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Stirling to attend national public liability talks

Deputy Chief Minister Syd Stirling will represent the Territory Government at a national conference on public liability being held in Melbourne tomorrow.

Mr Stirling said the conference follows on from a similar meeting attended by Chief Minister Clare Martin and other Australian Treasurers in March.

"The Northern Territory is now well-placed to reach agreement with the Commonwealth, as well as other State and Territories, on ways to bring public liability insurance premiums down to a reasonable level," Mr Stirling said.

"Because the Territory is so small, we need to work cooperatively with other jurisdictions if we are to find workable ways to reduce premiums for Territory businesses and community organisations.

"Territory business and community groups will receive maximum benefit from a uniform and consistent national approach.

"At tomorrow's conference, it is expected that most jurisdictions will support a number of important proposals including tort law reform which will allow for caps to be applied on general damages claims and a redefinition of the concept of negligence in law.

"Meanwhile, the Territory Government is investigating the feasibility of group insurance arrangements for not-for-profit community organisations. For example, we have been asked to join Queensland’s group insurance scheme.

"The Government will also hold a number of risk management seminars in June to assist those organisations facing renewal notices."

Mr Stirling said the Opposition’s call for a Territory-own scheme administered by TIO was impractical and foolhardy.

"Essentially the Opposition is saying that NT tax payers should assume the risk of public liability," he said.

"The Territory is simply too small for such a scheme to work and it also has the potential to send TIO broke."