

SUBMISSION 10



Senator Ross Lightfoot
(Chair – Joint Standing Committee on National Capital and External Territories)
Senator for Western Australia
Liberal Party of Australia
Suite 10/ 40 Cedric Street
Stirling WA 6021

Via Email: senator.lightfoot@aph.gov.au

Date: 5th of September 2002

Dear Senator,

With reference to Department Of Transport and Regional Services (DOTARS) Bulletin Number 73/02: Parliamentary Joint Standing Committee on National-Capital and External Territories (JSCNCET) of 28th August 2002 AND with particular emphasis on the *land management and planning services including reference to the proposed transfer of Crown land/ property by the commonwealth* which states "The Committee is seeking submissions from residents with a view to public hearings....." we submit the following:-

As a development company having a successful *track record* on Christmas Island over many years: We purchased a subdivision at government auction on the 30th of September 2000 (Location 448 Phosphate Hill Road) and are currently developing/ sub-dividing this land for the purposes of providing serviced allotments suitable for a variety of land uses (mostly residential). Our intended market is offcourse (a) the current Christmas Island Population and (b) the ominent population increase expected in relation to the proposal for a new *detention centre* and (c) the proposals relating to *APSC*.

History:

This background information is important and will hopefully assist you in your decision making re- proposed *transfer of crown land*:-

Our pre-purchase plans (and the timing of such) were thrown into disarray within two weeks of having purchased the above mentioned property when we were informed by Mr Scott McGufficke, Manager Planning Building and Health, Shire of Christmas Island that Location 448 was not zoned *commercial/ residential mix* (as sold by the commonwealth) but rather *public purposes/ hospital*. This of course rendered the property useless to us and we immediately lodged an application to change the zoning. Following regulatory processes this took over twelve months and in addition we were encumbered by a very lengthy subdivision application process.

Our persistence in the face of adverse circumstances has finally resulted in our ability to offer fully serviced subdivided allotments (at Location 448) in accordance with the regulatory requirements.

With particular reference to the *commonwealths* increased housing demand: We have already announced our position to Christmas Island Administration and their real estate agent highlighting our readiness to provide both land and house packages to accommodate their needs. This information was forwarded several months ago on indication from *administration* that they would like to know what we have to offer. As yet we have had no confirmation of their requirement.

Today:

The idea that the commonwealth is now considering "*special deals*" (as described by the government) which will see large and or small organisations in receipt of land to be utilised for the purposes of competing with our product is unacceptable. The term used is *unfair competition* and a government sponsored venture like the one proposed must surely abide by the ethics it imposes on the broader community and be *fair* to all concerned. We will not be the casualties of government policy.

When we purchased Location 448 we did so on the understanding that we were entering a *fair* and *just* property market on Christmas Island.

Please note: We purchased our land at Commonwealth Government Auction and in doing so - have advise from the Christmas Island Administration that land **will not** be made available to any individual or organisation under any circumstances other than those accessible to all interested parties (ie Public Auction/ Tender). Quote - "there will be no special deals". Christmas Island Administration has indeed gone beyond this promise in stating - "no land will be released on Christmas Island for any purposes for which such land is already available from the private sector."

We trust the *joint standing committee* as a process sure to bring democratic and moral justice to the affairs taking place on Christmas Island.

The Hon. Wilson Tuckey MP, Minister for Regional Services, Territories and Local Government conducted a public forum at the Christmas Island Club on the 12th of March this year at which he advised (in relation to the major developments taking place on Christmas Island); the positive benefits said to impact on local industry, business and the broader community. We applaud his resolve and look forward to fruition.

If it is your opinion that our comments should be directed or forwarded to other departments or authorities as well to further assist our cause then please advise us of such as soon as possible.

Your time on this matter is sincerely appreciated and we eagerly await your response.

Yours Sincerely

John Sorensen

Northern Bay Pty Ltd
PO Box 47
Christmas Island
WA 6798

CC: Committee Members, Joint Standing Committee on the National Capital and External Territories (as listed at www.aph.gov.au/house/committee/ncet)