

NORFOLK



ISLAND

THE GOVERNMENT OF NORFOLK ISLAND

MEDIA RELEASE

NSL set to start on 1st July

Minister for Finance Ron Nobbs has announced that His Honour the Administrator gave assent to the *Norfolk Island Sustainability Levy Bill 2006* on the afternoon of Friday 12th May. “This means that the new levy will begin its trial stage at the low level of 1% from 1st July”, Mr Nobbs said. He also announced that publications on the implementation of the new system and the relevant forms have been prepared, and a full public education programme would commence next week.

Mr Nobbs said that the Norfolk Island Government had taken note of a range of issues passed on by an officer from the Australian Treasury and where necessary had modified the legislation accordingly. “The officer made a number of helpful suggestions on administrative and technical matters”, Mr Nobbs said. “These ideas have allowed us to fine-tune the Bill and to establish appropriate systems. I am grateful to Treasury for its helpful advice”.

Mr Nobbs said that, given past statements, he was not surprised that Minister Lloyd had referred to these administrative matters in his letter to all Norfolk Island residents, categorising them as “challenges and flaws”. He said that the issues raised were definitely not at that level, and dealt with such things as time limits on keeping records, definitions, time periods for appeals, and the currency in which transactions were recorded.

“Before the Bill was presented to the Assembly, I provided a briefing to all Assembly Members on the issues raised by the Treasury officer and what actions we had taken to modify the legislation”, Mr Nobbs said. “All matters have been addressed, and we are getting on with what the Commonwealth told they expected – the good governance and effective administration of Norfolk Island”.

Mr Nobbs said that Minister Lloyd had not at any time raised any issues of concern with the Norfolk Island Government about the NSL until his letter in April. By then, all of the matters detailed by Treasury had been thoroughly examined and detailed advice received. Mr Nobbs added that it was interesting that the Commonwealth Minister of Finance had been supportive of the introduction of the NSL.

Ron Nobbs
Minister for Finance

12th May 2006