



Municipal and Essential Services IP Stakeholder Engagement Strategy

OVERVIEW

An essential component of the new homelands policy is to increase accountability and transparency of the program.

Homeland residents, Service providers, and government all have a commitment to improve the level of amenity at homelands across the Northern Territory.

This engagement strategy outlines the underpinning elements of engagement that the Northern Territory Government will strive toward achieving in 2013-14.

KEY ELEMENTS

The key elements of the stakeholder engagement strategy include:

Connecting with Residents of Homelands

Residents of homelands will be provided with an opportunity to engage with their service provider and with the dedicated homeland work unit through one on one discussion, being provided with information about the homelands policy and program guidelines and the asset management plan for their homeland.

Availability of Information

Advisory Forum - An annual homelands advisory forum will be conducted for service providers initially on a regional basis, however broadened as required. These forums will provide opportunity for service providers to collectively share best practice and utilise the wealth of collective knowledge and experience to navigate complex issues.

Residents of homelands will be able to have their voice represented at the forum via their service provider.

Dedicated Homeland Work Unit

The department of Regional Development and Women's Policy has established a dedicated work unit that specialise in homelands and town camps. Staff in this unit have extensive experience with homelands and town camps and have a dedicated focus on these areas. The homeland work unit will work with service providers and residents to ensure the homelands program is successful.

Online support

A dedicated homelands web page has been established where members of the public can access the homelands policy, program guidelines and associated programs. The web site will also host fact sheets, questions and answers, asset management plans, list of homelands and indicative funding levels, and agreed service standards. The web site can be accessed at www.homelands.nt.gov.au

Free call phone number and dedicated email

A free call hotline number has been established as well a dedicated email where enquiries can be made about the homelands program. Freecall 1800 031 648 email outstations.program@nt.gov.au

Access to additional support programs

The Northern Territory Government provides additional support for homeland residents including the Homelands Extra Allowance and Housing Maintenance Program. Visit www.homelands.nt.gov.au

Building and Maintaining Relationships

Dedicated Engagement Officer

A dedicated Engagement Officer will commence in July 2013 and has a primary role to engage with homelands service providers and other stakeholders and be a conduit of two way information regarding the implementation of the homelands policy and service provision. The Engagement Officer will also visit homelands and talk with residents when required.

Technical Officer Support

Three permanent Technical Officers have regularly visited homelands to record the condition of buildings and other essential assets. Technical officers work very closely with service providers to ensure maintenance and other works are directed to the most important areas.

Technical Officers also have good relationships with homelands residents and are an important conduit of feedback to assist the homelands program. Technical Officers are based in Darwin, Katherine and Alice Springs and monitor all homelands across the Northern Territory.

Communication Plan

A communications plan will be developed to support the implementation of the various homelands programs and will include:

Newsletter

A homelands newsletter will be compiled on a biannual basis (or more frequently if required). The newsletter will be produced by department staff with input from the engagement and technical officers. The newsletter is seen as a tool for disseminating useful information about systemic homelands issues as well will include 'good news' items that may provide motivation to others. The newsletter will also be a mechanism to remind service providers of important funding and reporting timelines.

Radio Messaging

There is scope to provide key messages across a region by utilising local radio networks, specifically Indigenous operated / focused broadcasters. Messaging will be decided on an as necessary basis and aimed at supporting proposed changes to any aspect of the homelands program.

Community Posters

Similar to the radio messaging, printed posters will be developed to advise people various aspects of the homelands program. The posters may be placed in the homeland area or the service centre near the homeland.

Feedback

Feedback from residents and service providers will be encouraged to ensure continued improvement of the program. Information on how to submit feedback will be widely distributed and may take the form of internet based submission to a field officer recording feedback from a conversation. Where requested, all feedback will be responded back to the individual.

One-on-one Discussions

Every homeland resident and service provider can request to meet with or talk to a representative from the dedicated homeland work unit. This will ensure all stakeholders have an opportunity to have their issues appropriately heard and responded to.