

Education Review – Norfolk Island

Stage One, Stage Two and Stage Three

The Report

Prepared for:
The Hon. Robin Adams MLA, Minister for Cultural Heritage
and Community Services,
Norfolk Island Legislative Assembly
October 2013 – September 2014

Chair's Foreword

On the 18th of October 2013, the Education Review Working Group was formally established to enquire into, report and make recommendations to the Minister in relation to the provision of education in Norfolk Island. On behalf of the Education Review Working Group it is a privilege to present the final Education Report 2014.

The Report was written to assist the Norfolk Island Government uphold its commitment to the Road Map's aspirational goal of considering ways to provide "excellent educational outcomes on the Island for future employment; and investigate the expansion of educational opportunities for tertiary and vocational education". There are nineteen (19) recommendations.

The main messages within The Report are:

- Failure to extend and implement relevant pieces of Commonwealth legislation to Norfolk Island continues to disadvantage the community.
- The community wishes to see the NSW curriculum continue to be delivered with ongoing regard given to the Island's unique culture and history.
- The creation of a Ministerial Advisory Committee is desirable to ensure that future education and workforce skills policy development is based on sound advice.

The public was encouraged to participate in this local community based review; working group members targeted key stakeholders using various methods of consultation including surveys, interviews, social media, public meetings, local radio and media outlets; paper and online.

The Report was prepared with the knowledge and skills of the working group members together with other community members who provided considerable assistance. The working group is sincerely grateful to those who engaged in the review process. The working group believes that The Report is a valuable piece of community based work and where recommendations are adopted, will lead to the delivery of a range of shared policy objectives and outcomes that will benefit the Norfolk Island community.

Melissa Ward MLA

Chair and Executive Officer of the Review Working Group

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Summary

The *Norfolk Island Act 1979* (Cth) created a unique self-governing arrangement which left the Island without the application of most Australian law, services and programs. The *Australian Education Act 2013* (Cth) does not apply to Norfolk Island and therefore Federal Government funding opportunities which are available to other schools are not available to the Island. In 1988 the Norfolk Island Government (NIG) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Commonwealth reaffirming its commitment to fully fund education on the Island. It has become increasingly difficult for the government to uphold its commitment; in fact the current public school funding model has been under-pinned by the Federal Government since 2011. From a service delivery perspective, an education package is purchased by the NIG. NSW Department of Education and Communities (DEC) teachers are recruited and seconded to teach at the Norfolk Island Central School (NICS); this arrangement is outlined in a MoU between the parties. The education package supports the delivery of the NSW curriculum, but does not include automatic access to relevant NSW services or programs.

In 2008-09 payment to the NSW Department of Education fell into arrears and in February 2010 it was agreed that the Administration of Norfolk Island (ANI) would commence a payment plan; the debt at the time was \$2,000,000 and a payment plan was to see the education debt repaid by 2014. However, due to an increase in staff numbers (a result of the NSW DEC staffing formulae being adhered to) and at current repayment rates, it is projected that the debt will not be repaid in full until March 2019. The NICS budget allocation for 2013-14 was \$3,450,000 or 10% of the Government's overall expenditure. Of the allocated figure, 89% was for salaries and wages, 10% for recurrent expenditure and less than 1% was allocated for capital expenditure. (Figures from ANI)

In relation to Early Childhood Education and Care the Commonwealth *Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010* and *Regulations* do not apply to Norfolk Island and corresponding legislation has not been passed by the Norfolk Island Legislative Assembly (NILA). The Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA) which is the National Body that jointly governs, guides and oversees the implementation of the National Quality Framework (NQF) does not include Norfolk Island. The NIG has not attempted to mirror the work of the ACECQA and as a result Early Childhood Education and Care has not evolved at the same rate as mainland Australia. In terms of government funded service delivery across the Pre-school to Year 12 continuum, Norfolk Island does not adequately meet the needs of the community particularly in the area of early intervention and psychometric assessment.

On the subject of Vocational Education and Training (VET) it is important to note that the *Skills Australia Act 2008* applies to the Island but the *Skilling Australia's Workforce Act 2005*, which links funding to Australian States and Territories for a range of conditions and targets for training outcomes, does not include Norfolk Island. The *National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011* applies to Norfolk Island; however, there is no local process to facilitate the adoption of an Australian Skills Quality Authority. The Norfolk Island Central School (NICS) works in partnership with Registered Training Organizations (RTOs) in NSW, Queensland and local private sector employers to support students who choose to access

VET courses. The NIG does not have a strategic policy in relation to current, emerging and future workforce skills needs and workforce development needs.

A general condition of the Commonwealth's 2013-2014 Funding Agreement for the Norfolk Island Territory stipulated that the NICS budget be benchmarked against comparable NSW DEC schools. The Benchmarking Report attached at Appendix 5 demonstrates that NICS is currently understaffed, does not have access to a school counsellor or reading recovery teacher, has no equivalent funding for the Integration Funding Support Program and no funded resources and programs for additional needs students. Transitional Equity Funding for geographical isolation does not extend to the Island. The school is currently unable to access K-6 Literacy and Numeracy programs or submit applications for State or Commonwealth Tied Educational Grants.

To achieve the Road Map's aspirational goal of both Governments considering ways to provide "excellent educational outcomes on the island for future employment; and investigate the expansion of educational opportunities for tertiary and vocational education" the review examined the regulatory framework and the current level of services being provided for education and training. It also examined how Norfolk Island residents may gain equivalent access to relevant services and programs available to the broader Australian community. The future status of the Island's public school, a sustainable funding and service delivery model are matters to be resolved between the Norfolk Island and Federal Government. The working group considers that at a practical level the current support and assistance arrangement between the NSW Government and the Norfolk Island Government should progress to become a service delivery agreement between the Federal, NSW and Norfolk Island Government and respective agencies.

The creation of a Ministerial Advisory Board will assist the relevant Minister to explore the development of contemporary educational facilities and opportunities for future employment on the Island. The social and economic value of maintaining and promoting the Island's unique heritage and culture should not be underestimated and needs to be intrinsically linked to each stage of educational development; Pre-school to Year 12 and beyond.

Summary of Recommendations:

Governance and funding arrangements

1. *Memorandum of Understanding between the Commonwealth Government and Norfolk Island Government dated April 1988*

1.1 The Norfolk Island and Australian Government agree to an equivalent funding and service delivery model in relation to early childhood education; school aged student education, vocational education, apprenticeships and adult education.

1.2 The Norfolk Island Government negotiate the extension and implementation of relevant Commonwealth and NSW legislation where applicable and appropriate.

1.3 Norfolk Island Government endorse a Ministerial Advisory Board to provide skilled advice and guidance in relation to educational development, cultural policy and employment needs.

2. *Memorandum of Understanding on Teacher Staffing of Norfolk Island Central School between the NSW Department of Education and Training (currently known as the NSW Department of Education and Communities) and the Norfolk Island Government dated May 2008.*

2.1 The 2008 Memorandum of Understanding not be used in its current form and that the Minister enter into dialogue with the NSW DEC Director of staffing.

2.2 The NSW DEC curriculum and teaching staff merit selection recruitment process continue to be used.

2.3 Norfolk Island Central School adopt and implement the full range of NSW DEC policies and procedures where practicable.

3. *Education Act 1931 (NI); including the leaving age for school children*

3.1 Significant amendments to the *Education Act 1931* (NI) be postponed until a policy direction on a sustainable funding and service delivery model is agreed between the parties.

4. *Education Regulations; which include provisions relating to Bursaries and Scholarships*

4.1 The *Education Regulations 1931* (NI) be amended to recognize modern educational learning tools and employment arrangements.

Educational services, standards and professional development

5. Facilitate an audit of existing local student services for children on the Pre-school to Year 12 Continuum. Identify comparable student services as available to Pre-school and school aged children in NSW, for example, paediatric services, counselling services, child protection legislation in regards to employment and volunteers in childcare and school facilities.

5.1 School Counsellor/Child Psychologist be engaged to complete assessment submissions; assist the school to access NSW DEC support services and implement programs.

5.2 All requests for additional funding support for children with suspected or diagnosed additional needs be processed through Norfolk Island Central School.

5.3 NSW DEC Disabilities Access Assessment Criteria and relevant support agencies be made available to the Norfolk Island Central School.

5.4 An Early Years Case Management Officer be engaged to coordinate and develop individual Family Service Plans for families of children with additional needs.

5.5 Norfolk Island Government develop a policy position in relation to child protection for all employees and volunteers at Pre-school and the Norfolk Island Central School.

5.6 All parties work towards ensuring that Norfolk Island students and young people are included in National and NSW DEC data collection systems.

6. Identification of professional development framework/methodology for staff working in Pre-school to Year 12 facilities

6.1 A new service delivery arrangement for the Norfolk Island Central School include the provision of Administrative and Support staff.

6.2 All new Norfolk Island Central School staff participate in induction training.

7. (Examine) The role of the Administration in the process for engagement of casual employees both teaching and ancillary, Information Technology support, pay roll management for support/ancillary staff and other support services provided to the Norfolk Island Central School

7.1 That the responsible Minister convene an internal review to address the following issues in relation to non-NSW DEC employees:

- i. Employment status
- ii. Professional development standards
- iii. The application of NSW DEC policies and procedures
- iv. Child Protection.

Stage Two - Investigate the expansion of educational opportunities for tertiary and vocational education including apprenticeships.

8.1 The Norfolk Island Government request Youth Apprenticeship funding subsidization by the Australian Government until a sustainable governance model is implemented.

8.2 The Norfolk Island Government develop a Future Workforce Policy and Vocational Education and Training (VET) facility plan in collaboration with relevant Norfolk Island and National stakeholders.

Methodology

On 18 October 2013, the Minister for Cultural Heritage and Community Services established the Education Review Working Group. The working group was established to enquire into, report and make recommendations in relation to the provision of education in Norfolk Island. The review was carried out in three stages; Stage One examined the following documents and legislation:

- Memorandum of Understanding between the Commonwealth Government and Norfolk Island Government dated April 1988
- Memorandum of Understanding on Teacher Staffing of Norfolk Island Central School between the NSW Department of Education and Training (currently known as the NSW Department of Education and Communities) and the Norfolk Island Government dated May 2008
- *Education Act 1931* (NI) and *Education Regulations*; which include provisions relating to Bursaries and Scholarships

The working group was tasked with facilitating an audit of existing Norfolk Island student services for children on the Pre-school to Year 12 continuum. The working group was to identify comparable student services available to Pre-school and school aged children in NSW, for example; paediatric services, counselling services and child protection legislation in regards to employment and volunteers in childcare and school facilities.

The working group was asked to identify professional development framework/methodology for staff working in Pre-school to Year 12 facilities and to review the Administration of Norfolk Island's (ANI's) role in the process for: engagement of casual employees both teaching and ancillary; information technology support; pay roll management for support/ancillary staff and other support services provided by the ANI to the Norfolk Island Central School (NICS). The working group was to report to the Minister by the end of Term 4 of the School Year 2013.

The working group targeted key stakeholders using various methods of communication and consultation including surveys, interviews, social media and public meetings. To raise community awareness, two local radio interviews were held and media releases were placed in the *Norfolk Islander* newspaper and Norfolk Online website.

On 14 February 2014, the Chair wrote to the Minister presenting two interim recommendations:

1. That the 2008 Memorandum of Understanding not be used in its current form and that the Minister enter (as soon as possible) into dialogue with the NSW Department of Education and Communities (DEC) Director of staffing; and
2. Progress to Stage Two of the Review.

On 19 February 2014, the Minister announced at a formal sitting of the Norfolk Island Legislative Assembly (NILA) that Stage Two of the Review would commence. The working group, with the assistance of an additional member, Ms. Ro Peterson, Career Advisor, was asked to investigate the expansion of educational opportunities for Vocational Education and Training (VET) including apprenticeships. In addition the Minister requested the working group to examine the NSW DEC International Student Procedures and see how they could be applied at NICS.

Stage Three deals with reference to a 2013-14 Funding Agreement General condition which states that the NICS is to be bench-marked against comparable schools in NSW; this task was carried out by the Principal of the school after consultation with NIG representatives and the NSW Director of schools.

Membership of the Working Group

Mrs. Melissa Ward MLA - Nominee of Minister, Chair & Executive Officer of the Review Working Group

Mrs. Michelle Nicholson – Principal, Norfolk Island Central School (NICS) and NSW Department of Education and Communities (DEC) representative

Mrs. Rowan Evans – Parent representative of the Parent and Citizens (P&C) Association, Executive Committee

Ms. Wendy Morrice – Director, Banyan Park Community Playcentre

Mrs. Dominique Kelly - Home Schooling

Mrs. Cristina McRitchie – Director of Minischool Private Pre-school

Mr. Doug Clark – Executive Member, Norfolk Island Special Education Development Unit (NISEDU)

Ms. Trish Magri – Former Librarian/Information Technology (VET) teacher at Norfolk Island Central School

Mrs. Judith Davidson – Former Head Teacher Secondary, Norfolk Island Central School

Ms. Suzanne Hardy – Teachers’ Federation Representative (Stage One) and Librarian, Norfolk Island Central School

Ms. Rowan Peterson – Teachers’ Federation Representative (Stage Two) and Career Advisor, Norfolk Island Central School

Thank You

The Report was prepared with the knowledge and skills of the working group members together with other community members who provided considerable assistance. The working group is sincerely grateful to those who engaged in the review process and care has been taken to ensure that all stakeholder views have been fairly and accurately represented.

Introduction

Under the *Norfolk Island Act 1979* (Cth), Education is a Schedule 3 matter which means that the Australian Government maintains ultimate responsibility for related legislation. The *Education Act 1931* (NI) gives the Administrator the power to carry out or enforce provisions of the Act and may delegate powers to the appropriate Minister. From a service delivery perspective, NSW DEC teachers are seconded by the Norfolk Island Government (NIG); this arrangement is outlined in a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the parties. The NSW curriculum is delivered at the public school and the NSW teachers' professional development is maintained as part of the package; teacher professional learning funds are forwarded annually by the DEC as a tied grant to the school. NSW DEC teacher salaries and entitlements are paid for by NSW DEC who then invoices the ANI; payments are managed by the ANI.

In 2008-09 payment to the NSW DEC fell into arrears and in February 2010 the NSW DEC agreed to a request from the NIG to enter into a payment plan; the debt at the time was \$2,000,000. A payment plan was to see the education debt repaid by 2014. However, due to an increase in staff numbers (a result of the NSW DEC staffing formulae being adhered to) and, at current repayment rates, it is projected that the debt will not be repaid in full until March 2019. Since late 2011 the Australian Government has contributed to the cost of delivering education at the school. In the 2013-14 financial year the total budget expenditure of the ANI was \$34,140,000. The school budget allocation for the same year was \$3,450,000 or 10% of overall expenditure. Of the appropriated figure, 89% was for salaries and wages, 10% for recurrent expenditure and less than 1% was allocated for capital expenditure. \$25,000 was allocated for bursaries and scholarship grants. (Figures from ANI)

In March 2011, a reform document titled the Norfolk Island Road Map was agreed and signed between the Norfolk Island Government and the Australian Government. The Road Map included a goal for both governments to work in partnership towards achieving a sustainable population with access to health, social welfare and educational services comparable with the broader Australian community. As a result a number of reports were prepared including the Norfolk Island Public Service Review (Australian Continuous Improvement Group, November 2011) and the Norfolk Island Economic Development Report (Dr. James Fogarty, March 2012). Both reports refer to education and state that the Road Map provides a framework for the two governments to work together to strengthen educational and supporting services in Norfolk Island and both reports suggest that the Australian Government be responsible for the funding and delivery of State level services (including education), by contracting with a suitable service provider. An Update of the Financial Position on Norfolk Island (Commonwealth Grants Commission, 2011) identifies State service delivery requirements and how they compare to Norfolk Island. The Review of Existing Child and Family Support Services on Norfolk Island (Calvert & Connolly, Sept 2012) highlighted what has been reported over many years; that due to the small size of population and revenue base the NIG alone is not able to provide the continuum of services required to support families and children.

In October 2013, the Minister for Education, the Hon. Robin Adams JP, MLA announced at a formal sitting of the NILA the establishment of the Education Review Working Group and in doing so, the Minister tabled the 'Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians'. The Minister made it clear that although the NIG did not participate in signing the Melbourne Declaration, the Government intends to uphold its commitment to providing an education to the children of Norfolk Island; this is consistent with the objectives that were agreed in the 1988 MoU between the NIG and the Australian Government. The NIG recognizes that it is not possible to fully fund the provision of education and related services under the current governance model.

Stage One of the Review – Key Elements

1. Memorandum of Understanding between the Commonwealth Government and Norfolk Island Government dated April 1988

Background

The key objective of the 1988 MoU was to structure education in a way that would qualify students for recognized Australian accreditation and that educational standards were comparable with those on the mainland. The MoU states that the NSW curriculum would apply to the island and that regard would be given to the Island's history, culture and economy. An option to provide Years 11 and 12 in the future was left open and was eventually funded and established in 1992. The NIG was to liaise with the NSW DEC to recruit and appoint sufficient teachers to staff the school using the Department's staffing formulae as a guide when determining staffing levels. Periodic inspections were to be undertaken by the NSW Education Department and the NIG was to be responsible for the total cost of public education on the Island.

General Discussion

The NIG has recently reaffirmed its commitment to upholding the objectives of the MoU; however, in reality it has been unable to fund comparable services and programs to those delivered on the mainland. There are no specific terms on which educational services are provided to Norfolk Island other than the recruitment and appointment of teachers; this is discussed under the next heading of The Report. The principles outlined in the MoU have remained unchanged and, in the absence of a comprehensive service level agreement for school education, a special relationship has evolved between the NIG, the NSW Government and the DEC.

The MoU is silent on early childhood education; legislation and standards around early childhood education and care have changed dramatically on the mainland since 1988 and the NIG has not progressed at the same rate.

Conclusion

Norfolk Island does not benefit from a range of National and State or Territory services and is not eligible to participate in all programs covering early childhood, primary, secondary and tertiary education. A contemporary governance model and service delivery arrangement must provide access to services, programs and funding relevant to education and training. The provision of Years 11 and 12 at NICS and the Island's unique history, culture and economy need to be recognized within a new service delivery arrangement. Future government policy development in the area of education and training needs to be guided by well informed and objective advice drawn from a range of people including skilled education and training professionals. The working group recommends the creation of a Ministerial Advisory Board which includes local representatives to provide sound advice to the Minister across a range of areas including education and care, culture and workforce skills.

Recommendations:

- 1.1 The Norfolk Island and Australian Government agree to an equivalent funding and service delivery model in relation to early childhood education, school aged student education, vocational education, apprenticeships and adult education.
- 1.2 The Norfolk Island Government negotiate the extension and implementation of relevant Commonwealth and NSW legislation where applicable and appropriate.
- 1.3 Norfolk Island Government endorse a Ministerial Advisory Board to provide skilled advice and guidance in relation to educational development, cultural policy and employment needs.

2. Memorandum of Understanding on Teacher Staffing of Norfolk Island Central School between the NSW Department of Education and Training (currently known as the NSW Department of Education and Communities) and the Norfolk Island Government dated May 2008.

Background

The 2008 MoU is an operational document which covers select matters relating to teaching staff at the NICS and infers adherence to a range of NSW DEC policies and procedures. Leave and salary provisions, relocation expenses, period of operation and an attachment outlining the process for classroom teacher, executive staff and Principals requesting additional appointment years are outlined in the document. NSW DEC teacher salaries and entitlements are paid for by NSW DEC who then invoices the ANI and payments are managed by the ANI. The confirmation of teaching positions and the eligibility to apply for an extended tenure or 'core' position is dependent upon satisfying immigration requirements. The document states that the NIG shall meet the ongoing cost of public education and that the appointment of teaching staff shall be in accordance with the NSW Department's selection procedures. The MoU does not cover locally recruited casual, temporary, support learning, administrative or ancillary employees.

General discussion

Recent amendments to the *Immigration Act 1980* (NI) have resulted in Australian citizens being able to work and live on the Island without restriction. A NSW DEC teacher is therefore no longer required to obtain a temporary or general entry permit to remain on the Island; in effect a teacher's immigration status is no longer relevant in relation to tenure at the school. The working group found that the MoU does not provide a definitive framework for the extension of tenure process. The current education package arrangement, which includes the use of NSW DEC teachers is effective and provides positive results. NICS has a higher than State average student retention rate and a proven record of providing an education that is adequate to prepare students for tertiary studies in Australia; in some cases students are offered early entry places at University.

Conclusion

A review of the MoU is overdue and for the reasons outlined above it would be unwise to rely on the document in its current form. The secondment of teachers from the NSW DEC is

a long-standing arrangement and should continue in accordance with the NSW DEC's staffing formulae and merit selection procedures. A revised MoU should make it clear which DEC policies and procedures apply at NICS. The working group provided the Minister with an options paper based on the written submissions received in relation to the 2008 MoU. The provision of locally recruited support staff is examined later in the report under the 'Role of the Norfolk Island Administration'. The following recommendations are made:

Recommendations:

2.1 The 2008 Memorandum of Understanding not be used in its current form and that the Minister enter into dialogue with the NSW DEC Director of staffing.

2.2 The NSW DEC curriculum and teaching staff merit selection recruitment process continue to be used.

2.3 Norfolk Island Central School adopt and implement the full range of NSW DEC policies and procedures where practicable.

3. Education Act 1931 (NI); including the leaving age for school children

Overview

The *Education Act 1931* (NI), sets out the establishment of public and private schools; how a school shall be conducted, medical examination of school children, school fees and the establishment of a parents and residents association. The Administrator is responsible for administering the Act; however, a delegation of power exists and this is routinely transferred to the responsible Norfolk Island Minister.

Community views were sought on the school leaving age and the responses demonstrate, in principle, support for the school leaving age to be in line with the mainland. However, it was felt that vocational education or post-school pathways and apprenticeships, additional resourcing and programs for children who require useful training type courses, need to be established before considering amendments to Norfolk Island's legislation. Medical examination of school children, existing policies and corresponding public health legislation were raised as areas requiring further examination.

Home-schooling occurs on the Island; however, there is no government or specific community service in place to support families who chose to do so. Home-schooled children participate in various school and community group events. A comprehensive legislative review should include how the government can support those who choose to Home School on the Island.

The working group notes that there are no Government funded youth intervention programs especially those with a rehabilitative focus; a modern service delivery model for Justice and Policing must address this deficiency.

Conclusion

Given that both the Australian and Norfolk Island Government are currently working to achieve sustainable outcomes for Norfolk Island, including essential service delivery, it would be advantageous for a joint policy direction on the future of education to be agreed before extensive legislative reform commences. A detailed legislative review needs to consider the following areas; staffing of public schools, leaving age, child protection, home schooling, legislated delegation of powers, powers of the P&C Association and the definition of contagious diseases and consequential legislation including, but not limited to, public health. A policy first approach will allow time for further consultation to take place at a joint Government, Legislative Assembly and community level. NICS is the only established public school on the Island with 290 students currently enrolled. The following recommendation is made:

Recommendation:

3.1 That significant amendments to the *Education Act 1931 (NI)* be postponed until a policy direction on a sustainable funding and service delivery model is agreed between the parties.

4. Education Regulations; which includes provisions relating to Bursaries and Scholarships

Overview

The Regulations provide further detail on how schools are to be conducted, staffing arrangements, suspension of pupils, infectious diseases and the use of school buildings. A particular focus for the working group was Part 4 of the Regulations which provide details on bursaries & scholarships, vocational training scholarships and tertiary education scholarships. The principal objective behind the provision of bursaries and scholarships is to provide support for students who wish to undertake further education and training appropriate to their potential and aspirations; the NIG provides an annual Grant of \$25 000. In addition, two privately funded Scholarships are available to students of NICS; these are the Agnes Hain "Pursuit of Excellence" scholarship which awards the successful applicant with \$5000 and the Eldon Foote Foundation "George Hunn Nobbs Memorial Scholarship" which provides financial assistance for two students to attend Hurlstone Agricultural High School for Year 11, with the option to extend to Year 12 by demonstrating success in Year 11.

The duties and authority of the Principal were examined in depth. The authority of the Principal extends to the engagement of assistant teachers. The process of engagement for NSW DEC is documented but, for locally recruited staff, it is not. Further detail on this matter is provided later in the report under 'Role of the Administration'.

Conclusion

A Joint Government policy decision on the future provision of education on Norfolk Island needs to be agreed before major legislative changes are proposed. A move to recognize, through legislation, the current NSW DEC staffing arrangements and locally recruited non-DEC staff arrangements, could occur in the short term. Part 4 of the Regulations should be

amended immediately to recognize the use of modern education learning tools, terminology and true cost of tertiary education. The following recommendation is made:

Recommendations:

4.1 That the *Education Regulations 1931 (NI)* be amended to recognize modern educational learning tools and employment arrangements.

5. Facilitate an audit of existing local student services for children on the Pre-school to Year 12 continuum. Identify comparable student services as available to Pre-school and school aged children in NSW, for example: paediatric services, counselling services, child protection legislation in regards to employment and volunteers in childcare and school facilities

The Report provides a brief overview of key relevant mainland legislation but not a comprehensive comparison report on the full range of National and NSW services and programs.

Pre-school

Relevant Commonwealth legislation does not apply to Norfolk Island and the NIG has not attempted to mirror the work of the Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA); as a result, Early Childhood Education and Care has not evolved at the same rate as the mainland. Private and community centres have assumed responsibility for approximately forty (40) pre-school aged children on the Island; apart from planning regulations, there are no legislated standards applying to providers or staff. In terms of professional qualifications, the majority of staff members at both Pre-school facilities hold qualifications ranging from a Bachelor of Special Education to childcare certificates. One centre advertises using the Australian 'Early years learning framework' as a guide. The working group has not attempted to assess whether or not local facilities meet National Quality Framework (NQF) Standards. There is a desire within the industry to adopt national standards so that staff can build on their current knowledge and experience and ensure that their curriculum decision making is consistent with current thinking and expectations. However, it must be recognized that the NIG is not equipped to oversee the implementation of the NQF or related services and programs. A comprehensive gap analysis would need to be undertaken and new education service delivery model established before Norfolk Island can formally adopt the NQF. An implementation strategy would need to include a transitional period; adequate resources and professional development opportunities for local personnel and community education.

Norfolk Island Central School (NICS)

As noted earlier in the report, a full range of NSW services do not extend to the Island. The NICS Benchmarking 2014 (Stage Three of The Report) highlights some of the differences between NICS and comparable NSW DEC schools in terms of relevant welfare type services and programs. [See Appendix 5]. As part of the teaching staff contingent a Learning and Support Teacher (LAST) is employed at the school. There is currently no funding of programs to provide additional support for students with additional needs and their families. The available Government funding is currently for human resources only; for student learning

and support officers (SLSOs). The term 'additional needs' includes children with an intellectual disability, physical disability, vision impairment, hearing impairment, language disorder, mental health conditions or Autism. There are no specific programs available for gifted and talented children.

Counselling and Psychometric Services

All school students in the NSW public school system, from pre-school to Year 12, are able to access a trained school counsellor/child psychologist. Under the NSW DEC school counselling service, school counsellors are qualified teachers who have a post graduate degree in child psychology and post graduate qualifications in school counselling. School counsellors become registered psychologists with the Australian Health Practitioners Registration Authority (AHPRA) to ensure continuous professional development standards are maintained. The NSW DEC equips school counsellors with psychometric testing equipment and testing pro-forma to allow identification of a broad spectrum of needs and abilities, including gifted and talented. The current lack of psychometric services restricts educators' ability to test for measure of psychological variables such as intelligence, aptitude and personality traits. In the past, students at the school had access to a trained school counsellor/educational psychologist; however, this is no longer the case, primarily due to the logistics of utilizing a regional and district pool of educational practitioners as is the current practice for NSW public schools.

There is one full time government funded counsellor on the Island, employed by the Norfolk Island Hospital Enterprise (NIHE). The current incumbent is a social worker who, in working with children and adults, assesses and treats a range of mental health issues such as depressive illness, anxiety and panic disorders as well as conduct disorders, school attendance issues, relationship and family difficulties. The counsellor liaises with the school, the child welfare officer (CWO) and, given the MoU involving NIHE and South East Sydney Local Health District (SESLHD) can liaise, refer and consult with both child and adolescent and adult mental health specialists and services based within the SESLHD. In 2013 a fatal motor vehicle accident on the Island resulted in a school based response and two NSW DEC based senior psychologists flying out to the Island to provide debriefing at the school. Given the absence of critical student assessment the following recommendation is made:

Recommendation:

5.1 A School Counsellor/Child Psychologist be engaged to complete assessment submissions; assist the school to access NSW DEC support services and implement programs.

Disability Standards

The Australian Government demonstrated its commitment to students with disabilities when the Commonwealth *Disability Standards for Education 2005* was enacted. This was to clarify rights and obligations under the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* and the *Standards for Education 2005*; both apply to Norfolk Island. The Standards require all education and training providers in Australia, both government and non-government, to provide reasonable adjustments for students with a disability. This commitment has not been embraced by the NIG. In the NSW DEC system, access to specialist resources for students requiring additional educational support are managed by schools; it is the school Principal who prepares a funding application for those students with an appropriate disability

confirmation. The type and nature of the disability is initially assessed and confirmed using Disability Criteria through the school counselling service. For these students, a range of specialist services related directly to the needs of the student can be sought.

The school does not have access to these specialist services and the NIG does not fund equivalent services. The method of securing additional support for a child with suspected or diagnosed additional needs has been for parents to make a direct representation to the responsible Norfolk Island Minister. Parents reported feeling guilty, uncomfortable and humiliated having to ask for additional education support on behalf of their child. The school reported that, as a result of the current practice, some parents are not making representation thereby leaving a small number of children without additional support. As a result of the work being carried out as part of the Review and given the fact that there are no equivalent support services available on Island, the school Principal, at the request of the Minister, recently convened a group to address the matter; Terms of Reference are currently being formulated. In addition, NICS has registered as part of the National Register for students with a disability. The following recommendations are made:

Recommendation:

5.2 All requests for additional funding support for children with suspected or diagnosed additional needs be processed through the Norfolk Island Central School.

5.3 NSW DEC Disabilities Access Assessment Criteria and relevant support agencies be made available to the Norfolk Island Central School.

Early Intervention Medical Services

The Norfolk Island Hospital Enterprise provides in-kind services to support visiting early intervention type specialists; there is no regular, ongoing support service available. There is no resident clinical child psychologist on the Island and no qualified person to provide additional support for children who are not meeting their developmental milestones prior to entering school. It has been reported by Pre-school staff that, on occasion, suggestions to parents that their child should be professionally assessed for delays in development are disregarded; this leads to an absence of early intervention which results in children entering the school system unable to perform to their full potential.

For thirteen (13) years, the Norfolk Island Special Education Development Unit (NISEDU) has subsidized visiting developmental paediatricians who make regular visits to the Island and provide professional diagnoses for children who are suspected by parents or education staff of having a chronological delay. NISEDU is funded through private donations and sponsorship and the service is provided at no cost to parents. A Speech Pathologist regularly visits the island; in both cases airfares and accommodation are subsidized by NISEDU. In the case of the Speech Pathologist, a service fee is charged to the client. Understanding that key support government funded support services are absent, the following recommendation is made:

Recommendation:

5.4 An Early Years Case Management Officer be engaged to coordinate and develop individual Family Service Plans for families of children with additional needs.

Norfolk Island Government Social Service Benefits

The *Social Service Act 1980* (NI) provides a ‘handicapped children’s benefit’ and an ‘orphans benefit’ that shall apply to “...the maintenance, training and advancement of the child”. The Norfolk Island taxation system, unlike that of the mainland, does not provide child support payments or family tax rebates.

Child Protection Services

Legislation governing child protection in NSW is the *Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998*. NSW DEC’s Internal Child Welfare Section provides or engages necessary support for any students in need of additional support. The NICS Principal is an employee of the NSW DEC and is duty-bound to provide Child Protection and Wellbeing Reports to the Department’s Internal Child Welfare Section; the review found that this was not occurring and access to equivalent support services is not available. DEC teachers are bound by internal operational procedures and policies; there is mandatory professional development in this area, which is funded by the DEC, and staff are bound to make mandatory reports to the school Principal. The review found that NICS students are named within the DEC system for the purpose of academic testing, for example, NAPLAN but not for child protection and wellbeing.

The *Child Welfare Act 2009* (NI) provides the framework for the protection and wellbeing of children. A part-time Child Welfare Officer (CWO) is employed by the ANI to carry out statutory roles and responsibilities, which include mandatory reporting training for all employees who come into contact with children. Mandatory Reports on the Island are made directly to the CWO. Legislation allows the CWO to inform other State and Territory CWO’s of concerns regarding children and young people who may be travelling interstate. The government does not currently fund additional child welfare services or programs.

Volunteers

Norfolk Island legislation regulating volunteers working with children does not exist and in its absence both the community based pre-school and NICS require volunteers to sign a NSW Prohibited employment declaration.

The working group has concluded that relevant legislation must be in place for all employees and volunteers who work with children on the Island. Given the absence of legislation the following recommendation is made:

Recommendation:

5.5 The Norfolk Island Government develop a policy position in relation to child protection for all employees and volunteers at Pre-school and NICS.

Community Service Group Support

Students and families are supported by a number of Community Service Groups. These include, but are not limited to, the NISEDU, LetI Salan Parents Group, Daa Side F’Ucklun (Youth Centre), Quota, Rotary, Sunshine Club and the Lions Clubs.

Special Note – The Norfolk Island P and C Association

The P&C Association raises funds with the support of the business community and makes an annual financial contribution to the school of approximately \$17 000; this is used to fund both recurrent expenditure and capital items such as information technology and playground equipment.

Conclusion

For children and young people to reach their potential and become active and productive members of any community, it is vital that their educational and welfare needs are assessed and monitored, and that findings are acted upon. It is important for both the NIG and Australian Government to acknowledge the absence of National and State equivalent legislation and essential educational and support services. The current level of service delivery provided by the NIG does not meet contemporary community needs and expectations. Data collection contributes to planning; the Australian Early Development Index (AEDI), for example, is a national collection of information on young children's development. In order to accurately assess the needs of the Norfolk Island community, people residing on the Island must be included in key national information collection activities; this will assist governments, agencies and the broader community to make evidence based decisions on which level of services are required. For families, students and young people in need of guidance and support, the creation of a coordinated support service system will have lasting benefits.

Recommendation:

5.6 All parties work towards ensuring that Norfolk Island students and young people are included in National and NSW DEC data collection systems.

6. Identification of professional development framework/methodology for staff working in Pre-school to Year 12 facilities

Pre-school Centres

As described earlier in the Report there are no legislated professional standards for Pre-school facilities on the Island; however, the majority of staff members hold qualifications which include Bachelor of Special Education, Diploma in Child Services and Childcare Studies Certificates. Staff reported that they would welcome the opportunity to have face to face training with early childhood education and care professionals. Staff reported difficulty in up-skilling while living on Island; barriers such as slow internet speed and cost were identified. The school Principal reported that where possible, Pre-school staff is invited to attend relevant professional development training days; however, participation and achievement cannot be recorded in the same way as NSW DEC staff. Pre-school staff reported that the low-wage structure for early childhood staff provides little incentive to train in the field and remain on the Island.

NSW DEC teaching staff

A tied grant is forwarded to NICS by the DEC to provide professional development of teaching staff and a strategic direction for use of those funds is detailed in the Annual School Plan. The Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (the Standards) apply to teachers

who are seconded to NICS from the DEC. The Standards describe the key elements of quality teaching and make explicit the knowledge, practice and professional engagement required across teachers' careers. Seconded teaching staff is required to undergo performance monitoring each year. Collegial support networks, post-graduate training and DEC courses are used by teachers to continually update their knowledge and skills. NICS currently has five (5) staff members with Vocational Education Training (VET) credentials, which are central to the delivery of a broad curriculum for NICS secondary students. All teachers who deliver VET courses at NICS have undertaken the VET Teacher Training Program and are required to undertake regular professional development to remain current.

NICS locally recruited learning support and administrative staff

Like other ANI departments, NICS is expected to make annual budget bids based on the professional development needs. Funding for professional development of ANI staff are centralized and managed by the Human Resources Department of the ANI. There is no formal process in place for the maintenance of professional development standards of staff other than those recruited through the DEC merit selection process. Professional development of non-DEC staff is contingent on the school Principal including them in staff development days; the Principal facilitates this where possible; however, there is no recorded outcome of training. The school Principal reported a concern that NICS Administrative staff is not provided an opportunity to maintain comparable DEC professional standards. The school's administrative staff does not have access to standard NSW DEC information via the portal, for example, best practice standard updates and management training programs.

Legitimate concerns were raised by parents that some casual relief teachers are not qualified teachers; a minimum qualification standard must be agreed for teaching roles at the school.

Conclusion

A meeting was held with staff to ascertain the level of satisfaction in relation to professional development. In relation to Pre-school, the review found long standing concerns continued in relation to the lack of access to mainland funding opportunities, the lack of professional development opportunities and wage relativity. NSW DEC teaching staff appreciated the challenges associated with a remote posting. Infants and Primary teachers felt that their professional development was not disadvantaged while seconded to NICS; however, some Secondary staff reported otherwise. The working group identified that it would be beneficial for all new staff members (DEC and non-DEC) to be versed in the historical and cultural significance of Norfolk Island particularly where it applies to the curriculum; an induction course based on advice provided by a Ministerial Advisory Board should be provided to new staff. Legislative, policy and procedural differences between NSW DEC and non-DEC staff need to be identified and documented. The working group is concerned that without equivalent professional development opportunities and access to the DEC network, education on the Island will not be delivered at a comparable standard and therefore the following recommendation is made:

Recommendations:

6.1 A new service delivery arrangement for the Norfolk Island Central School include the provision of Administrative and Support staff.

6.2 All new Norfolk Island Central School staff participate in induction training.

7. (Examine) The role of the Administration in the process for engagement of casual employees both teaching and ancillary, Information Technology support, pay roll management for support/ancillary staff and other support services provided to the Norfolk Island Central School

The *Education Act 1931* and *Regulations* (NI) make it clear that the school Principal is responsible for all matters relating to the employment of additional staff and the maintenance of all records at the school. Conversely, the school is not a legal entity and therefore does not have the authority to remunerate or enter contracts in its own right; the ANI Accounts Branch assists the Principal by carrying out a paymaster role. The ANI manages a cleaning contract on behalf of NICS and an ANI employee carries out the role of school grounds maintenance. Information obtained from the ANI and NICS show that in addition to twenty four (24) NSW DEC engaged teaching staff, there are seventeen (17) locally engaged and regularly employed administrative, language and support learning staff working at the school. In addition to this there are approximately seven (7) people registered as casual relief pool staff.

Where records are available they demonstrate that the terms and conditions of engagement of staff are based on the provisions of the *Public Sector Management Act 2000* (NI). In most cases personnel files are sparse and current instruments of engagement do not exist. As a result the review was unable to determine the current terms and conditions of most locally employed staff members. The review found that seven (7) non-DEC staff members were initially engaged or appointed by the ANI but that in a number of cases the instrument of engagement has expired, yet people remain employed and continue to be paid by the ANI Accounts Branch. The method of engagement varies between the two groups; however, in both cases successful applicants were endorsed by the Minister and a list of names is routinely sent to the ANI Accounts Branch for processing.

Given the noticeable confusion of relevant parties in relation to legal responsibility of employees working at the school the working group recommends the following:

Recommendations:

7.1 That the responsible Minister convene an internal review to address the following issues in relation to non-NSW DEC employees:

- i. Employment status
- ii. Professional development standards
- iii. The application of NSW DEC policies and procedures
- iv. Child Protection.

Stage Two of the Review:

Investigate the expansion of educational opportunities for tertiary and vocational education including apprenticeships.

Overview

The *National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011* applies to Norfolk Island but the NIG has not moved to create corresponding legislation in line with other states and territories. Norfolk Island does not have the financial or administrative capacity to deliver state level VET services. The education package purchased by the NIG (from NSW) does not include access to School-based apprentice and traineeships. The Island's unique taxation arrangement makes it difficult for residents to obtain Australian Government funding assistance. The school offers students a limited range of vocational education and training (VET) approved courses up to certification level three; this is done in cooperation with Southern Cross distance education centre, the Open Training and Education Network (OTEN), North Coast Institute of TAFE and local employers who provide work placement. NICS is currently ineligible to apply for Trades Skills Centres Programs. The role of the NICS Careers Advisor includes the oversight of senior students transitioning into mainland tertiary and VET facilities as there are currently no equivalent facilities available on the Island.

The ANI currently supports two traineeships in partnership with mainland Registered Training Organizations (RTOs). Employers hiring apprentices are not eligible to receive incentive payments under the Australian Apprenticeship Incentive program due to the Island's unique governance model. There is an arrangement in place with NSW TAFE to waive fees for Norfolk Island residents; however, block release courses are not configured in a way that accommodates Norfolk Island residents' needs. Queensland has proven to be a suitable provider; however, Norfolk Island apprentices who attend block course training in Queensland are charged at a non-state rate, for example: a four year mechanic apprenticeship costing a Queensland resident \$4,000 costs a Norfolk Island resident \$15,000; this effectively acts as a deterrent. In addition, Queensland does not accept Norfolk Island residents as being eligible to be registered or indentured at their training institutes.

The NIG offers funding support for bursary, vocational training and tertiary education in the form of a scholarship; this amounts to one return airfare between Norfolk Island and Sydney and \$500 for text books. In January 2014, the Administrator, the Hon. Neil Pope, announced the establishment of a 'one-off' Norfolk Island Apprenticeship/Traineeship Scholarship Initiative to assist Island residents with the cost of achieving higher education and training. The Australian Government's financial support was aimed at encouraging the growth of a skilled workforce in both traditional trade and non-trade areas. Eight (8) young Island residents and their employers are currently taking advantage of this opportunity; however, the initiative is not ongoing. The working group believes that it is not unreasonable for the NIG to request ongoing youth funding assistance in the form of Apprenticeships until Norfolk Island enters the Australian taxation system and relevant legislation and services are extended and implemented. The following recommendations are made:

Recommendations:

8.1 The Norfolk Island Government request Youth Apprenticeship funding subsidization by the Australian Government until a sustainable governance model is implemented.

8.2 The Norfolk Island Government develop a Future Workforce Policy and Vocational Education and Training (VET) facility plan in collaboration with relevant Norfolk Island and National stakeholders.

An [Inquiry Into Vocational Education In Schools](#) (Magri & Pedel, 2003) states “The Norfolk Island Government has written to the New South Wales and Queensland Governments seeking their assistance in having students from Norfolk Island charged at the same rate as Queensland or NSW students, but without success to date.” It would be reasonable for either State Government to expect compensation from either the Norfolk Island or Australian Government when considering such a request.

Conclusion

Norfolk Island’s unique taxation arrangements make it far more expensive and often beyond the reach of Norfolk Island residents to access equivalent higher education and training opportunities. The working group acknowledges that small, remote communities face a number of limitations in relation to service delivery; however, barriers that prevent equitable access and opportunity in education and training must be removed. The expansion of VET services on Island would require substantial investment on the part of the NIG.

NSW DEC International Student Policy and Procedures

In moving on to Stage Two of the Review, the working group was asked to consider whether or not the NSW DEC International Students Policy and Procedures could be applied to NICS. The Commonwealth *Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000* and *National Code 2007* do not apply and the Island does not have an International student program like other States and Territories. The NSW legislation, *Education Act 1990*, does not extend to Norfolk Island and as previously highlighted in the report, NICS is not integrated into the NSW DEC system. Without a full suite of supporting legislation it is not practical or affordable to apply the same procedures at NICS.

Conclusion

The working group believes that the notion of catering for International Students on the Island has merit and should be examined further particularly as Norfolk Island is being encouraged by the Australian Government to diversify its economy. Without a clear understanding of the Norfolk Island Government’s policy position in this area it is difficult for the working group to consider this matter further.

Stage Three of the Review

Benchmarking 2014

A general condition of the Commonwealth's 2013-2014 Funding Agreement for the Norfolk Island Territory stipulated that the Norfolk Island Central School budget be benchmarked against comparable NSW schools. The school Principal was assigned the task and after consulting with the NSW Director of Schools and NIG representatives the school was benchmarked against Bowraville Central School, Northern NSW and Lightning Ridge Central School, Western NSW. The financial summary attached at Appendix 5 indicates that as a result of a unique funding model the school receives approximately \$500 000 less income per annum than the smaller of the two benchmarked NSW schools. The benchmarking report indicates that the school is currently understaffed and does not have access to a school counsellor or reading recovery teacher. There is no equivalent funding for the Integration Funding Support Program and there are currently no funding resources and programs for additional needs students; Transitional Equity Funding for geographical isolation does not extend to Norfolk Island. The school is currently unable to access K-6 Literacy and Numeracy programs or submit applications for State or Commonwealth Tied Educational Grants.

Appendix 1: References

Norfolk Island Legislation, www.info.gov.nf
Norfolk Island Legislative Assembly, Hansard
Norfolk Island Administration Annual Reports and Records Department
Norfolk Island Road Map, March 2011
Wellbeing Report – Norfolk Island, Deloitte Access Economics, April 2011
Norfolk Island Public Service Review, Australian Continuous Improvement Group, January 2012
Norfolk Island Economic Development Report, ACIL Tasman, March 2012
Review of Existing Child and Family Support Services on Norfolk Island, Calvert & Connolly, September 2012
Commonwealth Grants Commission Financial Update, 2011
Child Care on Norfolk Island, Report of Working Group T. Sheridan MLA & B. Christian MLA et al, 2008
Inquiry Into Vocational Education In Schools, P. Magri & H. Pedel, 2003
Report of the Select Committee into Youth Employment and Opportunities, NILA, October 1996
Australian Government Legal, www.comlaw.gov.au
Australian Government Early Years Learning, www.education.gov.au/early-years-learning
Australia’s Care Education and Care Quality Authority, www.acecqa.gov.au/national-law
Australian Apprenticeships, www.australianapprenticeships.gov.au

Appendix 2: List of stakeholders consulted

Hon. David Buffet, AM, MLA former Minister for Education
Hon. Vicky Jack, former Minister for Education, current Child Welfare Officer
Hon. Nadia Cuthbertson, OAM, former Minister for Education
Hon. George Smith, AM, former Minister for Education and Chief Minister, Past President of P & C Association and Honorary lifetime member
Elaine Hughes, Bursaries Committee member
Tony Gallagher, Counsellor, Norfolk Island Hospital Enterprise
Liat Baddock, BSocSci, BSW (MAASW) JP, Independent Social Worker
Peter Cooper, Retired Social Worker, NSW DoCS
Fran Beecham, Retired NSW DEC Psychologist/Teacher
Barry Higgins, Independent Reviewing Officer (2008 MoU)
Parents & Citizens Association members
Social Welfare Advisory Group members
Norfolk Island Special Education Development Unit (NISEDU) members
Norfolk Island Central School front office staff
Norfolk Island Central School additional needs support staff
Norfolk Island Central School teaching staff
Jon Gibbons, CEO, Administration of Norfolk Island
Bruce Taylor, Deputy CEO, Administration of Norfolk Island
Robyn Gillies, Human Resources Manager, Administration of Norfolk Island
Norfolk Island Central School parents
Banyan Park Playcentre parent survey
Minischool parent survey

Appendix 3: Terms of Reference – Education Review



TERMS OF REFERENCE

EDUCATION REVIEW

The Hon. Robin Adams, Minister for Cultural Heritage and Community Services as Minister with responsibility for Education has established a Working Group to **enquire into, report and make recommendations in relation to the provision of Education in Norfolk Island.**

The review process will adopt a staged approach and take into account contemporary community needs and expectations, available resources and the Norfolk Island Road Map (2 March 2011) which was developed in partnership between the Norfolk Island and Commonwealth Governments. The Road Map provides a framework for the two governments to work together to strengthen:

- The Island's economic diversity to provide a sustainable and growing economy
- The Island's social cohesion and resilience
- The Island's unique heritage and environment

The Road Map at clause 4 details an aspirational goal for a sustainable population with access to health, social welfare and **education services** comparable with the broader Australian community.

To achieve this goal in respect of **education services**, both governments agreed to work together in 2011-2012 to:

- Consider ways to provide facilities and opportunities to provide excellent education outcomes on the island for future employment; and
- Investigate the expansion of educational opportunities for tertiary and vocational education.

Under the June 2013 Funding Agreement between the Commonwealth Government and the Norfolk Island Administration (the Administration) there is a requirement at Schedule 2 - Specified Improvements - at Clause 3, General Condition's page 19 at Item 12b that -

"The Education budget will be benchmarked against equivalent services in New South Wales to identify appropriate service levels, against specific staffing levels, to ensure benchmarks are not eroded or where greater than NSW standards, appropriate savings measures can be applied. A suitable benchmark community i.e. a small rural based community of similar size and population, will be identified and agreed between the parties"

Education is a Schedule 3 matter in accordance with the *Norfolk Island Act 1979* (Cth) and therefore any new or amending legislation relating to Education must be referred to the Commonwealth Minister with responsibility under the *Norfolk Island Act 1979* for instructions before the Administrator can assent to the legislation.

The Norfolk Island Government provides and funds the Norfolk Island Central School and engages teachers through a Memorandum of Understanding with the New South Wales Department of Education and Communities. The Administration purchases a package from the NSW Department of School Education for K-12 which includes the curriculum and Board of Studies examinations.

The Working Group appointed by the Minister is:

- Mrs. Melissa Ward, MLA - Nominee of the Minister, Chair & Executive Officer of the Working Group
- Mrs. Michelle Nicholson - Principal and NSW Department of Education and Communities representative
- Mrs. Rowan Evans - Parent representative on the P&C executive
- Ms Wendy Morrice – Director, Banyan Park Play Centre
- Mrs. Dominique Kelly - Home schooling
- Mrs. Cristina McRitchie - Director of "Minischool" Mr. Doug Clark- Member of executive of NIESEDU
- Ms Trish Magri - Former Librarian/Information Technology (VET) teacher NICS
- Mrs. Judith Davidson - Former Head Teacher Secondary NICS
- Ms Suzanne Hardy - Staff federation representative NICS

The Education Act 1931 (Norfolk Island), the Education Regulations, the 1988 Memorandum of Understanding between the Commonwealth Government and Norfolk Island Government and the 2008 Memorandum of Understanding between the NSW Department of Education and Training (now known as the NSW Department of Education and Communities) and the Norfolk Island Government re staffing of the Norfolk Island Central School (NICS) are outdated and a comprehensive review is necessary.

Stage 1 of the review will concentrate on the following:

1. Memorandum of Understanding between the Commonwealth Government and Norfolk Island Government dated April 1988
2. Memorandum of Understanding between the NSW Department of Education and Training (now known as the NSW Department of Education and Communities) and the Norfolk Island Government on Teacher Staffing of Norfolk Island Central School dated May 2008
3. *Education Act 1931*; including the leaving age for school children
4. *Education Regulations*; including provisions relating to Bursaries and Scholarships
5. Facilitate an audit of existing local student services for children on the Preschool to Year 12 continuum. Identify comparable student services as available to Preschool and school aged children in NSW e.g. pediatric services, counselling services, child protection

legislation in regards to employment and volunteers in childcare and school facilities

6. Identification of professional development framework/methodology for staff working in Preschool to Year 12 facilities

7. The role of the Administration in the process for engagement of casual employees both teaching and ancillary, Information Technology support, pay roll management for support/ancillary staff and other support services provided to the Norfolk Island Central School.

In preparing its report and making recommendations, the Working Group may consider the following:

- Any plan of management, strategies and policies in place for educational improvement at NICS
- Review of Existing Child and Family Services on Norfolk Island dated September 2012
- Administration Annual Reports.

The Working Group may, through the Chief Executive Officer of the Administration call for relevant documents; and/or personnel to provide information in relation to the provision of services to NICS. Members may discuss matters with external parties, subject to any overriding legal obligations on confidentiality.

The Working Group members are required to act as representatives and consult in an open and transparent manner. Consultation will include past and present teachers, the Student Representative Council, NICS Youth Council, the Parents & Citizens Association, educators and the broader community.

The Working Group is to limit its deliberations to the items defined under Stage 1 and report to the Minister by the end of Term 4 of the School Year 2013.

It is the Minister's intention that stage 2 of the review investigate the expansion of educational opportunities for tertiary and vocational education including apprenticeships; and that stage 3 of the review benchmark the education budget against equivalent services in New South Wales as required under the June 2013 Funding Agreement between the Commonwealth and the Norfolk Island Administration.

Appendix 4: Written Submissions

Wendy Morrice

Doug Clarke

Cristina McRitchie

Norfolk Island Social Welfare and Awareness Group

Liat Baddock

Dominique Kelly

Ro Peterson

Judith Davidson

Peter Cooper

Appendix 5: Benchmarking

Successful Learners, Confident and Creative Individuals, Active and Informed Citizens



Norfolk Island Central School Benchmarking 2014

“12 b. the Education budget will be benchmarked against equivalent services in New South Wales to identify appropriate service levels, against specific staffing levels, to ensure benchmarks are not eroded or where greater than NSW standards, appropriate savings measures can be applied. A suitable benchmark community i.e. a small rural based community of similar size and population, will be identified and agreed between parties”

Norfolk Island Central School – Lightning Ridge Central School – Bowraville Central School

Norfolk Island Central School - Benchmarking	
School	School Context
Norfolk Island Central School	Norfolk Island Central School (enrolment 302 students) is located on Norfolk Island, approximately 1800 km northeast of Sydney in the South Pacific Ocean. The Norfolk Island Government has a long standing arrangement with the NSW Department of Education and Communities which is determined by a Memorandum of Understanding. Members of the teaching staff are appointed through a merit selection process. The Norfolk Island Government and the community take a keen interest in education. The school's motto is "Play the Game." Students develop a sense of pride in their school and connect with the traditions, cultural identity and unique lifestyle of Norfolk Island. Our purpose is to create a culture of high expectation, embrace a differentiated curriculum that caters for the needs of all students as 21st Century learners and provide opportunities for our students to become active and engaged citizens within their own community and beyond.
Lightning Ridge Central School	Lightning Ridge Central School is in the north-east corner of the Western NSW Region. It is 300 km from the Bourke Schools Office. The school is in a unique mining location, with a population drawn from all over the world, seeking opal. The school uses its unique environment as a feature in many of its learning activities and studies. Lightning Ridge Central School has excellent facilities, which include well-maintained classrooms in aesthetic surroundings. The school has a superb library, good computing facilities, and increasing numbers of its classrooms fitted with interactive whiteboards. The school plays a significant role in its community, aiming to be an inclusive community facility, used and respected by the whole community. The school has many strengths. The learning environment is vibrant, energetic and caring. The members of the teaching staff are leaders in the use of the Quality Teaching framework as well as the implementation of the Reading to Learn strategies. There is a strong support staff focussed on the needs of the students. There is a positive parent body, working closely with the school in achieving the goals of the school. A significant proportion of the school's students (approximately 47%) identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander. The school receives support from the National Partnerships (Low SES) program and Equity Funding.

Bowraville Central School	Bowraville Central School is a K-12 campus serving a diverse community within the Nambucca Valley, Mid-North Coast, NSW. With along and proud history dating from 1875, the school's first ever Year 12 candidates completed their Higher School Certificate examinations in 2008. This momentous phase of the school's development has coincided with the recent completion of a six million dollar capital works upgrade that commenced in 2007. For several years, the school has been a recipient of Priority Schools Program funding: resources that enable staff and community to work together to create innovative programs of support for students, regardless of their age or background, within a caring and supportive environment. In 2012 the school joined the National Partnerships – Low SES School Communities Program, additional significant resources that are enhancing the school's ability to achieve its stated objectives.
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School Enrolment 2013					
	K-2	3-6	7-10	11-12	total
Norfolk Island Central School	80	85	99	38	302
Lightning Ridge Central School	110	142	118	45	450
Bowraville Central School	51	68	89	33	241

School Retention 2013				
Year 10- Year 12 retention 2011 -2013	Norfolk Island Central	Lightning Ridge Central	Bowraville Central School	Norfolk Island Central School has 20.7% higher student retention %(from Year 10 to Year 12) than the NSW.
School retention	85.2%	42.9%	43%	
State retention	64.5%	64.5%	64.5%	

Post School Destinations 2014	
Norfolk Island Central School	<p>Of the 24 students in Year 12 in 2013 all received a HSC qualification and in 2014:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8 have enrolled in University (35%) • 8 have enrolled full time in TAFE (36%) 7 of those in Australia (28%), 1 in New Zealand (4%) and 1 in Vanuatu • (4%) • 3 have gained apprenticeships in Australia (13%) • 3 student have been accepted into the Australian Defence Force (8%) • 1 student is working full time in Norfolk Island (4%) • 1 student is working in New Zealand (4%)
Lightning Ridge Central School	<p>In 2013 there were 14 students who received their HSC qualifications. 8 of these students were offered and they all accepted a place at University, 1 has taken up a full time apprentice, 3 have gained employment and 2 are seeking employment. 10 of the fourteen year 12 students completed a VocED course as part of their HSC. Stage 5 and Stage 6 TAFE accredited courses available through Western Institute of TAFE. 2013 choices were Children's Services, Electro Technology, Automotive, Fashion Design, Hairdressing, Beauty Therapy, and Human Services.</p>
Bowraville Central School	<p>IN 2013 twenty three students commenced Year 12. Of this cohort twenty one students (91%) completed their HSC or VET equivalent. Post school destinations include University (23%) full time employment (22%) TAFE (14%) Deferred university (8%) Pathways (13%) part-time employment (3%) seeking employment 17%)</p>

Data in this table is transferred directly from the 2013 Annual School Reports.

Workforce Composition 2013			
Position	Norfolk Island Central	Lightning Ridge Central School	Bowraville Central School
Principal	1	1	1
Deputy Principal	1	1 + 1 (National Partnership)	1
Assistant Principal	2	3	2
Head Teacher	3	3	3
Head Teacher Mentor	0	.5	0
Classroom Teacher	14	24.6	15
Teacher of Reading Recovery	0	.3	.3
Learning and Support Teacher	.8	1.7	1.2
Careers Advisor	.4	.6	.4
Teacher Librarian	1	1.2	.8
Multi-categorical teacher	0	2	1
Teacher Virtual Selective	0	.8	0
Teacher of ESL	0	.4	0
School Counsellor	0	1	.4
	Allocated teacher entitlement 24.69 (24 teachers funded) - .69		
School Administrative and Support Staff	8 (not DEC staff)	11.3	7.5

Teacher Qualifications 2013			
School	Degree or Diploma%	Postgraduate%	NSW Institute of Teachers Accreditation%
Norfolk Central School	100%	36%	8%
Lightning Ridge Central	100%	4%	26%
Bowraville Central School	100%	10%	4%

TPL Funding 2013 – Teacher Professional Learning - DEC provide funding directly to schools as a tied fund			
	Norfolk Island Central School	Lightning Ridge Central School	Bowraville Central School
	\$29,808	\$42,263.34	\$17,527.00

Financial Summaries 2013 – Norfolk Island Central School, Lightning Ridge Central School, Bowraville Central School

This summary covers funds for operation costs and does not involve expenditure areas such as permanent salaries, building and major maintenance or training and development for staff. Administration staff members who work at the school have not been included as these positions are classed as permanent staff in comparable DEC schools.

Income		Norfolk Island Central School	Lightning Ridge Central School	Bowraville Central School	
Balance brought forward		00	693,155.48	166078.73	
Global funds		187,932	452,475.66	294,258.82	
Tied funds		101,719.17	814,041.50	382,137.07	
School and community sources (e.g. P&C)		17,000.00	73940.75	101056.61	
interest			25471.45	7775.65	
Trust receipts			25,342.95	36628.57	
Total income		306,651.17	2,084,427.79	987,935.45	
Expenditure		Norfolk Island Central School	Lightning Ridge Central School	Bowraville Central School	
learning	Teaching and	77,000	60,091.91	48,764.74	
	Excursions	2,832	2,508.04	46,575.11	
dissections	Extracurricular		10,968.12	42,787.76	
Library			3326.09	209.00	
Administration and office costs (not wages)			167,035.89	49,586.42	
		Sub total	77,000	243,930.05	187,923.03
Casual relief teachers		25,500	All short term relief in 2013 was paid from Equity Funding	87,649.08	
Tied Funds		101,719.17	748,970.24	344,519.07	
Utilities		57,400	97,564.16	62,000.38	
Maintenance		42,200	89,903.99	31,410.76	
Trust accounts			22,341.44	36,834.62	
Total expenditure		306,651.17	1,202,889.88	751,141.26	

Balance carried forward	00	881,537.91	236,794.19
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Tied Funds 2013 - Norfolk Island Central School, Lightning Ridge Central School, Bowraville Central School						
	Norfolk Island Central School		Lightning Ridge Central School		Bowraville Central School	
	Opening balance (carried 2012)	2013 funding	Opening balance (carried 2012)	2013 funding	Opening balance (carried 2012)	2013 funding
Student assistance scheme	00	00	00	6,039.00	521.85	5,690.85
Community hub	00	00			00	4,722.76
Special Education – programs for students with additional needs	00	00	1905.65	636.84	00	00
Integration (Students with additional needs)	00	86,335.00	13,882.52	127,132.81	18,727.07	80,256.11
Funding and Support		(student learning support officers wages only) No program funding			8,946.50	21,903.44
Work place learning	3,772.15	1236.17	1,872.62	4,038.64	00	5,158.00
Additional TPL (teacher professional learning)	00	00			00	4,381.89
NortaNorta (individual tuition for Aboriginal Students)	00	00	35,917.26	92,939.92	3,733.23	38,511.10
FOCUS – 2014 NAIDOC community engagement	00	00	5,000.00	00	00	00
SASS traineeship (office staff)	00	00	2,201.77	1,998.00	00	00
Trade Training Project – ongoing project to upgrade Hospitality and Construction areas.	00	00	126,590.10	1,397.36	00	00
					Bowraville recently funded \$6 million for upgrade (2014)	
Community gardens Live Life Well – outdoor garden	00	00	2,000.00	868.03	1,294	14,580.03

Student Volunteering – Premiers	00	00	2,811.80	00	00	00
Xcel staff Relief – virtual school	00	00	00	5,450.24	00	00
ASPIRE	00	00	399.02	4,422.02	00	00
Equity Funds (welfare programs)	00	00	997.65	242,315.64	5,389.17	27,333.33
Teaching Programs Development Project – introduction to the New Curriculum	00	00	4,713.56	2,474.73	00	00
Aboriginal Transitional Funds	00	00	113,713.03	69,131.01	00	00
NSW AECG Primary Aboriginal Language	00	00	00	\$42,973.07	00	00
Gumbaynggirr – aboriginal language program	00	00			6,870.00	5,852.02
Aboriginal language program			28,109.00	11,150.13		
Aboriginal early years – Early Childhood support	00	00	00	00	5,318.98	10,138.10
Early action for success – K-2 Literacy and Numeracy interventions	00	00	00	30,984.00	8,827.82	30,485.11
Climate program	00	00	00	00	756.00	00
GATS Aboriginal Program	00	00	00	00	10,000	0000
Premier Sporting Challenge	4,999	1,176.00	00	00	00	00
Active After School	2,326.21	12,972.00			00	1,660.27
National Partnerships	00	00	141,862.28	54,533.90	21,670.62	73,962.66
	11,097.36	101,719.17	385,996.81	706,733.90	82,044.56	326,992.07

Funded Programs - Norfolk Island Central School, Lightning Ridge Central School, Bowraville Central School		
Norfolk Island Central School	Lightning Ridge Central School	Bowraville Central School
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active After School – a comprehensive and well attended extra curricula activity (Australian Government Funding) • NSW Premiers Sporting Challenge – provides opportunities for the school to expand and build aspirations towards a broader range of sporting disciplines (NSW funded) • Work Placed Learning – NSW Funding for Vocational Education and Training courses at NICS. (NSW DEC funded) <p>Norfolk Island Funded</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Norfolk Language – funded by NIG • Norfolk Community Arts provides a range of Arts workshops during the school year • The Career Market is funded by NIG and NSW VET funding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multi Lit – Literacy and Numeracy Program – higher duties paid to teacher for coordination of program – National Partnerships Funding • Employment of extra teacher in middle school to work with stage 3 students – National Partnerships funding • Focus on Learning Program – targeted early literacy and numeracy program and additional resources – Equity Funding • Additional Learning and Support Officer employed with responsibility for stage 4 literacy and numeracy – Equity Funding • Additional teacher employed .5 to release AP to coordinate student learning support services • Employ an additional computer technician (.6) to supplement the work of existing Technical Support Officer (.4) with National Partnership 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early Action for Success – K-2 Literacy and Numeracy strategy. • Bridges Transition Program - National Partnerships – Pre – School to Kindergarten • Partnership with RFWS _ Royal Far West School – to enhance development of students with speech development issues. Students assisted by Speech Therapy staff. • Professional Learning Teams – National Partnerships – staff collaboration • Students Learning Portfolios – National Partnerships funding – Year 7-10 • Teachers professional development programs to develop understanding for using data to inform future teaching – National Partnership funding • Professional Development for National Curriculum

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most programs that are run at NICS rely on in-kind participation by parents, community, staff or visitors 	<p>Funding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Best Start Assessment – Kindy start program – employ 2 extra SLSOs and release a Kindergarten teacher – National Partnerships Funding and Equity Funding • Extra staff employed to monitor attendance – National Partnership Funding 	<p>Programs – National Partnership funding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality Teaching NSW Assessment PD – National Partnerships Funding • Development of Personal Learning Plans for students – employment of extra staff (SLSO) National Partnership Funding • Employ extra Administration staff member of work with timetable administration – National Partnerships Funding • Community Art Project • Language Program – NSW Aboriginal Education and Training Directorate and National Partnerships Funding • BRIDGES – Early Years Framework – extra staff member and SLSO employed with National Partnerships Funding to coordinate and develop individual Family Service Plans for families and children enrolled in BRIDGES • Develop community gardens with NSW Environmental Heritage Trust Grant
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References		
source	date	description
My School	2013	ACARA – Australian Curriculum and Reporting Audit
Norfolk Island Central School Budget	2013-2014	Norfolk Island ERP Suite – 2013-2014 Budget for Norfolk Island Central School
Lightning Ridge Central School Annual Financial Statement (AFS)	November 2013	Mandatory requirement of DEC NSW
Bowraville Central School Annual Financial Statement (AFS)	November 2013	Mandatory Requirement of DEC NSW
Enrolment and Entitlement Report – Norfolk Island Central School, Lightning Ridge Central School, Bowraville Central School	2013	Issued by DEC NSW – staff entitlement based on actual enrolment February of that year.
Annual School Reports - – Norfolk Island Central School, Lightning Ridge Central School, Bowraville Central School	2013	Mandatory requirement for DEC NSW – must be uploaded to DEC and School site by 1 April of following year.

School Management Plans - – Norfolk Island Central School, Lightning Ridge Central School, Bowraville Central School	2012-2014	Mandatory requirement for DEC NSW – revised plans need to be with Director of School by November of the previous year. New plan submitted each three years.
Information from DEC website		Information informing programs and eligibility

