



## HAS THE HON JAMIE BRIGGS MP, ASSISTANT MINISTER FOR INFRASTRUCTURE AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT, MISLED THE AUSTRALIAN PARLIAMENT?

The Assistant Minister for Infrastructure and Regional Development in his Second Reading speech for the Norfolk Island Legislation Amendment Bill 2015 advised the House of Representatives as follows:

### MINISTER BRIGGS SAID

**“Norfolk Island is the only place in Australia where Australian citizens do not receive social security benefits”**

### FACT CHECK - MISLEADING

Norfolk Island has its own *Social Services Act 1980* and persons in Norfolk Island no matter their nationality or citizenship, including Australian citizens, who meet the qualifications for social service benefits on Norfolk Island, receive benefits. This was a pre-requisite of the Commonwealth Government for self-government to commence in 1979.

### MINISTER BRIGGS SAID

**“There has been no significant infrastructure investment since the 1970s, and the Norfolk Island government has not had the capacity to maintain what was built then or earlier.”**

### FACT CHECK - MISLEADING

In 1979 Norfolk Island inherited infrastructure from the Commonwealth in very poor condition; our road network for example was mainly unsealed. Since self-government commenced in 1979 the Norfolk Island Government has provided significant major infrastructure, both new and upgraded, including -

- Sealing and maintaining 140 kms of road network
- New Police Station
- New Bicentennial Centre
- New Library and Broadcasting Station
- New Works Depot
- New Norfolk Island International Airport Terminal
- Airport resealing and ongoing maintenance
- New Water and Sewerage Treatment Plant for CBD and surrounds
- Burnt Pine (CBD) road upgrade
- New Waste Management Centre
- New Fire and Emergency Services Co-ordination Centre
- Purchase of two new Rosen Bauer Airport fire engines
- New Telecommunications Centre (Telecom); telecommunication upgrades including satellite contract (“fibre from the sky”), internet and mobile telephone service
- Share funding with the Commonwealth of KAVHA World Heritage Site
- Maintenance of Commonwealth owned Cascade Jetty
- New Landing platform for cruise ships to unload at jetties
- Funding of medical evacuations following withdrawal of RAAF





## MINISTER BRIGGS SAID

“The island’s electricity network is at risk of collapse”

### FACT CHECK - MISLEADING

It is not denied that the electricity infrastructure/network is aging but it is incorrect to say that it is at risk of collapse. Proactive ongoing maintenance is performed daily on the high and low voltage reticulation around the Island by local electrical linesman. Equally, the power house has a strict maintenance schedule which is also carried out daily. See below comments from Senator Back at the Estimates Committee Hearing on 27 May 2014:

**Senator BACK:** “I should also record that they are generating 3.72 units per litre, Secretary, which is very, very high—at the top end. So they are very efficient. ...But I must say that, for the technology that is there and the age of it, the fellow is doing a tremendous job.”

## MINISTER BRIGGS SAID

“Older Australians will be able to access the age pension”

### FACT CHECK - MISLEADING

Under the proposal by the Commonwealth some “Older Australians” **MAY NOT** receive the age pension. The Commonwealth Fact Sheet: “Norfolk Island reforms: information for individuals” states:

#### “Age Pension

The Commonwealth Age Pension will replace the Norfolk Island Age Benefit from 1 July 2016. The Commonwealth Age Pension has different eligibility rules and payment rates. Some recipients of the Norfolk Island Age Benefit may not meet eligibility requirements of the Commonwealth Age Pension. However, recipients may be eligible for alternative payments in the Commonwealth social security system.”



**WE HAVE SO MUCH TO BE  
PROUD OF AS A TINY  
COMMUNITY OF LESS THAN  
1800 PEOPLE**

Lisle D. Snell  
Chief Minister and Minister for Tourism

10 April 2015