



## **THE ADMINISTRATION OF NORFOLK ISLAND**

### **Response to media release on social welfare benefits**

The Administration of Norfolk Island has responded to a media release claiming that needy Norfolk Islanders have been wrongly denied social welfare payments. The details given are incorrect, as no relevant application for assistance has been received or rejected. The information provided appears to relate to an individual who enquired about payment of special benefits, but did not in fact make a formal application when advised that such benefits were subject by law to an income test. The matter had not at any stage been referred to the responsible Minister and there is no evidence of poor administration in its handling.

No complaint about the advice given or the administrative actions of any officer was made to the Administration's administrative complaints system, and no application for review under the *Social Services Act 1980* has been lodged with the Administrator. Both of these processes are quick and effective ways for claimants to seek a remedy without involving costly lawyers or court actions.

The advocate for the person involved had sought and been given the above advice. If any person wishes to lodge an application for special benefits, the Administration will consider it on its merits in accordance with the provisions of the Act.

5 June 2009