

# Municipal and Essential Services IP Program Delivery Plan 2013-14

## OVERVIEW

This program delivery plan should be read in conjunction with the publication 'Homelands – A Shared responsibility - Program Guidelines 2013-14' and 'Homeland Policy – A Shared Responsibility'.

The Municipal and Essential Services Implementation Plan (MES IP) is a schedule to the National Partnership Agreement on Stronger Futures in the Northern Territory. The Implementation Plan, among other things, requires the Development of a Program Delivery Plan on an annual basis.

This and other documents relating to the delivery of Municipal and Essential Services (MES), and other services delivered to homelands will be publicly available on the Northern Territory Government's internet site (Department of Regional Development and Women's Policy).

## GENERAL PROGRAM

Residents living at homelands in the Northern Territory may be eligible to receive repairs and maintenance and upgrades to water supply, sewerage systems, power supply and other items determined as essential services. Additionally, the homelands may be eligible for the management of waste, which can include the establishment of a dump and collection of waste services at their homeland. Other areas that will be considered include road maintenance, landscaping and dust control, dog control and environmental health activities.

There are a number of service providers already established throughout the Northern Territory who, if eligible, will receive funding to provide these services to homelands. There is no provision for funding to be provided directly to any resident at a homeland.

Repairs and maintenance to dwellings at homelands is provided for under a separate program. Details of this program are available in the Program Guidelines.

## HOMELAND ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible for consideration of service provision, a homeland must meet the following baseline criteria before further consideration of service / funding level:

- access to a reliable source of potable water;
- access to permanent accommodation; and
- generally reliant on larger communities for services such as schools and health centres.

Not all homelands are permanently occupied, or occupied for a period that meets the criteria for being eligible for municipal and essential services. A dwelling is considered occupied if it is the resident's principal place of residence. For funding purposes, there are two levels of occupancy:

1. Occupied – dwelling is the resident's principal place of residence.
2. Unoccupied – no one has used the homeland for a significant period (measured in years).

### ALLOCATION FORMULA

Funding for service provision to a homeland will be determined via a funding allocation methodology that includes level of occupancy, access and power availability.

### ACCESS

There are three levels of access:

1. Reasonable access – within 160 km of a community where homeland residents can access services including Police, education, medical, retailers (shops).
2. Difficult access – between 160 km and 250 km from services. A 15 percent weighting is applied.
3. Remote access – in excess of 250 km from services, OR where the homeland can only be accessed over water. A 80 percent weighting is applied.

### POWER AVAILABILITY

There are two categories of power:

1. Power – the homeland is connected to the main power grid.
2. No power – the homeland is not connected to the main power grid and residents are required to organise their own power generation, such as by use of a generator. A 15 percent weighting is applied.

### SUMMARY OF WEIGHTING CATEGORIES

- **Reasonable Access/No Power:**  $0\% + 15\% = 15\%$  weighting
- **Reasonable Access/Power:**  $0\% + 0\% = 0\%$  weighing
- **Difficult Access/No Power:**  $15\% + 15\% = 30\%$  weighting
- **Difficult Access/Power:**  $15\% + 0\% = 15\%$  weighting

- **Remote Access/No Power:** 80% + 15% = 95% weighting
- **Remote Access/Power:** 80% + 0% = 80% weighting

Homelands that are considered unoccupied, but have reasonable infrastructure, may be funded to receive baseline maintenance to ensure the assets do not deteriorate beyond repair. It is likely that some homelands may be occupied for a period of time and due to other circumstances become unoccupied for long periods, then be reoccupied. For this reason a review of dwelling occupancy will be conducted with service providers annually.

### **SERVICE PROVIDER ELIGIBILITY AND SELECTION**

Service providers must demonstrate that they are a registered organisation that by nature of their business objectives, are engaged in or capable of providing municipal and essential services to homelands.

Service providers will be required to meet criteria contained in their funding agreement including the development of an asset management plan for each homeland. The department encourages service providers to develop their asset management plan in consultation with the residents of the homeland.

For the 2013-14 period, all existing service providers will be given the opportunity to receive funding for the provision of municipal and essential services to homelands that they were already servicing.

### **FUNDING AGREEMENT**

New three-year funding agreements will be entered into with service providers from 2013-14 to provide increased certainty for service providers. Payments will be made on a six-monthly basis pending the service provider meeting agreed performance indicators.

Funding agreements will be provided to service providers for consideration in July 2013. It is anticipated that all funding agreements will be settled and in place by end of August 2013.