



ABORIGINAL LEGAL RIGHTS MOVEMENT Inc

MEDIA RELEASE

NO DELIVERY ON PROMISED FUNDING

The Aboriginal Legal Rights Movement rejects the assertion by Federal Treasurer Wayne Swan that his Government has honoured all its pre-election promises.

ALRM CEO, Mr Neil Gillespie is disappointed that the Rudd Government has not addressed a critical funding shortfall for Aboriginal Legal Funding as was promised, in what now appears as the pre-election rhetoric.

“For the Treasurer Mr Wayne Swan to proclaim that ALL promises made by Labor prior to the last Federal Election have been honoured is wrong - to say the least. Promises appear to have been honoured – except for those that address issues for Aboriginal peoples,” Mr Gillespie said.

“The Rudd Government gave a firm commitment to ALRM on 22 November 2007 that “Labor will ensure the effectiveness and efficient operation of the courts and tribunals by strengthening funding to Aboriginal Legal Aid Agencies”.

“Furthermore, Sports Minister Kate Ellis confirmed to ALRM in 2007 Labor Policy that Indigenous legal aid salaries would be on par with mainstream legal aid.”

“Aboriginal people continue to be overrepresented in the justice system and are incarcerated at alarming rates. Worse too, this Government is following the racially discriminatory policies of the previous Government.”

“ALRM funding has been static since 1996 – except for a disgraceful offer of \$1000 on 18 February 2008. At the same time though, mainstream legal aid funding has increased by over 120% in the last 12 years.”

Mr Gillespie said ALRM intends to lodge a formal complaint to the United Nations.

“Australia continues to be in breach of the Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination Article 2 which provides that “each state party (read country) undertakes to engage in no act or practice of racial discrimination against persons, groups of persons or institutions and to ensure that all public authorities and public institutions, national and local, shall act in conformity with this obligation”.

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