



## MEDIA RELEASE

### **Changes to planned border restrictions for visitors to Norfolk Island**

With the increase in COVID-19 cases in Victoria and uncertainty about the level of community transmission in NSW and ACT, the Emergency Management Team (EMT) has decided to exercise caution and postpone reopening Norfolk Island to visitors from NSW and ACT until Friday, 24 July 2020. Visitors travelling from Victoria will not be permitted to travel to Norfolk Island until further notice. These restrictions will be regularly reviewed by EMT.

Persons travelling from any other state will be free to enter Norfolk Island without quarantine if they do not overnight in NSW or ACT during transit to Norfolk Island. Any person travelling from NSW or ACT (including returning residents / essential workers / visitors) who choose to travel to Norfolk Island will be required to quarantine at their own cost for 14 days.

The EMT acknowledges concerns within the community associated with reopening the island to visitors. While EMT has agreed to delay opening borders to travellers from NSW or ACT it is important to note that COVID19 risks will need to be appropriately managed with unrestricted borders, as part of our normal lives moving forward.

Over the past months, EMNI – in consultation with medical authorities and stakeholder input – has developed controls that will assist reducing the likelihood of infection if COVID-19 was to be detected on Norfolk Island. This includes raising awareness of our individual responsibilities for physical distancing, hand hygiene, avoiding contact with people if we feel unwell and getting tested if we have symptoms.

These controls are critical for managing COVID-19 risks and are now considered ‘normal’ across Australia. Returning residents frequently comment how relaxed parts of the Norfolk Island community are with following these controls. This will have to improve to effectively manage the risks of infection across our community and may damage the Island’s reputation if visitors do not observe the same level of compliance on Norfolk as they would on mainland.

EMT is constantly being updated regarding the situation in Australia and is making its decisions with consideration of medical advice being provided locally through NIHRACS representation both on the EMT and the Incident Management Team (IMT) and from the Commonwealth Deputy Chief Medical Officer.

The Norfolk Island Entry Pass is now online and compulsory for returning residents and essential personnel. The Entry Pass application process requires travellers to declare information related to COVID-19, including close contacts with confirmed cases or travel from declared COVID-19 hotspots.

Anyone who does not meet Entry Pass requirements will be at risk of not being permitted onto Island or into the community. Consequently, they may be returned to mainland at their own cost or placed into quarantine at their own cost.

9<sup>th</sup> July 2020

Sgt Glenn Elder

Incident Controller