

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

WRITTEN QUESTION

Mrs Lambley to the Minister for Environment, Climate Change and Water Security:

Northern Territory Controller of Water Resources

- 1. Please provide details as to the qualification and experienced required of the position of Northern Territory Controller of Water Resources.**

Answer:

Appointment of the Controller is a statutory appointment under the section 18 of the *Water Act 1992*. The appointment is at the Ministers discretion. Historically, the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Department of Environment, Parks and Water Security (and its predecessors), the Executive Director of Water Resources or the Director of Water Licensing have been appointed as the Controller given their knowledge of the sector. For nearly a decade, the CEO of the Department has been the appointed Controller. The current Controller and CEO of the Department, Ms Joanne Townsend was appointed Controller on 19 December 2016. Dr Alaric Fisher, Executive Director of Flora and Fauna Division was subsequently appointed the Acting Controller on 25 June 2017, to undertake the role of Controller when necessary.

- 2. Is the Northern Territory Controller of Water Resources required to have particular qualifications and expertise in the field of water resource management or a similar tertiary qualification?**

Answer:

The *Water Act 1992* does not prescribe the qualifications or expertise required of the Controller of Water Resources.

As a statutory decision maker, the Controller applies the principles of administrative law, against legislation and policy.

The Controller is supported by advisors and experts in the field of water resource management.

As the CEO of the Department responsible for the *Water Act 1992* and water resource management, it is considered that they have adequate knowledge of resource management to make informed decisions regarding water licencing.

Anyone aggrieved by the decision made by the Controller is able to have the decision reviewed. This review is undertaken by the Minister who may seek to be advised by a constituted Water Resources Review Panel established under the *Water Act 1992*.

3. What is the salary level of the Northern Territory Controller of Water Resources?

Answer:

The Controller receives no additional remuneration.

The Department is progressing arrangements to seek a Controller independent of the Department. If agreed, selection would be through an Expression of Interest process. This appointment would receive remuneration.