29 August 2007

EPA Legislation Introduced

Delivering on an important election promise, the Northern Territory Government has introduced legislation to allow the establishment of an Environment Protection Authority.

At the last election the Martin Government promised to establish an EPA, in stark contrast the CLP promised it would never have one.

Environment Minister, Delia Lawrie, said the EPA has been designed for the specific needs of the Territory.

“We have a unique, largely pristine environment in the Territory and the EPA will ensure it is protected as the Territory continues to develop and grow,” said Ms Lawrie.

“For the first time in the Territory’s history we will have an EPA that is the right model for the Northern Territory.

“Thorough consultation with community and stakeholder groups led the interim Board to recommend an EPA with a highly strategic role.

“Government has accepted all of the Board’s recommendations and the EPA will take on the role of an independent statutory advisory body – it will give advice on policy and legislation.

“Importantly the EPA will also have the power to scrutinise regulatory systems across Government agencies.

Ms Lawrie said the EPA will be assist both Business and Government to make more informed decisions about ecologically sustainable development.

“The establishment of the EPA will improve assessment, approval and monitoring processes and increase certainty for everyone,” said Ms Lawrie.

“It is imperative that as we enter a new phase in the Territory’s development we have new environment protection measures in place.”

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