

Michael Gunner
Chief Minister of the Northern Territory



Media Statement

Restoring Trust – Justice Mansfield to Conduct Inquiry into Political Donations

15 July 2017

In another step towards restoring trust in government – and delivering on an election commitment - the Territory Labor Government today announced the appointment of Honourable Justice John Mansfield AM as Commissioner of the Political Donations Inquiry.

Chief Minister Michael Gunner said the appointment of Justice Mansfield – who is well respected across the legal community and has a longstanding connection to the Northern Territory - is an important step towards restoring trust in the institution of government in the Territory.

“Territorians are entitled to know that the public interest, not private interests, dictates public policy and decisions of Government,” Mr Gunner said.

“This inquiry gives us the opportunity to restore this confidence, by shining a light on previous conduct and delivering a credible path forward to reform political donations for the future.”

The Government has appointed Justice Mansfield on the recommendation of an Advisory Panel constituted in line with the Northern Territory’s Judicial Appointments Protocol.

Justice Mansfield is now tasked to inquire into and report on options for the reform of political funding and donations in the Northern Territory.

Mr Mansfield held appointment as Justice of the Federal Court between 1996 and 2016. He has extensive experience in native title matters, particularly in the Territory context, and also in the areas of administrative law, constitutional law, intellectual property and commercial law.

He was appointed Queen’s Counsel for South Australia in 1985 and for the Territory in 1988. He also served as President of various law societies and councils, and between 1991 and 1993 he held the role of Counsel assisting the Commissioner for the Royal Commission into the State Bank of South Australia.

The NT Government is also creating an Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC) with powers to seek out the misuse of power and tax payer funds in the Territory and ensure corruption is punished.

Terms of Reference for the Political Donations Inquiry are attached.

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