



# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

## MATTERS OF PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

Each Tuesday and Thursday in the Routine of Business there is an opportunity for Members to discuss a Matter of Public Importance.

This opportunity usually arises after business before the Assembly has been completed.

A Matter of Public Importance is a discussion in the Assembly and is not a debate. There is no question before the Chair so no vote is taken at the end of the discussion.

### **How is a Matter of Public Importance raised?**

Under Standing Order 66, a Member proposing for discussion a Matter of Public Importance submits a written statement regarding the matter to the Speaker at least two hours before the time fixed for the commencement of the Meeting of the Assembly.

If the Speaker determines that the proposal is suitable to be discussed as a Matter of Public Importance, they inform the responsible Minister and the Leader of the Opposition as soon as is possible.

### **How many Members are required to support a Matter of Public Importance?**

At the allocated time, the Speaker reports receipt of the written statement proposing a Matter of Public Importance and reads the proposal. Four Members are required to support a Matter of Public Importance – the proposer and three others. Members indicate support by standing in their places.

### **Subject matter**

Proposals for Matters of Public Importance are accepted if they relate to matters within the competence of the Assembly. This means that the Northern Territory Government has to have responsibility for the subject matter.

### **Time limits**

The total time available for a Matter of Public Importance discussion is two hours. The Member proposing the matter and Member speaking next may speak for 20 minutes each; all other Members may speak for 15 minutes each. There are no extensions of time available.

### **SUMMARY**

A Matter of Public Importance is a discussion in the Assembly. There is no question before the Chair so no vote is taken at the end of the discussion

Proposals for Matters of Public Importance discussions are accepted if they relate to matters within the competence of the Assembly