



Marion Scrymgour

MINISTER FOR ENVIRONMENT AND HERITAGE



URGENT HERITAGE ORDER OVER PLANE CRASH SITE

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Heritage Minister Marion Scrymgour has announced that an Interim Conservation Order (ICO) will be placed on the site of a 61-year-old plane wreck discovery, found in Darwin Harbour.

The RAAF C-47 Dakota has been nominated for Heritage listing, however the ICO will provide interim protection for 90 days over the wreck while the Heritage Advisory Council prepares a Heritage Assessment for the Minister.

"This is an exciting and significant find for the Territory and tangible reminder of Australia's military presence in the Territory during WWII," Ms Scrymgour said.

"The NT Government has moved quickly to issue interim protection on the site while its values are assessed by the Heritage Advisory Council," Ms Scrymgour said.

"I would really like to thank local tour operator Shaun Uden from *Fish Darwin* for making such an important contribution to solving this mystery and for bringing the past alive for all of us."

Ms Scrymgour said that while she favours giving the wreck site permanent protection under the *Heritage Conservation Act* by declaring it as a heritage place, this could only occur after assessment by the HAC and appropriate public consultation.

The C-47 Dakota crashed on 5 September 1946 while on a test flight. The pilot and crew survived the crash but the plane was never recovered.

"The first bombing of Darwin occurred just under 65 years ago--which seems a long time ago.

"However, the finding of this warplane reminds us of the importance of those events to all of us, and are emblematic of the freedoms we enjoy today.

"This newly discovered site holds communal memories that are important to many generations of Darwin people."

Ms Scrymgour said the NT Government was committed to protecting the Territory's heritage, especially World War II sites, which also served as major tourism drawcards.

"Our heritage places are very important in shaping the Territory's identity, but they also play a huge role in our tourism industry - which of course has flow-on economic benefits for the NT." Ms Scrymgour said she will formally ask the Heritage Advisory Council to assess the heritage value of the wreck. The ICO will be in place for 90 days while it is being assessed.