



## **Aboriginal Legal Rights Movement Inc.**

### **MEDIA RELEASE**

#### **RUDD AND RANN NEED TO ADEQUATELY FUND ABORIGINAL LEGAL SERVICES**

**For immediate release**  
27 March, 2008

The Aboriginal Legal Rights Movement is calling upon the Rudd Government to honour its pre-election commitment to increase funding for Aboriginal legal aid.

ALRM CEO, Mr Neil Gillespie said that unless an immediate injection of funds is provided to ALRM it will be forced to reduce services throughout regional South Australia including the APY Lands.

“Senior Management of ALRM has met and is making recommendations for the ALRM Board to consider at its 1 April meeting which include withdrawing services to all regional court circuits in the months of May and June 2008,” Mr Gillespie said.

“For the months of May and June the courts in SA will be significantly disrupted as ALRM will not have the resources to send his legal staff to the various jurisdictions throughout the State.”

“Static funding from the Australian Government to ALRM since 1995 has forced this unfortunate situation. In contrast mainstream legal aid funding has increased over 120%.”

“ALRM is solely funded by the Federal Government even though most of ALRM’s activities relate to State law,” he said.

Mr Gillespie said he hoped the Standing Committee of Attorneys-General (SCAG), meeting in Adelaide this week, will see commonsense and reason and force an agreement not just in SA but nationally, where Aboriginal legal aid receives an immediate injection of funds.

“Labor promised ALRM in its advice 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.”

“Youth Affairs Minister, Kate Ellis even advised ALRM that it was Labor Policy that Indigenous legal aid salaries would be on par with mainstream legal aid.”

“Premier Mike Rann, as SA Premier and National President of Labor should be working towards ensuring adequate funding is provided for Aboriginal legal aid and bring his Attorney General into line and contribute to ALRM’s operations.”

For more information

Mr Neil Gillespie  
ALRM CEO  
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ALRM CEO, Mr Neil Gillespie will be available to talk with South Australian media. To arrange an interview, contact ALRM CEO, Neil Gillespie (m) 0417 086 025 or (08) 8113 3702

FYI: The Aboriginal Legal Rights Movement Inc provides legal services and associated activities (legal aid and native title legal services, financial counselling, law reform and advocacy, the Aboriginal Visitors Scheme and community education) for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in South Australia. ALRM is an independent incorporated Aboriginal community organization.