

NT Greens Media RELEASE

END CDP AND PROVIDE REAL WORKING RIGHTS FOR INDIGENOUS TERRITORIANS



This May Day, the NT Greens are calling for the abolition of the unsuccessful, racist Community Development Program (CDP).

A compulsory 'work for the dole' program, CDP forces financially vulnerable community members into unsafe working conditions and denies them basic working rights such as sick leave and superannuation.

"CDP is indentured slavery and should be abolished," said George Hanna, Greens Candidate for Lingiari.

"People are expected to do things above and beyond their skill sets with no training or support provided for them to develop skills to participate in a sustainable workforce".

"More and more people are having to rely on churches and charities for handouts, demonstrating how ineffective this program really is," said Mr Hanna.

CDP workers are not classed as workers under the Fair Work Act and receive \$11.60 per hour. The national minimum wage is \$18.29 per hour.

The NT Greens are calling for improved safety and working rights for Indigenous Territorians beginning with a return to the CDEP model of wages, not welfare.

Greens candidate for Solomon, Timothy Parish, said workers rights must be respected as the economy picks up speed transitioning away from fossil fuels.

"The solar energy sector in the NT already employs more locals than FIFO workers and that is good for our economy and our community," he said Mr Parish.

"Territory workers deserve a fair and just transition plan to shift from the fossil fuel industry of gas toward solar and renewable energy," said Mr Parish.

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Additional points:

- *A recent Government evaluation of the \$300 million a year CDP program reveals the program adds no value to the lives of its participants and its punitive measures fail to take into account the health, social and economic disadvantage, distance and cultural differences of workers.*
- *The punitive measures placed on CDP workers are discriminatory. There are clearly different rules for CDP workers, who are fined from the first absence or breach of employment as opposed to workers under the Newstart program, who can be unemployed for up to 12 months before being forced into work for the dole programs.*
- *The Australian National Audit office revealed CDP workers are four times more likely to be penalised than other workers. These penalties are financial, which adds further financial stress to an already inadequate living wage.*