



## End of year message

Last year, I commenced my message by welcoming the elected community representatives to the Norfolk Island Governance Committee (NIGC). A year later and after much advice, reading, research and passionate discussion, we are in the position of having an Australian Government decision to support a new bespoke model of local governance that is empowered to make laws for local service delivery. I would particularly like to thank the efforts and tireless work that Alma and now Chris and Chelsea are doing in representing the community on this most difficult of tasks, they are very worthy of all our support.

A strength of our community is the diversity of views and the passion with which they are held. I respect divergent views and accept that in some respects individual views may not all be reflected in what becomes our new form of representative government. However, after more than a year, I am sure that what eventually comes into being as our governance will be much better than where we have come from. I urge patience from the community as we are committed to sharing and obtaining views on these detailed aspects of the model that we are now working on.

Working closely with Phil Reid as the General Manager of Norfolk Island Regional Council, the Committee is well advanced in getting an in-depth understanding of the costs and revenues to support service delivery to the community. This understanding is the cornerstone to our discussions on developing a sustainable financial model.

In parallel, the work on developing and discussing the policy elements that will form the detail of the governance model continue. This is a lot of work as it covers the spectrum from the responsibilities and powers of the new Assembly through to transitional arrangements to ensure that things are done properly.

While the work of the NIGC has been a major focus this year, our trip to the Indian Ocean Territories in March has established a really good relationship with my counterpart Administrator Farzian Zainal. Since then, we regularly meet and work together on issues that are common to our communities. During the year, Minister for Territories Kristy McBain made arrangement for Farzian and I to sit as advisers to the Territories Infrastructure Project Board. With Brendon Christian being appointed as the Director of Territories Capital and Major Projects, we have a good team to provide insights into our respective communities' infrastructure projects. I look forward to hosting Farzian to visit us next year.

Meliame, Mana'ia and I would like to thank the community for the support they have provided us throughout the year.

Best wishes for a happy, safe and enjoyable festive season.

George Plant  
Administrator of Norfolk Island

December 2024



# Newsletter

Norfolk Island

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## The year that was...

This year we welcomed 26 citizenship conferees as full members of the Australian community, adding to the heart and strength of our diversity.

The Norfolk Island Governance Committee (NIGC) met regularly, both in person and virtually, continuing the hard work required to come to a consensus of a new governance model.

Our relationship with the Indian Ocean Territories has strengthened through regular discussions of our shared issues and a passion to achieve resolutions for our communities.

The Minister for Regional Development, Local Government and Territories, Kristy McBain returned to island to meet with the NIGC members and inspect infrastructure projects. The Minister continues to reiterate the Australian Government's ongoing investment in Norfolk Island's sustainable future.

Government House welcomed a much-needed new roof, worked on by Jordi Construction and many local tradespeople. The Government House Community Gardens opened once again thanks to some passionate community members. Let's see what produce thrives over the next twelve months.

We celebrated the first Year 12 cohort to complete their senior years successfully through the Queensland curriculum. What a magnificent achievement and transition. Congratulations to Russell Moore for steering the ship through this period. We now welcome Thomas Black to lead NICS.

James Tobin and the Channel 7 Sunrise crew filmed on island not once but twice this year. They obviously couldn't resist our beautiful Island.

Our community welcomed multiple visitors disembarking from cruise ships. A huge thank you to everyone involved in the smooth operations that make it possible for day trippers to enjoy our majestic waters, natural environment, and rich history and culture.

Our museums continued to showcase our rich and storied history through diverse exhibitions.

We had the hottest day on record and also the driest, we continue to hope for rain in the new year and are monitoring this closely.

As a community we celebrated many events as well as commiserated. But as always, we came together during tough times.

At this time of year, we come together with our families, friends, and community ahead of the new year. It is a time of hope and we are optimistic for what comes next. So many selfless community members are caring for others this Christmas, working and volunteering to keep everyone safe, and showing others they are cared for and valued. Thanks to all of you.



## Did you know?

Last month, the Australian and Queensland Governments published the annual report on state-level services being delivered by Queensland to the Norfolk Island community across the 2023-24 financial year.

You can read the report at the link here, to gain a thorough understanding of all the services delivered through the partnership between the Australian and Queensland Governments:

[https://www.infrastructure.gov.au/territories-regions-cities/territories/norfolk\\_island/norfolk-island-state-services-partnership](https://www.infrastructure.gov.au/territories-regions-cities/territories/norfolk_island/norfolk-island-state-services-partnership)

Some of the key achievements captured include:

- Delivering 1,646 outpatient appointments through Metro North Hospital and Health Services (MNHHS) to Norfolk Islanders.
- Completion of Queensland delivery of the Higher School Certificate at NICS and commencing the full transition to Queensland delivery of the Australian Curriculum from Prep to Year 10 and the Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority senior curriculum for NICS students.
- Supporting 21 apprenticeships and traineeships for Norfolk Island through Queensland, including TAFE Queensland delivering both in-campus and online training to 8 apprentices and trainees.

## Staffing updates

At the department, we have bid farewell to Kynan Gowland, and welcomed Rebecca Rush to the role of permanent head of the Norfolk Island Branch. It was great to meet her on her first visit to island earlier this month, and I have no doubt that her passion and enthusiasm will serve her well in leading the Branch and support the delivery of essential services over the long-term.