



Norfolk Island | Issue no. 35 | 12 March 2026

Administrator's update



2026 is now in full swing! As you will read in this newsletter, we have had a terrific Australia Day along with plenty of rain and with just a month to go - hopefully no cyclones. The NIGC had its first meeting of the year on 23 February, and it was great to welcome Chelsea Evans back. Thank you to Anita French for stepping in as Chelsea's proxy while she was away. I mentioned in my last newsletter that I hoped to share our recommendations on the proposed Assembly Ordinance and financial model with the community. While the committee has done a huge amount of work on both, more is required, so that when the recommendations are released, we can explain how key elements will work in practice. I apologise for the delay in sharing information and remain committed to receiving community feedback.

While we've had a relatively calm summer, there have been tragic incidents in the water. In response, short-term measures have been put in place to help ensure both visitors and the local community understand that, despite our beautiful swimming spots, hazards can be present.

Alongside these immediate steps, work is under way to improve signage and explore longer-term safety measures to support safer experiences around the island's coastline.

Australia Day on Norfolk Island: Honouring community, resilience and unity

This Australia Day, the Norfolk Island community came together to celebrate the rich diversity, shared heritage and enduring values that define our island home.

Echoing Minister Kristy McBain's address message, the celebration highlighted the island's remarkable history and deep sense of care that guides our community.

A highlight of the day was the presentation of the Australia Day Awards, recognising individuals whose quiet contributions uplift and inspire. The recipients embody the Norfolk Island spirit – selfless, dedicated and deeply connected to community.

As we celebrated their achievements, we also acknowledged the many everyday acts of service that often go unseen but make an extraordinary difference to island life.

As we look ahead, the community is encouraged to carry forward the values that unite us, continuing to work together toward a strong and vibrant future for Norfolk Island.

To all award recipients, warm congratulations – and to the entire community, thank you for making this celebration truly meaningful.



Celebrating a special citizenship milestone

Although this year's Australia Day program did not include a formal Citizenship Ceremony, a significant and joyful milestone was marked within the Office of the Administrator. Ashleigh Ross was officially welcomed as a full member of the Australian community, completing the final step in her journey to citizenship.

Colleagues gathered to celebrate the occasion, recognising the skills, aspirations and commitment Ashleigh brings to both Norfolk Island and the nation.

Ashleigh's achievement was warmly acknowledged as both a personal triumph and a valued addition to the fabric of the Norfolk Island community – a moment of pride shared by all who work alongside her.



Office of the Administrator

New Military Barracks, Kingston, Norfolk Island 2899

Celebrating local apprentices and their achievements

Norfolk Island recently celebrated four young apprentices who have completed their vocational qualifications. Blake Schmitz and Matthew McConnell achieved their Certificate III in Heavy Vehicle Mechanical, while Croydon Snell and Kayden Judd completed their Certificate III in Retail Butchery.

The presentation at Government House brought together families, employers and community members to recognise the hard work and commitment behind these achievements. These qualifications were made possible through the Queensland Government program, supported by the Australian Government, which enables islanders to train locally and build skills that strengthen the community.

Local vocational training continues to play an important role in supporting employers and growing a skilled workforce on the island. Providers such as Asuria, through the VET Financial Assistance Initiative, ensure learners have access to the support they need.

Special thanks were extended to parents, employers and the staff of Norfolk Island Central School for their guidance and encouragement. Their support helps make these opportunities — and successes — possible. These accomplishments reflect a positive future for Norfolk Island, with motivated young people contributing to a strong and capable local workforce.



Get Ready for the 2026 Census

The 2026 Census will take place on 11 August and the Australian Bureau of Statistics is beginning local engagement to make sure Norfolk Island is well supported. The ABS are also hiring a Field Manager and four Field Officers, providing valuable short-term job opportunities for locals.

The last Census in 2021 recorded 2,188 residents, including 319 people with Norfolk Island ancestry – a reminder of how important accurate data is for planning services and shaping the island's future.

Everyone on Norfolk Island is encouraged to take part and help build a clear picture of our community. To learn more about the local Census jobs and how to apply, visit census.abs.gov.au/jobs

Welcoming our new Director of Norfolk Island Operations

Welcome to Allison Rossetto, the new Director of Norfolk Island Operations. Allison brings a wealth of experience and a strong commitment to working closely with the community. Her passion for collaboration will be invaluable in this important role. Be sure to stop and say hello if you see her and her dog out and about on island.

Water safety reminder

With warm weather and busy beaches, it's a good time to pause and think about water safety. Whether you're swimming, boating or fishing, please take extra care around the water and look out for those around you – particularly tourists who may not be aware of local conditions.

Simple steps make a big difference: swim with others when possible, check conditions before heading out, avoid alcohol when in or near the water and always keep a close eye on children. If you're boating or using watercraft, remember to wear a lifejacket and ensure your equipment is in good condition.

Water safety is a shared community responsibility. By staying alert and making sensible choices, we can all enjoy Norfolk's beautiful coastline safely and help others to do the same.

Building connections in the Pacific: a visit to Tonga

During a recent personal visit to Tonga, I made a courtesy call to the Australian High Commission in Nuku'alofa and met with Deputy High Commissioner Alison Gow. The discussion covered a range of shared interests, with governance, and the shared environmental issues facing Pacific communities at the forefront. Both of us reflected on the close ties our respective communities have to our island homes and the importance of cooperation in addressing the challenges we face. The opportunity to connect informally during my travels enhances the understanding of Norfolk Island in the Pacific. The visit underscored the ongoing commitment to collaboration across Australia's Pacific networks, particularly around environmental and governance challenges facing island communities.

