



**NORFOLK ISLAND LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
13TH NILA HANSARD – 7 DECEMBER 2011**

SPEAKER Good morning Honourable Members, we commence with the Prayer of the Legislative Assembly.

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.

Thank you Honourable Members please be seated. Please feel free to remove jackets gentleman make sure that your mobile phones have been switched off.

CONGRATULATIONS

SPEAKER Minister Sheridan on behalf of myself and your colleagues may I wish you a very happy birthday.

MR SHERIDAN Thaenk yu. Daa spoes tu bii es siikret.

SPEAKER No secrets in the chamber! Before we move on, I welcome to the public gallery this morning, Professor Richard Herr who is the acting co-coordinator for ANZACATT Parliamentary Law and Practice and as you know Professor Kerr has just completed a United Nations review of the small national parliament of Samoa where he travels to next week for the CPA's Parliamentary Induction Seminar with Doctor Shija, Secretary General of CPA London. Welcome Professor Herr.

MEMBERS Hear, hear

CONDOLENCES

MR SNELL Madam Speaker it is with regret that this House records the passing of **Shelley Joy Hall** on Friday 21st of October 2011. Shelley was one of six children to the late Geoff Hall and Doreen Nobbs of Norfolk Island. Doreen still resides in Sydney. Shelley was born on the 10th of January 1954 and she was raised on Norfolk Island from early school age, at their family home at Rocky Point, when the family moved from Tasmania to New Zealand and back home to Norfolk. Whilst here, Shelley was well known in the hospitality industry having worked at the old Paradise Hotel at Kingston and also child minding and also looking after many of her friends children. In 1970 at the age of 18 Shelley married Michael Sharkey, son of the late Sally Quintal, and in 1972 they had Clinton. Shelley has five brothers and sisters, Dean, Bronwyn, Judelle, Dale and Tammy. Her Grandchildren are Zeak, Makayla and Taine Sharkey. Shelley was known for a number of things, her hospitality and generosity, she was generally a quite person who was liked by everyone. She was incredibly kind hearted, a giving person and a true friend, her door was always open. Shelley knew her community well and she loved her cup of tea, she never cussed or fussed, and time did not bother her. She was small and courageous and wasn't afraid of anyone. Shelley's interests was her family and visiting her mother and step father every

fortnight to help with their shopping and chores. Keeping up with people was something that she was good at, she was an historian of the stars, especially those who had passed away in tragic circumstances, Elvis Presley, Princess Diana, Michael Jackson and others. She loved music and her stereo was always playing. Shelley loved drawing, gardening, fishing, painting, knitting and also had a very rare clown collection, having collected them for over 30 years. Shelley prayed a lot and had her own connection with God, Shelley was cremated at the Eastern Suburbs Memorial Park at Matraville and her ashes brought home to be with her son Clinton and her grandchildren. To them, to her extended family and to her many friends, this House extends its deepest sympathy.

Madam Speaker it is also with regret that this House records the passing of **Maise Joy Nobbs** on Sunday the 20th November 2011. Better known as Mai, Mai Nobbs was born in Kaitaia in 1936, and following the passing of her mother she was raised in a blended family with eleven children. Following her schooling in Kaitaia she left to live in Auckland with her Aunt and Uncle, where she got a job and trained for nursing for a few years. Whilst there she met her future husband Roy at the Orange Dancing Hall, dancing being one of Mai's many loves. Later they won trophies at the Bounty Ball for their waltzing. Following a three year courtship Mai and Roy were married in Auckland in 1957, after obtaining permission from a justice of the peace, as at that time, both at 20 were underage. Mai and Roy with their first five children moved home to Norfolk Island in 1965 then added another two girls to their family. Here they lived at Roy's Grandparents home, out Cobby's at Rocky Point. There was only a wood stove and no electricity. The fridge ran on kerosene and lantern wicks had to be trimmed. Washing for a large family could take all day, pulling water from the well and boiling up the copper for hot water. Mai was homesick for two years but took up the challenge of Norfolk living. She never complained and through her, the children learnt to 'get on with it'. Grandma Nobbs took her for driving lessons. Later the family moved to the home that Roy built at Rocky Point. Always an open home with many visitors and lots of children. Mai was blessed with an abundance of patience and had an open mind. She was a worker. Whilst being Mother to her seven children she took in washing, ironing, sewing and baby-sitting, and later had full time work sewing then working at Foodland, a job she enjoyed until she retired. Mai enjoyed tennis, and matches at the Nobbs' home was well known throughout the Island. Mai was a worthy opponent for any court. She had a wonderful way with plants and a beautiful garden. She loved the beach and her children have many memories of sunset meals. A quiet person with a marvellous sense of humour, Mai was a great listener and a good teacher. For such a little person she made a lot of people's lives easier by just being herself. Mai will be sadly missed in our community. To Roy and their children Stephen, Joy, Debra, Michael, Darrin, Gaelene and Michelle and their families, to Mai's extended family and to her many friends this House extends its deepest sympathy.

Madam Speaker it is also with regret that this House records the passing of **Michella Jane Reynolds** on Wednesday the 23rd November aged 37 years. She was the only daughter of Donald Reynolds and Maureen Gray (nee Patterson) and sister to Justin, Erica, Jarrid, Felicity, Mikiela, Daryl and Mauatua Reynolds; and James and Emily Gray. Michella was brought up in Norfolk with her father Donald and then wife Debbie and four of her siblings. She attended the Seventh Day Adventist School and the Norfolk Island Central School to Year 10 which in those days was the final year at NICS. Michella was a beautiful girl. She had a keen mind and did well at school. She had an artistic flair that produced a few highly prized paintings and drawings in her early teen years and she enjoyed a keen sense of Norfolk humour that everybody fondly remembered her for, and made many lifelong friends. She was an excellent child singer and learnt piano. For Year 11 Michella moved to Perth, living with her mother Maureen, husband Andy and family. Michella finished school during Year 11 and due to her artistic talent was chosen from many applicants to study Art and Design at the Western Australian Institute of

Technology. Whilst completing this study, unknowingly she was sadly moving into a world that nobody knew about. By the time Michella turned 20 years, she had entered a world that would change her way of thinking and doing things for the rest of her life. Her world became a place of demons and voices that were meshed in the terrible mental illness of schizophrenia. Michella left Perth and moved to the Central Coast of New South Wales for 18 months living and being cared for by her step-mum Debbie and husband Ivan and family whilst receiving treatment at the Gosford Hospital where Debbie was a nurse. After that period Michella returned home to Norfolk and lived with her father Donald and his wife Maree and family for a couple of years. Michella had recuperated to the extent where she was able to work and was employed at what was then Marks Bakery and for a short time had her own flat. Unfortunately as time passed Michella's condition worsened. Unable to hold down employment she finally moved into the Mawson Units being near the hospital for daily treatment. Michella was well known to many shopkeepers and business people up and down Burnt Pine, stopping in for chats along the way on her way to the bank and Foodland. Despite her mental illness she had a keen mind and would always remember birthdays and children's names, and all the Doctors who saw Michella found they were often engaged in deep discussions about the medication prescribed for her and that her knowledge of medications often astounded them. After battling her condition for many years, she quietly passed away, far too soon. To Michella's parents Donald and Maureen, to Maree and Debbie, her brothers and sisters, her extended family and her many friends this House extends its deepest sympathy. Thank you Madam Speaker.

SPEAKER Thank you Mr Snell, Members as a mark of respect to the memory of the deceased, please stand in silence.

PETITIONS

SPEAKER Are there any petitions for presentation Honourable Members? No petitions.

GIVING OF NOTICES

SPEAKER Giving of notices, are there any notices to be given this morning? No notices.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

SPEAKER We move to questions without notice Honourable Members. Mr King.

MR KING Thank you Madam Speaker, I have a question directed to the Chief Minister. When might the House or the community be informed on the Government's position in relation to the draft Temperate East Marine Bioregional Plan, which has been circulating and been discussed in the community in recent times?

MR BUFFETT Thank you for the question Mr King, Madam Speaker, Mr Nobbs has responsibility in that particular area, and I'll turn to him in the first instance to make that response, thank you.

MR NOBBS Thank you Madam Speaker, thank you Mr King for the question, as everyone would know around the table, the consultation process has commenced and the 90 period in that will enable, and has certainly enabled up to this point, access on the Island to stakeholders and interested parties with regards to the Marine Bioregional Plan. Informing the Government's view on moving forward of the plan and our input into that, we've sought response from Norfolk Island Fishing

Association and we'll certainly seek a wider feedback, particularly as part of the consultation process that has recently been undergone by the officers of that Department.

MR KING A supplementary, my question really was, when might the community know what the Government's position is in relation to the plan?

MR NOBBS Thank you Madam Speaker, I need to actually go back in time with regards to this and where I first brought this matter into the House and I discussed the overlay of the proposed reserve and the MOU, which is the Memorandum of Understanding which sets out the plans of management for the Box around Norfolk Island. Members will quite readily recall that I stated quite clearly that I would like the Box removed and not part of the Reserve, that information was undertaken by the Department to review, they provided me written documentation to say that they overlay of the reserve would not introduce any new management parameters to those that already had their own plans of management, much the same as in other states around Australia. The key issue for the Government level is to ensure that our own going usage and traditional usage is not impaired, obviously we are also very mindful of the environmental aspects and we're certainly endorsing the parameters of the bioregional plan in that regard. To put a timeframe on the policy, is difficult at this stage, only because the feedback that we received from the officers while they were on the Island was that there was room for them to give us feedback on how their consultation process worked on the Island and what the sensitivities were and the parameters for movement within the proposed plan arrangement. So at this stage I would say within one month we should be able to provide a clear Norfolk Island Government perspective on how we see the plan operating on the parameters we see in the Memorandum of Understanding working within that.

SPEAKER Members I'm going to ask your indulgence please, that we suspend the sitting for 10 minutes, we have a problem with the microphones. This House is suspended until 10.30am.

SPEAKER Honourable Members we resume our sitting. But could I first publically record our grateful thanks to Mr Gary Summerscales and the miracles that he is able to perform on very short notice to this community, thank you Gary, thank you to our broadcasting staff as well.

MR BUFFETT Time for questions has just expired!

SPEAKER Yes, just expired!! Do I have a motion!? We are resuming on questions without notice, and we had a supplementary from Mr King, I'm not sure whether Mr King if you were seeking a second supplementary from Minister Nobbs.

MR KING I can't remember anymore Madam Speaker.

SPEAKER Alright, well, Honourable Members questions without notice?

MRS GRIFFITHS Thank you Madam Speaker, my question is for Minister Sheridan. Minister where is the \$25,000 quit campaign up too?

MR SHERIDAN Thank you Madam Speaker, the quit smoking campaign Madam Speaker, the basis for it has been developed and we are just waiting for the actual increase in the price of cigarettes you might say to take effect on the Island, and in discussions with the Norfolk Island Hospital Director, we've agreed that we

would run this quit program in January Madam Speaker, after the festive season has been come and gone you might say, so in January that quit program should commence.

MRS WARD Thank you Madam Speaker, my question is to the Minister for Tourism, the Minister has previously stated that better sea freight handling options would result in reduced charges, where has the Minister gathered the information to support his statement and if he is making an assumption what is it based on?

MR NOBBS Thank you Madam Speaker, better sea freight, could you please repeat that aspect please Mrs Ward?

MRS WARD Better sea freight handling options.

MR NOBBS Thank you Madam Speaker, I assume this is in regards to looking at a barge tender arrangement, okay. The barge tender evaluation process to see whether there is a mutually combatable arrangement for moving passengers to cruise ship to shore and that has the capacity to carry containers if that option should open itself up for Norfolk Island is currently under evaluation with a ports working group, so there is data that shows there is a number of containerised vessels that pass Norfolk on a very regular basis and that there may well be reductions in freight that is containerised rather than in our current format.

MRS WARD Supplementary yes thank you. So therefore, as far as the Minister is aware, has the ports working group developed a business case that would substantiate the claim that containerisation would result in lower handling costs.

MR NOBBS Thank you Madam Speaker, thank you Mrs Ward for the question, that is currently what is before the working group at the moment.

MRS GRIFFITHS Thank you Madam Speaker, my question is again for Minister Sheridan. Minister did the National Parks apply under the Norfolk Island Planning Act to build their beautiful boardwalk within 50 metres of the Captain Cook Cliff?

MR SHERIDAN Thank you Madam Speaker, not that I'm aware of, but I'm not privy to all Development Applications, if some of them comply and they're permissible as a right, I don't necessarily get to see those, but I can ask the Planning Officer for some details if they have submitted a Development Application and whether or not they need too and I can get back to Mrs Griffiths with an answer.

MR SNELL Thank you Madam Speaker, I direct a question to the Chief Minister. Chief Minister can you advise if a recommendation has been made to close our Government House and to remove the Assembly and Administration from Kingston? If so, whom as the recommendation been made?

MR BUFFETT Close Government House and abolish the, okay. In terms of the Kingston and Arthurs Vale Historic Area Madam Speaker, there have in recent times been a number of studies done, one is for future management of the Kingston Area, which is commonly called the Ayeliffe Report. To my knowledge there is nothing in that particular report that covers the area that Mr Snell has just raised, there are however other reports, one that comes to mind, is the Bruce Lever Report, a Tourism Strategy for the Kingston and Arthurs Vale Historic Area, this report has been in its draft form, presented to the Kingston and Arthurs Vale Historic Area, it has a range of tourism suggestions for the Kingston Area and whilst I can't claim to remember all of the detail, it did have some projections in terms of Government House, I have got to say that

that is not something that is endorsed by the Norfolk Island Government one iota. I think if I remember correctly it had thoughts that Government House might make an ideal interpretive centre, let me also say that I do understand from time to time that the Golf Club have made proposals to have Government House as their Club House, so those sort of things are not necessarily new in the area, and on each occasion that those arrangements have been foreshadowed, they certainly have not been endorsed by the Norfolk Island Government. Similarly so with any suggestions of this nature in any other reports that are around.

MRS WARD Thank you Madam Speaker, my question is also to the Chief Minister in a similar vein, when can the community expect to see the new management arrangements put in place for KAVHA and will the new arrangements affect the current conservation management plan?

MR BUFFETT Madam Speaker, thank you again for this question, the future management arrangements for KAVHA have been on the books for some time now, the last Board meeting, KAVHA Board meeting, agreed that there should be representatives from the Norfolk Island Government and from the Australia Government, the two participants on the Board, to come together and examine those arrangements so that a recommendation might be then put forward to both Governments and those recommendations might be explored further in the wider community. The Norfolk Island Government's representatives for its part, have done its work and are to have discussions with the Commonwealths part in that to come forward with a recommended report, when that comes forward, we will be able to exhibit that in a wider sense to the community, that is where it is at. And I've got to stress that Norfolk Island has done its bit in that component, I don't know even know who the Commonwealth representatives are at this time, but we have, for almost a month, two months now, made our representatives known and they have played their part.

MR KING Thank you Madam Speaker, a further question to the Chief Minister. Can the Chief Minister advise what the status accorded by the Government to the locally produced report entitled "Community Economic Transition" Plan.

MR BUFFETT Thank you for allowing me to pause Madam Speaker, I have in front of me the report that Mr King has just mentioned, a Norfolk Island Community Economic Transition Plan September 2011. The Government, to my knowledge has not been directly involved in this process, Norfolk Island Government.

MR KING It does reflect involvement of Norfolk Island Government representatives in the body of the report, that is why I am asking.

MR BUFFETT If I remember correctly, this is not been an initiative of the Norfolk Island Government, I'm not trying to say that there is not value in this, that is not what I'm trying to say, I'm really trying to identify the processes in respect of it, this has not been an initiative of the Norfolk Island Government as far as I can understand, however there are some sustainability concepts in which the Norfolk Island Government has been endorsing, the NICHE program for example, and I know that that program has been involved with some NSW Governmental processes that have fielded people that have assisted this community consultation process, if I remember that correctly and it may well have produced this report. The Government hasn't actually examined this report in it being asked for an endorsement or otherwise at this stage.

MR KING A supplementary and without in anyway Madam Speaker wishing to disparage the report, I think it's a quite interesting indeed, it sparked my interest in respect that it involved Norfolk Island Government representatives and

establishes plans to develop tourism strategies and diagnostic reports and marketing plans and the like and my further question would be is there a probability that the plan set out in that document with further Government consideration might displace or redirect the current resources and capabilities of the Government, for example Tourist Bureau, Public Service, etc.

MR BUFFETT I am happy to take that on notice and examine those so that there can be some clear guidelines given for it, but thank you for that.

MRS GRIFFITHS Thank you Madam Speaker, Madam Speaker I am not sure who this question is too, it crosses over, but I would like to know what is the rate of depreciation of the fire trucks at the airport, I'm happy to have it taken on notice.

MR NOBBS Madam Speaker I will take that on notice and get that.

MR KING Question for the Minister with responsibility for the importation of apples, I think it is Mr Sheridan, the Minister recently said that he is in the process of preparing regulations for preparing regulations to enable the importation of apples, will he be tabling those regulations today? Or have they been made as yet?

MR SHERIDAN Thank you Madam Speaker, no I'm still working on the process to have those regulations made, so I can't table them today, but it is in the process.

MRS GRIFFITHS Thank you Madam Speaker, Madam Speaker my question is for the Minister with responsibility for culture, what activities has the Minister taken in the cultural sector since taking on this portfolio?

MR BUFFETT Madam Speaker thank you for the question, in direct terms, funds to embark upon cultural projects have been almost non-existent in the present and previous financial year, however that doesn't mean that there are not a range of cultural activities that are taking place on the Island. The School for example fosters cultural arrangements particularly in the teaching of Norfolk Island's language, there are of course Museum activities both of these two areas I have responsibility for as the appropriate Minister. The KAVHA area which has obviously seen World Heritage Status gained in August of last year, is another significant cultural area, the Sirius is another, although the most recent Sirius activity has been Commonwealth initiated activities, but those Commonwealth initiated activities have gained National and Commonwealth listing for the Sirius Site, the Museum Trust arrangement which has association with the Norfolk Island Museum, equally in my area, is an active body, there has been identification of cultural content in the Roadmap also, which again I have responsibility for. This question has come from Mrs Griffiths and I just make mention that I have authorised her presence at the Council of Elders so that there might be that area of responsibility exercised with her participation. So hopefully that might just give an overview of some of the cultural activities, areas of activities that continue, notwithstanding the sparse money that's around at this moment.

MR KING A question for the Minister who is responsible for I guess, development is it, I wish to ask what is the status of the strata title white paper.

MR SHERIDAN Thank you Madam Speaker, the status of the white paper of the strata is that a tender has been let, these people who were the successful tenderers were notified in the Norfolk Island Gazette, they should be on Island either late this year or early next year for their visit that they need to do to gain some

information on Island but it is envisaged that by, I believe it is March/April next year, that we would have this paper complete.

MR KING Minister is it a fact that the successful bidder is the same organisation that initially provided an estimate of costs for budgetary purposes and if this is so, does this not undermine the legitimacy of the procurement process.

MR SHERIDAN Thank you Madam Speaker, Mr King is quite correct, we did obtain some indicative pricing you might say from this University with regards to what it may cost to compile such a paper and that was the figure that we used to put in our budget preparation. When the tender was let, we had three tenders, one was for quite a vast amount of monies which was about two and a half times the original budget and that was from that same organisation, one was a local bid for some 20 odd thousand dollars and one bid was put in with no monetary figure. Upon the assessment of all these tenders it was decided to negotiate with the University as it was deemed that they would provide the best outcome that we were trying to achieve and the price was negotiated down to something that we could accommodate within our budget and then it was decided and agreed to go with that tenderer.

MRS WARD Thank you Madam Speaker, in December 2010 a local targeted consultation working group was established to assist the community's discussions and assessment of the proposed financial reform as a result of the Roadmap. Is this Minister aware whether or not the group provided locally gathered information to the ACIL Tasman Group who recently carried out the Socio-Economic Development Study on the Island, either as a group or individually?

MR NOBBS Thank you for the question, on an individual basis I think the members of that group in there as they represent the peak bodies as well.

MRS GRIFFITHS Thank you Madam Speaker my question is for the Minister with responsibility for the Public Service. Can the Chief Minister explain why there are five positions are being advertised in the local Government gazette at the moment when there is a supposed recruitment freeze on?

MR BUFFETT Madam Speaker I don't have in front of me the detail of those five positions, and even if I did, I may not be able to respond to the exact detail about each of them, but let me in principle speak about the position freeze. Yes there is a freeze in terms of taking people on, that is the economic climate that we are in, and the frugality that we are observing at this time. However, when some positions do become vacant they are not positions that you can not fill. They may well be positions that you need to have continuity in and if that is the case then there is a recruitment process to fill them, and there is a process within the Service to evaluate whether there is that need or not. And therefore if those five positions have been advertised, I am assuming that that process has been followed and decision taken by the appropriate Public Service people that those positions are needed to fulfil a service to the community of the Island.

MR KING A supplementary, so Chief Minister this a recruitment freeze that is not a recruitment freeze.

MR BUFFETT It is a freeze on those areas unless it can be proven that there is an absolute need for a continuation for the provision of those services.

MR KING Yes, I understand that, but on the one hand we talk about...

SPEAKER Do you have a question?

MR KING Yes I do. Chief Minister on the one hand we talk about saving money and putting a freeze on new recruitment, but there are some obscure guidelines, there appears to be, am I correct in assuming that the guidelines that determine whether a position is essential or not, are not written down, and not understood by the Government or the community of this House?

MR BUFFETT I am not able to respond as to whether Mr King really understands them or not, what I am saying is, that I understand how it operates, I have endeavoured to set out how it operates, and there are processes in the service to undertake that process. I regret that Mr King doesn't understand that.

MR KING I understand quite well...

SPEAKER Further questions without notice Honourable Members. Mrs Griffiths.

MRS GRIFFITHS Thank you Madam Speaker, my question is again for the question to the Chief Minister in his portfolio with responsibility for the Public Service. Chief Minister in passing the last budget you mentioned funding for succession training on the Island, how are these funds being used and what activities are being undertaken to implement succession training on the Island?

MR BUFFETT Thank you Madam Speaker, again thank you for that question. Succession planning within the Administration is being undertaken on a program that is called Learning Seat, Learning Seat Program and that program is being pursued, it's a program that means using a website and using information technology and that process is in place, is presently being erected, the program itself has been purchased, the program itself, if I remember correctly costs something like \$40,000 and that is the budgetary process that you have just referred too, that purchase has been made and there are now processes within the service to identify, based upon aptitude, attitude, ability and the like of people who may well be involved in the succession training programs and they may be able to participate in these programs and indeed lead to a Diploma arrangements, in other words they would gain documented recognition if they successfully pursued the course, but more to your point, if they undertake this work, they will then be in a position to be able to in a succession planning arrangement move into positions when they become available and provided they are the successful applicant, because it doesn't put aside the merit selection process, but it does put people into place so that they are in a position to be able to apply for them and from the Services point of view it will know that it has people in place that will progress up the system when that comes along. But it's not only a program that allows for succession training, but training at other levels within the service as well, this is not up and running at this stage, it is being implemented and the basic program has been purchased, once it's operational there is a monthly fee in terms of that IT program, but that has not commenced yet, it will commence once the other things are in place and people are there to be able to utilise it.

MRS GRIFFITHS Chief Minister am I to understand correctly that this learning seat program is really only available for public servants within the public service or is there intention to extend the succession training to the general public?

MR BUFFETT Both Madam Speaker but the service first, in other words to establish it first and to have it operational first, I mentioned it's the early stages here, once that is done there is capacity for persons outside the service to be able to utilise it and gain qualifications from it.

MR ANDERSON Thank you Madam Speaker, a question for the Chief Minister, just in case he was feeling left out! Can you provide an update in relation to the implementation to the Burroughs replacement, and in particular the extent to which the system is soon to be able to cope with consolidating our Administrations accounts into one bill and one envelope.

MR BUFFETT Again, thank you for the question, Madam Speaker Chapter and Verse about where it is this very day I think I would probably need to do some homework about, so if you could excuse me on that, but I can say that programs have been engaged with people to undertake this work so that the very thing that you talk about we don't get a dozen bills, they may be consolidated, will be achieved, but I'm not trying to claim that it is achievable today, I think I should just do some further homework, and may be informally I could let you know and circulate that to Members if in fact they would like to see how that is running.

MR KING A supplementary to the Chief Minister. Chief Minister is it a fact that over the past 32 years the same question in relation to bills in one envelope has been asked somewhere in the order of 462 times?

MR BUFFETT I have had some informal advice that they think they might cut over today!

MR ANDERSON Thank you Madam Speaker, one more for the Chief Minister, the Commonwealth Financial Officer was advertised, do we have any updates as to whether there was an appointee, I don't have any detail at this time, I have asked the Commonwealth to keep us up to scratch, but I haven't had advice at this time.

MR KING A further question to the Chief Minister within his capacity or responsibility for finance matters, Chief Minister are you able to assure the House that the Government owned REO Cafe operates at a profit, and if not assurance can be given, what consideration has been given to divestment of this business?

MR BUFFETT I will take that on notice Madam Speaker.

MR KING Thank you Madam Speaker a question for Minister Sheridan, what monitoring takes place on the damage to road services caused by the protruding tow bars of tour buses and is the public purse adequately compensated for the damage?

MR SHERIDAN Thank you Madam Speaker I will have to take that one on notice, just because I don't know any information in regard to that.

MRS GRIFFITHS Thank you Madam Speaker my question is to Minister Nobbs with responsibility for broadcasting, Minister who monitors the content of the radio station, when was the last time that the community expressed their views through a community survey?

MR NOBBS Thank you Madam Speaker, with regard to monitoring of the content, I would have to say that that occurs more on a broad community scale for feedback rather than a dedicated body. With regard to surveys, and if you don't mind, I actually thank Mrs Griffiths for discussing this with me yesterday, so I was able to discuss with the broadcast manager what occurs in this area, and with many of the competitions and the various other initiatives that they are running at the station they include a bit of question and answer within that, however I am also aware that the membership of the radio station have discussed a new upcoming survey, or the

potential of a survey to gain better information, not just restricted to radio only, but to encompass television issues as well.

MR KING I wonder if the Minister could inform the House, whether if listener surveys were to reveal a vastly diminishing audience or a cost benefit analysis reveal an unacceptable imbalance would the Government persevere with the ownership of the Radio Station as a public asset?

MR NOBBS Thank you Madam Speaker I think at regular budgets that question is thrown around, and there are a number of parameters that have to be considered in that, and they relate to the community radio station licensing and the license that is available to do that arrangement on the Island, versus privatise or making a commercial arrangement, so I would have to say that it is assessed on an ongoing basis, at this point in time I have no intention of changing the arrangements at the station, however perhaps closer to our next budget development we may well investigate further afield and seek expressions of interests in people's views of other options we could do with broad casting in Norfolk.

MRS GRIFFITHS Yes, thank you, does the Minister agree then that there is value in increasing the Norfolk content on the radio?

MR NOBBS Absolutely.

MR SNELL Thank you Madam Speaker, Madam Speaker I direct this question to the Chief Minister. Chief Minister can you give some assurance that there has been no decision has been made yet on the appointment of an alternative airline to the Island?

MR BUFFETT Thank you Madam Speaker, thank you Mr Snell for the question. The engagement of an alternative airline arrangement by a tender process is in the hands of the Commonwealth, and they have not advised us at this time of the result of that. I know that they are going through processes at this time, indeed there has been a public presentation for those who are interested in the arrangement that Norfolk Island has been involved in, and Minister Nobbs attended that at an earlier time, we know that now it has gone on, that the closing date for all of that has happened and we expect the Commonwealth to advise us. We press them for dates without success, my guess is that by the end of this month that we certainly should have a decision. But it is not for me to make that call, processes continue, and they are demanding probity processes, they continue.

MR KING Thank you Madam Speaker a question for Minister Sheridan, will the Minister advise if he's satisfied, if he is satisfied, that if employers are meeting their obligations in respect of payment of the Workers Compensation Levy?

MR SHERIDAN Thank you Madam Speaker, all I can say to that, is that I am satisfied Madam Speaker because I haven't been advised of otherwise. I would expect my officer who runs the Workers Compensation Scheme that if there is a problem of people paying their dues, that I would be informed, but he has not done so, so I would expect that people are paying their expected dues.

MR KING Can I ask a supplementary? So Minister you are unable to detail to the House then what checks and balances are in place to ensure that employers are meeting their obligations?

MR SHERIDAN I will have to take that on notice Madam Speaker and get back to Mr King.

MR KING A question for the Minister with responsibility for the environment. Minister has the Government considered the ease with which a prohibition on the importation of plastic bags into Norfolk Island could be implemented in the interest of environmental protection and if so, what was the outcome of such considerations?

MR SHERIDAN Thank you Madam Speaker I'm unaware of any, well in my time, no discussions have taken place in regards to the prohibition of the importation of plastic bags, if there has been one undertaken I will pursue that through the service and ascertain as to why the decision, or to see what the decision was at that time.

MR KING A supplementary if I may. Is the Minister prepared to adopt a policy position in relation to the importation of plastic bags, or the prohibition on the importation?

MR SHERIDAN Thank you Madam Speaker I'm certainly quite receptive to a position on the importation of plastics, as to what it would be, that would have to be determined after the review of the information, if there is such information out there.

MRS WARD A supplementary, thank you, can I seek an assurance from the Minister, that before such a policy decision is made by Government that that question and debate be brought to the House for broad discussion, thank you.

MR KING A question for the Minister with responsibility for Industrial Relations in the Island, or employment matters. Minister is it a fact that the failure to provide either an annual holiday entitlement or a public holiday entitlement are offences under the Employment Act 1988 punishment by a monetary fine?

MR SHERIDAN Madam Speaker if Mr King could just elaborate there a little bit more, I'm just not quite sure what he is asking.

MR KING Is it a fact that the Employment Act 1988 creates an offence for an employer not to provide to an employee a annual holiday entitlement or a public holiday entitlement.

MR SHERIDAN I believe it does Madam Speaker, I believe there is a requirement for employers to provide for such days to be paid, I'm quite positive.

MR KING A further supplementary, is the Minister aware if any, or how many convictions have been secured under the Act for offences of a failure to provide an annual holiday entitlement or a public holiday entitlement?

MR SHERIDAN Madam Speaker I would have to take that on notice and get that information from our Legal Services Unit.

MR KING Thank you Madam Speaker, a question for the Chief Minister. Chief Minister other than a preparation of a yes statement for the upcoming referendum, what has the Government planned as part of its campaign to preserve recent legislative amendments, for example, radio broadcasts, talk back discussion, open debate perhaps with proponents of the no case, media campaign.

MR KING I table the extract from the House of Representatives Hansard 24th November 2011.

SPEAKER That paper is so tabled. Further questions without notice Honourable Members? No further questions.

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

SPEAKER We turn now to answers to questions on notice. And the first one is Mrs Ward, 275, directed to you Chief Minister.

MR BUFFETT Thank you Madam Speaker the question is this Madam Speaker, will the Chief Minister explain in detail how the Administrations procurement procedures will satisfy the Commonwealths Finance Ministers orders principles of (a) value for money (b) open and effective competition and (c) fairness and equity in dealing, and whether tenders will be called on all existing contracts and agreements on a regular basis. Madam Speaker there are two documents that are referred to here in this particular question, one is the Commonwealth Finance Minister's Orders for Norfolk Island in 2011 and the other is the procurement of goods and services at the Administration's Policy and Guidelines in that respect. To endeavour to respond to the queries raised; the procurement of goods and services by the Administration takes place under a direction made under Section 38 of the Public Monies Act 1979, this direction is the Administrative Policy & Guideline entitled "Procurement of Goods and Services, Purchasing, Tenders and Contracts". Three of the key purchasing principles of the policy and guidelines are the principles that are stated in the question, that is, value for money, open and effective competition and fairness and equity in dealing. And in those guidelines also, there are subsets, for example, amounts up to \$5000 from \$5000 to \$20000, \$20000 to \$50000 and \$50000 and over and there are various arrangements in respect of each. For example up to and including \$5000 purchases may be obtained without quotes provided the rates are considered reasonable and they are consistent with normal market practice. But if then you go beyond the \$50000 for example, public tenders must be called for those goods and services, so you can see the range and how they might be tackled. The real question however I think tackles this; given the Commonwealth Financial Ministers Orders, how are we going in respect of ours to be compatible with them, and I have asked the Service to ensure that we update ours if that is necessary, to undertake a review to ensure that we do comply with a more recent Commonwealth Financial Ministers Orders. The Administration ones go back to 2004, so they may well be some need to make adjustments there, but that is being attended to in that context.

MRS WARD I'll put it as a supplementary, but the Chief Minister may just have missed the end of the question, which is whether existing tenders or existing contracts and agreements whether they will be updated as well and on a regular basis going forward?

MR BUFFETT If there is a requirement for the supply in goods and services to continue, then obviously the policy and guidelines will be the procedures to be followed, and they are the ones that I mentioned are being ensured to be compatible with the Commonwealth Financial Minister's arrangements.

SPEAKER Thank you Chief Minister, the next question is 300, Mr King to the Chief Minister, Chief Minister.

MR BUFFETT The question is this, what assessments were made before deciding to discontinue bulk fuel sales and what were the determinant factors? Thank you for this question, Madam Speaker, this was really taken because a complaint

has been received from members of the public, that the Government might be entering the areas of competition where private enterprise is providing a service. The factors that were taken into account were, the administration costs of sale, that is manning pumps, depreciation, etc, whether that is adequately included in the price of the bulk fuel sold. The fact that petrol stations currently do offer, as we understand it, a bulk discount to customers, and it led to an initial decision that the service should maybe cease selling bulk fuel. And leave, therefore, that activity to the private sector and there was a date projected at the end of this month. However since that time, there have been further representations from the public, that if there is such a discontinuance it would disadvantage businesses by increasing the cost of fuel in some circumstances, who might buy in that context, and given all of that, it was decided to direct a report to prepare detailed total costing of the bulk operation and the impact of a cost neutrality on the bulk price. That is yet to be got, and when that is got, then the Government obviously will evaluate that and make a further decision.

MR KING I'm sorry Chief Minister are you saying that decision has been made to discontinue but maybe reviewed subject to outcomes.

MR BUFFETT Yes, there was an initial decision, and whether further information came forward we set lets reevaluate that and see how it sits, and that is being done at this moment.

SPEAKER Thank you Chief Minister, the next question is Mr Anderson to the Minister for Tourism, Industry & Development, Minister Nobbs.

MR NOBBS Thank you Madam Speaker the question reads as Carnival Cruises have indicated that they would be prepared to consider reinstating Norfolk Island to their cruise program if infrastructure improvements are made to enhance the certainty of disembarkation of their passengers, can the Minister outline the suggested upgrades that Carnival Cruises have requested and what action he has taken to address their requirements. Madam Speaker in communications that I have had with Carnival Cruises Executives, they have made it quite clear that Norfolk Island has the potential to receive up to 40 perhaps even 50 calls each year, subject to an alternative passenger tendering arrangement enabling disembarkation to the Island to improve substantially, with regard to my actions in progressing this, I've liaised with Carnival Cruise Executive to assemble the technical specification for the tenders barges to satisfy safety and cruise ship passenger disembarkation criteria. I've sought technical advice from engineering firms that have the capacity to design and build such vessels, in discussions with Minister Crean's Department I've also discussed this project and the broad economic benefits that such vessels bring in cruise ship and freight handling capacity. A Minister sub-committee on ports and infrastructure for Norfolk has been established to assemble the information on the tenders barges and a supporting business case to form a proposal to the Commonwealth.

SPEAKER Thank you, the next question on notice is Mr Anderson to the Chief Minister, Chief Minister.

MR BUFFETT The question is this Madam Speaker, does the Government have a program to ensure that all accommodation providers that supply their own cars for visitors use as part of their package have those vehicles properly registered and insured as rental cars, if there is no such compliance program will the Government initiate a review and when will it commence? Madam Speaker the response, and I thank Mr Anderson for this question, it's the responsibility of the rental car owner, as it is the responsibility of every car owner to ensure that their vehicle, or vehicles are properly insured and properly registered. It's the responsibility of the owner to advise the insurance company, motor vehicle registry office of the use of the vehicle

to ensure that the proper insurance and proper registration is in place, the motor vehicle registry office won't register a motor vehicle without a road worthy certificate and third party insurance. And the police has a responsibility to ensure that vehicles are on the road are registered, thus there is to a degree, a compliance program in place in that context. But having described that, should there be some specific cases that maybe has fallen through that proposed net, that really means non-compliance, I would be pleased to have some further details so that that might be addressed.

SPEAKER Thank you Chief Minister, the next question on notice is 303, Mr Anderson to the Minister for Community Services. Minister Sheridan.

MR SHERIDAN Thank you Madam Speaker, the question 303 reads, could the Minister please update the House on the progress of the four day week for green waste deliveries to the Waste Management Centre and advise whether the remaining three days are proving sufficient to control the build up of green product, is there any consideration being given to dispose of green waste elsewhere without it having to be chipped? The answer is Madam Speaker, the four day week for deliveries was brought upon as a result of backlog of green waste to the Waste Management Centre, a decision was made to halt deliveries of green waste completely until the stock pile of green waste could be processed, on completion of this work and deliveries of green waste was re-instigated there was a restriction to four days of the week so as to enable the staff a couple of days of un-ended space to be able to process the green waste on the closed days. During this period an assessment was undertaken as to the ability for staff to completely process the green waste, and it proved successful in that all green waste dumped was processed. This has now allowed the Waste Management Centre to again receive green waste seven days of the week with processing of the waste undertaken on Tuesdays. Staff would prefer if no waste is delivered on Tuesdays, but at this point in time no persons have been turned away. People are reminded that the Waste Management Centre can not process large logs, stumps or green waste with builders rubble, fencing wire, etc, these items will not be accepted at the waste management centre. The other part of the question in regard to consideration given to the disposal of green waste elsewhere without being chipped has been considered in the past on numerous occasions, every time this option has not been pursued due to the risk of someone inadvertently bringing argentine ant infested material to a location which is not currently infested. Madam Speaker the risk is too great.

MR ANDERSON Maybe I missed it, but has there been an announcement that the public, the community, can now take green waste to the Waste Management Centre seven days a week.

MR SHERIDAN Yes Madam Speaker, I thought I just said that.

MR ANDERSON You did, but has there been a public announcement prior to this?

MR SHERIDAN Madam Speaker when I sought the advice from the public service, I was actually unaware myself that they were receiving it seven days a week, so I will ensure that if they have changed their method of operations, that the public are so advised.

SPEAKER Thank you Minister Sheridan, question 304, Mrs Griffiths to the Minister for Tourism, Industry & Development, Minister Nobbs.

MR NOBBS Thank you Madam Speaker the question reads, at the last meeting you referred to a Marine Bill. What areas within this Bill are the subjects of policy consideration? What are the policy objectives of this Bill? Was a policy paper

developed prior to developing this Bill and if so, will the Minister table it? Thank you Madam Speaker, it is proposed that there will be two Bills to comply with the Norfolk Island Government's obligations under the Norfolk Island Fishery Management Policy 2009, I table a copy of that Policy Madam Speaker. Part three of this document sets out the objectives of the Management Policy, Part four sets out the measures to be taken to achieve these objectives and Part seven and eight sets out Norfolk Island Boat Licensing arrangements and boating safety regulations respectively. A Memorandum of Understanding between the Norfolk Island Government and the Australia Fisheries Management Authority is an attachment to the Management Policy as is the Norfolk Island Fishing Association boating safety equipment standards. As I have said, there will be two Bills, a Marine Safety Bill and a Fisheries Management Bill, a working group consisting of representatives of NIFA, Norfolk Island Fishing Association, the Registrar, Deputy Crown Counsel, Norfolk Island Police, Chief of Staff and myself has been established, and it has become a process of developing this draft legislation to fulfil the commitments made within the Management Policy. The group has met on several occasions and has begun the consultation process with a view to introducing the Marine Safety Bill in the Parliament in the early months of 2012. I will also be tabling in early 2012 a report to the Parliament, which is another requirement under the 2009 Policy Paper Madam Speaker.

SPEAKER Thank you Minister Nobbs, the next question is 305, Mr King to the Chief Minister, Chief Minister.

MR BUFFETT I'll move onto 306, I'll handle 305 on another day Madam Speaker. 306 says can the Chief Minister explain why members of his government are prone to dismiss questions which are "operational" in nature and can he assure the community that his Ministers fully understand that executive responsibility extends to all areas of public sector activity whether operational or not? Madam Speaker thank you for this question from Mr King, I just mention to say that it is not the emotive dismissive as in the question, but Minister's certainly identify when the nature of a matter is operational, there is a process to be followed in relation to complaints about operational matters, because in the first instance complaints should be directed to a Manager who manages that operation and if satisfactory answers are not given, then it of course can be directed further up the line to the Chief Executive Officer for example, plus there are complaints procedure within the Administration that might address such matters also. And so there is a first line of responsibility there, it is accepted that there are occasions when maybe an unsatisfactory result comes from all of that and it may then need to apply to a Ministerial area and that happens from time to time. I think it is probably useful to mention that process because there is common criticism directed at Minister's about political interference and if that process is followed, then it means that the operational arrangement has opportunity to first be addressed before it reaches the political arena. Part of this question says, that can he give assurances to the community that his Minister's fully understand that executive responsibility extends to all areas of public sector activity, whether operational or not. I do need to point out that that is not an accurate statement, for example there are particular areas within operational areas, within the service, in which it is inappropriate for Minister's to be involved. There are some registry, statutory functions about operational areas, another area is probably in the police area, within the public service itself, the CEO in the service as particular statutory function, and indeed in that particular piece of legislation, I seem to recall that it prohibits Ministerial areas participation in some operational activities. So that needs to be understood in the processes also.

MR KING A supplementary Madam Speaker yes, I'm sorry the Chief Minister may have misunderstood my question, does he understand that I am not talking about executive participation in operational matters, I'm talking about executive

States and Territories have passed legislation to facilitate or protect public interest disclosures, that is the whistle blowing process. But that legislation is not consistent and I think it is fair to say that views differ as to the satisfactoriness or otherwise of those various statutory approaches. There is no Australian national model, and there is no public interest disclosure legislation in Norfolk Island at this time. But I make mention of these things; the 2003 report on Norfolk Island Governance by the Joint Standing Committee on the National Capital of External Territories recommended, amongst other things of course, it was a thick report, that the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1994 of the ACT be applied by the Commonwealth in Norfolk Island and that the Commonwealth Ombudsman be conferred with jurisdiction to deal with matters that might arise under that legislation. That didn't come to pass. In 2009 the former Federal Parliament Standing Committee on legal on constitutional affairs delivered a report entitled, Whistle blower protection a comprehensive scheme for the Commonwealth Public Sector. This report unanimously recommended as a matter of priority that the Commonwealth introduce legislation to protect interests disclosures in the Australian Government Public Sector. The Australian Government of the day indicated its response to the report, that it intended to introduce comprehensive public interest disclosure legislation, but that has not yet been introduced into the Federal Parliament. I think most people would agree that Norfolk Island may be should have public interest disclosure legislation, and I point out in that context, although not exactly matching what is being said here, that we have on our books at present Ombudsman Legislation to be introduced, but that awaits Commonwealth processes before we can put it in place. It doesn't answer all the questions about whistle blower arrangement, but it does allow independent and confidential enquiries and processes that don't exist in Norfolk Island at present and I look forward to the day that might happen.

SPEAKER Thank you Chief Minister, the next question on notice is 309, Mr King to the Chief Minister, Chief Minister.

MR BUFFETT Thank you again Madam Speaker, Mr King asks me, what is the Government's drug and alcohol strategy and is it being adequately managed in terms of police activity, health services and government policy development? Health services for drug and alcohol use are provided on a needs basis, apart from the policing in these areas to ensure compliance with Norfolk Island laws, Doctors and the Counsellor, who is a Social Worker and has significant experience in the field of mental health care. Those people provide for people in need to overcome drug and excesses and addiction. Drug and alcohol dependence can also be linked to mental illness, but not always. Prevention strategies and treatment may be provided by Doctors within the Island, some on a locum placement, so you will see that there is not necessarily always continuity, and the Counsellor in Norfolk Island. If treatment off Island is requires, then placement would be sought through a variety of non-governmental organisations. Government policy development in these areas are presently being expanded using the Memorandum of Understanding currently being finalised between the Norfolk Island Hospital and the South East Sydney District within New South Wales, which will provide pathways for referrals and patient transfers to those specialised organisations and that is particularly in the hands of Minister Sheridan, he is overseeing that process. A bid has been made in the 2012/13 budget for funds to establish a Community Health Officer, who has part of the role will provide programs, will provide literature, in these areas that have just been mentioned to facilitate early intervention and this will assist in diverting people from dependence on drugs and alcohol and also make the local community aware of those programs if they do need them.

MRS GRIFFITHS Is it intended that this Community Health Officer also play a role in domestic violence and for example provide information specific to Norfolk Island on domestic violence relief?

him to discuss what the opportunities, barriers and outcomes are likely to be regarding Norfolk Island's participation.

SPEAKER Thank you Minister Nobbs, the next question on notice is number 311, Mrs Ward again to the Minister for Community Services, Minister Sheridan.

MR SHERIDAN Thank you Madam Speaker, it is quite a substantial question Madam Speaker and I have two sets of answers provided, a detailed one, or a short and sharp one, so it depends what Mrs Ward would like to hear – a short and sharp response or a detailed response, what would you prefer?

MRS WARD Will the response be tabled in some form if it really is pages long, I'm quite happy for the response to be tabled?

MR SHERIDAN I can table the response Madam Speaker.

SPEAKER I am in your hands Minister Sheridan, if you wish to table it.

MR SHERIDAN I can table the response Madam Speaker and Mrs Ward can have a look at it and get back to me at the next meeting if she has any queries.

SPEAKER That paper is so tabled.

MR SHERIDAN Would you like me to read it?

MRS WARD How many pages is it?

MR SHERIDAN I'll read it out Madam Speaker. The question reads, as a measure of quantifying financial stress within the community, would the Minister provide the following information in relation to the Norfolk Island Healthcare Scheme: (a) how many individuals owe levies that have been outstanding for 90 days or more and what is the average amount outstanding; (b) is the total amount outstanding trending upwards or downwards in the last six months and if so what is the percentage movement each month; (c) what is the total debt owing to the Healthcare fund for each of the six months; and how many people have been referred for legal action to recover outstanding debt in the last 2 years and what was the average amount they owed? Madam Speaker just before I do start, those four series of questions, the time frames are all varied, they don't match each other, i.e. 90 days, then they talk about six months, then percentage of each month and then the health care fund for each six months and the health care levy is a three month period, so the answer will be in relation to a three month period you might say. I provide the following in relation to the question by Mrs Ward. Please note that as the September 2011 levies have only just become past due, they are not provided in the figures detailed in this answer. Answers are based on information for levies from June 2011 back. The first part of the question, 45 people have outstanding levies dating 90 days or more up to the end of the June 2011 levy period with the average outstanding amount per individual being \$352.21. The second part of the question, average arrears for the last four levies is higher than the average over the past six years, but as is always it does take time to reduce an arrears situation, so it is expected that the arrears figure for September 2010 through to June 2011 will reduce over the next few months. For example the average debt from March 2005 through to June 2010 is \$338.13 a period of 21 levies, but the average debt from September 2010 through June 2011 is \$2,022.12. Average arrears over a 12 month period for the past 5 years is as follows; Financial year 05/06 \$285, financial year 06/07

\$317, financial year 07/08 \$609, financial year 08/09 \$268, financial year 09/10 \$397. I'll let you work the percentages out. Answer to the third part of the question, the total debt owing to the Healthcare fund for each six month period, but as the Healthcare levy is broken down into three month periods, I will provide the three months advice rather than six months and I can go back to June 2005, which is \$255, September 2005 \$240, December 2005 \$300, March 2006 \$300, June 2006 \$300, September 2006 \$300, December 2006 \$315, March 2007 \$315, June 2007 \$337.50, September 2007 \$510, December 2007 \$660, March 2008 \$660, June 2008 \$605, September 2008 \$330, December 2008 \$472.50, and it goes on Madam Speaker and I will table this, up to the March 2011 period, \$1285, June 2011 \$5,440, which is a total of some \$18,489.40 Madam Speaker and the last part of the question; 129 persons have been referred to Legal Services in the past two years with a total of \$58,946.81, of this \$43,097 has been paid, the average is some \$456.95 per person.

SPEAKER Thank you Minister Sheridan that paper is so tabled. Question 312 Mrs Ward again to the Minister for Community Services, Minister Sheridan.

MR SHERIDAN Question 312 reads Madam Speaker, would the Minister provide the following information in relation to the Norfolk Island Hospital Enterprise; how many individuals owe debt that has been outstanding for 90 days or more and how has this figure varied over the past 12 months; how many of those individuals are visitors; what amount is owed on medical procedures; and what amount is owed on pharmaceuticals? The answers are Madam Speaker to the first part, as of the 2nd of December 2011 the total individuals with debts past 90 days is 187 with a total of \$258,067.10. As at 30th of November 2010 the total individuals with debts past 90 days were 232, with a total of \$335,509.38, a decrease by \$77,442.28. The second part of the question, the number of individuals noted above of whom are visitors is as at the 2nd of December 2011 only one of these were a visitor, as at 30th November 2010 there were five persons on this list who were a visitor. And of note as at 2nd of the 12th 2011 there were 27 debtors on this list who have left the Island, i.e. being residents and TEP's. And for the third and the fourth part of the question Madam Speaker, the Hospital is unable to access the information immediately. The only way to fully answer these queries is to print out each individual hospital account and itemise each item into either medical procedures or pharmaceuticals. This would mean the printing of 187 reports and manually transcribing each item. Madam Speaker I have declined to ask the Hospital to do this.

SPEAKER Thank you Minister Sheridan, the next question is 313 Mrs Ward again to the Minister for Community Service.

MR SHERIDAN Thank you Madam Speaker, question 313, would the Minister provide the following in relation to the Norfolk Island Hospital Enterprise debt collection procedures; (a) what is the process for debt collection; (b) in 2010/11 how much money was spent on legal services to recoup bad debt; (c) how many default summons were issued in each of the past 3 years; (d) what amount was collected as a result of court action in 2010/11; what amount has been written off as bad debt in each of the past 5 years; and the last part, what constitutes a payment agreement? First part Madam Speaker, the process for debt recovery at the Norfolk Island Hospital Enterprise is as follows; apart from the regular monthly statements, the debt recovery clerk sends out reminders to those who do not make regular payments or have a written agreement and who have a debt outstanding in 90 days. If no payment received or agreement signed by the next month a final notice letter is sent stating that the debtor is expected to pay for all non urgent treatment at the time of the service is provided. A list of these 90 plus day debtors is provided to all departments at the Hospital. If no payment received or agreement signed by the next month a debt recovery legal letter is sent and a

spreadsheet provided to the Director to commence legal process. A spreadsheet of 90 days debt is updated every month and forwarded to the Director along with a debt recovery report, of which is forwarded to the Hospital Advisory Board and to myself. If no response to the debt recovery letter the Director, through the Court of Petty Sessions sends out a Default Summons. If no response to the Default Summons within 2 weeks a Default Judgement is sent out through the Court of Petty Sessions. If still no response a Form 2015 Notice About Court Order and Enforcement Options is registered with the Court of Petty Sessions and sent out. A Form 81 Notice Requiring Financial Information is sent out, so that an order then can be made by the Court to either garnishee wages or sell assets. Second part of the question Madam Speaker, in 2010/11 no funds were expended on legal services to recoup bad debt. The Director of the Hospital does all the paperwork and processes the documentation through the Court of Petty Sessions. The third part of the question, the number of default summons issued over the past three years are; for financial year 2008/09 23 summons, 2009/10 12 summons, and for the financial year 2010/11 19 summons. Fourth part of the question, 90 day debtors have decreased by \$77,442.28 from November 2010 as a result of court action and active debt recovery processes, with \$19,638.47 as a direct result of court action. Fifth part of the question, the amount written off over the past 5 years is; financial year 2006/07 \$7,160.43, financial year 2007/08 \$18,834.38, financial year 2008/09 \$2,527.60, financial year 2009/10 \$11,448.75, financial year 2010/11 \$12,504.41. All debts that are written off Madam Speaker are reinstated if the debtor returns to the Island. The last part of the question, a payment agreement is made for those who cannot afford to pay their account in full. Payment agreements are made so that the debt is paid off within a twelve month period if possible or what the debtor can afford on a weekly basis. Once an agreement is signed the debtor must pay for any non urgent treatment at the time of service. And I've got a copy of the payment agreement if Mrs Ward would like a copy.

SPEAKER Thank you Minister Sheridan, question 314, Mrs Ward again to the Minister for Community Services, Minister Sheridan.

MR SHERIDAN Thank you Madam Speaker, question 314 reads, would the Minister outline the Norfolk Island Government's long term strategy for catering to an aging population, including, but not limited to, the provision of aged care facilities at the Hospital? Madam Speaker the problem of our aging population is not entirely a problem that Norfolk Island has on its own. In percentage terms our elderly may show up as a larger percentage of the population than say Australia, our saving grace is that although the percentage terms are high, the actual numbers are not in the thousands. The Government's strategy for catering for an aging population is based around service delivery in areas such as health, social services, discounted services and provision of care. Currently our social services members enjoy subsidised health and dental costs, subsidised services such as electricity, water assurance, telephone rental and car registration. Provision of care for our elderly has been enhanced with the introduction of Home Care services for our social service recipients, which does include a period of respite care. It is hoped that this will be further enhanced within six months by the budgeting of a Carers Benefit in next Financial Years budget. This will enable our elderly, or persons who require virtually full time care, for this care to be provided in their homes by a person who will benefit from this new initiative. The provision of aged care facilities at the Hospital are provided to care for our elderly and within the plans for a new hospital, beds available have been increased from 12 to 18, some 50% increase. Also of note is the intention to assess the introduction of strata title, for which in the area of caring for an aging population, should enable the elderly to remain in a serviced apartment as their own home for a longer period prior to accessing permanent care facilities. Of course the discussions with the Commonwealth in regard to the provision of services and extension of programs and benefits will also benefit our aging population. On the top of this list in discussions to ensure that private health cover is able to be

extended to Norfolk Island residents and Australian visitors by Australian based health companies, without the requirement to form our own pool of monies, this may enable visitation without travel insurance to a degree. The possible extension of Medicare, Social Services and the PBS schedule to residents of Norfolk Island will also assist our aging population to access services to which the aged population in Australia is accustomed to and we aspire too. I would also imagine that this will be a topic of consideration in the current review of children and family support services currently on Norfolk Island or for a better want, what's not provided on Norfolk Island.

SPEAKER Thank you Minister Sheridan, and final question on notice, 315 again Mrs Ward to the Minister for Community Services, Minister Sheridan.

MR SHERIDAN Thank you Madam Speaker, question 315 reads, does the Commonwealth recognise that the principle of the Norfolk Island Hospital Enterprise is to provide health services at true economic cost is not being adhered to and is practically impossible? Does the new partnership arrangement with the Federal Government include ways to deliver our financially unsustainable method of health service delivery? The answer Madam Speaker, I am fully aware that the Norfolk Island Hospital Act 1985 indicates that the principle for health services provision, so far as is practicable, to be so provided at the true economic cost of the service. I am also aware that the functions of the Hospital Enterprise under the Act is to ensure the efficient and effective delivery of health services to the Norfolk Island community and also to strive to maintain and improve the health of persons in the Norfolk Island community. This is exactly what the Norfolk Island Hospital Enterprise is attempting to achieve, an efficient and effective delivery of health services, but at the same time ensuring that the delivery of these services are at a cost of which is not too expensive and are affordable. This is why the Government support the Norfolk Island Hospital Enterprise with a subsidy each year, this year it will be just over \$2million. If the service delivery was to be delivered at the true cost then huge changes would have to be made, services reduced or not provided and the costs for these services increased. This community does not warrant or deserve this; the community deserves the full provision of services of which can be provided by the professionals that are currently employed at the hospital, and for services not provided on-island, then the provision of visiting specialists or pathways off-shore to medical care in Australia. Madam Speaker, the discussions with the Commonwealth have not reached the detail stage on delivery of health services but it is the intent that when these discussions are taking place that the community's best interests will be at the forefront of these discussions, in particular the level of health services that will be provided on-island. It is my intent that no health service delivery will be reduced but only will be enhanced for the betterment for the community.

SPEAKER Thank you Minister Sheridan. Honourable Members that concludes questions on notice now this morning.

PRESENTATION OF PAPERS

SPEAKER We move now to Presentation of Papers, are there any papers for presentation this morning, Minister Nobbs.

MR NOBBS Thank you Madam Speaker, Section 14 of the Bookmakers and Betting Exchange Act 1998 provides that the Norfolk Island Gaming Authority must promptly provide the Minister with a copy of each (a) license or variation of a license or (b) approval of a transfer or surrender of a license and the Minister must table the copy at the next Sitting of the Legislative Assembly. This morning I was provided with two licenses to act as a Bookmaker and one surrender of license, so I so table those documents Madam Speaker.

SPEAKER Those papers are so tabled, thank you Minister Nobbs, further papers for presentation this morning Honourable Members? Minister Sheridan.

MR SHERIDAN I think this is where I table regulations. Madam Speaker in accordance with Section 41 of the Interpretation Act 1979, I table the Traffic (Amendment) No. 4 Regulations 2011 and also Madam Speaker in accordance with Section 41 of the Interpretation Act 1979, I table the Traffic (Amendment) No. 5 Regulations 2011.

SPEAKER Thank you Minister Sheridan, those papers are so tabled, further papers for presentation Honourable Members? There appears to be no further papers from Minister's. Before I move onto statements, I table a letter dated 25 November from his Honour the Administrator which he has written in response to my letter to him of 13 October 2011 concerning the motion passed by the Legislative Assembly on 5 October 2011 on the extension of Commonwealth laws to Norfolk Island. Members have all been provided with a copy of this document. In his letter His Honour conveys to me as Speaker the views of our Federal Minister the Honourable Simon Crean MP on the matters addressed in the aforementioned letter. For the record I will read the Administrator's letter into Hansard. 25 November 2011, the Honourable Robin Adams JP MLA, Speaker, Legislative Assembly of Norfolk Island, Quality Row, Kingston, Norfolk Island 2899, Dear Madam Speaker, I refer to your letter dated 13 October 2011 concerning the motion passed by the Legislative Assembly on -05 October 2011 on the extension of Commonwealth Laws to Norfolk Island. As requested I conveyed a copy of your letter to the Honourable Simon Crean MP, I for Regional Australia, Regional Development and local Government and have now received his response. The Minister has noted the Legislative Assembly's suggestion relating to the updating of the Centre for International Economics 2006 Report on the extension of Commonwealth Legislation. He has advised that he does not intend to engage the Centre for International Economics for that purpose as considerable changes have been made to Commonwealth and Norfolk Island Legislation in the intervening period. The 2006 Report was based on modelling undertaken prior to the implementation of the Norfolk Island Goods and Services Tax and used assumptions that the Norfolk Island Government would raise on Island taxes to fund works identified in the asset management plan which was never put into effect. The Minister also advises that his department has commissioned a number of reports to help inform the Norfolk Island reform process, including the review of the Public Service, the community survey and Wellbeing Report and the Economic Development Strategy and Action Plan. The Australia Government has also engaged the Commonwealth Grants Commission staff to update its 2006 report on the Financial Capacity of Norfolk Island, this update is a necessary step in developing advice for the Australia Government on the longterm sustainability of Norfolk Island. The Commission will also examine the Federal type taxes and expenditure that Norfolk Island administers to assist the development of future Governance options. The Minister has conveyed his appreciation for the Norfolk Island community's ongoing assistance with the development of these reports and reviews, he has also asked for the Norfolk Island's Governments continued leadership and resolve to work with the Australia Government to secure the financial sustainability of Norfolk Island. Yours sincerely, Owen Walsh, Administrator, and that letter was copied to Honourable David Buffett, Chief Minister, the Honourable Tim Sheridan, Minister for Community Services and the Honourable Andre' Nobbs the Minister for Tourism, Industry & Development and by myself to non-executive Members. That concludes papers.

STATEMENTS OF AN OFFICIAL NATURE

SPEAKER Statements, are there any statements of an official nature, Chief Minister.

MR BUFFETT Madam Speaker I have an overall situation report encompassing a range of matters covered generally by the Roadmap, by the most recent Funding Agreement and by the general progression and discussion and actions with the Federal Government. As a reminder, I mention that Norfolk Island's Roadmap, seeks in the long term, sustainability for our quite small place, so that we who live here may regain prosperity, not just spasmodically, but with some strength and depth over some visionary period of time, and conceptually this envisages us migrating from our own rather limited economic pool where we have demonstrated that we are finding it extremely difficult and are not able to in all circumstances to fund the total needs of the Island, to a larger economic environment where we make a contribution according to our means and receive the benefits from a larger economic pool, for example in areas of Hospital, Harbour, Education, Welfare needs and the like, some of which we've been discussing here today. At present, we are sureing up the fabric of the Island with Commonwealth funding assistance, \$14.1million this current year. And whilst the fabric is being maintained a series of reforms and changes are being implemented to lift our game and prospectively lead us out of the present difficult times to more prosperous times. We all know that this road is rocky, it is difficult to tread, the road is elongated and the process is protracted, I think that we can probably say that half of the whole would prefer to undertake little or less of the Roadmap processes and the other half cry criticism that it is not all done today or even done yesterday. But such is the lot of Government's to tread such paths, we are treading. To add substance to the structure of the Roadmap and how we tread forward, in other words evidence upon which we base decisions, a number of studies have been undertaken, most, but not all, most are Commonwealth funded, a Wellbeing Report, this was some time ago now, April of 2011, it's the Deloitte's/Access Economics Report, that report is now complete and it has been presented, we know its contents. Further along the track we have a Public Sector Review, that is now we understand in its concluding stages, we've yet to have a public release of that, that's the ACIG Report. We continue to wish that that reaches a stage of finality so that it can be publically displayed, we have a Norfolk Island Census, that report is ready for delivery, in fact I can table a copy of that report today Madam Speaker, Norfolk Island Census reported the 2011 Census of Population and Housing, I just mention a couple of things from it, not to analyse the report at all today, but just to give it some perspective. We will just again, to give perspective, we conduct a Census every five years, the last was in 2006, August, it's the same date as Australia conducts its Census, and we have been doing this for decades now. So 2011, August, total population 2302 people, that comprises ordinary resident people 1795 and a visitor population at the date the census is taken of 507. The inter censal annual growth, in fact it's a decrease, it's a minus, -1.8%, at the last census in 2006 there were 2523, so you can see that there has been a drop. But just in case you think that the drop has never happened before, let me just give you figures over the past couple of years, I've mentioned 2302 for the August 2011, last census, again the figure I've quoted to you, 2523, 2001 – the year before that, it was 2601, but 1996 it was 2181 so you can see that is less than this particular year, so it is not as though we have never been there before. It is the total population that the community supports, it also shows in this Census the median age, that is of the ordinarily resident population, 46 years, over 46 years. I wasn't looking at you Mr King! I wasn't looking at you!! Number of dwellings 1144, but occupied dwelling 1017, average household size, two. Ordinarily resident population aged 15 and over in the labour force, 1441 and the median individual weekly income, \$555. There are some other things of course in terms of this, I thought they might be just useful to highlight from the Report itself, I table this Report Madam Speaker. As you

can see, it is in a form not bound at this moment, when I have access to a bound copy I will provide that also to this Assembly.

SPEAKER That paper is so tabled Chief Minister and may I just enquire for the listening public, its availability, that will be available on the internet?

MR BUFFETT Madam Speaker am I addressing the House at this time or are you?

SPEAKER Thank you! I was asked to ask the question.

MR BUFFETT Madam Speaker as soon as there are copies that can be available in a printed form, that will be done, I thought because we are sitting today, if that was available to me, not with standing that it is in this more, less presentable form that you would like me to present it, and that has been done. I'm really trying to list through the various studies that have been undertaken and that is the third that I have mentioned. There is also the Commonwealth Grants Commission Report, you will recall that there was an earlier report done by the Grants Commission and of more recent times, there was an update, it's called a Staff Findings, in other words, not addressed by the totality of the Commission as I understand it, but an update of the financial capacity of Norfolk Island in 2011 and it's labelled "Staff Findings". This document totals 185 pages, again I do not have it in bound form, but I do understand that this is now on the web and therefore available for public access and that comment, but given today's Sitting, I thought that that too might be useful for me to table, I do so Madam Speaker, it is 185 pages as I've just mentioned.

SPEAKER That paper is so tabled.

MR BUFFETT Thank you. Madam Speaker moving on in terms of the various reports that are progressively being brought into the arena, the next is the Economic Development Study and Action Plan. This is a report being prepared by ACIL Tasman. This report at the last count is due for presentation to the Commonwealth Government, this is a Commonwealth Government Report on the 19th of December. And so that is yet to be delivered as you will understand, and in terms of the most recent Funding Agreement, there is to be a review of existing children and family support services to be done, and review personnel are soon to be on Island to address that particular report. These reports, there are some other smaller ones, but these are the major reports that have been commissioned and I do emphasis that these reports aren't designed to just stand one alone. But to be progressively informing to us, and informing each report one to the other, so that they build up a body of information for sound Government decision taking, both on the part of the Norfolk Island Government and of the Commonwealth Government and indeed that is starting to happen, one is becoming more helpful to the other. Possibly the most helpful report that is yet to come, next expected, is the Economic Development Strategy and Action Plan. Both Government's will place great reliance on the information that this report is expected to present. It is expected to assist us to possibly model both some of the economic scenes sought to be exercised within the Roadmap as well as financial information to be useful to people within the Island engaged in various groups of activities, whether they be employees, employers, those within various industries, for example accommodation industry, retail industry and the like. And modelling their financial circumstances will assist us to see how this Roadmap works out and moves forward, one of the things that has been said, is we need to have evidence based material to be able to prove the concepts that we've put forward in the Roadmap and these are the processes to do so. Another related report and process relates to the Airline, and I had a question earlier today about the Airline, the Airline situation is that for some months negotiations have progressed from Commonwealth funding to negotiations with Airlines and we expect the Commonwealth

to tidy negotiations with prospect carrier, date unknown, but we would certainly hope that that is soon, if we want to put an indicator, that we would like to tidy it by the end of this month, so that the community knows, and I'm not trying to set a date upon it. Except that we understand it will move as quickly as they are able and we certainly hope that in the mid to end month there are some announcements about it. So delivery of key reports, the Economic Study, the Public Sector Review, the Airline. Where does that lead us? It leads us to be able to have that information to be able to further map out those things that are conceptualised within the Roadmap, it allows us to talk further with the Commonwealth in terms of their projected arrangements to go to their own Government, we don't know exactly when, but certainly early in the new year, to foster Norfolk Island's wellbeing, utilising our process into the bigger pool, which is the Australian concept of things. You can see that there are some key things that may happen within the next few weeks. What I have suggested to Members on a more informal basis, is that I might have a series of radio talks, say each week or fortnight over the next period of time, that might be able to pick up that information, let the community know authoritatively know in respect of it, we all know that rumours abound in this place. We experience it, but that is the difficulty of there being a vacuum and not information there, we are not always the ones to have that information, but when we have it, we want to be able to share it, and I'm suggesting that process. So, Madam Speaker I am able to present those reports that I have referred to earlier, an update on where we see those others sitting and maybe over the next few weeks, some projections as to where we might plug in and have information and share it within the community as soon as we have it. I present that situation report Madam Speaker.

SPEAKER Thank you Chief Minister. Further statements Honourable Members? Minister Sheridan.

MR SHERIDAN Thank you Madam Speaker I do have a couple of statements, and it's just in regards to coming to that time of the year, I would like to take this opportunity to remind the road users on Norfolk Island Madam Speaker to be careful and considerate for other road users especially over the upcoming holiday period over Christmas and the New Year. Holiday periods such as this bring home a lot of family and friends who have come to Norfolk Island to enjoy its pleasant beauty and charm. With them comes a lot of extra traffic on the roads, with families and groups out enjoying themselves, whether it is picnicking, sightseeing, partying or just driving down the road for a few supplies. There will also be a considerable increase of traffic during the dark hours with festivities being celebrated by family and friends for Christmas and New Year celebrations. Madam Speaker the last thing that any family wants, parents want or partners want is a phone call to say that a member of their family, spouse or child has been involved in a vehicle accident. It is everybody's responsibility to ensure that when using the public roads that the road laws are obeyed, speed signs observed and the newly introduced laws on the wearing of seatbelts, together with the provisions of Learners and Provisional licence holders are known by all. This includes family and friends who are visiting, ensure that they are aware of the changes to the Road Traffic Act. Madam Speaker this next comment could be in relation to a question by Mr Anderson or Mr King about the referendum coming up, but it is interesting to note that since the introduction of seatbelt legislation there has been a number of motor vehicle accidents and I have been made aware that persons who have been wearing their seatbelts have escaped major injury, whilst a number of those who have not been wearing their seatbelts have had very serious injuries, some even life threatening. Madam Speaker the Norfolk Island Police will be proactive over this holiday season policing speeding, driving under the influence, and anti-social behaviour amongst other things, but it is my hope that their time is for nought and that they will not be required to attend any accidents, bring peoples before the courts, make that phone call to loved ones but enjoy the season as we will all be doing. I would just like to conclude by I would like to think that all persons on Norfolk Island can remain safe this Christmas.

SPEAKER Thank you Minister Sheridan. Another statement
Minister Sheridan?

MR SHERIDAN I've got a statement in regards to a fire danger period
Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker the Fire Advisory Board met on the 27th November
2011 and recommended to me that a Fire Danger period be declared for the period 10th
December 2011 until 14th January 2012. The Fire Advisory Board consisting of the Chief
Fire Officer, Gerri Downie, Fire Officer Graham Cock and Member Ian McLeod and
information from the Conservator and the Norfolk Island Met Bureau were discussed
during this meeting. Due to the continuing dry conditions, the abundant amount of dry
litter throughout the reserves and the National Park and the results of modelling by the
Weather Services in New South Wales which indicated that the KBDI (which is a
measure of long term moisture deficit) for Norfolk Island is currently 93, which is
approaching very high values. Considering this information the recommendation for this
Fire Danger Period has been agreed too and it will appear in the local gazette this
weekend. Madam Speaker during a period of the Fire Danger Period no person may
light a fire in the open air unless they have a permit from the Chief Fire Control Officer.
A person may still light a fire for cooking in a properly constructed fireplace or in a
properly constructed incinerator designed to prevent the escape of sparks or
incandescent material. If persons are considering burning off or lighting a fire outside
permission has to be sought and a permit obtained. The Chief Fire Control Officer may
be contacted on 22049, 51199 or 51149.

SPEAKER Thank you Mr Sheridan, further statement
Honourable Members, Chief Minister.

MR BUFFETT Thank you Madam Speaker, Madam Speaker Mr
Bruce Baskerville, Site Manager of the Kingston and Arthurs Vale Historic Area,
concludes his term of his engagement during this month. He has managed the site
including entering the World Heritage status, he has assisted the KAVHA Board in its
role, and he has particularly assisted the Government in developing future management
papers for discussion with the Commonwealth about this area and I would like, upon his
conclusion of term, to offer him thanks from the Government and wish him well in his
future endeavours.

SPEAKER Thank you Chief Minister. Minister Sheridan.

MR SHERIDAN Thank you Madam Speaker, just a final brief
statement, it is actually to do with Drug and Alcohol Services and it may support a
question to the Chief Minister earlier today. Madam Speaker with the Christmas and
Near Year period about to commence, the stress placed on families, individuals and
organisations can be put to the test. Extra stress can result in people seeking out
different types of measures in an attempt to reduce these feelings either via the use of
alcohol or drugs. Over the next couple of months in particular I urge all persons to take
particular care when enjoying their gatherings, parties and social get-togethers. This
time of the year also puts pressures on the family budget, what with all the expectations
that this time of year brings. I would like to provide some assurance to these people of
the facilities that are available especially in relation to alcohol and drug dependency.
Services that are available are the doctors and nursing staff at the Hospital, and
appointments can be made by ringing 22091. There's also free access to the Counsellor
if any person would like to discuss any particular problem. The Counsellor can be
contacted on 23191 or 56400. Also available are telephone counselling services
including Crisis Counselling via 1800 551 800, Violence Against Women via 1800 200
526. There is also available websites for Mensline Australia via
www.menslineaus.org.au and Youth Help via www.reachout.com.au. Madam Speaker

these will be reprinted in the paper this weekend as a press release. Alcoholics Anonymous can also be contacted on 23150. And Madam Speaker if any person would like assistance with financial planning, this can be accommodated through the CIRCA office on 22447 which is a free service which is provided by that CIRCA office. Madam Speaker if any person feels that they are in need to be referred off-island for any drug and alcohol problem, this can be organised through the Norfolk Island Hospital Enterprise who have direct pathways to the South East Sydney Local Health District and can arrange the referral. In providing this information I would just like to add that it is the responsibility of the licensee's, community, family members, parents and mates, to ensure that alcohol is not consumed by a person under the age of 18 years of age. Under the Liquor Act 2005 it is an offence to supply alcohol to a person under the age of 18 years of age. The penalty for this is \$500. Madam Speaker I would just urge all of the community to enjoy their festive season but to be mindful of persons who may be at risk and therefore a danger to themselves and others.

SPEAKER Thank you Minister Sheridan, any further statements this morning Honourable Members?

MESSAGES FROM THE OFFICE OF THE ADMINISTRATOR – NO 25

SPEAKER There being no further statements we move now to Messages from the Administrator, of which I have one. Message number 25, on 22 November 2011 acting pursuant to Section 21 of the Norfolk Island Act 1979 I declared my assent to the following proposed laws passed by the Legislative Assembly; Married Persons (Equality of Status) Act 2011 being Act number 17 of 2011. That message is dated 22 November 2011 by Mr Owen Walsh Administrator.

PRESENTATION OF REPORTS STANDING COMMITTEES

SPEAKER I don't believe there are any reports from Standing Committees, which Honourable Members brings us to the substantive matters on the Notice Paper and I'm looking for you to guidance about lunch.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING FOR LUNCH

It is now 10 to one, I am proposing to suspend until 2.30pm. Honourable Members unless there is an offer to the contrary this House stands suspended until 2.30pm, thank you.

RESUMPTION OF SITTING

Honourable Members we recommence at Notices

CUSTOMS ACT 1913, EXEMPTION FROM PAYMENT OF CUSTOMS DUTY

SPEAKER Notice number one Honourable Members is the Customs Act 1913, exemption from payment of Customs Duty, stands in your name Chief Minister.

MR BUFFETT Madam Speaker I move that under subsection 2(4)(b) of the Customs Act 1913, this House recommends to the Administrator that the goods specified in the of this Schedule imported by the person specified opposite, and on the conditions mentioned, in the second column of the Schedule be exempted from duty. And the schedule is then as printed and circulated, but I'll walk through the columns; column one which lists the goods, column two lists the Importer and the Conditions. So firstly the goods; Safety Equipment and the amount of duty applicable is \$257.40 imported by the Norfolk Island Fishing Club, no conditions attached is the first. The next

is defibrillators, amount of duty applicable \$467.04, St John's Ambulance importers, no conditions. And then back to goods again, two Extreme MotoX motorcycles, amount of duty applicable \$1930.20, importer Norfolk Island Junior Rugby League, conditions, that the motorcycles to be exported at conclusion of the event. You will see the context of these three items Madam Speaker, I move that motion.

SPEAKER Thank you Chief Minister, the question before the House is that the motion be agreed to. Debate? Chief Minister.

MR BUFFETT Madam Speaker, this is a formal process, under the Customs Legislation the appropriate Minister has the authority to exempt duty in a certain set of circumstances, where the duty is less than \$200. I might say that, something has just come to mind that I should have done earlier in the Sitting, this relates to items that are beyond the \$200 mark and in those set of circumstances it needs to come to the House in a formal motion, which is what this, I commend this motion.

SPEAKER Thank you Chief Minister, debate Honourable Members. There seems there is no debate.

QUESTION PUT
AGREED

The motion is so agreed.

MR BUFFETT Madam Speaker I wonder if I might seek your indulgence and maybe the indulgence of the House also, I just mentioned that lower than \$200 it is within the Minister's authority to make exemptions, that has been done over recent times, but there is a provision that I need to table those items in this House, I've got to say that I have signalled this to Members earlier and I think I probably should have done this in Papers, when we were at Papers earlier in the Sitting, I wonder with you indulgence if I might so table it now?

SPEAKER Is leave granted Honourable Members? I take it leave is granted? That paper is so tabled Chief Minister.

MR BUFFETT Thank you.

MOTION TO RESCIND

SPEAKER We move now to Notice two, the motion to rescind, Mr King this is in your name.

MR KING Yes Madam Speaker, I move that the vote of the House on the motion recorded as item 10 in the Minutes of Proceedings of this House dated 5th October 2011 be rescinded.

SPEAKER Honourable Members Mr King had earlier requested that the motions on notice 2 and 3 be debated together on the understanding that each motion will be voted on separately. Is leave granted for that to happen Honourable Members. Leave is so granted. Mr King you might like to move the second motion which puts it on the table.

MR KING Yes I so move Madam Speaker.

SPEAKER Thank you Mr King, if you would read it out for the Hansard.

MR KING I move that the vote of the House on the motions recorded as item 13 in the Minutes of Proceedings of this house dated 5th of October 2011 be rescinded.

SPEAKER Thank you Mr King, I ask the Acting Deputy Speaker, Mr Sheridan, to take the Chair, thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER Afternoon ladies and gents, we are up to debate, is there any debate, I think Mr King has the floor.

MR KING Thank you Mr Acting Deputy Speaker, the original motions that I am seeking to rescind here today, passed this Assembly with an affirmative vote of three of the six Members present. There were three who were for varying reasons who were absent on that day. They were and are substantive motions that touched on very significant current issues, namely of course the progression of the Roadmap towards Governance change and of course the preservation of culture identity. Mr Acting Deputy Speaker, these are highly important matters which are at the heart of every Member of this House and they require, in my view, the consideration of every Member of this House, they did not sit on the Notice Paper for a period, so that public opinion could be guarded, as one would normally expect to be the case, that is the manner in which the House has conducted itself over the years, with matters of a substantive significant nature, be it a Bill or a Motion and as such Mr Acting Deputy Speaker, the fact that the public were denied a reasonable period in which to put their views forward, it offended against one of the movers own arguments about the lack of public consultation, Ms Adams, the mover of the original motions, is extremely passionate about the protection of culture and traditions, and endeavouring to ensure good outcomes for local people, and that is evident in her original motions and her debate, and I admire her greatly for her passion. I would suggest however Mr Acting Speaker that her level of care and concern in these matters is no greater than that of any other Member around this table, Ms Adams is scared about unsatisfactory outcomes in the Roadmap process and we all are, of course we all are. We all deal differently with our fears and some of course manage deal, cope with change quite readily, others not so, 12 months ago when the Chief Minister and the Government, and the Chief Minister especially made probably the hardest decision in his life, but he did so with a very clear expectation, in my observations, a very clear expectation and desire that the chosen path was the best possible option for providing a more sustainable future for his community. His decision, was in my view, perhaps a little belated, but never the less it was made with a level of conviction and commitment and an understanding that a failure to take the direction that he chose, that is to do nothing, was by far the most damaging, perhaps critically damaging option for the preservation of the Norfolk Island way of life as he knew it and his culture and traditions. Indeed we had already at that stage, Mr Deputy Speaker continued to lose our own people to more stable economies. We watched then as our culture and traditions walked up the steps onto the plane, onto the plane out of here, we watched then, and we watch now, as standards of living continue to fall and people continue to lose their investments and incomes, the Chief Minister did what he had to do. In an attempt to stop these things. The Chief Minister agreed Mr Acting Deputy Speaker to take the pathways set out in the Roadmap on the basis that there were net benefits for the community, a much used phrase in debates, and much was made of that in the debate on the original motions. Of course that is what he would like, what we would all like, but our job is to be alert that he takes every step available to him in an effort to achieve those net benefits, what he can't do however, and what we can't do, either individually or as a group, is to make any guarantee of net benefits, we can not do that, the very nature and complexity of the Roadmap process ensures,

ensures that there will be unintended consequences, there is no template Mr Acting Deputy Speaker to accommodate or facilitate the contemplated changes. It hasn't been done before, at least in the Australian context, we had, perhaps foolishly, hoped that these net benefits would be available well before this time, that hasn't happened for a number of reasons, and we can be somewhat critical about that, but that will not add to this current debate. What we understand 12 months down the track is that decisions for the medium and long term can not be made until all parts of the picture have been pulled together. The evidence based decisions which will come from the various reports that the Chief Minister alluded to at length today. Reports that will provide into the basis for those informed decisions, to do in fact, what was sought to be achieved by the original motions, by Ms Adams motions, these studies of course, as remarked upon by the Chief Minister are nearing completion and the process can not, and in my view, should not be interrupted by introducing additional requirements and processes which will add little or nothing to the progression. Mr Acting Deputy Speaker, there will never ever be enough public consultation on this matter, as far as some in the community are concerned, consultation in my observation over many years takes on a somewhat different meaning in Norfolk Island to elsewhere, in the eyes of some here it means listen to me and do what I say. It can not be that way, there has been opportunity for discussion and consultation and those who are complaining that it was inadequate are perhaps the same people who declined to inform themselves and participate in the debate about where Norfolk Island was headed and the inevitability of Norfolk arriving at the position that it is in right now. We, Mr Acting Deputy Speaker, are the elected representatives of the Island community, the Government Minister's are the executive representatives of this House, none of us are perfect, in fact some of us are far short of being perfect. We are responsible for the direction in which we are headed and ultimately we will be held accountable. I am not happy Mr Acting Deputy Speaker with many aspects of the Government's performance, I've made that reasonably clear, but I will not do anything that will stand in the way of progress on the Roadmap, progress towards a more sustainable future towards the Island, I understand and accept that there can be no guarantees about outcomes or net benefits. There will be, as unintended and perhaps adverse consequences, in fact you could guarantee that there will be adverse consequences, but all we can do in relation to them Mr Acting Deputy Speaker, is to seek to minimise them, to be alert to them, and to respond to them as quickly as we can to ensure that as far as possible, best outcomes and negative impact of people of Norfolk Island. There are mechanisms and agreements in place for ongoing review, and like any other plan that is developed, particularly in the public sector, the value of a plan is only as good as its periodic review. The Government expressed its own commitment. I share that commitment as a backbencher to ensuring that I will do, my commitment is to do what I can to support the Government and press the Government in the direction that I believe is the right direction. The Government's own commitment as expressed 12 months ago, was a commitment to reform, as expressed by the Chief Minister out of sheer necessity, and I would expect, out of love for his community and a desire for its survival, it was no small matter, and a very very brave journey for him to embark upon. In my view, he did what was responsible and what was expected of him as Chief Minister. Of course I recognise that it would have been a very very difficult year for him, and his Minister's. I am bewildered however Mr Acting Deputy Speaker at his failure to vote against the original motions, his failure to use that opportunity to reaffirm his and his Government's commitment, some would have interpreted that failure as a crack in the Government's resolve, it is certainly difficult to understand and accept that he would leave it for others to support the directions set by him and his Government and his pathway that he has chosen and followed for the past 12 months. Particularly Mr Acting Deputy Speaker, in the light of a clear expectation expressed by the mover of the original motions, that the Roadmap process and the various terms of the Funding Agreements should pause whilst the new processes envisaged by the motions were undertaken and that is my contribution, thank you.

ACTING DEPUTY SPEAKER Thank you Mr King, is there any further debate ladies and gents?

MRS GRIFFITHS Thank you Mr Acting Deputy Speaker, let me say from the outset I have no intention of going back on my original vote, when it comes to voting in this House, I vote according to my conscience. When I believe in something I don't often change my view or direction and I have no intention of starting now. In discussing the motions and they have been combined, in October I pointed out some facts that are still relevant. They are that any reforms that we must undergo must provide a net benefit to this community, that we have done little to protect and promote our culture, we have used culture and traditions as an impediment to change rather than integrating it into change. The motion called for independent people to oversee our reforms, and I stand by that view, and reiterate my call, that a body such as the Joint Standing Committee be tasked to enquire into and report on the implementation of the proposed reforms, specifically those goals set out in the Roadmap. With particular emphasis on the preservation and promotion of our culture and our identity, I still support that view. I haven't changed my mind, and I certainly won't do so on this motion, that I originally supported. I don't support this motion.

MR SNELL Thank you Mr Acting Deputy Speaker. I likewise supported this motion, and I certainly won't be changing my vote as requested in Mr King's motion. There are several aspects regarding Mr King's motion; one is whether there is a question of proper procedures were complied with at the time, and the answer is yes. It is very unusual that a motion to rescind the previous motion, other than to correct an issue is dealt with. So, one must ask oneself, what is Mr King all about here, is it to embarrass this House, or the Government, we are all here to look after the interests of our constituents, and some of our constituents are those that support the motion that was put by Ms Adams. I certainly don't intend to change my mind on that and perhaps Mr Acting Deputy Speaker, we should, for the sake of the listening public, reiterate and read what the actual motions were all about, even though they were published in the Norfolk Islander, it was adequate advertisement of what was going to be all about, and there was adequate, I think, exposure for those wishing to make some further comment. We had already seen a letter from the Administrator from Minister Crean's office regarding one of those motions, which I'm sure Mr King would have been pleased to have read, the other of course, he is relying on now, is the protection of Norfolk Island's cultural heritage, and for the sake of the listening public I wish to read that motion. Ms Adams to move whereas in 1979 the Commonwealth of Australia entered into a new partnership arrangement with the Territory of Norfolk Island, by the passage through the Commonwealth Parliament, of the Norfolk Island Act 1979 (the Act) and whereas in the preamble to the Norfolk Island Act of 1979 (the preamble) the Commonwealth parliament of Australia (a) acknowledges the residents of Norfolk Island, including descendants of the settlers of Pitcairn Island and (b) recognises the special relationship of the said descendants of Norfolk Island and their desire to preserve their traditions and culture, and whereas on 25th November 2010, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed by the Honourable Simon Crean MP on behalf of the Commonwealth of Australia and by the Honourable David Buffett AM MLA on behalf of the Government of Norfolk Island (the parties). And whereas by the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding Norfolk Island has agreed in all terms to change the 1979 partnership between the Commonwealth of Australia and the territory of Norfolk Island and "on the basis that there will be a net benefit for Norfolk Island and its community and there is appropriate consideration of local circumstances". And whereas the changes currently being proposed to the 1979 partnership between the Commonwealth of Australia and Norfolk Island could contrary to the intention of the Commonwealth Parliament in 1979, adversely impact on the special relationship of the descendants of the settlers from Pitcairn Island and their ongoing desire to preserve their traditions and culture (the rights of the Pitcairn descendants). And whereas the

Legislative Assembly of Norfolk Island is of the view that a process should be put in place as a matter of priority to ensure that the rights of the Pitcairn descendants are in no way diminished. Now this House resolves that the Honourable David Buffett AM MLA enter into urgent dialogue with the Honourable Simon Crean MP to discuss an approach being made to Major General Jeffery AC CBO MC, former Governor General of Australia and the Honourable Robert Bob Ellicott QC BA LLB, former federal Minister with responsibility for Norfolk Island in 1979, being eminent persons respected by the Commonwealth Parliament and the Norfolk Island Parliament, or in the event that they are unavailable, such other eminent persons as are agreed between the parties under consultation with the Members of the Legislative Assembly, with a view to their being co-opted to independently oversee the changes to the 1979 partnership, and thereby assist the Commonwealth of Australia, the Commonwealth Parliament, the Norfolk Island Parliament and the Norfolk Island community to have certainty that the proposed new partnership adequately reflects the rights of the Pitcairn Descendants and the rights of the Norfolk Islander and the rights of the long term permanent residents of this Island. Mr Acting Deputy Speaker, I see no offensive nature of that motion what so ever, and out there in this community there are people who applaud the actions by that Assembly on that day. Mr Acting Deputy Speaker, there are other aspects raised in Mr King's argument in support of his motion, he recalls the departures from this Island that have been members of this community that have left, due to lack of employment or due to lack of standard of living, etc. May we just remind ourselves that all those departures, and there are not that many of them, but there are some, departures have not been because of financial or any other reasons of a lack of living here on Norfolk Island, the standard of living, but have been solely by choice, some have left very good employment to take up better paid positions elsewhere, some have left very good jobs vacant and also some have gone for the reasons that Mr King has pointed out, but not all of them. Mr King also mentioned in his address that plans of course, is only as good as periodic review, one must think about the periodic review that was promised by the Federal Government in 1979, that they were going to periodically review the Norfolk Island Act in its commitment to Norfolk Island. Had that of course occurred Mr Acting Deputy Speaker, we may not have been in the situation we were 12 months ago, when, as Mr King quite rightly points out, Mr Buffett, Chief Minister, was virtually forced to take the action of which he did. Like Mrs Griffiths, I have no intention of changing my vote on this today, and I hope the other Members around this table will take note of it as well. Thank you Mr Acting Deputy Speaker.

MR BUFFETT Mr Acting Deputy Speaker, this motion is about process, it's about rescission, processes in this legislature, whether or not we should oscillate an issue back and forth depending upon on whether we think we can marshal the numbers on this day or another day, these issues, that is item 10 and 13 of the Minutes of Proceedings that is mentioned in the motion, in fact have been decided, and it has been decided by a regular and proper sitting. Maybe that is okay with some in terms of the outcome, but not okay with the others, but as far as I can see there are no irregularity to be fixed in that particular process. I can see clearly on both sides of the ledger, that there are people that feel that they need to debate the issue that has already been debated and already decided. My view Mr Acting Deputy Speaker that that is not the issue for today, those issues have been decided, it is not an issue to be revisited. We need to decide whether we want to be comfortable about the processes. Mr King did on an earlier occasion offer thoughts that Erskine May, the Bible in terms of the Legislative Procedures, Parliamentary Procedures, should be more closely adhered to on occasions, may I just read from Erskine May, in terms of matters of this nature, that is about rescissions. This procedure is rarely, rarely invoked, May, that means Erskine May, states that the reason motions to rescind a vote, or resolution are rare, is that the Houses instinctively realise that Parliamentary Government requires the majority to abide by a decision, regularly come too, regularly, that means if it is done in its proper courses, however unexpected, and that it is unfair to resort to methods whether direct or

indirect to reverse such a decision. But obviously people want to have another go at it. Erskine May offers caution about that, and in today's debate, I don't consider that it's appropriate to revisit the matter, we need to devote whether you want to rescind or not the procedural matter and if there is going to be continued debate about the matter again, I move that the question be put.

ACTING DEPUTY SPEAKER I think that the people that wanted to have a word have had their say.

MR KING That is not correct.

ACTING DEPUTY SPEAKER Mr King are you looking for the floor?

MR KING No no.

ACTING DEPUTY SPEAKER No.

MRS WARD I would like to speak on the process.

MR ANDERSON Likewise.

ACTING DEPUTY SPEAKER Then I will refer to Mrs Ward there Mrs Ward if she would like to speak about the process.

MR BUFFETT If she would like to talk about process, that is what the motion is about.

MRS WARD Thank you Mr Acting Deputy Speaker, and I certainly second the words of the Chief Minister, I have previously expressed my views on these motions, or this issue and I have no intention to go through that again, whether Ms Adams timing was deliberate or not, I'm not going to spend time on that, the reality is we are in politics, it is everybody's democratic right to represent their constituents in any way they see fit. The other important point, is that Ms Adams has clearly stated that she is 100% behind the Chief Minister in his endeavours, now she admits in Hansard that in relation to the assessment of the current financial and economic situation, and at that time her brain hadn't thought beyond that report. Now I think it would have been far more productive you know if we could have extended our brains a little further and we all understand that we are currently working with the Australia Government in an already agreed format. What I would like to add at this stage is an acknowledgement and a thank you to the Chief Minister who has given the community today, and the House a progress report. A strong indication and stated facts that the wheels are turning, but we are in very early stages of assessing local circumstances, and the Chief Minister listed those in the House this morning, that they are the result of an agreed joint Government position. And of course the Commonwealth continues to provide the Island with monthly instalments of money as emergency funding. Another point which I think is relevant is that the, Madam Speaker this morning, tabled a document which was a response to her, a written response to the request of the House to update the Centre of International Economics, the answer is in the negative, that is no surprise to me, Minister Crean gives his valid reasons why not, he has simply reminded Madam Speaker and all of us, that the Centre of International Economics is no longer relevant and other reports are currently underway, as the Chief Minister has said, so we move on. I think that the last point that is important to say, is that, even though we are nine independent Members, this community expects us to work together, and nothing should be so urgent that it needs to be pushed through without all of us nine Members sitting around the table, because anything less is not truly representative of the entire community. Now we do have huge challenges ahead, leaderships not about being popular, it's not about sitting

on the fence, it's about making those decisions that we, as the nine representatives believe are in the best interests of the community as a whole, thank you Mr Acting Deputy Speaker.

ACTING DEPUTY SPEAKER Thank you Mrs Ward for that debate on the process, now I believe Mr Anderson would like to have a few words to say on the process.

MR ANDERSON On the process, yes, on the content of the two motions, first of all I endorse the comments of Mr King and those of Mrs Ward. And I acknowledge the comments of the Chief Minister that this matter has been decided. But I think that it is necessary to at least have the opportunity to comment on the substantive nature of the two motions and whether or not they are appropriate. These two motions were brought on, if I understand the debate correctly, to encourage discussion, on the need for consideration on the impact of effects of the Roadmap, particularly in the area of extension of Commonwealth legislation and encourages discussion on the need to preserve the rights, traditions and culture of Pitcairn Descendants, which it appeared to imply, where either being overridden or ignored. I note that they were brought on, and adjournment was requested by Mrs Ward and declined and the meeting with three of the nine Members were absent from the meeting and therefore unable to participate in the discussion. Bringing it on without adjourning certainly restricted the opportunity for the often repeated reason that these issues needed to be discussed. Perhaps the way they were brought on was to ensure within the Chamber there was as little discussion as possible on the merits of, and the need for, the two motions to proceed in the form in which they were presented. The debate I perceived reach the point on both motions that the mover of both motions was not convinced herself of what was being argued was actually necessary. It was suggested that we merely needed to proceed with caution and be aware of the potential impacts, but the motion still proceeded. I do not intend to go into the actual debate on the content of the two motions, other than to comment on the fact that one motion sought an update of a report prepared for a previous Commonwealth Government on instructions from a then Minister from a party not now in power, which resulted in a report that no one here has seen in other than an abridged version, and which was supplied under Freedom of Information. It seems to me that there was certainly not enough justification to suggest to the Commonwealth that it needed to be updated, therefore was the content of the motion the best way to proceed in order to engender discussion. Minister Crean has already advised the Government that he will not be doing as he was encouraged to do, by essentially three Members of this House. I think the motion was an embarrassment for the Norfolk Island Assembly and that is reflected in the points in the Minister's reply, the concerns may be real, but the methodology was flawed. The second motion sought independent oversight of the preservation of the rights and traditions of Pitcairn Descendants, it made passing reference to long term permanent residents of the Island. Mrs Ward asked the question in the previous debate, what are those special rights that need special independent oversight and how are they different to those of non-descendants, tell us what you perceive them to be then we can discuss them. Once again I believe it was embarrassing that these motions progressed, the second motion mentioned the names of two people who had not been consulted about their involvement, even if they were interested, protocol normally dictates that you pay them the courtesy of contacting them to see whether they are prepared to participate. The independent oversight of an intangible that can not be quantified makes the intended task very difficult. The right thing to do in my view, is to redress the action taken and to rescind the motions, the impact would be minimal, but at least having demonstrated to Canberra at how adept the Assembly can be, we can also recognise short comings and set them straight. Thank you Mr Acting Deputy Speaker.

ACTING DEPUTY SPEAKER Thank you Mr Anderson, any further debate on the procedural aspects of it, thank you Chief Minister, Honourable Members there being no

further debate, I put the question, that the vote of the House as recorded as item 10 in the Minutes of Proceedings of this House dated 5th of October 2011 be rescinded.

QUESTION PUT

Madam Clerk if you could call the House please.

CLERK	Ms Adams	No
	Mr Snell	No
	Mr Sheridan	No
	Mrs Griffiths	No
	Mr Buffett	No
	Mr Nobbs	No
	Mrs Ward	No
	Mr King	Aye
	Mr Anderson	Aye

ACTING DEPUTY SPEAKER Thank you, the Noes have it, the motion is negated

MOTION TO RESCIND

Moving now onto Notice Number three, which was incorporated in this same motion. Honourable Members I now put the question that the vote of the House that of the House on the motion recorded as Item 13 in the Minutes of Proceedings of this House dated 5th of October 2011 be rescinded.

QUESTION PUT NEGATIVED

I think the noes have it, would you like the House called Mr King and Mr Anderson? The motion is negated. We now move onto Notice number four and if I could ask Ms Adams to resume the Chair.

MOTION BY LEAVE – PROVIDENT ACCOUNT ACT 1958

SPEAKER Honourable Members we are at that position on today's programme where Chief Minister is seeking leave in respect of a motion on the Provident Account, Chief Minister.

MR BUFFETT I do seek leave to move this Motion, I have earlier foreshadowed this Members but there was not the process of actually giving Notice so that it might appear on the yellow paper.

SPEAKER Is leave granted Honourable Members?

QUESTION PUT AGREED

SPEAKER Leave is so granted Chief Minister.

MR BUFFETT Thank you Madam Speaker, I move that for the purposes of Section 4 and 4A(1)(a) of the Provident Account Act 1958, the Legislative Assembly recommend that the Minister with responsibility for the Provident Account Act 1958, revoke any previous appointment of the Official Trustee, and appoint Kim Narelle Edward being a public service employee, to be the Official Trustee of the Provident Account.

SPEAKER Thank you Chief Minister, the question before the House is the motion be agreed too, debate? Chief Minister.

MR BUFFETT Thank you Madam Speaker, Madam Speaker there is now a vacancy in the office of Official Trustee, the earlier occupant is no longer a member of the Service and the Legislation requires that that be the case, I have had advice from the Public Service Association that the Provident Account obviously relates to people who are in that capacity, with the recommendation for Kim Narelle Edward to be appointed and I have consulted and therefore as a result of the consultation, make this formal proposal. If you are agreeable to it, then I will continue with the appointment subsequent to your voting on the matter, the matter is in your hands and I commend it to you.

SPEAKER Thank you Chief Minister, debate Honourable Members? I think Members are comfortable Chief Minister that debate be concluded, I put the question.

QUESTION PUT
QUESTION SO AGREED

The motion is so agreed. Moving along now to Notice number 4, the Immigration (Amendment) Bill 2011, this stands in your name Chief Minister.

MR BUFFETT Thank you Madam Speaker, Madam Speaker I move that the Bill be agreed to in principle. I present the Immigration Act and move that motion that the Bill be agreed to in principle.

SPEAKER Thank you Chief Minister, the question before the House is that the motion be agreed too. Debate Honourable Members? Chief Minister.

MR BUFFETT Madam Speaker this Bill is introduced today to remove immigration restrictions upon Australia citizens and New Zealand citizens with the intent of facilitating tourism activity in Norfolk Island. It's a facility for the entry and stay of visitors, I want to give that emphasis, visitors. It's not about long term stay in Norfolk Island, this is a process to facilitate visitors in the principle industry in the Island of visitors. It's anticipated that by removing requirements for a passport, by extending the period for visitors to stay in the Island in the first instance from the normal 30 days to an extended 45 days and then beyond that in certain circumstances to stay for up to a year, and that is what this legislation is all about. So to walk through those, it is intended that people will no longer require a passport if you are an Australia, if you are a New Zealand person, or if you have the appropriate authority to stay in Australia, that is a Visa, a multiple re-entry visa or permanent residency within the Australian scene, and in those circumstances you may more freely move into the Island as a visitor. People presently have the capacity to stay without any further documentation than filling in the form on the plane and getting off the plane in Norfolk Island and stay for 30 days. There is an extension of that in the first instance to 45 days, but people may also have the capacity to stay up to a year, that is 365 provided that they are a visitor, and provided they have sufficient funds to maintain for them to maintain themselves during that period of time and that they do have travel insurance, they're the parameters of it all. And that is what the encompassing arrangements are proposed in this particular piece of legislation, you will see again, if I might emphasise it, that it's an effort pursued with us by the Commonwealth Government, so that in terms of our industry, there is a greater flow, an easier flow of visitors, we hope this will be the case, and this is reflected in the legislation. It also reflects the factor that at this moment there is not the extension of Australian medical facilities in this place, so there will be an ask for insurance arrangements to guard against any difficulties there, although that part might vary once the Australian arrangements for facilities that exist in Australia to extend to Norfolk

Island, but that is not the case with Australia legislation at this moment. That is an overview in respect of this piece of legislation, I commend it to the House, there will be debate to whatever extent Members would wish to today, at the conclusion of that, I will propose an amendment so that we might conclude at our next coming together Madam Speaker.

SPEAKER Thank you Chief Minister, Chief Minister would it be convenient to you to table the Explanatory Memorandum.

MR BUFFETT Yes, I table the Explanatory Memorandum.

SPEAKER That paper is so tabled, thank you, debate Honourable Members? Mr Snell.

MR SNELL Yes, thank you Madam Speaker, Madam Speaker, Mr Buffett is to be congratulated on his endeavours to comply with the requirements of the Funding Agreement and this matter, certainly, I think would facilitate the entry into Norfolk Island of peoples from Australia and New Zealand for visitations of the nature of which he has just explained. But there are of course certain difficulties associated with this. And he has mentioned one of health and whether they would be automatically entitled to be in our healthcare system, but he is going to address that as he promised, and there are others, and it was raised yesterday at the MLA's by Mrs Griffiths, and that is the question of voting in our elections, if somebody was to be here for 365 days, and was to be classified as ordinarily resident. Madam Speaker after consultation it has been advised to me, that 39A of the Norfolk Island Act says, entitlement to enrolment on the electoral role 1. A person is entitled to enrolment if, at the time of applying for enrolment, the person (a) is at least 18 years and (b) an Australian citizen and (c) has been ordinarily resident within the territory for six months immediately before the application. The question is, is whether 365 days on a visitors permit entitles a person to be ordinarily resident within the territory. The legal advice that has been offered is, ordinarily resident is a question of fact, the case law indicates that a person is ordinarily resident in a place if they habitually and normally resided lawfully in that place from choice and for settled purpose throughout the prescribed period, apart from temporary or occasional absences, it is possible in an appropriate factual scenario that a person on a visitors permit could be determined to be ordinarily resident and therefore entitled to enrolment. Madam Speaker that raises a question and I'm certain that the Chief Minister in his further deliberations with this Bill will take those into account. Thank you Madam Speaker.

MR ANDERSON I will just offer a few comments Thank you Madam Speaker, I appreciate that this Bill is only intended to be a starting point in relation to barriers to visitor entry and their ability to remain on the Island, and I also appreciate that this is intended to stimulate discussion with the Commonwealth on the issues that arise for their Customs and Immigration Department and for other Departments such as Medicare, and it is also for it to highlight issues for Norfolk Island in the areas such as health and housing. But we have the benefit of people who may seek to remain, already having to have a status that allows them to remain in Australia generally, there may be an issue of what is though a genuine visitor, an issue that arises under the Australian Visa requirements and under what circumstances can such permits in our case, be cancelled, this issue could easily be included in policy, but we will be talking about people who are already on the Island, other specific policy issues need to be considered, such as will a visitors permit be granted to a pregnant visitor if they are likely to give birth during the period of validity of that permit and what are the implications, again, another issue which is specifically covered under the Australian Long Stay Visitors Visa's. I think there have been arguments that expecting a visitor to apply for an extension of their permit during the first 45 days and satisfy financial and health conditions could represent

additional barriers. Long stay Australia Visitors Visa's, I believe, are generally applied for before the person arrives on Australia soil. There is some provision for such application once they are in Australia. The local logistics will need closer investigation because if a visitor arrives and stays for 45 days, and I personally would prefer it to be 90 days, and I understand the difficulties that that may amplify, but if they are granted the exemption, they might reasonably be expected to come and go from the Island, in the remaining 320 days. If they do so, does that negate the extended permit? Under the Act they would receive another permit when they return within the 320 days, which will apply? The Long Stay Australian Tourist Visa allows for single or multiple entries, not both and that is a condition that could be imposed. The provision of travel insurance, to address the health issues, will provide some level of comfort, but with matters such as pre-existing conditions, will there really be any real additional comfort? Also, if a person arrives with travel insurance for say 45 days, then decides to stay for another 320 days, can they get that insurance extended? Normally travel insurance is only available before you commence your travel. Basically I'm only raising a few additional issues which will need to be considered as part of the discussions and I look forward to hearing the comments from the Commonwealth on the Bill. Thank you Madam Speaker.

SPEAKER

Thank you Mr Anderson, further debate Honourable

Members, Mrs Ward.

MRS WARD

Thank you Madam Speaker, I understand that the Chief Minister has brought this Bill on, as part of the Funding Agreement compliance, it is about enabling flexibility, it is about visitors, this isn't the open door of immigration, as I understand is a great concern to a lot of people in the community, that is not what this Bill is about, but what this Bill is going to do, obviously, has already been pointed out today, is raise more questions. I think that of everything under the Road Map we know immigration is a hot potato, more than taxation, but then immigration is a hot potato for mainland Australia as well, so this Bill will lead to more discussions, it is probably not an area, in my opinion, that's been given enough thought by the Commonwealth Government, but that is what this will lead to.

MR NOBBS

Thank you Madam Speaker, Mrs Ward has actually hit the nail on the head in terms of the progression of this, if we look at what has been hoped to progress between New Zealand and Australia with the Trans-Tasman gateway, there's certainly been a lot of dialogue, a lot of headlines about enabling easier tourism travel between Australia and New Zealand, what that's eventuated to at this point, and I'm not saying there hasn't been dedicated effort to it, because there has, but what it's come down to is really the SmartGate System, or the Kiosk System where you use electronic passport and things like that. For Norfolk Island I think where we will progress to this, and I think it will take quite some time, and there will certainly be some feedback in terms of what's tabled today, specifically as it's a Schedule 3 item. So we would expect feedback in that regard, but I don't at this point that there will be many options too different to what is currently in place and being trialed with the Trans-Tasman arrangements, and the reason for that is that there is a need for that immigration policy information that attaches itself to people whether they are normally resident or whether they are foreign nationals. And the SmartGate Kiosks and the systems that enable electronic travel authority information to be shared with those areas that form part of that border control is imperative and that is certainly something that we have highlighted along the way, is that Norfolk Island, as in effect a protector of entry and border to Australia, has certainly put its hand up to gain access to that to ensure that we are providing the best support for border security, and this, I would hope, will move us another step towards getting that better alliance between immigration, diac and such systems within Australia and Norfolk Island and further linking with New Zealand. From a tourism perspective I can see certainly some advantages in simplifying, and we've all had various discussions both in the Chamber and outside the Chamber, about moving to

domestic travel rather than leaving from international departures, and there are some pros and cons with that as well, but at the end of the day the immigration falls within Schedule 3, so there will be a great deal of detail to be worked out with this between the Commonwealth and the Norfolk Island Government. Electronic travel authorities are imperative if we are to provide the best outcomes for Norfolk Island and for Australia border, however, I see this as a great move, thank you.

MR BUFFETT A couple of mentions were made about prospective Commonwealth comment, and I just want to confirm of course that this of course has been dispatched to the Commonwealth for their comment.

MRS GRIFFITHS Thank you Madam Speaker, simply a comment that I would support this today, but I will not support that it be rushed through the House next month, I would like this to sit on the table and go through due process.

MR BUFFETT Madam Speaker if I may, it is not proposed to process any further today, and that is what we are doing, and what I propose is the normal process, introduce it today, sits on the table and when we next come together, then we give it some finality.

MRS GRIFFITHS I do not support finalizing it next meeting, I would rather it sit for the full three months and gather as much comment from the community as possible, just for the Chief Minister's benefit.

MR BUFFETT May I just make the point that it is not normal that a Bill has to sit on the table for three months, I'm not necessarily opposing the process that Mrs Griffiths is talking about, I'm talking about, if you are talking about normality, which I thought she was talking about, the normal thing is introduce it, and the next time we sit we give it some formality, but there may be differences for this.

SPEAKER Thank you Chief Minister, thank you Mrs Griffiths, further debate Honourable Members? As there is no further debate Chief Minister I look...

MR BUFFETT May I just make one additional point, and this is continuing conversation about whether it will be one or three months, there has been given an indicator in the funding arrangements, that we have by the 1st of January commitment. We need to demonstrate our seriousness about this, now this won't be tidied by the 1st of the January, but if we start to prolong it much beyond that, then we may be giving the wrong impression at the other end.

MRS GRIFFITHS Thank you, I understand that Chief Minister, I understand that if it's sitting on the table, then I would imagine that the Commonwealth at that time would imagine that you were doing your utmost to move it through the process, but given as Mrs Ward said, this is a hot potato, this is something of great importance to the community, that the most amount of time to be given for community consultation and comment.

SPEAKER Thank you Mrs Griffiths, further debate Honourable Members? Chief Minister I look to you now for a motion of adjournment.

MR BUFFETT I move that this matter be adjourned and made an Order of the Day for a subsequent day of Sitting Madam Speaker.

SPEAKER Thank you Chief Minister, the question before the House is that the motion be agree too.

QUESTION PUT
AGREED

The debate is adjourned Honourable Members.

ORDERS OF THE DAY**OFFICIAL SURVEY (AMENDMENT) BILL 2011**

SPEAKER We move now to Orders of the Day, and the first Order of the Day is the Official Survey (Amendment) Bill 2011, Minister Sheridan you have the call.

MR SHERIDAN Thank you Madam Speaker, this Official Survey (Amendment) Bill is very simple, and as I indicated at the last Sitting, that it is just giving the ability comparing the Surveyor-General to delegate his or her powers and functions as set out in the Act to another person and requires that the delegation be done in writing, that it be produced for inspection if requested by any person affected by the use of the delegated powers. Madam Speaker as I indicated last month, this amendment has been requested by the Surveyor-General so I bring it to the House for the amendment to be made.

SPEAKER Is there any debate Honourable Members on the question that the Bill be agreed to in principle? Since there is no debate, I put the question.

QUESTION PUT
AGREED

The Bill is so agreed to in principle. This it the wish of the House to dispense of the detail stage? With that being the wish of the House Minister Sheridan I look to you please for a final motion.

MR SHERIDAN Thank you Madam Speaker I move that the Bill be agreed too.

SPEAKER Thank you Minister Sheridan, the question before the House is that the motion be agreed too. Is there any debate Honourable Members? No debate I put the question.

QUESTION PUT
AGREED

That Bill is so agreed.

EMPLOYMENT (AMENDMENT NO. 2) BILL 2011

The final substantive matter on todays program Honourable Members is Employment (Amendment No. 2) Bill 2011, Minister Sheridan you have the call to resume on the question that the detail stage amendments that you moved at the last Sitting be agreed too, Minister Sheridan.

MR SHERIDAN Thank you Madam Speaker, Madam Speaker the Employment (Amendment No. 2) Bill I have had in the House for a fair while now, and I've tabled a detailed stage amendment at the last Sitting, Madam Speaker with the Houses concurrence, I would like to seek leave to withdraw the amendments currently

before the House and to replace them with amendments dated the 7th of December appearing in my name on the programme.

SPEAKER Minister Sheridan you are seeking leave to withdraw the amendments which were proposed in the detail stage at the last Sitting with new amendments that are today dated 07...

MR SHERIDAN No, sorry, it's the 2nd, sorry, correction, it is the 2nd of December Madam Speaker, but the Explanatory Memo is the 7th, if I could just get my facts correct.

SPEAKER Okay, thank you, thank you.

MR SHERIDAN My apologies.

SPEAKER Yes, is leave granted Honourable Members? I'm sure we all understand exactly what I'm asking? Leave is so granted. Minister Sheridan then for those purposes, would you like to read the new amendments into Hansard?

MR SHERIDAN I can Madam Speaker, I can read the detail stage amendment into Hansard there Madam Speaker, it's essentially that Item 2 be withdrawn and substituted for the Item 2 that is in the detailed stage amendment and it is Section 108 (1) Repeal paragraph (2)(e) and insert (3) Regulations for the purpose of section 14 may provide— (a) that the minimum rate be determined as an amount payable as an hourly rate or in respect of a working week, or both. (b) that the minimum rate remain unchanged or be increased (but not reduced) annually in accordance with— (i) the determination of an independent authority; or (ii) a prescribed methodology having reference to matters other than only the RPI. (c) that if a determination of the minimum rate is to be effected by an independent authority, the authority must conduct an annual review and determination having regard to— (i) variations in the RPI; (ii) a prescribed methodology; and (iii) submissions from interested parties; and (iv) the prevailing social and economic circumstances of Norfolk Island; and (v) such other relevant matters as may be prescribed.'."

SPEAKER Thank you Minister Sheridan.

MR SHERIDAN Madam Speaker I have further amended the detail stage amendment you might say, to assist with some Members who had a problem with how the detailed stage amendment was at the last Sitting, whereas it indicated that the minimum wage may be changed by solely consideration of the RPI movement, and I agree, it may not be the best index for minimum wage movement, but, until we get something else, it was the only index that we really did have, but I took on board their concerns and now the RPI is one of the matters that may be considered, may be considered, not in its entirety and just by itself. So how it reads now there Madam Speaker, it may be changed, it can't be decreased by the determination of an independent authority, or a prescribed methodology, having reference to matters other than only the RPI, so that fixes up that little problem. I don't know what else I can say Madam Speaker, what I am attempting to do here is set in concrete a method, a system, that the minimum wage is reviewed on an annual basis, instead of just left in hibernation until it falls off the shelf one day, the Act falls off the shelf, hits the Minister on the toe and says have a look at me. So this is what I am trying to do, just to have that in concrete that it is reviewed annually so that we can ensure that our minimum wage really keeps up with the cost of living on Norfolk Island for those people who are paid around those dollars can be assured that you know, they will have a few more cents in their pocket each week. So I just leave it in the House's hands Madam Speaker.

SPEAKER Thank you Minister Sheridan, the question before the House is that the amendments be agreed too, debate Honourable Members? Mr Anderson.

MR ANDERSON Thank you Madam Speaker, I'm happier with the proposal than with the first, but I invite the Minister to ensure total clarity by amending his detailed stage amendment by adding the word "and" in 2(c)(i) we had a discussion earlier and he acknowledged that that's where or was taking out from, and maybe the word and had been over looked in being substituted, I think at the moment there is a potential for it to read, the variations in the RPI is a separate category from the others because it doesn't and, I think the clarity would be provided if the and were added back in, and I suggest, or I would seek that that amendment and I have comments otherwise in relation to the detailed stage amendment.

SPEAKER With your agreement Mr Anderson I'm going to ask Minister Sheridan, whether you are comfortable to include that in your detailed stage amendments has having being inserted?

MR SHERIDAN Madam Speaker I'm comfortable to, if the House is comfortable to add and in where Mr Anderson has indicated.

SPEAKER Okay, that just saves us another step in the process, thank you. Mr Anderson.

MR ANDERSON Thank you Madam Speaker, otherwise I maintain my objection to the use of the RPI but in its current form, but I understand the Commonwealth Government Contractor undertaking the Economic Development Study are also expecting to provide an updated method of calculating a more accurate measure which will still be called the RPI. But it will not have the accuracy of the CPI. I agree it is what we have, it may be going to improve by virtue of the contractor who has voluntarily looking at it. In support of my view, I suppose it is worth noting that the recent industrial action in the United Kingdom in part related to the current UK Government's switching public service pension increases to movements in their CPI rather than using the existing situation where movements to tied to movements in their RPI. The justification was that the CPI more accurately tracks the movement of an economy than an RPI because it is more comprehensive in its coverage and calculation. Their statisticians were of the view that the RPI overstated the true situation, it would be reasonable to assume both RPI's were constructed along similar lines and therefore potentially, in the event we had a proper CPI, an RPI may be giving a higher result, I will support the amended version, but hope that before it is utilized the new improved RPI calculation is in place. I also trust that with the changeover in the calculation of the RPI that a transitional adjustment is determined if necessary for any immediate effect on the RPI that arises from a more accurate calculation. Thank you Madam Speaker.

MRS GRIFFITHS Thank you Madam Speaker, I mentioned last month that I was hesitant to support this Bill as I wasn't keen on the idea of tagging the minimum wage to our RPI, however I note that Minister Sheridan has changed this in his amendments and I appreciate it. Like Mr Anderson I also understand that there will be some work down on our RPI, I have one final concern that the Minister might take the time to address. If we have employees on a minimum wage and their employers are forced to pay more, particularly when we have sent an indication that they are going to be generating higher profits in the short and medium term, can the Minister assure me that we will not simply see lower paid employees lose their jobs altogether when faced with an increase.

MR SNELL Thank you Madam Speaker, Madam Speaker I also share some concerns, I voiced these before, that I have difficulty in agreeing to setting or

tying a wage system which could automatically give pay increases for no performance or any other circumstances which would necessitate a pay increase, so we could be tying a pay increase to variations to the RPI and it could become automatic. Whilst the amendments as described doesn't necessarily say that the increase will be forthcoming, but if the RPI rises it would be very hard for an argument to say oh but the RPI has risen so therefore the minimum wage should go up. There are some concerns, but I appreciate what the Minister is trying to do, he is trying to tidy up a process that's been very adhoc for a long time and to a better, fairer and more equitable system under these regulations. I can appreciate that and for that reason alone I support the amendments.

MRS WARD Thank you Madam Speaker, firstly thank you to the Minister for carrying through the concerns of some Members around the table, I certainly fully support the intent of the Bill, which is as the Minister has described, to remove the three assessments in 18 years type scenario carrying on into the future. My concern was not so much that the minimum wage was set on the RPI, the RPI is fine if that is your system, without having a CPI, but it was the integrity of the RPI, and so now with ACIL Tasman, Dr James Fogarty being the one doing the review, and if that review is to the Commonwealth by the 19th of December and hopefully to this Government soon after that, that will give an accurate measure of the RPI and therefore I am confident to support the detailed stage amendments, the Bill today, Thank you Madam Speaker.

MR SHERIDAN Thank you Madam Speaker, I'll just make a couple of comments in regards to a couple of other comments that have been made, unfortunately I can't guarantee that if the minimum wage was increased that persons would not lose their job, unfortunately I can't give that guarantee, that is purely a matter for the employer and how he does his employment. What I am trying to guarantee is that those people who are paid around the minimum wage, that their minimum wage is reviewed on a regular basis and to allay Mr Snell's concerns about the RPI, I have removed all reference to tying it to the RPI, it is only one factor that maybe taken into consideration when assessment of the minimum wage is made, it is just one of the factors, there is the tying to it completely has been taken away, so that should allay Mr Snell's fears in that regard. All I'm trying to do Madam Speaker is put in place a system that the minimum wage is reviewed regularly utilizing, as it's turned out on the detailed stage amendments, utilizing a methodology and looking at all areas in our society that may have affect on the cost of living, and I think it is only fair that those people who are paid at a low rate, have that certainty that this will be done.

SPEAKER Thank you Minister Sheridan, further debate Honourable Members? I believe debate has concluded. So I put the question that the amendment stage of 02 December 2011 be agreed too.

QUESTION PUT
AGREED

I now put the question that the clauses as amended be agreed too.

QUESTION PUT
AGREED

And finally I put the question that the remainder of the Bill be agreed too.

QUESTION PUT
AGREED

Minister Sheridan I look to you for a final motion.

MR SHERIDAN Thank you Madam Speaker I move that the Bill as amended be agreed too.

SPEAKER The question before the House is that the motion be agreed too, any debate Honourable Members? Mr King.

MR KING Just some brief words in general Madam Speaker to reiterate my disappointment expressed earlier in the debate in the first reading of the Bill that whilst I respect and acknowledge Mr Sheridan's objective in relation to this matter, I repeat my concerns that if there is a genuine desire on his part to attend to the needs of the lower and middle income earners in the Island, why is this process not accompanied by a review of the current minimum wage, which has been in place for some three and a half years. And again, as a member of the Impact of Bills Committee to express my disappointment on behalf of the Committee that put in a lot of effort that the recommendations for further amendments contained in that report have not been accommodated in this Bill, and one would have thought that it would have been a relatively simple matter to include them given that the report was submitted to this House and the House resolved to adopt those recommendations, yet the opportunity hasn't been taken to accommodate them in this Bill. Having said that, I understand where it's heading and I will support the Bill, thank you.

MR NOBBS Thank you Madam Speaker, I'm just actually seeking a bit of clarity here as we go to the last part of the motion, as to whether we've included the amendment

SPEAKER Yes.

MR NOBBS We have, okay, thank you.

SPEAKER The question before the House Honourable Members is that the final motion be agreed too. If there is no further debate I put the question.

QUESTION PUT
AGREED

It was a unanimous aye. The Bill, as amended, is agreed too Honourable Members.

FIXING OF THE NEXT SITTING DAY

SPEAKER Honourable Members we move now to fixing of the next Sitting Day and I look to Mrs Ward.

MRS WARD Thank you Madam Speaker, I move that this House at its rising adjourn until Wednesday the 1st of February 2012 at 10am.

SPEAKER Thank you Mrs Ward the question before the House is that the motion be agreed too, debate Honourable Members? There being no debate I put the question.

QUESTION PUT
AGREED

The date of the next Sitting is so fixed as Wednesday 1st February 2012 at 10am.

ADJOURNMENT

SPEAKER We move now to adjournment and it stands in your name Mr Snell, any debate after you have moved the motion?

MR SNELL Thank you Madam Speaker, Madam Speaker I move that the house do now adjourn.

SPEAKER Thank you Mr Snell, question before the House is that the motion be agreed too, debate Honourable Members and I look to you Chief Minister.

MR BUFFETT Madam Speaker thank you for the call, I know that it is only the 7th of December, but we have just decided that we will meet on the 1st of February, so obviously Christmas will intervene. May I, on the Government's behalf, offer Christmas Greetings to the wider part of the community and wish them every happiness in the Christmas Season that is able to be offered and that we all are able to move together into 2012 with a frame of mind for better things to happen in our place here. May I particularly in the smaller context of things, pay acknowledgement Madam Speaker to yourself and those who work in the Legislative Assembly for the support that they have given to both Government and obviously to wider membership, that's absolutely invaluable for us being able to pursue our tasks and for my own part and for the part of my own Ministerial colleagues, to our Chief of Staff and to our Senior Research Officer for their invaluable work and the officers of the Service, almost 200 people, although I think we talked about earlier today the matter of restrictive employment, there may be less than 200 at this moment, but whatever the number may be, they have all an important role to play and have played it during the year past and we're all equally approaching the Christmas season and I wish them all the best with warm thanks from the Norfolk Island Government.

MR SHERIDAN Thank you Madam Speaker, Madam Speaker I would just like to support the Chief Minister's comments and wish the community all the best for this upcoming festive season. I must say, that during the lunch break I took the opportunity to duck over to Government House, I think Mrs Ward was over there, and it was Open Day there, but they had classes K-2 down there singing Christmas Carols under the oaks trees there and it was wonderful to see, an enjoyable 20 minutes. So I would just really like to thank the community for the support that they have shown me this year, but in particular, as the Chief Minister has stated we have a lot of people in the Administration that do support each of the Ministers in our roles, and realistically I've got too many to thank Madam Speaker, so I would just like to thank everybody in the service. But I would really like to point out the community boards that do support me and give me feedback, especially the Hospital Advisory Board, the Employment Conciliation Board, the Social Services Board, the Emergency Management Committee, the Road Safety Committee, Planning & Environment Board, the Social Awareness Advisory Group, the Social Welfare Advisory Group, and of course, it only meets once a year, but the Ivens Buffett Environmental Advisory Board and of course I couldn't stop saying thank you unless I thanked the staff down in this compound, specifically the Clerk sitting over there, Gaye, thank you, Secretary down in the front office, my right hand girl you might say is Alma down there, Senior Research Officer and the Chief of Staff, and including the staff that come down here to do relief, they're a vital cog, keg? Cog, I'm thinking about Christmas already! They are a vital step in the ladder, I don't know, they are a vital cog in this mechanism that makes this work down in this compound and I would just like to thank all of those people, thank the community for their support and I look forward to having a couple of beers and some festive spirit throughout the New Year.

MR NOBBS Thank you Madam Speaker, I'm quite fortunate that between the Chief Minister and Tim they've highlighted the fact that we really appreciate the level of support both from within the Service and within the community in terms of the

various feedback and service support, so I certainly reiterate what they've said and pass on, not only my thanks, but also the best wishes for those areas, particular in the portfolio areas and the volunteers that form many of those bodies that work on that to wish them the best for the festive season. We've certainly had a challenging year and I'm really hoping that we are all moving into a productive year, a prosperous year and that we get a more stable year as well. One or two other things I just wanted to cover before the end of debate today and that is to welcome the Norfolk Island Government Tourist Bureau GM, Glen Buffett, into his role, and I wish him and the Norfolk Island Government Tourist Bureau and our industry partners and the various industry operators on Norfolk Island the best of Christmas and of course I wish them high occupancy, good retail sales and all those things as well. On another note Madam Speaker we say goodbye to our CEO for Norfolk Air before we go much further than the middle of this month, so through this House I want to acknowledge the work that Jeff Murdoch has put into the Norfolk Air Service, he certainly has looked at all avenues, he certainly has been accessible and done his outmost I think to see the best outcome for Norfolk in an air service capacity as well as a broader tourism and destination profile building capacity. In finishing Madam Speaker I would just like to wish all around this table and outside this table a very pleasant, happy family filled festive season and the best of New Years.

MR SNELL Thank you Madam Speaker, Madam Speaker I reiterate and agree with the comments that have already been made around this table, this afternoon in congratulating and thanking those that have assisted the assembly and myself in the past 12 months and before that as well, I think special mention should be made to the past performance of the CEO who has vacated his position now as we know, wish him and his good lady best seasons greetings and of course past staff who are no longer with the public service, they've contributed a great deal, and I mention some who are no longer there, Steve Mathews, his wife, and of course Mitchell Evans and a few others that are no longer there we thank them for their past input into Norfolk Island and into the public service and I thank those, particularly with the cruise ship operations that have struggled over the past 12 months, those that have volunteered their help, those that have been on call, the Chamber of Commerce for their assistance, whether we agree with some of their policies or not, they have been doing a good job to try and benefit our major industry here on Norfolk, particularly with the Christmas Pageant and other public functions, CIRCA and of course Tourism Operators and Accommodation Proprietors and so on. Tourism is very important to us, and like the Minister has mentioned, the efforts of Norfolk Air, there's going to be big changes for us in the near future with the airlines, so we've got that to look forward too, but we thank all those that have been associated with Norfolk Air in the last 12 months and I wish everyone around the table a very happy and prosperous Christmas and New Year, thank you.

MRS WARD Thank you Madam Speaker, the Chief Minister made mention of the assistance by the staff of course to the wider assembly and not just to the Government and I would just like to thank, particularly the people who come as relief staff they basically hit the ground running, that is Sharyn and Paula, and I think they do an amazing job, they help me a lot with the research that I carry out, so I thank them personally. I would also like to thank my Facebook family, they stimulate my debate, they help me correlate my thoughts into this House, so I thank them as well, they know who they are! Also just mention of the Regional Commonwealth Department officers who come and go, they won't be listening on the air today, but I extend my thanks and best wishes to them and the consultants who carry on review and to George Plant who continues to be the Road Map Senior Adviser, and to the wider community a safe Christmas and New Year and we'll be back in 2012, thank you.

MR KING Madam Speaker lest my silence be taken as or construed as not wishing to offer my best wishes to my colleagues around the table, I do so here and now and very loudly and in particular I offer my best wishes to the Government,

and Acting Deputy Speakers Minister Sheridan and Mrs Griffiths who take the Chair willingly when called upon to do so, thank you. To the rest of my Assembly colleagues it is an ongoing pleasure to work with you as elected representatives of this community of the 13th Assembly. To the officers from the Radio Station who join us in the Chamber to record our meetings for Hansard, thank you for your assistance, to all members of the Norfolk Island public service for the support you have given to both me and to our Legislative Assembly over the past 12 months, thank you. And may I congratulate each and every one of you on your professionalism in what from time to time can be difficult and unrewarding circumstances. We have many unsung heroes in the Norfolk Island community, far too many to mention personally but I acknowledge each and every one of you with thanks for Norfolk. To our school leavers, both in years 10 and 12, who are moving forward onto the next path of your precious lives, go forward with pride in yourselves and in your Island, knowing that this Island is a very very special place, which is always here to return to in the years ahead. To His Honour the Administrator and Mrs Walsh, in my address and reply of the first Sitting of the Legislative Assembly on 24th of March 2010, I acknowledged the role that the Administrator has played in the territory of Norfolk Island over the years, Official Secretary, Acting Administrator and today as the Administrator, for a total at that time of some 10 years and then on that same occasion I said that none of those roles can take greater precedence to the part that the Administrator has played in our community in more recent times, in bringing to Government House our Island's own first lady, Bianca. To the Administrator and Mrs Walsh on behalf of this community we thank you for the untiring role you have played and will continue to play in this community. To conclude Honourable Members, but most importantly of all, to the people of Norfolk Island, may the festive season this year be kind to you all and may we together in 2012 go from strength to strength. Thank you Honourable Members. Further debate Honourable Members? Mr Snell, no, fine. There being no further debate, I put the question that the House do now adjourn.

QUESTION PUT
AGREED

This House stands adjourned until Wednesday the 1st of February 2012 at 10am. Thank you Honourable Members.