



THE GOVERNMENT OF NORFOLK ISLAND

MEDIA RELEASE

Bushfire and flood disaster relief - Chief Minister's radio statement

Chief Minister André Nobbs was interviewed on Radio Norfolk on 9th February 2009 concerning the natural disasters of bushfires in Victoria and floods in Queensland. The Chief Minister made the following points:

"I am sure that over the past few days, all members of the Norfolk Island community have seen and heard about the tragic bushfires in Victoria and the widespread floods in Northern Queensland, which have resulted in much loss of life and enormous property damage.

As the national 1800 helplines cannot be accessed from here, anyone in Norfolk Island seeking information about family or friends can telephone Red Cross on 0061 3 8327 7700 or the Salvation Army on 0061 137258. Current bushfire information is also available at www.vicnet.net.au/ and www.abc.net.au/news/. The ABC site also has updates on the Queensland floods.

Both banks in Norfolk Island will accept donations from anyone wishing to make a contribution to the Victorian Bushfire Appeal Fund. You can also contribute to the Queensland Premier's Disaster Relief Appeal by post to PO Box 15185, City East, Brisbane 4002 or by making a deposit to a specified bank account. I have supplied both banks in Norfolk Island with the details of the account for such donations.

The Norfolk Island Government has created a register for volunteers who may wish to assist in the rebuilding phases in Victoria or Queensland. We will arrange free return fares to Melbourne or Brisbane on Norfolk Air for anyone willing to donate their services. Please telephone 22003 to provide your name and contact details if you are willing to assist in this way.

We have indicated that at some future time we would be willing to host visits of victim families to Norfolk Island as part of their recovery by providing free Norfolk Air trips. I have also been in touch with local service clubs who have agreed to assist with accommodation and ground transport for such families.

I have today written to the Premiers of Victoria and Queensland expressing our sympathy for victims and making offers of any assistance we are able to provide. I and will keep the community informed about any requests that are received.

There have already been many offers of help from people in Norfolk Island, and I know that as a community we will stand united in our willingness to help those in need following these terrible fires and floods in Australia”.

André Nobbs
Chief Minister

9 February 2009