Expressions of Interest open for Remote Home Ownership Program

29 October 2014

Expressions of interest have now opened for remote public housing tenants to sign up to the Territory Government’s new remote home ownership scheme.

Information sessions about the Remote Home Ownership Program were recently held in the eligible communities of Wurrumiyanga on Bathurst Island, Milikapiti on Melville Island, Angurugu and Umbakumba on Groote Eylandt and Milyakburra on Bickerton Island.

“These information sessions were warmly received by the community with over 20 expressions of interest received so far,” said Housing Minister Matt Conlan.

“Clearly, there is a strong appetite for home ownership in our remote communities which is encouraging to see.

“This program is part of the Giles Government’s plan to develop Northern Australia and drive economic opportunities in remote communities. Unlike the Labor party, the Country Liberals are determined to give Aboriginal people in the bush the same opportunities as Territorians living in urban areas and that includes the chance to buy their own home.

“The program will see public housing become a pathway to home ownership, not an end in itself. It is an important investment in a better future for people in the bush.”

Senior Traditional Owner, Bernard Tipoloura, was one tenant who attended an information session and said he was interested in purchasing his home in Wurrumiyanga on the Tiwi Islands.

“We’ve always wanted to buy a home, my wife and I. We want to do things and set a good example for my people. I want to renovate and put in solar energy, modify the building, and add a veranda to welcome people. I would like to have something for our grandchildren.

“I’ve got a granddaughter who stays with us and I keep telling her about how important home is. I think people are more proud when it’s their own house.”

$4.5 million has been set aside over the next three years for the program and up to half the Territory’s remote housing stock could be made available for sale to tenants who wish to purchase their home in communities with long-term leases.
The price of properties will be determined via an independent evaluation and it is expected that most homes would be available for purchase in the $50,000 to $150,000 range.

As part of the program, the Northern Territory Government has employed case managers to help applicants with the process of purchasing their own home. Once successful, applicants will then complete a home owner training program through Indigenous Business Australia.

Indigenous Business Australia will provide the loan products and services under the program including insurance for the first 12 months. At the completion of the sale, owner occupiers will be supported with a special incentive grant of $20,000 to help them upgrade and maintain their home.

It is expected the first homes will be ready for sale towards the end of the year.

For more information and for expressions of interest forms contact the Department of Housing on 08 8999 5069, your local housing office or visit: [http://www.housing.nt.gov.au/remotehousing/remote_home_ownership_program](http://www.housing.nt.gov.au/remotehousing/remote_home_ownership_program)

**Photos attached:** 1. Senior Traditional Owner, Bernard Tipoloura, and his wife at the Wurrumiyanga remote home ownership information session, 2. Mr Tipoloura discussing the remote home ownership application process with a representative from Indigenous Business Australia.

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[ Bernard Tipoloura 1 ]

[ Bernard Tipoloura 2 ]