Attorney-General for Australia

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INFRASTRUCTURE BOOST FOR CHRISTMAS ISLAND

15 December 2009

Minister for Home Affairs, Brendan O'Connor, today announced a $50 million infrastructure package to benefit the Christmas Island community.

"The Australian Government is committed to supporting the community on Christmas Island and working with them towards an economically, environmentally and culturally sustainable future," Mr O'Connor said.

"The package will provide additional health, policing and education resources to maintain a high standard of service to the local community and to people in immigration detention.

"This expansion will not only address current needs but will support the economic future of Christmas Island."

The Australian Government has approved funding over three years from 2009-10 to:

- expand waste water treatment infrastructure to meet increased demand for this service
- upgrade the power station to respond to the growing need for electricity on the island
- employ additional health workers through the Indian Ocean Territories Health Service
- employ additional school teachers and aides at the Christmas Island District High School; and
- investigate the feasibility of lengthening the wharf at Flying Fish Cove and sealing the road to North West Point.

Two additional police officers will be stationed on Christmas Island to ensure an appropriate level of policing for the increased island population.

The Australian Government has also approved an $11.3 million whole-of-government fibre optic solution on Christmas Island to connect the seven key Australian Government agencies located on Christmas Island.

The funding announced today is in addition to a $10.8 million capital works package announced in August.

"These projects are of considerable importance to sustaining services and supporting economic development on Christmas Island," Mr O'Connor said.

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