SECOND NORFOLK ISLAND
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

HANSARD

Second Sitting
(3 March 1982)
Executive Member for Administration, Education & Health
(The Honourable David Ernest Buffett)

Surface Transport  Firearms
Roads, Footpaths & Bridges  Explosives
Street Lighting  Places of Public Entertainment
Water Supply  Museums, Memorials & Libraries
Electricity Supply  Boarding Houses & Hotels (food & beverages)
Drainage & Sewerage  Foodstuff & Beverages
Garbage & Trade Wastes  Trading Hours
Primary Production  Markets & Street Stalls
Slaughtering  Hawkers
Domestic Animals  Radio & Television
Pounds  Telephone Services
Pests & Noxious Weeds  Coastlines, Foreshores, Wharves
Recreation Areas  Lighterage
Cemeteries  Registries & Rolls
Forestry & Timber  Social Services
Fire Prevention & Control  Education
Quarrying  Health
Prevention of Nuisances  The Environment
Noxious Trades  Culture & Traditions
Gases & Fuels

Executive Member for Planning, Tourism & Commerce
(John Terence Brown)

Building Control  Advertising Hoardings
Tourism (including Tourist Accommodation)  Fishing
Immigration  Land Use Planning & Subdivisions
Air & Sea Transport (other than Lighterage)  Legislation Planning
Future Planning  Commerce

Executive Member for Finance
(Edward Davenport Howard)

Revenue Raising  Public Monies
Postal Services  Customs
Liaison with the Public Service Board  Retail Price Index
Bond Store & Future Commercial Undertakings  of the Administration
MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

President - The Honourable David Ernest Buffett
Deputy President - Mr. William Winton Sanders

Brown, John Terence
Buffett, Alice Inez
Buffett, The Honourable David Ernest
Christian-Bailey, Bernard Edwin
Gray, Chloe Barbara
Howard, Edward Davenport
Jackson, Gilbert Wallace
Quintal, Gregory Gilbert Francis
Sanders, William Winton
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Next Sitting Day  
Adjournment  
Adjournment Debate
The Assembly met at 2p.m. The President (Hon. D.E. Buffett) took the Chair and read the Prayer.
LEAVE OF ABSENCE - MISS BUFFETT

MR. PRESIDENT: Honourable Members, Miss Alice Buffett is away from this meeting of the Legislative Assembly and leave is sought for Miss Buffett. Is leave granted? Leave is granted. Thank you Honourable Members.

May I say at this time Honourable Members, Miss Buffett continues to be hospitalised at Prince Alfred Hospital in Sydney. She is of course being treated for her diabetic condition and kidney problems. Her condition I am advised is improving and she and her family are hoping that she will have progressed to being an outpatient by the 11th or 12th of this month.

COMMONWEALTH DAY MESSAGE

MR. PRESIDENT: Honourable Members I have a Commonwealth Day message which I would like to read at this time, from the Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, and I read the message Honourable Members:

"March the 8th will be observed as Commonwealth Day in all countries which are members of this unique family of Nations. This is the eighth consecutive year marking its observance. I am pleased to continue the custom started by previous Chairmen of the Executive Committee of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association and send a Commonwealth Day message to all branches of the Association.

During the past year, Belize and Antigua and Barbuda achieved their independence. The CPA congratulates both countries and looks forward to their continuing interest in the Association.

The CPA, like the Commonwealth itself, has undergone a process of evolution. Since its founding in 1911 as the Empire Parliamentary Association, it has grown to meet the changing and varied needs of its members on every continent. The CPA is today an Association of Commonwealth Parliamentarians who, irrespective of
race, religion or culture, are united by community of interest, respect for the rule of law and individual rights and freedoms, and by pursuit of the positive ideals of parliamentary democracy.

The community of interest which typifies our Association is based on diversity. In that respect, it reflects the Commonwealth itself. Parliamentary democracy is represented in the CPA and in the Commonwealth by institutions with centuries of tradition. Equally, the CPA embraces parliamentary assemblies which have evolved new and different representational forms to better reflect the dynamic and needs of their particular societies.

The CPA also rests on a foundation of equality. Branches representing national parliaments and those representing state, provincial or territorial legislatures participate on an equal footing; so do old Branches and new, large ones and small.

Co-operation within the Commonwealth takes many and varied forms: education, health, law, technical assistance, and scientific research, to name a few. The particular and essential contribution of the CPA rests in its pursuit of the positive ideals of parliamentary democracy. It is in its dedication to this pursuit and the noncomitant recognition of the principles of accountability, free elections, protection of the rights of individuals and minorities, and respect for the rule of law, that the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association will continue to make its unique contribution to its 10,000 members, to its 127 Branches, and to the Commonwealth itself", and it is signed by Gerald R. Ottenheimer, Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, Headquarters Secretariat in London.

RESPONSE FROM THE OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL

MR. PRESIDENT: Honourable Members the next item on the Notice Paper concerns a response from the office of the Governor-General.

Honourable Members will recall that at a sitting of the
House on 4th November 1981 a message was agreed to be sent to the Governor-General through the office of the Administrator on the matter of the Governor-General's withholding of assent to a Bill passed by the Legislative Assembly for an Act to amend the Legislative Assembly Ordinance 1979.

A reply has been received from the Official Secretary to the Governor-General and I read it for the information of Members:

"His Excellency the Governor-General has received the Address which you forwarded to him on behalf of the members of the Legislative Assembly of Norfolk Island.

His Excellency has asked me to say that he has noted the deep concern and regret of the Legislative Assembly that, acting on the advice of the Federal Executive Council, he has withheld assent to a bill passed by the Legislative Assembly of Norfolk Island, for an act to amend the Legislative Assembly Ordinance 1979.

The members of the Legislative Assembly will know of the great personal interest which the Governor-General has taken in the people of Norfolk Island as well as in the Island's constitutional development. In relation to those matters which are the subject of your address, His Excellency knows you will understand that he is able to do no more than ensure that the views expressed in the Address are made known to the Minister for Home Affairs and Environment. His Excellency asks me to let you know that this has been done". Yours sincerely, David I Smith, Official Secretary to the Governor-General.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

PUBLIC SERVICE BOARD

MR. PRESIDENT: Questions without notice. Mr. Sanders.

MR. SANDERS: I direct my questions to the Executive Member for Finance.
Mr. Howard I would like to know what were the names of the persons who made up the Public Service Board prior to the new Administrator and the new Chief Administrative Officer?

MR. HOWARD: The Chairman of the Public Service Board is always the Administrator, that is set out in the Public Service Ordinance. So the previous Chairman of the Board was the Acting Administrator Mr. Paterson. It is provided also that the Chief Administrative Officer shall be a member. Up until the departure of Mr. Bains as Chief Administrative Officer he was a member of the Board. The third of the three members is elected by the officers of the Public Service. Mr. Brian Bates was elected in the first election to that position, and I believe last year there was a second election and once again he was elected. So he has been, since the beginning of the Public Service Board, the member representing the officers of the Public Service.

MR. PRESIDENT: Thank you Mr. Howard. Mr. Sanders.

UPGRADING OF PUBLIC SERVICE POSITIONS

MR. SANDERS: Is it true that the positions of 17 officers of the Public Service have been upgraded by the Public Service Board, if so - how much extra will this cost the people of Norfolk Island - a figure of $16,784 a year was mentioned, is that correct?

MR. HOWARD: In Statements which are to come two or three items down the list in our agenda today, I intend to present quite a detailed statement on the Public Service Board's latest report which includes information on that question. There will be a chance after that statement for any questions relating to that sort of thing and I think it would be better if I took them then if that is alright with you.
MR. SANDERS: Yes. Does it include in your statement whether the upgraded salaries were backdated, and if so to when?

MR. HOWARD: That information is in my sack of stuff to draw on when I am asked questions such as that. I would be happy to answer it when Statements come around.

**ABOLISHED PUBLIC SERVICE POSITIONS**

MR. SANDERS: Could the Executive Member also confirm that although 76 positions were allegedly abolished by the Public Service Board, no monetary savings were made to the people of Norfolk Island since these positions were not in fact filled by anyone for many years?

MR. HOWARD: Again, if I may, I will make a point of dealing with that when I make my statement.

**PUBLIC SERVICE WAGES**

MR. SANDERS: Just one more question Mr. Howard. Is it possible to arrange for those public servants who wish Australian award wages to live in Australia, and those public servants who are quite happy to do a days work for a days wages with equality with those of the private sector, to live on Norfolk and be public servants?

MR. HOWARD: That is something that you really ought to ask the Public Service Board and not me.
MR. PRESIDENT: Questions without notice. Mr. Jackson.

AIRFARES

MR. JACKSON: Mr. President, I direct this question to the Executive Member responsible for air transport.

You will recall that the weekly newspaper "The Norfolk Islander", carried two items which concerns me and the rest of the community in their issue on Saturday 13 February. In bold print a statement by the Managing Director of East-West Airlines, Mr. John Riley, announced that East-West will slash one way fares to the Gold Coast to $60 one way; Brisbane $63 one way; and Hobart $77 one way.

On the same page, not half an inch away from that statement, Burns Philp's Travel Manager, Mr. Lisle Snell, advised regrettably East-West have increased their airfares effective immediately to one way off peak to $230 and one way peak to $250, three times as much as those charged for a one way fare to Hobart which is approximately the same distance.

The question is Mr. President, would the Member responsible for air transport state the reasons for these glaring discrepancies and if the Norfolk Island Government was consulted before these increases became effective?

MR. BROWN: Mr. Jackson I am not aware whether the Norfolk Island Government was consulted before these increases, certainly I was not consulted, although my predecessor in this role may have been, certainly in my discussions with my predecessor he has not advised me that he was consulted. As for my own intentions, it is my intention to arrange a meeting at an early date with the senior executives of East-West Airlines to discuss this and other matters in relation to the air services from Sydney to Norfolk Island.

MR. JACKSON: Thank you Mr. Brown.
INCREASED FREIGHT CHARGES

MR. JACKSON: I have another question. Once again to the Executive Member responsible for shipping.

The question is are you aware that an $11.50 levy to be imposed on each revenue tonne commencing on the next arrival of the Ile de Lumiere from Sydney, represents a 10.6% increase on current freight charges, and are you also aware that another freight increase similar to this one is predicted for April of this year?

MR. BROWN: Mr. Jackson, on 10th February of this year I had discussions with representatives of the C.C.C. in relation to the proposed freight increases. I am not in a position at this instant to confirm to you the exact amount of those increases, however I am able to advise that the representatives of that company brought with them accounting information with which they were able to demonstrate to my satisfaction that the increase represented an increase to cover increased costs on their part. I have copies of the documents which they left with me together with a copy of further documents which have been provided to me today and I would be happy to let you peruse those at your convenience.

MR. JACKSON: Where these extra costs itemised in any way?

MR. BROWN: Yes they are itemised. To a very small extent they are attributed to an increase in the wages paid to the stevedores and lighterage workers in Norfolk Island, but that was only a small part of the overall increase and I think if you do peruse these documents when you do have the time to do so, you will either be satisfied by them or you will from them raise further questions which I will happily take up on your behalf.

MR. JACKSON: I will be happy to peruse them Mr. Brown but I would not say that I will be happy with them at this stage.
PECUNIARY INTEREST

MR. JACKSON: I have another question and it is directed to the Minister for tourism once again.

Mr. Brown at our first sitting you made a lengthy statement concerning your pecuniary interests in shares in Norfolk Island Airlines and Hillcrest Motel and as an Executive Member your responsibility as a Minister includes land and air transport and tourism, which could be seen as a direct pecuniary interest in this area.

The question is have you anything further to add to your previous statement regarding pecuniary interest?

MR. BROWN: Yes Mr. Jackson I do. You will see on the Notice Paper for today that I will be making two ministerial statements. One of those statements is in relation to pecuniary interests and if it is convenient to the House I will make that statement at that time.

MR. JACKSON: Thank you Mr. Brown.

NARCOTIC DRUGS

MR. JACKSON: I have one more question. The question is directed to the Minister for Finance, and it concerns an item advertised in the paper on drugs.

Residents of Norfolk Island, especially parents with young children, have reason to be shocked and concerned at a statement in "The Norfolk Islander" on Saturday 13th February under the heading of the police column "2222 Calling", where it stated that the police are aware that drugs - and I take it to be narcotic drugs - may be coming in through the post, and are making enquiries through the Australian Federal Police Narcotics Bureau to have this type of drug transportation looked at.

The question is Mr. Deputy President, would the Minister state how serious this situation is and has it been established that narcotic drugs are entering Norfolk Island through the post?
MR. HOWARD: I cannot give a clear immediate answer. I am concerned as you are Mr. Jackson about the possibility of drugs being used on Norfolk Island. I hear that they are being used, I am sure you have heard that they are being used, by whom, how much, where, I do not know. It is primarily a job for the Commonwealth Government to see to because they are responsible for law enforcement but as people elected to look after the interests of the Island I think it is our concern as well. Steps are being taken by the Customs office today, tomorrow, almost immediately, to significantly upgrade their ability to screen illegal entry materials that maybe coming in by air along with passengers. I would be delighted to ask the Revenue Manager if he will see that the Post Office considers whether it should be doing something similar on this end, what can be done I am not sure, I am as concerned as you are, I do not know what the facts are, I think we have been discussing this vague, general worry and it is a serious one, for over a year now - I think it is over a year now since you first raised the matter. I am with you 100% in your concern, I think we have let it drift a little too long, I think we ought to do something. I will certainly do everything I can.

MR. JACKSON: Thank you Mr. Howard. Following up on that question, and I appreciate your answer along those lines, however is the Minister satisfied that everything possible is being done to prevent narcotic drugs from entering Norfolk Island by means such as through the airport, by ship, by visiting yachts or by light aircraft using Norfolk Island as a stopover point?

MR. HOWARD: Mr. Jackson's question is am I satisfied that everything possible is being done to prevent that. The answer is no. I am certain that everything that can be done is not being done. I am inclined to believe that more could usefully and sensibly at a reasonable cost be done, and I think it should be.

MR. JACKSON: I think the question could now be put Mr. Deputy President, will you then take it up with the responsible
persons and make sure that everything possible is done in the future.

MR. HOWARD: Of course I will take it up with the responsible persons. No, I cannot guarantee that everything possible will be done. All such things are a matter of balance. I am sure that if we wanted to devote our whole annual budget of three odd million dollars to stopping drugs, we could do a great deal more than if we devote $20,000 or $50,000 to it.

LIQUOR BOND

MR. JACKSON: Just one further short question to the Minister for Finance once again Mr. Deputy President. Is there any truth in the rumour that the Liquor Bond in Burnt Pine may be sold to private enterprise?

MR. HOWARD: First I have heard of it.

MR. JACKSON: Thank you.

CARE OF PUBLIC PLACES

MR. HOWARD: A question to Mr. Buffett if I may. I want to ask if he will pick up on something that sort of fell between the chairs following the resignation of Mr. Blucher. Just before Mr. Blucher's resignation I expressed quite serious concern and spoke at some length, and copies of hansard I think are available that set out the concern, about the rubbishy look of many parts of the Island, and the apparent lack of any systematic method for keeping public places tidy. My suggestion at that time was that what was needed was some system that set down on paper in which some particular person or some particular part of the Administration is
assigned the job at certain stated times of going around and seeing that these places are kept clean. As I said I think that suggestion slipped between the chairs at that time and I am asking Mr. Buffett if he would pick it up and see what he can do with it.

MR. BUFFETT: Mr. Deputy President, most certainly I can pick that up and see what can be done in addition to what is being done now. Members will no doubt be aware that we do have contractual arrangements for persons to clear rubbish at various places around the Island so that it is kept in a neat and tidy fashion. We do have persons within the work force of course who have a task to mow and keep tidy various recreational areas for example, and they do a very sound and very good job. If there are any difficulties that are not presently covered I most certainly will be happy to examine them and see if they can be tidied as well.

AIRPORT CLOSURES DURING UPGRADING

MR. HOWARD: A question to Mr. Brown in his responsibility for air transport. I do not know if he has the answer now, if he does fine, if not I would be happy to have it when we next meet.

The question has several parts to it - will the airport be closed or severely restricted for some period during the upgrading? That is the first part of the question. The second is if so, for what period of time and what are the estimated dates? And again if so, what plans are being made for bridging through that period with the least disruption to tourism and the longest notice to people in the tourist industry on the Island?

MR. BROWN: Perhaps Mr. Deputy President I could take that as a question on notice for the next meeting and reply to it at that time.
PAPERS

PASTURAGE & ENCLOSURE REGULATIONS

MR. BUFFETT: Mr. Deputy President, amendments to the Pasturage & Enclosure Regulations were made after the December meeting of the last Legislative Assembly and the principal matter contained in those regulations concerns charges for rights of pasturage by specifying annual charges, and in accordance with practice, I table a copy at this the first practical occasion.

MR. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Are there any more papers? Mr. Howard have you any papers?

MR. HOWARD: I do not. I have several statements. At least I don't think I do, do I?

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

MR. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Statements by leave. Are there any statements by the Executive Members please? Mr. Buffett.

COMPLETION OF TERM OF MR. M.A. BAINS

AS CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

MR. BUFFETT: Mr. Deputy President I would like to make two statements if I may. The first one Mr. Deputy President concerns the completion of the term of Mr. M.A. Bains as Chief Administrative Officer.

Mr. Deputy President, Mr. Malcolm A. Bains completed his duties as Chief Administrative Officer at the end of last month – the 28th of February 1982, and I would like to record the Government's appreciation of his work as Chief Administrative Officer. As Members will know, Mr. Bains brought a wealth of experience and
knowledge to the position he held as Head of the Public Service in Norfolk Island and this experience and knowledge was valued and much used. Mr. Bains undertook many onerous tasks, made adjustments in the Public Service where necessary and made astute and tireless application to his various roles. Mr. Bains as part of the Chief Administrative Officer's statutory role was a member of the Public Service Board. During the time of his membership the Board undertook the serious and difficult task of a review of the Public Service and Mr. Bains' experience was a valuable asset in that study. This report of the Public Service Board has been presented in three parts to the Government. Mr. Bains' work in Norfolk Island has been appreciated by the Government and I record this appreciation in the House today.

At this time I also wish to welcome Mr. Bains' successor, Mr. Deputy President, and that is Mr. John Gilchrist. Mr. Gilchrist has taken up his appointment and is already showing sound application to the position. Mr. Gilchrist is in the gallery of this House today and I make mention that we are happy to welcome him and look forward to a happy and rewarding association.

MR. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Are there any more statements please. Mr. Brown.

MR. BUFFETT: I have one other statement Mr. Deputy President.

MR. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: I am sorry Mr. Buffett.

VOTING SYSTEM IN NORFOLK ISLAND

MR. BUFFETT: Mr. Deputy President I would like to make a statement advising of a letter from the Minister for Home Affairs and Environment on a voting system in Norfolk Island.

Honourable Members will recall that a delegation consisting of Miss Buffett, Mr. Howard and myself met with the Minister for Home Affairs and Environment, that is Mr. Wilson, in Canberra on the
11th of November 1981 to address him on the matter of the present and proposed voting laws of Norfolk Island. At that meeting the Minister agreed to examine a system of voting which may meet the needs of Norfolk Island. Consequent upon that a proposal upon a voting system was sent to the Minister on the 23rd of November 1981, and a reply has now been received from the Minister and I read it for your information and the information of Members, Mr. Deputy President, and I quote from the letter - "I refer to your letter of 23 November 1981 regarding a proposed voting system for Norfolk Island Legislative Assembly elections. As I advised you in my letter of 3 December 1981 I referred your proposal to my colleague the Minister for Administrative Services, and asked for his comment. The Minister has now replied to my request and I enclose a copy of his letter for your information. I am sure you would appreciate that, in view of the Minister's comments, I am not in a position to support the system you proposed. I would, however, like to repeat the statement that I made to the delegation which you led on 11 November last that if the Norfolk Island Government wished, the Commonwealth would be prepared to initiate an expert inquiry on the matter. Following the Governor-General's declaration that he withheld assent to the Legislative Assembly Bill 1980 the Assembly passed the Legislative Assembly (Amendment) Bill 1981. This Bill contains provisions for the election of members to the Legislative Assembly which duplicate those in the Bill from which assent has been withheld. The Acting Administrator reserved the new Bill for the Governor-General's pleasure. In regard to this latter Bill, I propose to take no further action at this stage pending further discussions on a voting system suitable to the Island. I am sending a copy of this letter to the Administrator, Yours sincerely, Ian Wilson".

For additional purposes of clarity, Mr. Deputy President, I would like to read the attachment to that letter, which is a letter from the Minister for Administrative Services, Mr. Kevin Newman to the Minister for Home Affairs and Environment, Mr. Wilson. If you would bear with me - "My dear Minister, In my letter of 15 December
1981 you will recall that I promised to provide comments on the voting system proposed for Norfolk Island by representatives of its Legislative Assembly. I understand that preliminary discussions have taken place between officers of your Department and the Australian Electoral Office and that you have been given a report on those talks. The Australian Electoral Office considers that the proposed system has a number of shortcomings. The concept of provisionally electing candidates with provision for their displacement is novel and does not appear to have found acceptance in any of the most commonly used voting systems. The following may well be reasons why:

The proposed system is substantially a first past the post system;

Apart from requiring an indication of a first preference there is no provision for subsequent alternative choices or preferences;

The proposed system envisages a quota of first preference votes. Unless the support for a minority group commands a minimum of 10% of the first preference votes there is no possibility of that group's candidate being elected.

In the example given by the Assembly:
17.69% of the first preference votes did not play any part in electing any candidate;
4325 aggregate votes elected 9 members;
3100 aggregate votes did not elect anyone.

In the example, Evans had 101 first preference votes, thus ensuring his election under the proposed system. However, had the first preference votes for Evans and say for Peters been 51 each then the 202 first preference votes - out of a total of 825 - polled for the last 13 candidates would not have elected a single candidate.

The Assembly's explanation "How the System Should Work", states that while a displaced candidate would have been elected under a first past the post system, he would have been "a relatively weak runner" among those elected. This statement is to be compared with the example which shows Anderson with an aggregate vote of 382 being
replaced by Evans who polled an aggregate vote of 158.

Another contradiction in the explanation is that while
it states that it would seem highly probable that a candidate who
received a high number of aggregate votes would also receive a
high number of first preference votes, this is not borne out by
the example given. In the example Evans is shown as polling only
an aggregate of 158 votes, 101 of which are first preferences.

Given that the Government, acting on the basis that there
should be a fair electoral system for Norfolk Island which caters
for minority groups, has rejected the previous first past the post
system in force on the Island, I doubt whether it could consistently
with that decision accept the system now being proposed.

It also occurs to me that there might be a real question
whether the proposed scheme would gain general acceptance on the
Island, particularly at the time of an election. Technical
description and objections aside, the scheme provides for the election
of a candidate - although provisionally - and his possible subsequent
displacement by another candidate who on the face of it has less
overall appeal or popularity. This does appear to be conducive to
lack of public confidence in the candidate finally elected. Public
opposition to and discontent with the proposed system could become
quite emotional.

Officers of the Australian Electoral Office are, of course,
available for further discussions with your officers, but I doubt
that such discussions would lead to any different conclusions
regarding the proposed system. Yours sincerely, Kevin Newman”.

I just reiterate that that was a letter from the Minister
for Administrative Services, Mr. Newman to the Minister for Home
Affairs and Environment, Mr. Wilson, and was the attachment to the
letter which I read earlier.

Mr. Deputy President the Executive Committee is considering
what steps are to be taken and will come forward shortly with
recommendations concerning this matter.
MR. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Thank you Mr. Buffett. Mr. Howard.

MR. HOWARD: A question of Mr. Buffett on that statement if I may.
Can he make copies of those two letters available to Members of the Assembly and to the Press.

MR. BUFFETT: I would be very happy to do so Mr. Deputy President.

MR. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Thank you Mr. Buffett. Anymore statements. Mr. Brown.

IMMIGRATION

MR. BROWN: Thank you Mr. Deputy President. Firstly I wish to make a statement in relation to immigration.
The Executive Committee in conjunction with the responsible officers of the Norfolk Island Public Service, is presently preparing draft papers dealing with the problems being experienced in immigration matters and with suggested objectives and policies in relation to immigration. When complete those papers will be presented for debate in this House. Until that time no change is presently proposed in the composition of the Immigration Review Board. I would like to commend the efforts of the members of that Board and to add that their thoughts will be sought in relation to the proposed papers.

PECUNIARY INTERESTS

MR. BROWN: The second statement Mr. Deputy President, is in relation to pecuniary interests.
At the last meeting of this House I brought to the attention of the House my interests and my family’s interests in Norfolk Island Airlines Limited and Hillcrest Hotels Limited, and I indicated my intention to make a statement in this regard at an early date.

I have discussed this matter with the members of the Executive Committee and with most of the other Members of the Legislative Assembly and I can now advise my intentions.

I intend to dispose of my shares and my family’s shares in Hillcrest Hotels Limited and to resign as a Director of that Company immediately. I intend to dispose of the major part of my shares and my family’s shares in Norfolk Island Airlines Limited. My family will retain a holding of just under one half of one percent of the issued capital in that Company, that is 2,000 shares out of an issued capital in excess of 450,000 shares. I will immediately be ceasing to act as an active Director of Norfolk Island Airlines Limited but I will continue with my role of Chairman of Directors until the Annual General Meeting this year, which is expected to take place in July. At that stage I will resign as a Director. Until I have disposed of the Airline shares and resigned as a Director of the Airline as indicated, any decisions to be made by me in my executive role in relation to Norfolk Island Airlines will be made not by me but by my fellow Executive Members.

These actions go far beyond my legal obligations but I consider it proper that justice not only be done but that it be seen to be done. Thank you Mr. Deputy President.

MR. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Thank you Mr. Brown. Mr. Howard.

MR. HOWARD: Mr. Deputy President I think the Standing Orders allow moving without notice a motion of thanks, and I would like to do that.

MR. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: That the statement be noted.
MR. HOWARD: Alright I will move that the statement be noted. That will allow me to say what I want to say.

I want to express my thanks to Mr. Brown for what he is doing here. I think he is going far beyond what the law would require in any country that I know of. He, as he said, discussed this problem of pecuniary interest with Members of the Executive Committee. I want to make it clear that I feel he has gone all of the way and a little bit more toward isolating himself from any possible undesirable effects of having such pecuniary interests and I wanted to thank him on behalf of myself and I think on behalf of the Island for what he is doing.

MR. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Thank you Mr. Howard. Is there any more debate on the statement? Mr. Jackson.

MR. JACKSON: Mr. Deputy President, I appreciate Mr. Brown's statement. He is quick off the mark. He made a statement in the House at the first sitting of the Second Legislative Assembly that he would be disposing of his shares, well he has carried out that promise. But there is another point that I wish to make clear and I endeavoured to do that in the First Legislative Assembly of Norfolk Island, that the Government of Norfolk Island is predominant, it plays a more active role than interests any Member may have in outside interests. If a person wishes to represent the Government and the people of Norfolk Island well it is their duty to do so, and interests outside, as far as pecuniary interests are concerned, should play second fiddle to being a Member of the Legislative Assembly, but as stated before, I appreciate the statement.

MR. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Any further debate? Then I put the question that the statement be noted.

Question - put

Motion agreed to unanimously
MR. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Mr. Howard.

REPORT FROM THE PUBLIC SERVICE BOARD

MR. HOWARD: Thank you, I would like to make a statement on a report that has been received by Members of the Assembly from the Public Service Board.

Following the W.D. Scott Report reviewing the Public Service of Norfolk Island, the Public Service Board has had a number of meetings and has issued now three reports on their responses to the Scott Report. The Public Service Board's Report No. 3 was sent to Members of the Assembly about two and a half or three weeks ago, and I want to make some comments on it.

The Public Service Board have reviewed all of the positions in the Norfolk Island Public Service. As a result of that review they have decided to abolish fifteen positions that were allowed for in the establishment of the Public Service. I should point out that those are positions that have not been filled lately so it does not involve dismissing anyone. At the same time those were Public Service positions that were available to be filled at the discretion of the Public Service Board and what they have done is to cross those off the list. Before this action there was a total, including the staff at the school, of 180 public service positions in the establishment. They have now cut that down to 163. Also in the course of their review they have upgraded seventeen positions which they felt were deserving of more pay than had been assigned to them. They have downgraded eighteen positions which they say in their view are overpaid at the level assigned to them and some other positions are still under consideration. The Public Service Board has also established qualifications - educational and experience qualifications - that in the future will be required before someone can be hired or move into any one of 61 different positions in the Public Service. So far as the downgrading of positions is concerned, the Board has in my view quite properly done that with what they call a no detriment
provision, which means that the person presently occupying a position which is being downgraded stays at his or her present salary level and will receive so long as they are in that position cost of living increases if those come along but no other increases; will be if possible given more work to do to justify the unwarranted degree of pay that they may be receiving and will be relocated in suitably graded positions when possible.

Mr. Sanders asked whether there were any real savings in the dis-establishing of positions and other changes, I cannot answer that question specifically, I do not know what the effect will be in terms of what we have actually been spending. I know what the effect will be in terms of what the Public Service Board is authorised by the establishment list to spend, which is that taking into consideration the positions abolished and the downgradings of eighteen positions and the upgrading of seventeen positions, the theoretical saving to the Island based on maximum salaries in each of those positions is about $82,000 a year.

Secondly we learn from the Public Service Board's Report No. 3, that in response or following on an Australian arbitration award granting a 9 to 13% increase in Australia for clerical and related grades that the Public Service Board has granted that same increase of 9 to 13% to clerical and related grades in the Norfolk Island Public Service. As the newly elected Assembly took office we were informed that this had been done, it was a fait accompli.

Another important thing disclosed in the Public Service Board's Report No. 3 is that the Public Service Board has now reversed its former position which called for the continuation of a link, a tie, between wages and conditions in the Norfolk Island Public Service and The Australian Commonwealth Public Service. The Board's policy now is that that tie which has existed for a long time should henceforth be discontinued. In the future the Board believes that adjustments in salaries should be made in terms of the Norfolk Island Retail Price Index which will first become useable as from the beginning of next year but will not be able to be measured accurately until the middle of next year. But the Board believes that salary adjustments should also take into account the Norfolk Island Government's ability to pay
and also take into account salaries paid elsewhere on Norfolk outside the Public Service. There has been discussion in the Assembly and elsewhere in the past about how comparisons between Public Service wages and the wages outside the Public Service should be made. In the interest of good relations between the Public Service and the public, and to give the Assembly reliable information when we have to consider how much we should allocate in the way of money for Public Service salaries, it seems to me necessary that the comparison between Public Service wages and wages elsewhere on Norfolk Island should be made according to principles that are laid down by someone who is independent from and is seen to be independent from the Assembly, independent from the Public Service Board, independent from the Department of Home Affairs, independent from the Public Service. The Executive Committee has recommended to the Public Service Board that the Public Service Board get in touch with W.D. Scott and see how economically they could undertake such a survey. I have not yet any definite confirmation of the Public Service Board's response to the Executive Committee's recommendation.

It seems clear to me from the tone of Public Service Board Report No. 3 that the Public Service Board intends that there should be from now on good communication and collaboration between the Public Service Board and the Assembly. One of my responsibilities as Executive Member for Finance is liaison with the Public Service Board and I appreciate and I welcome that apparent co-operative attitude on the part of the Board.

I would also like to express my thanks and the Executive Committee's thanks to the Public Service Board for the immense amount of work that the Board has obviously put into preparing this Report No. 3. The Executive Committee has not concluded its consideration of Report No. 3 as yet. I think this will be ongoing for some months to come. I would like to conclude my comments on Public Service Board Report No. 3 by quoting from one further comment the Board makes. It says 'The Board will also consider the training requirements of each member of the staff and submit proposals to the Government for overall financial approval so that this aspect of the Board's work can be pursued. The Board attaches great importance to securing a well
trained Public Service and this can only be in the interests of the good government of the Island. It should be recognised from the outset that the recipients of such assistance should be expected to serve the Island for a minimum period of say two years after obtaining the needed qualifications with government financial assistance". I would like to say that that concept has my full support and I hope it will have the Assembly's full support.

MR. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Thank you Mr. Howard, have you any more statements?

MR. HOWARD: Yes I do.

MR. JACKSON: I note that statement.

MR. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: The statement is noted, is there any debate?

MR. JACKSON: Yes. I have had a look, Mr. Deputy President, at the Report as was outlined by Mr. Howard and I am appreciative of what Mr. Howard has just said in his statement that the co-operation of the Members of the Public Service Board has been one that he appreciates. I believe that there has always been co-operation, but the only difference as I have seen it in the past, has been some attempt to drive a wedge between this Assembly and the Public Service Board and members of the Public Service. But as time goes on I am convinced that this will heal and that we will all be able to work in harmony and respect the people within the Public Service because I am certain they must be getting darn fed up with being needled, picked at and described by some Members of this Assembly and other people in the private sector as only being down there as fat cats and earning large wages. Now they have come down in their Report and stated that they have placed a freeze on all wages except the natural cost of living assessments until April 1983 - now if that is not co-operation I do not know what it is. Therefore in saying that I appreciate the
statement by Mr. Howard, I also appreciate the co-operation that has been shown by members of the Public Service of Norfolk Island.

MR. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Any further debate? Mrs. Gray.

MRS. GRAY: Yes if I may, a couple of questions on the statement, Mr. Deputy President, and also referring to what Mr. Jackson has just said. The cost of living increases will be granted, how will they be arrived at?

MR. HOWARD: I may have said something in an unclear way. People who will get only cost of living increases from now on are simply those whose positions have been downgraded. They will stay in their present position for the timebeing, drawing the same wages they have been drawing even though the position has been downgraded, but that particular person will not get any automatic annual rises, they will simply get cost of living increase rises. That does not apply to the Public Service generally, as I understand it, I do not think the Board has intended that.

MRS. GRAY: A second question if I may on the same topic, you said a theoretical saving, I gather that means not an actual saving, and I think you have almost made reference to that in your answer to my last question?

MR. HOWARD: The answer is I do not know yet. It is something that I want to find out about, I have not yet had time to find out. I suspect there is some saving but I do not know what they are.

MRS. GRAY: May I make reference to a third and final point, that of the training of staff – would it be possible to suggest an interchange of staff with the Department in Canberra by way of training?

MR. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Mr. Howard.
MR. HOWARD: I think the very putting of the suggestion in this room with the Chief Administrative Officer sitting there who is a member of the Public Service Board sees that the suggestion has been heard already.

MR. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Any further debate? Mr. Howard.

MR. HOWARD: Yes, I would like to comment on something Mr. Jackson said. He says the Public Service Board has frozen wages until 1983. If I understand the Public Service Board's Report No.3 correctly, I would like to clear up what I think is a misunderstanding there. It would seem on the surface that what the Board is saying is no more wage adjustments until we have the Norfolk Retail Price Index in operation. That will read back to the beginning of 1983. The figure will not be available until the middle of 1983. I presume what they are saying is that the next wage rise they would see would be one made after June 1983 and probably retrospective back to the beginning of that year. I have not seen that the Board has said anything to the effect that there will not be any rises between now and then. We do not know what is going to happen between now and the end of 1982, and it is perfectly imaginable that conditions will arise that will make a wage rise something that will be only just and fair, if so I am sure the Board will look at it at the time, I am sure we will look at it at the time. I do not see any absolute freeze of wages until some time in 1983.

MR. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Any further debate? Mr. Jackson.

MR. JACKSON: Mr. Deputy President. We can call it what we like – a freeze or any other phraseology, but I am certain that there has been a proposed suggestion that there be no further increases until April 1983, now the reason for that as I have taken it is that the sooner the C.P.I. Index gets into operation and gets cracking, it will give us an opportunity to assess the situation on Norfolk Island being comparable to the cost of living on the mainland, and that has been the objective all along as far as I can see it as what the Public Service and other people on the Island have been requesting –
a Norfolk Island cost of living on actual costs on what it takes to sustain a family, and that is what is needed, and as I see it that is the reason the Public Service Board stated in their Report that there will be no further increases until April 1983, to give us a chance to get on with the job.

MR. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Mr. Howard.

MR. HOWARD: I am concerned only that members of the Public Service who may be listening may be being given assurance by Mr. Jackson of a bit of bad news that I do not think is necessarily so. He may interpret it one way, I may interpret it the other way. I would suggest that if members of the Public Service are concerned about that that they talk to Mr. Bates who is their representative on the Public Service Board and I am sure he can tell them what the facts are.

MR. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Any further debate? No further debate, then I put the question that the statement be noted.

Question - put

Motion agreed to unanimously.

MR. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Are there any further statements? Mr. Howard.

REMUNERATION TO MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

MR. HOWARD: Thank you. I would like to make a statement about Assembly pay.

By law the pay of the Assembly is determined by the Remuneration Tribunal in Australia. That was set up in the Norfolk Act. Last year the Remuneration Tribunal determined a new level of salaries and compensation for Members of the Assembly and for the
Executives of the Assembly and the Members of the Assembly, God bless them, I was overseas at the time but I certainly supported what they did, they voluntarily took a bit over 7% cut from what the Remuneration Tribunal had as a matter of fact allowed them. It is the intention of the present Members of the Assembly to remain at that same reduced level, not only for the rest of this financial year but for the following financial year as well. Similarly the Members of the Assembly believe that the total payments to all of the Executive Members of the Assembly should be no more than the level that was established last year.

On behalf of the Members of the Assembly I made, on the 24th of February, a submission to the Remuneration Tribunal recommending that the pay for Mr. Buffett as President and as Executive Member for Administration, Education and Health, remain exactly as it was while he was Chief Minister; that Mr. Sanders as Deputy President receive $500 more each year than the other non Executive Members; that Mr. Brown and I as the two other Executive Members should share equally in the amount that is left over from the total allowed for executive pay. In actual dollar figures this submission, if the Remuneration Tribunal accepts it and rules that way, would mean that all Members of the Legislative Assembly would receive $3500 a year. In addition to that there would be $500 a year more for Mr. Sanders; there would be an additional $6,250 each for Mr. Brown and for me; and an additional $18,375 for Mr. Buffett.

I make this statement simply to make sure that those figures and our recommendation as an Assembly are public and are known and are out in the open and I would like to table a copy of my submission to the Tribunal.

MR. JACKSON: A question on that statement.

MR. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: The statement is noted, yes.

MR. JACKSON: Mr. Howard, you stated that yours and John Brown's remuneration will be $6,250.
MR. HOWARD: That is what has been proposed.

MR. JACKSON: Proposed...

MR. HOWARD: In addition to the Member's salary, that is right.

MR. JACKSON: Bringing it up to $10,000.

MR. HOWARD: However it adds up.

MR. JACKSON: Well that is what it does add up to - $10,000 - that you and Mr. Brown will be receiving, as proposed, so in fact it is not $6,250.

MR. HOWARD: No, and the same thing applies for Mr. Buffett's salary, and the same thing applies for Mr. Sanders, it would be on top of the $3500 a year.

MR. JACKSON: I must draw attention, as I have done in the past, to the fact that many candidates who offer for election and get elected, are in some ways in a position where they do not rely on the $60 a week for Members such as myself and the six others. One thing we must make sure of is that if a person wishes to represent his or her Island and be the people's representative in the Norfolk Island Legislative Assembly, that they receive adequate remuneration, otherwise you will have some people who wish to be elected asking themselves 'can I afford it' - and you will find many candidates who wish to stand for election asking themselves that question. I am sure that Members who are here from the old Council days will realise that this method of government absorbs far more work, far more time, than it did in the Council days, so therefore I must make the point that even though it is sometimes stated that remuneration is money down the drain or paid out for nothing, the point is that because of the time involved, some people who work for
an employer may not be able to get the time off to attend meetings, and therefore he or she would not be able to stand for election to the Government, so therefore I consider remuneration an important issue in this Assembly.

MR. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Any further debate? Mr. Howard.

MR. HOWARD: I will simply end with a final comment saying once again that the submission that I have tabled was made after it had been reviewed by the Executive Committee and circulated to all Members except Miss Buffett who is away, and that it went as a submission on behalf of the whole Assembly.

MR. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Thank you Mr. Howard. I put the question that the statement be noted.

Question - put
Motion agreed to unanimously

FINANCE

MR. HOWARD: I would like to make a statement on the state of the Island's finances.

In order for Members of the Assembly and officers of the Public Service and concerned members of the public to know how the Government is getting along financially, and in order to keep an eye on new trends as they may develop, it is necessary to have regular financial reports available.

In the past Members of the Assembly and before that Members of the Norfolk Island Council, have been given a complete set of detailed financial accounts once or twice a year, and comments about finance from time to time in between. One of the disadvantages of the complete sets of Norfolk Island Government accounts is that they
run to ten or fifteen pages packed solidly with fine detailed figures and for anybody not trained in accounting or without much experience of working with accounts, it becomes pretty difficult to see the forest for the trees.

I am extremely pleased to report that I have had a series of very constructive discussions about this problem with Brian Bates who is the Accountant for the Administration and he has been able to work out procedures which will without any real significant amount of extra work allow me to present up to date financial information to the Assembly every month from now on. Copies of the first such report which takes one sheet of paper, have been made available to Members. I am sorry that they were not available earlier so that you could have studied them and given thought to them well in advance of the meeting, from now on Mr. Bates says I should be able to have the reports in the hands of Members a week or more before Assembly meetings, and that will give you more adequate time to consider the reports and to comment on them at the meetings. Because it is a new kind of report, because in my view it is going to be a key to good government on the Island, I would like to take a couple of minutes and talk through the form of this one sheet of figures and explain some things that may not be obvious.

The sheet is headed 'Financial Indications for Executive Member for Finance'. You should bear in mind that this is not a financial report, it has not been audited, it is not constructed the way usual financial statements are constructed. In some ways it has got some apples and some oranges in it, in some ways it is not textbook accounting, that is deliberate, it has been designed to be as informative as it can be. Next of all the report that you have in front of you is for seven months that ended on the last day of January this year. Without going to considerable extra expense and effort I will not be able to give you financial figures just a few days after the month ends. Without much extra work on the part of Mr. Bates and his staff I will be able to give you reports a month and a few days late, I think that is timely enough to make sense out of them.
The next point is that I want to draw to your attention to the fact that the figures are stated in thousands of dollars. One of the confusing things about the full accounts of the Island is that there are seemingly millions of numbers on those statements and most people just get cloudy in their minds when they see that many numbers. Eliminating the zero, zero, zero and rounding figures up or down to the nearest thousand makes the figures easier to look at, simpler to grasp, so bear in mind that when you see for example in the upper left hand corner the figure 31, that does not mean $31 it means $31,000. The report will cover eleven major items that are important in understanding how the Island's finances are going. Under the heading of Revenue the report includes revenue from postal and philatelic operations, revenue from customs, revenue from the liquor bond and then an item that is called all other revenue. The three ones I mentioned first are the three largest single sources of revenue. All other sources of revenue are then lumped into one final figure called all other revenue. That is on the top half of the sheet. On the bottom half of the sheet is Expenditure, and the principal items of expenditure that are shown are first of all salaries of the Public Service, not including salaries for the school teachers, the next item is education estimated salaries, and I want to pause a moment and make sure you understand what that is. The teachers at the school and the Principal - the staff at the school - draw their pay cheques regularly just the way anyone else in the Public Service does. We do not get billed for them regularly, we get billed every year or year and a half - it varies, by New South Wales. The Administration accounts are kept on a cash basis which means that if we literally followed cash basis accounting, the cost for education salaries month after month after month would show up as being zero because we had not actually paid out any cash yet and then in one month it would be $278,000. What Mr. Bates has done is to strike an average figure which is about what the salaries are at the school and to include that in the cost. We did not pay it last month but we will have to pay it sooner or later and it is attributable to that month.
The next item in expenditure is other expenditure not counting
capital expenditures and the last one is capital expenditures.
If you subtract all of the expenditures in the bottom half of the
sheet from all of the revenue at the top half of the sheet, you
find out whether we were ahead or behind. In a business that last
subtraction figure would be called profit or loss. In the case of
a Government it is called credit to or deduction from the Revenue
Fund.

Now those are the items on which you will be seeing reports
each month from now on. You are going to see reports that give you
those figures in three different comparative ways. You will notice
that the columns on the chart are numbered 1 to 8 across from left
to right. Columns 1, 2 and 3 give you a figure for each of those
financial items for last month and then for the same month a year ago,
and column 3 gives you a percentage comparison showing how the
latest month that we have figures for compare with that same month a
year earlier. That is the first 3 columns. Those first 3 columns
dealing with just one month's results need to be looked at with a
fair amount of caution, they may give you an early indication of some
trend that is beginning and if you see a big up or a big down
compared with a year ago you want to ask a question about it, as for
example I asked the Revenue Manager, postal and philatelic was down
75% in this January compared with last January, should we be worried,
and his answer was no, he said that is simply a reflection of how the
stamp issues were timed and the fact that Australia Post owes us some
money from a couple of months back. He said it is nothing to worry
about. But differences of that kind cause you to have a look and
wonder if something is wrong, it causes you to ask questions.

The most important figures on the sheet as far as I am
concerned are in columns 4, 5 and 6. Column 4 shows you how much we
have brought in or how much we have spent on each of the items down
the left hand side so far through the year. The end of January is
7 months of the financial year and in column 4 you see how much each
of those has been for the first 7 months of the year. The next column,
column 5, has a heading that will be puzzling until you know what it
is intended to mean. The heading is 'Revenue Supply Proportion'.

Now in the case of revenues, in the case of income, that is the proportion of revenue that we should have got in in 7 months if the revenue came in exactly evenly every month, in other words for postal and philatelic that is seven twelfths of what we estimated we would bring in in postal and philatelic revenue for the entire year, and comparing that with what we have actually brought in in postal and philatelic for 7 months, gives you a rough impression of how we are going against our original estimates. Again that can be misleading. Revenue does not come in evenly month after month. Customs revenue will be up in the period following the arrival of a ship with a big cargo, it will be down in a period after there has been no ship or a ship with small cargo. Postal and philatelic will go up after the new stamp issues and then drop down again. None the less those are important comparisons. In the final two columns a comparison is made between how much each item is so far this year in 7 months and how much it was last year in the first 7 months, so that you can see for example from this report that in the first 7 months of this year we have earned 19% more - that is the top right hand figure on the sheet - 19% more in postal and philatelic revenue than we earned in the first 7 months last year.

It will take a little bit of getting used to before you can read and deal with these reports easily and readily and get out of them all the information that they contain. I hope you will make the effort, I hope people elsewhere in the community will make the effort, I intend to make copies of this available to the Norfolk Islander, I hope they will think it is newsworthy enough to print it, I hope the Chief Administrative Officer will make copies available to Branch Heads. I think an awareness of how we are going is important to the Island's good government.

I would like to draw some preliminary conclusions about how we are going, based on what the figures on this report show, up through the end of January, a month ago. First of all looking at columns 4, 5 and 6 which are the most important columns in my mind, you find that revenue has come in over the first 7 months at a rate
which is 3% more than we thought revenue would be coming in. That is good, we are a little ahead on our estimated revenue, we are a little ahead even though customs and liquor bond are down. If you look in column 6 you will find that customs is off 19% from what we had hoped we might be earning this far into the year; liquor bond is down 11%, both of them well down on last year. I am sure those reflect the decline in tourism. The good news is that postal and philatelic have increased enough to make up for those two falls. So that in general is the revenue picture at the moment.

The spending picture at the moment is that up to the end of the first 7 months we have spent 5% less than you might think we would have spent in 7 months. That is good too.

The general conclusion that I draw from what this report says is that if revenue holds up on about the level that it has been in the first 7 months and if we keep spending under the same kind of control that has been under so far this year, we have a good chance of breaking even this financial year instead of winding up with a quarter of a million dollar draw on the Revenue Fund which is what the original budget expected. We have a good chance of breaking even this year if these trends continue.

There are some other conclusions to be drawn from this report. One is that philatelic revenue is becoming more important to us than ever it was. I think that means that it is more important than ever that we take pains not to over-exploit philatelic revenue, that can be done, I have no reason to believe that it is being done, I have reason to believe that the Revenue Manager has taken pains to see that it is not being done but it is something that we need to watch out for, we need to be careful of. Another general conclusion that I draw looking at this chart, and I draw your attention to the lowest right hand column figure on the report. The total cost of government on the Island in the first 7 months of the year has been 37% more than it was in the first 7 months of last year. We are able to pay for it, the revenues that are coming in have just about paid for it. The point that I want to make is that the cost of government cannot go on increasing at the rate of 37% a year. I do not mean to level any criticism, I do not know exactly why that figure is as high as it was. It is within what we supplied at the beginning of the year, but it is still a mighty increase - up 37% from the same period.
last year and that kind of rate of growth in the cost of government cannot go on.

There were three substantial items that were included in the budget for this year but that we did not supply money for, preferring to wait until later in the year and see how the year was going, I mention the first stage of the Civic Centre which would bring the Post Office and the Customs Office and the Liquor Bond and some other facilities all together in one place up town; second was the hiring of a Land Use Consulting Planner; the third was the first stage of a computer or a word processor for use in the Admin. I want to express my preliminary view, and it is only a preliminary view, looking at these figures and seeing the way we are going at the moment, my preliminary impression is that we should not try to afford those in this financial year, maybe in the coming year, but my first impression is we should say sorry there is not enough money to start those things in this financial year.

Those are my general comments on this, I am very pleased at the ability of the Accountant and his staff to undertake to give us figures like these once a month, I think it will give us better financial understanding, better financial control that any elected Government has ever had on Norfolk before and I am pleased to hand it to you.

MR. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Thank you Mr. Howard. Any more statements?

MR. JACKSON: I would like to note that statement so that I can make a comment if I may Mr. Deputy President.

MR. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: The statement is noted.

MR. JACKSON: I would say Mr. Deputy President that we should be very pleased with the report that has just been given. Mr. Howard said in his opening remarks that some months you will see some lemons and some oranges and I suppose it will happen from month
to month that some of the oranges will turn into lemons and some of the lemons will turn into oranges in this month to month assessment, because it is quite true that revenue and expenditure just run equal every month. But the most heartening thing I see in this report is that expenditure is 5% below supply. Now I consider that the main thrust of this statement and it is a great credit to the Accountant and his staff and the people of the Public Service, I do not want to harp on it but it is good to see that expenditure is 5% below supply.

MR. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Any further debate? Mrs. Gray.

MRS. GRAY: Mr. Deputy President, may I just say that I am very pleased, as Mr. Jackson is, that the paper takes this form, I am also very pleased to say that even I can understand it, thank you.

MR. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Any further debate? Mr. Christian-Bailey.

MR. CHRISTIAN-BAILEY: Yes I would like to echo Mrs. Gray’s sentiments. I think it is a step in the right direction to be given a set of figures in this form monthly, we will be able to monitor the progress of the finances in a much more meaningful way.

MR. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Any further debate? I put the question that the statement be noted.

Question - put
Motion agreed to unanimously

MESSAGES FROM THE OFFICES OF THE ADMINISTRATOR

MR. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Messages from the offices of the Administrator - I have to report that I have received messages from the offices of the Administrator as follows:

NOTICES

APPOINTMENTS TO BUSINESS COMMITTEE

MR. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Notice No.1. Mr. Buffett.

MR. BUFFETT: Thank you Mr. Deputy President. Mr. Deputy President I move that in addition to Mr. President ex officio, John Terence Brown and Edward Davenport Howard be members of the Business Committee.

MR. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Any debate? The question is that John Terence Brown and Edward Davenport Howard be members of the Business Committee.

Question - put
Motion agreed to unanimously

APPOINTMENTS TO STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE

MR. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Notice No.2. Mr. Buffett.

MR. BUFFETT: Mr. Deputy President the second of two motions which immediately stand in my name regarding Committees of
the House. The second one is the Standing Orders Committee, and I move that in addition to Mr. President and the Deputy President, ex officio, John Terence Brown, Bernard Edwin Christian-Bailey and Gilbert Wallace Jackson be members of the Standing Orders Committee.

MR. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Any debate? The question is that John Terence Brown, Bernard Edwin Christian-Bailey and Gilbert Wallace Jackson be members of the Standing Orders Committee.

Question - put
Motion agreed to unanimously

APPOINTMENTS TO HOUSE COMMITTEE

MR. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Notice No.3. Mr. Buffett.

MR. BUFFETT: Thank you Mr. Deputy President, the final one concerning Standing Committees of this House - I move that in addition to Mr. President, ex officio, Alice Inez Buffett and Bernard Edwin Christian-Bailey be members of the House Committee.

MR. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Is there any debate? The question is that Alice Inez Buffett and Bernard Edwin Christian-Bailey be members of the House Committee.

Question - put
Motion agreed to unanimously

APPOINTMENT TO NORFOLK ISLAND BUILDING BOARD

MR. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Notice No.4. Mr. Brown.

MR. BROWN: Mr. Deputy President, I move that this House pursuant to section 6, subsection 2 of the Building Ordinance 1967
elect William Winton Sanders to be a member of the Norfolk Island Building Board.

MR. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Is there any debate? I put the question. The question is that the motion be agreed.

Question - put
Motion agreed to unanimously

APPOINTMENT TO NORFOLK ISLAND SOCIAL SERVICES BOARD

MR. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Notice No.5. Mr. Buffett.

MR. BUFFETT: Mr. Deputy President, thank you. The first of two motions concerning appointments to Boards, areas of which I have executive responsibility, Mr. Deputy President, I move that this House acting in accordance with section 5(1) of the Social Services Act 1980, resolves that Gregory Gilbert Francis Quintal, a Member of this House, be appointed a member of the Norfolk Island Social Services Board.

Mr. Deputy President I say that Mr. Quintal has some breadth of knowledge about the community and I am sure he will be able to make some contribution to the Board which advises in a wide capacity on social services needs in the Island, and I commend the motion.

MR. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Thank you Mr. Buffett. Is there any debate? I put the question. The question is that the motion be agreed.

Question - put
Motion agreed to unanimously
APPOINTMENT TO NORFOLK ISLAND SOCIAL SERVICES BOARD

MR. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Notice No. 6. Mr. Buffett.

MR. BUFFETT: Mr. Deputy President, also in connection with the Social Services Board I move that this House, acting in accordance with section 5(1) of the Social Services Act 1980, resolves that Alice Inez Buffett, a Member of this House, be appointed a member of the Social Services Board.

MR. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Is there any debate? Mr. Jackson.

MR. JACKSON: I wish to support that motion. At our first informal meeting after the election, a group of six Members introduced a paper outlining certain conditions and policies which no doubt they had had discussions over over a number of days. One of these conditions was that Mr. Greg Quintal would be appointed as the Legislative Assembly's representative on the Social Services Board to replace Miss Alice Buffett. I consider, Mr. Deputy President, the method used to remove Miss Alice Buffett off the Social Services Board, was one of a very callous nature by those who were responsible. There were no reasons given for her removal. Miss Buffett took over the role as our representative on the Social Services Board at a very difficult time when the Social Services Bill became law. It was Miss Alice Buffett who guided and assisted our senior citizens in this historic change-over from an allowance of grace and favour to a social and welfare pension as of right. Miss Alice Buffett or Na as she is affectionately known to all of us, put her heart and soul into her duties assisting the senior citizens to a degree that she even neglected her only source of income, that is making souvenirs to sell to tourists, therefore Mr. Deputy President, I have no hesitation in supporting this motion in favour of Miss Alice Buffett also being appointed to the Social Services Board.

MR. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Mr. Buffett.
MR. BUFFETT: Mr. Deputy President, as we all know, Miss Buffett is hospitalised on the mainland and I would prefer to offer her the opportunity of saying how she could cope with the months ahead before committing her to this motion and would therefore move its adjournment until her return.

MR. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Is there any debate on the adjournment? Then I put the question that debate be adjourned and that continuance of the debate be made an order of the day for the next day of sitting.

MR. HOWARD: A question - Mr. Deputy President - made an order of the day for the next day of sitting or some future day? Mr. Buffett proposed that it be adjourned until Miss Buffett had come back.

MR. BUFFETT: If I may Mr. Deputy President, excuse me, I would think it might be more practical to wait until Miss Buffett returns to the Island if you would find that acceptable.

MR. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Yes.

**AMENDMENT TO STANDING ORDERS**

MR. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Notice No. 7. Mr. Buffett.

MR. BUFFETT: Thank you Mr. Deputy President. I move a motion Mr. Deputy President concerning amendments to Standing Orders. I move that the Standing Orders of this House be amended by inserting after Standing Order 72, the following new Standing Order, and I read it Mr. Deputy President:

"72A. Certain matters not to be debated except with public excluded. No Member may refer to the conditions of service or conduct of a named or identifiable officer unless the House has, on motion
duly moved without notice, voted to exclude strangers and suspend broadcasts of its proceedings. In this Standing Order 'Conditions of service' in respect of an officer, includes—(a) any part of his conditions of service; and (b) any proposed conditions of service, and also includes, where appropriate, terms and conditions of appointment; 'conduct' in respect of an officer, includes conduct both in fulfillment of his duties as an officer and otherwise; 'officer' means—(a) an officer or employee of the Norfolk Island Public Service; and (b) the holder of a statutory appointment on Norfolk Island, and includes—(c) a person it is proposed should be an officer; and (d) the immediate family of an officer who are residing with him, but does not include a Member who would otherwise be an officer as defined."

Mr. Deputy President may I say at the outset that in normal circumstances this would be a matter first considered by the Standing Orders Committee and then brought forward to the Legislative Assembly, but as will be realised, membership of the Standing Orders Committee was not established until the commencement of this sitting here this afternoon, and so the amendment has first been considered by the Executive Committee and has been unanimously agreed and is now brought forward for consideration by the Legislative Assembly.

The purpose of the amendment is to show proper consideration for persons where their situations, that is conditions of service and conduct in the Public Service or statutory appointment in Norfolk Island, may be raised in this House and where of course they are without the facility to reply and we are covered by the immunities of privilege, and of course we have covered that area Mr. Deputy President because that is the area in which this House provides funds for the employment of those people and so there is logicality that they may be the areas which may come to the notice of this House more readily than others. It does not of course mean that such matters cannot be discussed, it does remain that all Members may discuss any such matter in this House but it is proposed that such discussion not be in the presence of strangers in the gallery and broadcast over the air. I might say however that it will still be recorded in hansard and hansard is still available for persons to peruse but it does not have
the matter of making a public spectacle of the situation.
As I view the matter at this time it shows a proper and
tidy manner of handling a subject that could at times be delicate,
and I commend that motion to the House Mr. Deputy President.

MR. PRESIDENT: Debate Honourable Members. Mrs. Gray.

MRS. GRAY: Mr. President, if the motion as proposed is
accepted by this House it suggests to me that a protective gesture
is being made or shown to officers of the Public Service. As a
result of that it would suggest that a man in the street may be
drawn and quartered by this House but that an officer of the Public
Service may not. I certainly could not support such a motion in
this House.

MR. PRESIDENT: Mr. Sanders.

MR. SANDERS: Mr. Buffett, I oppose the Standing Orders
being amended. My reasons are if any officer, whether he or she be
appointed or a public servant or whoever he or she may be, commits
a misdemeanour, they should not be protected by secrecy nor should
his or her name be protected. These people are employed out of
public funds and are therefore accountable to the public. If a
member of this persons' family contributes to this misdemeanour then
they too should not be protected by secrecy. An appointed person or
a public servant should not have the Secrecy Act to hide their
conditions of service or their conduct. They receive their salaries
from public monies and are therefore accountable to the public for
their actions. I oppose the motion - there should be no secret
meetings.

MR. PRESIDENT: Mr. Christian-Bailey.

MR. CHRISTIAN-BAILEY: I support the motion Mr. President.
I see this as a protection to everybody, I do not see it as being
levelled at any particular sector but the public in general, and for that reason I support the motion.

MR. PRESIDENT: Mr. Howard.

MR. HOWARD: I do not quite fully understand the objections that Mrs. Gray and Mr. Sanders have raised. Mrs. Gray says that this would give special protection to the Public Service but that a private citizen could be drawn and quartered here in the Assembly. I frankly do not understand that. What we are talking about is when it comes to discussing the terms of employment or the conditions of service or the conduct in the Public Service of a Public Service officer, that we ought to do so not over the air. Now I do not see that we are ever going to be discussing the terms and conditions of employment or the conduct of private citizens, I do not see that as being part of the House's business at all, it has never happened so far in the Assembly that I can remember. I do not see that we have the same relationship toward the public that we do toward the Public Service. Now secondly, on Mr. Sanders' point that there should not be a secrecy protection - I do not see any secrecy in what the motion proposes at all, what it says is if you are going to talk about somebody's pay, pocketbook, conduct, shut the radio off and ask the guests to leave for a moment. We then discuss as openly as we like, any of that persons affairs that we think we ought to be able to discuss and a recording is made of the whole thing and it then typed out in hansard and there is a public record of it afterward, I do not see that there is any secrecy, I see all there is is an absence of, as Mr. Buffett said, possibly making a public spectacle of somebody. Now I see the motion as being one simply of courtesy and decency and proper behaviour and I certainly support it.

MR. PRESIDENT: Mrs. Gray.

MRS. GRAY: If I may reply to that. Standing Orders already cover most areas of criticism in debate, particularly Standing Order