MEDIA RELEASE

MINISTER FOR THE RAILWAY
HON BARRY COULTER, MLA

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ENVIRONMENTAL CLEARANCE FOR RAILWAY

Environmental clearance for the Adelaide to Darwin railway has been determined by the Federal Government.

Northern Territory Railway Minister Barry Coulter said today an Environmental Management Plan for the railway had been approved by the Federal Minister for the Environment, Senator Robert Hill.

The EMP updated a comprehensive Environmental Impact Statement completed in 1984, taking into account modern information on heritage issues and species habitat. It covers the environmental management of railway construction and operation.

The latest plan was placed on public display in Darwin, Alice Springs, Palmerston, Katherine and Tennant Creek during December last year and January this year and provided to local government authorities along the rail corridor. One comment only was received from Darwin City Council.

Mr Coulter said an environmental advisory group would be established to oversee construction and operation of the railway, comprising relevant NT government departments and major contractors involved in all phases.

He said all Commonwealth requirements for proper environmental management had been met, and he was grateful Senator Hill had given the issue prompt consideration.

“Another task preparing the way for the railway has now been completed,” Mr Coulter said. “Acquisition of land for the rail corridor is progressing well and discussions with land councils and traditional owners on clearance for sacred sites are also advancing positively.

“We are just about ready to go to the market place seeking expressions of interest to build, own and operate the railway.”

ENDS

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