



**NORFOLK ISLAND LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**  
**14<sup>TH</sup> NILA HANSARD – 16 JULY 2014**

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.

**LEAVE OF ABSENCE – MR SHERIDAN**

MS ADAMS Thank you Mr Speaker, I seek leave of the House for Mr Tim Sheridan, who is attending the Commonwealth Games in Glasgow

SPEAKER: Honourable Members, is leave granted? Thank you. Leave is granted?

**PETITIONS**

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

**NOTICES**

Notices, are there any Notices.

**QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE**

Are there any Questions Without Notice this morning

MR EVANS Thank you Mr Speaker. This question is directed to Minister Ward. I have consulted Minister Ward and there are several questions within this question and Minister Ward is happy to take all those in one question. So the question Minister has any modelling been undertaken in terms of the impact of rates on the local community? Has that modelling been made available to the community who must pay those rates? Has the Norfolk Island Government done any analyses on the economic impact on the community including the private sector? The rates implementation states 'if the purpose of the consultation is simply to provide information then this should be clearly stated at the outset. As in any consultation, if the Island community can have an impact on the final decision then the extent of this influence needs to be outlined at the beginning of the process'. Could the Minister outline how and to what extent the community can influence this process? Thank you Mr Speaker

MR WARD Thank you Mr Speaker and thank you Mr Evans for your question on this vitally important issue. Since the commencement of the Roadmap process there has been a scarcity of economic information for Norfolk Island upon which

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to develop sound policy – a scarcity that has seen this government push for the Household and Business Surveys that are about to be circulated. The most contentious reform the Commonwealth is pushing is that we impose Municipal Rates over Norfolk Island property. For a place where much of the land is the subject of hereditary acquisition, this is a major reform that has potentially devastating consequences for Norfolk Island people. The ability to hold and pass land from one generation to the next, irrespective of their monetary wealth is an integral part of Norfolk Island culture and tradition. The Household and Business Surveys are designed to give us the most comprehensive insight and definition of the community's capacity to pay municipal rates or any other imposts that either the Commonwealth or this government could seek to impose. It is the ever increasing financial demands on people that successive governments have demanded that have damaged this island's competitive edge in the tourism market. We and the Commonwealth should be working to rebuild the economy rather than trying to tax the place into prosperity. Mr Speaker, this government has had little option but to accept Commonwealth demands to introduce a rating system whether this community wants it or not, and to this end we have had our Public Service, in particular our Chief Executive Officer, Mr Jon Gibbons, develop a system that is as near as possible appropriate for Norfolk conditions. This system was accepted as meeting the requirements for conditional funding of the Cascade Jetty upgrade. Notice was then received 3 days later that two key elements of the rating system had to be changed. One of these changes could directly impact the owners of multiple portions and could create major inequities, inequities that are allowed for in many other jurisdictions. Norfolk is being told to have a tougher system than these other places. Mr Speaker, I hope there is a time in the future when the local economy could support the community's ability to pay into a rating system, but right now all indicators are that this is not the case. While no one likes exposing their financials, I urge every eligible member of this community to respond to the Household and Business Surveys, and to tell it how it is. Every measure is being taken to keep the supplied material anonymous, confidential and secure. Finally Mr Evans, your question about consultation is very important. While the Rating Strategy has been examined by a number of people, with any wide ranging measure such as this there are bound to be unique issues, circumstances and consequences that may need fine tuning. This consultation process including the public meeting referred to by Minister Sheridan is an opportunity for people to bring these issues forward so that the process may be refined to yield the best possible outcome. Thank you Mr Speaker

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MRS WARD Thank you Mr Speaker a supplementary if I may, because I sense a slight conflict in what the Minister is saying but if he could clarify perhaps that in opening with his answer the Minister stated that there was a scarcity of data and then he went on to say at the end that all indicators demonstrate, so I'm wondering which way it is currently please

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MR WARD Thank you Mr Speaker and thank you Mrs Ward for that question. These indicators that I refer to would probably be referred to as anecdotal. It's the factors such as the community struggling to pay charges such as healthcare, the downward trend in motor vehicle registrations that I've been working on in recent days, these are the sort of trends that are fairly indicating what most of us know around the place that people are doing it very tough and that there is difficulty in some sectors in meeting current commitments, let alone taking on new ones

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Mw Thank you Mr Speaker, and is that information being relayed back to the Commonwealth so that they have a clear understanding of the economic stress on the Island

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MR WARD I confirm that it is being relayed back. Yes

MR NOBBS Thank you Mr Speaker. I have a question for the Minister for Immigration. As I understand it Minister in previous Roadmap / Funding Agreement negotiations, the Commonwealth negotiators have been Commonwealth

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Public Servants and the then Administrator, insisted changes occur through arrangement covered by the Norfolk Island Immigration Act and is it correct that these changes were made without proper community consultation

MS ADAMS Thank you Mr Speaker and thank you Mr Nobbs Ward for the question. Are we talking about the Immigration Amendment No 2 Bill and the lead up to it.

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MR NOBBS Yep. If that's the numbers. I don't know what the numbers are

MS ADAMS There were two Bills. The Immigration Amendment Bill which put in place the self funded retirees regime followed by the Immigration Amendment No 2 Bill which put in place, we brought down the Immigration barriers around Australian and New Zealand citizens being able to come and go from Norfolk Island without restricted entry

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MR NOBBS Both

MS ADAMS I'm going to take that on notice because I would like to respond in an appropriate way. Certainly there... no I'll take it on notice thank you. I would rather respond fully thank you

MR NOBBS The second part Mr Speaker is it also correct that to appease possible community concerns the Commonwealth undertook to review these so called reforms by the 30<sup>th</sup> June 2014 and the review would include the impact of such reforms including economic, environmental, land use and social and cultural impacts and was such a review to be undertaken by the 30<sup>th</sup> June 2014. Has this occurred

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MS ADAMS Thank you Mr Speaker yes Mr Nobbs that is correct. That was a requirement from memory in the September 2012 Funding Agreement section 11(2)(b) but if you are prepared to wait, I will be responding in depth to question on notice from Mrs Ward and you will get further understanding around that if we could wait until that time

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MR PORTER Thank you Mr Speaker. A question for the Chief Minister or Minister Ward, as a further to my question at the last Assembly can you report if there is any advancement in providing to this House timeframes showing milestones in advancing the construction of Cascade Pier, the installation of the incinerator, implementation of land rates and community title, just to mention a few

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MR SNELL Thank you Mr Speaker and thank you Mr Porter for the question. The question covers a number of areas. I will be touching on two of them, the pier and the incinerator in a question on notice from Mrs Ward. Time frames have been set in accordance with the Funding Agreement. As we are well aware, the other sections of the question I will have to take on notice unless of course Mr Ward can clarify further

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MR WARD Thank you Mr Speaker as far as the community title goes, there is no further advancement on that from the advise I gave in this House at the last sitting

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MR NOBBS Thank you Mr Speaker I guess it might be a supplementary to that to the Chief Minister really, has the Funding Agreement 2014/15 actually been signed at this stage and if not, why not

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MR SNELL Thank you Mr Speaker and thank you Mr Nobbs for the question. Mr Nobbs, no the Funding Agreement has not been signed off at this time. The Funding Agreement contains a number of issues as mentioned previously that

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require consideration. Consideration and discussion is underway with the Department on some of these areas that are complicated and we are indebted to the Department for allowing us to split some of these milestone conditions and we hope to have some detail as to the advancement of the requirements under the Funding Agreement and milestones in the near future but to answer the question, no the Funding Agreement has not been signed

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MRS WARD Thank you Mr Speaker it would be helpful if the Chief Minister would be able to just perhaps give dot point examples of the list of issues that are still creating problems for the Government or the Commonwealth. Would he please list that. He said they'd been previously stated but just to remind Members please

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MR SNELL Thank you Mr Speaker, and thank you Mrs Ward for the question. I refer to the letter of the 25<sup>th</sup> June to the Hon Jamie Briggs that was read out in the June meeting, at our last meeting detailing a number of issues that need to be responded to and I again quote points 1 and 2 above that is "The Australian Government, two officials from my Department and including the Commonwealth Financial Officer based on island will formally agree the Norfolk Island budget and subsequent budget updates and or changes prior to relevant Appropriation Bills being considered by the Legislative Assembly. Once agreed the document will be publicly released to the broader Norfolk Island community. Any subsequent changes to the budget must be agreed in advance by the Australian Government and any new or unbudgeted expenditure must be fully offset. These offsets must be genuine savings and not deferrals of expenditure or liabilities into future years." Dot point 2 was the annual 2.5% efficiency dividend that has been requested to be applied to extend across the board commencing in the 2014-2015 year and applied perpetually across the years using the 2013-2014 as the base year. These offsets must be genuine savings and not deferrals of expenditure or liabilities into future years and any further pay rises for Norfolk Island Government employees must be met from within the reduced annual budget. Mr Speaker the Norfolk Island Government responded with caution to these commitments, noting the difficulties that these commitments present. The Norfolk Island Government also had difficulties with other areas including the five days after the close of the month for the provision of reporting on agreed budget details. That's been extended with thanks out to 20 days. Some issues were also regarding the rating strategy that was proposed. There were also difficulties with immigration and our government response to those about producing further barriers to immigration was a problem, and there have been several others, so they've all been, and the NEXUS report of course, the Management Consulting Health Services Plan, so there are a number of issues that are still being discussed Mr Speaker

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MRS WARD Thank you Mr Speaker a supplementary if I may, isn't it a fact that the 2.4% efficiency gain has actually been dealt with through the budget process

MR SNELL That is correct. That one has been dealt with

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MRS WARD So is it a fact that the outstanding matters remain, Immigration and the Deloitte's recommendations and issues around the provision of health services

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MR SNELL Thank you Mr Speaker that is correct. Those are still being discussed

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MR NOBBS Thank you Mr Speaker I have a question for the Minister responsible for KAVHA. Is it correct that there is a new site manager or somebody of that nature appointed to KAVHA, a position I believe has been vacant for some twelve months

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MS ADAMS Thank you Mr Speaker. It is my intention to make a small statement this morning but I'll take the opportunity now and respond here. So it is my understanding that at a meeting of the KAVHA Board on 5 June this year the unfilled position of Site Manager was discussed. Members will recall my writing to the Administrator on 17 December 2013 and again on 14 February 2014 seeking clarity around the position of Site Manager which had become vacant by departure of Mr Greg Lovell who had been recalled to Canberra. My letters were in response to questions I think in fact from yourself Mr Nobbs, back at that time in the House. I have not at this time received a response from the Administrator to my letters. The issue is one that certainly has not been resolved in a satisfactory manner. However it is also an issue that is addressed in the Exposure Draft of the Heritage Management Plan 2014 which is to go on to public consultation phase in some time in the future. But Mr John Peterson has been engaged by the Commonwealth on a three months trial as the Commonwealth Heritage Manager. This is not related to the Site Manager and the Chief Executive Officer, and I were offered the opportunity last week to meet with and welcome Mr Peterson to the Island. It is regrettable that Mr Peterson's roles and responsibilities were not worked through by both governments and the Chief Executive Officer, before Mr Peterson's arrival as was the stated intent at the Board meeting on 5 June. However it might be helpful to state that the draft minutes of that meeting record that Mr Peterson role is "development and monitoring of the Works program activity and managing compliance expertise in respect of Commonwealth world heritage obligations. I thank Mr Paul McInnes from the Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development for having undertaken to provide me with further detail on Mr Peterson's role so that there is clarity for all persons. I welcome Mr Peterson to Norfolk Island. I hope that's helpful Mr Nobbs.

MR NOBBS A supplementary Mr Speaker. Minister to whom does the position actually Report and is there a precise duty statement available for the position outlining the particular responsibilities

MS ADAMS The Commonwealth Heritage Officer? Thank you Mr Nobbs. I'm not privy to that information. Certainly it was indicated at the Board meeting that there would be discussion at Government level, Chief Executive Officer level, around the role that the Commonwealth Heritage Manager would perform and I'm looking forward to Mr McInnis who's undertaken to provide me with further detail on that role. I really can give you no further clarity at this time. I'm happy to take that on notice for you to get more information but at this time there is nothing more to tell you

MR NOBBS Just a question to the Chief Minister in relation to the Public Service. Chief Minister are you aware that during the last financial year two persons with permanent positions within Administration and its work area known as KAVHA had their positions and pay downgraded from a five day week to a one and a half days per week on the pretext that the Norfolk Island Government had no money.

MR SNELL Thank you Mr Speaker, yes Mr Nobbs, I am aware of the situation. It is before the Complaints Officer at this time and I can't give you any further details

MR NOBBS Can I have a supplementary please. Following the Federal Government's generosity and provision of funds for the budget we recently passed, which includes funding of additional and even new positions...

SPEAKER If I could just interrupt you for a moment please. I want to refer you to Standing Order 72A and I'll just read it to you in the context of what I have raised. "No Member may refer to the conditions of service or conduct of a named or identifiable officer unless the House has, on motion duly moved without notice, voted to exclude strangers and suspend broadcasts of its proceedings." Just bear that in mind of how you proceed with this matter

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MR NOBBS Well I'll just have to see...

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SPEAKER You're running quite close to the mark

MR NOBBS Thank you Mr Speaker I'll tack then if I can. Given that the new funding arrangement created by the passage of the budget recently and the ...gee you've got me a bit shot to pieces here Mr Speaker but ... will there be funds available under the new budget arrangements which includes the provision of new positions and also reinstating positions that were down graded, will there be funding to available to actually upgrade the positions from one and a half days to a five day week considering that they are permanent public servants. That's all I can say apparently Chief Minister, sorry about that

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MR SNELL Thank you Mr Speaker and thank you Mr Nobbs for the question, you're touching on an area that has been covered by the Funding Agreement as to the allocation of funds for future employment which is subject to consideration at the moment. The Commonwealth has been requesting the Norfolk Island g on numerous occasions to keep within our allocated budgeted amount within Norfolk Island to refrain from any employment without first budgeting approval and I cant really go into any other further detail qt this time but if Mr Nobbs would prefer I could get further detail for him and I'll take that part on notice

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MR NOBBS My concern is that – and I ask the Chief Minister if he may wish to comment or he may take it on notice that the Norfolk Island Government does not propose to utilize the same tactics to downgrade other full time employees within the Administration

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MR SNELL I can't answer that question Mr Speaker simply because there is no such tactic, there is no such procedure in the Public Service for such an operative manner to be introduced or complied with. It's a hypothetical question and I certainly can't answer that

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MRS WARD Thank you Mr Speaker a supplementary please to the Chief Minister. Given that the Funding Agreement appears to be inhibiting the Chief Executive Officer's ability to recruit, has a finalized deadline been set for the finalizing of the Funding Agreement so that everybody knows where they stand and we can get on with business

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MR SNELL Thank you Mr Speaker and thank you Mrs Ward for the question, the answer to that is we would like to complete the process as quickly as possible but to set a time frame on it, no there hasn't been a timeframe set

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MR NOBBS I ask a question in relation to pest control and that's to Minister Ward. Is the Argentine Ant project seen as a eradication or a control programme and given its status, in your response, how is it progressing?

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MR WARD Thank you Mr Speaker and thank you Mr Nobbs for that question. The Argentine Ant Eradication Program started out some three years ago with the intention of being an eradication project and was tracking quite well until the method of funding changed. Originally there was around \$97,000 committed from the Norfolk Island annual budget per annum and a singular amount was coming into the project from the Australian Caring for our Country funding. That Caring for our Country Funding setup changed and the available funds were no longer available so in the last year or so the Argentine Ant project has been more a holding operation functioning on the funds that we've allocated through our annual budget

MR NOBBS A further question, different animal. Is the phsyllids proposal and eradication or control program and given its status in your response and based on the advise that you've been given, what is the chance of success

MR WARD Thank you Mr Speaker and thank you Mr Nobbs for the question. The initial concept for the phsyllid control was to be an eradication project. It had to be mounted very quickly. At the time the phsyllid was discovered they were in very low numbers around the place and very low density and the advice we had was that we needed a very quick response on that and then of course we've had delays with our budget process which precluded a eradication project being undertaken which needed to kick off at the beginning of August and the Service certainly would not be able to recruit people or let a contract to do an eradication project if the funds were available. As it stands there is a significant amount of funding cut away from the original eradication budget, some \$86,000 so that leaves us in a position of only running a control program rather than an eradication

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MR NOBBS Just a supplementary please, what's the mid August? Is it cyclical this animal. Why must it start in mid August

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MR WARD Thank you Mr Speaker, well they know from other areas where the pest occurs, that it slows down through the colder winter months and then picks up quite rapidly as you get into spring and we are expecting quite a rapid pick up in its activity as the spring months come in and unfortunately just the way that it's all worked out, we cannot set up a viable eradication project at this time so the next best thing we can do is have an intensive control project rather than an eradication. By having an intensive control hopefully we will have opportunity possibly next year to do an eradication if we can hold the numbers down and suppress it

MRS WARD Thank you Mr Speaker a supplementary please, given that there is approximately \$300,000 in the budget for the containment program for the psyllids, can the Minister inform the House what the cost of this problem is to the economy, so in other words what is the lost revenue to the primary producers

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MR WARD Since we don't get actually get direct figures back from the growers on the various lines that they grow it would be very hard to put a dollar figure on it, but we do know that he pests affect prime crops, crops of great importance to people here. Potatoes and tomatoes, I don't think anyone could argue that they are not very basic vegetables that are required in this place that is reliant on its fresh produce so there's also costs of health implications if you have intensive control based on herbicide use or chemical usage and the effects of that chemical usage over time, who knows the cost of it. It could be absolutely massive and then of course there is the further potential cost to mainland Australia with the higher security risk that it poses to Australian agriculture and it is a massive thing and we are certainly not underestimating this or taking this pest lightly in any way

MRS WARD Thank you Mr Speaker a supplementary if I may, and given that the Minister has stated that this is a bio security risk for mainland Australia are they in any way contributing to the cost of eradicating or containing this pest on the Island

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MR WARD Thank you Mr Speaker I have written to the Australian Minister for Agriculture the Hon Barnaby Joyce, seeking their involvement in the eradication program as it was to be at that time, and to date I've not had a response on that

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MR NOBBS Thank you Mr Speaker a question to the Minister responsible for KAVHA again if I may please, it's in relation to the KAVHA Board meeting, since the current Norfolk Island Government took office in March 2013 how many meetings of the KAVHA Board have been conducted, are the minutes of these meetings made available to the Norfolk Island Government and when will these minutes be made available to the community

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MS ADAMS Thank you Mr Deputy Speaker I continue, I will take that on notice. My understanding is that really the only change that happened to immigration by the 2012 Immigration Amendment No 2 Bill was the changes related to Australian and New Zealand citizen and whatever the immigration law was prior to that time remains in respect of foreign nationals. It can only be foreign nationals who are holding a TEP but that's as much as I'm prepared to answer at that time

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MRS WARD Thank you Mr Speaker. A question to the Chief Minister. The Chief Minister recently reminded the community of the Norfolk Island Government's preferred model of self government. Is the Chief Minister confident that the Norfolk Island Government has the capacity to deliver a complex range of State and Territory level services

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MR SNELL Thank you Mr Deputy Speaker and Mrs Ward. Yes

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MRS WARD Thank you Mr Speaker a supplementary please would the Chief Minister be able to explain his reasoning behind writing to Minister Briggs in March asking for State level services to be delivered to the Island in a way similar to Christmas Island

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MR SNELL Thank you Mr Deputy Speaker I don't recall that. I'll have to take that on notice and come back to Mrs Ward on that

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MR BUFFETT Thank you Mr Deputy Speaker, I direct a question to the Chief Minister if I may. Mr Deputy Speaker I'm seeking an update on the Norfolk Island Government's policy and platform on the way ahead and my first question is to the Chief Minister what is seen by the Norfolk Island Government as the next principle decision to be taken in securing long term sustainability for Norfolk Island and in his answer I would be grateful if he could identify whether it is a Norfolk Island Government or a Commonwealth Government decision that might need to be taken

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MR SNELL Thank you Mr Deputy Speaker and thank you Mr Buffett for the question. The main emphasis again that the Norfolk Island Government is trying to secure is certainty. Certainty into what form of Government will apply to Norfolk Island. Certainty as to the way forward. We have completed as much of the Funding Agreements, milestones, conditions of the Roadmap, over the last four years. We are now looking for certainty, we are looking to the Commonwealth to give us some clarity on exactly the forward estimates for Funding Agreement and so on into the future

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MR BUFFETT Thank you Mr Deputy Speaker, and thank you Chief Minister, for that response. If in fact one of the key decisions to be taken is to provide certainty in terms of the forms of Governance within the Island I'm assuming he's recognizing that that principally is a decision to be taken by the Commonwealth, in that particular instance

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MR SNELL Thank you Mr Deputy Speaker, that is correct

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MR BUFFETT Thank you Mr Deputy Speaker, could I further ask the Chief Minister, this, we had a visit by Assistant Minister, Briggs and he at in this Chamber with us all and he indicated that he would consult with the Norfolk Island Government in terms of this process. Could I ask the Chief Minister, whether he has consulted with the Norfolk Island Government to date in this process

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MR SNELL Thank you Mr Deputy Speaker and thank you Mr Buffett for the question, the answer is yes, he has, and it's still ongoing

MR BUFFETT Thank you Mr Deputy Speaker, could the Chief Minister elaborate on that with some detail

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MR SNELL Thank you Mr Deputy Speaker we are going to hold meetings with the Administrator to discuss areas of this concern. We have written on numerous occasions to the Minister about our concerns and we hope to be able to give some clarification to the Member in due course.

MR BUFFETT Thank you Mr Deputy Speaker, could I ask the Chief Minister if within these consultations whether the Commonwealth have given a timeframe for a decision about governance, a decision about time frames for entry into the taxation regime and the welfare scheme regimes

MR SNELL Thank you Mr Deputy Speaker and thank you Mr Buffett for the question, no, there have been no time frames set

MR BUFFETT Thank you Mr Deputy Speaker, can I further ask the Chief Minister, well, to be quite frank, what's the Norfolk Island Government doing about that. What's he doing to secure some timeframes in this process bearing in mind we have people leaving the island, we have people going out of business, we have people who without the certainty of which the Chief Minister speaks, are in dire circumstances. Are we able to have the Norfolk Island Government secure from the Commonwealth Government some timeframes so that there is better certainty and understanding within the Norfolk Island community about how we an travel in terms of the way forward

MR SNELL Thank you Mr Deputy Speaker and thank you Mr Buffett for the question. I will be elaborating a little bit on this matter in questions on notice which may assist in satisfying Mr Buffet in his questions and to those in the community who are listening to this broadcast and it certainly is a concern for us. We've virtually done everything we possibly can to get a decision as to a better way forward from the Commonwealth. It hasn't eventuated

MR BUFFETT Thank you Mr Deputy Speaker, this is about the electricity charging regime. I think it's probably the Chief Minister, in the absence of Minister, Sheridan or Mr Ward. Well whoever the Chief Minister, would designate to make a response. I understand that a review group has undertaken a study of solar power installations to generate electricity and the flow on effect upon the established main line electricity arrangements. I ask if that report is now available to the community.

MR SNELL Thank you Mr Deputy Speaker and Mr Buffett for the question. The Electricity Working Group report has been given to some Members. Whether its available for community publication I'm not sure and to take that question on notice but Minister, Ward may be able to elaborate a little further

MR WARD Thank you Mr Deputy Speaker certainly there was no material on this subject in the dossier of papers I took over from Minister Sheridan prior to his departure and unfortunately I didn't think to ask for san update on that particular issue before he left so I'm unable to assist Mr Buffett at this time

MR BUFFETT Thank you Mr Deputy Speaker, may I ask the Chief Minister if he could give some timeframe for this report being publicly available

MR SNELL Thank you Mr Deputy Speaker and thank you Mr Buffett for the question I'll take that on board and see what... I'll have to seek advise on this from the Service

MR BUFFETT Thank you Mr Deputy Speaker, just a final part of this particular question if I may, I make a preliminary comment that of course people know in the community that this review has been undertaken. They haven't seen the report at this moment, but as like other reports, rumours start when there is a gap and the longer that gap is the more rumours will be around about the various charges that

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the community might expect and really I'm inviting the Chief Minister and his colleagues to be forthcoming with some information so that rumours are not relied upon, but the substance of the report and I ask the Chief Minister therefore if he can take that into account in making a response to the timeframes

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MR SNELL Thank you Mr Deputy Speaker and thank you Mr Buffett for the question, yes certainly

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MRS WARD Thank you Mr Deputy Speaker jut a question of interest if I may to the Chief Minister given that the Chief Minister said in his radio interview on the 4<sup>th</sup> July that he was indebted to the OEDC and their CEO would the Chief Minister share with Member and the community the significant outcomes that the group have achieved in developing the economy of the Island since their inception

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MR SNELL Thank you Mr Deputy Speaker and thank you Mrs Ward for the question, Mrs Ward you are quite right, I feel and I'm certain that other members of the community feel the OEDC have been prominent in their submissions to not only the Infrastructure and Business Development Committee but also to look at sustainable ways that Norfolk Island could benefit from industries both in Australian and worldwide to encourage investment in Norfolk Island. They've been prominent in areas, the Joint Standing Committee submissions and so on to give indications of how they think Norfolk Island would benefit from certain areas of cruise ship visitations, from other industry developments in Norfolk Island, financial as well as training, agricultural and many other issues and they've been certainly proactive in trying to assist the Norfolk Island community and the Norfolk Island Government in efforts in this regard and they would compliment I'm sure the employment of an Economic Development Officer if that should be able to be instigated in the near future with the Norfolk Island Government

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MRS WARD Thank you Mr Deputy Speaker, a supplementary please, and thank you Chief Minister, for the answer, as to whether the group have been able to broker or secure any deals to date, that will benefit the economy

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MR SNELL Thank you Mr Deputy Speaker and thank you Mrs Ward for the question, it is my understanding that yes they are in some final stages of discussions with a number of I'll call it people, a number of companies that may benefit the community, obviously the details are in confidence and I can't give any more detail

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MRS WARD Thank you Mr Deputy Speaker, a supplementary please, from the same radio interview, is that the Chief Minister went on to say that the Norfolk Island Government must become more actively involved in the economic development of the Island. Would he take this opportunity, to explain what he meant

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MR SNELL Thank you Mr Deputy Speaker and thank you Mrs Ward for the question certainly, and that is to the employment of an Economic Development Officer to help assist in areas of the development model for Norfolk Island

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MR BUFFETT Thank you Mr Deputy Speaker, a question for the Chief Minister, earlier in question time he responded by saying that he had no information or knowledge about Administration wanting to crush rock. I assume that Administration is not going to crush rock. It would seem silly if they were bout to do that but I do ask the Chief Minister, in terms of the crushing of rock whether the Administration has intent of buying crushed rock at this time for road making purposes or any other purposes, especially information of that nature might be useful where times are tight, and business opportunities are sought by established rock crushers in the Island. Can the Chief Minister be helpful bout any of that

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MR SNELL Thank you Mr Deputy Speaker and thank you Mr Buffett for the question certainly, yes, the procurement of crushed rock is ongoing for

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road base, road works etc and certainly we are negotiating. The Service is negotiating for the purchase of crushed rock as we speak

DPEUTY SPEAKER I think Minister Ward indicated that he wished to contribute

MR SNELL I'm sorry, I beg your pardon

MR WARD Thank you Mr Deputy Speaker, we have had a couple of small orders placed with the primary supply of rock in recent times and I'm glad to say that the Administration being in this new financial year is able to place those orders and hopefully it's the start of quite a bit more along those lines. There's certainly the work to be done there and the need for those materials, so I welcome that capital commitment in the budget and look forward to that work and those materials progressing

MR BUFFETT Thank you Mr Deputy Speaker, if I may in terms of a supplementary, could the Minister remind us of the figure that is allocated or that purpose please

MR WARD Thank you Mr Deputy Speaker, yes \$500,000

MR PORTER Thank you Mr Deputy Speaker a supplementary please given that we have a scarcity of rock materials to create the crushed product I understand there is an allocation in the budget for surveying to determine how much rock is available. Could Minister Ward advise us if that's being actioned and when

MR WARD Thank you Mr Deputy Speaker and thank you Mr Porter for the question, I have discussed this mater with the CEO he's well aware of that allocation in the budget, and that will be progressed as soon as the survey is available I believe

MRS WARD Thank you Mr Deputy Speaker if I may to the Minister with responsibility for the Hospital, given that the funding agreement called for the Hospital to be benchmarked against either a New South Wales or an Indian Ocean Territory model, will the Minister explain why an Indian Ocean Territory model was chosen rather than a comparable New South Wales health service

MS ADAMS Thank you Mr Deputy Speaker I think probably the obvious is that it's isolated, surrounded by water, same difficulties of transportation etc etc. Also in an earlier Funding Agreement – and I can't quote verbatim but I recall in an earlier Funding Agreement to the one that required the benchmarking, there was a requirement for the Hospital to be certainly with the ACHS process, there was a tying together with the Indian Ocean Territories and another one which escapes me at the moment without looking into the earlier Funding Agreements but it seemed a logical way to go and that's what was chosen and I think the result has been a good one. It has allowed one on one discussion with the Indian Ocean Territories Health Director, and in fact what we have done now, is we have sent the Hospital's Report back to the Indian Ocean Territories Health Director giving the opportunity that if there was more worthwhile or additional information for the purposes of clarity that she could provide to our paper which by the way isn't due for send off to the Commonwealth until I think it's the 28<sup>th</sup> of this month, that's in the interest of all parties, but at this point in time it was provided to the community in the local press, is as it stands at this time

MRS WARD Thank you Mr Deputy Speaker if I may and given my question to the Chief Minister previously bout the Norfolk Island writing to Minister Briggs on the 25<sup>th</sup> March saying that the Norfolk Island Government and the Commonwealth need to agree a model of self governance so that similar service delivery arrangements as those in place for Christmas Island can be put in place for Commonwealth and State functions in Norfolk Island is it therefore reasonable for the

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services in New South Wales or the Indian Ocean Territories to identify appropriate service levels against specific staffing levels to ensure benchmarks are not eroded or whether greater than New South Wales standards, appropriate saving measures can be applied. Norfolk Island chose to benchmark against equivalent services from the Indian Ocean Territories. I'm certainly not saying that's the preferred model for Norfolk Island going forward. I'm saying to you that that was the model chosen for the preferred model under the benchmarking arrangements. Is that helpful because I'm certainly not for one month suggesting that what we offer, Norfolk Island, at this time, should in any way be diminished. Let me make that clear

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MR BUFFETT Thank you Mr Deputy Speaker, a supplementary please on this same subject. We've got a number of reports now that are looking at how we should travel forward in terms of health services and the Hospital and related services there. At present we have locums who provide the medical services. Good locums too I might say. But nevertheless we still have the difficulty of limited surgical processes within the island. We still have people who to bear children must go offshore, and I'm wondering whether in the information that you have to date Minister, I'm referring this to the appropriate Minister Mr Deputy 'speaker whether there is seen it be a remedy for the Norfolk Island community in some of those. In other words, continuity in terms of medical services and examples such as birth of children to be able to be undertaken within our own homeland

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MS ADAMS Thank you Mr Deputy Speaker. Mr Buffett I couldn't agree with you more but they are aspirational goals of each of us around this table, should be aspiring to that our health service is able to provide that going forward into the future. It's one of our greatest losses that our people are no longer being born on Norfolk Island but how we resolve that is not an easy issue and believe me, the Director is continually working through South East Sydney local health district in discussions with the Rural Health Service that provides doctors, trying to resolve this problem. The difficulty it would seem comes from the cost of insurance and the amount of doctors available to perform obstetrics. It's just a difficult area, believe me, that we are continuing to explore as best we can. I can make no promises into the future. The MPS model suggested by the NEXUS Report gives no joy in that regard. Indian Ocean Territories have no joy in that regard. But all I can give is an assurance that going forward, we will be endeavoring if it is at all possible to provide that service the community but I can make no promises. I hope that answers the question

DEPUTY SPEAKER Any further questions without notice. We move on

**ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

We move to Question on Notice and the first one is to the Chief Minister.

MR SNELL Thank you Mr Deputy Speaker, Question 64 Mrs Ward to ask the Chief Minister and Minister for Tourism, Is it a fact that the Norfolk Island Government has not taken advantage since October 2011 of its right to attend as an observer, high-level Australian Tourism meetings and if so; will the Chief Minister explain the failure to do so?, Mr Deputy Speaker, it is a fact that Norfolk Island does have observer status at both the Tourism Ministers' Council and the Australian Standing Committee on Tourism (ASCOT) meetings in Australia. ASCOT comprises Commonwealth, State, Territory and New Zealand representatives and develops, coordinates and considers tourism policies in Australia. Provides advice and recommendations to the Tourism Ministers' Council. Has collective responsibility for implementation of the National Long-Term Tourism Strategy, reporting to the Tourism Ministers' Council. The Tourism Ministers' Council provides a forum for discussion and decision making on tourism policy matters of mutual interest to the Australian Government, State, Territory and New Zealand Governments and has collective responsibility for delivery of the National Long-Term Tourism Strategy. In light of Norfolk Island's economic circumstances I have not attended any of the Ministerial Council

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Meetings as the cost of attendance outweighs the benefits. I can advise, however that the General Manager of the Norfolk Island Government Tourist Bureau receives all of the minutes and associated papers from the meetings to keep abreast of the overall discussions and trends within policy which enables him to advise me as responsible Minister. If Mrs Ward would like to view an example of minutes from the meetings, she is welcome to make a time to view them in my office. The minutes will also provide information on who attends. Thank you Mr Speaker.

MRS WARD Thank you Mr Speaker if I may. Given that the Chief Minister has said that the cost outweighs the benefits, what would the costs be

MR SNELL Thank you Mr Speaker the cost would be the travel allowance, the cost of the airfares, those would be the costs and I agree that we would have to then weigh j the difference of the benefits that may be associated with this, but as an observer the input from the Norfolk Island Minister would be minimal. The contacts with those who attend might certainly be of an advantage. I agree with Mrs Ward in some areas that it probably needs to be reviewed, and I take that from the question that Mrs Ward is asking, and I certainly take that on board.

MR SNELL Thank you Mr Speaker. Question 65 Mrs Ward to ask the Chief Minister and Minister for Tourism. Does the Norfolk Island Government have in place a tourism development framework to assist the Island and tourism industry to grow its competitiveness and if it does; will the Chief Minister give an overview of the framework and a progress report? Mr Speaker, on 11 December 2013 this House endorsed the Norfolk Island Tourism Strategic Plan 2013/2023 tabled on the 16<sup>th</sup> October 2013. The framework of this strategic plan is loosely based on the Australian Tourism framework and provides vision and guidance through a number of key themes and principles for the development of Tourism over the next ten years. The Basic Framework has the following components

- The Vision
- Strategic themes
- Guiding principles
- Leadership framework
- Market analysis
- Priorities
- Action Plans
- Review and measurement mechanisms

This plan was only endorsed in December of 2013 with the initial review of the Strategic plan set for March 2015. It is a little premature to assess the Strategy at this stage however Norfolk Island Government Tourist Bureau General Manager report for the 2013/14 Financial year, due out this month, will provide an overall update on Tourism and the elements of the Strategic Plan for which the Norfolk Island Government Tourist Bureau is responsible. Thank you Mr Speak

MRS WARD Thank you Mr Speaker will the report that the Chief Minister has just referred to be made publicly available and if I can add on to that, when the Tourism Strategy was Tabled in the House in December 2013, the public was led to believe that a communication plan would follow. What action has the Chief Minister or the Minister for Tourism taken to ensure that that will occur

MR SNELL Thank you Mr Speaker I will take those on notice and to ensure what Mrs Ward has asked will be discussed with the General Manager for a final decision

MR SNELL Thank you Mr Speaker. Question 66 Mrs Ward to ask the Chief Minister and Minister for Tourism. Given the Chief Minister's 4<sup>th</sup> of July comments on radio VL2NI will he confirm the following:

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- 1) That \$1,000,000 has been allocated in the 2014-15 budget for infrastructure investment;
- 2) How the investment will stimulate the economy; and
- 3) When the community will see the initiative rolled out?

Mr Speaker, the 2014/15 Budget includes capital expenditure of \$1.3 Million and roadwork materials of \$500,000.

#### **Capital Budget**

The major items included in the capital budget which will provide economic stimulus are:-

\$400,000 towards project CDG010, which is the preparatory work associated with the Cascade Jetty project. This work is primarily in the area of geo-technological work, (establishing the makeup of the geology below the sea-floor).

This is the first step in the project to strengthen, widen and extend Cascade Jetty, the primary funding being from the \$13 million Community Development Grant, as announced by the Assistant Minister for Infrastructure and Regional Development in December 2013.

This project will provide stimulus to the economy through the \$13 million that will be injected into the economy over the next two years. Whilst offshore resources will be required in aspects of the project, there will be an emphasis on using local material suppliers and labour, where-ever this is possible.

Additional economic stimulus will be achieved when cruise ships regularly include Norfolk Island in their schedules.

The community will see the commencement of this project when the Community Development Grant Funding Agreement is signed. A draft of this funding agreement is expected to be received in the coming weeks.

\$100,000 towards Project RDAF300024, the high temperature incinerator. This \$100,000 is for the housing, and ancillary costs associated with the installation of the High Temperature Incinerator. The \$433,000 cost of the incinerator is from a second Funding Agreement provided by the Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development Economic stimulus will be through the supply of the shed and installation of the incinerator being a combination of materials and labour from contractors and from within the Administration.

The incinerator installation is currently the subject of an Administrative Review Tribunal process. Subject to the outcome of the ART review, an expression of interest will be issued for the supply of the incinerator, and once the incinerator specifications are known work can commence on the supply of the shed and ancillary items.

\$80,000 for a new lighter. The project plan is currently being finalised and work will commence in the first quarter of this financial year. The donated timber has been drying for the past 12 months, and skilled labour will be required for this labour-intensive project.

#### **Roads Budget**

The Road materials budget of \$500,000 is a 200% increase on spending in recent years. It is in recognition of the condition of our roads and is part of a ten-year roads programme.

The increased programme will provide local stimulus through the increased requirement for crushed rock

MR SNELL Thank you Mr Speaker. Question 67 Mrs Ward to ask the Chief Minister and Minister for Tourism. Will the Chief Minister describe the action his Government has taken to further reduce barriers to tourism investment on the Island and will the Chief Minister describe the action his Government has taken to attract such investment to the Island? Mr Speaker Mrs Ward would be aware that during the term of the 13<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly in accordance with the September 2011 Funding Agreement Norfolk Island agreed to support and/or implement the full extension to Norfolk Island of the *Competition and Consumer Act 2010* (Cth); the reduction of any regulatory or other barriers to competition for telecommunications and any other business activity, including any legislative restrictions to enable Australian citizens to start any new businesses within the Territory and local policies to promote competition and investment in Norfolk Island. The Norfolk Island Legislative Assembly amended

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legislation to allow competition and relevant to this question passed the *Tourist Accommodation (Amendment) Act 2012*. The Amendment Act removed the restriction on non-resident ownership and repealed the *Tourist Accommodation (Ownership) Act 1989* to de-regulate and de-control the provision of tourist accommodation on Norfolk Island. The Norfolk Island Government believes that there are no remaining Norfolk Island legislative barriers to tourism investment in Norfolk Island. In accordance with the Funding Agreement requirements to promote immigration and investment in Norfolk Island, an Immigration and Investment Promotion Strategy was developed. Funding of \$50,000 was provided by the Commonwealth to enable an advertising campaign to promote the opportunity to live and invest in Norfolk Island. The advertising campaign was conducted in mainstream Australian newspapers in both Sydney and Brisbane; in Your World Magazine and Norfolk Online. To complement that campaign. A new advertising campaign will soon commence through Australian magazine advertising using Bartercard trade dollars provided by the Administration of Norfolk Island, the Norfolk Island Government Tourist Bureau is assisting the Administration of Norfolk Island to put together that strategy now. The strategy combines the compilation and publication of information relevant to living investing and business development in Norfolk Island. An eBook "Investment and Business Development Opportunities in Norfolk Island" was developed by the Administration of Norfolk Island in conjunction with the Norfolk Island Government Tourist Bureau, highlighting the potential of the destination for living and investing in Norfolk Island. The eBook, and we give thanks to Mr Nobbs as well, includes the reference to the changes to the Tourist Accommodation legislation and immigration system. In addition to the eBook, a double sided flyer was produced called "Live in/Invest in Norfolk Island" which also promotes living, investing and business development opportunities in Norfolk Island. The flyer is available both in electronic and hard copy. An email address – investmentenquiries@admin.gov.nf has also been set up as a first port of call for investment enquiries. Thank you Mr Speaker.

MR SNELL Thank you Mr Speaker. Question 68 Mrs Ward to ask the Chief Minister and Minister for Tourism. Will the Chief Minister outline the Norfolk Island Government's policy position in relation to skilled foreign labour entering the Island? Mr Speaker the Norfolk Island Government's policy is the *Immigration Act 1980*. The Act provides that if an employer in Norfolk Island requires skilled labour not available in Norfolk Island then they are entitled to seek such skilled labour elsewhere than in Norfolk Island. A foreign national seeking a grant of a Temporary Entry Permit for the purposes of employment must satisfy certain conditions including the grant of an Australian Multiple Entry Visa. Thank you Mr Speaker.

MR NOBBS Thank you Mr Speaker, could I ask a supplementary question. I don't know if its to Mrs Ward or to the Chief Minister, but is there any reference to skilled?

MR SNELL Thank you Mr Speaker, the reference to skilled labour would be to trades and those requiring certification in probably construction. The Norfolk Island Government acknowledged that there is no legislation requiring registration and licensing of persons within the construction and some associated building trades. Perhaps Mr Nobbs is referring to this but the Building Act 2002 and the Building Regulations 2004, some must comply also to the Building Act of Australia, Electrical licensing and Registration Act 1985 for electrical supply Regulations and Australian standards must be complied with. There are conditions within Norfolk Island that puts some conditions over licenses that are granted here.

MS ADAMS Thank you Mr Speaker. Question 69 Mrs Ward to ask Minister Adams. Thank you Mr Speaker and thank you Ms Ward for the question. The question reads, is it a fact that during the 2014-15 funding agreement negotiations the Norfolk Island Government rejected a proposal put forward by the Australian Government to remove all further barriers to Australians coming to the Island to live and if so; on whose advice was the Minister acting and what were the reasons given? Mr Speaker for the record the proposed funding agreement milestone to which Mrs Ward is

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modern society; and harmonised with the mainland arrangements under the Migration Act 1958 (Cth).” Regrettably this statement adds little clarity to the subject matter and if there is no intention to extend the Migration Act 1958 (Cth) to Norfolk Island it is appropriate that Norfolk Island be formally advised. It has been suggested as a first step to our harmonising with the mainland arrangements under the Migration Act 1958 (Cth) is the removal of all conditions for existing Australian residents wishing to move to Norfolk Island. I think that should have said ‘citizens’. Norfolk Island has responded as follows: An Australian citizen can move freely to and from Norfolk Island however, it is the Australian Immigration regime that requires those same citizens to hold a passport or a document of identity for re-entry into Australia. Although a statement of fact that an Australian citizen has to pay \$125 to become a resident of Norfolk Island, this has no relevance to freedom of movement to and from Norfolk Island by Australian citizens. There is no requirement for an Australian citizen to become a resident of Norfolk Island and in fact it could be argued it is not in their interests to do so for the following reasons: An Australian citizen who is a resident of Norfolk Island cannot return to Australia and immediately obtain the benefits that they enjoyed when they were ordinarily resident in Australia. If an Australian citizen moves to Norfolk Island for longer than five years, they are no longer eligible for Medicare. An Australian citizen ordinarily resident in Norfolk Island is not entitled to benefits under the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme; cannot obtain Australian Private Health Insurance to cover them whilst in Norfolk Island; they are no longer eligible for entitlements under the Australian social services system and if admitted to other than a New South Wales public hospital are considered international patients and charged accordingly. An Australian citizen seeking to remain in Norfolk Island however can immediately join the Norfolk Island Healthcare Scheme which will provide them with medical, hospital and medical evacuation insurance benefits. These comments support the view that the barriers to immigration and investment in Norfolk Island are not as a result of the Norfolk Island immigration legislation, but exist as a result of Australia’s immigration legislation and systems, not those of Norfolk Island. Mr Speaker this response is lengthy but for the reasons stated earlier it is lengthy of necessity in the interests of documenting a historical timeline around this issue.

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MRS WARD Thank you Mr Speaker and I thank the Minister for her response. Just if I can seek clarity. The last point about the disadvantages for the people who become residents on Norfolk Island around social services and health benefits, may I ask the Minister who that advise has been provided by

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MS ADAMS Thank you Mr Speaker. As is normal case in crafting any response and this response has been crafted by myself, I do have discussions with other people and I’m either comfortable with the discussions and the outcomes from those discussions or I am not. Therefore what is before you is the view that I hold Mrs Ward

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MRS WARD Thank you Mr Speaker if I may because it’s very important to seek clarity on this issue as to whether this is advise or a research project that the Minister has carried out herself or whether this is information been provided to her by the Norfolk Island Administration

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MS ADAMS Thank you Mr Speaker I have answered the question

MRS WARD Mr Speaker am I to take it that this was a research project done by the Minister

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MS ADAMS I have answered the question thank you Mr Speaker

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MRS WARD and not with the advise provided to her by the Administration

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MS ADAMS I have answered the question thank you Mr Speaker

MR SNELL Thank you Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, if Mrs Ward is agreeable, I will answer questions on notice number 70 and 71 together as they are inter-related. Thank you Mrs Ward and I thank Mrs Ward for the questions. The questions are: 70. Given that passports, Medicare and private health insurance are regularly listed as barriers to tourism on Norfolk Island and given that these items are beyond the control of the Norfolk Island Government; what is the Chief Minister doing on behalf of the community to pursue them with the Australian Government? And 71. Given that lack of certainty in relation to governance, taxation and social welfare, are commonly stated as barrier to investment on Norfolk Island; what action has the Chief Minister taken on behalf of the community to pursue these matters of continuing uncertainty with the Australian Government? Mr Speaker my response to these questions is necessarily lengthy. Mr Speaker whilst tourism and governance issues fall in my portfolio responsibilities, immigration, Medicare, private health insurance and social welfare fall within the portfolio responsibility of the Minister for Cultural Heritage and Community Services. Mr Speaker the issues highlighted by Mrs Ward as being barriers to tourism and investment in Norfolk Island are real supportable concerns. Mrs Ward has asked what am I doing on behalf of the community to pursue these matters with the Australian Government. Mr Speaker, I can assure Mrs Ward and this community that the Norfolk Island Government has raised with the Commonwealth Government these issues on a number of occasions. On 27 March 2014 an Inquiry into Economic Development in Norfolk Island by the Joint Standing Committee on the National Capital and External Territories was announced. The Norfolk Island Government lodged its submission to the Inquiry by the due date on 17 April 2014. The Submission outlines the issues raised by Mrs Ward including the requirement for visitors to hold travel insurance because neither private health insurance nor Medicare will cover them for any medical or hospital costs incurred in Norfolk Island and the increased costs for aged visitors seeking travel insurance. In addition, anecdotal evidence provided to the Norfolk Island Government is that some social welfare benefits are not transportable when Australian's travel to Norfolk Island and this can reduce the time that an Australian chooses to visit Norfolk Island. The Submission repeatedly referred to the need for an agreement on the Norfolk Island Preferred Model for Territory Self Governance which would see these commonwealth benefit schemes, including the pharmaceutical benefit scheme, extended to Norfolk Island. This was a commitment of the Commonwealth Government in Funding Agreements in particular the September 2011 Funding Agreement. The Preferred Model for Territory Self Governance has been submitted to the Commonwealth Government on a number of occasions and reaffirmed by this House not only by this government but also during the term of the 13<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly. We continue to wait for at least an acknowledgement of all those letters. Mr Speaker in terms of the need for a passport, this is an Australian Government requirement for persons wishing to seek to enter Australia including Australian citizens. In 1981 the Commonwealth announced new requirements for Trans-Tasman travel and from 1 July 1981 all people entering Australia were required to hold and produce a passport. I should point out though that Australian citizens travelling to and from Norfolk Island can travel on a Document of Identity which is processed in the same way as a passport application. The 2001 JSC Inquiry "In the Pink and In the Red" found, and I quote: "The Committee does not believe that Australian citizens should need a passport to travel to and from Norfolk Island. ... If tourism, and hence the Norfolk Island economy, is to flourish, visitors will need guarantees that their visit will not impose hidden costs." Mr Speaker, as the then Chief Minister your government was required by the September 2011 Funding Agreements with the Commonwealth Government to remove immigration barriers on Australian citizens seeking to travel to and remain in Norfolk Island to facilitate the extension for the Migration Act 1958 and for the Commonwealth to outline an implementation plan for access to Commonwealth benefits schemes, including Social Security and Medicare.. In good faith Norfolk Island removed those immigration barriers but the Commonwealth is yet to meet its commitments. Mr Speaker prior to the Joint Standing Committee Inquiry, representatives of the Norfolk Island Government met with Minister Briggs in Canberra in

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November 2013 and in Norfolk Island in February 2014. The issues mentioned by Mrs Ward in her question were, amongst other things, raised with Minister Briggs including the preferred model of governance. During the February meetings an undertaking was given by the Federal Minister that Options for the future governance of Norfolk Island would be provided to the Norfolk Island Government prior to being submitted to the Federal Cabinet. The February meeting was followed up with a letter from me in March 2014 and again in May 2014. The Norfolk Island Government is yet to receive details of governance options being considered by the Commonwealth. On 5 June 2014, I received a letter from Minister Briggs to advise that the funding support being provided for the 2014-2015 financial year is only a short-term measure while the Australian Government considers is broader election commitment to integrate Norfolk Island into the Australian Taxation and Social Security Systems. Mr Speaker, I responded to Minister Briggs on 11 June 2014 requesting that both governments return to the negotiation table to resolve all the outstanding issues committed to by the Commonwealth Government and the Norfolk Island Government to give certainty as to the future governance of Norfolk Island. I again wrote to Minister Briggs on 25 June 2014 addressing all the issues outlined in his letter setting out the higher level commitments he has sought from the Norfolk Island Government upon which the Commonwealth funding for the 2014-15 financial year is contingent upon and seeking an agreement to an intergovernmental meeting with the commencement of the new Administrator, the Hon Gary Hardgrave. I am yet to receive a response to those letters which have all been tabled previously. Mr Speaker, I could go back to the commencement of this 14<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly and outline all the approaches made by this government to the Commonwealth Government outlining what the Norfolk Island Government has attempted to achieve. Suffice to say that when this government was first elected in March 2013 the Ministers wrote to their counterpart Ministers in the Federal Government and the Shadow Ministry. When the Federal Government changed to a Coalition Government in September 2013 the Norfolk Island government wrote again to the newly appointed Federal Ministers. Responses to the majority of those letters are yet to be received. Mr Speaker I will contain the rest of this response to what the Minister for Cultural Heritage and Community has attempted to achieve in relation to immigration, health issues and social welfare with the Commonwealth Government. There have been numerous letters written by the Minister for Cultural Heritage and Community Services to the Federal Minister and other Federal Ministers in relation to the issues raised by Mrs Ward not only because they are considered barriers to tourism and investment but to seek assistance of the Commonwealth to address the commitments to extend social welfare and Medicare to this community and to address the aspirational goals of the Road Map in relation to Immigration, Health, Welfare and Education. The Minister for Cultural Heritage and Community Services wrote to the Shadow Ministers in March 2013 and in particular the Hon Kevin Andrews who was Shadow Minister for Families, Housing and Human Services and the then Shadow Minister for Health and Ageing, the Hon Peter Dutton, MP. When the Federal Government changed to be a Coalition Government, Minister Adams again wrote to the responsible Ministers and in particular the Hon Kevin Andrews and Hon Peter Dutton who are now the Minister for Social Services and for Health respectively. In November 2013 Minister Adams again wrote to Ministers Briggs and Dutton in relation to the extension of Medicare, the PBS Scheme and the Private Health Insurance Act 2007 and the broader issue in the September 2011 Funding Agreement in which the Commonwealth undertook to provide an implementation plan for access to Commonwealth benefits schemes, including social services and Medicare. In fact, a meeting was arranged for Minister Adams to meet with Minister Dutton during the period we were in Canberra to meet with Minister Briggs but the meeting with Minister Dutton was cancelled at the last moment. Minister Adams again wrote to the then Administrator in January 2014 seeking to follow up on the letter to Ministers Briggs and Dutton. Last week, Minister Adams met with the Administrator, the Hon Gary Hardgrave and again outlined that Norfolk Island had in good faith removed the barriers to immigration for Australian citizens but that the Australian commitment to extend social services and Medicare had not been met. Mr Speaker, this has been a lengthy response but I trust that it responds sufficiently to Mrs Ward's questions for which I thank her

MS ADAMS Question 72 Mrs Ward to ask Minister Adams. Thank you Mr Speaker and thank you Ms Ward for the question. The question reads, what Hospital budget funds have been allocated to carry out further consultation in relation to assessing the health service needs of the community and when will the assessment process be complete? The Norfolk Island Hospital Enterprise has allocated a sum of \$25,000 in this financial year to undertake a health needs assessment of the community. The Long Term Strategic Planning will be funded in the 2015/2016 budget. It is anticipated that the first stage of the assessment process will be concluded by the end of October, 2014 with the Long term Strategic Planning completed in the next financial year. Notwithstanding this allocation in the Hospital budget which by its very size is a constraint as to how far we can go at this time, notwithstanding this allocation, Members will also be aware that in the Commonwealth budget for Norfolk Island there is a sum of \$2M for ongoing governance reforms. The Norfolk Island Government has submitted a proposal to the Commonwealth on expenditure of these funds and this proposal includes a request for \$50,000 to undertake the health needs assessment out of which an aged Care Strategy can be developed. Thank you Mr Speaker.

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MS ADAMS Thank you Mr Speaker and thank you again Mrs Ward for the question. Question 73, What percentage of the Hospital budget is allocated to preventative health programmes? The Norfolk Island Hospital Enterprise has allocated a total of \$40,500 or 1% of the budget for preventative health programs. This includes funds for Health Promotion, Public Health screening, School Dental program, Psychiatric services and the Quit Smoking program. The of course has been carried over from previous years. In fact Members may have noticed in the Norfolk Islander on 12 July 2014 a half page advertisement from the Norfolk Island Health Services headed Women's Wellness Program and I table that document, where the Lion's Club of Arthur's Vale, the Rotary Club of Norfolk Island and the hospital health service have provided details of a screening program designed for women of all ages commencing today and being run for at least ten weeks. I quote from the notice in the Islander. "There is a world-wide recognition of the need for health promotion initiatives to reduce the burden of chronic illness on each person and on society in general. It has been shown that the financial burden of health services can be greatly alleviated by reducing the incidence of type 2 diabetes, which is regarded as a 'lifestyle disease' which is the scourge of many parts of the world". In conclusion may I offer the gratitude of the Norfolk Island Government, my Assembly colleagues and the Norfolk Island community to the service clubs and many community groups on Norfolk Island who greatly assist in subsidising many preventative health programs. Their service to the community should never be understated. Thank you Mr Speaker.

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MS ADAMS Thank you Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker there is an interrelation between questions 74 and 75 and with the indulgence of Mrs Ward I intend to respond to both of them at the same time. The questions from Mrs Ward are - Question 74, Is it a fact that the draft funding agreement calls for an Aged Care Strategy to be developed and if so: is the Minister confident that the necessary skills to carry out this important work exist on island? Question 75, Will the Minister inform the House what is stopping the draft Nexus Health Report being finalized? To give context to the issues raised in the questions. The draft Schedule to the proposed 2014-2015 Funding Agreement provided by the Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development and the letter dated 5 June 2014 from the Hon Jamie Briggs, setting out the high level commitments expected from the Norfolk Island Government upon which the essential services funding is contingent, requires: 1. the development of an aged care strategy; and 2. The key recommendations of the 2013 Nexus Management Consulting Health Services Plan review must be implemented within the life of this funding agreement. I have both in writing to, and in helpful discussions with His Honour the Administrator, shared my view that the Norfolk Island Government cannot agree to this condition being met within the timeframe of the milestone being proposed and have sought agreement that these milestones be removed from the Schedule as I have requested that a Health

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Needs Assessment be undertaken from which an Aged Care Strategy can be developed. I have outlined in the response document which I now table, the recommendations of the Nexus Report and the Norfolk Island Government's position on each recommendation to support my request to remove the milestone pending the Health Needs Assessment. It's important to note Mr Speaker, that the Draft Nexus Report was a desk top study by Nexus Management Consulting. There was minimal engagement with stakeholders, and on their own admission Nexus, noted that the planning process had significant resourcing and timing constraints that precluded a more comprehensive consultation process with the Norfolk Island community. Moreover, there is on their admission a paucity of available data on the health status of the Norfolk Island population which should underpin health service planning. Accordingly, this plan does not purport to be a detailed services plan; rather it sets out a broad direction for the future of the health service. There was no consultation with doctors, there was no consultation with hospital staff and there was no consultation with the community at large. In terms of the necessary skills to develop an Aged Care Strategy, it is intended that the Strategy will be developed following the health needs assessment of the community which will be conducted by consultants. In tabling this document I'm not intending this day to read all the comments. I put it on the table and with leave of the House that it be taken as read and included in Hansard.

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SPEAKER Leave is granted

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MS ADAMS Thank you Mr Speaker. That concludes me.

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**DRAFT Health Services Plan**  
**Norfolk Island**  
**Nexus Management Consulting**  
**(The Nexus Report)**

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Assistant Minister Briggs in a letter to the Norfolk Island Government dated 5 June 2014 articulates for the Norfolk Island Government his expectations which underpin the Commonwealth's continued support.

The letter advises that "Commonwealth funding will be contingent upon a number of higher level commitments which amongst other things, requires "...a continued commitment to implement in a timely manner broader reforms which are preconditions to tax and social services integration".

This document addresses the following higher level commitment:

**"The key recommendations of the 2013 Nexus Management Consulting Health Services Plan review must be implemented within the life of this funding agreement"**.

The Norfolk Island Government cannot agree to this condition being met within the timeframe of the 2014-2015 Funding Agreement as set out below.

Overview

The Nexus Report was a desk top study by Nexus Management Consulting. There was minimum engagement with stakeholders, and on their own admission Nexus, noted that the planning process had significant resourcing and timing constraints that precluded a more comprehensive consultation process with the Norfolk Island community. Moreover, there is a paucity of available data on the health status of the Norfolk Island population which should underpin health service planning. Accordingly, this plan does not purport to be a detailed services plan; rather it sets out a broad direction for the future of the health service.

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There was no consultation with doctors, hospital staff or with the community at large.

**Recommendations of Nexus Report**

This paper –

- Documents the recommendations of the Nexus Report;
- Gives context in respect of those recommendations that have already been met;
- Provides the Norfolk Island Government's response on each recommendation;  
and
- Identifies the reasons why the Norfolk Island Government is not in a position to implement the key recommendations of the Nexus Report in the 2014-2015 financial years.

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### Recommendation 1

It is recommended that the Norfolk Island Hospital be replaced by a Multi-Purpose Service (MPS) that includes residential care beds, acute care beds, community health services and outpatient services

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#### Norfolk Island Government position

The Nexus Report provides examples of Australian (New South Wales) purpose built MPS facilities - Balranald Health Service at a capital cost of \$13.9 million for a population of 3000; and Hillston MPS to be built in 2014 – estimated capital cost \$12 million for a population of 1054. Based on these figures the costs of a purpose built MPS on Norfolk Island would be considerably higher due to increased costs of shipping and freighting building materials and associated equipment to the Island. This is supported in the Nexus commentary which states:

"While none of these examples are the same as Norfolk Island in terms of population size and/or proximity to the nearest hospital, they do provide some information about the capital costs of building a facility and estimated recurrent costs. These figures are indicative only: the recurrent costs would depend on the services provided and the staff requirements; the costs of evacuations from Norfolk significantly increase the estimated operating costs of any health facility on Norfolk. Moreover the building costs would be higher on Norfolk because of the need to obtain building material from the mainland."

When benchmarked against the Indian Ocean Territories Health Service (Christmas Island) (refer attached benchmarking report dated 25 June 2014 prepared by the Director of the Norfolk Island Hospital Enterprise) and the Balranald Health Service (refer Appendix 3 of the Nexus Report) it is clear that, based on the services that the Norfolk Island Hospital Enterprise provides, the Enterprise already aligns with an MPS, notwithstanding the hospital is not yet accredited and it is in need of major structural upgrading.

This Norfolk Island Government, along with previous governments, have sought, unsuccessfully, to obtain grant funding to build a new hospital under the Health and Hospital Fund Regional Priority Round however at that time Norfolk Island did not satisfy the definition of a *local governing body* and therefore was not eligible to apply for funding. The Norfolk Island Government requested, through the Office of the Administrator, in April 2011 for the Federal Minister to declare Norfolk Island as a *local governing body* for the purposes of Commonwealth funding under the *Local Government (Financial Assistance) Act 1995 (Cth)*. This declaration was not made. .

The recommendation above for the construction of a new, built for purpose MPS in Norfolk Island's current economic circumstances is unrealistic and not feasible as such a project could potentially equate to half the annual Norfolk Island Government Budget.

As stated in the letter from the Chief Minister to Minister Briggs on 25 June 2014 the next step is a health needs assessment to be undertaken in consultation with the community. Minister Adams previously wrote to Minister Briggs on 25 March 2014 in relation to this issue and seeking to retain \$35,000 of Commonwealth funding to the Norfolk Island Hospital Enterprise to apply to undertaking the necessary health needs assessment. This request was denied.

Despite this a health needs assessment will be undertaken by an appropriately qualified consultant hopefully within the next two months.

#### **Recommendation 2**

**It is recommended that the Norfolk Island Multi-Purpose Service develop a suite of primary health care and community health services appropriate to the needs of the Norfolk Island community with particular priority for aged care, mental health and drug and alcohol services.**

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#### **Norfolk Island Government position**

It is unclear why Nexus in clause 4.2 proposes the need to develop general practitioner and visiting specialist services, dental services, pharmacy services, health screening services, including pre-school and school clinics, domestic violence, community nursing and outreach services when these services are already provided. See attached benchmarking report. It is acknowledged that whilst Alcoholics Anonymous, GROW and the Mental Health Support Group are very active on the Island, the Norfolk Island Government is supportive of these services receiving further robust support.

The building of programmes to enhance health education, health promotion and preventative health initiatives are already being developed by NIHE with key stakeholders with the full support of the Norfolk Island Government.

As stated in the Norfolk Island Government position on recommendation 1, the aged care needs of the community, now and into the future, will be included in the proposed health needs assessment to be undertaken in consultation with key stakeholders and the community at large. The matter of Mental Health services and drug and alcohol services are already the subject of a fully costed draft proposal prepared in September 2013 by South Eastern Sydney Local Health District (SESLHD) for the Norfolk Island Hospital Enterprise (NIHE). This confidential proposal (attached) has only recently been brought to the attention of the Director of the NIHE, the Norfolk Island Hospital Advisory Board and the Norfolk Island Minister and whilst funds have been allocated in the NIHE 2014-15 budget to progress the proposal, it is yet to be fully discussed with the Director, the Advisory Board and SESLHD.

#### **Recommendation 3**

**It is recommended that the Norfolk Island Multi-Purpose Service form part of the community hub recommended in the recent review of child and family support services in the Island.**

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#### **Norfolk Island Government Position**

The Norfolk Island Government provided a written response to the Review of Child and Family Support Services to the Department on 25 September 2013 and sought advice as to the Australian Government's response to recommendations in the Report which refer to what is recommended that the Australian Government undertake. The Norfolk Island Government has not received a response from the Department.

#### **Recommendation 5 of that Report proposed:**

"That a community centre be established as the "Hub" from which to provide a coordinated service system for Norfolk Island's children and families. To facilitate the establishment of the Hub, the Norfolk Island Government should provide a rent free centrally located community house that would provide the physical needs of the Hub, supporting its upkeep and maintenance, and funding its utilities and on-costs."

Recommendation 5 further defines the role of the Australian Government in facilitating the establishment of the Hub including funding a full-time social worker, assisting the Team leader in the development of the Hub's reporting framework; relocating the

Community Liaison Officer to the Hub; providing a program fund of \$20,000 per annum to support Hub initiatives arising from community consultation and need, support the cost of 1800 number access and undertake a three year evaluation for the Hub including at least twice yearly management meetings between the Hub, the Norfolk Island Government and the Australian Government.

A community hub supported by the Norfolk Island Government has been established in a house owned by the Norfolk Island Administration known as "DCA No. 9". The hub is an incorporated association known as "Norfolk Island Community Centre Incorporated".

The objectives of the association are –

- To provide a welcoming and respectful environment in which people can meet that engenders a sense of personal ownership and empowerment.
- To provide services to meet the social welfare needs of disadvantaged individuals and groups residing on Norfolk Island.
- To undertake work to identify these needs on Norfolk Island and to assist in developing a response.
- To provide flexible services responsive to client needs and to implement appropriate service management standards, and policies and procedures accordingly.
- To provide management expertise and material support to DCA8, also known as the "Norfolk Island supported accommodation project".
- To co-operate and work in partnership with other organisations with similar objects, aims and values.

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The Community Hub is in its infancy. It currently has a dual purpose – the Child Welfare Officer has her base there and the building provides an alternative location for the counsellor when his clients wish privacy that is not provided at his rooms at the Norfolk Island Hospital Enterprise. It is intended that the Hub would in time be a venue for public awareness and educational programs on a multitude of health and wellbeing issues using preventative rather than reactive measures.

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#### **Recommendation 4**

**It is recommended that the health service of Norfolk Island be contracted to an off-shore position, in line with the model for police and school education.**

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#### **Norfolk Island Government position**

Comparing the current model for provision of police and school education to Norfolk Island to the provision of health services to an offshore provider demonstrates a lack of understanding on the part of Nexus as to how police and school teachers are engaged and funded.

Provision of teachers for the Norfolk Island Central School is provided through a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between NSW Department of Education and Communities and the Norfolk Island Government. Salaries for those teachers are at the same rate as those paid in New South Wales. The 1988 MOU between the Commonwealth of Australia and the Norfolk Island Government together with the Education Act 1931 sets out the broad parameters for the provision of education on Norfolk Island. The engagement of Australian Federal Police is on a similar basis.

The MOU with SESLHD Provides a clear referral pathway for patient transfers and generally the arrangement under the MOU has worked well and provides an essential service to Norfolk Island residents requiring medical and/or hospital treatment off-island. There are areas of service delivery by SESLHD under the MOU that require further fine tuning and these continue to be addressed by both the Norfolk Island Hospital Enterprise (NIHE) and SESLHD through ongoing teleconferences. Staffing of, and the wage structure for employees of the NIHE is governed by the *Norfolk Island Hospital Act 1985*, and the Public Sector Remuneration Tribunal, not under the MOU with SESLHD

The Norfolk Island Government at this time does not support the engagement of an offshore provider for Norfolk Island Health Services.

#### **Recommendation 5**

**It is recommended in light of the formal relationship with South Eastern Sydney Local Health District that its Board be approached about providing the role of the offshore provision of the Island's health services.**

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#### **Norfolk Island Government position**

The previous Acting Director of the NIHE Ms Julie Morrison, a secondee from SESLHD, in collaboration with the then Chief Executive of SESLHD, engaged Nexus to develop the health services plan.

The Norfolk Island Government at this time does not support the engagement of an offshore provider for Norfolk Island Health Services. The Norfolk Island Government gives an undertaking to write to the Director of Health in NSW and the Director of Health in Queensland to ascertain the feasibility, including whether it would be cost effective for an offshore provider to provide Norfolk Island Health Services.

The Norfolk Island Government would not support an offshore provider without market testing for provision of the service as required by clause 42 of the Commonwealth Finance Minister's (Norfolk Island) Orders 2011

#### **Recommendation 6**

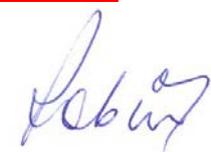
**It is recommended that existing legislation covering individual health measures be consolidated into a single public health act.**

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#### **Norfolk Island Government position**

The Norfolk Island Government gives in principle support to the concept of consolidating Norfolk Island's health legislation that is not currently under the control of the Norfolk Island Hospital Enterprise into a single public health act which would address tobacco, food, drugs and poisons and the regulations of other public health-related activities.

The Norfolk Island Government acknowledges the merits of this recommendation. Whilst the Norfolk Island Government does not support the inclusion of this recommendation as a milestone in a Funding Agreement, the Norfolk Island Government will commit to use its best endeavours to achieve this goal on the clear understanding that there are competing priorities for drafting of new legislation. The new public health legislation will be included on the Government's Legislative Programme with a goal of tabling an exposure draft in the Parliament in late 2015.



Robin Adams

**Minister for Cultural Heritage and Community Services**  
**3 July 2014**

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SPEAKER We've concluded Questions on Notice Honourable Members and we move on.

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#### **PRESENTATION OF PAPERS**

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**MR SNELL** Thank you Mr Speaker. I table the Norfolk Island Government response to recommendations made by the Infrastructure and Business Development Committee. The Chair of the **Infrastructure and Business Development Committee** has reported to this House on the deliberations of the Committee and presented the Committee's Reports dated 17 July 2013; 16 October 2013; 19 February 2014 and 21 May 2014. These reports were provided to the Norfolk Island Government Ministers on the 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2014 to enable the Government to consider the recommendations. Mr Speaker the Norfolk Island Government commends the Members of the Infrastructure and Business Development Committee on the four reports presented. The Government has responded to each of the recommendations contained in each of the Reports and has requested that the Committee recommends what it considers the top five priorities to be pursued which would be achievable and affordable given the competing priorities for finance and human resources available to the Norfolk Island Government and the Administration of Norfolk Island. Thank you Mr Speaker

**SPEAKER** I note that somebody may wish to move a motion that notes this Report

**MRS WARD** Thank you Mr Speaker I'll move that the Report be noted

**SPEAKER** The question is that the Report be noted

**MRS WARD** Thank you Mr Speaker if it is the intention of other Members, particularly the Members of the Working Group to speak then I will hold back, if they would like to speak but I'm not getting any indication ...yes they may Mr Speaker and I will come back

**MR NOBBS** Thank you Mr Speaker. We haven't discussed the letter actually at this stage. I think we will be doing that some time this week or next week depending on when our next meeting is scheduled and I understand, I received a call last night that we may be able to schedule one next week for one particular ongoing proposal and I would suggest that it may be appropriate to make it an order of the day for the next day of sitting Mr Speaker and we can deal with it then if Members are agreeable to that

**SPEAKER** Could I just see if there are any other comments before we actually entertain that particular motion

**MRS WARD** Thank you Mr Speaker just to say that I would be comfortable to support and adjournment

**SPEAKER** Okay then Mr Nobbs, I interpret then that this matter be adjourned and made an order of the day for a subsequent day of sitting

QUESTION PUT  
 AGREED

The ayes have it. That matter is attended to. Thank you Chief Minister. Further papers

**MR SNELL** Thank you Mr Speaker, I table the NIGTB Visitor Statistics for 2013-14 Financial Year. I am pleased to advise of some highlights for the year that are worth noting. Total numbers are up 2053 passengers or 9% on the 12/13 figures. This is despite a 15% reduction in the Norfolk Island Government Tourist Bureau Budget and this is above the Strategic Plan target by 6%. June 2014 was the best June

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ensured their success in being invited to perform at the State Dance Festival. However, not only have these beautiful girls represented Norfolk in Australia, over the years they have also done so in Tahiti; the Cook Islands; the Solomon Islands and Palau. The State Dance Festival presents the work of over 1500 students from Kindergarten to Yr 12. The Festival showcases these students in six diverse performance programs throughout the week long festival. The program highlights the study of dance in public schools. Each performance reveals the determination of students and their teachers to explore the art of dance and to achieve performances of the highest quality. These performances are underpinned by technical training, stamina, creativity, confidence and respect for one another. Hard work and training is a weekly discipline for the Baunti Byuutis under their mentor Mrs Maree Reynolds and training has certainly stepped up since the first meeting with parents back in March when the decision to apply for this coveted event was taken. They have been dancing at the airport and other community events for some months now to raise the funds needed to allow them to accept the well deserved invitation from the NSW Department of Education and Communities. The girls are impressive on stage and truly need to be recognised for their hard work and dedication, a fact to which I can personally attest having together with the School Principal Mrs Nicholson last evening watched them perform as the introductory act at Colleen Hewitt's concert at Rawson Hall. In addition to funds the girls have raised themselves and other donations from the community, as part of the Department of Education and Communities Rural and Remote strategy the school will receive \$2000 towards the cost of getting the girls to Sydney to perform. This grant is very much appreciated. This is a very exciting opportunity for the students to celebrate one aspect of Norfolk Culture and share it with so many people at such an elite level. From all ucklun well done yorlyi. Thank you Mr Speaker.

SPEAKER Thank you Ms Adams. Any further Statements?  
We've concluded thank you

#### MESSAGE FROM THE OFFICE OF THE ADMINISTRATOR – NO 16

SPEAKER Honourable Members **Message No. 16** – from the Administrator advising that on 27 June 2014 acting pursuant to section 21 of the *Norfolk Island Act 1979* I, declared my assent to the following proposed law passed by the Legislative Assembly, the **Appropriation Act 2014-2015 (Act No 8 of 2014)**. The message is dated 27<sup>th</sup> June 2014 and signed Neil Pope, Administrator,

#### REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES

SPEAKER Honourable Members there are no reports of Standing Committees this morning. No. We move to Notices.



#### NORFOLK ISLAND LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY 14<sup>TH</sup> NILA HANSARD – 14 AUGUST 2013

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

#### PRAYER

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

## ~~CONDOLENCES~~

### ~~SPEAKER~~

~~Honourable Members Are there any condolences today. Mr Evans~~

### ~~MR EVANS~~

~~It is with regret that this House records the passing of **Lynette May Sheridan** affectionately known as Bub. Born in March 1965 and raised on Norfolk Island, she was the daughter of Christine and Warren Sheridan. Lynette was the youngest of five children, sister to Deb, Tim, Martyn and Sam. As a child she was close to her older brothers and considered herself a tom boy, playing outside in their playground of Ball Bay, having adventures with their cousins and the animals and spending summers at the beach. Lynette loved horses and as a child she learned to ride well. She loved spending time with her dad and was happiest when feeding the animals. Lynette did well at school and enjoyed competing on Sports Day for her Norfolk House. By 1978 most of the older children had moved out of home and Lynette moved to Sydney with her Mother. They settled in the eastern suburbs and Lynette attended Randwick Girls High where she quickly made friends and developed her own independence. Lynette loved the fast life in Sydney but her heart brought her home many times. She had four children and they made her extremely happy. Ngaire first in 1982 then Jesse ten years later. He formed a close relationship with his Mother and became her rock. During one of her trips back to Norfolk she rekindled a childhood romance and was married and had her third child Jenna. This was one of the happiest times of her life. Finally Jonah came along with his kind eyes and big heart just like his Mother. Lynette was a wonderful aunty to seventeen nieces and nephews. She was generous and would give even, when she herself had little. In the course of her life Lynette had many jobs including working at the post office, cooking with her Mother and cooking at the hospital. Lynette battled many challenging life experiences. In 2001 she enrolled in TAFE to use her own experience to help others and became a drug and alcohol worker. She worked successfully in her career for many years and helped many people who suffered from similar problems as her. This is when her kind and compassionate nature was at its best. Lynette had a fun loving nature and she enjoyed spending the day at the beach and then going home to enjoy an evening with her many friends just as she also enjoyed having a good chat over a cuppa and many nights were spent with a pot luck dinner. Lynette always saw the best in people and formed many friendships over the years. She will be remembered as being young at heart, a caring, free spirited and loving daughter, sister, aunty, friend and mother. To Ngaire, Jesse, Jenna, Jonah, Christine, Deb, Tim and Sam and their families, and to her many friends, this House extends its deepest sympathy. May she rest in peace.~~

~~It is with regret that this House records the passing of **Joan Irwin**, a lady who has loved the Island since she and her late husband, Commander Peter Irwin, RN, Retired, came to live here in 1980. She was farewelled following a Requiem Mass conducted by Father Paul Hilder at the St. Philip Howard Catholic Church where Joan's three sons — Mark Whitmore and his wife Mary, David Whitmore with partner Jane, and Stephen Whitmore with partner Natasha, gathered with many friends. Joan was born in May, 1933 in Darlinghurst. She was the first born to Maghnus and Mabel Rankin and the elder sister to Clyde. She grew up in the family home in Earlwood, Sydney and attended St. Bridget's school in Marrickville. Joan was a blond bombshell and one of her claims to fame was that she was in the first intake of female lifesavers in Australia, based at Maroubra Beach. She loved dancing, and was a proficient ice-skater. She married Graham Whitmore in 1955, and they had three boys. As the wife of a builder, the family moved many times. Joan was always an active member of the community, beginning~~

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~~with the school tuck shop, and was heavily involved in the church youth group. Joan had a great interest in reading, and used her immense trivia knowledge to win a prize in the TV show, BP Pick-A-Box. She had a wonderful sense of humour and was not averse to pulling pranks. Joan and Graham separated and two years later she met and married Peter, a retired Commander in the Royal Navy. Peter introduced Joan to Norfolk. He was an avid lover of the island and Joan quickly shared his passion. They enjoyed a number of holidays here before finally relocating in 1980, to own and operate 'Impulse', a boutique in Burnt Pine. They gained permanent resident status as soon as they were eligible and built their dream house overlooking Ball Bay using a single Norfolk Pine from the property. It allowed Joan and Peter to indulge in their hobby for shell collecting and gardening and it provided plenty of room for their two dogs. The Island welcomed them and Joan often talked of their love for Norfolk and their new friends. Joan enjoyed gardening (they won a competition); cards (Bridge and Jarro); cooking and entertaining, reading and music. Their house was always full of music, be it from one of their organs or a musical soundtrack turned up loud. They were founders of the Norfolk Island Organ Society. She continued her life-long love of volunteering for the community, becoming involved with White Oaks and the Church Council. Joan loved her family and would take every opportunity to visit them in Sydney, travelling at least once a year. She was a gadget collector and was always on the lookout for the latest invention, be it an egg slicer, a mango corer or an avocado keeper, she just 'had to have it'! Joan is survived by her three sons Mark, David and Stephen, three grandsons — Christopher, Scott and Matthew and an unborn great-grandchild due in January. To her family and her many friends, this House extends its deepest sympathy. May she rest in peace.~~

~~SPEAKER \_\_\_\_\_ Thank you Mr Evans, Honourable Members as a mark of respect I ask that all Members stand for a period of silence in their places.~~

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

### ~~QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE~~

~~Following a meeting of MLAs with the Immigration manager yesterday — is it a fact that Australian and NZ citizen who have cash bonds being held by the Administration can immediately apply to have their money refunded?~~

~~Is there an administrative process in place for Australian and NZ citizens to follow in order to get back confidential information that was used to support their GEP applications under the old immigration regime? If there is no procedure in place, would the Minister ask for a procedure of this kind to be developed so that people can have their private information returned to them?~~

~~Given that the Minister has removed the Immigration Policy and guidelines motion from the Notice Paper and that she stated last month that — "the more we look the more we find the more change we need", would the Minister spell out exactly what she thinks needs to be changed in either the act or the policy?~~

~~Given that by the 1<sup>st</sup> August the Minister is required to review Healthcare and medical evacuation levies will there be an increase on the 1<sup>st</sup> September and how much will it be?~~

~~Paper tabled; Minister for Cultural Heritage and Community Services, Ms Adams — Medivac Flights during January to 31 July 2013.~~

~~Given that the CM has said that the Chief of Staff position is something of an ongoing consideration would the CM advise the House whether or not he has made a decision — will there be a CofS within this compound and if so, when will the position be advertised?~~

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~~Would the CM provide to the House his understanding of how NI is affected by the Federal Government moving into caretaker mode?~~

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~~Given that the CM responded to my QON about his government's vision, plan and legislative program, by saying that the document is not yet ready to be released however he looked forward to providing it to Members and the community, is the CM able to provide that to Members today?~~

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~~Given that the CM committed to seek assistance from the office of the Administrator to help make a list of the Cwlths support to the island since the signing of the Road Map and the dollar value, is the CM now able to do that?~~

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~~Question relates to divestment of government business enterprises given that the Commonwealth has completed its tender process and a Consultant has been appointed to carry out an assessment — when can we expect to see this person or these persons on island?~~

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~~Is it a fact that the NIGTB has had its annual financial grant cut and if so, by how much and, where have the cuts been made and if the CM could refer to specific areas that would be helpful?~~

~~Question relates to the Oceania Economic Development Corporation's — would the CM assure the House that his Government remains committed to the Road Map reform program in addition to welcoming new private sector investment to the island?~~

~~Given that a preferred applicant for the Administration CEO Position has been chosen, would the CM inform the House of his expectations of the new CEO?~~

~~Question relates to the time it is taking for the NIA to comply with the FAG milestones — is it a fact that the Regional dept has given the NIA an extension of time to comply with May milestones — and if so, what is the deadline and what are the consequences if they fail to comply?~~

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~~We move to Papers Honourable Members~~

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## ~~PRESENTATION OF PAPERS~~

~~MR SHERIDAN — Thank you Mr Speaker I table~~

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~~**Customs Duty Exemptions**, "Daffodil Day" objects by Quota for \$98.40~~

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~~MS ADAMS — Thank you Mr Speaker. — Later this morning in statements I will be providing the House with an update on health and hospital initiatives. However in papers I now table the Report titled **The Review of existing child and family support services dated September 2012** which was published online on 22 July 2013 by the Department of Regional Australia, Regional development and local~~

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~~Government (DRALGAS). This Report which was prepared by Gillian Calvert AO and Marie Connolly Phd stemmed from a requirement at item 18 of the September 2011 Funding Agreement for Norfolk Island to work in partnership with the Commonwealth to further build its capability to provide children and family support services on Norfolk Island. The report now tabled is the outcome of the study undertaken to achieve this goal. Mr Speaker I move that the paper be noted. Mr Speaker, the terms of reference for the review were to Examine the current framework for family support and child protection services on Norfolk Island; Identify barriers and issues associated with the provision of effective children and family support services; Consider practices, procedures and resources within the Norfolk Island Government with direct responsibilities in this area, and also consider how the government and non-government organisation agencies might contribute to a more effective protection and support network; and Consider how the Norfolk Island Government can help to support children and young people to reach their potential and assist individuals and families who are at risk or in crisis. In considering the service needs of children and families living on Norfolk Island the consultants took the following approach in undertaking the review - A desk review of available documents relating to the demographics of the Norfolk Island community, service statistics, earlier reviews and reports relating to the provision of Norfolk Island services; A series of community meetings that included a public meeting and meetings with specific interest groups; Meetings with Ministers in the Norfolk Island Government and the staff of the Norfolk Island Administration; Meetings with service providers across the sector; and Individual meetings with young people and families.~~

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~~MRS WARD Thank you Mr Speaker. Review of existing child and family support services on Norfolk Island This report came about as a result of the Road Map and funding agreements. If we think back to 1979 the NIG was to provide a comparable standard of services to its community. And as recently as 6 weeks ago, the NIG re-affirmed its commitment to provide mainland standard services in Education and Health (new FAG). The reality is that the NIG does not and can not deliver to its community the standard of services that are required to be delivered by State and Territory governments and we all know that and understand why. It was as a result of such issues that the previous government sat down and worked out a plan with the Cwlth on a revised way fwd for NI. The authors Marie Connolly and Gillian Calvert referred to people having multiple jobs and the effect that has on parenting. There is reference to families where someone had a disability or a mental illness, or where they were parenting alone and the challenge they faced and they noted that women had spoken to them of returning to work as soon as one week after giving birth. Perverse effects of the health insurance scheme (healthcare system that does not take into account someone's ability to pay) The authors noted - We have found the breadth, design and operation of the safety net and mutual obligation expressed through Norfolk Island's income support, taxation, health, and employment legislation and systems to be extremely limited by comparison to mainland Australia. This inadequate safety net is critically significant when seen in combination with the island's concentrated wage structure, high cost of living, increasing job insecurity, the absence of any social housing and the notably older age profile of Norfolk Island than that of the rest of Australia. Indeed the median age on Norfolk Island is 46, as compared to 37 in the rest of Australia. They also said - It was clear to us that Norfolk Island has a strong community spirit... Several recommendations were made ... There were expected references to unhealthy levels of alcohol consumption, domestic violence and risky behaviour and what I noted was that during their time on Norfolk Island they heard of many instances of people feeling unsafe when they openly challenged issues. As a consequence we believe that informal hierarchies of power exist on the island that support cultures of intimidation and violence and that there is an atmosphere of fear that disables criticism. Unfortunately, this is something that I encounter on a regular basis and when I encourage people to stand up and say something they will not, because they fear retribution. That is why it is so important for Government and Administration to have their policies and procedures clearly identified - so that there is not question of us and~~

them—it is one rule for all and everyone understands what those rules are. I also note from reading the Report that a few people on the island expressed their doubts that families were in fact confronting real hardship. We can also read that a few people have expressed a view that introducing a stronger safety net for families could undermine the strengths of self-reliance and the strong work ethic that underpins many of the values of Norfolk Island life. We have heard those views expressed by one of our colleagues however am with the majority of people who expressed to Marie and Gillian the need to protect more vulnerable members of the Norfolk Island community in ways that are respectful of diverse needs, for example, ensuring humane responses when people lose their jobs, when they are affected by mental illness, or when they require specialist care. There are 7 recommendations but I will read Recommendation 1. "Norfolk Island residents should within three years, become part of the same income security, employment, taxation, child support scheme and benefit systems as other Australian residents including eligibility requirements, processes and support and participation requirements. We recognise a staged implementation may be needed in some areas, for example, early childhood education and care." Delaying corrective action is likely to cause an exacerbation of the problems making them more difficult, and more expensive to solve in the future I do not intend to talk about the break down of what has or hasn't occurred so far as a result of the recommendations. What I will do is acknowledge the work of the Office of the Administrator and the work that they have done with local community groups. The local community service group members and helpers are the unsung hero's in what has been achieved to date in the area of social welfare, they sometimes very quietly to improve the lives of the most vulnerable people in our community and we should all remember our fate can change at any time and acknowledge those who are there to assist. In closing Mr. Speaker, I think that it is an opportune time to thank the soon to retire from Federal politics, the Hon. Simon Crean our previous Minister responsible for Territories. I thank him for his efforts and his acceptance that the NI community and its welfare is ultimately the responsibility of the Federal Government. There have been many reports and surly this one will insight change and result in a more secure future for Norfolk Island?

MR SHERIDAN Thank you Mr Speaker **Bookmakers and Betting Exchange Act 1998— Report on statutory default**

MR SHERIDAN Thank you Mr Speaker **Gaming Act 1998— Licence for Interactive Gaming Entertainment Pty Ltd**

MS ADAMS Thank you Mr Speaker **Immigration— Revocation of Policy**

MR SPEAKER Thank you. Further papers.

## STATEMENTS

MS ADAMS Thank you Mr Speaker. **Health, hospital and community initiatives and the opening of DCA Safe House on 3 August 2013.** Earlier this morning I tabled the Report resulting from the review of existing child and family support services on Norfolk Island and of course this report cannot be considered in isolation of the Island's 5-year Health Services Plan currently being crafted and referred to further on in this statement.

Members will recall that at the July 2013 sitting of the House I advised that a review had been commenced within the Administration on the provision of health and related services. The review was raised as a point of interest at the July meeting of the Hospital Advisory Board with my giving an undertaking that the review would not be undertaken in isolation of the Norfolk Island Hospital Enterprise which is the Island's healthcare

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facility. The Hospital Enterprise is a corporate entity in its own right with its Vision being, and I quote –

“to work in partnership with the government and community of Norfolk Island to provide continuing improvement in the health of the community and the provision of sustainable, efficient and affordable health care”.

The Hospital Enterprise has as its Mission Statement –

“to promote, improve and care for the health of the Norfolk Island community including its residents and visitors”

In my statement today Honourable Members I will endeavour to give a brief overview of key activities that are being undertaken by or on behalf of the Hospital Enterprise in partnership with both the Norfolk Island Government and the Commonwealth Government in order to achieve the aims set out in its Vision and Mission Statement.

In the December 2012 Funding Agreement the Hospital was required to meet a number of milestones which include –

a) Commencing working towards a level of "Marked Achievement" in at least the '15 mandatory criteria of the Australian Council of Healthcare Standards (ACHS);

b) Norfolk Island Government collecting health statistics and publish quarterly, commencing June 2013, using formats and standards of other Australian health statistics, as set out by the Department and informed by Indian Ocean Territories Health Service.

c) Preparing a report that further examines what additional measures (legislative or operational procedures) might be implemented to enhance the efficient and effective delivery of health services on island, and

e) Norfolk Island Government publishing for the first time, health statistics, using formats and standards of other Australian health statistics, as set out by the Department and informed by the Indian Ocean Territories Health Service.

In March this year the Commonwealth Government provided \$100,000 to the Hospital Enterprise which entered into a Funding Agreement with the Commonwealth to achieve the following:

1. Delivery of the Island's five year Health Services Plan;
2. Advancement of the critical pathway towards accreditation of Island Health Services; and
3. Complementary adjustment to Norfolk Island Health legislation to achieve accreditation.

The Hospital Director has briefed me on how these projects are progressing.

#### **Accreditation of Island Health Services**

In December 2012 Ms Maria Christian RN, Quality Improvement Co-ordinator for the Hospital Enterprise conducted an Assessment of how the Hospital Enterprise currently measured against the Australian Council of Healthcare Standards (ACHS). The Hospital Advisory Board has received a report from ACHS on the results of the Self-Assessment NIHE conducted last December and work to attain the status of "marked achievement" in at least the '15 mandatory criteria of the ACHS are ongoing.

An educator with the ACHS visited between 8 and 12 July to conduct sessions with hospital staff on all the standards required in order to achieve a level of accreditation as required under the Funding Agreement. Support continues to be given weekly by the Clinical Governance Unit of South East Sydney Local Health District or SESLHD via teleconferences and emails.

A visit has been arranged through the Clinical Governance Unit of the SESLHD for a Clinical Nurse Consultant to visit for one to two weeks, possibly in September, to train clinical staff in aseptic techniques. This training is part of the process for meeting the mandatory criteria of the ACHS.

Health Service Plan for the Norfolk Island Hospital and Health Service

With the assistance of the SESLHD Planning & Population Health Unit a firm, Nexus Management Consulting, was engaged to develop the Health Services Plan. I had the

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~~opportunity to meet with the Nexus Consultants, Greg Masters and Jill Hardwick, at the end of their visit in the week 29 July to 2 August. During their visit they had broad ranging discussions with key personnel in the health service area on the Island across both government and community organisations. It is intended that the report furnished by Nexus Consultants will include a description of current services; detail of health services utilisation; list of issues affecting future health service delivery; recommendations for provision of services and a proposed plan for health services.~~

~~Complementary adjustment to Norfolk Island Health legislation to achieve accreditation~~

~~Following discussions between the Hospital Enterprise, SESLHD and the Department of Regional Australia a Local Government, Arts and Sport, Dr Tim Smyth was engaged in late April 2013 by the Hospital Enterprise to undertake a review of the Norfolk Island Health legislation. Dr Smyth has provided the Hospital Advisory Board with his June 2013 interim report which outlines a number of key findings. The interim report is to be considered by the Hospital Enterprise and the Advisory Board in the first instance. The next step is for there to be a multi-jurisdictional discussion involving the Norfolk Island, Commonwealth and NSW Governments to guide the next stage of the review.~~

~~Look forward to receiving comment from the Hospital Enterprise and the Advisory Board and to be able to table at the September sitting of the House the interim report and advice received.~~

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### Opening of DCA8 House

~~Mr Speaker there is another significant initiative which I wish to acknowledge — this time a community initiative — namely the DCA8 community supported and managed safe house which formally opened on Saturday 3 August 2013.~~

~~In opening DCA8 I paid tribute on behalf of the Norfolk Island Government to Mrs Vicky Jack, our Child Welfare Officer, who had the initial idea many years ago and has, with the assistance of so many generous, caring people, too numerous to mention, turned this idea into a reality.~~

~~Honourable Members this project is yet another demonstration of how this community can pull together in times of need to achieve great things when called upon to do. The Norfolk Islander in reporting on the opening used the following words in their report, and I quote—~~

~~“DCA8 is a novel service, a local solution, meeting a need and providing a service which works here on Norfolk Island” and I am sure all Members here this morning join me in wishing the ongoing management team of volunteers tasked to manage this project well in their future endeavours.~~

### NOTICES

#### PROTECTION OF MOVABLE CULTURAL HERITAGE ACT 1987

~~MS ADAMS Thank you Mr Speaker I move that in accordance with section 9 of the *Protection of Movable Cultural Heritage Act 1987*, this House recommends to the Minister that Janelle Blucher be appointed as a member of the Norfolk Island Cultural Heritage Committee for the period of four years commencing 16 July 2014.~~

~~SPEAKER The question is that the motion be agreed to. Ms Adams~~

~~MS ADAMS Thank you Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, the Protection and Moveable Cultural Heritage Act 1987 provides for a Committee with a membership of 4. There are currently three on that Committee as a result of the appointment of Mr Neil Tavener having expired on 12 August 2013. Mr Tavener has served the Committee well for some twentyfour years, with a significant number of years as Chairman. He was actually appointed as a member of the inaugural committee in 1989. I sincerely thank him for such a significant length of service in this voluntary capacity and having given so many years of service I understand his decision not to seek re-appointment. Mr Speaker the Protection of Movable Cultural Heritage Act was established to provide the framework for the protection of Norfolk Island’s heritage of movable objects, to support the protection by foreign countries of their heritage of movable cultural objects, and for related purposes and by way of interest for the listening public I will give some quotes from the Act. The Act provides that a reference to the movable cultural heritage of Norfolk Island is a reference to objects that are of importance to Norfolk Island for ethnological, archaeological, historical, literary, artistic, scientific or technological reasons being objects falling within a number of defined categories. One of the nine categories in the Act includes objects relating to the convicts, free settlers, military and naval personnel associated with the penal settlement and Pitcairn Islanders and their descendants. Mr Speaker, I thank Ms Janelle Blucher for agreeing to be appointed to this committee, and know that her expertise as the conservation officer/assistant curator at the Norfolk Island museums will be very valued by the committee. I thank Ms Blucher for undertaking this voluntary role. I commend this motion to the House.~~

~~SPEAKER Thank you. Is there any debate. Then the question is that the motion is agreed. I put that question to you Honourable Members.~~

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QUESTION PUT

AGREED

That motion is so agreed. Thank you Honourable Members

MOTION BY LEAVE

NORFOLK ISLAND HOSPITAL ACT 1985 – APPOINTMENT OF MEMBER TO ADVISORY BOARD

SPEAKER Minister Adams you are seeking leave in this matter.

MS ADAMS Thank you Mr Speaker, I seek leave to move a motion dated 15 July 2014 appearing in my name on the programme

SPEAKER Is leave granted Honourable Members? Leave is granted. Ms Adams

MS ADAMS Mr Speaker I move that this House, in accordance with section 12 of the *Norfolk Island Hospital Act 1985*, resolve that Barbara Joy Kelly be appointed by the Minister as a member of the Norfolk Island Hospital Advisory Board for a term of 3 years commencing on the date of gazettal of this appointment.

SPEAKER The question is that the motion be agreed to. Ms Adams

MS ADAMS Thank you Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker. On Monday just passed, Mrs Val Martinez tendered her resignation to me as member and Chair of the Norfolk Island Hospital Advisory Board. It is with sincere regret that I accepted Mrs Martinez's resignation. I have had the very real pleasure of working with Mrs Martinez since I assumed the role of Minister with responsibility for Health in March 2013: her passion for her role on the Board and her caring for the hospital and the role that it plays in this community cannot be understated. Mrs Martinez has been a member of the Board and served as its Chair since she was first appointed in August 2006. On behalf of us all I wish her well and extend to her on behalf of my Assembly colleagues and the Norfolk Island community sincere thanks for the tireless hours she has dedicated to the role of Hospital Board member and particularly as its Chairperson. From me personally I say thank you Val. Your passion will be missed. Honourable Members it gives me pleasure to recommend to you the appointment of Barb Kelly to fill the vacancy on the Board. The role is voluntary, the duties of members can be onerous and certainly at this time the statutory role of the Board cannot be understated. That role is (a) to provide advice and direction on the strategic management of the Enterprise; (b) to advise the Minister on issues relating to the future development of the Enterprise; and (c) to advise the Minister on public health issues. Earlier today in questions on notice reference was made to the draft Nexus Report and the need for a health needs assessment out of which an Aged Care Strategy can be developed. The Advisory Board will be called on to play a key role in this process. In recommending Ms Kelly to the House as a member of the Board I would like to place on record some of the many attributes that Ms Kelly will bring to the role. Ms Kelly holds an Associate Diploma of Welfare Studies and Community Work and a Certificate IV in Workplace Training and Assessment; in the years 2001 to 2011 she was the Centre Co-ordinator at The Junction Neighbourhood Centre in Sydney and having personally spent half a day earlier this year at the Centre I can attest to the high regard in which Ms Kelly was held in that role. She has been a Working Group Member on the HACC/Health Joint Working Party; and has been the Convener of the Care Co-ordination Working Group with SESAHS in NSW. These are just a few of the many roles that Ms Kelly has held over many years in the area of welfare and community health. I commend the appointment of Ms Kelly to the House.

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MRS WARD Thank you Mr Speaker if I may just say a few personal words. I understand the Minister has thanked Mrs Val Martinez on behalf of Members but if I may just acknowledge the tremendous amount of work that Mrs Val Martinez did and to repeat the words of the Minister, her passion, her commitment and her care in the way she conducted what has been a challenging role over the last two years. I will personally remember the fund raising events which were certainly driven by Mrs Martinez. To welcome Mrs Barb Kelly. The period we are facing is going to be full of challenges and so I would like to acknowledge that and as the Minister has pointed out, the role of the Advisory Board is to provide that advise and direction on the Strategic Management of the Enterprise and issues relating to the future development of the Enterprise whether that be Hospital, Hospital/Health Services that is a process that will be worked through and that the Advisory Board will be well aware that as part of their role, they are able to take such steps as they consider practicable to consult with the Norfolk Island community generally so I certainly look forward to watching their work, supporting their work and taking their advise through the Minister as we move forward. Thank you Mr Speaker.

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SPEAKER Thank you. Is there any further debate. Then the question is that the motion is agreed. I put that question to you Honourable Members.

QUESTION PUT

AGREED

That motion is so agreed. Thank you Honourable Members

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**INTRODUCTION OF LAND RATING SYSTEM**

MR NOBBS Thank you Mr Speaker. I decided to bring this on and I would hope that it could be held over until Minister for Finance, Mr Sheridan is back because it's in his area and I'd hate to be seen to be trying to usurp some of his area of responsibility whilst he's off the Island. Mr Speaker, I move that this House resolve that any system of rating land on Norfolk Island must be applied to all land in Norfolk Island, irrespective of its classification, tenure be it freehold or Crown Lease, or ownership.

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SPEAKER The question is that the motion be agreed to. Mr Nobbs

MR NOBBS Thank you Mr Speaker. This motion is purely aimed at ensuring that in discussions and decisions or any other such action in relation to the introduction of a land rated system for Norfolk Island includes a requirement that all land on Norfolk Island regardless of ownership or other factors, that the rating system encompasses all land. Very simple. I wish to make it perfectly clear that this motion does not support the introduction of a rating system on land. This motion does not support the non consideration of the introduction of a rating system on land nor does this motion even attempt to specify the precise type of rating system which may or may not be introduced. This motion very simply requires that in the event of any land rating system being considered, it must embrace all land on Norfolk Island. This place, Norfolk Island, is very small, in both area and population and in addition is very isolated. It has been required largely to live over the years on its own devises. Unfortunately some people appear to forget this. This island has borrowed ideas from other places and melded them as it has developed its own site specific ideas. This Island has never been one to accept unquestionably and I repeat, unquestionably, the premise that ideas from say WoopWoop or elsewhere are the way to go. Our forebears were never capable of accepting this and I can readily hear a response more than once I might add. The response simply was if you don't wish to question WoopWoop then it's the place for you.

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This attitude unfortunately has been classified for some as an offshoot of our immigration system or worse as racial, sexist, homophobic or some such equally ridiculous nametag. What it really says is sure, look at what may be shown as good for WoopWoop, but is it good for Norfolk Island. Some may say that we still do this all the time. Really? We all know that it's not so. Whilst I acknowledge the great work done by those in presenting papers giving unbiased views on rating and development of processes, I feel they are constrained within the parameters presented to them. These parameters were missing a key factor. This motion rectifies that. While land owned by the Norfolk Island Government, private individuals, charitable organizations etc are included in the proposal, it appears that up to possibly 25% of the area of Norfolk Island and for Minister Ward, not including Nepean or Philip Island, Johnny's Stone or any offshore facilities, could be automatically excluded from the rating system as proposed. However, if this area were included it will see either an increase on a \$250,000 take as was seen for the proposed system, or probably more important, a potential to reduce the rate on each individual portion currently included in the proposed rating system. I commend the motion and I will seek unless you wish to finalise it today Ladies and Gentlemen, I will seek in time to as you suggest

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SEPAKER Mr Nobbs I will give you an opportunity to propose an adjournment. Can I just cast my eyes around the room to see if there are any others who would care to debate it today

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MRS WARD Thank you Mr Speaker I might just add at this moment Mr Speaker that the municipal rates strategy is a publicly available document and that we are going in a sense through a community consultation process at the moment so I really hope that the Minister responsible is doing everything, and the Government, to explain to the community that there is a strategy out there. Please read it. This is an opportunity to have input and so all of those issues and Mr Nobbs has chosen to put it as a motion on the table today, can be debated and thrashed out but I just am really stressing to the listening public that the consultation process, the communication around this issue, is open, is currently open and so that would be dealt with at this stage. I certainly will support and adjournment but yes, I just need to stress that. It's a publicly available document

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MR SNELL Thank you Mr Speaker I respect the intent of the motion. It's one of the hardest decisions any government will have to make in the future and it deserves consultation. It deserves consideration. It deserves more time. I will certainly support and adjournment for future discussion

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MR NOBBS Thank you Mr Speaker I so move,

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SPEAKER Thank you. Mr Nobbs has now moved a motion of adjournment. The question therefore is that debate be adjourned and the resumption of debate made an Order of the Day for a subsequent day of Sitting. Thank you and I put that question to you Honourable Members.

QUESTION PUT

AGREED

That motion is so adjourned. Thank you Honourable Members

LAND ADMINISTRATION FEES (AMENDMENT) BILL 2014  
LAEN ADMINESTRIESHAN FII (CHIENJEN) BIL 2014

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Minister Ward, you have carriage of this matter this morning

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MR WARD Thank you Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, on behalf of the Minister for Finance, Mr Sheridan, I present the Land Administration Fees (Amendment) Bill, 2014 and move that the Bill be agreed to in principle and I table the Explanatory Memorandum to the Bill

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SPEAKER The question is that the Bill be agreed to in principle. Minister Ward

MR WARD Thank you Mr Speaker. The purpose of this Bill is to separate fees that are payable upon instruments evidencing transactions covered by the Act. At present fees are levied (section 4(1)) upon instruments dealing with land (including shares in defined companies owning land) at high levels (33 fee units or 4% of the land value whichever is greatest). These fees are not however payable in respect of certain exempt transactions including those involving the Administration, charities and community organisations and those exempt by regulation (section 6). At present the only transactions exempt by regulation are those involving deceased estates. The Act also provides for payment of a small registration fee of 3.3 fee units that recovers some of the administration costs of the registration process but does so only in respect of transactions that are not exempt transactions (subsection 4(8)). Because instruments concerning deceased estates are exempt by regulation they do not pay the fee. It is intended that transactions involving deceased estates should be liable to pay the fee for registration of the transaction but should continue to be exempt from the higher level fees of subsection 4(1). In order to do this subsection 4(8) is removed to a separate section because as it stands it is not possible to lawfully prescribe that deceased estate transaction is exempt from the fees under subsection 4(1) but not the registration fee. The Bill consists of 4 clauses. Clauses 1 2, and 3 are the usual clause providing the name of the Act, the commencement and the name of the Act being amended. Clause 4 removes from section 4 the provision (subsection (8)) that levies a registration fee of 3.3 fee units on all transactions other than those referred to in subsections (1) and (7). A new section 6B is inserted that levies the registration fee of 3.3 fee units on all instruments except those that are exempted, however paragraph 6(f), which allows for the exemption of prescribed transactions, is not included as a transaction that can be excluded from the registration fee of 3.3 fee units. The intended effect is that the transactions of deceased estates that are prescribed by regulation will pay the registration fee but not the fee under section 4(1). Thank you Mr Speaker

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MR NOBBS Thank you Mr Speaker I support the motion although there's fees now involved in it but there was an anomaly in the whole setup really so I think it's jut clarifying what was supposed to be that wasn't done and so on, so I support the motion definitely

SPEAKER Thank you. Further debate. No. Minister Ward

MR WARD Thank you Mr Speaker, I move that debate be adjourned and the resumption of debate made an Order of the Day for a subsequent day of Sitting

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SPEAKER Thank you Mr Ward and I put that question to you Honourable Members.

QUESTION PUT

AGREED

That motion is so adjourned. Thank you Honourable Members. We've completed Notice for today. There are no Orders of the day to be brought on

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**FIXING OF THE NEXT SITTING DAY**

MRS WARD Mr Speaker I move that this House at its rising adjourn until Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> August 2014 at 10.00 am

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MR SPEAKER Thank you Mrs Ward. Any debate on this matter. I put the question.

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QUESTION PUT

AGREED

The motion is agreed.

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### ADJOURNMENT

MR PORTER Thank you Mr Speaker. I move that the house do now adjourn.

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MR SPEAKER The question is that the House do now adjourn. Is there any adjournment debate.

MR NOBBS Thank you Mr Speaker. I wish to make a brief comment. It started brief but it got a bit longer as the evening wore on. A brief comment on negotiations

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MR SPEAKER Thank you. Any further adjournment debate Honourable Members. No. We conclude. Then I will put the question that the House do now adjourn.

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QUESTION PUT

AGREED

MR SPEAKER Honourable Members this House therefore stands adjourned until Wednesday the 20<sup>th</sup> August 2014 at 10.00 am.

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4) Minister for Finance, Mr Sheridan – Update on Sporting activities during August 2013

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MR SPEAKER As there are no Messages from the Office of the Administrator nor Reports of Standing Committees we move on

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### NOTICES

#### NORFOLK ISLAND GOVERNMENT TOURIST BUREAU ACT 1980 APPOINTMENT OF MEMBER AND CHAIRPERSON

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MR SNELL Mr Speaker, I move that this House in accordance with section 4 of the *Norfolk Island Government Tourist Bureau Act 1980* recommends to the Minister that he re-appoint Michael Perkins to be a member of the Norfolk Island Government Tourist Bureau Advisory Board for the period of two years commencing 9 September 2013 and that he be Chairperson of the Tourist Bureau Advisory Board for that period.

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~~SPEAKER Any further debate? I put the question that the motion be agreed to~~

~~QUESTION PUT~~

~~AGREED~~

~~That motion is agreed to~~

~~**NORFOLK ISLAND GOVERNMENT TOURIST BUREAU ACT 1980  
APPOINTMENT OF MEMBER**~~

~~MR SNELL Mr Speaker, I move that this House in accordance with section 4 of the *Norfolk Island Government Tourist Bureau Act 1980* recommends to the Minister that he appoint Anita Toni French to be a member of the Norfolk Island Government Tourist Bureau Advisory Board for the period of two years commencing 9 September 2013.~~

~~SPEAKER Any further debate? I put the question that the motion be agreed to~~

~~QUESTION PUT~~

~~AGREED~~

~~That motion is agreed to~~

~~**PROTECTION OF MOVABLE CULTURAL HERITAGE ACT 1987**~~

~~MS ADAMS Thank you Mr Speaker I move that in accordance with section 9 of the *Protection of Movable Cultural Heritage Act 1987*, this House recommends to the Minister that Beryl Phyllis Evans and Rhonda Evelyn Griffiths be re-appointed as members of the Norfolk Island Cultural Heritage Committee for the period 26 August 2013 to 25 August 2017.~~

~~Honourable Members the appointment of—~~

~~\_\_\_\_\_ Eve Semple  
\_\_\_\_\_ Rhonda Evelyn Griffith  
\_\_\_\_\_ Beryl Phyllis Evans and  
\_\_\_\_\_ Neil Tavener~~

~~Honourable Members the Protection of Movable Cultural Heritage Act deals with the protection of movable cultural heritage of Norfolk Island, namely, objects that are of importance to Norfolk Island for ethnological, archaeological, historical, literary, artistic, scientific or technological reasons. The Act categorises the objects which fall within the meaning of the Act.~~

~~The appointment of members of the Norfolk Island Cultural Heritage Committee under the Protection of Movable Cultural Heritage Act 1987 expires on 25 August and before speaking to the motion proper I would like on your behalf to thank Mr Neil Tavener for his years of community and voluntary service on the Committee. Mr Tavener is not seeking re-appointment at this time.~~

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~~Honourable Members Mrs Semple is off Island at the moment and I have yet been unable to seek her agreement to re-appointment. I trust that she will continue in this valuable role.~~

~~In the meantime Honourable Members I have brought to the House this morning the re-appointment of Beryl Phyllis Evans and Rhonda Evelyn Griffith as members of the Norfolk Island Cultural Heritage Committee for the period 26 August 2013 to 25 August 2017 and seek your endorsement of their re-appointment.~~

~~SPEAKER ————— Any further debate? I put the question that the motion be agreed to~~

~~QUESTION PUT~~

~~AGREED~~

~~That motion is agreed to~~

~~ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE NO. 19 RELATING TO IMMIGRATION~~

~~MRS WARD ————— Thank you Mr Speaker, I move I move that the House take note of Minister Adams' answer to Question on Notice (number 19) asked at the 17 July 2013 sitting of the House relating to the immigration website. The question related primarily to the need for Australian and New Zealand citizens to have onward air-tickets. I will lead off by saying Mr. Speaker that this matter is in the process of being resolved however I felt that it was important to briefly speak to the motion in order to provide information to the listening community who is interested in immigration matters. It is important to me give the community an assurance that their elected representatives uphold the law and that the Minister will ensure that policy changes are implemented by the CEO of the Public Service and that if uncertainly exists, that it is clarified. Minister Adams has tabled a document titled "Discussion Paper on airline ticket policy, 13<sup>th</sup> August 2013". The first statement that the paper makes is this; "Currently there is a long standing requirement for persons other than residents to have means for onward travel from NI or to have lodged a cash bond in lieu." Question is, "should this requirement continue?" As I said this has been resolved now, but the problem was that this statement about an ongoing requirement for persons other than residents had been made null and void when the Immigration changes were assented to on the 24<sup>th</sup> of May and the changes were reflected in the New Policy and Guidelines Published on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of July. The change reflected at section 14A (4) of the Act clearly shows that "The holder of an unrestricted entry permit has the same rights under any enactment as the holder of a general entry permit...". That means that now — only a TEP (FN) needs to be considered for an onward ticket for travel out of NI. Australian and NZ citizens can travel to NI, just as we can travel to Australia or New Zealand on a one way ticket. Can I just note that any risks associated with that were analysed and identified to the Commonwealth officers last year. Where I first became aware that the changes were not being implemented was when the Immigration website went live at the end of July which led to my Question on Notice No. 19. We know that Minister Adams didn't need to bring this question to us — what she needed to do was insist that the changes were implemented based on clearly articulated and documented changes — both to the law and the policy — but the Minister did~~

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~~bring it to us and just so that the listening community is aware — there was strong support for the airfare issue to be clarified and that it should be removed — as is and was originally intended for Australian and NZ citizens. We have been assured by the Minister that DIAC will be update its Fact Sheet 59~~

~~□TIM (ground handlers and travel agents)~~

~~□Website will be update~~

~~□people who are entitled to receive a cash bond refund will do so and I trust that this will happen... there may be some time delay?~~

~~Coming back to the answer provided by Minster Adams to my Question on Notice No. 19. Clearly it was materially wrong but — I now trust that the Minister will see that the immigration department requirements are updated. So I hope that we have managed to clear a few things up, for everyone involved. In closing — if we believe that immigration, investment and growth are key elements in our economic recovery, then we must continue to do everything we can to remove barriers and create flexibility across the board and make the recovery happen and I appreciate that takes some change in thinking.~~

~~MS ADAMS ————— Thank you Mr Speaker~~

~~Paper tabled; Minister for Cultural Heritage and Community Services, Ms Adams — Immigration — Discussion Paper on airline ticket policy~~

~~SPEAKER ————— Any further debate? I put the question that the motion be agreed to~~

~~QUESTION PUT~~

~~AGREED~~

~~That motion is agreed to~~

~~ORDERS OF THE DAY~~

~~MARINE SAFETY (AMENDMENT NO 2) BILL 2013~~

~~SPEAKER ————— Honourable Members we resume on the question that the Bill be agreed to in principle and Mr Ward has the call to resume. Mr Ward~~

~~MR WARD ————— Thank you Mr Speaker~~

~~SPEAKER ————— Thank you. Further debate around the table. I will now put the question that the Bill be agreed to in principle~~

~~QUESTION PUT~~

~~AGREED~~

~~The Bill is agreed to in principal. We move to the Detail Stage.~~

~~Is it the wish of the House to dispense with the Detail Stage. We so dispense. Minister Ward I seek a final motion~~

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~~MR WARD~~ Thank you Mr Speaker I move that the Bill be agreed to

~~SPEAKER~~ Thank you Minister Ward. I put the question

~~QUESTION PUT~~

~~AGREED~~

~~The ayes have it. The Bill is agreed.~~

### ~~CUSTOMS (AMENDMENT) BILL 2013~~

~~SPEAKER~~ Honourable Members we resume on the question that the Bill be agreed to in principle and Mr Sheridan has the call to resume. Minister

~~MR SHERIDAN~~ Thank you Mr Speaker

~~SPEAKER~~ Thank you. Further debate around the table. I will now put the question that debate be adjourned and resumption of debate be made an Order of the Day for a subsequent day of Sitting. I put that question

~~QUESTION PUT~~

~~AGREED~~

~~That matter is so adjourned. Honourable Members we have concluded Orders of the Day.~~

### ~~FIXING OF THE NEXT SITTING DAY~~

~~MRS WARD~~ Thank you Mr Speaker. I move that the House at its rising adjourn until Wednesday the 18<sup>th</sup> September 2013 at 10.00 am.

~~MR SPEAKER~~ Thank you. Any debate.

~~QUESTION PUT~~

~~AGREED~~

### ~~ADJOURNMENT~~

~~MR EVANS~~ I move that the House do now adjourn,

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

~~QUESTION PUT~~

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AGREED

MR SPEAKER Honorable Members this House stands adjourned until Wednesday the 18<sup>th</sup> September 2013 at 10.00 am.

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