

# IN YOUR PARLIAMENT – NT LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

## Legislation and Ministerial Statements and Reports

### May 2006 Sittings

The following information provides summaries of the legislation dealt with by the Northern Territory Parliament. It is not intended to be a comprehensive or definitive description of each Bill, nor should it be relied upon as such. Please refer to the legislation itself for full details. Information on how to locate or obtain the full text of Acts and Bills is provided below.

#### Summary Information on Bills Passed in the May 2006 Sittings

##### **Motor Vehicles Amendment Bill 2006 (Serial 43)**

The Bill provides for the appointment of an independent Compensation Contributions Commissioner, with statutory responsibility for determining *Motor Accidents (Compensation) Act* (MACA) contribution amounts. The Commissioner will be required to consult with the Minister and to consider the recommendations of the Territory Insurance Office prior to finalizing a determination. The Commissioner may make determinations in accordance with prescribed prudential and affordability standards, which are to be established in regulation.

##### **Victims of Crime Rights and Services Bill 2006 (Serial 44)**

The Victims of Crime Rights and Services Bill 2006 consolidates a range of victim related legislation complementing the Victims of Crime Assistance Bill 2006. It establishes the new Crimes Victims Services Unit (“CVSU”) and the Victims Register. It also repeals and replaces the *Crimes Victims Advisory Committee Act* and provides for the Attorney-General to issue a Charter of Victims Rights. The Bill provides for the appointment of a Director and officers of the Crimes Victims Services Unit and sets out the functions of the Unit.

##### **Victims of Crime Assistance Bill 2006 (Serial 45)**

The Victims of Crime Assistance Bill 2006 repeals and replaces the current financial assistance scheme for victims under the *Crimes (Victims Assistance) Act*. The Bill establishes a new administrative scheme to provide victims with assistance to overcome and rehabilitate from injuries sustained as a result of a crime committed against them. This new scheme provides counselling for victims as well as financial assistance for financial loss and compensable injuries.

##### **Terrorism (Emergency Powers) Amendment Bill 2006 (Serial 46)**

This Bill amends the *Terrorism (Emergency Powers) Act* in order to give effect to the decision of the Council of Australian Governments conferring on members of the Police Force special powers for:-

- preventative detention of persons for up to 14 days to prevent terrorist acts or preserve evidence following a terrorist act; and
- greater stop, search and seize powers in areas of mass transport hubs and other places

for use in –

- preventing a terrorist act occurring; or
- preserving the evidence related to a terrorist act; or
- assisting the community recovering from a terrorist act.

Further amendments to the Bill include inserting a power to apply for a covert search warrant.

### **Justice Legislation Amendment Bill 2006 (Serial 49)**

This Bill amends various Acts falling within the Justice Portfolio. Many of these amendments are primarily administrative and non-controversial in nature, and they are not be considered to be of sufficient importance to warrant a stand alone Bill.

The Acts amended include the *Agents Licensing Act*, *Associations Act*, *Co-operatives Act*, *Construction Contracts (Security of Payments) Act*, *Interpretation Act*, *Land Title Act*, *Lands and Mining Tribunal Act*, *Professional Standards Act* and the *Sentencing Act*. Many of the amendments correct or rectify matters which are of a technical nature. Others overcome inconsistencies, or are intended to clarify the intention of existing provisions.

**After they receive assent, Acts will be on sale at the Government Printing Office, Railway Street, Parap or GPO Box 1447 Darwin 0801 and the Alice Springs Access Centre, Westpac Building, Todd Mall, Alice Springs or PO Box 1071 Alice Springs 0871. Legislation can also be accessed at [www.nt.gov.au/dcm/legislation/current.shtml](http://www.nt.gov.au/dcm/legislation/current.shtml)**

## **Summary Information on Bills Currently Before Parliament**

### **Appropriation Bill 2006/2007 (Serial 50)**

This Bill seeks to authorise the issuing and expending of public moneys of the Territory for the year ending 30 June 2007.

### **Judges and Administrators Pensions Legislation Amendment Bill 2006 (Serial 51)**

This Bill seeks to remove provisions from the *Supreme Court (Judges Pensions) Act* that disentitle a judge's surviving partner from receiving a pension on either remarriage or the entering into of a de facto relationship. The Bill makes a similar amendment to the *Administrators Pensions Act*, as the pension scheme under that Act is structured similarly.

These amendments address outdated notions and presumptions contained in both these Acts. The disentanglement of a surviving partner once he or she remarries or enters a new de facto relationship is based on the assumption that a Judge's partner

is a completely dependent female. The operation of the schemes in relation to surviving partners is also inconsistent with the fact that the schemes are treated as superannuation for other purposes.

### **Treasury Legislation and Consequential Amendment Bill 2006 (Serial 52)**

This Bill seeks to amend various Acts within the Treasurer's Portfolio. The changes form part of the 2006-07 Budget, and take effect from 1 July 2006 unless otherwise indicated.

The Acts that the Bill seeks to amend include the *First Home Owner Grant Act* and a consequential amendment to the *Land Title Act*, the *Stamp Duty Act*, the *Taxation (Administration) Act*, the *Mineral Royalty Act* and the *Pay-roll Tax Act*.

The Bill also makes amendments to the Taxation (Administration) Regulations and the Taxation and Royalty Appeals Tribunal Rules.

### **Information Amendment Bill 2006 (Serial 53)**

The purpose of this Bill is to clarify that after 1 July 2006, where the *Information Act* is inconsistent with another law of the Territory, the *Information Act* will prevail over that other Act to the extent of any inconsistency, whether that other law is made before or after 1 July 2006.

The Bill also extends the "Exemptions in the Public Interest" under Part 4 of the *Information Act* by –

- extending the protection provided by section 48 of the Act to those secrecy provisions which are listed in Schedule 1 of the Act;
- inserting a new provision 49A to exempt information obtained or created in the course of an investigation, audit or inquiry by the Ombudsman, the Health and Community Services Complaints Commissioner, the Auditor-General, a Board or Commissioner appointed under the *Inquiries Act* or a Commissioner within the meaning of the *Local Government Act*, and
- inserting a new paragraph in section 54 to protect information which might harm or prejudice measures to protect a place of scientific, cultural or historic significance.

**The full text of Bills can be found at**  
[www.nt.gov.au/dcm/cabinet/legislation/register.shtml](http://www.nt.gov.au/dcm/cabinet/legislation/register.shtml)

## **May Ministerial Statements**

### **The Hon Clare Martin MLA**

- Katherine Floods and Cyclone Monica Emergency Response and Recovery

## May Ministerial Reports

### **The Hon Clare Martin MLA**

- Territory Trade and Tourism  
Visit to China and Singapore

### **The Hon Dr Peter Toyne MLA**

- Child and Maternal Health

### **The Hon Paul Henderson MLA**

- Business and Skilled Migration  
Strategy
- Local Industry Participation  
Plans

### **Dr Chris Burns MLA**

- Bus Security
- Work Choices Legislation

### **The Hon Kon Vatskalis MLA**

- Building the Territory's  
Resource Base
- Pastoral Industry Survey

### **Ms Marion Scrymgour MLA**

- Sound of the Sky Exhibition
- Indigenous Art and the Export  
Industry

### **Mr Elliot McAdam MLA**

- Indigenous Housing

### **The Hon Delia Lawrie MLA**

- Child Care Services