



—New Inquiry—

The Development of Northern Australia

The Australian Parliament's Northern Australia Committee has commenced an inquiry into the development of Northern Australia. The Committee has been tasked with the important role of helping to define the future of Australia's North—a region vital to the economic future of the nation.

The Committee will consider policies for developing the parts of Australia which lie north of the Tropic of Capricorn, spanning Western Australia, Northern Territory and Queensland, and in doing so:

- examine the potential for development of the region's mineral, energy, agricultural, tourism, defence and other industries;
- provide recommendations to:
 - enhance trade and other investment links with the Asia-Pacific;
 - establish a conducive regulatory, taxation and economic environment;
 - address impediments to growth; and
 - set conditions for private investment and innovation;
- identify the critical economic and social infrastructure needed to support the long term growth of the region, and ways to support planning and investment in that infrastructure.

The Committee will also present to the Parliament its recommendation for a white paper which would detail government action needed to be taken to implement the committee's recommendations, setting out how the recommendations were to be implemented, by which government entity they were to be implemented, a timetable for implementation and how and when any government funding would be sourced.

The Committee is due present an interim report to Parliament on the activities of the Committee as soon as practicable after **30 May 2014**, with particular reference to the outcomes of public hearings held across Northern Australia, and any specialist knowledge emanating from the public submissions process. The Committee is due to deliver its final report and recommendations to the Parliament on or before **6 July 2014**.

Committee Chair, the Hon Warren Entsch, stated: "With its abundant resources and proximity to Asia, Northern Australia is set to become the new frontier in the economic development of Australia, opening up new opportunities which will benefit the entire nation. With the right policies and incentives in place, Northern Australia has the capacity to become a leader in agriculture, minerals and energy, tourism, research and education. We must remove impediments to growth and set the stage for innovation and investment."

Submissions are due by **Monday, 17 February 2014**. The Committee would prefer submissions to be sent electronically to jscna@aph.gov.au. Submitters are encouraged to read the information on preparing a submission available on the committee website before lodging their submission. Information on the inquiry is available on the committee website at www.aph.gov.au/jscna

For media comment: Please contact the Committee Chair the Hon Warren Entsch MP on (07) 4051 2220

For background information: Please contact the committee secretariat:
Phone: (02) 6277 4162 Email: jscna@aph.gov.au Website www.aph.gov.au/jscna