



Media Release

**Minister for Ageing
Minister for Disability Services
Minister for Aboriginal Affairs
The Hon. Paul Lynch MP**

11 February 2010

Murrin Bridge water and sewerage project delivers

Minister for Aboriginal Affairs Paul Lynch and NSW Aboriginal Land Council (NSWALC) Councillor Craig Cromelin today inspected the recently completed upgrading of the Murrin Bridge communities water and sewerage facilities..

The new sewage rising main was installed as part of a 25-year \$200 million partnership between NSWALC and the NSW Government.

Mr Lynch said the Government understood the importance of access to drinking water and the safe disposal of waste water to the health of Aboriginal people.

“In larger cities and towns we often take water and sewerage for granted, but in many discrete Aboriginal communities, residents rely on tank, creek or bore water and on-site septic sewerage systems that regularly break down,” he said.

At Murrin Bridge, the project replaced a partially-collapsed and clogged sewage rising main to prevent overflow of effluent into the environment from the pump station.

“We’ve waited a long time for this to happen,” Councillor Cromelin said. The community is delighted with the upgrade. It makes a real difference.

“Just as the overall impact of this joint water and sewerage program makes a difference - a huge difference.

“That’s why the State Land Council, of which I am a part, committed \$100 million dollars of its own funds to make it possible.

“It will potentially save lives. It will improve and health and well-being of thousands of people in the 60 communities where upgrades will be carried out,” Councillor Cromelin said.

“Also, of fundamental important to land councils was to have agreements reached with local government shires to fulfil ongoing maintenance of our infrastructure - such as water and sewerage.

“I know negotiations to this effect have started with Cobar Shire Council.

“For me - and in particular the local Murrin Bridge Aboriginal Land Council - it is vital that they succeed. I urge everyone concerned to try and have these negotiations completed as soon as possible.”

During his visit today, Mr Lynch met with members of the Murrin Bridge Local Aboriginal Land Council, Murrin Bridge Aboriginal Health Service, Murrin Bridge Vineyard, Kejole Koori Arts Studio and the Murrathinna Aboriginal Pre-School

Mr Lynch said listening to the aspirations and concerns of Aboriginal communities was an important part of his job.

“Working in partnership with Aboriginal people is the only way we can effectively deliver the services and infrastructure to communities,” he said.

Mr Lynch said the Government’s \$240 million Aboriginal Communities Development Program had delivered 37 refurbishments and repairs, seven new houses and two replacement houses in Murrin Bridge.

“In delivering these essential services, the program also provided job opportunities for local Aboriginal people with Aboriginal companies as preferred contractors,” he said.

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