



## MEDIA STATEMENT

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### **AMSANT backs *Right to Power* report to end energy poverty in the NT**

The Aboriginal Medical Services Alliance Northern Territory (AMSANT) has welcomed the release of the *Right to Power* report, describing it as an urgent call to address energy poverty and ensure Aboriginal communities have reliable, affordable access to power.

AMSANT Chair Rob McPhee said the report—led by Original Power in collaboration with the Central Land Council, Northern Territory Council of Social Service (NTCOSS) and Western Sydney University—exposes the energy insecurity faced by many Aboriginal Territorians, which is driving health inequity and putting lives at risk.

“This report shines a light on something our health services see every day: families living without power, often in extreme heat, because of mandatory prepayment meters and unaffordable energy costs,” Mr McPhee said. “We are seeing a higher proportion of pre-paid meters in remote communities than in cities and regional towns, where poverty, poor health and disadvantage is already widespread. People in the bush should have the same right to uninterrupted power supply as those in towns and cities.”

“The evidence is clear—secure, affordable energy is essential to health, safety and wellbeing. In remote communities, health is about more than just hospitals and clinics; it’s about having power to refrigerate medicine, store food safely and keep cool during 40-degree heat. When the power goes out, health and safety are at risk.”

The fact that so many Aboriginal families live with the daily risk of disconnection shows how far we still have to go to close the gap.

The *Right to Power* report found that in the NT, households experience 41 to 59 disconnections each year, often without notice or public reporting. Disconnections doubled during extreme heat. It calls for the phase-out of mandatory prepayment systems, national standards for energy hardship, and urgent investment in community renewable energy solutions.

Mr McPhee said the findings reinforce the urgent need for long-term investment in safe housing, affordable energy and other conditions that underpin good health. He commended the report’s authors and partners for their leadership and evidence-based advocacy.

“We strongly support the report’s call for power to be treated as a basic human right,” Mr McPhee said. “Energy insecurity is part of a wider picture of poverty, overcrowding and housing that drives poor health outcomes.”

AMSANT is calling on PowerWater to review the recommendations of the *Right to Power* report and how it supplies electricity to remote customers, and move to a model that is less reliant on prepaid meters.

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