



# Northern Land Council

## MEDIA RELEASE

### **NLC surprised by call for repeal of permit system**

**12 September 2006**

Northern Land Council (NLC) Chief Executive, Norman Fry, today expressed surprise at calls by Indigenous Affairs Minister, Mal Brough, and the Member for Solomon, Dave Tollner, for the removal of permit requirements to access Aboriginal land.

“The Commonwealth Minister seems to have been seriously misled by Dave Tollner regarding this issue”, Mr Fry said.

“Senator Nigel Scullion told the Parliament on 9 August 2006 that the NLC takes ‘a very responsible approach to ... permit issues’, and that he had abandoned his earlier personal position that permit requirements be removed.”

“Senator Scullion emphasised that he was “convinced” that the NLC “is responsible enough to ensure that the media have access, without any prescriptive legislation to ensure the permit system gives them access”, Mr Fry said.

“The NLC has advised both the Commonwealth and NT Governments that it will ensure reasonable access to Aboriginal land, including that the media will continue to have access to court proceedings.”

“Paul Toohey's reference on ABC radio today to the Yarralin case as an example of the permit system precluding access to a Supreme Court hearing is false. Yarralin is not Aboriginal land. It is a community living area granted as NT freehold, and the permit system has no application to it”, Mr Fry said.

“The NLC welcomes the Chief Ministers’ support for the current permit system.”