



Northern Land Council

MEDIA RELEASE

Local government reform timetable unrealistic

7 March 2007

The Northern Land Council has today raised concerns about the Northern Territory's local government reform process and called on Minister Elliot McAdam to extend the existing deadline concerning the implementation of the proposed reforms.

The NLC's Chief Executive, Mr Norman Fry said that the reform model had not been subjected to an appropriate consultation process and as a result there was significant misunderstanding about the intent of the reforms in the bush.

"It is essential that Aboriginal people are fully included in this reform process. To date, this has not occurred and it cannot occur by 1 July 2008," Mr Fry said.

"The current implementation timeframe of 1 July 2008 is unrealistic".

The NLC has identified particular concerns about the way shire boundaries have been drawn.

"The establishment of boundaries need to take into account cultural, linguistic and demographic factors to ensure optimum outcomes in service delivery," Mr Fry said.

"These factors do not appear to have been properly understood by the government,"

"The NLC is also concerned that we will end up with another under-resourced, unaccountable and ineffective system.

"We must get this right and not create another flawed system that works against Aboriginal people rather than for them," Mr Fry said.