



Norfolk Island Chamber of Commerce, Inc

MEDIA RELEASE - Thursday 20 September 2018

After 3 years, the experiment that abolished self-government in Norfolk Island has failed: Miserably!

**THE NORFOLK ISLAND CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
NOW ASKS THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT**

WHY?

Chamber received a copy of a public letter this week, and then received by Facebook a response from Assistant Minister Sussan Ley, Assistant Minister for Regional Development and Territories.

The Australian Government **must explain** to the Norfolk Island people the contents of the Minister's message and also answer:

- **Why** was the Norfolk Island community **NOT** informed previously of the plan to move 'state' managed services from New South Wales (NSW) to the Australian Capital Territory (ACT)?

- **Why** has there not been open and transparent dialogue on this topic with the people of Norfolk Island, rather than a poor attempt at damage control?
- **Why** did the Administrator of Norfolk Island not mention this alarming development during his radio interview on Tuesday 18 September 2018?
- **Why** is the commitment now only for “similar services, rights and responsibilities as other Australians”, rather than the same?
- **Why** are the “existing arrangements with NSW” only in place until June 2021?
- **Why** is it “... a possibility that NSW will be unable to continue to provide or add the additional state services..”?
- **Why** was the community of Norfolk Island not informed (until this week) that the Department of Infrastructure, Regional Development and Cities has “... approached the ACT as a possible provider...?”
- **Why** has the community not been informed that the ACT does not have Local Government legislation?

Assistant Minister Ley stated she wants to -

“ensure services are co-designed with the Norfolk Island community – and to ensure Norfolk Island residents are involved throughout this process”.

- **Why** has this not happened to date and will the Australian Government now commit to **GENUINE** community consultation? Will there be real community input into negotiation or must residents wait on the sidelines cap in hand until told what has been decided for us?

The Chamber now requests that the Australian Government immediately arrange an open forum meeting with Norfolk Island residents to explain **WHY**:

- confidential plans are being prepared by the Australian Government that will obviously have a major impact on the health, the education, the lives, the businesses, the economy, and the future of Norfolk Island?
- these plans were only confirmed by the Australian Government after an anonymous letter regarding these sweeping changes was published in local media?
- the Australian Government thinks it has the right to do all this to the Norfolk Island people.