



CHIEF MINISTER

Parliament House  
State Square  
Darwin NT 0800  
chief.minister@nt.gov.au

GPO Box 3146  
Darwin NT 0801  
Telephone: 08 8999 8700

The Hon Anthony Albanese MP  
Prime Minister of Australia  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Prime Minister

I am writing to provide an update on the upcoming appointment of the Administrator of the Northern Territory (the Administrator). His Honour Professor the Honourable Hugh Heggie AO PSM was appointed into the Office of the Administrator on 31 January 2023 for a term of three years, expiring 30 January 2026.

The Administrator is appointed under section 32 of the *Northern Territory (Self-Government) Act 1978* by the Governor-General, for a period at his discretion.

My Government wishes to nominate Mr David Connolly for appointment as the next Administrator for the Northern Territory for a period of three years. Mr Connolly is regarded as one of the Northern Territory's leading pastoralists and agricultural innovators. Since 2015, he has served as General Manager of the Tipperary Group of Stations, where he has played a key role in advancing the region's pastoral industry. His commitment to driving economic growth in the Northern Territory was further demonstrated through his tenure as Director of the Northern Cotton / Western Australia–Northern Territory Cotton Gin from 2022 to 2024, which successfully launched in 2023.

Mr Connolly will be the 24th Administrator for the Northern Territory if appointed and Mr Connolly's CV is attached.

If this proposal is in accordance with your Government's wishes, I would be grateful if you could take the necessary steps to appoint Mr Connolly as the new Administrator, commencing 31 January 2026.

Yours sincerely

s22(1)(a)(ii)

LIA FINOCCHIARO

12 JUN 2025



## CURRICULUM VITAE

Name: David s47F Connolly

Former name (s): N/A

Residential address:

s47F

Date of birth:

[REDACTED]

Present position: General Manager, Tipperary Group of Stations

Educational and professional qualifications:

2005 – 2007 Graduate Diploma Agribusiness University of Queensland, Gatton Campus

1984 – 1986 Associate Diploma Stock and Meat Inspection, University of Queensland, Gatton Campus

1981 – 1983 Senior School Certificate – The Southport School

Relevant experience: 2015-Current: General Manager, Tipperary Group of Stations

2011-2015: Head of Livestock Investments, Insight Global Farmland Fund (IGFF), Australian General Manager, Thames Pastoral Company.

2009 - 2010: Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Farmworks Pty Ltd

2003-2009: Chief Operating Officer, Australian Agricultural Company (AAco)

1987-2003: Regional Livestock and Stud Stock Manager, Dalgety / Wesfarmers Landmark

Current board memberships:

2023 – 2025 Director, National Farmers Federation (NFF)

Former board memberships:

2021 – 2024: President, Northern Territory Cattleman's Association (NTCA)

2022 – 2024: Director Northern Cotton / WANT Cotton

2011 – 2015 Non Executive Director, Insight Global Farmland Fund (IGFF)

MS25-002356



**Australian Government**

**Department of Infrastructure, Transport,  
Regional Development, Communications, Sport and the Arts**

**To: The Hon Kristy McBain MP, Minister for Regional Development, Local Government and Territories** for decision

**cc:** The Hon Catherine King MP, Minister for Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government

**Subject:** Appointment of the Northern Territory Administrator

**Critical Date:** Please action by 20 October 2025, <sup>s47C</sup> [redacted] consideration and Federal Executive Council processes before the current Administrator's term expires on 31 January 2026.

**Recommendation/s:**

1. That you **note** the department's assessment of Mr David Connolly's suitability for the role of Administrator of the Northern Territory, at **Attachment D.**

Noted / Please Discuss

2. Based on your assessment, <sup>s47C</sup> [redacted] at **Attachment B.**

Or

Signed / Not Signed

<sup>s47C</sup> [redacted]

<sup>s22(1)(a)(ii)</sup> [redacted]

**The Hon Kristy McBain MP**


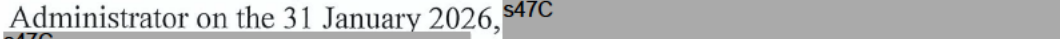
Date: 30/10/25

MS25-002356



Comments:

**Key Points:**


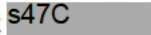
1. As Minister for Regional Development, Local Government and Territories, you are responsible for the appointment of the Administrator of the Northern Territory (NT). The term of the current Administrator, His Honour the Honourable Professor Hugh Heggie (AO PSM), expires 31 January 2026.

- a. The Administrator of the NT is a statutory appointment made by the Governor General under Section 32 of the Northern Territory (Self-Government) Act 1978 <sup>s47C</sup>  Based on the department's records, it has been the convention since at least 2013 that the Australian government accepts the NT Government's nomination for the role.
- b. To ensure the swearing in ceremony can occur prior to the expiration of the current Administrator on the 31 January 2026, <sup>s47C</sup>  and the Federal Executive Council by the 11 December 2025 (at the latest) (see **Attachment H** for full timeline).

2. On 12 June 2025, consistent with past practice, the Chief Minister of the NT, the Hon Lia Finocchiaro MLA, wrote to the Prime Minister nominating Mr David Connolly as the next Administrator for three years (**Attachment A**). Mr David Connolly has indicated his willingness to accept this appointment if offered to him and is available to take up the position when the current Administrator's term expires.

3. Consistent with <sup>s47C</sup>  and as requested in the letter from Acting Prime Minister, Hon Richard Marles MP <sup>s22(1)(a)(ii)</sup>  the department has undertaken due diligence for the proposed appointment **Attachment D**, and included a Private Interests Declaration at **Attachment E** and a Curriculum Vitae at **Attachment F** for your consideration. This is consistent with past appointment processes coordinated by the department.

<sup>s47C</sup> 

5. Consistent with appointment requirements <sup>s47C</sup>  the letter that seeks nomination (**Attachment B**) includes a Private Interests Declaration at **Attachment E** and a Curriculum Vitae at **Attachment F** and an Appointment <sup>s47C</sup>  form at **Attachment G**.

MS25-002356

**Financial impacts:**

6. Remuneration and allowances are set by the Remuneration Tribunal.

**Legal/Legislative impacts:**

7. The proposed appointment conforms with applicable legislation.

**Stakeholder Implications:**

8. s22(1)(a)(ii)

**Consultation:**

9. We have consulted the NT Department of the Chief Minister and Cabinet, NT Government House, the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet and the Department's Governance, Ministerial and Parliament Branch.

**Media Opportunities**

10. We will work with your office to prepare a media release once the appointment process is finalised.

**Attachment A:** Nomination letter from the NT Chief Minister

**Attachment B:** Letter to the Prime Minister<sup>s47C</sup>

**Attachment C:** s47C

**Attachment D:** Assessment of suitability – Mr David Connolly

**Attachment E:** Private Interests Declaration – Mr David Connolly

**Attachment F:** Curriculum Vitae - Mr David Connolly

**Attachment G:** Appointment Details pro-forma – Mr Connolly

**Attachment H:** Administrator appointment timeline

Cleared By: Kim Forbes  
 Position: First Assistant Secretary  
 Division: Territories Division  
 Mob: s22(1)(a)(ii)  
 Date: 12 August 2025

Contact Officer: s22(1)(a)(ii)  
 Section: Mainland Territories Policy  
 Mob: s22(1)(a)(ii)

**Instructions for Ministerial Services:** Nil

**Do you require a signed hardcopy to be returned:** No

**Responsible Adviser:** s22(1)(a)(ii)

**PDMS Distribution List** Jim Betts, David Mackay, Kim Forbes, Rebecca Rush, s22(1)(a)(ii)  
[appointments@infrastructure.gov.au](mailto:appointments@infrastructure.gov.au)

~~PROTECTED CABINET~~



## The Hon Kristy McBain MP

Minister for Emergency Management  
Minister for Regional Development, Local Government and Territories  
Member for Eden-Monaro

Ref: MS25-002356

The Hon Anthony Albanese MP  
Prime Minister  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Prime Minister

I am writing to you concerning the appointment of the next Administrator of the Northern Territory.

The term of the current Administrator of the Northern Territory, His Honour, Professor Hugh Heggie AO PSM, will expire on 31 January 2026. The Chief Minister of the Northern Territory, the Hon Lia Finocchiaro MLA, wrote to you on 12 June 2025 nominating Mr David Connolly to fill the position.

s47C

As requested in the letter from Acting Prime Minister, Hon Richard Marles MP, the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications, Sport and the Arts, has undertaken appropriate due diligence for the proposed appointment.

Mr Connolly has a background in agribusiness and pastoral management. Since 2015, he has served as General Manager of the Tipperary Group of Stations.

Mr Connolly has been assessed by my Department as being appropriately qualified for the role of the Administrator for the Northern Territory. s47C, s47B(a)

~~PROTECTED CABINET~~

~~PROTECTED CABINET~~

I confirm the appointment conforms with applicable legislation and any real or perceived conflict of interest with the proposed nominee has been considered and addressed.

To ensure that the appointment proceeds smoothly, approval is required no later than 25 November 2025. This timeline will allow for all the necessary administrative processes to be completed in advance of the Executive Council meeting before the current Administrator of the Northern Territory appointment terms expiry.

I have attached with this letter the Appointment <sup>s47C</sup> form, a copy of Mr Connolly's Curriculum Vitae and a signed Private Interests Declaration. <sup>s47C</sup>  
<sup>s47C</sup> Mr Connolly's appointment will then be considered by the Federal Executive Council.

Yours sincerely

s22(1)(a)(ii)

Kristy McBain MP

30 Nov /2025

Enc

cc The Hon Catherine King MP, Minister for Infrastructure, Transport,  
Regional Development and Local Government

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## PRIVATE INTERESTS DECLARATION

<b>PROPOSED POSITION &amp; ORGANISATION</b>	The Administrator of the Northern Territory
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Please answer the following questions by circling the reply that applies to your personal circumstances. **If you answer “yes” to any question, please provide details in the provided attachment to this form, signed and dated.** Please note that answering “yes” to any question does not necessarily preclude you from being appointed. Your response will be treated as confidential and will only be used for purposes connected with this proposed appointment.

1. Do you have any disclosable criminal convictions, i.e. convictions as an adult that form part of your criminal history other than those protected by the Spent Convictions Scheme (see Part VIIC of the <i>Crimes Act 1914</i> )?	s47F
2. Are you, or have you been, the respondent or defendant in any civil or criminal court action (including as a company director or other office holder)?	
3. (a) Have you ever been declared bankrupt, entered into a debt agreement under Part IX of the Bankruptcy Act 1996 (the Bankruptcy Act) or entered into a personal insolvency agreement under Part X of the Bankruptcy Act? (b) If you are in a partnership, have any of your partners ever been declared bankrupt, entered into a debt agreement under Part IX of the Bankruptcy Act or entered into a personal insolvency agreement under Part X of the Bankruptcy Act?	
4. Has any business or commercial enterprise for which you, or if applicable your partner(s), have had responsibility ever gone into receivership or a similar scheme or arrangement?	
5. During the last 10 years have you, or if applicable your partner(s), been the subject of a court order in connection with monies owing to another party?	
6. Have you ever been summonsed or charged concerning non-payment of tax or outstanding tax debts, investigated for tax evasion or defaults, or negotiated with the Australian Taxation Office over outstanding tax debts?	
7. Have you ever been the subject of a complaint to a professional body which has been substantiated, or is currently under investigation? Have you been subject to a formal conduct investigation? (if yes, please provide details).	
8. Have you ever been dismissed from employment because of a discipline or misconduct issue?	
9. Are you the director of a company, sit on a board of any organisation, or hold any other professional roles or other Commonwealth roles (including advisory roles)? <u>If yes, please provide details on the following page(s) on how this conflict of interest would be managed (please include all bodies, including not-for-profit).</u>	Yes / X
10. Do you or your immediate family have any financial interest in any company or business, or are you or your immediate family employed or engaged by any company or business, which might have dealings with, or an interest in the decisions of, the office to which you may be appointed? If yes, include advice in the attachment on how this conflict of interest would be managed.	s47F
11. Are you a lobbyist registered on the Australian Government’s Lobbyists Register or the register of a state or territory? If yes, please provide details in the attachment.	
12. Are you currently employed by the Commonwealth, the Administration of a Territory, or a public statutory corporation or incorporated company owned by the Commonwealth on a full-time/part-time basis? If yes, please provide details.	
13. Is there any other information which could be relevant to your suitability for the appointment, or other information that should be disclosed to the Government prior to appointment (if yes, please provide details).	

### ASSURANCE

<p><b>I advise that to the best of my knowledge my private, business and financial interests, including taxation affairs, would not conflict with my public duties or otherwise cause embarrassment to myself or to the Government during my term of appointment. I also undertake to advise the responsible minister and recuse myself from any relevant matters should a situation arise in the future which might cause a conflict of interest with my responsibilities under, or otherwise impact on, this appointment.</b></p>		
DAVID <span style="background-color: grey; color: white;">s47F</span> CONNOLLY	<span style="background-color: grey; color: white; display: block; width: 100px; height: 30px; margin: 0 auto;">s47F</span>	7.8.2025
Name	Signature	Date

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## PRIVATE INTERESTS DECLARATION - ATTACHMENT

<b>PROPOSED POSITION &amp; ORGANISATION</b>	The Administrator of the Northern Territory
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Please provide details for all 'yes' answers to any question on the Private Interests Declaration form. Please detail how any conflict(s), actual or perceived, will be managed if appointed. Please note that responses to Q12 may be relevant to remuneration payable for part-time appointments with reference to section 7(11) of the *Remuneration Act 1973*. The Act provides that a person is not entitled to remuneration for part-time appointments when holding certain full-time employment, engagement or appointment. Your responses will be treated as confidential and will only be used for purposes connected with the proposed appointment.

**Please provide conflict mitigation strategy(ies) for all current directorships, board and professional roles, as well as any matters noted under Question 13 on the previous page.**

QUESTION	DETAILS <u>WITH</u> CONFLICT MITIGATION STRATEGY
9	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>I am currently a Director of the National Farmers Federation which will terminate at the NFF AGM on 20<sup>th</sup> October 2025 as my term will end and I will not be re-standing for election as Director. The Directorship will not renew.</b></p> <div style="background-color: #cccccc; height: 150px; width: 100%; margin-top: 10px;"> <span style="position: absolute; top: 5px; left: 5px; font-size: small;">s47F</span> </div>

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**ASSURANCE**

I declare that to the best of my knowledge, the information provided above is true and correct.

DAVID s47F CONNOLLY

.....  
Name

s47F  


Signature

7.8.2025

.....  
Date

## CURRICULUM VITAE

Name:	Mr David s47F Connolly
Former name (s):	NA
Residential address:	s47F [Redacted]
Date of birth:	s47F [Redacted]
Present position:	General Manager, Tipperary Group of Stations
Educational and professional qualifications:	<p>2005 – 2007: Graduate Diploma Agribusiness University of Queensland, Gatton Campus.</p> <p>1984 – 1986: Associate Diploma Stock and Meat Inspection, University of Queensland, Gatton Campus.</p> <p>1981 – 1983: Senior School Certificate - The Southport School.</p>
Relevant experience:	<p>2015 - Current: General Manager, Tipperary Group of stations</p> <p>2011 - 2015: Head of Livestock Investments, Insight Global Farmland Fund (IGFF), Australian General Manager, Thames Pastoral Company.</p> <p>2009 - 2010: Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Farmworks Pty Ltd.</p> <p>2003-2009: Chief Operating Officer, Australian Agricultural Company (AAco).</p> <p>1987-2003: Regional Livestock and Stud Stock Manager, Dalgety / Wesfarmers Landmark</p>
Current board memberships:	2023 – 2025: Director, National Farmers Federation (NFF)
Former board memberships:	<p>2021 - 2024: President, Northern Territory Cattleman's Association (NTCA)</p> <p>2022 - 2024: Director Northern Cotton / WANT Cotton</p> <p>2011 – 2015: Non-Executive Director, Insight Global Farmland Fund (IGFF)</p>
EEO categories: (if available):	

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## APPOINTMENT DETAILS PRO-FORMA

<b>Proposing Minister/s</b>	The Hon Kristy McBain MP Minister for Emergency Management Minister for Regional Development, Local Government and Territories. Member for Eden-Monaro
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<b>Organisation</b>	N/A
<b>Proposed Position</b>	Administrator of the Northern Territory
<b>Is this a New Appointment or a Reappointment?</b>	New Appointment

<b>Proposed Appointee</b>	Mr David s47F Connolly						
<b>Nominee's Current Position and / or Relevant Credentials</b>	General Manager, Tipperary Group of Stations						
<b>DOB</b>	s47F	<b>Gender</b>	M	<b>State of Residence</b>	NT	<b>EEO Category*</b>	N/A

<b>Proposed Term</b>	From 31 January 2026 for 3 years.	<b>Full time (FT)</b>
<b>Remuneration</b>	\$376,640 (total remuneration per year)	<b>Set by</b> Remuneration Tribunal (Remuneration and Allowances for Holders of Full-time Public Office Determination 2025)

<b>Has the APSC Merit and Transparency policy for Agency Heads and Statutory Offices been followed?</b>	N/A	<b>Is the Private Interests Declaration attached?</b>	Yes
		<b>Is a current CV attached?</b>	Yes
<b>For all other vacancies, has the Minister addressed appointment options?</b>	N/A	<b>Is the current membership list of the body attached?</b>	N/A

<b>What is the legislative authority?</b>	Northern Territory (Self-Government) Act 1978
<b>Have all legislative requirements been met?</b>	Yes
<b>Who appoints?</b>	Governor-General

<b>Departmental Contact Officer</b>	s22(1)(a)(ii)	<b>Phone</b>	s22(1)(a)(ii)
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**Appointment Process for new Northern Territory Administrator**

	DESCRIPTION OF TASK	RESPONSIBLE TEAM
1.	NT Chief Minister writes to Prime Minister and proposes nominee/s	NT Chief Minister
2.	<p>Ministerial submission, including due diligence analysis, prepared to seek agreement for <sup>s47C</sup> [REDACTED]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <sup>s47C</sup> [REDACTED]</li> <li>• Completed and signed Private Interests Declaration form</li> <li>• CV</li> </ul>	Territories
3.	Ministerial consideration and agreement	Minister's Office
4.	<sup>s47C</sup> [REDACTED].	Prime Minister's Office
5.	<p>The department prepares the Federal Executive Council (ExCo) documents. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explanatory Memorandum (EM)</li> <li>• Instrument of Appointment</li> <li>• Formal Minute</li> </ul>	Territories
6.	ExCo Secretariat clearance of the draft papers.	PM&C
7.	Ministerial consideration and approval of ExCo Papers	Minister's Office
8.	Submission of papers and Executive Council approval – 27 November ExCo	PM&C

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9.	<p>Further Ministerial Submission to the Minister to provide for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Nominee negotiates terms and conditions with department (department liaises with the Remuneration Tribunal, who must approve them)</li> <li>Minister sends letter of congratulations to nominee and provides instructions on terms of appointment (Charter letter)</li> <li>Minister writes a letter of thanks to predecessor</li> </ul>	Territories	<p>s47C</p> 
10.	Ministerial consideration and approval of final submission	Minister's Office	
11.	Send package to nominee	Territories	
12.	Coordinate swearing in ceremony and press release (hosted by the Chief Minister of the Northern Territory)	Government House / Protocol NT	

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**Australian Government**
**Department of Infrastructure, Transport,  
Regional Development, Communications, Sport and the Arts**

MS25-002753

**To: The Hon Kristy McBain MP, Minister for Regional Development, Local Government and Territories** (for decision)

**cc:** The Hon Catherine King MP, Minister for Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government

**Subject:** Appointment of the Northern Territory Administrator - Mr David Connolly - Executive Council Package

**Critical Date:** Wednesday 3 December 2025 to allow submission of final papers to ExCo by close of business Wednesday 3 December 2025

<b>Recommendations:</b>	
1. Sign but <b>do not date</b> the Executive Council minute at <b>Attachment A</b> for a commencement date of 1 April 2026 or <b>Attachment E</b> for commencement date of 1 February 2026, recommending the Governor-General appoint Mr David Connolly as the Administrator of the Northern Territory.	<b>Signed / Not Signed</b>
2. Sign but <b>do not date</b> the Instrument of Appointment at <b>Attachment B</b> for a commencement date of 1 April 2026 or <b>Attachment F</b> for a commencement date of 1 February 2026. The instrument is required to printed and signed by the Minister on parchment paper (minimum 90 GSM) and delivered to Prime Minister and Cabinet once signed.	<b>Signed / Not Signed</b>
3. That you <b>initial</b> the bottom right hand corner of each page of the Explanatory Memorandum explaining the recommended appointment to the Governor-General at <b>Attachment C</b> for commencement date of 1 April 2026 or <b>Attachment G</b> for commencement date of 1 February 2026.	<b>Initialed / Not Initialed</b>
4. Initial the bottom right-hand corner of Mr David Connolly's Curriculum vitae at <b>Attachment D</b> .	<b>Initialed / Not Initialed</b>
<div style="background-color: grey; width: 150px; height: 20px; margin-bottom: 5px;">s22(1)(a)(ii)</div> <div style="background-color: grey; width: 150px; height: 20px; margin-bottom: 5px;"></div> <p><b>The Hon Kristy McBain MP</b></p> <p><b>Comments:</b></p>	
	Date: 3/12/25

**Key Points:**

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1. s34(3)

(MS25-002356 refers).

2. The appointment process of a new Administrator for the NT is unlikely be completed before the term of the current Administrator ends on 30 January 2026 (refer Attachment H). The department recommends revising the commencement date to 1 April 2026. This timing allows completion of all required steps and provides sufficient lead time to coordinate the swearing-in ceremony, which will require significant logistical planning.

3. In the recommendations, the department has provided two options for your consideration, revising the commencement date to 1 April 2026, at **Attachments A, B and C** which would allow sufficient time to finalise the terms and conditions for the new Administrator and coordinate the swearing-in ceremony; or retaining the original commencement date of 1 February 2026, at **Attachments E, F and G**, noting that the ceremony and negotiations could not be completed by this date and an acting arrangement would therefore be required. An acting arrangement brief covering the period between 31 January and 1 April 2026 is available at your office for consideration, MS25-002807 refers.

4. For this matter to be considered at the Executive Council meeting on Thursday, 11 December 2025, the signed documentation including the instrument (printed and signed on parchment paper (minimum 90 GSM)), must be received by the Executive Council Secretariat no later than Wednesday, 3 December 2025. We are working with your office to manage this process. You have advised that your office will physically deliver the documents to the Executive Council Secretariat on this day.

5. Subject to Executive Council consideration and approval by the Governor-General, we will provide you with further briefing to finalise the appointment, including a draft media release and notification letters to Mr David Connolly and a letter thanking His Honour Professor the Honourable Hugh Heggie PSM AO for his service.

**Financial impacts:**

6. Remuneration and Allowances are set by the Remuneration Tribunal.

**Legal/Legislative impacts:**

7. The proposed appointment conforms with applicable legislation.

**Stakeholder Implications:**

8. By having acting arrangements in place, shifting the swearing-in date to 1 April 2026 is expected to have minimal impact on the NT community and government and no further implications are anticipated for the NT community and government. A submission will be referred to you shortly for acting arrangements.

**Consultation:**

9. We have consulted the NT Department of the Chief Minister and Cabinet, NT Government House, the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet and the Department's Governance, Ministerial and Parliament Branch.

**Media Opportunities:**

10. We will work with your office to prepare a media release once the appointment process is finalised.

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**Attachments:**

Attachment A: Executive Council Minute – Mr David Connolly  
 Attachment B: Instrument of Appointment – Mr David Connolly  
 Attachment C: Explanatory Memorandum – Mr David Connolly  
 Attachment D: Curriculum vitae – Mr David Connolly  
 Attachment E: Executive Council Minute – Mr David Connolly  
 Attachment F: Instrument of Appointment – Mr David Connolly  
 Attachment G: Explanatory Memorandum – Mr David Connolly  
 Attachment H: Process to appoint NT Administrator

Cleared By: Kim Forbes  
 Position: First Assistant Secretary  
 Division: Territories Division  
 Mob: s22(1)(a)(ii)  
 Date: 28 November 2025

Contact Officer: s22(1)(a)(ii)  
 Section: Mainland Territories Policy  
 Mob: s22(1)(a)(ii)

**Instructions for Ministerial Services:** Nil

**Do you require a signed hardcopy to be returned:** No

**Responsible Adviser:** s22(1)(a)(ii)

**PDMS Distribution List** Jim Betts, David Mackay, Kim Forbes, Rebecca Rush, s22(1)(a)(ii)  
[appointments@infrastructure.gov.au](mailto:appointments@infrastructure.gov.au)

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**MINISTER FOR REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT, LOCAL GOVERNMENT  
AND TERRITORIES**

Departmental No. 378 of 2025

**Minute Paper for the Executive Council**

Executive Council  
Meeting No. ....

**Subject**

*Northern Territory (Self-Government) Act 1978*

Commission of Appointment of Administrator  
of the Northern Territory

Approved in Council

.....

Sam Mostyn AC  
Governor-General

.....

Filed in the Records  
of the Council

.....

Secretary to the Executive Council

Recommended for the approval of Her Excellency the Governor-General in Council that, by instrument in the attached form and under section 32(1) of the *Northern Territory (Self-Government) Act 1978*, she appoint Mr David Connolly as the Administrator of the Northern Territory, for a period of three years, beginning on 1 April 2026.

Kristy McBain  
Minister for Regional  
Development, Local Government  
and Territories



*Northern Territory (Self-Government) Act 1978*

COMMISSION OF APPOINTMENT  
OF ADMINISTRATOR OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

I, the Honourable Sam Mostyn AC, Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia, acting with the advice of the Federal Executive Council and under subsection 32(1) of the *Northern Territory (Self-Government) Act 1978*, appoint

**DAVID s47F CONNOLLY**

to be Administrator of the Northern Territory for a period of three years, between 1 April 2026 to 31 March 2029.

Signed and Sealed with the  
Great Seal of Australia on  
2025

Sam Mostyn AC  
Governor-General

By Her Excellency's Command

Kristy McBain  
Minister for Regional Development, Local Government and Territories

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ENTERED ON RECORD by me, in Register of Patents No.    page   , on  
Secretary to the Federal Executive Council

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## EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM

Minute No. 378 of 2025 – Minister for Regional Development, Local Government and Territories

Subject - *Northern Territory (Self-Government) Act 1978*

Commission of Appointment of Administrator of the Northern Territory

The proposed instrument would appoint Mr David Connolly as Administrator of the Northern Territory for a period of three years, between 1 April 2026 and 31 March 2029.

The *Northern Territory (Self-Government) Act 1978* (the Act) provides for the Government of the Northern Territory and establishes the position of the Administrator of the Northern Territory.

Subsection 32(1) of the Act provides that 'There shall be an Administrator of the Territory, who shall be appointed by the Governor-General by Commission under the Seal of Australia and shall hold office during the pleasure of the Governor-General.'

The Minute proposes the appointment of Mr David Connolly as Administrator of the Northern Territory for a period of three years beginning on 1 April 2026.

Mr Connolly's proposed appointment is on the recommendation of the Northern Territory Chief Minister and has been approved by the Australian Government.

Mr Connolly's appointment would succeed the appointment of His Honour Professor the Honourable Hugh Heggie AO PSM as Administrator of the Northern Territory. His Honour was appointed as the 23<sup>rd</sup> Administrator for a period of three years beginning on 31 January 2023.

Mr Connolly is appropriately qualified for appointment in terms of section 32 of the Act and has over 35 years of leadership in agribusiness and pastoral operations, including extensive executive-level experience in complex organisational and regulatory environments. Mr Connolly has a strong background in agribusiness and pastoral management and is a well-respected figure within the Northern Territory's agricultural sector.

The Act specifies no conditions that need to be satisfied before the power to make the proposed appointment may be exercised.

Mr David Connolly's curriculum vitae is attached.

The Minute recommends that the appointment be made in the form proposed.

Authority: Section 32(1) of the  
*Northern Territory (Self-Government) Act 1978*

## CURRICULUM VITAE

Name: Mr David s47F Connolly

Residential address: s47F

Date of birth: s47F

Present position: General Manager, Tipperary Group of Stations

Educational and professional qualifications:

2005 – 2007: Graduate Diploma Agribusiness University of Queensland, Gatton Campus.

1984 – 1986: Associate Diploma Stock and Meat Inspection, University of Queensland, Gatton Campus.

1981 – 1983: Senior School Certificate - The Southport School.

Relevant experience:

2015 – Current: General Manager, Tipperary Group of stations

2011 – 2015: Head of Livestock Investments, Insight Global Farmland Fund (IGFF), Australian General Manager, Thames Pastoral Company.

2009 – 2010: Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Farmworks Pty Ltd.

2003 – 2009: Chief Operating Officer, Australian Agricultural Company (AAco).

1987-2003: Regional Livestock and Stud Stock Manager, Dalgety / Wesfarmers Landmark

Current board memberships: 2023 – 2025: Director, National Farmers Federation (NFF)

Former board memberships:

2021 – 2024: President, Northern Territory Cattleman's Association (NTCA)

2022 – 2024: Director Northern Cotton / WANT Cotton

2011 – 2015: Non-Executive Director, Insight Global Farmland Fund (IGFF)



**MINISTER FOR REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT, LOCAL GOVERNMENT  
AND TERRITORIES**

Departmental No. 378 of 2025

**Minute Paper for the Executive Council**

Executive Council  
Meeting No.....

**Subject**

*Northern Territory (Self-Government) Act 1978*

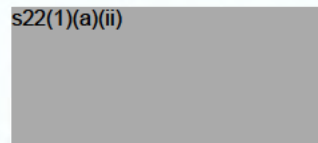
Commission of Appointment of Administrator  
of the Northern Territory

Approved in Council

Recommended for the approval of Her Excellency the Governor-General in Council that, by instrument in the attached form and under section 32(1) of the *Northern Territory (Self-Government) Act 1978*, she appoint Mr David Connolly as the Administrator of the Northern Territory, for a period of three years, beginning on 1 February 2026.

.....  
Sam Mostyn AC  
Governor-General

s22(1)(a)(ii)



Kristy McBain  
Minister for Regional  
Development, Local Government  
and Territories

.....  
Filed in the Records  
of the Council

.....  
Secretary to the Executive Council



*Northern Territory (Self-Government) Act 1978*

COMMISSION OF APPOINTMENT  
OF ADMINISTRATOR OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

I, the Honourable Sam Mostyn AC, Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia, acting with the advice of the Federal Executive Council and under subsection 32(1) of the *Northern Territory (Self-Government) Act 1978*, appoint

**DAVID** s47F **CONNOLLY**

to be Administrator of the Northern Territory for a period of three years, between 1 February 2026 to 31 January 2029.

Signed and Sealed with the  
Great Seal of Australia on  
2025

Sam Mostyn AC  
Governor-General

By Her Excellency's Command

Kristy McBain  
Minister for Regional Development, Local Government and Territories

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ENTERED ON RECORD by me, in Register of Patents No.    page   , on  
Secretary to the Federal Executive Council

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## EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM

Minute No. 378 of 2025 – Minister for Regional Development, Local Government and Territories

Subject - *Northern Territory (Self-Government) Act 1978*

Commission of Appointment of Administrator of the Northern Territory

The proposed instrument would appoint Mr David Connolly as Administrator of the Northern Territory for a period of three years, between 1 February 2026 and 31 January 2029.

The *Northern Territory (Self-Government) Act 1978* (the Act) provides for the Government of the Northern Territory and establishes the position of the Administrator of the Northern Territory.

Subsection 32(1) of the Act provides that 'There shall be an Administrator of the Territory, who shall be appointed by the Governor-General by Commission under the Seal of Australia and shall hold office during the pleasure of the Governor-General.'

The Minute proposes the appointment of Mr David Connolly as Administrator of the Northern Territory for a period of three years beginning on 1 February 2026.

Mr Connolly's proposed appointment is on the recommendation of the Northern Territory Chief Minister and has been approved by the Australian Government.

Mr Connolly's appointment would succeed the appointment of His Honour Professor the Honourable Hugh Heggie AO PSM as Administrator of the Northern Territory. His Honour was appointed as the 23<sup>rd</sup> Administrator for a period of three years beginning on 1 February 2023.

Mr Connolly is appropriately qualified for appointment in terms of section 32 of the Act and has over 35 years of leadership in agribusiness and pastoral operations, including extensive executive-level experience in complex organisational and regulatory environments. Mr Connolly has a strong background in agribusiness and pastoral management and is a well-respected figure within the Northern Territory's agricultural sector.

The Act specifies no conditions that need to be satisfied before the power to make the proposed appointment may be exercised.

Mr David Connolly's curriculum vitae is attached.

The Minute recommends that the appointment be made in the form proposed.

Authority: Section 32(1) of the  
*Northern Territory (Self-Government) Act 1978*

s22(1)(a)(ii)

## Process for the appointment of the NT Administrator

### 1. s34(3) Approval

- s34(3)
- s47C

### 3. Instrument of Appointment

- To be signed by the Minister on Wednesday 3 December 2025.
- Signed Instrument provided to the Executive Council secretariat by COB Wednesday 3 December 2025.
- Timings above are critical to meet the final Executive Council meeting for 2025, scheduled for Thursday 11 December 2025, and to gain Governor-General approval.
  - The next Executive Council meeting is not likely to occur until February 2026.


### 4. Governor-General Involvement

- The Governor-General will approve and sign the Instrument at the Executive Council meeting on 11 December 2025.
- This formalises the appointment.

### 5. Post-Approval Timeline (approx. 3 months to Swearing-In)

- Once the instrument is signed and approved, the following steps occur:
  - a. Negotiation of Final Terms and Conditions**
    - The department will engage with the Administrator Designate to agree on terms and conditions, and other entitlements.
    - Ensure alignment with Commonwealth guidelines, policies and legislation, and NT expectations.
  - b. Ministerial Approval of Negotiated Terms**
    - The department submits negotiated terms and conditions for Ministerial sign-off.
    - Administrator Designate signs the agreed terms after Ministerial approval.
  - c. Ministerial Correspondence**
    - Issue a formal letter of congratulations to the Administrator Designate.
    - Send a notification letter to the NT Chief Minister advising of the appointment.

d. s47B(a)



**e. Briefings by Government House (NT)**

- Schedule a series of briefings for the Administrator Designate on:
  - Constitutional role and responsibilities.
  - Protocols and ceremonial duties.
  - Engagement with NT Government and community.

**f. Drafting of Swearing-In Instrument**

- Prepare the formal instrument to be signed during the swearing-in ceremony.
- Ensure legal and ceremonial requirements are met.

**g. Coordination of Swearing-In Ceremony**

- Organise logistics for the ceremony, including:
  - Attendance by the Minister (or nominated Commonwealth representative).
  - Governor-General's participation.
  - Media coverage and official photography.
- Confirm venue, date, and guest list in consultation with NT Government.

~~PROTECTED: Cabinet~~

MS25-003099


**Australian Government**
**Department of Infrastructure, Transport,  
Regional Development, Communications, Sport and the Arts**

**To: The Hon Kristy McBain MP, Minister for Regional Development, Local Government and Territories** (for decision)

cc: The Hon Catherine King MP, Minister for Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government (for information)

**Subject:** Northern Territory Administrator Appointment - Post-Executive Council documentation for approval

**Critical Date:** Please action by 19 December 2025 to enable the Northern Territory government to make an announcement of the administrator designate prior to Christmas.

**Recommendations:**

1. That you **note** the start date of the commencement of the appointment term is 1 February 2026, ~~s34(3)~~

**Noted / Please Discuss**

2. That you **sign** the letter of congratulations to the nominee Mr David Connolly, appointed as 24<sup>th</sup> Administrator of the Northern Territory, at **Attachment A**.

**Signed / Not Signed**

3. ~~s22(1)(a)(ii)~~

4. That you **approve** to delegate authority to the department to negotiate the terms and conditions of the appointment with Mr David Connolly, in line with former processes.

**Approved / Not Approved**

5. That you **approve** the Northern Territory Government leading the public announcement of the Administrator Designate.

**Approved / Not Approved**

**The Hon Kristy McBain MP**



~~s22(1)(a)(ii)~~


Date: 17/12/25

~~PROTECTED: Cabinet~~


MS25-003099

**Comments:****Key Points:**

1. On 11 December 2025, the Executive Council formally endorsed the appointment of Mr David Connolly as the 24<sup>th</sup> Administrator of the Northern Territory, with the commencement date set for 1 February 2026 through to 31 January 2029. <sup>s34(3)</sup>  <sup>s34(3)</sup>  ensuring continuity of governance and adherence to established protocols. The department anticipates the swearing in ceremony to be held late February 2026, with dates to be confirmed by the Administrator's Official Secretary.

2. <sup>s22(1)(a)(ii)</sup> 

3. The department has prepared for your signature at **Attachment A**, a letter of congratulations to Mr Connolly, appointed as 24th Administrator of the Northern Territory. The letter conveys your best wishes for Mr Connolly's tenure and advises that the department will be in contact to negotiate the terms and conditions of his appointment.

4. <sup>s22(1)(a)(ii)</sup> 

5. Approval is sought for you to delegate authority to the department to negotiate the terms and conditions of Mr Connolly's appointment on your behalf. This approach is consistent with best practice and will enable the department to manage discussions with Mr Connolly, ensuring all arrangements comply with legislative and remuneration requirements, including alignment with established government policy. The department will provide updates and seek your direction as required.

**Financial impacts:**

6. Remuneration and Allowances are set by the Remuneration Tribunal.

**Legal/Legislative impacts:**

7. The proposed appointment conforms with applicable legislation.

**Stakeholder Implications:**

8. By having acting arrangements in place commencing 31 January 2026, there is expected to be minimal direct impact on the NT community and government, and no further implications are anticipated for the NT community and government.

**Consultation:**

9. The department has consulted NT Government House, Department of Chief Minister and Cabinet (NT), Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet and Financial Governance teams.

**Media Opportunities:**

~~PROTECTED, Cabinet~~

MS25-003099

s47B(a)

**Attachments:****Attachment A:** Letter of congratulations to Mr Connolly**Attachment A (i):** Instrument of Appointment – Mr Connolly**Attachment B:** s22(1)(a)(ii)

Cleared By: Kim Forbes  
 Position: First Assistant Secretary  
 Division: Territories  
 Mob: s22(1)(a)(ii)  
 Cleared Date: 12 December 2025

Contact Officer: s22(1)(a)(ii)  
 Section: Mainland Territories Policy  
 Ph: s22(1)(a)(ii)  
 Mob: s22(1)(a)(ii)

**Instructions for Ministerial Services:** Nil**Do you require a signed hardcopy to be returned:** No**Responsible Adviser:** s22(1)(a)(ii)

**PDMS Distribution List** Jim Betts, David Mackay, Kim Forbes, Kylie Donovan, s22(1)(a)(ii)  
 appointments@infrastructure.gov.au

~~PROTECTED, Cabinet~~



## The Hon Kristy McBain MP

Minister for Emergency Management  
Minister for Regional Development, Local Government and Territories  
Member for Eden-Monaro

Ref: MS25-003099

Mr David <sup>s47F</sup> Connolly  
<sup>s47F</sup>

via: <sup>s47F</sup> @nt.gov.au – Official Secretary to the Northern Territory Administrator.

Dear Mr Connolly,

I am pleased to advise that you have been appointed as Administrator of the Northern Territory for a period of three years commencing on 1 February 2026. A copy of the instrument of appointment is enclosed for your reference.

My department is currently liaising with the Department of the Chief Minister and Cabinet (Northern Territory), as well as the Official Secretary to the Administrator, to ensure arrangements for your swearing in by the Honourable Sam Mostyn AO, Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia proceed smoothly.

As the representative of the Crown in right of the Northern Territory, the role of Administrator carries significant responsibility, encompassing both statutory powers and its important ceremonial and civic duties.

In the coming days, my department will be in touch to discuss and negotiate the terms and conditions of your appointment to ensure clarity and mutual understanding. We look forward to working closely with you to support your transition into this distinguished role.

I wish you all the best in your appointment and I look forward to receiving periodic reports on your public engagements, particularly with the Northern Territory community.

Your sincerely

<sup>s22(1)(a)(ii)</sup>

Kristy McBain MP

17/12/2025

cc

The Hon Catherine King MP, Minister for Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government



# MINISTER FOR REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT, LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND TERRITORIES

Departmental No. 378 of 2025

## Minute Paper for the Executive Council

Executive Council  
Meeting No. .... 25 .....

### Subject

*Northern Territory (Self-Government) Act 1978*

Commission of Appointment of Administrator  
of the Northern Territory

Approved in Council

s22(1)(a)(ii)  
[Redacted]

Sam Mostyn AC  
Governor-General

11 December 2025

Filed in the Records  
of the Council

s22(1)(a)(ii)  
[Redacted]

Secretary to the Executive Council

Recommended for the approval of Her Excellency the Governor-General in Council that, by instrument in the attached form and under section 32(1) of the *Northern Territory (Self-Government) Act 1978*, she appoint Mr David Connolly as the Administrator of the Northern Territory, for a period of three years, beginning on 1 February 2026.

s22(1)(a)(ii)  
[Redacted]

Kristy McBain  
Minister for Regional  
Development, Local Government  
and Territories



*Northern Territory (Self-Government) Act 1978*

COMMISSION OF APPOINTMENT  
OF ADMINISTRATOR OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

I, the Honourable Sam Mostyn AC, Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia, acting with the advice of the Federal Executive Council and under subsection 32(1) of the *Northern Territory (Self-Government) Act 1978*, appoint

DAVID <sup>s47F</sup> [REDACTED] CONNOLLY

to be Administrator of the Northern Territory for a period of three years, between 1 February 2026 to 31 January 2029.



Signed and Sealed with the  
Great Seal of Australia on  
11 December 2025

s22(1)(a)(ii) [REDACTED]

Sam Mostyn AC  
Governor-General

By Her Excellency's Command

s22(1)(a)(ii) [REDACTED]

Kristy McBain  
Minister for Regional Development, Local Government and Territories

ENTERED ON RECORD by me, in Register of Patents No. 60 page 5, on 11 December 2025  
Secretary to the Federal Executive Council  
s22(1)(a)(ii) [REDACTED]