

MEDIA RELEASE

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LANDMARK DISCUSSION PAPER RELEASED TODAY

SUE BRADLEY COMMITTEE CO-CHAIR

The Northern Territory Statehood Steering Committee released a landmark Discussion Paper called *Constitutional Paths to Statehood* in Darwin today. The Paper will be officially launched in Alice Springs at an informal community consultation dinner to be held on Thursday 24 May 2007.

The Paper can be viewed at www.statehood.nt.gov.au under the 'publications' button or a copy can be obtained by calling 1800 237 909.

"The Paper has been developed as a result of preliminary discussions the Committee has undertaken with the Northern Territory community about what a Northern Territory Constitution may look like and draws together the work of previous Legislative Assembly Committees and the Land Councils." Committee Co-Chair Sue Bradley said.

The Paper is being released for detailed consultation with all Territorians for a period of 32 weeks. Submissions will close on 31 December 2007.

Territorians are asked to examine a range of issues in the Paper such as:

- Should the Northern Territory have a Governor if it becomes a State?
- How do we ensure we create a long-lasting constitution for future generations?
- Do we need electoral reform or an upper house?
- Should a Constitution have a Bill of Rights?
- What is the role of a Constitutional Convention?
- How does the Territory deal with Land Rights on Statehood?

and much more.

It is anticipated a detailed report on the matters raised will be considered by the Statehood Steering Committee and submitted to the Legislative Assembly early in 2008.

The findings will enable the Committee to develop a strategy for a future Constitutional Convention prior to any referendum on the Statehood issue.

An Executive Summary Paper will also be released in June to assist awareness and understanding of the issues contained in this major landmark publication.

This Paper is the first in a series of two vital issues papers for the Northern Territory. The second paper: *Commonwealth Terms and Conditions of Northern Territory Statehood* will be released in February 2008.

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