



Australian Government

BUILDING OUR FUTURE

NORFOLK ISLAND reform update

Message from the Administrator

We are in the first days of Norfolk Island's positive future.

There is much to do and there is a role for all Norfolk Island residents in making this change work.

The Advisory Council members are each committed to being active in our community and proactive in their resolve to represent the range of views needed to get the future governance model right.

Equally each of us should keep informed by getting the facts on entitlements at the Australian Government Information Centre.

Based on the positive feedback from the recent full house of appointments at the Centre, many future benefit recipients and visa holders now realise much of the 'dem-tull' was wrong. People who attended now have accurate information, and are now looking forward to the future. In recent days I have introduced a new arrangement for free childhood immunisation and passed on savings to lower the price of electricity and fuel from 1 July this year.

In coming weeks the results of work already undertaken in the areas of economic development, roads, telecommunications and health will guide the future.

I look forward to continuing to work with you over the year ahead.

The Hon Gary Hardgrave

Advisory Council

This month, the Assistant Minister for Infrastructure and Regional Development, Jamie Briggs made important announcements about the appointment of the Members of the Norfolk Island Advisory Council. Melissa Ward, as Chair, will be supported by Wally Beadman, Duncan Evans, Eve Semple and PJ Wilson.

Advisory Council Members have a broad range of backgrounds and importantly, have wide-ranging experience in local tourism, transport, environment, business, culture and heritage.

Establishment of the Advisory Council is an essential step in the transition to an elected Regional Council. It ensures the community is actively engaged in shaping and delivering reform for Norfolk Island in the lead-up to and beyond 2016.

Most notably for the people of Norfolk Island, the Advisory Council will provide the community with a local voice and assist with sharing information about the transition arrangements.

The first meeting of the Advisory Council is scheduled for 1 July 2015.





Norfolk Island Advisory Council Chair Melissa Ward recently met with Assistant Minister Jamie Briggs, Senator Zed Seselja, Gai Brodtmann MP and Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development staff to discuss governance arrangements for Norfolk Island.

Ms Ward reiterated the importance of reforms which prioritise economic development, community safety and sustainable government.

The Council has a number of key objectives to accomplish over the coming months, including advising Assistant Minister Jamie Briggs on:

- the model for the Norfolk Island Regional Council
- the transition of Administration of Norfolk Island staff to the Norfolk Island Regional Council
- the phasing in of new laws based on those of New South Wales.



Have your Say, Find out More

Your feedback is important to us.

If you have a question about changes that commence from 1 July 2016, you can confidentially contact the Administrator.

You are also encouraged to contact the Administrator if you have any topics you would like in future editions of this newsletter.

Legislation progress and commencement of laws on 18 June

The *Norfolk Island Legislation Amendment Act 2015* ('the Act') received the Royal Assent on 26 May 2015 and is now law.

Some Norfolk Island residents have asked what will happen now the law has passed, and what this will mean for businesses and the community.

The Act is divided into two main parts: an *interim transition time* and a *final transition time*.

The *interim transition time* started on 18 June 2015. On this date, the Norfolk Island Legislative Assembly and Executive Council ceased to operate.

During the *interim transition time*, authority for many decisions previously made by Norfolk Island Ministers has been conferred on the Assistant Minister for Infrastructure and Regional Development, Jamie Briggs.

The Assistant Minister has delegated many of his decision making powers under Norfolk Island laws to the Administrator and Peter Gesling, Executive Director of Norfolk Island.

This delegation makes sure the day-to-day running of the Administration of Norfolk Island can continue. Most other government arrangements will remain the same.

The Administration of Norfolk Island, the hospital and the tourist bureau will continue to deliver services during the *interim transition time*.

The *final transition time* of the Act will begin on 1 July 2016.

Copies of the Act are available on www.comlaw.gov.au with ID# C2015A00059.

The Administrator will continue to work closely with the Advisory Council and the community during this period.





If you have questions about the Act or the interim transition time on Norfolk Island, you can direct them to

NorfolkIslandReform@infrastructure.gov.au

Future newsletters will discuss other aspects of the Act.

The New Australian Government Information Centre

The recent visit by staff to the new Australian Government Information Centre was very popular.

The Centre is open on a regular basis from 10.00am – 1.30pm and 2.30pm – 4.00pm weekdays. You are welcome to visit the Information Centre during these hours to use the online tools and calculators to explore government services.

For those who didn't get a chance to make an appointment, specialist staff from the Australian Taxation Office (ATO), the Department of Immigration and Border Protection and the Department of Human Services will return for the week of 29 June 2015.

To book an appointment contact the Information Centre on 23465.

There are still 12 months until the reforms commence.

You can raise issues with the Administrator at office.administrator@infrastructure.gov.au or email questions on Norfolk Island changes to NorfolkIslandReform@infrastructure.gov.au



You may have heard... the community will be faced with hundreds of pieces of New South Wales legislation, which will all commence 1 July 2016. ***This is not true.***

In the lead-up to 1 July next year, the Australian Government will be working closely with the Advisory Council and the New South Wales Government on a model to ensure service delivery arrangements are prioritised, are flexible and responsive to particular needs on Norfolk Island.

Not all New South Wales laws will be applied from 1 July 2016. They will be assessed on a case-by-case basis before they are introduced to consider the impact on the circumstances of Norfolk Island. Norfolk Island laws will continue in force until specifically repealed.

Over the next twelve months, the Advisory Council will work with the Australian and New South Wales Government to identify which laws are suitable for Norfolk Island, either in whole or in part. New South Wales laws, when applied, will be applied as Commonwealth law.

It's important to be involved in this process through the Advisory Council.



www.infrastructure.gov.au/norfolk-island-reform



Office.administrator@infrastructure.gov.au



29 June – 3 July 2015

Representatives from ATO, Human Services and Immigration at Information Centre.



1 July 2015

First meeting of the Norfolk Island Advisory Council.



From now onwards ...

Information Centre remains key contact for information about changes to tax, health, immigration, and government payments.

