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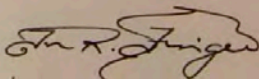
CABINET DECISION

NO. 1050

Submission No.: 880
Title: CHANGES TO FIREWORKS DAY.

Cabinet considered whether the sale and use of fireworks to commemorate Guy Fawkes Day should be discontinued and decided that for a trial period this should not be changed but that interested service organisations should, in addition, be permitted to stage fireworks displays on 1 July, 1980.

Cabinet decided that the position and public reaction should be reassessed early in 1981.



(M.R. FINGER),
Secretary to Cabinet.

7 February, 1980.

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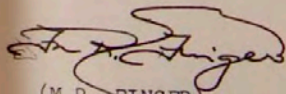
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CABINET DECISION

NO. 1033

Submission No.: 880
Title: CHANGES TO FIREWORKS DAY

Cabinet deferred further consideration.



(M.R. FINGER),
Secretary to Cabinet.

23 January, 1980.

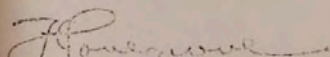
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CABINET DECISION

NO. 1025

Submission No.: 880
Title: CHANGES TO FIREWORKS DAY.

Cabinet deferred consideration until Cabinet Meeting
23 January, 1980.


T.C. LOVEGROVE,

(XXXXXXXXXXXX),
Secretary to Cabinet.

9 January, 1980.

Actg.

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FOR CABINET

SUBMISSION No: 380

Title:	CHANGES TO FIREWORKS DAY
Minister	The Honourable P.A.E. Everingham, M.L.A., Chief Minister
Purpose:	To celebrate Self-Government Day by fireworks and to reduce the hazards of firing of fireworks by the general public.
Relation to existing policy:	'Cracker Night' is currently held on 'Guy Fawkes Day' on the 5th November.
Timing/legislative priority:	The decision should be announced early enough for manufacturers and retailers of fireworks and organisers of pyrotechnic displays to make appropriate arrangements.
Announcement of decision, tabling, etc:	Press release only is required.
Acting required before announcement:	Nil.
Staffing implications, numbers and costs, etc:	Nil.
Total cost:	No direct costs are expected.

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Department/Authority.....LAW.....

COMMENT ON CABINET SUBMISSION No.

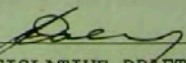
TITLE: CHANGES TO FIREWORKS DAY.....

COMMENTS:

Under the proposed Bushfires Act at present in Bill form before the Assembly, the use of fireworks can probably be made subject to the prohibition on the use of fire on days of total fire ban.

There are no legal barriers to the proposal.

There appear to be no constitutional barriers to the proposal.


SIGNED: LEGISLATIVE DRAFTSMAN

DESIGNATION: FOR SOLICITOR-GENERAL

DATE: 4 JANUARY 1980

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THE ISSUES

- . The celebration by fireworks of 'Self-Government Day'
- . Fire and health hazards associated with the firing of fireworks by the general public.

CONSIDERATION OF THE ISSUES

The celebration of 'Self-Government Day' is a more relevant occasion for Territorians than Guy Fawkes Day and is in keeping with the traditional significance of these celebrations.

Due to the more clement weather, the 1st July is favoured by the Lions Club which provides pyrotechnic displays on 'Cracker Night' as espousal of the club's commitment to sight conservation. Fireworks celebrations at this time of the year would coincide with the tourist season and the Bougainvillea Festival in Darwin. A large pyrotechnic display is also provided in the last week of July in Darwin in conjunction with the Darwin Show.

No other states celebrate 'Guy Fawkes Day' and only two allow public firing of fireworks; New South Wales in June and Tasmania in May. The move in other states toward prohibition of firing of fireworks by the public is due to the high number of injuries and damage cases resulting from the mis-use of fireworks. While this aspect has not come to the foreground during past cracker celebrations in the Northern Territory, it remains a possibility though

minimised through the work of the Lions Club.

The Bushfires Council, the Fire Brigade and the Firefighters Association do not support the public firing of fireworks due to the fire risk and consider that the fire hazard throughout the Northern Territory would be greater on 1 July than 5 November.

OPTIONS

- a. Prohibit totally the sale and public use of fireworks but allow controlled displays. Under this option the Lions Club would stage a pyrotechnic display on 1 July.
- b. Permit the sale and public use of fireworks on 1 July only. Under this option, the Lions Club would stage a pyrotechnic display on 1 July.
- c. Continue to permit the sale and public use of fireworks in recognition of Guy Fawkes Day.
- d. Permit the sale and public use of fireworks on the Saturday nearest to 5 November and on 1 July. This option does not preclude movement towards option a. by progressively increasing the restriction on the firing of fireworks by the public.

THE PUBLIC IMPACT OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS

The provision of fireworks displays on 1 July would receive a favourable reaction. It is not considered that adverse

criticism would get much support.

Organisations which have expressed support for a prohibition on public use of fireworks are the Alice Springs, Katherine and Tennant Creek Municipal Corporations, the Bushfires Council, the Fire Brigade, the Firefighters Association, the Lions Club and the Bougainvillea Festival Committee.

The Lions Club, retailers and manufacturers of fireworks should be informed of the decision by letter in addition to the public announcement.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

There are no direct financial implications unless the Government becomes involved in sponsorship of pyrotechnic displays. This is not recommended.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT RELATIONS

All the Municipal Corporations would react favourably to the proposal, although the Tennant Creek Council has indicated that fireworks displays should go ahead only in suitable climatic conditions. Councils should therefore be given the opportunity by administrative arrangement to veto the provision of displays.

CO-ORDINATION AND CONSULTATION

The views of Municipal Corporations, the Bougainvillea Festival Committee, the Chief Fire Officer, the Bushfires Council and the Chief Inspector of Explosives in the

Department of Mines and Energy were sought and are reflected in the arguments developed in the submission.

LEGISLATION

None of the options require any legislative change. The conditions on the sale and use of fireworks are given by notice in the Government Gazette.

PUBLICITY

A draft press statement is provided at Attachment A.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That Cabinet approve:

- a. That authorisation of sale and use of fireworks to commemorate Guy Fawkes Day be discontinued;
- b. The gazettal of the conditions for sale and use of fireworks and the arrangement of pyrotechnic displays on 1 July in each year in recognition of the anniversary of Northern Territory Self-Government;
- c. An officer in the Department of Health compiling records of injury occasioned by public firing of fireworks and submit a report to the Minister following each 'cracker night'.

PRESS RELEASE

FIREWORKS DAY

The Acting Minister for Mines and Energy, Mr. Everingham, announced today that Cabinet had considered a proposal to change 'cracker night' from 5 November to 1 July. The anniversary of a responsible Northern Territory Parliament is considered a more appropriate way for Territorians to celebrate the continuing tradition of the Westminster system of Government than the anachronistic Guy Fawkes Day which is not celebrated in any other state of Australia.

It has, therefore, been decided that celebration of Guy Fawkes Day will cease and the public firing of fireworks will be permitted on 1 July each year. Controlled pyrotechnic displays will be encouraged.

Another aspect of the public use of fireworks is the danger to personal safety. Although Northern Territory celebrations have had a good record of safety in the past, the potential for serious injury to a good many people remains. A close watch will be maintained on the effects of 'cracker night' and if the incidence of injury increases, the Government will consider a total ban on the public firing of fireworks. Celebrations will be restricted

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thereafter to controlled pyrotechnic displays.

Mr. Everingham added that individuals or organisations wishing to stage a controlled fireworks display at any time could still apply to the Chief Inspector of Explosives for a permit, as has been the case in the past.

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