

# Norfolk Island Regional Council

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## MEDIA RELEASE

### KEEPING THE COMMUNITY INFORMED

#### THE 2016 CENSUS ON NORFOLK ISLAND

Mayor Adams spoke on radio this week about the upcoming Census to be conducted on Norfolk Island on Tuesday, 9 August.

‘This time Norfolk Island is being included in the Census being conducted by the Australian Bureau of Statistics whilst in previous years Norfolk's Census was conducted under Norfolk Island legislation,’ Mayor Adams said, ‘and I have had a number of very encouraging discussions with Mrs Alice Rogers who has been engaged by the Australian Bureau of Statistics as Norfolk Island's Area Supervisor for the Census. Alice was the successful applicant when Expressions of Interest were invited by the ABS some time ago. She is being assisted in the distribution of Census Forms to households on Norfolk by Ms Tania Randall, Mrs Megan Magri and Mrs Jeanette Cassidy.

‘Mrs Rogers tells me that the ABS is very culturally aware and is to be applauded for their sensitivity and response to Norfolk Islander's concerns that their identity will be lost by their inclusion in the Australian Census; that the ABS has understood Norfolk's distinctiveness and the importance of collecting information unique to Norfolk Island; in particular the need to recognise the Norfolk Island language and the number of Norfolk Island people of Pitcairn descent, both on Island and in Australia,’ Mayor Adams said.

‘The ABS recognises that we are different and of the need to recognise that difference and I thank our Area Supervisor Alice Rogers whom I know has played a key role in achieving this recognition. Alice has asked me to mention that the procedure being used for dropping off Census forms to Norfolk householders is also unique as Tania, Megan and Jeanette will be making every effort to speak with householders and explain the opportunities when completing the Census form for them to record their Pitcairn ancestry and heritage.

‘So how’, Mayor Adams said, ‘will the Norfolk Islanders be recognised when they complete their Census forms? Well firstly in the pack of Census material delivered to your home is a Census Household Form and at the top of the Census Household Form on the left hand side you will see a 10 digit Code number. The ABS computer will recognise that number as a Census form coming from Norfolk Island.

‘Secondly in each pack of Census material is a separate form headed The 2016 Census on Norfolk Island’, Mayor Adams said, ‘this form, which is only being distributed to people on Norfolk Island, provides guidance on how to fill out the main Census form so that there is recognition of being born on Norfolk Island; being of Pitcairn descent; speaking the Norfolk Island language; identifying whether your Mother or Father were born on Norfolk Island; and identifying your ancestry as Pitcairn. Two new codes have been created by the ABS in their data base - one to recognise Norf'k/Pitcairn as a language; the other to record people of Pitcairn ancestry/descent in the Polynesian group.’

Mayor Adams went on to explain that whilst the form The 2016 Census on Norfolk Island is only being distributed to households on Norfolk, that Ms Rogers has also arranged for it to be posted on Facebook by Norfolk Online so the opportunity is there for people to spread the message and the information form far and wide to family and friends living in Australia to encourage them to also have their Norfolk heritage recorded in the Australian Census.

‘A side benefit of having a code on the Census form which identifies the form as coming from Norfolk Island’, Mayor Adams said, ‘will also allow collection of other statistical data such as age and financial demographics which can be used by the Commonwealth Government in assessing appropriate funding needs for our unique situation.’

Mayor Adams reminded the Norfolk Island community of the importance of completing the Census, quoting from the form which says ‘CENSUS IS OUR MOMENT TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE’.

Mayor Adams again spoke about -

### **THE FORTHCOMING COMMUNITY GATHERING TO DISCUSS THE COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN 2016-2026**

In again reminding the community to come to Rawson Hall on Wednesday, 10 August at 5:30pm to give their views on the draft 10 year Community Strategic Plan, Mayor Adams took the opportunity to speak about how the Vision in the current draft of the Plan came to be included.

‘The current version of the Strategic Plan’, Mayor Adams said, ‘has its Vision that Norfolk work towards being recognised as “The Best Small Island in the World”, or as Archie Biggs in his poem calls Norfolk “Daa Baas Side Orn Earth”. This aspiration is not new and I first became aware of it in 1974 when the Commonwealth Government engaged Professor G.J. Butland, Pro-Vice Chancellor of the University of New England in NSW, to undertake a population study of Norfolk Island. In his report Professor Butland concluded that –

“If a concerted effort were made, backed by larger financial resources, the community could turn the small area of the island to its own advantage by converting Norfolk Island into ‘the best small island in the world’, a model haven of considerable beauty, of unique historical interest, of a thriving community, and of rest and relaxation....”.

‘That possibility’, Mayor Adams said, ‘remains as real today as it did in 1974 but as always it is up to us as a community to believe in the possibility and bring it to fruition.’

Mayor Adams urged the community to join Councillors at next Wednesday’s meeting so Councillors can hear from the community on the Plan following the power point presentation conducted by the General Manager Ms Lotta Jackson.

**Robin Adams**  
**Mayor**

**4 August 2016**