



Issue 47 – 16 February 2024

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Welcome Message

Welcome to the latest edition of the newsletter, and the first for 2024.

I would like to start off by wishing you all success and good fortune this Chinese Year of the Dragon.

Lunar New Year is an important and joyful time for so many here – a time steeped in culture and tradition – and no matter how you celebrate, I hope it was a period of happiness and prosperity for you and your families.

This Lunar New Year is particularly special, as not only is 2024 the Year of the Dragon, but Christmas Island has been commemorated by an Australia Post stamp in honour of our rich, dynamic and multicultural community.

As we enter this new year, I would like to welcome Amy Rossbach to my team in the Administrator's Office. Amy joins us as the new Office Manager, taking over the role from Linda Anticich who finished up in December. Amy has a wealth of local knowledge having previously lived on Christmas Island and, for the past three years, on Cocos (Keeling) Islands. I would also like to thank Linda for her support as I settled into my role and for her dedicated service to the Administration over many years.

I also welcome the acting head of the Indian Ocean Territories (IOT) Branch Adam Stankevicius to his role, who is with us until the return of Kim Forbes later in the year.

We are lucky here in the IOT that so many of our colleagues both on island and on the mainland share our passion and commitment for our region, and I know that Adam will bring not only his knowledge and expertise to the role, but his genuine desire to work with the community and our partners to secure the best outcomes for the IOT.

Earlier this month Adam made the trip over from Canberra to Christmas and Cocos Islands, and was able to meet with stakeholders and tour infrastructure and projects over the week. These face-to-face visits are vital to supporting community-led projects and policies – ensuring greater community engagement and input.

With January having flown past, we are looking ahead across the next few months, with a particular focus on some key announcements and projects around the future sustainability of our region.

Progress has been made on a Coastal Hazard Risk Management and Adaptation Plan for Cocos, with a final report expected to be delivered mid-year – you can read more on this in the newsletter – while the Australian Government is also supporting our future preparedness through expanding eligibility for the Disaster Ready Fund, with applications now open.

As a region vulnerable to natural hazards, we want to be as prepared as possible for future natural disasters, and I urge all of you to make sure you are ready in the event of a cyclone, coastal inundation or landslide. Make sure you are reviewing your storm preparedness safety plans, know where to go in the case of evacuation and know who to call in an emergency.

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

New Christmas Island Marine Rescue boat hits the water for the first time



The new Marine Rescue boat for Christmas Island was successfully launched earlier this month and is now set for final inspections before heading out to sea to undergo a more comprehensive round of testing and trials.

Once the boat has passed its trials, it will be shipped to the IOT where, after a schedule of training and commissioning, it will become an invaluable addition to Christmas Island's marine rescue capabilities.

Larger than the existing rescue vessel, the new boat has the most up-to-date instruments and equipment installed to support operations around Christmas Island.



CKI's Pulu Blan Madar announced as one of the best beaches in Australia

The "Best Australian Beaches" list is out for 2024 and this year Pulu Blan Madar has come in at number 5.

Tourism Australia's Beach Ambassador Brad Farmer AM, was the adjudicator of the annual top 10 list of beaches, which were chosen from the almost 12,000 contenders found across the mainland and external territories.

While Squeaky Beach in Victoria took out the number one spot, Mr Farmer noted the “mirage like magical appearance of rustling coconut palms seemingly floating on its flour-soft sand,” that makes Cocos one of the most beautiful locations in Australia, and the world.

Pulu Blan Madar is one of the Cocos (Keeling) Island’s natural wonders, and we are thrilled to see it recognised in this year’s list of best beaches.

Dolly Beach on Christmas Island also received an honourable mention, showcasing the extraordinary beauty of our region.

A list of the ‘top ten’ Australian Beaches for 2024 is below:

1. Squeaky Beach, Victoria
2. The Farm, NSW
3. Cockle Creek, Tasmania
4. Madfish Bay, Western Australia
- 5. Pulu Blan Madar Island, Cocos (Keeling) Islands**
6. Cylinder Beach, Queensland
7. Lagoon Beach, NSW
8. Long Beach, South Australia
9. Cow Bay, Qld
10. Casuarina Beach, Northern Territory



Pulu Blan Madar’s crystal-clear waters are mesmerising. (Image: Jaxon Roberts)

**Update on the Cocos (Keeling) Islands
Coastal Hazards Risk Management and**

Adaptation Plan

The Australian Government is partnering with the Western Australian Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage (DPLH) and the Shire of Cocos (Keeling) Islands (CKI) to develop a Coastal Hazard Risk Management and Adaptation Plan (CHRMAP) for CKI.

Funded by the Australian Government, the CHRMAP will help understand how CKI's coastlines will be affected by sea-level rises, including coastal erosion and inundation, over a 100-year timeframe.

The Government has undertaken extensive community engagement on CKI, with residents providing information about how they value and use the coastline, which is helping inform options being developed to manage future coastal risks. I would like to thank everyone who participated in these sessions in 2022 and 2023, and note that there will be further community consultation in the future as we implement the next steps in the CHRMAP process.

DPLH is currently developing the CHRMAP report, which is expected to be completed in mid-2024. This is a very complex piece of work, and it is important to take the time to get it right. Once the CHRMAP is completed, it will support government and private sector decision-making, including future infrastructure planning and investments on CKI, and the management of any future hazards to keep the community and environment safe into the future.

All three tiers of government share a commitment to addressing the challenges of coastal hazards currently impacting the community. I will keep the community updated on the progress of the CHRMAP as more information becomes available.

Community updated on the Cocos runway project



[Download PDF \(11.4MB Dropbox link\) to view enlarged full size document.](#)

The Department of Defence returned to the Cocos (Keeling) Islands early in February, to update the local community, businesses and other stakeholders on the runway project.

The project will upgrade the airfield at CKI to meet Defence's capability requirements and improve overall airfield safety for all aircraft. It will involve strengthening and widening the runway and taxiways, strengthening and reconfiguring the existing apron, refurbishment of lighting, stormwater drainage works, a 150m extension of the runway and removal of legacy Defence waste from CKI.

In a range of meetings, including three community information sessions across Home and West Islands, Defence and its lead contractor Fulton Hogan outlined the scope of the project and its stages to the community. They also provided information on employment and training opportunities and opportunities for local businesses to bid to support the project. In the community sessions, questions about impacts to the community, local economy and environmental protection were addressed.

Fulton Hogan will be sub-contracting a number of works packages throughout the project, with employment opportunities available through subcontractors.

With the finishing touches to the design being finalised in coming months, work on CKI is expected to commence in mid-2024 with the Material Offloading Facility (MOF). This will be followed by work on the construction camp in the second half of 2024. Both are anticipated to be completed early in 2025, with runway works from mid-2025 to mid to late 2027.

There will be further on-island engagement once the subcontractor for the MOF is in place, including more information on local opportunities related to that package of works.

Make your innovative idea a reality with the Active Australia Innovation Challenge

Indian Ocean Territories (IOT) residents have the opportunity to turn their bright ideas for keeping our communities active and healthy into reality, with grants up to the value of \$50,000 available through the Heart Foundation's Active Australia Innovation Challenge.

Heart disease is the leading cause of deaths across Australia, with physical inactivity a key risk factor for developing a serious and potentially fatal heart condition – which is why it is so important that we are all staying physically active at all stages of life.



The Active Australia Innovation Challenge provides an opportunity for schools, councils, community groups and organisations to find new and innovative ways to encourage communities to get more active and live a healthier lifestyle.

If you meet the criteria and have an exciting idea for helping people at risk of chronic disease to get fit and healthy, you are encouraged to apply through The Heart Foundation's website, with applications open now until 1 March 2024.

You can read more about the grant program, including the Application Guide at: [Active Australia Innovation Challenge | Heart Foundation website](#).

Inspire Inclusion: International Women's Day 2024

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

Every year, on 8 March, we come together to celebrate International Women's Day (IWD), to commemorate and honour the achievements of women across our community, whether social, political, economic, cultural or domestic.

This IWD, the theme is 'Inspire Inclusion', focusing on inspiring others to understand and value women's inclusion, to create a sense of belonging, relevance, and empowerment.

Here in the Indian Ocean Territories (IOT), women have long played an important and active role in our economy, but we know that more work needs to be done to ensure women and girls are achieving equal participation in the economy.

As Chair of the IOT Regional Development Organisation, as well as a former councillor and board member for several associations and manager in some of Christmas Island's largest industry organisations, I am particularly passionate about supporting local women and girls to learn, earn and lead.

If you would like to participate in this year's International Women's Day, there will be events held across our region. On Christmas Island, this includes an evening event on 7 March with the IOT Health Service which will profile available services to women, as well as a networking breakfast supported by PRL the following morning. On Cocos, there will be a special event supported by the Shire at the Cyclone Shelter on Home Island on the afternoon and evening of 8 March.

We hope to see many of you there, to celebrate and recognise the important role that women have and continue to play in our region's future.



Historic 'Z' Plates on display



In a blast from the past, a set of Commonwealth of Australia 'Z' plates were recently located by the Christmas Island Motor Vehicle Registry.

The 'C of A' black-on-white background plates with a red 'Z' prefix were introduced in 1951-1952 for use by Commonwealth Government departments throughout Australia, so they could be distinguished from state and territory plates.

In 2000, the Commonwealth Vehicle Registry closed, and each state and territory became responsible for the issue of Australian Government number plates.

Each state and territory replaced 'C of A' with their state initials, except for the Northern Territory who still uses 'C of A'.

With approval from the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications

and the Arts, the plates are now on display in two locations.

One plate can be viewed on Christmas Island at the museum in Tai Jin House here on Christmas Island, the other is on display at the Motor Museum of Western Australia.



Community Bulletins



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



Community Bulletin

INDIAN OCEAN TERRITORIES

- [Improving access to Disaster Ready funding for the Indian Ocean Territories](#)
- [Public Holiday 2024 change & Proclamation Notice](#)
- [D05/2024 Community Bulletin – CI school bus service operation confirmed](#)
- [D03-2024 Community Bulletin – New IOT Facebook page](#)
- [D02-2024 Community Bulletin – CI Recreation Centre management](#)

Christmas Island Outdoor Cinema



Late changes will be posted on the Roundabout
Blackboard and [Facebook](#).

Adults \$ 5.00

School aged children 3 to 17 years old \$2.00



Migration (G)

SATURDAY - 17 February, 7.30pm

A family of ducks try to convince their overprotective father to go on the vacation of a lifetime.

Here is a list of potential movies. If you would like to sponsor one, get in touch.

Available March/April (ish):

- Anyone but you (RomCom)
- Madame web (Marvel superheroes)
- Drive away dolls (Road tripping)
- Dune part II (Sci fi)
- Elio (Disney)

Available May / June-July (ish):

- Ghostbusters Frozen Empire
- Snow white
- Kung fu panda 4
- Civil war
- Spy x family code white (Manga)
- The fall guy
- Kingdom of planet of the apes
- Furiosa (a mad Max saga)
- Ballerina (John Wick spin off)

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.)

Volunteers needed for projection, bucket collection and to assist on the Executive Committee.

To become part of this exciting club or enquire about sponsorship, please Email:

cioutdoorcinema@gmail.com

or accounts@cinema.org.cx

Rating information provided by

<http://www.classification.gov.au>.

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 ***

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

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

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