



TABLE OF RECOMMENDATIONS
NORTHERN TERRITORY GOVERNMENT
INITIAL RESPONSE TO THE INDEPENDENT
TOWN CAMPS REVIEW
REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS



Note: 'Supported' means supported without change or condition, 'Supported in-principle' means that the government endorses the general concept, principle or outcome of the recommendation, but may wish to achieve the same result in a different manner to that prescribed by the recommendation and 'not supported' means the general concept, principle or outcome of the recommendation is rejected by government and will not be implemented.

CATEGORY	RECOMMENDATION	POSITION	COMMENTS
LAND TENURE, LEASING AND LEGISLATION	<p>Create certainty in land tenure</p> <p>Current tenure arrangements should be simplified and restructured so that town camp owners are empowered to control their own space and seek development opportunities.</p>	Support in-principle, subject to further consultation	<p>The Northern Territory Government will work with landowners, residents and the Australian Government to ensure the land tenure arrangements are fit for purpose and provide contemporary options for long-term sustainability.</p> <p>This aligns with the Northern Territory Government's broader commitment to ensure land ownership delivers on economic and social aspirations of Aboriginal Territorians.</p>
	<p>Remove or reduce restrictive legislation</p> <p>A statutory review of the <i>Special Purpose Lease Act</i> should be undertaken to modernise its provisions, and remove restrictive barriers to land dealings.</p>	Support	<p>The Northern Territory Government will undertake a statutory review of the <i>Special Purpose Lease Act</i> that focuses on improved opportunities and outcomes for town camp residents which are practical and achievable.</p> <p>Consultation with special purpose lease holders and the broader community will be undertaken.</p> <p>This aligns with the Northern Territory Government's broader commitment to ensure land ownership delivers on economic and social aspirations of Aboriginal Territorians.</p>

CATEGORY	RECOMMENDATION	POSITION	COMMENTS
	<p>Establish clear roles and responsibilities</p> <p>A legal framework needs to be established which delineates clear roles for each of the funding parties, town camp owners, residents and service providers. This can be achieved by implementing agreements between the parties detailing the obligations and rights of each. These should be supported by rigorous reporting and compliance monitoring to ensure those roles and responsibilities are being upheld.</p>	Support	<p>The Northern Territory Government supports providing clarity of functions for entities engaged with town camps.</p> <p>The newly established Town Camps Futures Unit will be tasked with bringing all stakeholders together, including government agencies, to develop a framework that is best matched to achieving a clear and transparent model suitable for each individual town camp.</p>

CATEGORY	RECOMMENDATION	POSITION	COMMENTS
HOUSING	<p>Refurbish housing</p> <p>All existing housing stock that houses permanent residents should be refurbished to meet the standards of the <i>Residential Tenancies Act</i>.</p> <p>To improve housing durability and future maintenance costs, asset management plans should be developed and implemented on the back of firm tenancy agreements. Where permanent residents reside in temporary structures these need to be replaced with adequate housing.</p>	Support in-principle	<p>The Northern Territory Government supports houses being bought up to an appropriate standard.</p> <p>Investment in housing of this magnitude must be underpinned by a long-term plan and supported by appropriate asset management planning and tenancy support programs.</p> <p>The Town Camps Futures Unit will develop, together with communities, a Town Camps Policy and Implementation Plan by mid-2019 that will outline clear roles and responsibilities for regulation reform, governance and funding as well as the long-term policy for achieving a sustainable future for town camps.</p> <p>The Northern Territory Government will seek a joint investment approach with the Australian Government on areas of shared responsibility.</p>
	<p>Determine town camps' populations</p> <p>Further work is required to determine the actual demographic position and the additional housing capacity, if any which is required.</p>	Support	<p>Aboriginal people living in town camps know who live there permanently and who visitors are.</p> <p>The Town Camps Futures Unit will work with residents to undertake population assessments across the town camps to obtain an understanding of the number of permanent and transient residents.</p> <p>Having accurate population data is essential to help inform the development of a long-term plan for town camps.</p>

CATEGORY	RECOMMENDATION	POSITION	COMMENTS
	<p>Account for transient visitors</p> <p>Temporary accommodation spaces should be constructed in areas that experience significant population fluctuation. These spaces must be strictly controlled with strong rules and accountabilities for transient visitors.</p>	<p>Support in-principle the intent of the recommendation, subject to the development of a long-term Policy and Implementation Plan by mid-2019</p>	<p>Understanding why people have moved from their normal place of residence, coupled with accurate population data, will help inform government of the need for investing in visitor accommodation.</p> <p>Resolving singular elements of the many town camps issues in isolation is not the solution. Bringing it all together in a well-planned and coordinated way will provide the roadmap for town camps for the future.</p> <p>The Town Camps Futures Unit will assess current visitor accommodation together with the population analysis as part of its planning function.</p>
	<p>Create pathways to home ownership</p> <p>Through strong governance frameworks provide structured support to town camps for the development of defined pathways to home ownership.</p>	<p>Support in-principle, subject to further consultation</p>	<p>The Northern Territory Government supports home ownership opportunities for all Territorians including town camp residents.</p> <p>The Town Camps Futures Unit will assess how home ownership arrangements may work given the current tenure arrangements in town camps.</p> <p>This aligns with the Northern Territory Government's broader commitment to ensure land ownership delivers on economic and social aspirations of Aboriginal Territorians.</p>

CATEGORY	RECOMMENDATION	POSITION	COMMENTS
	<p>Create effective collection structures</p> <p>Through strong governance frameworks provide structured support to town camps for the development of sustainable collection frameworks.</p>	<p>Support in-principle, subject to further consultation</p>	<p>The Northern Territory Government will assist town camp landowners to implement tenancy agreements and charge rent where appropriate.</p> <p>As part of its work in planning and coordinating service delivery in town camps, the Town Camps Futures Unit will review tenant contributions to the costs of housing.</p>
	<p>Create private investment opportunity</p> <p>Through strong governance frameworks adequate contributions from residents can increase the commercial viability of opportunities associated with the provision of housing and essential infrastructure. A strong governance structure will also provide investors with long-term certainty facilitating the exploration of private investment opportunities in town camps.</p>	<p>Support in-principle, subject to further consultation</p>	<p>The Northern Territory Government supports the concept of private investment in town camps; however, careful consideration of the long-term benefits for current and future residents must be foremost when considering a private investment model.</p> <p>It will be important to consult with town camp landowners and residents, Land Councils and other stakeholders on private investment to ensure it is what the people want to see in their area.</p>

CATEGORY	RECOMMENDATION	POSITION	COMMENTS
MUNICIPAL AND ESSENTIAL SERVICES	<p>Upgrade sewerage networks</p> <p>Town camps with undersized networks or non-compliant sewage pump stations should be upgraded so that the infrastructure complies with relevant standards.</p>	<p>Support in-principle the intent of the recommendation, subject to the development of a long-term Policy and Implementation Plan by mid-2019</p>	<p>Urgent works will be undertaken to ensure the safety of town camps residents; however, the upgrading of infrastructure to meet current standards will require significant investment which the Territory is not able to immediately fund.</p> <p>Support from the Australian Government will be sought to jointly invest in improving town camps' infrastructure.</p>
	<p>Upgrade water networks</p> <p>Town camps that are non-compliant should undergo major upgrades to the water supply in order to comply with Power Water Corporation standards and provide the required capacity. The water supply to the town camps is proposed to be measured with bulk water meters located on the community boundary.</p>	<p>Support in-principle the intent of the recommendation, subject to the development of a long term Policy and Implementation Plan by mid-2019</p>	<p>Urgent works will be undertaken to ensure the safety of town camps residents; however, the upgrading of infrastructure to meet current standards will require significant investment which the Territory is not able to immediately fund.</p> <p>The transition from bulk meters to individual meters will be considered as part of the development of the Policy and Implementation Plan by mid-2019.</p> <p>Support from the Australian Government will be sought to jointly invest in improving town camps' infrastructure.</p>
	<p>Upgrade road infrastructure</p> <p>Long-term designs which incorporate a full two lane road network, with all appropriate road furniture, line marking, footpaths, signage, kerbs and gutters, side entry pits and underground drainage should be constructed at all town camps.</p>	<p>Support in-principle the intent of the recommendation, subject to the development of a long term Policy and Implementation Plan by mid-2019</p>	<p>Urgent works will be undertaken to ensure the safety of town camps residents; however, the upgrading of infrastructure to meet current standards will require significant investment which the Territory is not able to immediately fund.</p> <p>Support from the Australian Government will be sought to jointly invest in improving town camps' infrastructure.</p>

CATEGORY	RECOMMENDATION	POSITION	COMMENTS
	<p>Upgrade community structures</p> <p>Community structures should be upgraded and/or repaired. Regular maintenance should be undertaken to ensure the structures are kept in good working order.</p>	<p>Support in-principle the intent of the recommendation, subject to the development of a long term Policy and Implementation Plan by mid-2019</p>	<p>Improving community structures will help the town camp community members improve their living environments.</p> <p>The Northern Territory Government will seek to partner with the Australian Government to jointly invest in an upgrade program to accelerate these works.</p>
	<p>Upgrade electrical infrastructure</p> <p>Electrical infrastructure should be upgraded or repaired. Regular maintenance should be undertaken to ensure the structures are kept in good working order. Investment should be made in cage protection to protect electrical components.</p>	<p>Support in-principle the intent of the recommendation, subject to the development of a long term Policy and Implementation Plan by mid-2019</p>	<p>Urgent works will be undertaken to ensure the safety of town camps' residents; however, the upgrading of infrastructure to meet current standards will require significant investment which the Territory is not able to immediately fund.</p> <p>Support from the Australian Government will be sought to jointly invest in improving town camps' infrastructure.</p>

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ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	<p>Invest in people rather than places</p> <p>Strong governance frameworks, transient accommodation areas and defined pathways to economic development will allow individuals to be directed to the social programs that can assist recovery.</p>	<p>Support</p>	<p>A key function of the Town Camps Futures Unit will be to coordinate services being delivered to town camps including social programs which are not unique to town camps and occur more widely in our community.</p> <p>Connecting services that provide the necessary education and support to reduce the occurrence of these social issues is already taking place in our community. Government will continue to support improvements in delivery of these important functions.</p>
	<p>Invest in people rather than places</p> <p>Facilitate long-term investment participation to generate pathways to economic development.</p>	<p>Support</p>	<p>Having strong governance arrangements in place coupled with a supported plan for each town camp will be the foundation to build on to promote greater participation in the workforce by town camp residents.</p> <p>The Town Camps Futures Unit will work closely with the Department of Trade, Business and Innovation, the Australian Government, and business and industry stakeholders to identify suitable pre-employment programs to encourage greater workforce participation.</p> <p>The Town Camps Futures Unit will actively consider opportunities, including through the new Aboriginal Contracting Framework, to influence the inclusion of employment opportunities for town camp residents through service delivery contracts and related services.</p>

CATEGORY	RECOMMENDATION	POSITION	COMMENTS
	<p>Invest in people rather than places</p> <p>Incentivise and enable the employment of local Aboriginal residents to deliver local services, leading to the progression of individuals down a continuum of economic development.</p>	<p>Support</p>	<p>Having strong governance arrangements in place coupled with a supported plan for each town camp will be the foundation to build on to promote greater participation in the workforce by town camp residents.</p> <p>The Town Camps Futures Unit will work closely with the Department of Trade, Business and Innovation, the Australian Government, and business and industry stakeholders to identify suitable pre-employment programs to encourage greater workforce participation.</p> <p>The Town Camps Futures Unit will actively consider opportunities, including through the new Aboriginal Contracting Framework, to influence the inclusion of employment opportunities for town camp residents through service delivery contracts and related services.</p>

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	<p>Invest in people rather than places</p> <p>Align funding agreements for service delivery and local contracts to the goal of long-term Indigenous employment.</p>	<p>Support</p>	<p>Having strong governance arrangements in place coupled with a supported plan for each town camp will be the foundation to build on to promote greater participation in the workforce by town camp residents.</p> <p>The Town Camps Futures Unit will work closely with the Department of Trade, Business and Innovation, the Australian Government, and business and industry stakeholders to identify suitable pre-employment programs to encourage greater workforce participation.</p> <p>The Town Camps Futures Unit will actively consider opportunities, including through the new Aboriginal Contracting Framework, to influence the inclusion of employment opportunities for town camp residents through service delivery contracts and related services.</p> <p>Through the Local Decision Making agenda, the Town Camps Futures Unit will actively engage with town camp residents to identify and design local service delivery opportunities.</p>

CATEGORY	RECOMMENDATION	POSITION	COMMENTS
GOVERNANCE	<p>Create a clear governance structure</p> <p>Facilitate the implementation of strong governance structures that allow residents to control space and make decisions representative of the resident population.</p>	Support	<p>The Northern Territory Government agrees that improving the governance structures supporting town camps will improve much of the current uncertainty that surrounds town camps and their residents.</p> <p>The Town Camps Futures Unit will focus on restoring the governance arrangements which support the landowners and residents, including through the Local Decision Making agenda.</p>
	<p>Empowering town camps residents</p> <p>Facilitate the establishment of active representative ownership groups who can control the town camps' space.</p> <p>Support the ongoing development of the representative group.</p>	Support	<p>The Northern Territory Government agrees that improving the governance structures supporting town camps will improve much of the current uncertainty that surround town camps and their residents.</p> <p>The Town Camps Futures Unit will have a primary focus of restoring the governance arrangements which support the landowners and residents, including through the Local Decision Making agenda.</p>
	<p>Establish a structure to give Town Camps leadership and direction</p> <p>A more effective framework should be designed starting with creation of a single agency tasked with providing the direction and leadership to town camps. The agency should be used to streamline funding distribution and the provision of support and information services to town camps.</p>	Support	<p>Improving the governance structures supporting town camps will improve much of the current uncertainty that surround town camps and their residents.</p> <p>The Town Camps Futures Unit will have a primary focus of restoring the governance arrangements which support the land owners and residents. The unit will develop, together with Aboriginal communities, and other key stakeholders a Town Camps Policy and Implementation Plan by mid-2019 that will outline clear roles and responsibilities for regulation reform, governance and funding as well as the long-term policy for achieving a sustainable future for town camps.</p>

CATEGORY	RECOMMENDATION	POSITION	COMMENTS
	<p>Incorporate Indigenous associations</p> <p>Incorporate a regional body representative of each town camps residents under the <i>Corporations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) Act 2006 (Cth)</i>.</p>	<p>Support strengthened and targeted representation for town camps residents; however, further consultation is required in relation to the appropriate incorporation body for Aboriginal organisations</p>	<p>The Northern Territory Government supports having Aboriginal organisations that are high performing and well governed.</p> <p>However, migration to the <i>Corporations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) Act</i> may not necessarily be the solution. The Town Camps Futures Unit will work with organisations and guide them to a growth and improvement path. There are many ways an organisation can rebuild and increasing the regulatory burden may hinder these opportunities.</p>

