



NTCOSS NEWS SHEET – April 2011

NT Budget

The NT budget will be handed down on Tuesday May 3. NTCOSS board members will meet at midday to analyse key implications of the document for the community sector. We will issue a media release early on Tuesday afternoon, and provide a summary of the main aspects of the budget to our members the following day.

NTCOSS Conference

The recent NTCOSS conference ‘Towards a Just NT – Designing the Future Together’ was widely agreed to have been a great success. Over 130 delegates attended a stimulating two days of presentations, which included ACOSS CEO Cassandra Goldie assessing the effectiveness of income management. Children’s Commissioner Howard Bath, and AMSANT CEO John Patterson also contributed to a spirited discussion on child protection.

David Denmark made the relatively dry subject of transport come alive with his discussion of opportunities for community-based transport systems in the Territory. Key policy areas such as youth justice, and the circumstances of asylum seekers were also examined in some detail. A range of motions on income management, income support and asylum seekers were passed and have been conveyed to the responsible ministers.

The conference was preceded by a very successful one day Alcohol and Other Drugs forum entitled “Forging the Future – Practical responses to contemporary issues”. Amidst a range of interesting presentations, Dr Ian Webster delivered a key note address in a down to earth manner which demonstrated his expertise in this complex field. All involved agreed that the three days of the forums were informative and thought-provoking.

Media

Media releases promoting the NTCOSS Conference, and the Alcohol and Other Drugs Forum attracted considerable interest in the run up to these events. Wendy Morton did radio interviews for both ABC and TTFM. The *NT News* also carried two brief reports. The *Darwin Sun* published a detailed report on Ian Webster’s speech, focusing on the clear need for an Alcohol and Drug peak in the NT. Meanwhile in Alice Springs, Central Australian Co-ordinator, Jonathan Pilbrow continues to attract a considerable level of media interest in the need for more public transport in the region.

NT Mental Health Coalition

Congratulations to Nfanwy Welsh who has been appointed as the new Executive Officer of the NT Mental Health Coalition. Welcome aboard Nan!

Regards from the NTCOSS crew.