

# SCIENTIFIC INQUIRY INTO HYDRAULIC FRACTURING IN THE NORTHERN TERRITORY



Ms Joanne Townsend  
Chief Executive Officer  
Northern Territory Department of Environment and Natural Resources  
PO Box 496  
PALMERSTON NT 0831

Dear Ms Townsend

## **RE: HYDRAULIC FRACTURING INQUIRY – INFORMATION REQUEST**

As you are aware, the Hydraulic Fracturing Inquiry is being held under the Northern Territory *Inquiries Act* which provides, under section 9 of the act, for powers to send for witnesses and documents relative to the activities of the Inquiry.

Following the public release of the Issues paper, and an extensive community consultation process, members of the Hydraulic Fracturing Inquiry are now progressing towards the production of an Interim report, scheduled to be released to the public in mid-2017. We thank you and your Department for the cooperation you have provided to the Inquiry to date.

To further assist the Inquiry process, there are a number of sources of information your Department has been identified as holding that the Inquiry requires access to. These are as follows:

### Water Resource Information

- All digital information relating to the boundaries and regional hydrogeology of groundwater catchments in the Northern Territory.
- All digital information relating to the boundaries and regional hydrology of surface water catchments in the Northern Territory.
- Regional water quality information relating to the groundwater and surface water catchments.
- Details of potable groundwater aquifers (e.g Tindall aquifer) including; extent, volume, recharge, flow direction, current allocations, water quality.
- Details of non-potable groundwater aquifers including; extent, volume, recharge, flow direction, current allocations, water quality.
- Details of surface water resources (both perennial and non-perennial) including; annual and seasonal flows (preferably monthly), water quality, current allocations and uses.
- Any climate change impact projections on water resource availability (particularly surface waters).

Once potentially impacted areas have been identified, the Inquiry will revert seeking water balances (by simple mass balance modelling) for each area down to the shale formation, and confidence levels for each.

### Ecosystem Information

- Digital coverage for all surface water ecosystems (rivers, wetlands, billabongs, waterholes).
- Digital coverage of all groundwater dependent ecosystems.
- Identification of all groundwater dependent communities (for drinking water and irrigation).
- Listed sites of Conservation Significance and known notable EPBC listed taxa ranges.
- Terrestrial ecosystem information and boundaries.

Geographic data sources should be provided in ESRI shapefiles to GDA94 Datum. All data sources should include metadata where possible. Metadata to meet the following Australian New Zealand Land Information Council (ANSLIC) standards <http://www.anzlic.gov.au/resources/metadata>. For clarification on data requirements, please contact Richard McAllister, Director of Science, Hydraulic Fracturing Taskforce on 08 8999 8835 or [Richard.Mcallister@nt.gov.au](mailto:Richard.Mcallister@nt.gov.au).

The *Inquiries Act* provides protection for matters deemed confidential, however it is my intention wherever possible to have all information publically available. Can your Department please indicate which materials (if any) are not to be made publically available and provide the reasons for the determination for each.

Your Department may already be planning to submit this information as part of a separate submission to the Inquiry by the deadline of 30 April 2017, and if so I look forward to receiving this information in due course, noting the requirements above. If your Department is not intending to provide a submission to the Inquiry, or the material sought above doesn't form part of your submission, I ask that you meet our request as soon as possible.

Yours sincerely



THE HON JUSTICE RACHEL PEPPER  
Chair

27 April 2017