LABOR CAUGHT SHORT ON HOUSING
Terry Mills MLA
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The Housing Industry Association’s report on the Territory’s future residential needs once again highlights the disarray surrounding the Henderson Government’s failed land release policies.

Key findings in the HIA report include:

- The need for 21,500 dwellings over the next 10 years – almost double the 12,200 dwellings completed over the past decade;
- An underlying demand of 2400 dwellings in 2009 – double the 1180 commencements last year;
- An underlying housing shortage of 4200 dwellings – after years of under-investment;
- The anticipated accumulated housing shortage of 11,500 dwellings by 2020;
- A 10 year increase in housing prices of 176.1% compared to an increase in full time earnings of 52.5%;
- An increase in rentals of 23% over the past two years – three times faster than the cost of living increase.

The report also puts a time-frame on the commencement of the housing crisis in the Territory, stating: ‘Since the 2006 Census, the NT’s lack of new home building has turned the state from a housing ‘surplus’ to a housing ‘shortage’.

“This puts responsibility for the housing crisis fair and square on the poor planning of successive Labor governments,” says Opposition Leader Terry Mills.

“A decade ago, when the Country Liberals were in Government, they already had suburban Bellamack, Johnston and Zuccolli on the drawing board as part of the wider Palmerston East-Mitchell sub-division and were already in the pre-planning stages for Weddell.

“What followed in the 2001 election of the Labor Government was an inertia and lack of foresight that has forced Territorians to live in caravans and tents or to leave town because dwelling purchase and rental prices are out of reach.

“The failure of this Henderson Government to deliver on its promises is well illustrated by Delia Lawrie’s quote from February last year, when she said:

‘I look forward to him (Terry Mills) driving through the streets of Bellamack and Johnston in 2009’.

(Hansard: February 10, 2009)

“The best way to achieve that goal would be to get a tractor or digger license because the roads in both sub-divisions just aren’t ready.

“And it was only three years ago Delia Lawrie said 300 blocks were needed to meet the Territory’s housing demands.

“As the HIA survey shows, this assessment was desperately out of touch.”

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