Northern Territory of Australia
Legislative Assembly

Minutes of Proceedings

Meeting Number 43
Wednesday 4 February 2026

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1. **MEETING OF THE ASSEMBLY**
The Assembly met at 10.00 am. The Speaker, the Honourable Robyn Lambley, took the Chair, read the prayer and delivered the acknowledgement of country on behalf of the Assembly.

2. **MOTION: LEAVE OF ABSENCE**
Pursuant to Standing Order 224, J Davis moved that a leave of absence for today be granted to K McNamara for personal reasons.

Question put and passed.

3. **HOUSING AMENDMENT BILL 2026 (SERIAL 55)**
Mr Edgington (Minister for Housing, Local Government and Community Development), pursuant to notice, presented a Bill for an Act to amend the *Housing Act 1982*, and tabled an Explanatory Statement (Paper 582).

Mr Edgington moved that the Bill be now read a first time and delivered an explanatory speech.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a first time.

Mr Edgington moved that the Bill be declared to be urgent.

Question put and passed.

Mr Edgington moved that the second reading of the Bill be made an order of the day for a later hour.

Question put and passed.

4. **SENTENCING AMENDMENT (MURDER) BILL 2026 (SERIAL 51)**
Ms Boothby (Attorney-General), pursuant to notice, presented a Bill for an Act to amend the *Sentencing Act 1995*, and tabled an Explanatory Statement (Paper 583).

Ms Boothby moved that the Bill be now read a first time and delivered an explanatory speech.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a first time.

Ms Boothby moved that the Bill be referred to the Legislative Scrutiny Committee for report by 4 March 2026.

Question put and passed.

5. ELECTRICAL SAFETY AMENDMENT BILL 2026 (SERIAL 50)

Ms Boothby (Attorney-General), pursuant to notice, presented a Bill for an Act to amend the *Electrical Safety Act 2022*, and tabled an Explanatory Statement (Paper 584).

Ms Boothby moved that the Bill be now read a first time and delivered an explanatory speech.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a first time.

Ms Boothby moved that the Bill be referred to the Legislative Scrutiny Committee for report by 4 March 2026.

Question put and passed.

6. MINISTERIAL STATEMENT: 2026—THE YEAR AHEAD

Mrs Finocchiaro (Chief Minister) made a statement regarding 2026—The Year Ahead and moved that the Assembly take note of the statement.

Ms Uibo.

Paper tabled: Ms Uibo, by leave, tabled: Letter to the Senate Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport References Committee, concerning the inquiry into the state of Australia's aviation sector, dated 4 February 2026, from Ms Selina Uibo, Leader of the Opposition (Paper 585).

Mr Maley.

Debate interrupted.

Suspension of Meeting: The meeting of the Assembly was suspended between 12 noon and 2.00 pm.

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7. VISITORS

On behalf of all members, the Speaker welcomed YouthWorX NT present in the gallery.

8. NOTICES

The following notices were given:

1. Mr Edgington (Housing, Local Government and Community Development) will present on the next meeting day a Bill titled Local Government Legislation Amendment (Code of Conduct and Other Matters) Bill 2026 (Serial 54).
2. Mr Yan (Minister for Logistics and Infrastructure) will present on the next meeting day a Bill titled Commercial Passenger (Road) Transport Legislation Amendment (Licensing) Bill 2026 (Serial 53).
3. Ms Boothby (Attorney-General) will present on the next meeting day a Bill titled Bail Amendment Bill 2026 (Serial 52).

4. J Davis will move on the next General Business day:

That this Assembly:

1. Recognises that the independence and effectiveness of the Auditor-General are fundamental to public accountability, transparency, and trust in government spending.
2. Notes with concern that the Northern Territory Auditor-General is currently ranked last in Australia for independence, lagging behind every other Australian jurisdiction and international neighbours such as Papua New Guinea and Fiji.
3. Acknowledges that unlike other Australian jurisdictions, the Northern Territory Auditor-General lacks the statutory power to conduct performance audits, which are essential for assessing whether government programs are operating effectively, and efficiently.
4. Notes the urgent calls from the Australasian Council of Auditors-General (ACAG) and the NT Auditor-General for a full rewrite of the *Audit Act 1995* to modernise the office's mandate and align it with best practice standards.
5. Calls on the Government to:
    a. Develop and introduce amendments to the *Audit Act 1995* to explicitly grant the Auditor-General the power to conduct performance audits, ensuring the office can examine the efficiency and effectiveness of public expenditure, not just financial compliance;
    b. Ensure these amendments provide the Auditor-General with full discretion to exercise a broad audit mandate without interference from the Executive Government; and
    c. Commit to providing adequate and stable funding to the Auditor-General's office to ensure it has the resources necessary to undertake these expanded performance review functions effectively.

5. J Davis will move on the next General Business day:

That this Assembly:

1. Recognises that Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is a limited measure that fails to capture inequality, environmental sustainability, or the true health of our communities, and that an economy should be designed to serve people and the planet, rather than the other way around.
2. Notes the success of international jurisdictions, such as New Zealand, Scotland, and Wales, in adopting wellbeing frameworks that prioritise early intervention and intergenerational equity.
3. Calls on the Government to:
    a. Develop a Territory Wellbeing Framework that moves beyond simple economic metrics to include a dashboard of indicators measuring social, environmental, and human capital;
    b. Implement a 'Wellbeing Budget' process similar to New Zealand, requiring all budget proposals to be assessed on their long-term impact on human health, social cohesion, and climate resilience; and
    c. Adopt a 'Community Wealth Building' approach to procurement and economic development, ensuring that public spending is retained locally to support Territory jobs and businesses.

6. J Davis will move on the next General Business day:

That this Assembly:

1. Recognises the importance of foundational supports for people with disability in the Territory and the urgent need to work to reduce the systemic barriers in place.

2. Notes that a significant portion of people with disability in the Northern Territory are eligible for the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS), but NDIS services are in short supply making many reliant on mainstream and foundational services that are often under-resourced or inaccessible.
3. Acknowledges that Aboriginal people with a disability in the Territory often face "double disadvantage" due to the intersection of disability and discrimination, and that culturally appropriate services are critical for their wellbeing.
4. Recognises the unique challenges of service delivery in rural and remote areas, where "thin markets" and workforce shortages prevent many Territorians from accessing the daily supports they need.
5. Calls on the Government to:
    a. Invest in robust foundational supports outside of the NDIS to ensure that the majority of Territorians with disability who are ineligible for the scheme or cannot access services due to shortages can still access essential assistance, transport, and community participation services;
    b. Commit to increasing the supply of accessible social and affordable housing that meets universal design principles, noting that people with disability are disproportionately affected by the Territory's housing shortage and overcrowding; and
    c. Support the growth of the Aboriginal community-controlled sector to deliver disability services, ensuring that supports are culturally safe, trauma-informed, and available in remote communities where mainstream NDIS providers are often absent.

9. QUESTIONS

2.05 Ms Uibo to Mr Edgington
2.09 Mr Mackay to Mrs Finocchiaro
2.13 Mr Young to Mr Edgington
2.17 Mr O'Gallagher to Mr Maley
2.21 Mr Brown to Mr Edgington
2.25 Mr Howe to Mr Yan
2.29 Mr Paech to Mr Edgington
2.33 Mr Paech to Mr Edgington – Supplementary
2.34 Mr Patel to Ms Boothby
2.38 Mr Paech to Mr Maley
2.41 Mrs Zio to Mrs Hersey
2.45 Mr Guyula to Mr Maley
2.49 Mrs Carlson to Ms Cahill
2.53 J Davis to Ms Boothby
2.56 Mr Kerle to Mr Burgoyne
3.00 Mr Brown to Mrs Hersey
3.04 Dr Rahman to Mr Edgington

Mr Edgington (Leader of Government Business) asked that further questions be placed on the Written Question Paper.

Mr Edgington (Minister for Health) gave a supplementary answer to a question asked earlier during question time from Mr Paech.

10. MOTION: SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

Mr Paech moved that that so much of Standing Orders be suspended which would:

> Allow free discussion of community concerns relating to the appointment of the Administrator when discussing the motion on appointment processes today.

Mr Burgoyne moved that the question be put.

Question, that the question be put, put and the Assembly divided:

Ayes 17

Ms Boothby	Mr Burgoyne	Ms Cahill	Mrs Carlson
Mr Charls	Mr Edgington	Mrs Finocchiaro	Mrs Hersey
Mr Howe	Mr Kerle	Mr Mackay	Mr Maley
Mr O'Gallagher	Mr Patel	Dr Rahman	Mr Yan
Mrs Zio			

Noes 6

Mr Brown	J Davis	Mr Guyula	Mr Paech
Ms Uibo	Mr Young		

Motion passed.

Question, that the suspension of Standing Orders be agreed to, put and the Assembly divided:

Ayes 6

Mr Brown	J Davis	Mr Guyula	Mr Paech
Ms Uibo	Mr Young		

Noes 17

Ms Boothby	Mr Burgoyne	Ms Cahill	Mrs Carlson
Mr Charls	Mr Edgington	Mrs Finocchiaro	Mrs Hersey
Mr Howe	Mr Kerle	Mr Mackay	Mr Maley
Mr O'Gallagher	Mr Patel	Dr Rahman	Mr Yan
Mrs Zio			

Motion negatived.

11. PERSONAL EXPLANATION: MR YOUNG

Mr Young gave a personal explanation.

12. MOTION: APPOINTMENT PROCESS FOR THE ADMINISTRATOR OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

Ms Uibo, pursuant to notice, moved:

> That this Assembly:
>
> 1. Refers the appointment process for future Administrators of the Northern Territory to the Legal and Constitutional Affairs Committee for inquiry and report, including consideration of:
>   a) Best-practice standards for vetting and due diligence;
>   b) Clear responsibility and accountability for each stage of the appointment process;
>   c) How relevant information should be identified, assessed and documented;
>   d) The adequacy of existing safeguards, checks and balances; and
>   e) Options to strengthen the appointment process to ensure transparency, integrity and sustained public confidence in future appointments.

Mr Edgington.

Mr Edgington moved that the question be put.

Question, that the question be put, put and the Assembly divided:

Ayes 17

Ms Boothby	Mr Burgoyne	Ms Cahill	Mrs Carlson
Mr Charls	Mr Edgington	Mrs Finocchiaro	Mrs Hersey
Mr Howe	Mr Kerle	Mr Mackay	Mr Maley
Mr O'Gallagher	Mr Patel	Dr Rahman	Mr Yan
Mrs Zio			

Noes 6

Mr Brown	J Davis	Mr Guyula	Mr Paech
Ms Uibo	Mr Young		

Motion passed.

Question, that the motion be agreed to, put and the Assembly divided:

Ayes 6

Mr Brown	J Davis	Mr Guyula	Mr Paech
Ms Uibo	Mr Young		

Noes 17

Ms Boothby	Mr Burgoyne	Ms Cahill	Mrs Carlson
Mr Charls	Mr Edgington	Mrs Finocchiaro	Mrs Hersey
Mr Howe	Mr Kerle	Mr Mackay	Mr Maley
Mr O'Gallagher	Mr Patel	Dr Rahman	Mr Yan
Mrs Zio			

Motion negatived.

13. MOTION: SHARED DECISION MAKING WITH ABORIGINAL COMMUNITIES

Mr Guyula, pursuant to notice, moved:

That the Legislative Assembly:

Recognise the urgent need for Government to begin the work of creating genuine partnerships and shared decision-making with all Aboriginal communities on all issues that affect Aboriginal people. This work must begin by providing support for the development of community groups that represent all clan and family groups within a community and have authority to make decisions for the people of the community, in accordance with Aboriginal law.

Mr Edgington, Mr Paech, J Davis, Mr Brown, Ms Uibo, Mr Young, Mr Guyula (in reply).

Question put and passed.

14. PAPERS TABLED

The Speaker tabled the following papers:

1. Correspondence, written responses to Members' request pursuant to Standing Order 114, regarding written questions not answered within 30 days, from several Ministers (Paper 587).
2. Quarterly Members' Fuel Transaction Report, Quarter 4, October to December 2025 (Paper 588).
3. Annual Members' Satellite Phone Transactions Report, January to December 2025 (Paper 589).

15. ADJOURNMENT

Mr Maley (Deputy Chief Minister) moved that the Assembly do now adjourn.

Mr Maley, Mrs Zio, Dr Rahman, Mr Charls, Mr Patel, Mr Mackay, J Davis, Mrs Carlson, Mr Kerle.

Question put and passed.

The Assembly adjourned at 7.53 pm until Thursday 5 February 2025 at 10.00 am.

DEEMED PAPERS

Pursuant to Standing Order 239 the following paper were deemed tabled:

Subordinate Legislation

Subordinate Legislation No. 14 of 2025, Taxis Amendment Regulations 2025 (Paper 586)

ATTENDANCE

All members attended the meeting, except K McNamara on leave.

RUSSELL KEITH
Clerk of the Legislative Assembly