The Northern Territory Government, AFLNT and CAFL are meeting today (April 12) to plan a stronger future for the game in Central Australia.

The summit, sponsored jointly by the Government and the footballing bodies, will discuss key issues surrounding the future of the Country Cup and the CAFL.

Minister for Central Australia Dr Peter Toyne said the issues include:

- How to integrate the two competitions;
- Reliance on alcohol sponsorship;
- More participation from remote community youth and non-Aboriginal Alice Springs participants; and
- The development of effective partnerships with ATSIC, AFLNT and the Department of Sport and Recreation.

"Sport is not just about high achievers," Dr Toyne said.

"There are health, lifestyle and personal benefits to individuals and communities."

"Importantly, sport underpins much of community life in Central Australia and it is crucial that Government and sports bodies work together to address not just sporting issues, but how they affect the well-being of the whole community."

Another of the issues to be discussed is the ongoing upgrade of Traeger Park.

"The CAFL will be one of the main beneficiaries of this development and the summit will provide an opportunity for them to put their views to Government on what will best fit their future plans," Dr Toyne said.

Dr Toyne said the Government is also seeking to hear how clubs can become less reliant on alcohol sales.

"Clubs rely on these sales for their survival and yet Aboriginal people tell me they are concerned with the sale of alcohol at footy games," Dr Toyne said.

"We want to hear from the clubs as to how they can better promote healthy lifestyles."

Dr Toyne said he was delighted Sport and Recreation Minister John Ah Kit has taken the initiative to support the summit.

"A professional facilitator will help remote community clubs, the CAFL, and representatives of the five CAFL clubs to develop their ideas into a practical plan," Dr Toyne said.
"It is another example of how this Government is willing to listen and act on the advice of Central Australians."

The summit will begin at midday at Mona’s Lounge, Traeger Park, Alice Springs.