



**NORFOLK ISLAND LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY  
12<sup>TH</sup> NILA HANSARD – 15 OCTOBER 2008**

**PRAYER**

Almighty God we humbly beseech Thee to vouchsafe Thy blessing upon this House, direct and prosper our deliberations to the advancement of Thy glory and the true welfare of the people of Norfolk Island, Amen

**CONDOLENCES**

Honourable Members I call on condolences, are there any condolences this morning? Mr Sheridan

MR SHERIDAN

Mr Speaker it is with regret that this House records the passing of Keith Charles Norman Bigg on the 26th September 2008. Keith was born on Norfolk Island on the 27th April 1938 in the house behind Telecom which was then a lovely island cottage known as "The Retreat". He was the eldest of three children: Keith, Arthur and Evelyn - whose parents were Beatrice Florence nee Quintal - affectionately known to all as "Beattie" - and Charles Frederick Bigg. As a very young boy, Keith left Norfolk Island with his parents and went to live in Woollahra. He was educated at the Woollahra Central School - from kindergarten to the NSW Intermediate level. On leaving school Keith's first job was assembling radios for a firm in Bridge Street, Sydney. From there he went on to make a career in the wool trade until coming home to live on Norfolk Island in the early 70s. Whilst walking down a street in Paddington with his brother they saw three girls walking towards them. Keith tull, I bags dar redhead. It was Cec. This redheaded lady became the love of his life. Cecily and Evelyn became close friends and on weekends they would get all dressed up and Keith and Max would arrive to pick them up and off to the hotel circuit to listen to the bands, have a dance and a really great time. In 1963 he married Cecily Connors and together they raised three sons - Neville, Gary and Anthony and have five grandchildren - Tyler, Lara, Lachlan, Jordan and Corey. Keith loved them all dearly. Keith loved to bet on the horses. He loved sports especially tennis and football and had played for the Bondi Royals when he was in Sydney and then played for the Greens here on Norfolk. He was also a strong swimmer and became a member of the Tamarama Surf Lifesaving Club. Here on Norfolk, Keith worked for Martins Agencies for many years and he and Cec also worked part time for the Westpac Bank. He was a patient and quiet achiever who loved his family, Norfolk and the community he lived in. Keith will be remembered for his many stories (true or false) and his jokes. He will be remembered as a person who never had a bad word to say about anyone and was always respected for that. Keith will be sadly missed by everyone who knew and loved him. To his sons Neville, Gary and Anthony, to his grandchildren - Tyler, Lara, Lachlan, Jordan and Corey, to his family and many friends this House extends its deepest sympathy. Mr Speaker, may he rest in peace

Mr Speaker it is with regret that this House records the passing of Reginald Miles McCoy on the 30<sup>th</sup> September 2008. Woody born lornside hes twin Jason orn the 28<sup>th</sup> January 1976 in Tauranga, New Zealand. When hi 8 days old hi need one emergency operation in Auckland but hi fight through, then when hi 8 months old dem do open heart surgery en hi fight through gain. Dem check orn hem plenty time over de next few years and hi get one clear bill of health. In 79 when hem an Jas se 3 dah family moow to Norfolk. When dem two ready fe start school dem's pre school reputation, es fraidi un. Lorraine se wash dems mouth with soap daa much dem tull dem se used to it. Miss Bataille seriously consider

retiring, happily dem se get orn en she learn fe luw dem. In 82 dah family moow back to New Zealand fe catch up with dems Mum's family. Woody an Jas especially luw dems sport dere an when dah family start back for Norfolk in 86 dems teacher se moosa cly, cos he gwen lose dah bas part of hes footy an a cricket team. Woody settle back on Norfolk and continue dem friendship en a thing that mean so much to hem on his beloved Norfolk. In 92 Woody done up a school and hi do some mechanics an a building and enjoy running amuck with hes extended Norfolk family, lorng side hes mate Jas, living up 4 corners and Cutters corn with mates do mine what time dem get up in a morning somebody would be se already crack one beer. Creatin dem Woody Legends. In 1996 hi join ah forestry crew, becoming stock inspector and in 98 hi start with lighterage. His established and consolidated friendships mean daa much to hem. Woody or Reg as he luw to be called luw life on Norfolk and was an island boy through and through. Luwen his rock hoppen, fishen, gwen rumma, footy (representing Norfolk), touch, cards, pool, chess, reading, telly and his couch, an partying and partying lorngside his many mates. In 2001 hi set up house with Kelly Worboys and on the 20<sup>th</sup> July 2002 dem was blessed with the birth of Zack Reginald. Zack was the light of Woody's life. He was a devoted, luwing Dad and he so luw his precious "bubba" Zack. Sadly, Woody en Kelly part, Kelly returning with Zack to her family in New Zealand. It was a very hard time for Woody, but thankfully with the luw and support of his family and mates and the support of Kelly and her family Woody still see a lot of, and was fully involved with his beloved Zack and when dem together es like dem nowa bin apart. Woody continue fe work and play hard lorngside Jas and his mates then in 2006 Woody and Shelly fall head over heels fe one nother. Dem two manage fe keep dems relationship a secret fe many months – something dem was very proud of – keepen a secret on Norfolk. Zack and Shell het et orf from the start en everybody happy fe Woody. Dem two daa excited when dem find out Shell se cetch. Sadly dem lorse dems baby nor da long ago but Woody keen fe start making another one soon as possible. Tragically on the 30<sup>th</sup> September Woody pass orn peacefully but oh so devastatingly suddenly in hes sleep. At 32 Woody was far too young but wi daa grateful that Woody's last two days were beautiful ones spent with Zack and Shell. To his adored son Zack, his soul mate Shelly, mate forawa twin Jas, sisters Toni and Kal, Mum and Dad Noelene and Kevin, Grandmas Ena and Eunice. To his nieces en nephews, his family and many friends dieh House extend its deepest sympathy. Mr Speaker, may he rest in peace.

MR SPEAKER Thank you Mr Nobbs. Honourable Members as a mark of respect to the memory of the deceased, I ask that all members stand in silence please. Thank you Honourable members

## PETITIONS

Are there any petitions this morning?.

## GIVING OF NOTICES

Are there any notices?

## QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Are there any questions without notice?

MR SHERIDAN Mr Speaker I've just got a couple today seeing as how I wasn't here last month. First of all to the Chief Minister. Chief Minister has this Government considered the implications to Norfolk Island of the current world financial crisis and if so, what are the implications for Norfolk Island and what strategies are being utilised to combat this growing problem

MR NOBBS Thank you Mr Speaker and Thank you for the question Mr Sheridan. I plan on making a full statement in the Statement area of today's meeting that will give some detail to the amount of investigative work that we've done so

far as well as what we have planned for the future in regard to our reaction and abilities to read on the global financial crisis so I'll make a full statement later on

MR SHERIDAN Mr Speaker I'll leave my other questions until he makes his statement. I have a question for the Minister for Finance. Minister at the last meeting you stated when tabling an answer to a Question on Notice with regard to the GST that the GST was a resounding success. On what basis do you make this claim

MR CHRISTIAN Thank you Mr Speaker, I think the answer to that question is fairly obvious. If you look back at where we've come from with the GST, it was implemented for the first time ever in Norfolk Island. It was designed in Norfolk Island. Our legislation was drafted in Norfolk Island. The projections were prepared for us by a firm of economists based on estimates of the Norfolk Island economy and after a year of operation the actual outcomes more or less perfectly match the projections of the economist and I think that's a pretty good result. For the first time ever, as I said back then, we now have a measure of the economic activity in Norfolk Island and a bench mark on which we can compare things to going forwards. I might add that I did read an article in the Norfolk Windows magazine and I think where it alluded to the \$130m that we turned over in our economy last year as being the gross domestic product. I must stress that, that terminology belongs to whoever the author or the article was because gross domestic product or gross territory product if you like, when it's determined by an economist will have duplications removed from the global amount so Norfolk Island's gross territory product is likely to be a little bit lower than that, in true economic terms. I just need to clarify that

MR SHERIDAN Mr Speaker a couple of supplementary questions. With regard to that question Minister since the introduction of the GST some eighteen months ago, the Government undertook to review the operation of the GST. Has this been completed

MR CHRISTIAN Thank you Mr Speaker, yes it has. The Working Group that was set up to review the GST completed it's review and made a number of recommendations to the Legislative Assembly and the Legislative Assembly membership has largely accepted those recommendations. We then awaited for our Legal Services Unit to provide drafting instructions to the Legal Draftsman. Unfortunately that to date has not happened and I am meeting with the legal draftsman on Friday of this week or Monday of next week, it's just slipped my mind at the moment, where I will issue a fresh set of instructions which will reflect the wishes of the Legislative Assembly Members and once that legislation is drafted I will introduce it into the House where the Membership of this Legislative Assembly will have a further say on it, and we'll go from there

SPEAKER Thank you Mr Christian. Honourable Members we do have a technical problem with the transmission of the proceedings this morning so I would ask that Members bear with us and I would like to suspend this session this morning for a period of some fifteen minutes until we've had a technician arrive to continue with the broadcast so Members please bear with us and Members of the public. I suspend this meeting for fifteen minutes and we'll see what transpires in that time. Thank you Honourable Members

SPEAKER Honourable Members we resume the meeting for this morning and Mr Sheridan, you have the call

MR SHERIDAN Mr Speaker a further supplementary question to the Minister for Finance with regard to GST. Minister as part of the GST review, what has been the impact of the GST on the cost of food

MR CHRISTIAN Thank you Mr Speaker, it's hard to determine exactly at the moment, but at the time that we were talking implementing GST when impact on

food was considered it, was thought to be around about 4.5%, that's what food would increase by. Obviously there are some in the community that take a different view when food is increased by more than that, but what they haven't taken into account is that GST is only one component of the costing of food so if the food itself has actually gone up, prior to importation, and the freight has gone up, and the fuel surcharge has been increased by the shipping company well then the cost of food in Norfolk Island will be increased, but it's not all attributable to the GST

MR SHERIDAN Mr Speaker a further couple here. Minister what has been the impact of the GST on the household budget

MR CHRISTIAN Thank you Mr Speaker, I can't answer that off the top of my head but the RPI figures are routinely produced and I don't actually have the current RPI figures, they were dealt with by the Chief Minister in my absence so he might be able to shed some light on that but at the end of the day Mr Speaker in the absence of any form of taxation on Norfolk Island in an income sense, all Norfolk Islanders as far as I'm aware are quite happy to pay a little bit more for their food as their contribution to Norfolk Island

MR SHERIDAN Mr Speaker I did have a couple more here on the impact of GST on the cost of fuel and on the small businesses particularly local producers. What I was trying to get at there Minister was if during the review were items such as that considered in the GST review

MR CHRISTIAN Certainly Mr Speaker. At the time that the GST was introduced you may recall that the GST was actually absorbed by the Administration and the costs were not passed on to the consumer but those who purchased fuel and used fuel in their businesses, like primary producers are able to claim the GST input credits so their fuel actually theoretically went down and one would have hoped that any savings were passed on to the consumer but equally important, is that anybody else along the food chain gets to claim that input tax credit

MR SHERIDAN Mr Speaker a further supplementary question there just going on with the GST Minister in the last financial year some \$8.55m was collected in GST. Would the Minister advise the amount that would have been collected by the Government if the taxation regime prior to the NSL and GST had remained in place, considering that this should have been part of the review

MR CHRISTIAN Thank you Mr Speaker, I can't say. It's a hypothetical. You're comparing different economic times with different economic times. The review of the GST was not to compare with what it may have raised under the old taxation regime that was in place, the decision had already been made to move on to a broad base consumption tax and the review basically revolved around refining the legislation, converting policy into legislation and closing loopholes where loopholes were appropriate and considering whether or not the 9% rate was the appropriate rate. There was never any intention to compare it with what may have been under the old system. That was history

MR SHERIDAN Mr Speaker a further supplementary question for the Minister. Minister how many GST audits were undertaken in the past financial year

MR CHRISTIAN I don't know Mr Speaker, but I did table a comprehensive report at the last meeting and it was probably contained in that and I table regular quarterly reports from the GST office, so it will be in there

MR SHERIDAN Mr Speaker just one last question on the GST there. Minister how many temporary entry permit holders own and run their own business here on Norfolk Island

MR CHRISTIAN I don't know Mr Speaker. That's probably confidential information

MR SHERIDAN Mr Speaker a couple here for the Minister for the Environment. Minister have you responded formally to the letter from the Commonwealth Minister Debus dated the 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2008 in relation to his view on KAVHA and if so, what approach did you take in your response

MRS JACK Thank you Mr Speaker have you the letter there for me to look at Mr Sheridan. I responded to many of the Minister's letters. Offhand I can't remember – what was the content – more of the content, because there have been several letters between Minister Debus and myself regarding KAVHA

MR SHERIDAN Mr Speaker the letter that I referred to was in relation to the view on KAVHA that they would not alter the boundaries and that they would not undertake a review of the current KAVHA boundaries

MRS JACK Thank you Mr Speaker that was in response, that letter to me was in response to a letter that I was directed to send through a motion of the House so his letter was actually in response to mine, and what I did do by recollection, was forward a copy of that letter to I think it was all lease and freehold landowners within the KAVHA area because I felt that the motion that had come to me through the House was on their behalf and so that sought me to seek Minister Debus to see if he would be prepared to look at altering boundaries etc. he gave a very definitive response and I made that response available to the relevant land and freeholders and leaseholders and because it was a response to me I didn't reply to that letter

MR SHERIDAN Mr Speaker just a couple more with regard to KAVHA for the Minister. Minister are the area of each site within the Australian Convict sites group which are proposed to be nominated for World Heritage, of which KAVHA is one of them, the same areas that are listed on the National Heritage list

MRS JACK Thank you Mr Speaker I can't answer for all the other ten sites. There are eleven sites in all as serial listings, but the KAVHA site is the KAVHA boundary as is the one recognised by this Government. The MOU. Yes

MR SHERIDAN Mr Thank you Speaker in the case that you couldn't really answer that Minister could you provide details of the difference between each site on the National Heritage List and that proposed for World Heritage Listing

MRS JACK Thank you Mr Speaker in that there has been a requirement for the other ten sites to have a buffer zone included in the nomination. That has not been required of the KAVHA site. The KAVHA site does not have a buffer zone attached to it. It is simply the KAVHA area as is outlined under our own Heritage Register, the one that's recognised under the National Heritage Register, the one that's recognised by the Australian Heritage Council, that is the one that we're working with. Other zones though, other sites, for example your Port Arthur site, does have a buffer zone attached as do Hyde Park Barracks, those ones all have an additional – outside their own portion – another buffer zone

MR SHERIDAN Mr Speaker a further supplementary question please. Minister would you be able to provide the details of the buffer zones for each of the nominated sites in the Australian Convict Sites group and what controls apply to these buffer zones

MRS JACK Thank you Mr Speaker. Each of those. I have the, and have informed Members that the series listing, the nomination that has gone to UNESCO has been available. I have several copies in my office which I have to make

available more to the KAVHA office, to the public library, to drop off some to the school, but all the eleven sites are shown with their buffer zones and the detail is given and what else were you looking for. All the information regarding to this site, the areas, everything that I think Mr Sheridan is asking about, the controls, are listed in that. No further controls have been put in because it's all under the relevant legislation. No further management or legislative levels were being put in. You have the KAVHA CMP, you'll have our own Heritage Register, you'll have the EPBC Act as well outside that, but there are no new management levels or legislation being put in for it, but it is all listed there and even that management format is put in a diagrammatical way on one page within that nomination. I'll put it out there. All those nominations, the books have to be made available to the public. Some have been already. Been put in place, but I received some more copies on Friday and they still need to be placed out in the public arena

MR SHERIDAN Mr Speaker the last a supplementary question on that. Minister what protection is the Norfolk Island Government offering landholders in the current area of KAVHA and also the landholders immediately outside the KAVHA boundary in relation to their rights of ownership and ability to utilise their own property

MRS JACK Their rights of ownership aren't being questioned at all and their uses and development practices will still be as they are today and those will be relating to the Norfolk Island Plan and if any of their planned activities would make a significant impact within the site under the relevant sections of the EPBC Act

MR SHERIDAN Mr Speaker one for the Chief Minister please. Chief Minister what action do you intend to take over the repeated and serious misinformation which is being provided to this House and the community regarding the issue of the dioxin testing

MR NOBBS Mr Speaker I've had numerous consultation with Minister Vicky Jack regarding this issue. I've also spoken at length to someone who felt that they were in an affected area, and I am quite confident in both the manner in which the Minister for the Environment acted upon first being made aware that there may be an issue of dioxins, in that area out towards Headstone and was present at the meeting when that issue was first raised and the Minister gave an immediate direction to the then CEO to commence an investigative process and to provide the best outcomes for those living in those areas. As that has progressed along it has definitely come to our attention in recent times that some of the testing that was requested at that meeting has not gone its full phase, and so at the immediate notification that that testing was not done to its fullest extent the Minister for the Environment acted again promptly and professionally and ordered the full testing of all aspects in that area, so I'm confident that the testing for those areas will be completed in the best way possible. I'm also aware that it's been commenced through the Minister for the Environment

MR SHERIDAN Mr Speaker a supplementary question for the Chief Minister. Chief Minister that's all well and good, but this House I think over the past, I think this all started off in about December last year and the last three or four months, to questions in this House the Minister has stated unequivocally that all these tests had been done for dioxins on sediment and soil samples which now are deemed to be incorrect, so who is going to be held accountable for the misinformation emanating from this House

MR NOBBS Thank you Mr Speaker and thank you for bringing this forward Mr Sheridan. The Minister at all times have given advise to this House that has been provided to her by the professionals that were engaged to carry out the testing and as was evident in the statement of the last sitting, Minister Jack provided quotations from those persons who were involved in that area of the testing process. Interestingly enough, in that area for the testing of dioxins and other contaminants, the personnel who we have dealt with in the past have changed, and whether or not that is a result of the information that has been provided to us and has now been called into account, I'm not

entirely sure, but I am certain now that the personnel who the Minister is dealing with, are taking this very seriously and by having the direct communication with them there is no misinterpretation of exactly what we expect to be tested and how quickly we expect it to be done

MR SHERIDAN Mr Speaker just a supplementary question there again. That's all well and good there Chief Minister but I would refer to a question in the House with regard to my asking yourself with regard to a question of accountability and penalties associated with misleading information and you indicated, and just to quote yourself, that "if you are providing misleading information another penalty in terms of being in this office would be that you probably wouldn't return" and I manage to obtain some copies of those ALS reports and even I can see that no testing for dioxins were carried out on those soil testing even though the Minister has stated numerous times that they were analysed by Administration officials, ALS confirmed this, etc etc. she's provided this to the House. What I'm trying to say is, who is going to be held accountable for all this misinformation

MR NOBBS Mr Speaker as I've already alluded to, there are several links in this chain and the evidence and information that has been provided to this House has been done so with what has been provided by the professionals, consultants and scientists in those areas to the Minister. I'm happy to take on board any of the documentation that you may have there and have a look at it, and discuss it with the Minister and discuss it with yourself further to this meeting if you require

MR SHERIDAN Mr Speaker a further supplementary question to the Minister for the Environment this time please. Minister will you be making a public apology to the Headstone resident which you've wrongly ridiculed in your statement to this House on the 17<sup>th</sup> September last, now that you finally have admitted that the allegation by the Headstone resident that soil samples you claimed to have been tested for dioxins were indeed never tested; that the water tank sediment you claimed were taken from tanks were also in fact never taken and tested

MRS JACK Mr Speaker I won't be giving a personal apology or apology to that particular Headstone resident because I've never mentioned that person's name in this forum and I don't believe it would be appropriate to start doing so now, however, if my colleagues are of a different view then they can complain to you Mr Speaker, and bring the matter before a disciplinary committee which may force me to do that but I have prepared a statement in which I recognise, and I will be making it at the appropriate time, Mr Speaker in which I recognise the fact that matters weren't done as I was led to believe, and I say I regret any distress caused to Headstone residents but because I haven't; named that person in this forum I don't believe I should. However as I said before, if my colleagues are of a different view then I stand to be corrected and that can be taken before the disciplinary aspect of this Legislative Assembly

MR SHERIDAN Mr Speaker a further supplementary question for the Minister. Minister will you inform this House and the community now that such serious and misleading information was allowed to be repeatedly given, particularly when on several occasions both in this House and in correspondence to yourself you were advised of the real facts of this situation

MRS JACK I'm not going to start brow beating people in this place and try to lay blame. What I'm trying to do is correct a situation that has arisen, and move forward in a positive way. Now I deeply regret misinformation given to myself, and the effect that has caused in this House and to me but I'm going to move forward with it, and correct it. I'm not going to start trying to lay blame and looking backwards. Besides it can be scattered. The Blame. And it goes back some ten months if you want to really look at it Mr Speaker and as I say, I'm not prepared to do that but make best of the situation and move forward

MR SHERIDAN Mr Speaker one final one on that please. Now that it's clear that no sediment was tested there Minister and given that dioxins do not dissolve on water, will you now agree to reimburse Headstone residents who have continued to purchase bottled water until this testing has been carried out

MRS JACK Mr Speaker the original cause of complaint was against the water at Headstone. That water has been analysed and deemed to be fine. No I will not be reimbursing,. The question has not only been asked in this forum, it's also been asked I believe of the Chief Minister in a private meeting, and it was also asked of the Secretary to Government who also supplied the same answer. I again repeat that information

MR SHERIDAN Mr Speaker I do have a further one there. Minister considering again, the misleading information presented in this House by yourself on numerous occasions, is it your intention to accept the responsibility yourself, as they say, the buck stops with you, and resign as a Minister as one would expect a conscientious Government official to do so

MRS JACK No Mr Speaker I'll leave that to be, if a person has that view, then I wish they would take it before the Speaker and have the matter investigated. I leave it for the House to censure me

MR SHERIDAN Mr Speaker another one for the Chief Minister. Chief Minister reading a letter to the editor in the past week with regard to the contracts given to local businesses for labour to construct the new fire station, it is apparent that certain businesses obtain work even when their prices were substantially higher than others who had applied. Could you advise us who decided on who would be given these contracts and on what basis was this decided

MR NOBBS Thank you Mr Speaker in regard to the management of those works and the assessment for eligible criteria and the type of work that was involved and the monies involved, it goes through a three stage process. The Fire Station Working Group assembles and looks through the tenders that have been submitted and the information that has been provided there. That is further forwarded on to the Corporate Management Group who make a further independent assessment and then that information is forwarded on to the Tenders committee and the Executive so there is a great deal of scrutiny across all parts of the tender and it really comes down I think to one of the phrases that is quite often in the tenders document that the highest or lowest or not necessarily any tender will be accepted. What is accepted is that we move toward the best outcome we can for any of these projects so I'll just restate that again. There are three separate levels of scrutiny for that process

MR SHERIDAN Mr Speaker another one for the Chief Minister there please. Given that the works on the RESA have now commenced and considering that work has been provided on an hourly charge out rate, what practices are in place to ensure that the contractor's employees time sheets are correct and that the contractor's claims for payment are correct

MR NOBBS Thank you Mr Speaker and thank you for this question Mr Sheridan. In recent weeks I've had the opportunity to go out to the RESA works areas and have discussions with the works manager out there, also manager of Public Works has prepared for me a report in recent days which I've added to and given some information to, to make a statement to this House on how RESA is progressing. In answer to your question in particular Mr Sheridan every conceivable element is put into the spread sheet on a daily basis that lists everything from tonnage, to consumables, to man hours to equipment down time and up time and enables the planning of the normal daily work load so that we are paying for plant and equipment that's to be used rather than

anything that's to be on standby or anything like that, so I do have a statement to make on that and I will say that it is being well managed and eyes are firmly on the budget as well as the production

MR SHERIDAN Mr Speaker a supplementary question to the Chief Minister, has the internal auditor been given a brief to assist in this area and just to follow on, how much has RESA cost to date

MR NOBBS Mr Speaker as I said, I do have a more comprehensive statement and I'm happy to table that with some of the documentation. In terms of the internal auditor no process has been put in place there as yet but you will be very aware that there are many check of's on each phase of this project

MR CHRISTIAN Thank you Mr Speaker, I just wonder if I can provide any supplementary information there in respect of the internal auditor. Nowhere in the Administration are the activities of the internal auditor telegraphed in advance. The internal auditor formulates his own programme and is free to investigate any section of the Administration he chooses to, with no notice

MR SHERIDAN Mr Speaker I have a question here but I don't know if it's for the Minister for Finance or the Minister for the Environment. Just in regards to the sustainable agricultural workshop that was held in the past couple of weeks. What was the Government's – I note that the Government sponsored that activity. What was the total cost of the Government's sponsorship for this

MRS JACK Thank you Mr Speaker the cost of getting the fellow over here was quoted to me as being in the vicinity of roughly \$4,100

MR SHERIDAN Mr Speaker a supplementary question, so was that the total cost to the Government. His airfare and the cost of coming over here and the venue hireage, morning teas, anything else associated with his visit

MRS JACK Thank you Mr Speaker some personal sponsorship was taken up for that Mr Speaker as was the notes for the course was sponsored and this was put on the programme by National Parks, Mr Brook Watson came on board there. There have been some private sponsorship with regard to morning teas and hireage, so we're still getting the full cost in, but the costs that was quoted to me to bring this fellow over roughly was \$4,100. There are going to be some further costs attached to it, because the solid testing, it was felt that there was such a positive response that we need to keep this momentum going and indeed it benefits the entire community. I was approached to see whether the Government would come on board with assisting in soil testing for nutrients etc. I spoke with my colleague the Minister for Finance and with the amount that's proposed, it would be 50% on a specific number of testing and that is expected to be roughly \$2000

MR SHERIDAN Mr Speaker a couple for the Minister responsible for the airline. I think this one's been around for a couple of weeks Minister. An approach has been made by the ATA I believe for the airline number 13737 to be made a free call. Can you advise whether it is the intention of the Government to make this so or not

MR CHRISTIAN Thank you Mr Speaker, and I welcome that question. Yes it is the Government's intention to do that if possible but I've come up against a little bit of a hurdle. What I promised the ATA was that I would find out what it would cost to provide the service free by requesting from the Telecommunications Manager the level of calls going through that number and I've since been told that if I was to request that information and it was provided to me I would be breaching the confidentiality clauses that are within the Telecommunications Act or something like that so I can't actually give you

the number Mr Sheridan but it's still my intention to do so if I can get around this slight hurdle

MR SHERIDAN Mr Speaker another question for the Minister responsible for the airline. Minister I note the intention to cease some routes in particular the Gold Coast and in particular the second Melbourne route early next month. Minister prior to the commencement of the services what analytical business case was provided to indicate that these services would be successful

MR CHRISTIAN Thank you Mr Speaker, quite a bit actually. From time to time the airline looks at its business across its routes and we were also mindful that we need to provide additional seats into Norfolk Island to meet the tourism targets outlined in the tourism strategy and experience from the past has proven to us that simply adding frequency to an existing gateway doesn't always work. This was demonstrated when we added the Friday service to both Sydney and Brisbane and we subsequently terminated the Brisbane service because there was no demand for it and we redirected the Friday Sydney service on to Melbourne and that counted as the Melbourne service. The Melbourne service proved very successful and we had fairly high load factors, in fact up in the 90% but it was 90% of a reduced capacity so instead of carrying 106 people I think we were carrying about a maximum of 65 or 86 or something in the order of that and the Melbourne service was so encouraging that it was felt that there could be more demand there then we were providing seats for so the decision was taken to add the second Melbourne service. In respect of the Coolangatta one we applied some of the methodology that was applied in Newcastle there and what Norfolk seems to have been able to do in the past and this is where I stress seems, is that wherever we have a population base approaching a million people we seem to be able to sustain one flight per week out of that population base and Coolangatta has a fairly high retiree population and it suited the demographic that travel to Norfolk Island. We discussed it at length with our industry wholesale partners and we discussed it with the manager of the Visitor Information Centre and they were all positive and I have always been of the view that I was prepared to give something a go because unless you try it you never really know, and to give ourselves the best possible chances a fairly long lead time was put in place where advertising was commenced and we actually had all of the approvals in place to operate the service prior to commencing the advertising so that we didn't have the stamp on the reservations system subject to regulatory approval because that can be a bit of a turn off so we cleared all of those hurdles before the inventory was loaded into the reservation system. We then commenced a fairly intensive marketing campaign and I will make some mention of that later in Presentation of Papers to stimulate interest and things were looking pretty good from the beginning of October and onwards, however the financial meltdown in the world has caused a lot of people I think to rethink their travel plans and consequently at the end of October bookings didn't just taper off, they took a drastic drive and that's why the Government when we met with the management of Norfolk Air last week we decided the best course of action at the moment was to temporarily withdraw from the service

MR SHERIDAN Mr Speaker just one final question please to the Minister for Finance with regard to the airline. Minister I note the losses incurred by the airline in July and August and I believe in September and most probably in this current month. Can the Minister explain why it's taken over three months and the expenditure of all the profits of the airline to decide to cease some services considering the extensive data available to the airline officials and yourself

MR CHRISTIAN Thank you Mr Speaker, it's fairly easy to answer. If you recall Mr Speaker the corresponding period last year, the airline had significant negative cash flows and consumed almost all of its reserves. That was an environment where part of the plane, in fact 50% of the plane was borne by Ozjet airlines who gave us significant discounts in order to keep all of the services operating so it became the normal operation if you like, and then as September came we started to rebuild and go forwards and there was every expectation that would happen this time around, however, this time

around there was some significant additional factors coming into play. Up until December of this year, sorry last year, halfway through the financial year, the airline was sailing very well and we were on track to probably produce an annual profit in excess of two million dollars. However, that was when oil prices started to go silly and our fuel bill started to significantly increase so Mr Speaker where we have consumed all of the airlines reserves, it's not unusual. It happened last year. We had someone else to bear the pain with us last year. This year we don't have that and in addition, I have been saddled with additional fuel costs of probably close to \$1.5m that I didn't have last year and when you see the figures that I will produce for the airline up until the end of September this year it's actually been a pretty good result under the circumstances. Mr Speaker I probably should carry on because the second part of the question was why didn't we act sooner and there's an important thing to add to that, what we have tried to do as an airline is to put seats into the market place that can be filled so that we can deliver visitor numbers into Norfolk Island to meet the targets set out in the tourism strategy. Mr Speaker you can't advertise something for sale unless it exists. It's unlawful in the world of travel so you have to commit to putting seats into the marketplace in the reservations system so that anybody looking up the reservations system can purchase them there and then. So you cannot advertise the seats for sale and then make the flights available if people happen to book. It's the other way around. We have also noticed over the passage of the last few months that the lead time when a particular flight moves from loss to break even, to slightly profitable can be as little as two weeks. The days of people booking months in advance are long gone. It's almost as if it's impulsive travel. Now they make a decision today and they go tomorrow so we wanted to give ourselves sufficient time to confirm the trend was in fact downwards and some of the statistics that I'll refer to later in Presentation of Papers, will justify the airlines position and management of the situation

SPEAKER

Thank you. Any further Questions? We move on

## PRESENTATION OF PAPERS

Are there any Papers for Presentation this morning Honourable Members

MR CHRISTIAN

Thank you Mr Speaker, I present the financial indicators for September and in there Mr Speaker I will also make reference to the airline results for July, August and September although I've only just been given the September ones but I'll speak off the cuff to those. Mr Speaker the revenue fund financial indicators for the month of September 2008 have been prepared. As yet I do not have the cash at bank balance for the 30 September 2008 nor the revenue fund's estimated financial position at the 30 September 2008 but I will circulate them to Members when I receive them. Revenue from customs duty has achieved 103% of the revised budget. Other taxes has achieved 69% of the revised budget. Earnings from GBE's has achieved 104% of the revised budget and interest received has achieved 100% of the revised budget. GST NSL has achieved 93% of the revised budget and other charges has achieved 77% of the revised budget. Income from all sources at the end of September 2008 stood at 93% of the revised budget which equates to \$3.412m. Forecast income was expected to be \$3.671m. the income of \$3.412m for the September quarter is \$501,000 more than the income received in the corresponding period last year. Overall revenue fund expenditure is being limited to 92% of the revised budget with actual expenditure in dollar terms being \$3.409m which is \$284,000 more for the September quarter than the last financial year. At the end of the September quarter the revenue fund is in surplus by \$3,000 which is \$26,000 better than it was forecast to be and compares favourably with the corresponding period last financial year when the budget was in deficit by \$214,000. Mr Speaker the financial crisis that has gripped the world will adversely affect Norfolk Island and will continue to do so until international financial markets stabilise and Australians and New Zealanders once again feel financially secure enough to invest in a Norfolk Island holiday. I believe that the relative strength of the Australian financial sector, the strength of the Australian economy and the decisive action taken by Prime Minister Kevin Rudd and his Government to inject up to \$4billion into the first mortgage home lending market and the

introduction into Parliament of legislation that will protect all savings for the next three years will ensure that the current downturn in visitor numbers from Australia will be short-lived. Mr Speaker the Chief Minister will today be making a statement which will outline measures that the Government will implement to prepare the Administration for the expected reduced income streams over the next few months and I urge all Members to participate in debate at the appropriate time. I will now address the Norfolk Air situation and I will commence by reminding all Members that the airline has historically experienced negative cash flows for the July August and September period and is likely that this negative cash flow will extend into October of this year. For the month of July, income from all sources total \$1,229,530 and expenditure total \$1, 600,170 resulting in a loss for the month of \$370,640. The expenditure amount quoted includes \$252,000 in additional fuel costs over and above the contract strike rate and \$7,000 which was spent on advertising and promotion. At the end of July 2008 the airline retained \$844,343 in accumulated profits. The month of August 2008 delivered income from ticket sales, carriage of freight and interest on investments totalling \$1,441,770. total expenditure was \$2,031,815 which includes \$340,350 in additional fuel costs over the contract strike rate and \$52,350 spent on advertising and promotion. The result for August 2008 is a loss of \$590,045. At the end of August 2008 the airline retained \$254,298 in accumulated profits. Mr Speaker the \$600,000 loss for August is about twice that which I was expecting and is attributable to two factors and they are, escalating fuel prices and falling seat load factors. Mr Speaker on Friday 10<sup>th</sup> October, all Executive Members met with the Chief Executive Officer of Norfolk Air to be briefed on the status of forward bookings which were held by the airline and the picture was not good. Forward bookings for October, November, December and January 2009 were all down when compared with the corresponding period last year. For example Mr Speaker I'll share this information with you. October alone was down 6% and this is across the entire network. November was down 31%. December is down 25% and January is down 11%. When we look at Coolangatta and the second Melbourne service it became apparent that despite the long leading times and in excess of \$200,000 being spent by Norfolk Air and its supporting wholesalers loading the new services, the booking momentum that was building, collapsed dramatically at the end of October with some of the scheduled Coolangatta services not having a single passenger booked on them. The Executive Members accepted the advise of the Norfolk Air CEO and immediately suspended indefinitely the Coolangatta and Tuesday Melbourne services, effective from the 6<sup>th</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> November respectively. In addition, poor loadings on the Wednesday Sydney flight has seen the schedule amended by suspending services from the 5<sup>th</sup> November to the 25<sup>th</sup> February 2009 except Wednesday the 24<sup>th</sup> December which will be operated as scheduled. All affected passengers can be accommodated on other flights remaining in the schedule. Norfolk Air's participating wholesale and airline partners were notified over the course of the October long weekend and media releases were issued to the public in Australia and Norfolk Island on Monday 13<sup>th</sup> October 2008. Mr Speaker the decision to reduce services was required to match seat capacity with demand and to secure Norfolk Air's financial position. Mr Speaker if we discount the temporary suspension of the Sydney Wednesday service there will still be 43,000 seats available for sale in the Australian marketplace on an annual basis up until May 2009 when the number of available seats will rise to 52,000 as a result of the introduction of the 737-300 aircraft. This will allow Norfolk Island to receive the same number of visitations as last year if we are able to sell those seats. To this end Mr Speaker myself, the Tourism Minister Mr Gardner and our respective officers along with our local and Australian wholesalers will accelerate the marketing partnerships programme which hopefully will have a beneficial impact in the Australian marketplace. In closing I wish to draw to the attention of Members a comparison of visitor numbers to Norfolk Island for the period January to September for the year 2007 and the year 2008 and Mr Speaker you will find these statistics very interesting. Visitor arrivals and this is from all sources for the January to September inclusive period 2007 was 24,770 visitors. For the same period in 2008 the total visitor numbers were 24,534. The variation there is a reduction of about less than 1% in visitor numbers to Norfolk Island over that period. The interesting part is this. In that time visitor arrivals from New Zealand had fallen by 1916 people or 34% while visitor arrivals from Australia for the same period were up by 1680 people or just on 6% so Mr Speaker Norfolk

Air has really done a sterling job in maintaining and preserving visitor numbers into Norfolk Island. Now I'll just go on a little bit because partway through this meeting I've been given the unaudited profit and loss for Norfolk Air for the month of September and I'll share this information with you and table this along with the financial indicators for September. Mr Speaker ticket sales for the month came in at \$1,643,100. Airfreight receipts came in at \$59,700, a bit of miscellaneous income came in at \$100 giving us an operating income of \$1,702,900 and to that we can add interest from our investments of \$10,500 giving a total income of \$1,713,400 for the month. Now Mr Speaker if we look at the expenditure side the result is as follows, we expended \$1,988,365 which gives us an operating loss for the month of \$274,965 and to that we can add \$7,150 which was spent on advertising promotion which gives us a net result for the month of a loss of \$282,115. Now that is a dramatic turn around on the previous month. We have halved the hemorrhaging whilst still paying out \$278,500 in additional fuel costs and I would expect that I can maintain this trend going forward into October so the net result of all of this is that at the end of September 2008 the airline is in the red to the amount of \$27,817 so that means that we've exhausted all of our reserves and I am now operating from the cash reserves from the airport GBE but under the circumstances I find that an acceptable outcome. It's not too far different from the same situation we were in last year where we were from about I think from memory \$150,000 of exhausting all of our reserves here and we will rebuild as we go forward and I'll keep Members and the community informed as we progress

MR GARDNER Thank you Mr Speaker, under subsection 31 (4) of the Legal Aid Act 1995 and clause 12 of the Memorandum of Understanding between the Commonwealth of Australia and Norfolk Island I now lay before the Legislative Assembly at this sitting of the 15<sup>th</sup> October 2008 a report addressing the matters specified in that subsection which are as follows – a. a report of the Legal Aid Advisory committee for the above period relating to its activities for that period; b. all recommendations of the committee that have been accepted and a statement of reasons for the non acceptance of recommendations; c. that no legal assistance has been provided to a body corporate and d. enclosing a summary of the financial records of the fund in relation to the above period

MR GARDNER Thank you Mr Speaker, I table the inbound passenger statistics for September 2008 and move that the paper be noted

SPEAKER Honourable Members the question is that the paper be noted

MR GARDNER Thank you Mr Speaker, when perusing the figures which I understand have been provided electronically to all Members and certainly are widely distributed within the community we will see that the figures for September are down some 20% on the same period last year, or approximately 1200 people down for the year to date as compared to year to date figures for the same period last year. Interestingly enough, when we compare those arrival figures with 2006 we see that they are almost on par but we must have done very well in the first couple of months of the financial year in 2006, that's July and August as we are about 1400 or so down on the same period for the same year even though for the month we certainly outperformed that month in 2006. There are obviously a number of reasons and explanations for that and a lot of that has to do with the initiatives that were put in place by Norfolk Air at the time which had some success, some limited success, but clearly have an impact from time to time and particularly when they are targeted at a ripe market that is hankering for a destination. The Minister for Finance in his previous address in relation to the financial figures has mentioned global issues and their potential for impact and I understand the Chief Minister is going to make a statement in relation to that later on so any particular debate on that I probably will save until that time but those global financial issues will not stop the world from turning and will not stop the world from operating. We are evidencing a significant softening in the market as evidenced by the Finance Minister's remarks previously as far as the performance of Norfolk Air is concerned but that is not something that is frightening us off, or making us throw our hands in the air and walk away, in fact, we

recognise both the airline and Norfolk Island Tourism have recognised that the issues surrounding the global financial crisis more so impact in this part of the world on confidence though we certainly do recognise the fact that people have suffered in their hip pocket and in their life long savings which obviously influences them in the decisions that they make about travel and their spending patterns. We recognise those things, but it's about remaining confident. It's about ensuring that we still have a presence in the marketplace. We as Norfolk Island Tourism remain committed to our strategic plan. We are committed to our partnership arrangements with our wholesale partners under the marketing partnership programme, and as I said, that programme is designed entirely to ensure that we maintain an ongoing presence in the marketplace come hell or high water. It is vitally important that we do, do that. Clearly again, as the Minister for Finance mentioned earlier, the intervention of the Australian Government, the Rudd Government with their recent announcements about, I think, they've quantified it at some \$10billion assistance into the Australian marketplace will stabilise the Australian market. I have absolutely no doubt about that. We will still face some uncertainty from our potential market for a period of time. There's no doubt about that however, the point I'm trying to make is that I am confident that the market will stabilise and we will be able to return both as Norfolk Island Tourism and as an airline, hand in glove because there is a very strong relationship between both entities to ensure that we deliver on the promise that we've made under our tourism strategy. The initiative taken by the Tourist Bureau at the show on the weekend was welcomed and Terry and his Team are to be commended for that initiative and in ensuring that many of the often asked questions, answers were able to be provided by very informative display boards and also by the staff that were in attendance and as I understand it, from talking to Terry this morning that initiative was particularly well received by all of those people that took the time to go and I guess refresh their confidence in our tourism market and what the Tourist Bureau are doing to promote Norfolk Island in our market places. In the next few weeks I hope that the Branding Committee of the Tourist Bureau will be able to make a presentation to Members of the Legislative Assembly about identifying the brand, the marketing brand for Norfolk Island going forward and also giving some very informative consideration for opportunity for consideration by Members into the market demographics paper and work that has been undertaken to date which is a very valuable part of the arsenal in promoting Norfolk Island and enabling us to be able to confidently identify the market which we are pursuing and again in relation to that, there will be a further opportunity for the local industry to interact with our wholesale partners in November at our next industry meeting proposed to be held on the island. In relation to visitor figures, and it does relate to some of the comments that the Minister for Finance made and following a visit that I made to New Zealand earlier in the year to meet with our wholesale partners in New Zealand it became very obvious then that the ingredients for the recent events globally had combined in such a way that they were already showing a marked effect in the New Zealand marketplace and in reporting to Members on my return from that I indicated that I thought that New Zealand was a pretty good litmus test or indicator for how things were going to pan out generally. It seems that the New Zealand market is more easily influenced than the Australian one, is impacted on sooner than the Australian market and usually takes a little longer to recover from any downturn. Mr Speaker there have been significant impacts as I reported in the House I think following that visit to New Zealand including elections and exchange rates and financial institutions that have gone to the wall but I think it's fair to say that despite recent events globally that there is optimism within the marketplace, both in Australia and New Zealand. You've even shared your own optimism with us in recent days, about forward bookings and where you see them and that certainly is assisting the level of confidence around this table and hopefully that is going to filter down through the community. I guess in just commenting on where Norfolk Island is placed today, I think there are some advantages that are clearly evident to us. Those include unfortunate for some obviously, the weakening of the Australian dollar against other global currencies including the euro and the British pound, the US dollar, the Japanese yen and even in this region the French Pacific Franc which makes us a more competitive destination for our established markets both out of Australia and New Zealand and I think that even with the weakening of the New Zealand dollar against the Australia dollar it is again shed some confident light that

the downturn that we had readily noticed out of the New Zealand market again, has another tool, another ingredient that will assist us to recover that market in due course. Mr Speaker again returning to the inbound passenger statistics, I do note with interest that the visitations out of Victoria are well up for September. Almost double what they were last year but bearing in mind obviously that I think it was in October last year that our first Melbourne service commenced. For September this year we've doubled those figures and in actual fact Victoria is outpacing Queensland which was our established second major provider of visitors to Norfolk Island and certainly has outpaced them in the month of September. That's interesting as far as total visitor numbers are concerned and it's also interesting to note from those figures that not all of those Victorian visitors have come direct out of Melbourne. It's very clear that some have come through the other gateways into Norfolk Island including Sydney, Newcastle and Brisbane so it is obviously a market that is doing us well and it was painful to us all I think to have to withdraw the second service out of Melbourne as we did last week but as soon as we are in a position I think it will be given consideration to relaunch the second service and we will have to obviously weight that up against the expanded capacity of the 737-300 series aircraft that's due to come on line in May out of Melbourne. We have experienced a downturn. To some that is distressing. It is disappointing to many others but I am confident that despite some of these other influences that have without question had an impact on our market that, that will recover. I remain positive and the world will not stop turning. We will wake up tomorrow, we will still be in the market with our marketing partnership programme and we will still be attracting valued visitors to Norfolk Island. Thank you

**MRS JACK** Thank you Mr Speaker I was just wondering yesterday when the Minister's were discussing this very topic at our regular weekly meeting, I asked the Minister for Finance in his capacity as Minister for the airline on the ability for private individuals or wholesalers to start operating a little bit outside the square, I'm fully aware of the tourism strategies that are in place in conjunction with our Tourist Bureau and wholesalers and the airline, but also a difference on the way people can start to make bookings on the airline and if he could just talk about some of those issues, because I found it very interesting the way people can chop and buy those tickets. If you could just discuss that

**MR CHRISTIAN** Thank you Mr Speaker, and thank you Mrs Jack. What we have done for quite some time now is sold single sector tickets in Norfolk Island which means that anybody can mix and match so you don't have to come to the island on a Sunday and return the following Sunday. You can come in on one day and go back on another but we've also put in place advance purchase tickets so people can buy them three, four, five, six months in advance at very low prices and if for instance, they're not able to travel on the day originally nominated, we don't refund the money, it's gone forever to the airline, but we do allow people to change the day of travel for a small fee and that's what most airlines are doing now, and the idea is that we can build a base load for the airline some time out into the future but it does remain flexible and as far as I'm aware, and I may stand corrected on this, it's not seasonal, it's available year round and that's an initiative that hasn't been there before and it should be well received I would have thought by the group market that forms about 30% of the visitors that come to Norfolk Island from both Australia and New Zealand

**MR MAGRI** Mr Speaker I just wanted to ask Mr Gardner and this is more for the benefit of the listening public, you mentioned branding and you talked about branding, I just wondered whether you could explain to those Members of the community that might be listening exactly what that means, whether you are talking about a logo that goes on the front of an envelope or whether you are talking about the catch phrase or a new catch phrase for Norfolk Island or simply the way we sell ourselves, but can you explain what branding means

**MR GARDNER** Thank you Mr Speaker, it's pretty much the latter of what the Minister has raised as far as how it is of how we sell ourselves, of how we are

seen in the marketplace and until we the Working Group and we as a community embrace a brand I can't tell you exactly what it is. I did make mention I think at the last sitting of the House when making some commentary or the one before that, when making some commentary about tourist arrival figures, about the marketing strategy and about some of the research that we had done in relation to developing a brand and there has been extensive research being done in trying to identify what we have on offer in Norfolk Island which body of our market, which group or demographic of our market has a hankering for what is on offer in Norfolk Island, what it is that we need to do in Norfolk Island if we are to change or add additional segments to our market, and I think there are a couple of raised eyebrows when I said something about the Norfolk Island being an easily recognisable facet of what Norfolk Island is about, however that's not our brand. Then, however that's not our brand. The Norfolk Island pine as a stand alone item is something that seems to put fear into some people that if you go to Norfolk Island you'll end up in a Scandinavian environment full of ice and snow. It paints that picture. As do some of our advertising and promotion type activities which in the past they have tried to market us with exclusive beaches, nobody in the water and you know the loving couple standing on the sand at Emily Bay but nobody else is in sight and that raises questions, and it all comes to marketing and it's something that's been made up from marketing research and that makes a picture in people's minds that it's either too cold for swimming or there's something in the water and you don't want to go in there or people don't want to visit Norfolk Island because there's absolutely nobody on the beaches. And so this research is being brought together at the moment with the Branding committee who are trying to fit all of the pieces together so that when the options are given to us about the brand and about what brand it is that we're going to market off shore everybody clearly understands the reasons why each of those components have been put in place

**SPEAKER** Thank you Mr Gardner. Further debate Honourable Members. There being no further debate, the question is that the paper be noted and I put that question

**QUESTION PUT  
AGREED**

**SPEAKER** Thank you.

**SPEAKER** Any further Papers for presentation. No. We move on

#### **STATEMENTS OF AN OFFICIAL NATURE**

Are there any Statements of an official nature this morning Honourable Members.

**MRS JACK** Thank you Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, at the previous sitting of the Assembly I provided a statement on the testing of samples of water, sediment and soil in the Headstone area following representations from residents who were concerned about possible residues from the burning of waste in that area. On the basis of all of the data available from the testing laboratory and all of the information provided to me by officers of the Administration and the Secretary to Government, I advised the Assembly that there had been testing for dioxins in all of samples taken. The advice which was provided to me resulted from a full examination by officers of the Administration files and electronic records and a study of the laboratory reports. This included a statement in an email from the testing laboratory to the office of the Administration CEO that the results for dioxin testing "...were all less than our limit of reporting, except for samples 5, 6 and 7 which did contain very low levels of OCDD (Octa-Dioxins) which are commonly found in the environment at these levels". I now seek to correct the statement I made at the last Assembly meeting, because further information has now been provided to indicate that while numerous tests were conducted on all water, soil and sediment samples, only the eight water samples were tested for dioxins and the six soil or sediment samples were tested for heavy metals, OC/OP pesticides, and herbicides but not for dioxins. The initial

samples were taken because of residents' concerns about possible dioxins in water supplies, but the testing regime was subsequently extended by decision of the former CEO to also submit samples of soil and sediment from the Headstone area and a control sample from the Two Chimneys Reserve. The information available to me from the Administration files on this matter indicated that testing for dioxins would be the basic testing regime and that this would be supplemented by additional tests for other possible contaminants. Mr Speaker, following last month's statement, further representations were made by a community member, who was still concerned that some of the samples may not have been tested for the presence of dioxins. I was away from the Island when the resident questioned the nature of the actual tests undertaken, but on the basis of the renewed concerns, further contacts were made on my behalf with the ALS Laboratory Group Environmental Division laboratory in Brisbane in order to clarify precisely what tests had been conducted. ALS were also asked for a definitive statement which could be provided to residents to confirm the testing regime. There has been considerable staffing change at ALS since the tests were conducted early in 2008, but the new Assistant Laboratory Manager - Environmental undertook on 24 September to recover all files and check what tests were performed. That advice was provided by ALS on 29 September, making clear that the water samples were tested for dioxins, furans and PCBs. ALS advised that the soil/sediment samples were tested for heavy metals, OC/OP pesticides and herbicides. Mr Speaker, I said in my statement last month that if any MLA or community member brought to my attention credible information of test results other than those already obtained, or professional opinion on individual medical effects or other public health risks, the position would be reassessed to determine whether any additional testing was required. Following receipt of the information about the actual tests performed, urgent advice was sought from ALS as to whether the original samples were still available for retesting, but we were informed that they had been destroyed after three months in accordance with normal laboratory procedures. ALS then provided advice on what would be involved in collecting and submitting further soil and sediment samples for testing. These procedures have now been put into place, including the ordering from ALS of a quantity of the specified glass jars and a refrigerated container for them to be kept at the required temperature for transport back to the laboratory. This order was placed a week ago and it is hoped that the consignment will be received on today's Brisbane air service. I have requested that as soon as possible after receipt of the containers, relevant Administration officers should arrange for soil samples to be taken from properties earlier tested for water and for sediment samples to be taken from the tanks of properties in the Headstone area, including the tank which could not previously be tested because of its depth. Testing required of ALS for each of these samples will be specifically for dioxins. Test results will be supplied by ALS and will be analysed. If there is any dioxin identified by ALS above its minimum level of reporting, further analysis will be sought from the Australian Centre for Human Health Risk Assessment (Prof Priestly) or an equivalent professional assessment authority if ACHHRA is unable to undertake the task. This was the process used for interpretation of the earlier test results. Any further action will depend on the report and recommendations of ACHHRA. Mr Speaker, while I have accepted the need for more testing and have put in place arrangements for that to happen in an expeditious manner, I want to repeat that there has been no evidence presented to me or to the government in the period since late 2007 which has linked any actual medical problem or other measurable detriment to dioxin or other contamination in the Headstone area. That said, if this new round of testing produces any adverse results, of course the government will take decisive action on the basis of the expert opinion provided. Mr Speaker, the information I previously provided to the Assembly was done so by me in good faith and based on all the material that was then available to me. I have now taken action for more testing, based on the further information now provided. I regret any distress caused to Headstone residents that because of the misunderstanding on the complete testing regime, it has taken a considerable time to get a definitive outcome for whether there is any issue with dioxins in the soil and sediment. On the other hand, it should be repeated that the initial concerns of the residents were about the possible presence of dioxins in water. The water has been comprehensively tested and there is clearly no problem in that regard. Corrective action to ensure that the soil and sediment

samples are collected and tested for dioxins is now well in hand, and I will keep the Assembly and the community informed of the outcomes. Thank you, Mr Speaker

MR NOBBS

Mr Speaker Mr Speaker I would like to provide an updated report on the runway end safety areas currently under construction at the airport. Over the last few weeks I have visited the site and seen first hand the works being carried out and managed by our Manager of Public works. At this point I would like to provide some extracts from a detailed report that the Manager of Public works has prepared: "The project proper commenced 10<sup>th</sup> September 2008 with the set out of drain and commencement of removal of top soil from the batter in the stock pile area at the end of runway 11. Topsoil was stockpiled for future top dressing of batter after removal of hard fill for drain and sediment pond. The side batter of runway 11 was stripped of batter then redressed with topsoil before moving on to the batter at the drill ground. Current works are being undertaken from this area with approximately 1500 tonnes of material being removed daily. The drain and sediment pond has been installed and top dressed, the main batter commenced and at this time, the 12<sup>th</sup> October 2008 it is approximately four metres off the ground at the lowest point. That's Diddles end of the batter. The area of main batter which is 4050 square metres is slowly being back filled and compacted. The batter is slowly rising from the ground in intervals of 200 to 250 mm and is currently on schedule. Materials are of good quality and high compaction is being achieved. Compaction tests for the above are being undertaken on island by local contractors after the training. Weather has not been a major factor as yet with the loss of only 14.5 hours since commencement. The fire station site has been cut out and proper heights confirmed by Don Taylor. More materials are to be moved in the coming weeks approximately 5000 tonnes to help with water disbursement and runoff as well as helping with visual site lines, approximately 5000 tonne of material have been removed and stored. Plant used currently is being supplied by three contractors, Island Industries, BC Excavations and Administration and consists of three excavators, four trucks, one loader, one roller, sheepsfoot, one dozer sheepsfoot, one Hyster rubber roller, one D6 bulldozer. All plant is working to its optimum and operators should be commended for the way in which they are operating the plant and for completing the long hours, currently 7am to 6pm six days per week. A copy of Mathew Francisco's draft report on the site is attached to the Project Manager's report to me. Mathew is head engineer for ARUP and is representing Simon Batt who is otherwise busy at this time. Mathew has made his first visit to the island and is very happy with the way operations are going including arranging and training staff to undertake soil samples and use of the densitometer for compaction. We are in regular contact with him and he is due back at approximately the half way mark next month. Don Taylor has been on island and has completed further survey work at 2 9 end batter, setting out the new batter and confirming the new fence line at the property owners. Problems have been minimal and any that have occurred have been solved or rectified quickly in house." Additional to this information are the spreadsheets detailing the expenditure, man-hours, equipment and tonnage of materials moved. The spreadsheets list weekly expenditure, further broken down into man-hours and equipment hours on a daily basis. Daily tonnage of material moved – this is further broken down into numbers of truckloads per day and personnel required on a daily basis depending on the planned work program for that day. My reading of the project information is that this work is on schedule at this point, the main batter for runway 11, now that it has a level base will rise approximately 250mm per day enabling not only level compaction, but also a safe and reasonably dust free environment for the site workers and surrounding area. Interestingly enough Mr Speaker a week ago I had heard some Demtul regarding this job that inferred that the contractors had slowed their output in the hope of dragging this job out for more pay. As is quite often the case Mr Speaker Demtul gut et wrong. The project manager advised the operators quite correctly of the optimum number of daily loads and safe speeds of operation to ensure occupational health and safety of all on site workers and best outcomes for job completion, ensuring minimised disruption and discomfort to surrounding land owners. As pointed out in the progress report Mathew Francisco who is head engineer for ARUP has visited the site and has given the thumbs up regarding procedures, site management and compaction utilising the nuclear densitometer. Mr Francisco has extensive experience in major earth

works and that is inclusive of runway construction and RESA implementation in Australia. He will return at the halfway point of RESA construction for the 11 runway, as will Don Taylor to ensure that all is going to plan and specification. Mr Speaker there is an immense amount of detail in the spreadsheets that gives me great confidence in both the management of this project and the management of funds assigned to this project. Although we as always are at the mercy of poor weather conditions should they occur, the RESA project looks set to meet timelines and manage its budget very well. I will keep this house and the community informed of further progress regarding RESA as this project continues. My personal vote of thanks to Mike and all the operators for their great work on site to date. Thank you

MR NOBBS

Mr Speaker as alluded to earlier, this is a statement on Norfolk Island **and the global financial crisis**. Mr Speaker, all of us are intensely aware of the current global financial crisis, which has seen unprecedented volatility in world share markets, the collapse of significant financial institutions and a credit freeze between lending institutions. This comes on top of a long but consistent fall in equity prices in Australia, New Zealand and other world markets which have had a negative effect on superannuation funds and retirement incomes for many people who have been a significant part of Norfolk Island's traditional tourism market. The turmoil in the world financial system is so broad and so fast-moving that it would be unwise for anyone to predict where it might all end. The present economic uncertainty appears likely to persist for some time and many world leaders are now predicting a severe drop in growth and even widespread recession. The Norfolk Island Government welcomes some signs in the last few days that world governments are beginning to work together to find solutions. We also recognise the unprecedented steps taken by the governments of Australia and New Zealand in very recent times to underwrite bank deposits and to increase spending in some areas in an attempt to boost private sector consumption and to target additional payments toward some specific segments of the population most at risk. We in Norfolk Island are not immune from these huge upheavals in the world economy. As a small but largely self-sufficient economy, we must brace ourselves for some of the flow-on effects of the global situation. We face a very challenging market situation in our main industry of tourism, possibly for many months ahead. One of the first activities put on hold by individuals and families in tough times is holiday spending. This is already showing up in other markets highly dependent on tourism such as the Northern Territory and our neighbours around the Pacific. Norfolk Tourism and Norfolk Air are currently running high levels of promotion in our major tourist markets in Australia and New Zealand, including some innovative and attractive television commercials. Norfolk Tourism has also finalised promotion agreements with all of our major wholesalers to ensure ongoing promotion for the rest of this financial year on a guaranteed funding basis linked to performance and outcomes. As a government, we are hopeful that these measures will help to counter the negative effects of the global crisis and maintain our tourist numbers at the highest levels possible. We recognise that our private and public sector incomes are directly linked to visitor arrivals and on-island expenditure, and we will continue to carefully scrutinise the tourist market and our visitor outcomes. In order to ensure that we closely monitor our overall public finances in these difficult economic times, we have commenced a process of complete review of all revenues and expenditure. There is normally a review of the Revenue Fund budget around the mid-point of each financial year. This year, we will bring that review forward and it will commence as soon as possible. As well, we will extend the thorough review to include all government business enterprises and statutory authorities. Our aim is to complete the full expenditure and revenue examination so as to be in a position to make a full "state of the nation" report to the Assembly and community in the first week of December this year. Some steps have already been put in place. With Norfolk Air now operating as a more self-contained entity, we have full access to a much wider range of up-to-date data in areas such as load factors and forward yields. This has enabled us to introduce a new fare structure with real gains for wholesalers and those who purchase advance-payment tickets. It also gives us much more information on which to assess forward bookings and projected costs. Norfolk Air operates with a Chief Executive Officer and a board consisting of the five Executive Members. The board reviewed forward



think about \$4.8b they've put towards their pensioner and single family people who are in need and while we're in no position to offer similar amount Mr Speaker or even a pro rata amount, I would just like to highlight and to remind people that we are considering, due to these external influences, the executive debated some of the issues that currently face our people on pensions and those in need, yesterday at our meeting and papers are coming forward from the Public Service regarding reviewing of the current electricity assistance package that is given to pensioners. Currently Mr Speaker that is 5cents per unit to a maximum of \$25. Now that package when it was first introduced, electricity was 28cents per unit. Now the electricity is 72 cents per; unit so the percentage assistance has certainly dropped off and so a paper is coming forward as I mentioned Mr Speaker reviewing that amount and either raising the maximum level or keeping it to say the first 500 units and correcting it from say maybe 5cents to 10 cents. As I said I'll know more when the paper comes. We've also recently pensioners were granted free Telecom line rental for one private land line to their residence. What we are going to do is look at other possible ways instead of a cash payment, a one off payment Mr Speaker, look at other ways in which we can assist pensioners in their daily requirements and as I said, that paper is coming forward so while I don't believe we are in a position to offer a one off payment, in our current situation, I believe we are in a position to assist in other ways and provide some monetary relief and I just think that needs to go forward too as well as looking and maintaining another infrastructure and service provision we are also looking at those who have low levels of spending capability. Thank you

MR ANDERSON

Mr Speaker just on the economy. Things are tough. We know that. I would like to wait and find, a few of our Minister's have spoken of the airlines. The timing of what was done with the airline, and I compliment them for acting quickly, they couldn't have acted any quicker than they did, the Minister for the Airways outlined why they couldn't and it was good to see immediate action and tourism, you've got a tourism strategy as Mr Gardner said, and we must stick to this tourism strategy as this is the way to go. What we do not want to do, is to panic and start throwing money around outside of that tourism strategy because it will not give us the desired results we are looking for. There was some enlightening things that the Minister for Finance focused on. The New Caledonia service which is great and the opportunity to quickly take this up will certainly next year help the economy but it will take a long time to come out. The early bird that the Minister for Air has mentioned, is a great initiative and will do a lot to get the economy rolling into next year and we've got to take a long term view of these things. We mustn't use bandaid tactics and panic into doing things which are not economical for us, but the main thing I would talk about at this point is that the Government can only do a certain amount. They can set the pattern, they can set things up. We need to do more in the community. It's been very disturbing of late, the number of reports coming back from the commercial sector. Now we in the commercial sector have to pick our act up. There are complaints about the tourist accommodation houses, the complaints about retailers not giving the service they should, are disturbing. Now we've talked about branding before. Now branding is something which is very hard to define and Mr Gardner made a very good attempt at finding that but branding is a perception of how people see us, and that's what branding is about and it's very hard to define but certainly bad branding is what we are getting reports back at the present time and that's what we don't want. The perception of people coming to Norfolk Island to see that we are the most welcoming efficient smiling hard working etc etc people that they could come across and we are slipping there. And there's no use kidding ourselves. We have to pick our act up as an island or we will not recover as we should. A lot of people have spent money. They are doing hard times when maybe they shouldn't, but you've got to do this otherwise the whole infrastructure falls down. The standard of tourist accommodation needs to be picked up. There's no need the tourist accommodation houses complaining about their being unfairly treated with gradings. They are there for a reason and if you can't meet the gradings, that's fair enough but there's no use complaining about it. Just get on with the job of what you've got to do. The retail sector is hard. It is really hard and there are no easy answers because on Norfolk Island it is hard to adapt quickly. Very hard to adapt quickly but you have to keep trying and we're not adapting nearly quickly enough, so my message is out to the

community, come on, get on with it, pick your act up. The Government is doing their part and it's doing as much as they can, but they can't help the community. There's no easy answers there. As I said, let's pick our act up. Thank you

**SPEAKER** Honourable Members the question is that the paper be noted. Any further debate. There being no further debate, the question is that the paper be noted and I put that question

QUESTION PUT  
AGREED

**SPEAKER** Thank you. Honourable Members I have a statement from the Speaker. I wish to acknowledge the successful Parliamentary Educators Conference held on Norfolk Island from the 29<sup>th</sup> September to the 1<sup>st</sup> October. The Conference was held on Norfolk Island this year as a result of participation at a previous Parliamentary Educators Conference by our Deputy Clerk Mrs Gaye Evans. Mrs Evans was conference organiser and I was pleased to be able to be involved in a small way. Participants came from the ACT, New South Wales, South Australia, Western Australia, Northern Territory, Tasmania, New Zealand and two first time representatives from Niue and the Solomon Islands as well of course, Norfolk Island. The role of the Parliamentary Educators Conference can be varied and participants of course basically run their own civic and citizenship programmes for students, adults and they organise conferences, conventions and workshops as well as for teachers, and to help citizens understand and think about issues of democracy, how parliament works and how our system works. They also greatly assist candidates and new Members. The participants indicated to me that they thoroughly enjoyed their time here and appreciated the information given by guest speakers, including Mr Gardner and the sharing of information. I wish to thank the guest speakers, the staff and in particular Mr Perkins for his transportation of the delegates and other venues which assisted in assuring a successful Parliamentary Educators Conference here on the island. Costs to this Legislative Assembly was minimal and well balanced by the retail therapy carried out by the delegates when the conference programme was concluded. Thank you Honourable Members

Any further Statements of an official nature. No. We move on

#### **MESSAGE FROM THE OFFICE OF THE ADMINISTRATOR – NO 20**

Honourable Members, I have received the following Message from the Office of the Administrator and it is Message No 20 which reads that on the 23<sup>RD</sup> September 2008, pursuant to section 21 of the Norfolk Island Act 1979, I declared my assent to the following law passed by the Legislative Assembly, the Firearms (Amendment) Act 2008 which is Act No. 16 of 2008, and that message was dated the 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2008 and signed by Owen Walsh, Administrator

#### **REPORT FROM STANDING COMMITTEES**

Are there any Reports from Standing Committees? No. We move now to Notices Honourable Members

#### **NOTICES**

#### **PUBLIC SECTOR MANAGEMENT ACT 2000 - APPOINTMENT OF CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER**

**MR NOBBS** Mr Speaker I move that this House recommends in accordance with section 38 of the *Public Sector Management Act 2000*, that George Plant be appointed Chief Executive Officer of the Public Service. Mr Speaker, I am pleased to place before the Assembly a motion for the appointment of Mr George Plant as the new

Chief Executive Officer of the Administration of Norfolk Island. In doing so, I wish to acknowledge on behalf of all Members the contribution of Mr Steve Mathews, who has acted as CEO for the past seven months. This is not the first occasion on which Mr Mathews has stepped into the role of Acting CEO and I thank him for all of his hard work during this period when a selection process has been underway for a new permanent CEO. Mr Speaker, I also want to thank the selection committee which has diligently performed its task and provided a written recommendation to Members on the appointment of the most meritorious candidate. Vicky Jack, Brendon Christian and Terence Grube put in many long hours to assess all written applications, interview short listed candidates, conduct referee checks and evaluate psychological testing reports. I commend them for their efforts and for the recommendation of Mr Plant as the most meritorious candidate. Mr Speaker, if the Assembly supports this motion, I am confident that Mr Plant will be a most suitable appointee as CEO. He will come to us with a breadth of experience in Norfolk Island, the Pacific and indeed the global economy. He has impressive achievements in his past endeavours, and we will be looking to him to work closely with the government to achieve the many goals set out in our three-year strategic plan. I have spoken to Mr Plant who is prepared to start duties in the near future if the Assembly agrees to his appointment. A draft contract of employment has been prepared and I would expect that this could be finalised within a short time of the successful passage of this motion. Mr Speaker, I commend the motion to the Assembly.

MR ANDERSON

Mr Speaker when will the process commence

MR NOBBS

contracts this Friday morning

Mr Speaker at this stage I commence signing of the

MRS JACK

Thank you Mr Speaker on behalf of myself and the other two panel members I just would like to say that we had a considerable number of applicants for the position and I enjoyed working with my two colleagues there, with Mr Brendon Christian and Mr Terence Grube, but it was a long process and quite a few afternoons and weekends went into it. Mr Grube was the Chairman of the committee and I would just like to say how much I appreciated his down to the line situation calling. He made sure that the process for all applicants was consistent and that it was recorded individually and then as a group and it was a pleasure to be part of the panel. Thank you

MR B CHRISTIAN

Thank you Mr Speaker I congratulate Mr George Plant on the commitment to his community. It's great to see a person from Norfolk Island obtain the relevant qualifications and experience to enable them to contribute to the running of the public service. I am confident that Mr Plant will be a competent leader and I fully support this motion

SPEAKER

Thank you Mr Christian. Any further debate Honourable Members. There being no further debate, the question is that the motion be agreed to and I put that question

QUESTION PUT  
AGREED

Thank you. The motion is agreed

**PUBLIC SECTOR MANAGEMENT ACT 200 - DETERMINATION TO AMEND THE HUMAN RESOURCES POLICY AND PROCEDURES MANUAL SUBSECTION 3:10**

MR NOBBS

Mr Speaker I move that this House, having considered the written comments of the Norfolk Island Public Service Association and the Norfolk Island Public Service Board in respect of the draft determination to amend subsection 3.10 Mileage Allowance of the Human Resources Policy and Procedures Manual, does hereby in accordance with and under sections 26 and 28 of the *Public Sector Management Act*

2000 make the draft determination in respect of subsection 3.10 of the Human Resources Policy and Procedures Manual by replacing subsection 3.10 of the Human Resources Policy and Procedures Manual dated 22 February 2006 and substituting the draft determination, and declares that a copy of this motion, signed by the Speaker shall be the instrument in writing of the Legislative Assembly for the purposes of paragraph 26(1)(d) of the said Act

MR SHERIDAN Mr Speaker I just wonder if the Chief Minister could explain to the listening public exactly what that means. Replacing a subsection with another subsection. What's it all about?

MR NOBBS Mr Speaker what this relates to is, as I've pointed out, is to do with the Policy with regard to mileage allowance. That increase has come about because of a 30% increase in fuel costs and further to that is a suggestion that has been forwarded to the Public Service Association as well as the Public Service Board that to enable this to happen more fluidly in the future that the CEO is able to assess through the calculation process if there is a need for this mileage allowance to be altered due to significant changes in fuel prices

MR SHERIDAN Mr Speaker could I ask the Chief Minister to just advise what the new mileage allowance will be and what it was raised from

MR NOBBS Mr Speaker the mileage allowance, according to 310 is payable as follows, 1600cc or less, 41.1cents per kilometres; more than 1600cc but less than 2000cc 49.9cents per kilometre; more than 1600cc but less than 3000cc 52.4cents per kilometre; more than 3000cc is 55.9cents per kilometre

MR B CHRISTIAN Thank you Mr Speaker just to clarify there, was that just quoting the old figures or was that the new figures. Is there a comparison between the old and the new

MR NOBBS There's a... hang on. I don't think I have the old figures with me at the moment but as I said, there's been a 30% upward movement in the price of fuel at the bowser so this was to compensate for that. I don't think there's been a change since 2006

MR B CHRISTIAN So would it be fair Chief Minister to assume that there's a 30% increase on their allowance as payable

MR NOBBS There are very few vehicles that are operated in that situation in the Public Service as I understand it, so for those that do operate a personal vehicle in those instances, then that is an increase in relation to the increase in fuel prices so, on the one hand yes, the amount of cash paid has increased in terms of what it's costing the operator for that increase is probably not really shifting that much of a percentage

MR SHERIDAN Mr Speaker just another query with regard to the increase. The people who make claims for the mileage allowance through the Administration are they compelled to keep log books and justify their mileage use for work purposes

MR NOBBS Mr Speaker my understanding is that, that is the case

MR ANDERSON Mr Speaker we really do want to know what the old rate was. Not in all categories but the old rates and what the new rates are because we wouldn't have a clue what it means

MR NOBBS Mr Speaker I had circulated this documentation to all Members some time ago when this was initially signed off and with our Research Officer currently away at the moment I had left a lot of the documentation in that part of this process where it was to be forwarded through so I'm happy to forestall this and bring it on again at the next meeting with further information

SPEAKER So the motion is, Chief Minister

MR NOBBS Mr Speaker to adjourn the motion

MR SHERIDAN Mr Speaker I so move

SPEAKER The question is that debate be adjourned and the resumption of debate made an Order of the Day for a subsequent day of sitting

QUESTION PUT  
AGREED

The Ayes have it. Debate is so adjourned Honourable Members

### **NAMING OF ROADS**

MR MAGRI Mr Speaker I move under section 7 of the Official Survey Act 1978 that this House recommends that the Administrator determine that the Schedule of recommended road names dated 9 October 2008 and tabled in the House today, under section 7 of the Act, be named accordingly by the instrument of determination to be executed by His Honour the Administrator, dated the 10<sup>th</sup> October 2008. Mr Speaker I table that schedule

MR GARDNER Thank you Mr Speaker, I understand that is an amended schedule. Can I just enquire as to when that may have been circulated to Members

MR MAGRI Mr Speaker just to make things official I first have to officially table the advised Schedule of the recommended names dated 9<sup>th</sup> October 2008 and I so do. That is correct Mr Speaker. It is an amended schedule and I intended to foreshadow those amendments in debate and apologise at the late date of the amendments hadn't allowed me to circulate it to Members in time. The amendments that had been made are minor amendments and hopefully they won't delay the passage of this through the House today, but I'm happy if Members have any concerns. Those amendments simply include removing apostrophes because it wasn't seen as appropriate to have apostrophes on any sign posts, and to include one further name that was to remain un-named and that's for road 52, which I do believe Members have had a look at the reference map and road 52 will now be called Tevarua Lane, or it is recommended that road 52 be called Tevarua Lane and just for Members information, that road is off New Cascade Road and leads down towards Sally Tighe's house, past our Madam Clerk's house. Mr Speaker I'll just go to my normal debate. I intended to have this before I foreshadowed those changes. Mr Speaker as a result of the decision to implement a rural address system for the island in August 2007 it became necessary to have the roads that remained unnamed identified with a name. These included some roads whose title vested in estates, private individuals, the Administration of Norfolk Island and the Commonwealth. A public exhibition was held in the Norfolk Mall on the 26<sup>th</sup> July 2008 displaying a draft of recommended names based on historical context in order to receive any submissions or to answer any queries. Submissions continued to be accepted from the public until the end of August 2008. Submissions were received in respect of 26 roads with a balance of recommended names being provided by the Registry Office. Mr Speaker under section 7 of the Official Survey Act 1978 I'm required to provide the following. Where a road required by section 6 to be shown on the official survey has more than one name, or is unnamed

the road shall be referred to on the official survey by a name determined by the Administrator. As the Administrator would require a recommendation from the House prior to the formal naming of any road, a schedule of those roads that are recommended has now been tabled. If this motion is passed, it will simply recommend that the Administrator notify the Surveyor General so that the Official Survey can be amended to that effect. I commend the motion to the House

**SPEAKER** Thank you Mr Magri. Is there any further debate? There being no further debate I put the question that the motion be agreed to. Honourable Members and I put that question

QUESTION PUT  
AGREED

Thank you. That motion is agreed to

#### **FIXING OF THE NEXT SITTING DATE**

Thank you Honourable Members we move to the fixing of our next sitting day

**MR B CHRISTIAN** Mr Speaker I move that the House at its rising adjourn until Wednesday 19th November 2008, at 10.00 am.

**SPEAKER** Thank you Mr Christian. Is there any debate Honourable Members. The question is that the motion be agreed to.

QUESTION PUT  
AGREED

The motion is agreed to

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

**MR ANDERSON** Thank you Mr Speaker I move that the House do now adjourn

**SPEAKER** Thank you Mr Anderson. Is there any further participation in adjournment debate Honourable Members.

**MR NOBBS** Mr Speaker as is usual at this time I mention that there will be the Radio Minister's Forum tomorrow open to all Members around the table and yourself included Mr Speaker and I might also take this time to congratulate our Administration Owen Walsh, recently returning from being sworn in as the now Administration for Norfolk Island and so I pass on from this House our congratulations to him in his new role and capacity

**MRS JACK** Thank you Mr Speaker just a little time to pause and reflect and acknowledge some years of service given by George Edwin Anderson who has recently finished his time within the Administration and KAVHA. Puss started in 1962 working for the Administration and throughout his time working with the Administration he has been linesman, lighterage, worked with lighterage, works manager and I believe was an officer who was first sent away to train as the first Disaster Coordinator for the Administration. I would just like to say that Puss has given some 26, 27 years dedicated to KAVHA and on behalf of the board and I believe Members around this table, I wish to thank Puss for his years of dedication because he's also transferred his dedication into his Works Team within the KAVHA precinct and I'm sure I speak also for the many people, Members and officers associated with the KAVHA Board in thanking Puss for his years of

service and acknowledging that time and his assistance given to the Board and I wish him well. Thank you Mr Speaker

MR GARDNER Thank you Mr Speaker, I would just like to if I could just add a few words to those of Mrs Jack. As you would be aware I've had the pleasure of working with Puss over a great number of years both as a Member of the Legislative Assembly and the interactions with him as a Public Servant responsible for the management of the KAVHA site but also for as many years as a Member of the KAVHA Board and working very closely with Puss on KAVHA matters and I must say it has always been a pleasure working with him. He's certainly not been afraid to want from time to time to be a little controversial. That's always welcomed and adds to the colour of an individual and a personality and has always been willing to make his views known on who should control the site and how it should be governed but Mr Speaker importantly, he has headed a team and that team has been directly responsible for the magnificence that is KAVHA today. There is absolutely no doubt about that, and that includes all of the players over many years and those who have been long serving Members that have been in the employ of KAVHA from Shane at the cemetery, and the tremendous job that he does at that end, to Smudgie as the resident painter and decorator, Kane and Mick in the carpentry section, Franklyn and Dean in the planting and the maintenance of the grounds and all the other people responsible for the day to day upkeep and maintenance. It has been a team effort. Puss has headed that team. Both he and his team are to be congratulated for the outstanding contribution that they've made and to Puss, well done and enjoy a retirement that's well deserved

SPEAKER Thank you Mr Gardner and from the Speaker's chair I certainly reiterate and acknowledge the very kind accolades that have been extended to Puss Anderson. Puss has contributed a great deal to Norfolk Island's community. As a Councillor, he was one of the original early Councillors in the Norfolk Island Advisory Council and he's put in a lot of effort as you say, down here at the Kingston area from a personal and island point of view, he's contributed a great deal. In some of the re-enactments of Foundation Day and other days of note in our tourist booklets, from a tour operators point of view has contributed a great deal in those events as well and we certainly wish him the best for his retirement

MR GARDNER Thank you Mr Speaker, I just might recognise the trials and tribulations of being in Year 12 on Norfolk Island and wish all those sitting for their HSC the very best of luck in the exams which I believe start tomorrow, and so for the next two or three weeks our Year 12 students, which is a record number of students, and I had the pleasure of attending on behalf of Mrs Jack at their farewell at the school. Mr Speaker, please bear with them in probably the most daunting task that they've faced in their thirteen years of school, but I certainly would like to join with my colleagues in wishing them every success in their examinations and their futures ahead

MEMBERS Hear, hear

SPEAKER Thank you Mr Gardner and before we adjourn I wish to announce that I will be attending the 220<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Arrival of Captain Bligh Bounty Celebrations in Tahiti both on an official and personal basis. I will be paying my own airfare to go to Tahiti, but some assistance has been offered by this House to my accommodation expenses, but it is a very encouraging to note that there are so many residents of Norfolk Island attending the celebrations in Tahiti. 84 was the last count and I will certainly do my best to ensure that with others, that all help and assistance will be extended to those that are attending. Thank you Honourable Members. Now I put the question that the motion be agreed to that House do now adjourn

QUESTION PUT  
AGREED

Therefore Honourable Members this House stands adjourned until Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> November 2008, at 10.00 am.

