

# Referring a significant variation to the NT EPA

NT EPA ARCHIVE DOCUMENT

Environmental impact assessment  
guidance for proponents

NT EPA ARCHIVE DOCUMENT

Further information and guidance on the environmental impact assessment process is available on the NT EPA website at: <https://ntepa.nt.gov.au/environmental-assessments>.

Comments on this guideline are welcomed and should be directed to the NT EPA through one of the following methods:

Post: PO Box 3675, Darwin, NT 0801  
Email: [ntepa.consult@nt.gov.au](mailto:ntepa.consult@nt.gov.au)  
Tel: (08) 8924 4218

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## Introduction

The *Environment Protection Act 2019* (EP Act) requires the proponent of a proposed action or a strategic proposal (a proposal), to notify the Northern Territory Environment Protection Authority (NT EPA) of a proposed significant variation to a proposal.

The meaning of a significant variation of an action is defined under section 12 of the EP Act as a variation that:

- a. will alter the action to the extent that a referral trigger that did not previously apply to the action now applies;
- b. has the potential to have a significant impact on the environment; or
- c. will result in new or additional areas being subject to a potential significant impact on the environment.

Part 7 of the *Environment Protection Regulations 2020* (EP regulations) details the processes for providing notice of significant variations through the following stages of the environmental impact assessment process:

1. significant variations notified during the assessment process
2. significant variations referred after an assessment report has been completed for a proposal
3. significant variation after an environmental approval has been granted for a proposal.

### Purpose of the guidance

There are many reasons why a proposal may be varied by a proponent as it does work to further refine its thinking on design and implementation through the construction, operation and eventual closure phases. The NT EPA seeks to encourage variations by proponents that better avoid, reduce, mitigate or manage potentially significant environmental impacts; in particular the implementation of new technology, relevant industry best practice and responding to community and stakeholder concerns.

This document provides guidance to proponents, statutory decision makers and the community about:

- the processes required to be followed for referring a notice of significant variation at various stages of the environmental impact assessment process
- information required from a proponent in relation to the notice to ensure that the NT EPA can determine whether the notice should be accepted or refused
- decision making timeframes and additional information that may be requested by the NT EPA throughout the process
- the effect of providing a notice and the resulting processes after the notice has been given, and
- the accepted methods of submitting or referring a notice to the NT EPA.

This document also provides guidance on the decisions made by the NT EPA in considering the notice; and matters the NT EPA considers to make a determination on the significant variation.

This guidance document is part of the series of guidelines targeted at communicating the environmental impact assessment process to proponents. For more general information about environmental impact assessment in the NT, please refer to the Guide to Environmental Impact Assessment and Environmental Approval in the Northern Territory ([link](#)).

## Determining whether a variation is significant

In deciding whether a variation to a proposal is significant and should be referred to the NT EPA for environmental impact assessment, proponents should undertake a comparative analysis of the potential significant environmental impacts in relation to the original proposal and the varied or modified proposal.

Where a variation to a proposal is considered to be beyond the threshold that could reasonably be considered to be substantially the same as the original proposal, with respect to potential significant environmental impacts, the variation is likely to be a significant variation.

For illustrative purposes only, Table 1 provides examples of variations to a proposal that may be considered significant and variations to a proposal that may not be considered significant.

**TABLE 1 EXAMPLES OF SIGNIFICANT AND NON-SIGNIFICANT VARIATIONS**

Significant variation example	Non-significant variation example
A modification to the proposal size, scale and/or footprint, such that the potential for significant environmental impact is increased.	A minor modification to the proposal including size, scale and/or footprint, such that the potential for significant environmental impact is substantially the same.
A substantial increase to the intensity of the proposal including rates of production, such that the potential for significant environmental impact is increased.	A minor increase to the intensity of the proposal including rates of production, such that the potential for significant environmental impact is substantially the same.
An extension to the proposal life or the hours of operation, such that the potential for significant environmental impact is increased.	A minor change to the proposal life or the hours of operation, such that the potential for significant environmental impact is substantially the same.
A substantial increase to the extent, duration or severity of potential significant environmental impacts in relation to the proposal.	A minor increase or modification to the extent, duration or severity of potential significant environmental impacts in relation to the proposal, such that the potential for significant environmental impact is substantially the same.
The addition of primary, secondary or ancillary facilities that substantially increase the potential for significant environmental impacts	The addition of primary, secondary or ancillary facilities that result in limited changes such that the potential for significant environmental impact is substantially the same.
A new technology becomes available and is proposed for use, which may result in an increased potential for significant environmental impacts.	A new technology becomes available and is proposed for use, which is likely to result in reduced or substantially similar potential for significant environmental impacts.

Significant variation example	Non-significant variation example
There is an unforeseen discovery during construction which requires changes to the proposal that may result in increased potential for significant environmental impacts.	There is an unforeseen discovery during construction which requires changes to the proposal that would likely result in reduced, or substantially similar potential, for significant environmental impacts.

## Initial considerations

### Providing notice of a significant variation

Section 51 of the EP Act requires a proponent to notify the NT EPA of any proposed significant variation to a proposal. Alternatively, under section 52 of the EP Act, a proponent that has already been issued with an environmental approval must refer the proposed significant variation for assessment by the NT EPA.

When providing a notice of a significant variation to the NT EPA, the proponent may also provide draft terms of reference (TOR) or draft amendments to existing TOR that may be appropriate as part of the significant variation. If provided, the proponent must also provide a statement of reasons stating why the draft TOR or draft amendments are appropriate.

In relation to those referrals received after an environmental approval has been issued, and the referral relates to an approval holder initiated EIS referral and includes draft TOR for an assessment by an EIS for the significant variation, and the draft TOR are appropriate, the NT EPA may accept the referral as an approval holder initiated EIS referral.

Within 10 business days of receiving the notice, the NT EPA may direct the proponent to provide additional information. The NT EPA must formally accept or refuse, a notice within 15 business days after the notice is given. If, however, additional information has been requested by the NT EPA, the clock stops until that information has been received.

### Grounds for refusing to accept a notice of significant variation

Regulations 167, 197, and 219 provide the general grounds that the NT EPA has available for refusing to accept a notice of significant variation. The refusal can be because the notice provided by the proponent:

- contained insufficient information to make an assessment decision
- was not prepared in the appropriate form, or did not contain the appropriate content (regulation 263)
- relates to part of a larger action proposed by the proponent and information on the whole action is required to make an assessment decision, or
- was not required to be given.

In addition to the above general grounds, under regulations 220 and 221, for a significant variation received after an environmental approval has already been issued, the NT EPA may also consider:

- that a referral for a strategic assessment would be more appropriately assessed as a standard assessment; and

- that when receiving a referral of significant variation as an approval holder initiated EIS that it would be better referred for a standard assessment or a strategic assessment.

## Public consultation timeframes

Once a notice has been accepted, and at any stage of the environmental impact assessment and approval process, it will be placed on public exhibition and the NT EPA will consult with government authorities. The public exhibition periods for the various types of notices are summarised in Table 1.

**TABLE 1 – PUBLIC EXHIBITION CONSULTATION PERIODS**

Assessment method	Exhibition period of notice
Standard assessment that is not an accepted proponent initiated EIS referral.	20 business days
Standard assessment that is an accepted proponent initiated EIS referral.	30 business days
Strategic assessment that is not an accepted proponent initiated EIS referral.	30 business days
Strategic assessment that is an accepted proponent initiated EIS referral.	40 business days

## Process following acceptance of the notice of significant variation

### Significant variation referred during the assessment process

Division 1 of Part 7 of the EP regulation provides the process for consideration of significant variations that are notified by the proponent while the assessment process is still being undertaken by the NT EPA. A proposal is considered to be in an environmental impact assessment process if the NT EPA has made a decision on the referral information (that assessment is required and the method of assessment) and the NT EPA has not yet completed an Assessment Report.

If the application received whilst the assessment process is still taking place, the NT EPA may suspend the environmental impact assessment process of a proposal until it has made a decision on the significant variation (regulation 163).

Within 30 business days after the conclusion of the public consultation process the NT EPA must determine:

1. whether the proposal can continue within its existing environmental impact assessment process (i.e. by referral information, supplementary environmental report, an environmental impact statement process, or by inquiry),
2. whether the proposal requires a different method of environmental impact assessment,
3. a new environmental impact assessment is required just for the components of the significant variation,
4. environmental impact assessment is no longer required, or

5. for the EIS or Inquiry methods only, that the assessment can continue with amended TOR.

When the NT EPA decides that an EIS or Inquiry method is required, the NT EPA will also consider the requirement for:

1. amended terms of reference
2. new terms of reference, or
3. an addendum to the existing terms of reference.

The NT EPA will provide a statement of reasons for the decision (or recommendation of a strategic proposal), which will be made publicly available.

The draft TOR will be placed on public exhibition for 15 business days. Consultation with government authorities will also take place during this period. Within 15 business days after the consultation period has ended the NT EPA must approve the amended TOR.

### Significant variation notified after an assessment report has been finalised

Division 2 of Part 7 of the EP regulations provides the process for significant variations that are referred by the proponent after an assessment report has been finalised.

In determining whether the referral requires a new environmental impact assessment, the NT EPA will consider the following:

- whether the potentially significant impacts on the environment of the significant variation are materially different from, or additional to, the impacts already identified in the original proposal
- whether the potential detrimental effects of the significant variation are indeed significant compared to the potentially significant impacts identified in the original proposal
- whether the objects of the Act and the purpose of the environmental impact assessment process set out in section 42 of the EP Act, would be undermined if the matters raised in the significant variation were not assessed.

In addition to this the NT EPA will consider whether:

- the potential significant impacts of the variation can be avoided or mitigated or managed through the proposed conditions of the draft environmental approval given to the Minister with the assessment report
- the potential significant impacts of the variation can be avoided or mitigated or managed if an amendment is made to the proposed conditions of the draft environmental approval given to the Minister with the assessment report, or
- the potential significant impacts of the variation are such that a new assessment is required for the matters in the significant variation.

The NT EPA will consult with the proponent on any proposed changes to the draft environmental approval as a result of assessing the notice.



If, however, the previous assessment resulted in a statement of unacceptable impact in relation to the Proposal, the NT EPA will consider the significant variation referral in accordance with regulation 205 and decide whether the:

- potential significant impacts of the proposal can be avoided or mitigated or managed through the conditions of an environmental approval
- potential significant impacts of the proposal cannot be avoided or mitigated or managed through the conditions of an environmental approval; or
- environmental impacts of the significant variation are such that a new assessment is required for the matters in the significant variation.

If the NT EPA decides that a new assessment is required for a significant variation to a proposal for which a statement of unacceptable impact has been published, the NT EPA must:

- for an existing standard assessment, decide that the significant variation assessment is to be a standard assessment, and the required method of environmental impact assessment;
- for an existing strategic assessment, decide that the significant variation assessment is to be a strategic assessment and the proposed method of environmental impact assessment.

### Significant variation after environmental approval granted

Division 3 of Part 7 of the EP regulations provides the process for significant variations that are referred by the proponent under section 52 of the EP Act, after an environmental approval has been granted for a proposal.

In determining whether the referral requires a new environmental impact assessment, the NT EPA will consider the following:

- whether the potentially significant impacts on the environment of the significant variation are materially different from, or additional to, the impacts already identified in the original proposal
- whether the potential detrimental effects of the significant variation are indeed significant compared to the potentially significant impacts identified in the original proposal
- whether the objects of the Act and the purpose of the environmental impact assessment process set out in section 4A of the EP Act would be undermined if the matters raised in the significant variation were not assessed.

In addition to this, the NT EPA will consider whether:

- the environmental impacts of the variation can be managed through the existing conditions of the environmental approval
- the environmental impacts of the variation can be managed through amendments to the existing conditions of the environmental approval, or
- the environmental impacts of the variation are such that a new environmental impact assessment of the variation is required.

## Information to be provided in the notice of a significant variation

The NT EPA requires proponents to complete a notice of significant variation form (Appendix A). The form can be downloaded from the NT EPA's website: <https://ntepa.nt.gov.au/>, or a hard copy can be obtained from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources. Proponents can contact the Environment Division if they require assistance to complete the form (see below).

In summary, the form requires the following categories of information to be provided with the notification of the significant variation:

1. Type of significant variation
2. Content of the original proposal
3. Content of the proposed significant variation to the proposal
4. Detrimental environmental impacts of the original proposal
5. Detrimental environmental impacts of the significant variation and
6. What the potential environmental impacts of the variation are, and whether they are likely to be significant

Similarly to the original referral process, it is important for proponents to examine all potential impact sources that relate to the proposed significant variation, and the potential impact pathways between the source of an impact and sensitive receptors and environmental values that may be impacted. These need to be considered both in isolation and cumulatively with other reasonably foreseeable proposals and/or approved actions.

The application for a significant variation should identify which of the NT EPA's environmental factors and objectives are likely to be impacted by the proposed significant variation. The NT EPA's environmental objectives considered for each factor are described in the NT EPA's Environmental Assessment Guidance – NT EPA Environmental factors and objectives ([link](#)).

### Potential environmental impacts of the proposed significant variation

As was provided in the initial referral of a proposed action or strategic proposal to the NT EPA, the application for significant variation should also address relevant environmental factor/s and include the following in the significant variation form. Where supporting information is referenced, this should be attached to the form.

1. Receiving environment – describe the current condition of the environment in relation to the environmental factor specifying any identified values likely to be impacted.
2. Potential impacts – assess the potential impacts of the proposed significant variation, the significance of the impacts, and how the impacts might affect the NT EPA's objective for the environmental factor (see Appendix B).

3. Mitigation – describe in terms of management hierarchies<sup>1</sup>, measures proposed to avoid, mitigate or offset (if appropriate) the potential impacts, the effectiveness of proposed measure(s) and the level of confidence that the measure will be implemented, and whether by implementing the measure(s) the NT EPA's objective for the environmental factor is likely to be met.
4. Assumptions – describe any assumptions critical to your assessment, e.g. risk appropriately identified, particular mitigation measures or regulatory conditions implemented, measures proven and likely to succeed.
5. Consultation – outline any outcomes of consultation with stakeholders.
6. Describe any potential cumulative impacts (successive, incremental and combined impacts of past, present and reasonably foreseeable actions within the area of influence of the proposed significant variation).
7. Ecologically sustainable development (ESD)<sup>2</sup> – describe how the principle/s of ESD applicable to the environmental factor have been considered in formulating the proposed significant variation.
8. Provide a statement of expected residual impact for the environmental factor. Residual impact is the impact remaining on that factor assuming the management hierarchies have been successfully implemented.
9. Discuss any changes to environmental management plans, environmental approval conditions or other authorisations that may be required as a result of the proposed significant variation.

Appendix A provides a checklist to be used to determine whether the proposed significant variation may have further significant impacts on the environment that may require additional assessment.

## Draft terms of reference and statement of reasons

If a proponent elects to provide an amended draft Terms of Reference (TOR) and an accompanying statement of reasons (SOR) for their draft TOR with the notice of significant variation, the TOR and SOR must be provided in an approved format. Please contact the Environment Division for advice on the approved format.

## References and data

All sources must be appropriately referenced, preferably using the Harvard Standard. A reference list should include the address of any internet pages used as data sources. Referenced supporting documentation and data, or documents cited in the referral, must be available upon request.

Spatial data included in the referral should be provided in GIS format, geo-referenced and conform to the following parameters:

- Data type: closed polygons that represent the proposed boundary and the activity areas for all physical elements of the proposal (footprint)

<sup>1</sup> The environmental decision-making hierarchy and the waste hierarchy as set out in sections 26 and 27 respectively of the *Environment Protection Act 2019*

<sup>2</sup> The principles of ESD are set out in Part 2 Division 1 of the *Environment Protection Act 2019*

- Attribution: Name the development footprint and each activity area in the attribute table of the spatial data
- Format: ESRI geodatabase or shapefile
- Coordinate System: GDA94 (datum) and projected into the appropriate Map Grid of Australia (MGA) zone.

All maps and figures contained in the referral should be clear and readable, of appropriate scale, in either jpeg or pdf format and of good resolution (> 300 ppi). 'Flatten' figures to reduce the size of the referral.

Any raw data collected or generated to support development of the referral should be provided in csv or excel file formats. Data columns should be clearly titled for variables with relevant units.

## Where to submit the form

The significant variation notice form, and any accompanying documentation, may be submitted to the NT EPA in a number of ways:

- by email: [referrals.ntepa@nt.gov.au](mailto:referrals.ntepa@nt.gov.au)
- by FTP: contact the NT EPA for more information
- by post: Northern Territory Environment Protection Authority, GPO Box 3675, Darwin NT 0801
- by hand: Level 1, Arnhemica House, 16 Parap Road, Parap

Referral documents should be provided in electronic format and should be less than 35MB to allow for web upload.

## Further information

Further information and guidance on the environmental impact assessment process is available on the NT EPA website at: <https://ntepa.nt.gov.au/environmental-assessments>. If you require assistance in applying this guideline to your circumstances or you are unsure whether a notice of significant variation is required for your proposed action, please contact the NT EPA. Email: [eia.ntepa@nt.gov.au](mailto:eia.ntepa@nt.gov.au) Tel: 08 8924 4218

# APPENDIX A: Significant variation notice form

**NT EPA ARCHIVE DOCUMENT**

**DRAFT**

# Form to apply for a significant variation of a proposed action or strategic proposal

Under sections 51 to 52 of the *Environment Protection Act 2019* a Proponent or Approval Holder must notify/refer a proposed significant variation to the Northern Territory Environment Protection Authority (NT EPA).

Additional information on submitting a notice of significant variation can be found in the document *Environmental Assessment Guideline – Providing Notice of a Significant Variation to the Northern Territory Environment Protection Authority* at [\(link\)](#).

1. Proponent/Referrer details			
Proponent <input type="checkbox"/>		Other relevant person/s <input type="checkbox"/>	
Name (print)		Signature	
Position		Organisation	
Email			
Address	Street No.	Street Name	
	Suburb	State	Postcode
Does the referrer request that the NT EPA treat any part of the information in the referral as confidential? <i>Provide confidential information in a separate attachment.</i>		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Title of the proposed significant variation			
Name of the proponent/s (including Trading Name if relevant)			
Australian Company Number(s) <input type="checkbox"/>		ACN: _____	
OR			
Australian Business Number(s) <input type="checkbox"/>		ABN: _____	
Contact for the proposed significant variation (if different from those providing notice/referral).			

Please include: name, physical address, phone, and email.

**Significant variation declaration:**

I, ....., (full name) declare that I am authorised to provide notice of/refer this significant variation on behalf of....., and further declare that the information contained in this form is true and not misleading.

**2. Type of significant variation**

**What type of proposal is being referred for a significant variation?**

- proposed action
- strategic proposal
- proponent initiated EIS

**What stage in the environmental impact assessment process is your proposal currently in?**

- during assessment
- after assessment report
- after environmental approval

Have draft terms of reference and statement of reasons been included?

- Yes  No

If so, ensure they are attached to this notice/referral of significant variation.

**3. Content of the Original Proposal**

Describe the key characteristics of the original proposal, including detrimental environmental effects.

Reference documents used to describe the contents of the original referral should be attached where relevant.

Where relevant discuss compliance with the Environmental Approval to date.

*Provide as an attachment to the form*

**4. Content of the proposed significant variation to the Proposal**

<p>Describe the key characteristics of the proposed significant variation and (see Environmental Assessment Guidance - Referring a Significant Variation to the NT EPA)</p> <p><i>Provide as an attachment to the form</i></p>	
<p>Have you provided electronic spatial data, maps and figures in the appropriate format?</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>

**5. Detrimental environmental effects of the proposed significant variation**

<p>What are the environmental factors that could be significantly impacted by this proposed significant variation?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Landforms</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Terrestrial environmental quality</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Terrestrial ecosystems</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Hydrological processes</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Inland water environmental quality</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Aquatic ecosystems</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Coastal processes</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Marine environmental quality</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Marine ecosystems</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Atmospheric processes</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Air quality</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Society and economy</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Culture and heritage</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Human Health</li> </ul>
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*For each of the environmental factors identified above, complete the table at item 6 below, or provide the information in a supplementary report/appendix.*



## 6. Potential environmental impacts

Please see Appendix A to the significant variation guidance to assist in filling out this section.

1	<b>Receiving environment</b> - Describe the current condition of the receiving environment in relation to this factor.	
2	<b>Potential impacts</b> - Identify and assess the potential impacts of the action against the NT EPA objective for the environmental factor.	
3	<b>Mitigation</b> - Describe the measures proposed to avoid, mitigate and manage the potential environmental impacts.	
4	<b>Assumptions</b> - Describe any assumptions critical to your assessment.	
5	<b>Relevant policy and guidance / industry standards</b> used in applying mitigation measures.	
6	<b>Consultation</b> - Outline the outcomes of consultation in relation to the potential environmental impacts and proposed mitigation.	
7	<b>Cumulative impact</b> - of this action with other actions in the area.	
8	<b>Ecologically sustainable development</b> - how have the principles been considered/applied?	
9	<b>Residual impact</b> - provide a statement of the expected residual impact to the environmental factor.	

## APPENDIX B: Checklist

TABLE 1: ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS, OBJECTIVES AND INDICATIVE ENVIRONMENTAL VALUES AND SENSITIVITIES POTENTIALLY RELEVANT TO THE PROPOSED SIGNIFICANT VARIATION

Theme	Environmental factor and objective	Indicative environment values and sensitivities	Does your significant variation have the potential to significantly impact on environmental values or sensitivities?
LAND	<p>1) Landforms</p> <p><u>Objective:</u> Conserve the variety and integrity of distinctive physical landforms so that environmental values are protected.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• distinctive features in the landscape, either geological or anthropogenic</li> <li>• subterranean karstic terrain and faults</li> <li>• craters, gorges, ranges, caves, massifs, escarpments, plateaus</li> <li>• monuments</li> <li>• culturally important features</li> <li>• tourism related to landforms</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable
	<p>2) Terrestrial environmental quality</p> <p><u>Objective:</u> Protect the quality and integrity of land and soils so that environmental values are supported and maintained</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• characteristics of soils, including chemical, physical, biological and aesthetic qualities</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable
	<p>3) Terrestrial ecosystems</p> <p><u>Objective:</u> Protect the NT's flora and fauna so that environmental values including biological diversity and ecological integrity are maintained.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 'sensitive or significant' vegetation</li> <li>• vegetation that provides an important ecological function</li> <li>• listed threatened species and their habitat (NT and Commonwealth)</li> <li>• listed migratory species and their habitat (Commonwealth)</li> <li>• locally endemic species or species with restricted habitat</li> <li>• 'iconic' or culturally important animals, plants and vegetation</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable

Theme	Environmental factor and objective	Indicative environment values and sensitivities	Does your significant variation have the potential to significantly impact on environmental values or sensitivities?
<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">WATER</p>	<p>1) Hydrological processes</p> <p><u>Objective:</u> Protect the hydrological regimes of groundwater and surface water so that environmental values are maintained.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the supply and quantity of water in surface water features including rivers, lakes, wetlands, swamps, creeks, billabongs, intermittent streams, floodplains, mangroves and drainage lines</li> <li>the supply and quantity of water in groundwater features including aquifers, aquitards and water tables</li> <li>declared beneficial uses</li> <li>present and future uses, and users of water</li> <li>current or potential water supplies, including regional scale aquifers</li> <li>culturally important water features</li> </ul>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable</p>
	<p>2) Inland water environmental quality</p> <p><u>Objective:</u> Protect the quality of groundwater and surface water so that environmental values including ecological health, land uses and the welfare and amenity of people are maintained.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the quality of water in surface water features including rivers, lakes, wetlands, swamps, creeks, billabongs, intermittent streams, floodplains, mangroves and drainage lines</li> <li>the quality of water in groundwater features including aquifers and water tables</li> <li>declared beneficial uses</li> <li>present and future uses and users of water</li> <li>current or potential water supplies, including regional scale aquifers</li> <li>culturally important water features</li> <li>RAMSAR wetlands</li> </ul>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable</p>
	<p>3) Aquatic ecosystems</p> <p><u>Objective:</u> Protect aquatic habitats and flora and fauna to maintain environmental values including biological diversity of flora and fauna and the ecological functions they perform.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the health of the biota in inland waterways</li> <li>the habitats that support the lifecycle of aquatic biota</li> <li>groundwater dependent ecosystems</li> </ul>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable</p>

Theme	Environmental factor and objective	Indicative environment values and sensitivities	Does your significant variation have the potential to significantly impact on environmental values or sensitivities?
SEA	<p>1) Coastal processes</p> <p><u>Objective:</u> Protect the geophysical and hydrological processes that shape coastal morphology so that the environmental values of the coast are maintained.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• processes that support coastal benthic communities and habitats such as coral reefs, mangroves, salt marshes, seagrass meadows and sponge gardens</li> <li>• conservation significant low lying areas including tidal creeks, deltas and river mouths</li> <li>• unique coastal landforms</li> <li>• significant cultural and aesthetic values</li> <li>• active or passive recreation</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable
	<p>2) Marine Environmental Quality</p> <p><u>Objective:</u> Protect the quality and productivity of water, sediment and biota so that environmental values are maintained.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• quality of the water, sediment and biota</li> <li>• ecosystem health condition</li> <li>• fishing and aquaculture</li> <li>• recreation and aesthetics</li> <li>• industrial water supply</li> <li>• cultural and spiritual values</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable
	<p>3) Marine ecosystems</p> <p><u>Objective:</u> Protect marine habitats and flora and fauna so that biological and functional diversity and ecological integrity are maintained.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• conservation significant marine and coastal fauna and critical habitat such as nesting, breeding or foraging habitat</li> <li>• conservation significant marine and coastal flora and vegetation</li> <li>• groups of species (species richness and assemblages of species)</li> <li>• ecological functions and processes</li> <li>• species of social, cultural and/or economic significance.</li> <li>• integrity of marine ecosystems and the ecological services they supply</li> <li>• biological diversity</li> <li>• functional diversity</li> <li>• provision of refuge</li> <li>• food supply</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable

Theme	Environmental factor and objective	Indicative environment values and sensitivities	Does your significant variation have the potential to significantly impact on environmental values or sensitivities?
AIR	1) Air quality <u>Objective:</u> Protect air quality and minimise emissions and their impact so that environmental values are maintained.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the chemical, physical and biological characteristics of air</li> <li>the biological processes that depend on the air quality</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable
	2) Atmospheric processes <u>Objective:</u> Minimise greenhouse gas emissions so as to contribute to the NT Government's aspirational target of achieving net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050, and adapt to a changing climate to protect ecological integrity and maintain the welfare and amenity of people.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A contribution to the NT's greenhouse gas emissions</li> <li>Adaptation to a changing climate</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable
PEOPLE	1) Society and economy <u>Objective:</u> Maintain or enhance the social and economic values for current and future generations of Territorians.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>communities, towns, private properties and dwellings where people reside</li> <li>aesthetics and recreation</li> <li>resources including water supply and food sources</li> <li>jobs and businesses</li> <li>agriculture, fisheries and industry</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable
	2) Culture and heritage <u>Objective:</u> Protect the rich cultural and heritage values of the Northern Territory. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>cultural heritage items and places</li> <li>sacred sites</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>bus stop</li> <li>totemic flora and fauna</li> <li>important or significant country</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable

Referring a significant variation to the NT EPA

Theme	Environmental factor and objective	Indicative environment values and sensitivities	Does your significant variation have the potential to significantly impact on environmental values or sensitivities?
	3) Human health <u>Objective:</u> Ensure that the risks to human health are identified, understood and adequately avoided and/or mitigated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• drinking water</li><li>• recreational water</li><li>• air quality</li><li>• bush tucker</li><li>• radiological limits</li></ul>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable