



THE GOVERNMENT OF NORFOLK ISLAND

MEDIA RELEASE

Special rise in pension rates

Norfolk Island Minister for the Environment, Education and Social Welfare, the Hon Vicky Jack MLA, has announced that Norfolk Island social welfare beneficiaries will receive a special increase in pension rates from 1st July, to offset the increased rate of the Goods and services Tax from that date.

Mrs Jack said that pensions paid under the *Social Services Act 1980* are increased in accordance with price movements in Norfolk Island as measured by a six monthly price survey, undertaken in March and September each year. As the price survey for the period ending 30 June 2009 was less than 1.000 factor there will be no automatic increase to benefits for the period 1 July 2009 to 31 December 2009.

Mrs Jack said that she had considered the outcome of the price survey, and acknowledged that the increase in the rate of GST could create an immediate financial impact on social service recipients. Any such increase to the cost of living will not be measured for recipients of Social Services until September 2009, for payment adjustments in January 2010.

In these special circumstances, the Norfolk Island Government has therefore approved for the six month period 1 July 2009 to 31 December 2009, an increase of \$13.80 per fortnight for a single person and an increase of \$11.20 each per fortnight for married persons, regardless of any income received.

The next benefit payment for period ending 8 July 2009 will include an amount of \$7.89 for single recipients and \$6.40 per fortnight each for married recipients, being for an eight day part-fortnight period. Recipients will receive the full supplementary amount up until and including the pay period ending 23 December 2009. For the period 24 December to 31 December 2009 recipients will receive a payment of \$7.89 for single recipients and \$6.40 per fortnight each for married recipients, being for an eight day part-fortnight period.

Mrs Jack said that the special pension increases were part of the Norfolk Island Government's policy of ensuring that equity measures in the budget also included those in receipt of social welfare assistance.

Stephanie V Jack

Minister for the Environment, Education and Social Welfare

3 July 2009