

### EPA BOARD TO DISCUSS LEGISLATIVE REFORM

The EPA Board is set to discuss legislative reform with interested stakeholders in Alice Springs and Darwin next week.

Next week's discussions follow the EPA Board's recent presentation of its report and recommendations on the form and function of an independent Environment Protection Authority to the Northern Territory Government.

EPA Board Chair, Professor Gordon Duff, said the meetings on 17 and 18 July would allow the Board to discuss its report and recommendations and hear from industry and the community about what they believe should be the priorities for future environmental, legislative change.

Professor Duff said the report *Towards an Environment Protection Authority (EPA) for the Northern Territory*, reflected the sentiments of the extensive community consultation held last year.

"Following the Northern Territory Government's acceptance of our report and recommendations last month, we have so far had one stakeholder meeting in Darwin, which went quite well," Prof Duff said.

"Those people who did attend were able to engage in productive discussion with me and fellow Board members, Professor Donna Craig and Mrs Judith King.

"The upcoming meetings provide stakeholders with another chance to ask questions about the report and recommendations or raise any concerns they may have.

"Our discussions with stakeholders about the report and its recommendations to date have confirmed the strong role it will play in any future reform of the Northern Territory's environmental legislation.

"The report puts the Environment Protection Authority in a strategic role, rather than duplicating the operational responsibilities of existing agencies.

"The report also recommends legislating to establish an independent Environment Protection Authority, which would provide high level advice to Government about protecting the environment, in consultation with the community."

Other recommendations of the EPA Board's report include:

- Powers to scrutinise government processes in order to provide advice on their adequacy
- Powers to initiate its own investigations and/or inquiries and to accept third party references
- The EPA will comprise a small group of people with relevant expert knowledge, but with resources to call in a wide range of specialist expertise and advice when needed
- Establishment of frameworks and policies that enhance integration across Government and build business and community confidence

**The EPA Board's information sessions will be in**

- **Alice Springs on Tuesday, 17 July at Spinifex Room, Crowne Plaza at 1.30pm**
- **Darwin on Wednesday, 18 July at the Brolga Room, Novotel Atrium Hotel at 10am**

To view the EPA Board's report in full go to [www.nt.gov.au/epaboard](http://www.nt.gov.au/epaboard)

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