



CONFIRMED MINUTES OF MEETING

Meeting of the Community Consultative Committee (CCC) of the Shire of Christmas Island held at the George Fam Centre at 5.00pm Wednesday 17th July 2024

1 Declaration of Opening of Meeting / Announcement of Visitors

1.1 Chairperson Gordon **THOMSON** declared the meeting opened at 5.00pm

2 Record of Attendance/Apologies/Leave of Absence/Declarations of Financial, Proximity or Impartiality Interest

Attendees:

Community Consultative Committee

Shire President	Gordon THOMSON
Shire Planning, Governance and Policy	Chris SU
CI Christian Fellowship	Stephanie SAMBELL
Shire Councillor	Kelvin LEE
CI Women's Association	Jessica SEET
Shire Councillor	Hafiz MASLI
CI Neighbourhood Centre	Oliver LINES
Shire CEO	David PRICE
Phosphate Resources Limited	Zoe McMILLAN
Chinese Literary Association	TAN Teik Kiang

Apologies

Union of CI Workers	FOO Kee Heng
Malay Association	Azmi YON
Islamic Council of CI	Sultan SAYED
Poon Saan Club	Suzane CHAN

Absent

CI Tourism Association	n/a
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Visitors

Fisheries Management Committee

FMC Chairperson	Azmi YON
Shire Fisheries Officer	Shahrin JAMIL
FMC Committee	Brady COLLETTE

Scientific Advisor	Dr. Kendra TRAVAILLE
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State Agencies

Commonwealth Dept. of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry	
Assistant Director	Christian SARGEANT
DAFF Officer	Jamie VARGA

Officer of the Administrator
Administrator of Christmas Island
Executive Assistant

Farzian **ZAINAL**
John **BUNCLE**

3. Confirmation of Previous Minutes

3.1 Confirmation of 11th June 2024 minutes

CCC Resolution –		
Moved: MASLI	Seconded: LEE	Res. No: CCC6/2024
That the CCC confirm that the minutes of the 11 th June 2024 are a true and accurate record.		
For:		
Shire President	Gordon THOMSON	
Shire Planning, Governance and Policy	Chris SU	
CI Christian Fellowship	Stephanie SAMBELL	
Shire Councillor	Kelvin LEE	
CI Women’s Association	Jessica SEET	
Shire Councillor	Hafiz MASLI	
CI Neighbourhood Centre	Oliver LINES	
Shire CEO	David PRICE	
Phosphate Resources Limited	Zoe McMILLAN	
Chinese Literary Association	TAN Teik Kiang	
Against:		
None		
Carried: 10/0		

3.2 Action Items

	Action Item	CCC Meeting	Action Officer	Status
1.	That the Commonwealth be informed of the CCC’s resolution to participate in the review of the five year <i>IOTHS Strategic Plan 2019-2024</i>	June 2024	Chair	<i>CCC to be advised of this progress at next meeting.</i>

4. Agenda Business

4.1 Dept. of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

4.1.1 Chairperson Gordon THOMSON welcomed Christian SERGEANT and Jamie VARGA from DAFF to make a presentation on the regulatory changes reducing the allowable fish weight from 10kg to 5kg per passenger.

- 4.1.2 CCC and FMC members introduced themselves to the DAFF officers. Chairperson THOMSON provided background as to the Fisheries Management Committee and the Christmas Island Fisheries Ordinance 2022 development; it is within the 2022 Ordinance that permits 10kg of fish to be able to be taken off island to Perth.
- 4.1.3 DAFF Christian SERGEANT advises that the restriction of 5kg fish take to Perth from the IOTs are presently in effect by law. Informed the meeting that he is aware of the cross-legislation in this space and was sympathetic to the complexities of external territory legislative management.
- 4.1.4 DAFF Christian SERGEANT provided that 2017 advice from DAFF did not provide for any restriction of fish movement from the IOTs into Australia. However the 2024 Biosecurity Goods Determination restricts more than 5kg of fish from being able to be brought into Australia from anywhere in the world. He noted that there was no consideration for the IOTs in the development of this Determination.
- 4.1.5 DAFF Christian SERGEANT advised that there was a 2026 'sunset' for all Determinations made under the *Biosecurity Act (Cth)(2015)*. The Act itself was to be reviewed for 2026 also.
- 4.1.6 DAFF Christian SERGEANT was sympathetic to the confusion and the crossover of laws applicable, and informed the meeting that he hopes to be able to influence the legislative review for 2026. He confirmed that until that point, DAFF and biosecurity officers at Perth Airport must abide by the law in place, which he stipulated again regrettably includes IOT residents as part of the overall international restriction of 5kg incoming of finfish from around the world into Australia.

Provided that if 10kg was a sustainable amount of fish for the IOT fisheries to be able to tolerate then he would recommend on his end a clause in the 2026 legislation to allow this amount for IOT – Perth journeys. He continued that submissions from the FMC / CCC on the cultural importance of fish sharing for IOT residents would also assist him to move the argument within DAFF working group on the matter.

- 4.1.7 Chris SU and Gordon THOMSON advised that the Shire's Fisheries Advisor Dr. Kendra TRAVAILLE will be able to assist with the fish take numbers that she and Shire Fisheries Ranger Shahrin JAMIL have been collating.
- 4.1.8 Chris SERGEANT reiterated that consistent alignment with other legislation on this commodity would be agreeable.
- 4.1.9 Chairperson Gordon THOMSON queried which legislation had superiority; the *Christmas Island Fisheries Ordinance 2022* or the *Biosecurity Act 2015*? DAFF advised that this can only be determined by a court; the DAFF officers at his level and the relevant staff at Perth Airport are bound by the *Biosecurity Act 2015*.
- 4.1.10 Chris SU distributes the *30 April 2024 Seafood (excluding finfish) from the Indian Ocean Territories for human consumption* and the *25 June 2024 Fish: including fish caviar, fish roe, fish viscera and fish maw (excluding salmonid fish)* advice from the Australian Biosecurity Import Conditions (BICON) platform.

Chris SU noted that the 30 April 2024 advice provided for an *unlimited quantity of seafood to be able to be brought into mainland Australia from the IOTs for both commercial and personal use*. However this 30 April 2024 advice specifically restricts finfish from counting as 'seafood', thus excluding wahoo, tuna, snapper, etc.

DAFF officers confirmed that this 30 April 2024 advice was correct and that it works alongside the 25 June 2024 advice.

FMC members noted that under this 30 April 2024 advice, one could bring unlimited quantities of Cocos (Keeling) Island *Gong-Gong* to the mainland. The FMC members noted that the Cocos (Keeling) Island Fisheries Ordinance 2022 allows people to take a maximum of 2kg only off CKI to the mainland.

Meeting discussed this discrepancy at length. Meeting concluded that this was not satisfactory, that an alignment to the CKI/CI Ordinances needed to be had.

- 4.1.11 Meeting discussed if there was any ability for Perth airport staff to exempt IOT residents from the 5kg limitation, given that the CKI/CI Ordinances provided for 10kg? DAFF reiterated that the staff are forced to uphold the Biosecurity Act (2015)(Cth) rules in place.
- 4.1.12 Meeting concludes that the only method was to have the Act changed to allow for the IOT to be able to carry 10kg of fish to mainland Australia to align it with the CKI/CI Ordinances. Meeting noted that this was above the operational powers of the DAFF personnel and would require political effort with legislators.
- 4.1.13 Meeting concludes that information should be disseminated to the community regarding the limitation to 5kg of fish permissible from the IOTs from this point on.
- 4.1.14 Chairperson Gordon THOMSON thanked the DAFF personnel for making their presentation and advising of a way forward with the 2026 review of legislation. The CCC / FMC will be making scientific submissions and cultural reasonings through Dr. Kendra TRAVAILLE and Shahin JAMIL as invited by Assistant Director Christian SERGEANT to assist him in the 2026 legislation review working group to make the case for the IOTs.

DAFF Christian SERGEANT, Jamie VARGA, Office of the Administrator Farzian ZAINAL and John BUNCLE leave at 6.00pm

Fisheries Management Committee members Azmi YON, Brady COLLETTE, Shahrin JAMIL and Dr. Kendra TRAVAILLE leave at 6.00pm

4.2 IOT Air Services Procurement

- 4.2.1 Chris SU presented DITRDC Community Bulletin D13/24 'Update on the IOT Air Services Tender' of 27 June 2024 to the CCC members.
- 4.2.2 Gordon THOMSON advises that the successful tenderer will commence November 2025.
- 4.2.3 Meeting noted the continued off loading of luggage; members present had luggage offloaded from the 9.7.2024 flight yet to arrive.
- 4.2.4 Chairperson Gordon THOMSON advised the meeting that he had raised with Administrator Farzian ZAINAL the continued community disappointment with the failure of VARA to be able to address the issue.

Action Item – Gordon THOMSON to provide the CCC with the email correspondence exchanged with Administrator ZAINAL.

- 4.2.5 Chairperson Gordon THOMSON provided an overview of the options before consumers who wished to complain about service failure with the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission and the WA Dept. of Commerce.

Meeting discussed making a collective complaint from residents with evidence of offloaded baggage.

- 4.2.6 Action Item: Zoe McMILLAN to assist in generating an online survey doc open to the public to input their offloaded luggage information.

This data would be used to help inform any complaint to the ACCC or WA Dept. of Commerce, noting that it could not be used to generate a complaint to VARA on behalf of any or all residents for compensation for delayed luggage.

4.3 IOT Eligible for Regional Arts WA Funding Streams

- 4.3.1 Meeting received update from Chris SU that Regional Arts WA has advised Shire that IOT residents can make an application to the Quick Response Grant and Project Grants under the Commonwealth Regional Arts Australia Office via RAWA.

Chris SU reported that this advice was passed onto island arts groups n 15/7/2024.

5.0 General Business

6. Closure of Meeting: 6.30pm, next meeting TBA