



NTCOSS NEWS SHEET – June 2011

Climate change and carbon tax

The Australian Council of Social Service has welcomed the Federal Government's announcement to establish a mechanism for pricing carbon pollution. "Effective and equitable action is vital to mitigate against the genuine threats posed by climate change and the potentially devastating impact on the poor who will be the worst affected," said Acting CEO Dr Tessa Boyd-Caine. "ACOSS supports the introduction of a carbon pricing mechanism provided it really does have the effect, over time, of reducing greenhouse gas emissions and encouraging the transition to a clean energy economy."

More action on the 'Equal Pay' case

A rally and march on parliament house in support of the equal pay claim was held in Darwin on Wednesday 8 June. The event attracted considerable support from Community Sector organisations and from the union movement. A range of speakers including NTCOSS Executive Director Wendy Morton addressed the rally. After the speeches, there was a march on parliament house, where a delegation was admitted to the building to lobby for the NT Government to provide supplementary funding to cover any pay rises which flow from the Fair Work Australia decision.

This week brought a major step forward in securing the viability and effectiveness of community services. The Commonwealth Government has committed to providing *fair and appropriate supplementation* to support higher wages for community sector and disability workers. However the NT Government has made no such assurance, and NTCOSS would encourage members to lobby their local NT politicians to seek a guarantee of funding supplementation.

Media

June has seen much discussion in the media about the merits of a floor price on alcohol. Central Australian Co-ordinator Jonathan Pilbrow has done a radio interview with the ABC in Alice Springs where he described the floor price as the 'missing plank' in the NT Government's new suite of policies designed to reduce alcohol-fuelled anti-social behaviour.

In Darwin, Wendy Morton had a letter published in the *NT News* correcting some mis-information about the way a floor price would operate, and calling on the majority of moderate drinkers to make a small sacrifice for the benefit of those who are most vulnerable. On a different issue, Jonathan has also engaged with the media to express NTCOSS concerns about the significant increase in the number of poker machines proposed for the casino in Alice Springs.

The NTCOSS Introductory Media Training sessions are proving to be a popular item, and it is likely that we will be running further sessions in Darwin later in August. Phone Graham at the office on 8948 2665 for more information.

Regards from the NTCOSS crew.