**FUEL WATCH**

Darwin Diesel Average 136.3
Lowest 135.5
Multiple locations
Darwin ULP Average 126.0
Lowest 124.7
Multiple locations

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**Round up the hounds**

Animal Welfare officers have flown 60 dogs to Five Mile and about 500kg of dog food has also been sent to the flooded town to feed pets left behind.

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**HAYLEY SORENSEN and CRAIG DUNLOP**

WITH the evacuation of Daly River complete and most of the town sleeping at Darwin Showgrounds, authorities turned their attention yesterday to rescuing pets from the flood-stricken community.

Four Animal Welfare officers flew 60 dogs to a make-shift kennel at Five Mile.

Acting Chief Minister Willem Westra van Holthe said authorities had also flown 50kg of dog food to the flooded town to feed the animals left behind.

“There have been anecdotal stories of animals being washed away or taken by crocodiles... it’s important evacuated residents have some small comfort in knowing their animals are being looked after,” he said.

But it could be more than a week before residents return to Daly River, with river heights expected to peak again today.

Bureau of Meteorology regional hydrology manager Nigel Mules said Daly River streamflow would receive a fresh flood wave as water made its way downstream from rainfall in the Katherine area.

“We’re looking at a long and protracted recession,” he said.

Mr Mules said it was unlikely the floodwaters would exceed the heights recorded at the weekend.

The river peaked at 14.88m at the community’s police station on Sunday.

Police have suspended the search for a 28-year-old man who was swept away near Pepimontari on Christmas Day.

The search will resume after floodwaters recede.

Access to Daly River is still restricted – only police or essential services are allowed into the community.

Senior Sergeant Tanya Mace told evacuees yesterday there was no telling when they would be allowed home.

“Until it’s been declared safe, we simply can’t have people going back,” she said.

Sen-Sgt Mace said behaviour within the evacuation centre had been good, with only a few people flouting alcohol bans or fighting.

“We’ve had a couple of people coming in drunk and a little bit of anti-social behaviour but as a whole, the behaviour has been tolerable,” she said.

The flooding in the community is the worst since 1998, with some locals suggesting the entire community should be moved. Mr Westra van Holthe said that would take an “enormous amount of money” but did not rule it out.

“We are always open to have those discussions with community residents and the Commonwealth Government. But first things first, we want to get the community recovered as quickly as we can.”

**Cold hard cash to help flood victims ‘on the way’**

FUNDING for flood displaced Daly River residents will be coming, acting Chief Minister Willem Westra van Holthe pledged yesterday.

At least 62 of the community’s 84 homes were affected by the flood.

No figures were available for the total cost of damage to the flooded community — nor a time frame for when residents might go home.

“There will certainly be some money to help people recover from this,” Mr Westra van Holthe said, adding the NT Government will be pursuing disaster funds from the Commonwealth Government.

“A rapid assessment team will be sent to evaluate the damage once the water levels begin to recede, expected next week at the earliest.

“They will have a look at the state of the community, the buildings, the infrastructure and determine safety initially,” he said.

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