

## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

### WRITTEN QUESTION

Mr Higgins to the Minister for Environment and Natural Resources

#### Appropriation Bill – Environment and Natural Resources

Please provide copies of:

- all questions, which you have received from the public in relation to the Estimates process and consideration of the Appropriation Bill for the 2017/18 financial year; and
- the answers to those questions that were presented to the Estimates Committee.

Please provide the information requested below for Agencies and Government authorities for which you have responsibility, as at 31 March 2017.

---

<b>DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES</b>
--

*Please accept apologies if questions are not under the correct Output. Where this is the case, it would be appreciated if you could indicate the appropriate Output in your response. Thank You.*

#### OUTPUT GROUP: NATURAL RESOURCES

##### OUTPUT: FLORA AND FAUNA

1. In the budget papers, it states that government is promoting economic opportunities through the sustainable use of wildlife, particularly saltwater crocodiles.” Please explain what that means. Why particularly saltwater crocodiles?
  - Saltwater crocodiles currently provide by far the greatest economic return from utilisation of wildlife in the Northern Territory. The value of the crocodile farming industry was recently valued at \$107M per annum, which is supported by the harvest of eggs and animals from the wild. The Department supports and facilitates enterprises based on utilisation of other wildlife species – such as game meat from magpie goose – but these are comparatively small in scale.
2. The Chief Minister has been in the news recently talking about crocodile safaris. Has there been any change in the Federal Government’s position

on this issue? Is there any reason to believe a crocodile safari proposal might go ahead despite the Federal Government repeatedly ruling it out?

- The Federal Government approved the Wildlife Trade Management Plan for the Saltwater Crocodile in the Northern Territory of Australia 2016-2020 in December 2015, and this Trade Plan has no provision for safari hunting. The current NT Management Program for the Saltwater Crocodile reflects the provisions of the Trade Plan, in order to facilitate continued Australian Government approval for the international export of crocodile products from the Territory. It is highly unlikely that the Northern Territory would go ahead with safari hunting without Australian Government approval.
3. What is the timeline envisaged for the introduction for these crocodile hunting safaris?
    - There is no timeline for the introduction of safari hunting specified in the Management Program, but it is an option that may be considered if the Australian Government approval context alters.
  4. Please provide a copy of the submission to, and response from the Federal Government regarding crocodile hunting safaris in the NT.
    - There has been no such submission or response during 2016-17.
  5. It also states government is “working with aboriginal elders and communities to preserve and utilise aboriginal biocultural knowledge for the conservation of the Territory’s flora and fauna.” Please explain what this means. When did the initiative begin? Please give examples.
    - The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (and its predecessors) has had a program to document indigenous ecological knowledge since the late 1980s. This has primarily involved recording and documenting local language names and uses for plants and animals, targeted endangered languages and responding to requests from elders and communities for this work to be carried out. To date, biocultural knowledge has been documented for 50 languages in 37 publications. Current work is on languages in the Roper/Gulf and Elliott regions.
  6. The budget paper also states that there will be \$9.9 million over five years to accelerate land resource mapping activities, through a soil, water and biodiversity assessment. Please advise how much will be spent on biodiversity assessment over the next 5 years and breakdown the figure further.
    - There is an allocation of \$1.5M to biodiversity assessment, evenly split over four years commencing 2018-19. The first year of the program (2017-18) is devoted to planning and consultation, so there is no specific allocation to biodiversity assessment in that year.

7. According to the budget there is \$1.2 million in Commonwealth funding for pest and weed management. Please break that down and explain how the money is being spent.
  - This is funding over 4 years from a Partnership Agreement between the Australian and Northern Territory Government for pest animal and weed management. The Department is undertaking three projects addressing Wild Dogs (\$0.58M), Prickly Acacia (\$0.29M) and Mimosa (\$0.29M). The Wild Dog project is in collaboration with Department of Primary Industry and Resources and seeks to provide a sound evidence base for the impacts of wild dogs on pastoral production in different regions of the NT, and the most effective and appropriate mechanisms of control. The Prickly Acacia management program will work with land holders and key stakeholders to develop best practice approaches to control this weed and protect highly valuable grazing lands from its impacts. The Mimosa management program is targeted at strategic northern catchments to control isolated infestations where feasible, to protect environmental and economic values.
8. How is the cabomba eradication program going in Darwin River? How is success measured and is it likely to be achieved?
  - The cabomba eradication program in Darwin River is going well. Success is measured by eradication. Providing there are no new occurrences of cabomba found, the significant investment made by the NT Government of \$600,000 for 2017-18 means it is likely cabomba will be eradicated in 2017 from Lok Landji Billabong. However, the site will need to be monitored for several years to confirm that no live seeds remain.
9. There is \$300,000 in the budget to reduce the high fire risk associated with gamba grass infestation? How is that deployed? How is that assessed? Is there any other funding for gamba grass control in this portfolio? Why is so little spent on gamba grass control?
  - The \$300,000 allocated in the budget to reduce the high fire risk associated with gamba grass infestation has been allocated to staff and expenditure capacity in the 2017-18 budget. This includes funding for two staff, funded at 1.5 FTE and operational expenditure of \$90,000 including purchase of chemicals.
  - A range of staff undertake work associated with gamba grass control. Weed management on private land remains the responsibility of the land owner. For gamba grass, the department's weed management focus is on compliance and enforcement activities.
10. The budget paper states that government is reviewing the *Weeds Management Act*. Please outline what this process involves. What is the timeline for this process?

- A review of the *Weeds Management Act* has not commenced beyond an assessment by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources to identify the areas requiring update. The priorities and timeline for the review process will be determined at a future stage by Government.
11. The budget paper also says that there are 2,400 biodiversity information requests met. Who tends to make these requests? Can these figures be broken down?
- There is a broad range of requests for information, advice and/or provision of data in relation to the fauna and flora of the Northern Territory from other government agencies, industry, land managers and the general public. This also includes processing of wildlife permits and identification of flora and fauna specimens. A breakdown of the type and number of requests is tabulated below.

Response to development assessments	250
Digital data requests	30
Wildlife permit assessment / approval	150
Plant specimen identification	1 200
Animal specimen / photo wildlife identification	200
Desktop/field assessment of biodiversity values for land managers	20
Presentations to scientific / land manager / public forums	20
Input to Commonwealth Govt / cross-jurisdictional processes (recovery plans, etc)	10
Herbarium loans	20
Other wildlife information enquiries	500
<b>Total</b>	<b>2 400</b>

12. There are 8 management programs in place for sustainable wildlife use. Please list those programs and their purposes?
- The following management plans or strategies are in place, or are in preparation for completion in 2017-18:
    - Saltwater Crocodile Management Program
    - Freshwater Crocodile Management Program
    - Magpie Goose Management Program
    - Cycad Management Program
    - Oenpelli Python Harvest and Captive Breeding

The above are formal wildlife management plans under the provisions of the Territory Parks and Wildlife Act, for native species for which there is commercial use. They establish the framework for sustainable use of these species, such as setting the harvest quota and monitoring and reporting requirements.

In the case of saltwater crocodiles they also describe how problem crocodiles and human safety risks are managed.

- **Camel Management Plan**  
This management plan describes how feral camels should be managed in the southern NT, in order to maintain low densities and reduce economic and environmental impacts.
- **Pest Animal Strategy**  
This strategy will provide a high level framework for managing pest animals in the NT, including identifying priority species and actions, management methods and roles of government and land managers.
- **Coastal and Marine Management Strategy**  
Development of this strategy was included under this Key Deliverable. The Coastal and Marine Strategy will provide a high level policy framework for managing the marine and coastal environment.

## **OUTPUT: RANGELANDS**

1. An additional \$780,000 was allocated to this Output at Mid-Year Review. Please explain what this was for and what outcomes can be expected.
  - The additional \$780,000 allocated to the Rangelands Output at Mid-Year Review comprised:
    - - \$10,000 CSIRO funding for National Water Infrastructure Development Fund (NWIDF) Goods & Services Revenue associated with the soil and land suitability assessment.
      - \$42,000 North Australia Indigenous Land & Sea Management Alliance (NAILSMA) Goods & Services Revenue for vegetation expertise and data to support NAILSMA to develop information for a carbon farming fire abatement methodology for lower rainfall areas.
      - \$415,000 Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics and Sciences (ABARES) Goods & Services Revenue associated with producing a new land use spatial dataset of the NT to be made publicly available by the end of August 2017.
      - \$325,000 NP Commonwealth Funding including amounts carried forward from 2015/16 associated with the Prickly Acacia and Mimosa management programs. The Prickly Acacia management program will work with land holders and key stakeholders to develop best practice approaches to control this weed and protect highly valuable grazing lands from its impacts. The Mimosa management program is targeted at strategic northern catchments to control isolated infestations where feasible, to protect environmental and economic values.

- (\$8,000) Whole of Government savings measures totalling \$784,000, which was then rounded to the nearest \$10,000 for publication purposes.

### ***Indigenous Carbon Unit***

1. \$500,000 was allocated to an Indigenous Carbon Unit? What does that funding actually go towards?
  - The NT Government through the 'Protecting Country, Creating Jobs' policy, has committed to establishing an Aboriginal Carbon Unit in 2017-18. \$500,000 has been allocated for three years from 2017-18 to support the delivery of carbon abatement and economic development on Aboriginal land.
2. How will this model work?
  - The Aboriginal Carbon Unit (ACU) in consultation with key stakeholders will develop a Carbon Strategy. The strategy will focus on ensuring both Aboriginal and commercial partners are well placed to take advantage of carbon market opportunities and create sustainable, long term commercial enterprises.
  - The strategy will guide development of carbon farming industry on Aboriginal land. The ACU will also explore future options for "aggregating" the carbon accounting processes, to achieve product scalability and increase the capacity of individual ranger programs to engage in the established carbon market.
3. Are there public servants allocated to this unit?
  - Yes.
4. In the budget paper note under land clearing applications assessed, it states "the variation in financial year 2016-17 reflects strong growth and investment in the agricultural and horticultural industries." Please comment on the growth and investment as to why activity increased? Why is it believed this activity won't continue into the 2017/18 financial year?
  - There are always peaks and troughs in the number of land clearing applications received for assessment and it is not possible to predict these. Future estimates are based on a long-term average, rather than peak application numbers.
5. The decrease from 400,000 square km to 250,000 square km of land receiving weed extension services is explained as "the decrease mainly reflects changed resourcing and training arrangements that will service multiple stations." Has this increased the amount of land receiving weed extension services?
  - The focus of the Weed Management Branch has shifted towards targeted compliance and enforcement activities and more extension delivered to multi-stakeholder groups. Previously more emphasis was

placed on engagement and relationship-building through single property visits.

- There hasn't been an increase in the amount of land receiving weed extension services. The number of stakeholders receiving extension services has remained steady.

6. The budget paper states that 600 soil profile sites have been described and tested for land suitability assessment and mapping. Please break those down by region, or explain further how the sites are chosen.

- The Budget paper reported an estimate of 600 sites. The actual figures (to 31 March 2017) (part-year) are summarised below:

Survey Area	No. Sites	Status
Auvergne Station	22	In-progress
Gunn Point	21	Published ( <i>Soil and Land Suitability Assessment for Irrigated Agriculture in the Gunn Point area</i> )
Dunmarra	75	In-progress
Legune	20	Site investigation only
Manbulloo	5	Site investigation only
Darwin region (NAWRA - CSIRO)	101	In-progress
Ti Tree	67	Published ( <i>Soil and Land Suitability Assessment for Irrigated Agriculture in the Ti Tree Area, Northern Territory</i> )
Wadeye	122	In-progress
Charles Darwin University (training)	12	In-progress
Roper River valley	40	In-progress
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>485</b>	

NAWRA = Northern Australia Water Resource Assessment

- The regions to be studied are the most prospective for suitable soils and water for agriculture. Sites within an individual study area are chosen by scientific staff to give maximum representation of the landscape.

7. The budget paper mentions government provides “developers and users of the Territory’s natural resources with consistent scientific advice that promotes economic development without compromising the overall health of the Territory’s resources.” Please elaborate on that and provide examples of the consistent scientific advice.

- The Department develops, collates and maintains a very large amount of data and mapping relating to the Territory’s natural resources, including surface water and groundwater, soils, vegetation and biodiversity. The Department’s scientific staff are also subject matter experts in these areas. Access to natural resource data and advice on its use and interpretation is provided to land managers and developers (at precompetitive, project development and project assessment stages) through the Department’s web portal (NR Maps NT), data request, written advice, meetings and email and face-to-

face discussions between staff and users. Scientific advice is similarly provided to consent and regulatory agencies, such as the NT EPA.

8. The budget paper mentions “identifying opportunities for agricultural expansion through the strategic assessment and identification of land with suitable soils and sufficient water”. How much land has been identified since 1 July 2016? Where will the new agricultural precincts be?

- The area of suitable arable land (not including a water resource assessment) identified in published reports from 1 July 2016 to 31 March 2017 (part-year) is summarised in the table below:

Survey Report <sup>#</sup>	Area in hectares(suitable arable land)*
Soil and Land Suitability Assessment for Irrigated Agriculture in the Ali Curung Area, Western Davenport District	43,840
Soil and Land Suitability Assessment for Irrigated Agriculture in the Tennant Creek West Area	54,520
Soil and Land Capability Assessment for Irrigated Agriculture on Kurnturlpara and Part of Warumungu Aboriginal Land Trusts	2,490
Soil and Land Suitability Assessment for Irrigated Agriculture in the Wildman River area, Northern Territory.	8,994
<b>TOTAL AREA (ha)</b>	<b>109,844</b>

<sup>#</sup> All reports published to date under this program are available at: <https://denr.nt.gov.au/land-resource-management/rangelands/publications/land-soil-vegetation>

\* Estimate only - a definitive area is unable to be provided because the area of land suitable for different crops varies (for example 100 ha of land in a survey may be considered suitable for mangoes because they can grow on a range of soils, whereas only 50 ha may be suitable for forestry because forestry species are more productive on deeper, well-drained soils).

- New agricultural precincts are determined by market forces. The Department of Environment and Natural Resources provides baseline information to support investment decisions.
9. The budget paper mentions “supporting the economic viability of the pastoral industry through contemporary land management practices and ongoing diversification of the pastoral estate.” Please explain more about how the pastoral industry is assisted and elaborate on the ongoing diversification of the pastoral estate.
- The pastoral industry is recognised as a substantial contributor to the economy and regulatory reform gives industry improved certainty in investing in the sector.



- The *Pastoral Land Act* allows for diversification of the pastoral estate, it includes provisions relating to subleasing and alternative uses of pastoral land.
  - The Government is considering a proposal to amend the provisions of the *Pastoral Land Act* to enable the grant of sub-leases for non-pastoral purposes. This will provide an investor with improved security in terms of securing finance for operations on the sub-leased land, potentially creating jobs and economic growth.
  - Non-Pastoral Use and Land Clearing. Non-pastoral use permits are issued for a maximum 30 year term, providing pastoralists with surety of investments. The Pastoral Land Board continues to receive a steady number of applications for projects including commercial agriculture, horticulture, agriculture, tourism, accommodation and station stores demonstrating continued investment into the pastoral estate. Pastoralists are encouraged to speak with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources to assist in the application process. The Government has funded a position at the Northern Territory Cattlemen's Association to assist pastoralists in developing non-pastoral use and land clearing projects. The Pastoral Land Board regularly reviews the NT Pastoral Land Clearing Guidelines to ensure they remain contemporary and facilitate development while maintaining environmental values.
  - The Department has an ongoing pastoral land resource assessment program. The program assists pastoralists to sustainably manage their pastoral lease, but also provides information that could assist pastoralists identify opportunities for more intensive non-pastoral land use activities.
  - For large scale projects, the proponents are also encouraged to speak to the Department of Trade, Business and Innovation.
10. The agency profile states that government is “finalising an appropriate, sustainable and transparent process for rental of the Territory’s estate for pastoral purposes.” Please explain how much progress has been made since 1 July 2016. When will the process be finalised? Please outline how an “appropriate” process is measured. How can the process be improved?
- Under the *Pastoral Land Act*, pastoral rents are calculated as a percentage of the Unimproved Capital Value (UCV). Industry called for a review of options for alternative methodologies to alleviate the ongoing concerns from industry on the fluctuating nature of rental calculations and the long lead time in lessees obtaining resolution on appeals of their UCVs.
  - Government has considered the recommendations of the industry led working group, which included industry representation, established to consider pastoral rents to establish an efficient, predictable and

objective process moving away from the use of UCV's. Options based on corporate structure, size of property, productive capacity of the land when used for farming and the earnings available from that productive capacity are all being considered.

11. What is the Vacant Crown Land Strategy? Why the 20% drop in funding for this from \$576,000 to \$439,000? What does this money provide for?
  - In 2017-18, Bushfires NT funded \$439,000 for fire mitigation on Vacant Crown Land. The \$576,000 in 2016-17 includes \$150,000 being carried forward from the previous financial year because of delays in starting mitigation works due to seasonal conditions. The money provides for some operational salary components within Bushfires to manage the program, costs to install and maintain fire breaks (weed spraying or grading) and payments to Volunteer Brigades for planned burning to reduce fuel loads on vacant crown land in the Vernon Arafura Region.

### ***Indigenous Ranger Grants Program***

1. The Northern Territory Government is implementing a new policy initiative - Protecting Country, Creating Jobs which seeks to support Indigenous Rangers to protect the environment and create jobs. This will be achieved through a capital grants program for Indigenous Ranger groups. Please detail what consultation has been done with respect to this new policy initiative and where the money will come from.
  - The Budget provides for \$6 million over three years from 2017-18 to establish a Land Management and Conservation Fund to improve conservation practices on Aboriginal lands and seas, and support Indigenous ranger groups.
  - The Budget also provides for \$4.1 million over two years from 2017-18 for capital grants for Indigenous ranger groups to assist with the purchase of essential items.
  - The Department has established an Aboriginal Land Management Advisory Group to provide guidance to the development and implementation of the Indigenous ranger funding program. A Discussion Paper about aspects of the program has been circulated to all NT Indigenous ranger groups and made publicly available on the NTG web site, and the project manager has met with Indigenous rangers across the NT to discuss the funding program.
  - The grants program is due to open for applications on 31 July 2017.

## **OUTPUT: WATER RESOURCES**

1. Please provide a breakdown of all water and other natural asset allocation granted by the Northern Territory Government since 1 September 2016.

- Only two water extraction licences have been granted between 1 September 2016 and 31 March 2017, both being licence renewals.

Water Control District	Licence	Beneficial Use	Volume	Licence Holder
Alice Springs	AO511	Agriculture	20ML	Orange Creek Station
Western Davenport	WDP5005	Public Water Supply	300ML	Power and Water Corporation

- The water licence register lists all current groundwater and surface water extraction licences.  
Refer: <https://nt.gov.au/environment/water/approved-water-extraction-licences>

2. How many Water Advisory Committees are there?

- There are 8\* current Water Advisory Committees  
\*includes Rapid Creek Water Advisory Committee and Darwin Harbour Advisory Committee

3. How many were set up by the current government and how many were there already in existence?

- Alice Springs Water Advisory Committee – established June 2016
- Howard East Water Advisory Committee – established July 2016
- Ooloo Water Advisory Committee – established August 2016
- Tindall Limestone Aquifer Katherine Water Advisory Committee – re-established November 2016
- Ti Tree Water Advisory Committee – established December 2016
- Tindall Limestone Aquifer Mataranka Daly Waters Water Advisory Committee – established April 2017
- Rapid Creek Water Advisory Committee – established November 2016
- Darwin Harbor Advisory Committee – established June 2017

4. What is the allocation for each?

- Total expenditure in 2016-17 to 31 March 2017 was \$52,659. Establishment of committees is still underway. A total of 11 committees will be established, each with a \$30,000 budget. Total allocation for 2017-18 will be \$330,000.

5. How often do they meet?

- The meeting schedule for each committee varies, at the discretion of each committee chair.
6. When are the reports expected?
- Refer to following link  
<https://denr.nt.gov.au/land-resource-management/water-resources/water-allocation-plans/about-water-allocation-planning>
7. When they do the allocation, what economic modelling will be done?
- The Department undertakes scientific modelling, no economic modelling is undertaken by this Department.
8. The budget papers mention “implementing a strategic indigenous reserves policy and methodology.” Please explain how this policy works and the timelines around implementing it.
- Strategic Indigenous Reserves (SIR), now Strategic Aboriginal Water Reserves (SWR), are reserved volumes of water from the consumptive pool within a Water Allocation Plan area exclusively accessible to Aboriginal landowners to use or trade.
  - The purpose of the SWR policy is to enhance opportunities for Aboriginal economic development.
  - A draft policy was developed through stakeholder consultation. Elements of the draft policy were distributed to stakeholders through an SWR ‘policy options discussion paper’ in March 2017.
  - The SWR policy is being finalised.
  - Once finalised, the Department will commence policy implementation in new and revised water allocation plans, including those currently in preparation.
9. The budget papers mention “improving the transparency of water licence allocations and decisions, by making licence information publicly available online.” What is the timeline for implementing this? Will all information be made public?
- The Water Licence Decision Portal was launched in June 2017. This is an online portal which fulfils the Government election commitment to make water licensing information more accessible and licence decisions more transparent. Refer to following link: <https://denr.nt.gov.au/land-resource-management/water-resources/water-licensing-portal>
10. There was \$1 million in Commonwealth funding of a Territory feasibility study to investigate managed aquifer recharge. How is the study going? Are any preliminary results available and when will all results be made available?

- Phase 1 of the study (Feasibility) was delivered as scheduled and presented to the project Steering Committee in May 2017. The Committee has endorsed the project to proceed to Phase 2 (Detailed Site Investigation). A report on the Phase 1 work has been provided to the Department by the consultant, a copy of this report could be made available subject to agreement by the consultant.
11. There was \$200,000 in Commonwealth funding for compliance and enforcement systems for water management. What are these compliance systems?
- WALAPS (Water Act Licensing and Permit System) has been developed as an internal online work flow and document control system for licensing and permits, and compliance.
12. How much of the \$9.9 million over 5 years for land resource mapping is allocated to water mapping? Where will this mapping be done?
- \$4.9M is allocated to Water Resource Assessment over the 4 years from mid-2018 to mid-2022. The first year of the program (2017-2018) will establish the areas in which to target investigations.
13. Funding from the Commonwealth's "National Water Infrastructure Development Fund" has increased by \$675 million for financial year 2017/18. Why is there such a large increase?
- This should be \$675,000
  - There are two projects being funded under the Commonwealth's NWIDF:
    - The Northern Territory Irrigation Feasibility Study (MAR project) \$985,000 and
    - the Ord Stage 3 Feasibility Study (Keep Plains) \$2,500,000.
  - This funding was secured in 2016-17 and there has been no increase in funding since the agreement was struck.
14. Please provide a breakdown of how and where this money is being spent.
- The Northern Territory Irrigation Feasibility Study (MAR project) has a budget of \$1,283,000 comprising:
    - \$985,000 in Commonwealth funds,
    - \$248,000 from DENR (in-kind) and
    - \$50,000 from the Minderoo Foundation (in-kind).
  - The breakdown of expenditure of the Commonwealth funds is as follows:
    - \$785,000 Consultancy (Jacobs Group) and
    - \$200,000 DENR.

- The Jacobs Group will undertake and manage all operational phases of the project. This includes the Master Planning and Feasibility study (Phase 1), Detailed Field Investigations (Phase 2) and the Business Plan Development and Modelling (Phase 3).
    - DENR is undertaking the investigative drilling required in Phase 2 and will manage the project and funding.
  - The Ord Stage 3 Feasibility Study (Keep Plains) has a budget of \$3,585,000 comprising:
    - \$2,500,000 in Commonwealth funds;
    - \$170,000 from DENR (in-kind); and
    - \$915,000 from Geoscience Australia (in-kind).
  - The breakdown of expenditure of the Commonwealth funds is as follows:
    - \$1,680,000 Geoscience Australia (GA) and
    - \$820,000 DENR
  - The GA program consists of a hydrogeological assessment, geomorphic and structural mapping, and a flood inundation study. Airborne electromagnetic data will be acquired and processed in conjunction with a field program of groundwater sampling, and downhole and surface geophysics.
  - The DENR program consists of soil suitability assessment, surface water assessment, water quality assessment, surveying and the drilling of investigative boreholes. DENR will manage the project and the funding.
15. Please provide an update on the water licensing arrangements in the rural area.
- On 6 July 2016, the Declaration of Exemptions under the *Water Act* (the Act) was amended. The new declaration removes the exemption for bores pumping less than 15 litres per second in the Darwin Rural Water Control District from licensing requirements under the Act.
  - The removal of the exemption now requires those using bores, other than for stock and domestic use, to obtain a water extraction licence, install a meter and report monthly usage to the Water Resources Division within the Department of Environment and Natural Resources.
  - The Division has implemented a number of initiatives to increase community awareness around the changes to licensing including:
    - public presentations in Berry Springs and Humpty Doo;
    - letters to homeowners and businesses;
    - provision of information packs;

- increased print and radio advertising;
  - establishment of Bore Central at Palmerston including after-hours opening;
  - information booths staffed by water Resources at Howard Springs shopping centre and Coolalinga Markets;
  - establishment of digital display boards at all MLA offices in the Darwin Rural area; and
  - Installation of road-side signage depicting local aquifer levels.
- To date, the Division has responded to over 400 phone calls and conducted over 200 face-to-face consultations about water use and licensing.
  - Advertising of Notices of Intention to make water extraction licence decisions commenced in April 2017, and is ongoing.
16. How many water licence applications have been received?
- From 1 July 2016 to date over 250 applications have been received.
17. How was the half a hectare cut off point determined?
- S.11 of the *Water Act* specifies that owners or occupiers of land may take water for “irrigating a garden, not exceeding 0.5ha, which is part of the land and used solely in connection with a dwelling”.
18. How many license applications have been submitted since 1 September 2016?
- Darwin Rural – 229.
19. Is it believed that some water users who should apply for a licence have not yet done so? What would the estimated number of these water users be?
- It is estimated that over 100 additional licences may be required. Further investigations will be conducted using new land use mapping to be released in the near future. Community education and engagement is ongoing to encourage those who require a licence to apply.
  - It is important to note that the new license system aims to ensure the Government is better able to understand water use levels in the growing Darwin Rural Area so water resources can be managed sustainably into the future.
20. Is it still Government policy to oppose new dams?
- There is currently no Government policy on extending or limiting dam infrastructure.

21. How much will the review of water extraction licences cost? How much is allocated for it?

- The review was initially budgeted at \$366 000. The actual cost of the review will be verified when the report is submitted to Government and the final invoices are received by Government.

*This question was answered by the Department of the Chief Minister.*

22. How much are the review panel members, Ms Dyson and Dr Davison, being paid?

- The contracts with Ms Megan Dyson and Dr Annette Davison are confidential. For this reason, specific details of the remuneration package cannot be disclosed.

*This question was answered by the Department of the Chief Minister.*

23. What is the hourly rate for their pay?

- Refer to question 22.

*This question was answered by the Department of the Chief Minister.*

24. If the estimated cost of the review is \$366 000, then how much is the estimated amount paid to the panel members?

- The estimated cost of the review includes funding for travel, meetings, remuneration for the water scientist, remuneration for the panel and miscellaneous costs.
- 
- The Department of the Chief Minister and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources are to absorb the cost of providing support to the Panel from within existing resources.

*This question was answered by the Department of the Chief Minister.*

25. What were the estimated number of hours worked for each panel member, when estimating the cost of the review at \$366 000?

- The estimated cost for each panel member was based on 30 days' work.

*This question was answered by the Department of the Chief Minister.*

26. How many licenses were issued during that timeframe?

- 2 licence renewals, 1 increase and 1 administrative amendment were granted during the review period.



27. Is the Minister aware of any other reviews which have been held retrospectively into an entire term of government?

- The water review seeks to restore trust and integrity in the water allocation system after community concerns were raised about the process under the previous Government.

*This question was answered by the Department of the Chief Minister.*

28. The original terms of reference of the review state that it will conclude in mid-2017. Will this be made public?

- It is the intent of Government to release the report publicly. The release arrangements will be determined following consideration of the report, its findings and recommendations.

*This question was answered by the Department of the Chief Minister.*

### **Water Development Infrastructure Fund**

1. What action is the Government taking to work with the Federal Coalition Government to deliver money from the Water Development Infrastructure Fund? Please provide copies of submissions and responses.

- In June 2015, the Our North, Our Future White Paper on Developing Northern Australia (the White Paper) announced that the Commonwealth Government will establish a National Water Infrastructure Development Fund (NWIDF) which had two components: a capital component (\$440 million) and a feasibility component (\$59.5 million).
- Under the White Paper the Commonwealth committed to \$5 million of the feasibility component to developing Ord Stage 3 to be shared between the NT and WA Governments. The Territory received \$2.5 million.
- In January 2016, the Northern Territory Government submitted two Expressions of Interest (EOI) for feasibility funding under the Fund. These EOI were for:
  - feasibility assessments of the Adelaide River Offstream Water Storage (AROWS) project to extend the Darwin Region Public Water Supply (Power and Water Corporation); and
  - Northern Territory Irrigation Feasibility Study for Managed Aquifer Recharge (MAR) for irrigated agricultural development (Department of Environment and Natural Resources).
- The EOI for MAR project was approved for funding of up to \$985 000. The Power and Water Corporation bid was not successful.

- Applications for the feasibility component are now closed. Opportunity exists for the Territory to submit Expressions of Interest to access the capital component for water infrastructure construction following completion of the feasibility work.

## OUTPUT: BUSHFIRES

1. I note government is “improving compliance with fire prevention and mitigation legislation by landholders, including through gamba grass reduction strategies.” How is this going?
  - This is progressing well but is a long-term activity with difficult to measure outcomes. It is achieved through a range of activities in the areas of education, compliance and enforcement, supported by free control chemicals and equipment loans.
2. Please provide figures showing increased compliance.
  - Compliance cannot be demonstrated through figures, it is demonstrated through awareness and action by land owners which is difficult to quantify.
  - Between December 2016 and February 2017, 478 properties in priority areas within Darwin’s rural area were assessed for gamba grass compliance issues from the road. As a result, 82 properties were determined to require follow up on site inspections.
  - Orders under the *Weeds Management Act* were subsequently issued to non-compliant land managers. Failure to comply with an order within a designated timeframe can result in the issue of an infringement notice.
  - 49 properties were inspected during the 2016-17 control season and of these 35 properties received statutory orders to control gamba grass. One infringement notice was issued during this period.
3. How is this monitored?
  - Weed Management Officers conduct annual field inspections based on known and mapped weed infestations and their potential threat to property and life. Where serious issues are detected, Officers visit the site and provide advice and direction to the landholders on what works are required to reduce the risk and to be compliant with the current declared status. These directions can be in the form of statutory works orders which are implemented through the compliance provisions of the *Weeds Management Act*.
4. What are the gamba grass reduction strategies?
  - The gamba grass reduction strategy focuses on getting landholders to be accountable and to take responsibility for the management and control of gamba grass on their property. Under the *Weeds Management Act*, weed management is the responsibility of the land owner, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources works with landholders through the provision of education, awareness raising and management advice. The Department also provides limited free herbicide to assist landholders in controlling their weeds.

5. Do these programs apply to the government as a landholder? Who is responsible for handling and dealing with gamba grass on crown land?
  - All land owners have the responsibility for weed management on their land. Any NT Government department which holds Crown land, or has Crown land under its care and control, is responsible for its management, including weed management.
6. There is \$300,000 to reduce the high fire risk associated with gamba grass infestation? How is that deployed? How is that assessed? Is there any other funding for gamba grass control in this portfolio? Why is so little spent on gamba grass control?
  - As stated under question 9 Flora and Fauna output:
    - The \$300,000 allocated in the budget to reduce the high fire risk associated with gamba grass infestation has been allocated to staff and expenditure capacity in the 2017-18 budget. This includes funding for two staff, funded at 1.5 FTE and operational expenditure of \$90,000 including purchase of chemicals.
    - A range of staff undertake work associated with gamba grass control. Weed management on private land remains the responsibility of the land owner. For gamba grass, the department's weed management focus is on compliance and enforcement activities.
7. In the budget papers, it is stated that the number of wildfire incidents attended by staff or volunteers will increase from 300 in financial year 2016/17 to 400 in financial year 2017/18 due to weather conditions? How does that compare with the number of wildfires attended in previous earlier years?
  - This represents a possible increase of about 10-20% on average years but approximately the same as a number of busy seasons e.g. 2006 and 2011. This is very difficult to forecast because of the variables of weather conditions, proximity to responders, and also size of wildfire (may experience more wildfire events but there may be less area affected).
8. Why did the PEFO reduce the estimate of the number of extension visits to properties?
  - The 2015-16 Budget said 150 which was an increase from the 2014-15 year. The numbers estimated were higher due to the increased fire management and planning activity across the Territory.
9. The budget papers say that there will be 400 stakeholders trained, a number stable with earlier years. In general, who are these stakeholders? Are they landholders?

- Stakeholders are a variety of Land Owners, Land Occupiers and Organisational Employees (Parks and Wildlife & Parks Australia, Genesee & Wyoming Rail, Aboriginal Rangers, Pastoral property staff, Conservation Land Management students, Machinery Contractors, Media personnel, forestry staff)
10. The budget papers also state there are 550 trained volunteers, similar with last year. Is that enough volunteers to deal with the threat levels of bushfires, especially in what is estimated to be a busy season?
- 550 volunteers is an appropriate number for a busy season. Volunteering availability is always a difficult issue to manage, and we are always seeking and training new volunteers to boost our capacity.
11. There were 5000 enforcement actions relating to the *Bushfires Act* and similar. Please breakdown what was the outcome of these enforcement actions. Is it expected that the number of enforcement actions will grow or reduce in coming years?
- The bulk of these enforcement actions are inspections of properties for compliance with the firebreak requirements as prescribed in s68 of the *Bushfires Management Act*.
  - As at 30 June 2017 approximately 2950 inspections were completed. The lower number of actual inspections was due to the inability of compliance officers to access properties given the longer than usual wet season.
  - It has been found in the past that inspecting around 4,500 properties will reveal that around 10% of those properties are not compliant. Non-compliant landowners are then contacted with a reminder to comply, and those properties are inspected again within 14 to 21 days. The reminder usually leads to near complete compliance, a small number (usually less than 50) then receive a formal warning followed by another inspection and in a very small number of cases (usually less than 10) an infringement action follows. This arrangement has been found to be successful in ensuring that firebreak compliance is at a satisfactory level. There is no expectation that the numbers will change significantly in the near future.
12. There was \$200,000 for the National Aerial Firefighting Centre Agreement in this budget. What are those funds spent on?
- The \$200,000 is a payment from NAFC and represents part refund for payment of stand-by costs of fixed wing firebombing aircraft for responding to uncontrolled bushfires in the Vernon Arafura Region.
13. What are the plans for a new Bushfires NT headquarters? When will funding be allocated?
- The head office of Bushfires NT is located in Albatross Street, Winnellie. The Department of Environment and Natural Resources

and Bushfires NT continue to work with Department of Infrastructure Planning and Logistics to explore options for alternative suitable premises for Bushfires NT located in the rural area under a lease arrangement. There is no capital funding allocated for the construction of a new Bushfires NT Headquarters.

14. A letter has been sent regarding Lot 2900, Hundred of Strangeways, a few kilometres past the Cox Peninsula Road turn off on the Stuart Highway as a good potential site for a new headquarters. Has this site been investigated?
  - Access to suitable land options is not the deterrent to the development of a new Bushfires NT Headquarters. There is no capital funding allocated or committed to the development of this or any other site.

## **OUTPUT GROUP: ENVIRONMENT**

### **OUTPUT: ENVIRONMENT**

1. Under the agency profile there is mention of “Improving the Territory’s environmental management, including delivering a leading practice regulatory framework for environmental impact assessments and environmental approvals” What are the timelines for that process?
  - We are currently undertaking extensive reform of environmental legislation that will strengthen the protection of the environment, through the implementation of a robust, clear and transparent set of rules and guidelines for how the environment must be protected;
  - The reforms will be delivered in two stages. Stage 1 addresses reforms to the environmental impact assessment and project approval system. Stage 1 is due to be completed by early 2019.
  - Stage 2 addresses the repeal of the *Waste Management and Pollution Control Act* and the transfer of the environmental management provisions from the *Mining Management Act* and potentially other resource management legislation to a fully functioning Environment Protection Act. Stage 2 is due to be completed by mid-2020.
2. When will legislation be available to deliver on this outcome?
  - New impact assessment and approval legislation by early 2019.
  - New Environment Protection Act by mid - 2020.
3. What are the largest areas of expenditure in this output area? Please provide a breakdown of the largest items within this output area.

- Breakdown of largest items of expenditure (% of total budget 2016-17):
    - Employee Expenditure is 69%
    - Operational Expenditure is 13%
    - Depreciation (non cash) is 3%
    - Grants are 15%
    - Property Management is Nominal
4. Is the Coastal and Marine Strategy within this output?
- No this is captured under the Flora and Fauna output group.
5. What is the timeline for this strategy?
- The Strategy will be completed in early 2018. This will include a period of public comment on a consultation draft later in 2017.
6. What does a strategy mean? Will it mean changes in legislation or regulation or something else?
- The Territory coastline plays a key role in the economic and recreational life of the Territory and is home to important ecosystems and abundant sea life.
  - We are putting in place a marine and coastal management strategy that will ensure the health and viability of our coastline, support its use by Territorians for recreational and cultural purposes, manage growing demand for our natural resources and foster sustainable industry for the benefit of the economy.
  - We are doing this in close consultation with the community for the long-term benefit of the community, the environment and the economy, with a focus on boosting recreational fishing opportunities, preventing pollution of our waterways, fostering sustainable industries and supporting the Territory's unique outdoor lifestyle.
  - The strategy will provide a high-level policy framework for managing the marine and coastal environment, and it is envisaged that this will include a vision, management principles, long-term objectives and medium term outcomes. It is possible that some legislative or regulatory changes may be required to achieve all the objectives and outcomes, but this would occur in subsequent implementation phases.
7. What is the consultation process for the Coastal and Marine Strategy?
- To facilitate the development of the Strategy, a Partnership Group was established by invitation from the Minister for Environment and Natural Resources, which comprises 15 organisations representing

land owners, industry and community groups. An Inter-agency Working Group was also established by invitation from the CEO of the Department comprising seven NT Government departments that have responsibility for managing the coastal and marine environment. A workshop involving both groups has guided the initial strategy development and the external partner organisations will continue to be involved in refining this draft, prior to release for public comment later in 2017.

8. The budget papers state that the Government is “delivering a leading practice regulatory framework for environmental impact assessments and environmental approvals.” What are the timelines for this process? When will the Government introduce legislation to deliver on this outcome?
  - See responses to questions 1 and 2.
9. There is a new measure titled “Decision on whether Environmental Impact Assessment required”, with a forecast of 30. Please elaborate on this measure and the reason for its introduction.
  - Under the *Environmental Assessment Act*, the NT EPA is required to consider development proposals to determine whether environmental assessment is required. The NT EPA may decide that a proposal requires assessment at the Public Environmental Report or Environmental Impact Statement level, or that the proposal is not likely to have a significant effect on the environment and does not require assessment. This measure reports on the number of these decisions the NT EPA has made. The measure provides a more comprehensive report on decision-making under the *Environmental Assessment Act*.
10. Another new measure is “waste and pollution approvals and licences” with an expected 200 for financial year 2017/18. Please provide a breakdown of the numbers of approvals and licences for financial year 2016/17 up until March.
  - Environment protection approvals and licences issued over the period 1 July 2016 to 31 March 2017:
    - 20 Environment Protection Licences issued under the *Waste Management and Pollution Control Act*.
    - 5 Environment Protection Approvals issued under the *Waste Management and Pollution Control Act*.
11. Why are the numbers an increase from last year?
  - This is a new measure that reports on all licences and approvals administered under the *Waste Management and Pollution Control Act* and waste discharge licences administered under the *Water Act*. The



2016-17 measure only reported on environment protection licences and approvals under the *Waste Management and Pollution Control Act* that were issued in 2016-17. The new measure provides a more comprehensive indicator of regulatory activity.

12. According to the budget papers, the Government expects to have conducted 85 compliance audits this year and 110 compliance audits next year. Please summarise the findings of this year's audits to March.
  - Compliance audits have delivered a range of findings, from finding that an activity is being managed in an environmentally acceptable manner to finding potential breaches of licence or approval conditions and/or environmental legislation. Refer NTEPA website for further information: <https://ntepa.nt.gov.au/waste-pollution/compliance>
13. Have there been any fines or penalties levied for any breach of compliance in financial year 2016/17? Please provide additional details on these actions.
  - Number of penalty infringement notices issued in 2016-17 (to 31 March 2017): 25
  - Court-imposed penalties:
    - Breakthrough Group (NQ) Pty Ltd (Breakthrough) were fined a total of \$65,000 plus victims' levies, ordered to pay investigation costs and ordered to clean up waste when convicted for two offences under the *Waste Management and Pollution Control Act* (the Act).
    - Breakthrough pleaded guilty to one count of polluting the environment, resulting in material environmental harm under s 83(4) of the Act and one count of failing to comply with the lawful requirements of an Authorised Officer under s76(c) of the Act.
    - The proceedings were a result of an investigation by officers for the Northern Territory Environment Protection Authority (NT EPA) into the burial of waste at a rural property dating back to 2015.
14. The Government has as a key performance indicator "Environmental grants to promote ecologically sustainable practices" with \$1 million allocation. Is spending a normal key performance indicator in this instance?
  - Yes – it demonstrates investment in community-level activities to implement and promote ecologically sustainable practices.
15. Wouldn't a better key performance indicator be a measure of the use of ecologically sustainable practices?
  - This would be very difficult to measure and report on for a grant program.

- All grants have a requirement for acquittal to address the achievement of all project outputs.
16. Please provide a breakdown of those \$1 million in environmental grants to promote ecologically sustainable practices.
- \$480 000 funding allocated to Arid Lands Environment Centre, Environmental Defenders Office (NT) Inc, Environment Centre Northern Territory, Australian Marine Conservation Society and Keep Australia Beautiful Council Northern Territory.
  - Over \$12 000 issued to improving environmental outcomes in schools
  - Over \$138 000 issued to improving Container Deposit Scheme outcomes in schools and regional areas.
  - Nearly \$411 000 issued to specific waste and recycling projects across the NT.
17. According to the budget papers, there is a provision of \$250,000 to the Arid Lands Environmental Centre, Environmental Defenders Office and Environment Centre of the Northern Territory. Is that figure correct?
- The Government has reinstated funding totaling \$250,000 to ALEC, ECNT and the EDO to support their efforts to contribute to good environmental policy development in the Territory.
18. Did these three organisations apply for the grant? Was it from a funding program?
- Grant funding to these organisations was a Government election commitment. The funding has been provided from the existing Environment Grants program.
19. Please provide a further break down of that figure between the three organisations.
- Funding breakdown:
    - \$50k Environment Defenders Officer
    - \$100k Environment Centre of the NT
    - \$100k Arid Lands Environment Centre
  - \$30k has also been committed to the Australian Marine Conservation Society.
  - \$200k has been committed to Keep Australia Beautiful Council Northern Territory
20. Why did Government decide to split the figure that way?
- Grant funding of these amounts to these organisations was a Government election commitment. The funding ensures the organisations are supported to contribute to the development of good environmental policy in the Territory.

21. Are other organisations allowed to contest the grant?
  - The 2017-18 Environment Grants round is currently open for application. Further details are available at: <https://denr.nt.gov.au/environment-information/get-funding-for-environment-projects>
22. Do the grants need to be acquitted?
  - Yes
23. What are the terms and conditions attached to each grant?
  - Environment grant agreements include requirements to submit progress reports consistent with milestone commitments, provide a final report on the project outcomes and undertake independent financial audits of the use of the funds. The grant agreement also sets out agreed terms for payment of the grants upon completion of milestones.
24. Was the grant for one year, or is it ongoing and if so for how long?
  - \$50k Environment Defenders Officer – 5 year funding agreement commencing March 2017
  - \$100k Environment Centre of the NT – 5 year funding agreement commencing March 2017
  - \$100k Arid Lands Environment Centre – 5 year funding agreement commencing January 2017
  - \$30k to Australian Marine Conservation Society – 5 year funding agreement July 2017
  - \$200k to Keep Australia Beautiful Council Northern Territory – annual funding

### ***Environmental Groups***

1. Funds were awarded to the Environmental Defenders Office and a number of other Green groups in the 2017 budget. Please advise as to whether this is new expenditure or if this money has come from another budget, for example from the operational budget of the independent EPA.
  - The funds come from within the current Environment Grants budget.

## **OUTPUT GROUP: STATUTORY AUTHORITY**

### **OUTPUT: NORTHERN TERRITORY ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AUTHORITY**

1. How many Full Time Equivalents are currently employed within the NT Environmental Protection Authority? Please break those numbers down by section.
  - 5 members at 0.2 FTE each, totaling 1 FTE
  - 1 chairperson at 0.6FTE, totaling 0.6 FTE
  - Total = 1.06 FTE
2. How many Full Time Equivalents have resigned or retired from the NT Environmental Protection Authority? Please break those numbers down by section.
  - 1FTE being the former Chairperson of the NT EPA
3. What has happened to these positions? Has the work been reallocated to existing staff?
  - A new chairperson has been appointed from within the existing NT EPA membership which created a vacancy for a new NT EPA member which has since been filled.
4. Are there any plans to fill these positions in the near future?
  - Not applicable – the position has been filled
5. What is the progress update on the EPA's investigation into silt mitigation for Durack Lakes?
  - The NT EPA continues to investigate turbidity issues observed in Durack Lakes. The effectiveness of measures in place to control the erosion and sediment will not be known until the onset of the next Wet season.
6. What resourcing has been allocated to maintain important historical areas such as the WWII 16 Mile Camp in Johnston, specifically broken down into the maintenance schedule, and are there plans to expand this historical precinct?
  - The Crown Land Estate section within the Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Logistics manages this site, along with adjacent areas of bushland, through its grounds maintenance contract. The contractor is required to ensure the paths are tidy and clear of branches and weeds by attending to the site 13 times a year. The contractor also empties rubbish bins weekly in the wet season (October to April) and fortnightly in the dry season (May to June).

- There are no plans to expand the heritage-listed area.
- Information has been provided by the Department of Tourism and Culture as it falls within its responsibility.

## **OUTPUT GROUP: CORPORATE AND GOVERNANCE**

### **OUTPUT: CORPORATE AND GOVERNANCE**

#### ***Staffing***

1. How many Full Time Equivalents are currently employed within this Agency, broken down by Output and Business Unit?
  - The Department of Environment and Natural Resources had 284.1 Full Time Equivalents as at Pay 19 on 23 March 2017.

Output	FTE as at Pay 19 (23 March 2017)
Executive	7.9
Bushfires NT	29.3
Corporate Services	22.0
Environment	37.2
Flora and Fauna	38.5
Rangelands	65.6
Water Resources	83.6
Grand Total	284.1

2. How many Full Time Equivalents have resigned, retired, taken a redundancy package or have been made redundant, or terminated? Please break down these numbers by Output and Business Unit.
  - The Department of Environment and Natural Resources had 25 resignations for the reportable period of 1 July 2016 and 31 March 2017.
  - The Department of Environment and Natural Resources had 2 retirements for the reportable period of 1 July 2016 and 31 March 2017.
  - No staff were made redundant or terminated during the reportable period.

Output	Resignation	Retirement
Bushfires NT	1	
Corporate Services	2	
Environment	3	
Flora and Fauna	2	
Rangelands	11	
Water Resources	6	2
Grand Total	25	2

*\*Figures are sourced from Personnel Information Payroll System (PIPS) based on paid headcount.*

3. What has happened to these positions? Has the work been reallocated to existing staff?
  - Of the 27 exiting staff, 20 were in established funded positions and seven were held supernumerary without an allocated position number. Supernumerary staff are generally recruited for fixed periods to complete specific work and not usually replaced.
  - 14 of the 20 established funded positions have been filled. The remaining six positions have had work temporarily reallocated or ceased
  - Two of the seven supernumerary roles have been filled.
  
4. Are there any plans to fill these positions in the near future?
  - There is recruitment underway to fill one of the vacant established positions. Further supernumerary recruitment will be undertaken as necessary to meet specified objectives.

---

## QUESTIONS TRANSFERRED FROM OTHER AGENCIES

### OUTPUT: FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT- INDIGENOUS CARBON UNIT

1. Budget Paper 2 page 50 sees an allocation of \$500,000 being ring fenced for an Indigenous Carbon Unit. Please outline how this scheme will operate? What modelling is there to underpin this spend?
  - \$500,000 has been allocated for three years from 2017-18, to support and drive the delivery of carbon abatement and economic opportunities on Aboriginal land. The budget combines a portion of in-kind support from expertise across agencies such as Bushfires NT, Department of the Chief Minister and Business, Trade and Innovation and funding.
  - The Aboriginal Carbon Unit will provide advice and support to ranger groups and land owners and support the promotion of the emerging industry to new potential partners and project regions.
  - The Aboriginal Carbon Unit has been chartered to develop, based upon consultation with industry participants, an Aboriginal Carbon Strategy for the NTG.
  - \$300,000 of this allocation will be targeted towards implementing the strategy to ensure both Aboriginal and commercial partners are well placed to take advantage of carbon market opportunities and create sustainable, long term commercial enterprises.
  
2. What consultation has the Government engaged in with Aboriginal people prior to the announcement of funding in Budget 17/18?
  - Consultation with Aboriginal stakeholders include Northern and Central Australian Land Councils, Indigenous Land Corporation, North Australian Indigenous Land & Sea Management Alliance. Consultation has also been undertaken with existing Aboriginal Territory carbon abatement enterprises such as Arnhem Land Fire Abatement (ALFA) and with representatives from the following Aboriginal Ranger groups, such as: Warddeken, Yugul Mangi Tiwi Land Rangers and Djelk Rangers.