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Our Ref: DD2013/03507

Dr Ian Holland
Secretary, Standing Committee on Community Affairs
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Dr Holland

RE: INQUIRY INTO THE THERAPEUTIC GOODS AMENDMENT (2013 MEASURE NO.1) BILL 2013

The Northern Territory Department of Health welcomes the opportunity to provide comment for this inquiry, and apologies for the delay in responding.

These amendments are supported as they will clarify a number of matters in the *Therapeutic Goods Act 1989 (CW)*, and improve protection measures for consumers and patients.

The matter most likely to have an impact in the Territory is power to exempt specific products from the scope of the *Therapeutic Goods Act 1989 (CW)*. This will be useful as it will clarify the responsible agency in the event of a complaint about an exempted product.

Advice has been obtained from the agencies responsible for compliance with food regulations and consumer law in the Territory. It is anticipated that the increase in workload of these areas will not be significant, as complaints about the products likely to be exempted are already being handled by these areas.

Although out of scope of this inquiry, the Northern Territory Department of Health wishes to express concern regarding the increasing availability of non-compliant "therapeutic" products being purchased via internet or imported by travellers. Consumer protection is being undermined by the availability of products which have not undergone standard safety assessments and are not part of the recall system. Action on this issue is much needed and further review is recommended.

Yours sincerely

Dr Christine Connors
Acting Chief Health Officer

31 May 2013

Cc Chief Minister, Hon Adam Giles