

MEDIA RELEASE

15 AUGUST 2020

For immediate circulation

Country Liberal Government will empower Aboriginal Territorians

A Country Liberal Government will reset the relationship with Aboriginal Territorians and empower Aboriginal communities by establishing genuine partnerships to ensure that decision making is focused at the local level on a range of issues including housing, health, economic development, the environment and justice, Opposition Leader Lia Finocchiaro said today.

“For too long, governments in the Northern Territory have taken a ‘we know what’s best for you’ policy approach, by not effectively engaging with communities and working primarily at a high level with governments and land councils. Communities and individuals have been left out, which has led to a disconnect and substantial policy failure,” Mrs Finocchiaro said.

Aboriginal people know what’s best for their communities and should be empowered to decide on solutions that are best suited for them including in the housing space.

We will ensure that an Aboriginal community-controlled peak housing body will advise and work collaboratively with the government to streamline Aboriginal housing policies including in communities, homelands, outstations and town camps. Community housing groups will be involved in the design and delivery of remote housing while management models will be developed so tenancy management and maintenance can be performed locally.

Aboriginal community control and delivery of health services has proven to be a successful model. On Aboriginal health we will build the capacity of communities to support local and regional solutions for health outcomes, commit funding for programs that actually work, deliver training and professional development for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health practitioners and conduct an audit of facilities, including morgues in remote communities.

We will work with the Commonwealth to ensure its Community Development Program creates opportunities for employment and enterprise, work with Aboriginal leaders to develop employment pathways that suit local needs, aspirations and expectations, resource training providers, and ensure government procurement policy provides incentives to employ, train and retain Aboriginal employees and enterprises.

We will work with Traditional Owners, Aboriginal leaders, land councils and experts to create a “prospectus” of economic development opportunities across the Aboriginal estate. We will work with Aboriginal people to establish business hubs and incubators to assist Indigenous Entrepreneurs or groups to establish registered businesses to tender for and

Leader of the Opposition
LIA FINOCCHIARO MLA

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secure work in or near communities. We will also fund business mentors to provide ongoing support to Indigenous businesses.

In the environment space, we will support Aboriginal rangers with training and development and double funding for the Aboriginal Ranger Grants Program.

The CLP supports the Draft Aboriginal Justice Agreement and will work to implement its vision, principles and aims in consultation with Aboriginal Elders and stakeholders. We will also create a justice reform strategy, establish a local community justice system, operate programs to reduce imprisonment and reoffending rates and commit to positive diversionary programs.

“It’s about time a Northern Territory Government worked with all people to give them a voice on the issues that affect them. This policy lays the groundwork for those processes to make that happen,” CLP candidate for Arafura Gibson Illortaminni said.

“The disconnect between government decision making and Aboriginal people has been a major problem in the past. It leads to poor outcomes in policy and on the ground in communities. This policy is a genuine approach to engage between the people in communities and decision makers,” CLP candidate for Gwoja Phillip Alice said.

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