#### Submission

to

# Office of Indigenous Policy Department of the Chief Minister Northern Territory Government

## **'Outstation' (Homeland) Policy Discussion Paper 2008**

**Submitters:** 

Laynhapuy Homelands Association Inc. on behalf of our members -

Traditional Owners of the Laynhapuy, Djalkarripyungu and

Miyarkapuyngu regions of North East Arnhem Land

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#### **BACKGROUND**

The Laynhapuy Homelands members believe that the point of reference currently outlined in the Discussion Paper will have detrimental social, health and economic outcomes for our people.

We would like to provide the context for the Northern Territory Government to adequately understand the crucial role of homelands in the development and wellbeing of our people.

LHAI would first of all like to point out that 'Outstation' is not a reflective description of places where Yolngu have lived for millennia. Accurate terminology is important to Yolngu of North East Arnhem Land.

It should be noted that the word 'Outstation' is very offensive to Yolngu and only highlights one of the key problems of engaging Yolngu communities: essentially the lack of understanding, respect and appreciation of the Yolngu and the Homeland movement, by all levels of Government.

To us, the word 'Homeland' has a much larger and more significant meaning. The word is synonymous with our land, our birthplace.

Furthermore, Outstation Resource Agencies/Associations should be referred to as Homeland Resource Associations/Centres.

Government will do well to respect and understand that we want to maintain our culture, language, identity and land. We want to protect and keep our community members healthy and sate, and this is achieved through the maintenance of respect and pride in ourselves. It is also important to recognise that in order for others to support us in achieving self determination and self sufficiency, we do recognise the need to incorporate mainstream elements, but to do so in our own way.

In the words of Barayuwa Mununggurr (Chair LHAI) "These places are not cattle stations. These places are not people stations. <u>These places are not Outstations</u>, <u>but Homelands</u>. The land is our home for a lot of Yolngu people."

"We are the spiritual people of the land. We have our songlines, our culture, our law and our arts. This is what links us to the land, and the Homelands make us who we are. This is very important for both the Northern Territory Government and the Commonwealth Government to understand this."

There has been a continual lack of respect and meaningful consultation by so-called appropriate representatives of mainstream culture. We hope that the policy process will acknowledge this and work to address this issue.

One of the key issues with homeland development is economic development. Unfortunately, the view taken of what constitutes economic development is that of mainstream culture, with it's underlying assumptions and values. It must be recognised that this does not necessarily equate to Yolngu economic values.

We support CDEP, and recognise that this program has had and continues to have, an important role in community development and maintenance of our homelands. There is great potential for greater expansion of economic development aligned with CDEP, and as such should be resourced to be able to continue this role, in expanded capacity where demonstrably working well.

However, we are still condemned to overcrowding due to lack of foresight and funding in the MoU between the Australian and Northern Territory Governments, and we would argue that this leads to health and social problems, Yolngu should not be blamed for this failure of Government policy – instead Government should be working with us, to gain fair outcomes that will work, for all.

The message to all levels of Government from our Homelands people, is that we will not be moving out from our traditional lands, and we are here to stay.

Our land is our culture, language and identity. We have the right to live and work in our homelands, and this makes us proud of who we are.

Our people are healthy and happy, and our children are safe. We have the same rights for education and training to be delivered in our homelands.

Therefore, LHAI believes the starting point for a discussion of Homelands Policy must be a clear recognition of the:

- Critical role in cultural maintenance. Because of homelands relationship to
   'place' and associated law, ceremony and inter-clan relations are critical to the
   maintenance of the cultural and social fabric of remote Indigenous populations
   generally. They play an important role in the social and cultural wellbeing of major
   communities as well, as benefiting those who are permanently resident on
   homelands.
- 2. Right to live on traditional country and engage in their culture. Traditional indigenous peoples have a fundamental right to live on their traditional country (clan estates) and practice their culture, language and traditions and pass these on to their children, and that as far as practicable all levels of government are obligated under United Nations conventions, treaties and declarations to enable this.
- 3. **Basic citizenship entitlements.** Aboriginal people living in their traditional clan estates also share the same basic citizenship entitlements as other Australians to benefit from public expenditure on roads, airstrips, public transport, health, education, housing, social and community services, parks & recreations, water supply, power generation, waste disposal, telecommunications, media, and more.

Moreover, LHAI believes that development of Homelands Policy must be set in the context of a clear understanding of:

4. Clear benefits demonstrated in: social, economic, health and cultural arenas to Indigenous people themselves, from living on homelands.

- Cultural/ceremonial: homelands are a focus for ceremonial activity (eg. Gangan with a resident population of 80-90 recently accommodated some 400 people from across East Arnhem Land for ceremony.
- Health: several studies have indicated health status of homeland residents is generally better, and indeed the homelands movement began in a direct response to government when the mining towns being built on Aboriginal Land, and as part of their own initiative and strategy to improve health and well-being. Government must respect and understand that there are improved cultural, social and health outcomes when homelands are supported.
- Law and order: law & order, social dysfunction and substance abuse problems are minimal in homelands.
- Safety: strong culture and traditional family structure in homelands generally keeps children much safer than the anomie of larger centres.
- o **Leadership**: homelands have clear structures for leadership.
- Clear sense of ownership: homelands are where people have control over their circumstances and where ownership of land and resources is not disputed. There is no doubt that people are happier living on their clan estates.
- Economic: homelands are where most economic potential resides because of this knowledge of and control over lands resources and cultural production (eg. arts, dance, music, bush foods, tourism, land management, border protection, etc.) CDEP is an important tool when used as a stepping stone towards economic development.
- Local engagement: homelands residents tend to be more self-reliant, and this extends to a greater willingness to engage in employment, training and self-help activity.
- Education: Garrthalala homeland is a model developed by homeland communities to cater for high school aged students, which has proven to be a successful pilot project, and as such, Government support to this particular style of model should continue. Education is crucial to the health and wellbeing of our people for secondary schooling, while recognising the need for permanent schools at other homelands, and possible linkages to adequately resourced School of the Air programs for smaller homelands. Government must ensure community education is part of the policy development process.
- **5. National and International benefit.** Which is derived from the maintenance of a strong Indigenous presence on country
  - Biodiversity, border security: Australia needs people living on, monitoring and managing the vast National Estate to achieve border security and maintain biodiversity, to maintain burning regimes, manage feral animals, etc.
  - Tourism and micro enterprises: The Australian tourism and arts & entertainment industries have drawn heavily on the uniqueness and

contemporary existence and 'authenticity' of Indigenous culture. A living, thriving Indigenous culture is essential for the success of these industries.

Currently these areas are also the key economic strengths and potentials for Indigenous communities, and homelands are central to capitalising on them.

- 6. **Moving people off country.** Will result in enormous economic costs and potential for very adverse social and cultural consequences of an economically driven, socially or politically engineered movement off country into centralised areas, unless in a voluntary and non-coercive arrangement.
  - Urban drift: the potential social consequences of drift and encouragement of homelands based people by all Government's to larger centres (towns, major communities) and consequent anomie and dysfunction is now well documented, if not yet understood. The NTER Intervention is barely scratching the surface and really only addressing the issue of lack of public investment. It cannot address fundamental issues of loss of cultural defined identity, social norms, roles and authority, etc.

The likely consequences are increased law and order costs, health costs, welfare costs, and chronic unemployment through Work for the Dole (as opposed to CDEP) and the associated psychological costs to individuals and families of living in such situations.

Non investment: There will be significant cost of abandoning existing investment in housing and infrastructure, and the costs of expanding the supply of housing, infrastructure and services in larger centres. It has taken the Intervention for Government to even contemplate addressing the shortfall of 56 houses for Yirrkala. Will government consider adding another 200 houses to replace those in homelands and address homelands overcrowding?

Recognising these rights and entitlements of Indigenous people and the importance of homelands in the exercise of these rights does not imply that the same type or quantum of service or infrastructure must be provided in homelands either individually or collectively. But it <u>does</u> mean that people living on homelands should not be denied at least a proportionate share of this public expenditure simply because of where they live.

In fact there are good national precedents (ie. fiscal equalization between states and territories) that the share of public expenditure on homeland residents should be weighted to compensate for locational cost factors and socio-economic disadvantage, since these are already factored in to allocations to the Northern Territory Government and NT Local Government. It is also arguable that other Territorians have in fact been advantaged at the expense of remote people over many years, because the same principles have not carried over to intra-Territory allocation of resources.

Any discussion of the costs, benefits and future potential of Homelands must be undertaken comparatively. What is the per capita public expenditure for basic services on other Australians, on other Territorians, on urban or regional Territorians

versus remote, on indigenous versus non-Indigenous Territorians, on remote major communities versus homelands? Such comparative analysis should not just reflect recurrent expenditures but also historic public investment in capital and infrastructure from which current generations benefit.

Without such comparative analysis it is impossible to determine whether there has been proportionate public investment in homelands or whether they have suffered from <u>chronic under investment</u> – which seems more likely. Without this data it is impossible to make informed decisions about what the future of homelands could or should be. It is impossible to say whether the issue of remoteness and scale is a 'problem' or whether it is in fact policy and budgetary/funding practice that is the problem.

Government must support infrastructure in our Homelands to improve and sustain better health, social and economic outcomes.

However, it must be recognised that people living on country will not be forced out to live in centralised areas through non provision of services, and it is their clear intent to remain on their clan estates, and it is their clear determination that it **IS** their land, and any such movement to 'determine the future of homelands' is coming from a very poor starting point and assumption.

Policies (or lack of) constructed without support of Homelands Resource Centres and their Aboriginal members living on the homelands themselves, will fail, as they have done so in the past. It seems that the direction of thinking of all levels of Government at present severely restrict services to the homelands, resulting in overcrowding on a massive scale, and generally not supportive of homeland settlement, with many drifting to fringe areas contributing to further marginalisation of homelands people.

There has been no sensible or adequate response for why "NTER" money allocated for alleviating overcrowding housing, was not spent at all in the homelands, where overcrowding is just as rife.

It is of considerable angst to our homelands members, that this discussion paper is due by the 1<sup>st</sup> of December, when the 'Outstation Community Engagement Workshops' advertised in the NT News on November 27<sup>th</sup>, advise the date for this consultation will be on the 10<sup>th</sup> December, **AFTER** written submissions have closed.

#### Response to the Specific Questions raised in the Discussion Paper

#### Question 1: Eligibility for Support.

What are the principles that should be applied to decide whether an 'outstation' (homeland) is eligible to receive support?

LHAI believes this question is wrongly formulated. It is not as simple as arbitrary population numbers, road access or similar criteria.

Diversity of differing homelands including but not limited to: social, kinship and cultural factors, history must be recognised, as well as their contribution to the maintenance of the national estate (what dollar figure could you possibly put on this in light of climate change?). Homelands leaders and representatives must be part of the process in identification for support for funding.

LHAI Yolngu, whom this organisation represents, takes exception at the term 'viability'. What this term means to non Yolngu is vastly different to how Yolngu interpret this word. 'Viability' of a homeland should have much more to do with the social/cultural commitment of residents to a homeland and their ability/willingness to assume the responsibilities that go with that.

Access to labour markets to assist determination on eligibility of support should not be pinpointed at major communities such as Yirrkala/Nhulunbuy, but strong consideration should be given to what the homelands are trying to achieve, and that is, to build up enterprise development, opportunities and with it, the labour force within the homelands, and this should be strongly supported.

There is however an issue of where the appropriate boundary lies between the public and the private domains of responsibility, and these may need to be more clearly negotiated in future.

For example, a one or two family homeland is extremely unlikely to need regular police patrols as it is not a 'public domain', and it would not be reasonable for them to expect one, so access to such a public service is not a relevant criteria for assessing viability. Alternatively, if a publicly funded bore and water supply system on such very small homeland is already in place, it may be appropriate to continue to maintain it at public expense just as happens for most other citizens. At the end of its working life, however, where major capital investment is required the issue of whether it is in the public or private domain may have to be reconsidered, but again a proper assessment of the term 'viability' **must be agreed** upon by Government and Yolngu before any move is made to decrease services.

There seem to be a number of assumptions embedded in this question that may need to be reconsidered:

Firstly, the different types of 'support' are not disaggregated, and very different principles might apply to different components.

Secondly it may not be appropriate to see homelands as individual locations requiring support, if they are instead conceived as part of a homeland network, such that economies of scale and efficiencies are very different. There are

more Yolgnu residing within the Laynhapuy Homelands than the entire community of Yirrkala, however level of funding and support and services is vastly different in the homelands.

Thirdly, it may not be appropriate to assume government is directly involved in delivery of services, and it may be more a matter of ensuring homeland populations receive their proportionate entitlement to public expenditure but through other delivery mechanisms.

Fourthly, matters of individual responsibility and choice should not be confused with issues of homeland 'viability' per se. For example, education of children can be achieved through school of the air, home tutoring, boarding school, commuting to school, etc if adequately resourced and supported by all. The issue may be whether parents understand their education responsibilities and what their options might be and that they can access their education entitlement in other ways.

It may not be entirely appropriate to determine 'viability' of a homeland on levels of housing maintenance/service or provision of same.

#### Should the 'outstation' be the sole or principle residence?

There seems to be an assumption in this question that people somehow have houses in more than one place which they are benefiting from, or that homelands are just 'weekenders'. Laynhapuy Homelands are not 'weekenders' but places of residence.

Yolngu are mobile for the purposes of accessing multiple services, attending ceremony and cultural obligations, accessing fresh food and goods, visiting family, etc, accessing education; children being flown into secondary school at Garrthalala (but residence is actually a smaller homeland with their parents) or driving to hub schools to stay for the week (but again, residence is actually a smaller homeland with their parents). or to avoid seasonal isolation (wet season), and at times to find less overcrowded or better functioning housing, or because of breakdown of essential services.

People also periodically get 'stranded' in large communities for periods of time for economic reasons, particularly if the mean average payment is very low – such as Centrelink, or non provision of Top Up through CDEP, especially if people cannot afford transport back home. Remote living in homelands means that it costs more to live. Even larger communities such as Yirrkala pay a higher rate for goods and services.

This mobility does not mean a homeland is not their sole or principle place of residence.

LHAl's experience is that the better the level of services and housing, the more likely the homeland is to be well and permanently occupied. The challenge is to minimise the factors that **force** people to be mobile, such as provision of fresh food and goods.

#### Should there be secure tenure over the 'outstation'?

It is LHAI's understanding that apart from perhaps excisions on pastoral properties, land tenure of the vast majority of homelands is 'secure' under the *Aboriginal Land Rights (NT) Act*. Aboriginal people own it and the relevant traditional owners give consent to development on it.

The real question here seems to be whether the NT Government wants/needs to secure their investment in housing and infrastructure constructed on Aboriginal land through some form of leasehold arrangement or resumption of land for crown purposes – and this is quite a different matter altogether.

LHAI believes there are good reasons to properly negotiate land use agreements in relation to government funded assets. This is not because the assets are at 'risk', but because the process of negotiation makes respective rights, responsibilities, expectations and 'trade offs' between community benefit and private rights much more transparent, and it is the proper 'legal' way to do things.

#### What kind of water supply is needed?

It is very hard to sustain a healthy living environment for permanent settlement without an adequate supply of potable water. The issue would seem to be whether the community residents can bear to cost over an above what might be a reasonable level of public subvention for water supply.

Presumably what constitutes a reasonable level of subvention must take into account the existing level of investment in the community and the costs of accommodating the community elsewhere.

However, again, Aboriginal people living in their traditional clan estates also share the same basic citizenship entitlements as other Australians to benefit from public expenditure, whether it be water, roads, power, airstrips etc.

A guaranteed secure, sustainable and potable water supply is essential for our homelands.

#### What level of access is required?

This would seem to be entirely contingent upon the size and level of self sufficiency of a community, and availability of alternative forms of all year access.

Road access may be different if there is good air and barge access. Poor road access may be acceptable if only one or two families depend on it to travel out to services, but may be unacceptable for a large community with either large numbers needing to travel out or services needing to be brought in. However, given the nature of cyclonic activity in the region, it should be a given that all remote airstrips are maintained/and or extended and funded adequately, in preparation of such destructive events for emergency airlifts.

#### What level of support is required (eg. from a Shire or ORA)?

There are significant benefits and efficiencies to be gained through the provision of support to multiple homelands via an ORA, particularly those who can assist to

provide housing, roads maintenance, municipal and essential services, and other functional services, as well as others such as homelands members support, members assistance, social services and more.

ORA's potentially have an advantage over Shires in that they specialise in being mobile and accessing remote homelands, and most importantly have the communication and information networks with homeland residents to support relatively effective operation. They also have 'buy in' since homeland residents are also usually members and represented on the government boards.

It is also important to note that many ORA's are run and managed by a Board of Aboriginal Directors, who are best placed to know intimately what the needs are of their homelands members.

The existence of an ORA controlled CDEP can also add significantly to the effectiveness of service delivery, and indeed many homelands communities also assist greatly in rehabilitation of substance abusers – and the value of this should not be overlooked, although either underfunded or not funded at all.

ORAs have an important role when their associated homelands are viewed as a social/cultural network. Where appropriately informed about the available resources, Yolngu people are perhaps best positioned to make decisions about how to allocate resources between homelands, precisely because they are all interconnected, so they have a far deeper understanding of the implications and priorities, than any outside observer, or transient Government employees such as Government Business Managers or ICC staff. ORA boards and membership provide a structure through which Yolngu themselves can decide what is most important.

This is not to suggest that Government should simply buck pass responsibility for rationing reduced resources onto ORAs, but adequate investment and resourcing should be the first port of call.

#### Are there cultural, social or economic reasons to support some 'outstations'?

There are very strong cultural social and economic reasons to support indigenous people living on country generally, and these are all very well documented and available publicly in the many submissions to both the Northern Territory and Australian Governments regarding the Intervention, CDEP Reform, submissions to the Senate and so on.

Within a network of homelands, the people themselves will know whether some homelands are more important to support than others, if it is a matter of rationalising resources. You must ask the people.

#### Question 2: Definition of an 'Outstation'

LHAI would first of all like to point out that 'Outstation' is not a reflective description of places where Yolngu have lived for millennia. Accurate terminology is important to Yolngu of North East Arnhem Land.

In the words of Barayuwa Mununggurr (Chair LHAI) "These places are not cattle stations. These places are not people stations. <u>These places are not Outstations</u>, <u>but Homelands</u>. The land is our home for a lot of Yolngu people."

"We are the spiritual people of the land. We have our songlines, our culture, our law and our arts. This is what links us to the land, and the Homelands make us who we are. This is very important for both the Northern Territory Government and the Commonwealth Government to understand this."

A definition of 'homeland' which is meaningful to LHAI would be:

A homeland is a locale which a group of indigenous people, usually closely related, have 'settled' through the establishment of houses and infrastructure to support permanent occupation. Usually the majority of residents will have a close cultural affinity with or 'ownership' of the locale through customary law, with it being part of their traditional 'clan estate'.

Through customary law and kinship the residents and the locale itself will usually be connected to other people who usually reside elsewhere because of other kinship/marriage connections or historical circumstance.

Homelands are generally characterised by the absence of people (indigenous or otherwise) who are not so connected through customary law.

It must be pointed out that the Homeland movement began to support Aboriginal people to move back to their traditional clan estates, after many were forced into larger communities such as Yirrkala, however, equally, some people have never, left their clan lands.

LHAI does not believe the issue of 'definition' is particularly relevant to developing an appropriate homelands policy. At one level homelands are simply 'relatively small population clusters of Australian citizens living remotely who need to access their citizenship entitlements'. The key question is how to **effectively service** such population clusters, **not how to define them**.

The strength of culture and the extent to which customary law links people to their land will strongly influence the character of the homeland and its social organisation. It will also significantly impact on the willingness of, and psychological, social, and cultural consequences for the residents, of any policy direction that encourages mobility off country.

#### Question 3: The Service Model

#### What is the preferred service model or models for 'outstations'?

The preferred service model is through ORA's servicing a network of culturally interrelated homelands. As outlined above ORAs have particular advantages as services providers because of their membership structure, historical association and specialisation. No external provider could easily replicate this. The Shires are not keen to take on responsibility of homelands.

It is important that relationships with Government (at all levels) and ORA's be strengthened and enhanced in order for the Whole of Government approach to be effective in determining service models and implementation of, and improve communications within the homelands themselves and Government.

It would not be practical to structure funding or services around individual homelands because it would not be possible to achieve necessary levels of effectiveness or efficiency, and perhaps the homelands network is a better and more effective model.

It should be recognised that homelands have an enormous amount of potential for development of enterprises and localised resulting employment, on a more 'viable' scale than large communities due to the underlying social, cultural and environmental fabric that binds these communities together and sustains relationships with other homelands.

#### Does a 'hub and spoke' model work?

The 'hub and spoke' model is appropriate in many circumstances. But it can depend on the degree of cultural and social connection between physically nearby homelands, relative size, existing level of development, and physical accessibility such as road distance and quality (not distance as the crow flies).

## How do Shires and ORAs fit in with Government services like education, health and police?

Because of the strong cultural interconnection of homelands and basis in customary law, and their sense of 'ownership' over their homeland communities, they do not fit comfortably with a Shire based model of service provision. Neither have the Shires demonstrated a willingness to take on servicing homelands, nor a willingness to properly engage with Yolngu effectively on their needs and aspirations. It is imperative that the Shires, homelands members and resource centres work together to build effective relationships.

From experience, homelands know that their needs are usually neglected if they are competing for resources with the major communities. Small numbers and out of sight usually also means out of mind for centrally located decision makers. Homelands are also unlikely to want to be drawn into the politics of resource allocation within and between major communities.

ORAs can have a key advisory role in relation to the provision of education, health and policing services within their cluster of homelands, and there are clear benefits if these services are structurally organised to reflect such clusters (eg. Yirrkala Homelands and Yirrkala CEC School, Laynhapuy Health) even if they are not directly controlled by the ORA.

It is well documented that Homelands schools have a superior attendance rate to those schools classed as 'townships', and as such, education within the homelands should be supported.

Currently with OATSIH, there is a new regionalisation model being explored, keeping health services in all homelands being managed under 'homelands health', with health services in townships such as Yirrkala, Gapuwiyak, Galiwinku etc, being managed

under a 'township' board of directors, this model realising the vast differences in homelands and townships, and the need to adopt a significantly different approach. Yananymul Mununggurr, CEO of LHAI, presented this model with OATSIH, AMSANT, funding bodies, current operating health services and Aboriginal members last week at the Health Regionalisation meeting.

#### **Question 4: 'Outstation' Service Levels**

#### What level of services should be provided to outstations?

The more appropriate question is how do things need to be organised to most effectively ensure homeland residents can access their citizenship entitlements.

In some instances this may mean locally based services, in others it might be a service centralised within the network of homelands, in others it might require some sort of subsidy to access a service elsewhere, or a combination thereof.

Applying arbitrary service levels could be inadvertently or inappropriately used to define some homelands as 'unviable'. Social, health, cultural and environmental considerations must be included in the mix, as well as aspirations of Yolngu living on country, who have clear direction and purpose about the way in which they wish to live and the future they see for their children.

Rather than specifying service levels it may be more appropriate to state outcome requirements within a network of homelands, for example:

- the population must be able to access potable water
- children must receive appropriate education
- people must be able to access health care
- homelands of sufficient size or social characteristics that necessitate regular policing must be accessible by road all year round.

There is then flexibility within the network of homelands to achieve these outcomes in different ways.

Of course none of this can be achieved without an adequate base level of resourcing from government.

Power is also an important factor within these considerations, and one which PAWA must start taking responsibility for, as opposed to Homelands Resource Centres.

#### What consideration should be used to determine service levels?

See above, including needs and wants in terms of housing, education, employment, business creation and potential, benefits of maintenance of the national estate, levels of income and accessibility to other services.

How can 'outstation' populations be estimated?

Employ people who are competent at developing baseline data eg. CAEPR, and access previously supplied data to both Governments from health, housing areas and ORA's.

#### Should some 'outstations' be considered as a major community?

Can't answer this without knowing the full implications. Does this mean the term will entail 99 year leases, GBMs, Shire Services Managers, commitment of housing, etc. or is it simply a label? Does this mean that people would be pushed into 'major communities' if their smaller homeland was deemed 'unviable?' This would need to be further investigated, as well as the consequences socially, environmentally, and it's relationship to health if overcrowding of houses is not addressed.

There should not be a quantum leap from homeland to major community.

#### **Question 5: Additional Issues for Comment**

#### What research is required?

- The economic social and health benefits of homelands.
- Populations and mobility.
- Comparative costs of services to other citizens.
- Keeping all the previous data given to government agencies over the years in one place so we don't have to keep answering these questions

#### Should a 'outstations' advisory group be set up?

YES, a homelands advisory group should be set up. Additionally there should be specialist advisory groups in relation to education, training, and possible health.

## Should housing on 'outstations' be treated purely as private property or as a Territory Housing asset?

In general, **no**. It should be publicly funded 'social housing' based on income/social need as it is for other Australian citizens. 'Community housing' models are well established in other jurisdictions as an alternative to 'public housing'.

There is little evidence to suggest that Territory Housing has the capacity or competence to manage remote homeland housing, but on socio-economic grounds the vast majority of homeland residents qualify for social housing assistance.

Making homeland housing 'private' would simply be about cost shifting, with the inevitable result being a massive deterioration and loss of housing stock and rise in associated health and social problems. Homeland residents in general do not have the financial capacity to support 'private ownership'.

In a few individual cases, home ownership might be an option and those individuals should be able to access the range of programs intended to assist home buyers

generally and specifically programs that assist public housing tenants to purchase their housing.

## How should Government develop a monitoring and evaluation framework for 'outstations' policy?

Very hard to do without properly resourced ORAs, and setting up the ORA Advisory Group. This group should consist of ORA's, and NT and Australian Governments, and Land Councils. It is imperative that a new MoU be renegotiated to adequately resource homelands. It must be developed with proper consideration for socioeconomic, health, environmental, cultural factors and responsibilities.

## What is the relationship between community living areas and 'outstations' policy development?

This question is not clear, and needs to be re-visited, or re-worded.

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Chairman Laynhapuy Homelands