

Administrator of Christmas Island Administrator of Cocos (Keeling) Islands

Community Newsletter



Issue 57 – 21 February 2025

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Welcome Message

Welcome to the first edition of my newsletter for 2025.

I hope you had a restful holiday season, and are now looking forward to the next twelve months and the possibilities ahead.

I would like to particularly wish all those who celebrated a happy Chinese New Year, and bid farewell to the Year of the Dragon, and welcomed in the Year of the Snake. The most tenacious of the 12 zodiac animals, the snake symbolises growth, wisdom and transformation – all vital qualities for the coming year. Already across both Christmas and Cocos we have seen extreme weather events at our door. I have been working closely with the Emergency Management Committees, and the communities, on disaster response and preparedness, and thank everyone involved for their efforts during the worst of the swells and now through the clean-up, assessment and repair process to come.

I encourage all of you to follow the <u>IOT News Facebook</u> <u>page</u> for the latest emergency management information, including storm warnings and advice for preparing for storms and extreme weather events over this wet season.

There is no doubt that extreme weather and the impacts of a changing climate will be a key focus for 2025, with the final consultations on the Cocos (Keeling) Islands Coastal Hazard Risk Management and Adaptation Plan (the Draft CHRMAP) now under way. The CHRMAP is how we can best understand the impact of rising sea-levels on Home and West Island, and to work together to determine a way forward over the next 50 years.

Currently, the draft is open for public comment – and I urge Cocos Islanders to read and review the document, a summary of which is available in both English and Cocos Malay here: <u>https://getinvolved.mysocialpinpoint.com.au/your-</u> <u>coastal-plan-cki</u>.

I just returned from a visit to Cocos where I met with a number of community members and I understand that for so many, this is a time of uncertainty. I want to assure all of you that myself, and the Australian Government are committed to supporting you throughout this process by designing a pathway forward for Cocos in partnership with the community.

Noting concerns raised about flooding on Home Island, the Department is assisting the Shire to assess options to address this. The Department has asked the WA Government to develop a Water Management Report (WMR) for Home Island to support the Shire to better understand groundwater flooding risks and management options. This work is being progressed as a priority.

While on Cocos, I also met with the new AFP officer in charge Nick Bannan and discussed a range of emergency management and community policing matters.

Looking ahead, we have a number of opportunities to build a stronger, more resilient region here in the IOT.

Round Three of the Disaster Ready Fund is now open, with \$200 million available across 2025-26 to support projects addressing the physical and social impacts of natural disasters on Australian communities. I encourage anyone interested in applying for a grant for projects supporting reduced disaster risk and building long-term resilience in the IOT to read the guidelines on the Department of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES) website.

We have already seen the impact that Australian Government investment can make on the day to day lives of our community, with the Christmas Island Daycare being awarded \$25,000 in grant funding for professional development. Once again, many thanks to the Shire and all involved in this important grant, that will make such a difference to the early childhood sector on Cl.

You can read about these stories and more in the newsletter, which captures only the highlights and key moments of the past month. If you would like to find out more about anything in the newsletter or you would like a hardcopy, please contact my office. Let us know if you want us to include your upcoming community event or activity in the newsletter. Stories (including photos) about recent IOT community events are very welcome and can be emailed to IOTAdministrator@infrastructure.gov.au.

Farzian Zainal

Administrator of Christmas Island and the Cocos (Keeling) Islands

Latest News

Cocos Islanders invited to have their say on CHRMAP draft

Community consultations on the final draft of the *Cocos (Keeling) Islands Coastal Hazard Risk Management and Adaptation Plan* (the Draft CHRMAP) are under way, with Cocos Islanders encouraged to have their say on this important document.

The Australian Government engaged the Western Australian Government to develop the CHRMAP for Cocos, as a means of understanding the impact of rising sea-levels on the coastlines of Home and West Island, and to outline a potential pathway forward over the next 50 years.

After previous workshops regarding options in 2022 and 2023, this current round of consultations is the final stage of the vital project, with community, industry and local government feedback an important part of its finalisation.

The draft CHRMAP is now available for public comment, with the community encouraged to share their thoughts on the plan.

The project team engaged to deliver the consultations, Shape Urban, was on island in late January – supported by the Australian and Western Australian governments – undertaking initial discussions with the Shire and community representatives about the draft report

Shape Urban will return in April for further discussions with the community about the proposed recommendations, providing the opportunity for stakeholders to ask more detailed questions on the proposals outlined in the report.

Dates and details for these information sessions will be released shortly.

The draft CHRMAP is an important part of the Australian Government's response to the impacts of climate change on Cocos, which includes a \$23.3 million investment in improving emergency preparedness and community safety while the longterm response is developed, which was announced late last year.

For more information on the draft CHRMAP, you can visit the project website at https://getinvolved.mysocialpinpoint.com.au/yourcoastal-plan-cki

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January 2025 Project Update

Good news! The project team has received input from all relevant Australian and State Government stakeholders and has arrived at the final stage of the project: preparing the draft Cocos Keeling Islands Coastal Hazard Risk Management and Adaptation Plan (the Draft CHRMAP). We need your input to help us finalise the CHRMAP. It has taken longer than expected to work through the

recommendations developed in the CHRMAP preparation. All stakeholders have taken the coastal hazard risks affecting the Cocos (Keeling) Islands seriously. Considering multiple factors including climate change, socioeconomics, culture and heritage, financia feasibility, and the long-term resilience of the Cocos community, it is not straightforward to make wellbalanced recommendations. The proposed pathway required careful analysis and review to ensure they were accurate and proposed actions appropriate. We sincerely appreciate your patience during this part of



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Exciting boost for early childhood education on Christmas Island





In fantastic news for children, parents, carers and early childcare workers on Christmas Island, Christmas Island Daycare staff are set to receive \$25,000 as a development and incentives package thanks to the Western Australian Government.

The Commonwealth-funded grant was secured under the West Australian Grant Attraction and Retention Packages for Regional Child Care Workers Program, which provides grants to local governments across regional Western Australia to fund initiatives supporting early childhood education and the care workforce.

The \$25,000 in grant funding, applied for by the Shire of Christmas Island, will go towards the professional development of Christmas Island Daycare staff, ensuring they are well supported in their vital roles of helping educate and care for our children during such an important phase of a child's life.

Early childcare workers have one of the most important and challenging roles in a child's development, with high quality early childhood education and care providing important opportunities for learning and socialisation which is why investing in a highly skilled, well-supported workforce is one of the most important ways we can give children the best start in life.

Many thanks to everyone involved in the grant application, and to the West Australian Government for working with them to access this scheme.

Kampong Waste Water Pipeline Replacement Project Update

The replacement of the wastewater pipeline in Christmas Island's Kampong is progressing, with works expected to commence on site later this month with an anticipated completion date of late April this year.

This important project will see the realignment of the wastewater pressure main, and a new alignment along Jalan Pantai, which will not only improve inground infrastructure to reduce maintenance costs, but will also improve safety for Water Corp's employees and contractors undertaking repairs near rockfall zones.

Water Corp is delivering this project on behalf of the Australian Government, with Saltire Infrastructure – a

specialist company experienced in delivering water infrastructure.

There will be some impact to road access during the project which will be minimised whenever possible.

There will also be some minimal impact to the Flying Fish Cove carpark area, however it will remain open through the works period.

Residents in the Kampong area and affected businesses will be kept updated on any traffic changes via letter drops and updates provided as required on the <u>IOT News Facebook page</u>.



Protecting our extraordinary marine parks



The Australian Government has released the first ever management plans for the Indian Ocean Territories Marine Parks, supporting better, long-term protection for our extraordinary and diverse marine ecosystem.

The plans focus on:

- protecting, researching and monitoring park biodiversity and habitats, including enhancing climate change resilience and adaptation;
- community stewardship, including supporting and recognising the traditional practices of island communities;
- continuing to work closely with other government agencies and other stakeholders with mutual and related interests;
- management rules aimed at protecting park values, while simplifying administrative processes for local communities and other park users.

Thank you to everyone who made a submission to these important plans – your local knowledge and experience of the parks has helped inform how they will be managed and protected for future generations.

More than 20,000 public submissions were received during the preparation of the plans, clearly demonstrating the global significance of our beautiful region.

Thank you also to the Parks Australia staff who have worked so diligently to make sure that these plans will protect our unique marine environments for decades to come, while recognising and respecting the strong connections our communities have to these waters. The plans are publicly available through the Australian Marine Parks website, which you can access here: Indian Ocean Territories Marine Parks management plans | Australian Marine Parks | Parks Australia

Subsidised Travel Reminder for IOT Pensioners and Students

Eligible students and pensioners across Cocos and Christmas Islands are reminded to take advantage of the Student Subsidised Travel Scheme and Pensioner Annual Free Trip Scheme offered by the Australian Government – supporting IOT residents who meet scheme requirements to get to and from the mainland.

Under these schemes, pensioners who have a Pensioner Concession Card issued by Centrelink and who have been living continuously in the IOT for two years or longer are entitled to receive one free return airfare to Perth per calendar year, while secondary and tertiary students not already receiving any type of Centrelink Youth Allowance can receive assistance to travel to attend their full-time studies.

Thanks to these Australian Government schemes, eligible IOT residents are receiving assistance comparable to other remote WA communities. The scheme guidelines can be obtained from <u>https://www.infrastructure.gov.au/territories-regions-</u> <u>cities/territories/indian-ocean-territories/travel-</u> <u>schemes</u>

The travel schemes continue to be administered from the Perth Office which is located at Level 9, 150 St George's Terrace, Perth. Contact details of officers administering the scheme and providing support are:

Perth

Ms Theresa Tan - Administration Officer / Travel Assistance Officer IOT Perth Office PO Box Z5048, Perth WA 6831 T: (08) 9220 5108 E: <u>iotairtravel@infrastructure.gov.au</u>

Guidelines and application forms are available onisland from:

Christmas Island

Mr Hafiz Masli - Coordinator, CI Community Resource Centre Old Technical School – 1 Lister Place, Poon Saan T: (08) 9164 7249 E: <u>mailto:christmasislandcrc@gmail.com</u>

Cocos (Keeling) Islands

Ms Darling Elat - Community Service Officer / Seniors Coordinator IOT Health Services, Cocos (Keeling) Island T: (08) 9162 7621 E: <u>darling.elat@infrastructure.gov.au</u>

Eligible residents are reminded to ensure their applications are submitted at least one month prior to the first intended date of travel to allow for the timely processing of your application.



Photo: Virgin Australia

Starting 2025 off with a shot!

2025's visiting coaches program is off to a flying start with the visit from Basketball WA under way.

Thanks to superstar coach Keely O'Brien, children and adults alike across Cocos have been honing their basketball skills, while learning first hand the importance of teamwork and resilience on and off the court.

Keely will next be travelling to Christmas Island from Friday, 21 February, where she will spend time with students at the school, and lead community workshops for interested community members – and we encourage everyone who is interested to take part in this fantastic opportunity.

Specific details about the visit have been posted to the IOT News Facebook page, so make sure you like and follow!

Coming up next month, Football West will be visiting Cocos and Christmas Islands for the last two weeks of term one, with Coach Baxter Hutchinson arriving on Cocos on Friday 28 March then heading over to Christmas Island on Friday 4 April.

Make sure to mark those dates down and keep an eye out on IOT News for more information on this exciting visit.



DISASTER RESILIENCE GRANTS

Round Three of Disaster Ready Fund Open for Applications

The Australian Government's Disaster Ready Fund (DRF) is delivering \$200 million of Commonwealth funding annually to establish disaster resilience and mitigation projects across Australia.

Applications are now open for Round Three of the DRF to support projects addressing the physical and social impacts of natural disasters on Australian communities. The Government is supporting the Indian Ocean Territories in the face of extreme weather events and natural disasters through Christmas and Cocos Islands' inclusion in the DRF.

The WA Department of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES) is the Lead Agency for DRF applications from the IOT. The National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) introduced changes for Round Three, which are summarised on the DFES website.

To apply for Round Three of this important program, you must review the Round Three Guidelines before applying, and read the supporting resources on the DFES website to prepare the strongest possible application. The attached factsheet summarises the process for IOT applicants, but should not be read in place of the Guidelines.

Project proposals must be submitted by 5pm (AWST) on 2 April 2025 via the DFES online application portal: <u>https://dfes.smartygrants.com.au/DRF2526</u>.

DRF is administered by the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) on behalf of the Australian Government.

To find out more and to apply for Round Three please visit the DFES website.

For enquiries on DRF Round Three email <u>DisasterResilienceGrants@dfes.wa.gov.au</u>.

For general enquiries on the Australian Government's emergency management arrangements email NEMA at <u>Disaster.Ready@nema.gov.au</u>.

The Secret Life of the CI Paper Wasp!

The Indian Ocean Territories have a vast and varied array of wildlife, including the smaller and sometimes overlooked insects of the IOT. Dr Anna Probert from the University of New England visited Christmas Island this month to conduct research into the endemic CI paper wasp. During her visit, I met with Dr Probert to discuss the work she is doing, as well as the impact the invasive Macao paper wasp is having on the Cocos (Keeling) Islands.

Dr Probert is keen to establish a citizen science surveillance project on Christmas Island to prevent the Macao paper wasp making its way to CI from Cocos. Christmas Island residents are encouraged to learn the differences between the native and Macao paper wasps, so that spotting the invasive species becomes easier.

If you see a wasp that you think looks like a Macao paper wasp, please take a photo if possible and make a note of the location of the sighting. You can then send the details to <u>cipaperwasp@une.edu.au</u> or also use this email address if you'd like further information on wasps in the IOT.





Paper wasp Alert for Christmas Island

REPORT! Macao paper wasp (Polistes olivaceus) Size 18-26 mm





Native paper wasp (Polistes balder) Size 15-18 mm





Macao paper wasp:

- is an exotic pest wasp and is established on the Cocos-Keeling Islands
- is larger than the Christmas Island native paper wasp, Polistes balder
- has wavy black bands on the abdomen, as seen above (top left)
- has larger nests, often with hundreds of wasps in the colony
- could hitch-hike to Christmas Island via freight and boat movements



Report Macao paper wasp

MyPestGuide™ Reporter via app or report online mypestguide.agric.wa.gov.au

Community Bulletins



Australian Government

Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts



NOTICE TO COMMUNITY

Motor Vehicle Registry – Temporary change to business opening hours & updated contact details

The Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts wishes to advise that there will be a temporary change to our Christmas Island Motor Vehicle Registry Office's opening hours.

Effective from Monday 13 January 2025 to Monday 31 March 2025 inclusive, the Christmas Island Motor Vehicle Registry Office will be opened from 8.00am to 12.00pm, Monday through to Friday.

From Tuesday 1 April 2025 onwards, it will revert back to our normal opening hours of 8.00am to 2.00pm.

Motor Vehicle Registry Office contact: Phone: 08 9164 7901, dial 1 extension 5168 Email: <u>info@mvr.gov.cx</u>

Job Opportunities



Australian Government

Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts



HV/LV Electrical Supervisor

Territory Officer Level 8, Christmas Island Full-Time Ongoing Vacancy

Package including:

- Base salary of between \$85,235 and \$116,780 per annum
- Employer contribution to superannuation at 16% of base salary
- District allowance payable in addition to base salary
- Generous leave entitlements
- Annual return airfares assistance to Perth
- Relocation assistance may be provided if relocating to the Territories

The Indian Ocean Territories Administration (IOTA) is currently seeking motivated, professional and suitably qualified persons to join our team as an HV/LV Electrical Supervisor within the Indian Ocean Territories Power Service (IOTPS) based on Christmas Island.

The IOTPS is the recognised Network Operator for the Indian Ocean Territories and is responsible for the generation and distribution of a safe, reliable and efficient electricity supply to residential, commercial and industrial consumers on Christmas and Cocos (Keeling) Islands. IOTPS also provides regulatory compliance in collaboration with the Department of Energy, Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety.

The key responsibilities of the HV/LV Electrical Supervisor are to plan and schedule the IOTPS electricity distribution network and power generation electrical maintenance activities and to supervise and manage all electrical, instrumentation and control system works performed by the maintenance team and maintenance contractors.

To be considered, applicants must possess a current and valid Western Australian Unrestricted Electrical Worker's Licence (Applicants with Interstate Electrical Licences which are eligible for mutual recognition in WA are welcome to apply. However applicants must hold an unrestricted Electrical Worker's Licence (WA) at time of commencement), must be listed as a nominee on IOTPS' in-house installation work licence within 6 months of commencement, hold a current manual 'C' class, or higher, driver's licence transferable to the Indian Ocean Territories and will be subject to a health assessment.

Our ideal candidate will have substantial post qualification trades experience with strong leadership and people management within the power or construction sector, extensive knowledge and experience of the power industry, demonstrated experience with power generation equipment (preferably medium speed diesel engines and HV alternators) and a demonstrated ability to motivate teams with professionalism, fairness, resilience and flexibility while demonstrating accountability for outcomes and behaviours. Applicants with experience in establishing and driving procedures to standardise maintenance practices and reporting, the preparation of financial budgets and forecasting, working with Maintenance Management System software, living and working in a remote location and a completed Certificate III, Certificate IV, Diploma or Advanced Diploma in Electricity Supply Industry (ESI) will be well regarded.

For an application pack outlining how you can apply, please contact the IOTA Human Resources Team at IOTHRTeam@infrastructure.gov.au and quote position number **111428**.

Applications close 4.00pm (Christmas Island local time) (CXT) (UTC+7) Monday, 3 March 2025.



Australian Government

Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts



Power Services Manager

Full Time Ongoing Vacancy on Christmas Island

Package including:

- Base salary of \$149,035 to \$171,979 per annum
- Employer contribution to superannuation at 16% of base salary
- District allowance payable in addition to base salary
- Generous leave entitlements
- Annual return airfares assistance to Perth
- Relocation assistance may be provided if relocating to the Territories

The Indian Ocean Territories Administration (IOTA) is currently seeking a motivated, professional and suitably qualified person to join our team as the Power Services Manager.

The Department, acting through the IOTA, is responsible for the generation and distribution of electricity to residential, commercial and industrial consumers on both Christmas Island and the Cocos (Keeling) Islands. The Department generates electricity in power stations on Christmas Island, Home Island and West Island and manages a Renewable Energy Buy Back Scheme for small scale renewables.

The Power Services Manager is primarily responsible for managing the delivery of safe, reliable and efficient power generation, distribution, billing and electrical inspection services for the Indian Ocean Territories (IOT's), delivering continuous improvement in safety, risk management, asset reliability and resilience and undertaking project and contract management relating to the provision of power services.

This is a critical operational management position and pivotal to success is leading and developing a high performance team within a multi-cultural workplace and fostering a values aligned culture. The role also plays a key role within the Senior Executive Leadership Team of the IOTA.

Our ideal candidate will possess relevant professional engineering qualifications or mechanical or electrical trade qualifications and substantial relevant industry experience. A demonstrated understanding and commitment to risk management and Workplace Health and Safety as it applies to power utilities and an ability to develop and manage procurements and contracts are also essential. Further, our ideal candidate must have a proven ability to establish and maintain positive and productive working relationships.

To be considered, applicants must be eligible to obtain a security clearance at Baseline Vetting Level (must be an Australian citizen), hold a current 'C' class Drivers Licence transferable to the Indian Ocean Territories and will be subject to a health assessment.

For an application pack outlining how you can apply, please contact the IOTA Human Resources Team at IOTHRTeam@infrastructure.gov.au and quote position number **109280**.

Applications close 4.00pm (Christmas Island local time) (CXT) (UTC+7), Monday, 3 March 2025



Australian Government

Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry



Casual Biosecurity Officers

The Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry is seeking people who are interested in casual employment as a Biosecurity Officer on Christmas Island and Cocos (Keeling) Islands. As a Biosecurity Officer, you will be responsible for delivering services to verify compliance with Australia's biosecurity and export market requirements. You will work as part of a team to anticipate risk and act quickly and effectively to protect our economy, environment and communities. The department has a national footprint delivering services in all capital cities and regional ports around the country and in Australia's offshore territories. In our regional ports, our activities include inspection of arriving and departing vessels, aircraft, goods, mail, crew and passengers.

The role of a Biosecurity Officer can at times be strenuous and physically demanding and involves a combination of office and field-based work. Applicants should note that the nature of the work is of an irregular and intermittent nature.

If you are flexible and would like an interesting and varied job helping protect Australia's valuable biosecurity status, please express your interest in a casual Biosecurity Officer role via our Temporary Employment Register which is available at https://awejobs.nga.net.au.





Australian Government

* Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts



Project Officer – Housing and Emergency Management (PN 116115)

Cocos (Keeling) Islands Full time ongoing vacancy - Territory Officer Level 4

Package includes:

- Base annual salary of between \$70,926 \$82,503
- Employer contribution to superannuation at 16% of base salary
- District allowance payable in addition to base salary
- Generous leave entitlements
- Annual return airfares assistance to Perth

The Indian Ocean Territories Administration (IOTA) is seeking a motivated, professional, suitably qualified person to join our Operations team as a Project Officer in Housing and Emergency Management based on the Cocos (Keeling) Islands (CKI).

The Operations team is responsible for managing a diverse portfolio of infrastructure and services across Christmas Island and the CKI on behalf of the Australian Government including properties, assets and infrastructure, community services including emergency management, justice services, land management as well as contracts and project management.

The key responsibilities of the Project Officer will be to support and assist the Operations team to manage and deliver the various infrastructure and services to the CKI community.

Our ideal applicant will have a sound understanding of housing and property management and the challenges faced in maintaining properties in a remote environment, as well as an understanding of community-centred emergency management. This includes knowledge of emergency risk management planning and coordination of emergency response and recovery as well as working with emergency service volunteers. The applicant will be a good communicator with excellent interpersonal and relationship building skills to develop and maintain effective working relationships across all stakeholders. They will also be able to demonstrate experience working within a procurement framework to achieve results, seeking spending approvals, issuing of purchase orders/contracts, monitoring delivery of goods and services, and acquitting expenses.

To be considered, applicants must hold a valid driver's licence transferable to the Indian Ocean Territories and be eligible to obtain a security clearance at Baseline Vetting level (must be an Australian Citizen). The successful candidate will also be subject to a health assessment and Nationally Coordinated Criminal History Check.

For an application pack outlining how you can apply, please contact the IOT Human Resources Team at IOTHRTeam@infrastructure.gov.au and quote position number **116115**.

Applications close 4pm Cocos (Keeling) Island Time (CCT)(UTC+6.5) Friday, 14 March 2025

Community Announcements



JOIN OUR VOLUNTEERING TEAM TODAY!

Mall training provided

GET IN TOUCH

- **W**Regular upskilling sessions
- **Second Second S**
- Supportive team environment
- Opportunity to support community

We are now recruiting new ambulance volunteers to our team and would love to hear from YOU!

FACEBOOK @ST JOHN WA - CHRISTMAS ISLAND CHRISTMASISLAND.COMMITTEE@STJOHNWA.COM.AU 0437 932 444





Late changes will be posted on the Roundabout Blackboard and <u>Facebook</u>.

Adults \$ 5.00 School aged children 3 to 17 years old \$2.00

Want to sponsor an upcoming movie?

You will receive 2 free passes, special seating, food platter with your favourite nibbles, drinks of your choice and a public announcement on the evening of the movie. We will advertise your company or individual message in the Islander, Facebook Page, on the world's most remote roundabout and one of the last remaining outdoor Cinema screens. (Your choice of movie and date will be dependent upon availability.)

To become part of this exciting club or enquire about sponsorship, please Email: <u>cioutdoorcinema@gmail.com</u> or <u>accounts@cinema.org.cx</u>

Rating information provided by <u>http://www.classification.gov.au</u>.

The Christmas Island Cinema Club is proudly supported by: CiFi, Freightshop, Shire of Christmas Island, Metro Solar and many local sponsors and volunteers.

* THE CHRISTMAS ISLAND CINEMA IS A SMOKE FREE AREA *



A Complete Unknown (M)

SATURDAY - 22nd February, 7.30pm

In 1961, an unknown 19-year-old Bob Dylan arrives in New York City with his guitar and forges relationships with musical icons on his meteoric rise, culminating in a groundbreaking performance that reverberates around the world.

Haven't subscribed yet? Subscribe to the next edition here!

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Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications a the Arts

Office of the Administrator of Christmas Island and the Cocos (Keeling) Islands

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