



# Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara

A.B.N. 77 261 612 162  
PMB 227 Umuwa via Alice Springs NT 0872  
Phone: (08) 8954 8132 Fax: (08) 8954 8110  
Email: [gmapy@anangu.com.au](mailto:gmapy@anangu.com.au)

To all communities

## Community Housing Update No. 4 2007/2008

The SGM of 28 and 29 May was attended by 160 senior people from 28 communities and homelands across the APY Lands.

State and Federal government presented on the \$25 million housing offer. They could not provide any information on the number of houses which would be built; where they would be built; and, over what period. Remember APY has uncovered that \$10 million in CHIP funding since 2003/04 has not been spent on housing, funded police stations have not been built, corruption and incompetence in housing R&M and undermining of the MOU for State management of housing approved by Minister Weatherill.

The *APY Land Rights Act* protects traditional owners and Anangu by requiring APY to consult with Traditional Owners (TO's) before agreeing to things like leases to the State over housing. Many TO's do not live in communities. TO's will be entitled to compensation for land transferred to the State by lease if the TO's agree to this. Anangu are protected even if they are not TO's for a community because the Executive Board needs to consider the views and interests of all Anangu whether or not they are TO's for the community they live in. A general meeting of the members of APY can bind the Executive and tell the Executive what to do on things like this.

APY asked the government not to do further consultations before our SGM on 28 and 29 May however they came on the 27 May anyway to hold private meetings at Amata and Pukatja. After this they announced that they had done a deal with Amata on housing. While the opinions of any group of Anangu are important, they do not bind APY. Anangu need to express their opinions to your Executive Board member and at our general meetings.

It is very dangerous to have private meetings with government who are trying to side step the *APY Land Rights Act* and the permit system.

The truth is that we need to stay united on this.

The May 28 and 29 meeting unanimously voted not to accept the transfer of all of our houses to the State (valued at \$146 million) for a promise of \$25 million but for APY to negotiate with government and for government to go through APY, not communities.

I have requested a meeting with government in Adelaide to settle an agreement on the housing based on a variation of last year's MOU approved by Minister Weatherill. This will allow proper time for consultation with TO's and Anangu about leases and how Anangu

would benefit from the leases as opposed to housing which we have been seeking for two years. I will report after this meeting.

Public housing is part of passive welfare. In communities in other parts of Australia, communities have agreed to change how welfare is delivered to improve social conditions. This is called welfare reform. Welfare reform would go a long way to solving the key card problem at Mintabie and make more money available for families.

The Executive Board invited Mal Brough to our SGM and he exposed that the Rudd/Rann housing offer is much worse than his offer while he was the Minister because he did not require a lease over all of the houses in exchange for the \$25 million, only the new houses.

The length of the lease is a separate matter linked to Anangu home ownership which we need to talk and think about. The Rudd/Rann offer is not better simply because it requires a 50 year lease as opposed to 99 year lease. They want to take all of the houses.

The meeting invited Mal Brough to consider advising us in housing and improving our lives. He is considering this. He is no longer in Parliament and would be working for us, if he accepts. He is not here to do a NT style of intervention. He has already said the APY Lands are different because we are trying to do something to make life better for Anangu.

Mal Brough travelled all night for no payment and was away from his family for three days to be with us. I believe we owe him our thanks.



**Bernard Singer**  
**Chairperson**