



THE GOVERNMENT OF NORFOLK ISLAND

MEDIA RELEASE

What is the best way to elect our representatives?

The Chief Minister of Norfolk Island, Hon Geoff Gardner MLA, has invited all members of the community to comment on what method of election they prefer for Members of the Legislative Assembly.

Mr Gardner said that the Assembly has before it a Bill which reflects a proposal from the Select Committee into Electoral and Other Matters of the 10th Assembly, that the voting system should be varied so that all electors have nine votes and must cast all nine for individual candidates. That is, voters would have to vote for no more or no less than nine candidates.

The current system equally requires voters to use all nine votes in total, but up to four votes may be allocated to any one candidate. This means that a valid vote could be cast for as few as three candidates or as many as nine. In either system, all votes are counted and the nine candidates with most votes are elected. Mr Gardner said that the Bill is due for final consideration at the next sitting of the Assembly on 15th March 2006.

“There are many other options available for voters to express their preferences”, Mr Gardner said. “For example, each voter could have only one vote, there could be a preferential or proportional representation system or the current system could be limited to a maximum of two or three votes per candidate up to a total of nine”.

“I am not convinced that we have adequately considered all of the possible options to achieve the results that the community really wants”, Mr Gardner said. “So I am calling on members of the community to make their views known to me, or any of the Members of the Legislative Assembly”.

Any interested person may also make submissions by email to clerk@assembly.gov.nf or arrange to meet with a Member of the Assembly by telephoning 22003.

Geoff Gardner
Chief Minister

3rd March 2006