrances for visitors, ambulances and staff; a new ambulance bay; and a new waiting area and triage space. It will provide for two resuscitation bays, two modern acute and one non-acute treatment bays. It will also provide additional treatment rooms, a consultation room, a family interview room, upgraded storage and upgraded toilet and shower amenities for staff and patients. In addition to the works within the emergency department, a new covered walkway between the ED and the ward building will be upgraded to meet work health and safety guidelines.

Clinicians were closely involved in the design process to ensure this is a functional and safe space. It is very important that when we are designing our health facilities we get advice from our clinicians on the ground who utilise the facility every day. Talking to staff in our health facilities can provide you with vital information up front when upgrading or building new facilities and can save time and provide better patient care, which is the aim of everyone involved in Health.

Staff involved were the Gove District Hospital emergency staff; the director of medical services; the ED clinical nurse manager; along with Dr Palmer, the director of emergency Top End Health Service; and the clinical nurse manager at Royal Darwin Hospital. The new ED also meets the guidelines set out by the Australian College for Emergency Medicine.

The community has been kept informed about the upgrades, with displays at the Garma Festival, advertisements in the local newspaper and local radio announcements in both Yolngu and English. Hospital Indigenous liaison officers are also available to ensure they can answer patient inquiries and provide information in language.

I am pleased to provide the House with an update on this project. It is not only delivering better health services in the Northern Territory, it is providing jobs for Territorians, with Probuild being tasked to construct the new emergency department, a local Territory company which has recently won awards. A good project is proceeding and is due for completion in late March 2017.

**Ms FYLES (Leader of Government Business):** Madam Speaker, I ask that further questions be placed on the Written Question Paper.

**ANSWER TO QUESTION**  
**School Enrolments**

**Ms LAWLER (Education):** Madam Speaker, in response to a question from the Member for Blain in relation to the number of students on the active and passive rolls, schools work hard to engage students and their families, but we are also aware that there is a policy in the department where if a student does not attend for 20 consecutive days and their non-attendance is unauthorised, they may be moved to the passive roll.

In the past—and I am talking about years ago, probably when you and I were teaching, Member for Blain—those students would have been taken off the roll. The passive roll is a positive measure where students can be tracked and continue to be engaged, or their families pursued to attend.

The figures are: enrolments in Darwin, 8443, with 55 on the passive roll; Alice Springs, 3073, with 183 on the passive roll; Arnhem, 3208, with 332 on the passive role; Barkly, 1297, with 102 on the passive role; Katherine, 2951, with 131 on the passive roll; Palmerston and rural, 6649, with 156 on the passive roll.

Truancy officers and the attendance team, as well as the department, continue to work hard to get those students to school.