





**ASSISTANT MINISTER BRIGGS**

**VISIT TO NORFOLK ISLAND**

**30 June 2015**

**PART 1**

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## **PART 1**

# **ITINERARY AND EVENT BRIEFS**

# ITINERARY

## VISIT TO NORFOLK ISLAND

Assistant Minister for Infrastructure and Regional Development

30 JUNE 2015

- 8.00 am **Depart Sydney for Norfolk Island**
- 12.10 pm **Arrive Norfolk Island and travel to New Military Barracks**  
*To be met by the Administrator, the Hon Gary Hardgrave.*
- 12.30 – 1.30 pm **Lunch with Administrator**
- 1.30 – 2.30 pm **Meeting with the Administrator’s Business Advisory Group and leaders of the local ALP and Liberal political parties.**  
*Meet and greet event with representatives from business and on-Island political parties. Discuss reforms, listen to their views and seek their assistance and commitment to the reform agenda*
- 47F
- 3.00 – 3.45 pm **Site Visits and Photo Opportunities**  
*Visit to Cascade Pier and location of footpath proposed from the corner of Taylors Road and Queen Elizabeth Drive to the village, joined by the Administrator, Executive Director of Norfolk Island and Chair of the Advisory Council*
- 4.00 – 5.00 pm **Free Time – Government House**
- 5.15 – 5.45 pm **Visit the Australian Government Information Centre and acknowledge the Officers’ work**  
*This is a private event and will include officials from several Australian Government agencies, including the Departments of Infrastructure and Regional Development, Human Services, Immigration and Border Protection and the Australian Taxation Office.*
- 5:50 – 6:00pm **Brief Meeting with 47F**
- 6.00 pm *Pre-dinner drinks* **Pre-dinner drinks and dinner at Government House with Advisory Council Members**  
*You will provide an informal briefing to the members of the Advisory Council outlining your charter and expectations for their 12-month term and transition to a regional council.*
- 6.30 pm – 7.30 pm *Dinner*
- Attendees:*
- The Administrator and his wife s 47F
  - Executive Director of Norfolk Island, Peter Gesling
  - 47F
- 8.00pm **Depart Norfolk Island**  
*The Administrator will drive you to the Airport.*

# **RUNNING SHEET**

## **VISIT TO NORFOLK ISLAND**

**BY THE HON JAMIE BRIGGS MP**  
**Assistant Minister for Infrastructure and Regional Development**

**30 JUNE 2015**

Accompanied by:

- Minister's office:

○ 47F  
■

*\*Note: Norfolk Island is a one and a half hours ahead of AEST*

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8.00 am (AEST)	<b>Depart Sydney for Norfolk Island</b>
12.10 pm (NI time)	<b>Arrive Norfolk Island</b> <i>The Administrator of Norfolk Island, the Hon Gary Hardgrave will meet you at the Norfolk Island airport. The Official Secretary has arranged three cars for use by the Assistant Minister's party.</i>
12.10 - 12.20 pm	<i>The Administrator will drive you to New Military Barracks (Office of the Administrator) and Government House.</i>
12.20 - 12.30 pm	<i>Prepare for meeting with the Administrator over lunch.</i>
12.30 - 1.30 pm	<b>Meeting with the Administrator over lunch at Government House</b>
1.30 – 2.30 pm	<b>Meeting with the Administrator's Business Advisory Group and leaders of the local ALP and Liberal political parties (New Military Barracks)</b> <i>Meet and greet event during a working lunch with representatives from business and on-island political parties. Discuss reforms, listen to their views and seek their assistance and commitment to the reform agenda.</i> 47F
2.30 – 2.45 pm	<i>Short break to prepare for site visits</i>
2.45 – 3.00 pm	<i>The Administrator will drive you to the location of the proposed footpath from the corner of Taylors Road and Queen Elizabeth Avenue to the village.</i>

3.00 - 4.00 pm	<p><b>Site Visit of the footpath proposed from the corner of Taylors Road and Queen Elizabeth Avenue to Village Place</b></p> <p><i>You will be given the opportunity to inspect the site of and have photos taken. You will be joined by the Executive Director and the Chair of the Advisory Council.</i></p>
3.20-3.30	<p><i>The Administrator will then drive you to visit the Cascade Pier.</i></p>
3.30 - 4.00 pm	<p><b>Site Visit of Cascade Pier</b></p> <p><i>You will be given the opportunity to inspect the Cascade Pier site and have photos taken. You will be joined by the Executive Director and the Chair of the Advisory Council.</i></p>
4.00 - 4.15 pm	<p><i>The Administrator will drive you to Government House.</i></p>
4.15 - 5.00 pm	<p><b>Free Time – Government House</b></p>
5.00 - 5.15 pm	<p><i>The Administrator will drive you to the Australian Government Information Centre.</i></p>
5.15 – 5.45 pm	<p><b>Visit the Australian Government Information Centre and acknowledge the Officers’ work</b></p> <p><i>This is a private event and will include officials from several Australian Government agencies, including the Departments of Infrastructure and Regional Development, Human Services, Immigration and Border Protection and the Australian Taxation Office.</i></p>
5.45 – 5.50 pm	<p><i>The Administrator will drive you to Government House.</i></p>
5.50 – 6.00 pm	<p><b>Meeting with 47F</b></p> <p><i>Brief discussion on recent key issues.</i></p>
6.00 pm <i>Pre-dinner drinks</i>	<p><b>Pre-dinner drinks and formal dinner at Government House with Advisory Council Members</b></p>
6.30 - 7.30 pm <i>Dinner</i>	<p><i>You will provide an informal briefing to the members of the Advisory Council outlining your charter and expectations for their 12-month term and transition to a regional council.</i></p>
	<p><i>Attendees:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>The Administrator and his wife s 47F</i></li> <li>• <i>Executive Director of Norfolk Island - Peter Gesling,</i></li> <li>• <b>47F</b></li> </ul>
7.30 – 7.45 pm	<p><i>Prepare to depart for airport</i></p>
7.45 – 8.00 pm	<p><b>Transfer to Airport</b></p> <p><i>The Administrator will drive you to the Airport.</i></p>
8.00 pm	<p><b>Depart Norfolk Island</b></p>

## Key On-Island Contacts

The Hon Gary Hardgrave	Administrator Gary.Hardgrave@infrastructure.gov.au	Mobile: 47F Office: 22152 Government House: 22000
s 47F	Official Secretary s 47F @infrastructure.gov.au	Mobile: 47F Office: 22152
s 47F	General Manager, Norfolk Island Taskforce (on-island) 47F @infrastructure.gov.au	Mobile: [REDACTED]
Emergency	Ambulance Fire Police	911 955 977
Overseas dialling (Australia)		0061+AUS number
Dialling Norfolk Island from the mainland		0011 6723+Norfolk number
Dialling a Norfolk Island number from an Australian mobile on Norfolk Island		006723 + Norfolk number

Note:

- Norfolk Island only has a 2G network (no data, smartphones cannot access apps without Wi-Fi);
- Global roaming is available for telephone calls, but it is expensive;
- The Office of the Administrator has spare phones and there is Wi-Fi at the office, Government House and the Australian Government Information Centre.





**FOR: The Hon Jamie Briggs MP**

**DIVISION: Local Government and Territories**

**EVENT BRIEF: Arrive at Norfolk Island. Travel to Government House. Lunch with the Administrator at Government House.**

### Event details

You will be met at the airport at 12.10 pm by the Hon Gary Hardgrave, Administrator of Norfolk Island. The Administrator will drive you to his office at New Military Barracks where, from 12.30 – 1.30pm you will meet with him and have lunch.

### Minister's role

The Administrator will brief you on the recent activity and key issues on Norfolk Island and his views on current issues, including progress on delivering the reform agenda.

### Minister met by

You will be met by the Administrator, The Hon Gary Hardgrave, upon your arrival at Norfolk Island Airport.

### Contact

The Hon Gary Hardgrave, Administrator of Norfolk Island  
Contact Number: Mobile: **47F**



**FOR: The Hon Jamie Briggs MP**

**DIVISION: Local Government and Territories**

**EVENT BRIEF: Meeting with the Administrator’s Business Advisory Group and, leaders of the local ALP and Liberal political parties**

**Event details**

You will be attending a meeting at the Office of the Administrator with the Administrator’s Business Advisory Group and members of the local ALP and Liberal political parties at 1.30 - 2.30 pm.

**Minister taken to the meeting by**

The Hon Gary Hardgrave, Administrator of Norfolk Island

**Contact**

The Hon Gary Hardgrave, Administrator of Norfolk Island

Contact Number: Mobile: 47F

**Minister’s role**

At this event you will meet with representatives from business and on-Island political parties. We recommend you discuss reforms, listen to their views and seek their assistance and commitment to the reform agenda.

**Attendees**

- 47F 47F
- [Redacted]
- [Redacted]
- Executive Director of Norfolk Island: Peter Gesling
- Department: s 47F

**Key issues**

- The future is bright for the Island and there needs to be an acceptance by the community of the reforms.
- Groups such as those at the meeting need to be champions of reform to support and assist the community to accept that change is necessary for economic growth.
- Since announcing the reforms, the Australian Government has commissioned a number of real studies into meaningful community and economic issues: options for improved mobile technology; a roads infrastructure strategy; health services plan; and managing the upgrade of the Cascade pier.
- It is important these groups continue to engage with the Advisory Council, Administrator and Executive Director on matters related to governance, reforms and strategies and actions for economic growth.



**FOR: The Hon Jamie Briggs MP**

**DIVISION: Local Government and Territories**

**EVENT BRIEF: Site Visits and Photo Opportunities: location of footpath proposed from the corner of Taylors Road and Queen Elizabeth Avenue to the Village Place; and Cascade Pier**

### Event details

This will be an opportunity to visit these two sites where the Australian Government is investing in key infrastructure projects on the Island. You will visit the location of the footpath proposed from the corner of Taylors Road and Queen Elizabeth Avenue to the Village Place between 3.00 and 3.20 pm. The Administrator will then drive you to the Cascade Pier, which you will visit between 3.30 and 4.00pm.

### Minister met by

The Hon Gary Hardgrave, Administrator of Norfolk Island

### Contact

The Hon Gary Hardgrave

Contact Number: Mobile: 47F

### Minister's role

- Photo opportunity for you to use in the media when announcing future projects on the Island

### Attendees

The Hon Gary Hardgrave

### Background briefing

#### *Cascade Pier*

- View the newly erected Australian Government sign announcing the project and construction timeframe of the project.
- The Australian Government has provided \$13 million to complete the upgrade of the Cascade Pier in the shortest possible time to enable jobs creation and the Norfolk Island economy to grow.
- The reconstruction of the Cascade Pier is a vital infrastructure project which is expected to:
  - increase economic activity during construction;
  - support the tourism industry with increased opportunities for visitation by cruise ships;
  - provide a safer port environment that may facilitate opportunities for improved freight handling.
- Better access to the Cascade Pier by cruise ships will be a central part of rebuilding the Norfolk Island tourism industry and the local economy.

- The review of the proposed design of the Cascade Pier is underway and a detailed project plan is currently being developed to consider options for the tendering and construction phases of the project.
- WorleyParsons has been appointed to lead the design review and costing for the pier refurbishment and extension and has been tasked with confirming the suitability of the design and seeking further stakeholder input.
- Pending successful completion of the design and award of a construction contract, it is anticipated that construction on the pier will commence around May 2016.
- The Australian Government is committed to completing the upgrade of the Cascade Pier in the shortest possible time to assist the sustainability of Norfolk Island, but no later than late 2017.

### **Background**

- While the area has been used for sea to land access since 1788, Cascade Pier has been in existence since the 1850s and was a vital piece of infrastructure during the whaling days. Today it represents an important link for goods and services from the mainland and other destinations.

### ***Footpath: Taylors Road and Queen Elizabeth Avenue***

- This project is part of the first stage of the Australian Government's infrastructure agenda for Norfolk Island and is an important road safety project for Norfolk Island.
- The Australian Government has listened to the concerns of local stakeholders and community members who have provided valuable information and assistance to WorleyParsons regarding the Norfolk Island Road Strategy.
- The safety of children travelling to and from school – by walking or cycling, as well as the general community and visitors to the Island, is a key road safety priority.
- Construction will consist of a 650 metre paved shared path from the Village Place along Taylors Road to the corner of Queen Elizabeth Avenue linking existing footpaths.
- This shared pathway will allow both pedestrians and cyclists to share the pathway safely.
- The wide pathway will also add greater accessibility and safety to pedestrians with prams, electric scooters and the elderly.

### **Background**

Preparatory works include planning, design, a geotechnical survey, local approvals, a tender process and consultation with the community and police to ensure the project will be completed in a satisfactory manner. This period could take up to 4 months. Once all preparatory works are completed, construction is expected to be completed within 3-4 months, with a total project timeframe of 8 months. Early indicative costings suggest the project may be in the order of \$750,000.



**FOR: The Hon Jamie Briggs MP**

**DIVISION: Local Government and Territories**

**EVENT BRIEF: Visit the Australian Government Information Centre and acknowledge the officers' work**

**Event details**

You will be visiting the Australian Government Information Centre from 5.15 - 5.45 pm. This will be a small gathering with Australian Government officers to acknowledge their efforts.

**Minister met by**

The Hon Gary Hardgrave, Administrator of Norfolk Island

**Contact**

The Hon Gary Hardgrave, Administrator of Norfolk Island

Contact Number: Mobile: **47F**

**Minister's role**

At this event, you will meet with Information Centre staff and the visiting Australian Government officials. Thank all those assembled for their work to establish the Centre and the close co-operation that has been established between several government agencies to deliver a very important outcome to the Norfolk Island community.

**Attendees**

This event will be attended by Australian Government staff, including those residing on Norfolk Island who will be staffing the Information Centre over the coming year, and visiting officials from the Departments of Human Services, Immigration and Border Protection and the Australian Taxation Office.

**Key issues**

- The work of the officials plays an important role in the reforms.
- To date, over 400 people have visited the centre and this is a mark of great success.
- This work is making a difference to the community.

**Background briefing**

- The Information Centre is part of the community support by the Australian Government leading up to the implementation of changes which will begin on 1 July 2016.
- Staff members are available in the centre to assist community members use the free-of-charge computers to access and print information and to use the online tools and calculators to explore Government payments and services.
- Officials will periodically visit the centre during the transition period to meet individually with residents about their circumstances to support a smooth transition to the mainland arrangements.
- Some of the most common queries received by staff and officials to date have included queries regarding the transitioning of Norfolk Island entry permits to comparable Australian visas or citizenship, requests for advice on individual and business taxation considerations, child support, age pension, disability support, Newstart, Medicare and eligibility for family tax payments.



**FOR: The Hon Jamie Briggs MP**

**DIVISION: Local Government and Territories**

**EVENT BRIEF: Meeting with s 47F**

### Event details

You will be attending a brief meeting with 47F, Chair of the Advisory Council between 5.50 and 6.00 pm at Government House.

### Minister met by

The Hon Gary Hardgrave, Administrator of Norfolk Island

### Contact

The Hon Gary Hardgrave, Administrator of Norfolk Island

Contact Number: Mobile: 47F

### Minister's role

Discuss key issues arising since your last meeting with 47F in June 2015 in Canberra.

### Attendees

The Hon Gary Hardgrave

### Key issues

- 47F may raise her views on the re-inclusion of a preamble recognising the Pitcairn culture in the *Norfolk Island Act 1979*.
- If the Australian Government were to consider the inclusion of a preamble, we recommend that it be succinct and historically accurate. It would also need to meet the requirements of the Office of Parliamentary Counsel.
- Reinforce your expectations of 47F and the Advisory Council at this meeting.

### Background briefing

Briefs on current issues, including the key messages and background are in Part 2.



**FOR: The Hon Jamie Briggs MP**

**DIVISION: Local Government and Territories**

## **EVENT BRIEF: Dinner with Advisory Council Members**

### **Event details**

You will be attending a dinner with the Advisory Council Members of Norfolk Island at Government House starting with pre-dinner drinks at 6.00pm, followed by dinner at 6:30 – 7.30pm.

### **Minister met by**

The Hon Gary Hardgrave, Administrator of Norfolk Island

### **Contact**

The Hon Gary Hardgrave, Administrator of Norfolk Island

Contact Number: Mobile: 47F

### **Minister's role**

You will be introduced by the Administrator, who will invite you to say a few words. We recommend that you refer to a set of talking points as included at **Attachment A** on the expectations and role of the Advisory Council for the coming 12 months.

### **Attendees**

- The Administrator and his wife s 47F
- Administration of Norfolk Island: Peter Gesling (Executive Director).

47F

### **Key issues**

Talking points for the Advisory Council are included at **Attachment A**

### **Background briefing**

- The five-person Advisory Council is established as an interim body to represent the local Norfolk Island community and contribute to reform for Norfolk Island, ahead of the commencement of the Norfolk Island Regional Council on 1 July 2016.
- A list of the biographies of the Council members is included at **Attachment B**.

# Attachment A

## Talking Points for the Advisory Council Formal Dinner

Congratulations to all of you on your appointment to this important Council that is central to the success of the Government's plans to restore prosperity and good governance to Norfolk Island.

- Your expertise and experience will be important to Norfolk Island becoming an example of better practice governance for non-self-governing territories.
- The Advisory Council will work co-operatively with the Administrator and the Executive Director to transition to a locally elected Regional Council.
- The Advisory Council is the voice of the Norfolk Island community;
  - It will be important to consider all views, even the dissenting ones, when you formulate your advice.
- I would like to thank s 47F as the Chair for her assistance in ensuring that the Advisory Council is able to operate from 1 July 2015.
- I am looking forward to working with you over the next 12 months.

### *Responsibilities of the Advisory Council*

- The Council has a responsibility to the Norfolk Island community to be an example of modern Australian governance practices.
- I see your priorities over the next year as follows:
  1. Firstly - develop a work plan and set of rules that will govern your activities and how you will interact with the community. The success of these reforms depends on this Council being accountable and transparent;
  2. Develop a preferred model for the Norfolk Island Regional Council within the framework of the *Local Government Act 1993* (NSW). This needs to be within the next few months to allow for the elections to be held early in 2016;
  3. Support the restructure of the Administration of Norfolk Island and its transition to a Regional Council aligned to the New South Wales local government framework;
    - the transition needs to consider the range of functions that are most appropriately undertaken by a regional council
    - many of the services currently provided may be more efficiently delivered outside of government
    - we need to ensure that staff are supported during this period of considerable change.



4. Identify priorities and preferences for introducing new laws to Norfolk Island modelled on New South Wales laws, based on the criteria of economic development, community safety and sustainable government;
- not all New South Wales laws will automatically apply as of 1 July 2016;
  - I understand that the introduction of New South Wales law as Commonwealth law on Norfolk Island as of 1 July 2016 has caused some concern in the community;
  - the process you will go through of identifying, prioritising and communicating the New South Wales laws for introduction will help to calm some of these concerns.

## Attachment B

### ADVISORY COUNCIL PROFILES

Title	First Name	Last Name	Employment Status	Summary of attributes <i>Summarise in point form key skills , experience and attributes</i>
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47F



## **PART 2**

### **CURRENT ISSUES**

# CURRENT ISSUES

## *New South Wales laws and Norfolk Island*

### **Key Message**

Norfolk Island law will remain in place while New South Wales laws are progressively applied. In the year leading up to 1 July 2016, the Australian Government will consult with the Norfolk Island community through the Advisory Council. The Advisory Council, as well as consulting with the Norfolk Island community, will consider the priorities and preferences for introducing new laws to Norfolk Island modelled on New South Wales laws, based on the criteria of economic development, community safety and sustainable government. Further information on the changes will be made available to businesses and individuals in the coming months.

## *Professional and business accreditation*

### **Key Message**

- There is some concern within the Norfolk Island community regarding the implications of accreditation on local business.
- Some Australian Government programmes require services to be delivered by an accredited business or professional. For example, the reimbursement of health costs under the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme and Medicare require associated professionals and businesses to be accredited.
- Norfolk Island will not be exempt from the accreditation requirements of Australian Government programmes. Businesses and professionals on Norfolk Island will need to gain accreditation before the benefits of these programmes can be accessed.
- The introduction of New South Wales law may also have some accreditation implications on professionals and business on Norfolk Island.
- The Australian Government will be working with the Norfolk Island Advisory Council to determine the priorities and preferences for introducing new laws to Norfolk Island, including considering the link between Australian Government service payments and business accreditation.
- The Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development is continuing to work through the issues of accreditation and will seek to support affected business and professionals to achieve necessary accreditation.

### **Background**

There are limited requirements for business on Norfolk Island to have formal accreditation. In most cases the accreditation requirements would not meet mainland standards. The Advisory Council Chair has expressed an interest in this issue.

## *Regional Council Elections*

### **Key Message**

- The Norfolk Island Regional Council will be established on 1 July 2016.
- The Regional Council will be established under the relevant New South Wales local government law which will provide a clear framework for the roles and responsibilities of the Council.
- Elections for the Norfolk Island Regional Council will take place in the first half of 2016.
- As a first priority, the Norfolk Island Advisory Council will have the responsibility to consider the model of the new Regional Council.
- Those in the community wishing to share their thoughts and opinions on this matter should provide them to the Advisory Council so they can be considered.

### **Background**

The *Norfolk Island Legislation Amendment Act 2015* abolishes the Norfolk Island Legislative Assembly and provides for the establishment of the Norfolk Island Regional Council from 1 July 2016.

The Norfolk Island Regional Council will be established under the relevant New South Wales local government law or will be established by an ordinance under section 19A of the *Norfolk Island Act 1979* to give the same effect. Establishing the Regional Council under New South Wales law will ensure existing governance arrangements currently in place in New South Wales are applied to the Norfolk Island Regional Council.

## *Capital Gains Tax (CGT)*

### **Key Message**

- While CGT provisions will apply to Norfolk Island as part of its move into the Australian tax system, the Australian Government recognises there are specific issues with respect to the application of this tax.
- In particular we understand the issues which may see people theoretically paying CGT on transactions which make a loss.
- The Australian Government Department of Treasury is looking at options to deal with these issues and we will consult on those options when we have more detail. It is a complicated matter.

### **Background**

Separate brief: MS15-000887.

## *Superannuation*

### **Key Message**

- The Chair of the Advisory Council has raised the impact of the mainland superannuation contribution caps on the ability of community members to move assets into superannuation.
- This is a complex matter, and I have agreed to give further consideration to this matter.
- The extension of mainland tax and superannuation does not start until 1 July 2016, so individuals should take a measured and considered approach to decisions around matters such as superannuation.
- Residents should consider taking professional, independent advice before making financial decisions including about superannuation.

## *Provident Account*

### **Key Message**

- I understand there is strong interest among staff of the Administration of Norfolk Island in how the Provident Account is to be managed going forward.
- There are no immediate changes to the Provident Fund.
- The handling of the Provident Account is something that will be considered in the coming months as part of the general transition to a Regional Council model.
- Members of the Provident Account will be consulted before changes are made to the Account.

### **Background**

- The Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development (the Department) is briefing you separately on this matter (MS15-000887), and will be seeking your agreement to a set of principles for future handling of the Provident Fund.
- The Provident Account is established by legislation and provides for retirement savings for staff of the Administration of Norfolk Island through employer and employee contributions. The Provident Account is a non-complying superannuation fund and, in its current form, would not allow superannuation contributions as required from 1 July 2016.
- The Department is developing options for the future management of the Provident Account for your consideration and consultation with members.

## *Gifts*

### **Key Messages**

- The Australian Government provides social security payments, such as the Age Pension, as a ‘safety net’ for people in the community unable to fully support themselves.
- The purpose of the pension gifting rules is to ensure that people who have significant means (income or assets) available for their self-support do so, rather than giving away those assets and relying on the taxpayer-funded social security system for support.
- Residents are urged to make considered and fully informed decisions on matters that may have major financial implications for them, rather than rushing to decisions now based on only partial information and limited advice.
- Residents may also, if they choose, re-consider their earlier decision to gift assets, such as land, and, if necessary, adjust any formal legal arrangements they may have put in place.
- From 1 July 2016, all Norfolk Island residents will be able to ask for decisions about their payments to be reviewed if they consider the decision is incorrect. If they believe the decision made by the review officer is incorrect, then they will be able to seek a further review of the decision by applying to the Administrative Appeals Tribunal (AAT).

### **Background**

Officials from the Australian Taxation Office (ATO) and Department of Human Services (DHS) held information session and private appointments with residents on island from 14-16 April 2015. A Fact Sheet on matters raised, including gifting of assets was developed, and cleared by the ATO and DHS.

The Fact Sheet contained a statement to the effect that gifting rules would not apply to any gifts made before the passage of the Norfolk Island Legislation Amendment Bill 2015. On publication of this Fact Sheet in the Norfolk Island newspaper, the Department of Social Services (DSS) advised the policy statement on gifting rules was incorrect, and that only gifts made before the 19 March 2015 announcement would not be considered under the gifting rules. The rationale is that from 19 March 2015, a Norfolk Islander could have reasonably expected that they would become qualified for a social security payment.

A correction was published with the March date, but the Commonwealth has attracted criticism for ‘closing off’ the opportunity for some residents to reduce their assets to qualify for the Age Pension. A small number of individuals may have made gifts in the short period 2 May to 13 May 2015 (when the fact sheet was reissued) in the belief that these would be exempt from the gifting rules and that their entitlements for future social security payments would not be affected.

The advice provided to some residents who have raised concerns on this and other issues is that they will have access to a formal system of review and appeal rights.

## *2006 CIE Report (if raised)*

### **Key Message**

- The 2006 Centre for International Economics (CIE) report into Norfolk Island reform scenarios is based on data and assumptions that are almost 10 years out of date.
- The Australian Government has released up to date economic modelling of the reform scenarios, completed by CIE in late 2014.
- The 2006 CIE Report is currently subject to a Freedom of Information (FOI) process being handled by the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, and it would not be appropriate to provide further comment at this time.

### **Background**

- The CIE report was commissioned in 2006 to inform Cabinet deliberations on the extension of mainland tax, social security and other programmes to Norfolk Island. The executive summary of the report was provided as part of the Cabinet submission. Ultimately the Cabinet decided not to proceed with reforms at that time.
- On 30 June 2014, the Freedom of Information Commissioner, Dr James Popple, varied a decision made in August 2011 by the then-Department of Regional Australia, Regional Development and Local Government to release a redacted version of analysis (attached with redactions highlighted) of the impacts of extending Commonwealth legislation to Norfolk Island. Dr Popple decided the majority of the report is not exempt and that the full report minus the executive summary which formed part of a Cabinet submission on the topic of Norfolk Island reform is to be released to the applicant, Mr 47 47F
- The Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (PM&C) appealed this decision to the Administrative Appeals Tribunal (AAT) arguing the whole of the report was exempt from FOI. The Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development was the respondent in the appeal process, as the department commissioned the report.
- On 27 May 2015, the AAT varied the decision of the Information Commissioner, and determined that the whole report was not exempt and should be released to 47F
- The Report has not yet been released, as the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet is appealing the decision.



## *Social security access and New Zealand citizens*

### **Key Message**

- The Australian Government agreed that NZ citizens who are permanent residents of Norfolk Island will be subject to similar social security residency requirements as those applied to NZ citizens on the Australian mainland.
- This means that NZ citizens residing on Norfolk Island who transition to an Australian permanent visa, post 1 July 2016, should have access to the same social security payments as NZ citizens residing in Australia granted an Australian permanent visa.
- The Department of Social Services is now reviewing the new legislative changes for access to social security by NZ citizens residing on Norfolk Island in light of the concerns raised in the Joint Committee's report and it will advise the Government of its findings and recommendations shortly.

### **Background**

There has been New Zealand (NZ) media coverage of the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Human Rights (PJC) finding of possible discriminatory treatment of NZ citizens on Norfolk Island who hold an Australian permanent resident visa being ineligible for social security benefits. This matter is being examined by the Department of Social Services (DSS), advice is pending.

The PJC released a report on 13 May 2015 following its consideration of the Norfolk Island Legislation Amendment Bill 2015 and associated Bills. It found that some categories of Australian permanent residents (NZ citizens) living on Norfolk Island would be ineligible for social security benefits under the new subsection 7(2AA) added to the *Social Security Act 1991*. This would not be the case if the same person resided on the Australian mainland. DSS plans to seek policy approval for legislative changes to correct the drafting error and will provide advice to Infrastructure to inform a response to the PJC by the Assistant Minister for Infrastructure and Regional Development.

## *Road Infrastructure Strategy*

### **Key Messages**

WorleyParsons has been engaged to formulate a Road Infrastructure Strategy for Norfolk Island. The Road Infrastructure Strategy will form the basis for prioritising future investments to address the significant improvements required to Norfolk Island's road network. This work will include:

An audit of Norfolk Island's road network, including assessing the condition of the roads and road infrastructure, as well as identifying improvements and redesigns which will minimise risks and black-spots;

- A priority list of road infrastructure improvements and indicative costs for these, as well as the ongoing maintenance requirements for the roads on the Island;
- Advice on the application of Australian standards and guidelines applying to road design, building and engineering standards which will assist in establishing best practice local standards, guidelines and construction methodologies which reflect local conditions; and
- Quantifying local resources for construction and maintenance of road infrastructure and identifying gaps and other sources of resources.

The study will consider the safety of road users (including cyclists and pedestrians), impacts on commercial activities such as tourism and the movement of freight, and the protection of the Island's cultural heritage.

WorleyParsons has consulted widely with stakeholders and undertaken site assessments on each of their three visits to the island.

The Road Infrastructure Strategy is expected to be completed by July 2015, and is intended for public release shortly thereafter.

### **Background**

Norfolk Island's road network consists of 121 kilometres of roads: 90 km of which are sealed and 31 km of which are unsealed. The majority of roads have never been fully constructed using current pavement design and Australian design standards.

## *Economic Development Strategy*

### **Key Messages**

SGS Economics and Planning has been engaged to formulate a Norfolk Island Economic Development Strategy. The Economic Development Strategy will:

- Identify opportunities to diversify and broaden Norfolk Island's economic base by utilising local experience and the existing skill base of persons on the Island;
- Identify private investment opportunities in current and emerging industries such as tourism, heritage and cultural precincts, cottage industries, agriculture, and aquaculture;
- Determine the infrastructure investment opportunities to improve access by tourists and enhance supply chain connectivity;
- Develop an action plan identifying key short and long-term projects, including costings, to underpin the Economic Development Strategy for Norfolk Island;
- Identify barriers to tourism, investment and increased local production and brand development, and strategies to overcome them.

The Economic Development Strategy is expected to be completed by July 2015, and is intended for public release shortly thereafter.

### **Background**

Without private investment and the use of local skills and experience the Norfolk Island economy will continue its current dependence on Commonwealth funding. For this reason the Norfolk Island Economic Development Strategy was commissioned to build on the March 2012 ACIL Tasman Norfolk Island Economic Development Report. This report described the Norfolk Island economy as being in a state of economic depression following two years of economic decline.

ACIL Tasman recommended that the Norfolk Island Government undertake reforms to stimulate the economy consistent with the *Competition Principles Agreement 1995* and encourage a substantially increased role for the private sector. The reform program recommended the privatisation of Norfolk Island Government Business Enterprises; tax reform to increase the Norfolk Island Government's revenue base; price setting for utilities by an Economic Regulator; legislative consistency with the mainland to reduce business costs, and investment in core infrastructure. Few of the identified reforms have since been implemented.

The Norfolk Island Economic Development Strategy will provide contemporary advice on setting the Norfolk Island economy onto a more self-sustaining basis and increasing its exposure to national and global markets.

## *Mobile Phone Network Review*

### **Key Messages**

GQI Consulting has been engaged to assess the condition of the existing 2G network, identify the infrastructure required to provide a minimum of 3G network services, including multimedia messaging, voice services and data and report accordingly.

The report will provide options and indicative costs for upgrading the network and outline the indicative costs for this. Advice received from GQI Consulting to date indicates that the current infrastructure presents a high risk of failure as it has reached the end of its useable life, with limited ongoing technical support available. Much of the supporting infrastructure (e.g. antennas/poles/ wires/huts) is however in good condition and will be able to continue to be used as part of an upgraded network.

The Mobile Phone Network Review report is expected to be finalised in July 2015, and is intended for public release shortly thereafter.

### **Background**

The mobile network on Norfolk Island is currently only capable of providing a 2G mobile service. The network was installed in 2006 by Ericsson, costing approximately \$1 million and only has capacity to handle voice and SMS services (data, MMS and video calling is not available). Most 2G networks in developed countries around the world are being de-commissioned, including in Australia where Telstra is set to switch off its 2G network by the end of 2016. The Administration of Norfolk Island has been advised that technical support for the 2G mobile service will not be available beyond 2015.

## *Health Services Plan*

### **Key Messages**

**47C** has been engaged to develop a Health Services Plan for Norfolk Island and provide options for the future provision of health services on the Island which are tailored to the needs of the community. The Plan will build on previous studies which have been undertaken in assessing community health and aged care needs. The Plan will:

- Identify priorities which are informed by discussions with community representatives;
- Assess current health and aged care service capacity including resource limitations and staff skills;
- Identify strategies to improve access to health and aged care services;
- Develop a model to provide health and aged care services suited to the needs of Norfolk Island, including recording utilisation data, options for implementation (i.e. use of external service providers) and indicative costing; and
- Assess the suitability of existing infrastructure, particularly in terms of its accreditation status to mainland health standards and Medicare accreditation requirements.

The key challenge for the next year is to integrate a preferred model for delivering health and aged care services on Norfolk Island into Australia's Medicare and social security systems. The Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development is working closely with the Departments of Health and Social Services to identify the priority infrastructure and practitioner accreditation requirements that will need to be in place by 1 July 2016. Negotiations will also shortly commence with the New South Wales Government to determine the extent of clinical support they may be able to provide.

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The feedback received has identified the Norfolk Island community strongly supports the need for health and aged care reform, and the extensive and organised community support network already in place that is willing to facilitate the changes required.

The Plan is expected to be finalised in July 2015, and is intended for public release shortly thereafter.

### **Background**

The Norfolk Island Hospital is the only health facility on Norfolk Island. The hospital has 24 beds including 8-10 aged care beds. Various reports over recent years have raised concerns about Norfolk Island's health services which include, but are not limited to an almost total absence of primary care and community health services, the dominance of an antiquated acute facility, as well as an absence of appropriate aged care service options suited to the age and health profile of the Island's population.

## *Air Services*

### **Key Message**

- Air New Zealand operates the service in a commercial manner, having regard to the interests of the Department, the users of the services, and the Norfolk Island communities.
- Air New Zealand has a Memorandum of Understanding with Norfolk Island Tourism that provides for an agreed approach to tourism and to ensure a co-ordinated approach to sales and events and interactions with tourism wholesalers.
- The Department is running a tender process for air services to Norfolk Island and the Indian Ocean Territories. Tenders close 2pm 29 July 2015 and the Department anticipates announcing the successful tenderer in late 2015.

### **Background**

The Norfolk Island Government operated the air service between the Australian mainland and Norfolk Island between July 2005 and February 2012. Until the Global Financial Crisis in 2008-09 the Norfolk Island Government operated the air service on a profitable basis. The Global Financial Crisis dramatically reduced global tourism numbers and highlighted the short comings in the Norfolk Island Government's contract with Air Nauru executed in August 2008. As a result of reduced passenger numbers and a poor contract the Norfolk Island Government sustained losses of up to \$7.5 million per annum operating the air service.

To remove the financial burden of providing an air service from the Norfolk Island Government the Australian Government agreed in September 2011 to provide 47C [REDACTED]. The Australian Government's decision to underwrite air services to Norfolk Island was part of the broader strategy to achieve a sustainable future for Norfolk Island. It was anticipated that a large commercial airline was expected to kick-start Norfolk Island tourism activity and provide greater economic opportunities for the community.

Norfolk Island experienced its worst visitor numbers in 2012 which coincided with the commencement of the contract with Air New Zealand. 47C [REDACTED]. Passenger numbers have increased by approximately 11 per cent since 2012-13.

The Australian Government currently underwrites the provision of air services to Norfolk Island and the Indian Ocean Territories via contracts with Air New Zealand and Virgin Australian respectively. Both of these contracts conclude on 31 July 2016. The Department has advertised an open tender for air services to these islands with the service commencing on 1 August 2016. The tender closes at 2pm on 29 July 2015. The Department anticipates announcing the successful tenderer in late 2015.