



Northern Land Council

MEDIA RELEASE

NLC welcomes consultations over amendments

18 November 2005

Northern Land Council (NLC) Chief Executive, Norman Fry, has broadly welcomed today's announcement by the Commonwealth Minister for Indigenous Affairs, Amanda Vanstone, which outlines proposed workability and other amendments to the *Land Rights Act*.

"Many of these amendments derive from the package agreed between the Land Councils and the NT Government in 2002," Mr Fry said.

"These workability amendments will remove red tape and speed up processes for mining and other developments, and are welcome."

"The amendments may also ensure through a transparent process that sufficient funds are available to Land Councils to properly perform their many functions," Mr Fry said.

Mr Fry also welcomed the Minister's decision to provide a consultation period before legislation is introduced and considered by the Parliament in 2006.

"This consultation period provides an important opportunity for public comment, including so as to ensure that traditional owners rights are recognised in a non-discriminatory way both in the claim process and in relation to the productive investment and expenditure of funds," Mr Fry said.

"The private briefing provided to the NLC this week by senior Commonwealth officials was constructive and appreciated, and the NLC looks forward to contributing to the development of the package through that process."