



Media Release

Adam Giles
Chief Minister of the Northern Territory

Bess Price
Minister for Housing

Review into Government housing program initiatives

17 June 2015

The Northern Territory Government will review its suite of housing supply and assistance programs to ensure they are meeting the needs of Territorians.

Chief Minister Adam Giles said the Country Liberals Government had been very active in stimulating land release and the supply of residential dwellings.

“It was obvious once we came to government that the Territory’s housing stock needed to be supplemented by about 500 dwellings per annum and we needed to take action,” he said.

“We released land, increased private sector developments and launched our Real Housing for Growth plan to address this shortfall and stimulated an affordable housing sector with options for key workers and low to middle income Territorians.

“Two-and-a-half years in, and with more than 1200 dwellings either tenanted, being constructed or in planning under Real Housing for Growth, it’s time to assess the initiative to ensure it continues to meet its objective. We certainly don’t want it to distort the supply and demand in the residential market and subsequently detrimentally affect the price of houses and units.

“With rental prices coming down and house prices stabilising, it’s timely to consider if the private sector is now able to meet demand thanks to the biggest land release program in the Territory’s history.”

The review of housing programs will encompass:

- What level and type of residential dwelling demand exists in the market;
- The impact of the government’s affordable housing initiatives in assisting Territorians on limited incomes into home ownership;
- The flow of new residential land on to the market as a result of the Government’s land release program;
- What concessions for first home buyers might be most appropriate in the market;
- Social housing demands, including public, assisted and homelessness services; and
- How we can better work in partnership with community housing providers.

The Government will hold off entering into any new Real Housing for Growth projects while the review is conducted. However it will continue any projects which are already the subject of agreements, negotiations or currently being considered with private sector developers.

The review will also consider social housing programs to ensure the Government better understands the need in areas such as supported accommodation and homelessness.

Minister for Housing Bess Price, said it was important for the Government to strike the right balance between creating affordable housing opportunities and meeting the needs of the disadvantaged in the community.

“We are going to look at all aspects of the housing needs of Territorians as part of this review, including the delivery of housing services to those who need it most,” Mrs Price said.

“I’ve raised my concerns about homelessness and social housing with the Chief Minister, and we are keen to find better ways to support struggling Territorians.

“There is more to be done in this area and the review will consult a range of stakeholders to identify potential policy improvements we can make.”

The Government will use the results of the review, which will involve the use of an external consultant and a stakeholder consultation process, to develop a new housing strategy.

It’s expected a draft strategy will be released towards the end of this year with the strategy to be finalised by February 2016.

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N.B. Economic data on the Northern Territory housing market is attached.