

ATTACHMENT B

MEDIA RELEASES ON THE INQUIRY

1. Each stage of the inquiry was advertised in *The Norfolk Islander*, a private weekly newspaper published by The Greenway Press.

- (i) The commencement of the inquiry and the visit to Norfolk Island by the Chairman, Dick Rye and the Secretary, Bob Searle, were advertised on 2 and 9 November 1996.
- (ii) The visit by Commission senior staff, Catherine Hull and Malcolm Nicholas, to explain the procedures for the inquiry, was advertised on 7 December, 1996.
- (iii) A reminder that submissions were due was published on 15 and 22 February, 1997.
- (iv) A change of date for the first conference was advertised on 22 and 29 March, 1997.
- (v) The first conference to discuss an annotated agenda and the workplace discussion program were advertised on 26 April and 3 May, 1997.
- (vi) The second conference to discuss the draft report was advertised on 28 June, 1997.

2. Radio interviews by Margaret Meadows of VL2NI, the Administration Broadcasting Service, were conducted with:

- (i) the Chairman and Secretary of the Commission in the week of 11 to 15 November, 1996;
- (ii) Commission staff, Catherine Hull and Malcolm Nicholas, in the week of 9 to 13 December, 1996;
- (iii) the Chairman and Secretary in the week of 5 to 9 May, 1997; and
- (iv) the Secretary on 7 July, 1997.

3. The texts of the press releases are reproduced below.

TEXT FOR THE NORFOLK ISLANDER

2 NOVEMBER and 9 NOVEMBER 1996

GRANTS COMMISSION VISIT

At the request of the Commonwealth and Norfolk Island Governments, the Commonwealth Grants Commission has been asked to report on Norfolk Island's economic capacity, financial and administrative arrangements and government services, including:

- (i) its capacity to meet obligations associated with current and future government functions that might be associated with an extension of the degree of self-government;
- (ii) its capacity to fund the Island's current and foreseeable infrastructure requirements (including its ability to service loans); and
- (iii) government services available on Norfolk Island including the contribution of the community towards those services and the capacity of the Island to maintain services at an appropriate level.

To begin this work, the Chairman of the Commission, Dick Rye, and the Secretary, Bob Searle, will visit the Island from Sunday 10 to Thursday 14 November. They will hold a series of meetings to explain how the Commission's work will be carried out and are keen to speak to anyone interested in giving their views on the major issues. The Commission regards local input into its inquiries as essential.

Following the visit, the Commission will prepare and distribute a discussion paper providing information on procedures and the major issues for the inquiry. Written submissions will be due about mid-February but it will also be possible to make oral submissions later. The report will be completed by mid-August 1997.

The main role of the Commission is to advise the Commonwealth Government on the distribution of general revenue assistance (some \$ 19 400 million per year) between the States and Territories. This advice is based on the principle that funds should be shared among the States and Territories so that each has the capacity to provide a common range and standard of services, provided it makes an average effort to raise revenue from its own sources and operates at the average level of efficiency.

In addition, the Commission has made reports on the Cocos (Keeling) Islands and Christmas Island similar to that required for Norfolk Island. The special circumstances of those Islands (such as their isolation, socio-demographic characteristics, economic situation and the standard of government services relative to those of remote mainland communities) were taken into account in considering their funding needs. Both Mr Rye and Mr Searle were involved in these reports.

If you would like to speak to them during their visit, please contact the Chief Administrative Officer on 22001 to make an appointment.

TEXT FOR THE NORFOLK ISLANDER

7 DECEMBER 1996

THE FINANCIAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE CAPACITY OF NORFOLK ISLAND

STAFF VISIT

The Commonwealth Grants Commission has been asked by the Commonwealth and Norfolk Island Governments to report on the financial and administrative capacity of Norfolk. The Commission is keen to receive submissions from the community and has produced a brief Discussion Paper to suggest the issues that might be covered. Catherine Hull and Malcolm Nicholas, two of the Commission's senior staff, will have the Paper with them when they arrive on the Island on 8 December.

If you talked to the Chairman and Secretary of the Commission, Dick Rye and Bob Searle, during their visit in November, a copy of the Discussion Paper will be sent to you. If you did not, and would like to receive a copy, call Rose in Administration on 22001 and she will make the necessary arrangements.

Catherine and Malcolm are available to talk to anyone who thinks they might wish to make a submission. Such discussions can be arranged by contacting the Administration or by leaving a message at the Castaway, where they will be staying.

TEXT FOR THE NORFOLK ISLANDER

15 and 22 FEBRUARY 1997

THE FINANCIAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE CAPACITY OF NORFOLK ISLAND

REMINDER

The Commonwealth Grants Commission has been asked by the Commonwealth and Norfolk Island Governments to report on the financial and administrative capacity of the Norfolk Island Government to provide government services.

The Commission is keen to receive submissions from the community to assist it in the preparation of this report. They are due by **28 February 1997**. If you wish to make a submission, please send it to:

**The Secretary
Commonwealth Grants Commission
5 Torrens Street
Braddon ACT 2612**

Norfolk Islanders will recall that the Chairman, Dick Rye, and the Secretary, Bob Searle, visited the Island in November 1996 to explain how the Commission works and how it would respond to the request from the two Governments. Catherine Hull and Malcolm Nicholas, two of the Commission's senior staff, also visited the Island in December to distribute a Discussion Paper showing the community how it might assist the Commission in making submissions.

Copies of the Discussion Paper are available from Rose Nobbs in the Administration on 22001.

TEXT FOR THE NORFOLK ISLANDER

22 and 29 MARCH 1997

THE FINANCIAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE CAPACITY OF NORFOLK ISLAND

CHANGE OF DATE OF CONFERENCE

The Commonwealth Grants Commission has been asked by the Commonwealth and Norfolk Island Governments to report on the financial and administrative capacity of the Norfolk Island Government to provide services. A considerable number of submissions have been received from the community and the Commission is very pleased with this response.

A Conference to discuss the submissions was scheduled for the week beginning 28 April. However, as the election for the Norfolk Island Legislative Assembly will take place on 30 April, the Conference will be put off for one week and will now commence on Monday 5 May at 4.30 pm. It will conclude on Wednesday 7 May. Discussions with service providers at their work places will follow on the Thursday and Friday.

Further details on the Conference, including notice of a session to be held on the evening of Tuesday 6 May, will be advertised in *The Norfolk Islander* closer to the date of the Conference. Members of the community who have not yet made a submission but wish to talk to the Commission while it is on the Island should contact Catherine Hull by fax (06 275 8009) or by reverse charges phone call (06 275 8048).

Information on the Commission's inquiry is contained in a Discussion Paper, copies of which are available from Rose Nobbs in the Administration on 22001.

TEXT FOR THE NORFOLK ISLANDER

26 APRIL and 3 MAY 1997

**THE FINANCIAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE CAPACITY OF NORFOLK ISLAND
CONFERENCE AND WORKPLACE DISCUSSIONS**

The Commonwealth Grants Commission has been asked by the Commonwealth and Norfolk Island Governments to report on the economic, financial and administrative capacity of the Norfolk Island Government to provide government services.

The Commission — Dick Rye, the Chairman and its two Members, Mr Ron Barnes and Professor Ken Wiltshire — and several members of their staff will be on the Island from 4 to 10 May.

A Conference to discuss submissions received from the Norfolk Island Government, the Department of the Environment, Sport and Territories and many Norfolk Island organisations and residents will commence on Monday 5 May at 4.30 pm at the South Pacific Resort Hotel. An agenda for the Conference is available from Joanne Adams in the Administration on 22001.

An evening session will be held on Tuesday 6 May to provide those who have not made submissions but who wish to discuss matters with the Commission an opportunity to do so. These discussions can be public or in-confidence. Anyone wishing to speak to the Commission in this way should contact Catherine Hull at the Commission on 06 275 8048 (reverse charges) or at the Hillcrest Gardens Hotels from Sunday evening 4 May.

A final session will be held on Friday 9 May at the South Pacific Resort Hotel. All sessions (with the possible exception of parts of the evening one) will be open to the public.

Discussions with government service providers will be conducted at their work places on the Thursday and Friday.

The Conference and workplace discussion program is as follows:

Monday, 5 May	4.30 pm - 6.00 pm	Opening of Conference, South Pacific Resort
Tuesday, 6 May	9.00 am - 5.00 pm	Conference
	7.30 pm - 9.00 pm	Conference
Wednesday, 7 May	9.00 am - 12.30 pm	Conference
Thursday, 9 May	9.00 am - 5.00 pm	Workplace Discussions
Friday, 8 May	9.00 am - 3.30 pm	Workplace Discussions
	4.00 pm - 5.30 pm	Conference Close, South Pacific Resort

TEXT FOR THE NORFOLK ISLANDER

28 JUNE 1997

THE FINANCIAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE CAPACITY OF NORFOLK ISLAND

DRAFT REPORT CONFERENCE

In continuing its inquiry into the financial and administrative capacity of Norfolk Island, the Commonwealth Grants Commission is to visit the Island again from 30 June to 4 July.

A draft report has been prepared by the Commission and distributed to the Norfolk Island Government, the Department of the Environment, Sport and Territories and many Norfolk Island organisations and residents. Five copies of the draft report and the submissions from the Norfolk Island Government and DEST are available in the Norfolk Island Library.

The report has been distributed as the basis for further discussions. It:

- tells readers what information the Commission has;
- raises the issues that need further discussion;
- provides details of the analysis undertaken and comparisons of Norfolk's situation with other communities; and
- gives some indication of preliminary findings.

In making comparisons, the report does not (with a few exceptions) imply what the Norfolk Island Government ought to do.

A Conference to discuss the Draft Report will commence on Monday 30 June at 9.00 am in the Sirius Room at The Colonial of Norfolk Island. The public sessions of the Conference will run from 9.00 am to 12.30 pm and from 1.30 pm to 5.00 pm on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday and close at 12.30 pm on Thursday 3 July. If necessary, an 'in-confidence' session will be held on the Thursday afternoon. Anyone wishing to speak to the Commission in this way should contact Catherine Hull at the Hillcrest Gardens Hotels from Saturday evening, 28 June.