

WHAT DOES THE INTERVENTION MEAN?

Centrelink - welfare payments and school



The Australian Government will introduce legislation to quarantine (hold back) 50 percent of all Australian Government income support and family assistance payments, and CDEP wages.

This will occur for an initial period of 12 months for people who have had payments for two years or longer and live in a "prescribed" community.

Centrelink will decide about people who don't live in those communities on a case by case basis.

The Australian Government will link income support and family assistance payments to school attendance for principal carers of children of compulsory school age in prescribed communities.

Where school attendance is poor, it will hold back 50 percent of income support payments and 100 percent of family assistance payments, for an initial period of 12 months.

It will include deductions to provide for school breakfast and lunch for the school age children.

Housing



It is unclear at this stage how much the Government will be spending on housing.

Major General Chalmers said that "thousands" of houses are needed but it is not known how many the Government will build or how much money they will make available.

Mr Brough says that normal rents and normal tenancy arrangements the same as NT Housing will be introduced.

Police



The Government asked all the states to lend some police officers and there are an extra 18 police officers in Central Australia at the minute.

However it is not known whether there will be more police in the long term.

Community stores



The Federal Government says community stores currently offer low quality food, poor management and high prices.

So it is introducing a licensing scheme to assess the quality of the store's food, its financial integrity, retail practices, governance and its ability to be included in the government's plans to quarantine welfare payments for the purchase of essential items only.

Stores will be assessed by contracted experts and an independent board will advise on licence decisions.

At first, community store licenses will only be granted for six months.

If an operator repeatedly fails its licence conditions, the store owner will be given a chance to replace the operator. If the owner refuses to appoint a new operator a new licence may be granted to a competitor.

The government may also compulsorily acquire the store and appoint a new operator itself.

Permits



Even though Aboriginal people told the Government they wanted to keep the permit system as it was, the Government wants to scrap it in areas of what it calls "common areas" of major communities, airstrips and access roads to the communities.

Common areas include roads in the communities and areas that are normally accessible to everyone such as public buildings and facilities, shops, art centres and the like.

Private residences and sacred sites will continue to be protected.

Permits will still be required for land outside of communities

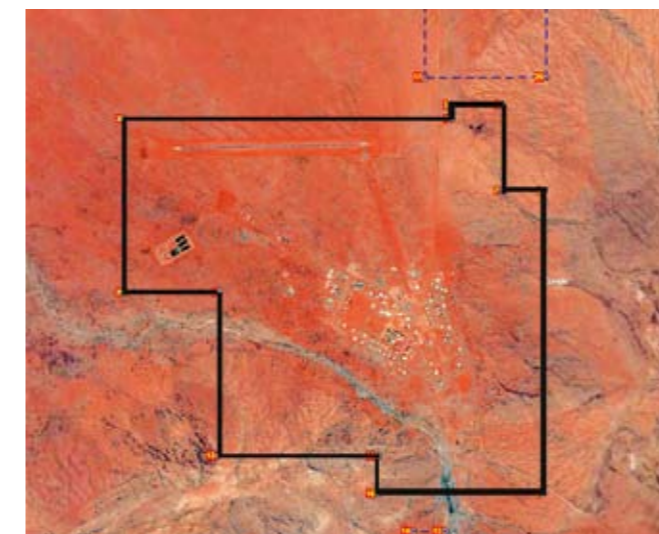
The army



The army has been going out to communities and setting up tents for the health teams. It is also assessing infrastructure.

Major General Dave Chalmers is the Operational Commander of the Northern Territory Emergency Task Force Operational Group.

Compulsory acquisition of communities - five year leases



The Government says that it is going to acquire Aboriginal communities which have more than 100 people and take a lease over them for five years. It says it will pay 'just terms' compensation.

The CLC says that it is not necessary to do this and that the CLC can make leases on communities for housing but that it does not need to lease the whole community.

Town camps



Town camps are on special purpose and Crown leases that are in place under Northern Territory legislation.

The Federal Government's changes will allow an Australian Government minister to take on the Northern Territory Minister's powers to take over those leases.

The legislation also reduces the amount of notice the government must give for taking back the leases from six months to just two months.

The Federal Government Minister cancel the leases for breaches of the leases' conditions and acquire any interest within the camps, including freehold land.

Health checks for all NT Aboriginal children



One of the first things the Federal Government announced was to send doctors and health workers into communities to give every Aboriginal child a health check. They asked for volunteer doctors to come and help from other states.

At first the Government said every child would have to be checked but it now says it's up to the parents if they want their kids to be checked.

One of the things some people were worried about was the type of checks that would be done on the children but Mr Brough now says that they will be regular health checks. The health checks have already started.

Government business managers



The Federal Government's announced sweeping changes to the way communities and the services provided to them will be managed.

Those changes include the power to give directions to bodies providing government-funded services in relation to non-fixed assets, directing bodies to perform specific tasks or actions, appointing managers to community government councils and incorporated associations and forcing non-voting observers to service organisations in communities.

The Government will also be able to terminate a funding agreement, even if the agreement's conditions haven't been breached, and vary funding agreements without the consent of the recipient.

CDEP scrapped



One of the Federal Government's changes that will be felt the most in Northern Territory Aboriginal communities is its decision to axe CDEP.

CDEP will be phased out by the 30th of June 2008 and participants moved onto income support programs.

Each CDEP provider will be given a transition date after which CDEP payments will cease.

A CDEP transition payment is intended to make up the difference between average CDEP payments and income support payments but will only be paid from the provider's transition date until the 30th of June 2008.

People whose income is being quarantined by the government under its intervention legislation will also have their CDEP transition payment managed.

CDEP income couldn't be quarantined by the Federal Government, but income support can.

The Federal Government says it hopes to move 2000 people off CDEP and into "real" jobs, but there are 8000 people in the Northern Territory on the scheme, leaving 6000 people with a 50 percent cut in their income thanks to the changes.

Alcohol and pornography

Possession and/or supply of pornography will be banned in prescribed communities and the police will have the power to seize any pornography that they find.



Alcohol and the transport of alcohol on Aboriginal land, town camps, and community living areas will also be banned.

Identification will be required to purchase larger amounts of liquor throughout the NT.