



ACTING PRIME MINISTER

Reference: MC25-080752

The Hon Lia Finocchiaro MLA  
Chief Minister of the Northern Territory  
GPO Box 3146  
DARWIN NT 0801

Dear Chief Minister

*Lia*

Thank you for your letter dated 12 June 2025 to the Hon Anthony Albanese MP, the Prime Minister, regarding your nomination of Mr David Connolly to be the next Administrator of the Northern Territory. I have been asked to respond as Acting Prime Minister.

I have referred your letter to the minister responsible for Territories, the Hon Kristy McBain MP, Minister for Regional Development, Local Government and Territories, to facilitate consideration of your nomination by the Australian Government.

Yours sincerely

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RICHARD MARLES

*16/7/25*



## 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

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LIA FINOCCHIARO

12 JUN 2025



## CURRICULUM VITAE

Name: David Robert Connolly

Former name (s): N/A

Residential address:

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Date of birth:

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)

18/01/2026 07:25:00 PM

MS SELENA UIBO MLA, NORTHERN TERRITORY LEADER OF THE  
OPPOSITION  
GPO BOX 3700  
DARWIN  
NT 0801  
AU

OPPOSITION.LEADER@NT.GOV.AU

PM Correspondence - ATT:314566 CC: RECENT APPOINTMENT OF MR DAVID  
CONNOLLY AS ADMINISTRATOR OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

Her Excellency the Honourable Ms Sam Mostyn AC  
Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia  
Government House  
Dunrossil Drive  
YARRALUMLA ACT 2600

Your Excellency,

I write regarding the recent appointment of Mr David Connolly as Administrator of the Northern Territory.

By long-standing constitutional convention, appointments to vice-regal office are drawn from individuals who are widely regarded as possessing exemplary personal integrity, professional distinction and an established record of public service. Such appointments are expected to reflect the highest standards of public respect, neutrality and apolitical conduct, consistent with the dignity of His Majesty's representative.

The office of Administrator carries not only constitutional and ceremonial responsibilities, but also an important civic responsibility to uphold and promote unity, mutual respect and community cohesion. In a diverse and multicultural jurisdiction such as the Northern Territory, the Administrator must be a unifying figure who commands the confidence of all Territorians.

Convention provides that such appointments are made on the advice of the elected government of the day, and in the case of the Northern Territory, advice that would ordinarily emanate from the Chief Minister.

It is in this context that I wish to raise serious concerns arising from further information now in the public domain regarding a series of highly offensive and deeply hurtful comments made by Mr Connolly prior to his appointment.

These comments have caused significant distress within the community and have undermined public confidence in his suitability for vice-regal office.

The Administrator has a solemn responsibility to represent His Majesty, safeguard the proper functioning of the Northern Territory's self-governing institutions, and uphold the dignity, traditions and values of public office. The conduct now attributed to Mr Connolly raises legitimate questions as to whether he can effectively discharge these responsibilities in a manner that commands the respect and confidence of the community.

In light of this new information, I respectfully submit that it would be prudent for Your Excellency to seek further advice regarding the appointment and to reconsider whether Mr Connolly remains an appropriate and acceptable choice to serve as His

Majesty's representative in the Northern Territory.

Yours sincerely

Selena Uibo MLA

Cc: The Hon Anthony Albanese MP, Prime Minister

Hon Kristy McBain MP, Minister for Regional Development, Local Government and Territories



## LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION

Parliament House  
State Square  
Darwin NT 0800  
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Darwin NT 0801  
Telephone: 08 8923 8000

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Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia  
Government House  
Dunrossil Drive  
YARRALUMLA ACT 2600

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SELENA UIBO  
18 JAN 2026

Cc: The Hon Anthony Albanese MP, Prime Minister  
Hon Kristy McBain MP, Minister for Regional Development, Local Government and Territories