



NORFOLK ISLAND LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
14TH NILA HANSARD – 19 NOVEMBER 2014

SPEAKER Honourable Members we commence with the prayer of the Legislative Assembly.

PRAYER

Almighty God we humbly beseech Thee to vouchsafe Thy blessing on 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 we are all present this morning. I firstly ask if there are any condolences. Mr Evans.

MR EVANS Thank you Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, it is with regret that this House records the passing of Unice Mihinga Vercoe was born in Otorohanga, the second eldest of ten children to Doug and Agnes Hughes. As a toddler her parents lived on a farm where their closest neighbours were an Indian family. Her mother said Unice first words were a mixture of Hindi, Maori and English. They moved to a farm at Otewa where she attended primary school. At the age of 12 the family moved to a coastal farming area and there she finished her primary schooling. Unice secondary schooling was at New Plymouth Girls High staying at Rangiatea Maori Girls Hostel. On leaving school Unice studied to be a hairdresser in Auckland before returning to Otorohanga to finish her apprenticeship and start her working life. But the travelling bug called and she wanted to see the world. Her first and her last stop was Norfolk Island. Noon arrived in 1972 to work at the South Pacific Hotel, and later at Paradise Hotel. She also had a number of part time jobs. Noon was a hard worker and Noon loved her job with Norfolk Island Airlines and was later to become their Norfolk Manager, a job she did with pride and held until the airline ceased operations in 1980. Noon then worked in Burns Philp Travel as part of the Air New Zealand and Qantas team. Following the birth of their daughter Suzy in 1989 Noon had to give up her permanent work due to ill health but she kept her part time jobs at Norfolk Telecom as a Telephonist and later helping with monthly accounts. She looked after her family and continued her passion as a radio announcer which she had commenced when she first arrived on Norfolk. Noon was the longest serving radio announcer spanning a period of over forty years. She assisted with concerts and charity shows as an entertainer and judge, particularly promoting her native Maori culture which she was extremely proud of. Noon was a qualified Tai-Chi and Qigong Wellbeing Instructor. She had a strong character and personality and was exceptionally talented. She would share this talent with anyone who was prepared to learn. When Noon chose Norfolk as her home she enriched our lifestyle and helped foster our knowledge and understanding of her Maori heritage and culture. In return she always respected ours. To her daughter Susie, to Basil and to her many friends this House extends its deepest sympathy. May she rest in peace.

It is also with regret Mr Speaker that this House records the passing of **Byron Hugh Burrell**, a quiet, gentle, strong man with an inquisitive mind. He continually challenged himself to learn more, whether in conversations, reading or watching his favourite TV programs. During the Second World War, Byron's father fell in love with the Island and after the war he, Nean and the children, 11 year old Byron and 5 year old Heather, moved to Norfolk Island and purchased the property at Point Vincent naming it Moana Roa. Byron was born in Christchurch in 1935. Byron and Heather soon became entrenched in the island way of life through his second family - Nick and Bebe Christian and their children. Nick always had

Byron in tow when he did anything, especially fishing. The children rode their horses over the mountain to School, until Russ Partridge purchased an old army troop carrier. Byron left Norfolk to attend Scott's Boarding School in Wellington at the age of 12 but enjoyed coming home each holidays. He joined the Royal New Zealand Air Force at 16 as a boy entrant where he did Aircraft Mechanics and during that time he served in Malaysia. While training in Blenheim he wrote to tell his parents that he was racing motorbikes, much to their horror. With only six months left in the Air Force before his discharge date, Byron decided not to renew his service as his father's health was failing. Byron at 25 years returned to Norfolk to help take over the farm and Sam's job as a British Petroleum Agent at the Norfolk Island Airport. In 1960 Byron met Noelle Lancon and they were married in 1962 and started a family which he was very proud of. Byron loved to fish, starting at the very young age of 6 and eventually having his own boat 'Quest'. He would also go to New Zealand and fish in Easter Fishing Competitions. Byron and Noelle had three children, Denise, Robyn and Dean and he taught them to fish as soon as they were old enough, starting off at the pier, then Headstone, and later progressing to Black Bank and Poll Point. Byron loved his animals - aquariums, dogs, cats, sheep, cattle, horses, geese, ducks, terns and even a wild dove that befriended him. When his children became interested in horses, he broke them in, rode in the A & H Shows and built the children a sulky for their pony. Byron was a perfectionist. He could turn his hand to anything that needed inventing, building or fixing. Winter nights were spent in his study building model aeroplanes and flying them with his modelling mates. Denise was the first to be married to Bill Donald and had three children, Trent, Alana and Brooke who he was very close to and had a lot to do with their upbringing. Robyn married Geoff Turner and Byron enjoyed getting to know their three girls, Elise, Mikaely and Jessica when they visited the island. Dean married Wendy LeComte and their son, Luca was often out at the farm with Grandad. Byron adored all his grandchildren, and taught them how to fish and drive a car out in the paddock. The grandkids all had him twisted around their little fingers. Byron will be sadly missed in our community and to his wife Noelle, his children Denise, Robyn and Dean, and their families, to his many friends this House extends its deepest sympathy. May he rest in peace. Thank you Mr Speaker.

SPEAKER Thank you Mr Evans. Honourable Members as a mark of respect I ask that you all to stand for a period of silence. Thank you Honourable members.

PETITIONS

SPEAKER Honourable Members are there any petitions this morning?

GIVING OF NOTICES

SPEAKER Are there any notices?

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

SPEAKER Questions without notice, are there any questions without notice? Mr Porter.

MR PORTER Thank you Mr Speaker. My question is to the Chief Minister. Can you inform the House if you believe it is possible to move municipal rates bill and regulations forward to a point where we will meet the reporting period, that is the November/December Funding Agreement requirements.

MR SNELL Thank you Mr Speaker, Mr Speaker that is a matter for debate at a later time and I do believe that questions of this nature will be answered when that matter is discussed in detail.

MR PORTER Thank you Mr Speaker, my question again to the Chief Minister, in the matter of community title legislation, can we achieve milestone 10d by the reporting period three, that is January/February 2015, and if not, does the Chief Minister have a contingency plan to cover this?

MR SNELL Thank you Mr Speaker. I have been looking at the Community Title Legislation in the past few weeks. It requires a lot of deliberation, and again it will be a matter for the Service and also for debate and it will become part of a strategy going forward, it has been debated in the Infrastructure and Business Development Committee, and we hope that in the near future it will become a agenda item for further debate as well Mr Speaker.

MRS WARD Thank you Mr Speaker, a question to the Minister for Finance if I may. When will the Minister make available to the public the Telecom O3b investment promotion strategy?

MR SHERIDAN Thank you Mr Speaker, I wasn't aware that we had an O3b investment strategy Mr Speaker, as I have indicated in the House before, O3b service is a replacement for Telecom New Zealand service, which provides improved bandwidth and increased latency speed. Of course this opens up opportunities for new businesses to come the island to make use of the greater bandwidth and also the reduction in the speed. As to having a separate strategy to go out there and look at new business, it's not necessarily the work of Telecom that needs to do that, it is the work of this whole Government to go out, and in particular mine and the Economic Development, and we go out there and we ascertain whether or not there are people out there who are willing to take advantage of this technology that we have put in place some two months ago. The initial intent was that for the first two months, October November, is that the O3b service would be assessed, especially the charging rate, and it was after that two month period that the Telecom Manager intended to then be able to package up a package for business clients to take advantage of. I know he has been working through some of these details, in the last Gazette last week, there was a small amendment to our pricing, and this was to facilitate some hotspots around the home, and there was an increase in bandwidth for a reduction in price you might say. So these things do take time Mr Speaker, but as for a detailed written strategy, no the Norfolk Telecom would not have one in regards to O3b in particular.

MRS WARD A supplementary then, I appreciate that and thank the Minister for his detailed response. So when will the Government be developing a time frame within which all of those elements that the Minister has pointed out will be slotted into, and then made public to encourage investment based on the new infrastructure?

MR SHERIDAN Thank you Mr Speaker, I suppose the response there Mr Speaker is that realistically it all comes down to what we can charge. That really will be the platform that we move forward to try and attract new customers. I know that Norfolk Telecom and myself are talking to new businesses who are offshore, people who are interested in utilising the new technology to start up places such as call centres, data storage facilities, so those are just two that have come up in the last month. That are attracted with the new technology that we have put in place. I believe that once we are able to snare a couple of new players in the game, particularly through gaming, which is a good avenue to take advantage of it, but new businesses, not necessarily old ones that we rely on, but new ones like call centres and data storage centres we will then see come to the fore and I think that once the word gets out there people will take advantage of the service.

MRS WARD If I may one more supplementary, because the comment that the Minister has just made, 'once the word gets out there' is the point I'm trying to make. So clearly two businesses are in contact with the current Government currently, the question is how were they made aware, how did they find out, so what is the

Government doing to ensure that other people, a wider range of people, are made available to these opportunities.

MR SHERIDAN Thank you Mr Speaker, and in response to that, I suppose I can only refer Mrs Ward to the work, invest in Norfolk Island programme that we undertook a couple of months ago, we have recently opened up a Norfolk Island Government facebook page, and really it's word of mouth, this one company that is interested in a data centre, happened to be a contact through both gaming and telecom, so it's through your contacts that you make these opportunities. So this is what we are going to pursue. When our Managers go away to different forums, like the Oceania Telecommunications conference every year, he will be able to push what we have, and those players there can come into the market.

MR NOBBS My first question is to the Minister for the Environment. Has there been any discussions on the proposal by the Joint Standing Committee for the Commonwealth to take over the Cascade Pier Project?

MR WARD Thank you Mr Speaker, thank you Mr Nobbs for the question, certainly Mr Nobbs I am aware of the recommendations in the JSC Report, in fact I have them here on the table with me. But at this stage whilst the consultation process is in place, there's been no moves in that direction, I have shared with the Administrator in recent days the contingency document that I developed to do with the Cascade Jetty, the current concept of the Cascade Jetty, and so it could be said that he and the Department are aware of the issues that I have around that project.

MR NOBBS Just a supplementary if I may Mr Speaker? Has the Norfolk Island Government spent any money on the Cascade Pier Project this year or not?

MR WARD This year certainly not that I am aware of.

MRS WARD The Minister has just referred to a contingency concept or contingency plan, as a member I'm unaware of the details of that, would the Minister please share that with Members of the House?

MR WARD Thank you Mr Speaker, thank you Mrs Ward for the question, yes I would be happy to share that with Members.

MRS WARD Is the Minister able to highlight some dot points in the House today?

MR WARD I don't believe I actually have a copy of the document with me today, I will just have a quick check, but basically it highlights issues around both the design, the possibility of the design that has been put forward perhaps not standing up to the sea conditions there, it details issues around the type of rock that's available for the construction work and what limited options we have if there are any cost overruns. That's just to sum up key points in it, but there is certainly quite a bit more in it than that.

MRS WARD Thank you Mr Speaker, it's really clarification, is the Minister saying at this point, that things like, when the original design concept was put forward, by I believe Worley Parsons at the time, that rock and design was not adequately covered, I just wonder why the Minister feels that he needs to interject at this stage?

MR WARD Thank you Mr Speaker, thank you Mrs Ward for the question, it's not a matter of interjecting, it's a matter of assessing what potential risks are associated with the project before we launch into and put the island into a situation that it perhaps can not get itself out of. Any significant project does have a contingency plan

around it, and it's just a matter of assessing the risks properly and making sure that you go into a project with your eyes open.

MRS WARD Thank you Mr Speaker, is the Minister saying that these issues were not adequately covered when the original grant application was made under the RDAF4 grant scheme?

MR WARD If it was adequately covered, it doesn't seem to be reflected in the documentation I have seen.

MR NOBBS A question for the Minister for Finance. I asked at the last meeting a question regarding Norfolk Island's possible contribution to the Commonwealth's white paper on defence. Have you any other information for the community on the subject?

MR SHERIDAN Thank you Mr Speaker, thank you Mr Nobbs for the question, yes a paper was prepared and submitted to the Defence White Paper later last month, I think the due date was the 28th/29th of October, that paper has been forwarded to all Members, and unfortunately I don't have a copy of it here with me, but I just refer Mr Nobbs to the submission that we did make and Mr Speaker, if it isn't already, I will make sure it goes up on the Norfolk Island Government website, I don't have any problem with that.

MR NOBBS That was my next question!

MR PORTER A supplementary to the previous question.

SPEAKER I apologise for having missed that. I give you that opportunity now.

MR PORTER Thank you very much Mr Speaker. To the Minister for the Environment. From the answers that he has given to Mrs Ward, it would make one assume that he would be happy to hand the Cascade Pier Project back to the Commonwealth given that there may be cost overruns, design implications and in fact it is their asset I guess in the first place.

MR WARD Thank you Mr Speaker, thank you Mr Porter for the question, happy to, is not necessarily the relevant point, it is an issue that will certainly be debated as dealing with all of the recommendations in the JSC Report, and it will be a matter for the whole Government to make a decision on and indeed all Members of this House to have some input into it if that were to be the decision. There could well be some very valid reasons for doing that, but it is not for the lack of capacity of this island to deliver the project, but if we are recognising our financial constraints, then there maybe some very sound logic for doing so, thank you.

MRS WARD Thank you Mr Speaker, Mr Speaker a question to the Minister for Environment, how is the Minister so sure that the island has the capacity to deliver, when he has found that the contingency plans, or identification of risk, was not adequately covered in the documentation that he has read in relation to the Cascade Pier.

MR WARD Thank you Mr Speaker, thank you Mrs Ward for the question. The technical aspects of building the pier as designed don't differ vastly from those involved from the reconstruction of Kingston Pier some years back. Most of the equipment involved in that project was locally based equipment, there was some imported equipment, and we still have people capable of people doing that work, again we would have import an engineer for the duration of the project, but in its technical aspect it is not

vastly different from works that have already been undertaken on the island. That isn't to say that the design is adequate.

MRS WARD Thank you Mr Speaker, my question is to Minister Adams, Minister Adams in relation to the future provision of Education and Health Services, what is the Norfolk Island Government doing to identify the gaps between the Norfolk Island and or the Commonwealth and or New South Wales legislation in relation to legislative framework which include funding mechanisms. So what is the Government doing to identify those gaps?

MS ADAMS Thank you Mr Speaker, thank you Mrs Ward for the question, are you talking about what flowed out of the Education Working Group? Is that what the question is directed to?

MRS WARD Mr Speaker, not specifically to education, but of course that report would have informed the Minister, so she may well be advised to use that information which was provided to her, but it crosses into health services as well. Which we understand, and it has been raised in the minutes recently with the Administrator and it is highly relevant and appropriate that these things are being discussed at this level. So what is the Norfolk Island Government doing, if anything, at this stage to identify those differences and gaps both in legislation which very often include funding mechanisms.

MS ADAMS Thank you Mr Speaker, will take that on notice so I can prepare a full report to Mrs Ward.

SPEAKER May I remind Members that in terms of having questions on notice that it requires the asker of the question to actually lodge it in writing.

MRS WARD Just simply Mr Speaker, is the Government currently doing anything or not at this stage? It is a yes or not?

MS ADAMS It is a constant thinking in my head, but not having been discussed at a Government level, thank you.

MRS WARD One more if I may Mr Speaker, it is in relation to the Legal Counsel position, given that this position was initially not filled because the money was needed to fund the 7 per cent public service wage increase in the last financial year, but in this financial year, given that Members within the Appropriation Act have funded, have provided appropriated funds, for the filling of the Legal Counsel position, what is the delay in the filling of that position, why is that position not being recruited again, given that the Legal Services Unit is clearly stretched.

MR SNELL Thank you Mr Speaker, and thank you Mrs Ward for the question, that's a question I can't answer at this time, but I do appreciate the concerns of Mrs Ward and would have to ask the Service and Legal Services if the ability is there to recruit, why hasn't it been done, but I will certainly come back to Mrs Ward with more detail.

MRS WARD A supplementary to the Chief Minister, isn't it a fact that the CEO, the Chief Executive Officer of the Administration, informed Members yesterday that it is the Commonwealth Department that is not allowing him to recruit a Legal Counsel?

MR SNELL I may have to call on my colleague, the Minister for Finance, for Minister Sheridan, for his input into this, I am not aware that the Commonwealth would restrict employment if it is already been budgeted for. But I would ask Minister Sheridan.

MR SHERIDAN Yes, just to help the Chief Minister out there, Mrs Ward is quite correct, even though the position has been budgeted for within our 14/15 budget, and as everybody knows the appropriation was assented to and the appropriation bill has been approved by the Commonwealth Department, the CEO of the Service has had indication from the Department that they would not support the filling of that vacant position, and I believe that their main reason is that in the last financial year when the Public Service had a pay increase, we deferred filling those positions, three or four positions, to facilitate the funds to pay that pay increase, they have taken a hard stance on it, and they believe that those positions that we deferred are positions that are no longer available to us to fill you might say in regards to we made a decision to not fill that position and to pay the increase, and they believe that to continue paying that increase well then that position will not be filled. So that's it in a nutshell, so that is the advice from the Department, that they will not support the filling of the position, and it is unfortunate that the Service now have to get sign off when we are filling positions that are vacant, and that's something that the CEO and the Department are still working through the issues with.

MRS WARD Thank you Mr Speaker, a supplementary perhaps to Minister Sheridan if I may, thank you. Is the Commonwealth being made aware – a two part question – first of all I would like to know whether the Commonwealth Department have the right to override budgeting or funding provisions made by this House, notwithstanding that they are assisting us with balancing that budget, and secondly are they being made aware of the flow on effect of not filling critical positions such as the Legal Counsel?

MR SNELL Thank you Mr Speaker, thank you Mrs Ward, it's a very interesting question, it also raises indications of other areas that the Department has made stipulations on what can be done and what can't be done, and there are instances where they have dictated to us that certain aspects such as Commonwealth Funding not be available if certain legislation is not passed through the House, there is an issue and I appreciate Mrs Ward bringing the issue to the public, I don't know how we are going to handle this in the future, it is a concern, and we certainly need to take it on board and I refer to some of the instances Mr Speaker, when we consider the words, insert the following words responsible Norfolk Island Minister to use best endeavours to encourage, before the words Norfolk Island Legislative Assembly to pass, insert words Public Service before the word regulations and so on, and they don't agree with that, they don't agree with the wording that the responsible Norfolk Island Minister to use best endeavours to encourage, so there is a difficulty not only with this situation, but with others as well, but it is interesting.

MRS WARD Thank you Mr Speaker, a supplementary if I may, isn't it a fact that, to the Chief Minister, isn't it a fact that the community title legislation, the land rate bill and the Public Service Regulations are not ready because the Legal Services Unit Officers or Personnel do not have the manpower to have those ready for the House or the Government in a timely manner.

MR SNELL Thank you Mr Speaker, thank you Mrs Ward for the question, I won't comment on that unless I have some advice from them, certainly they are stressed and stretched to their maximum, but to say that they are not doing certain things because of it, I would need some confirmation from them.

MRS WARD If I may Mr Speaker, a question to the Minister for the Environment, would the Minister please explain to the House why the Community Title Bill is not ready for the House.

MR WARD Thank you Mr Speaker, thank you Mrs Ward, that Community Title isn't due before the House yet, it would have been nice to have presented it sooner, as the Chief Minister has just identified to you, the Legal Services Unit does have to work to priorities and they are working to priorities of Funding Agreements, they are working to priorities of the Legislative Schedule, and they have certainly been able to well deal with

the prioritisation and get these things through as needed, to date they haven't failed to provide any information or any material that I have sought. I can't go beyond and speculate as to what else that may be expected of them, but they are certainly performing to date.

MRS WARD Thank you Mr Speaker, just to make it very clear, I am not being critical of the Legal Services Unit, I am actually trying to help and not hinder the process.

SPEAKER Do you have a question?

MRS WARD Thank you, the question is to the Minister for Finance, will the Minister for Finance explain why the Land Rate Bill is not on the table today.

MR SHERIDAN Thank you Mr Speaker, it is purely because I don't have the regulations ready to go with the Bill, the Bill that I tabled last month, and as part of my statement I made the comment that I would not be proceeding with the Bill until the Regulations were ready because that is where the detail is, because the land tax bill is only a facilitating bill, all the detail is in the regulations, and I have not had that had back from service as of yet, I have not even seen a draft, so to support Mrs Ward and the Legal Services Unit, I believe they are a bit stretched and lacking in resources, but they are doing the best that they can, and we can only bring to the House what they achieve Mr Speaker. It is unfortunate, we would like to bring on a lot of other smaller legislation, but unfortunately priorities take place and they are concentrating on certain legislation at this point in time of which, under the Funding Agreement we need to meet to obtain some funds so that the Service can deliver services to the community.

SPEAKER Are there any further questions without notice this morning Honourable Members? Then we will move to Questions that are on Notice.

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

SPEAKER Question number 30, Mr Nobbs to ask the Minister for Finance, Minister for Finance.

MR SHERIDAN Thank you Mr Speaker. Question 30 reads, will the Minister for Finance provide, for the public record, a simple table for each financial year since 1979 that lists, and there are five requirements Mr Speaker, the first one is the year; the second one is average number for resident population for the year; the third one is the total dollar value of expenditure from the Norfolk Island Government Public Account for the year; the fourth is the total dollar value of expenditure at (3) funded by Australian Government; and five is the total dollar value of expenditure at (3) used to fund works on Commonwealth assets e.g. Roads, reserves, piers etc. Mr Speaker, my response probably won't satisfy Mr Nobbs, but the Service has advised that for questions 30 and the following question 31 Mr Speaker from Mr Nobbs, a significant amount of information is being sought. They advise that in order to collate the information sought, it would take at least a week and that some of the information is simply not available. The finance computer system does not provide early financial data and a lot of this information would be on old files of which would be in storage and difficult to assess. In terms of population information sought in question 30, the Service has provided a table with a schedule of population statistics from Census information since 1986 and figures provided by the Service from immigration sources. I will not read out the whole table but will table a copy to the House and for Mr. Nobbs information the total ordinary population for the following years were: 1986 – 1977; 1991 – 1912; 1996 – 1772; 2001 – 2037; 2006 – 1863; 2011 – 1795; January 2012 – 1808; January 2013 – 1782; August 2013 – 1675; June 2014 – 1673; September 2014 – 1678; and just recently on 6 November 2014 – 1646. Unfortunately the other information I am unable to present to Mr Nobbs at this time.

SPEAKER Thank you Minister Sheridan, the question of 31 is also in your name, in fact, we go through to 34, I'm comfortable if you just continue, 31, 32, 33 and 34.

MR NOBBS Mr Speaker could I please have a supplementary for the Minister, and he may not be able to answer it. I can tell you, all up to June 2006, are on a computer program within the Administration, and I wonder if he would please ensure that they have a look at it.

MR SHERIDAN Thank you Mr Speaker, I will follow that through with the Service.

SPEAKER Continuing, question 31 to 34, Mr Nobbs to ask the Minister for Finance.

MR SHERIDAN Thank you Mr Speaker, question 31, will the Minister for Finance provide, for the public record, an itemised list detailing the specific works the Norfolk Island Government has been required to do in exchange for annual payments received from the Australian Government under Funding Agreements? Again Mr Speaker, as indicated prior, this will take the Service a period to access the information sought and I would prefer to leave this question on the Notice Paper for a future sitting day.

Question 32 Mr Speaker, will the Minister for Finance provide, for the public record, detail of expenditure reported to be spent by the Australian Government in emergency funding to Norfolk Island not covered in responses to questions 30 and 31 above. If the Minister does not have this information will he seek this from Minister Briggs' department to qualify his claims in Australian media? Mr Speaker, you might say, that this has confused me a little bit in that question 30, I will refer back a little bit, refers to immigration statistics and the amount of expenditure used to fund works on commonwealth assets, question 31 is after details of the specific works undertaken in exchange for annual payments as part of funding agreements. This question refers to claims made by Minister Briggs in Australian Media of expenditure reported to be spent by the Australian Government in emergency funding to Norfolk Island. As previously mentioned it would take time to get all of this information together and Mr Nobbs has been requested to further quantify the claims made by Minister Briggs so that an accurate response can be made. What I can inform Mr Nobbs is, that for the period since 2010 when the funding agreements commenced, and funds provided at earlier times, the following funds have been provided by the Australian Government to assist the Norfolk Island Government and the Administration of Norfolk Island in providing essential services to this community and to enable infrastructure projects to be undertaken. \$3.829 million on 16th December 2010 (which was a quantum of 2010-11 budget deficit); \$1.8 million on 14th April 2011 (an increase in 2010-11 budget deficit); \$2.9 million on 22nd September 2011 (budget shortfall for 2011-12); \$10.547 million – to finance airline exit costs; \$4.5 million on December 2012 (\$4.45 million received against essential service provision. The balance of \$50k was received into Trust to finance the Live, work, invest promotional campaign); \$4.4 million in the financial year 2013-14 – quarterly instalments subject to meeting deliverables (and of that only \$3.495 million was received); Up to \$7.5 million for the financial year 2014-15 for emergency funding support to meet budget deficit tied to reform deliverables, additional assistance of \$2.88 million provided to the Australian Department for Norfolk Island; A Grant of \$433,193 for the RDAF 3 Funding for a high temperature incinerator; A Grant of \$13 million for the Community Development Grant CDG010 for works to Cascade Jetty, of which Mr Speaker if I can add that the Funding Agreement still has not been signed for that. Loans of \$3,245,157.27 for the Cascade Cliff Safety Project in 1998 with a balance owing as at 31st March 2014 of \$360,735.78; and a Loan of \$12 million for the reseal of the Airport runway in 2004 with repayments commencing in 2009 with the balance owing still \$11.4 million. Mr Speaker the total of the funding mentioned is just over \$67 million for that period. Thank you.

assistance for the Administration of Norfolk Island for short term requirements which include technical oversight of the fuel contract and excess energy generation storage options; Fund capital works programs to enhance the tourism experience and provide better facilities for example roads, footpaths, walkways and bikeways, multipurpose community/conference centre, enhanced school facilities, dredging alongside Kingston jetty, storage solutions for excess energy generation; Facilitate access to Commonwealth administered grant and training programs to assist in small business development, establishing agricultural/horticultural, niche and boutique businesses and markets; Extend the current Air New Zealand Air Services contract and to consider additional flights in high season to allow an increase in visitor numbers; and Air Services Australia assume responsibility for operation of the Aviation Rescue Fire Fighting Service on Norfolk Island to ensure tourism safety; Development in partnership with the Commonwealth Government, an Offshore Banking Unit in Norfolk Island, registered and regulated in accordance with Australian legislation; establish Norfolk Island as a Special Economic Zone. The Government's response to the Committee's report reinforced these points and we look forward to a positive response from the Minister to that. Mr Speaker I also refer to the Infrastructure and Business Development Committee which was formed for the specific purpose of enquiring into and reporting on the strategic options of Norfolk Island, and just for the benefit of the listening public, the committee was established with the view to providing advice to the Legislative Assembly, the Norfolk Island Government and where practicable facilitate new investment in the form of business development, there were a number of issues of concern which are relevant to the committee's role, not the least of these concerns is the limited preparatory investigation which has been undertaken prior to establishing the concept of a Road Map. This issue is particularly relevant in the relation to the essential issue of revitalising and expanding the economy by attracting investment in new business ventures. The concept within some Funding Agreements to simply open up Norfolk Island immigration will not alone achieve the response expected in relation to expanding the economy. It appears that a major driving force of the immigration change was to create and enhance market for local business through sale of such things such as that currently stocked in shops, provision of services, or by sale of residential accommodation and such. This is a different concept to that of encouraging new investment in business to expand the local economy. In other places where new investment is sought, there are usually available certain incentives which may be offered to investors, developers, such as tax breaks, land/buildings where development may be sited, appropriate services readily available which such incentives normally under a government led structure. A depressed economy may not necessarily be a deterrent in some cases it will act as a positive. Norfolk Island has no such system of incentives, it may offer significant new business proposals in fact, with the uncertainty over issues of future taxation and regulatory arrangements, coupled with infrastructure concerns and limitations on some services, it is abundantly clear that major disincentives to exist. Mr Speaker I also refer to the recommendation to the Joint Standing Committee from the Norfolk Island Government, the Norfolk Island Government related to certain issues regarding telecommunications, telecommunications as we all know is important for the economy of Norfolk Island, the Norfolk Island Government has recently entered into an agreement with the approval of the Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development with O3b network, which will dramatically increase its broadband width and speeds through low latency. Improved internet speeds will enhance opportunities for business and investment in Norfolk Island and improve current locally based businesses in their offshore business dealings. Improved internet services will enhance Norfolk Island as a Tourism destination by meeting demand for high speed internet both for recreational and business travellers. Online businesses require reliable, fast, efficient telecommunications, hence the future goal of the Norfolk Island Government to move to a fibre optic cable. The Norfolk Island Government is currently assessing proposals for a fibre optic cable into Norfolk Island and an upgrade to both the land and mobile switches, both of which require Commonwealth support to proceed. The Norfolk Island Government understands that one of the proponents has lodged a submission to the enquiry for the establishment of a fibre optic cable to Norfolk Island outlining the economic, social, and commercial benefits. The Norfolk Island Government also related complements to tourism such as agriculture, other industry, or small/medium enterprises. We also referred to research and eco-tourism. Proposals and

opportunities for NICHE industries as mentioned before. Proposals to encourage diversification and broaden the island's economic base. Seeking an ability to establish a locally based commercial fishing industry, there have been numerous attempts by the Norfolk Island Government to seek to establish a locally based commercial fishing industry, it's response to the latest enquiry made in October 2013, the Norfolk Island Minister for the Environment was advised, amongst other things, the following 'I acknowledge your desire to foster new industries on Norfolk Island to reduce reliance on tourism as the primary income earner. In June 2012 the AFMA commission decided against the development of a commercial inshore Norfolk Island Fishery due to cost and sustainability concerns. It was also noted that there is limited infrastructure necessary to support a commercial fishery and the cost of building the infrastructure harbour facilities would be high'. Following receipt of the Norfolk Island Economic Development Report, discussions were held by Dr James Fogarty, the author of the report, in relation to the evaluation of other revenue streams for Norfolk Island. Dr Fogarty welcomed the idea that the Norfolk Island Government pursue information on the 200 mile fishing zone around Norfolk Island. A letter was sent to the then Minister for Regional Australia, Regional Development and Local Government in April 2012 requesting information on the 200 mile fishing zone around Norfolk Island as it has the potential in a similar vein to the Falkland Islands, \$25million per year, to support the economy and provide a diversification of opening a new industry. I would like to request your assistance in assessing the economic benefits of the island better assessing the fishing zone and the potential for locally based industry that accesses the exclusive economic zone. Norfolk Island Government supports the views expressed in the occasional paper, Australia's external territories, the forgotten frontiers, Chapter five, future policy options. Further exploration and data collection relating to resources in the Australian fishery zone and the exclusive economic zone would also benefit long term planning for the external territories and to help to identify industries which may create economically sustainable territories. Establishing Norfolk Island as an International Shipping Register, a discussion paper released by the Department of Infrastructure and Transport entitled 'Reforming Australia's Shipping, a discussion paper for stakeholder consultation' found amongst other things, that Australian shipping companies have a competitive disadvantage compared to ships registered elsewhere which can offer zero tax or very low rates for shipping business. In November 2011 the then Minister for Tourism, Industry and Development in Norfolk Island Government proposed to the then Minister for Regional Australia, Regional Development and Local Government that Norfolk Island considers that it is ideally suited to be an offshore Australian international shipping register. Under international law Australia can show a genuine link to Norfolk Island as the state of registration similar to other jurisdictions which have established international shipping registers in offshore dependencies. In addition, Norfolk Island has met its responsibilities under the international ship and port security code. The Norfolk Island Government proposed that as a means of broadening Norfolk Island's economic base, the Commonwealth Government consider the establishment of an offshore Australian international shipping register in Norfolk Island. This was seen as an opportunity to assist Norfolk Island to expand economic activity within the island beyond tourism, whilst increasing competitive parameters within the Australian shipping industry. Offshore finance centre, offshore banking unit, cyber centre, proposals to create Norfolk Island as a world regulated offshore banking unit/offshore finance centre, these proposals were intended to complement the Australian mainland offshore banking unit regime and benefit both Norfolk Island and Australia. The proposals required amendment to the Australian Tax Act. An offshore banking unit or such similar operation would be an industry that is not dependent on tourism, is capable of providing employment, would generate a new stable revenue source and is environmentally friendly, Gaming, Norfolk Island enacted Gaming Legislation and established a gaming authority in 1998, the Norfolk Island Gaming Authority has a sound reputation for highly regulated licences, well known in the Asia Pacific and in the United Kingdom and Europe, the Commonwealth Interactive Gaming Moratorium Act 2000 extended to Norfolk Island. At that time Norfolk Island had enquiries from 13 operators within the gaming industry seeking a licence to operate in Norfolk Island, as a result of the Interactive, Gaming, I'm sorry Gambling, Moratorium Act 2000 12 of these went elsewhere, only one operator continued with and had approved a book makers licence, both the Northern Territory and the Australian Capital Territory have protection in their self-

government act which provides that trade and commerce with states are to be free. Some gaming operators have not established businesses on Norfolk Island due to the fact that Norfolk Island does not have this same protection. The Commonwealth's Interactive Gambling Act 2001 has enabled offshore gaming sites to be assessed by Australian's at a cost to Australian companies who operate in a highly regulated environment. The Productivity Commission's Inquiry brought into Australia's Gaming Industry's recommended amendments to the Interactive Gambling Act 2001, but this was not adopted by the previous Commonwealth Government, an amendment to this Act will be very beneficial to Norfolk Island Gaming revenue. [unclear on tape] new proposals. Education Facilities, Commercial policy for the World Heritage and Kingston and Arthur's Vale Historic Area, a special economic zone around Norfolk Island, the Norfolk Island Government recommends that consideration be given to making Norfolk Island a special economic zone similar to what was recommended by Patterson and Pickford and also variously suggested in the 2013 Federal Election Campaign for Tasmania by the Prime Minister and for the Northern Territory by the previous Labor Prime Minister, this would create an environment to encourage investment in Norfolk Island and I quote - the Australian Federal Government could render the island's special tax and investment zones creating further incentives for investment, a means to stimulate the local economy. A special economic zone would be a method to stimulate economic activity and investment and prompt economic activity and investment where it has not previously existed. The establishment of Norfolk Island as a special economic zone would enable the Norfolk Island Government to meet the requirements of the Commonwealth Government in Funding Agreements which require the Norfolk Island Government to promote Immigration and Investment in Norfolk Island. A special economic zone for Norfolk Island would be regulated by Australia and be conducted on best practice consistent with Australia's international obligations. And in addition to that Mr Speaker an Economic Development Model was submitted and has been presented to the House and there are other infrastructure strategy and capital management plans by the Administration of Norfolk Island and obviously there are other documents available and also the Norfolk Island Government Tourist Bureau Strategic Plan is also of interest and supports the economic and future of tourism on Norfolk Island. Thank you Mr Speaker.

SPEAKER Thank you Chief Minister, question on notice number 38. Mrs Ward also to ask the Chief Minister and Minister for Tourism. Chief Minister.

MR SNELL Thank you Mr Speaker. Mrs Ward to ask the Chief Minister and Minister for Tourism - Given the Government's 2014/15 budget debate; will the Chief Minister list the identified constraints to business development and improving the economy and describe what the Government has been doing to remove and/or reduce local constraints? Mr Speaker the adoption of our preferred model of government, movement into the Australian taxation system together with changes to our immigration and investment in our infrastructure, will all lead to stimulation of the economy creating a more vibrant environment for business investment and development on Norfolk Island. This can only occur through cooperation and trust between the Federal Government and the Norfolk Island Government that will deliver sustainable long term economic growth for Norfolk Island. The current consultative information collection process however well-meaning does not bring the minds of the Federal Government and the Norfolk Island Government directly together in a way to develop an agreed way forward. Mr Speaker, no one is suggesting that nothing should change it is about the development implementation and delivery of change that needs to be agreed. To this end both the Federal and the Norfolk Island governments need to develop more trust between them within that process, agree on underlying principles for change and to engage in dialog and negotiations to develop a model that will satisfy those principles. Mr Speaker, today I have written to Assistant Minister Briggs seeking to put into place that process in an effort to install trust within the process in which meaningful agreed outcome can be reached. Thank you Mr Speaker.

SPEAKER Thank you Chief Minister. Question number 39 again Mrs Ward a question to the Chief Minister and Minister for Tourism. Chief Minister.

MR SNELL Thank you Mr Speaker. The question reads, is it a fact that the Norfolk Island Government's Preferred Governance model is reliant on access to the Australian fiscal transfer payment system and a dividend collected from each of the Government Business Enterprises, and given recent comments made by Assistant Minister Briggs that Norfolk Island would not be entering the fiscal transfer payment system, and the draft Deloitte Report recommendations, how will the Preferred Governance model be funded? Mr Speaker, our preferred model is no different than any other territory model that delivers State services. In that all need some form of transfer payments from the Federal Government. Our model is the only governance model for Norfolk Island that is on the table and we have requested that all models should be fully costed by Treasury and Finance. That costing should go to and identify what transfer payments should apply to our model so we are treated on an equal basis as to other territories, in that the Federal Government provides the appropriate funding through mechanisms that are applicable to Norfolk Island Government preferred model. As to Deloitte's, their final report has not yet been released.

SPEAKER A supplementary?

MRS WARD Thank you Mr Speaker if I may, for clarification, is the Chief Minister saying that in terms of transfer payments that his Government is open to discussing some alternate mechanisms around transferring funds that would ordinarily come through the GST transfer payment system.

MR SNELL Thank you Mr Speaker and thank you Mrs Ward for the question. The answer to that is yes.

SPEAKER Thank you, continuing, question number 40, Mrs Ward to ask the Minister for Cultural Heritage and Community Services, Minister Adams.

MS ADAMS Thank you Mr Speaker and thank you Mrs Ward for the question. The question reads, will the Minister table in tabular form by category the number of people that resident or otherwise who have obtained a Healthcare Levy Exemption over the past 12 months period and from those figures will the Minister inform the House how much as been paid out by the Healthcare Scheme in the same period. Mr Speaker I table a schedule of Healthcare Exemptions statistics since 13 June 2013 through to 14 September 2014 of Healthcare Exemptions, that is together with the Healthcare Manager's Report under the Healthcare Act on Healthcare and the Medical Evacuation Fund for the 2013-2014 financial year. In tabling those papers Mr Speaker I would move that both of them be printed to enable me to publish them in the local press. For the listening public I will read the report on Healthcare Medivac Funds for 2013-2014, this is a statutory requirement to provide this to me. Mrs Ward is looking?

MRS WARD Mr Speaker I think it may not be necessary in that my question related to the exemptions from the healthcare levy scheme.

MS ADAMS Yes, correct.

MRS WARD Yes, okay, if that is relevant I am open to that Mr Speaker.

SPEAKER Minister Adams.

MS ADAMS The way I am reading this Mrs Ward is together with the Healthcare Managers Report on Healthcare and the Medical Evacuation Fund for the 2014 financial year, which is a statutory requirement, and for me to table it in the House under statute. What I can say is...

SPEAKER Minister can I just ask you, are you using this as the opportunity to formally table that? I would prefer you to not do that.

words 'responsible Norfolk Island Minister to use best endeavours to encourage' the Assembly to pass, we can't guarantee how the Assembly will vote. They are insisting that that is not agreeable and they have not agreed to the words 'Minister to use best endeavours' and it has been inserted in a number of regulations regarding requirements of the Funding Agreement, which could in turn therefore excluded from being agreed to. And I also relate to the immigration milestone, yet not started Mr Speaker. In September 2011 Funding Agreement the Norfolk Island Government removed immigration restrictions on Australian citizens arriving and remaining in Norfolk Island to facilitate the extension of the Migration Act 1958 (Commonwealth) to Norfolk Island. This condition was subject to the Commonwealth outlining an implementation plan for access to Commonwealth benefit schemes including social security and Medicare. The Commonwealth did not meet this milestone. The Commonwealth was also required in the 2011 Funding Agreement to review the impacts of the immigration reforms by 30th June 2014 including economic, environmental, including land use and social, cultural impacts, the Commonwealth did not meet this milestone. The Government will make no further commitments to removing existing entry requirements for Australian citizens and permanent residents whilst the numbers of persons who are holders of unrestricted entry permits and who continue to be exempted from the payment of the Healthcare Levy on the grounds of their income being below the income threshold, it serves only Mr Speaker, to put the Norfolk Island community at further risk. Thank you Mr Speaker.

SPEAKER The final question that is on notice, Mrs Ward to ask the Minister for Cultural Heritage and Community Services, Minister Adams.

MS ADAMS Thank you Mr Speaker, thank you Mrs Ward for the question. The question reads - given the tabling of the Education Report 2014 and the Administrator's September 2014 letter to the Minister in relation to education and training on the Island; has there been any further discussion with the Australian Government on the matter, and if so, what was the outcome? Mr Speaker, I respond, there has been no further discussion with the Australian Government in relation to Education apart from finalizing the Memorandum of Understanding with the Department of Education and Communities. I am pleased, however, to advise that following preliminary consideration of the recommendations of the Education Working Group, with members of the Assembly some weeks ago, I will be seeking expressions of interest from the community for membership of the Ministerial Advisory Board, the creation of which was recommended by the Working Group. That Board to include local representatives to provide sound advice to the Minister across a range of areas including education and care, culture and workforce skills. It is intended that this Board guide future government policy development in the area of education and training needs. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

SPEAKER Thank you Minister. Thank you to those who have raised those questions and for the responses.

PRESENTATION OF PAPERS

SPEAKER Presentation of papers, are there any presentation of papers? Chief Minister.

MR SNELL Thank you Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker I would like to present the Government of **Norfolk Island's response to the Report of the Joint Standing Committee** on the National Capital and External Territories – Same Country: Different World, the future of Norfolk Island. Mr Speaker I so present the paper.

SPEAKER Thank you Chief Minister.

MS ADAMS

Mr Speaker I would like to move that that paper be noted.

SPEAKER
Adams.

The question is that the paper be noted. Minister

MS ADAMS

Thank you Mr Speaker. For the record I think it is important to read parts from the Government's response into Hansard and I will read the introduction. "A report "Same country: different world. The future of Norfolk Island" was tabled in the Australian Parliament on 20 October 2014 by the Joint Standing Committee on the National Capital and External Territories (the Committee). This Report, which is the outcome of its Inquiry into Economic Development in Norfolk Island, includes eight recommendations, which have been carefully considered by the Norfolk Island Government. This document is the Norfolk Island Government's response to those eight recommendations and to the content of the Report in general. We note with concern the Committee's view at clause 1.21 of the report that "whilst the Committee's original intention was to focus on economic development and leave governance matters aside – not least because they were not spelled out in the terms of reference – it soon became apparent that sound governance underpins any discussion of economic development". We further note with concern the comment at clause 1.23 of the report that "The Minister asked the Committee to focus on positive action to encourage diversification and broaden the island's economic base. Certainty and confidence is contingent on the introduction of mainstream government. This is a prerequisite for investor confidence and growth". The Norfolk Island Government contends that it was not appropriate for the Committee to broaden the Terms of Reference given to it by the Assistant Minister for Infrastructure and Regional Development to include governance matters in those terms of reference. The Committee should have sought a review of its terms of reference from the Minister to include governance issues and the Norfolk Island Government and the community of Norfolk Island given an opportunity to provide submissions on governance. As an amendment to the Terms of Reference was not sought, it was therefore not open for the Committee to make recommendations on governance reform and as such the "Governance: a new model" should not form a part of the Committee's report. It is most regrettable that the Report does not make any meaningful recommendations on "positive action to encourage diversification and broaden the island's economic base" notwithstanding that the Norfolk Island Government in its submission to the Committee requested the Committee's support in securing the Commonwealth's agreement to - a. The Preferred Model of Territory Self Governance; b. An agreed and ongoing fiscal relationship with the Commonwealth; c. Assist with funding of an economic development function for Norfolk Island; d. Continue to support completion of all stages of the Cascade jetty Upgrade Project and supporting infrastructure; e. The Norfolk Island Government being part of the Australian delegation to SPC Meetings and in the interim seek SPC support and assistance for the Administration of Norfolk Island for short term requirements which include technical oversight of the fuel contract and excess energy generation storage options; f. Fund capital works programmes to enhance the tourism experience and provide better facilities e.g. roads, footpaths, walkways and bikeways; multipurpose community/conference centre; enhanced school facilities; dredging alongside Kingston jetty; storage solutions for excess energy generation; g. Facilitate access to Commonwealth administered grant and training programs to assist in small business development, establishing agricultural/horticultural, niche and boutique businesses and markets; h. Extend the current Air New Zealand Air Services contract and to consider additional flights in high season to allow an increase in visitor numbers; and i. Air Services Australia assume responsibility for operation of the Aviation Rescue Fire Fighting Service on Norfolk Island to ensure tourism safety. j. Development in partnership with the Commonwealth Government, an Offshore Banking Unit in Norfolk Island, registered and regulated in accordance with Australian legislation. (14.4.1) k. Establish Norfolk Island as a Special Economic Zone. (15.5.3).' And those have been previously referred to by the Chief Minister in response to a question on notice. 'The Norfolk Island Government totally agrees that "sound governance underpins any discussion of economic development" and certainly agrees that "certainty and confidence.....is a prerequisite for investor confidence and growth." However, the Norfolk

Island Government disagrees in the strongest terms that the lack of certainty and confidence in Norfolk Island can be attributed to failure on the part of the Norfolk Island Government or the Norfolk Island Legislative Assembly when little, if any, action has been taken by the Commonwealth since – 1) the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding on 25 November 2010 between the Commonwealth of Australia and Norfolk Island whereby Norfolk Island agreed to enter into the Australian Taxation and Social Welfare systems; and 2) the signing of the Road Map for Change on 2 March 2011 by the Commonwealth of Australia and Norfolk Island; a Road Map which was “developed in partnership between the two Governments and is subject to budget outcomes from both the Commonwealth and Norfolk.” The stated purpose of the Road Map being to describe the reforms needed to strengthen – The Island’s economic diversity to provide a sustainable and growing economy; The Island’s social cohesion and resilience; The Island’s unique heritage and environment. The Road Map clearly sets out the path which, were it followed from 2011 moving forward, would have led to potential investors having confidence and certainty on the Road for change that Norfolk Island was following in partnership with the Commonwealth.’ I will leave it there Mr Speaker, because it leads then into the recommendations and Norfolk Island Government’s response on each one of the recommendations. Suffice to say in respect of recommendation one, which is the Committee’s recommendation that, as soon as practicable, the Commonwealth Government repeal the *Norfolk Act 1979* (Cth) and establish an interim administration, to assist the transition to a local government type body, determine in line with the community’s needs and aspirations. This will require the development of a new legislative framework. The Government’s response is, the Norfolk Island Government unreservedly rejects this recommendation. Recommendation 1 of the Committee goes well beyond the Committee’s terms of reference for the Inquiry into Economic Development on Norfolk Island. And recommendation 2 of course is, that the Committee recommends that formal mechanisms for community consultation be established which allow for regular and ongoing communication between any transitional administration and the community about the reform process and new governance arrangements. Again, in short, the response from the Norfolk Island Government is it rejects this recommendation. I urge all members of the community to make themselves aware, but I thought it was very important that the Norfolk Island Government’s response on recommendations 1 and 2 which were the subject of a community consultation process last Wednesday should be clearly on the table that that is the view of the Norfolk Island Government. Thank you Mr Speaker.

SPEAKER
noted, debate? Mrs Ward.

Thank you Minister. The question is that the paper be

MRS WARD
Thank you Mr Speaker, I will just add to the debate at this stage because the Norfolk Island Government has stated in its report that it unreservedly rejects recommendations 1 and 2, and I would just like it on the record that I don’t support the Governments position in this instance and I have already let them know that. I pick up two really critical factors around recommendations 1 and 2, and in 1 that there is no doubt that the Norfolk Island Act needs to change, it needs to be amended, it needs to be modified, we have been working towards that through a reform agenda for the last four years. If the JSC has been fronted by members of the community who have got to such a point of frustration that they think that the only way to resolve this is to repeal the Norfolk Island Act and remove the Legislative Assembly then I want to say that I hear that message loud and clear, I understand it, I appreciate the frustrations, I share those frustrations. After the word repeal comes the word a new legislative framework needs to be established, and that’s what I’m focussed on. Now if that is by way of repealing and replacing the Norfolk Island Act, then so be it, there have been major changes before, and you will know Mr Speaker that the Norfolk Island Act has previously been dated 1953, 1957, 1963 and 1979, it is a document. It is a man and woman written document. It can be changed, and we should not be afraid of that. It is not something so sacred that it can’t be amended, it must be amended. The difficulty is around the transitional administration, now I would look at that objectively and say well if that were to happen, if it were to happen, and there were to be people who were still local representatives on that body, good and well, if the Assembly were to remain in place, and that is what other people in the community want, and we must remember that the

MR NOBBS We have had our moments, but nothing like this. I just can not believe it. I won't go on with it, except to say that I'm against the proposal to say that people couldn't get up and voice their opinion at the public meeting last week is to me a joke. I just could not believe that that was coming through. There are people that don't like getting up to talk at the thing, but there is no reason to expect that by uttering an opposition of point 1 would have the dire consequences that people assumed, my view is that if you have the courage of your commitments you should make a stand and get up and say regardless. But anyhow Mr Speaker that is my view at the present time, I have a little bit more to say later on, but that's it for the minute.

MS ADAMS Thank you Mr Speaker. I have heard Mrs Ward and I have heard Mr Porter, and I agree with you on many of those points, but the main point that is being overlooked here, recommendation 1 does not say amend the Norfolk Island Act, it says repeal the Norfolk Island Act, and put in place an interim administration to assist transition to a local Government type body. Under the Norfolk Island Act hangs your parliament and self-government, so agreeing to recommendation 1, is saying that you don't want self-government, it does not say amend the Norfolk Island Act, if our territory model of governance is to be considered, there will need to be changes made to the Norfolk Island Act, at the very least to the schedules to the Norfolk Island Act if we are handing back Commonwealth powers. Let's get this quite clear, because there seems to be some misunderstanding at the public meeting, misunderstanding here, as to what this report is saying as to why we the Government unreservedly rejects this recommendation, because we unreservedly rejects the repeal of the Norfolk Island Act, the loss of the Parliament and the loss of self-government to be replaced by unelected, potentially, and the JSC clearly spells out how it is to happen, unelected people to administer this island until such time as a local type body is in place. Recommendation 2 clearly hangs off recommendation 1, you agree recommendation 1, well of course you need to have recommendation 2, which is formal mechanisms for community consultation, well it's not even that part, it's the next part which allow for regular and ongoing communication between any transitional administration and the community about the reform process and new governance arrangements. New governance arrangements seemingly to be a local Government type body as spelled out in recommendation 1. Let's be clear as to what these recommendations say, it is to repeal the Norfolk Island Act under which hangs self-government and your parliament. Thank you Mr Speaker.

MRS WARD Thank you Mr Speaker.

SPEAKER Can I just ask if there are any others who have not spoken who would want to make a contribution at this time. Minister Ward I will give you the call and then come back to you Mrs Ward.

MR WARD Thank you Mr Speaker. I would just like to place on the record through this forum my indignation at the JSC exceeding their terms of reference in the way that they did, if they felt the need to exceed those terms of reference there is a process that should have been followed and it wasn't. By not following that process they denied a lot of people the opportunity to contribute adequately to the matters that they were considering, and the matters that they have ultimately reported on. Chairman Luke Simpkins words explaining having exceeded the terms are not a credible excuse for not having followed that process, and there is just no excuse for establishing a dictatorship under these circumstances. Thank you Mr Speaker.

MS ADAMS Hear hear.

MR EVANS Thank you Mr Speaker, I suppose there is certainly a lot of talk out in the community that happened last Wednesday, and unfortunately what seems to have been going back to probably the Commonwealth is that it was an unfair voice

at what happened there at Rawson Hall there last week. If anyone wants to do something about it, if people go there that are against and support recommendations 1 or 2, maybe some sort of public consultation can be held where we can have one night where the people are against recommendations 1 and 2 can go there and another night when people are for recommendations 1 and 2 can go and then maybe people won't feel so vindicated when they go to those meetings. Probably that could be a basis where we could sort of go down, and then everyone can say that they have had their say and we can get a real count on who supports it and who's against it. Thank you Mr Speaker.

MRS WARD

Thank you Mr Speaker. Just like Mr Nobbs I didn't realise we were going to go into this detail, but it's like grab the opportunity or you lose it. I would just like to state as a representative that I find the use of the words dictatorship, loss of democracy, loss of voting rights, irresponsible at this time. Four years ago when we agreed in the Thirteenth Assembly and was again agreed by eight members of this House that we would move into the Social Security and Taxation System that we would hand back National or Federal responsibilities so to speak. That was when we understood, I thought, that the vision for full internal self-government was gone. And so what we were left to do was nut out the details, maybe play with words, I use modified self-government, we are wanting to retain as much control and say over the delivery of state level of services as possible, and that is around education and policing and health. We know that with education we already contract the teaching positions out to the NSW Department of Education, and that is a good relationship and I hope that continues. Policing we second the AFP, the Australian Federal Police to Norfolk Island. Health we have recently signed into an MOU, a Memorandum of Understanding with South East Sydney. So what I am saying is that is what we have already standing as service delivery relationships with other states and territories, we have agreed to hand back national type responsibilities and we are about to enter into negotiations on how best to deliver state level services and that is what we should be focussed on. What is best for this community and how are they going to be best delivered and how are we going to afford to deliver them. And if legislation which contains funding mechanisms and mechanisms as seemingly simple but fundamental around the collection of data in relation to the needs of our children, our aging population, to our youth. Collection of data is what good sound policy is based on. And that is what we are lacking, is that detailed level of data and the Minister Adams shaking her head, if she reads the education report which I know she has, will see that our children at the moment are not having their data, their results in certain areas, put back into the Department of Education System, so how on earth are we ever going to be able to access the support services and the programs that they need for us to deliver an equivalent standard of education to our children if they are not even in the system. So these are the sort of conversations and the negotiations and the debates that need to be had around that state level, those service deliver arrangements. What the suggestion is, is there is a transition to what is left then is a local government body, that is the view of the current Assistant Minister. It is view, it has not been decided by the Federal Cabinet, but these are all the pictures that are being built around that ultimate decision which I hope comes sooner than later, it must come sooner rather than later. So there is no dictatorship happening, it is either the Assembly is going to stay in place and we receive those support services, or there is going to be this administrative team, which may have local representatives on it, it may have somebody from the Council of Edlers, we don't know. But that is what we should be getting involved in and having those discussions and saying that this is how we would like it to look and as I can see, that is what His Honour the Administrator is attempting to do. Because the Norfolk Island Government hasn't done it. So I welcome those community consultations and I welcome the Assistant Minister, Jamie Briggs, taking the interest in Norfolk Island that he clearly is. Mr Nobbs is perhaps correct, it should have been the JSC coming out to look at the governance arrangements, but we all know that they need to be in place, sound governance arrangements before you can have a sound economy. So if the question was, well we are going to fight and kick and scream and unreservedly reject the change in our governance model, well the repealing of the Norfolk Island Act, and that we will allow the community to continue to suffer and be frustrated and for the economy to continue to contract and for the population to continue to decline because we want to keep what

currently is, just doesn't seem to make sense to me, because we know it needs to change. And we simply may be playing with words. I think there needs to be a recommendation, full internal self-government as we know it, as was the vision, and as was put in place by Bob Ellicott has gone. And I would hope that everybody at this table understood that. Thank you Mr Speaker.

MR WARD Mr Speaker, I do not accept that a panel of public servants are best placed to govern this island in place of an elected group of local people. I do not accept that a yes master attitude will achieve the right outcomes. This Assembly was elected to refine and build on the reform process that started in 2010 and there is absolutely no reason that this Assembly and this group of people here around this table should not be continuing to see that process through at least until the normal term that is allocated to it. Thank you.

MR SNELL Thank you Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker I unequivocally support the response of the Norfolk Island Government, obviously in its recommendation number one, and that is that the Norfolk Island Government unreservedly rejects this recommendation. Mr Speaker we must look at what is occurring and what state of mind is in place in a number of decision makers that we don't have any control over. Mr Speaker the community of this island clearly indicated their objections in a petition that was presented by myself and yourself to the Australian Parliament, over 700 signatures on that petition stated that they wish to remain the status quo. We can't ignore that. Everybody says that the community says this, that the community says that. The community has indicated to us, the majority of the community, they want the status quo to remain. Mr Speaker, it is disappointing when you read comments and hear comments from people who have a direct influence over the decisions that are being made on the Joint Standing Committee. For example Mr Speaker, the Chairman made comments like this, the Norfolk Island Government is failing to deliver on a range of responsibilities which are within their capability, no explanation, no form of confirmation of what he is talking about. He goes on to say in other areas, the Committee recommends that officers be placed in the transitional administration to strengthen Norfolk Island's economic and human resources capacity. The community out there would ask how many would be replacing this Legislative Assembly? Four members? Six officers? Ten, no matter what, if it is only two, the cost of those two officers to the Australian taxpayer I would expect Mr Speaker would exceed the annual expense of the nine members of this table. He made recommendations like, whilst on the island I found that the vast majority of people supported the end of self-government, how can such a person make such a statement when he was here for hardly a week, and he met with probably 40 people. We have indicated that over 700 of Norfolk Island's community wishes that the status quo remain. Mr Speaker it is also disappointing when you hear our Assistant Minister Briggs make comments such as these – there isn't any infrastructure upgrade to their roads since 1970's, it should be identified what roads have been sealed since 1979 as most of the roads were in dirt coral based, the Burnt Pine upgrade needs to be recognised. He makes statements like the broadband services are poor, taking in no consideration of the introduction of O3b in October 2014 has seen an increase in bandwidth of 150 per cent plus, the reduction of latency from 750 milliseconds to 150 milliseconds, this is equivalent to most eastern coast communities in Australia. Other comments that were made – the island's electricity network is extremely fragile and at constant risk of collapse, they charge exorbitant prices, Mr Speaker this is because we fund the total cost of expenditure, whereas say Lord Howe Island, how has an expenditure of approximately of \$1.1 million, receives a community services obligation grant from NSW of approximately \$800,000 per year. Lord Howe Island unit price per kilowatt ranges from 0.20 cents to 0.45 cents, and raises \$650,000 from usage charges. If they did not receive this grant, then their price would be in the range of \$0.40 cents to \$0.90 cents compared to that of Norfolk Island at \$0.71 cents per kilowatt. For their electricity, because the Government uses electricity, this is the Norfolk Island Government, the Norfolk Island Government uses it as electricity as a revenue measure, no we do not. We used to, and it was very important at one time, but we don't now. Last financial year the Electricity Enterprise broke even before depreciation and this year a small margin of profit as been budgeted for. Mr Speaker, he also claims – now I accept that there are people on the

island that are in a privileged position of power who will fight to keep their privileged position, now I ask you, what kind of nonsense is that? As our positions are only on a set period of time, what are we arguing for is the ability to retain a legislature for the community so that they can have representation in how the island is operated. Another quote, but at the end of the day a vast bulk of people who live on that island who do not have access to a pension, oh yes they do, of course we have access to a pension, Norfolk Island Social Services programs which includes the aged pension. Other quotes that we don't have child protection laws, gun laws, yes we do. Quotes like people on the island are subject to third world conditions, third world conditions is a sweeping statement and is of course not correct, if we were third world, the world's monies would be pouring in, and we are certainly not like a third world country, we have access to all modern facilities and the community live in very good accommodation and have access and freedom of movement and speech. Mr Speaker it is disappointing when you hear and read comments from members who are determining our future and they can't get the facts right. Thank you Mr Deputy Speaker.

MR BUFFETT

Thank you Mr Deputy Speaker, Mr Deputy Speaker this is obviously a key in determining issue in the Norfolk Island community today and the tabling of this document really, and the debate that has followed has really mixed a number of factors, mixed them all in. They've really gone beyond just the recommendations there, but it's impossible to address one without the other. The recommendations of the Joint Standing Committee number eight, there are eight of them. The reality is that with six of them there is really no argument, they are things that have been identified before and have been given some additional focus by the Joint Standing Committee. Two of them do have some difficulties attached to them. Number two, which is about a consultative process can be taken a number of ways, it can be interpreted that you need an entirely new body, but it could also be interpreted that the existing body can do the task of leading the transition arrangement, so I'm not really going to dwell too much upon that, except to just identify that. It's the first that has the difficulty, and this is the one that identifies the present Norfolk Island Act should be abolished, should be repealed. Which means in term the abolition of this Assembly, now that means abolition of the elected representatives of the Norfolk Island community. That is the mechanism whereby the community has its principle say in being represented with whatever may come. A number of things arising out of the Joint Standing Committee Report – one is that it is not a decision of the Australian Government, it is a decision of the Joint Standing Committee and the Australian Government is yet to make its decision upon that report, and so in that process Minister Briggs has indicated that this report is on the table and he would welcome representations about that, I think he gave a date, and somebody just might refresh my memory on what that date is, yes it is December, 90 days, the 90 days are running out, that needs to be emphasised, and people need to be encouraged, both individuals on the island and groups to respond to Minister Briggs' invitation to make known their views, some views we know are very strong, well they should be made strongly to him if they are held by people. The second is that the Administrator is undertaking a series of consultations, he advises that those consultations are to therefore inform the Minister. He has had a public meeting, he is to have another today, if I understand that timing it remains unchanged at 2 o'clock, we may or may not be finished, but 2 o'clock. My encouragement is that people, as they have attended that meeting to date do so with others and make their views known to the Administrator so that there will be clarity about their situation in his court. I do understand also that in addition to the public meetings the Administrator is also canvassing by a letter drop or the like, seeking views, people should respond to those, don't sit back about it, if you have a view put it. Otherwise, it will be said that the noisy ones are the ones that are being heard and not the whole spectrum who live in the island. So I really want to give encouragement for people to respond in whatever way people have invited, Minister Briggs, Administrator, and indeed continue to make your representation to this Assembly, which is obviously your elected representatives. What's my view? I want to prelude my view by just turning to some overall goals, these are not new, but they need to be seen in the context of where we are going today. And our goals are to achieve long term sustainability in Norfolk Island, achieve long term sustainability. The Road Map sets out the course for that, it's acknowledged that it needs a Mark II because it is a number of years old now, that's not in doubt, but its thrust

and its content remain valid and it needs to be clearly seen that that is the case. We in the main, that is Norfolk Island, have delivered our parts of the Road Map, the Commonwealth have not done all its bits, including those essential bits about introduction of taxation and the Social Welfare regime, etc, etc. But that's the first, achieve long term sustainability. The second, there are two parts of it, there second is of course to survive in the meantime, and survival in the meantime has been made possible by Commonwealth annual funding, that must be acknowledging and indeed the Commonwealth trumpet it from time to time, we all know that, but it's a fact, that's survival in the meantime. We don't want to live like that forever, but it is how we are surviving today and the Minister for Finance regularly tells us about the various components and of course has had some significant length today pointed out the difficulties in some of the Funding Agreements, but all of that is about surviving in the meantime. To achieve those overall goals, there are some essential things to be said in the wider spectrum. Norfolk Island has to secure the Commonwealth Governments implementation, I underline the word implementation, on their electoral decisions about Norfolk Island, that is should enter the larger fiscal pool in Australia. For example the taxation arrangements and the social welfare regime, Medicare, PSB and the like. That needs to be secured for our long term sustainability. We equally need to secure Government decisions on things that are yet undecided by the Commonwealth, which are essential to our long term sustainability, and one of the main things in that context in decisions that are yet outstanding is the model of governance, the model of governance in this place. We have put forward ours. We have put forward our model of governance, the Commonwealth have not put forward theirs, as they have not delivered some of the other things in the Road Map, well that's in the Road Map, the identification of this is in the Road Map, and when we have got that we are better able to quantify how we move forward. The costing of a model is hugely important and we need to do that collaboratively, as there are figures that will come from us, and there will be figures that will come from them. Meaning we are Norfolk Island and they in the Commonwealth, and they are essential processes to get to where we are going, because until we have done that we will have not erected a business operating field in Norfolk Island and those that have said business operation is what will create economic sustainability are quite right, and people will not come and invest nor people here who have the funds to invest will not invest them until the playing field is known. So the governance arrangement is the thing that is on our plate that needs to be determined. We need to advance our model that we have already identified, if the Commonwealth have other views then they have got to put that on the table, because unless we come to the table with that detail we are getting nowhere.

MEMBER(S)

Hear hear.

MR BUFFETT

We are getting nowhere, and we must, every day that we are not getting anywhere this Norfolk Island community suffers more and more and more. And so the priority for us is getting this model of governance. Now back to what is my view in terms of item 1, because that is the contentious item in this Joint Standing Committee arrangement. My view is very clear. That I oppose vehemently any abolition of the elected representatives of the Norfolk Island community, especially when the indicators are that whether in the short term or in the long term they may be replaced by Canberra bureaucrats. Canberra bureaucrats have skills, without a doubt, but their skills are not in delivering the services in Norfolk Island, their skills are not better than the elected representatives of the Norfolk Island community in delivering services in Norfolk Island. We can prove that. We can prove that over the period of 35 plus years the elected representatives of Norfolk Island have delivered a range of items that in the 60 odd years prior to that when the Commonwealth had responsibility they delivered none of it.

MEMBER(S)

Hear hear.

MR BUFFETT

These are examples. Increased the School to Years 11 and 12 so the totality of secondary education could be conducted in Norfolk Island, and notwithstanding what some people in the Joint Standing Committee have said, there have been significant road improvements in Norfolk Island since 1979, that's without a doubt,

that's not to mean that we are not without our potholes on this very day, but even with potholes today they are better than they were prior to 1979.

MEMBERS

Hear hear.

MR BUFFETT Norfolk Island representatives in their elected arrangement has delivered a Healthcare Scheme to Norfolk Island, which did not exist prior to 1979, as of right benefits for those who are in need, which did not exist in as of right context prior to that. A sewage scheme in the main high density area in Norfolk Island, I just make mention of that, that was part funded by the Commonwealth I acknowledge, the fact is however that for some 30 odd years prior to 1979 it was identified by various reports that there was a need for such a scheme and when the Commonwealth was there they did nothing. I'm just trying to illustrate that Norfolk Island elected representatives have a proven record. I mean we have a stoushes and notwithstanding that people might see a great difference amongst we who sit around here today. There were no less differences over the period from 1979 to today, but notwithstanding that, those things that I have exampled were delivered to the Norfolk Island community.

MEMBER(S)

Hear hear.

MR BUFFETT Now I might respectfully say, because I've been there, that this sort of stoushing that we are having amongst ourselves is a breeze today compared with last time and other times, so don't think that that's new anybody who else might be listening to all of this. But there we are. So I am advocate for the retention of elected representatives to be able to represent the Norfolk Island community in a) the negotiations that are obviously needing to be conducted now and a) in the provision of services in an ongoing arrangement. The Norfolk Island Act must be amended, there is no two ways about that, it must be amended, and that might mean significant amendment, but not abolition. You see, throwing out the lot, means throwing out the baby with the bathwater. Now the bathwater needs to go, but not the essential product. When you hear on the mainland, you see it in the television every night and during the day, in fact 24 hours a day now of course, that there are great conflicts within those who compete for power in the Australian Governmental sphere, and that goes on with great vehemence, but you don't see any argument about abolishing their parliament, in other words their basic institution, and that's what's being suggested here, suggested very strongly, bipartisan support of the Joint Standing Committee. And we must make it known if you are of that view, in the various quarters that I have illustrated where people are asking for views, in this matter. We must make changes I've already said that, and you will know my past record in terms of doing other things, that we must actually take that course and we must take it with some vigour and get things done. But to abolish the elected representatives is not the way to travel.

MEMBER(S)

Hear hear.

MR BUFFETT I want to mention two other things, and I know I have gone on for a bit. But I want to mention two other things. You mightn't say hear hear to this, but you have got to hear it anyhow! It relates to self-government as commenced in 1979, and it relates of course to the Road Map. First of all, self-government as erected in 1979, it has been said around the table here today, and it is said in many quarters, that that is now lost, it is gone, and I don't share that view. The self-governmental arrangements in 1979 has been certainly outgrown and therefore we need to make adjustments, because we have grown beyond that capacity of 1979. But to say that it has been a mistake, or should be thrown out is not the case, you see, those things that I have exampled in that 35 years as being achieved is an achievement of that self-governmental process, and that is extremely valuable to us. We need to move beyond that now, that is absolutely acknowledged, but to try and say, and discredit it, is a mistake, an absolute mistake, and I challenge anybody who wants to be of that view. That's the first thing. The second thing is really in a similar vein in terms of the Road Map, people are saying, oh the Road Map's dead, well it's not, and people

can say that if they want to, but the reality is that we continue to do those things that the Road Map identifies that we need to do. The Road Map does not provide all of the answers, it provides a strategy and identifies the issues that we need to address. For example it says we have got to address our governance model, it doesn't necessarily provide all of the answers there, in fact it says that we should have done it at least two or three years ago, and if we had done it two or three years ago, we have saved pain and suffering in this Norfolk Island community. Now we have done our bit about it, but others need to come to the party. So I am just trying to make the point, those who want to discredit where we have been, are not on my books, I see it differently. I see that is which we have needed to go and we have gone and we need to progress having made achievements from that platform. Both in terms of the self-governmental arrangements of 1979 and the Road Map that we signed in 2011. And that therefore is now probably enough from me.

MR SHERIDAN Thank you Mr Deputy Speaker, I won't speak very long at all, I just want to make a comment in regards to virtually recommendation 1, and that 1 has been discussed here, the repeal of the Norfolk Island Act, I don't believe that the Joint Standing Committee, when they made that recommendation considered the consequences of their recommendation. And I say that because it was not discussed within their report, it was just a recommendation, they didn't discuss anything about the Act or the governance arrangements. I only say that because I believe, okay this room is established by the Norfolk Island Act, but if I am wrong, I would like to be corrected, but I also believe that the Office of the Administrator is also established under the 1979 Act, so if the Joint Standing Committee is recommending that the Act be repealed, I don't think they would, as I said, I don't think they have considered the consequences of their recommendation, because I don't believe they would be recommending to the Australian Government that the Administrator be removed, or his Office be removed from this island. I will leave it at that, I just want to make that point. I don't believe it will be repealed, altered, amended, it has been mentioned before it has been around in some form since 1913 or somewhere around about there, but I don't think it will be repealed, but of course there could be some significant changes to the Act.

MR WARD Thank you Mr Deputy Speaker. Mr Deputy Speaker, firstly we understand the impacts that the costs of governance has in peoples in lives. We understand that governments and all the costs of government do take money out of people's pockets. And one of the questions there is what system would minimise that, or create a better balance. And so far from what we have seen from the Commonwealth, we have seen nothing to indicate that that situation would improve, I know others would argue on various lines, well if the Commonwealth if spending more money here that is inevitably going to do some good, perhaps, perhaps. But there is no doubt that the current fiscal situation here does limit what we can achieve and it limits what can be achieved and delivered. But that does not reflect on the right of this government to govern and that does not reflect on the capacity of this government. Today the Administrator has called another of his public meetings on the JSC findings, it is widely represented that the middle of a working day afternoon will not allow many people to attend, it will prevent many from participation, and that is a very valid concern. I echo Mr Buffett's comments earlier, urging people to be involved in that meeting if they possibly can this afternoon and to write in to submit on the questions that have been posed by the Commonwealth and to all related issues that they have concerns with and I call on the Commonwealth to get past their biases and deal with this in a constructive way and really work to get these issues sorted, thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER Further debate? There being no further debate, I put the question that the paper be noted.

QUESTION PUT

QUESTION AGREED

I think the aye's have it, the paper is noted. There are more papers.

SPEAKER Thank you Mr Speaker, earlier on in questions on notice, I referred to the **Healthcare Managers Report** on Healthcare and the Medical Evacuation Fund for the year 2013-2014 financial year, I so table that report and I move that the paper be printed to allow me to publish it in the local press? I am happy to read it if Members want me to do so? **Or take it as read and included into Hansard please Mr Speaker.**

SPEAKER The question is that the paper be printed, any further debate on the particular matter?

QUESTION PUT

QUESTION AGREED

The aye's have it, thank you. Any further papers? Chief Minister you have further papers? I'm sorry I would have given you the call earlier.

MR SNELL Thank you Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker under the Norfolk Island Act 1979 section 48J and also under part 4 of the Commonwealth Finance Minister's (Norfolk Island) Orders 2011, as Chief Minister I am obliged to table into the House the **Annual Report for 2013-2014**. As specified in part 4 of the Commonwealth Finance Minister's Orders, the Annual Report includes copies of the consolidated financial statements 2013-2014 and the independent Auditor's Report which the Minister for Finance will table later today. As the Financial Statements were only completed last Friday, 14 November 2014, and the final draft of the Annual Report was completed yesterday there has not yet been an opportunity for Members to view the Annual Report. The Annual Report will be made available online as soon as practicable. Mr Speaker in closing, I thank the Chief Executive Officer and the staff in the public service for all the work in compiling the Annual Report and particularly Bella Wilson for some years has had responsibility for co-ordinating the collection of information, compiling the report and seeing it through to printing. Thank you Mr Speaker, I so present the Norfolk Island Annual Report 2013-14.

MS ADAMS Thank you Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker certainly earlier on when moving the earlier paper be noted, I had not thought it would have evolved into the debate that it did, but that was very good that that happened, it is my intention today to table a copy of the petition to the Australian House of Representatives and to the Australian Senate which was delivered to the Federal Parliament by yourself Mr Speaker and by the Chief Minister last month and I move that that paper be noted.

SPEAKER The question is that the paper be noted.

MS ADAMS Thank you Mr Speaker, I will read into Hansard the text of the Petition signed by in excess of 700 members of the Norfolk Island community. 'To the Honourable the Speaker and Members of the House of Representatives, this petition of Norfolk Island residents and descendants of the original settlers of Pitcairn Island draws to the attention of the House the pending proposal to Cabinet to change governance arrangements on Norfolk Island. The Norfolk Island Chief Minister and the Minister for Finance left the meeting with the Assistant Minister, the Hon. Jamie Briggs MP, on 8 October 2014 with the view that the new model will not be the subject of community consultation before or after the Cabinets and Parliaments decision on such changes. We therefore ask the House to, before voting on any bill to change governance arrangements for Norfolk Island established by the Norfolk Island Act 1979 (Cth) that residents of Norfolk Island have the right to be provided the facts and be consulted at referendum or plebiscite and have a democratic say on the future model of governance on Norfolk Island before any proposed changes are voted on by the House.' The House being the House of Representatives. A similar petition Mr Speaker, similarly worded petition was presented to the Honourable President and Members of the Senate in Parliament assembled, I won't read that out again. Mr Speaker the thrust of the Petition to the Federal Parliament is that the petitioners ask both Houses of the Federal Parliament that before voting on any Bill to change governance arrangements for Norfolk Island established by the Norfolk Island Act 1979 that the residents

of Norfolk Island have the right to be provided the facts and consulted at referendum or plebiscite and have a democratic say on the future model of governance for Norfolk Island before any proposed changes are voted on by the Federal Parliament. The message from in excess of 700 members of this community is that there is to be a referendum or plebiscite on any changes to governance arrangements for Norfolk Island. As earlier stated Mr Speaker the recent Joint Standing Committee report at recommendation 1 recommends that as soon as practicable the Commonwealth Government repeal the Norfolk Island Act 1979 and establish an interim administration to assist the transition to a local government type body. At the 20 August 2014 sitting of this House it was agreed that this community be consulted at referendum or plebiscite before any changes are made to its governance; the motion was passed with all members present and no dissenting voice recorded. In February 2014 Minister Briggs invited residents to write to him and it is understood that 97 people responded; it is said that 70 of those people wanted a change in the governance arrangements. At the October sitting of this House during debate on the matter of public importance I posed a question to Minister Briggs and I repeat – “Minister why have you not taken into account the 87 people from Norfolk Island who wrote to you and I jointly; whose letters were tabled in the Norfolk Island Parliament on the 16th of April 2014; whose letters were provided to the Office of the Administrator, by the Clerk to the Norfolk Island Parliament, by letter dated 21 May 2014 and which letters were also sent to you Minister Briggs by registered mail. Why are you not mentioning these people Minister Briggs, and in case there is any doubt as to what those 87 people said to you and I Minister, 87 people said “Allow the Norfolk Island people to have an opportunity to decide through referendum/plebiscite after appropriate consultation before proceeding with any policy decision.” Following on from the tabling of the Report of the JSC on 20 October, Minister Briggs the day after, on 21 October again wrote to Norfolk Island residents advising that he had asked, and I quote, “the Administrator of Norfolk Island, the Hon. Gary Hardgrave, to lead consultation with the community over the next two months to inform the Government’s response to the report”. End quote. The consultation with the community in open forum commenced last Wednesday the 12th November. Some 300 members of the community attended. The Norfolk Island Government concluded from that meeting, and I quote from the Government press release that “The clear outcome from the meeting was a request for a referendum on the issue of governance and that the majority of those in attendance do not support the first recommendation of the JSC which recommends the repeal of the Norfolk Island Act and the appointment of an interim administration.” On the other hand the Administrator in his media release of 13 November 2014 states, and I quote “Discussion on the recommendations included a vocal few and a silent many who contributed through notes and other expressions; and that it was a shame a number of people were not able to comment publicly because they felt uncomfortable in expressing their views...” end quote. Two press releases Mr Speaker with two different conclusions drawn. Minister Briggs was comfortable that 70 letters to him were a clear indicator that the community wanted change to governance. The Administrator it would seem has formed a conclusion that while 300 people came to a meeting that there were still 1100 or so members of the community that have not expressed a view. Notwithstanding the differing conclusions drawn by Minister Briggs and the Administrator the fact remains that the Legislative Assembly of Norfolk Island by resolution without dissenting voice and all members being present, agreed on 20 August 2014 that the community should be consulted at referendum or plebiscite on the future governance for Norfolk Island once it is on the table, and in excess of 700 members of this community signed a petition to the Federal Parliament requesting that they be consulted by referendum or plebiscite before any change is made to Norfolk Island’s current governance model. Who is right and who is wrong – only one way to find out - and that is to hold a referendum or plebiscite, oversighted by an independent arbiter, before any change is made to the Norfolk Island Act by the Federal Parliament. It is my view that to do otherwise is to breach Article 1 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights which states that, and I quote, “All peoples have the right of self-determination. By virtue of that right they freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development”. Article 1 further provides “That the State Parties to the present Covenant, including those having responsibility for the administration of Non-Self Governing and Trust Territories, shall promote the realisation of self-determination, and shall respect that right, in

conformity with the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations.” End quote. I mentioned in my debate at the last sitting, the Harare Convention of 1971 to which Australia is a signatory, a convention which was reaffirmed by the Millbrook Commonwealth Action Programme, and I again quote, “we believe in the liberty of the individual under the law, in equal rights for all citizens regardless of gender, race, colour, creed or political belief and the individuals inalienable right to participate by means of free and democratic political processes in framing the society in which he or she lives.” End quote. To conclude, in the words of former Governor of NSW Dame Marie Bashir “If you want to know anything, listen to the people. It’s very important to listen. Getting out among the people and being part of the community is paramount.” End quote. So let the people speak. Let the silent majority have their say at the ballot box. Thank you Mr Speaker.

MRS WARD Mr Speaker could I just add a few words to that which is following on from Minister Adams...

SPEAKER Did you move that the paper be noted?

MS ADAMS Yes, the paper be noted.

SPEAKER Mrs Ward, sorry, yes.

MRS WARD Thank you Mr Speaker. Following on Minister Adams’ words is that the people must be informed in order to make an informed decision and so that is really where we are at, and just to clarify about the petition and the 700 signatures, because that is a lot of people, that is 700 residents, that’s not to be dismissed in anyway, but that was to seek, as Minister Adams has made very clear, a consultation and to be provided with the facts and figures before a vote was taken by the Parliament and for a democratic say to be had at a plebiscite or a referendum, I continue to support that and a need for that for the community, but of course it can’t be done until the community understands what a new governance model would be, so in the short term that is where I would like to see the conversation and the discussions focus, the Government and members in the community certainly to focus on is around the model, and if that can lead to a referendum or plebiscite further down the track in some months time, once that work has been done, then that would be wonderful. How that would flow with the Federal Parliament making decision I can’t dictate of course, but that is certainly something I would wish for the community and that the time was taken to respect those signatures and just to be very clear, the signatures on the petition don’t ask for the status quo to be retained as was indicated by the Chief Minister earlier in the House, it is as Minister Adams has said, that the residents have the right to be provided with information and then their wish to be expressed at referendum.

SPEAKER Anything further? The question is that the paper be noted.

QUESTION PUT

QUESTION AGREED

The aye’s have it. Are there any further papers this morning? Minister Sheridan.

MR SHERIDAN Thank you Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker section 2B(2) of the Customs Act 1913 makes provision for the Minister to exempt goods from duty where the duty payable is less than \$200. Section 2B(5) of the Act that where the Minister has exercised this power he shall lay a copy of exemption on the table of the Legislative Assembly. Mr Speaker I table these exemptions and the particulars are: 1. The sum of \$86.40 on the importation of a coffin casket carrier for community use by the Lions Club of Norfolk Island and 2. The sum of \$159.39 on the importation of trophies by the Norfolk Island Netball Association. Mr Speaker I would also like to table the Annual Report from the Liquor Licencing Board, and also the Annual Report from the Employment Conciliation Board. Mr Speaker under the Commonwealth Finance Minister (Norfolk Island) Orders 2011 section

20, I am obliged to table in the House periodic financial statements for the Administration of Norfolk Island and each territory authority I therefore table the quarterly financial statements for the period July-September 2014 for the Administration of Norfolk Island as well as the monthly financial statements for the period of October for the Administration of Norfolk Island and also that of the Norfolk Island Government Tourist Bureau and the Norfolk Island Enterprise. One last one Mr Speaker, under the Norfolk Island Act 1979 section 48C, the Public Moneys Act 1978 Section 8A and the Commonwealth Ministers Finance (Norfolk Island) Orders 2011 Section 33 I am obliged to table into this House the audited Financial Statements for the Administration of Norfolk Island, the Norfolk Island Government Tourist Bureau and the Norfolk Island Hospital Enterprise. Mr Speaker I therefore table the reports referred to above. Mr Speaker if I can move that these papers be noted and printed.

SPEAKER
Any further debate?

The question is that these papers be noted and printed.

MR SHERIDAN
Thank you Mr Speaker, Mr Speaker, I believe that the tabling of these reports in the October sitting satisfies the requirements under the legislation in that they be presented within five months after the end of the financial year. I would like to take this opportunity to thank thoroughly the office of the Australian National Audit Office and the Administration of Norfolk Island for enabling this to occur. I would like to thank especially the CEO, Mr Jon Gibbons and his financial team of Bruce Taylor and Gerry Connell and that of the internal auditor Cathy O'Sullivan for the hard work that has gone into preparing these accounts within the time frame as per the legislation. Mr Speaker I believe this is the first time for many a year that this has been accomplished. This is a result of the excellent working relationship that the Administration of Norfolk Island has forged with the office of the ANAO over these past three years. The deficiencies that have been identified in the past years are continuing to be rectified and this has clearly been demonstrated through comments from the ANAO's office about the improvement to the account keeping of the Administration and its Authorities. This report is accompanied with a letter from the ANAO's Executive Director, Ms Puspa Dash which includes her responsibility to express an opinion on the financial statements based on conducting the audit in accordance with the ANAO Standards, which incorporate the Australian Auditing Standards. However, because of the matters described in the Basis for Disclaimer of Opinion paragraph, she was not able to obtain sufficient appropriate audit evidence to provide a basis for an audit opinion. Accordingly, she therefore does not express an opinion on the financial statements of the ANI or the Consolidated Group for the year ended 30 June 2014. Mr Speaker, the Executive Director makes the claim that "Notwithstanding that Commonwealth funding has been provided annually in past years, given that future funding has been agreed only to 30 June 2015 and the uncertainties beyond that date disclosed in Note 1.3, I am unable to conclude whether the going concern assumption is appropriate." Mr Speaker, Note 1.3 relates to the Going Concern question and the ANAO report states "The Administration and the Consolidated Groups Financial Statements have been prepared on a going concern basis which contemplates the realisation of assets and settlement of liabilities in the ordinary course of business. The Administration is currently experiencing financial difficulty associated with a continuing economic downturn and a decline in tourism, and continues to incur losses. There are a number of economic factors that indicate the Administration is not able to meet the cost of providing ongoing essential services on Norfolk Island without ongoing financial support from the Commonwealth of Australia. Since the 2010-11 financial year, the Commonwealth has provided financial assistance to ensure the Administration has sufficient funds to meet expenditure commitments that have fallen due. Financial assistance is determined on an annual basis and is based on the Administration meeting agreed milestones. In 2014-15 funding of up to \$7.5 million has been allocated for financial assistance to Norfolk Island. There is no ongoing commitment from the Commonwealth to underwrite the Administrations future predicted losses nor is there any intention by the Commonwealth at this time to enter into a multiyear funding agreement with the Administration. The Administration has forecast negative net cash flows from operations, before Commonwealth funding, to a total of \$7.5 million in 2014-15, \$6.4 million in 2015-16, \$5.5 million in 2016-17 and \$5.5 million in 2017-18. The Commonwealth's current funding

commitment ends at 30 June 2015, and at the date of signing these financial statements, no further financial assistance has been negotiated. In addition, these cash flow forecasts do not include repayments of an outstanding loan amount of \$11.4 million made by the Commonwealth in 2005. For each year up to and including 2014-15, the Commonwealth has agreed to defer the annual loan repayment of \$1.2 million. These conditions give rise to material uncertainties that may cast significant doubt upon the Administration's ability to continue as a going concern. In the event that the Administration does not obtain additional funding from the Commonwealth and/or reduce expenditure in line with available revenue, the Administration may not be able to continue its operations as a going concern and therefore may not be able to realise its assets and extinguish its liabilities in the ordinary course of operations and the amounts stated in the financial statements. Nevertheless, there is no intention by the management of the Administration, or the Government of Norfolk Island, to cease operations of the Administration or the Consolidated Group or liquidate any assets." Mr Speaker, I don't intend to discuss the figures presented in detail other than to say that the Administration continues to work to a very tight budget, with multiple restrictions on the ability to undertake day to day tasks with limited resources at their disposal. It is pleasing to note that for the period audited, the annual appropriated funds were under spent to the tune of \$1,975,729. This has assisted the Administration to maintain a comfortable cash at bank balance at 30 June 2014 of \$4,137,034 and with a total equity balance of \$61,380,200 for the Administration. Mr Speaker, this does not mean that we are out of the woods yet and we will continue to rely on the Commonwealth for assistance whilst we work our way through these periods of change to a new model of Government of which sees Norfolk Island being financially sustainable in its own right and Commonwealth services provided to the Community as of right and keep the local economy buoyant. Mr Speaker, I will just mention one further fact around that, and that is in the closing audit letter from the Australian National Audit Office, to do with the Administration, unfortunately I don't have the closing audit letter for the Government Tourist Bureau or the Hospital Enterprise at this time, but with the issues that have been identified in previous years, five of those have been resolved from a current opening position of 12, five of those have been resolved, one of those has been downgraded, with three new issues identified, which leaves us at the conclusion of the audit period the Administration now has 10 open issues of which they are working towards to overcome over the next 12 months. So just with those words there Mr Speaker I congratulate the Administration for the work they have done in preparing these accounts, and I leave it to this House for consideration.

SPEAKER
and printed.

Thank you, the question is that those papers be noted

QUESTION PUT
QUESTION AGREED

The aye's have it, so noted and printed. Any further papers, done with papers thank you.

STATEMENTS OF AN OFFICIAL NATURE

SPEAKER
Chief Minister? Minister Adams?

Statements. Any statements of an official nature?

MS ADAMS
Thank you Mr Speaker. A statement on KAVHA. An update on KAVHA matters that might be of interest to Members. 1. Appointment of Norfolk Island representative as Alternate Member to the KAVHA Management Board. I am pleased to advise the House that in accordance with the provisions of clause 10 of the 1994 Memorandum of Understanding relating to the Establishment of the Norfolk Island Kingston and Arthur's Vale Historic Area KAVHA Management Board between the Commonwealth and Norfolk Island Governments: the Norfolk Island Government by Cabinet decision has accepted the nomination of Mr Rees Walden as the KAVHA Landowners representative and Alternate Member on the KAVHA Management Board and Mr Walden has accepted that nomination. Mr Walden may attend all Board meetings with full participation rights in the

absence of a nominated Norfolk Island representative. I welcome Mr Walden to this appointment which heralds long outstanding inclusion of the Private Landowners in the Management arrangements of the heritage listed KAVHA of which they share proprietorship. Secondly, review of the KAVHA Conservation Management Plan, the last advice I gave to this House in respect of the Review of KAVHA's Conservation Management Plan was advice that the KAVHA Board had met with the Consultant Review team in Canberra to workshop the recommendations of the consultants with specific emphasis on the Strategic Principles and Policies. Following the workshop the consultants issued a revised Draft Heritage Management Plan that was referred to the KAVHA Board for approval to release for Public Exhibition. Both the NI and Australian government representatives have requested revisions to the Draft prior to Exhibition which, I am advised by Consultant Team Leader Professor Richard MacKay, necessitates further process to resolve challenging differences and achieve a document acceptable for public exhibition. When the Draft is approved for exhibition - Richard will again visit the island to facilitate briefing sessions for stakeholder groups and the community. The third issue, relocation of the KAVHA Office, the community is aware that by letter from the Administrator, the Administration of Norfolk Island was instructed to vacate No.11 Quality Row which had for some time housed the KAVHA Office and the Secretariat to the KAVHA Board. I table the final communication from the Chief Minister to the Administrator of 2 October 2014 in relation to this matter. That letter from the Chief Minister concluded that it was not the intention of the Administration of Norfolk Island to relinquish occupation of any of the buildings currently occupied at this time, include No. 11 Quality Row, however if our needs change and this space is no longer required the Norfolk Island Government will advise of such intention to both your office and the KAVHA management Board in the first instance. Notwithstanding that letter from the Chief Minister, clearly stating the Government's position not to vacate any of the buildings, the Chief Executive Officer as head of the public service determined, as a matter of duty of care to one of our employees, that the Administration vacate No. 11 and to relocate the KAVHA office to the room at the Royal Engineer's Cottage set aside for KAVHA's purposes. I supported that decision as Minister with responsibility for KAVHA. I understand that a Commonwealth Officer has queried how long the officer would be located at the Royal Engineers Cottage. I have had a discussion with the Chair of the KAVHA Board and we are agreed that the KAVHA Secretariat will remain at the Royal Engineer's cottage until such time as the KAVHA Board has had a formal discussion and determined appropriate office accommodation for its Secretariat. It is however Mr Speaker interesting to note that despite the Administration being required to vacate No. 11 in two weeks, the building six weeks later remains empty. And finally, a nice one to conclude on, a welcome to the Commonwealth Heritage Manager, Mr Matthew Alexander, the Chief Minister, Norfolk Island Representatives on the KAVHA Management Board and I were delighted to host a morning tea to meet and welcome Mr Matthew Alexander to his new role in Norfolk Island and extend well wishes to his family who join us for two years. We look forward to working together to advance the concerted efforts of our governments over the past 35 years to protect and enhance KAVHA. Thank you Mr Speaker.

MR SHERIDAN

I have got one please. Mr Speaker I would just like to make a short statement in regard to my intention to bring to the House in the near future amendment to legislation that will allow the adjustment of the Norfolk Island Time Zone. Currently Norfolk Island operates at a +11.30 from Greenwich Mean Time, and this creates frustration when setting up and reporting software in today's electronic devices and it can only create further problems into the future. Norfolk Island is the region in this time zone and it is not recognised in many set up procedures in many of today's communications terminal devices. Mr Speaker the intent is to adjust the Norfolk Island time zone to +11.00 hours Greenwich Mean Time, which will bring Norfolk Island within 3 minutes of its true time zone instead of being out by approximately 27 minutes as it is now, this would mean that in normal operating periods, we will be on the same time zone as New Caledonia and one hour in front of the Australian East Coast and one hour behind New Zealand. During the Australian daylight saving period the time on Norfolk Island will be identical of that of the majority of the East Coast states. It is intended that this legislation be ready for the next sitting of the House, depending on the ability for our draftspersons to facilitate the

amendment required, Mr Speaker I would like to hear from the community as to whether they have any comments for or against the intended change to the Norfolk Island time zone. Thank you.

SPEAKER
Mrs Ward.

Further Minister's with statements? No, thank you.

MRS WARD Thank you Mr Speaker, if I may make a statement on my recent visit to Cameroon as the Norfolk Island Branch Delegate for the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, just for the listening public Mr Speaker, I will lead out by explain that the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association was originally established in 1911 as the Empire Parliamentary Association and in 1948 the name was changed to the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association. The CPA is a registered charity under the laws of the United Kingdom and has its own constitution. And it is under that constitution in section 1(1) that it states that the aim of the Association is to promote knowledge of the constitutional, legislative, economic, social and cultural aspects of parliamentary democracy with particular reference to the countries of the Commonwealth Nations. And under the aims and objectives and public benefit under the current strategic plan of the CPA, two strong focus points for me were to encourage professional development, which I took full advantage of, and to promote gender equality. The Commonwealth Parliamentary Association Conference which I attended was in Yaounde, Cameroon, which is in Central Africa between the 2nd and the 10th of October this year. It was both an honour and a privilege to be selected to represent the Norfolk Island Branch at the Conference; I thank my Parliamentary colleagues and the Clerk of the Norfolk Island Legislative Assembly Norfolk Island for their support and also the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly of the Australian Capital Territory, who is also the Regional Secretary, for his guidance and friendship during the Conference. Mr Speaker as you will know, and I put in my report, that yourself, the Speaker of the Norfolk Island Legislative Assembly who is a current member of the Executive Committee also attended the Conference and as such we both joined eight other Australian Region delegates including the Australian Region Commonwealth Women's Parliamentarian Chair, and it was beneficial for me to have one on one discussions with her as I am now the Norfolk Island delegate in the Women's Parliamentary Association. The Cameroon people were exceptionally warm and gracious hosts and after a respectful delay of 24 hours to mark the passing of the Secretary-General Dr. William Shija, whose passing has been noted in the previous sitting of this House by yourself Mr Speaker, the Conference commenced with the Official Opening Ceremony of the 34th Small Branches Conference, this led straight into the Small Branches Conference and three items were addressed: 1. The question of whether or not the Small Branch membership should be represented at the CPA Officer level, which is an executive level. A motion was put forward by the Chair of the CPA Executive Committee, Sir Alan Haselhurst. The motion was debated with opposing views and concerns coming from the floor; concerns included cost, tokenism, real term gains and congestion at the Executive level. Other delegates argued that small branches have a unique set of challenges to cope with and that these should be and deserve to be given a louder voice. The motion was eventually unanimously passed. The second item was a presentation by a lead speaker from St Helene, and she presented a case that education should be at the core of every government policy, and this was again unanimously supported. This was followed by four lead speakers from Malta, Gibraltar and the Isle of Mann who spoke across a range of issues including equality, protecting the most vulnerable in society, enhancing social development, identifying and equipping the youth with the future focussed workforce skills that they need and active aging policies and the commitment to transformation in all of those areas by Parliamentarians. The following day was the Official Opening of the 60th Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference. A number of speeches were made to mark the occasion including one delivered by the President of Cameroon. The event was followed by a Regional meeting where delegates were briefed on what had occurred to date in executive meetings. And I would like to report to the House that the Australian Regional Executive Committee delegates David Buffett, Vicky Dunn and Francis Logan led the Australian Region meeting in a way that demonstrated their professionalism in what was an awkward period. On the third day delegates were treated to a CPA Tour of Cameroon. Again Mr

Speaker and I joined Tour One which involved an internal flight to the East Coast of Cameroon, Doula; which was a 45 minute flight. We were then taken by bus to the coastal town of Limbe where we were entertained by a traditional canoe race, musicians and a beach wrestling match, we also visited the Botanical Garden. After lunch were driven through lush tea growing country towards the summit of Mt Cameroon to the re-unification memorial. Mr Speaker we were on different buses, but I can report that our tour guide didn't hesitate in answering our questions and so our small bus learnt quite a few things about Cameroon firsthand from a local, we learn about how Ebola and the HIV virus were affecting Cameroon's economy and social fabric. We learnt about the local education system which is a combination of English and French and they have private and public systems, we learnt about the treatment of girls, and we heard about homosexuality law in Cameroon which also raised its head at one of the workshops. Our tour guide was not afraid to talk about the good, the bad and the ugly of Cameroon and he assured us that his wife walked beside him, and not behind him but what he was most proud of was the reunification of his country. The political and economic history of the Republic of Cameroon is well worth reading and I encourage my colleagues to do so, there is a combination going back of English and German and French and Cameroon in history of course. The parallel between the CPA tagline "Unity in Diversity" and Cameroon's vision stood out; the vision was unity, unification, equality, education, and inclusion, despite there being 10 different regions in the country, each having different customs and dialects and distinct traditions. And I was inspired that day to continue to drive hard for a greater union to be built between Norfolk Island and mainland Australia and my strong message will continue to be that Norfolk Island's segregation at the Federal and State level is not in our best interest and must be corrected as a matter of urgency. The Commonwealth Women's Parliamentarians held their business meeting the next day. It was revealed that the number of women in Commonwealth Parliaments overall is declining and that International efforts to promote Women's Rights are hampered by psychological challenges. There also appeared to be general recognition that without men to support gender equality, women around the world will go nowhere. That day continued with a number of workshops, and I was drawn to two in particular, I would have liked to have completed all eight, but they were run simultaneously, so we had to choose two. I attended Workshop A which was titled Unity and Diversity and the role of Parliament. The sub-heading was Good Governance for the 21st Century – transparency and accountability continues to be the needs and requirements throughout the Commonwealth. And everyone who knows how I worked to support the passage of the Commonwealth Territories Law Reform Bill in 2010 will understand why I was drawn to this particular workshop. The following evening I was fortunate enough to be seated beside Professor Ken Coghill who was a key note speaker and we discussed the work he was doing on behalf of Monash University; his work included Codes of Conduct for Parliamentarians and the accountability of various governments and he spoke of his experience that in many, many parliaments there is a frustration when sound recommendations are put forward by Committees and they are ignored by Government. In the afternoon I attended Workshop E, which was titled, How can Parliament ensure that young people are placed at the centre of sustainable development: and the role of education in that. And I met the most inspirational young lady named Nadage Grace Yoko she was a female Youth Ambassador of Cameroon and we remain in contact today through social media. Nadage's mission as a Youth Representative to have a seat at the Executive level of the CPA. And what she had done was managed to make her way to the table and present as a lead speaker, that in itself is remarkable, and I couldn't stop congratulating on her achievement and wishing her well for the future and a note on that day was that a comment was made to me by a delegate, that we have a very strong Youth Assembly on Norfolk Island, under the banner of the CPA, so congratulations to members of the community and our youth who are involved in that body. The final day was the 60th General Assembly Meeting, which could be described as the main meeting of the conference, it had a 19 point agenda including the election of the new Chairperson of the Executive Committee. 138 delegates cast their vote, one voting paper was spoiled which led to a result of 70 votes to 67. A very close vote in deed, three votes the different. And the successful candidate was the Speaker of the Bangladesh Parliament Dr. Shirin Chaudhury. Dr. Chaudhury's sole opponent was the Hon. Juliana O'Connor-Connolly who is the Speaker from the Cayman Islands Legislative Assembly. Both

candidates spoke of unification and inclusion and the need to work together to ensure positive changes in the lives of people throughout the Commonwealth. The 'Change of Status' motion was listed on the agenda and that refers back to the point I made at the beginning Mr Speaker as you will be well aware, of the CPA status being a registered charity under the law of the United Kingdom, but that is being questioned. The result of that debate was what I would describe as fierce but there was also reasoned debate and it eventually the question was deferred to the next conference next year. Delegates were certainly left in no doubt that the matter is unresolved matter in the minds of many of the delegates. Next year the country hosting the CPA conference will be Pakistan, they won the honour of hosting, and there are no further hosts identified for future conferences as Barbados had offered for 2016, but they have withdrawn. It is expected that the selection process for the next Secretary-General will follow the same process as the previous one, with each region advertising and selecting one candidate for consideration to the Executive Committee. I would like to add at this point Mr Speaker, that whilst the general business of the Conference was underway there did appear to be whole other world going on of CPA Clerks and Secretaries' of the Delegates; these people are of course the engine room of the CPA and Parliaments around the Commonwealth. In closing, I would like to express my sincere thanks to the CPA secretariat staff who worked tirelessly to ensure that the Conference Delegates were well looked after and inform my colleagues and the broader community that a photographic journal is available on social media website, flickr, the social media website is called flickr and it is maintained by the CPA staff in London. Mr Speaker attending the CPA Conference was not a junket in my opinion, it was an experience which has helped to reinforce many of my political views, views that I hope will continue to be utilised as we progress spending some time with the ANC women, and watching their courage, their force and their lack of fear to sometimes act as a circuit breaker, because that is sometimes what needs to happen in debate, so again for that I give my sincere thanks to my Honourable colleagues and the Norfolk Island Community. Thank you Mr Speaker.

SPEAKER Thank you for your report.

MRS WARD Mr Speaker I will table the report, and move that it be printed.

SPEAKER The question is that the report be printed.
QUESTION PUT
QUESTION AGREED

The aye's have it, the paper is to be printed, thank you. We have concluded statements.

MESSAGES FROM THE OFFICE OF THE ADMINISTRATOR

SPEAKER There are no messages today Honourable Members.

REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES

SPEAKER There are no reports from Standing Committees, we then proceed to Notices.

NOTICES

CUSTOMS ACT 1913 - EXEMPTION FROM PAYMENT OF CUSTOMS DUTY

MR SHERIDAN Thank you Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker I move that, under subsection 2B(4) of the Customs Act 1913, this House recommends to the Administrator that the goods specified in column 1 of the Schedule imported by the person specified in column

2, and on the conditions mentioned in column 2 of the Schedule, be exempted from duty. And the Schedule is Mr Speaker, in Column 1...

SPEAKER Would you like to have that as taken as read?

MR SHERIDAN I can have that taken as read Mr Speaker. In other words I se done.

Column 1	Column 2
<u>Goods</u>	<u>Importer/conditions</u>
Laser Grader Blade Control Equipment - amount of duty applicable \$600.27	Norfolk Island Bowling Club Conditions: Control equipment to be exported on completion of use
Uniform - Football Jerseys - amount of duty applicable \$609.84	Norfolk Mutineers Norfolk Island Rugby League Masters Conditions: Nil
Basketball Tower - amount of duty applicable \$234.14	Daa Side fe Ucklun Conditions: Nil

SPEAKER Thank you. The question is that the motion be agreed to.

MR SHERIDAN Yes, that the motion be agreed to.

SPEAKER Any debate? No further debate. The question is that the motion be agreed to.

QUESTION PUT
QUESTION AGREED

The aye's have it, thank you.

SPEAKER A motion by leave, Minister Adams.

MS ADAMS Thank you Mr Speaker, I seek leave to move the motion standing in my name on the programme re the revocation of appointment and appointment of members and Chairman of the Social Services Board.

SPEAKER Is leave granted? Leave is granted. Minister Adams.

MS ADAMS Thank you Mr Speaker, Mr Speaker, I move that for the purposes of sections 4 and 5 of the *Social Services Act 1980*, this House resolve to recommend that the Minister revoke the appointment of Melissa Ward as a Legislative Assembly member of the Board and as Chairman of the Board, and appoint Hadyn Paul Evans who is not the Minister or the authorised officer, as a Legislative Assembly member of the Board, and further, appoint Ronald Coane Nobbs being a member of the Board as appointed on 12 April 2013 to be the chairman of the Board.

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

MS ADAMS Thank you Mr Speaker, Mr Speaker it is with sincere regret that last Thursday I accepted the resignation of Mrs Ward as member and Chair of the

Social Services Board, Mrs Ward has stepped down for personal reasons. Mrs Ward has performed her role on the Board in the usual professional and conscientious manner that she carries out all her duties as a Member of the Legislative Assembly and I thank her sincerely. Mrs Ward provided me with a valuable verbal exit report last Thursday and at that time raised with me a number of issues which I have undertaken to progress with the incoming Chair of the Board. Mr Speaker I thank Mr Hadyn Evans for agreeing to fill the vacancy as a Member of the Legislative Assembly and I thank Mr Nobbs as continuing Assembly Member on the Board for agreeing to assume the role of Chairman of the Board. I look to Members for their support of this motion. Thank you Mr Speaker.

SPEAKER Thank you Minister Adams, any further debate? No further debate, I put the question, that the motion be agreed to.

QUESTION PUT

QUESTION AGREED

The aye's have it, the motion is agreed, thank you. Notices are completed.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

SPEAKER In respect of Orders of the Day Honourable Members there is only one listed, and I have had an indicator from the Minister that he has asked that it not be brought forward, is there anything further that you want to elaborate further to that?

MR WARD Thank you Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker in light of community concerns with the Bill introduced at our last Sitting, it is not my intention to call the bill on today. I have requested legislative counsel to prepare a detailed stage amendment to in effect split the bill into two parts, that is to deal with breath testing, or road side breath testing and at a later stage a proposal to reduce the alcohol level from 0.08 to 0.05. I propose that the second stage amendment reducing blood alcohol level provisions be phased in in 12 months, thereby enabling a public information program and to allow licenced premises to implement such measures as they see fit to assist their members and clientele to lessen the impact of any changes on their businesses. Thank you Mr Speaker.

SPEAKER Thank you Minister, in that context then, that matter will be listed for a subsequent day.

FIXING OF THE NEXT SITTING DAY

SPEAKER Fixing of the next sitting day Honourable Members, Mr Porter.

MR PORTER Thank you Mr Speaker, I move that the House at its rising adjourn until Wednesday, 17 December 2014 at 10 am.

SPEAKER Thank you I put that question to you Honourable Members. The question is that that motion be agreed to.

QUESTION PUT

QUESTION AGREED

The aye's have it, thank you.

ADJOURNMENT

SPEAKER Adjournment, Mrs Ward.

MR WARD
adjourn.

Thank you Mr Speaker I move that this House do now adjourn.

SPEAKER The question is that this House do now adjourn. Is there any adjournment debate? I'm looking to Mrs Ward first if you have any participation, no. Mr Nobbs, thank you.

MR NOBBS Thank you Mr Speaker, I'm sorry to hold you people up, but this issue has been around for a few weeks and it is only coming out now. Mr Speaker an ongoing lack of progress in providing for recovery and expansion of the island's economy has been of great concern for some time. The Road Map was initiated with good intentions however it resulted in a greater interest in supporting social welfare than addressing the whole picture. My views have always been that a vibrant, diverse economy is an essential tool for any community battling to offset the need for social welfare. Whilst recognising a need for social welfare the question is to what degree is it required. Most important is the collateral damage to a community of high welfare dependency. It is usually, Mr Speaker, no very pretty. The island has an aging economy, one major reason is the current employment opportunities, we educate the children and encourage them to take up higher education, what opportunities do we offer them after all that? So they stay away, and maybe they return on retirement as I did, to add to an elderly population. Some younger members take up jobs on the island, and this is great, but not enough opportunities are available and particularly in the field to which they are qualified. Here is another problem, and one of many in the need to diversify. It all comes back to the economy. I am offer the emotion, hope and pleading, we need to get on with it. To put aside the JSC Report, but don't forget it, a report based on, in my opinion, on a premise in creating nothing more than a dictatorship with a large entourage of Commonwealth Public Servants. We have now entered a period a depressed economy just does not need. Forcing the issue will definitely not assist. So what is the alternative? A stand off? Sit and wait for something to happen? Altercation? Ongoing stress, putting the community down or something positive? History Mr Speaker shows that reports commissioned over the years have been discarded to history and have been replaced by new consultancies and reports. History shows that for 158 years this island has survived largely on the establishment and maintenance of its own economy. Norfolk Island has seen failures in its economy on numerous occasions in the past, such booms followed downturns are no different to the worlds developed countries, but on Norfolk Island, and this is really important, subsequent recovery resulted usually from action largely taken from within the community. The community actually led the recovery, a point both the Commonwealth and Norfolk Island Governments must appreciate. The real question in the community at the present time as we rapidly approach Christmas is not what they are getting for Christmas, but what happens after Christmas and the end of 2014. In due course I intend tabling a document aimed at providing a path after 2014, the proposal is to establish a process to bring the island out of its current malaise. The path proposed is to continue the past experience of the community led recovery, re-establish and re-vitalise an expanded economy, all within a framework of close co-operation between the representatives of the Norfolk Island and Australian communities. The strategy here was prepared by others, not resident of the island, but understand and have respect for the island and its people. All input was on the basis of experience in economic development in isolated areas and they are all Australian taxpayers. The document which is quite short suggests a very simple plan. And I've heard today, I've sat here in horror at listening to what was said. I'm not here, and I'm not putting this forward on the basis that we have really gone into what we should do, I'm saying that now. I was horrified and I was not going to proceed with it, and then I thought no, I'm not going to sit here on my what have you, and listen. This proposal contains a synopsis followed by a background, which provides in addition to the points made earlier, reference to; co-operation between Norfolk Island and the Commonwealth Governments being essential.

MEMBER(S)

Hear hear.

MR NOBBS An aim to secure a sustainable future whilst maintaining cultural heritage. Nothing promoted today was aimed at providing a diverse and sustainable economy. The Island's isolation and limitations must be noted and today we see the Island history actually repeating itself. There's reference to such fallacies as just growing the population will be a one stop fix, and that Norfolk Islanders pay no tax. It talks about a base wage established by the Commonwealth years ago at a percentage less than the Australian equivalent as the Norfolk Islanders do not pay income tax. It recognises that there are taxation options, but caution to suggest it at the present. A practical strategy is sought and provided by this document. The strategy is established in three phases. Phase A is from now, or acceptance, to 30 June 2015, that's next year. It aims to establish in this phase the real structure behind the strategy. Phase B from 1 July 2015 to 30 June 2022 is dedicated to implementing appropriate development strategies. Phase C is post July 2022, it is seen as ongoing and that the majority of proposals would be implemented. The document provides in diagrammatic form what its major structure is proposed. In phase A to 30 June 2015, and this is headed re-structure, it is proposed a) establishment of a development corporation; b) place the Government Business Enterprises under commercial structure and corporatize in four entities, establish public authorities for Health, Education, Policing, Tourism and KAVHA, other functions former Admin to be under revised arrangements, and finally another thing is further development of economic based concepts. In Phase B from 1 July 2015 to 30th June 2022 the document states that the timeframe for restructure is tight but is essential to the progression of the whole plan. The strategy, and I want to make this pretty clear, the strategy recognises the need for taxation reform. And signals the introduction of a new tax system within phase B. It also states that some Commonwealth financial support as occurred in recent years will be required during this phase. It suggests that the funding arrangements should be changed to one of project based funding. Specific funding arrangement required under the strategy are specified. All elements of the current economy are proposed to be and immediately vigorously reassessed at the commencement of phase B if not in phase A. A number of projects are identified and in no specific order should be progressed to diversify the economy. The Commonwealth's role is recognised in the proposed diversification, also in the phase 1 recommendation relates to Immigration and another to the Legislative Assembly once the economy has been revitalised. Phase C of the strategy is from 1 July 2022 onwards, would see the development corporations cease to exist, and the aim of a self-sustainability achieved. The strategy is imperative to the island, it is also imperative to the Commonwealth, not only in the managing of its responsibilities to the island, but is also imperative to ensure it is not funding yet another failed isolated community. Just as an aside, and I mentioned it earlier, my personal experiences as a Minister in this Chamber is that the Commonwealth Minister's will support such proposals as are seen as being a benefit to both Governments. I find it difficult to understand why this has changed. On this assumption the strategy is based. Thank you Mr Speaker.

SPEAKER Thank you Mr Nobbs.

MR NOBBS Do I table it now Mr Speaker.

SPEAKER Thank you, the paper is so tabled, thank you. Any further participation in the adjournment debate? No further debate I put the question that the House do now adjourn.

QUESTION PUT
QUESTION AGREED

The aye's have it, Honourable Members this House stands adjourned until Wednesday 17 December 2014 at 10 o'clock in the morning.