

# Media Release

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## **New SIHIP arrangements on Groote Eylandt**

The Australian and Northern Territory Governments today announced new arrangements under the Strategic Indigenous Housing and Infrastructure Program (SIHIP) on Groote Eylandt, Gunbalanya, Belyuen and Acacia Larrakia in the Northern Territory (NT).

Agreement was reached last night between the SIHIP Joint Steering Committee and Earth Connect Alliance that Earth Connect's operations under SIHIP in the NT would cease.

Territory Alliance – another SIHIP Alliance consortium working in the NT – will take on remaining stage one work on Groote Eylandt and the remaining work in Gunbalanya, Belyuen and Acacia Larrakia.

Territory Alliance will be on the ground in Groote Eylandt and Gunbalanya next week and will work with Earth Connect to enable a smooth and seamless transition of operations to Territory Alliance.

Territory Alliance has strong local knowledge, the capacity to manage important relationships with the Groote Eylandt and Gunbalanya communities and clear synergies with their existing works in other communities, including in the Tiwi Islands, Galiwinku and Maningrida.

A transition manager has been appointed to work with local residents, the SIHIP program directors and the Alliances to ensure a smooth transfer with minimal disruption to construction and refurbishment work.

Territory Alliance has agreed to continue the employment of all locally engaged employees in the communities under the new arrangements.

The Australian and NT Governments are committed to delivering quality housing to Indigenous people in the NT.

The Australian and NT Governments will continue to make improvements to the administration and delivery of SIHIP.

A recent assessment of SIHIP has found that the changes made to the program following a 2009 review mean that SIHIP is now on track to deliver on its targets of 750 new houses, 230 rebuilds and 2500 refurbishments over the period to 2013.

We will continue to closely monitor the standard of construction and refurbishments under SIHIP and take all necessary steps to improve the delivery of Indigenous housing in the NT.

Getting remote housing implementation right is absolutely critical for closing the gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians.

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