



From the desk of the Chief Minister

This is the second in an occasional series of columns in *The Norfolk Islander* where I will share my current thinking with you and seek your feedback on what is happening in the 12th Norfolk Island Legislative Assembly, as well as in Norfolk Island more generally. I've had a bout of the 'flu this week, but am now back at work. There are a few things coming up that I think you might find interesting.

Next week, we will be welcoming two important emissaries from Pitcairn Island, who will be here for a few days. Jay Warren is the Mayor of Pitcairn Island, and is well known to many in our community. He will be accompanied by Leslie Jaques, Commissioner for Pitcairn Islands. I have invited them to meet with His Honour the Acting Administrator and myself on Monday morning. After some informal discussions, we will host a morning tea which will be attended by other Ministers. We look forward to sharing mutual experiences and talking about ways we can deal with our common challenges.

Our historical and cultural ties with Pitcairn are of great importance to us, so it is great that Jay and Leslie can come to meet with us and to get out into the community for a few days. They will be off to New Zealand on Thursday, but I know that they intend to get around Norfolk as much as they can and to meet with lots of locals. They will also be giving interviews to the newspapers and talking on Radio Norfolk. Welcome, Jay and Leslie!

The Office of the Administrator has advised that a French naval vessel will be visiting Norfolk Island during the latter part of November. Full details are yet to be provided, but I believe that the ship will have a crew of around 30 and will be here for about three days on a goodwill visit. We will keep you informed about details of this welcome visit.

As part of our strategy to widen both the tourism and business appeal of Norfolk Island, the Government and Norfolk Tourism have embarked on a strategy to reach out to business and professional groups in Australia and New Zealand. Our first foray into this area will be the New South Wales Certified Practising Accountants' Congress, starting in Sydney on Tuesday 23 October. Around 2,000 delegates are expected to attend. Minister for Commerce and Industry Chris Magri and CEO Rhonda Wheatley (CPA) will be there, along with two of our Tourism Ambassadors. We will have a display stand with a video loop presentation, handouts and a competition for delegates. While of course we hope to achieve some immediate results, a longer-term aim is to build a database of professional contacts who might be able to make useful input into strategies to diversify and grow our economy and to expand our visitor markets.

I have spent some time lately working with the Immigration Committee and our professional staff on a full review of immigration policies and procedures. It is certainly my aim to ensure that in future the process will be transparent and clear to all applicants. I think there is considerable room for us to present a more professional and attractive image to those who might wish to apply for Norfolk Island immigration permits, especially people who could make positive contributions to our economy and society. We have designed an attractive and colourful pamphlet, which will be tested in the market in coming days and revised where necessary. This does not mean that we will be relaxing the current strict tests about who can come to Norfolk Island, but rather that we will be seeking a wider pool of talented people who really want to live here, from whom we can select those who best meet our needs.

These are exciting and challenging times for all of us in Norfolk Island. Please take the chance to contact to me and the other Members of the Assembly to share your views about the best ways for us to move forward together.

André Nobbs
Chief Minister

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