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MEDIA RELEASE

COLD COMFORT IN POLLUTION REPORT
Peter Chandler MLA
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The full extent of the Henderson Government’s neglect of Darwin Harbour is contained in the release today of the Australian Institute of Marine Science review of pollution activity at East Arm Wharf.

Shadow Environment Minister Peter Chandler said it was unacceptable that the report found levels of copper three times higher than base levels within the harbour.

This is in addition to the identification of other heavy metals around the wharf such as lead, zinc, arsenic, cobalt and uranium.

Also unacceptable was the finding that stormwater discharge from the wharf:

‘… could be considered to cause environmental harm.’

“Environmental legislation identifies levels of pollution concern on a sliding scale beginning with environmental nuisance and culminating in serious environmental harm,” Mr Chandler said.

“This report identifies that the red plume in Darwin Harbour caused actual environmental harm.

“The Department should make use of this evidence as it weighs up whether to take legal action against the Port Corporation over the spills.

“The Government will, of course, be prosecuting itself.

“For too long the Labor Government has neglected to implement proper environmental controls and safeguards – relying instead on whistle-blowers to do its job for it.

“I hope this report serves as a catalyst for significant change in how the Government does business when it comes to ensuring there is no repeat of these unacceptable pollution incidents into the future.”

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