



Through effective regulation, we prioritise the protection of our environment while fostering the Territory's economic development.



Onshore petroleum

- Inspect active drilling and hydraulic fracturing sites
- Audit listed waste volumes and management practices



Hydrocarbon facilities

- Audit and inspect all hydrocarbon processing and storage facilities



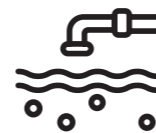
Waste management facilities

- Inspect high risk landfill sites
- Inspect high risk waste transfer stations and processing facilities



Treated wastewater (sewage)

- Inspect urban sewage treatment facilities in Darwin, Palmerston and Katherine
- Inspect licensed sewage treatment facilities in East Arnhem Land



Treated wastewater (mining)

- Inspect all mine sites that actively discharge wastewater
- Audit monitoring and compliance reports of these sites



Waste transporters

- Inspect high-risk transporters



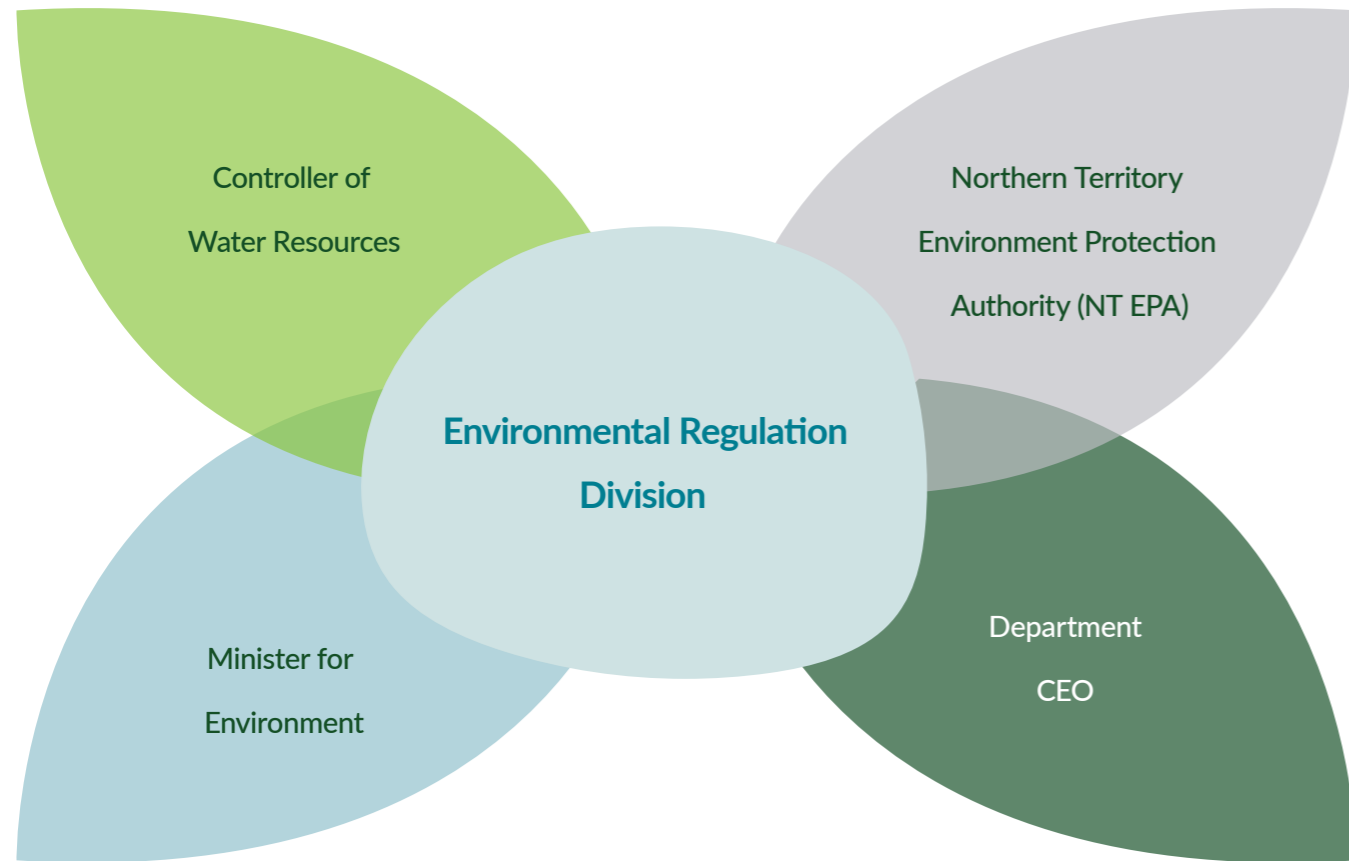
Aquaculture licence review

- map regulatory requirements for aquaculture projects
- review licence conditions and monitoring requirements
- make recommendations for licence amendments.



Who are we?

The Environmental Regulation Division within the Department of Lands, Planning and Environment (DLPE) supports four statutory decision-makers under a wide range of environmental laws to protect the Territory's environment.



Our purpose

Within this context, our purpose is to strike the right balance between enabling development and protecting the environment.



Our regulatory principles (PACTT)



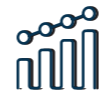
Proportionate

Our actions consider the risk of harm and attitude to compliance.



Accountable

We explain, justify, and document our regulatory actions and decisions.



Consistent

Our processes are consistent and lead us to the right outcomes.



Targeted

We allocate effort and resources to the areas with the potential for most harm.



Transparent

We share information about our actions and decisions.

We apply our proportionate, accountable, consistent, targeted and transparent (PACTT)¹ regulatory principles to everything that we do, including advice, licensing, monitoring, compliance and enforcement.

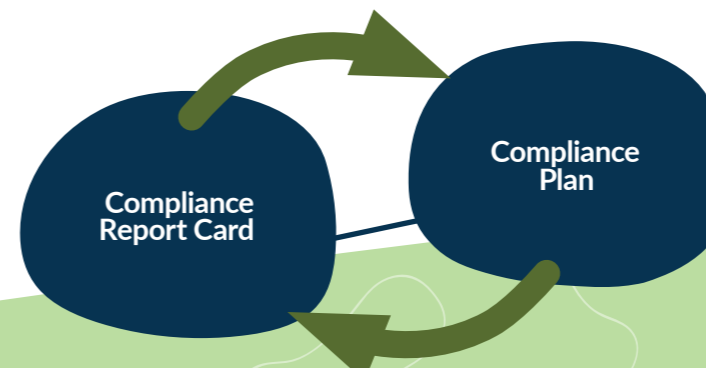
Our compliance planning and reporting

Our commitment to applying our PACTT principles, includes publishing our compliance priorities in annual compliance plans and our performance against them in compliance report cards.


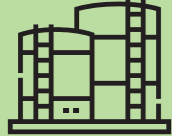

In 2024, the division published its second Compliance Plan. It targeted our effort and resources to areas with the potential for most harm and transparently communicated our compliance priorities.

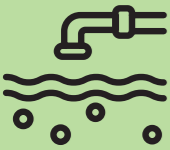



We kept ourselves accountable to that plan and reported back on how we delivered it in our 2024-25 Compliance Report Card. This in turn informed our focus in this 2025-26 Compliance Plan.

Transparency builds trust between the broader community, regulated entities, and the regulator.



¹ Pink, G., Navigating Regulatory Language: An A to Z Guide, (2021)

Description	What is the issue and why is it important?	Where will the regulator target its effort?
<p>Onshore petroleum</p> 	<p>The accidental release of wastewater and chemicals to the environment may lead to soil, surface water and groundwater contamination. Management of wastewater and chemical containment are critical to the protection of the environment.</p> <p>The potential for significant impact from a loss of containment incident means this remains a focus for the regulator.</p> <p>Listed waste, generated by Interest Holders, poses a significant risk to public health and the environment if not properly tracked, handled, and disposed of by licensed facilities.</p> <p>EMPs deal with expected total waste at an individual project scale. By comparing actual listed waste volumes across industry (including wastewater and residual drilling waste) it is possible to better understand future waste management needs at scale.</p>	<p>Inspect and/or audit drilling and hydraulic fracturing (HF) sites with a focus on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • preventative controls and systems related to spills and loss of containment • handling, treatment, reuse, and discharge practices for wastewater while it is on the well site and being transported to a licensed waste facility • chemical storage practices • encouraging near miss and incident reporting. <p>Audit the listed waste management volumes and practices of the four largest onshore petroleum Interest Holders in the Northern Territory, with a focus on the availability of records demonstrating:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the volumes of listed waste generated and disposal methods • the engagement of licensed waste transport companies • listed wastes are transported to and arrive at, a licensed disposal facility
<p>Hydrocarbon facilities</p> 	<p>The Territory has four hydrocarbon facilities regulated under the Waste Management and Pollution Control Act 1998 and the Environment Protection Act 2019. They are held by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eni Australia B.V. (Blacktip) • Ichthys LNG Pty Ltd (INPEX) • Santos NA Darwin Pipeline Pty Ltd (DLNG) • Crowley Australia Pty Ltd (Project Caymus) <p>The regulator's main priority in 2024-25 was on air quality issues related to these facilities. In 2025-26, the regulator will continue to follow up on air quality improvements while also turning its focus to emissions to land and water.</p>	<p>Inspect each hydrocarbon processing facility with a focus on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • emissions to land, water and air • implementation of improvements related to land, water and air emissions identified during the 2024-2025 compliance assessment • stack emissions monitoring. <p>Review licence conditions for hydrocarbon facilities in the Darwin airshed to ensure they adequately address human health risks from air emissions. The review will focus on strengthening regulatory controls and enhancing community confidence in air quality management.</p>
<p>Waste management facilities</p> 	<p>Under the Waste Management and Pollution Control Act 1998, an Environmental Protection Licence (EPL) is required for waste management facilities that handle or dispose of listed wastes on a commercial or fee for service basis, as well as for operating a landfill that services more than 1000 people.</p> <p>Waste management facilities currently operating in the NT include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • landfills • waste transfer stations (WTS) • processing facilities (including treatment and recycling). <p>In 2024-25, we identified poor practices in tyre and used lead acid battery (ULAB) storage. We also identified unlawful storage of listed wastes at licensed WTS.</p>	<p>Inspect high risk landfills with a focus on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • waste disposal and storage practices • landfill closure planning documentation • implementation of new tyre and ULAB storage requirements <p>Inspect high risk waste transfer stations and processing facilities with a focus on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • waste storage and segregation practices • emergency response controls.

Description	What is the issue and why is it important?	Where will the regulator target its effort?
<p>Treated wastewater discharge (sewage)</p> 	<p>There are 27 sewage treatment facilities in the NT that are licensed to discharge treated wastewater. Facilities are in urban, regional and remote locations servicing Northern Territory communities.</p> <p>Unauthorised overflows were common in 2024-25.</p> <p>While remote and regional facilities face unique challenges in achieving compliance, it is important that all members of the Territory community can be confident their local environment is protected.</p>	<p>Conduct a site inspection at urban wastewater treatment plants in Darwin, Palmerston, and Katherine.</p> <p>Conduct site inspections at regional sewerage treatment plants in the East Arnhem region with a focus on wet season preparedness and prevention of overflows.</p>
<p>Treated wastewater discharges (mining)</p> 	<p>There are currently 11 Waste Discharge Licences (WDLs) related to mine sites (including sites in care & maintenance, legacy and remediation).</p> <p>Treated wastewater from mining activities is considered a high potential risk to the environment and will remain a focus of the Regulator.</p> <p>In 2024-25 we identified that non-compliance with monitoring and reporting was common. Monitoring reports will remain a focus for the regulator this year.</p>	<p>Inspect all licensed mine sites that actively discharge wastewater, with a focus on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • implementation of performance improvement strategies • compliance with environment monitoring programs. <p>Audit monitoring and compliance reports of these sites to ensure compliance with WDL conditions.</p>
<p>Waste transporters</p> 	<p>Under the Waste Management and Pollution Control Act 1998, an environmental protection licence (EPL) is required for the transport of listed wastes, on a commercial or fee for service basis.</p> <p>In 2024-25, we identified smaller carriers were generally unable to demonstrate current emergency response plans, good record keeping, and arrangements to mobilise a clean-up response in an accident.</p>	<p>Inspect high-risk waste transporters with a focus on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • waste segregation and storage measures • emergency response preparedness and management.
<p>Aquaculture license review</p> 	<p>As part of the Northern Territory Government's commitment to simplify approval processes, a review of aquaculture licences will ensure the regulation of this industry is proportionate to risk.</p>	<p>The review will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • map regulatory requirements for aquaculture projects • review licence conditions and monitoring requirements • make recommendations for licence amendments.

Ongoing regulatory priorities

Groundwater quality management and compliance monitoring of onshore petroleum activities	The Division will review groundwater monitoring requirements to ensure they are fit for purpose for scale of activities and continue to monitor compliance and the effectiveness of control measures in approved Environmental Management Plans (EMPs).
Illegal dumping	Illegal dumping of waste is a significant and ongoing issue across the NT including the Alice Springs region. Operation: Don't Be A Dumper (DBAD) has been developed to tackle the illegal dumping problem in Alice Springs. The Division will continue its collaboration with Alice Springs stakeholders to tackle illegal dumping in the region.
Air quality monitoring	The Division understands the need to provide the community confidence around air quality, particularly considering ongoing hydrocarbon processing activities and proposed development at the Middle Arm Sustainability Precinct. The Division will continue to conduct ambient air quality monitoring (AAQM) at the 3 existing stations in the Darwin area, and conduct a review of the existing AAQM network.