

SUBMISSION 16

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September 16, 2002

Committee Secretary
Joint Standing Committee on the National Capital
And External Territories
Department of House of Representatives
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600
Australia



Dear Sir,

**Inquiry into specific Regional Services on Christmas Island
and Cocos (Keeling) Islands**

This submission has been provided by myself in my capacity as private individual, rather than through an organization that I am associated with. The views expressed are therefore of a personal nature, and do not purport to be the views of any organization that I am associated with, as that organization, or other members of such organizations, may have differing views. Information that has been used for this submission is available within the public domain, or relates to a corporation that is owned by my family. To provide the members of the Committee with a degree of information that relates to myself, and my involvement in community and business affairs of the Cocos (Keeling) Islands, the Introduction section provides certain relevant information pertinent to myself.

The submission has been prepared incorporating the following sections:

- 1 Introduction
- 2 Governance
- 3 Land Management.
- 4 Environment, economic development and utilities

5 Bibliography

6 Appendices

R J Grant

1 Introduction

I arrived in the Cocos (Keeling) Islands ('Territory') on October 14, 1986, and have resided since that date in the Territory. I am married to a Cocos Malay and we have a young daughter. Our family is a Muslim family and we reside normally Monday to Friday on West Island, and Saturday and Sunday on Home Island. In addition, we reside on Home Island during Muslim festivals, Ramadan and other cultural events.

My involvement within the community and business organizations relating to the Territory include the following:

COMMUNITY SERVICES

Cocos (Keeling) Islands Shire Council

President (elected 2001)

President (elected 1993)

Councilor (elected 1999 – 4 year term)

Councilor (elected 1993)

Chairman of Finance Committee (elected 1999 and 2001)

Cocos (Keeling) Islands Economic Development Association

Appointed to Management Committee of the Association by the Minister for Regional Services, Territories and Local Government in 2002

Elected as Secretary in 2002.

Cocos (Keeling) Islands Administrators Advisory Committee

Appointed 1999

Cocos (Keeling) Islands Health Advisory Committee

Chairman (elected 2002)

1 Introduction (cont.)

Islamic Council of the Cocos (Keeling) Islands (ISCO)

Chairman (elected 1998 – present)

The Cocos (Keeling) Islands Muslim Small Business Association (MUSBA)

President (elected 1998-present)

BUSINESS

I am also the chairman of directors for the following corporations:

Silverfox Corporation Pty Ltd

Indian Ocean Development Corporation Pty Ltd

AustAsia Strategic Investments Pty Ltd

Silverfox Corporation Pty Ltd is the developer for the Pulu Cocos Resort which is to be built on West Island, Cocos (Keeling) Islands. The environmental approval for this development was given by Environment Australia on April 23, 2002, and on August 23, 2002, Environment Australia issued the Certificate of Coverage of Impacts by Assessment required under the Environmental Reform (Consequential Provisions) Act 1999.

2 GOVERNANCE

2.1 Levels of government

- a) The Cocos (Keeling) Islands ('Territory') became an Australian Territory in 1955. In 1984 the Cocos Malay population voted in the Act of Self Determination for integration into Australia. The Territory has remained a non-self governing territory since that date, with a Commonwealth appointed Administrator.
- b) Christmas Island became a territory of Australia in 1958, and like the Territory is a non-self governing territory with an Administrator.
- c) Three levels of government exist for the Territory:

Local	Cocos (Keeling) Islands Shire Council
Territorial	Non-self governing territory with an appointed Administrator.
Commonwealth	Represented through House of Representative and Senate seats of the Northern Territory.

2.2 Local Government

- a) The Cocos (Keeling) Islands Shire Council ('CKISC') is the local government authority for the Territory. It is the only elected government body within the Territory .
- b) The CKISC and the Christmas Island Shire Council ('CISC') are members of the Western Australian Local Government Association ('WALGA'). However one Council was a member of WALGA's Pilbara Zone, and the other the Kimberley Zone.

Following discussions that commenced during the November 2001 Canberra National Local Government Conference, the CKISC and CISC will cease to be members of the above WALGA zones. In September 2002,

a separate Indian Ocean Policy Forum ('IOPF') will be established by WALGA for the CKISC and CISC.¹

2 GOVERNANCE (cont.)

A copy of WALGA's email confirming this is included in the appendix.

The first meeting of this IOPF will be held in the Territory in mid-October, 2002. The two councils will be able to develop joint Indian Ocean territories' strategies for local government issues and other non-local government issues. The IOPF will provide the vehicle to progress such joint Indian Ocean territories' issues in discussions with the Commonwealth and other parties. With the IOPF having a direct reporting line to the WALGA President and State Council, it will be in a position to progress its views on developments in the Indian Ocean territories direct to such bodies as the Western Australian Government, and to the Commonwealth Government through WALGA's representation on the Australian Local Government Association. Such developments will provide a immensely important avenue for the Indian Ocean territories.

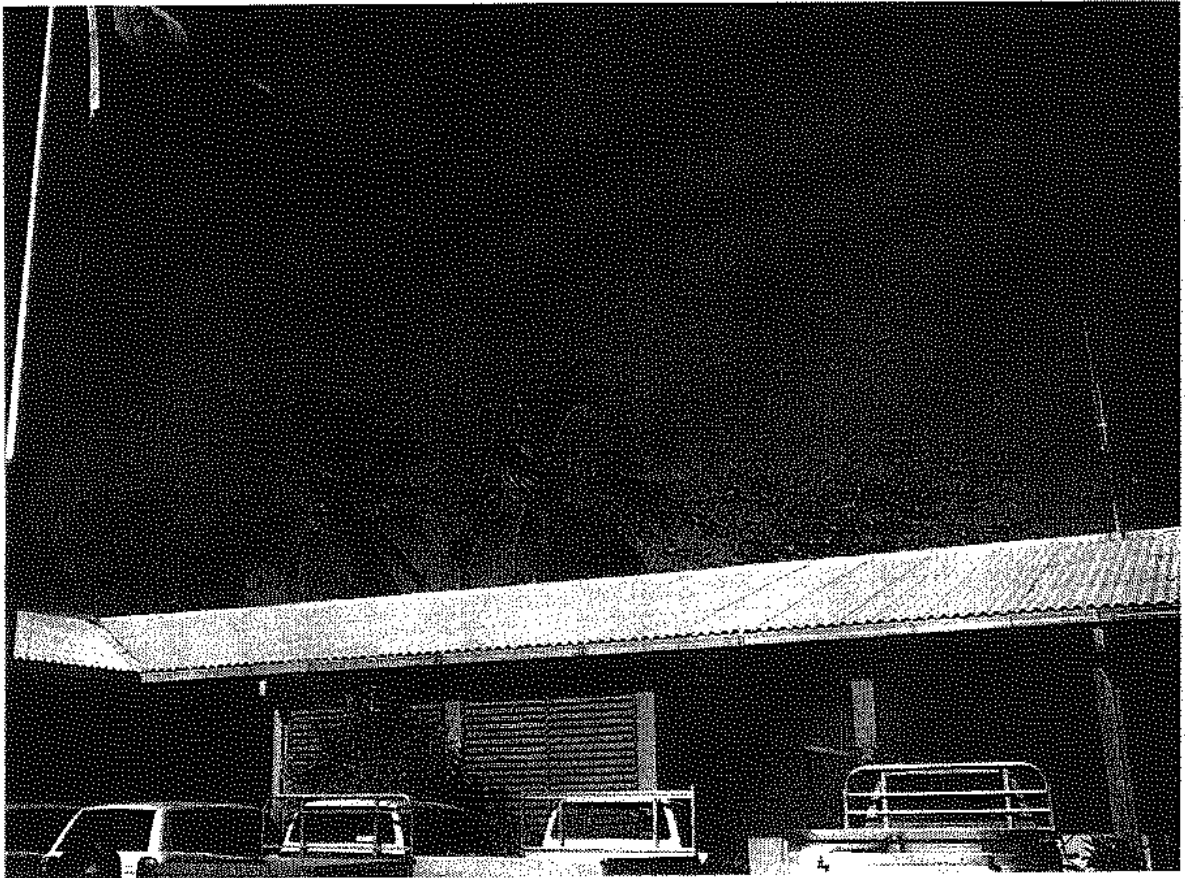
- c) As a result of an initiative of the CKISC, which commenced during the November 2001 Canberra visit, Level of Governments ('LOG') meetings have been instituted for the Territory. These meetings between the Commonwealth, Territorial and local government are to take place twice per year, one being in the Territory, and the other in Canberra. The first such meeting took place in the Territory in June 2002, and the second is planned for October 2002, in Canberra. The LOG meetings are intended to provide a vehicle to integrate governmental strategies that relate to finances, projects and programs. Once again this is a strategy to provide for a more integrated, and accountable, approach to the Territories affairs, and it is the hope that the CISC will subsequently be incorporated into LOG meetings to provide a comprehensive approach the development and governance of the Indian Ocean Territories.

¹ Western Australian Local Government Association. September 9, 2002.

2 GOVERNANCE (cont.)

2.3 Territorial government

- a) On September 3, 2002, the representative of the Commonwealth, handed to me, in my capacity as President of the CKISC, the first Territorial flag (a photograph of the flag is provided below)



The flag is a visual representation of the Territory's identity. Just as the Territory's flag provides recognition of the Territory's identity, it is equally important to recognize other significant developments within the Territory. These are detailed below.

- b) During the recent visit by Wilson Tuckey, Minister for Regional Services, Territories and Local Government, September 2-4, 2002, to the Territory, it was made clear to the CKISC, and the wider community, that the Minister was examining a strategy that would combine a reduction

of the Commonwealth's presence through its on island territory's administration and a transfer of Commonwealth/state services to local governments for

2 GOVERNANCE (cont.)

- c) both the Territory and Christmas Island. e.g. health, education, airports, ports, law enforcement, asset management. This follows on the Minister's desire to give the territories' communities more control over services and finances within the territories.
- d) Following on the Minister's desire to give the Territory's community more control over services and finances through elected representatives, although it be at the local government level, I am of the opinion that attention must be paid to the changes in the dynamics of the Territory. I am a firm supporter of Australia's multiculturalism, and therefore believe all residents of the Territory should be referred to as Cocos Islanders. Due recognition should be given to the fact that different ethnic groups (i.e. the Cocos Malays ethnic group and the non-Cocos Malay ethnic group) form the Cocos Islanders. I feel that this is vital for the future successful economic and social development of the Territory. The population dynamics have also changed with more non-Cocos Malays taking up permanent residency, and establishing businesses, or investing in the Territory.
- e) Although the above is not formally acknowledged, the creation of the CKISC, which replaced the Cocos (Keeling) Islands Council, has been a progressive move. It extend the mandate of elected local government over the entire Territory, with all eligible residents, Cocos Malays and non-Cocos Malay, being able to vote and be elected as Councilors. It's my opinion that appropriate recognition has to be given to these changing dynamics.
- f) All services should be directed at Cocos Islanders, and where required, if at a social or economic level, based upon a specific target group e.g. low income group, disabilities group, age group, education level group. In many cases in the past the thrust was more based upon ethnic groups.
- g) I believe the Minister's thrust to transfer state type responsibilities from the non-elected form of territorial governments, that exist both in the Territory and Christmas Island, to an elected body, is the correct strategy to be adopted. However, rather than transferring state type functions to elected local government bodies for the

Territory and Christmas Island, I would offer an alternative strategy. This is strategy is detailed below.

2 GOVERNANCE (cont.)

- (i) The Territory and Christmas Island are non-self governing territories of the Commonwealth of Australia.
- (ii) The concept of the integration of the Territory and Christmas Island into Western Australia has been examined by the Commonwealth. Such an integration would need a referendum in Western Australia. With the CKISC and the CISC now being members of the IOPF, with direct access to WALGA and the ALGA, should they oppose such a move, the communication of such a view to the Western Australian Government, through such avenues, would ensure that the issue went no further.
- (iii) It is unlikely that the two territories would become self-governing territories each in its own right.
- (iv) The two territories are geographically close to one of the most dynamic world regions (i.e. Southeast Asia) and each other.
- (v) The two territories have enormous potential marketing power both regionally and globally.
- (vi) The two territories should be combined into one Indian Ocean Territory, with its own elected government. This would provide the community of the Indian Ocean Territory direct control over their own affairs. As non-self governing territories, residents of both the Territory Christmas Island have no elected representation at territorial level.² All issues at territorial level are currently decided by a combination of the Federal Government minister and the Department of Transport and Regional Service staff. Although there does exist Administrator's Advisory Committees within both territories, this is not the same as elected territorial governments.³
- (vii) State type financing, and associated services, which provide common services to both territories (e.g. health, education, utilities, law, emergency services, airports,

²DOTARS Annual Report 2002-2001.3:38

³ DOTARS Annual Report 2002-2001.3:35.

ports) be placed under the Indian Ocean Territory government. Local government bodies would not be involved in state type services, but concentrate on local government services. I can see no advantage in breaking

2 GOVERNANCE (cont.)

current state type services, and placing them under two local government bodies. Although the Portfolio Budget Statements 2001-02 states: "*The revised framework, outlined in the Portfolio Budget Statements 2001-2002, improves the transparency of the Department's accountability framework. It will improve internal and external reporting functions by enabling DoTRS to focus more strategically on the outcome it is seeking to achieve*".

⁴ However, it is extremely difficult to extract information relating to the Territory's finances, which is another vital reason to have real accountability over the Territory's finances through elected representatives.

- (viii) The Commonwealth's function would revert back to a similar arrangement as currently exists with a state. There would be a rationalization of the Commonwealth's territorial administrations in territories, Territories Office Perth, and Territories Office Canberra. All administrative function would move back to the Indian Ocean Territory. The 2002-2003 Portfolio Budget stated: "*In 2002-2003 the IOT operating expense budget is \$68.7. Approximately 3/4 of these funds will be expended directly in provision of services to IOT communities*". Approximately 20% of these funds are expended in administration costs, with another 43% going in Non-SDA state services. There is no doubt that this level of expense could be reduced under the concept of an Indian Ocean Territory.⁵
- (ix) Both territories have a modern and common body of law, based upon a combination of Commonwealth, Western Australian and territorial ordinances.
- (x) Both territories have common airline and shipping services

⁴ DOTARS Annual Report 2000-2001:3.

⁵ DOTARS Budget 2002-2003: Overview.

3 LAND MANAGEMENT.

3.1 The Cocos (Keeling) Islands consists of 27 islands with a total land area of only 14 square kilometers. Any development can have significant impacts upon the terrestrial and marine environments. Land management may be divided into three distinct sectors:

Cocos (Keeling) Islands Shire Council land management

Commonwealth land management

Private land management

3.2 Cocos (Keeling) Islands Shire Council land management

Issues

The Cocos (Keeling) Islands Shire Council (Council) through two land trusts controls approximately 6/7ths of the land in the Territory, with the balance being owned by the Commonwealth and private parties.

The Council is currently engaged in a process which will see approximately 100 houses proceed from a situation under which Cocos Malays are tenants, under a weekly rental basis, to that of being long term lessees of land, and the owners of the houses constructed on the land to be leased.

The timetable for such a transition is as follows:

September 11, 2002 Land Trust Committee meeting to review Key Points Circular to be distributed to all tenants.

September 16, 2002 Key Points Circular to be distributed to all tenants

October 1, 2002 Land Trust Committee members to commence program of visiting each tenant to explain Key Points Circular and obtain tenant's feedback.

October 23, 2002 Public meeting at which the Council, as the trustee for the land trusts, will explain the strategy for the land lease arrangements and

3 LAND MANAGEMENT (cont.).

housing ownership transfer, plus provide answers to tenants' questions.

December 2002/
January 2003 Council's building surveyor to inspect all houses, and prepare schedule of defects.

March 31, 2003 Lease and ownership of houses documentation to be finalized, and program for transfer to commence.

The key issue that will affect the valuation placed upon the houses which are to be transferred will be the community's expectations of the Council for future housing requirements. If the community do not expect the Council to construct any additional housing this mean that the valuation for the houses will be quite low. However, if there is an expectation for the Council to build additional housing, based upon demographic projections, and the finance that will be required, and the associated construction time frame, the value that the houses are sold for will have to be adequate to meet this need. By the October 23, 2002, meeting the community have to indicate their preference to the Council

If the former alternative is selected by the community, the funds derived from the sale of the houses and lease fees will be used to provide services for vacant lots, wherever the resources are adequate, currently or planned. This may not necessarily be Home Island. The vacant lots can be leased, if on trust land, but the individuals will be responsible for obtaining the required finance for the construction of houses on such leased land.

Recommendations for consideration by Parliament's External Territories Committee.

- 1 A demographic study is required to determine future population trends.
- 2 A demographic study is required to determine what local government services will be required e.g. waste management, roads, law and order, health, education and welfare, recreational and culture.

3 A demographic study is required to determine what Territorial government services will be required e.g. utilities (power, water and sewage), education, health and

3 LAND MANAGEMENT (cont.).

4 welfare. A demographic study is required to determine what Commonwealth government services will be required

5 A demographic study is required to determine where Commonwealth, Territorial and local government services are to be located.

6 A demographic study is required to determine the level of funding that will be required by Federal, Territorial and local government to meet programs and projects.

7 A demographic study is required to determine future housing requirements, based upon the answers to the above recommendations.

3.3 Commonwealth land management

Issues

Issue 1 Former Animal Quarantine Station.

I have been informed that the former Animal Quarantine Station currently falls under the control of the Department of Immigration, Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs. Previously it was under the control of the Department of Primary Industries and Energy, who were in the process of examining alternatives for its disposal as it was no longer required for its original purpose. One alternative had been developed by the Department of Transport and Regional Services which would have seen the site developed for commercial and residential purposes.

The station was used as a temporary immigration reception and processing center in 2001 in relation to two boatloads of Sri Lankan illegal immigrants. However, since the removal of the last of these illegal immigrants, the Station has not been used. The Station has not been maintained and is rapidly deteriorating. I would recommend that members of the Committee examining the Station during their visit.

I have been informed that the Department of Immigration, Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs intend to maintain control over the Station until such times as the immigration reception and

processing center on Christmas Island has been constructed, and is operational. For illegal immigrants arriving in the Territory, the strategy would be to hold them temporarily in the Territory until

3 LAND MANAGEMENT (cont.).

they could be flown to the new facility, when constructed, on Christmas Island.

Recommendations for consideration by Parliament's External Territories Committee.

- 1 That the Station being transferred at the earliest possible time to the Department of Transport and Regional Services, and not wait until the new immigration reception and processing facility is operational on Christmas Island.
- 2 That the planning for the development of the Station for commercial and residential purpose proceed at the earliest possible time, so that such a development can be incorporated into the recommended demographic study, to determine the utilities and finances that will be required.

Issue 2 Buffet Close, West Island

In October, 2002, an area of Commonwealth vacant land on West Island, referred to as Buffet Close, is to be auctioned off, with the preferred strategy, being that Buffet Close be sold to a developer, who will be responsible for the subdivision and infrastructure development, and ultimate sale.

On August 5, 2002, the Minister for Regional Services, Territories and Local Government, wrote to the Council requesting that the Council's Town Planning Scheme be amended to permit zoning at R20, which would allow a minimum lot of 450m² per dwelling. The Minister requested the Council's views on amending the Town Planning Scheme to accommodate his request.

At the Council meeting of August 20, 2002, the Council resolved to inform the Minister that it did not consider a R 20 zoning appropriate taking into account the following:

- 1 The recommendations of the report, "Development Control Plan" prepared by Gutteridge Haskins & Davey Pty Ltd, commissioned by the Cocos Islands Administration in January, 2002, revised in February, 2002.

This report includes the statement: "Lot sizes in this precinct vary between 750 and 1800 m2. This equates to an R-Code residential density of around R10. This level of density is considered appropriate for the style of living and consistent with current demands. Proposals for development where the density would exceed R15 should

3 **LAND MANAGEMENT (cont.).**

be avoided unless it can be clearly demonstrated that the amenity of the residences within and near the development is not compromised..... Such proposals should be discouraged within or near the heritage precinct. The density controls in the DCP should be consistent with the Cocos Planning Scheme unless there are strong environmental and heritage reasons to differ. The density controls should not exceed those in the planning scheme".⁶

2 The Council's Town Planning Scheme No 1 states: " Within the Residential zone on West and Home Island the R15 residential code shall apply". ⁷

3 In addition the Council requested the Commonwealth to address the adequacy of issues that related to current, or proposed, utilities to service Buffet Close. The Department of Transport and Regional Services wrote to me, in my capacity as Chairman of Silverfox Corporation Pty Ltd (July 31, 2002: 1): "On the issue of whether the West Island waste water treatment plant has the capacity to cope with effluent from the Resort, as you are no doubt aware, further work is required. We are currently assessing the population increase that the newly commissioned system can contend with. It is quite possible an expansion of the plant will be required. I would be happy to work with you to determine an appropriate level of contribution for the provision of sewage and other utilities following the finding of our assessment". This was the particular point that the Council made to the Minister in its response in reference to his request for a R20 zoning classification for Buffet Close.

4 On September 3, 2002, during the Minister's visit to the Territory the issue was raised, and the Council explained its reasons for not agreeing to a R20 classification. The Minister informed the Council that he would proceed with a R20 zoning classification.

⁶ Gutteridge, Haskin & Davey. 2001: 25.

⁷ Shire of Cocos (Keeling) Islands. 2001: 13.

Recommendations for consideration by Parliament's External Territories Committee.

- 1 That a consistent, and appropriate, land management strategy be adopted taking into account the unique terrestrial and marine environment, sustainability of development, and ability of utilities to support development.

3 LAND MANAGEMENT (cont.).

Issue 3 Disposal of Commonwealth housing on West Island

I refer the Committee members' attention to the issue and recommendations contained in the Cocos (Keeling) Islands Economic Development Association's letter of August 22, 2002.

3.4 Private land management

I refer the Committee members' attention to the issue and recommendations contained in the Cocos (Keeling) Islands Economic Development Association's letter of August 22, 2002. I would in particular draw the members' attention to the influence that absentee investors are having in driving up property values.

4 ENVIRONMENT, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND UTILITIES.

4.1 The environment, economic development and utilities are completely interwoven in the Territory. Economic development must be sustainable within the fragile terrestrial and marine environment, and the utilities that are required to support the sustainable development have to be examined within the context of renewable alternatives, contribution to pollution and cost effectiveness.

4.2 Environmental approval

Issue 1

a) There three levels of government are involved in relation to environment issues

Commonwealth	Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act.
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Territory	Environmental Protection Act (WA)(CKI)
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Local	Relevant West Australian Acts
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b) Silverfox Corporation Pty Ltd is the developer for the Pulu Cocos Resort which is to be built on West Island, Cocos (Keeling) Islands. The environmental approval for this development was given by Environment Australia on April 23, 2002, and on August 23, 2002, Environment Australia issued the Certificate of Coverage of Impacts by Assessment required under the Environmental Reform (Consequential Provisions) Act 1999. The process to obtain the environment approval commenced in 1998 and included the preparation of a Notice of Intent, draft Environmental Management Plan, final Environmental Management Plan and Flora Study. In relation to the process of environmental approvals I do not have a problem as all issues have been addressed and approval provided.

- c) However, many activities that have an impact upon the environment, both individually and cumulatively, are not going through an environmental assessment process. Although individually they may not have a significant impact, cumulatively they do have an impact, not only on the environment but upon utilities (e.g. water, sewage,
- 4 **ENVIRONMENT, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND UTILITIES.**
- power, communications, waste management) as well as other services (e.g. health, education, welfare).
- d) Examples of activities include the construction and operation of small tourism ventures, the development of Buffet, clearing of areas on West Island for high voltage cables, and the future development of the Quarantine Station.

Recommendations for consideration by Parliament's External Territories Committee.

As the Territory has a very unique and fragile terrestrial and marine environment, all developments on a commercial nature, or for the development of infrastructure be subject to environment assessment, which would determine if any additional environmental study was required to obtain environmental approval. Unless this is done, the very uniqueness of the marine and terrestrial environment which attracts tourists will be damaged, resulting in a decline in the number of tourists.

2 Sustainable development

Issue

- a) The Cocos (Keeling) Islands Economic Development Association (CKIEDA) was incorporated on June 10, 2002. For the next three years, its annual funding will be \$100,000, consisting of \$75,000 from the Commonwealth, and \$25,000 from eNIC Cocos (Keeling) Islands Pty Ltd, the internet service provider. These funds can be supplemented by additional funds derived from grants.
- b) The objects are the CKIEDA are:
- To promote economic development in the Territory
- To enhance business opportunities in the Territory

To print, published, sell, distribute and circulate pamphlets, advertisement, books, and publications of any kind as are circulated to promote and advance the objects and purposes of the Association

To cooperate with other bodies having similar aims

3 ENVIRONMENT, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND UTILITIES.

To liaise with the Christmas Island Economic Development Committee Inc to achieve common goals

- c) The CKIEDA can contribute to the economic development of the Territory, however, the issue of sustainable development requires a more comprehensive strategic approach.
- d) The comprehensive sustainable development strategic approach, not only requires a Territorial approach, but a strategy which incorporates both the Territory and Christmas Island. In fact it further supports the concept of an Indian Ocean Territory.
- e) Issues to be incorporated into such a strategy include:
 - Environmental
 - Utilities (e.g. power, water, sewage and communications)
 - Aircraft services
 - Shipping services
 - Education
 - Waste management
 - Land management

Recommendations for consideration by Parliament's External Territories Committee.

That a comprehensive sustainable development strategy be developed, which incorporates assessment and approval processes to ensure economic development is sustainable and integrated within the fragile terrestrial and marine environments

3 Utilities

Issue 1 Renewable energy

The Commonwealth has recently commissioned study into wind generation, but taking into account the relative degree of isolation,

4 ENVIRONMENT, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND UTILITIES.

and the cost associated with the production of power, renewable energy is an area for further investigation.

Recommendations for consideration by Parliament's External Territories Committee.

That in conjunction with other environmental issues that may affect the Territory, such a climate change, the issue of sustainable energy alternatives be reviewed. In relation to climate change DoTARS' Annual Report 2000-2001 states: "*Identify in clear and timely fashion threats and opportunity for Portfolio interests from the emerging climate change agenda*".⁸ This is an area that has been pursued with little response from the Commonwealth, but is obviously vital for the Territory.

Issue 2 Home Island Power Station

Since the destruction of the Home Island power station in 2000, power has been supplied by temporary generators. The Commonwealth is reviewing options as to a new sources of power for Home Island.

Recommendations for consideration by Parliament's External Territories Committee.

That the issue of a permanent power station for Home Island, or a permanent alternative, be pursued on an urgent basis.

⁸ DOTARS's Annual Report 2002-2001. 3:4.

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Western Australian Local Government Association. September 9, 2002. Correspondence to Cocos (Keeling) Islands Shire Council.

Appendices

Cocos (Keeling) Islands Economic Development Association

PO Box 1051
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Cocos (Keeling) Islands
Indian Ocean 6799
Via
Perth Mail Exchange
Western Australia
Australia

Telephone
Australia 08 91 62 6532
International 61 891 62 6532

Email ckieda@kampong.cc

August 22, 2002

Warren Snowdon MHR
Parliament House
Canberra.
ACT

Dear Warren,

Reference: Housing on West Island, Cocos (Keeling) Islands.

The Cocos (Keeling) Islands Economic Development Association (CKIEDA) seeks your assistance on an urgent basis on the above subject. To assist you in considering this matter I have presented specific facts below.

1 The Cocos (Keeling) Islands Economic Development Association

1.1 The CKIEDA was incorporated under the Western Australian Associations Incorporation Act 1987 on June 10, 2002. The rationale for the formation of the CKIEDA flowed from the Federal Government's Regional Australian Summit, and the formation was strongly supported by Senator Ian MacDonald, the former Minister for Regional Services, Territories and Local Government. The current Minister for Regional Services, Territories and Local Government, Wilson Tuckey, has continued this strong support for the CKIEDA.

1.2 The objects of the CKIEDA include, as per the Constitution, point 4, states:

To promote economic development in the Territory

To enhance business opportunities in the Territory

To print, published, sell, distribute and circulate pamphlets, advertisement, books, and publications of any kind as are circulated to promote and advance the objects and purposes of the Association

To cooperate with other bodies having similar aims

To liaise with the Christmas Island Economic Development Committee Inc to achieve common goals

- 1.3 The following were appointed by Minister Tuckey to the Management Committee of the CKIEDA:

Name	Occupation	Residing
Rosly Arkrie	Small businessman Cocos Manpower	*House 12, West Island
Mhd Said Chongkin	Small businessman CKI Services	House 61, Home Island
John Clunnies-Ross	Small Businessman Cocos Marine	*House 58, West Island
Dieter Gerhard	Small Businessman Cocos Solutions	*House 50, West Island
Ron Grant	Small Businessman Silverfox Corporation Pty ltd	*House 27, West Island
Alan O'Grady	Manager, Cocos Islands Co-operative Society Ltd	House 34, West Island

The above were selected for their commitment to the economic development, and social development, of the Territory.

Those houses marked with an * are Commonwealth houses, which are rented on a weekly basis.

- 1.4 The most essential element for successful economic development of the Territory is the security of housing tenure, without this there can be no sustainable economic or social development for the Territory.

2 Introduction

I have attached DOTARS' letter of August 1, signed by Margaret Backhouse, the Deputy Administrator for the Cocos (Keeling) Islands, as Attachment 1, to this letter. This was a standard letter sent to all occupants of Commonwealth owned housing on West Island, who are not employees of the Commonwealth. The CKIEDA supports the move by the Commonwealth to put in place strategies that can assist long-term rental tenants of Commonwealth houses on West Island, to purchase those houses at realistic values. In achieving this goal, these tenants, who are in the majority small business operators, can contribute to the economic and social development of the Territory, a prime objective of the Commonwealth.

As you are well aware, as the local MHR, the Commonwealth has developed a strategy of auctioning off West Island houses which have been deemed to be surplus to the core operations of the Commonwealth. These, surplus houses, have been auctioned off progressively, and due to the limited number of houses that are available and the progressive strategy of release, the prices of house have escalated eg at the last auction this year, a 3 bedroom, fibre walled, asbestos roof house sold for \$380,000.; a former Direction Island house sold for \$230,000. In the majority of cases these houses have been purchased by persons from the Australian mainland, or elsewhere, who do not live, or conduct any business on Cocos. These houses may have been purchased on the basis of a tenant in resident, the residency being for a specified period. In fact one wealthy person from the mainland has progressively purchased three houses on West Island, and if not constrained by a tenant in residence, purely rents these houses out to persons on holidays, or involved on short term contracts for construction or other projects. Such an investment policy is in competition with businesses that have specific tourism operations such as the West Island Lodge, Cocos Cottages, The Last Resort, Cocos Bungalows and the hermit Lodge. Such sales, although maximizing revenue for the Commonwealth, have done nothing to address the pressing housing needs of long-terms residents of West Island.

3 Comments and recommendations

The CKIEDA wishes to comment on the contents of DOTARS letter of August 1, 2002 as follows, in an attempt to assist in the development of the social and economic environments of Cocos.

POINT 1 CONSULTATION

1.1 Issue

The introduction paragraph of the letter of August 1, 2002, states:

“ The purpose of this letter is to let you know of the Commonwealth's medium term intentions in relation to Commonwealth owned housing on Cocos and particularly that housing tenanted by private individuals”.

Comments

Housing is a fundamental issue, and is of prime concern for the persons who received the letter.

The letter was addressed to:

Name	Occupation	Residing
Noor Anthoney	Director- Development and Community Affairs. Cocos (Keeling) Islands Shire Council	House 43, West Island

Rosly Arkrie	Small businessman Cocos Manpower	House 12, West Island
Geoff Christie	Small Businessman A Rentals	House 18, West Island
John Clunnies-Ross	Small Businessman Cocos Marine	House 58, West Island
Dieter Gerhard	Small Businessman Cocos Solutions	House 50, West Island
Ron Grant	Small Businessman Silverfox Corporation Pty ltd	House 27, West Island
Casey Haig	Small Businessman Cocos Farma Ltd	House 47, West Island

It should be noted that there are extremely limited alternatives for housing on West Island. It is no understatement to say that this letter has placed substantial stress on the concerned persons, and their families.

Prior to the receipt of this letter the Commonwealth did not hold any form of consultative process with the persons that will be affected by this Commonwealth policy, either individually or as a group. By comparison, in my role as a Councilor, and President of the Cocos (Keeling) Islands Shire Council, an extensive and intensive community consultation process over a period of years, was introduced, and is still active, in relation to the transition of approximately 95 tenants in Council owned houses on Home Island, from weekly rental tenants, to owners of the houses they had previously rented.

I would request that the Commonwealth establish a consultative process, as a matter of urgency, for the group of individuals that are to be affected, and no further action be undertaken by the Commonwealth until such a consultation process has been established and finalized.

POINT 2 TIMING

2.1 Issue

The introduction paragraph of the letter of August 1, 2002, states:

*“ The purpose of this letter is to let you know of the Commonwealth’s **medium term intentions** in relation to Commonwealth owned housing on Cocos and particularly that housing tenanted by private individuals”.*

Comments

The above paragraph refers to the Commonwealth's medium term intentions. However, following on the DOTARS' letter of August 1, was a further DOTARS' letter dated August 13, 2002 which forms attachment B to this letter. This letter, referenced, Eligibility Review, requires the attached form to be returned by September 4, 2002, to Homeswest. In other words, approximately 3 weeks, has been provided to obtain all required information and forward it. In fact taking into account the Cocos Post Office last applicable day, Friday August 31, 2002, approximately 2 weeks, is allowed, or in the words of the final paragraph of DOTARS' letter of August 13, 2002:

“ Should you not complete the form or fail to return it by the due date this could result in you being deemed to be ineligible either to continue to rent the house you occupy or to purchase it”. The bold script is as per the original DOTARS' letter.

I refer back to the words of the introductory paragraph:

*“ The purpose of this letter is to let you know of the Commonwealth's **medium term intentions**”.*

The CKIEDA fails to see the extreme pressure being placed upon individuals to comply with the September 4, 2002, deadline, when the Commonwealth states a medium term strategy. The CKIEDA is unaware whether this emphasis relates to the next auction to be held on behalf of the Commonwealth in September, 2002.

Similarly to the comments on consultation the CKIEDA would recommend a more socially sensitive approach be adopted, and no further action be undertaken by the Commonwealth until all issues have been fully discussed.

POINT 3 WELFARE HOUSING

3.1 Issue

The third paragraph of the August 1, 2002, letter states:

“The Commonwealth is committed to providing housing assistance for eligible tenants in the Indian Ocean Territories (IOTs) to a similar standard and level of availability as applied to the mainland Consistent with the Commonwealth's broad commitment to provision of welfare services in the IOTs equivalent to those in remote WA communities, this may include the provision of an accommodation safety net for individuals who qualify for “welfare” housing. Some such welfare accommodation is planned for the site of the former Clunnies Ross Manager's bungalow on Home Island”.

Comments

The comment:

“this may include the provision of an accommodation safety net for individuals who qualify for “welfare” housing. Some such welfare accommodation is planned for the site of the former Clunnies Ross Manager’s bungalow on Home Island”.

This comment is totally incorrect. The “welfare housing” on Home Island is a joint state/council type of housing arrangement, and will consist of two units, one for independent aged living, and one for a young married couple with a family, currently housed in overcrowded accommodation on Home Island. This was confirmed to me by the Chief Executive Officer of the Council on August 19, 2002. Therefore this is not an option to those who received the letter of August 1, 2002.

The reference to welfare housing will not be available to those who received the letter of August 1, 2002, as they are either small businessmen or employees.

3.2 Issue

Paragraph 5 of the letter of August 1, 2002, states:

“ With help from Homeswest, The Islands Administration will now begin the preliminary work necessary to assess “welfare’ housing needs among private tenants currently occupying Commonwealth owned housing on Cocos and to apply direct housing sales arrangement to equivalent to those in WA”.

Comments

If a person does not meet the welfare requirements the option :

“private tenants currently occupying Commonwealth owned housing on Cocos and to apply direct housing sales arrangement to equivalent to those in WA”.

Just will not apply. Many of the persons who received the letter of August 1, 2002, have occupied Commonwealth houses for many years. By way of an example, I have occupied Commonwealth housing on West Island for sixteen years.

I would recommend that the Commonwealth revisited this issue, knowing full well the following:

That the current tenants will most probably not meet the welfare housing requirements as they are small businessmen or employees

That many have occupied Commonwealth housing for many years, and paid rent to the Commonwealth

That due to the age of many of these houses, their asset values, not a market value, would be zero or of a minor value, due to their depreciation over the years.

That the Commonwealth set social and economic objectives in relation to the disposal of houses, rather than treating it as a maximization of revenue exercise.

3.3 Issue

Paragraph 3 of page 2 of the August 1, 2002 letter states”

“Not all tenants will eligible to purchase the housing they currently occupy under the right to buy arrangement”.

The bold type is that of the Commonwealth in their letter.

Comments

If a person is not eligible to purchase the current house they occupy what are their options? The Commonwealth has stated in paragraph 2 of their August 1, 2002:

“Further steps include the rationalisation of remaining Commonwealth owned housing not directly required by the Department of Transport and Regional Services”.

This basically means a sale of the house by the Commonwealth. This means that the occupants of the houses will have to compete at a public option for their houses against mainland investors, something they cannot do.

3.4 Issue

Paragraph 4, August 1, 2002 letter states:

“ For those tenants eligible under the right to buy arrangements, any sales will be at current market value. It will be up to eligible tenants to arrange private finance to effect the purchase”.

Comments

The market value is that which has been established by previous auctions, and these market values have been affected by the release of small numbers of houses over a period of time, and the purchasing of the houses of persons from the mainland for investment purposes.

The Commonwealth is well aware that insurance cannot be obtained for cyclone, water inundation and earthquake. Without such insurance finance cannot be obtained, and in addition it is highly unlikely that any financial institution will provide mortgage funding for a property in the Territory.

3.5 Issue

Paragraph5, August 1, 2002 letter states:

“None of the foregoing should be construed to imply that current tenants who do not qualify for welfare housing or the right to directly purchase the house they now occupy will automatically have their tenancies terminated. Rather the Administrations will work with tenants how their housing needs can be met. For example, they may be able to purchase a property at public auction or the Administration could require any successful purchaser of the dwelling to offer guaranteed tenancy for a set minimum period as a condition of sale. It is also the Administration’s intention to offer Buffet Close development for sale at the next property auction with conditions designed to ensure building blocks come on the market at the earliest possible date”.

Comments

The above are addressed below:

“For example, they may be able to purchase a property at public auction”.

This is not a viable option taking into the extremely high prices being paid by mainland investors.

“ or the Administration could require any successful purchaser of the dwelling to offer guaranteed tenancy for a set minimum period as a condition of sale”.

This does not solve the problem of security of ownership. In addition rents have escalated under such circumstances. Houses occupied by staff of the Cocos Islands Cooperative Ltd’s staff have seen the following increase in weekly rents

Occupied by	Prior sale	After sale
Manager	\$169	\$325
Cook	\$169	\$235

Once again this provides no security as to the minimum period of the tenancy or the rental amounts.

“It is also the Administration’s intention to offer Buffet Close development for sale at the next property auction with conditions designed to ensure building blocks come on the market at the earliest possible date”.

This is not a viable option, as Buffet Close is to be sold to a developer as an undeveloped block. There are currently serious concerns as to the capacity of the new waste water management plant on West Island to be able to service such a development. To service such a development upgrades may be required.

Point 4 Eligibility Review

4.1 Issues

4.1 DOTARS ' letter of August 13, 2002, dealing with the eligibility review forms attachment B to this letter. Contacts that were provided included Mark Barrett and Craig Hill of Homeswest.

Comments

When Mark Barrett and Craig Hill have been contacted they were unaware of the issues relating to the Territory, such as contained in DOTARS' letter of August 1 and August 13, 2002.

Point 5

Equity

Of more fundamental importance is one of equity between Australian citizens living in the Territory. The Commonwealth undertook a \$10,000,000 Home Island Building Program to provide replacement housing for residents of Home Island over the period 1984 to 1994. Under this program, modern houses were provided to Home Island residents. Of the \$10,000,000, \$8,000,000 was provided directly by the Commonwealth, and the remaining \$2,000,000 was provided by the community. The \$2,000,000 was provided by the Cocos Islands Cooperative Ltd paying rent to the Council, and the Council retaining part of the social security benefits paid direct to it for eligible Home Island residents, such as pensions. The income of the Cooperative was predominately from Commonwealth sources, directly or indirectly. Thus the full \$10,000,000 come either directly or indirectly from the Commonwealth. The houses were passed by the Commonwealth to the Council, and for many years were rented to the tenants.

The Council is currently in the process of establishing a procedure whereby it will sell the houses to the tenants, thus providing social and economic security for the Territory. The value of the houses will not be dictated at a market value, or a welfare eligibility test, but what will achieve the social and economic objectives best for the Territory.

On the basis of equity, the CKIEDA, feels in relation to all of its above comments, that the issue of housing need to be re examined to ensure social and economic objectives are achieved. It would recommend the following alternatives:

Alternative 1

The Commonwealth and the Council are currently negotiating the transfer of a range of Commonwealth assets, including buildings and plant to the Council. This will include the transfer of housing on West Island, currently used by the Council.

The housing identified by the Commonwealth as public housing be transferred to the Council, and transferred to the current occupants on the same basis, as the houses on

Home Island are to be transferred to their current occupants. This would be a fair and equitable treatment for all residents on Home and West Island.

Alternative 2

That the current occupants, who in all likelihood will not meet the welfare criteria for renting or purchasing, be offered the houses by private sale.

That the value of the houses and the land not be dictated by market value, as these are artificially high, but be determined by a combination of the depreciated value of the house, and a value for the land. A system similar to that being used by the Council could be used.

That due to the difficulty in obtaining finance, that the purchase value, be paid by the tenants over a period of years on a monthly basis.

The Commonwealth has already established a precedent in the manner in which it transferred the West Island Supermarket and West Island Lodge to the Cocos Islands Cooperative Society Ltd recently.

Alternative 3

The houses be subject to the following conditions:

That they could be auctioned, but with the restrictions that persons would only be eligible to participate in the auction, if they had been employed for a number of years, or operating a business for a set number of years in the Territory, and had been a resident in the Territory for a number of years

That first preference would be given to the current occupant.

That a reserve price be established for the property

That the purchase price could be paid off on a monthly basis, such payment being made direct to the Commonwealth. This would eliminate the banking difficulties.

Sales with conditions have been used by the Commonwealth for previous sales in the Territory.

The CKIEDA would appreciate your strong support on this issue as security of housing is essential for economic and social reasons..

Yours Faithfully

Ron Grant

Secretary

Attachment A



DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORT AND REGIONAL SERVICES

Cocos (Keeling) Islands Administration

01 August 2002

Marias Blackett
House 27, West Island
Cocos (Keeling) Islands
Indian Ocean WA 6799

Dear Ms Blackett

The purpose of this letter is to let you know of the Commonwealth's medium term intentions in relation to Commonwealth owned housing on Cocos and particularly that housing tenanted by private individuals.

You will be aware that the Islands Administration has progressively been rationalising its housing stock. Those dwellings occupied by staff of other Commonwealth agencies have been transferred to those agencies. Commercial solutions, including sale by auction, are being pursued in respect of those dwellings occupied by corporate tenants. Further steps include the rationalisation of remaining Commonwealth owned housing not directly required by the Department of Transport & Regional Services for employees associated with the Administration, the delivery of State type services and related requirements.

The Commonwealth is committed to providing housing assistance for eligible tenants in the Indian Ocean Territories (IOTs) to a similar standard and level of availability as applied on the mainland. This includes rental assistance for needy families from the Department of Family & Community Services/Centrelink. Consistent with the Commonwealth's broad commitment to provision of welfare services in the IOTs equivalent to those in remote WA communities, this may include the provision of an accommodation safety net for individuals and families who qualify for "welfare" housing. Some such welfare accommodation is planned for the site of the former Clunies Ross Manager's Bungalow on Home Island.

The Commonwealth has been working with the WA Department of Housing & Works (Homeswest) for some time on the introduction of housing policies and schemes equivalent to those available in Western Australia. WA Homeswest officers have visited the IOTs on several occasions and will now give further advice and provide practical support on implementing these housing arrangements.

With help from Homeswest, the Islands Administration will now begin the preliminary work necessary to assess any "welfare" housing needs among private tenants currently occupying Commonwealth owned housing on Cocos and to apply direct housing sales arrangements to eligible tenants equivalent to those in WA. The next step includes sending out questionnaires to those private tenants who have tenancies over Commonwealth owned housing in the Territory.

The purpose of the questionnaire, which will be based on WA policy and practice, is to help assess whether tenants have any eligibility for "welfare" accommodation, as

PO Box 1093 Cocos (Keeling) Islands INDIAN OCEAN WA 6799 • Telephone: 08 9162 6660 • Facsimile: 08 9162 6897

well as to assess tenants' possible eligibility to purchase the housing they occupy under right to buy arrangements.

The Commonwealth is keen to encourage eligible tenants to take up the opportunities under the right to buy arrangements. These arrangements offer a means of promoting private sector growth on Cocos as well as providing Islands residents with access to the normal asset accumulation opportunities available to Australian families on the mainland.

Not all tenants will eligible to purchase the housing they currently occupy under right to buy arrangements.

There will be clear guidelines, based on WA practices and procedures, to identify those tenants who might be eligible to buy Commonwealth owned public housing. For example, tenants must not have an interest in any residential land (improved or unimproved) and must have been in public housing for a qualifying period. For those tenants eligible under the right to buy arrangements, any sales will be at current market value. It will be up to eligible tenants to arrange private finance to effect the purchase.

None of the foregoing should be construed to imply that current tenants who do not qualify for "welfare" housing or for the right to directly purchase the house they now occupy will automatically have their tenancies terminated. Rather, the Administrations will work with tenants to identify how their housing needs can be met. For example, they may be able to purchase a property at public auction or the Administration could require any successful purchaser of the dwelling to offer guaranteed tenancy for a set minimum period as a condition of sale. It is also the Administration's intention to offer the Buffett Close development for sale at the next property auction with conditions designed to ensure that building blocks come on the market at the earliest possible date.

It is not yet possible to put a timetable on application of these arrangements but we will be moving forward over the next couple of months. The next step will be to settle the questionnaire with Homeswest and send it out to those private tenants who have tenancies over Commonwealth owned housing in the Territory. This will be done in the next week or two.

We will keep you informed of developments and for inquiries please contact Ben

Attachment B



Cocos (Keeling) Islands Administration

13 August 2002

Marias Blacket
House 27, West Island
Cocos (Keeling) Islands
Indian Ocean WA 6799

ELIGIBILITY REVIEW

Dear Ms Blacket

Please be advised that the Department of Transport and Regional Services (DoTARS), with the assistance of the W.A. Department of Housing and Works (Homeswest), is carrying out a review of all tenants to determine their ongoing eligibility for public housing. This review is being undertaken to align policies in the Territory with those applying in Western Australia. In future, the DoTARS will undertake the review every 12 months, as is done for Homeswest tenants in Western Australia.

Please complete the enclosed "Rental Eligibility and Household Review" form and return it by 04/09/2002 in the attached envelope to Homeswest. You also need to send written proof of income for all household members. It is important that you answer all questions truthfully and disclose any changes in income and the existence of any additional assets.

Once Homeswest has received the above information, DoTARS Canberra Office, with assistance from Homeswest will determine:

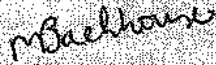
1. Your eligibility to continue to rent public housing; and
2. Your eligibility to purchase the house you occupy.

I emphasise that at no stage in the assessment process will Administration staff see your personal details.

In relation to point 1, Homeswest's policy is that tenants must, during the period of the tenancy, remain eligible for public housing assistance as determined from time to time. Where your income or assets details exceed current eligibility limits, you will be contacted to arrange an interview to discuss the particular circumstances and the available options. Such an option might be, for example, for you to purchase the property you are renting.

If you have any questions or need help to complete the "Rental Eligibility and Household Review" form, please do not hesitate to contact Mark Barrett on 08 9222 4736 or Craig Hills on 9192 0100, both of Homeswest. **Should you not complete the form or fail to return it by the due date this could result in you being deemed ineligible either to continue to rent the house you occupy or to purchase it.**

Yours sincerely



Margaret Backhouse
Deputy Administrator

Accommodation Manager: Craig Hills
Telephone: 08 9192 0100
Access Hours: 7am to 3.30pm
File Number: CK2002/115

OFFICE USE ONLY	
Income Verified	_____
Certified Details Loaded	_____
	Accom. Manager
DATE:	_____
RENT:	_____

Marias Blacket
House 27, West Island
Cocos (Keeling) Islands
Indian Ocean WA 6799

RENTAL ELIGIBILITY / HOUSEHOLD REVIEW

- This is a review application to assess your eligibility for public housing assistance and to purchase the house you occupy according to the income and assets of the persons living at the following address:

House 27, West Island
Cocos (Keeling) Islands
Indian Ocean WA 6799

- Please provide a telephone number where you can be contacted during working hours:

Contact Person _____ Telephone Number _____

- Provide details of the type of income and the amount received for each person in your household on the table on the next page.
- Written proof must be provided to confirm the income you and other people in your household are receiving and must be current within 2 weeks of the date supplied.

Please refer to "Providing Written Proof" for further information.
Provide the gross (before tax deductions) fortnightly income.
Provide your Centrelink reference number.

**ALL INFORMATION PROVIDED TO HOMESWEST IS TREATED AS
CONFIDENTIAL**

THIS FORM MUST BE RETURNED BY: 04/09/2002

Please contact Mark Barrett on 08 9222 4736 or Craig Hills on 08 9192 0100 if you need help to complete this form.

ELIGIBILITY/HOUSEHOLD REVIEW

Account No.

&ACCOUNT_NO

Page No.

PLEASE LIST ALL PEOPLE IN YOUR HOUSEHOLD. (Attach a separate sheet if insufficient space.)

NAMES	Title Mr/Mrs/ Ms	Sex: M/F	Date of Birth	Relationship to Tenant	Income Type	Gross Fortnightly income	Centrelink Reference Number

***NOTE:** Written documentation no more than 2 weeks old **MUST** be provided for **ALL** household members receiving an income.

Other Details:

Do you, or other people in your household:

1. have a Bank account/s, fixed deposits with combined savings of \$2,000 or more? YES NO
(If Yes, provide details below and photocopies of bank books or statements.)

Household member	Financial Institution	Value of savings/shares	Interest/dividends received fortnightly

2. Receive interest or dividends from investments such as bonds, shares, or debentures? YES NO
(If Yes, provide details below and photocopies of statements.)

Household member	Financial Institution	Value of savings/shares	Interest/dividends received fortnightly

6. receive child maintenance income? Amount fortnightly \$ _____ YES NO
 (If Yes, provide details for all children, and written proof from Centrelink, child support, family court order or letter(s) from person(s) providing maintenance.)

7. receive any income from sources outside Australia, eg. Overseas pensions or superannuation received from another country. YES NO
 (If Yes, provide details below and supporting documentation)

Household member	Source of income	Type of income	Amount received fortnightly

8. own, part own or purchasing any property including a house, unit, flat, vacant land or commercial property? YES NO
 (If Yes, provide ownership details below)

Household member	Address of property	Value of property	Amount owing on Home loan	Income received fortnightly

9. employed as seasonal worker throughout the year, e.g. driver, labourer, deckhand, guide, or part time during summer and winter seasons or school terms? YES NO
 (If Yes, attach details when work is likely to start and cease, and the likely income.)

10. received or will receive lump sum superannuation or Workers Compensation payments? YES NO
 (If Yes, provide names of recipients and attach details.)

Name _____ Payment type _____

Name _____ Payment type _____

11. receive income from self employment or from other business related activities? YES NO
 (If Yes, provide details and attach statements.) _____

12. any other income or financial assets not described above? YES NO
 (If Yes, provide details and attach statements.) _____

- Have you filled in all the questions and checked them carefully?
- Checked the names of all the people who live in your house. Are they all listed?
- Have you provided the written proof, (verification of income) documentation or the details you are required to provide for all of the people who live in your house?
- Signed the declaration below.
- Completed the information requested for our records.

DECLARATION:

- I/We undertake to notify the Department of Transport and Regional Services immediately if someone moves in or out, or if the income details change by more than \$10 per week.
- I/We understand that my/our tenancy may be terminated for willfully giving false information.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Signed: _____ Date: _____

----- Original Message -----

From:

Nick Wood

To:

bjarvis@shire.cc ;

lucy@shire.gov.cx

Sent: Monday, September 09, 2002 12:36 PM

Subject: Urgent - Establishment of an Indian Ocean Territories Zone of WALGA

Bob Jarvis, CEO, Shire of Cocos (Keeling) Islands

Gary Dunt, CEO, Shire of Christmas Island

Dear Bob and Gary,

Please find enclosed a draft of the item for the next meeting of State Council which relates to your proposal to establish a n Indian Ocean Territories Zone of WALGA.

The report includes three options which could achieve the objectives that both of your Councils have identified .

After careful consideration with the new President and Deputy President of WALGA, it has been recommended that rather than establishing a Zone, a n Indian Ocean Territories Policy Forum be establish ed on an ongoing basis.

This structure will function for all intents and purposes like a Zone , but with a greater degree of flexibility. While the forum will not have a seat of the Association ' s State Council, it will have direct input through the President to State Council. It can meet as often as necessary to progress issues of relevance to the Indian Ocean locality , or to consider and make resolutions on the state agenda .

The item is enclosed for your consideration. I would appreciate your comments/feedback ASAP (by tomorrow morning if possible) so that the State Council agenda can be finalised for print.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me on 9213 2020 or by e-mail.

Regards

<<State Council item _Establishment of an Indian Ocean Territories Zone.doc>>

Nick Wood

Manager, Projects & Strategic Development

Western Australian Local Government Association

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PO Box 1544 West Perth WA 6872

Tel: +61 8 9213 2020 Fax: +61 8 9322 2611

Email: nwood@walga.asn.au

Website:

<http://www.walga.asn.au>

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State Council item Establishment of an Indian Ocean Territories Zone.doc (Binary attachment)
