

## ***Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Act Review*** **Terms of Reference**

### **Background**

The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority (the Authority) was established under the *Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Act 1975* (the GBRMP Act) to manage the Marine Park, advise the Minister in relation to the Marine Park, conduct research and provide educational, advisory and informational services relating to the Marine Park. The Authority consists of a full-time chairman and three part-time members. The staff and chairman of the Authority constitute a statutory authority.

The Government made an election commitment to review the Act to improve the performance of the Authority, its office holders and its accountability frameworks. These terms of reference address the election commitment.

The Government is also conducting a review of corporate governance of all statutory authorities and office holders - the Uhrig review. Mr John Uhrig AC, conducted a review of eight statutory authorities and developed a set of corporate governance principles which are to be applied to all statutory authorities. The Authority is subject to the Uhrig corporate governance principles.

The findings of this review will also inform the implementation of the Uhrig outcomes in relation to the Authority.

The *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (the EPBC Act) is the Australian Government's primary legislation for environmental regulation. The review provides an opportunity to examine the GBRMP Act in light of the EPBC Act with a view to modernising the GBRMP Act to ensure consistency between the two Acts.

The review will be chaired by the Secretary of the Department of the Environment and Heritage, Mr David Borthwick, assisted by Ms Barbara Belcher, Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet and Mr Jonathan Hutson, Department of Finance and Administration, reporting to the Minister for the Environment and Heritage, Senator the Hon Ian Campbell.

Public submissions are invited, with a closing date of 30 September 2005.

### Scope of the Review

1. The review will focus on:
  - the role of office holders;
  - the functions of the Authority;
  - accountability frameworks; and
  - consultation mechanisms.
  
2. The review will provide advice, in light of the Uhrig principles, on:
  - the appropriateness of current arrangements;
  - the efficiency and effectiveness of current consultation mechanisms;
  - any changes to improve the corporate governance arrangements of the Authority;
  - any adjustment of the function of the Authority;
  - improving consistency between the GBRMP Act and the EPBC Act; and
  - any legislative amendments required to make such changes.