

Northern Manganese Limited has extensive manganese exploration projects in the Northern Territory.

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Mr Robert Marusco  
*Company Secretary*

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ASX Limited  
Company Announcements Office  
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**APPROVAL GRANTED BY NORTHERN TERRITORY  
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES, ENVIRONMENT ,  
THE ARTS AND SPORT (NRETAS)**

- **No further environmental assessment required for current proposed actions;**
- **Work program to test the sea floor using acoustic devices now being finalised;**
- **Areas to be targetted have been identified from latest interpretations generated from the earlier 'habitat' survey; and**
- **Area to be tested now reduced in size further minimising any impact on the environment**

Northern Manganese Limited (ASX: **NTM** - "Northern Manganese" or "the Company") is pleased to announce that it has received a formal response from the Northern Territory Department of Natural Resources, Environment, the Arts and Sports (NRETAS) to the Mining Management Plan (MMP) submitted by Northern Manganese and referred to NRETAS by the Northern Territory Department of Resources (DOR).

Under an arrangement that exists between the DOR and NRETAS - *Memorandum of Understanding* on Environmental Assessment Processes for mining proposals - NTM's MMP was referred to NRETAS for formal assesment.

Having examined NTM's proposed MMP NRETAS has now formally advised, to quote directly from their letter:

"As a delegate under the *Environmental Assessment Act*, I have determined that the proposal put forward by Northern Manganese Ltd does not warrant formal assessment and, subject to clause 14A of the environmental assessment administrative procedures, the environmental assessment process is at an end in respect to the proposed action."

The letter is issued under the authority of Mr Matt Darcey, Executive Director Environment and Heritage.

The company's consultants and contractors have been advised of this latest step in the approvals process. The final requirement before we can confirm the contract with the vessel owners, the technical advisors and the contracted marine observers is the formal authorisation required from the Department of Resources.

The Northern Territory Government, and particularly the Minister for Resources, have consistently emphasised their support for and encouragement of mineral exploration so we have every expectation, and anticipation, that the DOR authorisation will be issued soon.

Northern Manganese's Managing Director, Lloyd Jones, is in daily contact with the DOR to address any remaining matters so that the authorisation can be issued and allow the company to engage and use contractors currently available and in proximity to our intended work areas thus reducing mobilisation costs and time.

Notwithstanding the relatively short survey time - about 5 to 7 days - required for the field work in this next stage of the exploration work the company is taking great care to ensure all aspects of our work program are in compliance with the conditions of approval granted for the 'EPBC' application announced by the company last month. This included a requirement for the Company to use trained Marine Fauna Observers, onboard the survey vessel, to monitor and record the presence, if any, of marine mammals and turtles during the exploration work. It will be important for the survey team to ensure that there are no cetaceans (whales), dugongs or turtles in the vicinity of the acoustic and resistivity work and measures have been prescribed to ensure that such creatures are appropriately protected.

Northern Manganese has the greatest respect for the natural environment and the contract of engagement for our operators will provide a requirement for them to understand and abide by all of the regulatory conditions imposed.

As we advised in our recent notification of the 'EPBC' approval, we are now able to take a much more focussed approach to the marine survey that has been designed to take advantage of the latest technical advice generated by the CSIRO from the earlier 'habitat' survey. As a direct consequence of the re-modelling using the sea-floor data captured during the 'habitat' survey we have been able to reduce the area under immediate examination. This has reduced the time needed for the survey which is important given the relatively short 'window' allowed to us under the approval.



**Lloyd Jones**  
**Managing Director**