The Territory Government is committed to revitalising lawn bowls in the Territory following last year’s collapse of the Arafura Bowls Club, Chief Minister, Clare Martin, said today.

Announcing the Government’s response to a review of the sport, Ms Martin said lawn bowls played an important part in the Territory lifestyle and it was crucial for its future that it embraced the need to change.

"The review of the sport’s future has recommended the amalgamation of the men’s and women’s bowls association into a single peak body and the development of a strategic plan for Territory lawn bowls," Ms Martin said.

"This Government will work with the sport to develop the strategic plan and address key issues such as promotion and junior development."

Ms Martin said that as a sign of its commitment to bowling in the Territory, the Government would provide the sport with part of the proceeds of the sale of the land previously occupied by the Arafura Bowls Club. That land will be rezoned to allow residential development.

The Government will:

- Provide $250,000 from the land sale to upgrade facilities at the Darwin, Nightcliff and Palmerston Bowling Clubs.
- Work with peak lawn bowls organisations to identify needs for other lawn bowls facilities in the Territory.
- The balance of any funds received from the land sale, after the Government has recovered the cost of the land purchase, to be specifically used for general sports development in the Territory.

"Last year’s demise of the Arafura Bowls Club was extremely unfortunate but valuable lessons can be learned from its collapse to revitalise the sport of lawn bowls in the Territory," Ms Martin said.

"Lawn bowls must change if it is to survive and the Government is committed to working with the sport to enable it to consolidate and move forward.

"That is why we have made a financial commitment to the future of lawn bowls in the Territory."

The Government last year intervened to assist the Arafura Club and its creditors by purchasing the property for $571,000 - a fair value determined by the Australian Valuation Office.

All creditors of the Arafura club were paid in full before Christmas last year. This included staff superannuation and wages entitlements ($50,000), unsecured member loans ($25,000), loans from other sporting bodies, including the Disabled Sports Association ($65,000); secured member loans ($234,000) and other creditors including tradesmen ($154,000).

The former Arafura property will now be re-zoned R2 (medium density residential) and put on to the market for redevelopment.

"Proceeds from the sale will realise more than $250,000 going back into Territory lawn bowls clubs in the Darwin and Palmerston area to enable..."
them to consolidate and grow," Ms Martin said.

"We will also work with the sport to identify needs for other lawn bowls facilities across the Territory and any surplus funds will be held and specifically allocated to sports development activities in the Northern Territory."

Ms Martin said the unfortunate demise of the Arafura Bowls Club was a timely reminder to other sporting organisation to realise their role as small businesses, and of the necessity for them to get their operations in order.

NOTES

The R2 (Residential 2) zone of the Darwin Town Plan 1990

The R2 zone allows for medium density residential development. The objective of the R2 zone is to accommodate a mixture of detached dwellings, cluster dwellings and flats where the availability of services, size of allotments and proximity to main roads, schools and other community facilities will support medium residential densities.

Cluster dwellings and flats are allowed in the R2 zone with the consent of the Development Consent Authority. Buildings in the R2 zone should not exceed 2 storeys in height.