

you might say took away all our reserves and then we had to ask the Federal Government for some assistance to see us through just for our general revenue expenditure. So if we had continued to run the Airline we would have been asking for a larger amount of handout from the Commonwealth on a yearly basis, more than we are now. So no whilst it's a benefit to the Norfolk Island Government not having to worry about running an Airline, actually the loss that we had budgeted for is not a benefit to us directly.

MR PORTER Thank you. I look to the Chief Minister or the Minister for Finance. The Administration no longer accepts payment by American Express or Diners Club card. Has contact been made with these card providers and for that matter all card providers, to negotiate a reduction in the fees so that Administration customers will have the ability to use all cards to pay their accounts promptly without excessive card fees applying. If contact has not made in recent time, will it be made in the near future.

MR SHERIDAN Thank you Mr Speaker and Mr Porter for the question. This problem came up some time ago last year and when the decision was made to restrict payment to the Visa or Mastercard I believe it is and they discounted the other ones. At that time discussions were had with the other service providers whoever they may be, but I don't believe a reasonable cost could be provided. So it was decided at that time that they would restrict payments to just the Mastercard and the Visa. Mr Speaker I can ask the Service for some detail on that so that I can provide to Mr Porter so he knows exactly what the end results was and I will ask that and I'll get that information to Mr Porter.

MR NOBBS Thank you Mr Speaker. One for the Minister for Finance. Minister when will the Norfolk Island Budget be available to the Membership here and obviously the wider community and have you any comments at this stage in relation to the budget.

MR SHERIDAN Thank you Mr Speaker and Mr Nobbs for the question. Comments in relation to the budget, no I don't have any at this time. I have worked through with the Service for a timetable for the delivery of the Budget and the Budget is due to be presented to me next Monday, the 15th or 13th whatever it is. It is intended that we would have the budget in hand for 2 weeks to assess and to any changes that need doing and I'm hopeful that we can present the Budget to the House on the 29th of May when its envisaged that we do have our next sitting. So unfortunately for Mr Nobbs I can't provide any details because I haven't seen the majority of the details as yet. We are working to a \$6.7m deficit. The timetable, the Service have had discussions with all of their areas of, you know all of their departments. They put in their bid, they formulated the Budget and I'm expected to receive it next Monday.

MR NOBBS Just a supplementary. I understand that the \$6.7m deficit was a deficit but it actually comes from a forward Budget that was done about 2 or 3 years ago, 2 years ago, as far as I can gather. Has that been, are we still in that same position or can we progress beyond that figure and bring it down a bit or are we staying with that because it's \$6.7m two years ago.

MR SHERIDAN Thank Mr Speaker and Mr Nobbs. I believe that our forecast figures for the next financial year were actually greater than the \$6.7m. This figure has been adjusted over the last 6 months to bring it down to something that is reasonable. Now within that \$6.7m there is some millions \$2.3 or \$2.4m of capital works that actually need to be done. Now these figures haven't been supplied in the last 2 or 3 years Budgets, there has been no capital works, or very little and this is where the message has come. We've had to look at our capital expenditure quite hard, see what we really need and we've had to put this figure in otherwise it would be around the \$4.5

of what we are currently asking for, for this financial year. So the initial forecast was greater than the \$6.7 but it has been reduced down to that \$6.7.

MR NOBBS Just a supplementary please. Are you amenable to the Assembly putting their two bobs worth into the Budget arrangements or is it going to be a fete accompli once the Service completes it.

MR SHERIDAN Thank you Mr Speaker and Mr Nobbs. No the reason why I'm getting the Budget presented to me next Monday is for discussions with MLA's so that they can have input and if it needs to be changed well it will be.

MR PORTER Thank you Mr Speaker. To the Minister responsible for airfreight carriage. Is the Minister responsible or aware of the significant delays of airfreight from Sydney. Is the Minister able to advise the reason for these delays, and whether it is a fact that consignees are being told they can obtain preferred service by paying an additional fee, and if so who receives that fee. And also if there is an imbalance of freight from Sydney compared to Brisbane would there be an opportunity to investigate sending freight to Brisbane to expedite its passage to Norfolk.

MR SHERIDAN Thank you Mr Speaker and Mr Porter. The majority of that I will have to take On Notice because I'm just unaware whether or not there is an imbalance and whether freight can be transported from one destination to the other for transportation to Norfolk Island. As for the actual charges and whether or not businesses can pay a fee to expedite their mail, again I would have to ask the Postmistress. I am aware that she has just recently been off island, I believe two weeks ago to try and streamline processes and as yet I have not had a full debrief with her to see what the results of that visit were. So it's any help to you I'll have to take that On Notice and actually get back to you.

MRS WARD Thank you. My question is to the Chief Minister and Minister for Tourism. Is it a fact that at an on island JFC hearing last week the Tourist Bureau General Manager referred to the Tourism Strategy and said that the progressions for completion includes additional stakeholder consultation, input and commitment. What is being done to ensure that further consultation takes place and how long is this process expected to take.

MR SNELL Thank you Mr Speaker and Mrs Ward for the question. Your quite right the Strategic Plan for the Tourist Bureau is being worked through at this moment. The stakeholders involved of course are those members of the ATA, Chamber of Commerce and others with representation on the Board. The Board representation, it will be finalised today, they will be working through the progression of the Plan, Tourism Development Plan for Norfolk Island and we hope to have something for the House and Members in a very short time, but it's being worked on.

MRS WARD Again to the Minister for Tourism and Chief Minister. When the draft strategy was tabled last December the Chief Minister said that there was still work to be done on the strategy. Would the Chief Minister outline what work he thinks still needs to be done and has in fact that work undertaken for example, the Chief Minister raised questions on ticket prices, passports and medical airfares.

MR SNELL Thank you Mr Speaker and Mrs Ward. Yes there are areas within the Development Plan that we are working upon. Those areas are Destination Marketing. There are other areas, not particularly going into the airline ticketing and price costs structure at the moment, simply because that's part of the contract with Air New Zealand. We are looking at the possibility of a service from Melbourne in conjunction with Air New Zealand but other areas that have been mentioned Mr Speaker are still being worked upon. There is nothing I can give definite at this time.

MRS WARD Perhaps as a supplementary Mr Speaker. The Chief Minister suggested on Australia Radio in March when he was asked how he would improve tourism in Norfolk Island that he would like to talk with Air New Zealand about improvements to the Airline Schedule. I'm seeking clarity, is it a fact that the Chief Minister has had those discussions with Air New Zealand at this time and what was the outcome of those discussions.

MR SNELL Thank you Mr Speaker and Mrs Ward. Yes I have asked the General Manager of the Norfolk Island Government Tourist Bureau to seek some assurances from Air New Zealand and some indication of whether Air New Zealand could amend their Schedules and this is in request and response to members within the industry that there are areas of the Schedules that could be improved, for example during the peak periods to put on extra flights and in the off peak periods to reduce those flights, but still being the same number as maybe committed under the contract. We have had no response to that inquiry and I hope to get down to New Zealand in June and maybe at that time I'll be able to have some informal discussions and these matters will be raised.

MRS WARD Supplementary if I may. The Chief Minister has previously stated that too much work was done on the branding. Will the branding or destination marketing budget be scaled back under this Budget or the coming new Budget.

MR SNELL To answer the question Mr Speaker, yes it's being reviewed and I have the utmost confidence in the General Manager of the Tourist Bureau. He's looking at all those aspects from a ? point of view that we will look at our overseas representation and he's doing that at present and he's done some work on that to a cost saving benefit and we will still continue to do that.

MRS WARD If I may have one more supplementary on this subject Mr Speaker. The Chief Minister also declared that more work needed to be done with the Wholesalers to attract a senior citizen market. What discussions has the Minister had with the Tourism Manager on this matter and what has been the outcome.

MR SNELL Thank you Mr Speaker and Mrs Ward. Yes that's another area that we have been I touch with some Wholesalers in Australia. I have had discussions with representatives, Specialist Holidays for example and we Mr Robert Adams, he's been a big seller of Norfolk Island, he's concerned at the downturn in the Wholesaler activity but it is an ongoing review and research. The General Manager again has been very proactive in establishing destination marketing. You may have seen print media and also ? media of some of the efforts that have been done on the backs of buses and in railway stations and so on. Those are destination activities and we will continue to do that.

MR NOBBS Just one for Mr Ward if I may, Minister for Environment. Mr Ward I asked you a question last meeting on the Ball Bay Road and you responded very quickly. Could you just give an outline and to the community in general about what's happening with the dirt and the road at Ball Bay.

MR WARD Thank you Mr Speaker and thank you Mr Nobbs. Yes I can give a little more detail on that now Mr Nobbs. The soil that is there is mostly intended to be used to landscape the lower bank area of that roadwork or section of road that's been reworked and fortunately most of that soil can be used in that position and not have to be trucked around the island for different projects. So it shouldn't be there too much longer. I'm not sure what their schedule is. I think some of their equipment is currently tied with RESA and once that RESA project is done that allows them some flexibility to get back to that area.

MRS WARD A question for Minister Adams. In the Economic Development Study the Acel Tasman on page 112 it was suggested as a possible investment project the relocation of Administration functions from Kingston and redevelopment of historic buildings that might enhance the tourism attractions on Norfolk Island. Does the Minister know if there has been a proposal submitted to look at a significant private sector investment in the KAVHA buildings to enhance their tourism potential and if so what was the outcome.

MS ADAMS Thank you Mr Speaker and thank you Mrs Ward for the question. The answer is no I can't give you full details but it certainly came up as part of my discussions with the Site Manager and Miss French and I'll come back to you. I'll take that On Notice and come back to you with more details, it's certainly a matter for discussion. Thank you.

MR SPEAKER A number of times Minister's have indicated that they would like to that On Notice. May I just remind Members who are raising the question that to actually get it On Notice you need to lodge that question in writing with the Clerk. It's only a procedural matter but I just give a reminder.

MR BUFFETT Thank you Mr Deputy Speaker. I direct a question to Minister Adams. It's really about an update on Counselling services. Could I ask the Minister if she would give an update about the frequency about Counselling services, in other words whether of more recent times there has been an increase or a decrease, some indicator of numbers that might be useful to gauge how difficult things are within the Norfolk Island community.

MS ADAMS Thank you Mr Deputy Speaker and thank you Mr Buffett for the question. I attended the meeting of the Social Welfare Action Group commonly referred to as SWAG last week and was presented with the statistics for April of Counselling. I can give you some totals without going into detail, personal detail around the statistics. I'll be short in my answer. I think it's fair to say that there continues to be increasing stress within the community and a need to speak with the Counsellor.

MR BUFFETT Mr Deputy Speaker I wonder if I could have a supplementary in respect of that. Is the Minister able to give some increase in number if there is an increase in stress.

MS ADAMS Not without. This is a day by day statistic and I'm more than comfortable. I'm aware that you had at the JFC the March statistics so I'm very comfortable to provide you with these statistics and you can draw your own conclusions.

MR BUFFETT Yes I thank the Minister for that. It's not just a matter of providing it to me. In this context it would be good if it was made in a public sense so that the community may share the information.

MS ADAMS Could I just make a further response to...

DEPUTY SPEAKER I'll take Mr Buffett's statement as a question. Is that all right Mr Buffett.

MR BUFFETT Yes thank you Mr Deputy Speaker.

MS ADAMS On taking office as Minister I was provided with a briefing paper that the Minister incumbent in the position. In a sense being.....if I can speak from this document. Since being in this position the current Counsellor has

maintained an average case load of 36 clients per month. This has involved an approximate average of 50 1 hour counselling sessions per month, not including relationship counselling. The Counsellor case load is high and stressful and could lead to difficulties to the Counsellor if we don't be proactive in that area and assist the Counsellor and give further support. That's a matter that I have under discussion with the Principal at the Norfolk Island Central School as to how a partnership arrangement between the Hospital and the School I can bring to the Members first through Cabinet on looking at in a Budgetary sense how we can assist in the Counselling area. Is that helpful Mr Buffett.

MR BUFFETT Thank you. I have further if I may Mr Deputy Speaker. May I direct this question to the Chief Minister, it's about tourism. He provided some helpful information about strategy and the like. Could I ask him if he would provide the current figure to date in this financial year the number of visitors to Norfolk Island.

MR SNELL Thank you Mr Deputy Speaker and Mr Buffett for the question. Yes I have that information but regrettably I don't have it with me here and certainly I'll take that question On Notice, but I do refer Members back to the submission by the Norfolk Island Government Tourist Bureau General Manager Mr Buffett an excellent presentation to the Joint Standing Committee and if Members don't have that copy of that presentation which has all that information within it I'll be certainly be happy to make it available to them.

MR BUFFETT If I might raise a supplementary in respect of that. I would be interested to have the current figure and that figure to be made available publically. Could I ask the Chief Minister for his current assessment of visitors to the island at the end of this financial year, in other words the projection for the financial year that we are now coming to a close in.

MR SNELL Thank you Mr Deputy Speaker. Mr Buffett certainly I'll have that information for you. I don't have it with me here. I'll take that question On Notice.

MR BUFFETT Thank you Mr Deputy Speaker. May I direct this question further to Minister Adams. It really is about parents, mothers who need to move offshore to have children at the present state of play in Norfolk Island. Could the Minister brief the House on what action has recently been taken and what the end gain is aimed at in terms of offering assistance especially to those mothers who wish to register their children in the Norfolk Island context within the Norfolk Island machinery of registration.

MS ADAMS Thank you Mr Deputy Speaker and thank you Mr Buffett for that question. As I said in my Statement in the House at the last Sitting and applauded you for the proactive manner in which you have pursued this initiative I continue to pursue that with the Collector of Customs in his role of Manager of Immigration. I have had discussions with His Honour the Administrator and with the Community Liaison Officer Miss Jenny Maitland and I am feeling very positive that there is a good outcome emerging here from my most recent discussions, but however I don't have the full detail and there was a preference by the Office of the Administrator that they communicate directly with the Collector on his return which I believe should have happened yesterday and he will refer that response back to us so I can bring it to Members. Is that helpful? But I can say that the indicators are positive.

MR BUFFETT If I might raise a supplementary Mr Deputy Speaker. I thank Minister Adams for that response. It's my understanding that one of the remedies may well be an adjustment in Norfolk Island legislation to facilitate the registration of some children in certain circumstances. May I ask the Minister if she is

contemplating an adjustment to Norfolk Island legislation so that that can be achieved and what is her time frame for making that achievement.

MS ADAMS Thank you Deputy Speaker and thank you Mr Buffett for the question. What I can say to you is this, that I had raised that issue with the Community Services Manager in his role of Registrar of Births, Deaths and marriages and he has raised some issues, some potential problems around changing our legislation which has DIAC complications and without that paper in front of me I would prefer to give you a copy of that and provide Members with that detail so that I don't in any way mislead the House. But there was a complication there but what I understand may be the outcome from this vexing issue for mothers, pregnant mums is that the potential may be there for them to do both or either, register in Australia and register in Norfolk Island, or register in Australia only, or register in Norfolk Island only. But I would like to wait until I have formal advice through the Manager for Immigration and I will certainly bring Members up to date as quickly as I can on that matter.

MR BUFFETT Thank you Mr Deputy Speaker. The Minister just referred to DIAC and their part to play in this particular matter. May I move onto another and ask the Minister about the Immigration amendments that we have made here. We were signalled by the Commonwealth of the need to make Immigration amendments. They have been now made by this House and are awaiting assent by the Administrator and I ask the Minister has the Commonwealth acted since the last report to the House in terms of this piece of legislation which has been passed by the House for many months ago now and if it hasn't been assented to is the Minister following this up with the various appropriate Commonwealth Departments to ensure that there is some expeditious action, not exhibited to date.

MS ADAMS Thank you Mr Deputy Speaker and thank you Mr Buffett. Certainly I have been proactive in this area, but what I can say to Members without any paperwork in front of me and I might hand this over to the Chief Minister with whom I know advice has been given as to the assent process and am I correct that perhaps in two weeks there is an indication that there will be assent to the Immigration legislation in two weeks. I've only heard this second hand, it hasn't been put to me.

MR SNELL Thank you. That is correct we have been informed by the Regional Department representatives in Canberra that there will be a progress with the assent to the amendments to Immigration Act as proposed.

MS ADAMS Mr Deputy Speaker if I could continue to add to that. Because of the delay in the assent process around Immigration I contacted the appropriate people, including the CEO and highlighted the concern I had around meeting the April milestones in regard to Immigration and I'm pleased to be able to report that there has been permission given formally through the Office of the Administrator and the Commonwealth Finance Officer that the requirements under the April milestone around Immigration have been moved over to May because of the fact that assent hasn't been given to the Immigration and that is...but not withstanding that we continue to be very proactive in making sure that we are ready when the assent process comes. However as you would be aware in January Chief Minister, in your role then as Chief Minister you had given instructions for proactive steps to be taken to identify any difficulties that might be emerging that has been continued by myself, as you are all aware I made a Statement at the last Sitting around officers and Social Services, Healthcare, immigration, being proactive in looking at the legislation, making sure that the new forms etc etc are all in place. What has been highlighted, and this is an email which I'm happy to read out, which was sent to the Service through the Office of the Chief Executive Officer that with assent imminent to the Immigration Amendment No 2 Bill and the problems it seems you are having with the ERP suite which is the software package with which these areas provide statistics that the Service will be coming together in those areas that who need the ERP suite to produce statistics which is a requirement under

the milestones under the Funding Agreement to come together and we sort out how we can resolve this issue, if it can be resolved, if it's a training issue or whether it's a problem with the software package. That's happening now, so if that's of any help?

MR BUFFETT Mr Deputy Speaker I direct this question to Minister Sheridan, it's about the GST. Could I ask the Minister, given that GST is a major indicator of revenue movement the figure that we might have in terms of collection to date, that is this financial year. Is it above or below the estimate?

MR SHERIDAN Thank you Mr Deputy Speaker and thank you Mr Buffett for the question. I can advise that the GST collection us under our budgeted amount by some half a million dollars I think 5 or 600,000 and I am just looking. I haven't got the Financial Indicators for April but at the end of March, it remained below budget and if it continues in this sequence it will end up something like \$579,000 below budget for the current financial year.

MR BUFFETT Thank you Mr Deputy Speaker. I direct this question to I think the Chief Minister but you may want to redirect it given how you view it. Mr Deputy Speaker I ask the Chief Minister if he is able to let the House have an update on the study to map the assessment programme in respect of Government Business Enterprises.

MR SNELL I would have to take that On Notice Mr Deputy Speaker, unless of course there is another Member that may be able to answer that

MR SHERIDAN Thank you Mr Deputy Speaker. If I could just help the Chief Minister out. The process whee it's at at the moment for the divestment strategy for the GBE's is that they are in the process of letting the contract, preferred tender has been accepted. They are in the process now that the Department is negotiating with this preferred tenderer to finalise the contract. The Norfolk Island Government have seen the draft contract and they have submitted some response to it for finalisation. It is believed that the first stage of the assessment will be completed by the end of June but the actual assessment of the two GBE's that will be part of this contract i.e. Electricity and the Liquor Bond, not Electricity sorry the Telecommunications and the Liquor Bond will take some further time past the end of this financial year. So that's where it's at at the moment is that the Department are in the final stages of letting the contract and then the process will commence of writing a programme or what's the word I'm looking for.

MR BUFFETT Thank you Mr Deputy Speaker. A question to the Chief Minister. What course of action is the Chief Minister and the Government undertaking to secure continuity of services particularly essential services to the Norfolk Island community, given Minister Katherine King's announcements and utterances during her visit and consequent upon the visit of the JSC to Norfolk Island.

MR SNELL Thank you Mr Deputy Speaker and thank you Mr Buffett for the question which is a highly. It's a very difficult as we are all well aware if the funding arrangements for the 2013/2014 application is rejected for any reason it will provide us with a difficult situation to continue on services here on Norfolk Island. Whilst there has been some discussions within the Service to provide us with a balanced budget and the Minister for Finance Mr Sheridan has already given an indication to the Service that that may be required, at this present time there is no definite course of action if the funding should not be available from the Commonwealth to continue essential services.

MR BUFFETT A supplementary Mr Deputy Speaker. May I ask the Chief Minister given his answer whether he is contemplating any further approaches to the Commonwealth in respect of Norfolk Island's position.

MR SNELL Thank you Mr Deputy Speaker. I can only reaffirm what has transpired in relation the Roadmap, what has been proposed in previous Assembly's by the then Government. We are reaffirming our situation on that and we are waiting and have been waiting for two years, as Mr Buffett is well aware for some indications as to what the Commonwealth is going to provide for Norfolk Island in relation to their commitments and we are still awaiting that commitment and that will determine exactly how we move forward or what other plans we have to take into consideration Mr Deputy Speaker.

MR SHERIDAN If I could just respond a little bit further to the Chief Minister's response if I could. Just to assist or to just further go on from how the Chief Minister has responded to that question. It's my intent as the Minister for Finance that once the May Budget is handed down, I believe it's next Tuesday the 14th, once that budget is handed down we'll be in a more clearer position to see whether or not there has been anything allocated to Norfolk Island for the assistance for the next financial year and as Minister King stated and I believe it was in this room, when she was here, she said once the May Budget is announced there will be a requirement to commence negotiations on the new Funding Agreement. So I take heart from that that she hasn't discounted funding all together but she's indicated that once the Budget has come down there will be a need for the Australian Government or through her Department and Norfolk Island Government to discuss a new Funding Agreement for Norfolk Island for the next financial year. So that's I suppose it hangs on this Budget announcement next Tuesday whether or not there is some money allocated. If not then we have to be proactive and approach the Minister and make sure that we do get some assistance.

MR BUFFETT I thank both the Chief Minister and Minister Sheridan for their responses Mr Deputy Speaker. This is a related question although maybe a little beyond it. It has been reported to Members of the House that some prominent Departmental Officers have been moved on from the Department and therefore are no longer working on Norfolk Island projects relating to provision of services and relating to long term sustainability questions for Norfolk Island that need to be responded to by the Commonwealth. Given that situation what's the impact now upon how we stand Chief Minister in respect of those difficulties and maybe lack of people now who are working on projects that relate here, now no longer working on such projects.

MR SNELL Thank you Mr Deputy Speaker and thank you Mr Buffett for the question and yes you are quite right I have asked the Senior Policy Advisor for the Roadmap and my Chief of Staff to make some inquiries as to any implications of the departure particularly of Mr Nick Hill of the Regional Department Office back to Treasury whether there is anything that they may wish to report back to Norfolk Island as to any consequences that may flow from that and I will certainly bring it to the attention of Members as soon as I hear back from them but yes it is in train.

MR BUFFETT A further question to the Chief Minister Mr Deputy Speaker. I am really seeking an update on rounds 3 and 4 in terms of regional grants. I did raise this at the last Sitting but time has moved on since then and I'm wondering whether there is a further update. Obviously the round 3 and round 4 projects relate to the Waste Management project and the Cascade site.

MR SNELL Thank you Mr Deputy Speaker. If I could take that in two sections and we are well aware that the Regional Development application fund 3 and 4, round 3 refers to the Waste Management and if I could ask Minister Ward if he would answer that and I'll be happy to answer on the round 4 question.

MR WARD Thank you Mr Deputy Speaker, thank you Mr Buffett. The development application for the incinerator at the Airport has lapsed, the were some procedural problems with that development application, so we now no longer

community faces can be met by somebody suitably qualified and experienced as head of the Service?

MR SNELL Thank you Mr Buffett for the question, as Mr Buffett would be well aware from the vacancy advertisements that have been placed in the press and overseas, that the salary range is negotiable. What I have tried to do in austerity measures for Norfolk Island is to have some cost savings wherever I possibly can and I have started that within our own bailiwick down here, and the base salary of \$90,000 is negotiable, plus an increment of 10% for other entitlements, but the salary package is negotiable and on the results from the due process of the recruitment process, we will be looking at whether it needs to be brought up to a standard to secure some of the applications, which I have no knowledge how many have applied for at this time. But it is negotiable.

MR BUFFETT I do have a final question related to this matter, can I ask the Chief Minister what assurances does he offer to the House that the present CEO, if his term is yet to run for another period of time, a week or so not done, his successor, what assurances will you offer that his successor will not have his or her authority undermined? And therefore further diminish the standing of the Government, the Assembly and the Service itself in the processes that are related to all of this?

DEPUTY SPEAKER I will accept it, but I don't think it is a fair question, but it is up to the House to tell me.

MR SNELL I think it is a hypothetical question, and I can't answer it.

MR PORTER I was wondering if I could ask a supplementary question from one of the Speaker's previous questions that was directed to the Minister for Health, and pertaining to the matter for having our mothers having to go offshore for obstetric care and child delivery, and my question was, could the Minister advise if any action is being taken to progress this to where that service can again be offered on the Island to save that great cost and fragmentation of family services and the issue of where to register the birth in the first place, is there any action being taken to provide those services on Norfolk Island as it was in the past?

MS ADAMS Thank you, Mr Porter, that is a matter of extreme concern to the Norfolk Island community and especially to the Norfolk Island mothers because not only the cost factor that is involved, but the inconvenience to the mothers having to go off Island a month in advance, and I share their concerns. However, certainly the Hospital is being proactive, but it is a case of the Doctors being available, and at the moment you know that we are working on a rotating locum system, and whilst it ties within the locums that are engaged, there is a GP who has obstetrics there is currently a policy, I am led to believe, and I will take this component on notice to speak with the Hospital, that even though there might be a locum here for a month, that has obstetrics skills, but because of the uncertainty that surrounds a mother and the baby not making itself known as to when it is going to appear, therein lies the difficulty that it's a timing, you can appreciate that I'm sure. But I am happy to take that on notice, get you further information from the Hospital to see how far advanced, if they are anyway advanced in being able to resolve this problem. I am certainly am aware though I don't know that this is helpful to your question, there is much discussion around ongoing training off Island for our nursing staff at the Hospital to keep their obstetric qualifications up to date and training to expand on their qualifications, but that's not of help to the mothers that are pregnant and are having to go off Island, is that helpful? Can I help in any other way?

MR PORTER Mr Speaker I beg the indulgence of the Assembly, I have a personal interest in this! I have a daughter in law who is at the imminent stage

of child birth and will have to travel off the island, so as I said, it is a personal interest not necessarily a pecuniary one.

SPEAKER Further questions Honourable Members? No further questions, we move further to answers to questions on notice, there are three this morning. Firstly question number one, Mrs Ward to the Chief Minister, Chief Minister.

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

MR SNELL Thank you Mr Speaker, thank you Mrs Ward for the question, the question reads, would the Chief Minister table the Chief Executive Officer of Administrations' due diligence relating to Redemptech, reports dated February 27 and March 25, 2013 and any other associated documents? Mr Speaker I have sought legal advice on the presentation of such papers, which I believe have been compiled in relation to this question, and the legal advice that I have is that there are two issues arising from this, it circumvents the freedom of information, and there is already a freedom of information enquiry into the tabling of these documents, and also Mr Speaker and legal professional privilege and any other applicable privilege may be under question as well. So to answer the question, I can not at this time provide those documents as requested.

MR SHERIDAN Thank you Mr Speaker, the question reads, in relation to the development of a replacement revenue stream for the island, would the Minister tell the House of any Policy which has been formulated and give a progress report on any work done to date? The response Mr Speaker, the issue of the replacement revenue stream for Norfolk Island has been identified in the ACIL Tasman Report where it indicates that the core tax reform is the introduction of a recurrent land tax, this is a revenue stream reform of which I am working towards. A discussion paper was made available last year in regards to revenue method options for the Norfolk Island Government where it discussed the issues of land rates and land tax. This document virtually ruled out the principle of land tax being introduced, but the Norfolk Island Government might still undertake assessment of this tax prior to discounting it. The document indicated that the form of tax rates to be implemented into Norfolk Island with the possibility of raising some \$1.4 million based on the Commonwealth Grants Commission assessment. The Norfolk Island Government has asked the Service to provide advice on any type of land taxation that could be introduced, the service has put together a working group to assess the proposal and at this stage their comments are: broad modelling using a base percentage and differential percentage was carried out on a sample of absentee land owner valuations, based on the review of property based taxation systems and the modelling this group has agreed that a rate system, rather than a land tax, based on unimproved capital value being presented as the most applicable for Norfolk Island. To assist this working group the Land Valuation Bill was passed through this House last year, and it is my intent that a RFT, request for tender, be issued when assent to this Bill is achieved, so that all land on Norfolk Island may be assessed in the next financial year so that a system of land rates may be assessed fully with a view that land rates may be introduced in July 2014, staged in over a number of years, Thank you Mr Speaker.

MR SNELL Thank you Mr Speaker, thank you Mrs Ward for the question which reads, is it a fact that an Administration employee pay claim has been lodged with Remuneration Tribunal and if so would the Chief Minister inform the House of the potential financial impact on the budget should the claim be successful? Mr Speaker, yes, I can confirm that it is a fact that pay claim has been lodged with the Public Sector Remuneration Tribunal, the Norfolk Island Public Service Association, a prescribed organisation under Regulation 10 in Schedule 3 of the Public Sector Management Regulations 2000 lodged the claim on the 9th of November 2012, the Norfolk Island Public Service Association claim is for a total of 4 back dated increases, each for a 5% on January the 1st of each year, in the years 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012,

this is a cumulative total 21.55%. Should this claim be granted, an initial payment of \$1.28million would be required and annual additional payments in future years would be \$285,000. The Administration acknowledges the basis of the Public Services Association claim, however a payment of \$1.28 million would exhaust the Administrations cash funds, in March 2013 the Administration made an offer of a 3% increase, plus \$10 per week, commencing with implementation of the new Public Service Act, this offer which equated to an annual cost to the Administration of \$190,000 was rejected by the Norfolk Island Public Service Association. The pay claim will now be heard by the Public Sector Remuneration Tribunal, under Public Sector Remuneration Tribunal Act 1992. The matters to be taken into account are, a) the public interest, b) economic conditions in the Norfolk Island community, c) concepts of equity and fairness that apply in the Norfolk Island community and d) such other matters as are, in the opinion of the Tribunal, relevant to the proper performance of its functions, thank you Mr Speaker.

SPEAKER Thank you Chief Minister, that concludes answers to questions on notice, presentation of papers is next Honourable Members.

PRESENTATION OF PAPERS

MR SNELL Thank you Mr Speaker, Mr Speaker I wish to present an **Exposure Draft to the House of the Public Service Bill 2013** accompanied by an Explanatory Memorandum. Mr Speaker it is with grateful thanks that I acknowledge the exemplary work that has been conducted by members of the Legal Services Unit, by members of the Administration, in particular Robyn Gillies and others, and in particular to members of the staff here at the Legislative Assembly in enabling such a complex document to be available as an Exposure Draft today which of course will be available to those for review and this matter will be subject of further meetings. I present the Exposure Draft of the Public Service Bill 2013 and the Public Service Bill Explanatory Memorandum, and I so table.

MR SHERIDAN Thank you Mr Speaker, Mr Speaker, Section 2B(2) of the **Customs Act 1913** makes provision for the Minister to exempt goods from duty where the duty payable is less than \$200, Section 2B(5) of the Act that where the Minister has exercised his power he shall lay a copy of the exemption on the table of the Legislative Assembly. Mr Speaker I so table those exemptions. There is one exemption in the sum of \$103.26 on the importation of articles for use in fund raising activity by Norfolk Assists Those in Need.

SPEAKER Honourable Members before we move to far away from tabling of the Exposure Draft of the Public Service Bill 2013, I just foreshadow at this moment that when we come towards the end of this Sitting, it is my intention to not adjourn but to suspend until next Wednesday, so that the matter that the Chief Minister has put on the table may be further developed and we may further consider it when we come together next Wednesday. I will consult with you from the Chair when we get to that stage of the meeting, I just want to foreshadow it now. Any further papers? No further papers.

STATEMENTS

SPEAKER Are there any statements this morning? Minister Adams.

MS ADAMS Thank you Mr Speaker, I have two this morning. The first one is my opening of the **Norfolk Island Central School Second Term**. It was an honour for me that my first official activity as Minister with responsibility for Education was to open the second term of the 2013 school year of the Norfolk Island Central School and today for the record I share with you some of the remarks made in my

opening address. As Assembly Members know Pitcairn Island is said to be the first place in the world to establish compulsory education along with the right for women to vote. The Pitcairners in fact brought these rules with them when they settled on Norfolk Island as a community on 8 June 1856 with School resuming shortly after their arrival on Norfolk, on 14 July 1856 to be precise, when close to 70 children crowded into a long, bare, white-washed room on the second floor of the New Military Barracks at Kingston. This emphasis on school attendance is a reflection of the high value which Norfolk Islanders have traditionally placed on the education of their children; a high value that very much continues to be evident on Norfolk Island today. The school curriculum today and into the future is being modelled on the principle that the education system shall meet all needs, rather than one size fits all, that it is a can do curriculum and I am sure that Members will agree that is such a positive evolution in our education system and augurs well for the youth of Norfolk Island in the future. The Norfolk Island Central School is the hub of our community and the following definition of community taken from the website of The Health Communities Movement supports this, and as I said at the opening, "Community is defined to include all persons and organizations within a reasonably circumscribed geographic area in which there is a sense of interdependence and belonging". I shared my view that the Norfolk Island Central School is the Norfolk Island community in microcosm, it is a geographic area in which there is a sense of interdependence and belonging in the people who move in, around and through it, the staff, the students and the parents; it is a place in which the community has a tremendous sense of pride and belonging; and despite the fact that the education budget is so small and the support from NSW is so much more limited than it used to be nevertheless our school is a place where outstanding academic and sporting achievements are commonplace and where teaching and learning that occurs on a daily basis is first class. However, notwithstanding the great achievements at our school we must also be ever conscious of the changing needs of our youth as we move further and further into the age of technology and a good place to start is for Government on Norfolk and the School to partner in working towards a common goal that the students at the Norfolk Island Central School receive the same opportunities as are available to students in schools in NSW. We know that this presents a challenge to us in this tiny and isolated community where we currently have economic uncertainty but as I said, Norfolk is no stranger to meeting and solving challenges, in fact I said that I believe that Resilience is a Gene on the DNA of the Norfolk Islander through necessity, and that no challenge is insurmountable if there is a strong will to succeed and a willingness to work together towards achieving this common goal. As Members, and as I stated at the opening, are very much aware one of the key platforms on which I stood for both the 13th and 14th Assemblies is my continuing belief that Norfolk Island, with the right financial assistance, has the potential to be Australia's showpiece to the world and its bridge to the Pacific. In that belief of course lays the potential for our school to equally be a showpiece of excellence and innovation that is the envy of all which of course includes adult education, both TAFE and university. Following the culture and traditions of our people as laid down in Pitcairn Island's laws in 1836 I continue to promote the pursuit of excellence in education on Norfolk Island and as Minister with responsibility for education I look forward to working with the School Principal and her staff to achieve these goals. Thank you Mr Speaker.

MRS WARD

I move that the Statement be noted.

SPEAKER

debate, Mrs Ward.

The question is that the Statement be noted, any

MRS WARD

I would just like to pick up on one point that was made by Minister Adams and that was the reference to the children on Norfolk Island being included, or having access to every programme that they will need to be able to continue their education and I am particularly referring to the application of the national curriculum which the teachers are in training for at the moment and will start to be delivered from next year. The comment about the difficulty in accessing or having equal

opportunity for our children the Minister mentioned was economic, may I respectfully point out that it is more than economic it is political, it is highly politically, and when the Australian Prime Minister stands in the federal parliament and says every Australian child will benefit from National Education Programmes, well we would all be excused for thinking that included the children of Norfolk Island, but it doesn't, and I will certainly continue to advocate at the highest level to that to be put right, as it is not right for the children of Norfolk Island to be excluded because of politics, because of our current governance model, thank you Mr Speaker.

MS ADAMS Thank you Mr Speaker, and I thank Mrs Ward for those comments, because she and I are totally on the same platform here, and I just reinforce what I said, that a good place to start for the Government on Norfolk and the School to partner in working towards a common goal that the students at the Norfolk Island Central School receive the same opportunities that are available to the students in the schools in NSW and certainly the Principal and the Deputy Principal and myself who are meeting on a regular basis will be working towards this goal and there are lots I can't talk about more broadly at this point in time, but we will certainly be working towards that outcome, thank you Mr Speaker.

SPEAKER The question is that the statement be noted.
QUESTION PUT
AGREED

The aye's have it. Further statements, yes, Minister Adams.

MS ADAMS Thank you, a brief, comparatively brief statement on the **Working Group on Social Welfare and Health Care comparisons**. Honourable Members, and I did speak about this at the last Sitting as well. Honourable Members a short update on the Working Group established by myself with the co-operation of the Chief Executive Officer to review and provide detailed comparisons of the current Social Services and Health Care benefits, measuring against the Commonwealth benefits to help identify people in the Norfolk Island community that may not be captured in a positive way in transition from one welfare system to another. I am indebted to the following officers in the Public Service: Community Services Manager Mr Allen Bataille as Chair of the Working Group, to the Manager Social Services Mrs Kim Edward. The Healthcare Manager Mr Gary Dowling and to Chief of Staff Dr Cheryl Davenport who brings to the committee a wealth of experience in the area of Social Services in Australia, Ms Sharyn Quintal is providing secretarial assistance to the group. I am further indebted to the Chief Executive Officer, Mr Graeme Faulkner for bringing onto the Working Group, Ms Lesley Warren, who was formerly a member of the Commonwealth Capacity Building Team and now occupies the Business Systems Analyst within the Public Service, Ms Warren too brings to the committee her years of invaluable experience with Centrelink. The Committee held its first meeting on 18 April and has continued to meet weekly on a Friday afternoon. The issues for consideration by the working group are complex and the group has taken the decision to partition its considerations into the following categories; Aged and gender, Disability, Family, Special Benefits, Health, Homecare services, Long –term nursing care, Youth, Childcare, Utility rebates, Asset tests, Income support, income supplements, non-cash benefits, Benefits available on the mainland, not covered on Norfolk Island and Administrative notifications, debt recovery, including how to check if people are already receiving Australian benefits a and are also claiming for similar benefits in Norfolk Island. A matrix is being developed for making comparisons between the two jurisdictions and their benefits in each of the forgoing categories and it is estimated that it will be some three months before a report on the matter will be available to me as Minister. I thank the officers for the sterling work that they doing. Thank you Mr Speaker.

MESSAGES FROM THE OFFICE OF THE ADMINISTRATOR

SPEAKER There are no messages from the office of the Administrator.

REPORTS FROM STANDING COMMITTEES

SPEAKER Nor reports from Standing Committees, so we are going to commence Notices Honourable Members.

NOTICES

MUSEUM TRUST ACT 1987 - APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO THE MUSEUM TRUST

SPEAKER Notice Number 1, Museum Trust Act 1987 - appointment of members to the Museum Trust , Minister Adams.

MS ADAMS Thank you Mr Speaker, Mr Speaker I move that this house resolve for the purposes of subsections 5(1) and (2) of the *Museum Trust Act 1987* that the Minister appoint the following as members of the Norfolk Island Museum Trust— Albert Fletcher Buffett; Jeanette Elizabeth Calder; Peter Russell Horrocks; Ronald Coane Nobbs; and Jodie Therese Williams; for the period 9 May 2013 to 8 May 2015.

SPEAKER Thank you Minister Adams, the question is that that motion be agreed to, Minister Adams.

MS ADAMS Thank you Mr Speaker, Honourable Members Norfolk Island has a significant history both tangible and intangible incorporating Polynesian, penal and Pitcairn settlements; the Norfolk Island Museums plays a significant role in maintaining and preserving the artefacts that we hold in our museums for those periods in history, as well as being a major contributor in tourism. The Museum Curator and staff are supported in their work by the Norfolk Island Museum Trust, a very important body that provides oversight of artefacts, historical documents, photographs, etc, and provides advice. So it gives me great pleasure to move this motion of appointment to the Museum Trust of Albert Buffett, Liz Calder, Peter Horrocks, Ron Nobbs and Jodie Williams being long term members of this community who are known for their interest and passion in preserving, promoting and maintaining our culture and traditions. Thank you Mr Speaker.

SPEAKER Any further debate? No further debate. I put the question.

QUESTION PUT
AGREED
MR NOBBS ABSTAINED

The motion is agreed.

NORFOLK ISLAND GOVERNMENT TOURIST BUREAU ACT 1980 – APPOINTMENT OF MEMBER OF THE NORFOLK ISLAND GOVERNMENT TOURIST BUREAU ADVISORY BOARD AND APPOINTMENT OF DEPUTY MEMBER

MR SNELL Thank you Mr Speaker. I move that this House in accordance with Sections 4 and 6 of the Norfolk Island Government Tourist Bureau Act 1980 resolve that the Minister with responsibility for the Norfolk Island Government Tourist Bureau Advisory Board appoint Sandra Jane Petit to be a member of the Norfolk Island Government Tourist Bureau Advisory Board for the term of 2 years commencing 9th May 2013 and appoint Barry David Hyatt to be a delegate member of the Norfolk Island Government Tourist Bureau Advisory Board for the appointed member and to act

as the member if the member is absent or unable to discharge official duties during the term that the member is appointed to the Norfolk Island Government Tourist Bureau Advisory Board.

MR SPEAKER Thank you Chief Minister. The question is that this Motion be agreed.

MR SNELL Thank you Mr Speaker. It goes without saying how very fortunate we are within the community of Norfolk Island that people like Mrs Petit and Barry Hyatt have been prepared to put their names forward to join these Advisory Boards and their expertise and experience within the industry will be greatly appreciated and it will assist Norfolk Island moving on and I congratulate them and thank them for their involvement and their agreeance to join the Advisory Board of the Norfolk Island Government Tourist Bureau.

MR SPEAKER Thank you chief Minister. Debate? No further debate, I put the question that the Motion be agreed to.

QUESTION PUT
AGREED

That motion is so agreed

MOTION BY LEAVE - PUBLIC SECTOR REMUNERATION TRIBUNAL ACT 1982 – APPOINTMENT OF THE PUBLIC SECTOR REMUNERATION TRIBUNAL

MR SPEAKER We have two Motions by leave, or leave to be sought for two Motions. The first relates to the Public Sector Remuneration Tribunal Act 1982 – appointment of Public Sector Remuneration Tribunal. Chief Minister you are to seek leave.

MR SNELL Thank you Mr Speaker. I seek leave to move the foreshadowed Motion in respect of the appointment of the Public Sector Remuneration Tribunal

MR SPEAKER Thank you Mr Snell. Honourable leave is sought for that Motion to come forward. Is leave granted. Thank you, leave is granted

MR SNELL Mr Speaker I move that in accordance with Subsection 5 (2) of the Public Sector Remuneration Tribunal Act this House resolve to recommend to the Administrator that he appoint the Honourable Kevin Edmund Lingum AM QC to be the Public Sector Remuneration Tribunal;

MR SPEAKER Thank you the question is that that Motion be agreed to.

MR SNELL Thank you Mr Speaker. Again we are fortunate that Members of the Legal fraternity is prepared to put their nominations forward to address the need here on Norfolk Island of members of such an important role as is required under the Remuneration Tribunal. Mr Speaker there has been quite a difficulty in some areas of getting such members to be appointed and if I could I'd just relate to the history. The first application was filed for the Remuneration Tribunal as mentioned previously on the 9th November by the Public Service Association here on Norfolk Island. A letter from sent to Justice Birchett on the 9th November advising of the application. The Administration requested an extension of time to file to the 7th December 2012. A further letter was sent to Justice Birchett on the 27th November 2012 and a Memo sent to Chief Minister, yourself at that time the Honourable David Buffett on the 29th November 2012 advising of the passing of Justice Birchett. With a recommendation that a person be appointed to act during of course this vacancy. A letter received and reply sent to Mrs

Birchett concerning the passing of Justice Birchett on the 12th December. Memo from the previous Chief Minister dated 25th February 2013 advising that he was commencing the process so that it could be completed in the early days of the 14th Legislative Assembly and requesting a recommendation of a suitable candidate. Memo to the previous Chief Minister on the 27th February 2013 recommending the appointment of Ron Cahill for the Chief Justice Jacobsen to be approached to recommend someone suitable for the appointment. A Memo dated the 27th February 2013 from the previous Chief Minister advising that he would make the 14th Assembly aware of the recommendations. On the 2nd April 2013 a memorandum from the previous Chief Minister referring the matters to me. As Chief Minister with responsible for Justice I sent a letter via email dated the 3rd April 2013 to Chief Justice Jacobsen requesting that he recommend a person or persons to be appointed as a one member Remuneration Tribunal. On the 5th April 2013 email from Chief Justice Jacobsen recommending the Honourable Kevin Lingum QC and the Honourable Michael Moore as suitable persons. On the 8th April 2013 a letter by email sent to Justice Lingum QC by myself at that time there was no response. On the 2nd May 2013 a further letter, email sent to Justice Michael Moore to determine his interest or otherwise. On the 3rd May email to Chief Justice Jacobsen advising that Justice Lingum had not responded and that the email to Justice Moore had been returned and requesting that he contact the persons nominated by him to ascertain their interest in being appointed, for one member Remuneration Tribunal. On the 3rd May 2013 email response from Chief Justice Jacobsen to advise that he would personally contact the Justice nominated by him and Mr Speaker Mr Lingum has so nominated and we have that result to now recommend to the Administrator and I thank them for their efforts, both Justice Jacobsen and of course the Honourable Kevin Edmund Lingum Thank you Mr Speaker.

MR SPEAKER Thank you. Further debate. No further debate. The question is that that Motion be agreed.

QUESTION PUT
AGREED

That motion is so agreed

MOTION BY LEAVE – PREFERRED MODEL OF SELF GOVERNANCE AND TAXATION FOR NORFOLK ISLAND

MR SPEAKER A further Motion to be sought by leave.

MR SNELL Thank you Mr Speaker. I seek leave to move a Motion regarding the affirmation of an earlier Motion of this House.

MR SPEAKER Thank you Mr Snell. Honourable Members leave is sought for that Motion to come forward. Is leave granted. Thank you, leave is granted

MR SNELL Thank you Mr Speaker. I move that this House affirms the Motion dated 11th July 2012 proposed and agreed by the 13th legislative Assembly which stated that – “consequent upon the following examinations, studies and other measures undertaken in accordance with the Roadmap and respected Intergovernmental agreements, namely a) the Deloit Access Economics Wellbeing Report, Norfolk Island dated 27th April 2011, b) the Commonwealth Grants Commission Update of the Financial Capacity of Norfolk Island 2011 dated 2nd December 2011 c) the Australian Continuous Improvement Group Norfolk Island Public Service Review d) the ACIL Tasman Norfolk Island Economic and Development Report e) the Revenue Measure Options for the Norfolk Island Government Discussion Paper f) the Policies to Promote Competition and Investment in Norfolk Island Policy Paper g) the Norfolk Island Government’s Preferred Model for Territories Self Governance, and having regard to their respective outcomes this House resolves to a) endorse the Norfolk

Island Government's commitment to participation in the Australian Taxation and Social Security systems to deliver a net benefit to its community and to express a preference for the earliest introduction of those systems and b) affirms the inclusion of the island into the Australian GST and Transfer payments system c) reaffirm a preferred model for future self governance as set out in the Motion of the Legislative Assembly dated the 3rd August 2011 and commit to return core functions of Government through stage divestment of commercial enterprises using the Competition Principals Agreement 1995 Act as a policy framework. Prepare and commit to an itemised timetable for the reduction and/or removal of barriers to investment and competition reflecting a reasonable and balanced approach to individual areas and f) commit to supporting amendments to the Norfolk Island Act 1979 necessary to achieve the outcomes set in the Motion.

MR SPEAKER Thank you Chief Minister. The question is that that Motion be agreed to.

MR SNELL Thank you Mr Speaker. I move this Motion to affirm or reaffirm whatever the case you might like to be but to affirm the Motion of the 11th July 2012 to clear up any doubts the Australian Government may have about the Norfolk Island Government's commitment to entering the Australian Taxation and Social Security systems as agreed by the signing of the Norfolk Island Roadmap on the 2nd March 2011. I wish to dispel the comments expressed by Minister Katherine King following her April visit when she conveyed in the local media that she was disappointed that Norfolk Island Government leadership group appeared unsure of the way forward for the island and was divided on matters already settled by the two Governments. My Government was then and is now committed to the reforms contained in the Norfolk Island Roadmap and is keen to begin negotiations on how and when the implementation of the reforms can commence. During the recent visit of the Joint Standing Committee I presented a submission with the aim of providing clarity to the Australian Government. It sets out the Norfolk Island Government's willingness to participate as a partner to further progress solutions that meet the local community's expectations of future progress. In addition the paper outlined to the Joint Standing Committee the current state of Norfolk Island's economy and the perilous state of the Government's finances. The submission was prepared to clearly indicate to the Committee that the Government, since signing the Roadmap has steadfastly continued to systematically undertake those reforms that were available to it which fulfils my Government's side of this agreement. These reforms are continuing. The articles which appeared in the Australian newspapers and in the electronic media over the weekend is a clear indication to the Australian people that the island's economic future is dire and that we are awaiting to contribute, and this Government is committed to working in partnership with the Australian Government to achieve long term financial and social sustainability. In conclusion I agree wholeheartedly with the title of Minister King's 19th April Norfolk Online Media Release which says "Unity is needed to secure a better future for Norfolk Island". My Government is ready to commence negotiations Mr Speaker on the how and when the Australian Taxation and Social Security Reforms can be implemented to Norfolk Island. I commend the Motion Mr Speaker.

MR NOBBS Thank you Mr Speaker. May I say at the outset that I cannot support this Motion, not for what it contains, it's just the message that it's giving to the community on Norfolk Island as well as the Australian community. I also wish to make it perfectly clear that I'm totally supportive of the Norfolk Island Government and the Chief Minister Mr Snell in particular. I understand the difficulties that all MLA's have when they come into this particular environment and particularly the Ministers. I guess Mr Speaker that this support of the Chief Minister which is 100% and also for his Cabinet, were he a football Coach and I a member of the Club Board he would probably have some difficulties in accepting what I say, but that's not the case and I remain 100% behind him and his Ministers. But unfortunately or fortunately for me I was elected on the policies that I put forward and these weren't just policies that were written out in the

weeks leading up to the election. I've written Letters to the Editor for the past 3 years or for some time actually, but particularly in the last 3 years. Some of you may not have read it, that's what I'm speaking also to the general public and you missed something, but anyhow this is the story. I support, I stand by these letters and also my policies and unfortunately the Motion does nothing to support my policies. It is much that we are travelling over old ground, we're trying to seek some, or some are trying to seek some justification of what has happened in the past. There are thoughts that, that I think they call them in this modern era Chinese whispers, we've hears a bit about Chinese whispers in the last week in the Gai Waterhouse, Tommy Waterhouse, Singleton and Johnny John saga. The Chinese whispers as I see them was oppositions from visits by members of Parliament and also Minister's in the time that we've been here. I see it as reading between the lines in newspapers which I find very difficult because very often you can't read a word that's written on the lines, let alone what's written between them and other issues which I find difficult to accept, and I think that we are going over old ground and we've been going over old ground for the last what is it, 6 or 8 weeks now regurgitating these Motions from the previous Government and not getting on with what we should be doing. I love Australia dearly as I do New Zealand for that matter but there's one thing about the Australian physic which I think that you should really look at. They are prepared to get anybody help if they wish to help themselves and this is where I find that we have drifted into a situation where we've got difficulties and I admit fully that we have got big difficulties at the moment and I'll go into those in a few minutes but we have not in my opinion, and I'm talking about this Government now, and this Assembly now, we have not gone full bore into trying to help ourselves. I think that my concerns are these, and I'll repeat them. I've been on them for yonks. It's in relation to the island's economy. The island is in a very low state of affairs and it's very sad to see it. It's not the first time in the island's history that it's got low. I can't find anywhere since self government that it was possible this low but it's been pretty bad at times before self government and also during self government. I think it's a bit silly to actually blame self government for our bad parliament position. I think, it's really what happened in the previous 7 or 8 years that we've got problems, that created these problems. I think that we really need to look at the historical perspective of it and whilst I'm not going back to the Bounty and all of that I am going back to 2006 when Jim Lloyd, Minister Jim Lloyd at the time in the Howard Government arrived on the island here and I can remember it clearly. He came in and either he or one of his sidekicks who were fairly aggressive at the time, and we'd had no warning, we were just told I think it was the evening before that there was a meeting on with Minister Lloyd the next morning. He came in here and said "we're going to take you over" and that was it. Well everybody was a bit stunned by this. We then went and signed ? papers which were flyers going around the community, this is what's going to happen and the whole lot. I was the Finance Minister at the time so I'm talking fact, not fiction or make believe or what have you. I couldn't believe the situation and I won't tell you what I said to him and his sidekicks that night, but I was absolutely stunned and very very angry at the way that this issue had been brought up and the way it was handled. We happened to have a very close relationship in the Government at that time, the Geoff Gardner Government at that time with the Australian Government. I let the issues float around in the community a bit and then a few weeks later I got in touch with a senior member of the Cabinet that I knew and asked him what's going, what's happening here. He said I don't know - I'm not too sure, what's happened? So I told him what had happened, he said "leave it with me, this might take a while but I'll get to the bottom of it". So anyhow we went through the whole process and I discovered that Minister Lloyd at the time had no authority from the Cabinet to come over here and say what he said. The Australian Government wasn't to take him over. What he was told to do as far as I can understand is that he was to come over, talk to the Government, talk to the people, find out how he could, if we had a problem, how he could help, and that was it. But it was purely a take over. The issue was not in relation to Norfolk Island, it was in relation to his electorate in Australia, where he had difficulties with the opposition and was being chased over some reputed mismanagement of funds that were given by the Federal Government in his electorate. These are all facts. It turned into a month or so later. I had talks with the same Minister

who said "it's not happening, all the explanation was and that's it". We went through the next 6 months I guess of high expenditure. I think there was \$250,000 expended on the exercise and reports and counter reports and all of the rubbish that went on and it was never progressed. The Cabinet did not progress it. The Crean exercise was as far as I can gather was virtually the same thing and I'm not saying he had anything wrong with his, and it was all in good faith I believe for Mr Crean the Minister at the time, but it didn't have the approval of Cabinet and it still does not have the approval of Cabinet. The Memorandum of Understanding was signed in 2010, we still haven't got the approval of Cabinet to that particular proposal, and there's the issues that I have. The particular problems that I have in relation to the period from 2007 to 2010 there was, after the Lloyd exercise and I'll get back, I've jumped a line here I think. I'll get back to the Lloyd. The Lloyd exercise was put off because we were proactive. We'd actually been working, the Gardner Government had been working, strenuously to try and correct what was happening here. We had come in to a over \$1m deficit. This is a few years after we'd had problems, we had the major tourism developments and we had 40,000 tourists and we had money not coming out of our ears, but it was more than was required at that particular time. By 2004, 2005 we were having difficulties balancing the budget and we were over \$1m. We then immediately tried to look at more particular aspects that the Norfolk Island Government could deal with including taxation to try and balance the books. We went through all these things that was supposed to be going through here and we've had millions of dollars on reports and what have you. We've been all through those including land rates and what have you. What we came up with was a consumption tax. That seemed the fairest way to go, we progressed it and it eventually came in as a GST. The idea of that was simply this, that we needed, say 2 to 3 million dollars to 1) get over the hump that we had, that had been created, et over that hump and then when we were over the other side is to maintain the place at what would be an increase in costs every year but until we could maintain it until such time as we expanded the economy on the island here. That was critical/ Then, I'm talking about 2005, 2006 it was critical then, it's critical now. We got the tax in and what have you but there's been nothing really progressed on the particular issues. I went out, I got booted out, fair enough, that's good. The next Government tried to get the thing, get it going but they couldn't get it going. Then along came Minister Crean and you know we'd spent money, more money than was available to us and that's what had happened. So we ended up in debt and I felt sorry for the new Government coming in that they didn't progress something themselves but they didn't progress something themselves to get them over this hump. Anyhow what we've come to is this sort of situation now that where we've got such things as, I find it a bit silly actually that the Commonwealth Government is putting requirements on us such as immigration and the tourism policies. If we were within the Australian system, certainly we would have immigration and these tourism policies could then be implemented and implemented, fine that would be fine but not now. If your opening the place up to immigration and we're talking about it this morning that your going to open it up in a couple of weeks time, what's the plans? How are you going to handle them. I don't say there is going to be a million people coming in here, but there will be definitely problems emanating from people just coming in here because they've got a right to come in here, and those are the issues that we haven't addresses, and those are the issues that were never addressed in this particular period and that's why my argument is simply this that I cannot believe, with all due respects to the Minister Crean and Minister Buffett who signed the Memorandum of Understanding and then went on to the Roadmap why, why didn't, wasn't there the first study made would be the impact of the Roadmap and the others on Norfolk Island. I just can't believe why that was what happened. We looked at it I can tell you because one of the issues in the 2005, 2006 was simply this, to go into the Australian taxation, Social Services and the whole lot. It was too much for us, and I just want to say quite categorically that they can criticise the Administration as much as you like, but I tell you what they were terrific. Anyhow I'm getting a bit emotional about this because I feel very strongly about it, that we'd have a situation where the Administration at that time worked extremely hard, gave us really good advice and I think we came to a really good outcome. They were used and abused I suppose you could call it, but they were

tremendous and I just want to put that down in writing and I believe that we looked at coming into the Australian Tax system, it wasn't a personal thing. I pay tax in Australia, I've paid it for 50 years and I keep saying that, I still pay tax, I don't get all the benefits that involves living in Australia would accrue to me as a taxpayer. So be it, this is Norfolk Island. But anyhow I still pay tax and I have no second thoughts about it. It was all too complex, it was far too complex for us to deal with here, it was too complex really for the Commonwealth to deal with because they didn't seem to have any ideas as well. Now bearing in mind that we were working very closely, not with the Department of Territories but with Finance. They gave us a lot of help in that time and I appreciate that the Minister at the time Nick Nention was very supportive to the island. Anyhow I just wanted to make that clear that this is the history of it. We've come to a situation, I think, I really, I don't like to say it but I think that the Assembly is spooked in relation to what's going on. I mean if somebody misses their job or gets moved from one department to another, so, what's the go? I mean it's not really our concern. The concern of the move is somebody down in the, across the road in the Public Service to worry about who their dealing with at that time. We deal with and should deal with, as I dealt with Minchin in that 2006 period, directly with the Minister. We should be dealing directly with who ever that portfolio is, be it the Minister for Health, Minister for ?, the Chief Minister, the Prime Minister but you should be known to them and the other thing is that the Territories Minister is just, is a post box but she agreed, Mrs King agreed around this table that she would promote the visit of some Minister or Ministers or whatever you wanted from the island, to go and meet with senior Ministers, Cabinet Ministers in relation to Norfolk Island. Finally I would like to, I was hoping that this Assembly had, would give to the people of the island a particular issues that they spoke very strongly on during the election, well it was actually prior to and during the election and that is that they wished to have a say. Now to give them a say you have to know what your talking about and whether we actually need the arguments for and you need the arguments against. Whatever any proposal is, if it goes up for a Referendum or some such thing, you have for, against, your going to fall in a hole here, you have all the problems out for them and things. But we haven't done that as yet. And therefore I would like to seek leave Mr Speaker, Mr Speaker to move the following amendment to the Motion if I may please.

MR SNELL

Yes, Mr Nobbs

MR NOBBS

I will just hand this out but I'll start on it. Mr Speaker I seek leave and I have done it to move the following amendment. That all words after "that" be deleted and the following inserted in their place. "This House reaffirms it's appreciation of the financial assistance subsequently provided following the original agreement reached in the Memorandum of Understanding dated 25 November 2010 between the Commonwealth of Australia and the Government of Norfolk Island wherein the Norfolk Island Government as stated in the Memorandum of Understanding and I quote "agreed in broad terms to participate in the Australian Taxation and Social Security system on the basis that there will be net benefit for Norfolk Island and it's community and there is appropriate consideration of local circumstances. Thus as a consequence of the Memorandum it is requested that the Commonwealth and Norfolk Island Governments provide urgently to the community of Norfolk Island an assessment as to the impact, both positive and negative of that part of the Memorandum of Understanding which refers to a net benefit for the Norfolk Island and its community and there is appropriate consideration of the local circumstances". I think I've talked long enough Mr Speaker and I'll leave

MR SPEAKER

Mr Nobbs let me just address a procedural matter. We first of all have the substantive Motion. We have had that substantive Motion addressed by the Chief Minister and you addressed it equally. There are other Members who would equally want to address that substantive Motion. I'm going to give opportunity for that to happen Mr Nobbs. Then in a formal sense we may receive your amendment, because once that is on the floor, people may address that of course and

we will need to vote upon that first before we address the substantive Motion of course. It may affect the substantive Motion of course it that succeeds.

MR NOBBS I appreciate your advice Mr Speaker.

MR SPEAKER Thank you for your contribution Mr Nobbs.

MRS WARD Thank you Mr Speaker. Just following on from Minister Nobbs' contribution points... contribution to debate which I'm very pleased that he has done

MR NOBBS Point of Order Mr Speaker. I'm not a Minister

MRS WARD I apologise. I didn't think I'd referred to the Member as the Minister. Mr Nobbs, my colleague and that he has given us a history lesson on, in part very importantly what should have been done in 2006. So I'm not going to argue with any of those points, it gives a history lesson that there was no Cabinet submission in 2006 and quite correctly there is no Cabinet submission now, and that is the crux of the problem. What the Motion that the Chief Minister has put up is a call for unity. We basically have a situation where we have a Mexican standoff and this is a way of getting over that hurdle. The references to what we are getting on with, I'm one of these people who does read my colleagues contributions to media therefore I have read Mr Nobbs' contribution and he talks about getting on with what we should be doing. Going back the thing that was done after 2006 was the introduction of a GST. Now that may not have been the exact intent at the time but I think that everybody can clearly see the effects of that regressive taxation system being brought into Norfolk Island and we now basically have a depressed economy. So while the intent was good and the intent was to carry on trying to help ourselves, it's actually had an adverse effect. It's sent us backwards. I have to declare again as I did very clearly in my policy that it is actually the Governance model that is the problem. It's the overbearing burden of trying to deliver the services and deal with the responsibilities of three levels of government. So that's why I see the handing back of the national responsibility and in long term the joint funding arrangements with Health and Education are actually the only way to proceed and secure an affordable future for our community because we can't just keep implementing more and more taxes and different taxes and those taxes just being increased and increased and increased. We actually had to deal with the core issue, the fundamental basics was that we had taken on too many responsibilities. In 1979 it was 46 responsibilities, it is now grown to 103. We cannot do this any longer. The point of helping ourselves, I absolutely agree and that is where the previous Government and Minister Crean got together and the Minister's at the time put their heads together and thought right we need an economic development study to show us where we should be moving in terms of restructuring our economy and that would then in turn dovetail with the extension of the Federal taxation system. That of course was the ACIL Tasman Report. So a lot of the work that is referred to as "getting on with it" and "helping ourselves", that's exactly what's been going on for the last 2 years. The economic situation or financial situation for the Government, we must never forget that nothing was ever set aside for depreciation. We have millions of dollars worth of depreciation stacked up. We still owe the Commonwealth for the Runway loan, the reseal loan, and we are putting nothing away to prepare for the next one. So it's not a matter of just, oh we've balanced the budget, we're really proud of ourselves, tick, because nothing was being done to deal with replacement infrastructure for the future. I just make those points. In terms of the Motion and the reaffirmation of this Motion. The Motion before us, the substantive Motion was originally debated on the 11th July last year and there are 28 pages of debate in Hansard for anyone who is interested in looking at the original debate. But this reaffirmation of that Motion is demonstrating our commitment to securing Norfolk Island's long term future in partnership with the Commonwealth. That is our focus, and this Motion aims as the Chief Minister says to dispel any thought that the Norfolk Island Assembly is not committed to reform and it is very specific in the

particular areas that the Chief Minister did read out. This reaffirmation of the Motion should leave no doubt in anyone's mind that we are committed to the Roadmap reform process, and as we move to reaffirm this Motion there can be no denying that there are still many unanswered questions. The extension of federal tax and how it will be rolled out. There are still many unknowns but the point is until we demonstrate fully and get over the hurdle, we can't even have that conversation because a Federal Minister or Federal Politicians on either side of Parliament will have that excuse to stand back and say "well their not committed". Because quite frankly they need us like a hole in the head. We need them, they don't need us. But they actually need to step up and take on their responsibility and this leaves no wriggle room for them. So I believe that by supporting this Motion today we have nothing to lose and we have everything to gain because we cannot leave ourselves open to be accused of giving the Commonwealth an excuse to walk away. The ramifications of that action are more frightening to me than the unknown because they are known. Mr Speaker I would like to use this opportunity to press the point again that it's not good enough for the Federal Government to think that by allowing Norfolk Island to bid for a handful of Commonwealth Grant Programmes that they have satisfied their obligations to protect all Australian citizens. It is simply not good enough. This Motion is asking some Members to step outside their comfort zones, I respect that, but that is what our job is about. It's about making the tough and sometimes very unpopular decisions that are needed to place us in the best position that we can for our future. That is what the 13th Assembly set about doing and I welcome the Chief Minister's reaffirmation of that July Motion. One last thing if I may in closing Mr Speaker reaffirming this Motion does not mean being taken over. It means securing our future, and I will give my full support to the substantive Motion to the Chief Minister, I will congratulate him for showing courage and leadership in this particular item and I will say now that I have no intention of supporting any amendments that are made to this Motion because they seek to muddy the waters and that is not what we should be doing. We should be very clear in our position that we are calling for unity with the Federal Government and we re-affirm the July 2012 motion, thank you Mr Speaker.

MR WARD

Mr Speaker, last week the Government, the Assembly, the Chamber of Commerce and Tourist Bureau representatives addressed the JSC, they keenly delved into the issues surrounding the Roadmap and into the running of the island generally. As the issues are worked through, what we need is clarity and order in the whole process. First and foremost we need to know if the Commonwealth is still committed to the reform process it was driving, if so, we must be proactive in keeping this community informed as the process evolves. The issues at stake are not just territory management, but peoples lives, the issues of concern out there today are the need to anticipate what effects the extension of the Australian Taxation will bring, good, bad or otherwise. What is clear is much of the community concern would be alleviated by having a properly considered implementation schedule, this of course can only commence when and if the Commonwealth are ready to include us. We have to address local revenue raising, the first stage of that process is to assess what revenue capacity currently exists and what the likely capacity as the costs and benefits of the tax system start to take effect. What does the new Public Service Bill mean to those 171 or so employees affected? That is something that we are certainly needing clarification on. What is to happen to the GBE's and what impacts this will have on the employees of those businesses and what impacts will ripple through this community. We must maintain the model of governance that will preserve the principle that Norfolk Island is first and foremost the home of its residents and seek to uphold the preamble of the Norfolk Island Act 1979 in which the Australian Parliament acknowledges the residents of Norfolk Island include the descendants of the settlers from Pitcairn Island recognises the special relationship of the said descendants with Norfolk Island and their desire to preserve their traditions and culture, this needs to be factored into every policy and decision of this Government, thank you Mr Speaker.

MR SHERIDAN

Thank you Mr Speaker, I fully support the Chief Minister and this affirmation of this motion, I congratulate the Chief Minister for bringing

this to the table, as I believe over the last couple of months since he was elected to the post, it has been difficult times for him and in particular the dealing with the Commonwealth. I also believe that the Commonwealth, since the departure of Mr Crean has had some problems with dealing with Norfolk Island and the position that we were at at that time. I see this affirmation of this motion of the last Assembly central to the two Governments working towards a solution for Norfolk Island, it puts to bed any unrest, any of you said this, we said that, we don't need that, we don't need that to-ing and fro-ing between the two Governments, we need to work as one. As the Chief Minister mentioned in his speech, unity is needed and that is central for us moving forward. This motion hopefully will put it to bed, as I've said since the election and the departure of Minister Crean, there's been some confusion, there's been some words said that maybe the intent weren't necessarily what came out and this certainly affirms the Governments intent, the intent is to move forward with the reforms, the introduction into the Australian Taxation System, the Social Services System, for the net benefit of the community of Norfolk Island. Now I'm not saying that every single person will benefit, it won't be the case, but for the majority, and for the betterment of Norfolk Island moving forward it will be for the best. What needs to be done now and as Minister King said when she came over here, she indicated that she wouldn't be taking a proposal to Cabinet, and that was Mr Crean's biggest failure was that no Cabinet endorsement was given to it, well we need to put pressure on the Minister to actually take something to Cabinet to get it endorsed and to get it moved forward. This is the stage that Mr Crean was at, we need to reignite that, through this motion I believe that we will show the support for that motion to go to Cabinet, and to get the big tick, so then and only then will we be able to start discussions with all the other departments within the Commonwealth for the extension of services, it is only then that we will know the real benefits and some of the pitfalls that may come with them. But it is only when we have those discussions that we will be able to tell the community exactly how things will be implemented, until that happens all we are doing is marking time, we are dog paddling in the pool, out of our depth, we just can't seem to reach the shore. Affirmation of this and the pressure on the Minister will see hopefully, that there will be some money committed to Norfolk Island, the extension of the services that we need, and we need desperately here, we really do, as the Minister for Finance, I'm settling our budget on a deficit for the following financial year, as the Minister King has said, they can't keep handing us, or we can't keep asking for handouts, and I don't intend to do that, I want to see us get back onto our own two feet, and our modelling has shown, that the best way to do that, the best way to achieve that, is for participation in the Australian system, in partnership, so that we get the benefits that all Australians receive, why should we be outside the loop? We shouldn't be, we should be included, they like to think of us one, let's go down that path, we are one, let's make sure that we enjoy the benefits that all Australians enjoy, we might only be a small microscopic community, but we shouldn't be left out in the cold. They have a responsibility, this motion will ensure that, it will give them confidence that we are committed, it will give Minister King confidence to go to her Cabinet and say that Norfolk Island Government wants to do this, this is where we need to go and I fully support the Chief Minister, because I believe it has been a very difficult couple of months, it would have been very hard for him to bring this to the table because some of his views may not necessarily 100% support this, the Chief Minister has swallowed his pride and he has realised what is best for the community of Norfolk Island and that is what he intends to do, and I applaud the Chief Minister for taking this stance and bringing this motion forward, thank you Chief Minister.

MS ADAMS

Thank you Mr Speaker, I thank Mr Nobbs for his amendment, because that also, I believe, the opportunity for this, the 14th Assembly, today to demonstrate consensus Government and find compromise, and I do believe there is a way to find compromise with the amendment and the motion, and I will come to that later on after my debate. Mr Speaker the Chief Minister has brought this motion before the House today principally at a request initiated by Mrs Melissa Ward in her email to us all on 2nd of May. Mrs Ward expressed her concern that Senator Parry and other members of the Joint Standing Committee, to whom she spoke outside of session

at the JSC Hearing on 30th April, had formed the view that the 14th Assembly was not committed to reform despite the tabling by the Chief Minister at the JSC hearing of a position paper unanimously supported by the 14th Assembly, as the co-author, and I repeat as the co-author of the position paper presented at the JSC, in particular parts 1 – 4, I deliberately included at page 2, paragraph 2, the full text of the 11 July 2012 motion which was passed by the 13th Assembly, and I table a copy of the position paper and its attachments. As the co-author of the position paper, I also deliberately included in page 2, paragraph 3, the motion passed unanimously on 20 March 2013 by the 14th Assembly in which it reaffirmed support for reform and for the Roadmap, at the same time I included in the discussion paper, detail for the JSC demonstrating that on taking office in March 2013, that the Minister's in the Norfolk Island Government of the 14th Assembly had written to their Federal Ministerial counterparts outlining the specific Commonwealth legislation in each portfolio that requires amendment under the Roadmap reforms, those letters also clearly reaffirmed our willingness for reform. The discussion paper goes on to clearly identify the Norfolk Island position, at paragraph 5 it confirms entry into the Australian Taxation system was agreed to in 2010, and that the Norfolk Island Government has been waiting to discuss details, of how and when this could be introduced locally with the Australian Government for over two years. In the paper it is stated that without this commitment the community continues to have fewer rights than other Australians and is constantly accused of not wanting to contribute its fair share. At paragraph 5 on page 4 of the discussion paper it reaffirms that over 12 months ago the policy decision to adopt Australian GST on Norfolk Island was communicated to the Australian Government. Mr Speaker what is most regrettable is that members of the Joint Standing Committee did not have prior opportunity to read and digest the Assembly's position paper before asking questions and forming conclusions that it would seem some of their members had. I am confident that if they had had the opportunity to read the paper prior to the meeting that conclusions drawn by them might have been different. Mr Speaker when the motion before us today came to the House on 11 July 2012 I chose to abstain on the grounds that the motion proposes potential major constitutional change to governance on Norfolk Island and that change of that nature should only be undertaken after the community is consulted at referendum. I stood on that very platform for both the 13th and the 14th Assemblies and I remain as firm in that belief today as I did then. Mr Speaker I do not believe for one moment that reaffirming the motion today that was passed on 11 July 2012 will achieve the certainty that members around this table are seeking. When today's motion was crafted by all of us at our informal meeting yesterday I endeavoured to persuade you to change the motion to read at paragraph a) the following words: That this House – Reaffirms the agreement reached in the Memorandum of Understanding dated 25 November 2010 between the Commonwealth of Australia and the Government of Norfolk Island wherein the Norfolk Island Government "agreed in broad terms to participate in the Australian taxation and social security systems on the basis that there will be a net benefit for Norfolk Island and its community and there is appropriate consideration of local circumstances". The key words of course being "that there will be a net benefit for Norfolk Island and its community and there is appropriate consideration of local circumstances". And that means different things to different people, I accept that. Regrettably however I was unable to persuade members in that direction. And without any prior notice, Mr Nobbs has picked my point up, notwithstanding this, after much serious deliberation overnight on the best way forward with the motion, and believe me it took a long time to get here, I have come to the decision that I will support my Chief Minister and vote for the motion on the clear understanding that I do so only in the interests of unity to achieve the common goal of all members of this Assembly namely, that we are working towards building a future of economic certainty and sustainability for the Norfolk Island community; unity of purpose that has already been demonstrated in the motion of the House passed unanimously by the 14th Assembly already on 20 March 2013 and tabled in the House this morning as part of the JSC position paper; and unity of purpose that has been clearly demonstrated in the paper unanimously agreed by this Assembly and presented to the Joint Standing Committee on the National Capital and External Territories on 30 April 2013. But in supporting my Chief Minister this morning let

Members around this table be clearly aware that the time will arrive in the future when I will be moving for the community to be consulted at referendum on constitutional changes being proposed and that before final decisions are taken on participation in the Australian taxation and social security systems that every effort will be made to ensure that there will be a net benefit for Norfolk Island and its community and there is appropriate consideration of local circumstances. That is the promise made by the Chief Minister of the 13th Assembly when he signed the Memorandum of Understanding with the Commonwealth of Australia on 25 November 2010. Let the 14th Legislative Assembly pledge this morning to also honour that promise. Moving now to the amendment proposed by Mr Nobbs, and how I see for the willingness to compromise and find consensus around this table, that there is potential with Mr Nobbs words, to make them an addition to the motion that is before the House today, making no change to the motion as it currently is, the 11 July and by adding at the end of the motion, these words, and I'm not moving this as an amendment, I am just giving you the opportunity to consider this as a possibility of compromise and consensus around this table, because that is where we are trying to get too, unity around this table, let's try and get there. So the words could just be, "and furthermore that this House", moving to Mr Nobbs, "re-affirms its appreciation of the financial assistance subsequently provided following the original agreement reached in the memorandum of understanding dated 25 November 2010 between the Commonwealth of Australia and the Government of Norfolk Island wherein the Norfolk Island Government as stated in the Memorandum of Understanding" and you know the rest of the words, I've already said them in my debate, "agree in broad terms to participate in the Australian Taxation and Social Security Systems on the basis that there will be a net benefit for Norfolk Island and its community and there is appropriate consideration for local circumstances" and as a consequence of the memorandum of understanding, this House endorses that the Commonwealth and Norfolk Island Governments provide urgently to the community of Norfolk Island an assessment, as to the impact both positive and negative of that part of the memorandum of understanding which refers to a net benefit for Norfolk Island and its community and there is appropriate consideration of local circumstances. That demonstrates to the Norfolk Island community that we are concerned that there is a net benefit and until we have that study how can we possibly know, the 13th Assembly moved a motion, agreed a motion, and a letter was sent to Minister Crean seeking this kind of investigation, discussion, etc, it went off, but it wasn't agreed, let's try and come back on board on the same platform, reaffirm, I said I will with the riders that I have given, but add to it, let's compromise, let's try and bring our two governments together in a way that will give some comfort to the Norfolk Island community that they have in front of them the facts and can say, ok, this is a net benefit to us. I rest my case, thank you Mr Speaker.

MR PORTER

Thank you Mr Speaker, I intend to support the motion for the Chief Minister, when we speak of a Roadmap we are speaking of journey, a journey from un-sustainability to sustainability. I can't see how we can benefit this journey by introducing alternative destinations or alternative paths into the debate, it merely does as previous speakers have suggested – muddy the water. In terms of the Chief Minister and picking up on the Finance Minister's comments that it must grieve the Chief Minister a great deal to find that he has to have himself placed in this position, it is a position of necessity rather than desire, however having said that, we can appreciate that there will be winners and losers, and that will be the outcome, but what we must remember is the winner, the clear winner in this is Norfolk, and some of us may take a little pain, we may all not get exactly what we want, but the ultimate outcome for us charged with being the representatives of Norfolk is the best outcome for Norfolk. I don't know that we want to, or nor can we afford to be second class Australian citizens, I don't think it's a desirable outcome, so for those that feel that they might win, they need to focus on the overall outcome for Norfolk and acknowledge that we are all Australian citizens who enjoy equal benefit of the output of that country, I think that the amendments are arguments for another day, they are certainly more involved in the detail of the delivery and when we roll out the sustainable model those items clearly be addressed, there must be a net benefit to Norfolk, it must leave us in a better place than

therefore although that I am not trying to understand what Mr Nobbs has raised in terms of his motion, the reality is that it changes the focus of that original motion, and that is the purpose, for us to give focus to that motion. If Mr Nobbs wants to tackle it another time, I am happy to consider tackling it at another time, but not to disturb the Chief Minister's motion of affirmation, that is the purpose, it's important and I think we all should endorse it, I certainly will.

MRS WARD Thank you Mr Deputy Speaker, if I may, there have just been a couple of comments made by other members which I think is worth picking up on, and that is it is unfortunate that we have to reaffirm this motion or that it is repetitive action, I think that the community and the Commonwealth, Federal Politicians, including Minister King, are quite right in questioning the intent and the direction and the views of the new Government, the Norfolk Island Government, and that is because first of all in the previous Assembly, Mr Snell, who is now the Chief Minister voted against the particular motion and as Minister Adams said she in fact abstained, and within the policy, the election policy statements of those particular Minister's the Chief Minister and Minister Adams, who then went on to be the top polling candidates, they stood on what could be seen as, could be seen as, I won't say anti-reform, although their votes demonstrated that, so I won't use that, but they did question key elements of the reform process, and the fact is they went onto question that with Minister King, there is no denying that. So I understand that the community and everybody else is unclear on what the Norfolk Island 14th Government's position now is. So again I applaud the Chief Minister's actions, he has done what he has done because he has to do it. Thank you Mr Deputy Speaker.

MS ADAMS At an appropriate time, when all debate has been exhausted, I will be proposing to move that debate be adjourned to later in this sitting, which will be on the 15th, later in this Sitting, because we are going to suspend over to the 15th, just a week away, to allow us to further consider if there is a possibility to include at the end of the affirmed motion, which is totally unchanged, no intention to change it, but to add part of the amendment of Mr Nobbs, that at the very least reaffirms our appreciation for the financial assistance following the original agreement and requesting that the two Governments, ours and theirs, come together to provide to the community an assessment as to the impact, both positive and negative of that part of the MOU which refers to a net benefit to the Norfolk Island community, that there is appropriate consideration of local circumstances, and that there is no displacement of our people. They are promises that were made by the 13th Assembly, by its Government. Over and over we heard those words, let's reaffirm them, we are reaffirming what the 13th Assembly Government said in respect of its motion of 11 July, lets also reaffirm that we promised, as the 13th Assembly, a net benefit, no displacement of our people and taking into account local circumstances, at the appropriate time I will move that adjournment of debate to a later hour of this sitting for that purpose, namely the 15th of May.

MR SNELL Thank you Mr Speaker. I think everyone has had the opportunity to comment and I think they have on the basis of this Motion. Mr Speaker I'd like to show my appreciation and encouragement for the words I've heard around the table here this morning and Mr Speaker it goes without saying that yes it has been a difficult 8 weeks for me, I've had to look at difficulties within the Government, within our financial situation and I take on board the kind words from all of you, particularly Mr Sheridan. It is very very difficult for me to have to look at a new pathway that Norfolk Island has to follow and I appreciate what he says, it has to follow. Mr Speaker there is no doubt that we are playing with words here. Whilst the meaning and the intent is the same, all of us want what is best for Norfolk Island, that's without a doubt. There has been some mention of responsibilities. The responsibilities of this island has as Mrs Ward indicated grown to over 100. How we finance those new responsibilities even though some are not of our own choosing or design, we have them nevertheless. It's of great concern to me in the 8 weeks that we have looked at alternate revenue streams,

we have looked at other ways of taxation imposts. There aren't very many out there, all of us know that. Mr Speaker there are some within the community saying that we're prepared to do it tough, I'm prepared to do it tough but there are many out there that can't and I take their case into consideration. Certainly this Motion is not in accordance with my election policies but after as I mentioned before being here for 8 weeks and canvassing the concerns of the community and trying to assess how else we can go about a partnership with the Commonwealth in any different way I haven't come up with an answer and I don't think there is one at this time. There have been suggestions and the suggestions have all been looked at but financially they haven't come to fruition and as mentioned to me by others, particularly within the Service that there are very little revenue streams out there that will give and support and sustain the island to its lifestyle that we enjoy today. I am greatly disturbed and I'm sure members of the community are also of a possibility of what would happen to this island if we don't get the financial assistance that's required to balance our budget for the 2013 and 14 year. I have made some indications of austerity measures even within this area of the Legislative Assembly but even with the small contributions that we may be able to make there would be a huge lot of pain out there if we don't get the support that has been suggested within the financial arrangements for the 2013/14 year and onwards. So we have to look at what would happen as I mentioned if this partnership should fail. What I have to do is to stress that we need unity, we need clarity and we need commitment, particularly from the Commonwealth to move forward. Mr Speaker I commend the Motion.

MR SPEAKER Thank you Chief Minister. I think we're at the stage unless there are any other contributions on the substantive Motion of looking at the amendment that has been proposed by Mr Nobbs. Mr Nobbs therefore I'll turn to you again to see if you want to say any further words about that and then I'll proceed to seek the views of Members in terms of voting upon that amendment.

MS ADAMS Mr Speaker I had indicated an intention to move a Motion to move

MR SPEAKER And you will have an opportunity

MS ADAMS But not after the amendment is put. If debate is ? on the principle Motion at this time

MR SPEAKER If you want to move an adjournment Motion Minister Adams you will have an opportunity to do that either before or after, whichever you choose. I'm giving Mr Nobbs the opportunity to say anything further about the amendment at this stage.

MS ADAMS I foreshadow the adjournment debate before the Motion is put

MR NOBBS Well I'll put the Motion as such as was the intention, was my intention all along and I believe that we are wasting our time going back over old ground as far as these Motions are concerned. They are in there, we're working towards it, everybody knows that. If people want to either misinterpret within the group what other peoples views are well that's fine, but the situation is that we need clarification on a number of issues and one of these is in relation to the Memorandum of Understanding itself. It goes right back to that. Nobody seems to have called for a Motion in the past, in the last Assembly as far as I can recall or in this Assembly that we should go back to it and look at and answer the questions that were put during the last election as to where are we going, where are we going now? What's the impact of these things be on our economy and our general way of life, the whole lot on Norfolk Island, but particularly the economy. As I said earlier the economy is the basis of which recovery has always occurred on Norfolk Island. We've been down in the past, the economy has picked up and it's good. What's happening now is exactly the same as what's happened in the

past, it's gone down, the tourism industry is down. It will pick up I believe in time to what level, I don't know at this stage, but what we really need is an impact assessment of what will happen once these issues are put in place. Now look It's fair enough saying well, gosh it happens in Australia and it happens everywhere else, it sure has. Isolated communities, we are a very isolated community, there's no worries about that. I mean if anybody thinks we're not just because we get a plane here every couple, 2 a week from Australia or from Sydney and two from Brisbane and one from New Zealand that we're not isolated, believe me we are. We're a hugely isolated area, If somebody dropped something on the airstrip there that's it, finished, because it will take too long to get things here by ship. So we are extremely isolated. You can't drive here, you can't even swim here. But the thing is I just want to make some comments on what has already been said. One problem I have is that our previous actions in relations to the GST in 2006 and how we should have gone on with what Jim Lloyd said. The issue really is the GST for those who don't know or don't realise what happened was brought in in 2007, March 2007 at the same time an estimated \$2.5m in customs Duty was taken off, there was \$1m in FIL taken off. Now that was really important because the FIL according to the advice I had from the people and the banks who administer the FIL was that the FIL was drawn from the lower 1/3 of the economy, that's it. All the smarties that sent their money over to, and were sending their money over to Brisbane which did not have an FIL in place and so, like me and some of the others were paying it, and that was it. So that was an issues then. \$1m off there. Tourist accommodation, we could have left it in there because lets be a licence to operate, but no we took it off and I think it was about \$.5m. So that amounted to something like \$4m. We got in the estimate was we were looking at \$6 to \$7m, \$2 to \$3m on top of it. That was at 9%. I didn't agree with the increase to 12% but that was a grab for money. It's pretty obvious where the money was gone in 2007, 2010 Government, so be it and I know Mr Sheridan worked very hard to try and hold the fort and keep them on line but things went pear shaped at that time. Getting the Australian support will still,

MR SPEAKER

Order, do you wish to address the Chair Ministers

MR NOBBS

Australia is coming in here or whatever we go into their system will not be just glory days. I mean we have got to raise as much money as we can on the island and that's it. It's not glory days, there is no guarantee that we'll get into the GST system I can tell you that. That's a State tax system, it's not a Commonwealth, it's a State arrangements. There is no guarantee us getting into that because all of the States have got to agree and Territories. I just go back to the Northern Territory once again, we're after a Territory system of government, that's what the previous government put up and that's what I would agree with. If we have to go in it, that's the best system to have. There is all the Chief Ministers, or the majority of the Chief Ministers will tell you, if you wish to interview them, and I'll give you their phone numbers, I think I can find them, that their greatest problem was with the Commonwealth Government. So it's not going to be an easy task once you get into the system. So please don't tell me it's glory days. Glory days are South Sydney stuff, it's not the Government of Norfolk Island. I know that we've got terrific problems but we need to get this out to the community immediately. I can read the signs, right and the Chinese whispers and whatever you like to call them. I can read the signs, we've got difficulties, but I was intent on putting this amendment to this Motion to highlight the fact that we're sick and tired of going back over this old ground and reaffirming, there will be a sneezes and then the Secretary of the Department goes so we've got to reaffirm again. Then we get another sneeze and another Minister comes in and we've got to reaffirm again. How long is it going on. Let's get together with them, lets get the Australian Government directly, not going through other people and what have you, go to Canberra, talk to the Ministers and get it sorted out and then we can get this study going which should have been done in 2010. That's all I'm saying Mr Speaker.

MR SHERIDAN

Thank you Mr Speaker. I can't agree with the amendment that Mr Nobbs has put up. I agree with the wording of it. If he'd like to bring

it forward later in the sitting as a separate Motion I fully support it, but I think it's disrespectful, very disrespectful to the Chief Minister, when he's trying as a new Government to affirm the position of his Government as such was the previous Government which has been going down this road of reform for two to three years and this is all that the Chief Minister is attempting to do, is to commit his Government to the same path that the previous Government has been going down, that's the affirmation. Now for somebody one of his colleagues around this table to try and delete all of the words and insert their own when a separate Motion would achieve the same thing, I believe is very disrespectful and I will not support if an any essence, and that's goes for the same of adding words to it Mr Speaker.

MR SPEAKER Any further debate in respect of the amendment to the Motion.

MS ADAMS Thank you Mr Speaker. It would seem that if Mr Nobbs is comfortable to deal with this as a separate Motion, that resolves it, yes absolutely. I have no difficulty either coming out or being withdrawn or putting it to the vote, if it goes to the vote I will because I have given my support to the Chief Minister at this point in time, be supporting the Motion in the interest of unity, on the basis that it will come to the House as a separate Motion.

MR NOBBS I move that the amendment be put. Can I talk to that at all or not.

MR SPEAKER Yes, there appears to be an offer of withdrawing that and reconsidering it in another context or actually voting upon it. Which would you like to do Mr Nobbs

MR NOBBS I've come down this road and I'm going to stick to this road, if you might say. But I will bring this issues. I've got another Motion which I'll bring...

MR SPEAKER Let's attend to this amendment. May I just ask Members whether they have any further debate in respect of the amendment.

MR WARD Mr Speaker I generally concur with the Motion Mr Nobbs has put forward to be treated as a separate Motion as Minister Sheridan has suggested. I do have issues with Item 3 on it. I think we need to do a lot more work in relation to the principals of transferring Federal functions back to the Commonwealth, though there may be some we wish to retain and some we don't. So I think we need to work through that as a group before we make a firm commitment on that side of things but other than that I'd be happy to endorse Mr Nobbs' Motion as a separate Motion.

MR SPEAKER At this stage Mr Nobbs is proceeding with it as an amendment to Chief Minister's Motion. Any further debate in respect of the amendment.

MS ADAMS Just very briefly to confirm that I am unable to support the amendment as it currently stands. But the principle of the Motion, of the amendment I totally support and look forward to it coming if it's not passed by the House today, look forward to it coming into the House as a separate Motion for consideration by this Parliament.

MR SPEAKER Further debate. We're at the stage of voting on this amendment Honourable Members. The question is the amendment be agreed to.

QUESTION PUT

MR SPEAKER Would you like me to call the House Mr Nobbs

MR NOBBS I don't think so Mr Speaker.

MR SPEAKER The No's have it. The amendment is not agreed Honourable Members. We have remaining therefore the Chief Minister's Motion, the substantive Motion and I would like to put that Motion.

QUESTION PUT
AGREED

MR SPEAKER Mr Nobbs abstains. The Motion is carried Honourable Members. There has been an informal indicator to me that another request for leave on a Motion may come forward.

MR NOBBS Mr Speaker I seek leave to move the following Motion and I'll have it circulated if some guys would give me a hand here please. Do you give leave Sir

MR SPEAKER Just circulate so Members can see Members may see what we're talking about please Mr Nobbs then I'll seek leave from the House.

MR NOBBS The Motion is that this House resolves that the Norfolk Island Government seeks to establish a positive partnership with the Commonwealth Government and the Norfolk Island community in the spirit of co-operation and willingness to find joint solutions to the communities needs to result in a sustainable future for Norfolk Island and that agreed structural reform and implementation of the island's Governance arrangements and financial management framework results in a net benefit for Norfolk island and its community having due regard to the local circumstances to ensure Norfolk Island residents are not displaced.

MR SPEAKER Thank you Mr Nobbs. Honourable leave is sought for that Motion to come forward. Is leave granted. Thank you, leave is granted

MR NOBBS Thank you Mr Speaker. I was under the impression that if an amendment was put and it was not defeated at the Sitting that I couldn't bring it up again. So the following Motion goes a little bit beyond what that Motion suggests but hopefully it will actually perform the same as the last one, the previous amendment and I'm looking at the reasons why this was put and I would suggest that in the Memorandum of Understanding of 25th November 2010 the words were that as we read from, virtually from the Motion there relates to the net benefit for Norfolk Island and so on. It was also a joint Press Release by yourself and Mr Speaker as Chief Minister at the time with Minister Crean is referred to, I think it was yours anyhow the Norfolk Island Government, we confirm the necessity to work together in a partnership and co-operative approach to ensure there is a net benefit for Norfolk Island and its community and there is appropriate consideration of local issues and then that was the matter of public importance on the 5th November 2010 and the 10th December 2010 by yourself as Chief Minister Mr Speaker. And then there is the joint Press Release between yourself which I was referring to before with the Honourable David Buffett and the Honourable Simon Crean and I take out this part of it. This agreement is an example of what can be achieved by Government's working together in the spirit of co-operation and willingness to find joint solutions to the communities needs. Those were the basis of this Motion and apart from all the issues that I went through and I'm not going to go through them all again with the amendment. I think that we need to get on with it, get some co-operation and not confrontation between the Commonwealth and Norfolk Island and the Governments and look at and provide to the community some surety of where, if we do go down this line or a particular road or track or whatever you like to call it that at the end of it, or during the course of it there will be certain things, there are problems and at the end of it it's not as though we're going to the abyss and just fall over the edge. That's

one point. The second point is that we talk about sustainability and I harp on to what level will the community be sustained, because I have seen communities which have just fallen to pieces because of Government interventions in the past and I sought of worry very much that this one here without a clear understanding of where we're going will not follow that. And if you want to be sustained at the level of Social Services and so on, God help us. Thank you Mr Speaker.

MRS WARD Mr Speaker I welcome this Motion being put forward by Mr Nobbs, it's really another reaffirmation, and we're having a day of reaffirmations let's do this as well. It's all about compromise and unity and consensus but basically what the words do is pick up on a document that was signed by the Chief Minister at the time the Honourable David Buffett and the Honourable Simon Crean. At that Point c) and it says that the Norfolk Island Government had agreed in broad terms to participate in the Australian Taxation and Social Security systems on the basis that there will be a net benefit for Norfolk Island and its community and there is an appropriate consideration of local circumstances. Of course this MOU was drawn up when the Minister at the time was Craig Anderson, came in had a good look at the books, and went "oh dear, no can do, need help". So that was the MOU at the time. From that of course the Roadmap was developed and I'll just pick up a line. An important thing in the Roadmap was the recognition by the Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia was recognising the special relationship of the descendants of the original 1856 settlers. People forget that, that is actually in the Roadmap, that was never ignored. This Roadmap outlines the steps to reform for Norfolk Island. It represents the partnership between the Norfolk Island Government and the Australian Government to work together to seek community to seek input from the community and to embrace change to enable Norfolk Island to be strong and resilient. We all know that was formed and signed around the 2nd March 2011. So in the general sense of reaffirmation and supporting the work of the 13th Assembly, carrying on into being supported and clarifies and you know, ongoing commitment and unity I will support this Motion. Thank you Mr Speaker.

MR SHERIDAN Thank you Mr Speaker. I think it might be good if Mr Nobbs would just adjourn this until later in the Sitting if we're going to suspend the Sitting so that people can get their heads around it, but in essence I support this. It's nothing new that we haven't been doing for the last couple of years. We're trying to get a better place to live in, Norfolk Island. We're trying to work with the Commonwealth to find the playing field that we can all be happy with. That's what we're trying to do. We don't want to displace any Norfolk Island residents, we don't want to put anybody at a disadvantage here. What we're trying to do is make people here comfortable that they do have somewhere to fall back on if they do have hard times, and this is one place you know, sustainable, a sustainable place to live, and the only comment that I will take from Mr Nobbs' discussion on this and I take adage to it when he says "if we want to find a sustainable place and we're talking about Social Welfare, well he feel sorry for awa, he feels sorry for Norfolk". I take adage to that. He may be ok. Mr Nobbs may be ok, he's inferred today already that he pays taxes so he gets obviously an Australian pension or benefits, super or whatever from Australia. I'm ok Joe. I'm concerned about the community members within Norfolk Island who haven't got that safety net, who can't fall back on that. They are the ones that we're concerned about. Now just because the Social Welfare, Social Services, to get Australian Social Services gets extended to Norfolk Island and these people put out their hand for assistance, are we going to call ourselves a welfare State? This is what Mr Nobbs is inferring. I take adage to that. I will support his Motion but I think Mr Nobbs really needs to come down from where he's sitting and have a look at the community as a whole and see what their needs are, just not his. Thank you.

MR NOBBS I'll just respond to that very quickly. I don't, I understand where Mr Sheridan is coming from and what my view is simply this. If your talking about a sustainable future don't base it on just getting the dole, that is my go, because the whole place comes down to that. We will end up with the Bond or whoever

owns it, if you guys want to divest it or whatever you want to do with it, the Bond, Foodlands, maybe a dress ship because women have got to be dressed and that is what we're looking at. The rest – poof gone. Once you get down to a level poverty at that level, that's what I don't want to see. Don't aim to get on the dole, aim for something, give your community something better than that. I know what's going on Mr Sheridan, you know as well as do. I haven't got a huge pension or what have you because I retired early to come back here, so I gave up heaps I can tell you that and I'm not a hero, but the go is, this is what it's about, it's about where we want to be, at what level do we want it. Do you want it down the bottom? Mate it's dreadful, it's sad, I get upset about it, I've seen it, I've worked with it, it's terrible and then they get hooked in the system down here, it's nothing. We want to be up there so everybody has an opportunity otherwise you may as well close the School because the kids don't want to go to School because they've got no life, nothing. They've got no life at all, people, families don't work for generations as has happened in Australia based on a Government decision at the time. Mate I tell you what, this is what I'm about Tim, it's not about me being better than anybody. I'm not in the line of things. What we want to do is to aim high. We aim high, we're going to get something. If we aim low we're going to get it. That's what I'm saying. What level of sustainability are we looking at? And to get off the bottom we need an economy and we need it to keep us going. That's what it's about. Thank you.

MR WARD Thank you Mr Speaker. I'd just like to thank Mr Nobbs for bringing this Motion forward. I can only see it as a very positive affirmation there and wholeheartedly support it. Thank you Mr Nobbs.

MR PORTER Thank you Mr Speaker. I'll endorse those previous remarks. I think unfortunately Mr Nobbs' prophecies of doom are, they won't be realised if we discharge our duties in the interest of the community, that's our job, that's what we're here for and as I said before, and I wouldn't support the amendment because it was an argument for another day, this is that other day. This is where we do go back in and say, if we're going to engage in a true spirit of partnership with Australia, here are some of the ground rules we think are important and we need to put them back in, as Teddy said, kick that ball back into the game at every opportunity. I understand where your coming from, I worked in some of those communities I believe your alluding to, and that is a world that you wouldn't commit anyone to and I would certainly work strenuously to avoid. I don't believe we are becoming a welfare State. This island never was and I think it's a disservice to the people here to think that they would accept that. I've never lived with a more hard working community. I see people in an age way beyond retirement in Australia doing physical work that I'd balk at. So I don't think we should sell our community short. I don't think they will accept a welfare State from us and we would be redescent in our duty if we thought that was all we had to achieve. I commend your resolution. As I said this is the argument for the next day and let's make the Commonwealth aware of what we believe are the basic tenants of the outcome of the good governance and sustainability of Norfolk. Thank you.

MS ADAMS Thank you Mr Speaker. Very brief. The Motion from Mr Nobbs has my full support and I again let us turn our minds to the ASEC Report, Public Sector Review document page 15. Uncertain times needs direction and leadership. Norfolk Island needs a community vision and long term plan for the future with a 20 to 30 year horizon underpinned by sound strategic financial planning. That is where we're at, let's get on with that, lets do it, and that will determine quite clearly at what level in community consultation the community wants to be. I understand what Mr Nobbs is saying. Many times we've been led to the Indian Ocean Territories where 80% of the community is on welfare. We do not want that. The Roadmap clearly spells out that the way forward is that nobody on the dole is to be encouraged to come here. Let's get on with it, let's bring the community on board, create the vision, underpin the financial strategy and look forward to 20 or 30 years where we're a showpiece of Australia to the world and its bridge to the Pacific. Thank you.

MR SHERIDAN Thank you Mr Speaker. If I could just say that I don't think it's this Government's intent to create a welfare State. This is why we're going down the Roadmap reform basis. We want to see a good working relationship with Australia. We want to see some equalization, some transfer payments so that we can put money in the bank for a rainy day, plus investing in the island, into the economy, make it a bigger economy, a better place to live. Just because we have Social Services extended to Norfolk Island doesn't make it compulsory to apply, doesn't make it compulsory to put your hand out and have a hand out. It's just a safety net there for people who need it, and this is what our community needs at this point in time, is a safety net whilst we get everything else on track, until we get our finances back in order. We need to have that safety net otherwise more people will leave and then we will find that there won't be an economy that can survive because there won't be anybody here to support it. It's a big picture thing and this is why I will support Mr Nobbs in this but to go around scare mongering and say everybody is going to be on the dole and doing nothing sitting around, that's pie in the sky stuff. We want a better environment for our community. We want an economy that's strong and we won't do it the road that we're going down now, without the Commonwealth's assistance. If we don't have their assistance we will not achieve that. If somebody else thinks that we can, well I'd love to see their workings.

MR SNELL Thank you Mr Speaker. I intend to support the Motion. Mr Speaker but there are difficulties. Whilst I appreciate the impact that has been discussed previously I certainly am prepared to lead the Government and pound the pavements down in Canberra if necessary to establish this partnership and make it stronger than probably the 8 weeks have indicated, the past 8 weeks. I'm here to try this afternoon to try and rectify any misunderstandings that have occurred in that past 8 weeks. I think we're adult enough to be able to determine what is best for this island and to work to finalise that partnership with the Commonwealth, and we are going to strive for a level in between what has been explained by Mr Nobbs and the higher levels and I applaud the comments from Mr Porter. The difficulties that I see Mr Speaker is that within the Commonwealth they only have a number of days before they go into a caretaker mode of government. That will establish a barrier for us in moving forward with this. So we have to work out a strategy of what we can do and what we hope to achieve. Probably the best things that we can hope for now and I appreciate the affirmation of that Motion here this afternoon. That will be conveyed to the Minister and hopefully our comments here this afternoon will also be conveyed to the Minister. We need to work and finalise that partnership and I certainly support the Motion. Thank you Mr Speaker.

MR SPEAKER Thank you Chief Minister. Any final debate.

MR NOBBS I don't think me and Tim will agree on these sort of things but I just want to make a statement on this. There will be, the Norfolk Islanders won't be here, because they do want to work Mr Porter and that's why they are going away all the time and that's why they've been going away for 150 years to gain work and that's the way I look at it. There will be none here and I wouldn't like to see this place brought into that sort of state. That's what I'm saying. So we've got to be positive and we've got to get on with it. I'm sick of hearing around as you go around the traps that we've got no money, sure we've got no money but we can do things, and we always have and we always will, and we need to get on and show that we can do things and I think if we can get a positive attitude in the community. I know it's difficult with people because they are on hard times and the shopkeepers aren't doing well but it impacts on the visitors and we're in tourism we should be out there you know. Some in the industry are not so positive. I'd just like to say give us a go for another couple of months here, give the Government a go and if we can get this co-operation package going it will do wonders I can assure you. I move that the Motion be put unless you want to talk Mr Speaker.

MR SPEAKER I don't think I need to put that Motion. Looking around I think Members have had their opportunity for debate therefore Honourable Members the question is that this Motion be agreed.

QUESTION PUT
AGREED

SUSPENSION OF DEBATE ON 8TH MAY TO RESUME ON 15ND MAY 2013

MR SPEAKER Honourable Members we have completed the Notice Paper for today. What is remaining is the Public Service Bill 2013 and I foreshadowed earlier that I would consult with you about suspending this sitting today, that is now and coming together at 10.00 o'clock next Wednesday and during the time between now and then there may be opportunity for the Chief Minister to do some further work on the Public Service Bill. He presented the exposure draft at Statement time today and when we come together no doubt we will be in a position to introduce that in a formal sense to the Assembly. That's my intention Honourable Members but can I just look around to see if there are any difficulties with that process. Ok that's what we will do. Honourable Members we suspend at this time and we will resume at 10.00 o'clock on Wednesday next the 15th May.

RESUMPTION OF DEBATE ON 15TH MAY FROM 8 MAY 2013

SPEAKER Good morning to you all, the House resumes its Sitting from Wednesday the 8th of May, we are at the stage of calling on the Public Service Bill 2013, Chief Minister I give you the call.

PUBLIC SERVICE BILL 2013

MR SNELL Thank you Mr Speaker, Mr Speaker as indicated at the last Sitting of the House on the 8th of May 2013 I tabled an Exposure Draft of the Public Service 2013. Mr Speaker as foreshadowed at our informal Meeting of Members yesterday, Tuesday 13th May 2013, it is not my intention this morning to introduce the Bill today, but to seek to suspend this Sitting until Wednesday 22nd May 2013, at which time the Bill will be introduced for passage on the 29th of May 2013 to meet the May milestones contained in the Funding Agreement with the Commonwealth. Mr Speaker Members considered the Bill in detail at our Meeting yesterday and the need for a significant number of amendments have been identified, these proposed amendments have not, as yet, been considered by the officers responsible for preparation of the Bill, but they will be conveyed to them and the legislative draftsmen for comment and preparation of an amended Bill for introduction. In addition Mr Speaker it is my intention to forward the amended Bill to Public Service Managers through the Acting Chief Executive Officer and the Norfolk Island Public Service Association seeking comment by close of business on the 24th of May 2013, so that consideration can be given to any comments received prior to passage of the Bill on the 29th of May 2013. The Bill will also be accessible on the website www.info.gov.nf for interested members of the community, thank you Mr Speaker.

SPEAKER Thank you Chief Minister, Chief Minister with the concurrence of Members, when we reach that stage I will suspend until next week, that is the 22nd of May as you have requested. However before we get to that stage however I am aware that there are some statements that may be made today including one from yourself.

STATEMENTS

One if I may commence, is to advise Members that I have this morning been advised by His Honour the Administrator of a **visit by her Excellency the Governor-General of**

Australia, that visit is projected from the 13th – 15th October of this year and further detail about the detail of the visit will come in due course. Chief Minister.

MR SNELL

Thank you again Mr Speaker, Mr Speaker as we are all well aware the 2013-14 Australian budget outcomes for Norfolk Island was announced by His Honour this morning, and of course by Minister King last night in a press release. Mr Speaker the Australian budget announced last night in Canberra has, I am very pleased to announce today, provided essential services funding of **\$4.4m to enable the Norfolk Island Government to now ensure the compilation of the 2013-14 Budget Bill** which the Minister for Finance will bring to the Parliament next month. I express the Norfolk Island Government's sincere thanks to Minister King, the Australian Government and also His Honour Mr Neil Pope and his staff for the efforts in assisting us to secure this funding which helps to meet the costs of this next financial year's forecast budget deficit. The \$4.4m will be subject to a Funding Agreement between the Norfolk Island Government and the Australian Government and I expect negotiations to work through appropriate milestones to commence shortly. There is another \$1m contained in the Commonwealth budget statements which is allocated to enable continuing improvement of Norfolk Island Governance measures, this includes \$0.5m for Ombudsman services and Business Enterprise audits within the Administration and Government Business Enterprises. The other \$0.5m is to provide additional short term services for family support, child protection, aged care assessments and apprenticeship programme for young people. I expect that these initiatives will be negotiated as part of the Funding Agreement negotiations. I am also able to advise Mr Speaker that we are quietly optimistic of success in the Regional Development Australia Fund Grants programme in our bid for the high temperature incinerator to improve the island's waste disposal capacity. I am hopeful of an announcement from Minister King soon and will then be in a position to provide further details to the local community, thank you Mr Speaker.

MS ADAMS

Thank you Mr Speaker, I have two statements this morning, the first one is about the **Immigration (Amendment No.2) Bill 2012**. On the 13th of May I received a letter from His Honour dated 10 May, and I will read it. "Thank you for your letter of 23 April 2013, (that was from myself), in which you informed me of work being undertaken in anticipation of assent of the above Bill, I look forward to receiving a copy of the resulting paper, in relation to assent I expect to receive instructions from the Commonwealth Minister within the next few weeks. I note that at the time of your writing you were still to received advice from the Commonwealth Department of Immigration and Citizenship, (commonly referred to as DIAC), to enable updating of Norfolk Island Immigration Policy and Guidelines." And I was provided with a copy of advice received from DIAC and conveyed today from this office to the Manager of Norfolk Island Immigration. Mr Speaker I have been in ongoing discussion now for many weeks with officers in Immigration, Social Welfare, Healthcare, I reported to the House at the last Sitting, advising that we were going through any consequential actions, administrative actions, or legislation that was required once this Bill came into place, I am hopeful to receive the final report from that committee later today, or tomorrow, which will enable me to then send those comments to His Honour as indicated in his letter. Following on from that letter I have now received from the Office of the Administrator this morning, a further letter, this one is dated 13 May and it was to His Honour from the Minister, the Hon Catherine King, and I will read it. "I refer to your request for formal instructions under the Norfolk Island Act 1979 (Commonwealth) in relation to the Norfolk Island Immigration (Amendment No.2) Bill 2012. As the Bill contains provisions dealing with Immigration, which is an issue of national interest to the Australian Government, the Department of Immigration and Citizenship has been consulted. Although the Department does not oppose the legislation gaining royal assent, they have requested the proposed sunset clause in Section 28A(1)(d) of the Act being amended within 10 years of the section becoming law. On this basis, my instructions are that you declare assent to the island Immigration (Amendment No.2) Bill 2012. Thank you for raising this matter". And that is signed Catherine King and

discussion is taking place as to whether or not there will be an Executive Council meeting next Tuesday to achieve that assent, thank you Mr Speaker.

SPEAKER

Thank you Minister Adams.

MS ADAMS Thank you Speaker, my second statement, this one is a little more lengthy. Honourable Members the statement I am making this morning in my role as Minister with responsibility for culture and heritage is in two parts, the first part is to report on the visiting of fellows to Norfolk Island this week under the **Australian Leadership Awards Fellowship**. The second part builds on the first part and deals with the potential for Norfolk Island to be Australia's Bridge to the Pacific. Honourable Members this week EcoNorfolk Foundation Inc in partnership with Australian AID and the University of Sydney is hosting a series of educational workshops on Norfolk Island for five Fellowship recipients from the Pacific. The **Sustainable Islands Project** is co-ordinated by Manfred Lenzen, Professor of Sustainability Research, and Joy Murray, Senior Research Fellow, both from Integrated Sustainability Analysis, School of Physics, Faculty of Science, in the University of Sydney, in partnership with Ms Denise Quintal, Founder, of Eco Norfolk Foundation. The Project has received funding under the Australian Leadership Awards Fellowships which enables training programmes in sustainable development techniques for remote islands. This is the second training program held in Norfolk Island, the first being in October 2012, and this time we welcome the following visiting Fellows; and my apologies if I get the pronunciation not quite right, Christina Fillmed, who is the Executive Director in the State Environmental Protection Agency, in the Island of Yap, in the Federation States of Micronesia; Andrew and June Hosking, from Mauake, in the Cook Islands; Pelenatita Kara, Programme Manager for Civil Society Forum of Tonga; Alissa Takesy, Assistant, National Government, Department of Resources and Development for the Island of Pohnpei, in the Federation States of Micronesia. Throughout the week they will be joined by Eco Norfolk Foundation members, members of the NICHE team, you all know the NICHE team – Norfolk Island Carbon Health Evaluations study that is being undertaken – and students from Norfolk Island Central School, who will all have the opportunity to participate in workshops. And I will just pause here to say that it will be our pleasure on Friday to meet with these fellows as Members of the Assembly here on an informal basis and to learn more about their work. The week's program will look at the following examples of small and remote island sustainable operations and activities: Norfolk Island Electricity, with potential for capture and reuse of waste heat; Farmer Lou's Piggery and the capture of methane gas used for power production; Cascade Soft Drinks and recycling techniques, and Sustainable Natural Resource Management and Use in Norfolk Island. As Ms Denise Quintal explained at the programme opening which I attended last Friday evening along with the Chief Minister the Hon Lisle Snell and the Minister for the Environment the Hon Ron Ward, a number of years ago Ms Quintal had a dream of encouraging Universities to utilize our island as a showcase in the Pacific and to firstly scientifically calculate our ecological footprint so that we could all know what was the foundation stone of our island and how we could work to achieve sustainability through science. Ms Quintal met Professor Manfred Lenzen from the Integrated Sustainable Analysis Centre, at the University of Sydney many years ago and at that time discussed the possibilities of how Norfolk Island could share and scientifically enhance other islands in the Pacific to protect their people and provide the working tools such as the calculus of Triple Bottom Line. The delivery of the Sustainable Islands Training Programs is the beginning of the implementation of Ms Quintal's dream. Eco Norfolk Foundation has a mutual aim with ISA, namely, to encourage islanders to work together to acquire skills about implementing ideas that are proven to work on Norfolk Island and solutions that can also work on other home islands. Eco Norfolk Foundation is a leading NGO and has been operating as a not for profit organisation in Norfolk Island for over a decade. The delivery of these workshops are part of the overall program which supports AusAID's International Climate Change Adaptation Initiative (ICCAI) to help Australia's neighbouring island countries to adapt to the impacts of climate change. On behalf of my Assembly colleagues I extend a warm welcome to our

visitors from the Pacific who are with us for all of this full week; may their discussions and workshops be rewarding for all and on behalf of my Assembly colleagues I also offer Ms Quintal congratulations on her dedication towards achieving sustainability for Norfolk Island through science. As Members will be aware one of the key platforms on which I stood for both the 13th and the 14th Assembly is my firm belief that if a concerted effort were made, backed by larger financial resources, Norfolk Island has the potential to be Australia's showpiece to the world in the fullest sense possible, for example, in education, in health, in the environment, in the economy, and at the same time to also be Australia's bridge to the Pacific; this view is not new. Professor Butland in his 1974 Commonwealth of Australia commissioned study on Norfolk Island's population saw Norfolk Island's potential to be the best small island in the world. Professor Richard Herr OAM and Dr. Anthony Bergin in their 2011 paper titled "Our Near Abroad – Australia and Pacific Islands Regionalism" on several occasions endorsed the potential role that Norfolk Island could play as a bridge to the Pacific. For example at item 15, page 6 of the paper they state "...Norfolk Islanders of Polynesian ancestry can serve as bridges from Australia into the region". Honourable Members, the Norfolk Island Government presented a position paper to the JSC on its 30 April 2013 sitting on Norfolk Island and at the conclusion of our discussions, whilst I did not speak to it, I did provide to the Chair a paper titled "Our Near Abroad – Australia and Pacific Islands Regionalism – A strategy developed by the Australian Strategic Policy Institute (the ASPI) November 2011" along with a copy of Professor Herr's and Dr Bergin's paper. I table these documents today. Honourable Members I was pleased to have the opportunity out of session to speak briefly about the bridging concept with Chairman Louise Pratt who provided me with names of helpful people with whom to further the discussion on this concept. I am yet to take up that suggestion. In conclusion Honourable Members as indicated in the paper just tabled I am committed to working to develop the Commonwealth of Australia/Norfolk Island partnership to its fullest potential to the ultimate benefit of the Commonwealth of Australia and Norfolk Island with Norfolk Island as the Commonwealth's Island Territory "showpiece to the world" and its bridge to the Pacific. Thank you Mr Speaker.

SUSPENSION OF DEBATE ON 15TH MAY TO RESUME ON 22ND MAY 2013

SPEAKER Thank you Minister Adams. I think we have concluded in terms of statements that have been foreshadowed to me Honourable Members. At this stage I am of a mind to suspend further until Wednesday next, that is the 22nd of May 2013 when I will then call upon the Public Service Bill that you made mention of Chief Minister. Is there anything further from Members before I take that action? No thank you Honourable Members. Honourable Members we suspend until Wednesday the 22nd of May 2013 at 10am.

RESUMPTION OF DEBATE ON 22ND MAY FROM 15TH MAY 2013

SPEAKER Honourable Members good morning, we resume our Sitting from last Wednesday Honourable Members and I'm about now to call on the matter that we did not call on that time, but alluded too, that is the Public Service Bill 2013. Minister Adams I understand that you also have a statement, we will tackle the agended item first if we may and then you may remind me for that before we conclude the Sitting. Honourable Members the Public Service Bill 2013, Chief Minister.

PUBLIC SERVICE BILL 2013

MR SNELL Thank you Mr Speaker, Mr Speaker I present the Public Service 2013 and move that the Bill be agreed to in principle and I table the Explanatory Memorandum to the Bill.

SPEAKER Thank you Chief Minister, the question is that the Bill be agreed to in principle, Chief Minister.

Agreement are: 1. NIA is apolitical, performing its functions in an impartial and professional manner; 2. NIA employment decisions are based on merit; 3. NIA provides a workplace that is free from discrimination and recognises and utilises the diversity of the community it serves; 4. NIA is openly accountable for its actions; 5. NIA is responsible to the NIG in providing frank, honest, comprehensive, accurate and timely advice in implementing the Government's policies and programs; 6. NIA delivers services fairly, effectively, impartially and courteously and is sensitive to the diversity of the Norfolk Island community; 7. NIA establishes workplace relations that value communication, consultation, cooperation and input from employees on matters that affect their workplace; 8. NIA provides a fair, flexible, safe and rewarding workplace; 9. NIA focuses on achieving results and managing performance; 10. NIA provides a fair system of review of decisions taken in respect of NIA employees; and 11. NIA provides a reasonable opportunity to all eligible members of the community to apply for NIA employment. It is understood that the Bill before us today addresses these principles. Honourable Members the May milestone in the December 2012 Funding Agreement goes on to require: a) a Human Resources Policies and Procedures Manual to be written as an organisational level policy which will no longer require review or approval by the Assembly; b) the Public Service Board to be disbanded and replaced with an independent authority, acceptable to the Department, outside the Norfolk Island community; and c) the replacement of the old redundancy provisions with new provisions as spelt out in the Funding Agreement. Honourable Members I have some difficulty with the HR Policy, that is the Human Resources Policies and Procedures Manual, no longer requiring review or approval by the Assembly and I ask the question – where are the checks and balances? However, there is some balance perhaps in Part 14 in the Bill which requires that a review of the Act be undertaken by the Chief Executive Officer, the CEO, after 12 months and within the following 3 months the CEO report to the Chief Minister on matters and issues identified in that review. However whilst I support the principle of the review I have some difficulty with the review mechanism being undertaken by the CEO and would prefer to see a similar provision to that in the Marine Safety Act 2013, passed by this House recently and foreshadow my intention to move a Detail Stage Amendment to achieve this at the next Sitting, for the record, the provision in the Marine Safety Act reads: Review of Act, it's Section 114 of the Act, (1) The Minister is to review this Act to determine whether the policy objectives of the Act remain valid and whether the terms of the Act remain appropriate for securing those objectives. (2) The review is to be undertaken as soon as possible after the period of 12 months from the date of assent to this Act and a report of the outcome of the review is to be tabled in the Legislative Assembly within 3 months thereafter. (3) Nothing in this section restricts the power of the Minister to review the Act at any time or the powers of the Authority to review and make recommendations to the Minister at any time. Of course the works of the Authority would need to be changed. You will note that this review lies with the Minister whereas in the Public Service Bill the review lies with the CEO. It is my view that the Public Service Bill, in this regard, should mirror the Marine Safety Bill review provisions for consistency. Honourable Members on 8 May 2013 the 14th Assembly, I may be wrong on the date, it might have been on the second part of our suspended Sitting, but however for the purposes of this, subject to correction, on 8 May 2013 the 14th Assembly unanimously endorsed a motion moved by Mr Ron Nobbs and that motion contains one of the key benchmarks against which the review should be measured and I will read the relevant part of the motion: "That agreed structural reform and implementation of the Island's governance arrangements and financial management framework results in a net benefit for Norfolk Island and its community having due regard to local circumstances to ensure Norfolk Island residents are not displaced", that motion was unanimously agreed. In other words the foreshadowed review shall clearly spell out whether or not the legislation has resulted in a net benefit for the Norfolk Island community and that Norfolk Island residents in the public service have not been displaced. Honourable Members I have little more to say about the Bill proper. However having been a member of the Public Service between the years 1967 and 1988, and a parliamentary officer of the Norfolk Island Parliament from 1981 to 2010, I certainly do not share the continual criticisms levelled at our public service from within the

community. Certainly there is always room for improvement in a large organisation but they are management issues. The aspirational goal in the Roadmap for public sector management is that there be an efficient public service that meets the needs of the Norfolk Island Government and the community and that we are to ensure the Public Service is well positioned to deliver services and facilities that meet the needs of the community while working efficiently and at a consistently high standard. Honourable Members I personally believe that our Public Service already is efficient, that it already meets the needs of the Norfolk Island Government and the community and that the public service is working efficiently and at a consistently high standard. Of course this assessment is subjective on my part and I recognise that others in the community may not share my view but to those who do criticise I ask you to show me where else in Australia there is a similar sized public service in an isolated community such as ours that administers Federal, State and Local government with very limited resources with which to work and in the case of our highly skilled professional trades people being required to work for very low wages when compared to their counterparts in the Australian public service and in the private sector on Norfolk Island. However, I also acknowledge the need for continuous evaluation of the performance of the Service. In addition, the 14th Assembly has had a very short time frame within which to consider what is complex legislation, with potential to affect our public service; a time frame which does not ensure perhaps that we have good legislation passed by this House. It is most regrettable Honourable Members that the Commonwealth were unable to allow an extension of time beyond May in order to ensure that there is appropriate consultation both with the public and with the employees about the Bill. Notwithstanding this Honourable Members I will support the Bill for the following reasons: The contractual obligation under the December 2012 Funding Agreement originated in the 13th Assembly; and the 14th Assembly is required to meet the terms of that contract if we are to receive Commonwealth Funding for the May milestone; and secondly the legislation, as presently couched, is to be reviewed within 12 months. Mr Speaker in concluding I apologise to the Public Service Association for not having had the time yet to consider the concerns about the Bill they lodged with the Chief Minister yesterday and will undertake to do so over the next few days. Thank you Mr Speaker.

MR WARD Mr Speaker, just moments before this Sitting I received a copy of a letter from the Public Service Association outlining their concerns, while I applaud the huge effort the Legal Services Unit has made to develop this legislation, it is undeniable that it has been hastily developed, to enable compliance with the Funding Agreement milestones for this month. This haste is not an acceptable manner in which to make such a significant change and I flag this for two reasons; the first being that if passed it is likely amendments will be needed in the near future and secondly, if we enter into any further agreements of this kind there needs to be better allowance for adequate consultation within affected individuals. Lack of consultation has been an inherent issue with much of the Roadmap process under which this new legislation has been driven, and this Government must actively address this issue, Mr Speaker having regard to these concerns I reluctantly support this motion today.

MRS WARD Thank you Mr Speaker, just to reiterate a couple of the words of the previous speakers, the reason for this Bill is part of the Roadmap, it is unfortunate that it has had to become part of a Roadmap process, it is unfortunate that Governments in the past haven't been able to deal effectively with this reform, this much needed reform. This Bill is about creating effective and efficient public service, what I think needs to be pointed out, is that what is being introduced today, what is being introduced is this Bill, is very different to the Exposure Draft, so I think I would say that the people who have raised concerns with me about what they have seen as the continuation of Ministerial or political involvement in the process, in the Bill, that has to a large extent been removed, to it is probably wise for people who are showing great interest to revisit the new Bill which I am not sure is not on the Government Information Website yet, but I certainly hope it is, so those people can familiarise themselves with the new Bill. This reform, this Public Service reform, which is what this Bill is about, it's

about building trust within the community, it is about demonstrating independence in the process, it's about the community knowing that the Norfolk Island Government and the Norfolk Island Administration can be held to account and that we have open and transparent processes in place, it is also about affordability, although we need to be mindful as we move from a situation where we have a low cost public service board option for dealing with appeals to what will be a more expensive Commissioner, but an independent Commissioner. I would also like to acknowledge receipt of the letter from the Public Service Association, I will also go through every item that they have detailed, they have also asked a good question, can you please explain the basis of any departures from the Northern Territory model and their expected impact on the Island, so that's something I will certainly pay close attention too. The time frame was also mentioned, there's sort of some thought that this has been a big rush job, on one hand it has, but on the other hand, this Bill, I will try to find the media release which was made by the previous Minister responsible for the Public Service, and it was written on the 31st of August last year and it was a media release, and it said, "the Norfolk Island Administration has commenced the task of drafting new legislation to replace the existing Public Service Management Act and associated Human Resources and Guidelines", that was eight months ago, I can't explain why it has taken eight months to get to this table. The other thing that we need to be aware of when we talk about time frames, it has been locally acknowledged and a long overdue need for Public Service reform, it is highlighted to us, certainly when I became a Member of the 13th Assembly, there were inconsistencies between the Public Service Act and the HR Policy, that was identified to us then, so I'm going back over three years, by the Public Service Association, and it has been raised by various CEO's in the past, so it is not a new concept that there were problems between the Act and the Regs and the HR Policy, there were areas where it was apparently unworkable, and that was identified. This Bill is also a result of the recommendation, it is recommendation number 6 of the Australian Continuous Improvement Group Report, which is what we refer to as the ACIG report, it was a review into the Norfolk Island Public Service, and that's the same report that the 13th Assembly when it was tabled in this House by the previous Minister responsible for the Public Service. And of course the current funding agreement very clearly states what needed to be done to the Public Service Act and HR Manual, the Human Resources Manual and Guidelines, and that was negotiated in December last year. So my point is, that we shouldn't get the violin out on how this is a big rush job, we have known about this for months, and if nothing has been done at a political level or a service level, unfortunately I can't make comment, but I do know that I did sit here week after week, and from time to time I did ask the Minister responsible where are we at with the Public Service Bill, where are we at with the changes – it was with the Service. The other thing which raises its head in this process is, unfortunately, what is well documented in the ACIG Report and that is the resistance to change, and when you do a word search on the document, there are over a dozen references to the word resistance to change, and I think that this point is worth raising, because it will help people understand the challenges that we face as Members of the Legislative Assembly to implement reform and I think a personal comment, Mr Speaker is that, dealing with the Chamber of Commerce and the ATA, has been far easier than sitting here as a Member of the Legislative Assembly and putting forward proposed amendments to the Bill, and to receive a response from the Service which I am affronted by. I am affronted by the use of the language within the document, which was a response to the 43 suggestions, or proposed amendments put forward by us, we do our best to sit here, and without legal training, go through and work out what we feel is in the best interest of the community, and of course the Public Service are always a part of that evaluation. We received responses to our suggestions, I'm not going to go into the language that was used Mr Speaker, I'm just going to say that I'm affronted by the use of the language in this document that came from the Service. What is even more outstanding is that at the end of that document, is about five recommendations, or five proposed amendments were picked up from the 43 that we made, and it would appear that two days later, when drafting instructions were given to the Service, on drafting the Public Service Bill, changes that were originally proposed by us, and ignored, were then echoed by the

Commonwealth, they were suggestions that were raised to date by the Commonwealth, they were accepted and adopted. So the question has to be: why is when MLA's put it up, it gets ignored, why is it when the Commonwealth says do it, it gets done? I have to place that on the record, I find that very interesting. Having said that maybe I should be thanking the Commonwealth for their support, because without their support and their echoing of our points raised, maybe it wouldn't happen, and that again outlines the challenges that we face. Perhaps with hindsight we should have had an independent Commissioner in here helping us to put in place a new Public Service Act, with hindsight, because we are relying on information/advice from the Service. With that in mind, I will raise the points that I am still uncomfortable with in the Bill, because I'm not as confident as other Members are so far, to support this Bill in its current form. I still have a concern about Section 26, which is where the CEO is appointed by the Chief Minister on the recommendation of the Norfolk Island Legislative Assembly, that is a move away from the Northern Territory legislation, so it is not consistent with the other jurisdiction, and we had an open conversation about that, and it picks up on the point that the Public Service Association has raised, you know why have we moved away from that in that area? To be honest I can't give a clear answer so I need to be satisfied that there is a good reason for that, the compromise position that we made at the table, ok if the Norfolk Island Legislative Assembly is going to be involved, then we need to be retaining the section from the old Act which referred to the giving of information, the process in which the Norfolk Island Legislative Assembly was able to support the Chief Minister, or what we were to base our recommendation on. So I'm just stating for the record that it is still an area that I am not clear on, and I'm not comfortable with this at this stage. The other one is Section 42, the word Minister is still in there and it is to do with the determination of duties on fixed term contracts, and it is inconsistent with Section 43 which refers to casuals and I know we went through it yesterday, but I am still not comfortable, I see an inconsistency. At Section 70, this one concerns me greatly and it is the appeals about selection decisions, and at 70(b) it states the person is a prescribed eligible appellant, but I don't see the definition of what that is, it is not in the definitions, and what my caution is about this point, is that it's inconsistent with other jurisdictions, but it was stated by one of the Officers that we were leading the way in this area. I think I need to understand a little bit more about that because I'm concerned it does not meet contemporary practice – this is about being able to appeal on merit when somebody is coming into the Service, you should have had a meritorious process, and there shouldn't be a question. Some Members will remember that when we came into the 13th Assembly, we effectively had a road block, there were eight appeals in process, in the line, and I would need to go back and have a look at exactly what happened, but I recall that the Minister responsible, or the Attorney-General at the time, actually sought Australian Government advice on what to do. So that is the question, normally the appeal is on process, but here the terminology was that we are leading the way. What one of the real concerns behind it is because we are moving from the Public Service Board to a Commissioner, and that means an increased cost, it has been very clear about defining what somebody can appeal on, and a Commissioner will naturally accept all appeals, I know that further down there is a point where if something is vexatious or not done in good faith, but it is a potential cost implication, that I think needs to be given more thought. The transitional process and the way that we deal with outstanding appeals and that's at Section 98, there was some discussion that the Board would continue to deal with appeals, I don't think there are any in process now, but that just needs to be clarified so everybody does have a good understanding. So unfortunately at this stage Mr Speaker I can't give a clear undertaking to support this Bill, obviously it will go to the Commonwealth and for me, I know that there is a million dollars hanging off the passing of this Bill, but with respect, I don't support these reforms for the Commonwealth, I support them in the best interests in our community, and if this Bill isn't making sense, and isn't going to fit properly with the Regulations, and we don't have the Regulations, it just concerns me that we are rushing through this without really considering the consequences. I have a million other notes Mr Speaker, but I think I will leave it at that today, thank you.

MR PORTER Thank you Mr Speaker, it is my intention to support this Bill, I feel this is all about the need for contemporary governance structures, not too far in the past, there was an assessment made of our Public Service by an internationally recognised body and we received an extremely low score, so I believe the need for change is evident. We know the time frame is short, however in terms of taking the bitter pill of reform, it may not taste any better if it is chewed on for an extended period of time. Notwithstanding a desperate need for ongoing fundings must dictate our speedy attention to this matter. So with the regards to the misgivings of some of our Members, I see no option but to support the Bill and pay extremely careful attention to the Regulations and subordinate legislation that will support the day to day to operation of the Bill, thank you.

MR NOBBS Thank you Mr Speaker, I think that the main reasons for the urgency for the passage of the Bill was covered very clearly and concisely by Minister Adams, it's all about a million bucks, and unfortunately the time has not been given to really go through the proposals, and we have had a series of obvious mishaps with previous draftings of this particular Bill, but we've now been given one for today, and hopefully that will be available to all to view in the next few hours, hopefully. Mrs Ward pointed out that the issues go back to August last year, this was taken on, and nothing much has happened, which is really interesting, as thinking about it, I thought that, we signed this Funding Agreement or the previous Government signed the Funding Agreement in December, I thought now, the Commonwealth, they are pretty slack, so they'd probably get that in October and finally sign off on it, there would then be a couple of months of too-ing and fro-ing and it was August, and low and behold Mrs Ward gave me the exact date that it was. So things from my time of years ago in the Commonwealth Government employee, on loan to the NT I guess, nothings really changed. So I just want to say that as far as the Act is concerned, there is always need for change over a 13 year period, and that's the period it's been in place. What is claimed that the PSA said this, and so-and-so said about that, is really irrelevant, things weren't done, we can only learn from those sort of things, and we should take them onboard, but at the present time we are dealing with a Bill which has some ramifications for, and not only the Public Service, but the wider community, and particularly for this body here, the Legislative Assembly. I can't believe the former Act was so bad and we need to throw the lot out, anyhow it's happened and that's the way it is. It seems that the previous Act worked for most of the CEO's, but the exception appears to rule the roost, I'm pleased to be honest, and I'm being a little bit cynical here, because it's actually a NT Act, but I'm pleased that the name of the new Act has been changed, and that the word Management has been deleted, because this Bill is not about management, it's more about a dictatorship, and what this Act does is give the CEO extraordinary powers, those powers will need to be tempered by the Legislative Assembly and the Minister concerned by some very stringent policies, that's Government policies, which need to be looked at very closely over the weeks ahead. I don't think that you can write into these Bills, which then become Acts, everything that needs to be done, good Managers can make anything work, and that's the way I've always looked at things. Even though the diversity of the Administration makes the job of CEO here extremely difficult, in my opinion at the present time, but I am pleased to see that there is actually a review on the Act proposed in 12 months time. I agree with Minister Adams in relation to limitations in this particular area, my concern is that from a perspective from the Legislative Assembly side, there is an increased cost to it, the Commissioner, who has to be outside Norfolk Island, and it just appears that we can't manage ourselves, just another kick in the what have yous for us, and I believe it is a blow for self-government, however that's what it says in here, that there will be a Commissioner, a separate person as Commissioner, the Public Service Board is out the door and gone, and I thank those people who have served on it over the years, it hasn't been an easy task I know, from personal involvement, it hasn't been an easy task. It is difficult in a small community, but they have carried their duties out to the best, and I thank them very sincerely for their efforts. The unfortunate part of the whole exercise is this, Admin has been yet again put down, but I've said before, and I think said it at the

last meeting, or whenever, we have been here so many times Mr Speaker, I'm not too sure if it was last week, or the week before, or the week before that! But anyhow, I did say that there's a propensity to put Admin down, I find that quite abhorrent actually, their diversity of operation is quite extensive, as was pointed out, they are covering three levels of Government and done it to the best of their ability under the arrangements, and I would question whether there are others that would do it for the same price, the isolation is an incredible issue which people don't seem to realise, and I think they have held their own exceptionally well under the issues. There's been a push by Commonwealth the Public Service that the Commonwealth Public Service is an efficient organisation, I say that they are a pretty inefficient organisation at best from my own experience, and I hope that in the time that I haven't been a member of it, that they may have improved, but I doubt it very much, in fact they have, so I am lead to believe, in certain areas gone backwards. Although there are some really great and dedicated people that seem to hold the whole show together. So I would temper this believe that because of the Commonwealths Public Service wants it this way it is a wonderful thing, that's what I'm saying. The NT Act applies to a staff of 20,000 people, I don't know whether people realise that, 20,000 people, I was in a relatively small organisation, which was over 500 in it, just one small portion of it. It's not as diverse as the Norfolk Island Administration has to be, but it's all over the place. What I did find out was that on the technical side as far as the Public Service arrangements were concerned, on the technical side there was not a lot of protests and what have you, but on the clerical side, but there was a completely different organisation, fortunately I spent most of my time on the technical side, and things were handled reasonably well. There are 20,000 staff in the Northern Territory, that's what the Act applies, and we look at ourselves now with a proposal under the Road Map at the moment which is either dead or in a serious condition in hospital, if the issues go ahead, we will see something like 60 staff, and that's all, which will be in the Norfolk Island Administration, that's if the divestment of the GBE's occurs and the other proposals in the Road Map are carried out. So it seems strange that we are bringing in this whole new Act for potentially a small number of people, according to the former CEO in my time here, the number of Public Servants are 155 plus temps that go on just for limited periods, that's what he said here about three or four weeks ago, so it's not a big organisation, so why do we need all of these things? There have been a number of last minute changes along the way and one of them is also comment which have just come in, from the PSA and I thank them very much for their efforts, but all in all this Bill seems to be about controlling the interference about the Legislative Assembly in the Norfolk Island Administration, I think that people have got to step back about a bit and have a look at it, people here are elected to perform a job, to look after it, on a little place with a very small community, where every time you turn round you meet up with an elector and therefore a member of your constituency, the situation is that this issue is not as big as people think. There have been some instances I can tell you in the time I was here before, there was some instances, but it was largely on the basis of the Minister having to promote ideas, to try and assist the Service in whatever way they can, without actually standing over them, because there are not the number of people in Public Service to carry out all the functions that are required, that's what the story is. I've said all along that we are looking at the Public Service and we are looking at all the diversification and we are looking at all this, well we are not looking at ourselves, and that's where I believe a lot of these issues of keeping the Ministers noses out of the trough, or out of the Public Service or out of somewhere, should come from restrictions placed and passed by this Assembly here. I believe we need some controls over operations of Ministers and these should be in black and white and each Minister knows exactly where he stands. I'm not going to say anymore at this stage on it, because I haven't really looked at the PSA comments or other public comments which have just come in, and I look forward to these public comments, and I'm extremely sorry that you've only got one week. Thank you Mr Speaker.

SPEAKER Anything further around the table Honourable Members? I think all those who wanted to speak this morning have had their opportunity. Chief Minister may I refer back to you please.

MR SNELL Thank you Mr Speaker, Mr Speaker I move that debate be adjourned and resumption of debate be made an order of the day for a subsequent day of Sitting.

SPEAKER Honourable Members I put that question.
QUESTION PUT
AGREED

The aye's have it, the debate is so adjourned Honourable Members.

Members I foreshadowed I would give Minister Adams the call in respect of a statement, Minister Adams.

STATEMENT

MS ADAMS Thank you Mr Speaker, Honourable Members I wish to advise the House and the community that on instructions from the Commonwealth Minister, the **Immigration (Amendment No.2) Act 2012** was assented to at Executive Council yesterday, 21 May 2013 and a message of this effect will come to the House on 29 May. The result of this amendment relaxes border control for Australian and New Zealand citizens wishing to visit, live and work in Norfolk Island. The passage and assent to the Immigration (Amendment No.2) Act 2012 satisfies some of the requirement of the December 2012 Funding Agreement between the Commonwealth and the Norfolk Island Administration as it relates to Immigration controls. In addition Immigration Amendment Regulations were also made yesterday by Executive Council and these regulations will come into effect in due course. These Regulations set out details of the information required to be included on arrival and departure forms, residency applications and requirements for persons staying longer than 120 days in Norfolk Island, including compliance with the Norfolk Island Healthcare Act 1989 and the Healthcare Levy Act 1990. I am grateful to the officers of the Administration who have worked tirelessly to identify issues that needed to be addressed. There are still a number of consequential matters to be attended to including revision of the Immigration Policy and Guidelines and drafting and preparation of new arrival and departure cards. The passenger arrival information document when finalised will also contain words of welcome to our visitors and potential new residents. Thank you Mr Speaker.

MRS WARD Mr Speaker if that was a statement, may I move that it be noted.

SPEAKER The question is that the Statement be noted, Mrs Ward.

MRS WARD Thank you Mr Speaker, just as a member of the Immigration Board, I think it is appropriate to say a few words, because the Board is effectively now disbanded and I would also like to express my thanks and gratitude to my fellow Board members and the Immigration Staff, who as the Minister has said, have worked tirelessly through the changes to the Immigration Act, again it was a big reform agenda, it was a big process, it was a big battle, we had some challenges along the way, but we've done it. Part of the Funding Agreement is that there will be active promotion of the changes to immigration, so I look forward to seeing those, I'm already being asked questions in the street, how will it affect me, it is easy for me to respond, I'm a member of the Board, and I have that indepth knowledge, obviously a port of call is that Immigration Office, but I certainly hope we are going to see fact sheets and frequently answered questions, and something up on the website and really help people understand what it is going to mean for them. Really for Foreign Nations it's the same process, but for Australian's and New Zealander's who have family and want to understand now how easy it is that that information will be made available to them.

MS ADAMS Thank you Mr Speaker, and I thank Mrs Ward for pre-empting me, I had intended when the Regulations are tabled in this House, as you are aware, has a statutory requirement before they can come in, in order for them to remain valid, and at that time I had intended to speak at length about the role of the Immigration Committee, I thank you for putting that on the table in advance Mrs Ward, thank you.

MR NOBBS I still know that Minister Adams has done a lot of work on the Immigration side of things, and hopefully there will still be some procedural controls over what's now an open door policy. I'm really concerned myself on three things that have happened to date Mr Speaker, including the Immigration Act, changes to registered Tourism Accommodation and the Public Service Act. I'll put a scenario Members to you, that if the PSA were to take a class action against the loss of their entitlements, if the registered accommodation owners did the same – this is hypothetical – and if we get a few drop kicks in here under the immigration arrangements, which will be costing the Island heaps, I would say that the \$4.5m, or whatever it is, that we are going to get in the next financial year, could quite possibly be eaten up in those little exercises. Those are my concerns, I hope it doesn't happen, but I think that it should be pointed out, and that's why I want it record, that these changes have not been thought through fully, without the efforts of Mrs Adams on the Immigration side in the last four or five weeks, I don't know where we could end up, anyhow I thank her for her efforts. Those are the issues that I have Mr Speaker, there is a potential in all those three things, which are reforms, to actually eat up all the funds and more that we are getting from the Commonwealth in the next financial year, let alone in this financial year now, thank you Mr Speaker.

MR PORTER If I may Mr Speaker, I would preface my remarks by saying I support open immigration, I think it is a reform we must have. However, I still have some reservations, and I address these comments to Executive Council in the first instance to consider in the framing of Regulations pertaining to the operation of the Immigration Act. In Australia whether you want to shift from Bundaberg to Canberra or Cunnamulla it doesn't really matter, because the safety net follows you, it is there for all Australian's in all places. However, to that extent we appear to have the cart before the horse, we're going to accept open immigration, but that safety net hasn't yet been extended to Norfolk Island, and therein lies the peril for us that was picked up by Mr Nobbs. We are going to have to accept these people whether we like it or not, so this could have dire effects on our economy. The shortfall in the funds that the Australian Government has provided to Norfolk in this year already will put us under severe stress in our budget, so any further risk is unacceptable. If we did a risk analysis, the chance of people shifting to Norfolk, who in the short term find themselves in some sort of medical or financial distress is probably quite low, so people could say that we tilting at windmills. But if you look at the consequences of that opportunity arising, or that predicament arising, the financial constraints that we are operating under at the moment, as I have said, would very much limit the ability of Norfolk to be able to handle those situations, whether they be medical emergencies or financial incapacity. To lessen the impact of this, or until the safety net is extended to Norfolk, I believe we need some protection. Now, this protection can have sunset clauses triggered by the extension of the benefits, so that we are not trying to usurp the authority of the Act, but if an Australian notifies their intention to settle, we need to have some sort of a threshold or trigger mechanism that then means that we can look at things like making sure that they take up the Healthcare commitment and pay the levy. In the shorter term we would still probably need security checks, even our opportunity to fund ongoing police operations and infringement capacity are limited, so security checks, they need to provide in the short term their ability to be self-sufficient financially given the dire strait of our economy and our lack of ability to provide that funding, this may need to be to a tune of 10 years, similar to what is current on the Island now, or certainly the sunset clause until those benefits are provided by the Australian Safety Net extension. In the case of New

Zealand citizens, there requirements may need to stay until such times until we can afford to provide the assistance required, or until the New Zealand Government may give reciprocal rights to pensions or some such matter to allow us to fund those. The separate matter is Newstart or Social Security, as is the case in Australia to shift to areas of low job prospects many places have a withholding period on the access to unemployment benefits or Newstart allowances, social security, we may need to look at that here. It may be that you need to look at immigrants not being available for unemployment benefits until totally the safety net is extended to here. But even in that case, for a reasonably extended period, so that we don't attract people who are coming here strictly for lifestyle with no intention of providing any benefit to the Island, other than taking up welfare. So I think they are just some matters that I think I would like to see the Executive Council certainly put into the framing of the Regulations which no doubt we will have further opportunity to comment on when they're tabled in this House. Thank you Mr Speaker.

MR SNELL Thank you Mr Speaker I support wholeheartedly the concerns expressed by Mr Nobbs, Mr Speaker I've never been in favour of Unrestricted Entry Permits into Norfolk Island and have huge reservations of its impact as described by both Mr Nobbs and of course Mr Porter. And Mr Speaker I was quite disappointed this morning to learn that there have been some comment on radio by His Honour that this matter had been approved prior to it being announced here in this House.

SPEAKER Yes, Chief Minister, may I respectfully draw your attention to the fact that the position of the Chief Minister is not to be in any way adversely referred to under our Standing Orders.

MR SNELL Thank you, I take that back Mr Speaker. But the reservations as described by the two previous speakers, is certainly ones of great concern to the community and I endorse the comments by Mr Nobbs.

SPEAKER Thank you Chief Minister, is there any further contributors to the debate? The question before us that the statement be noted. No further debate, I put the question.

QUESTION PUT
AGREED

The aye's have it, thank you. Any further statements from you this morning? No, thank you Minister Adams.

FIXING OF THE NEXT SITTING DAY

SPEAKER We are going to progress to the fixing of the next sitting day Honourable Members, Mrs Ward.

MRS WARD Thank you Mr Speaker, I move that the House at its rising adjourns until Wednesday, 29 May 2013, at 10am.

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

QUESTION PUT
AGREED

The aye's have it.

ADJOURNMENT

SPEAKER Adjournment Honourable Members, Mr Porter.

MR PORTER
adjourn.

Mr Speaker, I move that the House do now

SPEAKER
Members? Chief Minister.

Thank you, any adjournment debate Honourable

MR SNELL
Thank you Mr Speaker, Mr Speaker I would like to if I could in debate, put to the Members a matter, and that is concerning Carnival Cruises to Norfolk Island, the next Carnival Cruise Ship is scheduled for the 3rd of June next month and Carnival Australia have advised also that they are planning another visit in October. Honourable Members the Norfolk Island Government is pleased to confirm that we have continued our close association with Carnival Australia in keeping the CEO, Ann Sherry, informed on progress re the RDAF4 Funding and Ms Sherry wrote to me last month to give support to Carnival's intention to continue their interest in utilising Norfolk Island as an important part of their Pacific cruise market. Ms Sherry also wrote in support of the RDAF Round 4 funding, in particular the obtaining by this Government, for purpose built barges to assist in unloading passengers here at Norfolk Island. This is in addition to their support to improve our landing facilities at both Kingston and Cascade, in principle. The Norfolk Island Government reaffirms the previous commitment by Mr Andre' Nobbs and Mr Alan McNeil and others in maintaining this very important and close association initiative to our tourism industry by Carnival Cruises. We look forward to the June arrival and pray of course for calm seas and blue skies. Thank you Mr Speaker.

MR SNELL
I would just like to give a small account of tourism here to Norfolk Island if I may Mr Speaker, just an update on the Norfolk Island Government Tourist Bureau. Financials in particular, the Australian National Audit Office Auditors visited, as I mentioned before, and I'm pleased with the progress of the financial situation of the Norfolk Island Government Tourist Bureau and they have been supplied with a number documents for the next audit scheduled for October. The Norfolk Island Government Tourist Bureau expects to run within current budget forecasts including allocations for promotions running into the next financial year, however Mr Speaker I have cautioned to the General Manager that we are in still a precarious financial situation, and there may be need to instigate some costs saving measures, and he is aware of this. Current travel numbers for April have exceeded the last years by 19% which is encouraging – equal to 2010. And ex New Zealand up by 1% with one less flight, that's in April. So figures are up from Australia by 19% and up from New Zealand by 1%, unfortunately though, overall year to date, we are 12% less than the 2011-12 year, we hope to be able to restrict. Current sales, April was not a good sales period for Norfolk or any other pacific destination, but sales have bounced back in the first half of this month of May. Whilst the forecast for this quarter, April – June, should show significant growth on last year's figures, it is still estimated that there will be an overall decline in total passengers of just under 10%. Current advertising: there is currently an outdoor destination advertising campaign in Brisbane and Sydney with, as Members have been aware, train station and back of bus advertising, which runs through to September, we have just finished a major tactical sales campaign in Sydney and Brisbane which included TV advertising in Sydney and Brisbane, full page advertising in Sydney and newspaper ads in Brisbane. The Norfolk Island Government Tourist Bureau have also co-op adverts in Sydney for Norfolk Island scheduled for the second week until July, and they have also commenced a five week co-op advertising programme in Melbourne. Current advertising in New Zealand includes co-op newspaper advertising campaign delivering press advertising weekly up until the end of June. They have also commenced a 10 day co-op tactical sales advertising on TV nationwide in New Zealand. The current media consists of, in Australia, an Australian Traveller magazine was here in April, Channel 7 Sydney Weekender Show was here last week, and the Fairfax Regional Newspaper are here for the County Music Festival. The current media New Zealand: the HSBC Golf TV Show were here in May, and TE Radar over the Pacific TV Crew are

here for the County Music Festival, and I might add that Honourable Members that is at no financial cost to the Tourist Bureau. There have been agent famils, two wholesaler famils were here in May, and one wholesaler famil is planned for June. Just out of interest Honourable Members, the current airfares as of January 2014 up to January 2014 Brisbane average fare is \$557, Sydney average fare \$597, these are return, Auckland average fare \$452. There are plans for new niche market focus on family holidays and meeting incentives and conferences. The tourism statistics that we wait for are still not available, and even after many efforts to have those tourism statistics from IT within the Administration haven't been successful as yet, well we are still working on it, hopefully it will be resolved. The events policy has been in draft form and will be finalised and hopefully for implementation by the end of this month. The tourism strategy, a special board meeting is scheduled for Thursday of this week to discuss the final draft. Honourable Members we have been in touch with Air Vanuatu, there has been some suggestion that Air Vanuatu might be interested in servicing Norfolk Island from Melbourne, I regret to advise that they are not currently interested in Melbourne – Norfolk Island – Villa operation. Mr Speaker that concludes that.

SPEAKER Further adjournment debate? No further adjournment debate. Therefore Honourable Members the question before us is that the House do now adjourn, I put that motion to you.

QUESTION PUT
AGREED

The aye's have it. Honourable Members we now stand adjourned until Wednesday the 29th of May, that is next week, 2013 at 10 o'clock in the morning.

