



**Marion Scrymgour**

MINISTER FOR NATURAL RESOURCES AND THE ENVIRONMENT

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## **Funding Boost Flows Through to Flood Forecasting**

The ability to better predict floods across the Territory has been given an annual boost of around half a million dollars.

Natural Resources Minister Marion Scrymgour announced the funding today, saying additional recurrent funding of \$444,000 would begin in 2007-08 with a further \$70,000 to be spent annually from 2011-12.

Ms Scrymgour said the funding from 2007-08 would provide for the establishment and operation of an upgraded flood forecasting service across the Territory, to communities where less reliable services currently exist.

She said the additional \$70,000 per annum ongoing from 2011-12 would allow for regular refit and replacement in order to prevent future degradation of the upgraded flood forecasting system.

"We have seen with the recent events in NSW how important it is to have reliable and flood forecasting systems," Ms Scrymgour said.

"A reliable flood forecasting services can significantly reduce the risk of flood damage and loss of life - timely warnings and forecasts save lives, aid disaster preparedness and decrease property damage."

Gauging stations act as water level recorders which measure and record the depth of water in a river, providing "near-real-time" data back to authorities.

The water level and rainfall data then goes directly into a predictive model which is used to inform the NT Police and Fire Service for flood warning purposes.

Ms Scrymgour said progressive improvement of the flood forecasting network will take place during the next four years and will include both the installation of new monitoring stations and upgrading the existing ones.

"The new funding will enable the Department to install eight new gauging stations, as well as upgrade the existing ones," Ms Scrymgour said.

At the moment there are 110 gauging stations throughout the Territory – with 32 being used for flood forecasting. The first upgrades are expected to take place in the Daly region in the coming year..

Ms Scrymgour said the improved flood forecasting system will allow NT Police Fire and Emergency Services, the community and business as well as other Government agency operations to better prepare for forecast flooding.

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