



THE GOVERNMENT OF NORFOLK ISLAND

MEDIA RELEASE

Norfolk Island Government submission to the Commonwealth on governance issues

Chief Minister André Nobbs said today that governance discussions would continue between himself and the Commonwealth Minister for Home Affairs, the Hon Bob Debus MP, with a further one-on-one teleconference set for next week. Following that, it was likely that he would travel to Canberra for a face-to-face meeting with Mr Debus, probably within the next 2-3 weeks.

Mr Nobbs acknowledged that there was much community interest in the detail of the submission made by the Norfolk Island Government and Legislative Assembly to the Commonwealth. He said that in order to protect the integrity of the negotiations and to respect the confidentiality of Minister to Minister correspondence, he was not able to release the full original submission, which consisted of around 180 pages of documentation. However, he has arranged for a summary of the submission to be prepared and uploaded to Norfolk Island Government websites. The summary will be available from Monday 19 January on www.info.gov.nf and www.gov.nf

The summary details the main areas addressed, which as previously announced arose from a statement in the House of Representatives by Minister Debus, and subsequent issues raised by Mr Debus during a visit to Norfolk Island late in 2008. These areas included:

- Changes to the governance model and reform of the Norfolk Island Act;
- Responses to parliamentary report recommendations;
- Equity, fairness and progressive revenue measures; and
- Service delivery and transparency.

“We have provided a detailed paper recommending substantial review of the governance arrangements in the Norfolk Island Act to make them less costly and complex”, Mr Nobbs said. “But despite some rumours in the community, we have made no suggestion in this submission to abolish the position of Administrator. In our proposals, the role of Administrator would be retained, with clearly defined powers, and some of the powers of the Commonwealth would be expanded and codified”.

Mr Nobbs invited all interested people to access the electronic summary, and said that he would continue to provide ongoing information to the Norfolk Island community regarding progress in the governance discussions with the Commonwealth.

André Nobbs
Chief Minister

16 January 2009