



MEDIA RELEASE

Public Accounts Committee

24 May 2016

Town Camps Report Tabled

Mrs Robyn Lambley MLA, Chair of the Public Accounts Committee today tabled the *Report on Repairs and Maintenance of Housing on Town Camps*.

“The condition of housing on town camps across the Territory has been an ongoing issue of concern. This report highlights key issues to be addressed to improve the repairs and maintenance of town camp houses,” Mrs Lambley said.

The report examines the Department of Housing’s administration of repairs and maintenance of town camps in Alice Springs and Tenant Creek, and the Department of Local Government and Community Services system of housing maintenance grants that applies across the rest of the Territory.

“The Department of Housing’s processes to deliver services have been disjointed, confusing and unresponsive to the needs of tenants. While some recent improvements have been made, the processes must be monitored to ensure they are delivering efficient and effective services to town camp residents” Mrs Lambley said.

“The Department of Housing has been tardy in meeting some of its obligations to repair houses. It has, without excuse, failed to conduct three yearly reviews of the housing and infrastructure in the Alice Springs Town Camps despite making commitments to do so” Mrs Lambley said. “The Government must do the right thing and deliver on all of its obligations.”

The recommendations in the report focus on reviewing the adequacy of existing processes to deliver effective and efficient services; reducing delays in repairs and maintenance; clarifying the rights and responsibilities of tenants and landlords; and the need for the Government to fulfil its obligations as the housing authority for the Alice Springs Town Camps.

During the Committee’s inquiry, the Government announced it would conduct a review on town camps. The Committee welcomed this review as an acknowledgement of the need to do more in this area and as an opportunity to give more detailed consideration to the issues the Committee has identified in its inquiry.

“Access to adequate housing is a fundamental human right and can affect a person’s physical, social and economic wellbeing. The issue of housing on town camps seems to have fallen into the ‘too hard basket’ for both the Northern Territory and Commonwealth Governments for too long” Mrs Lambley said. “The complexities associated with Aboriginal housing cannot be used as an excuse to ignore issues. It is time for the Government to make a serious and sustained commitment to improving housing on town camps across the Territory.”

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