



Issue 65 – 5 March 2026

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Welcome Message

Welcome to the first edition of our community newsletter for 2026. As we begin the year together, I'm reflecting on the cultural richness that makes the Indian Ocean Territories such a special place to call home.

With Chinese New Year and Ramadan being marked, this is an especially meaningful time for many families across our islands. It is doubly special this year, as these two celebrations were also joined with the observation of 40 days of Lent for the Christian community, reminding us all that while our cultural traditions are diverse, we are united by shared values of connection, reflection and compassion.

This sense of shared strength has been particularly evident in recent times.

Over the Christmas period, the Cocos Islands experienced the impacts of two cyclones in close succession. I want to acknowledge the calm, coordinated response across the community, and the strong spirit of volunteerism that underpinned these efforts.

I want to recognise the Cocos Islands Emergency Management Committee and the Territory Controller, Nic Bannon, for their leadership and work throughout these events, along with the efforts of all the volunteers supporting our response. As we remain in the midst of wet season, I encourage all residents across both territories to download and regularly check the Emergency WA app. Staying informed is one of the simplest and most effective ways to prepare for changing conditions.

From 9-13 February I was pleased to be back on the Cocos Islands to continue our discussions on preparedness and response, including leading an EMC meeting while on island and observing the biannual airport field exercise.

In this edition, you will find updates on several key areas of work. We are progressing planning and preparedness activities for avian influenza, ensuring we remain aligned with national guidance and ready to respond should the need arise. We are also continuing to investigate renewable energy options with a focus on long-term sustainability, reliability and affordability. Consultants from GHD were recently on Christmas and the Cocos Islands, to continue the important work of developing the feasibility study on options for decarbonising the electricity supply across the IOT.

You will also find an update from the Department of Defence on the Cocos (Keeling) Islands Airfield Upgrade Project, along with news about upcoming sports visits that I know many in our community will be looking forward to.

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

Shaping the future of health and wellbeing in the IOT



The Indian Ocean Territories Health Service Community Advisory Committee (CAC) recently met for the first time this year, to continue its important work ensuring community voices help shape the future of health and wellbeing across the islands. With community representatives from both Christmas Island and the Cocos (Keeling) Islands, alongside members from the Health Service, the Department and the Administrator, the CAC brings together a broad mix of local knowledge, cultural insight and professional expertise.

At the meeting, members received an update on the development of the next five-year Health and Wellbeing Strategy for the IOT. The new strategy will look beyond clinical services to consider the broader factors that support community health and wellbeing, including preventative practices and cultural and social wellbeing.

The Department received feedback from the CAC provided at its December meeting last year into the strategy, which highlighted the need to acknowledge the cultural and religious diversity of the IOT a core consideration in its design. Led by the Department in partnership with health service providers and the community, the strategy is being developed using a community-led and culturally safe approach, with a focus on integrated care addressing the broader factors that influence health and wellbeing.

This includes building a clear picture on current and future community health and wellbeing needs across the islands, informed by carefully protected data to support evidence-based planning while ensuring privacy and anonymity.

To complete this work, a community health survey will be launched to capture local views and lived experience. This will be a key opportunity for residents to share what matters most to them – whether its

access to services, preventative health, or broad supports that help families stay well. The consultation phase of the strategy's development is expected to begin in March 2026, with more information to come.

Alongside the strategy update, the CAC received several positive updates on health service improvements including the installation of the new X-ray machine on Home Island, with only minor building works left to complete. Once fully operational, it will support faster diagnostics closer to home. The CAC also heard that a new wheelchair buggy for Home Island is expected to arrive in early March, making it easier for residents with mobility needs to move safely around the island.

The Committee also heard that important work is currently underway to secure long-term arrangements with visiting specialists, helping lock in future visits and provide more predictable access to specialist services, while recruitment continues for several other exciting roles as the Health Service builds a strong, skilled team.

The CAC's insights continue to ensure that health planning in the IOT remains grounded in local experience, cultural understanding and the shared goal of supporting healthy, thriving communities.

Keeping Our Islands Informed: Bird Flu awareness in the IOT

The Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF) has developed a range of easy-to-use resources to help our Indian Ocean Territories (IOT) stay informed about H5 avian influenza (bird flu). While the IOT remain free of bird flu, these resources are about building awareness and preparedness, so our islands are prepared and well placed to respond if needed. You will be able to access the resources on the DAFF website shortly: [Resources for bird flu - DAFF](#)

These resources explain what bird flu is and how it spreads, the signs to look for in both wild and domestic birds, how to report concerns, and what a response would involve. They're designed for everyone, from families to pet owners to local organisations, land managers and community groups, so we can all play a part in reporting and early detection.

Across Christmas Island and the Cocos (Keeling) Islands, the department is working closely with DAFF, Parks Australia and the Shires to strengthen local preparedness. This includes sharing information, planning together, and making sure there are clear arrangements in place to act quickly if H5 bird flu is ever suspected.

The IOT are home to extraordinary and unique wild birds, and the community is well placed to recognise when something is not quite right in the environment. Local knowledge and observations are among the community's strongest assets in identifying unusual events early, which is why working together is so important in managing the risk of H5 bird flu in the IOT.

If you see multiple sick or dead birds, birds behaving unusually or sudden, unexplained illness or deaths in backyard poultry, please report it straight away. Record what you see, but don't touch them or get too close, and call the 24-hour Emergency Animal Disease Hotline on 1800 675 888.

Early reporting helps animal health experts understand what's happening, investigate quickly and act if needed.



Authorised by the Australian Government, Canberra

Authorised by the Australian Government, Canberra



Australian Government

Keep your birds safe

A serious strain of H5 avian influenza (bird flu) has spread quickly overseas due to migrating wild birds. Act now to protect your backyard poultry and kept birds.



Keep wild birds away from your birds by using housing and netting

Keep bird feed and water in an area that wild birds can't access



Keep poultry coops, aviaries and equipment clean

Keep new birds quarantined before integrating them with your flock



Keep up your hand hygiene - wash hands with soap before and after handling birds and eggs.

Keep watch for signs of sick birds. Report groups of sick or dead birds to your local vet or the Emergency Animal Disease hotline on 1800 675 888.



Be prepared birdflu.gov.au

Resources for bird flu



Shaping Our Energy Future Together: GHD Meets with Christmas Island and Cocos Islands communities

Work is under way to explore a cleaner, more sustainable energy future for the Indian Ocean Territories, with GHD visiting both Christmas Island and the Cocos Islands in January and February as part

of a key feasibility study commissioned by the department.

The visit included targeted stakeholder meetings and community drop-in sessions. These conversations provided valuable insights into how energy is used across homes, businesses and industry, and ensures the study reflects the distinct needs and priorities of each island.

The Department engaged GHD to explore options to decarbonise the electricity supply across the territories. The study will identify ways to introduce cleaner energy sources and reduce reliance on diesel, while maintaining the reliability and security that our communities depend on every day.

As part of this work, GHD is examining a range of potential solutions to generate, store and distribute power on both islands. This includes assessing renewable energy technologies, battery storage, and other emerging options that could support long-term sustainability and affordability. To build a clear picture of what is possible, the team also spent time on island reviewing how electricity is currently produced and consumed – how much, when, and by whom.

To support ongoing engagement, GHD has a community survey available to give residents another opportunity to share their views. You can access the survey here: [Indian Ocean Territories Energy Survey – Fill out form](#) until 31 March 2026.

The findings from this feasibility study will help guide future decisions about the territories' energy systems and support a long-term transition toward cleaner, more resilient power. GHD's visit marks an important step in shaping an energy future that reflects the needs, aspirations, and lived experience of our island communities.

For those who wish to provide written feedback to inform the study, you can email comments and submissions to indianoceanterritories@infrastructure.gov.au by 31 March.

[IOT Energy Survey Form](#)

Sports Visits Tee Off an Action-Packed Year

Sports visits to the Indian Ocean Territories are teeing off in style, with Golf WA set to swing into action across both islands this month. A golf specialist will be on Cocos (Keeling) Islands from 23-27 March, before heading to Christmas Island from 27 March – 3 April. It's the perfect chance for budding golfers to have a go, sharpen their skills, learn from a pro and maybe even discover the next island champion ready to hit the fairway running.

And the momentum doesn't stop there. Later this year, the world's game is returning to the region, with a soccer visit planned for early Term 2. It's a fantastic opportunity for young players to get back on the pitch, build confidence, and show off their footwork as they kick off another season of sporting fun.



These visits build on a stand-out year of sporting activity across the IOT in 2025. Wrapping up the 2025 program, Gymnastics WA flipped, rolled, and cartwheeled their way through Cocos in November, bringing high-energy sessions that had young people leaping at the chance to get involved. Calisthenics WA brought their trademark sparkle to Christmas Island that same month, inspiring creativity, strength, and teamwork. And WA Cricket hit it out of the park with visits to both Christmas Island and the Cocos Islands in October and November, giving local players the chance to bowl, bat and field alongside an experienced coach.

Across every visit, one thing has been clear: people in the IOT are stepping up to the plate, rising to the challenge, and showing enthusiasm for sport in all its forms. It's particularly great to see the next generation of potential world-class athletes right here in our own backyard, kids who are ready to take their shot, chase their goals, and run with every opportunity that comes their way.

Stay tuned for more details as the calendar fills up - there's plenty more action to come.



Community Bulletins



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



Community Bulletin

INDIAN OCEAN TERRITORIES

Number: D01/26. **Date:** 24 February 2026.

Rockfall and landslide preparedness

The department reminds the Christmas Island community that the updated Landslide Risk Management Plan for Flying Fish Cove and the Smith Point Road area is now available.

The plan has been endorsed by the Christmas Island Emergency Management Committee and sets out practical steps to help reduce the risk to people, homes and local businesses from landslides in these areas. It outlines the strategies and actions that should be taken to manage the hazard and supports community awareness about the causes of landslides and how risks can be reduced over time. You can download the full plan at the link:

<https://www.infrastructure.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/landslide-risk-management-plan-2025.pdf>

The plan is an important step in the long-term reduction and management of landslides and rockfalls on Christmas Island, however in the event of a major landslide or rockfall, the Territory Controller will take the lead under the Christmas Island Emergency Management Plan.

Staying alert during wet season

With the wet season underway, anyone living, working or spending time near Flying Fish Cove is encouraged to stay alert for signs of landslides and rockfalls, especially during or after heavy rain.

If the risk increases, you may see:

- Flashing lights or warning signs in affected areas
- Updates on IOT News or 6RCI Community Radio
- Notifications on the Emergency WA app (listed under “other”), using the Australian Warning System

The Australian Warning System uses three colour-coded levels to help you understand the situation at a glance:

- Yellow – Advice
- Orange – Watch and Act
- Red – Emergency Warning, meaning you must take immediate action for your safety and your family's safety.

If you notice a rockfall or landslide, please call the on-call AFP officer on 9164 8444.

Adam Stankevicius, Assistant Secretary, Indian Ocean Territories Branch

Public Announcements

Cocos (Keeling) Islands Airfield Upgrade

PROJECT UPDATE: JANUARY 2026

Happy new year and welcome to the first update for the Cocos (Keeling) Islands Airfield Upgrade Project for 2026.

Materials Offloading Facility

- Construction of the Material Offloading Facility (MOF) is progressing strongly at Rumah Baru, with all structural works now complete and only a few marine piles are yet to be installed.

- The MOF is expected to be completed and operational by mid-2026.
- For the safety of the community and our team, we remind all community members and visitors that the construction area underneath and around the MOF is an exclusion zone and access is strictly prohibited.

Sydney Highway

- The Project is working with the Shire to finalise the design of the Sydney Highway and Rumah Baru Rd upgrade works to support the upcoming construction traffic.
- The works are expected to commence in the second half of 2026.

Salt Water Reverse Osmosis Plant

- The project team is working with the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications, Sport and the Arts of Australia on the design for a Seawater Reverse Osmosis (SWRO) plant, which is being planned to supply fresh water during construction. The design will be finalised in the first half of 2026 ahead of construction commencement.

Office Compound

- Clearing works for the office compound were completed in January 2026.
- The compound will be located at the Quarantine Station (next to the Border Force buildings) and will contain temporary buildings and car parking for the project workforce.

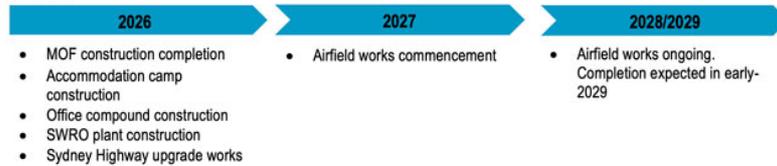
Accommodation Camp

- Clearing works for the accommodation camp are now complete and the buildings have been fabricated overseas.
- The buildings are planned to be shipped on a separate chartered vessel, and will arrive in early February 2026 between Zentner shipments AL2506 and AL2601. This shipping arrangement should not disrupt regular Zentner shipments and community freight offloading.
- The buildings will be unloaded from the vessel and transported on trucks (semi-trailers) from Rumah

Baru to the Quarantine Station lay down area. From there, the buildings will be transported a short distance to the accommodation camp, which is located at Lot 3003 (opposite the transfer station).

- It will take approximately two weeks to transport all of the buildings to the camp, and we anticipate that there will be eight truck movements per day during this time.
- There will be a small number of additional staff on-island to assist with the transportation of the buildings.

Timeline



Contact Us

Please don't hesitate to contact the Project team if you have any questions. Please email: info@cki-airfield-upgrade.com

Project Progress Photos



Supported by



Job Opportunities



CHRISTMAS ISLAND DISTRICT HIGH SCHOOL

POOL POSITIONS

SPECIAL NEEDS EDUCATION ASSISTANTS

Christmas Island DHS is seeking applications to establish a pool for Education Assistant (Special Needs) for full time, part time and casual positions that may arise from Term 2, 2026. Hours may be flexible according to the needs of the school.

As successful applicants in the pool, you will perform tasks that require discretion and judgement in achieving clearly defined outcomes for special needs students, as determined by a teacher. Through previous experience, you will ideally demonstrate the delivery of planned educational programs and contribute in the evaluation process. You will work under general supervision or autonomously and are expected to contribute advice and expertise as part of a team.

Selection Criteria

To be suitable for this role, the applicant needs to demonstrate the following work related requirements:

1. Demonstrated effective written and oral communication skills, including report writing and the ability to effectively interact with students with special needs, and liaise with parents, teachers and community members and assist teachers in understanding students where necessary.
2. Demonstrated effective interpersonal skills with the ability to contribute to a professional team and provide advice and evaluation in the development

- of the education program, including special education and therapy programs where they have been implemented.
3. Demonstrated ability to assist professionals in the implementation and evaluation of education programs, including special education and, if required, occupational and/or physiotherapy programs.
 4. Demonstrated knowledge and understanding of health and physical disabilities in students and adolescents.
 5. Demonstrated effective organisational skills that will assist in the delivery of effective education programs and subsequent feedback and evaluation to teachers or psychologists.
 6. Demonstrated ability to assist with the general health and well-being of students.

Applications will be assessed against the above selection criteria. The business needs of the school may also be considered. It is recommended that applicants consider all information contained in the job description form before applying for this position.

The successful applicants will be employed by the WA Department of Education and will need to obtain a current Department of Education Criminal Record Clearance prior to commencement of employment and obtain or hold a current Working with Children Check. Applicants need to hold a current driver's licence.

In order to apply for this position, applicants will need to provide a personal resume of 2 pages providing contact details for two professional referees and a covering letter (maximum 2 pages) addressing the selection criteria and work related requirements listed above. Applicants are advised that referee reports will be used as part of this process.

For further information about job requirements, please contact Jeannie Ku by email (gaik.ku@education.wa.edu.au) at Christmas Island DHS.

Applications are to be emailed to Jeannie Ku no later than 1 pm (Christmas Island time) on 13 March 2026. Late applications will not be accepted.



Medical Laboratory Technical Officer (PN 118035)

Territory Officer Level 5 Ongoing, Full-time Employment

- Base salary range of \$75,984 to \$89,783 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

The Indian Ocean Territories Administration (IOTA) is currently seeking motivated, dedicated and suitably qualified persons to join our Indian Ocean Territories Health Service (IOTHS) team on Christmas Island as a Medical Laboratory Technical Officer.

The IOTHS delivers a primary and acute health care service in two of Australia's most remote and most spectacular settings - Christmas Island (CI) and the Cocos (Keeling) Islands (CKI). The IOTHS includes a 24 hour eight bed hospital and primary care facility on CI and clinics on Home and West Islands in the CKI. The IOTHS is committed to "Working with our communities to keep us healthy for the whole of our lives".

Based on Christmas Island, the Medical Laboratory Technical Officer will primarily deliver a high quality, culturally appropriate multidisciplinary pathology service to the Christmas Island community working closely with doctors, nurses and other healthcare professionals.

Our ideal candidate will have demonstrated experience and knowledge of laboratory procedures as applied to pathology, including biochemistry, haematology, and microbiology. They will possess a strong understanding of laboratory safety and quality systems, supported by sound computer skills. The successful applicant will have the manual dexterity required to perform hands-on technical tasks, along with effective communication and interpersonal skills,

enabling them to work productively and collaboratively within a team environment.

Previous experience working in a rural or remote environment including working in a multicultural environment; and the ability to communicate in a local community language of Chinese and / or Bahasa Malay will be well regarded.

To be considered, the candidate must hold a Certificate IV in Laboratory Practices or equivalent relevant experience, be an Australian Citizen, hold a current class C Drivers Licence, hold a valid Western Australian Working with Children Check, provide proof of vaccination or immunity as required by the Indian Ocean Health Service Services (IOTHS) and evidence of qualifications.

For an application pack outlining how you can apply, please contact the IOTA Human Resources Team at IOTARecruitment@infrastructure.gov.au and quote position number **118035**.

Applications close 4.00pm (Christmas Island local time) (CXT) (UTC+7), Wednesday, 18 March 2026.

Community Announcements

Christmas Island Outdoor Cinema



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

Movie ticket \$5.00

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:
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, Sport and the Arts

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

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