

## **MEDIA POLICY**

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## 1 Introduction

The media will have an active interest in the affairs of the newly established independent Northern Territory Environment Protection Authority (NT EPA). It is therefore important to have a media policy.

## 2 Purpose

The purpose of the media policy is to provide guidance to the members of the NT EPA with respect to any media contact, interaction, communication or enquiries.

This policy outlines the coordination of contact between the NT EPA and the media. It is designed to ensure that in all dealings with the media, the NT EPA acts in a professional, coordinated manner and that all statements made are accurate, appropriate and consistent with the objectives of the NT EPA.

For the purposes of this policy, media contact includes: providing information via media releases or statements, letters, responding to media enquiries over the phone and via email, interviews or briefings, disclosing information to the media, comments on talkback radio, addressing a seminar or conference where the media are present, and media activities for events, reports, and launches.

## 3 Scope

This policy applies to all the members and matters directly related to the business of the NT EPA.

Other similar media directives apply to the staff supporting the NT EPA (as provided by the Department of Lands, Planning and the Environment).

## 4 Governance

The Chairperson of the NT EPA has overall responsibility for approving all external content for media including media releases, media statements, and media correspondence.

The Chairperson will be the official spokesperson and will coordinate contact with the media through the media relations contact (see Section 5 - staff and support that is provided by the Department of Lands, Planning and the Environment). Members of the NT EPA must not initiate media contact or respond directly to media enquiries concerning NT EPA matters.

However, should a member of the NT EPA have the professional knowledge and expertise on a particular matter, the subject of a media contact, the Chairperson may delegate responsibility for providing a response to the media.

### ***What to do if media contact you***

Journalists seeking comment on issues relating to the business of the NT EPA will invariably contact the members. While this policy acknowledges the right of the media to report and the right of the public to be informed, members of the NT EPA should not provide comment, agree to interviews nor respond to media queries without first obtaining the approval of the Chairperson.

If you are contacted by the media for comment:

1. Explain that the NT EPA has a media relations contact, and that in the first instance, they need to contact this person with their enquiry (media relations contact details listed below)

All journalists in the NT are aware of this procedure. This also applies to media outside of the NT.

2. Take note of the journalist's name, which media agency they are calling from and if possible, the issue they are enquiring about.
3. Inform the Chairperson and the NT EPA Senior Coordinator. Advising the Chairperson is sufficient if you are unable to directly get in touch with the NT EPA Coordinator, as the Chairperson will liaise with the media relations contact.

**Remember:** immediacy is paramount when dealing with the media. Not responding to the media's queries will not see their interest die down. Most commonly it has the opposite effect. Providing a response in a timely manner decreases the chances of misconceptions and factual errors that may be conveyed by the media.

## 5 Media relations contact

The media relations contact will be, in the first instance, the Media Manager within the Department of Lands, Planning and the Environment. The Media Manager's responsibilities will be to field and filter media enquiries, to keep media contact records, draft and coordinate media releases and statements, media interviews, media kits and background material; liaison with the Chairperson and the NT EPA members to coordinate appropriate responses to media issues, and alerting the NT EPA of sensitive or controversial media issues.

Media Manager contact telephone (08) 8924 7287 or E-mail at [media.DLPEhub@nt.gov.au](mailto:media.DLPEhub@nt.gov.au).