



Australian Government

Department of Infrastructure, Transport,  
Regional Development and Communications

# Norfolk Island Regional Council

## Public inquiry and election postponement

February 2021

### FAQ

[General information on the public inquiry into the Norfolk Island Regional Council \(NIRC\) and postponement of the upcoming election.](#)

#### What is the purpose of the public inquiry?

The inquiry will examine critical challenges facing the NIRC and whether the council is discharging its responsibilities under the Local Government Act 1993 (NSW) (NI) (Act), particularly in relation to financial and asset management.

The recently released independent audit reports identify significant issues with the NIRC's financial and operational performance.

#### How will it be conducted?

Ms Carolyn McNally has been appointed as commissioner to conduct the inquiry. The commissioner is independent of government and will determine how the inquiry will be conducted.

Generally speaking, such inquiries include public hearings and submissions from stakeholders. The inquiry process will likely take a number of months.

At the conclusion of the inquiry, the commissioner will present the Assistant Minister with a report outlining her findings in relation to the Terms of Reference for the inquiry.

The commissioner will provide further information on the inquiry in the near future.

#### Will the upcoming NIRC election take place?

The NIRC election will be postponed for 12 months. This will enable full consideration of the findings of the public inquiry, prior to an election taking place.

#### Will the council remain suspended?

Yes, the NIRC will remain under its current three-month temporary suspension with an interim administrator in place. A further decision will be made at the end of that period by the Assistant Minister.

The day-to-day functions of the NIRC will continue and staff will continue to perform their roles, under direction of the General Manager. The community's service delivery experience should not change simply as a result of a temporary suspension.

The Department will continue to provide financial support to the NIRC for payment of immediate critical priorities, such as staff salaries.