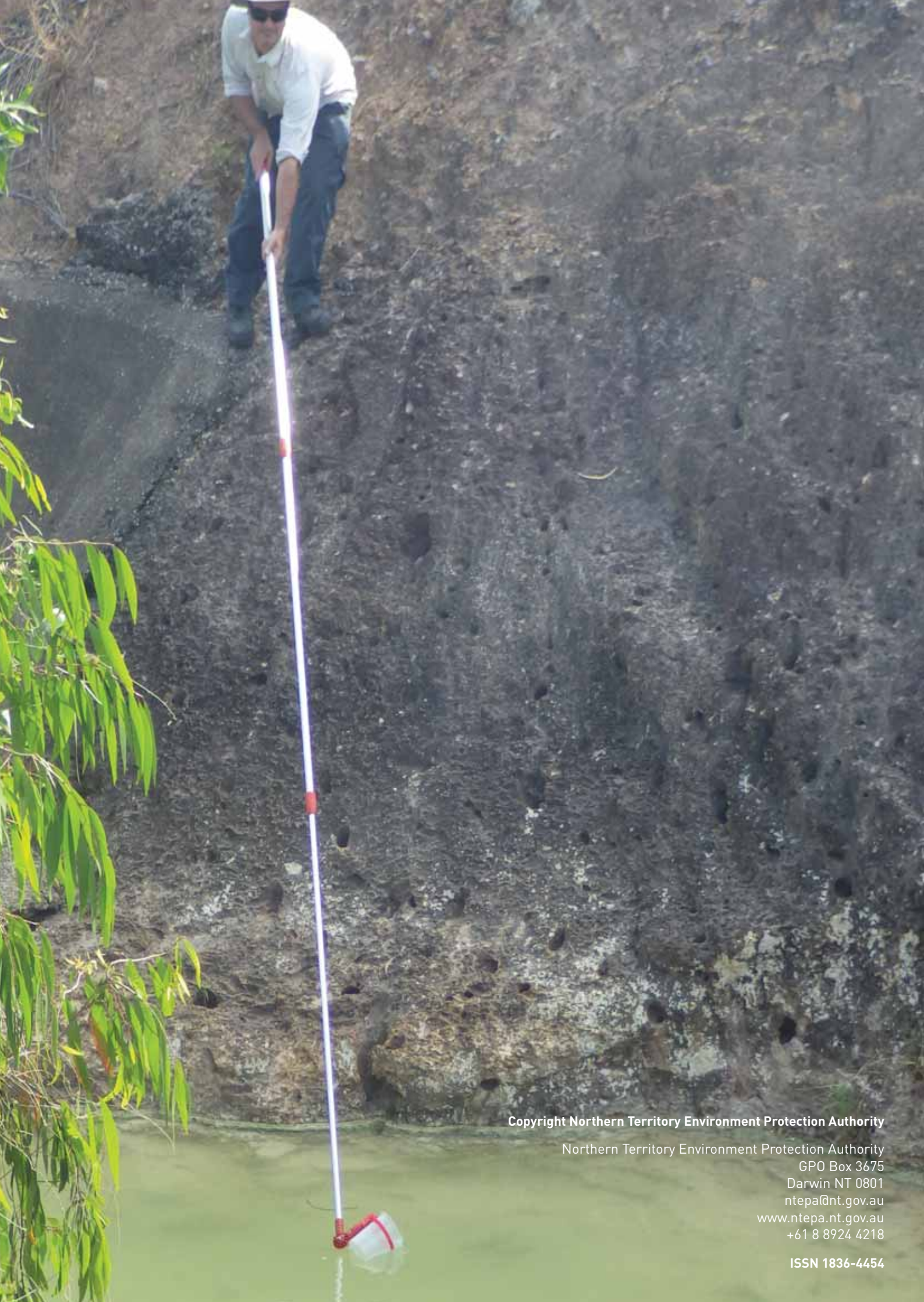


2014/2015

NORTHERN TERRITORY ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION AUTHORITY



ANNUAL REPORT  
ntepa



Copyright Northern Territory Environment Protection Authority

Northern Territory Environment Protection Authority

GPO Box 3675

Darwin NT 0801

[ntepa@nt.gov.au](mailto:ntepa@nt.gov.au)

[www.ntepa.nt.gov.au](http://www.ntepa.nt.gov.au)

+61 8 8924 4218

ISSN 1836-4454



## LETTER FROM THE CHAIR NT EPA TO THE MINISTER

**The Hon Gary Higgins  
Minister for 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 2015, 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 2014-15 financial year.

Dr William (Bill) Freeland  
Chairperson  
Northern Territory Environment Protection Authority  
30 September 2015



## CHAIR'S MESSAGE

The 2014-15 year saw the Northern Territory Environment Protection Authority's (NT EPA) highest ever involvement in regulatory issues protecting the natural endowment and environmental values for the which the Territory is renowned, and the mainstay of the Territory's prosperity.

The number of environmental approvals administered by the NT EPA has increased. Since 2013 Environment Protection Licences are up by 55%, Waste Discharge Licences by 22%, and Environment Protection Licences (associated with construction of new waste management facilities) have remained steady. The number of development projects submitted for impact assessment is increasing.

The return of beverage containers is up from 38% of all drink containers sold in the December quarter of 2012, to 54% of all drink containers sold in the Territory in the June quarter of 2015.

These changes inevitably involved an increase in demand for regulatory services by the NT EPA.

Demand for regulatory services, and community and industry interest in improvement in the quality of regulation has stimulated review of the existing environmental legislation. In 2014-15 the NT EPA provided a public paper of issues potentially important to review of the *Waste Management and Pollution Control Act* (WMPC Act). All comments of the paper are being assessed and the review will continue in 2015-16. Advice on amendment to the *Environmental Assessment Act* was provided to the Minister for the Environment in 2013-14. This was followed by the NT EPA providing a submission to an independent review of the Northern Territory's environmental assessment and approval framework

by Dr Allan Hawke. The NT EPA continues to provide input to these Northern Territory Government environmental reforms.

Implementation of the 2013-14 amendments to the *Environment Protection (Beverage Containers and Plastic Bag) Act* began in 2013-14 and will be completed in 2015-16. This will provide industry with simplified procedures that are efficient and likely to be cost saving.

The NT EPA is endeavouring to reduce the process time and effort inherent in meeting regulatory requirements. The first step was development of NT EPA online; a web based application for proponents to apply for approvals, receive approvals, and report on approval conditions. Step one, Environment Protection Licences under the WMPC Act, was launched in 2014-15. These were chosen as a first step so as to accommodate the greatest number of proponents, and provide a simple progression of steps extending the system to Environmental Approvals and Waste Discharge Licences. These are planned to be on-line before the end of 2015-16.

These, and other achievements documented in this report, could not have occurred without the dedicated efforts of the staff the Department of Lands, Planning and Environment has provided to service the needs of the NT EPA. The staff is thanked for its exceptional service, and the NT EPA looks forward to working with them to meet the challenges of the coming year.



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

- 1 Letter from the Chair NT EPA to the Minister
- 2 Chairs Message

### 5 1 Overview

- 5 1.1 What is the NT EPA?
- 6 1.2 Membership
  - 6 1.2.1 Chair of the NT EPA, Dr William Freeland
  - 7 1.2.2 Ms Janice van Reyk
  - 7 1.2.3 Dr Ian Geoffrey Wallis
  - 8 1.2.4 Dr John Chapman
  - 8 1.2.5 Professor David John Williams
  - 9 1.2.6 Chair of the NT Planning Commission, Hon Gary Nairn AO
- 9 1.3 Relationship with DLPE
- 10 1.4 NT EPA organisation chart
- 11 1.5 NT EPA strategic plan

### 11 2 Goal 1: Address priority environmental issues

- 11 2.1 Waste Management Strategy
- 12 2.2 Stormwater Strategy for the Darwin Harbour Region
  - 12 2.2.1 Erosion and sediment control on construction and development sites
  - 12 2.2.2 Environment risk assessment of potentially contaminating activities
- 13 2.3 Review of packaged on-site and community waste water treatment systems
- 13 2.4 Seabed mining report
- 14 2.5 Contaminated land management
- 15 2.6 Howard sand plains biodiversity

### 16 3 Goal 2: Minimise environmental impacts

- 16 3.1 Improving the regulatory framework
  - 16 3.1.1 *Environment Protection (Beverage Containers and Plastic Bags) Act* amendments
  - 17 3.1.2 WMPC Act and *Litter Act* review
  - 17 3.1.3 *Environmental Assessment Act* amendments
  - 18 3.1.4 *Marine Pollution Act*
- 18 3.2 Environmental assessment
  - 18 3.2.1 Assessments
- 20 3.3 Licences and approvals
  - 21 3.3.1 Regulating remote sewage treatment plants
- 22 3.4 Container deposit scheme
- 22 3.5 Managing noise
- 23 3.6 Addressing air quality
  - 23 3.6.1 Review of air emissions
  - 24 3.6.2 Ambient air quality monitoring
  - 26 3.6.3 National Pollutant Inventory (NPI)
- 27 3.7 Compliance and enforcement actions
  - 27 3.7.1 Compliance and enforcement planning
  - 28 3.7.2 Compliance and enforcement statistics
  - 30 3.7.3 Illegal disposal of waste
  - 30 3.7.4 Compliance and enforcement guidelines
- 30 3.8 Pollution response
  - 30 3.8.1 Section 14 Incident Reports
  - 32 3.8.2 Pollution hotline

## 33 4 Goal 3: Engage and inform government, community and business

- 33 4.1 Engaging with clients and partners
- 34 4.2 Improving communications
- 34 4.3 Grants
- 34 4.3.1 Container deposit scheme infrastructure grants
- 35 4.3.2 Environment grants
- 35 4.4 Developing advisory material
- 36 4.4.1 General guidelines
- 36 4.4.2 Environmental assessment guidelines
- 36 4.4.3 WMPC Act guidelines

## 36 5 Goal 4: Build organisational capability and capacity

- 36 5.1 NT EPA governance
- 36 5.2 NT EPA Online
- 37 5.3 Capability framework
- 37 5.4 Financial snapshot
- 38 5.4.1 Revenue
- 38 5.4.2 Expenses

## 40 Appendices

- 40 Appendix 1: Legislation administered
- 40 Appendix 2: Licences and approvals issued

## Table of Tables

- 26 Table 1: Exceedences of Air NEPM Standards
- 29 Table 2: Penalty infringement notices by reporting period
- 35 Table 3: Guidance material
- 38 Table 4: 2014-15 Budget movement and annual expense table
- 39 Table 5: NT EPA operating statement 2014-15
- 40 Table 6: New Collection Approvals issued under the EP(BC&PB) Act in 2014-15
- 40 Table 7: New Environment Protection Approvals issued under the WMPC Act in 2014-15
- 41 Table 8: New Environment Protection Licences issued under the WMPC Act in 2014-15
- 41 Table 9: New Waste Discharge Licences issued under the *Water Act* in 2014-15

## Table of Figures

- 10 Figure 1: NT EPA organisation chart
- 19 Figure 2: Projects assessed under the *Environmental Assessment Act*
- 20 Figure 3: Approvals and licences administered by the NT EPA
- 20 Figure 4: New approvals and licences issued by the NT EPA during 2014-15
- 22 Figure 5: 2014-15 Container return rate %
- 24 Figure 6: Palmerston air monitoring results
- 25 Figure 7: Winnellie air monitoring results
- 29 Figure 8: Compliance actions by action taken reporting periods to 2014-15
- 31 Figure 9: Section 14 Incidents reported
- 32 Figure 10: Pollution Hotline notifications
- 33 Figure 11: 2014-2015 Pollution Hotline notifications by type

## 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.

# 1 OVERVIEW

## 1.1 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:

- advise and report to the Minister for the Environment (the Minister) under Part 3 of the NT EPA Act
- protect the environment, having regard to the need to enable ecologically sustainable development
- promote effective waste management and waste minimisation strategies
- 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 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
- perform any other functions conferred on it by the NT EPA Act or any other Act.



## 1.2 Membership

The NT EPA consists of a Chairperson, four members appointed by the Administrator of the Northern Territory, and the Chair of the Northern Territory 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.



### 1.2.1 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 (PWCNT) and Director of Conservation Strategy with the Queensland Government.

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

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

Dr Freeland has represented the Northern 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 has been Chair of the NT EPA since its inception on 1 January 2013.



### 1.2.2 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 including Port of Melbourne, Melbourne Water and Citywide. She also serves on the audit, risk and finance of Sustainability Victoria and was recently appointed to a three person Ministerial Advisory Committee to inquire into the future strategic role of the Environment Protection Authority Victoria.

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.



### 1.2.3 Dr Ian Geoffrey Wallis

Dr Ian Wallis brings 30 years' experience as an environmental engineer providing advice to water and sewerage authorities and industries to the NT EPA. 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.



#### 1.2.4 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.



#### 1.2.5 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.

Professor Williams resigned from the NT EPA in September 2014.



### 1.2.6 Chair of the NT Planning Commission, Hon Gary Nairn AO

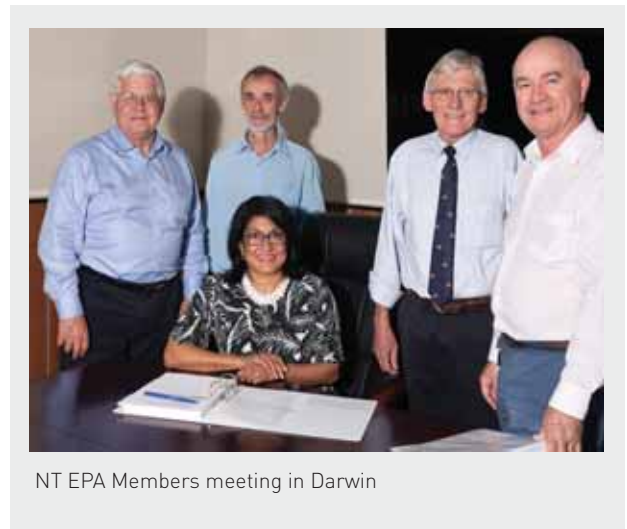
The Hon Gary Nairn AO is the Chairman of the Northern Territory Planning Commission.

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, Mr Nairn served as the Federal Member for Eden-Monaro from 1996 to 2007.

During his parliamentary career Mr Nairn was 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 from 1980 to 1995 and was involved in the planning, design and survey of many major developments including Palmerston, Cullen Bay, Bayview and Katherine East.

Mr Nairn remains involved in the spatial industry, is chair of the Tasmanian Spatial Information Council (TASSIC) and is the immediate past chairman of the



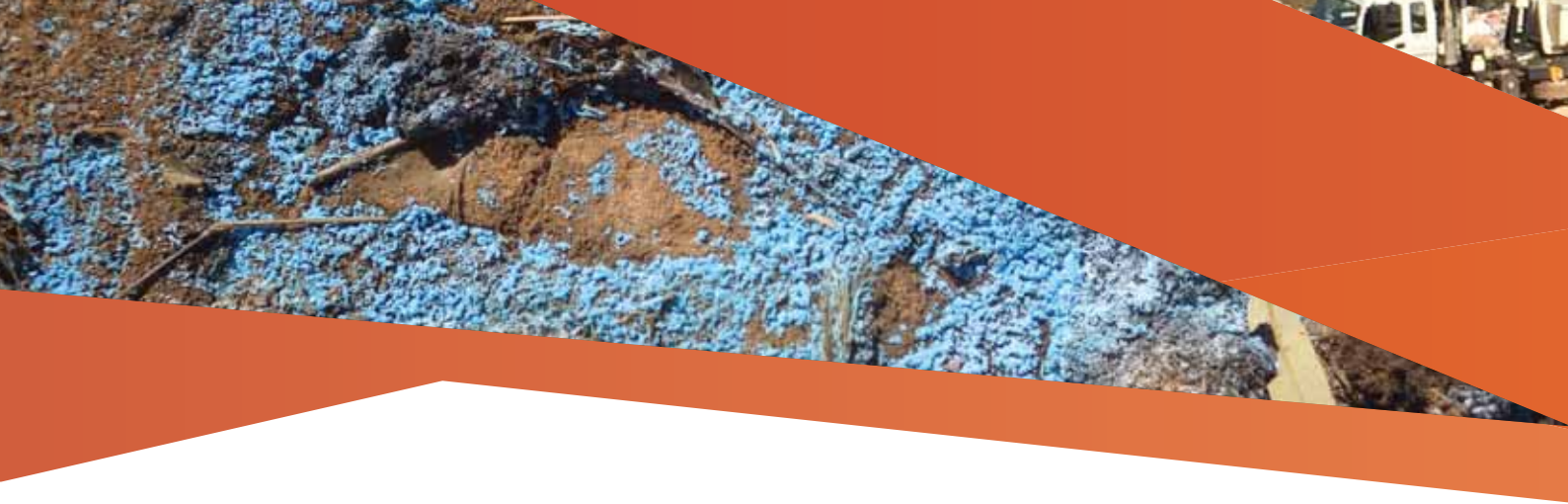
Spatial Industries Business Association (SIBA). Mr Nairn was made an Officer of the Order of Australia (AO) in the June 2015 Queens Birthday Honours.

### 1.3 Relationship with DLPE

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.

As at 30 June 2015 there were 38 full time equivalent staff working with the NT EPA in accordance with this requirement. The majority of staff were located in the Darwin region. Two staff members were based in Alice Springs and two staff were based interstate.

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



### 1.4 NT EPA organisation chart

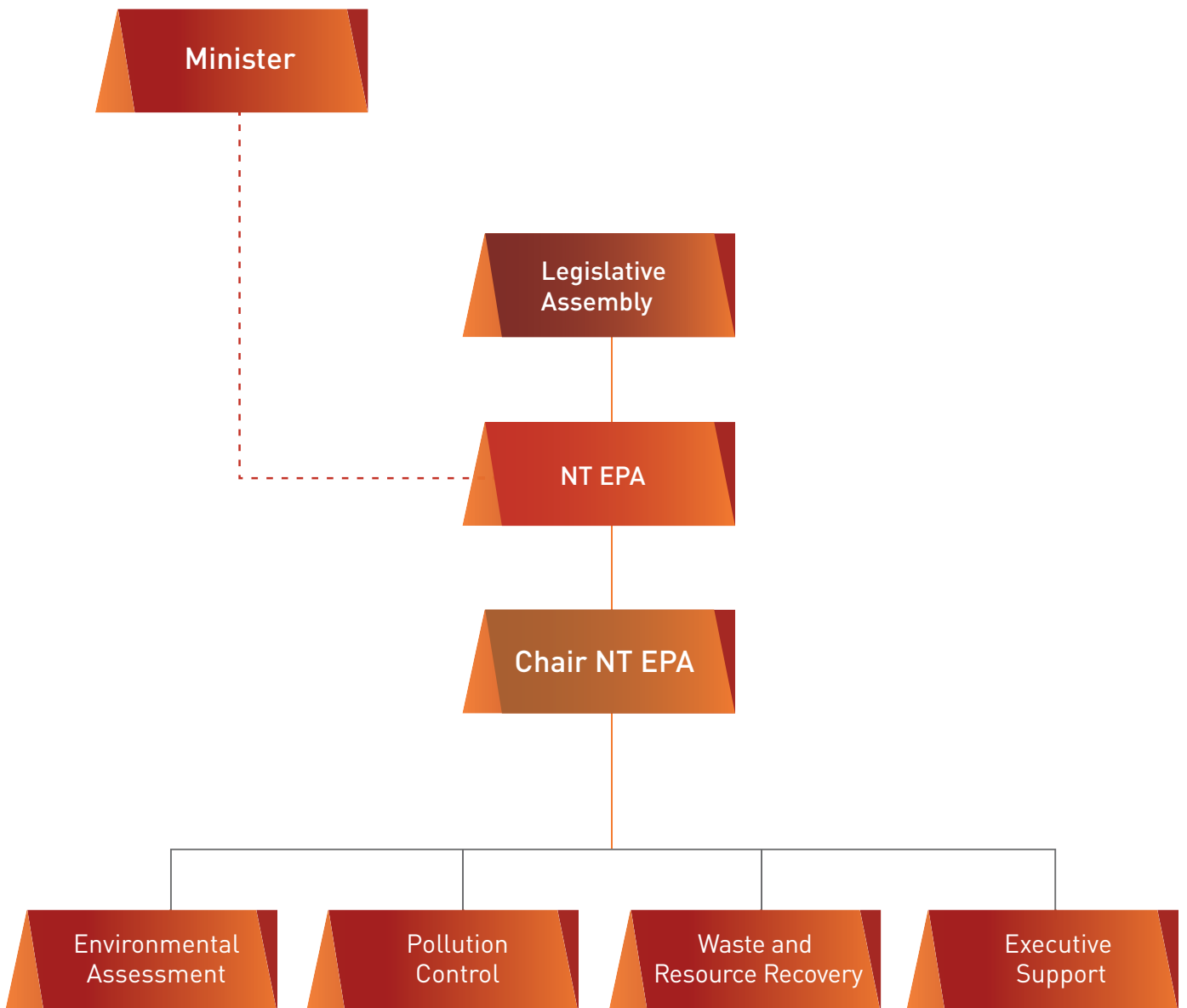


Figure 1: NT EPA organisation chart



## 1.5 NT EPA strategic plan

The NT EPA Strategic Plan 2013-16 outlines the NT EPA's key goals:

1. **Address priority environmental issues** to ensure legacies are identified and effectively managed.
2. **Minimise environmental impacts** to improve compliance and enforcement of environmental legislation and ensure impacts have been identified and mitigated to an acceptable level.
3. **Engage and inform government, community and business** to ensure environmental information is more accessible and easier to understand, and to support public awareness and community involvement in the NT EPA's processes.
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 that the NT EPA is a financially accountable and safe work environment.

Information on the NT EPA's achievements in relation to these goals is detailed in this report.

## 2 GOAL 1: ADDRESS PRIORITY ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

### 2.1 Waste Management Strategy

2014-15 Priority	Status
Finalise the drafting of a <i>Northern Territory Waste Strategy</i>	Ongoing

In July 2013 the Minister requested advice on opportunities for improving waste management practices in the Northern Territory from the NT EPA under Part 3 of the NT EPA Act.

The NT EPA subsequently established the Northern Territory Waste Management Advisory Committee (the 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, which has now fulfilled its role, comprised representatives from the NT EPA, the Local Government Association of the Northern Territory, various Northern Territory Government agencies, local government and regional councils.

Industry members were consulted throughout the Strategy's development. The final Strategy will be submitted as advice to the Minister in the first quarter of the 2015-16 financial year.



## 2.2 Stormwater Strategy for the Darwin Harbour Region

### 2014-15 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.

### Status Priority

Complete

The *Stormwater Strategy for the Darwin Harbour Region* was finalised in August 2014. The Strategy provides a basis for improving management of the quality of stormwater entering Darwin Harbour.

Since finalising the Strategy, the NT EPA has been working with local government councils, Northern Territory Government agencies and industry to develop a draft implementation plan. The draft implementation plan will be available for public consultation early in the next financial year.

The NT EPA's Compliance Activity Plan supports the improvement of stormwater quality by targeting erosion and sediment control on construction and development sites and conducting environmental risk assessments of potentially polluting activities including concrete batching facilities and vehicle wash facilities.

### 2.2.1 Erosion and sediment control on construction and development sites

Erosion and sediment control practices on construction and building sites are important in protecting the quality of stormwater.

During the 2014-15 Wet season the NT EPA undertook activities to increase awareness and improve erosion and sediment control practices on building sites. These activities included: engaging with industry representatives; a mail out campaign to all Territory registered builders; and site inspections of activities in major housing construction areas.

The campaign resulted in improved erosion and sediment control practices and a better understanding by industry of their responsibilities under the WMPC Act and *Water Act*.

The NT EPA will continue with its campaign to improve environmental practices on building sites through various means, including the release of relevant guidelines and factsheets.

### 2.2.2 Environment risk assessment of potentially contaminating activities

The NT EPA has identified a number of potentially contaminating activities that impact directly on the stormwater quality of Darwin Harbour and the water quality more widely.

The NT EPA has initiated compliance audits of premises with vehicle wash facilities and premises with



concrete mixing facilities. These compliance audits will assess activities against industry guidelines and selected jurisdictional guidelines.

The results from the compliance audits will inform the development of an environmental risk assessment tool that will assist the NT EPA in prioritising future compliance and enforcement activities.

### **2.3 Review of packaged on-site and community waste water treatment systems**

#### **2014-15 Priority**

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

#### **Status**

Ongoing

The Northern Territory's rapid rural and peri urban 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 about the use of these facilities to the Minister under Part 3 of the NT EPA Act.

During 2014-15 the NT EPA commissioned an independent investigation of current and proposed wastewater treatment systems for developments in the Northern Territory's rural and peri urban environments. The investigation also reviewed the regulatory framework for wastewater management in the Northern Territory.

The NT EPA is preparing its advice to the Minister in consultation with an interdepartmental working group established to oversee the independent investigation. Advice to the Minister will make recommendations for sustainable wastewater treatment options in the Northern Territory.

### **2.4 Seabed mining report**

#### **2015-16 Priority**

Advise the Minister on the impacts of seabed mining on the environment and other resource industries and methods for managing the impacts of seabed mining.



Seabed mining focusses on exploiting mineral deposits on and under the seabed floor. Seabed mining activities are diverse, ranging from sand mining for beach replenishment, sand mining of mineral sands, dredging for diamonds, to mining of sulphide deposits containing copper, gold, silver and zinc. Seabed mining can occur in shallow coastal waters or in deep seas.

In response to community concerns about potential seabed mining activities in Northern Territory waters, a three year moratorium on seabed mining was introduced on 6 March 2012.

In May 2012 the then Minister for Natural Resources, Environment and Heritage requested the former Environment Protection Authority (former EPA) and the Aboriginal Areas Protection Authority (AAPA) undertake reviews to inform government consideration of the possible future development and sustainability of the seabed mining industry. In November 2012 the former EPA delivered its *Interim Report: Seabed Mining in the Northern Territory* (available on the NT EPA website: [www.ntepa.nt.gov.au](http://www.ntepa.nt.gov.au)).

In 2015 the moratorium was extended for a further three years until 5 March 2018 to allow the NT EPA and the AAPA to complete their reviews.

The NT EPA anticipates completing its report during 2015-16. Once complete the report will be available on the NT EPA website [www.ntepa.nt.gov.au](http://www.ntepa.nt.gov.au) and tabled by the Minister for the Environment in the Legislative Assembly.

## 2.5 Contaminated land management

2014-15 Priority	Status
Review the Northern Territory's approach to contaminated land management.	Ongoing

The NT EPA manages contaminated land under the WMPC Act and in accordance with the *National Environmental Protection (Assessment of Site Contamination) Measure* to ensure that land used for potentially contaminating activities does not pose a risk to the environment and human health. Some land use activities within the Northern Territory that pose a risk to the environment and human health include bulk fuel storage facilities, waste handlers and landfills, defence land and sites with historical asbestos burial.

The review of the Northern Territory's approach to contaminated land continues. This year the NT EPA has:

- developed a fact sheet outlining the framework for contaminated sites assessment and remediation involving applications under the *Planning Act*
- approved the development of a *Contaminated Sites Environment Protection Guideline*.



## 2.6 Howard sand plains biodiversity

### 2015-16 Priority

Prepare an environmental quality report and advice for the Minister under Part 3 of the NT EPA Act on the biodiversity of, and threats to, the Howard sand plains.

In 2014-15 the NT EPA prepared a *Draft Environmental Quality Report: Biodiversity of the Howard Sand Plains Site of Conservation Significance*. The Howard sand plains is a site of conservation significance because of its globally significant, species-rich communities of bladderworts (carnivorous plants), and nationally and Territory listed threatened species.

The draft Report reviews existing knowledge of the sand plains' biodiversity and the threats to it and proposes possible long term solutions to ensure its preservation. The draft Report was released for public comment in April 2015, with comments closing in May 2015.

The Report will provide the basis for advice to the Minister for the Environment in accordance with section 25 of the NT EPA Act. Once complete the report will be available on the NT EPA website [www.ntepa.nt.gov.au](http://www.ntepa.nt.gov.au) and tabled by the Minister for the Environment in the Legislative Assembly.



Howard sand plains



Concrete washing into waterway

### 3 GOAL 2: MINIMISE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

#### 3.1 Improving the regulatory framework

DLPE is responsible for preparing amendments to legislation administered by the NT EPA in accordance with Government's directions (see Appendix 1: Legislation administered). The NT EPA may provide advice to the Minister about, and recommendations for, improvements to its legislation.

The NT EPA's contributions to improvements of the environmental regulatory framework in 2014-15 included:

- continuing a review of the WMPC Act and *Litter Act* which will form the basis of advice to the Minister
- providing a submission to an independent review of the Northern Territory's environmental assessment and approval processes conducted by Dr Allan Hawke.

##### 3.1.1 *Environment Protection (Beverage Containers and Plastic Bags) Act* amendments

2014-15 Priority	Status
Implement changes to the EP(BC&PB) Act to increase efficiencies and expand into remote areas.	Ongoing

The *Environment Protection (Beverage Containers and Plastic Bags) Act* (EP(BC&PB) Act) establishes the Northern Territory's container deposit scheme. The container deposit scheme 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 container deposit scheme. This saw a substantial overhaul of the container deposit scheme to address operational inefficiencies experienced over the first two and a half years of the scheme's operation.

In 2014-15 the NT EPA progressed implementation of legislative amendments to the EP(BC&PB) Act. It is expected that this will be completed in the 2015-16 financial year.



### 3.1.2 WMPC Act and *Litter Act* review

#### 2014-15 Priority

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

#### Status

Ongoing

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 *Marine Pollution Act* and the EP(BC&PB) Act.

During 2014-15 the NT EPA developed and released an Issues Paper as the first step in its review of the WMPC Act and the *Litter Act*. The Issues Paper sought comment on a limited number of topics relevant to the management of waste and pollution in the Northern Territory.

The NT EPA received 18 submissions which are being used in conjunction with other submissions received by the Northern Territory Government and the NT EPA to develop a comprehensive Discussion Paper. The Discussion Paper is expected to be released for public comment during 2015-16.



Discharged waste oil on water

### 3.1.3 *Environmental Assessment Act* amendments

#### 2014-15 Priority

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

#### Status

Ongoing

The *Environmental Assessment Act* (EA Act) establishes the Northern Territory's environmental impact assessment framework. The framework ensures that proposals that may have a significant impact on the environment are appropriately assessed, and that impacts on the environment are avoided or mitigated to the extent possible during



the design of development proposals. It assists regulatory authorities to identify appropriate conditions to manage the environmental impacts of proposals as they are implemented.

During 2014-15 the NT EPA continued to work with DLPE and the Northern Territory Government to develop and refine proposals to improve the Northern Territory's environmental assessment and approval framework.

### 3.1.4 *Marine Pollution Act*

2014-15 Priority	Status
Continue to establish the NT EPA's responsibilities in the administration of the <i>Marine Pollution Act</i> and review the implications of enacting Part 5 and section 30 to 35 of the Act.	Ongoing

The *Marine Pollution Act* (MPA) protects 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 includes emergency response provisions, which has been the focus for MPA activities during 2014-15.

The NT EPA has been facilitating the development of improved oil spill response and preparedness tools in its role as Oil Spill Response Atlas Coordinator and Environmental Science Coordinator under the Northern Territory Oil Spill Response Plan. The NT EPA coordinated part one of a two part NT coastline vulnerability and sensitivity workshop in June. Part two will be completed early in the next reporting period. The workshop will produce a vulnerability and sensitivity map of the coastline that identifies cells of coastline as being at high, moderate or low vulnerability to oil spills. A written report will support the map providing valuable information in the event of an oil spill. The NT EPA is also participating in the review of the National Plan Oil Spill Resources Atlas Policy.

The NT EPA is responding to marine incidents and potential pollution and this will continue to be the focus as the NT EPA develops its response protocols in coordination with government agencies.

## 3.2 Environmental assessment

### 3.2.1 Assessments

#### Core Business

Undertake environmental assessments



The NT EPA received 48 projects for consideration under the EA Act during 2014-15 (Figure 2). The NT EPA decided that seven projects required assessment at the level of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). Five of these projects also required assessment under the Commonwealth *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Protection Act 1999* (EPBC Act). No projects were determined to require assessment at the level of a Public Environmental Report.

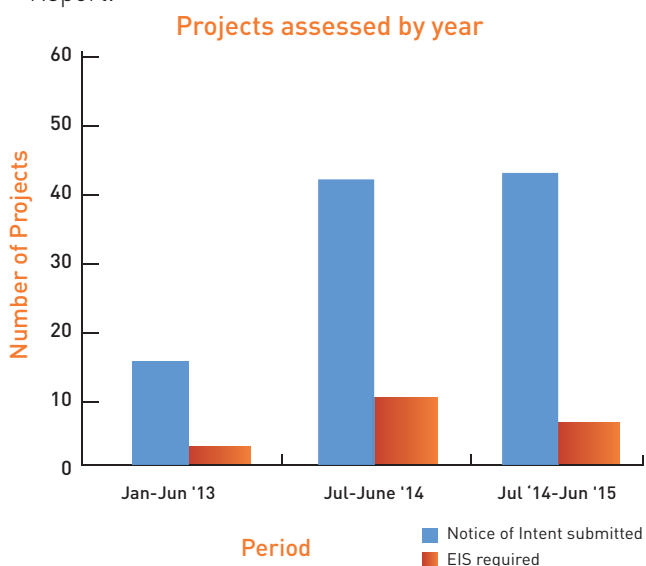


Figure 2: Projects assessed under the *Environmental Assessment Act*.

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. During 2014-15 the NT EPA advertised for public comment, finalised and issued to the proponent Terms of Reference for 10 projects, including seven projects for which the decision to require an EIS was made in 2013-14.

As at 30 June 2015, there were 14 projects for which proponents were preparing an 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 three projects and reviewing two EISs.

Once assessment of the EIS and any supplementary information is complete, the NT EPA publishes an Assessment Report which summarises the findings of the environmental impact assessment process and provides recommendations for matters to be addressed in environmental management procedures and approval conditions. No assessment reports were published by the NT EPA in 2014-15.

#### Environmental assessment bilateral agreement

On 11 December 2014 the Northern Territory and Australian governments entered into a Bilateral Agreement for environmental assessments under section 45 of the Commonwealth *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Protection Act 1999* (EPBC Act).

The bilateral agreement allows the Commonwealth Minister for the Environment to rely on environmental assessment processes conducted by the NT EPA under the *Environmental Assessment Act* when assessing proposed actions and making decisions under the EPBC Act.

The NT EPA welcomes the streamlining this new agreement brings to environmental assessment processes for projects in the Northern Territory.

The Bilateral Agreement is available from the Commonwealth Department of the Environment website: [www.environment.gov.au](http://www.environment.gov.au).



### 3.3 Licences and approvals

#### Core Business

Administer approvals, licences and grants

The NT EPA issues and administers licences and approvals under the WMPC Act, the *Water Act* (waste discharge licences only) and the EP(BC&PB) Act (Figure 3).

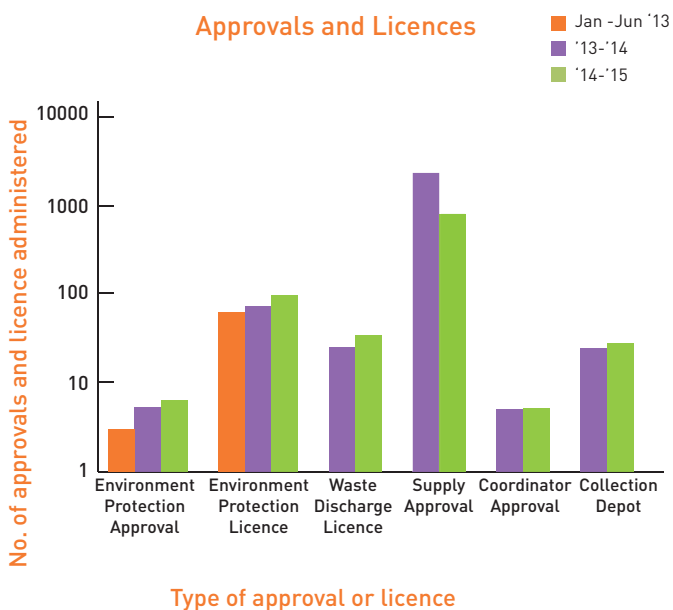


Figure 3: Approvals and licences administered by the NT EPA

Note for Figure 3: Supply approvals data for 2012-13 approvals is not reliable and has not been included

#### New Approvals and Licences 2014-15

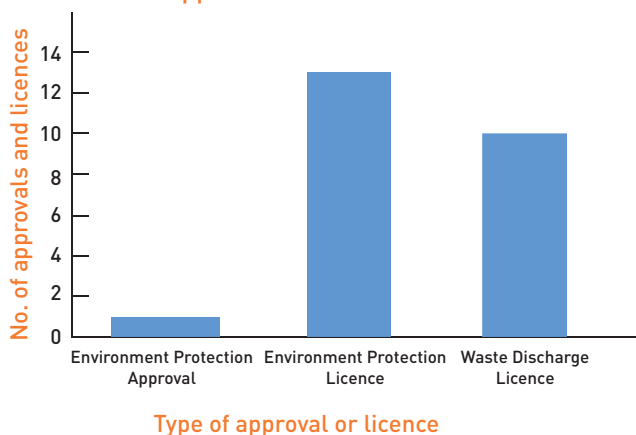


Figure 4: New approvals and licences issued by the NT EPA during 2014-15

One Environment Protection Approval, 13 Environment Protection Licences and 10 Waste Discharge Licences were issued by the NT EPA during the 2014-15 financial year (Figure 4). A substantial number of licence amendments and renewals have also 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 2014-15 see Appendix 2: Licences and approvals issued.

Current environment protection approvals and licences and waste discharge licences are available on the NT EPA website: [www.ntepa.nt.gov.au](http://www.ntepa.nt.gov.au).



### 3.3.1 Regulating remote sewage treatment plants

#### 2014-15 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.

#### Status

Ongoing

The NT EPA has supported Indigenous Essential Services Pty Ltd (acting on behalf of the Power and Water Corporation) to complete a risk assessment of all remote sewage treatment plants (STPs), and prioritise STPs for licensing based on risk to the environment. This risk assessment characterised the wastewater treatment and disposal systems for 56 sewage facilities across 72 remote communities.

Eight waste discharge licences were issued for remote sewage treatment facilities that discharge directly to water during 2014-15. Based on the risk assessment, the NT EPA anticipates that up to 29 remote sewage treatment facilities will require a waste discharge licence.



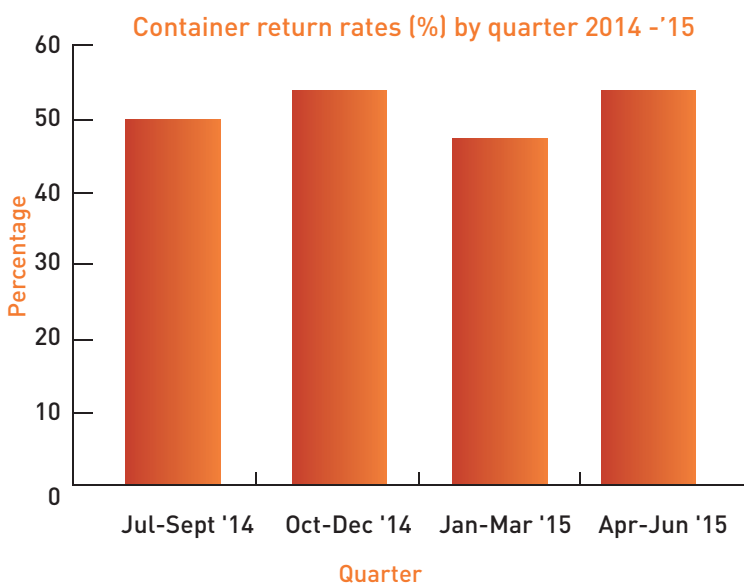
Tennant Creek Sewage Treatment Plant



### 3.4 Container deposit scheme

During the 2014-15 financial year 160 048 569 approved containers were sold in the Northern Territory. Of these containers sold, 82 466 155 were returned<sup>1</sup> to container deposit scheme coordinators. An overall return rate of 51.53% was achieved for the 2014-15 financial year.

Figure 5 demonstrates an increased trend in return rates from 50.03% in the July to September 2014 quarter to 54.24% in the April to June 2015 quarter. The reduced return rate in the January to March 2015 quarter was likely due to a number of factors including temporary closure of two regional collection depots for business improvements and wet season access issues; and a transition of services to a major beverage supplier to the Northern Territory between CDS coordinators, which likely resulted in the delayed return of containers during that quarter. Return rates continued an upward trend in the April to June 2015 quarter.



A total of 83 095 621 containers were redeemed<sup>2</sup> at collection depots during the 2014-15 reporting period. 61,374,536 containers were redeemed in the Darwin Region (73.86%) and 21 721 085 in areas outside of Darwin (26.14%). This equates to over \$8.3 million in deposits that have paid out to families, schools, communities, organisations and commercial operators in the Northern Territory.

The NT EPA prepares an annual report on the administration of the EP(BC&PB) Act each year. These reports are available from the NT EPA website: [www.ntepa.nt.gov.au](http://www.ntepa.nt.gov.au).

Figure 5: 2014-15 Container return rate %

### 3.5 Managing noise

2014-15 Priority	Status
Review the Northern Territory's approach to the management of noise.	Ongoing

<sup>1</sup>Containers returned by a collection depot to a coordinator and available for reuse and recycling.

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



The ongoing review of the Northern Territory’s approach to the management of noise has identified two main issues with the current regulatory regime:

1. The roles and responsibilities of agencies regulating noise in the Northern Territory are not clearly defined. This has created confusion in the community as to which agency or authority can help resolve noise issues.
2. Unlike in other jurisdictions, there are no quantitative limits placed on various noise emission characteristics (e.g. amplitude, frequency, modulation, timing). This has led to confusion within the community and industry about which types of noise emissions are acceptable in different situations, including different times of day.

The review has recommended a two pronged approach for addressing the above issues. In the short-term, the NT EPA will develop a guideline on noise emissions in the Northern Territory to:

- provide clarity around what agency regulates which type of noise
- specify recommended limits for noise emissions for different land use zones and specific noisy activities.

In the longer term, the NT EPA will investigate regulatory options to specify noise limits should these be required.

### 3.6 Addressing air quality

#### 3.6.1 Review of air emissions

##### 2014-15 Priority

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

##### Status

Ongoing



Air emissions

The NT EPA is developing a management regime to manage emissions into the air environment. Work has commenced on the development of a guideline to inform and instruct industry and the public on the range of air related issues relevant to the Northern Territory.

This guideline will included coverage of issues such as the management of industrial point source pollution, diffuse source air pollutants, odour, air dispersion modelling, air monitoring and standards to be applied in the Northern Territory.

#### 3.6.2 Ambient air quality monitoring

The NT EPA manages two ambient air quality monitoring stations in the Darwin region as part of its commitments under the *Ambient Air Quality National Environmental Protection Measure* (Air NEPM). The first station is located



at the Bureau of Meteorology site in Winnellie and has operated since 2013. The second station is located near Palmerston and has operated since 2012. Figures 6 and 7 show PM<sub>10</sub> and PM<sub>2.5</sub> data from June 2014 to June 2015 for both stations. The significant impact of prescribed burning and wild fires on Top End air quality is evident in the elevated levels of particulate matter at both stations during the months of the Dry season.

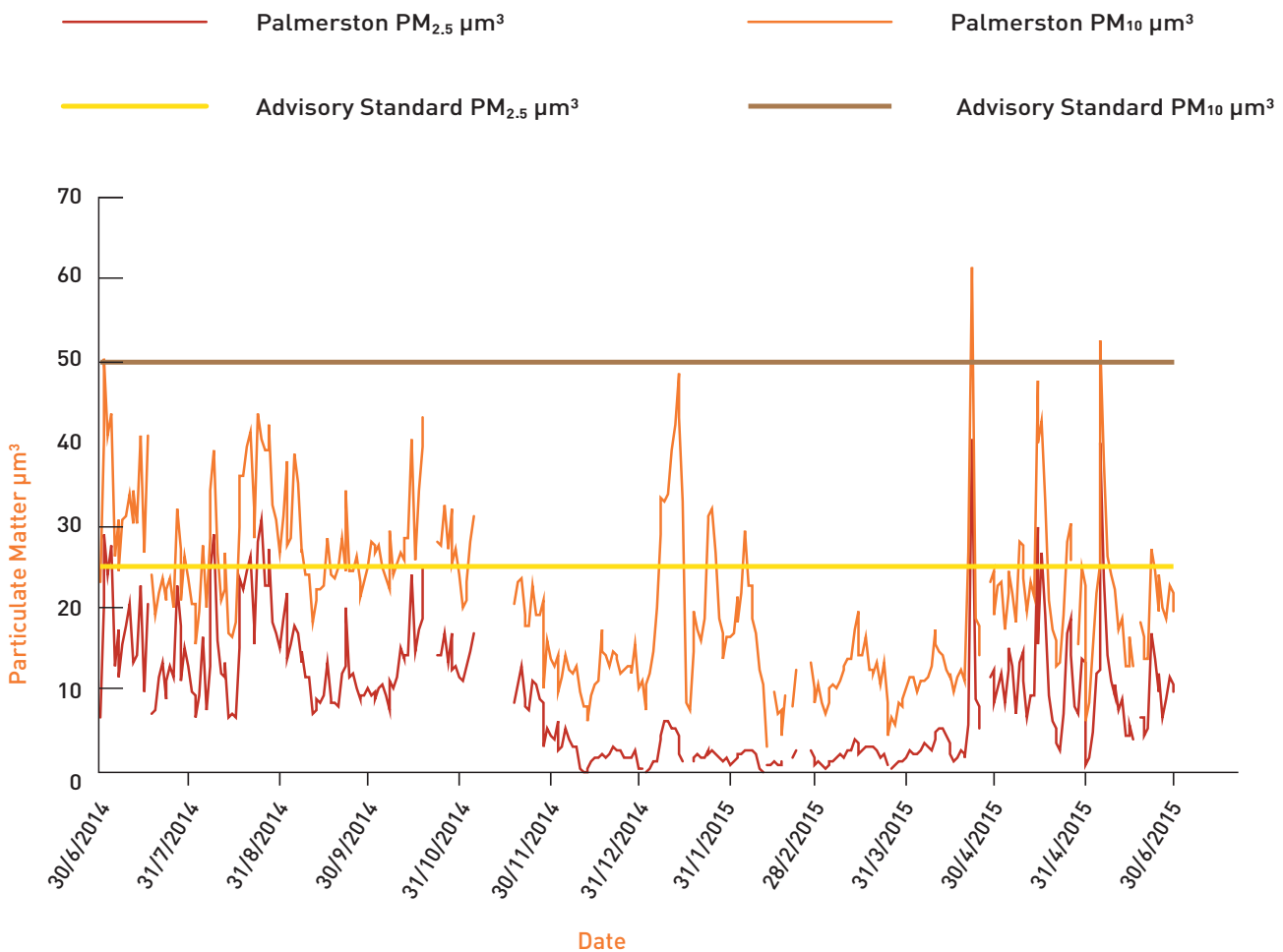


Figure 6: Palmerston air monitoring results

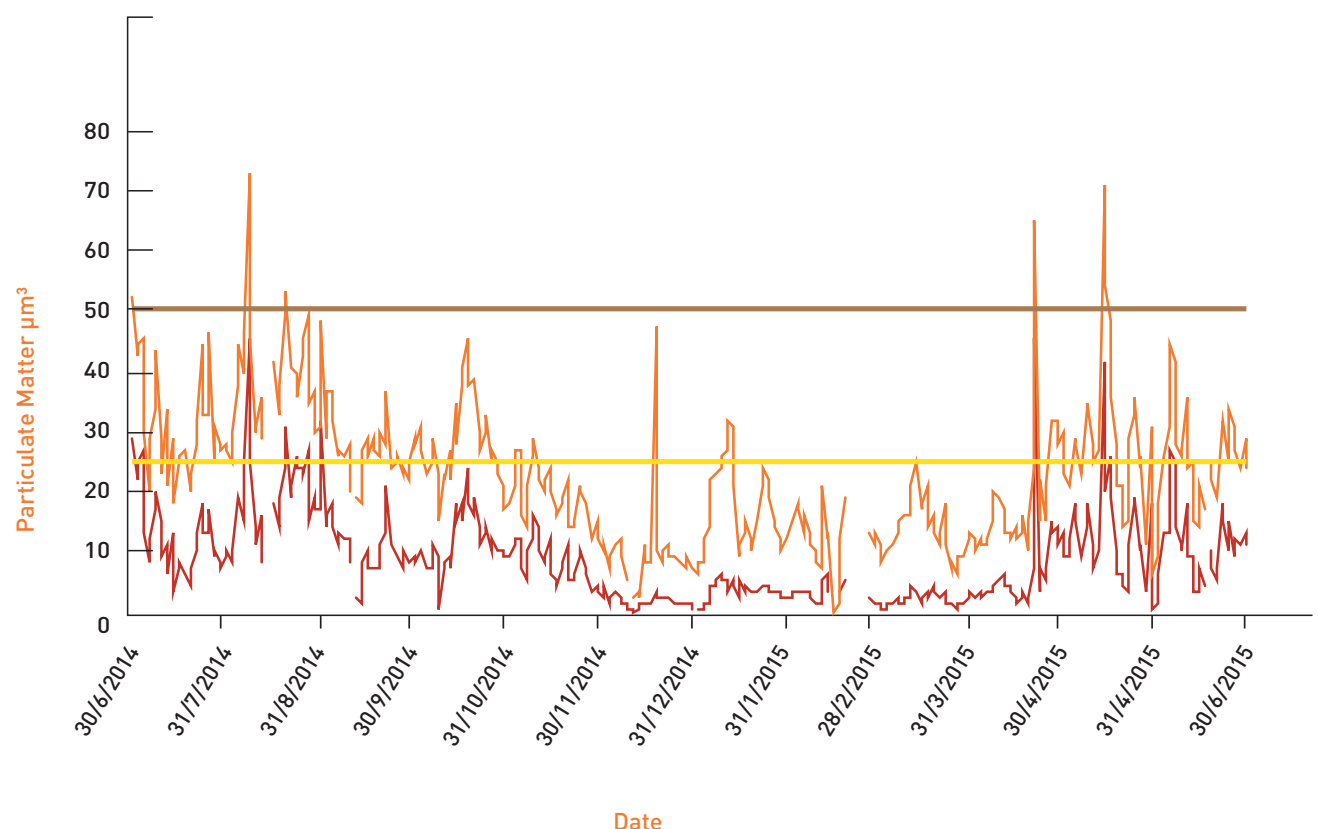


Figure 7: Winnellie air monitoring results

There were more exceedences of the Air NEPM standards for both PM<sub>2.5</sub> and PM<sub>10</sub> during the 2014-15 reporting period than in the 2013-14 period. Results from both years are in Table 1.



	Palmerston (13-15)	Palmerston (14-15)	Winnellie (13-15)	Winnellie (14-15)
PM <sub>2.5</sub> (µg m <sup>3</sup> )	6	11	6	12
PM <sub>10</sub> (µg m <sup>3</sup> )	2	3	1	6

Table 1: Exceedences of Air NEPM Standards

### Air quality monitoring at McArthur River Mine

On 8 October 2014 McArthur River Mining Pty Ltd (MRM) was issued with a section 48 notice under the *Waste Management and Pollution Control Act* for its mine site located at McArthur River. This notice required MRM to carry out an environmental audit program to ensure accurate and appropriate evaluation and reporting of sulfur dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>) from the Northern Overburden Emplacement Facility (NOEF) and whether there were impacts beyond the MRM mine site boundary.

The NT EPA issued a second section 48 notice on 24 April 2015 to reflect updated timeframe requirements imposed on MRM.

MRM commissioned two ambient air quality monitoring stations to monitor SO<sub>2</sub> in late June 2015. These stations are located at Borroloola and Devils Spring; two populations that were identified as possible receptors of SO<sub>2</sub> emissions from the mine site. The NT EPA expects that real-time data from the two stations will be available for the community on the MRM website in the near future. Validated reports required as part of the notice will also be available on the NT EPA website once complete.

The requirements of the environmental audit will be completed by June 2016.

### 3.6.3 National Pollutant Inventory (NPI)

The Northern Territory is a signatory to the *National Environment Protection (National Pollutant Inventory) Measure* (NPI NEPM). The NPI NEPM provides the framework for the development and establishment of the NPI, which is an internet database designed to provide publicly available information on the types and amounts of certain substances being emitted to air, land and water environments. The goals of the NPI are to:

- collect a broad base of information on emissions and transfers of substances
- 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 Northern Territory. NPI reports provide the community, industry and government with information about substance emissions including usage and 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.

The most commonly reported substances in the Darwin region during 2014-15 were total volatile organic compounds (TVOC), Benzene, Toluene, Xylenes and Carbon monoxide. These substances were also the most commonly reported in 2013-14.

Data collected by the NPI are available on the NPI [website: www.npi.gov.au](http://www.npi.gov.au).

### 3.7 Compliance and enforcement actions

#### Core Business

Undertake compliance and enforcement activities.

#### 3.7.1 Compliance and enforcement planning

2014-15 Priority	Status
Develop and implement a two year Compliance Plan.	Complete

In 2014-15 the NT EPA developed its first Annual Compliance Activity Plan and implementation schedule.

The plan details the NT EPA's anticipated compliance and enforcement activities under the WMPC Act, the *Marine Pollution Act*, the *Water Act* and the EP(BC&PBJA). Reporting commenced in January 2015 and will continue until 30 June 2016. The plan is available from the NT EPA website: [www.ntepa.nt.gov.au](http://www.ntepa.nt.gov.au).

Activities planned for compliance and enforcement are on course to achieve or exceed compliance and activity targets anticipated for the 18 months to 30 June 2016.

In the first 6 months of the plan, 23 site inspections were conducted on building sites against an expected 20 inspections to 30 June 2016. The high number of sites inspected is attributed to the NT EPA's erosion and sediment control campaign for building and construction sites, held during the Wet season. Two remote landfills and one remote community wastewater treatment site were visited, with eight visits planned over the next year.



Pollution Response vehicle

Licences and approvals have seen seven targeted licence inspections, with 13 Annual Returns undergoing a desktop review.

Within the first six months of the plan, 31 site inspections were conducted on premises subject to a notice e.g. authorised officer direction, pollution abatement notice. This is against an expected 15 for the full 18 month period.

### 3.7.2 Compliance and enforcement statistics

In conjunction with the Annual Compliance Activity Plan the NT EPA's 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: [www.ntepa.nt.gov.au](http://www.ntepa.nt.gov.au).

The range of compliance actions took place as a result of increased focus on long standing, unresolved issues and problem premises. The campaign to address activities in major housing construction areas such as erosion and sediment control on development sites resulted in an increase in authorised officer activities throughout the reporting period.

A more strategic approach to compliance and enforcement and an improvement in the training of authorised officers has resulted in a number of measures being implemented to improve compliance and communication with the public and other regulators.

Figure 8 identifies an increase in overall compliance actions from the 2013-14 reporting period to the 2014-15 reporting period.

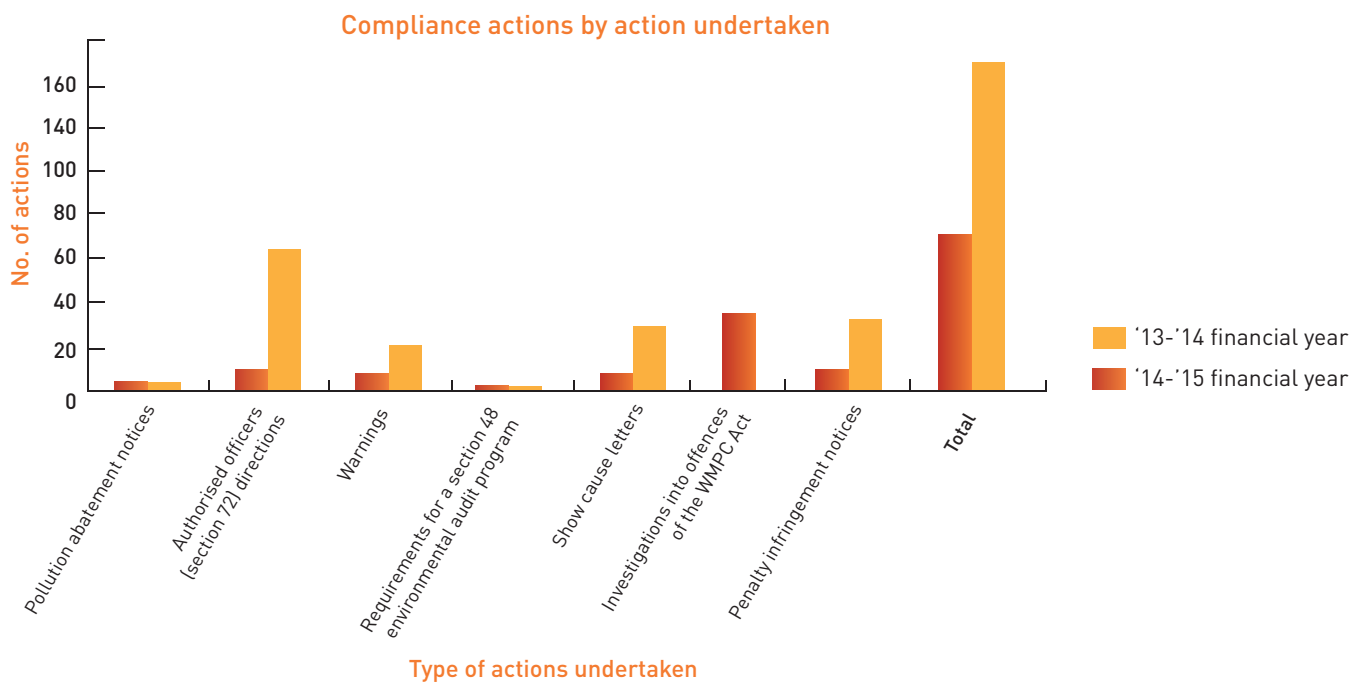


Figure 8: Compliance actions by action taken reporting periods to 2014-15

Table 2 identifies an increase in the number of infringement notices issued in the 2013-14 and 2014-15 reporting periods.

Penalty Infringement Notice Type	2013-14	2014-15
Unlicensed facility	1	0
Failure to comply with licence condition	5	3
Waste	1	0
Failure to comply with Authorised Officer direction	1	22
Environmental nuisance	1	7
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>32</b>

Table 2: Penalty infringement notices by reporting period



### 3.7.3 Illegal disposal of waste



Polluted stormwater in watercourse

NT EPA has increased its response to reports of illegal dumping.

The NT EPA has investigated reports of listed waste (tyres) dumping at multiple locations including inside and outside mineral leases.

Officers have installed surveillance cameras at known dumping locations; issued Directions to cease dumping, clean up and remove illegally dumped material; and issued Environmental Audit notices to assess material illegally dumped and buried.

The NT EPA continues to work with its Government partners with shared responsibilities for illegally dumped waste.

### 3.7.4 Compliance and enforcement guidelines

#### 2014-15 Priority

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

#### Status

Ongoing

The NT EPA is developing *Draft Compliance and Enforcement Guidelines* to complement its *Compliance and Enforcement Policy*. The guidelines are designed to ensure a targeted, transparent and equitable approach to compliance and enforcement in the NT EPA's pursuit of protecting the environment.

The NT EPA expects to finalise and adopt the guidelines during 2015. Once finalised, the guidelines will be available from the NT EPA website: [www.ntepa.nt.gov.au](http://www.ntepa.nt.gov.au).

## 3.8 Pollution response

### 3.8.1 Section 14 Incident Reports

#### 2014-15 Priority

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

#### Status

Ongoing

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 2014-15 seven Section 14 Incident Reports were received:

- Department of Police, Fire and Emergency Services – Berrimah, for a truck collision with a prime mover resulting in a hydrocarbon spill
- four reports from BHP Billiton Manganese Australia (GEMCO) for discharges of stormwater
- McArthur River Mining Pty Ltd for smoke emanating from the tailings storage facility area
- Teras Australia Pty Ltd for a diesel spill to land from a generator.

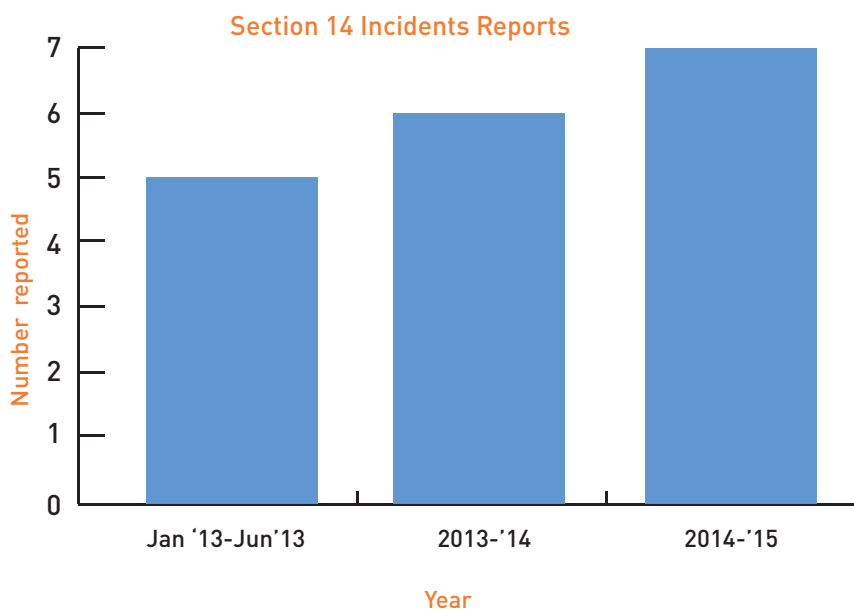


Figure 9: Section 14 Incidents reported



### 3.8.2 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.

The number of calls into the Pollution Hotline has exceeded expectations with 304 calls received in the first six months of 2015, an average of over 11 calls per week. This trend is expected 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.

Figures 10 and 11 illustrate the increased demand for this service compared to previous years.

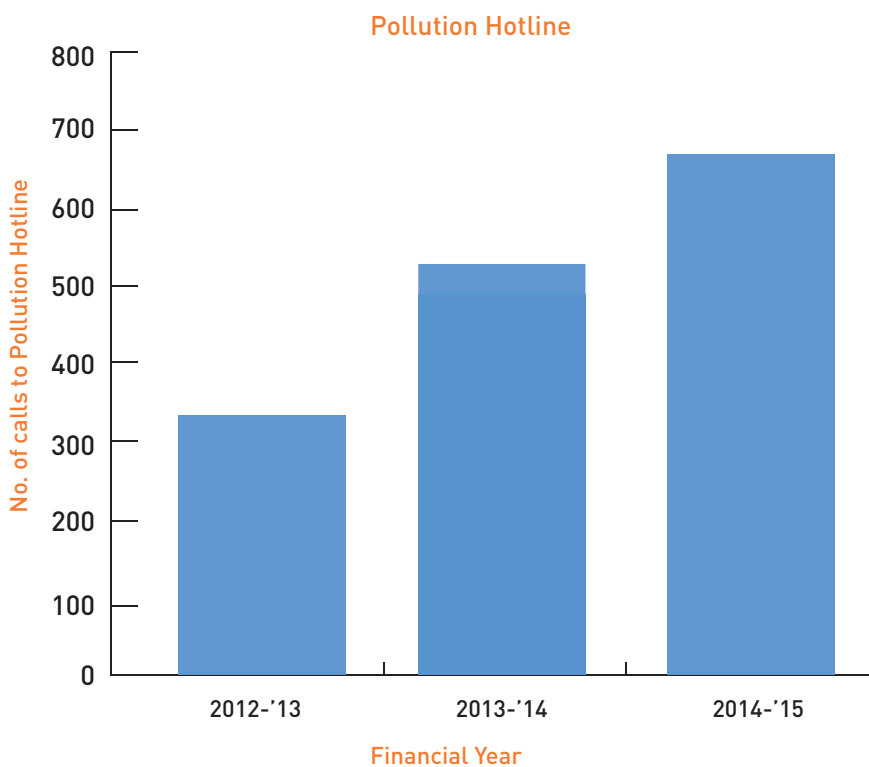


Figure 10: Pollution Hotline notifications



2014-15 Pollution Hotline notifications by type

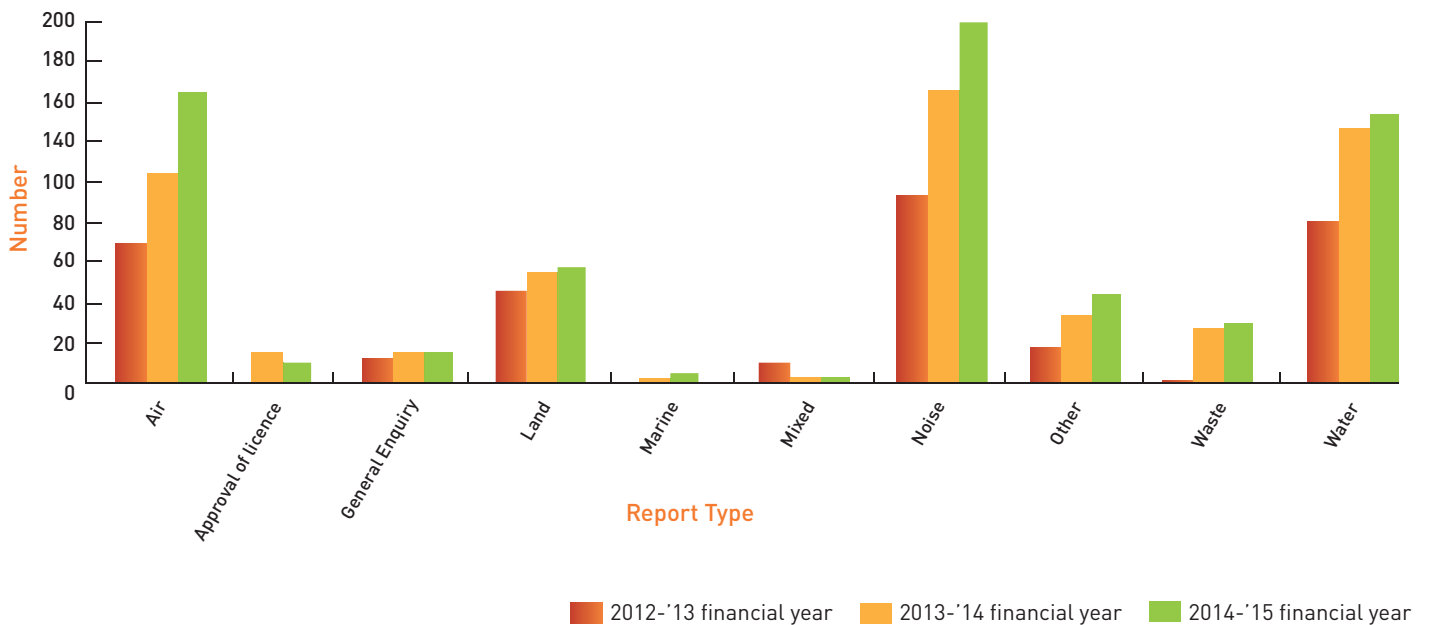


Figure 11: 2014-15 Pollution Hotline notifications by type

## 4 GOAL 3: ENGAGE AND INFORM GOVERNMENT, COMMUNITY AND BUSINESS

### Core Business

Provide advice

### 4.1 Engaging with clients and partners

As part of its regular meeting program the NT EPA visits various project and development sites. These site visits provide the NT EPA with a first-hand understanding of the environmental management issues faced by industry in the Northern Territory.



2014-15 visits included:

- McArthur River Mine
- Ichthys LNG (INPEX), Wickham Point
- North Australia Beef Limited (NABL) Abattoir, Livingstone
- Howard Sand Plains, Howard Springs.

In September 2014 the NT EPA conducted a series of public and industry workshops and presentations for the development of implementation plans for the *Stormwater Strategy for the Darwin Harbour Region*.

At its meetings the NT EPA has met with various stakeholders including the new Minister for the Environment, the Hon Gary Higgins MLA in relation to the functions and responsibilities of the NT EPA, and the new Chief Executive of the Department of Mines and Energy, Mr Ron Kelly, to discuss strategic matters requiring cooperation and open dialogue to obtain better environmental outcomes.

Throughout 2014-15, the Chair of the NT EPA made presentations about the NT EPA and its priority projects to industry representatives including the Environment Institute of Australia and New Zealand (EIANZ), the Minerals Council of Australia, Northern Territory Division, the Extractive Industry Association of the Northern Territory and students at Charles Darwin University. Dr Freeland also participated as part of the Environmental Imperatives Panel at the Northern Australia Food Futures Conference 2014.

## **4.2 Improving communications**

In 2014-15 the NT EPA finalised its communications strategy. The strategy is an internal document intended to identify the ways in which the NT EPA can take a targeted approach to 'demystifying' its work and provide consistent and clear messaging around its work in all communications with the public. The strategy will help position the NT EPA as an effective, independent and influential authority on environmental management.

The NT EPA will continue to implement the strategy during 2015-16.

## **4.3 Grants**

The NT EPA provides grants to fund community based projects to help reduce the impacts of waste and pollution on the environment, and to safeguard the Northern Territory's unique environment.

More details on the NT EPA's grants programs, including recipients, is available on the NT EPA website: [www.ntepa.nt.gov.au](http://www.ntepa.nt.gov.au).

### **4.3.1 Container deposit scheme infrastructure grants**

The Container Deposit Scheme Infrastructure Grants program has provided funds to community groups and businesses since 2011. It provides assistance in establishing infrastructure for collection depots or collection points within the container deposit scheme. The program aims to support regional and remote areas to further establish the scheme across the Territory. \$135 859 in funding was provided to 10 organisations in 2014-15.



### 4.3.2 Environment grants

The Environment Grants program has provided funding to schools and community groups since 2004. The program supports a range of small to medium sized environmental projects.

Funding provided through the 2014-15 programs addressed the environmental theme of Waste. \$623 580 in grant funding was provided to 31 projects, comprising five school projects, 23 community projects and five operational grants.

### 4.4 Developing advisory material

The NT EPA develops guidelines, factsheets and other material to assist the community and industry to understand its policies and processes and to provide certainty to the community and industry.

2014-15 Priority	Status
Develop guidelines on environmental assessment and regulation under the WMPC Act, EP(BC&PB) Act and <i>Marine Pollution Act</i> to provide greater clarity and transparency to industry and the community, and more effective processes within the NT EPA.	Ongoing

Since its commencement on 1 January 2013, the NT EPA has prepared a total of 21 different factsheets, guidelines and policies (Table 3).

	Pre NT EPA (pre 1 January 2013)	Post NT EPA (post 1 January 2013)	Total
Factsheets	5	3	8
Guidelines	7	14	21
Policies	0	4	4
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>33</b>

Table 3: Guidance material

All material developed by the NT EPA is available on its website: [www.ntepa.nt.gov.au](http://www.ntepa.nt.gov.au).



#### 4.4.1 General guidelines

The *Guideline for the Preparation of an Environmental Management Plan* was completed during 2014-15. This guideline provides advice on when environmental management plans (EMP) may be required by the NT EPA and the requirements of EMP. The guideline supports each of the NT EPA's environmental impact assessment, pollution and waste management activities.

#### 4.4.2 Environmental assessment guidelines

In 2014-15 the *Draft Guideline for the Preparation of a Notice of Intent* was released for public comment. The guideline is intended to provide advice on the role of a notice of intent in the environmental impact assessment process and to identify the minimum information requirements to be included in a notice of intent. Comments on the draft guideline closed in June 2015 and are currently being considered.

#### 4.4.3 WMPC Act guidelines

In 2014-15 the NT EPA released the *Draft Guideline for Pollution Avoidance on Commercial and Residential Building Sites* for public comment. The guideline is targeted towards members of the building industry to assist them to comply with their responsibilities under the WMPC Act and Water Act. Comments on the draft closed in May 2015. The draft guideline is currently being redrafted in consideration of the comments.

## 5 GOAL 4: BUILD ORGANISATIONAL CAPABILITY AND CAPACITY

### 5.1 NT EPA governance

Under the NT EPA Act, the NT EPA is required to meet at least four times a year.

In 2014-15 the NT EPA members formally met seven times (including two teleconferences), considered 83 out-of-session papers and attended four site visits. The increased number of meetings is due to an increase in consideration of topical and priority strategic environmental issues.

The NT EPA continues to implement its *Strategic Plan 2013-2016*.

### 5.2 NT EPA Online

2014-15 Priority	Status
Continue to develop and implement <i>NT EPA Online</i> , an NT EPA customer relationship management system to ensure integrated assessment and regulation of environmental matters.	Ongoing



In 2014-15 the NT EPA developed and implemented an online system for Environment Protection Licences (EPLs) that are issued under the WMPC Act. All new applications for EPLs are being submitted through this new system. A process has commenced to transition current licence holders into the system. Further development of the system for other licences and approvals issued by the NT EPA will continue during 2015-16.

### 5.3 Capability framework

2014-15 Priority	Status
Develop and implement the competency based training program.	Complete

In 2014-15 the NT EPA finalised its capability framework. The framework identifies the training needs of all staff in all areas and includes training in regulatory, technical and governance matters and will ensure that all NT EPA staff can perform their functions to the highest level possible.

Implementation of the training program identified through the framework commenced in 2014-15. Training delivered in accordance with the program included:

- Regulatory: Certificate IV in Government Investigations
- Technical: Environmental Auditor Training, Assessment of Environmental Sensitivities to Oil Spills, and Remediation Principles and Closure
- Governance: Advanced Decision Making and Governance, and Merit Selection.

The NT EPA also continued to support two staff in completing further education certificate courses through the Charles Darwin University.

Implementation of the framework and training program will continue during 2015-16.

### 5.4 Financial snapshot

The NT EPA is financially supported by DLPE. The following financial data have been extracted from DLPE to provide detail on the financial resourcing of the NT EPA.

The NT EPA had an annual budget of \$8.0 million in the 2014-15 financial year largely funded through NT Government appropriation. The total expenses incurred by the NT EPA of \$7.3 million were within 91% of the budgeted target. The total expenditure of \$7 260 536 includes \$1 163 000 worth of notional charging which represents goods and services received free of charge from the Department of Corporate and Information Services and is fully offset by \$1 163 000 in notional income (Table 5).

The NT EPA recorded a net surplus of \$0.7 million for the financial year due to position vacancies.



	2014-15 Published Budget \$000	2014-15 Final Estimate \$000	% change	2014-15 Actuals \$000	% change to Final Estimate
Northern Territory Environment Protection Authority	6 972	8 013	15%	7 261	-9%

Table 4: 2014-15 Budget movement and annual expense table

#### 5.4.1 Revenue

The NT EPA received one small grant from the Federal Government of \$23 000 to fund the NPI program. The majority of the remaining funding of \$6.8 million was provided by the Northern Territory Government as appropriated to DLPE.

#### 5.4.2 Expenses

The NT EPA incurred expenses of \$7.3 million in 2014-15; the major expense item was employee expenses of \$4.3 million to remunerate 38 full time equivalent staff. The NT EPA also reported \$2.1 million of administrative expenses, with the major expense being \$0.24 million to support the Pollution Control team. Grant expense of \$0.8 million had been recorded to fund a range of community environment programs such as:

- Environment grants
- Container Deposit Scheme Infrastructure grants
- Keep Australia Beautiful.

Variance between the 2013-14 and 2014-15 financial years is mainly due to one off expenditure in 2013-14 for the Container Deposit Scheme of \$2.1 million.

An annual operating statement has been prepared from DLPE accounts to reflect the financial activity of the NT EPA (Table 5).

Income	2013-14 \$'000	2014-15 \$'000
Grants and Subsidies Revenue		
<i>Current</i>	106	23
Appropriation		
<i>Output</i>	9,629	6 782
Goods and Services Received Free of Charge	444	1 163
Other Income	9	7
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>10,188</b>	<b>7 975</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>		
Employee Expenses	3,976	4 275
<i>Administrative Expenses</i>		
Purchases of Goods and Services	3,226	929
Depreciation and Amortisation	46	52
Other Administrative Expenses	444	1 163
<i>Grants and Subsidies Expenses</i>		
Current	1,427	842
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>9,119</b>	<b>7 261</b>
<b>NET SURPLUS/ (DEFICIT)</b>	<b>1,069</b>	<b>714</b>

Table 5: NT EPA operating statement 2014-15



## 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 assists DLPE with the administration of the following legislation:

- *Environmental Offences and Penalties Act*
- Environmental Offences and Penalties Regulations
- *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 waste discharge licensing provisions of the *Water Act* on behalf of the Department of Land Resource Management.

### APPENDIX 2: LICENCES AND APPROVALS ISSUED

Approval Number	Issued To	Date of Issue
EPA18	City of Darwin	13/10/2014

Table 6: New Collection Approvals issued under the EP(BC&PB) Act in 2014-15

Approval Number	Issued To	Date of Issue
EPA18	City of Darwin	13/10/2014

Table 7: New Environment Protection Approvals issued under the WMPC Act in 2014-15



Licence Number	Issued To	Type of Activity	Date of Issue
EPL121	Hoffman Trenching NT	Asbestos	18/07/2014
EPL122	Jolly & Sons Pty Ltd	Listed Waste Collect and Transport	6/08/2014
EPL129	Rock Solid Earthworks	Listed Waste Collect and Transport	13/08/2014
EPL124	Dirt Games Pty Ltd	Asbestos Collect and Transport	26/08/2014
EPL130	Category 4 Civil Works	Asbestos Collect and Transport	11/09/2014
EPL132	Suburban Asbestos Removals	Asbestos Collect and Transport	11/09/2014
EPL134	O.H. Connections Pty Ltd	Asbestos Collect and Transport	1/10/2014
EPL137	Breakthrough (NQ) Pty Ltd	Listed Waste Collect and Transport	18/2/2015
EPL138	SDA &Co Pty Ltd	Listed Waste Collect and Transport	9/3/2015
EPL128	Ant Construction and Development	Asbestos Collect and Transport	24/04/2015
EPL141	TOLL Energy	Listed Waste Storage	3/06/2015
EPL142	ABR Group Pty Ltd	Asbestos Collect and Transport	29/06/2015
EPL151	NQ Resource Recovery Pty Ltd	Listed Waste Storage	30/06/2015

Table 8: New Environment Protection Licences issued under the WMPC Act in 2014-15

Licence Number	Issued To	Date of Issue
WDL 199	OM Manganese Ltd	16/1/2015
WDL 201	Power Water Remote Operations	15/04/2015
WDL 202	Power Water Remote Operations	15/04/2015
WDL 203	Power Water Remote Operations	15/04/2015
WDL 204	Power Water Remote Operations	15/04/2015
WDL 205	Power Water Remote Operations	15/04/2015
WDL 206	Power Water Remote Operations	15/04/2015
WDL 207	Power Water Remote Operations	15/04/2015
WDL 208	Power Water Remote Operations	15/04/2015
WDL 209	Power Water Remote Operations	22/06/2015

Table 9: New Waste Discharge Licences issued under the *Water Act* in 2014-15



80 0064 567

Northern Territory  
Environment Protection Authority  
www.ntepa.nt.gov.au

**POLLUTION**