



Media Release

Darwin City Council

Communications & Marketing Ph. (08) 8930 0504 Fax (08) 8930 0669

Darwin Public Libraries Under Threat

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Tonight Darwin City Council expressed serious concerns on the proposal by the Northern Territory Government to drastically cut funding to local libraries in Darwin and other municipalities.

The proposal is to reduce funding by 10% per year over five years and to provide no Northern Territory Government funding after 10 years.

Currently the Northern Territory Government funds around 48% of Darwin City Council Library funding (\$1.4M per year).

The budget must be balanced and possible effects may be:

- Drastic reduction in services
- Possible Library Closures
- Increased rates to meet costs

Darwin Lord Mayor, Graeme Sawyer is also very concerned about the short consultation timeline, "We only just received the notice and have until December 1 to comment on the proposal. This does not give us adequate time for public consultation or time to find ways to mitigate the shortfall" he said. "This appears to be a blatant cost shifting exercise in breach of the Inter-Government Relations on Local Government Matters Agreement." "We are very concerned at the medium term implications for the financial viability of Council in relation to library services".

Darwin City Council Library are heavily patronised by the community at a rate of around 41% of the population. This is a significant portion of the community and a reduction in services will definitely be unpopular.

Contact: Gary Haslett, 8930 0504 or 0466 207 090