



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

Legislative Scrutiny Committee

Associated Minutes of Proceedings

**Inquiry into the Defamation
Legislation Amendment Bill 2025**

March 2025



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

15th Assembly

Legislative Scrutiny Committee

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

Meeting No. 3

12.08 pm, Thursday 13 February

Litchfield Room

Present: Mrs Oly Carlson MLA, Chair, Member for Wanguri
Mr Andrew Mackay, Deputy Chair, Member for Goyder
Justine Davis MLA, Member for Johnston
Mr Clinton Howe MLA, Member for Drysdale
Mr Chanston Paech MLA, Member for Gwoja

Secretariat: Ms Julia Knight, Committee Secretary
Ms Georgia Eagleton, Senior Research Officer
Mr Caelan Ikin, Administration/Research Officer

1. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

Mr Mackay moved and Mr Howe seconded that:

The Minutes of Meeting No. 2 of 28 November 2024 be confirmed.

Question put and passed.

2. CORRESPONDENCE

Noted

3. BILL REFERRALS

The Committee noted the proposed Bill inquiry plan for Bills referred during the February sittings and agreed to the following actions:

Committee Secretary to save copies of submissions referred Bills in the Bill Inquiry sub-folders in the Members Access Drive as they are received.

Territory Coordinator Bill 2025 (Serial 17)

- Key Stakeholder register as amended to incorporate Mr Paech's additions agreed to.

Defamation Legislation Amendment Bill 2025 (Serial 13)

- Draft Key Stakeholder register noted – Members to provide secretariat with any additional stakeholders by 3.30 pm, Thursday 13 February 2025.
- Departmental representatives to be requested to brief the committee on the Defamation Legislation Amendment Bill 2025 at a public briefing at 2.00 pm, Wednesday 19 February 2025.

Justine Davis moved and Mr Mackay seconded that:

The committee acknowledge the prompt work of the committee secretariat to assist committee members given the short timeframe.

Question put and passed.

4. NEXT MEETING

Public Briefing: 2.00 pm, Wednesday 19 February 2025.

Meeting closed at 12.45 pm.



Mrs Oly Carlson MLA
Chair



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

15th Assembly

Legislative Scrutiny Committee

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

Meeting No. 4

2.00 pm, Wednesday 19 February 2025

Litchfield Room

Present:	Mrs Oly Carlson MLA, Chair, Member for Wanguri Justine Davis MLA, Member for Johnston Mr Clinton Howe MLA, Member for Drysdale Mr Chanston Paech MLA, Member for Gwoja via TEAMS
Apologies:	Mr Andrew Mackay, Deputy Chair, Member for Goyder
Secretariat:	Ms Julia Knight, Committee Secretary Mr Caelan Ikin, Administration/Research Officer

1. PUBLIC BRIEFING – DEFAMATION LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL 2025

The Committee heard from the following witnesses:

- Ms Leonique Swart: Deputy Chief Executive Officer, Attorney-General's Department
- Ms Hannah Clee: Acting Director – Legal Policy, Attorney-General's Department

The witnesses withdrew.

2. NEXT MEETING

2.00 pm, Thursday 20 February 2025.

Meeting closed at 3.00 pm.



Mrs Oly Carlson MLA
Chair



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

15th Assembly

Legislative Scrutiny Committee

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

Meeting No. 8

9.00 am, Monday 3 March 2025

Litchfield Room

Present: Mrs Oly Carlson MLA, Chair, Member for Wanguri
Mr Andrew Mackay, Deputy Chair, Member for Goyder
Justine Davis MLA, Member for Johnston
Mr Clinton Howe MLA, Member for Drysdale
Mr Chanston Paech MLA, Member for Gwoja via TEAMS

Secretariat: Ms Julia Knight, Committee Secretary
Georgia Eagleton, Senior Research Officer
Mr Caelan Ikin, Administration/Research Officer

1. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

Justin Davis moved and Mr Mackay seconded that:

The Minutes of Meetings No. 5 of 20 February, Meeting No. 6 of 26 February and Meeting No. 7 of 27 February 2025 be confirmed.

Question put and passed.

2. CORRESPONDENCE

Noted

3. CHAIR'S DRAFT REPORT – DEFAMATION LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL 2025

Mr Mackay moved and Mr Howe seconded that:

The Committee adopt the 'No issues' report *Inquiry into the Defamation Legislation Amendment Bill 2025* be tabled out of session with the Speaker on Wednesday 5 March 2025 pursuant to Standing Order 200(4), for subsequent tabling in the Assembly on Tuesday 18 March 2025.

Question put and passed.

4. PRIVATE BRIEFING – LEGAL ADVICE ON THE TERRITORY COORDINATOR BILL 2025

The Committee was briefed by its independent legal counsel, Professor Ned Aughterson, on the Territory Coordinator Bill 2025.

5. CONSIDERATION OF EVIDENCE – TERRITORY COORDINATOR BILL 2025

In considering the evidence, the following resolutions were considered:

Justine Davis moved and Mr Paech seconded that:

Clause 8: Primary principle of Act. That subclause (a) be amended to read 'ecologically sustainable development for the Territory or a region of the Territory.'

2 for, 3 against

Question put and negatived.

Mr Paech moved and Ms Davis seconded that:

Clause 11: Appointment of Territory Coordinator. That the Bill be amended to remove clause 11 and reinstate clause 78: Appointment of Territory Coordinator and clause 79: Eligibility for appointment from the exposure draft of the Bill.

Question put and passed.

Justine Davis moved and Mr Paech seconded that:

Division 4: Exemption Notices be removed from the Bill.

2 for 3 against.

Question put and negatived.

Justine Davis moved and Mr Paech seconded that:

Clause 79: Recommendation to Minister. That clause 2(b) be amended to read 'must consult with any other person the Coordinator considers may be affected by the proposed exemption notice.

3 for 1 against.

Question put and passed.

Justine Davis moved and Mr Paech seconded that:

Clause 82: Tabling and Disallowance be amended to provide that exemption notices be tabled in the Assembly prior to their implementation.

2 for 3 against.

Question put and negatived.

Mr Paech moved and Justine Davis seconded that:

Clause 95: Limitation on review or appeal be amended to include a merits review process.

2 for 3 against.

Question put and negatived.

Mr Howe moved and Mrs Carlson seconded that:

The Bill be amended to include to require that an independent review of the Act's operation after 5 years of commencement to assess the implementation, performance and outcomes of the legislation.

4 for 1 against.

Question put and passed.

Justine Davis moved and Mr Paech seconded that:

The *Heritage Act 2011* be removed from the Schedule of Acts that are Scheduled laws.

2 for 3 against.

Question put and negatived.

Mr Paech moved and Justine Davis seconded that:

The Bill be amended to provide that marine parks, conservation areas, Northern Territory parks and reserves, Indigenous protected areas and Sacred Sites be exempt from the operation of the Act.

2 for 3 against.

Question put and negatived.

6. NEXT MEETING

3.00 pm, Monday 10 March 2025

Meeting closed at 1.10 pm.

Mrs Oly Carlson MLA
Chair