

MEDIA RELEASE - MR GERRY WOOD - CHAIR

**SIHIP NEW HOUSES YES
REFURBISHMENTS NO
CDEP MUST CONTINUE**

Gerry Wood, CHAIR CTC, says the recent trip to Maningrida by the Council of Territory Cooperation highlighted a number of issues.

Firstly members of the CTC were impressed by the effort being put into the construction of new houses and major infrastructure at the community and it seems that this year's targets will be met. Territory Alliance says it will construct 109 houses by the end of next year and at the present rate of construction that looks achievable.

Secondly the CTC is concerned that because of the cutbacks in the original amounts set aside for refurbishments houses are being handed back to tenants in a 'mixed' state, ie the toilets, showers, laundries and kitchen are being brought up to acceptable standard but the bedrooms were not painted and the walls were covered with graffiti. (*See attached photographs*). Graffiti and dirt still cover the exterior walls, windows are left as they are and verandah floors are in need of repair.

The CTC has previously recommended that houses be refurbished that reflected the original pre SIHIP review of \$150,000 so that houses could be properly repaired. Unfortunately the federal Government has not supported this recommendation and the consequences of that decision can be seen in these photographs.

Gerry says that Minister Macklin should have a look at these houses and ask whether she would be happy to hand these houses back to a resident in their present state.

He says the CTC has asked to meet with Minister Macklin in Canberra but she was too busy so it was disappointing to find she was visiting Gumbalunya yesterday and had no time to meet the CTC while she was in the Top End.

The CTC notes that the other major issue is the catastrophic effect the proposed scrapping of CDEP will have on communities like Maningrida. The CTC heard that possibly up to 450 people may lose their CDEP jobs if the changes occur which will put people back on welfare which is not something the community support.