Sport and Recreation Minister John Ah Kit today announced the beginning of a widespread consultation process which will lead to the Territory’s first comprehensive sports policy.

“After 25 years of self government, the Northern Territory does not have a formal, overarching sports policy which reflects the unique challenges and opportunities that are before us.

“There is no single, comprehensive document, developed in conjunction with the sports community and sports and recreation industry that might guide us in building a future for Territory sport,” said Mr Ah Kit.

“We need a document we can call our own, and which reflects our unique lifestyle..

The announcement was made as part of a ministerial statement in the Legislative Assembly this afternoon.

“Within the month, I will be releasing a discussion paper which will be widely circulated, with a clear process for consultation. I would be hopeful that we would be able to launch the policy by the end of this year.”

The policy addressing the key issues of:

- Greater, life long participation
- better access
- better skills
- better services
- better facilities
- better pathways
- better planning
- better events; and
- better governance

“I would see the development of this sports policy as a non-partisan effort—with contributions from all sectors.

“Sport is a part of the northern lifestyle. It forms an integral part of our culture, building community pride and spirit and contributing to social cohesion. It has direct benefits on physical and mental health; it has a direct impact on social behaviour and the incidence of crime. It contributes to both leadership and team effort,” said Mr Ah Kit.

“A comprehensive sports and recreation policy is important not just for the future of Territory sport, but also because of the links sport has with health and education. Sports have important economic benefits as well, through the local supply of employment, goods and services, as well as its links with tourism.”