



Australian Government
Office of Township Leasing

Senator the Hon Nigel Scullion
Minister for Indigenous Affairs
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Minister

Thanks you for your letter of the 9th April 2014 providing the Government's Statement of Expectations for the Executive Director Township Leasing

I am pleased to now provide you with my Statement of Intent, which outlines the key strategic priorities for my role as the Executive Director and that of my office, the Office of Township Leasing (the Office).

I would like to affirm my commitment to the administering of the leases and sub-leases I hold under the *Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act 1976* in a fair and open manner.

I assure you that the Office will not only continue its current high stands of corporate governance, but will continually review its processes and effectiveness to ensure that it continues to enhance its performance and improve its transparency and accountability.

I welcome the comments made in the Statement of Expectations about the contribution I and the Office can make to facilitating opportunities for economic development and home ownership.

The Office and I will continue to remain responsive to requests from Government, your office and the Department and will ensure that you are informed about significant events related to the Office's activities.

I look forward to continuing to work closely with you to deliver and enhance land tenure arrangements to improve the outcomes for Aboriginal Australians in the Northern Territory.

Yours Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Greg Roche', written over a large, light-colored scribble.

Greg Roche
Executive Director
Township Leasing
30 July 2014

STATEMENT OF INTENT

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF TOWNSHIP LEASING

Based on the Statement of Expectations from Senator the Hon Nigel Scullion, Minister for Indigenous Affairs, dated 9 April 2014.

BACKGROUND

The Minister for Indigenous Affairs (the Minister) issued a Statement of Expectations to me as Executive Director of Township Leasing (Executive Director) on 9 April 2014. I am pleased to provide this Statement of Intent in response.

STATEMENT

As Executive Director I am committed to meeting the expectations outlined by the Government and continuing to administer Township Leases for the benefit of Aboriginal Traditional Land Owners (Land Owners) in the Northern Territory.

Contribution to the Government's key priorities

I note that the Government's priorities for Indigenous Affairs include a strong focus on increased, sustainable employment for Aboriginal residents of remote communities. In the context of Township Leasing in the Northern Territory this priority will be primarily realised through facilitating economic development opportunities, enabling home ownership and entering into new Township Leases where possible to regularise land tenure arrangements. As Executive Director I am committed to supporting those outcomes and assisting the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet (the Department) to realise its policy goals within the parameters of my operational jurisdiction.

Role and Responsibilities

As Executive Director I am committed to contributing effectively to well-informed, evidence-based policy development and decision-making and I fully commit to meeting the expectations outlined by the Government.

In particular I will:

- Perform my functions independently, transparently and objectively and in accordance with Section 20C of the *Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act 1976* (the Act).
- Continue to strive for opportunities that will improve the lives of Land Owners and Aboriginal residents in the Township Leases I administer across the Northern Territory.
- Develop and maintain partnerships with Land Owners and key stakeholders to enable sustainable economic pathways for future generations.
- Maintain appropriate protocols with regard to the operational framework and strategic priorities of my Office.
- Report on the Office's activities in my annual report.

As Executive Director I will achieve the overall objectives and frameworks set out within the Act of entering into and administering leases in Aboriginal communities in the Northern Territory on behalf of the Australian Government. In particular I affirm my commitment to improving land tenure arrangements and facilitating economic development opportunities for the benefit of Land Owners and all residents in the Township Leases that I administer.

I recognise the importance of the individual lease agreements and I will safeguard the integrity of each lease and encourage Land Owners to improve the operation of the lease through the Five Year Review process. My Office and I will continue to work in a professional and culturally appropriate way with Land Owners to ensure that leases are managed effectively by providing reliable, efficient infrastructure to support the implementation of the terms of the lease.

My Office and I will maintain the integrity of the Office and have open and transparent dealings with the Land Owners, community residents, Aboriginal Land Councils, Governments and all other key stakeholders.

I will continue to provide guidance and direction to the Office to maintain a high level of professionalism in all dealings, including building the capacity of Office staff through training and development.

Relationship with the Minister

I will provide the Minister, the Minister's Office and the Department's Secretary with accurate and timely information on any significant issues.

The Office and I will remain responsive to all requests from Government, the Minister, the Minister's Office and the Department. I will ensure that any emerging issues or risks are appropriately handled and that the Minister and the Department are informed, including any matters that the Australian Government may be accountable for in Parliament.

Public Communications

I will manage my responsibilities in relation to public engagements, including with the media, with appropriate consideration of my statutory responsibilities. I will keep the Minister informed in a timely manner of these engagements. My Office will continue to promote awareness of Township Leasing through stakeholder engagement, management of a website and information products and participation in public forums.

Working with the Department

I will comply with all relevant legislation and in particular I will:

- Seek to produce cost effective outputs in accordance with the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act* and the Finance Minister's Orders.
- Meet my responsibilities to the Office employees as set out in the *Public Service Act 1999*.
- Continue to consult with the Department and contribute to its role in policy development by providing information on the Office's activities and strategic priorities.
- Provide information to the Secretary of the Department in parallel with advice being provided to the Minister.

The Office and I will continue to work in partnership with the Department's staff in a professional manner, build strong effective links across all relevant policy areas, and provide technical advice and assistance to the Department during land tenure negotiations. I will execute and implement any new lease agreements signed as result of those negotiations.

Executive Director priorities, transparency and accountability

I commit to maintaining the highest standards of corporate governance, accountability and transparency. The Office and I will:

- identify and manage potential conflicts in performing my functions under the Act in a professional and impartial manner.
- establish and maintain professional and cooperative working relationships with all key stakeholders to ensure that any obligations under the Act are appropriately implemented and managed.
- co-operate fully on any reviews undertaken by Parliamentary Committees, the Commonwealth Ombudsman, the Australian National Audit Office and the Privacy Commissioner to the extent of their legislative authority.

The Office and I will continue to encourage economic development in the Township Leases by facilitating discussions and negotiations between Land Owners and other stakeholders, enabling the environment for home ownership and providing input to the home ownership policy framework, and supporting the Department to develop new lease agreements.

Conclusion

I will strive to ensure that the Office works in harmony with the Government's broader policy reform agenda and to maintain a high level of awareness of the Government's Indigenous Affairs policy objectives.

My intention is that the Office and I will be high-performing and responsive in meeting the Government's expectations. I will review and enhance these operational arrangements as necessary to maintain the highest standards of corporate governance, accountability and transparency and to maximise the benefits of Township Leasing for the Traditional Aboriginal Landowners.