

NORFOLK



ISLAND

THE GOVERNMENT OF NORFOLK ISLAND

MEDIA RELEASE

Hydatid tapeworm not found in Norfolk Island

The Minister for the Environment, the Hon Stephanie Jack MLA, has reassured the community that there is no known occurrence of hydatid tapeworms in Norfolk Island.

Mrs Jack said that the "Pet Talk" column in *The Norfolk Islander* of 26th March might have given the impression that hydatid tapeworms were a problem in this community. The article detailed various types of intestinal worms that might infest the family cat or dog including hydatid tapeworms. "The newspaper item addressed important animal and human health issues", Mrs Jack said. "It rightly drew the community's attention to risks from parasitic worms that may be carried by family pets and the precautions that should be taken to control their effects. We should all be grateful that hydatid tapeworm has not been found here".

The Minister said that hydatid disease was a potentially fatal parasitic infection caused by the tiny hydatid tapeworm. However, the hydatid tapeworm has not been found in Norfolk Island and would be considered a significant public health and quarantine risk if it were. Neither the veterinarians nor medical practitioners practising on the Island have found any evidence of hydatid tapeworm in stock, dogs or people. Mrs Jack said that Norfolk Island therefore had hydatid-free quarantine status, and would remain vigilant to ensure that continued into the future.

Stephanie V Jack
Minister for the Environment

8th April 2005