



Issue 68 – 1 July 2026

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Welcome Message

Welcome to this edition of our community newsletter.

It's wonderful to be back in the Indian Ocean Territories after a short but productive return to Canberra.

I travelled with representatives from the Shires of Christmas Island and the Cocos (Keeling) Islands, where we met with Minister Kristy McBain, Department of Defence officials, and other Australian Government ministers and representatives. These discussions provided an important opportunity to advocate for the priorities of our island communities and strengthen our partnerships with Government. It was encouraging to see the strong interest in the Indian Ocean Territories and a shared commitment to working closely with our communities.

I also recently visited the Cocos (Keeling) Islands, where I undertook a site visit of the Defence construction camp and material offloading facility and met with the Emergency Management Committee, Shire representatives, and other key stakeholders as well as with a wide range of community members. These visits are an important opportunity to hear directly from the community and ensure local perspectives continue to inform decision-making.

I am also very pleased to share that the Western Australian Student Assistance Payment will now be available to parents and carers of students attending primary and secondary school on Christmas Island and the Cocos (Keeling) Islands. This is a fantastic measure that will help families ensure their children have the supplies, resources and opportunities they need to make the most of their education. Supporting our young people to learn, grow and thrive is one of the most important investments we can make — they are our future community leaders.

As we look ahead, significant work continues across the Territories on strategies and projects.

One of our key priorities is progressing the development of the Indian Ocean Territories Health and Wellbeing Strategy (2026–2030). Over the coming weeks, further consultations will take place across both Christmas Island and the Cocos (Keeling) Islands to hear directly from you about how our health services can be better connected — across prevention, primary care, mental health, aged care and disability. Your insights will help shape a strategy that reflects the needs, values and aspirations of our communities, and ensures our healthcare system remains strong, accessible and responsive.

Following the detection of the H5 avian influenza strain in WA, the newsletter includes a timely reminder to all of us about the extensive preparedness we have undertaken and proposed response to any detection or outbreak in the IOT, including what you should do if you find a sick or dying bird.

We are also pleased to include in this newsletter a wrap-up of the recent Football WA visit, which brought great energy to both islands — just in time for World Cup fever. It was wonderful to see so many young players getting involved, and I look forward to seeing our home-grown soccer stars take the national stage in the years and decades to come.

More information on these initiatives are included in this newsletter.

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

Keeping Our Islands Informed: H5 Bird Flu Detected in Australia



H5 avian influenza (bird flu) has been recently detected in Australia, with the first confirmed case identified in a wild migratory seabird (brown skua) found on the southern coast of Western Australia.

While the Indian Ocean Territories (IOT) remain free of H5 bird flu, this development is a timely reminder of the importance of awareness and preparedness across our communities. Preparedness is strongest when practical response arrangements are matched with early reporting from the community.

The IOT are equipped with sampling equipment to support the rapid investigation of reports of sick or dead birds. The Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry has also supplied the IOT with mission-critical response supplies to support an initial response by local teams should H5 bird flu arrive on the islands.

Community observations are an important part of early detection. Reporting early helps animal health experts assess the situation quickly and decide whether any further action is needed.

Signs to look out for include multiple sick or dead birds, birds that appear weak or unusually quiet, birds that have trouble moving or flying, or sudden illness or deaths in backyard poultry. If you see something concerning:

- Avoid contact. Do not touch the birds or get too close.
- Record what you see and where you saw it.
- Report it to the 24-hour Emergency Animal Disease Hotline on 1800 675 888, when prompted, choose

Option 5 for your location.

A range of bird flu materials are available including practical information on signs of disease, simple biosecurity steps, and what to do if you find sick or dead birds. Specific local guidance, including Preparing for H5 bird flu - Christmas Island and Preparing for H5 bird flu - Cocos (Keeling) Islands, is also available, and community members are encouraged to familiarise themselves with this. They are available here: [Resources for bird flu - DAFF](#).

By staying informed and reporting concerns early, the community can help protect the islands' unique birds and environment.

Australia remains free from H5 bird flu in poultry and egg production systems. At this time there should be no impact on chicken meat and egg supplies. Additionally, consistent with Food Standards Australia New Zealand advice, bird flu is not a food safety risk for chicken meat and eggs if they are handled and cooked correctly.

Investing in a reliable port for the Christmas Island community

Christmas Island Port continues to play a vital role in keeping our community supplied and connected. It's how essential goods reach the Island — from fresh food and medical equipment to building materials and everyday supplies — and it supports local jobs and economic activity, including the operations of the phosphate mine.

With so much depending on the port, maintaining safe and reliable waterfront infrastructure is a key priority of the Australian Government.

The current focus is on wharf remediation. Before a new wharf crane can be progressed, the wharf itself needs to be strengthened and made safe. This work is essential to protect the integrity of the site and ensure it can support the weight and operation of a modern crane.

The department has undertaken geotechnical assessments of the wharf's foundation and cliff face which are informing planning for the remediation

works, with the design stage commencing in July. This will be supported by a detailed workplan and the community will be kept informed of any impacts from the works on shipping schedules and access.

Our port operator Linx is monitoring conditions closely while remediation works are planned and progressed.

Repairs undertaken on the existing crane in 2023 has extended its useful life and continues to be monitored to ensure it can be operated safely. It undergoes servicing every six months.

The Department is committed to managing this project carefully, keeping essential freight moving and minimising disruption wherever possible. Although this is a complex undertaking, it represents a significant investment in the Island's future and in the island's sustainability.

Strengthening the wharf now means that in the future, a new crane project can be progressed – allowing it to be installed and operate safely and efficiently, helping to secure a strong and dependable port for the whole community.

We'll continue to share updates as the project progresses.

Community voices driving the future of health and wellbeing in the IOT

A new five-year roadmap for health and wellbeing across the Indian Ocean Territories is now taking shape — and community voices are at its centre.

The Indian Ocean Territories Health and Wellbeing Strategy (2026–2030) will guide how health, wellbeing and community services are delivered across Christmas Island and the Cocos (Keeling) Islands. Being developed by the department in partnership with the IOT Health Service (IOTHS), the IOT Administrator, and the IOTHS Community Advisory Committee (CAC), the Strategy is grounded in a simple principle: that services should reflect the needs, experiences and priorities of the communities they serve.

The Strategy will look closely at what supports good health across the Islands, where gaps exist, and how

services can work better together. It spans prevention, primary care, mental health, aged care, disability and broader social supports, and is informed by both recent data and lessons from the past 5–10 years.

A key part of shaping this work has been direct engagement with the community. In May, in-person consultations were held across both Christmas Island and the Cocos (Keeling) Islands, bringing together residents, service providers and stakeholders to share their experiences and ideas.

Community members highlighted common themes such as support for seniors, the importance of language and interpreter services, and a need for more health and wellbeing community infrastructure such as inclusive spaces for children, young people and families.

Taken together, this initial feedback points to the importance of practical, place-based solutions that are designed with — and for — the community.

Community input remains a critical part of the process. A survey is now available in English, Bahasa Malay and Chinese. A Cocos Malay version is being prepared and will also be available soon – the Cocos community will be informed separately once it is released.

The surveys will remain open until the end of July.

Access the survey here:

<https://www.infrastructure.gov.au/territories-regions-cities/territories/indian-ocean-territories/health-service>

Completed surveys can be returned to:

IndianOceanTerritories@infrastructure.gov.au

Feedback from the survey will help build a clearer picture of how needs are changing across the Islands, identify current and future priorities, and highlight which services are most valued by both the community and clinical staff. It will also help inform decisions about where additional services may be needed.

Together, these insights will directly shape the final Strategy — helping to deliver a clear, coordinated and community-informed plan to support health and wellbeing across the IOT over the next five years.

World Elder Abuse Awareness Day – Celebrating and Supporting Our Christmas Island Seniors



On Friday, 12 June, the Indian Ocean Territories Health Service proudly hosted a very special morning for our Christmas Island seniors to mark World Elder Abuse Awareness Day.

The morning began with a beautiful acoustic guitar performance by Simon Bolland, welcoming seniors as they arrived.

Our MC, Oliver Lines from the Shire of Christmas Island, officially welcomed attendees and acknowledged the many individuals and organisations who helped make this event possible. He also introduced Shire of Christmas Island councillor Mel Tung, portfolio holder for Seniors, who spoke in support of this important occasion.

Seniors enjoyed a mini expo featuring local organisations and service providers, who shared information on the support available in our community:

- Sergeant Brad Richards and Rebecca Kelly from the Australian Federal Police spoke about safety and encouraged seniors to call 000 for urgent assistance.
- Candice Ingwersen and Siti Zainal from St John Ambulance highlighted calling 000 in a medical emergency.
- Penny Hunstock from the IOTHS Oral Health Team reminded seniors about the importance of oral health and shared information on accessing reduced-cost dental services.
- Travis Cranley from Legal Aid WA, supported by Zaleha Aksan, discussed the importance of having

a will and staying alert to online and telephone scams.

- Susan De Cruz, Librarian at the SOCI Library, encouraged seniors to take advantage of free membership and resources.
- Occupational Therapist Caitlin Furner and Speech Therapist Bronte Brockway from IOTHS highlighted supports to help seniors remain safe, independent and well at home.
- Hafiz Masli from the Community Resource Centre explained how the CRC can assist seniors with applications for their annual seniors' flights and Seniors Cards.
- IOTHS Community Health Nurse Stevhnie Nel, outlined local community aged care services and raised awareness of the different forms of elder abuse, including financial abuse, emotional abuse, physical abuse, neglect and social abuse, reinforcing that it should never be accepted or ignored.

Throughout the morning, seniors enjoyed visiting the expo stalls, enjoyed musical performances by Hafiz Masli, shared a delicious morning tea, and spent time together as a community. Thank you to the Shire of Christmas Island, Legal Aid WA and CRC for providing morning tea.

A highlight of the day was a meaningful activity where seniors painted wooden flowers, each representing the message that every senior deserves to be loved, respected and valued.



A sincere thank you to all our stallholders, sponsors and community members who made the event possible, including:

- ♥ Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications, Sport and the Arts
- ♥ Shire of Christmas Island – especially Oliver Lines and Ron Foo
- ♥ IOTHS Health Workers, Allied Health Team, Social

Worker Lea Pedersen, Oral Health Team and medical students Mahi and Prit

♥ CRC for their contribution towards morning tea and the sound system

♥ Hafiz Masli for his wonderful musical performances

♥ Travis and Zaleha from Legal Aid WA

♥ AFP – Sergeant Brad and Rebecca

♥ Simon for his beautiful acoustic guitar performance

♥ Candice and Siti from St John Ambulance Christmas Island

♥ Christmas Island Shire Librarian Susan

♥ Our generous community sponsors – Island

Pharmacy, Christmas Island Post Office, CI Charities, CI Car Hire

Football Fever Kicks Off Across the Indian Ocean Territories



With global excitement building as the FIFA World Cup is underway, a recent Football West visit has brought a touch of that same football fever to the shores of the Indian Ocean Territories.

Led by Coach Izzy Folletta, the visit saw a packed schedule of activities delivered on Christmas Island (Monday 27 April to Monday 4 May 2026) and the Cocos (Keeling) Islands (Monday 4 May to Monday 11 May 2026). From schoolyards to community pitches, the program was all about getting the ball rolling, building skills, boosting participation and creating opportunities for people of all ages to get involved.

At both Christmas Island District High School and Cocos Islands District High School, students enthusiastically laced up their boots and took part in structured sessions focused on core football skills, including passing, control and movement. The energy was electric, with students showing great teamwork, determination, and plenty of smiles along the way.

It was especially encouraging to see strong participation from female students, highlighting that football is truly a game for everyone.

Beyond the classroom, the visit really hit its stride through community engagement. Coach Izzy provided sessions on Christmas Island with the Kampong Football Club, the Recreation Centre and the Cricket and Sporting Club, as well as on Cocos (Keeling) Islands with the Home Island Football Club and the community on West Island. Whether it was organised training or a casual kick-about, these activities brought together players of all ages - from young first-timers to seasoned community members - showing that football is more than just a game; it's a way to bring people together.



One of the standout moments of the visit was the “Stay On Your Feet” session for the local seniors group. With a focus on movement, balance and coordination, Coach Izzy used modified football activities to keep participants active while also creating space for laughter and connection. It was a great reminder that, when it comes to football, you’re never too old to get back in the game.

Across every session and both islands, one thing was clear – football is very popular in the IOT community and the next generation is ready to train hard, play well and make the most of any opportunity.

In many ways, this visit has set the field for what’s to come. There’s strong interest in coach education and accreditation, with locals keen to step up, build their skills, and help grow the game from within. With high participation, strong female engagement and passionate community support, the foundations are firmly in place to grow sustainable football programs across both Christmas Island and the Cocos (Keeling) Islands.

This initiative was funded by the Australian Government, with support from the Western Australian Government. Thank you to the Shires of Christmas Island and Cocos (Keeling) Islands, schools, clubs, community members and volunteers, for assisting to help make this visit possible -a true team effort both on and off the pitch. Thank you to the Cocos (Keeling) Islands and Christmas Island schools for providing the photographs.

As the world tunes in to the World Cup, the Indian Ocean Territories are already showing that football's biggest wins aren't just measured on the scoreboard, but in connecting and strengthening communities.



Community Bulletins



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



Community Bulletin

INDIAN OCEAN TERRITORIES

Number: D10/26. **Date:** 30 June 2026.

2026-27 charges for Water, Sewerage and Building Application Fees for the Indian Ocean Territories

From 1 July 2026, there will be changes to water, wastewater and building application services fees for the Indian Ocean Territories, consistent with pricing for remote communities in Western Australia.

The following increases have been applied to the new water and wastewater service charges:

- 2.75% increase for residential charges

- 2.75% increase for non-residential charges (commercial)
- 2.75% average increase for miscellaneous fees and charges
- 2.75% increase in water flow reduction/restoration fees reflecting the cost of providing the service.

The fees charged on CI and CKI are currently less than the cost of providing water and wastewater services. Full details about the 2026-27 charges can be found at:

- ***Christmas Island Utilities and Services (Water, Sewerage and Building Application Services Fees) Amendment Determination 2026***
[Christmas Island Utilities and Services \(Water, Sewerage and Building Application Services Fees\) Amendment Determination 2026 - Federal Register of Legislation](#)
- ***Cocos (Keeling) Islands Utilities and Services (Water, Sewerage and Building Application Services Fees) Amendment Determination 2026***
[Cocos \(Keeling\) Islands Utilities and Services \(Water, Sewerage and Building Application Services Fees\) Amendment Determination 2026 - Federal Register of Legislation](#)

The rates listed in these Determinations take effect from 1 July 2026.

The Australian Government, through the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications, Sport and the Arts, provides funding to Water Corporation to deliver water and wastewater services to Christmas Island (CI) and the Cocos (Keeling) Islands (CKI).

The fees for water, sewerage and building application services for 2026-27 were determined in consultation with Water Corporation.



2026-27 charges for Vehicle Examination Fees for the Indian Ocean Territories

An updated schedule of vehicle examination fees has been introduced in the Indian Ocean Territories (IOT) of Christmas Island and the Cocos (Keeling) Islands from 1 July 2026.

IOT vehicle examination fees are aligned with the Kimberley region of Western Australia and are updated annually. The following fee amendments are applied to vehicle examination fees in 2026-27:

Fees for the supply of vehicle examination services		2025-26 (current)	2026-27 (new)	Difference
Item	Vehicle	Kind of vehicle examination service and associated fee	Kind of vehicle examination service and associated fee	
1	Heavy vehicle	(a) first examination—\$306.25; (b) subsequent examination—\$183.80	(a) first examination—\$309.90; (b) subsequent examination—\$185.85	a) \$3.65 b) \$2.05
2	Trailer without brakes, motor cycle, motor carrier	(a) first examination—\$195.25; (b) subsequent examination—\$155.25	(a) first examination—\$196.65; (b) subsequent examination—\$156.25	a) \$1.40 b) \$1.00
3	Vehicle not covered by table item 1 or 2	(a) first examination—\$241.05; (b) subsequent examination—\$163.80	(a) first examination—\$242.85; (b) subsequent examination—\$164.95	a) \$1.80 b) \$1.15
4	Any vehicle covered by table item 1, 2 or 3	verifying the vehicle's identity or specifications—\$175.30	verifying the vehicle's identity or specifications—\$176.45	\$1.15

Full details about the 2026-27 charges, which take effect from 1 July 2026, can be found at:

- [Christmas Island Utilities and Services \(Vehicle Examination Fees\) Amendment \(2024 Measures No. 1\) Determination 2024 \(F2026L00812\)](#)
- [Cocos \(Keeling\) Islands Utilities and Services \(Vehicle Examination Fees\) Amendment \(2024 Measures No. 1\) Determination 2024 \(F2026L00813\)](#)

The Australian Government, through the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications, Sports and the Arts, provides funding to the Western Australian Department of Transport and

Major Infrastructure to assist in the delivery of transport services to the IOT.

Community Activities



Christmas Island Recreation Centre School Holiday Program

The Christmas Island Recreation Centre will deliver a School Holiday Program for students from Pre-Primary and above during the upcoming school holiday period. Activities will be held from 10:30am to 1:30pm on the following days:

Week 1

- Monday July 6
- Tuesday July 7
- Wednesday July 8
- Thursday July 9
- Friday July 10

Week 2

- Monday July 13
- Tuesday July 14
- Wednesday July 15
- Thursday July 16
- Friday July 17

No booking is required. Children must be signed in at the Christmas Island Recreation Centre front desk upon arrival.

For the safety of all participants, children under 10 taking part in Aquarun activities must be actively supervised by a parent or guardian at all times. Children under 5 must remain within arm's reach of their parent or guardian.

For further information about the School Holiday Program, please contact the Christmas Island Recreation Centre on (08) 9164 7939.

Community Announcements

Christmas Island Outdoor Cinema



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

Movie ticket \$5.00



Michael

Saturday, 4 July

The early life of musician Michael Jackson, from the discovery of his talent as the lead of the Jackson Five to

the artist whose creative ambition fueled a pursuit to become the biggest entertainer in the world.

**\$28 billion inheritance.
7 relatives standing
in the way.**



GLEN POWELL

**HOW TO MAKE
A KILLING**

How to Make a Killing

Saturday, 11 July

Disowned at birth by his obscenely wealthy family, a blue-collar stop at nothing to reclaim his inheritance, no matter how many relatives stand in his way.



Toy Story 5
Saturday, 18 July

Woody, Buzz, Jessie and the rest of the gang's jobs are challenged when they're introduced to electronics, a new threat to playtime.

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

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