

TOWN CAMPS

WHAT IS THE MEASURE?

The National Emergency Response Act 2007 (Cth) gives the Commonwealth Minister new powers over town camps in the NT.

Under the Act the Commonwealth Minister now has the same powers as NT Minister to administer, forfeit or resume town camp leases under the Special Purposes Leases Act (NT) and the Crown Land Act (NT). The notice provisions for forfeiture or resumption have been reduced from 6 months to 2 months.

The Commonwealth Minister has an additional power to compulsorily acquire town camp leases without any notice or process and vest a freehold title in itself.

If leases are acquired, compensation may be payable but it is not guaranteed.

WHICH TOWN CAMPS ARE AFFECTED?

The powers apply to town camps in Alice Springs, Darwin, Katherine, and Tennant Creek.

WHEN DO THE NEW POWERS START?

18 August 2007

WHAT ARE THE POSSIBLE PROBLEMS?

The new compulsory acquisition power does not follow the normal rules including giving notice to the leaseholders.

If the Commonwealth Minister forfeits or resumes a lease, it is not clear what the Minister can then do – the Minister has no power to grant new interests in that land.

The Act includes a power to modify the Special Purposes Leases Act (NT) by regulation – this means the Minister can make new laws about town camps without taking them through the Parliament.

where can I find out more?

Northern Territory National Emergency Response Act 2007 Part 4



Central Land
Council
Alice Springs