



Kimberley Land Council

MEDIA RELEASE

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Community closures still on the agenda

Western Australian Aboriginal communities remain under threat following the release of a State Government plan for the delivery of essential services.

According to the State Government, the *Resilient Families, Strong Communities* document is a 'roadmap' which will set the direction for reform in regional and remote Aboriginal communities.

Kimberley Land Council Chairman Anthony Watson said the plan showed little change in the WA Government's thinking around the rights of Aboriginal peoples.

"The new roadmap makes clear that the government is set on removing services from many communities by focusing funding on what it says are larger and more sustainable communities," Mr Watson said.

"This approach will destroy Aboriginal people's connection to country and their right to live within, care for, and protect their cultural heritage.

"We were promised a new and improved plan, instead we have community closures rebranded."

The State Government recently announced the start of 'on the ground' consultation about the roadmap, including talks in Bidjadanga.

"The KLC welcomes consultation, however we have significant concerns about the engagement process to date," Mr Watson said.

"The consultation appears to be about how government-imposed policy is implemented, when it should be about discovering appropriate policy for the delivery of services in conjunction with Traditional Owners.

"It also hasn't been made clear how and where the \$150 million that was initially committed by the State Government to the reform process is to be spent.

"The roadmap raises more questions than it answers and we are yet to understand how the government will fund the proposals stated in the roadmap when we all know the budget is in major trouble."

The *Resilient Families, Strong Communities* roadmap outlines a total of 10 priority actions that the State Government has committed to delivering over the next two years.

A full copy of the roadmap can be found at <http://regionalservicesreform.wa.gov.au>