



NORFOLK ISLAND LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
14TH NILA HANSARD – 16 OCTOBER 2013

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

PRAYER

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

WELCOME

Honourable Members I note in the Public Gallery this morning, Mr Jon Gibbons, who is the new Chief Executive Officer of the Public Service and on behalf of Members I welcome him to the chamber this morning

PETITIONS

Thank you Honourable Members. Petitions, are there any Petitions this morning.

NOTICES

Notices, are there any Notices.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Are there any Questions Without Notice this morning

MRS WARD Thank you Mr Speaker my question I believe is to the Minister for Finance as it relates to fuel pricing. What guarantee can the Minister give that consumer's interests are being adequately protected at the bowsers

MR SHERIDAN Thank you Mr Speaker and thank you Mrs Ward for the question. It would be very remiss of me to guarantee anything Mr Speaker. The fuel measurement at the bowsers are administered under our Weights Act which is quite old. It's recently been superseded by the Measurement and Weights Act 1960, I think its called that, its Australian new legislation, though 1960 is not new, but there is a National Measurement Institute and they've been to Norfolk Island before and their intention is that they will be on island again in the middle of November and they will be conducting a forum at Governor's Lodge for the community's information but they will also be inspecting all traders who conduct business transactions by weights and measures, so that will include the butchers, the fuel stations, the supermarkets, anybody who uses weight instruments to sell their product by, so whilst I can't guarantee that they are correct at this time, by the middle of next month they will have had an assessment by the National Measurement Institute under their legislation which applies to Norfolk Island

MRS WARD Thank you Mr Speaker my question is to the Minister with responsibility for Health and relates to the Hospital Director position, and the

question is asking the Minister who selects the recruitment panel and is the recruitment process for the Hospital Director to be administered under the Administration Public Service Guidelines or is there a stand alone recruitment Human Resource Principles or Guidelines for the Hospital

MS ADAMS Thank you Mr Speaker and thank you Mrs Ward for the question. Under the June 2013 Funding Agreement that spells out that the Norfolk Island Hospital Advisory Board provides the panel. They are just about at that final stage and my understanding is that there will be five Members on the panel. At this point in time I won't go into that detail because that's still at the Board Level. It's been done in consultation with our Human Resources section of the Norfolk Island Administration as to advertisement and the HR Office, or my understanding is that they will be assisting and guiding the panel on how to go through that recruitment process. Applications closed yesterday and I believe there's a good response. They haven't been provided to me yet to pass on to the Hospital and the Advisory Board and that's about as far as I can tell you at this stage if that helps

MRS WARD Thank you Mr Speaker. Given that the 2011 Public Service review made a recommendation to restructure the Legal Services Unit and given that the Crown Counsel position has still not been advertised, is it a fact that the CEO has been given the task of restructuring the Legal Services Unit. That question is to the Chief Minister with responsibility for the Public Service

MR SNELL Thank you Mr Speaker and thank you Mrs Ward for the question. Mrs Ward whilst we acknowledge that the 2013 policy hasn't been adopted as yet, the Public Service Bill hasn't been assented to, we will be giving consideration to the areas, the Legal Services Unit. I am aware that the position of Crown Counsel and Deputy Crown Counsel haven't been advertised and we are working our way through this requirement and will be advising in due course

MR NOBBS Thank you Mr Speaker I'm not too sure who to direct this question to so I'll use a shotgun approach. In relation to close circuit TV CCTV used on Norfolk Island for security or similar purposes in public places and elsewhere are there any laws, regulations or policies which govern their use, viewing, retention and storages of images so captured, and any privacy issues for individuals

MR SNELL Sorry Mr Speaker, may I have the question again Mr Nobbs

MR NOBBS In relation to close circuit TV CCTV used on Norfolk Island for security or similar purposes in public places and elsewhere are there any laws, regulations or policies which govern their use, viewing, retention and storages of images so captured, and any privacy issues for individuals

MR SNELL Thank you Mr Speaker and thank you Mr Nobbs for the question. I'm unaware of any Freedom of Information or Privacy regulations pertaining to such matters. I will have to take that question on notice

MR NOBBS Can you also take on notice any laws, regulations or policies of the Commonwealth Government related to CCTV which apply to Norfolk Island

MR SNELL Thank you Mr Speaker and thank you Mr Nobbs for the question, I will also take that on notice

MR SHERIDAN Oh yes, of course, plus income tax. But that won't be a local one, that will be through the Commonwealth so that will be part of the package there, but we're talking about local taxation which municipal rates is

MR NOBBS Are you happy with the current year's budget and do you intend to take a budget review and if so, what is the scheduled date for that review

MR SHERIDAN Thank you Mr Speaker and thank you Mr Nobbs for the question. Yes, there is an intent to review the budget at the half way mark. No timeline has been set for the review. We have been waiting for the new CEO to commence, but now he's here and within a couple of weeks I'll sit down with him and the Deputy CEO and work out a timetable so that it can be reviewed with as much data available as possible so I don't envisage the review to commence until late November so that we have at least a third of the financial year behind us so that we can see how our funds are going. At the moment, just with the call that we have had on the revenue fund and especially through my discretionary vote, no, I don't believe that it's travelling too well at all there's certain things that haven't been introduced that we planned to introduce as part of the budget and I'm talking about the increase to personal imports to 18%, the \$10 passenger movement fee at the airport, that was part of the budget and that hasn't been introduced as yet and won't be for another couple of months. We've budgeted for over \$500,000 income from that \$10 passenger movement charge. We will not get \$500,000 out of that increase this financial year because it hasn't been implemented as yet so we are a bit behind the eight ball on that, and so that will put pressure on the budget review to find the funds for those areas that those dollars were meant to fund. So it will be very difficult

MRS WARD If I may a supplementary, thank you Mr Speaker because I noted that the Minister for Finance did not mention the GBE assessment and so I'm wondering if there's been some delay in that process taking place

MR SHERIDAN Thank you Mr Speaker and thank you Mrs Ward for the question. No, there hasn't been a delay because they were supposed to be on island early in the new financial year. It is planned now that they visit the island for the second part of the divestment process, they have provided some documentation of how the process should work, I believe they should be on island late October so it is still planned with my financial policy statement that went with the budget that the GBE's would be assessed by the start of the next financial year and as whether or not how they are set up, whether they are maintained within the Administration in their own right or they are isolated from the Administration as a corporate enterprise or they are privatized, those decisions are yet to be made but I'm hopeful that by the start of the next financial year those decisions will be well on their way

MR NOBBS Minister for Health. Is it correct that there has been a wage adjustment claim recently settled for employees at the Norfolk Island Hospital and if so, would the Minister please explain under what method these claims were assessed and settled

MS ADAMS Thank you Mr Speaker and thank you Mr Nobbs for the question. Mr Nobbs if you wouldn't mind I will be tabling some determinations in respect of the Hospital in Papers and I'll speak to them at that time if you are comfortable with that

MR NOBBS Another one for the Minister if I may, is it correct that the Norfolk Island Healthcare Scheme has been varied such that benefits to Members and pensioners are not set independently as previously but are set by reference to comparable rates within the Commonwealth Medicare scheme

MS ADAMS Thank you Mr Speaker and thank you Mr Nobbs for the question. I'll give a preliminary answer but I think as a whole I will take it on notice but I can say that the policy for payment of medical expenses for social services recipients are set against the Medicare scheduled fee. I am aware of that but I would rather take that question on notice back to the officers please so that we give you the right information that you are needing

MR NOBBS Could I just ask two other questions of the Minister. If the comparable benefits have been utilised, are the conditions or access to such benefits in our Healthcare Scheme also comparable to the Commonwealth's Medicare scheme, that's the first question and the second one, has the effect of such change if any on Members and pensioners been assessed and have Members and pensioners been disadvantaged in any way

MS ADAMS Thank you Mr Speaker, a fair question and thank you Mr Nobbs, I will take those on notice and come back with a qualified answer thank you

SPEAKER Could I just remind Members for items being on Notice, that it is the responsibility of the asking person to actually place them on the Notice Paper. That's just a reminder. Further questions without notice

MR PORTER Thank you Mr Speaker a question to the Minister for Tourism, with the assent of the amending registration of accommodation legislation can the Minister inform the House what steps are being taken to amend the Regulations to ensure that the two match up and allow the manager responsible for controlling activities in this industry to effectively carry out his duties.

MR SNELL Thank you Mr Speaker and thank you Mr Porter for the question. The Administrative Officer for Tourist Accommodation recently provided me with a paper outlining a number of inconsistencies and discrepancies within the Tourist Accommodation Act and the Tourist Accommodation Regulations and subsequently recommended that the legislation be amended to rectify those inconsistencies. As per the new requirement since Mr Nobbs' motion passed in the House on the 29th May 2013, that is, that an impact statement is to accompany new or amending regulatory proposals the Administrative Officer has commenced a regulatory impact statement for proposed changes to the Tourist Accommodation Act 1984 and Tourist Accommodation Regulations. I look forward to providing the regulatory impact statement to Members when it is complete

MR PORTER A supplementary on that one, could the Minister tell us what steps he intends to take to put in legislation or is it possible, just further Regulations to ensure that minimum standards are achieved in Tourist Accommodation offered for short stay tourists given the change to the legislation

MR SNELL Thank you Mr Speaker and thank you Mr Porter for the question. The Tourist Accommodation Regulations currently require a Tourist Accommodation establishment to meet certain standards in order to be registered and accommodate visitors, however, it is also recognized that the previous requirement for mandatory accreditation provided further assurance that a Tourist Accommodation establishment met various minimum standards, particularly in the area of quality and condition. I do refer to recent statistics derived from visitor feedback have shown that 90% of our visitors rate the island's accommodation from very good to excellent, above shopping to experiences or food and beverage. We obviously do not want the Island's accommodation standard to diminish and I am therefore currently giving consideration to reinstating compulsory accreditation such as the star rating system which also provides for a Tourist Accommodation establishment to qualify for the Australian Government's TQUAL accreditation tick

MR PORTER Thank you Mr Speaker a further question to the Minister for Tourism, could you advise what steps you intend to take to ensure that accommodation offered to long stay visitors, in other words, staying beyond the 21 days but are not about to become residents, that the accommodation is fit for the purpose and does not place the visitor in harms way or create legal or financial risk to the island

MR SNELL Thank you Mr Speaker and thank you Mr Porter for the question. Recent amendments to the Tourist Accommodation Act have defined a visitor as visitors to Norfolk Island who do not intend to stay for more than 21 days, however, recent amendments to the Immigration Act 1980 allows Australian and New Zealand citizens to enter as unrestricted entry permit holders, and they can stay in any rental property. There is a concern that such rental properties are not required to be of any particular standards and the Administration's Tourist Accommodation section will have no authority to ensure that visitors are accommodation in satisfactory conditions when they stay in such rental properties. This issue has also been an ongoing concern on the mainland where Tourism authorities have been powerless when it comes to unregistered holiday houses that provide substandard amenities and conditions. It is actually one of the reasons that the Australian Government introduced the TQUAL accreditation tick. It is a matter of concern and I am currently looking into how to rectify that

MR PORTER Thank you Mr Speaker it was remiss of me, I should have at the beginning of these questions in my haste to ask, I should have mentioned that under the Legislative Assembly Register of Members Interest Act I have to declare an interest as the proprietor of a Tourist Accommodation House. I do have a personal interest but I'm more concerned with the industry's wellbeing than my own personal wellbeing but I'll make that statement

MR NOBBS Thank you Mr Speaker another question for Mr Sheridan if I may. It relates to cruise ships and I have two questions. Are there processes in place which provide advise to you of the precise financial value to the island of each cruise ship which visits and unloads its passengers

MR SHERIDAN Thank you Mr Speaker and thank you Mr Nobbs, no, there's no set system in placed to quantify exactly how much a cruise ship visit would be worth. Those figures would hopefully come through GST returns and you would see a spike. Other than that, no, there is no other methodology in place at this time to quantify exactly how much a cruise ship is worth to Norfolk Island. There's no exit surveys or anything like that in placed at this time

MR NOBBS Would it be appropriate to have such information, proper information not maybes and, my next question was does that process collect all the data, well there's no process but I mean like local agents fees, any purchase from the ship itself which may not be evident. Is it your intention to establish a process

MR SHERIDAN Thank you Mr Speaker and thank you Mr Nobbs, certainly. That information would certainly be beneficial to everybody, not jut the Government but to the community as well. I'll take that on notice and I'll speak to the Public Service in regards to what's possible to identify a drop by these visitors to Norfolk Island from cruise ships

MR NOBBS Thank you Mr Speaker just a couple of questions to the Minister for Health. What is the current hospital debt.

MS ADAMS Thank you Mr Speaker and thank you Mr Nobbs. This is timely because I was going to mention this in Statements so I'll...

MR NOBBS No well....

MS ADAMS No. I'll respond to it now because I'm keeping a very close eye, along with LSU, the Hospital Director, and the officer at the Norfolk Island Hospital, on trying to reduce the Hospital debt and so just yesterday I was provided with these figures, without taking into account any debt that occurred yesterday via transactions at the Hospital, so the total outstanding is \$434,526.92 and this is broken up into over 90 days \$213,229.61; 60 to 90 days \$84,026.13; 30 to 60 days \$128,951.91; and 0 to 30 days but not including yesterday \$8,319.27 giving a total outstanding of \$434,526.92.

MR NOBBS Is it intended that the aim is to reduce the debt and that the reduction of the debt will be progressed and what impact will this have on the selection criteria of the position of Hospital Director currently I understand under recruitment

MS ADAMS Thank you Mr Speaker and thank you Mr Nobbs. I will continue on from my statement which I think will provide you with the answer you are looking for. The hospital is currently working closely with our legal services unit who have undertaken to assist the Hospital on a fee for services arrangement with debt recovery processes. The fee for services arrangement is currently being assessed. This is an ongoing arrangement and I look forward to being able to report to the House at the November sitting that the Hospital debt is reducing and I take the opportunity to thank the Legal Services Unit for stepping in to assist us with this process. As Members are aware the Norfolk Island Government provides to the Hospital a monthly subsidy and a continuation of payment of the subsidy needs to be supported by a reduction in the debt. It is a role under the current engagement of the Hospital Director as it is going forward in the position description for the permanent Hospital Director that the management of the hospital and health services debt recovery is one of the important roles that the Hospital Director undertakes and I thank the acting Hospital Director Mrs Julie Morrison for her assistance with me to date in this regard. I hope that's helpful

MR NOBBS Thank you Mr Speaker I would just like to ask, the next question's been asked of me, but being a former public servant I think this is very important., Does the Norfolk Island Public Service, I think it might be for the Chief Minister this one, does the Norfolk Island Public Service have a Code of Conduct and if so, how does it affect claims that managerial senior staff are running around running the Administration down and its staff in public places

MR SNELL Thank you Mr Speaker and thank you Mr Nobbs for the question. The answer is yes, the Public Service does have a Code of Conduct, they do have certain arrangements for contractual obligations by persons who are employed by the Public Service, senior staff have Codes of Conduct as well. As a matter of running down the Public Service I can't comment on that one, but I'm sure in due course I will take that issue on notice and I'll get back to Mr Nobbs accordingly

MR NOBBS The next one relates to the Government's Annual Reports and we're well behind. I suggest it would be for the Chief Minister but the issue really is, when can we expect to that the Government of Norfolk Island's Annual Reports for the years 2010-2011, 2011-2012 and 2012-2013 and has there been a breach of the relevant legislation which required a time on these particular reports

MR SNELL Thank you Mr Speaker and thank you Mr Nobbs for the question. The Administration Annual Reports rests with the Deputy Chief Executive Officer's responsibility and he has advised me and the Public Service that they should be available for tabling at the next meeting. I do understand Mr Speaker that some of

them are being proof read at this very moment. I would hope to have them available to Members at the next meeting

MR PORTER Thank you Mr Speaker this is to the Minister for Finance, with the recent publicity regarding the inquiry into electricity pricing, in order to allay the fears of the consumers, can the Minister explain the terms of reference of the working group and can the Minister further advise when we can expect to know the outcome of their deliberations and the quantum of these prices

MR SHERIDAN Thank you Mr Speaker and thank you for the question. I'll have to take that on notice because I don't have the terms of reference with me at the moment, but there is a working group within the Administration assessing the price of the electricity but I'm sure that with the installation of PV's that everybody pays their way towards the electricity supply. I'm hopeful that I will have a report from that group within weeks. I'm hopeful that this issue will be settled by the electricity billing period which is late December so I'll just have to take that on notice and I'll get back to you with the Terms of Reference for Mr Porter

MR PORTER Further to that there might be something else that you could add to that, can the Minister assure the electricity consumers and guarantee that the overall amount of the Bill will not change. I understand that the pricing methodology will change but is this going to be a price hike or is it merely reassign how that Bill is calculated across the use and supply of electricity

MR SHERIDAN Thank you Mr Speaker and Mr Porter, no there's certainly no intent that there will be a price increase. After the last shipment of fuel, electricity prices should have gone up three cents but it was decided that we would withhold that until this new formula was in place. It is certainly not the intent that it will cost the consumer any more. It is hopeful that actually the price will be reduced, for customers who say doesn't have solar or those benefits, that the actual benefit that we do get from the solar will flow on to all customers and it is hopeful that with the new pricing structure that actually the price of electricity will be reduced

MRS WARD Thank you Mr Speaker, a supplementary to that if I may. Is it a fact that at a meeting of Members two weeks ago there was discussion on this very issue and that the Minister has already publicly stated that he was waiting for the review to be received in November, and that at that stage he would allow for the subject, topic, issue to be put out for public consultation in a way that there would be plenty of room and time for there to be consumer input into the discussion of the way electricity pricing is administered. I'm talking about the split between the generation and reticulation and maintenance of the infrastructure. I just pose that question to the Minister for Finance

MR SHERIDAN Thank you Mr Deputy Speaker and Mrs Ward for the question. That's the intent that when the report does come to me within weeks and I'm hopeful that they would have had some community consultation already in regards to the breakdown of pricing, but yes, depending on what the report says, exactly how it's broken up, yes it's the intent that the community will have their say so we'll just have to wait and see what the report says, and then we'll work forward with a plan of action

MR BUFFETT Thank you Mr Deputy Speaker a supplementary if I may in respect of this matter, tied up in all of this is the matter of whether people may be able to make further installations of solar power capacity. There is a moratorium on that at this moment. Could the Minister make some commentary about how that's travelling, whether the moratorium may continue, whether there may be a possibility for those who at present don't have the opportunity to install solar power, maybe able to do so into the future

MR SHERIDAN Thank you Mr Deputy Speaker and Mr Buffett for the question, yes you are quite correct, there is a moratorium on the installation of a PV system at this point in time purely because of the over supply that these units generate on a given day and we encounter problems down through the electricity Department. It's certainly the intent that the fault you might say, or the ability to store that excess energy is being assessed also by this group. We've had many approaches by different people with various ways of rectifying the problem. We are hoping that we can come to a solution but then part of the solution will be the funding of it so that will be a big part of it as well. It is hopeful that in the future yes, we will be able to remove this moratorium, encourage residents to install the PV's so that realistically the electricity generated will be the bare minimal just to keep those systems alive you might say, and that the Island will be run on renewable energy or solar energy 24.7. That's the ultimate aim, so yes, the timeframes, I can't give you any timeframes, because that's unknown, but that certainly is the intent that in the future that moratorium will be lifted and people will be able to install PV's

MR BUFFETT Thank you Mr Deputy Speaker a further supplementary if I may and I thank Minister Sheridan for that helpful response. I know he's careful in terms of the time frames, I wonder if he's prepared to give an estimate that maybe by the end of this year there may be some answers and indicators to members in the community who have an interest in this particular area

MR SHERIDAN Thank you Mr Deputy Speaker and Mr Buffett for sure, yes I'm hopeful that by the end of this financial year we will have a definite solution in place. It would most probably be how we fund that solution which would most probably be as big a problem as you say, the excess of electricity will be in time, but there are some people out there and some initial time frames that on initial discussions there could be the opportunity for a public private partnership PPP, in regards to this but those have to be assessed. We may have to go out to the open market to make sure we get value for money etc so these things will take time but it is hopeful that by the end of the financial year that we will have, and if not sooner, a solution that we would like to work towards.

MR BUFFETT Thank you Mr Deputy Speaker on quite a different subject if I may, could I also ask Minister Sheridan if he is able to provide the budgetary figure allocation to the Norfolk Island Tourist Authority, from the budget in the year we are currently in

MR SHERIDAN Thank you Mr Deputy Speaker and thank you Mr Buffett for the question. Luckily I did bring the budget up with me and cost centre 290 somewhere, the figure that was provided to the Tourist Bureau this year was \$1,315,200 for this current financial year

MR BUFFETT Thank you Mr Deputy Speaker this is a question to the Chief Minister I'm aware because you've foreshadowed to us that you will later today let us have a copy of the Strategic Plan in terms of Norfolk Island Tourism, therefore I don't want to necessarily address that at this moment but when you were kind enough to ask the General Manager of the Tourism Authority to come and speak with us and give us a brief yesterday, he was also able to let us have the projected tourism figures for 2013-2014 that is the current year and also the projection for the year 2014-2015. I wonder if you could refresh my memory and also formally advise the House of the two figures

MR SNELL Thank you Mr Deputy Speaker and thank you Mr Buffett for the question. I would have to do that by electronic email. I didn't bring those figures up with me and had I known of the question I would have, but I can't give you those figures at the present time but I will be tabling the final Strategic Plan as envisaged

total seats availability of 40,040 seats. Estimated visitor capacity ex Sydney is 11556, ex Brisbane 11556 also, ex Auckland 6158 giving an estimated total of 27,548 seats. That's based on an 80% average load factor and less 14% for local traffic

MRS WARD Thank you Mr Deputy Speaker an obvious supplementary the question is why is the aspirational goal of the Norfolk Island Government Tourist Bureau 24000 when there is the capacity to carry 40,000 to the island per annum

MR SNELL Thank you Mr Deputy Speaker and thank you Mrs Ward, it's based on the realistic advertising and realistic expectations from the industry. We can set the figure at 40000 but the [possibility of getting that at this time is remote and we of course are doing our best to achieve as much visitation as possible

MR BUFFETT Thank you Mr Deputy Speaker a supplementary if I may and this is a question again to the Chief Minister, I just want to ask the Chief Minister about this to get some clarity. Is he saying that the Government is comfortable in that its aspirational goal which is 24000 is he comfortable with that knowing that it is insufficient to deliver economic viability within the Norfolk Island community

MR SNELL Thank you Mr Deputy Speaker and thank you Mr Buffett I think what has happened in previous times is that expectations have been given that are unachievable and it has caused some grief within the community when those figures haven't eventuated. What we are trying to provide is a more realistic, more honest, a more dedicated form of Strategic Plan that belies our current situation here on the Island and I recommend to everybody to get a copy of this Plan which I will table during Presentation of Papers. It is a responsible Strategic Plan and one which I hope everybody will work to. If we exceed the expectations that are in here, well and good, but I congratulate the General Manager of the Tourist Bureau for being honest and for having the foresight to bring in a realistic Strategic Plan and those who have compiled it with him

DEPUTY SPEAKER Did you have a question Minister Sheridan

MR SHERIDAN Thank you Mr Deputy Speaker I didn't have a question, I was just going to help out Mr Buffett and Mr Snell that the budget figures for arrivals was based upon 27000 persons less 10% local traffic and 24,300 visitors. That's what the budget was worked out on and was thought at the time that, that was a realistic figure. It wasn't a aspirational goal you might say, it was a realistic figure that the budget was based upon

MR BUFFETT I direct this to the Chief Minister thank you Mr Deputy Speaker. I have in front of me here a report, Census and Population and Housing dated the 9th August 2011 and this report provides figures to show that the Norfolk Island population as at that date was 2302, the basic population 1795 with a visitor population of 507, a total as I've mentioned 2302. I ask the Chief Minister whether we have statistical information to keep up to date these records using this report as the base product. In other words, travelling from this date the 9th August 2011, do we have statistical records that are kept that progressively gives us an up to date figure

DEPUTY SPEAKER Chief Minister the report was before your time, do you want to answer it

MR SNELL Thank you Mr Deputy Speaker and thank you Mr Buffett for the question. Statistical information regarding what Mr Buffett has just asked for has been difficult to compile within the last few years. We have had some difficulty in

obtaining that type of statistical information that he has required, in the past few weeks we hope that the matter has been resolved and better stats will be provided in the very near figure

MR BUFFETT Thank you Mr Deputy Speaker and thank you Chief Minister for that response, notwithstanding the difficulties of which he accurately refers, does he have a current figure

MR SNELL I'll have to take that on notice, no I don't have a current figure

MR BUFFETT Could I ask him to provide such a figure and ask him when he might be able to provide such a figure

MR SNELL Thank you Mr Deputy Speaker and thank you Mr Buffett the figure of population at the present time, is that what we're talking about

MR BUFFETT With its various components. If I might just clarify with the Chief Minister we now have changes of course in terms of the various permits and there are various measures there to be measured and I'm just keen to ask the Chief Minister whether he has a mechanism to be able to record those to give us up to date figures as we travel along the path

MR SNELL Thank you Mr Deputy Speaker and thank you Mr Buffett, the answer to that is yes. Yes we do have and had I known about this question before the commencement of this meeting I would have been able to bring up the necessary documentation to clarify exactly. I don't know if my colleagues might have that information with them, but that information is available and it can be distributed accordingly

MS ADAMS If it's helpful to Mr Buffett I'm happy to answer that. Just yesterday there was a meeting between our new CEO, our Deputy CEO, Immigration, IT, the Bureau Manager, myself and Jason Adams to discuss this very issue of statistics because it is a requirement under the Funding Agreement to provide quarterly statistics which taken into account Mr Buffett, the new immigration arrangements. I just want to let you know that we are very much across it at this time. Immigration and IT will be sitting down over the next couple of days because we have a commitment of 21 October to provide the quarterly statistics that include the information that you are requiring. I hope that's helpful

DEPUTY SPEAKER Time for Questions Without Notice has expired
Honourable Members

MR BUFFETT May I request that we have an extension of ten minutes
Mr Deputy Speaker

DEPUTY SPEAKER QUESTION PUT
AGREED

Thank you. Mr Buffett

MR BUFFETT Thank you Mr Deputy Speaker could I ask Minister Adams in a supplementary question if the 21st October is the date that it needs to be provided to the Commonwealth whether she could undertake to provide equally by that date to Members, the figures that she's talking about

MS ADAMS Thank you Mr Deputy Speaker, certainly Mr Buffett. The date of 21 October is the date quarterly statistics of course are July, August, September and so that quarter is now being compiled and it is my understanding that the date of 21 October is the date that we have to provide the quarterly stats and certainly they'll be provided to all members and they will be published. There is a requirement for them to be published on an Administration website and they will be published on info.gov.nf and we are looking at other avenues as to how we can publish more widely. I hope that's helpful

MR BUFFETT Thank you Mr Deputy Speaker I ask the Chief Minister what are the indicators used by Government to measure the increase or recovery or indeed further losses and decreases but to measure how we are travelling in terms of an eventual recovery or a continuation of the present decline. We have talked about tourism figures, I'm not talking about tourism figures now, they've been mentioned, but I ask the Chief Minister whether there are other indicators that he might be able to itemise both for Members and the community that are used for such measuring of how we are travelling economically within Norfolk Island

MR SNELL Thank you Mr Deputy Speaker and thank you Mr Buffett for the question. I'll pass that question over to the Minister for Finance as he may be able to give a more detailed answer in response

MR SHERIDAN Thank you Mr Deputy Speaker and thank you Mr Buffett for the question. Yes, during Papers today I intend to table some economic indicators and these may be used to assess in the longer term how the Norfolk Island economy is faring. Most of these indicators were as a result of the ACIL Tasman Economic Report, saying that we should utilize these areas to assess our performance and within them is the gross revenue for Norfolk Island. There's the pensioner rate or the BAF, the increase on a quarterly basis, of course we've talked about visitor statistics, there's some of those, and also under the GST the number of NBN numbers which have been opened, new NBN numbers and how many have closed down etc, so that in a sense you could say that they're a new business so that's what we are trying to say there and also the other one is our Retail Price Index which I don't have a copy of at this time because there's just a little bit of work that needs to be done on it, but by the next quarter or it will be before then, I will have that data as well so I'll be tabling those in Papers and those are the sort of areas that we are looking at to establish how the economy of Norfolk Island is progressing

MR BUFFETT Thank you Mr Deputy Speaker this I ask of the Chief Minister, at the September meeting, our last meeting, the Chief Minister tabled a Legislative Programme and my question relates to it. It's obvious to us all Mr Deputy Speaker that there are no Notices on today's paper, there are no Orders of the Day on today's paper, there are just questions on Notice. Given this Legislative Programme that was tabled on the 18th of last month and looking at it, there are no dates into the figure beyond the 17th July 2013 that I can see mentioned. Can I ask the Chief Minister does that mean given today's programme with nothing on it, this Legislative Programme with no dates upon it, does that mean that the Government's Legislative Programme is really in disarray

MR SNELL Thank you Mr Deputy Speaker and Mr Buffett for the question. Certainly the Legislative Programme is not in disarray. We have certain timelines and as Mr Buffett would be well aware there have been changes within our Administrative system here on the island with the new CEO just coming on board and the Crown Counsel taking over the position as Acting CEO for the period of five months, so there have been some delays with the introduction of certain legislation but they will be addressed in due course

DEPUTY SPEAKER Minister Adams do you want to add to that

MS ADAMS I'm comfortable to if Mr Buffett is comfortable

MR BUFFETT My question at this moment is to the Chief Minister. I thank the Chief Minister for his response. He has mentioned that there have been changes in timelines and I accept that obviously in a programme such as this there are changes in timelines, but I've endeavored to point out and I ask the Chief Minister whether there are any dates. Give me one. Any dates. In terms of this programme that he can provide to be helpful. I cannot see one Mr Deputy Speaker and that's why I'm really asking the question

MR SNELL Thank you Mr Deputy Speaker and thank you Mr Buffett. Regulatory impact statements are necessary for the introduction of any new legislation such as referred to and they are all under consideration at the moment

DEPUTY SPEAKER You can blame me Mr Buffett for that

MR BUFFETT I thank the Chief Minister for his response. Can I ask him now whether he is able to provide us with the programme and what timeframes he might put in terms of providing such a programme which might have some realistic dates upon it

MR SNELL Thank you Mr Deputy Speaker no I can't give you that assurance at the moment but we will be working on it and I'll advise the House in due course

DEPUTY SPEAKER Any further questions without notice Honourable Members. Then we move to Answers to Questions on Notice

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Mrs Ward under Question on Notice No 24 has asked the Minister for Cultural Heritage and Community Services a question. Do you have a response to that Minister

MS ADAMS Thank you Mr Deputy Speaker yes. This question was stood over from the September sitting. Question on Notice **No 24** from Mrs Ward asks is it a fact that the Norfolk Island Central School is undergoing a reform process and if so; will the Minister provide the following. I'm going to pause there and respond to the initial part of Mrs Ward's question that being, is it a fact that the Norfolk Island Central School is undergoing a reform process. I will give a partial response here and then continue in my response to part 2 of the question. Firstly I can advise that we are currently setting up a review working group, and this isn't new to the House, I have mentioned this in passing before, and that working group is to enquire into, report and make recommendations in relation to the provision of Education in Norfolk Island and Mrs Ward, and I thank her, will head up and chair that review team as my nominee. Terms of reference for the review are almost settled and the review gets underway by the end of this month. For the record the review team will comprise the following persons in this community and I take the opportunity to offer them my sincere thanks for taking on this task. Mrs Melissa Ward, MLA, who is the Chair, Executive Officer and my nominee of the review group, Mrs Michelle Nicholson, who is the Principal and New South Wales Department of Education and Communities representative, Mrs Rowan Evans, a member of the P&C, Ms Wendy Morrice, who runs the Banyan Park Play Centre, Mrs Dominic Kelly, who undertakes home schooling, Mrs Christina McRitchie, who runs the Minischool, Mr Doug Clark who is representative of NISEDU, Ms Trish Magri, Former teacher at the Norfolk Island Central School with particular emphasis on TAFE and Mrs Judith Davidson, former Head Teacher Secondary. It would not be unreasonable to expect that recommendations for reform may well flow from the review which will be very comprehensive. The matter of current reform at NICS will be dealt with in my response to part 4 of the question. Mrs Ward goes on to ask for an outline of the Norfolk Island

Government's education policy including the basis for any proposed changes. The Education Act 1931 and the Education Regulations set the statutory framework for the establishment and maintenance of schools in Norfolk Island and provides that all teachers at public schools shall be subject to the Act and the regulations and to any instructions issued by the Administrator under this Act. The Administrator may delegate all or any of his powers and functions under the Act and I as Minister with portfolio responsibility for education currently hold a delegation from the Administrator under the Act. In addition to the legislation there are two memoranda of understanding currently in place. The 1988 Memorandum of Understanding on educational matters between the Commonwealth of Australia and Norfolk Island Government and the 2008 Memorandum of Understanding between the New South Wales Department of Education and Training, and the Norfolk Island Government on Teacher Staffing of Norfolk Island Central School. The 1988 MoU sets the benchmark for Norfolk's education policy in that it has as its objectives the following 1. Public education on the Island shall have regard to both Australian and Norfolk Island objectives in education, including the objectives of special purpose programmes, and shall ensure the maintenance of educational standards comparable with those on the Australian mainland; and 2. Education on the Island will be structured to qualify students for a recognised Australian accreditation. The 1988 MoU also provides that education programmes within Norfolk Island shall be based on the curriculum guidelines that apply in New South Wales and shall have regard to the Island's history, culture, traditions, geography and economy. For the record Honourable Members I table the Australian Curriculum Information sheet titled "**A world-class curriculum for the 21st Century**" and I also table the "**Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians**" which was made by all Australian Education Ministers in 2008 which of course includes New South Wales. For us to align with the New South Wales curriculum and the need for our students to qualify for a recognised Australian accreditation it follows that the aspirational goals contained in the Melbourne Declaration are equally valid as Norfolk Island's educational goals. Furthermore, the Roadmap acknowledges the need for both governments to work together to consider ways to provide facilities and opportunities to provide excellent education outcomes on the Island for future employment; and to investigate the expansion of educational opportunities for tertiary and vocational education. The review of education to which I have just referred and which Mrs Ward will be taking on board on our behalf will no doubt address these aspirational goals which I am confident all my Assembly colleagues equally support. Mrs Ward further asks in this question for a list of stakeholders who were consulted prior to the reform being implemented and because there's some doubt around what is being meant by the use of the word reform I have confined my response to this, to the recent Head Teacher changes at the school, so I'm hoping that I'm giving you the right answer here on this one. If this part of the question is referring to the decision taken earlier this year in respect of the two new Head Teacher positions I can advise that this was done in consultation between the senior executive of the School, the New South Wales Education Department School Education Director, the New South Wales Education Department Director of Staffing, myself as Minister with responsibility for education, and by invitation former Minister for Education in the 13th Assembly, the Hon David Buffett MLA. In addition there has been opportunity offered on several occasions for community participation in planning sessions on Staff Development Days and parents and community members have been given the opportunity during the year to suggest immediate and future changes as have students through the Student Representative Council. It is my understanding that the curriculum change initiatives that all NICS staff has been involved in since the first week of February 2013 are consistent and concurrent with change initiatives that have been mandated across all Australian schools. The New Australian Curriculum, referred to as the National Curriculum, will be implemented in 2014 for year 7 and 9 in the secondary area of English, Mathematics, Science and Technology and History. All executive and teaching staff are aware of and have responded to mandatory curriculum reform for 2014. Appropriate Professional Development has been provided it is my understanding, for all staff. The third part of the question asks for the number of school staffing positions which will be affected as a result of change. Mr Speaker I am advised that there are only two positions that will have a change of title and responsibility for the commencement of

the 2014 School year. There will be a new Head Teacher Secondary Studies and a new head Teacher Learning and Teaching; these positions replace the current Head Teacher English and Head Teacher Mathematics and the change is in line with new curriculum philosophy. And finally part 4 of the question asks for the cost implication of any change? I am advised that there is no change to teacher numbers or staffing allocation to NICS for 2014 and therefore no cost implications to the change. I hope that's helpful

MR SHERIDAN Thank you Mr Speaker, Question **No 31** reads will the Minister inform the House how much the Norfolk Island Government contributes to local charities, services and sporting clubs in any given year by way of duty exemptions tabled in this House? 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 \$200.00. Section 2B(5) of the Act provides that where the Minister has exercised this power he shall "lay a copy of the exemption on the Table of the Legislative Assembly". In addition, applications for exemption from duty above the sum of \$200 are brought to this House by Motion recommending to the Administrator that he approve exemptions under subsection 2B(4) of the Customs Act 2013. Mr Speaker the amount of duty exemptions tabled for the Financial Year July 2012 to June 2013 are:

St John Ambulance – first aid manuals and kits, medical and training equipment	\$26.62, \$37.51, \$12.33, \$61.20, \$77.88, \$63,01 = \$278.55
Netball Association - trophies	\$79.29
Norfolk Assists those in Need	\$211.08, \$103.26 = \$314.34
Association of Norfolk Island Archers – archery equipment	\$86.07
Cheryl Tennis Club – veterans' tennis trophies	\$126.43
Norfolk Island Volunteer Rescue Squad – training and rescue material	\$2,621.40
Norfolk Island Fishing Association – safety equipment	\$459.12

Therefore, total sum provided to these community groups for the financial year 2012/2013 was \$3,965.20. Thank you, Mr Speaker

MS ADAMS Thank you Mr Speaker yes. Question on Notice **No 32** is from Mrs Ward who has asked the following question. It is in three parts and I will respond seriatim. 1. Is it not a fact that a recent change in the way an application fee is applied at an administrative level when making an application for a declaration of residency under the *Immigration Act 1980*, which includes a spouse and/dependent children, has increased from \$125.00 irrespective of the number of persons included in the application, to \$125.00 per person included in the application. In response, subsection 30(1) of the *Immigration Act 1980* permits an applicant to include their spouse and children under 18 in their application for a declaration of residency. Under subsection 30(2) persons included in an application for a declaration of residency are to be regarded as if they had made a separate application. Similar provisions are set out in sections 13(3) and (4) regarding applications for permits. The fee for an application for a declaration of residency is set at item 8 of Schedule 2 of the *Immigration Regulations 1984* at 5 fee units. Unlike fees regarding applications for TEPs there is no reduced fee for other persons included in the application. Section 89 of the Act expressly prohibits an application being dealt with until the applicable fee has been paid. The relevant fact in this regard therefore is that previous administrative practice was contrary to the Act and Regulations. Part 2. Is it not a fact that the change has resulted in an increase to the fees payable and therefore the Minister's advice to the House on the 16th of September that there has been "no changes to the fees" was misleading. The fact is that no fee has been changed. The Act and Regulations are now being applied at their prescribed amount. 3. Is it not a fact that such an increase conflicts with the General conditions,

point 9 of the 2013-14 funding agreement which says "Norfolk Island will not develop policies or procedures that will disadvantage or impede Australian citizens wishing to reside on Norfolk Island?" Again I respond, the fact is that no fee has been increased. No new policy or procedure has been introduced save that the Act and Regulations are now being applied at their prescribed amount. Thank you Mr Speaker I hope that's helpful

MS ADAMS Thank you Mr Speaker. Question on Notice **No 33** from Mrs Ward, will the Minister advice the House in detail of the factors which were taken into account when determining that a new interpretation and application of the immigration law was necessary for residency applications and explain how this change has been applied without amendment of the empowering Regulations? In response I advise, as indicated in response to the earlier question, that is Question No 32, previous administrative practice was contrary to the Act and Regulations. A decision was made that the clear and unambiguous provisions of the Act and Regulations should be applied. Thank you Mr Speaker

MRS WARD A supplementary if I may thank you Mr Speaker. Is it a fact that neither the Immigration Department nor the Legal Services Unit have raised this supposed misinterpretation in the time of the 18 month Immigration Review and all the time that the Minister for Immigration has sat in that role of responsibility

MS ADAMS I'm unable to answer that question Mr Speaker simply because I wasn't a party to the Immigration Review which took place in the 13th Legislative Assembly if that's what we're referring to

MRS WARD Thank you Mr Speaker is it a fact then that the previous application of the law has stood for thirty years, and has changed now after thirty years, almost thirty years. Is it a fact

MS ADAMS I think I'll just repeat the response that I have given to the question already. The fact is that no fee has been changed. The Act and Regulations are now being applied at their prescribed amount. There has been no fee increase. There is no new policy or procedure in place save that the Act and Regulations are now being applied at their prescribed amount. I can't speak for the past. I cannot speak for the past I can only speak for the present and the advice which I have been given

MRS WARD Thank you Mr Speaker a supplementary if I may. Is it not a fact that at a meeting of Members on the 8th October that Members were advised that a June 3 document was factored in and community concerns were factored in or taken into account when this new interpretation of the law was applied administratively

MS ADAMS I'm not quite certain what Mrs Ward is asking me here

MRS WARD If I may Mr Speaker I'm referring to a document that was brought to an MLA's meeting and agenda which was to do with Immigration Regulations. It was the setting of a fee for residency by citizenship and its dated 3 June 2013

MS ADAMS If Mrs Ward could make that available to me. Is this the one that is currently on the immigration website because that one certainly has fees as they are being applied today. Is that what we're talking about. Without it in front of me I can't answer your question

MRS WARD It's an administrative working document. Mr Speaker may I move that the Minister's answer be noted

SPEAKER No. Not at this moment. If you wish to raise queries and supplementaries I am happy to give you the call

MRS WARD May I ask a supplementary to the Chief Minister on this question.

SPEAKER I just remind in terms of my response there. This is question time. You do have the opportunity to agenda items in terms of making a notice of motion at a subsequent time but this is question time. Mrs Ward, you have the call to the Chief Minister

MRS WARD Thank you Mr Speaker the question is, would the Chief Minister be prepared or will the Chief Minister take the decision that was made by his Minister back to Cabinet to be reassessed because the outcome has been an increase in almost 200% in the way that the fees are applied for an application of residency by citizenship and that it was done without any debate, any conversation, it was not done in an open and transparent way and whether he would seek independent legal opinion on this matter

MR SNELL Thank you Mr Speaker and thank you Mr Ward for the question. I see no problem with bringing this matter to Cabinet. To the House. There are implications in what Mrs Ward is saying, that she has doubt as to the legality of the information that has been given to mi Adams in regard to this matter and we are an open and transparent Government, if there is any doubt whatsoever, we shall certainly respond accordingly and as such it will be raised

SPEAKER That concludes Answers to Questions on notice Honourable Members. We move on to Presentation of Paper. Are there any Papers for presentation this morning

PRESENTATION OF PAPERS

MS ADAMS Thank you Mr Speaker. **Public Sector Remuneration Tribunal – Determination NIHE No 1 of 2013.** Mr Speaker in accordance with section 13(4)(b) of the Public Sector Remuneration Tribunal Act 1992 I table the following: 1. A Determination by consent expressed in Terms of Settlement made by the Tribunal on 19 September 2013 under sections 8(1)(a) and (b) and 10(1) of the Public Sector Remuneration Tribunal Act 1992 in respect of the application for an increase in the remuneration rate for the non-contracted staff of the Norfolk Island Hospital Enterprise; and 2. A Determination by consent expressed in Terms of Settlement made by the Tribunal on 19 September 2013 under sections 8(1)(a) and (b) and section 10(1) of the Public Sector Remuneration Tribunal Act 1992 in respect of the application for an increase in the remuneration rate for the domestic staff of the Norfolk Island Hospital Enterprise. I so table the Determinations made by the Hon Kevin Lindgram AM QC who is a member of the Tribunal

MR SNELL Thank you Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, I table the **Norfolk Island Tourism Strategic Plan 2013 – 2023.** Mr Speaker, copies were provided to Members on Tuesday by the General Manager of the Norfolk Island Government Tourist Bureau. The final signed copy I am tabling today has minor typographical corrections to the copy circulated to Members yesterday. The development of this document has occurred over the past 18 months and has included many opportunities for community input and comment and is now finalised. This document you could say, is now delivered in two parts: 1. The first provides for 10 year Strategic elements providing guiding principles, strategic themes and direction for growth, development and investment. 2. The second part is a 2 year schedule including action plans from the Norfolk Island Government Tourist Bureau and a graph to highlight other organisations, departments & bodies that play major roles in the success of the Tourism industry, encouraging them to submit their own two year action plans over the life of the document. The Norfolk Island Government Tourist Bureau Advisory Board will

play a major leadership role in both the communication and evaluation of the Strategic Plan. The Strategic section of the Plan will go through a review process every 2 years and the Action Schedules every year. This document forms the commitment of the Norfolk Island Government to Tourism. It is now for all other stakeholders to include their own commitment to the Plan and action plans as this will ensure a true Government, Industry partnership were we are all working together, understanding our responsibilities and monitoring our outcomes. Mr Speaker, I would like to sincerely thank the General Manager of the NI Government Tourist Bureau, for his hard work and dedication in preparing this document. I would also like to acknowledge the work the previous Minister for Tourism, Mr Andre' Nobbs, undertook also. I would also like to thank the Advisory Board for the role they have played and the role they will continue to play. Mr Speaker, as Members were only given the document yesterday, I would like to foreshadow that at the appropriate time, if the paper is noted, I would like to move that debate be adjourned and made an order of the day for a subsequent day of sitting to allow members time to review the final document and have meaningful debate in the House. Thank you Mr Speaker.

MR SHERIDAN Thank you Mr Speaker **GST Quarterly Report July-September 2013**. In accordance with section 129 of the Goods and Services Tax Act 2007 I am required to report on the operations of the Act during July to September for the operations of the Act in the quarterly periods. I also just table the GST Quarterly Report for the July September quarter 2013

MR SHERIDAN Thank you Mr Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to table some **Quarterly Economic Indicators July-September 2013** for the Island and these comprise Economic Indicators of gross Island revenue and these are a indicative measure of the Norfolk Island economy. The gross Island revenue is based on the total of gross revenue declared by NBN holders in their monthly GST returns. I also would like to table as I mentioned previously briefly, the Benefit Adjustment Factor July 2013, some visitor statistics for the financial year and the Visitor Statistics for the September quarter and also the NBN numbers that have been created for the quarter, going back some 18 months there and it is interesting to note that at the end of the September quarter there have been fourteen new NBN numbers created and in June the period before, some thirteen new NBN numbers quoted. If I could just make a quick comment on the gross revenue of the Island. Since the financial year and this is indicated in the paperwork that I'm tabling, that the gross revenue of the Island has fallen from \$147m in the financial year 2010-11 down to \$106m in the financial year 2012-13 or a drop of 28%. In the wholesale and the retail trade, that's fallen by 11% from just over \$55m in that same period down to \$49m and in the accommodation and food services sectors its fallen some 17% going from \$19.5m down to something just under \$16.5m. These indicators over a period of time as a stand alone quarterly report, won't do much but over a period of time they will be very helpful to me, to the Norfolk Island Government and to the community in assessing exactly how the Norfolk Island economy is standing up to the pressures of the outside world. As I said in two years there is an overall downfall of 28%, and that's terrible. It hurts the community and I think this is demonstrated by the sectors in the Burnt Pine area where we some empty shops, we see some Island families leaving the Island and we're trying to recover but it will be a long term recovery process and this is where we do need that assistance from the Commonwealth which we initiated some three years ago as the Roadmap and that is what's planned, with the assistance of the Commonwealth we can get Norfolk Island back on to a financially sustainable platform where we will be able to fund most of these things ourselves and we'll have a private sector that performs as it did in the past and everybody within the community can go home with a profit at the end of the day and not spending some of their own dollars, so I would just like to table those indicators and I will be tabling those on a quarterly basis so that in the future we'll be able to map exactly how the economy is tracking. Thank you Mr Speaker

MR SPEAKER Thank you. Any further Papers Honourable Members. No. We move to Statements of an official nature, are there any statements this morning

STATEMENTS

MR WARD Thank you Mr Speaker. **Reconstruction of Headstone Bridge** Mr Speaker I would like to take this opportunity to advise that all materials have been sourced for the reconstruction of Headstone bridge. The contractors are this week making initial preparations and expect to commence on site early next week.

MR WARD Thank you Mr Speaker. I am also pleased to advise that the roads crew have conducted a significant rework of the **Bumbora Road** within the Bumbora Reserve. The forestry crew have also had a role in this, co-ordinating with the roads crew, they have cleared a significant area of woody weeds from the hillside above the road which improves the amenity, outlook and health of this prime coastal Reserve.

MS ADAMS Thank you Mr Speaker, **Mental Health Week.** Honourable Members last week I was privileged as Minister with responsibility for health on Norfolk Island to be invited to be a part of the Mental Health Week activities which took place in the week commencing 5 October 2013. The aim of Mental Health Week is to help raise awareness of mental health; to promote social and emotional wellbeing to the community, encourage people to maximise their health potential, enhance the coping capacity of communities, families and individuals and to increase mental health recovery. The week's activities included a visit by psychiatrist Dr Matthew Large who came to us from the South East Sydney Local Health District where he is currently Medical Superintendent of Mental Health Services at the Prince of Wales Hospital Sydney and Clinical Senior Lecturer at the School of Psychiatry at NSW University. Dr Large was joined by Mr Neville Bradbury who is the Field supervisor for GROW in NSW and the ACT and I am confident that all those who had the opportunity throughout the week to listen to the stirring messages from both Dr Large and Neville Bradbury were moved by what they heard. I would like to acknowledge into the Assembly's records the efforts of the Norfolk Island Mental Health Support Group – a small band of locals who are working to help people in this community – a group that was responsible for organising the week's activities and for bringing Dr Large and Neville Bradbury to the Island. In conclusion Mr Speaker I would particularly like to mention our year 12 students who on their last day of school did a fundraiser on the roundabout in Burnt Pine and raised a significant sum of money which helped to defray the costs of bringing Dr Large to Norfolk Island. The recent contribution to the Mental Health Support Group from the Commonwealth Government to assist with Dr Large's visit is also acknowledged with thanks. Thank you Mr Speaker

MR SNELL Thank you Mr Speaker, Members and the community are aware that **Mr Jon Gibbons** commenced as **Chief Executive Officer** of the Administration of Norfolk Island on Wednesday the 9th October 2013 and I take this opportunity to welcome him and Mrs Jeanette Gibbons. Mr Speaker at the last sitting when the formal motion to recommend the appointment of Mr Gibbons was passed, some of my colleagues took the opportunity to extend their tanks to Mr Wayne Richards for his role as Acting Chief Executive Officer. I again take this opportunity on behalf of the Norfolk Island Government to thank Mr Wayne Richards who was appointed to act as Chief Executive Officer at extremely short notice and in demanding circumstances. Wayne has over the past five months provided the Norfolk Island Government with carefully considered and professionally competent policy advice and options and opinions on matters across the full spectrum of Norfolk Island's governance. As stated previously in the House and in my Media Release, Mr Jon Gibbons brings to Norfolk Island significant experience in many areas including corporate governance, corporate

and operational planning, financial management, policy formulation, long term planning, implementation and evaluation including the areas of finance, records management and procurement. Mr Gibbons' experience over 26 years in Government will help Norfolk Island continue the process of reform and we look forward to working with him. Thank you Mr Speaker

MR SNELL Thank you Mr Speaker, the Norfolk Island Government and of course Members of the Legislative Assembly acknowledge the concerns raised by the Norfolk Island community and our friends in Australia and New Zealand and indeed around the world, pertaining to various articles printed in Australian newspapers over the last weekend. The Norfolk Island Government take these issues seriously and we will be seeking advice as to how best to respond whether it be by counter press release or radio interview. Several options are available to us, however, these press releases are not new and are under the circumstances we find ourselves in, I guess we can expect these ill informed and poorly researched views from time to time. Norfolk Island has an excellent reputation of assisting those in need and we have demonstrated that by donating thousands upon thousands of dollars and kind to natural disasters within Australia and the Pacific over many decades. Norfolk Island contributed per capita of population the largest number of men and women to world conflicts in response to requests by our super power partners. We have never shirked away from our responsibilities as a caring and generous community and may this tradition continue forevermore. Thank you Mr Speaker

MR SHERIDAN Thank you Mr Speaker. **Wholesale fuel pricing.** I would like to make this statement to defuse a lot of inaccurate information that has flowed from the community since the increase to the price of wholesale fuel back on the 23rd September. The reason for the increase was as stated in my press release of 19th September 2013, and this was due to the changes in the US dollar exchange rate. This rate has seen the AUD rise against the USD over the past few years to a high of \$1.07 in Mar 2012 but has slide since then to be at \$0.89 in Aug 2013. During this period the price of a barrel of oil reached a high of \$139 in June 2008, and reduced to \$118 per barrel in March 2012, in August 2013 the price per barrel was \$122. The wholesale price of fuel has been relatively stable since March 2012 after the delivery of fuel subsequent to the fuel shortage of which was experienced by the community of which necessitated delivery of fuel in 205 litre drums. The delivery price of ULP in April 2013 was the same as the price in March 2012. The September 2013 delivery cost per litre was \$0.1173 higher, an increase of 9% over the last shipment. The actual purchase price between the April 13 and the September 13 actually fell slightly (\$0.0096 per litre) but the fall in the Australian dollar over this period from \$1.0202 to \$0.9140, a fall of 9.6%, has resulted in the price increase after conversion into AUD. If this increase was to be absorbed by Norfolk Energy there would be a shortfall of approx. \$420,000 in a 12 month period, a shortfall of which cannot be absorbed by the Enterprise. The wholesale price of \$2.17 per litre is based upon the principle of Competitive Neutrality of which includes the Waste Management Levy of \$0.03 per litre, a fuel levy of \$0.20 per litre of which raises an approx. amount over a financial year of \$320,000 which in each yearly budget is allocated to the Roads department which received in the FY13/14 budget \$497,000 to complete their tasks. The other amounts include \$0.23 for GST, with the other \$0.28 being made up from the distribution costs and overheads. The actual profit for Norfolk Energy over a FY is approx. \$50,000 or \$0.014 per litre. Thank you Mr Speaker

MR NOBBS Mr Speaker could I move that the Statement be noted

SPEAKER The question is that the Statement be noted. Mr Nobbs

MR NOBBS Thank you Mr Speaker and thank you Mr Sheridan for that. Could I have a copy of it after you've finished. I asked Minister Sheridan if he could make a statement on it because I had had enquiries by people who thought that I was

Chairman of the Public Accounts committee, and I just want to say that I'm not Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee. I'm non it and there are procedures for an enquiry to be undertaken which have not occurred and at this stage I haven't pressed for it because Minister Sheridan was making his statement. I'll get the Statement if anybody wants to read it, just let me know, and at this stage I hope that you'll thank the Minister for his statement and I hope this appeases some of the concerns in the community

MR SHERIDAN Thank you Mr Speaker, if I might just add to that, the contract for the fuel delivery expires late next year. It is the intent that the request for tender documentation, I have requested it to be ready by the end of this month,. There is a process, the Legal Services Unit is working on at this point in time, it will need to be passed through the Commonwealth for their comment prior, so whether or not it meets that deadline it needs to be seen, but that is my intent and that should give all interested parties some twelve months to see whether or not they would like to put in a tender for the supply of fuel which the Norfolk Island community uses so that's the process going on for the delivery of fuel into Norfolk Island

MRS WARD Thank you Mr Speaker, just because there will be people listening to this today and if I could just seek one point of clarity from the Minister, the Minister has said that Norfolk Energy has a profit of \$50,000 per year, has depreciation or the cost of maintaining the Ball Bay fuel tanks been factored in or does maintaining those fuel tanks need to come out of that \$50,000 profit

MR SHERIDAN Thank you Mr Speaker and Mrs Ward for the question, no, that \$50,000 profit will be after the daily maintenance of the depot, the daily maintenance of the depot is factored into it, but the replacement of the infrastructure, the depreciation would not be. That's purely on a straight cash basis

MR PORTER Thank you Mr Speaker if I could ask the Minister for Finance a question relating to his statement about going to tender, would it be the Minister's intention to have Norfolk Energy tender for this work

MR SHERIDAN Thank you Mr Speaker and Mr Porter for the supplementary, I can't see any reason why Norfolk Energy cannot place a tender in for the supply of the fuel. It would be a discussion that I'll be having with the new CEO to see exactly how we wish to see this eventuate. The whole issue of supply of fuel is whether or not Norfolk Energy gets out of the game altogether, whether or not it wants to get itself in deeper, that's a discussion that we need to have, but the outcomes will be for the best benefit of the community

SPEAKER Thank you. Further debate Honourable Members?
Then I put the question

QUESTION PUT
AGREED

That Statement is noted

MR WARD Thank you Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker on the 17th July this year I announced in this house that a **Road Safety Forum** would be held to seek public input into a full review of road safety issues on this island. The public forum will be held on Wednesday, 23 October 2013 at Rawson Hall between 5.00 and 6.30 pm to discuss road safety issues on the island and to seek community input as to what measures, if any, are considered necessary to adopt or legislate for, to make our roads safer for all road users. This initiative has been put forward by the Road Safety Committee for a community based forum to actively seek input from the public. I urge as many people as possible to attend and be involved. The views of the community are

critical to the success of any road safety program. Matters to be addressed at the meeting will include the provision of a driver education program at the school; review of the current restrictions of the 'L' and 'P' plate driver's licences; drink driving issues, enforcement of road rules and motor vehicle registration and licensing. This forum is an opportunity to raise awareness of the issues and work through them to find solutions that are acceptable and workable in the Norfolk Island context. The forum will present input from medical officers, ambulance, police and rescue services and actively seeks input from all who have road safety concerns or ideas they wish to have considered. Many in the community may be unaware of the Road Safety Committee. The Committee is group of voluntary local members who give freely of their time to bring a range of expertise and experience together to guide the enhancement of safe road use for all road users. As well as the regular members of the Committee, considerable assistance has been freely given by Mr Ian Faulks who is a nationally recognised expert in road safety matters. I take this opportunity thank Mr Faulks and the registrar Mr Allen Bataille, the emergency services personnel and all who have been working on this project and to those who have agreed to conduct the forum. Thank you Mr Speaker

MS ADAMS Thank you Mr Speaker. **KAVHA.** At the sitting of the House on 18 September 2013 I was asked the following question: "What are the current site management arrangements for KAVHA with the recent departure of the Site Manager and when will the role be advertised to be filled". In my response I confirmed that the Commonwealth Site Manager had departed and the process moving forward is yet to be determined. Since then I have revisited the Statement I made to the House on 10 April 2013 upon taking up the ministerial responsibility for KAVHA in the 14th Assembly; a statement that was copied to Minister King when she visited the Island earlier this year and also tabled at the meeting of the KAVHA Board on 25 July 2013. For the record I reaffirm the points made in my statement last April. At that time I referred to the March 2011 Road Map which speaks of preserving and enhancing the environment and heritage attributes of the Island including the Kingston and Arthur's Vale Historic Area and the other natural areas of Norfolk Island and recognizing their contribution to the economy and community; and the requirement under the Road Map in 2011-2012 to implement an appropriate structure for the operation of the Kingston and Arthur's Vale Historic Area. I also referred to the 22 September 2011 Funding Agreement between the Commonwealth of Australia and the Norfolk Island Administration, which requires Norfolk Island to continue to support the need for revised management arrangements for the world heritage Kingston and Arthur's Vale Historic Area, and to work cooperatively, collaboratively and in good faith with the Department to:

- a. finalise the preferred model of management by the next meeting of the Management Board; and
- b. implement the new governance model by 30 June 2012.

Furthermore the June 2013 Funding Agreement provides that Norfolk Island must ensure the contributions to the Kingston and Arthur's Vale Historic area remains at \$300,000 in the 2013-14 financial year. In my statement in April 2013 I advised I am committed to the stated intention in the Road map to strengthen the Island's unique heritage; an integral part of which is the Kingston and Arthur's Vale Historic Area. I again confirm my ongoing commitment to that goal and to this end give an undertaking to have dialogue as soon as possible with my ministerial counterpart in the Commonwealth Government on the progression of the reforms relevant to KAVHA in the Road map to ensure that our commitment to raise the profile of this prestigious World Heritage Listed site is achieved in a timely manner.

MS ADAMS Thank you Mr Speaker. **Centenary of Norfolk Island being placed under the authority of the Commonwealth of Australia.** By an Order in Council dated the 30th day of March, 1914, His Majesty King George V, after reciting that the Parliament had passed an Act No. 15 of 1913, entitled "An Act to provide for the acceptance of Norfolk Island as a territory under the authority of the Commonwealth, and for the government thereof" and that it was expedient that the said Order in Council of 18th of October, 1900, should be revoked and that Norfolk Island should be placed under the authority of the Commonwealth of Australia, was pleased to revoke the said

Order in Council of 18th of October, 1900, and to order that Norfolk Island be placed under the authority of the Commonwealth of Australia” “the said Order in Council was published in the *Gazette* on 17 June 1914, and took effect from 1 July 1914, being the date of commencement of the *Norfolk Island Act 1913*’. Under that Act Norfolk Island was declared to be accepted as a Territory under the authority of the Commonwealth of Australia. Honourable Members 1 July 2014 will mark the Centenary of the commencement of the *Norfolk Island Act 1913* and the Centenary of Norfolk Island being accepted as a Territory under the authority of the Commonwealth of Australia. At the very least in my view this significant milestone warrants recognition by the Commonwealth of Australia Government, the British Government which handed Norfolk Island over to the Commonwealth of Australia, the New South Wales Government and the Norfolk Island Government; and the Norfolk Island Government needs to enter into dialogue with the Commonwealth of Australia as a matter of some urgency as to how this prestigious Centenary should be acknowledged in a truly meaningful way. As Minister for Cultural Heritage and Community Services including health, social welfare, education, immigration and KAVHA to mention but a few of my portfolio responsibilities, I support the commencement of this dialogue as quickly as possible on Norfolk Island at both government and community level and suggest the first question we need to ask ourselves is this. What does this Centenary mean to us on Norfolk Island? Can it be the milestone from which Norfolk Island is launched into a future that is financially, economically, environmentally, politically and socially sustainable – Australia’s showpiece to the world, its hub in the Pacific ; its bridge to the Pacific and its Jewel in the Crown. If our answer to this question is yes, then there is much to be done in the next 8 months and it cannot be achieved in isolation of the Government of the Commonwealth of Australia. In the press release on 5 September 2013 the then Coalition spokesman on Norfolk Island the Hon Michael Keenan MP advised that an Abbott Government would revive the stalled negotiations on the future of the island to provide certainty to the Island population within 18 months of the election of a new government. When making this statement it is more than probable that the Centenary which cemented Norfolk Island’s relationship with the Commonwealth of Australia in 1914 was not high on the Coalition’s radar and neither was it high on ours. In fact it is thanks to Mr Kerry Tilson, Publications Consultant Philatelic-Retail Services of Australia Post writing on 2 October 2013 to our Philatelic Bureau inquiring whether Norfolk Island planned a stamp issue to celebrate the Centenary that commemoration of the Centenary has come under discussion. Members of the Assembly this week have agreed that commemorating the Centenary is important and that to commence the process the Chief Minister should initiate prompt discussion with the Commonwealth of Australia on what celebrations they are planning and at the same time seek input from members of the Norfolk Island community as to how they see this significant milestone can be commemorated in a meaningful way. May robust discussion commence Mr Speaker

SPEAKER
move on

That concludes Statements Honourable Members. We

MESSAGE FROM THE OFFICE OF THE ADMINISTRATOR

Message No 8 from the Office of the Administrator, advising that on 8 October 2013 acting pursuant to section 21 of the *Norfolk Island Act 1979*, I referred the following proposed law for instructions of the Commonwealth Minister: **Customs (Amendment) Bill 2013** and this Message was dated the 8th October 2013 and signed Neil Pope. Administrator.

REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES

Are there any Reports of Standing Committees? Mr Nobbs

MR NOBBS Thank you Mr Speaker. The **Second Quarterly Report of the Infrastructure and Business Development Committee** dated 16 October 2013. It commences on the -

Introduction

The Legislative Assembly on 10 April 2013 resolved to establish an Infrastructure and Business Development Committee (hereinafter referred to as "the Committee") with the following Terms of Reference :-

- 1) Investigate and report on –
 - (a) the means by which the current Norfolk Island economy may be strengthened and expanded;
 - (b) Norfolk Island's current and future infrastructure needs based on current, proposed or potential business development requirements; and
 - (c) such other relevant matters as the Chief Minister and/or the Committee deems relevant.

This is the second report of the Committee which conforms with the requirement of the resolution of the Legislative Assembly requiring a report by the Committee at the end of each quarter. The Committee's initial report was delivered to the Legislative Assembly on 17 July 2013 and contained eight recommendations. These recommendations remain active and should be considered in conjunction with the Committee's second report. The first report's recommendations were passed to the Norfolk Island Government for their deliberation and action as appropriate. To date there has been no response from Government although the responsible Minister is understood to be progressing Recommendation 2.

Meetings of the Committee

During the reporting period, July-September quarter, the Committee formally met on seven occasions. Additional advice was received during informal discussions and written advice was provided to the Committee.

During formal meetings nine persons appeared before the Committee. The Committee wishes to record its appreciation of those who took time to appear before the Committee during the quarter under review concentrated largely on the requirement to investigate and report on:-

"Norfolk Island's current and future infrastructure needs based on current, proposed or potential business development requirements".

The Norfolk Island Administration, under policies developed by the Norfolk Island Government, is a major provider and maintainer of the island's key infrastructure. As a consequence the Committee largely concentrated its infrastructure review on the Administration before, in time, progressing to the private sector. Initial written submissions were sought, to be followed by personal presentations by management and others in each area.

Ownership of key infrastructure by the Norfolk Island Government has been questioned in the past, particularly those from which a high financial return was possible. Notwithstanding such questions, the issue of future ownership of each Government owned asset has not been reviewed by the Committee. The latest Commonwealth/Norfolk Island Funding Agreement requires a study to be undertaken on divestment of two Government Business Enterprises.

Notwithstanding this, a recommendation, included in the Committee's first report that "a more commercial approach be introduced in key areas of Administration infrastructure" has continued to be shown as relevant. It should be pointed out that introduction of a more commercial approach is possible without divestment to the private sector in the form of privatisation, in part or full, and allows retention as a community owned asset, be it more appropriately managed. It is proposed to continue assessment of infrastructure and it is planned to have a more comprehensive report available by the end of the next quarter.

Issues of Concern

Whilst its deliberations, particularly in relation to infrastructure, are ongoing the Committee feels it is important to highlight, at this stage, some major individual concerns which need to be dealt with sooner rather than later.

Whilst in no way comprehensive, the Committee considers that from its deliberations to date the following are issues of major concern which require some urgent attention.

Recommendations of the Committee's First Report

The Committee's initial report provided eight recommendations, each of which are still relevant, and the Committee feel need progression by Government.

Whilst the Committee recognises the need for revitalisation of the tourism industry to support current investment in infrastructure etc it is also mindful of the need to broaden the islands economic base by encouraging new business. Unfortunately there are clear impediments to decisions to significantly invest in such new business. The Committee's initial report highlights such impediments and made recommendations in response.

1. Telecommunications:-

The Committee feels that telecommunications are an essential ingredient in progressing the aim of attracting new business as well as appropriately servicing current business. Communication standards offered to business has been in a number of cases below the required standard and potential new business has been lost to the island.

Norfolk Telecom has over the years found itself in an invidious position where it attempted to balance its role as a service provider where it needed to invest funds to improve service and an acceptance by the Norfolk Island Administration that it follow public service procedures and contribute to the Administration significant funds. In recent times it was stripped of funds by the Administration for use elsewhere, despite protests from the entity. Such action precluded not only use of those funds to upgrade services but also sadly the entities ability to simply pay its bills. One bill left outstanding was the carrier New Zealand Telecom, which left the actual carriage of communications in a precarious position and whilst the account was eventually settled by instalments it was not before additional costs in interest payments.

Whilst the Committee understands the current Norfolk Island Government is acting responsibly and is progressing the ability to lift the current signal speed there is an urgent need for a total plan for the island's telecommunication requirements into the immediate future. Such plan would be fully costed with time frames and business planning to include, among other things, for a return on investment.

2. Resources of South Pacific Commission:-

Norfolk Island was included in the area covered by the South Pacific Commission following inception of the Commission in the late 1940s and in fact Norfolk Island has from time to time received professional advice related to economic development from the Commission. It appears for the past 15 to 20 years there has been virtually no contact between Norfolk Island and the Commission. This is despite the fact that the Commission has resources which could greatly assist Norfolk Island in areas of business development particularly related to agriculture. The potential value of the South Pacific Commission to Norfolk Island should be recognised.

3. Management and utilisation of Kingston and Arthurs Vale Historic Area (KAVHA):-

The relics of the convict era at Kingston are of considerable importance to the Norfolk Island community. The area known as KAVHA was first discussed in the 1970s and was eventually listed as a World Heritage Area in 2010. Despite the excellent work by the local KAVHA team over the years, particularly when restoration was permitted, subsequent maintenance of fixtures and the area in general maintained in a pristine condition, the actual value as an attraction which was claimed would follow World Heritage listing has not eventuated.

The area comprises magnificent relics of the convict era which include buildings reconstructed in the past to restore them to their original status, other former buildings which have remained as "partial ruins" and finally "total ruins" where what has been described as 'piles of rock' denote the site of a previous convict building. The restoration work done in the past has been excellent and authenticity has been maintained as copies of all original building plans are held by KAVHA. However, the restoration program ceased and a policy of ongoing maintenance of conserved buildings and structures was implemented. Subsequently proposals to resume restoration works have

been resisted. After some 25 years and loss of some potential opportunities, there appears a need to review the current resistance.

There have been significant concerns in relation to KAVHA and one in particular of long standing relates to what could be considered the heart of any entity, an appropriate management structure.

Currently KAVHA is managed under a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Commonwealth and Norfolk Island Governments, signed in June 1994. The MOU provides for the maintenance of a Management Board established under a 1989 MOU and comprises four members two from the Commonwealth and two from Norfolk Island. The Commonwealth members are selected by the Minister responsible for Territories and the Norfolk Island members are selected by the Minister with responsibility for KAVHA. The MOU provides for objects and functions of the Board, cost sharing, financial arrangements and the like.

There have been numerous reports and utterances in relation to KAVHA since its inception and particularly in relation to an appropriate management regime. The issue of legislative backing and the need for Norfolk Island legislation has been canvassed since the initial concept of KAVHA was considered in the late 1970s and the 1994 MOU records an intention to establish the Management Board by statute.

4. Vulnerability of the islands fuel supply:-

Whilst of late the costs associated with the supply of fuel on the island have seen a fairly significant rise in fuel costs it is not the role of the Committee to deal with such an issue.

However the Committee does have a role in other areas related to the supply of fuel. Norfolk Island has in the recent past seen supply difficulties. It is recognised that measures have been put in place to balance the storage capacity at the Government owned facility at Ball Bay to reflect anticipated usage and the supply schedule. However, given the vulnerability of the island to issues beyond its control there appears a need to provide some additional storage capacity at the Government's Ball Bay facility.

5. Tourist accommodation:-

The Tourist Accommodation Act 1984 under which Norfolk Island's tourism accommodation is regulated was amended in 2012 and 2013 as a consequence of a Funding Agreement between the Commonwealth Government and the Norfolk Island Administration.

The amendments have made significant changes and it is not intended to list the many changes in this report. However, two fairly fundamental amendments are used as an example as having the potential to negatively impact on the quality of accommodation provided.

Despite what is accepted as an oversupply of tourist accommodation the tourist accommodation quota, which restricted the number of units licensed, was removed under the premise of encouraging investment and financial stimulation. Further, the requirement for units to undergo mandatory accreditation was removed.

The standard of accommodation offered to visitors to Norfolk Island in the past has shown in visitor surveys that 90% rated the islands accommodation as very good to excellent and "Trip Advisor" last year stated travellers gave Norfolk Island accommodation the highest average review rating out of all Australian States, Territories and off-shore islands. Given these two examples it may be argued there is potential for downgrading of the island's accommodation bank to the detriment of the island's major industry.

Whilst all concerns which followed the recent amendments to the Accommodation Act can not be listed in this report it is understood a comprehensive document is being prepared for Government with suggested amendments to the current Act.

6. Value to the island of new business:-

The Committee fully supports the concept of new business ventures on Norfolk Island and the attendant promotion and assistance in encouraging such business to be established on the island. However, it is clearly essential for the Norfolk Island Government to be aware at an early stage of such business and able to differentiate the potential immediate and long term value or otherwise, to the island of each new venture.

As a consequence the Committee feels there is a need for Government to develop a process which automatically notes a proposal and/or commencement of a new business and fully assesses the potential benefit of that business to the Norfolk Island economy.

Recommendations (...continued from First Quarterly Report)

- 9) The Committee urges the Government to progress the recommendations of its first report.
- 10) That telecommunication upgrades to provide greater signal speed be progressed as a matter of some urgency and a comprehensive plan, including costs, time frame and business plan, be prepared for the islands telecommunication requirements for the immediate future.
- 11) Norfolk Island's ability to access resources available within the South Pacific Commission be re-negotiated.
- 12) Two issues related to the Kingston and Arthurs Vale Area being a proposal, to revise its management structure and the removal of the existing ban on restoration of current ruins, be progressed by Government.
- 13) Consideration be given by Government for the provision of some additional fuel storage at its Ball Bay facility.
- 14) The Tourism Accommodation Act be amended to take account of issues created by the recent amendments to the Act.
- 15) The Government initiate a procedure to record any new business established on Norfolk Island and their potential value to the island's economy.

Thank you Mr Speaker. I would like that to be noted and I'll move in due course to make that an Order of the day for a subsequent day of sitting

SPEAKER Thank you Mr Nobbs are you tabling that report. Could you move a motion that the Report be noted

MR NOBBS Thank you Mr Speaker I table that Report and move that the Report be noted

SPEAKER The question before us is that this Report lodged by Mr Nobbs, be noted. Further debate. There seems to be no further debate at this time Mr Nobbs so would you like to move a motion for adjournment

MR NOBBS Thank you Mr Speaker I move that debate be adjourned and made an Order of the day for a subsequent day of sitting

SPEAKER The question is that this matter be adjourned and made an Order of the day for a subsequent day of sitting

QUESTION PUT
AGREED

That matter is so adjourned Honourable Members

FIXING OF THE NEXT SITTING DAY

MR EVANS Thank you Mr Speaker. I move that the House at its rising adjourn until Wednesday the 13th November 2013 at 10.00 am.

MR SPEAKER Thank you Mr Evans. Any debate on that Honourable Members

QUESTION PUT
AGREED

ADJOURNMENT

MR NOBBS I move that the House do now adjourn,

MR SPEAKER Thank you. Any adjournment debate Honourable Members

MR NOBBS Thank you Mr Speaker. I just want to make some very brief comments firstly on the report that was in the Sydney Morning Herald and then another issue that I think is fairly important. It's been an interesting last few days with the cruise ship and the Show which was great and I congratulate all who took part in that Show and had it going, and the reports of planes being full. Sadly there's been a death and I commiserate with the family but the Sydney Morning Herald seems to have taken everybody's fire at the present time and whilst nobody like's their home being trashed, and I can see how people who recognise Norfolk Island as their home, are really upset about it, but I really question whether those living and not connected to the Island, who live offshore will be really impacted negatively by the whole thing. In perspective I read it first and was a little bit upset about it and then decided I would go through it line by line and read it properly which is always handy I guess, and there were some really sad bits in it but there are two that I would like to make comment on and firstly it seems to me that we are very intent on tearing ourselves apart in this particular situation and I urge people to jut settle down a bit because things will turn in time. The other thing is that I was aghast at the one accusation in there from the lady concerned, the author, because it was always my premise that our laws and the courts look at people being innocent until they're proven guilty and I think that in one particular case in this the author went a step too far and there should be some recompense I firmly believe. As to the rest of it there was a lot of interesting stuff in there about it, what was the causes of the GFC, airline troubles, all these sorts of things. That's fine, but we should look at all three issues, not just those three, and they keep on coming up but there are other issues that we need to attack and finances too. I always thought that we should have had a judicial enquiry as to why the slump actually occurred but it hasn't got many wheels on that unfortunately and so we're going with innuendo and the like. In the articles there were some quite funny and informative sides to it that should be looked at in the clear light of day. Like "after 160 years of talking about Queen Victoria giving Norfolk Island to the Pitcairn people prior to their arrival in 1856 and the language and culture being maintained every since, we are seen in this article as blue bloods. I find that really difficult and whilst I am a very proud blue blood, I did play a few games for the Reds at one particular time. It contained some real classics, like the café intrigue, where you're going to coffee before a meeting and I didn't see anybody there this morning, so I don't know what's going on it reminds me of an actual occurrence some fifty years ago when there was a group on the Council called The Block. They did meet openly no worries, in private before each Council meeting. That did happen. But I don't think it's happening now. The other thing is we apparently have an historical ball that's come up to light which is fine. As long as we're not rewriting history. The Administrator is portrayed as running the show, outside his Vice Regal role....

SPEAKER Order. Order Mr Nobbs. It's inappropriate to refer to the Administrator's office in an adverse way in terms of Standing Orders in this Assembly

MR NOBBS Thank you Mr Speaker, I appreciate what you're talking about. It wasn't in an adverse way. I should have prefaced it by saying that the article appeared to portray, which I'll do now, the Administrator as running the show outside his Vice Regal role. That's all. The article portrayed that there were tax differences between Norfolk Island and Australia. Rally, nobody wants to pay tax in Australia as I keep telling people, but we should be pleased to do it. I suggest that the writer get some old tapes from Kerry Packer and you can hear a rich man's view on tax avoidance. He was

MR SNELL Thank you Mr Speaker, I would like to make reference to the cruise ship visit on Norfolk Island on the weekend and to congratulate everyone who had a part in ensuring that as many as I think 1600 passengers came ashore on that beautiful day. I would like to record my thanks and the thanks of this House to those who assisted, particularly on the jetty and on the pontoon, and assisting in tenders and launches., without them and their expertise I have no doubt that the unloading of those passengers would not have progressed. I took the opportunity to go down to the unloading site early in the morning to assist if possible and to help with dialogue with the officer in charge from the ship and I hoped that my conversation with him assisted in his decision to allow passengers to come ashore. In highlighting the cooperation between the shore crew and the ship's Captain that were working together, we can achieve the unloading of the passengers to our mutual benefit but it would not have occurred without the assistance of the many who were there on the day, from those working on the jetty, in the launches, to those transporting the passengers and to the Public Service staff and officers who assisted and the equipment that was made available. It is of great benefit to the Island and it certainly was spectacular to see and I extend appreciation to all. Thank you Mr Speaker

MR SPEAKER Thank you. Any further debate Honourable Members. No. Thank you, Honourable Members I put the question to you that the House do now adjourn.

QUESTION PUT
AGREED

MR SPEAKER Honourable Members this House stands adjourned until Wednesday the 13th November 2013 at 10.00 am.

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