

2013/2014

NORTHERN TERRITORY ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION AUTHORITY



ANNUAL REPORT
ntepa



LETTER FROM THE CHAIR NT EPA TO THE MINISTER

The Hon Peter Chandler MLA
Minister for Lands, Planning and the Environment
Parliament House
DARWIN NT 0800

Dear Minister

I am pleased to present you with the annual report of the Northern Territory Environment Protection Authority (NT EPA) for the year ended 30 June 2014, as required under section 33 of the *Northern Territory Environment Protection Authority Act* (NT EPA Act).

The report describes the performance of NT EPA's functions during the 2013-14 financial year.

Dr William (Bill) Freeland

Chairperson
Northern Territory Environment Protection Authority

20 October 2014

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CHAIR'S MESSAGE

In order to continue to maintain community and industry confidence in the environmental protection regime, a mix of regulatory reform, improvement in policies (e.g. guidance materials) and improvement in the application of regulatory powers is required. The process of legislative and policy reform has begun, with an emphasis on legislation and policy most likely to influence industry and the community. Most notably:

- Recommendations on reforms to the *Environmental Assessment Act* were made to the Minister for Lands, Planning and the Environment as part of advice under Part 3 of the *Northern Territory Environment Protection Authority Act* (NT EPA Act) as a result of the findings in the *Redbank Copper Mine – Environmental Quality Report*.
- 2013-14 saw government make needed reform of the *Environment Protection (Beverage Containers and Plastic Bags) Act*. The container deposit scheme could not have continued in the absence of the reforms.
- The *Waste Management and Pollution Control Act* is under review. It is anticipated that a consultation paper concerning the Act will be released early in the new financial year. The number of policies, guidelines and fact sheets available for industry and the community is gradually increasing and more are in development.

Transparent, targeted and appropriate assessment of the environmental impacts of development proposals is essential in ensuring industry and community confidence in the Northern Territory Environment Protection Authority (NT EPA). This requires proponents to submit adequate

and appropriate documentation to evaluate environmental risks and impacts and effective mitigation and management measures.

The recent surge of proposals requiring impact assessment has varied between projects that have been relatively simple to assess where proponents have provided high quality and robust information, while others have proven more complex and time consuming where proponents have provided inadequate information. These failures result in potential delays to project initiation.

The NT EPA urges proponents to work with us to minimise risks of delay and added costs by providing appropriate information when submitting their Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). Our guidelines for environmental assessment and management, and our policy of being available for consultation, are designed to assist in providing clarity and certainty for proponents.

The NT EPA is taking steps to ease the bureaucratic burden of the approvals and licencing application and reporting processes. We are developing an interactive system, *NT EPA Online*, to provide our clients with online application, approval and reporting services.

This will improve the NT EPA's capacity to provide stakeholders with information, and provide certainty and timely delivery of environmental approvals and licences to industry. This long overdue facility will of necessity be introduced in stages over the coming two years, with different modules implemented as they are developed.

Compliance activities have increased during the past year. Where possible the NT EPA prefers to work with industry and individual businesses to correct waste and pollution concerns. Enforcement

activities are appropriate in some cases. The number of enforcement actions has increased this year, with improved reporting of incidents. The compliance program will be formalised as it continues in the coming year.

Community and industry acceptance of and engagement in the environmental protection framework is being enhanced by the collaborative development and implementation of strategic approaches to significant environmental concerns; issues that have been of community concern for many years. The draft *Stormwater Strategy for the Darwin Region* was released for community consultation this year and will be followed by consultation on a draft *Waste Management Strategy for the Northern Territory* in the coming financial year. Development and implementation of the strategies critically involves collaboration with industry, government agencies, municipal authorities and the community.

The NT EPA recognises there is further room for improvement in how we engage with industry and the community. Our communications with the community and industry have focused on specific fundamental activities of the NT EPA. These include legislated requirements, proposed strategies, guidelines and fact sheets, and community reporting of pollution incidents on the Pollution Hotline. We intend broadening our communications to include strategy implementation and adoption of industry standards, and to better serve the interests of two way communication. We have engaged a consultant to provide us with guidance on how our communications can be improved. Advice received will be acted upon to expand and enhance opportunities for community and industry input.

The NT is growing. That growth is a product of new, and in many cases exciting development initiatives

and opportunities. The surge in new projects necessarily brings with it an increasing need to ensure that as we reap the benefits of development, we respect and retain the environmental qualities that support the lifestyles of Territorians. The coming year continues a process of the NT EPA collaboratively developing and applying new tools that are essential to fulfilling our role in the ecologically sustainable development of the Territory.

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PART 1: OVERVIEW

Our Vision

Ecologically sustainable development in the Northern Territory.

Our Purpose

To be an effective, independent and influential authority on environmental management.

Our Values

- Accountable
- Responsive
- Innovative
- Proactive

Our Principles

- Transparent processes and independent decision making.
- A strong focus on collaboration and partnerships.
- Science and evidence underpins decision making at national, Territory and local levels.

WHAT IS THE NT EPA?

The Northern Territory Environment Protection Authority (NT EPA) is an independent body corporate established under the *Northern Territory Environment Protection Authority Act* (NT EPA Act).

Under section 7 of the NT EPA Act the objectives of the NT EPA are to:

- promote ecologically sustainable development;
- protect the environment, having regard to the need to enable ecologically sustainable development;
- promote effective waste management and waste minimisation strategies; and
- enhance community and business confidence in the environmental protection regime of the Territory.

The functions of the NT EPA are to:

- advise and report to the Minister for Lands, Planning and the Environment (the Minister) under Part 3 of the NT EPA Act;
- undertake functions associated with environmental assessments and the management of waste and pollution conferred on the NT EPA under the NT EPA Act or any other Act; and
- perform any other functions conferred on it by the NT EPA Act or any other Act.

Membership

The NT EPA consists of a Chairperson, four members appointed by the Administrator of the Northern Territory, and the Chair of the NT Planning Commission. Appointed members to the NT EPA are required to collectively provide knowledge and experience in a broad range of environmental, business and social disciplines.



Chair of the NT EPA, Dr William Freeland

Dr William Freeland gained his Masters degree in Science at the University of Queensland before obtaining a PhD in Zoology from the University of Michigan. Prior to his appointment, Dr Freeland was an environmental consultant working with business and industry in environmental management in the Northern Territory. He is a former Director of the Parks and Wildlife Commission of the Northern Territory and Director of Conservation Strategy with the Queensland Government.

Dr Freeland has spent 30 years of his career in the Northern Territory. He has considerable knowledge and understanding of environmental issues in the Territory. Dr Freeland has over 20 years' experience in research and management roles with the Parks and Wildlife Commission of the Northern Territory including working with the community. His experience in the Territory has given Dr Freeland

an extensive understanding and appreciation of the issues relevant to regional areas and the Indigenous community.

He has represented the Territory on various national environmental groups such as the National Standing Committee for Water, Land and Biodiversity, Natural Resource Management Ministerial Council, and the Standing Committee to the Australian and New Zealand Environment Council.

During his career, Dr Freeland has published scientific papers and consultancy work in the fields of conservation management, environmental impacts, waste management, ecologically sustainable development and tourism development. Dr Freeland brings a breadth of experience to the position of Chair of the NT EPA.



Dr John Chapman

Dr John Chapman completed his PhD in Organic Chemistry at the University of Sydney and subsequently obtained a diploma in environmental studies at the Macquarie University.

Dr Chapman brings over 30 years' experience in the field of ecotoxicology and environmental protection having worked in the New South Wales Office of Environment and Heritage (OEH) and its predecessors. During this time, he has been involved in ecotoxicology research, supervision and management and has produced numerous reports and advice in the area of chemicals and the impacts of contamination on the environment. Dr Chapman is currently an Honorary Scientific Fellow with OEH.

Dr Chapman was involved in developing the toxicant guidelines for the Australian & New Zealand Guidelines for Fresh and Marine Water Quality (ANZECC 2000) and is on the team for the current revision of these guidelines. He currently undertakes occasional consulting in ecotoxicology and honorary work with OEH.



Dr Ian Geoffrey Wallis

Dr Ian Wallis brings 30 years' experience as an environmental engineer providing advice to water and sewerage authorities and industries. He has been a registered environmental auditor for 17 years providing advice in the form of environmental studies, audits, investigations and inputs into environmental impact assessments.

Dr Wallis conducted postgraduate research at Monash University in sediment transport, the dispersion of wastes in estuarine and ocean waters, and the social and technical issues involved in managing pollution. Dr Wallis has been a researcher at various Universities and laboratories in the United Kingdom and United States of America.

Dr Wallis has extensive experience in environmental assessments, air quality, water quality and oceanographic studies, and is recognised as one of Australia's experts in these fields. He was a member of the Expert Panels on Desalination and on dredging in Darwin harbour.



Professor David John Williams

After obtaining his First Class Honours Degree in Civil Engineering from Monash University, Professor David Williams obtained his PhD in Soil Mechanics at the University of Cambridge. Professor Williams is currently the Director of the Geotechnical Engineering Centre within the School of Civil Engineering at The University of Queensland, where he has been based for most of his 30-year career. Professor Williams enjoys an international reputation for applying geotechnical principles to mine waste disposal and mined landform design. He has researched and published extensively in this field and is highly sought after for his advice and for peer reviews of operating and closing mines within Australasia and worldwide. Over the last 10 years, Professor Williams has been active in the drafting of Commonwealth Government Leading Practice Sustainable Development Handbooks for the Mining Industry, and was involved in the drafting of the 2012 Australian National Committee on Large Dams (ANCOLD) Guidelines on Tailings Dams.



Ms Janice van Reyk

Ms Janice van Reyk is an experienced non-executive director on a number of boards in the infrastructure and utilities sector. She has a strong commercial background as a senior executive in ASX listed industrial companies combined with environmental experience.

Ms van Reyk's environmental experience includes advising on a range of socio-economic assessments, stakeholder consultations, environmental and remediation issues. Together with her executive management experience she brings great depth to the NT EPA.

Ms van Reyk is a Fellow of the Australian Institute of Company Directors. She has a Master of Environment specialising in water, energy and urban issues; a Master of Commerce specialising in corporate finance, economics and accounting; and a Bachelor of Arts and a Bachelor of Laws.



Chair of the NT Planning Commission, Mr Gary Nairn

The Hon Gary Nairn is the Chairman of the Northern Territory Planning Commission.

After a 25 year career as a surveyor in Australia, United Kingdom and Europe, including 13 years as Managing Director of his Darwin based surveying and mapping consultancy, Gary Nairn was elected as the Federal Member for Eden-Monaro in 1996.

He served in the Australian Parliament until 2007 which included being the Parliamentary Secretary to Prime Minister Howard from 2004 to 2006 and Special Minister of State from 2006 to 2007. His responsibilities in these roles included water reform, e-Government, Commonwealth properties, the Australian Electoral Commission and five Government Business Enterprises.

Mr Nairn lived in the Northern Territory for 15 years and was involved in the planning, design and survey of major developments such as Palmerston, Cullen Bay, Katherine East and Bayview.

Mr Nairn remains involved in the spatial industry through his consultancy work and is currently



NT EPA Members at Mereenie Oil and Gas Field

the national chairman of the Spatial Industries Business Association (SIBA). Mr Nairn also chairs the Tasmanian Spatial Information Council (TASSIC), an advisory council to the Tasmanian Government.

Relationship with the Department of Lands, Planning and the Environment

Under section 37 of the NT EPA Act, the Chief Executive Officer of the Department of Lands, Planning and the Environment (DLPE) must provide the NT EPA with staff and facilities to enable it to properly exercise its powers and perform its functions.

There are currently 39 staff provided to the NT EPA in accordance with this requirement. The majority of staff are located in the Darwin region, with two staff in Alice Springs and two staff working remotely from interstate.

DLPE provides the NT EPA with support for its corporate functions.



NT EPA organisation chart

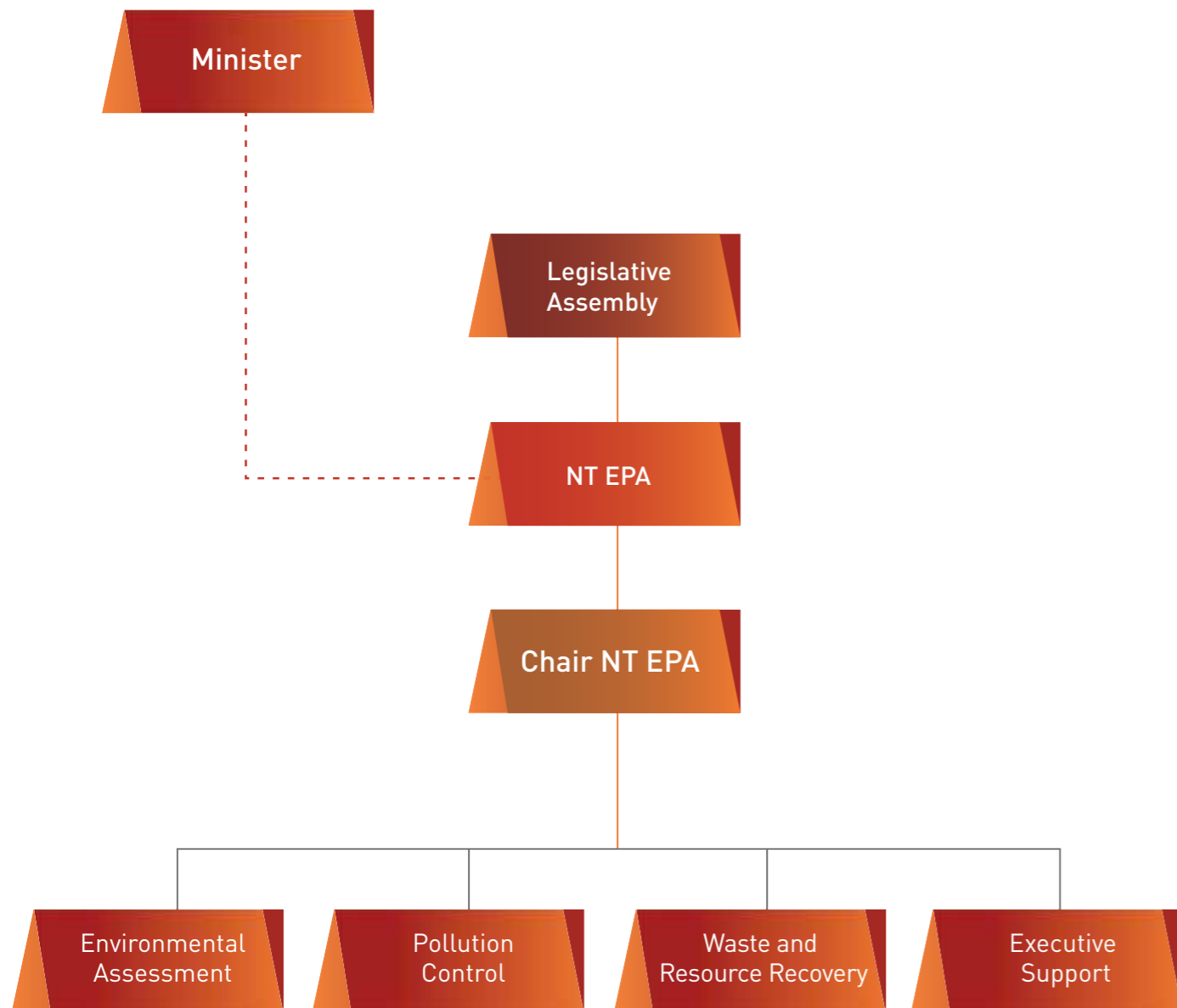


Figure 1: NT EPA organisation chart

STRATEGIC PLAN

This year the NT EPA finalised its Strategic Plan 2013-2016. Four key goals are identified in the Plan.

1. **Address Priority Environmental Issues** to ensure legacies are identified and effectively managed. The key priorities for this goal are to:
 - address waste management and minimisation across the Northern Territory;
 - improve the quality of storm water entering the Darwin Harbour;
 - improve the management of contaminated sites in the Northern Territory; and
 - improve responses to major environmental incidents.
2. **Minimise Environmental Impacts** to improve compliance and enforcement of environmental legislation and ensure impacts have been identified and mitigated to an acceptable level. The five key priorities for this goal are:
 - drive legislative regulatory reform to establish a contemporary environment protection framework;
 - undertake risk based assessment of potential environmental impacts to inform approvals and compliance;
 - develop policy, guidelines and standards to inform leading environmental management practice;
 - address the management of waste and pollution issues in remote communities; and
 - improve the management and compliance of waste and pollution.
3. **Engage and Inform Government, Community and Business** to ensure environmental information is more accessible and easier to understand and public awareness and community involvement in NT EPA's processes. Key priorities are to:
 - work effectively with clients and partners to improve environmental performance and standards;
 - increase knowledge and awareness of environmental laws, impacts of activities and people's duty of care; and
 - encourage industry and community bodies to contribute to the resolution of issues of environmental significance or public concern.
4. **Build Organisational Capability and Capacity** to ensure effective planning and reporting on organisational performance; that staff have the appropriate competencies and expertise to achieve NT EPA outcomes; and ensure financial and business sustainability. The key priorities for this final goal are to ensure:
 - integrated systems and processes;
 - staff have the training and tools to effectively and efficiently manage environmental issues; and
 - strong governance, financial accountability and a safe work environment are maintained.

Information on how the NT EPA has started to tackle these important goals is outlined in detail in Part 2 of this report.



PART 2: ACHIEVEMENTS

GOAL 1: ADDRESSING PRIORITY ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

Core Business

Conduct investigations

Advice under the NT EPA Act – Redbank Copper Mine

2013-14 Priority

Prepare a report on the environmental status of Redbank Mine located in the Roper Gulf Shire near the Queensland border.

The NT EPA produced a report, the *Redbank Copper Mine – Environmental Quality Report* and related *Recommendations on the Environmental Assessment and Regulation of Mine Sites* under Part 3 of the NT EPA Act. These were based on an investigation into regulatory, assessment and performance failings at the Redbank Mine site.

The report uses the mine as a case study to aid understanding of the environmental impacts legacy sites can cause and how legacy mining issues arise.

The report documents the mine’s history and environmental issues and finds that legacy mine sites such as the Redbank Copper Mine are the result of failures by:

- mine operators to appropriately assess and manage environmental risks, including a failure to meet the operational and information provision requirements of regulatory approvals;

- regulators who have been unable to hold operators to account or effectively address environmental risks; and
- the regulatory system in the 1990s which allowed mining to commence prior to approval of Environmental Management Plans.

Financial constraints and a lack of transparency are also identified as contributing factors to these failings.

Recommendations to the Minister focused on ways to improve legislation and processes to reduce the risks of inadequate management of mining operations and mine closure. This included strengthening the *Environmental Assessment Act* (EA Act) and improving the transparency of reporting on compliance with environmental approvals.

The Minister tabled the documents in the Legislative Assembly on 27 March 2014. The Minister will formally respond to the report and recommendations during 2014-15 as required under the NT EPA Act.



Monitoring mining discharge impact into creek

Advice under the NT EPA Act – Stormwater Strategy for the Darwin Harbour Region

2013-14 Priority

Provide advice to the Minister in the form of a Stormwater Strategy for the Darwin Harbour Region. The strategy will ensure an effective, co-ordinated and consistent approach to stormwater management across the catchment area.

2014-15 Future Priority

Finalise a Stormwater Strategy for the Darwin Harbour Region to ensure an effective, co-ordinated and consistent approach to stormwater management across the catchment area.

The draft *Stormwater Strategy for the Darwin Harbour Region* was released for public comment in May 2014 for a period of six weeks.

Darwin Harbour is the ultimate receiving environment for all stormwater and wastewater discharged from the Darwin and Palmerston urban areas, and the greater Darwin region catchment as a whole.

As the Darwin Harbour Region continues to experience growth and development pressures, with inevitable increases in demands on land and waterways, there has been an increasing need for a strategy or policy position to assist in managing issues associated with urban stormwater within the region. The draft *Stormwater Strategy for the Darwin Harbour Region* seeks to provide a basis for improving management of the quality of stormwater entering the Darwin Harbour. The strategy is expected to be finalised for publication in 2014-15.

Waste management in the Northern Territory

2013-14 Priority

Commence the drafting of a Northern Territory Waste Strategy.

2014-15 Future Priority

Finalise the drafting of a Northern Territory Waste Strategy.

The NT EPA received a request from the Minister in July 2013 for advice on opportunities for improving waste management practices in the Northern Territory. The NT EPA subsequently established the Northern Territory Waste Management Advisory Committee under section 11 of the *Waste Management and Pollution Control Act* (WMPC Act) to provide advice to the NT EPA in formulating its response to the Minister.

The Committee comprises representatives from the NT EPA, the Local Government Association of the Northern Territory, various Northern Territory government departments, local government and regional shire councils.



Illegal dumping

Private industry is a critical component of waste management in the Territory. Industry is being consulted during the strategy's development.

Preliminary advice was provided to the Minister in May 2014 advising that a Northern Territory Waste Management Strategy would be developed to determine opportunities for improved waste management across the Northern Territory.

It is anticipated that the strategy will be finalised during 2014-15.

Contaminated land management

2014-15 Future Priority

Review the Northern Territory's approach to contaminated land management.

The NT EPA regulates a number of contaminated land sites across a broad range of industries. Sites include but are not limited to land occupied by regulated waste handlers, the former petroleum storage depots located in Stuart Park, and the former Darwin Waterfront heavy industry area.

The NT EPA commenced a review of the Northern Territory's contaminated land management approach in 2013-14. The review will continue

in 2014-15 with the intention of developing an implementation plan for the management of contaminated sites. Supporting guidelines and other documents will also be developed.

The review will focus on achieving:

- less environmental impact from historical contamination, including the identification of potential impacts to sensitive receptors and to beneficial uses of land and water;
- contaminated environments more readily cleaned up with a focus on those posing the greatest risk;
- a clear understanding by stakeholders of the NT EPA's roles and responsibilities in managing contaminated environments. Additionally, a clear understanding of stakeholder's roles and responsibilities in managing contaminated land including due diligence and the potential requirement of engaging an environmental auditor; and
- a greater understanding of, and better access to, information on managing and locating contaminated environments.

It is anticipated that the review will contribute to a broader review of the WMPC Act.



Oil contaminated soil investigation

Review of the suitability of packaged on-site and community waste water treatment systems

2014-15 Future Priority

Advise the Minister about on site and community waste water treatment and reuse options in the urban and peri urban areas of the Northern Territory.

The Northern Territory's rapid urban and rural development has resulted in a demand for alternate methods of treating sewage. These include on-site and community scale waste treatment facilities that are less capital intensive than traditional reticulated sewage systems. This demand, together with concerns as to the potential for these facilities to generate serious health and environmental impacts, has led the NT EPA to initiate a report under Part 3 of the NT EPA Act. Advice to the Minister will make recommendations for sustainable waste water treatment options in the Northern Territory and potential requirements for the regulation of on-site and community treatment plants should it be appropriate. It is expected that this advice will be provided to the Minister by early 2015.

GOAL 2: MINIMISING ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

Improving the regulatory framework

DLPE is responsible for recommending and preparing amendments to legislation administered by the NT EPA (see Appendix 1). During 2013-14 the NT EPA assisted DLPE to improve the environmental regulatory framework through:

- proposing amendments to the *Environment Protection (Beverage Containers and Plastic Bags) Act* (EP(BC&PB) Act) and conducting industry consultation on the amendments;
- commencing reviews of the WMPC Act and the *Litter Act*;
- proposing amendments to the EA Act;
- assisting to repeal the *Water Efficiency Labelling and Standards Act* and replacing it with the *Water Efficiency Labelling and Standards (National Uniform Legislation) Act*.



Environment Protection (Beverage Containers and Plastic Bags) Act

2013-14 Priority

Review the EP(BC&PB) Act to increase efficiencies and expand into remote areas.

2014-15 Future Priority

Implement changes to the EP(BC&PB) Act to increase efficiencies and expand into remote areas.

The EP(BC&PB) Act establishes the Northern Territory's Container Deposit Scheme (CDS). The CDS is an industry run scheme that is regulated by the NT EPA.

In 2013-14 the NT EPA assisted DLPE to review and implement legislative changes to the EP(BC&PB) Act. This saw a substantial overhaul of the CDS to address operational inefficiencies experienced over the first two and a half years of the scheme's operation.

Targeted industry consultation was conducted on the Consultation Draft Bill in January and February 2014. A second round of industry consultation was conducted in February and March 2014. Amendments to the draft Bill were made as appropriate in response to comments received during consultation.

The administration of the scheme was formerly delegated to staff of the NT EPA by the Chief Executive of DLPE. The NT EPA took over the administration of the CDS in January 2013 and became the regulating authority on 30 June 2014.

Key operational inefficiencies addressed by the legislative amendments included:

- the NT EPA's inability to take substantial regulatory action against existing approval holders;
- too many splits and sorts of container types at the collection depot level for the CDS to be efficient;
- reliance of existing approval holders on ineffective waste management arrangements;
- collection depot operators not being open to the public and accepting containers through commercial arrangements only; and
- the apparent ineffectiveness of the CDS Principles.

The amended Act was assented on 2 June 2014 and commenced on 30 June 2014. The amended Act does not alter the objectives or original intention of the Act. It endeavours to give effect to the original intent by improving clarity and functionality of existing provisions. It is expected that the amendments will bring improved efficiency to the CDS and maximise community, business and environmental benefits. These improvements will see some of the barriers to the implementation of the CDS in remote areas reduced.

The amendments will be implemented over the six to 16 month period following the commencement of the amended Act.

Environment Protection (Beverage Containers and Plastic Bags) Regulations

Under the CDS, all beverage containers sold in the Northern Territory are required to comply with labelling standards specified in the Environment Protection (Beverage Containers and Plastic Bags) Regulations. The labelling standards were due to take effect from 31 December 2013.

The NT EPA assisted DLPE to develop amendments to the Regulations extending the date by which all refund markings had to reflect the new labelling requirements to 30 June 2014. This change was needed because of changes and uncertainties caused by the 2013 legal challenge to the CDS.



beverage containers sorted for transport at a CDS collection depot

Environmental Assessment Act

2013-14 Priority

Support Government in the development of a new EA Act.

2014-15 Future Priority

Continue to support Government in the development of a new EA Act.

The EA Act establishes the environmental impact assessment framework. The framework ensures that proposals that may have a significant impact on the environment are appropriately assessed, and that the impacts on the environment are avoided or mitigated to the extent possible during the design of proposals. It also assists regulatory authorities to identify appropriate conditions to manage the environmental impacts of proposals as they are implemented.

Following on from a substantive review of the EA Act undertaken by the former Environment Protection Authority in 2010, DLPE proposed a number of amendments to the Act in early 2013. The NT EPA provided advice and assistance to DLPE in the drafting of legislation to give effect to those proposals.

During 2013-14, the NT EPA made a number of recommendations for improvements to the EA Act as part of the *Recommendations on the Environmental Assessment and Regulation of Mine Sites* prepared as advice to the Minister under Part 3 of the NT EPA Act. The NT EPA also, through DLPE, proposed further amendments to the environmental impact assessment and approval framework. These recommendations and proposals are currently before the Northern Territory Government for consideration.



Waste Management and Pollution Control Act

2013-14 Priority

Review the WMPC Act and provide advice to the Minister under Part 3 of the NT EPA Act.

2014-15 Future Priority

Continue to review the WMPC Act and provide advice to the Minister about the Act under Part 3 of the NT EPA Act.

The WMPC Act is the primary legislation to manage waste and pollution in the Northern Territory. It is supported by topic specific legislation in the *Litter Act*, the EP(BC&PB) Act and the *Marine Pollution Act*.

The NT EPA commenced a combined review of the WMPC Act and the *Litter Act* in 2013-14. The NT EPA intends to use the findings of the review to provide advice to the Minister under Part 3 of the NT EPA Act on potential reforms to the waste and pollution management framework.

As part of the review process, the NT EPA has developed a consultation paper which it expects to release early 2014-15. The NT EPA's *Stormwater Strategy for the Darwin Harbour Region*, *Waste Management Strategy for the Northern Territory*, and reviews of the regulatory frameworks for managing contaminated land, air and noise, will all contribute to the development of recommendations to the Minister on reform of the WMPC Act.

Water Efficiency Labelling and Standards (National Uniform Legislation) Act

In 2014 the NT EPA assisted DLPE to draft legislation to repeal the *Water Efficiency Labelling and Standards Act* and replace it with the *(Water Efficiency Labelling and Standards (National Uniform Legislation) Act* (WELS Act).

The new WELS Act upholds the Northern Territory Government's commitment to ensuring a nationally consistent water efficiency labelling and standards (WELS) scheme.

The WELS scheme promotes the conservation of Australia's water resources. It aims to reduce household water consumption by providing information to consumers on water-use and water-saving products. It supports the development of new water-use technologies. The WELS scheme applies to household water products, including washing machines, dishwashers, showers, toilets, urinals and tap ware. These products must be registered under the scheme before they can be offered for sale in Australia. The scheme enables consumers to identify the water efficiency of products – much like the 5-star electricity rating scheme.

The NT EPA monitors the WELS Act on behalf of the Northern Territory Government and participates in the national WELS advisory group on behalf of the Northern Territory Government.

Marine Pollution Act

2013-14 Priority

Establish the NT EPA's responsibilities in the administration of the *Marine Pollution Act* and review the implications of enacting Part 5 and section 30 to 35 of the Act.

2014-15 Future Priority

Continue to establish the NT EPA's responsibilities in the administration of the *Marine Pollution Act* and review the implications of enacting Part 5 and section 30 to 35 of the Act.

The purpose of the *Marine Pollution Act* (MPA) is to protect the Northern Territory's marine and coastal environment from the impacts of ship sourced pollution by minimising intentional and negligent discharges of ship-sourced pollutants into coastal waters. The MPA achieves its purpose primarily through the application of the *International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships 1973* (MARPOL).

The NT EPA administers the MPA on behalf of DLPE. During 2013-14, the NT EPA identified and appointed a number of authorised officers, and implemented appropriate delegations to ensure the effective day to day management of the MPA.

The NT EPA undertook a gap analysis of existing policy, processes and procedures required to effectively administer the Act. This work may reveal additional issues that will need to be resolved before the NT EPA is able to provide a comprehensive marine pollution response regime for the Northern Territory. This review and development will continue into, and perhaps beyond, the 2014-15 financial year.

Environmental assessments

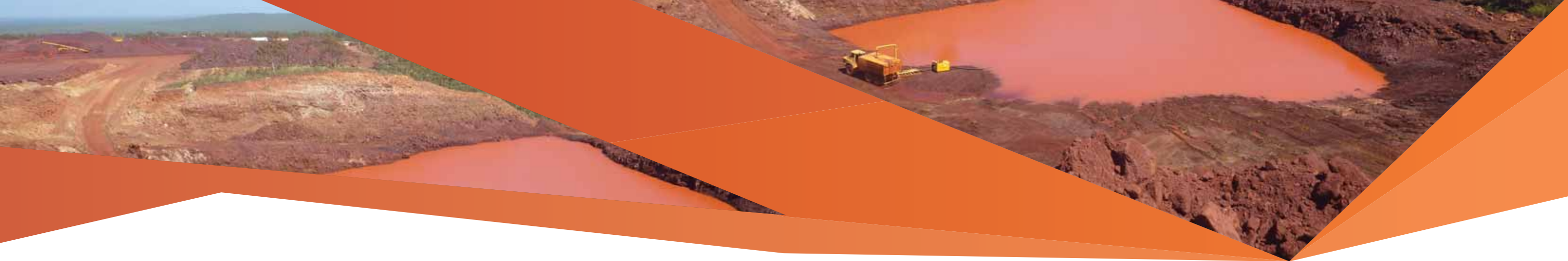
2013-14 Priority

Continue to assess the environmental impacts of major developments in the Northern Territory, including the Mt Todd Gold Project and Katherine to Gove Gas Pipeline Project.

Core Business

Undertake environmental assessments to identify the environmental impacts of major developments in the Northern Territory.

The NT EPA received 47 projects for consideration under the EA Act during 2013-14. The NT EPA decided that 11 projects required assessment at the level of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). No projects were determined to require assessment at the level of a Public Environmental Report. Seven of these projects also required assessment under the Commonwealth *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Protection Act 1999* (EPBC Act).



Water pollution investigation

The NT EPA prepares Terms of Reference, initially as a draft, to define the matters relating to the environment which the proponent is required to address in the EIS. Between 1 July 2013 and 30 June 2014, the NT EPA advertised for public comment, finalised and issued to the proponent Terms of Reference for four projects, including two projects for which the decision to require an EIS was made in 2012-13.

As at 30 June 2014, there were seven projects for which proponents were preparing the EIS based on Terms of Reference issued by the NT EPA. At the same time, the NT EPA was developing Terms of Reference for an additional nine projects.

Once an EIS is received, the NT EPA publishes assessment reports at the completion of the assessment process under the EA Act. The assessment report summarises the findings of the environmental impact assessment process and provides recommendations for matters to

be addressed in environmental management procedures and approval conditions. The NT EPA published assessment reports for four projects in 2013-14:

- Assessment Report 73 – Katherine to Gove Gas Pipeline;
- Assessment Report 74 – Twin Bonanza 1 Gold Project;
- Assessment Report 75 – Sherwin Creek Iron Ore Project; and
- Assessment Report 76 – Mount Todd Gold Project.

These assessment reports and the associated recommendations were provided to the Minister who in turn provided them to the Minister for Mines and Energy who determines whether a project will be approved. Approvals under the EPBC Act are made by the Commonwealth Department of Environment.

Licensing and approvals

Core Business

Administer approvals, licences and grants

The NT EPA issues and administers licenses and approvals under the WMPC Act, the *Water Act* (waste discharge licences only) and the EP(BC&PB) Act.

	EPA ¹	EPL ²	WDL ³	Supply Approval ⁴	Coordinator Approval ⁴	Collection Depot ⁴
Total administered	5	73	26	2313	5	26
New for 2013-14	4	16	5	389	0	3

¹ Environment Protection Approval issued under the WMPC Act

² Environment Protection Licence issued under the WMPC Act

³ Waste Discharge Licence issued under the Water Act

⁴ Issued under the EP(BC&PB) Act

Table 1: Licenses and approvals administered by the NT EPA

A substantial number of licence amendments and renewals have been made throughout the year to existing licences. For a full list of new approvals and licences issued under the WMPC Act and *Water Act* in 2013-14, see Appendix 2.

Current Environment Protection Approvals are available on the NT EPA website at: <http://www.ntepa.nt.gov.au/waste-pollution/approvals-licences/ep-approvals>. Current Environment Protection Licences are available on the NT EPA website at: <http://www.ntepa.nt.gov.au/waste-pollution/approvals-licences/ep-licences>. Current waste discharge licences are available at: <http://www.ntepa.nt.gov.au/waste-pollution/approvals-licences/wd-licences>.



Regulating remote sewage treatment plants

2014-15 Future Priority

Undertake a risk assessment of all remote sewage treatment plants (STPs) and prioritise STPs for licensing based on risk to the environment. Continue to implement licensing of remote STPs.

In 2013-14 the NT EPA commenced a program to licence discharges from numerous remote sewage treatment plants. This is being done in collaboration with the Power and Water Corporation and the Department of Community Services.

There are 56 remote STPs being assessed as to their licensing and environmental risk status. The STPs will be prioritised according to the level of risk they pose to the environment. It is expected that all of the identified high risk sites will be licensed by the end of 2014-15, to be followed by licensing of the remaining sites.

Container Deposit Scheme

Under section 92 of the EP(BC&PB) Act, at the end of each financial year the NT EPA must complete an annual report about the administration of the Act. Further detail on the CDS is contained in that annual report which also includes matters relevant to the operation of the plastic bag ban. The annual report is tabled in the Legislative Assembly within four months after the end of each financial year and is available on the NT EPA's website.

Container deposit return rate

153 906 094 approved containers were sold in the Northern Territory for the period 1 July 2013 to 30 June 2014. 64 315 721 of these were returned¹ to CDS coordinators. Figure 2 demonstrates a steady rise in return rates from 35.7% in the July – September 2013 quarter to 47.7% by the March – June 2014 quarter. An overall return rate of 41.8% was achieved for the 2013-14 financial year.

A total of 66 248 759 containers were redeemed² at collection depots during the 2013-14 reporting period. 51 235 189 containers were redeemed in the Darwin region (77%) and 15 013 570 in areas outside of Darwin (33%). This equates to over \$6.6 million in deposits that have been paid out to families, schools, communities, organisations and commercial operators.

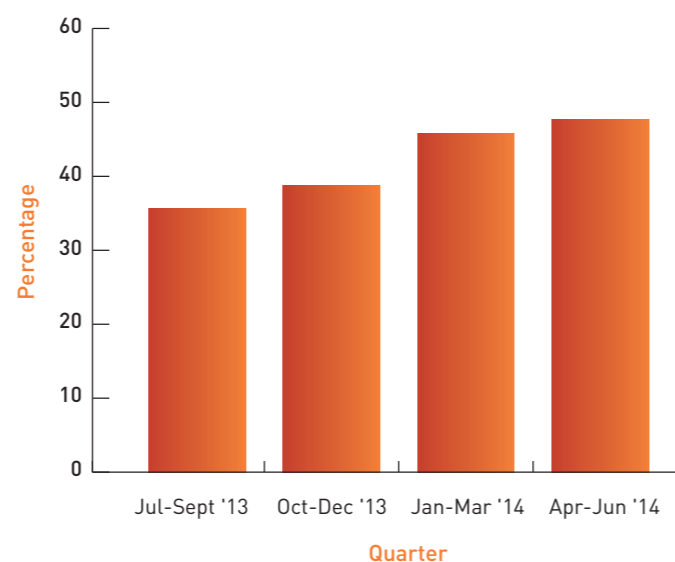


Figure 2: 2013-14 Container return rate %

² Not all containers redeemed at a collection depot are returned to a coordinator in the same reporting period in which they are redeemed.

Review of regulated containers

As required by section 50 of the EP(BC&PB) Act, a review of the containers regulated under the CDS was undertaken in 2013-14. The review found that:

- the containers currently regulated by the CDS cover up to 90% of beverage container litter observed in the NT litter stream by the Keep Australia Beautiful Litter Index survey;
- an appreciable drop in NT beverage container litter appeared following introduction of the CDS but due to limited data it is too early to say whether this change was due to the CDS;
- while it is not currently contemplated that additional types of containers will be included in the CDS, the following types might be appropriate:
 - glass wine and spirit bottles;
 - juice and flavoured milk containers greater than one litre; and
 - wine bladders; and
- the suitability of these container types for recycling would need to be carefully evaluated prior to inclusion.

Any addition of new containers would require discussions and agreement with the Government of South Australia in order to maintain consistency between the Northern Territory and South Australian schemes in accordance with the Intergovernmental Agreement between the two jurisdictions.

Noise

2014-15 Future Priority

Review the Northern Territory's approach to the management of noise.

Noise management regulatory review

Noise is regulated by a number of different entities, each responsible for the regulation of a specific type of noise (e.g. antisocial behaviour is regulated by the police; noise from pubs and clubs is regulated by the NT Licensing Commission; general noise amenity is regulated by the NT EPA). There is some confusion in the community about who regulates what types of noise.

The NT EPA initiated a project in 2013-14 to review the regulation of noise in the Northern Territory and propose recommendations for improvement. The review outcomes will identify the major issues and potential solutions for the regulation of noise in the Northern Territory.

Air

2014-15 Future Priority

Develop and implement a new approach to the management of emissions to air.

Air regulatory review

The NT EPA also initiated a review of the management of air emissions from industry which included nuisance dust in 2013-14. As a result of the review, there will be development of guidelines



and other documents concerning: point source standards, air dispersion modelling requirements, national clean air agreement requirements, technical guidance for staff and industry, technical fact sheets, air regulatory training for staff including odour, dust and diffuse source emissions. For example, management of nuisance dust will be improved by the development of comprehensive dust guidelines focussed on issues at construction sites.

Ambient air quality monitoring

To achieve compliance with the *Ambient Air Quality National Environment Protection Measure* (Air NEPM), the NT EPA manages two ambient air quality monitoring stations in the Darwin region. The first station is located at the Bureau of Meteorology site in Winnellie and has operated since 2012. The second station is located near Palmerston and has operated since 2013.

Both stations collect ambient air quality data for ozone, nitrogen dioxide, carbon monoxide, sulfur dioxide and particulates. Data are used to comply with reporting requirements under the Air NEPM and to monitor the impacts of industrial development on the Darwin airshed. Prior to the establishment of these stations, particulate data only was collected by Charles Darwin University at the Casuarina campus.

The Air NEPM requires reporting on the concentration of pollutants in the air at particle sizes of PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5}. It is a goal under the Air NEPM that particles as PM₁₀ will not exceed a concentration of 50µg/m³ on more than five days in any year, and that particles as PM_{2.5} will not exceed a concentration of 25µg/m³ in any 24 hour period. In the Darwin region PM₁₀ exceeded the 50µg/m³ standard twice in 2013-14, while PM_{2.5} exceeded a concentration of 25µg/m³ six times (Figure 3).



Particulate levels in 2013-14 were below average for the Darwin region.

Generally, air quality in the Darwin region was excellent during the Wet Season and fair during the Dry Season. This is consistent with the generally good ambient air quality in the Northern Territory. Particulates are the only airborne pollutants recorded at levels above the Air NEPM standards in the Northern Territory. These particles are primarily generated by bushfires with a smaller proportion generated by diesel engines and industry.

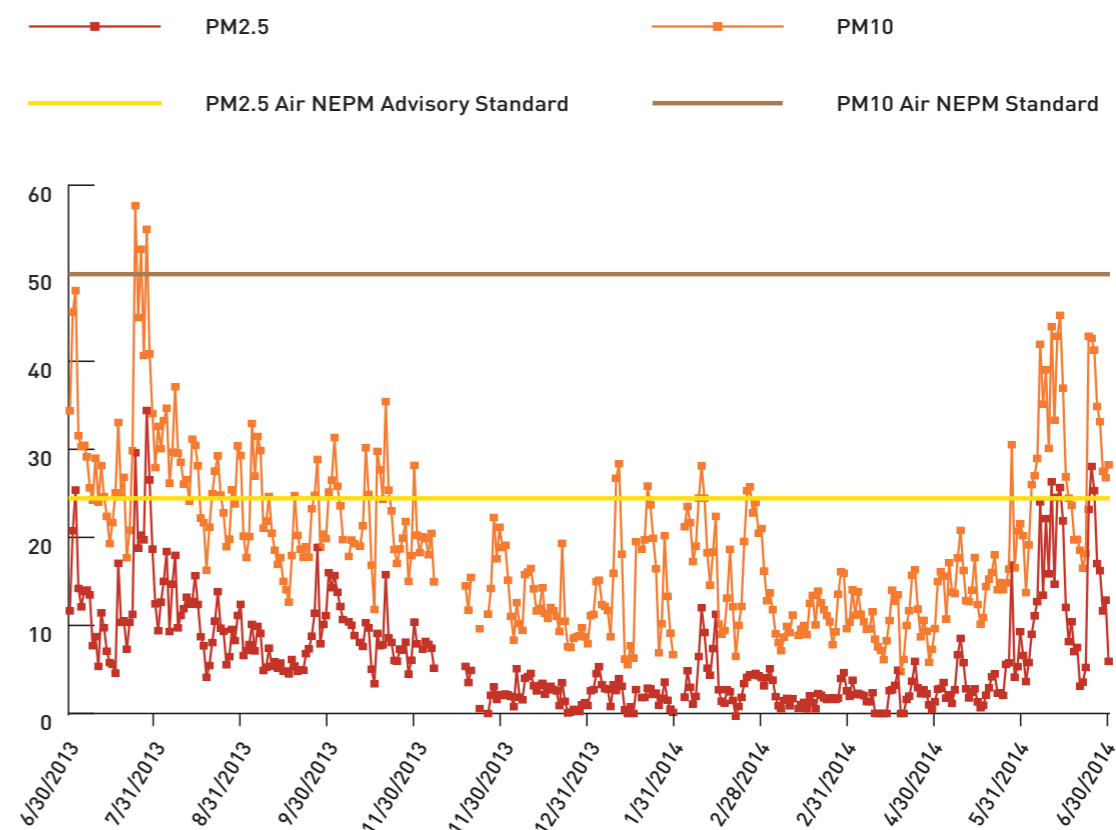


Figure 3: Darwin particulates 2013-14

Public access to live and historical air quality data is available from the NT EPA website at: <http://ntepa.webhop.net/NTEPA/Default.ltr.aspx>.

The Northern Territory's annual compliance reports under the Air NEPM are available from the NT EPA website at: www.ntepa.nt.gov.au/waste-pollution/air.

National Pollutant Inventory (NPI)

The Northern Territory is a signatory to the *National Environment Protection (National Pollutant Inventory) Measure* (NPI NEPM). The goals of the NPI are to:

- collect a broad base of information on emissions and transfers of substances on the reporting list; and
- disseminate the information collected to all sectors of the community in a useful, accessible and understandable form.



The Northern Territory has 110 facilities reporting to the NPI. Together these facilities emit or handle the majority of polluting substances in the Territory. NPI reports provide the community, industry and government with information about substance emissions including emission estimates for 93 toxic substances and the source and location of these emissions. Facilities reporting to the NPI include mines, sewage treatment plants, gas processing plants, galvanising plants and power stations.

Data collected by the NPI are available on the NPI website at: www.npi.gov.au.

Plastic bag ban

The EP(BC&PB) Act provides the legal framework for the regulation of the supply of single-use, lightweight, non-biodegradable plastic bags by retailers.

As required by section 59 of the EP(BC&PB) Act a review of the first two years of the plastic bag ban was undertaken in 2013-14. The report found that:

- overall shoppers were found to be supportive of the ban, stating that it was good for the environment, not that inconvenient and helped to reduce litter;
- a high-level analysis conducted on overall plastic bag use suggested that a reduction of approximately 10.3 million plastic bags has occurred as a result of the ban;
- the Keep Australia Beautiful Litter Index Survey indicated a decrease in the overall shopping bags in the litter stream; and
- before an expansion of the plastic bag ban is considered, further education of shoppers should be undertaken to encourage greater reuse of shopping bags.

This report did not provide an indication of whether there has been a reduction in the amount of plastic bag disposal to landfill.

Further information on the plastic bag ban is contained in the annual report developed under section 92 of the EP(BC&PB) Act and available from the NT EPA's website.

Compliance and enforcement actions

Core Business

Undertake compliance and enforcement activities

The NT EPA Compliance and Enforcement Policy expresses the NT EPA's commitment to undertaking its regulatory role and the principles it follows when conducting compliance or enforcement activities. The Policy is available from the NT EPA website at: <http://www.ntepa.nt.gov.au/about-nt-epa/publications/policy-and-procedures>.

2014-15 Future Priority

Develop guidelines to support implementation of the Compliance and Enforcement Policy.

In 2013-14 there was a marked increase in the number of compliance actions taken compared to the previous year. This resulted from an increased emphasis on some long standing, unresolved issues and problem premises. It was also due to a more strategic approach to compliance and enforcement and an improvement in the training of authorised officers. It is expected that the level of activity will again increase in 2014-15 as a result of a number of measures being implemented. These include development of a compliance plan and improved communication with other regulators.

Action taken	2013-14
Pollution abatement notices	4
Authorised officer (section 72) directions	8
Warnings	8
Requirement for a section 48 environmental audit program	1
Investigations into offences of the WMPC Act	35
Show cause letters	7
Penalty infringement notices	9
TOTAL	72

Table 2: Compliance actions undertaken in 2013-14

Type	2013-14
Unlicensed facility	1
Failure to comply with licence condition	5
Waste	1
Failure to comply with Authorised Officer direction	1
Environmental nuisance	1
TOTAL	9

Table 3: Penalty infringement notices issued by type

During 2014-15, the NT EPA will finalise guidelines to complement its Compliance and Enforcement Policy. The guidelines will aid in ensuring a targeted, transparent and equitable approach to compliance and enforcement in the NT EPA's pursuit of protecting the environment.

Section 14 Incident Reports

2014-15 Future Priority

Encourage improved reporting under section 14 of the WMPC Act through industry education and information.

Section 14 of the WMPC Act requires that where an incident occurs in the conduct of an activity and the incident causes, or is threatening or may threaten to cause, pollution resulting in material or serious environmental harm, the person conducting the activity must notify the NT EPA within 24 hours. The NT EPA refers to a report of this nature as a Section 14 Incident Report.

In 2013-14 six Section 14 Incident Reports were received from:

- McArthur River Mining Pty Ltd for a trailer rollover carrying copper-zinc concentrate;
- John Holland Pty Ltd for a leachate leak at the Shoal Bay landfill;
- WDR Iron Ore Pty Ltd for an uncontrolled discharge from mining pits;
- WDR Iron Ore Pty Ltd for an uncontrolled discharge from a mining pit, run of mill (ROM) pad and other areas;
- WDR Iron Ore Pty Ltd for a heavy vehicle driving off a bridge and into the Cox River;
- Power and Water Corporation for a discharge of untreated effluent at the Darwin Botanical Gardens during a period of significant rainfall.



Pollution Hotline

The NT EPA runs a 24 hour Pollution Hotline for the Northern Territory community to report environmental pollution problems and concerns and receive notifications from industry. In 2013-14 the NT EPA oversaw an increased demand for this service compared to the 2012-13 financial year. It expects this trend to continue as existence of the hotline is promoted more widely through the community. The community plays a critical role in identifying environmental offences and is encouraged to use this service. It allows the NT EPA to investigate issues, resolve community concerns and, as appropriate, take action against offenders.

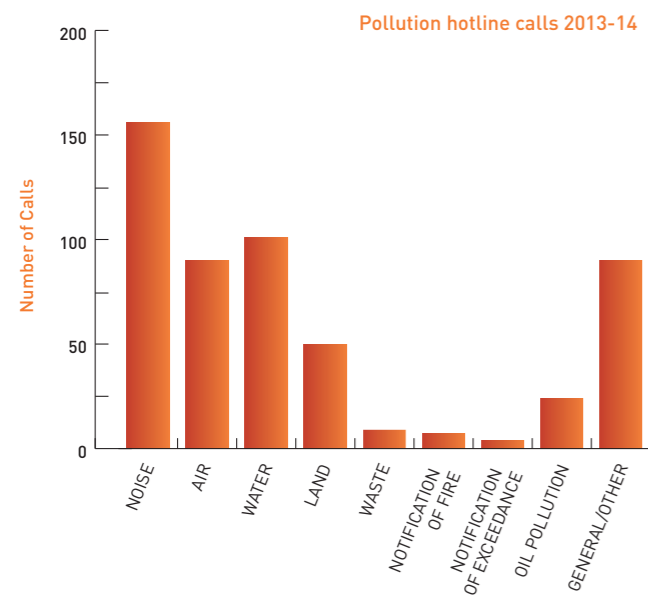


Figure 4: 2013-14 Pollution Hotline notifications by type

Developing a compliance plan

2014-15 Future Priority

Develop and implement a two year Compliance Plan.

During 2014-15, the NT EPA will develop a two year Compliance Plan. The Plan will describe and plan how the compliance work of the NT EPA will be conducted and the issues to be targeted and delivered over the period 2014-16.

The Plan will be developed using a risk based approach to identify key sites, issues and industry areas that will be targeted. These will include higher risk licenced and unlicensed sites, identified problem premises and legacy issues.

The Compliance Plan will provide for a significant increase in pro-active and co-ordinated field inspections as well as increased annual compliance inspections. This approach should deliver a combination of maintenance and strategic compliance goals. It will drive wider improvement through increased awareness of legislative requirements and increase NT EPA knowledge to further develop the risk based approach and shape future plans.

It is anticipated that the Compliance Plan will include consultation campaigns with specific industry sectors, using a multi-pronged approach including media awareness and education. Once completed, the plan will be available on the NT EPA's website.

GOAL 3: ENGAGING AND INFORMING GOVERNMENT, COMMUNITY AND BUSINESS

The NT EPA encourages community involvement and engagement. Community engagement is essential when making decisions that affect the community. Ongoing community involvement and transparency of decision making processes are core principles of the NT EPA.

Core Business

Provide advice

Engaging with clients and partners

The NT EPA members visited a number of sites during 2013-14. The visits provided first hand understanding of the environmental management issues faced by industry in the Northern Territory. Visits included:

- Power and Water Corporation sewage treatment facilities in the Darwin region;
- petroleum drilling sites at the Mereenie oil and gas fields south of Alice Springs;
- Ranger Uranium Mine; and
- the Crocodile Gold mine site at Pine Creek.

In November 2013, the NT EPA members delivered the "NT EPA – Who We Are" forum in Alice Springs. The forum sought to provide an overview of the role, purpose and functions of the NT EPA.

During 2013-14, the Chair of the NT EPA gave presentations about the NT EPA and its priority projects to various industry representatives, including the Northern Territory Branch of the Minerals Council of Australia, the Mining Club Panel and the Urban Development Institute of Australia.



NT EPA Members at Crocodile Gold mine site at Pine Creek

As a member of the Northern Territory Planning Commission, the Chair attended the 2013 Katherine Land Use Forum where environmental and planning matters were discussed.

NT EPA members participated in an informative information sharing session with officers from the Department of Mines and Energy in May 2014. The NT EPA anticipates holding similar meetings with other agencies during 2014-15.

Development of a communications strategy

The NT EPA engaged a communications consultant to identify simple, effective and resource-efficient communication methods to raise the NT EPA's profile among key stakeholders and the community, foster two way communication and to build understanding of the NT EPA's role. The strategy will be finalised early in 2014-15. It will aim to 'demystify' the work of the NT EPA, to provide consistent and clear messaging around its work and to position the NT EPA as an effective, independent and influential authority on environmental management.



Guidelines

During 2013-14 the NT EPA developed a number of guidelines designed to improve clarity and certainty for business and the community.

2013-14 Priority

Development of further guidelines on environmental assessment and regulation under the WMPC Act and *Water Act* to provide greater clarity and transparency to industry and the community, and more effective processes within the NT EPA.

2014-15 Future Priority

Develop guidelines on environmental assessment and regulation under the WMPC Act, EP(BC&PB) Act and MPA to provide greater clarity and transparency to industry and the community, and more effective processes within the NT EPA.

Environmental assessment

The NT EPA finalised a number of Environmental Assessment Guidelines designed to provide greater clarity and transparency of the environmental assessment process, and to improve efficiencies for proponents and the NT EPA.

Guidelines completed in 2013-14 include:

- Guidelines for the Preparation of an Economic and Social Impact Assessment;
- Guidelines for the Environmental Assessment of Marine Dredging in the Northern Territory;
- Guidelines for Environmental Offsets and Associated Approval Conditions;
- Guidelines for Assessment of Impacts on Terrestrial Biodiversity;
- Environmental Assessment Guidelines on Acid and Metalliferous Drainage (AMD);
- Environmental Assessment Guidelines – Development proposals submitted under the *Planning Act*;
- Environmental Assessment Guidelines – Land clearing proposals submitted under the *Pastoral Land Act*;
- Environmental Assessment Guidelines – Mining exploration or production proposals submitted under the *Mining Management Act*; and
- Environmental Assessment Guidelines – Petroleum exploration or production proposals submitted under the *Petroleum Act*.

Priority Guidelines for development in 2014-15 include:

- Guidelines on Information Requirements for a Notice of Intent;

- Environmental Assessment Guidelines for Seabed Mining;
- Environmental Assessment Guidelines for Linear Developments; and
- Environmental Management Plan Guidelines.

Guidelines to support the administration of the WMPC Act

The draft Guideline on Listed Waste Handling Activities was released for Northern Territory Government agency comment in May 2014 for a period of three weeks.

The Guideline's aim is to:

- inform industry and the community on the process applied by the NT EPA when making decisions regarding the regulation of listed waste handling activities; and
- promote a consistent, risk-based approach to the regulation of listed waste handling activities.

The Guideline is being revised following agency comments and is expected to be released for public consultation during 2014-15.

The WMPC Act enables the NT EPA to require a financial assurance as part of an Environment Protection Approval or Environment Protection Licence condition in certain circumstances. Guidelines will be developed in 2014-15 that establish when and how financial assurances will be required by the NT EPA.

Other priority guidelines for development during 2014-15 include:

- Environmental Monitoring reports for clients; and
- Compliance and enforcement guidelines.



Inadequate sediment and erosion control

Guidelines on Waste Discharge Licensing under the *Water Act*

Waste discharge licences authorise waste to be discharged to water. The NT EPA is responsible for assessing Waste Discharge Licence applications for approval by the Controller of Water Resources (position currently held by the Chief Executive Officer of the Department of Land Resource Management) or his delegate and for monitoring compliance with waste discharge licence conditions.

The draft Guidelines on Waste Discharge Licensing under the *Water Act* was released for public comment in January 2014 for a period of six weeks.

The draft guidelines have been developed in consultation with the Controller of Water Resources to provide information to industry and the community regarding what waste discharge licences are, the legislative requirements, how to apply for waste discharge licence and the principles that the NT EPA will apply when assessing waste discharge licence applications. The draft guidelines were accompanied by a series of application forms that are proposed for use when seeking a new waste discharge licence or a renewal of a waste discharge licence.

These documents have now been released on the NT EPA website and can be viewed at:

<http://www.ntepa.nt.gov.au/waste-pollution/approvals-licences/how-to-apply>.



Environmental impact from mine site

Container Deposit Scheme guidelines

Following the legislative reform process to the EP(BC&PB) Act the NT EPA finalised a number of CDS Guidelines providing clarity as to new regulatory requirements for approval holders.

Guidelines completed in 2013-14 include:

- CDS Coordinator Guidelines; and
- CDS Collection Depot Guidelines.

Priority guidelines for development in 2014-15 include:

- Supply Approval Guidelines.

Grants

Container Deposit Scheme infrastructure grants

The Container Deposit Scheme (CDS) Infrastructure Grants program has provided funds to community groups and businesses since 2011. It provides assistance in establishing infrastructure to become a collection depot or a collection point within the CDS. The program primarily targets regional and remote areas to further establish the scheme across the Territory. \$266 136 in funding was provided in 2013-14.

Environment grants

The Environment Grants program has provided funding to schools and community groups since 2004, supporting a range of small to medium sized environmental projects. Funding provided through this program addressed four specific environmental themes of Water, Waste, Energy and Ecosystems. \$636 420 in grant funding was provided to 41 projects, comprising 13 school projects and 28 community projects. More details on the program and past grant recipients can be found at <http://www.ntepa.nt.gov.au/grants/grants>.

GOAL 4: BUILDING ORGANISATIONAL CAPABILITY AND CAPACITY

NT EPA governance

The NT EPA members formally met five times in 2013-14, considered 84 out-of-session papers and attended four site visits.

The NT EPA developed a Strategic Plan 2013-2016 to guide its activities in the coming years. The Strategic Plan identifies the NT EPA's vision and high level goals, priorities and commitments to enable the NT EPA to better fulfil the objectives outlined in the NT EPA Act. The Strategic Plan clarifies the NT EPA's role and purpose, recognising its relationship with industry and the community; adopts the values and principles identified by the members of the NT EPA and its staff; and emphasises the importance of transparent processes and independent decision making.

The Strategic Plan is available from the NT EPA's website at: www.ntepa.nt.gov.au.

NT EPA Online

2013-14 Priority

Implementation of an NT EPA customer relationship management system to ensure integrated assessment and regulation of environmental matters.

2014-15 Future Priority

Continue to develop and implement *NT EPA Online*, an NT EPA customer relationship management system to ensure integrated assessment and regulation of environmental matters.

The first stage in development of an online system for clients to apply for new environment protection licences has commenced. It is expected to be well progressed during the next financial year. This will allow applicants to manage their licence requirements using an online system, increasing efficiencies for environmental officers within the NT EPA.

Capability framework

2014-15 Future Priority

Develop and implement the competency based training program.

The NT EPA initiated development of a competency based training program for its staff. When finalised, the program will identify the training needs of all staff in all areas whether it be governance, technical or regulatory. This development has been identified as a high priority need so that the staff of the NT EPA can perform their functions to the highest level possible.



Financial snapshot

The NT EPA is financially supported by the DLPE. DLPE has provided the following information regarding the financial resourcing of the NT EPA.

The NT EPA had an annual budget of \$10.0 million dollars in the 2013-14 financial year largely funded through NT Government appropriation. The total expenses incurred by the NT EPA of \$9.1 million was within 1% of the budget target. The Budget was increased in 2013-14 by additional government funding to subsidise the Container Deposit Scheme until federal regulation could be enacted to validate the NT scheme.

The NT EPA recorded a net surplus of \$1 million for the financial year due to position vacancies.

	2013-14 Published Budget \$000	2013-14 Final Estimate \$000	% change	2013-14 Actuals \$000	% change to Final Estimate
Northern Territory Environment Protection Authority	7 449	10 032	34.68%	9 119	-9.10%

Table 4: 2013-14 Budget Movement and Annual Expense table

Revenue:

The NT EPA receives one small grant from the Federal Government of \$36 000 to fund the National Pollutant Inventory program. All other funding of \$9.67 million is provided by the NT Government as appropriated to DLPE.

Expenses:

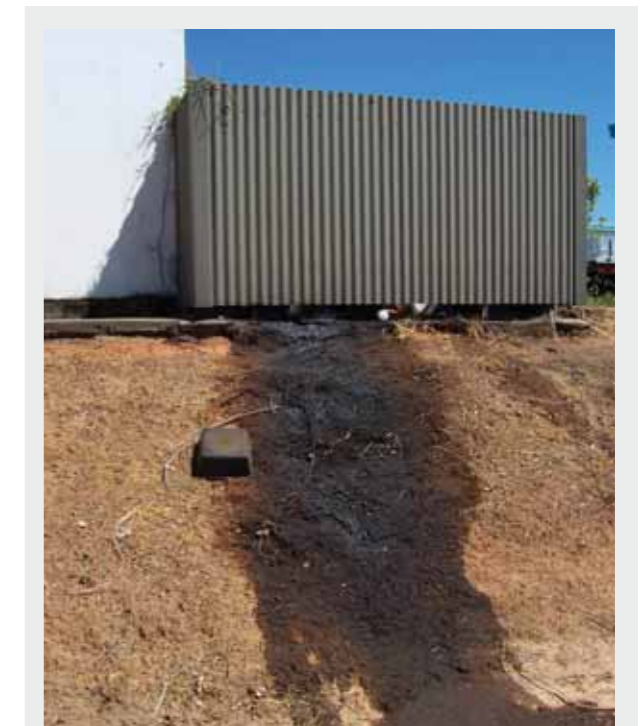
The NT EPA incurred expenses of \$9.1 million in 2013-14, the major expense item was employee expenses of \$4.0 million to remunerate 38 full time equivalent staff. The NT EPA also reported \$3.7 million of administrative expenses, with the major expense being \$2.3 million to support the Container Deposit Scheme. Grant expense of \$1.4 million has been recorded to fund a range of community environment programs such as:

- Cool Community grants;
- Environment grants;
- Container Deposit Scheme Infrastructure grants; and
- Keep Australia Beautiful.

An annual operating statement has been prepared from DLPE accounts to reflect the financial activity of the Authority in table 4.

INCOME	
Grants and Subsidies Revenue	5
Current	106
Appropriation	
Output	9,629
Goods and Services Received Free of Charge	444
Other Income	9
TOTAL INCOME	10,188
EXPENSES	
Employee Expenses	3,976
<i>Administrative Expenses</i>	
Purchases of Goods and Services	3,226
Depreciation and Amortisation	46
Other Administrative Expenses	444
<i>Grants and Subsidies Expenses</i>	
Current	1,427
TOTAL EXPENSES	9,119
NET SURPLUS/ (DEFICIT)	1,069

Table 5: NT EPA Operating Statement 2013-14



Illegal oil discharge



Oil contaminated soil investigation



PART 3: APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: LEGISLATION ADMINISTERED

The NT EPA has regulatory responsibilities under the following legislation and statutory instruments:

- *Environmental Assessment Act*
- Environmental Assessment Administrative Procedures
- Environment Protection (National Pollutant Inventory) Objective
- *Environment Protection (Beverage Containers and Plastic Bags) Act*
- Environment Protection (Beverage Containers and Plastic Bags) Regulations
- *Northern Territory Environment Protection Authority Act*
- *Waste Management and Pollution Control Act*
- Waste Management and Pollution Control (Administration) Regulations

The NT EPA administers the following legislation on behalf of DLPE.

- *Environmental Offences and Penalties Act*
- *Litter Act*
- *Marine Pollution Act*
- Marine Pollution Regulations
- *National Environment Protection Council (Northern Territory) Act*
- *Nuclear Waste, Transport, Storage and Disposal (Prohibition) Act*
- *Water Efficiency Labelling and Standards (National Uniform Legislation) Act*

The NT EPA administers the following legislation on behalf of the Department of Land Resource Management:

- *Water Act* (waste discharge licensing provisions only)

APPENDIX 2: LICENCES AND APPROVALS ISSUED

Four new Environment Protection Approvals were issued by the NT EPA during 2013-14:

- Environment Protection Approval EPA14 Northern Territory Department of Infrastructure;
- Environment Protection Approval EPA11 Veolia Environmental Services Australia Pty Ltd;

- Environment Protection Approval EPA9 Ichthys LNG Pty Ltd; and
- Environment Protection Approval EPA12 Ichthys LNG Pty Ltd.

Sixteen new Environment Protection Licences comprising 14 licences to handle listed waste and two landfill licences were issued by the NT EPA during 2013-14:

- Environment Protection Licence EPL103 Telecom Tim Pty Ltd;
- Environment Protection Licence EPL104 Veolia Environmental Services (Australia) Pty Ltd;
- Environment Protection Licence EPL105 J.J Richards & Sons Pty Ltd;
- Environment Protection Licence EPL106 Northline Pty Ltd;
- Environment Protection Licence EPL107 Genesee Wyoming Australia Pty Ltd;
- Environment Protection Licence EPL108 B.I.G Carpentry Pty Ltd;
- Environment Protection Licence EPL109 Barkly Shire Council;
- Environment Protection Licence EPL110 Central Desert Shire Council;
- Environment Protection Licence EPL111 DJ Palmer Excavations Pty Ltd;
- Environment Protection Licence EPL112 Asbestos Solutions NT Pty Ltd;
- Environment Protection Licence EPL113 Stormboy Stormwater Pty Ltd;
- Environment Protection Licence EPL115 Matchewson Pty Ltd;
- Environment Protection Licence EPL116 ISG Management Pty Ltd;
- Environment Protection Licence EPL117 Stockwater Pty Ltd;
- Environment Protection Licence EPL118 Service Stream Communications; and
- Environment Protection Licence EPL119 Civmec Construction & Engineering Pty Ltd.

Five new waste discharge licences were issued by the NT EPA during 2013-14:

- Waste Discharge Licence WDL 192 JKC Australia
- Waste Discharge Licence WDL 193 Ichthys LNG Pty Ltd
- Waste Discharge Licence WDL 195 ConocoPhillips Pipeline Australia Pty Ltd
- Waste Discharge Licence WDL 196 Darwin Port Corporation
- Waste Discharge Licence WDL 197 Saipem (Portugal) Comercio Maritimo, Sociedade Unipessoal, LDA.

