

From: s22(1)(a)(ii)
To: s22(1)(a)(ii)
Cc: [NorfolkIslandGovernance](#)
Subject: FW: Letter from the Council of Elders [SEC=OFFICIAL]
Date: Thursday, 20 November 2025 8:10:39 AM
Attachments: [noname](#)
[CoE to NIGC - Chris & Chelsea - 14 Nov 2025.pdf](#)
[Government-of-Norfolk-Island-Elections-FRAMEWORK-Nov-25.pdf](#)
[Media-Release-GNI-17-Nov-25.pdf](#)

OFFICIAL

FYI

OFFICIAL

From: s22(1)(a)(ii) @infrastructure.gov.au>
Sent: 20 November 2025 07:57
To: s22(1)(a)(ii) @infrastructure.gov.au>; DONOVAN, Kylie
<Kylie.DONOVAN@infrastructure.gov.au>; Forbes, Kim <Kim.Forbes@infrastructure.gov.au>
Subject: Fw: Letter from the Council of Elders [SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

FYI

Kind regards

s22(1)
s22(1)(a)(ii)

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From: s22(1)(a)(ii) @infrastructure.gov.au>
Sent: Thursday, November 20, 2025 08:11
To: s22(1)(a)(ii) @infrastructure.gov.au>
Subject: Fw: Letter from the Council of Elders [SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

Kind regards

s22(1)
s22(1)(a)(ii)

Released under the Freedom of Information Act 1982 by the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications, Sport and the Arts

s22(1)(a)(ii)

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From: Chelsea Evans <chelsea497@gmail.com>**Sent:** Wednesday, 19 November 2025 08:22**To:** s22(1)(a)(ii) <[s22\(1\)\(a\)\(ii\)@infrastructure.gov.au](mailto:s22(1)(a)(ii)@infrastructure.gov.au)>; Forbes, Kim <Kim.Forbes@infrastructure.gov.au>; Rachel Welch <Rachel.Welch@premiers.qld.gov.au>; Chris Magri <chrisni2899@gmail.com>**Subject:** Fwd: Letter from the Council of Elders

Dear Members,

Please see the email below received last night from the Council of Elders.

Happy to discuss today or tomorrow.

See yorlye shortly.

Chelsea and Chris

Chelsea Evans

Aus +61 s22(1)(a)(ii)

Nlk +6723 50432

----- Forwarded message -----

From: President - CoE <president@nicouncilofelders.org>**Date:** Tue, 18 Nov 2025 at 9:43 pm**Subject:** Letter from the Council of Elders**To:** <chelsea497@gmail.com>, <chrisni2899@gmail.com>, Secretary - CoE <secretary@nicouncilofelders.org>

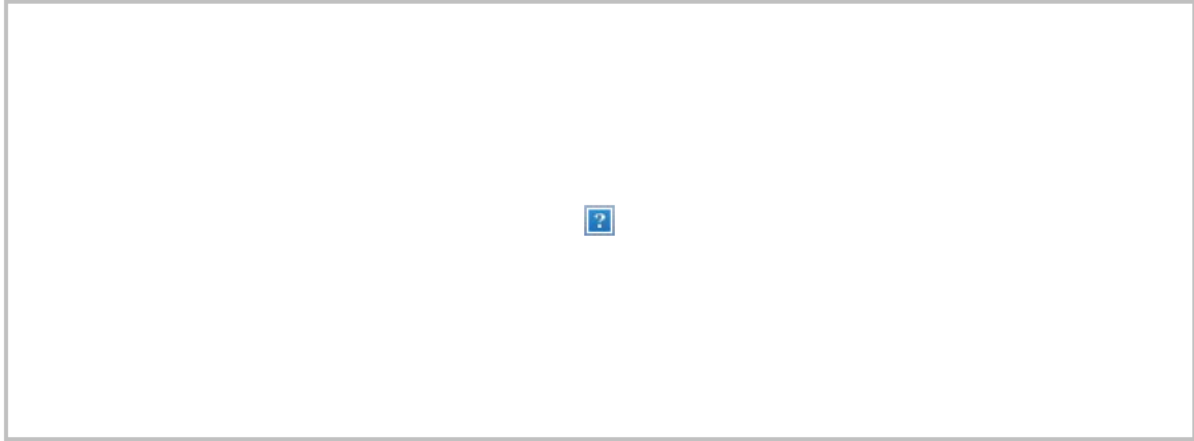
Dear Chelsea and Chris,

It is with great respect that I am sending this letter and accompanying documents to you both.

With warm regards,
s47F and the Council of Elders

Att. Letter, GNI Framework, Media Release

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Released under the Freedom of Information Act 1982 by the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications, Sport and the Arts

NORFOLK ISLAND COUNCIL OF ELDERS

INASMUCH

14 November 2025

by email: chelsea497@gmail.com
chrisni2899@gmail.com

Dear Chris and Chelsea,

Re: Council of Elders support to reaffirm the Government of Norfolk Island pathway

Our sincere thanks to you both for your time meeting with us over the past few weeks to discuss your work within the Norfolk Island Governance Committee (NIGC), and the associated challenges.

We recognise that the NIGC was established with genuine intent and that you have contributed significant time and effort on behalf of the community. Your work, and the integrity with which you have carried it out, is deeply respected by this and the former Council of Elders.

As we discussed, the Council of Elders have spent considerable time reflecting on the direction of the governance process, the outcome of the UN Human Rights Committee communication, and the Australian Government's recent decision to extend the period of external administration on Norfolk Island for another twelve months. After evaluating these developments in the context of our community's history, legal foundations, and expressed aspirations, the Elders resolved that we must now take a further step that aligns directly with the rights of the Norfolk Island people.

We have therefore determined to support the reinstatement of the Government of Norfolk Island under the 1838 Pitcairn Constitution — the original constitutional compact between the Pitcairn people and the Crown, that has never been lawfully revoked. This step is not intended to conflict with the work you continue within the NIGC, nor does it diminish the commitment you have both shown. Rather, it reflects the Council of Elders' responsibility to uphold the rights, continuity, and constitutional identity of the Norfolk Island people, which we believe cannot be realised through the current NIGC framework.

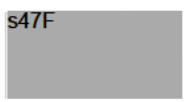
Please know that the Council of Elders makes this decision with full respect for your roles and without expectation that you alter your own positions. You are elected representatives carrying out duties entrusted to you, and we recognise the integrity of that responsibility.

The path we are now taking is one that is seen as necessary to safeguard the rights of the Indigenous Pitcairn-descended community and to provide the broader Norfolk Island community with a lawful and representative avenue forward. We remain committed to open communication, mutual respect, and a cooperative relationship with you both as we proceed.

Thank you both for your dedication to the community, and your engagement with the Council of Elders. We look forward to continued dialogue and shared respect as Norfolk Island navigates this important moment in its history. Attached are advance copies of the Media Release and Election information to be published. Please feel free to share this information with NIGC members should you wish to do so.

With our best wishes,

s47F



s47F



President





For the People

Elections for the Government of Norfolk Island

1st January 2026

The Norfolk Island Council of Elders provides the following information regarding the upcoming elections for the Government of Norfolk Island (GNI).

The Council of Elders recognises the Pitcairn Island Constitution of 1838—hereafter referred to as our Constitution—drafted by the Pitcairn Islanders who settled Norfolk Island in 1856 as the original constitution of Norfolk Island. This Constitution, recognised by the British Crown - and in fact one of the first democratically elected constitutions in the British empire - remains a legitimate foundation to advance our distinct constitutional status & democratic rights, and preserve our cultural identity.

In honour of the voting rights granted to our ancestral mothers in 1838, the Council of Elders strongly encourages all eligible women to participate in the election.

Election Day: 1 January 2026

On this date, a single election will be held to determine our representatives who form the Government of Norfolk Island.

The Council of Elders will oversee the election process to uphold the provisions of our constitution, and officially sanction the elected government once determined.

The election process

All eligible residents of Norfolk Island are invited to:

- Stand for election to the Government of Norfolk Island; and/or
- Vote in person at the designated polling station.

Each eligible voter holds two votes to be cast separately in the election of two elected positions.

The candidate receiving the highest number of votes shall be elected Magistrate.

The Government of Norfolk Island shall comprise:

- The Magistrate;
- The candidate with the second-highest vote count; and
- One additional eligible member appointed by the Magistrate.

Eligibility Criteria

Candidates: to accept nomination for election you must be over the age of 18 and a native-born Norfolk Islander, which means of Pitcairn descent and born on Norfolk Island.

Voting: to be eligible to vote you shall have attained the age of 18 years and must be a native born on the Island, male or female, or have resided 5 years on the Island.

Pre-qualification of eligibility: to expediate your voting on election day, please email Terence Grube JP to arrange a pre-qualification appointment (v.a@nicouncilofelders.org).

To vote you must attend in person at the publicly declared polling station.

Post-Election Priorities

The Council of Elders will be looking to the newly elected Government to:

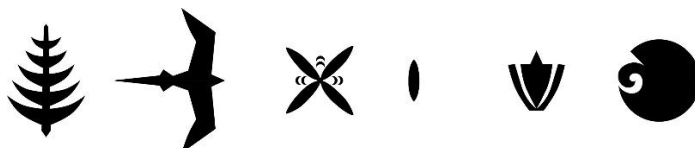
- rebuild cohesion across the Norfolk Island community;
- modernise our 1838 Constitution and define a clear framework that reflects today's diverse community;
- enhance arrangements with Australia to better serve Norfolk's needs for ongoing provision of community services;
- pursue self-determination for the Norfolk Island community;
- establish and maintain transparent communication channels; and
- develop sustainable revenue-generation strategies.

The importance of the Government of Norfolk Island

This election marks a return to the path forged by our ancestors, honouring their legacy and securing our voice in determining our future.

By this election, we reclaim our authority and reaffirm our own narrative that makes Norfolk Island unique. Creating a community-led pathway to self-governance is the most effective way to restore dignity, unity, and agency for Norfolk Island's people.

We are the next chapter in Norfolk Island's history. Let us come together to build a future that is proudly Norfolk.



Frequently asked Question and Answers

Elections for the Government of Norfolk Island — Q&A

➤ Legal Foundations

Q: What gives us the legal right to form a government?

A: International law does. Article 1 of the United Nations Charter and key human rights treaties affirm that all peoples have the right to freely choose how they're governed. Norfolk Island's community is exercising that right through lawful, peaceful elections.

We're also restoring the 1838 Constitution—created on Pitcairn Island and brought to Norfolk Island by the community. It was formally recognised by colonial administrators. It provides for a locally elected government and has never been repealed. It remains a valid foundation for self-government.

This will be a significant time in our history where Norfolk Islanders will genuinely shape our future with our consent after generations of imposed governance. It's a turning point—lawful, principled, and community-led.

It is also a clear message to the Australian Government that Norfolk Island's people are ready to lead, to govern responsibly, and to be heard. We are not asking for permission—we are exercising our right.

Q: Why now?

A: Because imposed governance since 2015 hasn't worked. It lacks transparency, accountability, and cultural legitimacy and has been a financial disaster. The proposed “bespoke” Norfolk Island Assembly doesn't meet the community mandate or expectations.

The Government of Norfolk Island election is a step forward—real, responsible, and rooted in law.

Q: Isn't the 1838 Constitution outdated or overridden?

A: No. Later laws didn't cancel it. It remains intact. We are not inventing something new—we're restoring what is already ours.

Q: Is this recognised by Australia or other governments?

A: Recognition is political. Legality is constitutional. Our right to self-government doesn't depend on outside approval. That said, we welcome respectful dialogue and cooperation.

Q: Is this symbolic or real?

A: It is real. This is a lawful, community-led government—not a protest or a stunt. It is about reclaiming our future and restoring legitimate governance.

Q: Is this about independence?

A: This is about self-determination—the people's right to decide how we're governed. What comes next will be shaped by the community, not imposed from outside.

➤ Services & Continuity

Q: Will pensions, healthcare, and other services be affected?

A: It is not the intention of this process to interrupt existing community services. The Council of Elders looks to the elected Government of Norfolk Island to work cooperatively with service providers to achieve ongoing delivery of essential community services.

Q: Will this change how I interact with Centrelink, Medicare, or other agencies?

A: Community wellbeing including ongoing access to community services is a key priority for the Council of Elders. Over time, the Government of Norfolk Island may negotiate local enhancements or service agreements.

Q: Will taxes change?

A: The Council of Elders expects that any proposals to change the tax structure of Norfolk Island are subject to public consultation and democratic process.

Q: What is the role of the Norf'k Ailen Government (NAG)?

A: The Council of Elders acknowledges the efforts of the NAG. To maintain unity and progress, the Council of Elders believes that one election with a unified and mandated outcome is essential for Norfolk Island's future.

The Council of Elders will sanction the community elected Government of Norfolk Island members on 1st January 2026.

Q: Isn't the Governance Committee a representative voice for the Norfolk Island community?

A: The Governance Committee has not achieved the outcome that Norfolk Island intended. The reinstatement of the Government of Norfolk Island takes control of the outcomes needed for a self-determined future for Norfolk Island.

Q: What's the difference between the Governance Committee and the Government of Norfolk Island?

A: Our elected representatives on the Governance Committee have confirmed that their proposed Assembly will not advance Norfolk Islands right to self-determination or restore self-government. The Government of Norfolk Island, with an elected mandate from the people, provides us representative authority to address this retrogression.

Q: What's changing—and what's not?

A: What's changing is who gets to shape the future, and how.

Q: How will the Government of Norfolk Island be funded?

A: Norfolk Island has a long history of managing its own affairs. The Commonwealth Grants Commission has confirmed that we are politically and financially more self-sufficient than Australian Territories and most Australian States

Looking ahead, Norfolk Island could pursue treaty and free association arrangements with Australia or other international partners. There are proven models used across the Pacific and globally that allow for stable service delivery while affirming the right to self-govern.

This is not about haste. It is about principled negotiation, practical planning, and genuine consent. The Government of Norfolk Island is empowered to ensure that Norfolk Island's future is shaped by its people—with dignity, clarity, and care.

➤ Election & Participation

Q: How do I prove I am eligible?

A: Evidence required to stand for election as a candidate

- (i) over the age of 18 years as demonstrated through a government-issued document showing date of birth,
- (ii) native born as demonstrated through a government-issued document showing place of birth as Norfolk Island or Pitcairn Islands, and
- (iii) holds a letter from the current family representative in the Council of Elders to confirm eligibility as a Pitcairn descendant.

Evidence required to vote

- (i) over the age of 18 years as demonstrated through a government-issued document showing date of birth,
- (ii) Native born as demonstrated through a government-issued document showing place of birth as Norfolk Island or Pitcairn Island, and
- (iii) holds a letter from the current family representative in the Council of Elders to confirm eligibility as a Pitcairn descendant, or
- (iv) ordinarily resident of Norfolk Island for a period of five years, as able to be demonstrated through official documentation if so required.

A person is *ordinarily resident* of Norfolk Island if:

- their usual home is on Norfolk Island, or
- Norfolk Island is their permanent abode, even if they are temporarily absent.

Remember:

- You must have lived on Norfolk Island for a minimum of five years and
- You must attend in person to vote.

Q: Who can vote in the Government of Norfolk Island election on 1st January 2026?

A: Under the 1838 Constitution, voting rights are granted to people aged 18 and over who are:

- natives of Pitcairn descent, born on Norfolk Island,
- non-native residents who have lived on Norfolk Island for at least five years.

Q: Will eligibility to vote in future elections change?

A: It may. After this election, the Council of Elders encourages the Government of Norfolk Island to modernise the constitution to reflect contemporary representative practice. Your voice will help shape the future.

Q: What happens on Election Day?

A: Here is a preliminary schedule of events for 1st January 2026

- In the weeks presiding the election, eligible candidates and voters are encouraged to organise evidence to demonstrate eligibility to participate in the 1st January 2026 elections;
- **7 am-10 am:** eligible candidates are invited to register with the presiding Council of Elders representative. During this time, the Council of Elders representatives will endorse that the candidates satisfy the eligibility criteria to stand for election;
- **10am:** the Council of Elders will announce the nominated candidates list;
- **10.30 am-12 pm:** nominated candidates are required to be at the polling station and available to answer questions from the Norfolk Island community. Voters must finalise eligibility to vote;
- **12 pm-6.00 pm:** – polling stations are open for voting by eligible community members;
- **6 pm:** polling stations close and counting of votes commences under the steward of the Council of Elders. The presiding Elder will declare the result of the election as soon as votes have been counted and separately checked to confirm the result.

➤ Vision & Values

Q: Why does this election matter?

A: Because our story has come full circle. The 1838 Constitution gave us one of the world's first democratic voices — and that voice is speaking again. After generations of imposed governance, we are reclaiming our right to decide, respectfully and lawfully, how Norfolk Island will be governed. This is not rebellion; it's renewal — a peaceful return to dignity, community, and self-belief.

Q: What kind of government are we building?

A: A government born from the people — transparent, respectful, and guided by our shared values.

Q: What values guide this new chapter?

A: Unity: Standing together as one community, not divided by imposed changes.
Respect: Honouring our heritage, our place, our diversity, and our achievements.
Integrity: Acting with honesty, humility, and accountability in public life.
Self-determination: Taking responsibility for our choices and our future.
Inclusion: Ensuring every voice is heard and valued.

These are the principles that have shaped who we are and our pride and love for Norfolk Island.

Q: How do we carry these values forward?

A: The world will see who we are through how we lead ourselves. This is our moment to show that small nations can do great things when guided by shared vision and enduring values.

Q: What does the Government of Norfolk Island mean for Norfolk Island's future?

A: It means decisions made with local insight, cultural respect, and legal integrity. It means representative government that understands and resonates, not one that disregards or divides.

Q: What if I'm uncertain?

A: If you feel conflicted, you are not alone. This is not about choosing one side over another—it is about coming together. Ask questions, attend community sessions, listen to others' experiences. Your voice and your doubts both matter. Democracy grows stronger when every person willingly participates and contributes to making a fairer and brighter future for us all.

Q: Who can I contact if I have any questions?

A: Please email any questions to the Visions Assembly, a committee of the Council of Elders, at v.a@nicouncilofelders.org.



MEDIA RELEASE

Council of Elders Announces Community-Led Pathway to Reaffirm the Government of Norfolk Island

The Norfolk Island Council of Elders today confirmed its support for reaffirming the Government of Norfolk Island under the 1838 Pitcairn Constitution — the original agreement between the Pitcairn people and the Crown, and a continuing expression of the Norfolk Island people's right to self-determination. This decision comes after many years of patient, good-faith engagement with outside processes.

To take this step fairly and transparently, the Council of Elders will facilitate a community-led election on **1 January 2026**. This process belongs to the whole community — Pitcairn descendants and long-term residents alike — and provides an opportunity to rebuild unity, trust, and a strong mandate for the island's future.

Reaffirming the Government of Norfolk Island today is not about division or looking backwards. It is about moving forward with clarity, confidence, and respect for our heritage. It offers a constructive pathway at a time when other avenues have reached their limits.

This next step is about bringing Norfolk Island together. It is about reaffirming our own voice, upholding the legacy of our ancestors, and ensuring that no external authority determines our rights for us. The Council of Elders remains committed to working respectfully and constructively with the Australian Government throughout this process.

This is a “For the People” moment — a peaceful, lawful return to representative government. The Council of Elders invites the whole community to participate fully, stand together, and help shape the next chapter of Norfolk Island's story with unity, dignity, and pride.

The Council of Elders will continue to provide information and support to help the community prepare for the 1 January 2026 election. Please watch for updates in the newspapers and online

For further information please contact the Visions Assembly at: v.a@nicouncilofelders.org

Norfolk Island Council of Elders
16 November 2025

Ends

Background Information

The UN Human Rights Committee process, despite much hope and effort, has not delivered the remedies our people sought. Likewise, while the Norfolk Island Governance Committee (NIGC) was established with sincere intent, its model will not restore the level of representative authority or self-governing rights the people of Norfolk Island are entitled to. As Geoffrey Robertson KC noted on 22 November 2024, *“It has become abundantly clear that the NIGC has been established merely to perform a local governance mandate... against the clear wishes of the Norfolk Islanders, who continue to be denied the right to exercise their democratic voice.”*

The Australian Government's recent decision to extend the administration of the Norfolk Island Regional Council for another twelve months compounds a prolonged period without democratically elected local representation. This continued imposition is deeply felt by a community that did not design — and has never consented to — a governance structure that does not reflect its identity or its lawful constitutional position.

For decades, our community has repeatedly been told that its rights, aspirations, and governance model sit “out of scope.” Yet throughout all the setbacks and delays, one simple truth has remained: Norfolk Island already has a lawful constitutional foundation that has never been extinguished. The 1838 Pitcairn Constitution — written by our ancestors and approved by the Crown — came with the Pitcairn people in 1856 and has remained valid ever since. It affirms our right to govern our own affairs and established one of the earliest democratic systems in the Pacific, well before modern systems arrived.

When Queen Victoria declared Norfolk Island a “distinct and separate settlement,” she confirmed that the Pitcairn people's laws, customs, and way of governing would continue here. This was a promise made to our forebears and intended to last.

Norfolk Island community groups and the Visions Assembly have worked tirelessly to keep the island's rights, history, and aspirations alive. Their efforts have helped ensure that self-determination remains at the heart of our public conversation and that the community's voice has never fallen silent.

The Council of Elders acknowledges the commitment of those Norfolk Islanders who continue to serve on the NIGC. Their dedication is appreciated. However, the Council of Elders cannot endorse any process that limits or redefines the rights of the Norfolk Island people. Our responsibility is to uphold our constitutional identity and ensure that the community remains at the centre of all decisions affecting its future.



s22(1)(a)(ii) 20/11/2025 12:14

s22(1)(a)(ii)

Hey so Chris specifically thanked me for all you guys' work. Just passing it on. They had a very rough community meeting last night. See the COE letter I emailed around earlier.

20/11/2025 12:18

I feel for him and Chelsea having to do even more meetings with even more not-necessarily-onside stakeholders after the full day of workshop yesterday.

Are we going to be briefing the Minister about the CoE election stuff?

s22(1)(a)(ii) 20/11/2025 12:37

s22(1)(a)(ii)

I've punted to s22(1) so we will work out a comms approach.

s22(1)(a)(ii) 20/11/2025 12:48

s22(1)(a)(ii)

I think we definitely need to put it into a For Info brief in PDMS. I'd like that to be in the system.

s22(1)(a)(ii) 20/11/2025 12:50

s22(1)(a)(ii)

Can you reach out to s22(1)?

I've just been messaging with her & she asked about TPs. I said we'd do a ForInfo brief.



s22(1)(a)(ii) 20/11/2025 12:58

s22(1)(a)(ii)

Will do

s22(1)(a)(ii) 20/11/2025 13:02

s22(1)(a)(ii)

OK so I just spoke to KF, she said yes please to back pocket TPs for Senate Estimates, which she'll then provide to the MO. Can we do another BPB at this point?

s22(1)(a)(ii) 20/11/2025 13:11

s22(1)(a)(ii)

This FAQ is wild

s22(1)(a)(ii) 20/11/2025 13:11

This FAQ is wild

s22(1)(a)(ii) 20/11/2025 13:12

Is this real? yes it is.

Well, even if we can't put it in a real BPB, we can give her a page of notes.

s22(1)(a)(ii) 20/11/2025 13:35

The **Government of Norfolk Island** shall comprise:

- The Magistrate;
- The candidate with the second-highest vote count; and
- One additional eligible member appointed by the Magistrate

The Magistrate gets to bring a friend!?

They talk about the importance of representative democracy and one third of their government is elected by one person

20/11/2025 13:36

Also, only 3 people. Not 5 (or 7).

And we already ran a process to elect 3 people. It 'has not achieved the outcome that Norfolk Island intended.'

From: s22(1)(a)(ii)
To: s22(1)(a)(ii)
Cc: [NorfolkIslandGovernance](#)
Subject: RE: Letter from the Council of Elders [SEC=OFFICIAL]
Date: Thursday, 20 November 2025 8:51:08 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
[image002.png](#)

OFFICIAL

Thanks s22(1)(a)(ii).

I have created a draft brief MS25-002992. s22(1)(a)(ii), I have allocated to you as I am on leave tomorrow.

Best

s22(1)(a)

OFFICIAL

From: s22(1)(a)(ii) @infrastructure.gov.au>
Sent: 20 November 2025 15:35
To: s22(1)(a)(ii) @infrastructure.gov.au>; s22(1)(a)(ii) @infrastructure.gov.au>; s22(1)(a)(ii) @infrastructure.gov.au>; s22(1)(a)(ii) @infrastructure.gov.au>; s22(1)(a)(ii) @infrastructure.gov.au>
Cc: NorfolkIslandGovernance s22(1)(a)(ii) @infrastructure.gov.au>
Subject: RE: Letter from the Council of Elders [SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

Hi all – here's some TPs you may like to use as a draft. Don't know if we want a line acknowledging CoE as a key stakeholder on NI and one we engage with on a range of issues, or not, as that may add weight to this proposal. May be better to keep straight bat. These are based on NAG's points, but pared back

If asked for comment on the CoE plan to hold elections for an alternative Norfolk Island government:

- We are aware of the Council of Elders proposal.
- There is no basis in law for establishment of an alternative government body and its proposed positions.
- We would be concerned if the establishment of such a community body caused confusion for Norfolk Island residents and visitors, particularly about access to essential services and programs.
- The Australian Government and this department remain focused on our positive and ongoing work with the broader Norfolk Island community to enhance local decision-making and civic representation, including through the Norfolk Island Governance Committee and its democratically elected community representatives.
- This important work includes responding to the recommendations in the Joint

Standing Committee on the National Capital and External Territories report on Norfolk Island governance, 'Restoring Democracy'.

If asked

About Australia's authority over NI:

- Norfolk Island is an integral part of the Commonwealth of Australia, and has been since it was accepted by the Commonwealth as a territory under s122 of the Australian Constitution on 1 July 1914.

s22(1)(a)(ii)

Director Communications and Future of CKI Taskforce

Territories Division

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Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications, Sport and the Arts
CONNECTING AUSTRALIANS • ENRICHING COMMUNITIES • EMPOWERING REGIONS

infrastructure.gov.au

*I would like to acknowledge the traditional custodians of this land on which we meet, work and live.
I recognise and respect their continuing connection to the land, waters and communities.
I pay my respects to Elders past and present and to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders.*

OFFICIAL

From: s22(1)(a)(ii) @infrastructure.gov.au
Sent: 20 November 2025 05:11
To: s22(1)(a)(ii) @infrastructure.gov.au; s22(1)(a)(ii) @infrastructure.gov.au; s22(1)(a)(ii) @infrastructure.gov.au; s22(1)(a)(ii) @infrastructure.gov.au
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Sent: Wednesday, 19 November 2025 08:22

To: s22(1)(a)(ii) [@infrastructure.gov.au](mailto:s22(1)(a)(ii)@infrastructure.gov.au); Forbes, Kim

<Kim.Forbes@infrastructure.gov.au>; Rachel Welch <Rachel.Welch@premiers.qld.gov.au>; Chris Magri

<chrisni2899@gmail.com>

Subject: Fwd: Letter from the Council of Elders

Dear Members,

Please see the email below received last night from the Council of Elders.

Happy to discuss today or tomorrow.
See you shortly.

Chelsea and Chris

Chelsea Evans
Aus +61 s22(1)(a)(ii)
Nlk +6723 50432

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **President - CoE** <president@nicouncilofelders.org>
Date: Tue, 18 Nov 2025 at 9:43 pm
Subject: Letter from the Council of Elders
To: <chelsea497@gmail.com>, <chrisni2899@gmail.com>, Secretary - CoE
<secretary@nicouncilofelders.org>

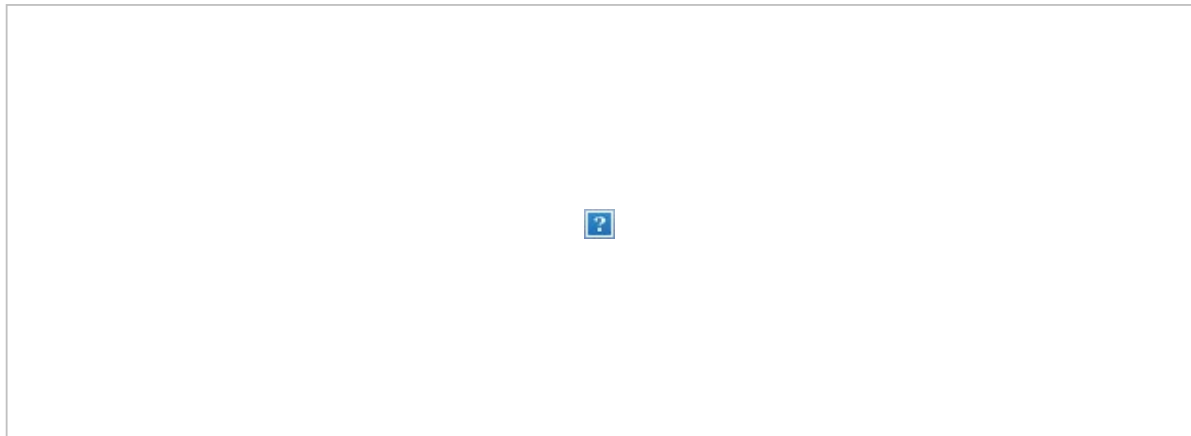
Dear Chelsea and Chris,

It is with great respect that I am sending this letter and accompanying documents to you both.

With warm regards,
s47F and the Council of Elders

Att. Letter, GNI Framework, Media Release

--



OFFICIAL

OFFICIAL

From: [Forbes, Kim](#)
To: s22(1)(a)(ii); [DONOVAN, Kylie](#)
Cc: s22(1)(a)(ii)
Subject: RE: NIGC Communique November 2025.docx [SEC=OFFICIAL]
Date: Friday, 28 November 2025 12:16:20 PM

OFFICIAL

Thanks I've made some comments on the draft

Kim

OFFICIAL

From: s22(1)(a)(ii)@infrastructure.gov.au>
Sent: 26 November 2025 19:41
To: s22(1)(a)(ii)@infrastructure.gov.au>; Forbes, Kim
 <Kim.Forbes@infrastructure.gov.au>; DONOVAN, Kylie <Kylie.DONOVAN@infrastructure.gov.au>
Cc: s22(1)(a)(ii)@infrastructure.gov.au>; s22(1)(a)(ii)
 s22(1)(a)(ii)@infrastructure.gov.au>
Subject: RE: NIGC Communique November 2025.docx [SEC=OFFICIAL]
Importance: High

OFFICIAL

Hi all – have made some minor edits in the link – as Leife outlined, this is a good vehicle to confirm the legal basis for this model (as opposed to community group activities). I see the current messaging as sufficient on this front.

s22(1)(a)(ii)

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

Thanks

s22(1)
(a)(ii)

OFFICIAL

From: s22(1)(a)(ii)
Sent: 26 November 2025 15:41
To: Forbes, Kim ; DONOVAN, Kylie ; s22(1)(a)(ii)
Cc: s22(1)(a)(ii) ; s22(1)(a)(ii)
Subject: NIGC Communique November 2025.docx [SEC=OFFICIAL]

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OFFICIAL

Hi Kim, Kylie & s22(1)(a)(ii)

Please find attached the draft communique I've put together for last week's NIGC meeting. Link here:

s22(1)(a)(ii)

(Please note – s22(1)(a)(ii) is seeing this now, but we discussed the approach earlier.)

[@Forbes, Kim](#): Please let s22(1)(a)(ii) & I know if you think this will need to be socialised with the MO, or whether it was covered off in this morning's meeting.

In drafting this, I've given consideration to the recent announcement by the COE re their proposed alt-government. This communique does not address that directly, of course, but I have tried to emphasise some elements of this (legitimate!) process – eg establishing the Assembly in law, providing critical services etc, as a way of obliquely providing the community with some surety. Very happy to discuss if/where this could be strengthened.

I can make any changes early tomorrow & send to s22(1)(a)(ii) or s22(1)(a)(ii) for circulating to the other members.

s22(1)(a)(ii)

OFFICIAL

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s22(1)(a)(ii)

05/01 10:03

FOI 27-095 - Document 6

s22(1)
(a)(ii)

s22(1)(a)(ii)

it's on the new For the People NI
FB page: [Facebook](#)

If you haven't asked for soc med sites to be enabled, you'll have to put in a request to IT for that (s22(1)(a)(ii) also worth you doing this too, if you haven't already.) I'm happy to approve requests.



Some interesting info: total number of voters 648. Total votes cast: 1277 (some people only voted for 1 person). Peter Christian-Bailey elected CM (535 or something votes), Tim Brown elected 1st Councillor (300-and-something votes). Rebecca Hayes (3rd runner up - 200-and-something votes) chosen as 2nd Councillor. Cherri Buffet was the 4th candidate (87 votes).

FOI 27-095 - Page 22 of 50

s22(1)(a)(ii)

05/01 10:14

FOI 27-095 - Document 7

s22(1)(a)(ii)

Was there any media on the CoE process?

s22(1)(a)(ii)

05/01 10:15

s22(1)(a)(ii)

I assume in the Islander, and there was some local & NZ radio. I don't think it registered in mainstream Aus media (s22(1)(a)(ii) has been keeping an eye out).

I'm going by what's linked on the FB page, to be honest.

FOI 27-095 - Page 23 of 50

under the Freedom of Information Act 1982 by the Department of
e, Transport, Regional Development, Communications, Sport &

s22(1)(a)(ii)

05/01 10:17 Edited

FOI 27-095 - Document 8

s22(1)(a)
(ii)

"The 2026 vote shows a community eager to restore a voice in its own affairs. But without legal authority, it also highlights the broader reality: Norfolk Island remains in a governance gap, waiting for a formal system that reflects both its history and its future." from this: [Norfolk Island Just Held an Election — Courage Is The Cure](#)

s22(1)(a)(ii)

05/01 10:18

s22(1)
(a)(ii)

I mean, they quietly held two elections on 1 January, actually. neither of them with any basis in law.

FOI 27-095 - Page 24 of 50

s22(1)(a)(ii)

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OFFICIAL

From: S47F
Sent: Wednesday, December 24, 2025 10:16:11 AM
To: McBain, Kristy (MP) <Kristy.McBain.MP@aph.gov.au>
Subject: Norfolk Island "Elections"

Dear Minister

The Norfolk Island Council of Elders are to have an election on January 1, which purports to be an election for the government of Norfolk Island.

While many on Norfolk Island would be aware of the reality of the situation, i.e. that this election is meaningless, some newcomers may participate in this process in the mistaken belief that it has some role in the future governance of the island.

If island residents participate in this process they will likely be named as unwitting supporters of alternative arrangements proposed by the COE.

It is important therefore that either yourself or your representative on Norfolk Island clarify the situation publicly to avoid any confusion.

Sincerely

s47F

Norfolk Island

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s22(1)(a)(ii)

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OFFICIAL

From: s47F
Sent: 02 January 2026 19:43
To: Minister.McBain.MO <Minister.McBain@MO.regional.gov.au>
Subject: Of concern to many.

You don't often get email from s47F [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear Minister,

For many Islanders who advocated for change prior to 2015 this is indeed of concern. It looks like nothing has changed and is a return to what feels like “us and them”.

With the silence from the Commonwealth, many locals believe this “election” has legitimacy.

Attached for your reference.

Kind regards

s47F

Norfolk Island.



MEDIA RELEASE

2 January 2026

In accordance with the Government of Norfolk Island Election Day Rules and Procedures, and the Principles of the 1838 Pitcairn Constitution, the Magistrate has now formalised in writing the appointment of Rebecca Hayes as Second Councillor of the Government of Norfolk Island. This follows the 1 January 2026 election of the Magistrate, Peter Christian-Bailey, and First Councillor Timothy Brown. This appointment takes effect immediately.

INASMUCH

From: s22(1)(a)(ii)
To: s22(1)(a)(ii)
Subject: RE: Updated TPs - Norfolk Island CoE election outcomes [SEC=OFFICIAL]
Date: Thursday, 8 January 2026 12:21:31 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
[image002.png](#)

OFFICIAL

No, you're both correct, fair point. We should be calling it the GNI elections.

OFFICIAL

From: s22(1)(a)(ii) @infrastructure.gov.au>
Sent: 08 January 2026 10:56
To: s22(1)(a)(ii) @infrastructure.gov.au>; s22(1)(a)(ii) @infrastructure.gov.au>; s22(1)(a)(ii) @infrastructure.gov.au>
Subject: Re: Updated TPs - Norfolk Island CoE election outcomes [SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

Ah yes, I was wondering about that too but assumed it was because I'm still working out Norfolk background

OFFICIAL

From: s22(1)(a)(ii) @infrastructure.gov.au>
Sent: Thursday, 8 January 2026 10:17 AM
To: s22(1)(a)(ii) @infrastructure.gov.au>; s22(1)(a)(ii) @infrastructure.gov.au>; s22(1)(a)(ii) @infrastructure.gov.au>
Subject: RE: Updated TPs - Norfolk Island CoE election outcomes [SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

I don't know if this is just me, but I'm confused about why we keep calling it the Council of Elders elections. The COE already has elections for its own members, and while I understand they led this activity it was open to anyone who meets the set criteria, whether or not they are affiliated with the CoE.

Assistant Director, Norfolk Island Strategy • Norfolk Island and Mainland Territories Branch • Territories Division

s22(1)(a)(ii) @infrastructure.gov.au

P s22(1)(a)(ii)

M s22(1)(a)(ii) Canberra, ACT 2601

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I acknowledge the traditional custodians of this land on which we meet, work and live.

I recognise and respect their continuing connection to the land, waters and communities.

I pay my respects to Elders past and present and to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

OFFICIAL

From: s22(1)(a)(ii) <s22(1)(a)(ii)@infrastructure.gov.au>
Sent: 08 January 2026 09:50
To: s22(1)(a)(ii) <s22(1)(a)(ii)@infrastructure.gov.au>; s22(1)(a)(ii) <s22(1)(a)(ii)@infrastructure.gov.au>; s22(1)(a)(ii) <s22(1)(a)(ii)@infrastructure.gov.au>
Subject: FW: Updated TPs - Norfolk Island CoE election outcomes [SEC=OFFICIAL]
Importance: High

OFFICIAL

Hi guys

Please find below TPs & messaging on COE elections approved by Kim F & the MO.
Please use this for drafting min corro responses.

Cheers

S
2

OFFICIAL

From: s22(1)(a)(ii) <s22(1)(a)(ii)@infrastructure.gov.au>
Sent: 05 January 2026 14:51
To: s22(1)(a)(ii) <s22(1)(a)(ii)@infrastructure.gov.au>
Cc: DONOVAN, Kylie <Kylie.DONOVAN@infrastructure.gov.au>; s22(1)(a)(ii) <s22(1)(a)(ii)@infrastructure.gov.au>
Subject: FW: Updated TPs - Norfolk Island CoE election outcomes [SEC=OFFICIAL]
Importance: High

OFFICIAL

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Hey s22(1)(a)(ii) – see below in case needed.

Cheers

s22(1)(a)(ii)

OFFICIAL

From: s22(1)(a)(ii)

Sent: 05 January 2026 11:26

To: s22(1)(a)(ii) <s22(1)(a)(ii)@mo.regional.gov.au>; s22(1)(a)(ii) <s22(1)(a)(ii)@mo.regional.gov.au>; s22(1)(a)(ii) <s22(1)(a)(ii)@mo.regional.gov.au>

Cc: Forbes, Kim <Kim.Forbes@infrastructure.gov.au>; DONOVAN, Kylie <Kylie.DONOVAN@infrastructure.gov.au>; s22(1)(a)(ii) <s22(1)(a)(ii)@infrastructure.gov.au>

Subject: Updated TPs - Norfolk Island CoE election outcomes

Importance: High

Hey s22(1)

Further to your request for updated TPs and background following CoE elections, have updated our existing points so they are correct in tense and also added in lines from Ministerial end of year message about our model. Background added from public announcements. Cleared by s22(1)(a)

If asked for comment on the CoE's recent elections for an alternative Norfolk Island government:

- We are aware of the recent Council of Elders activity.
- There is no basis in law for establishment of an alternative government body.
- We would be concerned if the establishment of such a community body caused confusion for Norfolk Island residents and visitors, particularly about access to essential services and programs.
- The Australian Government and this department remain focused on our positive and ongoing work with the broader Norfolk Island community to enhance local decision-making and civic representation, including through the Norfolk Island Governance Committee and its democratically elected community representatives.
- This important work will deliver on the recommendations agreed by the Government from the Joint Standing Committee on the National Capital and External Territories in its report on Norfolk Island governance, 'Restoring Democracy'.
- The bespoke governance model, shaped by Norfolk Islanders' input and feedback, will allow all residents enrolled to vote to elect, and be elected as, members of the Norfolk Island Assembly. It will return democratic representation and decision-making to Norfolk Islanders, reaffirming Norfolk

Island as an empowered community committed to inclusivity, equality and governance.

- Acknowledge the good work done by the NIGC on electoral policy recommendations which will support the holding of the inaugural election anticipated for 2026.

If asked

About Australia's authority over NI:

- Norfolk Island is an integral part of the Commonwealth of Australia, and has been since it was accepted by the Commonwealth as a territory under s122 of the Australian Constitution on 1 July 1914.

BACKGROUND ON COUNCIL OF ELDERS COMMUNITY ELECTION

The community election for the Council of Elders' Government of Norfolk Island positions of Chief Magistrate and First Councillor took place on Norfolk Island on 1 January 2026.

The election was conducted under the principles of the 1838 Pitcairn Constitution brought to Norfolk Island in 1856, with the voting base restricted to 'residents of five years or more or native-born Pitcairn descendents'.

The Council of Elders reported a total of 1277 votes, representing 648 voters

Election outcomes:

Chief Magistrate – Peter Christian Bailey

First Councillor (elected) Timothy Brown

Second Councillor (appointed) Rebecca Hayes

s22(1)(a)(ii)

Director Communications and Future of CKI Taskforce

Territories Division

s22(1)(a)(ii) [@infrastructure.gov.au](mailto:infrastructure.gov.au)

M +s22(1)(a)(ii)

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*I would like to acknowledge the traditional custodians of this land on which we meet, work and live.
 I recognise and respect their continuing connection to the land, waters and communities.
 I pay my respects to Elders past and present and to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders.*

OFFICIAL

From: s22(1)(a)(ii) [@mo.regional.gov.au](mailto:mo.regional.gov.au)

Sent: 05 January 2026 10:06

To: s22(1)(a)(ii) <[REDACTED]@infrastructure.gov.au>

Subject: RE: Norfolk Islander - Saturday 3 January 2026 [SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

Hi s22(1)(a)(ii),

Happy New Year! Thanks for sending. Can we pls have some updated TPs on the CofE election pls, with a para of background (how many voted, etc).

Cheers

s22(1)(a)

OFFICIAL

From: s22(1)(a)(ii) <[REDACTED]@infrastructure.gov.au>

Sent: Monday, 5 January 2026 12:52 PM

To: s22(1)(a)(ii) <[REDACTED]@infrastructure.gov.au>; s22(1)(a)(ii) <[REDACTED]@infrastructure.gov.au>; s22(1)(a)(ii) <[REDACTED]@infrastructure.gov.au>; s22(1)(a)(ii) <[REDACTED]@infrastructure.gov.au>; OFFICE.ADMINISTRATOR <[REDACTED]@infrastructure.gov.au>; IOT Administrator <[REDACTED]@infrastructure.gov.au>; NIMT Communications <[REDACTED]@infrastructure.gov.au>; s22(1)(a)(ii) <[REDACTED]@mo.regional.gov.au>; s22(1)(a)(ii) <[REDACTED]@mo.regional.gov.au>; DLO McBain <[REDACTED]@mo.regional.gov.au>; Norfolk Island and Mainland Territories Branch <[REDACTED]@infrastructure.gov.au>; Territories Enabling Services Branch <[REDACTED]@infrastructure.gov.au>; s22(1)(a)(ii) <[REDACTED]@infrastructure.gov.au>; s22(1)(a)(ii) <[REDACTED]@infrastructure.gov.au>; s22(1)(a)(ii) <[REDACTED]@infrastructure.gov.au>; NEULING, Jo <Jo.Neuling@infrastructure.gov.au>; s22(1)(a)(ii) <[REDACTED]@infrastructure.gov.au>; s22(1)(a)(ii) <[REDACTED]@infrastructure.gov.au>; Forbes, Kim <Kim.Forbes@infrastructure.gov.au>; s22(1)(a)(ii) <[REDACTED]@infrastructure.gov.au>; s22(1)(a)(ii) <[REDACTED]@infrastructure.gov.au>; Norfolk Island Project Team <[REDACTED]@premiers.qld.gov.au>; s22(1)(a)(ii) <[REDACTED]@premiers.qld.gov.au>; s22(1)(a)(ii) <[REDACTED]@infrastructure.gov.au>; s22(1)(a)(ii) <[REDACTED]@infrastructure.gov.au>; s22(1)(a)(ii) <[REDACTED]@infrastructure.gov.au>; s22(1)(a)(ii) <[REDACTED]@infrastructure.gov.au>; s22(1)(a)(ii) <[REDACTED]@mo.regional.gov.au>; s22(1)(a)(ii) <[REDACTED]@mo.regional.gov.au>; s22(1)(a)(ii) <[REDACTED]@infrastructure.gov.au>

Subject: Norfolk Islander - Saturday 3 January 2026 [SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

Hi All

Happy New Year. Please find attached the Norfolk Islander from 3 January 2026.

Content summary below.

P1,2,4: CoE announcement of community election results

P6: Norfolk Ailen Govt election results

P7-8: For The People NI media release on community election process

P12: CoE media release Norfolk Island votes!

P17,18,20: Letters to the Editor, governance matters

P24: NIHRACS update

Thanks

s22(1)(a)

s22(1)(a)(ii)

Director Communications and Future of CKI Taskforce

Territories Division

s22(1)(a)(ii) [@infrastructure.gov.au](mailto:s22(1)(a)(ii)@infrastructure.gov.au)

M s22(1)(a)(ii)

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*I would like to acknowledge the traditional custodians of this land on which we meet, work and live.
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I pay my respects to Elders past and present and to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders.*

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The Hon Kristy McBain MP

Minister for Emergency Management
Minister for Regional Development, Local Government and Territories
Member for Eden-Monaro

Ref: MC26-000221

s47F

Norfolk Island

via: s47F

Dear s47F

Thank you for your email of 24 December 2025 regarding the community election held on Norfolk Island on 1 January 2026. I apologise for the delay in responding.

I am aware of the recent event undertaken by community groups on Norfolk Island. As you indicate, there is no basis in law for establishment of an alternative government body and I would be concerned if the establishment of such a community body caused confusion for Norfolk Island residents and visitors, particularly about access to essential services and programs.

One of the Australian Government's priorities for Norfolk Island continues to be our positive and ongoing work with the broader Norfolk Island community to enhance local decision-making and civic representation, including through the Norfolk Island Governance Committee (NIGC) and its democratically elected community representatives.

The NIGC regularly shares updates with the community through the NIGC's community representatives, who conduct fortnightly public meetings, and the Norfolk Island Administrator's updates via radio, social media and his regular newsletter. The NIGC also issues communiques after major meetings with information about progress on key work and upcoming priorities.

This important work will deliver on the recommendations agreed by the Government from the Joint Standing Committee on the National Capital and External Territories in its 2023 report on Norfolk Island governance, *Restoring Democracy*.

The bespoke governance model, shaped by Norfolk Islanders' input and feedback, will allow all residents enrolled to vote to elect, and be elected as, members of the Norfolk Island Assembly. It will return democratic representation and decision-making to Norfolk Islanders, reaffirming Norfolk Island as an empowered community committed to inclusivity, equality and governance.

I encourage you and other Norfolk Island residents to participate in any consultation opportunities with the NIGC, and more broadly in this process, to deliver a bespoke governance model.

Thank you for taking the time to write to me on this matter.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'K. McBain', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Kristy McBain MP

9/12 /2026



The Hon Kristy McBain MP

Minister for Emergency Management
Minister for Regional Development, Local Government and Territories
Member for Eden-Monaro

Ref: MC26-000230

s47F

Norfolk Island

via: s47F

Dear s47F

Thank you for your email of 2 January 2026 regarding your concerns about the community election conducted on Norfolk Island on 1 January 2026.

I am aware of the recent event undertaken by community groups on Norfolk Island. As you would be aware, there is no basis in law for establishment of an alternative government body, and I would be concerned if the establishment of such a community body caused confusion for Norfolk Island residents and visitors, particularly about access to essential services and programs.

One of the Australian Government's priorities for Norfolk Island continues to be our positive and ongoing work with the broader Norfolk Island community to enhance local decision-making and civic representation, including through the Norfolk Island Governance Committee (NIGC) and its democratically elected community representatives.

The NIGC regularly shares updates with the community through the NIGC's community representatives, who conduct fortnightly public meetings, and the Norfolk Island Administrator's updates via radio, social media and his regular newsletter. The NIGC also issues communiques after major meetings with information about progress on key work and upcoming priorities.

This important work will deliver on the recommendations agreed by the government from the Joint Standing Committee on the National Capital and External Territories in its 2023 report on Norfolk Island governance, *Restoring Democracy*.

The bespoke governance model, shaped by Norfolk Islanders' input and feedback, will allow all residents enrolled to vote to elect, and be elected as, members of the Norfolk Island Assembly. It will return democratic representation and decision-making to Norfolk Islanders, reaffirming Norfolk Island as an empowered community committed to inclusivity, equality and governance.

Thank you for taking the time to write to me on this matter and your continued interest in and advocacy for the Norfolk Island community.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'K. McBain', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Kristy McBain MP

9/12/2026

s22(1)(a)(ii)

09/02 11:59

FOI 27-095 - Document 14

s22(1)
(a)(ii)

it looks like the pieces of min corro about the 1 Jan **elections** are ready for signature, so we'll be able to see those approved words soon

FOI 27-095 - Page 39 of 50



s22(1)(a)(ii)

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OFFICIAL

From: S47F [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@proton.me>**Sent:** 07 February 2026 15:53**To:** Minister.McBain.MO <Minister.McBain@MO.regional.gov.au>**Cc:** David Smith MP <david.smith.mp@aph.gov.au>; OFFICE.ADMINISTRATOR <OFFICE.ADMINISTRATOR@infrastructure.gov.au>; NorfolkIslandGovernance <NorfolkIslandGovernance@infrastructure.gov.au>; jscncet@aph.gov.au**Subject:** "Misrepresentation of Norfolk Island 'governments' and request for ministerial clarification

You don't often get email from s47f [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear Minister McBain,

We write as residents of Norfolk Island to seek clarification and reassurance about recent developments that appear to cut across the governance framework you have publicly outlined for the Island.

We fully appreciate that the Australian Government has committed to establishing a bespoke Norfolk Island Assembly within the Commonwealth's existing constitutional framework. We also understand that the Australian Government has emphasised that this will not involve a return to self-government or any change to Australia's sovereignty over Norfolk Island. Your emphasis has been that the Norfolk Island Governance Committee (NIGC), together with the current administrative arrangements, are the recognised mechanisms through which local views are to be channelled and the new governance model developed.

In that context, two developments are causing growing concern in this community:

1. A self-styled "Norfolk Ailen Government" has, over the past year, sent a representative, Ms Leah Honeywood, who describes herself as "Chief Magistrate" of that body, to functions in Tonga, including meetings with the Tongan Prime Minister and speeches at formal events, in that purported capacity. To an external observer, this appears to be someone presenting herself internationally as holding a quasi-judicial public office for "Norfolk Island", despite there being no such office recognised under Australian law.
2. More recently, a separate body calling itself the "Government of Norfolk Island" has published a "community update" in the local paper describing its strategies to date, and stating that it *"is beginning to engage with regional and international partners to build an aligned network of support to help us achieve Norfolk Island's longer-term aspirations"*. This body, through its three "elected representatives", appears to be positioning itself to engage regionally and internationally as though it had some form of political status.

Taken together, these actions appear to create a parallel narrative of "governments" and "representatives" for Norfolk Island that is quite separate from, and potentially in tension with, the governance arrangements you have articulated – namely, that:

- All governmental authority over Norfolk Island rests with the Commonwealth, exercised through the Administrator, the department, the current regional council administration and, in future, the legislated Norfolk Island Assembly; and
- The NIGC is the formal mechanism for developing the bespoke governance model in consultation with the community.

We are concerned that this situation, unchecked, risks creating serious confusion:

- Locally, about who is entitled to speak for Norfolk Island and to engage with "partners" on its "longer-term aspirations";
- Nationally, about the coherence of the Commonwealth's own governance message; and
- Internationally, where foreign governments and regional organisations may be misled into believing that these self-styled bodies have some official standing, or that Australia recognises them as having a role in Norfolk Island's external relations.

In light of this, we would be grateful if you could:

1. Confirm whether you and your department are aware of the activities of the Norfolk Ailen Government and Ms Honeywood's attendance at functions in Tonga in the purported capacity of "Chief Magistrate", and whether any steps have been taken to ensure Tongan officials and others understand that this body and office have no status under Australian law.
2. Confirm whether you are aware of the recent public statements by the group styling itself "Government of Norfolk Island" about engaging "regional and international partners" to advance "Norfolk Island's longer-term aspirations", and how you see this in relation to the NIGC process and the governance model you have announced.
3. Indicate whether you have sought, or will seek, advice on whether any of this conduct raises issues under Commonwealth law (including the provisions relating to impersonation of public officials and misrepresentation of governmental status), and whether the Australian Federal Police or Attorney-General's Department have been consulted about the appropriate response.
4. Outline what steps you intend to take to make it clear – to Norfolk Island residents, to the wider Australian public, and to regional and international partners – that there is no recognised "Government of Norfolk Island" other than the structures created or authorised by the Commonwealth, and that all official engagement about Norfolk Island's governance and international status must occur through those structures.

Those of us who support a clear, orderly and transparent governance pathway for Norfolk Island are simply seeking assurance that the Commonwealth will not allow confusing or potentially misleading claims to public or governmental status to undermine the integrity of the process you have put in place.

Thank you for your attention to these concerns. We would appreciate your response.

Yours sincerely,
s47f
Norfolk Island s47f

s47f

s47F

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The Hon Kristy McBain MP

Minister for Emergency Management
Minister for Regional Development, Local Government and Territories
Member for Eden-Monaro

Ref: MC26-001896

s47F

Norfolk Island s47F

via: s47F

Dear s47F

Thank you for your correspondence of 7 February 2026 regarding clarification on the Norfolk Island governance framework. I recognise your concern that the actions of some local community groups may create misinformation and confusion with regards to Norfolk Island's current and future governance arrangements.

I can confirm that activities that have no basis in law do not detract from the Australian Government's commitment to implement a new governing body, the Norfolk Island Assembly, within the parameters described in my media release on 13 November 2024 and further detailed on the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications, Sport and the Arts (the department) website.

The department has recently published additional information on its website to clarify the Australian Government's position. This information is available at www.infrastructure.gov.au/territories-regions-cities/territories/norfolk-island/governance-administration. The department also engages regularly with relevant agencies to ensure clarity across government and our international stakeholders. Any instances of individuals or groups acting contrary to the laws that apply on Norfolk Island, including Commonwealth laws, would be reported to the appropriate authorities.

Thank you for taking the time to write to me on this matter.

Yours sincerely

Kristy McBain MP

17 /03/2026

s22(1)(a)(ii) 15/05 09:43

FOI 27-095 - Document 17

s22(1)(a)(ii)

s22(1)(a)(ii) 15/05/2026 09:09

and yes, I have to remind myself it's 'government' first i.e.
"Government of Norfolk Island", not Norfolk Island government whic...

Errr... This is the Council of Elders one, yeah - that had the election in January? What's NI Government?

s22(1)(a)(ii) 15/05 09:55

s22(1)(a)(ii)

Maxwell, John 15/05/2026 09:43

Errr... This is the Council of Elders one, yeah - that had the election in January? What's NI Government?

the one I was thinking about is the NAG

•Norf'kAilen Government (NAG)

Established in late 2024. Third election on 1 January 2026. Vigorously presents itself as the official Norfolk Island government to other Indo-Pacific nations (i.e. Tonga, Vanuatu). Highly vociferous/active, limited evidence of impact or support within the broader community.

s22(1)(a)(ii) 15/05 10:00

s22(1)(a)(ii)

Oh right. So, hang on, were there two separate elections on 1 Jan this year?

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s22(1)(a)(ii) 15/05 10:00

s22(1)
(a)(ii)

Oh right. So, hang on, were there two separate elections on 1 Jan this year?

s22(1)(a)(ii) 15/05 10:02

s22(1)
(a)(ii)

Yep. Norf'k Ailen Govt (NAG) and Government of Norfolk Island (GNI) both had elections on 1 Jan 2026.

Alternative Governments

Established and supported by cohorts within the Norfolk Island community as the 'true' government/s of Norfolk Island. These have no basis in law.

•Norf'kAilen Government (NAG)

Established in late 2024. Third election on 1 January 2026. Vigorously presents itself as the official Norfolk Island government to other Indo-Pacific nations (i.e. Tonga, Vanuatu). Highly vociferous/active, limited evidence of impact or support within the broader community.

•Government of Norfolk Island (GNI)

Established in 2025. First election on 1 January 2026. Establishment driven by the Council of Elders due to their dissatisfaction with Australian Government decisions about the developing Norfolk Island Assembly model. Some evidence of impact and support within the broader community. 648 people purported to have voted in the 2026 election.

From: s22(1)(a)(ii)
To: s22(1)(a)(ii)
Subject: Fw: TPs for Fiona meeting? [SEC=OFFICIAL]
Date: Friday, 29 May 2026 11:43:46 AM

OFFICIAL

Hi s22(1)(a),

Just in case in my absence we have to prepare TPs for Kim to meet the incoming administrator, this may be useful.

Cheers

From: s22(1)(a)(ii)@infrastructure.gov.au>
Sent: Monday, May 25, 2026 3:59 PM
To: s22(1)(a)(ii)@mo.regional.gov.au>
Cc: Forbes, Kim <Kim.Forbes@infrastructure.gov.au>; RUSH, Rebecca <Rebecca.RUSH@infrastructure.gov.au>
Subject: RE: TPs for Fiona meeting? [SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

Hi s22(1)(a)(ii),

Fully agreed with the focus on governance and expectations. Kim has cleared the following TPs to support the Minister at the meeting tomorrow.

Please let us know if you need anything else.

Cheers,

s22(1)(a)(ii)

General:

- Congratulations again on your appointment. I am looking forward to you bringing your extensive foreign affairs and diplomacy skills and experience to this role.
- I understand you have already met with Kim Forbes and Bec Rush who will be your regular contacts in the department, and that s22(1)(a)(ii) has been assisting with logistical arrangements for your move to the island.

- As the Australian Government's representative on the island, I ask that you engage with the community as a whole and listen to all perspectives. We know that there are differing views on a range of issues amongst the community, including regarding future governance arrangements.
- You will receive your Charter letter shortly and I wanted to highlight a couple of things in particular.

Governance and reform:

- A key role will be for you to lead engagement with the community on a new governance model for Norfolk Island, including as a member of the Norfolk Island Governance Committee (NIGC).
 - The NIGC is a non-statutory body which provides a formal avenue for the Norfolk Island community to have input into Australian Government decisions directly affecting the community, while the Norfolk Island Regional Council remains under administration.
 - As Administrator you are a member of the NIGC, and may be elected chair by a vote of all members.
- The history and need for reform of Norfolk Island's governance arrangements is well-documented, including most recently a 2023 Joint Standing Committee on the National Capital and External Territories report titled Restoring Democracy: Report of the Inquiry into local governance on Norfolk Island. In response, in November 2024 the Australian Government announced a new governance model for Norfolk Island.
- Since the end of 2023, the primary focus on the NIGC has been to provide recommendations to government on the design of the new governance model for Norfolk Island.
 - When the Australian Government announced the new model in November 2024, the focus was further narrowed with the NIGC to focus on recommendations to implement that model.
- The new model would include a new Norfolk Island Assembly consisting of five democratically elected members and by now I thought we would be preparing for an election for that new Assembly at the end of this year.
- Unfortunately, the work of the NIGC to finalise its recommendations stalled towards the end of last year. This has made it impossible to establish the statutory Assembly in 2026.
- In discussions with the NIGC community representatives, it also became clear to me that one aspect of the original decision was at odds with the enduring preference of the Norfolk Island community.
 - The community's preference is to establish the Assembly by primary legislation.

- This approach would add significantly to the timeframe, but I have been told timeliness is a lower priority for the community than the mechanism.
- I am currently in discussion with the Prime Minister's office to seek his authority to vary that aspect of the decision and progress the governance reforms in primary legislation.

Other 'governments':

- I also seek your support in the Australian Government's handling of alternative Norfolk Island 'governments'.
- Several prominent community organisations on Norfolk Island, comprising senior members of the Pitcairn community, assert that they collectively represent a majority of the Norfolk Island population. This includes entities referred to as the Government of Norfolk Island and the Norfolk Ailen Government.
 - On 1 January 2026, the Norfolk Island Council of Elders held elections for the Government of Norfolk Island (GNI).
 - Elections used an electoral roll limited to those with Pitcairn descent, or others with at least 5 years residency on the island.
 - GNI is planning to hold its first general assembly on 30 May where enrolled members of the community can vote publicly for the various notice papers.
- There is no legislative or legal basis for the establishment of an alternative government body.

*****[END]*****

OFFICIAL

From: RUSH, Rebecca <Rebecca.RUSH@infrastructure.gov.au>

Sent: Monday, 25 May 2026 10:25 AM

To: s22(1)(a)(ii) @mo.regional.gov.au; s22(1)(a)(ii) @infrastructure.gov.au

Cc: Forbes, Kim <Kim.Forbes@infrastructure.gov.au>

Subject: RE: TPs for Fiona meeting? [SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

s22(1)
(a)(ii)

The Team can provide some suggested TPs, no problem @ s22(1)(a)(ii) could the team please progress some notes through to Kim Forbes – we should note Kim and I

have briefed the incoming Administrator and are finalising her induction pack in advance of her arriving on Island 1 June. Suggest you please talk to s22(1)(a)(ii) who is now back on Island, also.

With thanks

rtr

rebecca.rush@infrastructure.gov.au

• M s22(1)(a)(ii)

OFFICIAL

From: s22(1)(a)(ii) @mo.regional.gov.au

Sent: 25 May 2026 10:13

To: RUSH, Rebecca <Rebecca.RUSH@infrastructure.gov.au>; s22(1)(a)(ii)
<s22(1)(a)(ii) @infrastructure.gov.au>

Cc: Forbes, Kim <Kim.Forbes@infrastructure.gov.au>

Subject: TPs for Fiona meeting? [SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

Hi team,

Pls let me know if there is anything specific you'd like Minister to raise with Fiona tomorrow.

Otherwise we will focus on Governance and expectations.

Cheers,

s22(1)(a) .

s22(1)(a)(ii)

Senior Adviser

Office of the Hon Kristy McBain MP

Minister for Emergency Management

Minister for Regional Development, Local Government and Territories

s22(1)(a)(ii) @mo.regional.gov.au

P s22(1)(a)(ii) • M s22(1)(a)(ii)

Parliament House, Canberra, ACT 2601

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