

2027 CIDHS Welcome booklet

Here, in this one tiny island, is a spectacle that you cannot witness anywhere else in the world.
Sir David Attenborough



PERSEVERE

CHRISTMAS ISLAND DISTRICT HIGH SCHOOL

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CHRISTMAS ISLAND DISTRICT HIGH SCHOOL

PERSEVERE

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A GUIDE TO CHRISTMAS ISLAND 2027



WHERE IS CHRISTMAS ISLAND?

The Australian territory of Christmas Island lies in the Indian Ocean, approximately 360km Southwest of Java and 2400 km Northwest of Perth. It is 900 kms from Cocos Island. A flight direct to Perth takes around 4 hours, to Cocos takes just under 2 hours.

THE PEOPLE

The population of permanent residents on Christmas Island is currently around 1500 and is a mix of diverse ethnic groups. The unique cultural mix of the island is reminiscent of places like Singapore or Malaysia. The most visible cultural groups are Chinese and Malay but there are also smaller groups of Indian and Eurasian residents. There is also a substantial Anglo-Australian population. All of these groups co-exist peacefully on Christmas Island and the level of tolerance and cooperation enables many of the island's wonderful events to occur. Island residents are happy to share in the cultures of others through the island's many festivals and celebrations such as Chinese New Year, Hari Raya or Christmas. Newcomers to the island are often impressed by the friendly welcome they receive from island residents and the hospitality that is extended to them.

WHAT IS IT LIKE TO LIVE ON CHRISTMAS ISLAND?

One of the nicest things about Christmas Island is the strong sense of community. You meet people you would never have had the opportunity to get to know on the mainland, and they become life-long friends. Residents look forward to returning each year to familiar island faces and the fantastic hospitality of the Christmas Island people. Six degrees of separation becomes more like two on Christmas Island and it seems everyone knows someone who has lived or lives on Christmas Island. It is not unusual to meet people who you went to school with years ago or who have friends in common with you. There are regular social and sporting opportunities on Christmas Island and many people say that their life on Christmas Island is busier than it ever was on the mainland!

Christmas Island is a fantastic place to raise a young family and there are quite a lot of families with young children on island. The nature of Christmas Island allows children to have the kind of childhoods many of us had years ago with the associated freedoms. There is little traffic and only one set of traffic lights on island! Every destination is close and it never takes long to get anywhere. Christmas Island is large enough, that if you want your space, you can do things on your own, or go to different places than other people go. On the other hand, it is small enough, that if people haven't seen you for a while, someone is likely to check if you are ok and extend an invitation to do something.

Most people find the first six months of their

stay exciting, though challenging. They meet new people and make new friends through many social opportunities such as golf, Hash House Harriers, Mixed netball, diving or social drinks. Usually weekends and time off is spent exploring the natural and cultural diversity of the island and early on newcomers are invited to the first of many cultural celebrations such as Chinese New Year.

'Waiting for the ship' at this time of the year, however, can be frustrating. From January to April, due to large ocean swells, there can be a delay in ship arrivals, which results in shortages of some food items. It may also mean a delay in the arrival of household effects. The sailing schedule can be found at www.zentnershipping.com.au At this time of year there is also "tropical weather" with a lot of rain, humidity and plenty of mosquitoes, which can limit outdoor play opportunities for children.

As newcomers settle in they can begin to feel the distance from family and friends. People have commented that at this time it is nice to have some visitors come to see them. It is also advisable to take a trip home after the first four to six months on island. This trip allows you to see family and friends and make any purchases that you feel are necessary.

There is nowhere else quite like Christmas Island, it is totally unique. Many people come to Christmas Island intending to stay only a short time and end up being long term residents. When people leave the island for work or to be closer to family they regret having to leave and many return even 30 to 50 years after they were first here. Those who leave looking for 'greener pastures', often find the greenest pastures were those of the island and that they want to return!

Living and working on Christmas Island for most people is an extremely rewarding professional and personal experience, but it is important to remember that you are living in an isolated and small community. It helps to stay open minded, be culturally and environmentally aware and get involved in community organisations and events as much as possible.

All in all, most islanders feel the benefits of living here far outweigh the frustrations. We hope that this will be the case for you and that you will learn to love this island as much as the long-term residents do.

RELIGION

There are many religions represented on Christmas Island. You can learn more about Buddhism and Taoism in the The Essential Christmas Island Travel Guide. As well as many Buddhist and Taoist temples the island is home to the Mosque which is the centre of worship for the island's Islamic population. You will learn more about beliefs, customs and traditions of Islam, Buddhism and Taoism through cultural activities run by the school. There is a Bahai temple



for followers of the Bahai faith. There is also a Catholic Church which holds a Sunday Service at 9am and a Christian Fellowship that meets every Sunday at 10am at the Poon Saan Hall.

THE WEATHER

The constant temperatures of the island mean summer all year long (our climate is not that different to Indonesia). Humidity remains fairly high all year and ranges between 80 – 90%. Temperatures remain fairly steady over the year too with the maximums usually in the mid to high 20's. During the 'wet' season (December – April) there can be a lot of rain and stormy tropical weather brought on by the monsoons. This often makes the ocean too rough for swimming or boating. The island has had several near misses with cyclones that bring strong winds, rain and rough seas, which are quite spectacular. However, the island has not been hit directly by a cyclone for a long time.

It usually takes newcomers a while to adjust to the weather here and many people find they feel more tired than usual. All school houses have air conditioning and the school is air conditioned, so you will be able to find some relief! You can also swim all year long at the local pool and for most of

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the year at the beach (swell permitting). Given the weather, it is suggested that you leave any heavy winter clothing behind – you won't need it here! Do, however, leave it somewhere accessible (not in storage) for your trips back to the mainland during winter. A list of suggested clothing and items is included at the end of this guide.

DRESS

CI is a fairly relaxed place and is usually quite warm and the casual attire of the residents reflects this. You will see very few suits here and business dress is usually smart casual. Please be aware though, that you should wear appropriate attire when in the Kampong to show respect for the Islamic community on island. Women and men should wear modest clothing which covers the shoulders and upper legs. You may need to bring one good outfit as the island usually holds an annual ball and there may be other occasions when you need to "dress up".The Christmas Island Tourism Association release a 'Whats on' every month. This is advertised on their Facebook page. An example is on the final page of this brochure.

ON APPOINTMENT – WHAT TO DO

The Principal will usually ring you to inform you of your appointment and will give you the relevant contact information during this call. After you have celebrated winning the position you will need to contact the Coordinator of the IOT schools Michael Nicholas on (08) 9285 3685, or Michael.Nicholas@education.wa.edu.au. He will direct you to contact Reliner Colaco at DoE Housing and Transport (H&T) and will tell you to take a look at the DoE H&T website – www.det.wa.edu.au/housingandtransport/detcms/portal/ When you contact Housing and Transport they will give you the travel agent information and purchase order number you need to book your flights.

Housing and Transport will also give you the contact for the removalist and the shipping company Zentners which services the islands. Initial allocations for shipping are listed on the H&T website. For an indication the allocation for teachers without dependents is 14 cubic metres and with dependents is 19 cubic metres with an additional 2 cubic metres per dependent child on island to a maximum of 27 cubic metres or a 6 metre sea container. Each teacher is allowed an extra 2 cubic metres for professional materials. Even if you are both teachers and have both been appointed – you will only be allocated the family allowance of 19 cubic metres.

This process may be a little different for those staff not appointed at the beginning of a school year, but the initial contact is still the Coordinator of the IOT schools.

There are a number of Facebook sites that you may want to join prior to your arrival such as:

Christmas Island District High School

CI Buy, Swap & Sell

CI Blackboard

Christmas Island Tourism Association

GETTING HERE & AWAY - FLIGHTS

There are currently two flights a week to and from Christmas Island.

QantasLink fly to CI twice a week.

On Mondays the flight route is Perth- CI- Cocos- Perth

On Fridays the flight route is Perth- Cocos- CI- Perth

We suggest that you join Qantas Rewards prior to your flight.

All flights can be delayed or cancelled with little or no notice, due to weather or aircraft supply problems, so it is advisable to keep an eye on the Facebook CI Blackboard page on the day of your departure. Also, due to strong tailwinds



in some months the plane can land much earlier than scheduled and boarding times are frequently much earlier than those printed on boarding passes. It is a good idea to have travel insurance that specifically covers weather disruptions.

PART OF AUSTRALIA BUT AN INTERNATIONAL DESTINATION

Although Christmas Island is a part of Australia, travel here requires you to follow international flight guidelines. All flights depart from the International Terminal in Perth (T1) and require passengers to carry photo identification. We would recommend all family members get passports if they do not already have them as this will speed up the customs process each time. Passengers need to be at the airport 2 hours prior to their flight time to check in. This allows you time to check in comfortably and then move through immigration and security. The good thing about being an international flight is that you can buy duty free anytime you fly to CI or back to Perth!

When travelling from Christmas Island to Perth you also need to be at the airport to check in 2 hours prior to your flight time. The check in counter closes 30 minutes prior to the arrival of the aircraft and no passengers will be processed after this time. This is different to the times for Virgin flights out of larger airports. There are no refunds for missed flights because of late check-in.

LUGGAGE ALLOCATIONS

Qantas has strict luggage allocations. As of November 2026, you are entitled to 23kg per person. Extra luggage can be purchased at the airport only. It is $236 for 23kg and it is at the discretion of the airport staff if they accept the bag. Carry on is 7kgs.

It is reccomended to have friends or family with you at the airport, so you can leave things with them if need be. They may also offload all luggage to be brought in on a later flight.

It is advisable that you use some of your allowance to bring fresh fruit and vegetables, yoghurt, cheese, cold meats and frozen meat as supplies of these items on island may be limited due to swell and weather conditions. If you want to bring perishable items they must be packed in solid plastic/fibreglass eskies or Styrofoam boxes with lids. They should be taped up and labelled clearly with your name and the destination Christmas Island. It helps to write this in full to avoid confusion as Cocos Island is also sometimes written CI. Soft sided cooler bags and cardboard boxes are not permitted. Any seafood, meat or frozen products must be sealed in watertight plastic bags or sealable containers and the container cannot include any loose ice or any dry ice. The total weight of each container may not exceed 23kg. There is no insurance on perishables.

On arrival at CI your perishables will be checked by Customs and Quarantine officers. It is advisable to keep & pack your shopping receipts, to speed up the checking process. For more information on baggage allowances including information on

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infant baggage limits Qantas.com.au

If you want to bring some essential teaching resources with you to get the year started, it would be advisable to send these Express Post (see section on Post).

FOOD ON THE FLIGHT

Qantas Link flights do include a small meal during the flight. There is no provision to purchase extra food on the flight, so make sure you bring extra snacks if needed. It is advisable to travel with food, especially for children. Island residents with children often travel with fruit, sandwiches, muesli bars and other snacks. Just ensure that you leave left-over food on the plane or declare it on entry into Perth/Christmas Island.

If you are worried about your weight on check in at Perth, you can purchase sandwiches, salads, fruit, cheese and biscuits and other snacks and drinks upstairs after you have checked through. This is not included in your weight allowance. It is also advisable to bring something to keep your children entertained as the flight can seem very long for children. Once through immigration and security at Perth Airport, there are shops where you can purchase drinks/water, newspapers, magazines, books, children's colouring-in and some toys etc to take on board. There are also cafés and duty free stores.

COSTS OF FLIGHTS

See the Qantas Website:

https://www.qantas.com/en-au

EXTRA ITEMS NEEDING DELIVERY TO CI

If you choose to use Freightshop to take your extra baggage, you need to inform them of your travel dates and organise to deliver your extra baggage to them no later than one working day prior to your flight. It is up to you to organise getting your luggage to Freightshop. Some people choose to use a courier. Others deliver the luggage to Freightshop themselves. If you are lucky your extra luggage will travel around the same time you do. People have often found that goods can be substantially delayed when sent via Freightshop, however it is usually faster than placing it on the next ship (which usually takes up to 6 weeks to arrive).

Freightshop are located at Unit 1B, 13 Hugh Edwards Drive, Perth International Airport. Visit their website for directions as it can be confusing. The office is on a different street than the warehouse. Please contact Freightshop to confirm all details and information -

Phone: 9477 6088

Fax: 9477 6077

Mobile: 0433 663 019 - Drew

Email: perth@freightshop.com.au

Please also check your baggage allocations with the Coordinator of the Indian Ocean Territories (IOT) schools – Michael Nicholas – 9285 3685.

YEARLY FLIGHTS

Teachers and their dependants* at CIDHS are entitled to one return flight off island after completing a full years service by DoE as part of their position. This flight is only to the value of the set current return flight to Perth. If you have chosen a self funded fare then you will only be reimbursed the prescribed amount.

Towards the end of Term 3 each year you will receive an Annual Travel Concession (ATC) form from the Registrar at the school. You must complete this form and say when you will be using your flights – Christmas time, Term 1, Term 2 or Term 3. You can nominate to use your flight at any time during the year as long as it is used within 12 months. If you do not use the flight within this time period it is considered forfeited.

* Dependants are classified as the children of the teacher and the spouse if the spouse is not employed full-time elsewhere and is earning under $6000 p/a. This excludes spouses who work for the school. If a spouse is a Part-Time worker at the school they are entitled to a full fare. If you have any queries about this the person to talk to is the Coordinator of the IOT schools, Michael Nicholas on (08)9285 3685, or michael.nicholas@education.wa.edu.au.

CUSTOMS & QUARANTINE

The Australian Border Force is responsible for undertaking border related functions on Christmas Island including the arrival & departure of aircraft, ships, yachts, launches and accompanying passengers, crew and cargo. You can contact them for more information on 9164 7228.

Christmas Island is home to many unique endemic species. It is also free of many pests and diseases found in other parts of the world. Quarantine undertake various reporting, screening and inspection operations to keep the island this way. Certain products are prohibited on island while others may require some form of treatment before they are released. To find out more contact the Department Agriculture and Water Resources on 9164 7456.

SO NOW YOU ARE HERE WHAT DO YOU NEED TO DO FIRST?

POWER CONNECTION

The island electricity (consumer voltage 240V 50 cycles) is generated by diesel plants in the power station located on island. The power to your house may be connected already. You must have the power transferred to your name within your first two weeks on island. To do this, you need to fill in a form, available from the Indian Ocean Territories Power Authority. They are located in the Indian Ocean Territories Administration building which is located on Jalan Pantai opposite the Post Office. You can contact account enquiries on 9164 7901 extension 7921.

Teachers on CI can claim an air conditioning subsidy from the DoE. In order to claim this you need to keep your bill and receipt as proof of payment. You then fill in a form and fax this off to DoE with your receipt and bill. Ask someone at the school to show you how. See Allowances section.

WATER

Water is pumped from several springs and underground systems. The water is treated and supplied in accordance with WA standards and is tested regularly. It is safe to drink. Again, water may have been connected before you arrive. You must have this transferred to your name within the first few weeks on island. To do this you will need to contact Water Corporation located at 1 Canberra Place near the Westpac Bank. They can be reached at 9164 7826. Residents on CI pay for their own water consumption.

TELEPHONE CONNECTION

You can organise to have your phone connected by calling Telstra on 13 22 00. Germadjen Communications sub-contract to Telstra on island and will organise your connection. They can be contacted on (08) 9164 8505. Island calls are charged at local rates, with calls to the mainland charged at STD rates. Mobile phones are popular on Christmas Island, however only Telstra phones and plans work here. Vodafone and Optus plans will not work on Christmas Island. A Telstra GSM mobile service operates on the island in populated areas, however if you are going to areas outside of the settled areas coverage can be limited. Due to the island internet coverage (there is no 4G network), you cannot send pictures at a text, you can, however, access the internet from your phone with a WiFi connection. You can claim an allowance from DoE for having to disconnect and reconnect your phone – see Allowances Section

INTERNET CONNECTION

There are currently three options for your internet provider. Firstly there is NBN which is via a satellite already installed onto the roof of your new home. You just need to choose from an NBN provider and fill in the paperwork.

The island has its own internet company called CIFI (Christmas Island Fibre Net). Using the undersea fibre optic cable, it is the fastest and most reliable internet.For more information please see www.cifi.com.au

Starlink also service this area. You will need to purchase the hardware from the mainland.

There is 4G Mobile Data in the township.

POST OFFICE BOXES

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There are no home mail deliveries on Christmas Island and residents have a post office box at the Post Office. You can organise one of these either when you arrive or before arrival by contacting the CI Post Office on 9164 8495. You can also organise a Christmas Island PO Box at any mainland Australia Post Office. Be sure to tell them though that you are eligible for a reduced rate (as CI has no home delivery and we are GST free) – it will save you about $60.

You will be provided with a key to your box and can access this at any time (they are located outside the building). When you receive a parcel, you will get a red card in your box and will need to present this to the staff at the counter during opening hours to get your parcel. Keep the receipt from arranging your post office box - you may be able to claim some money back from the Department of Education and Training as part of a Disturbance Allowance (See Allowances Section).

VEHICLES

The distance from the Settlement to the school is 5 km, and from Poon Saan to the school 2 km. The area is extremely hilly and a vehicle is necessary. The climb from settlement to the school or hospital is over 200 metres and although some young and fit enthusiasts will ride up by mountain bike, this is only for a few.

Newcomers, either ship their own cars to the island or they purchase cars already on island. There is a provision for new teachers to ship one vehicle to the island OR one boat to the same shipping value



as a car. Please contact the Coordinator of the IOT schools, Michael Nicholas on (08)9285 3685 or, michael.nicholas@education.wa.edu.au to discuss allowances. There is no provision to bring both a car and a boat. Many teachers pay to ship a boat to the island. Some new teachers organise for someone on island to let them know what vehicles are available and then make arrangements for purchase on arrival. When shipping a vehicle to island, you cannot fill the vehicle with other goods – it must enter the container empty.

If you are bringing a vehicle to island bring one that is reliable. Toyota is a popular brand as these cars can usually be easily repaired. A light 4WD will get you to most locations around the island. A 2WD is suitable for getting around town but will restrict your access to some of the best locations. A Toyota Rav 4 or something similar is the perfect vehicle for the island and there are many of them here. If you own a boat, be prepared for your vehicle to get wet at the boat ramp. There is no protected marina and the boat ramps are slippery so a large 4WD is necessary.

Please be aware, that if you are shipping your car to the island, it may be some time before you receive it, due to bad weather or shipping problems. Cars can be hired on island through





CI Car hire, though numbers are limited and pre-booking is highly recommended

CI Car hire: 0474 210 881

VEHICLE REGISTRATION

The island comes under the jurisdiction of the Australian Federal Police and has Australian laws and processes. If you are bringing a car from the mainland you will need to transfer the registration at the Vehicle Licensing Office, located opposite the Post Office at IOTA. You can also renew Vehicle Registrations here if you have bought a car on island. They are open Monday to Friday from 8am till 2pm and the contact phone number is 9164 7901, ext 9 8522.

All new and used vehicles brought to Christmas Island must undergo a Vehicle Inspection before they can be registered. You need to make a booking for inspections (only done on Tuesdays). A Single Trip Permit must be obtained to move the vehicle from the wharf when it arrives to the Depot for the Vehicle Inspection and to return it to the place of residency. To transfer a Vehicle Registration the following forms must be completed - Proof of Identity (original documents only – MR186); Proof of Vehicle Ownership (MR50) and Vehicle Transfer Form (obtained from the Motor Vehicle Registry)

BOAT REGISTRATION

All boats on CI must be registered at the Police Station. You can contact them on (08)9164 8444. Boat trailers can be registered at the Motor Vehicle Registration Office. For more information contact them on (08) 9164 7901. See section on Boating.

VEHICLES – FUEL & MAINTENANCE

There is only one petrol station on island – Indian Ocean Oil Co. There are four diesel bowsers and four unleaded bowsers. All fuels supplied by IOOC comply with the latest Australian Fuel Standards. Unleaded fuel is around $3.02 per litre and Diesel $3.32. The station is opposite the CI Supermarket on Gaze Rd Settlement. It pays to have vehicles serviced before shipping them to the island as it can be difficult to get mechanical work done on island. There are several places you can have your car serviced but are not always open and can have long waiting periods. If your vehicle has something more serious wrong with it, repairs may take a while as parts usually have to come from the Australian mainland. Parts can take some time to arrive either by airmail (if they are small parts) or by ship if they are large parts. It is advisable to ensure your vehicle has at least one spare tyre when you bring it to the island. Salt spray and weather can impact on vehicles stored and used on island and the combination of phosphate dust and salt can damage cars over time.

DRIVERS LICENCE

Your existing Australian drivers licence is valid on

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Christmas Island.

TOURS

You may wish to do a tour to familiarise yourself once you arrive. The following tours are available
Indian Ocean Experiences
https://www.indianoceanexperiences.com.au/

Extra Divers
www.extradivers-worldwide.com

CI Wet N Dry
https://divingchristmas.com/

TAXIS

There is currently no taxi or Ubers on the island.

HEAD OUT FOR A DRINK AND A MEAL

After organizing all your bits and pieces, you are probably exhausted and have found your fridge is empty! There are several pubs and places to eat out on island, some with ocean views. Opening hours vary slightly from day to day and during busy periods, bookings may be necessary. The locations and contact numbers for the pubs and restaurants on island are listed in The Essential Christmas Island Travel Guide.

SCHOOLING

Christmas Island District High School (CIDHS) is fully integrated within the Department of Education and caters for all children from Kindergarten to year 12. The main campus is located on Murray Rd in Drumsite and there is a free bus service to and from school each day. Kindergarten is run from an alternative location – The Tom Patterson Building in Settlement - and has its own bus service. All curriculum, policies and guidelines are in line with those operating in WA schools. The school is well-resourced and engages quality staff through a merit selection process. Class sizes are usually small compared to mainland standards. The school computer network is Apple Macintosh based.

If you have children who will be attending the school, they can be enrolled when you arrive. You will need to call the school and make an appointment with a Deputy to enrol your children. The School Officer in the front office will direct you to the right person. School uniforms can be ordered through the school, though you may wish to purchase some items in Perth before you arrive. There are also school book lists/stationery lists which can be obtained from the CIDHS front office on (08) 9164 8546

There are often private music lessons offering tuition in a range of instruments, and an Islamic school that operates each afternoon from 3pm – 5pm.

DAYCARE

There is a registered Daycare centre on the island that is well equipped and staffed. Christmas Island Daycare Centre Inc operates from 7am to 5pm Monday to Friday but is closed over the Christmas School Holidays. Enrolments can be made by contacting the centre coordinator during centre hours on (08)9164 7453.

PLAYGROUP

The Christmas Island Playgroup runs one morning a week at the school for non-school age children and their parents/carers.



INDIAN OCEAN GROUP TRAINING ASSOCIATION (IOGTA)

Other education and training facilities on the island include Indian Ocean Group Training Association, which offers post compulsory educational opportunities including traineeships, apprenticeships, VET courses and a range of community and adult education courses. Employment services are offered through three mainland providers for the Indian Ocean Territories – Skill Hire, the Salvation Army and Mission Australia. IOGTA also provides labour hire services to complement available employment services. Business services are available including payroll and bookkeeping, binding photocopying and faxing. You can hire facilities and equipment from IOGTA. Staff are available for hire for exam supervision. If you are interested in searching for work on island please contact IOGTA on (08) 9164 7220.

HOSPITAL

The Indian Ocean Territories Health Service (IOTHS) offers a wide range of medical, nursing and ancillary health services. Qualified medical, nursing and ancillary health workers provide these services. The health facilities are modern and well equipped, and include an accident and emergency department, consulting rooms, laboratory, dental clinic, operating theatre, 8 inpatient beds, x-ray and ultrasound facilities.

The hospital is open 24 hours for medical advice and treatment. Nurses attend to emergencies. If the nurse on call thinks the doctor is required he/she will summon the doctor after assessing the patient. During normal hours ring 9164 8333. There are two doctors on the island who practice from the Hospital. Appointments can be made 8.00am to 4.00pm Mon to Fri. Routine medical services are provided free to Australian citizens & permanent residents who have a valid Medicare card.

If you have an ongoing health problem bring a photocopy of your health record to the Health Centre together with any medications you may be on. It is wise to see your specialist just prior to leaving the mainland so that follow up appointments can be arranged when you next take recreation leave. Child health care services, such as immunisations, are available at the hospital. There is also a voluntary St Johns Ambulance Service which welcome new members. The number to call for an ambulance is 000 which is the same as the mainland.

The IOTHS has a Patient Assisted Travel Scheme (PATS). PATS assists full-time residents of the Indian Ocean Territories to access health specialist and acute care in Perth, which cannot be provided on the island. PATS provides assistance with the cost of travel to and from Perth and the cost of accommodation in Perth, where these costs are directly related to PATS travel.

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Emergency cases are evacuated to Perth through the RFDS. Obstetric patients are referred to Perth for delivery before the last 4 weeks of pregnancy. These patients and their spouses (but not other family members) are assisted in their travel to Perth. Please contact the IOTHS on (08)9164 8333 for more information or to obtain the PATS Guide for Patients and their Carers. It is advisable for family members who are visiting the island to have travel insurance as non-residents are not entitled to PATS assistance.

DENTAL

Dental services are available on the island for a scheduled fee. There is however, no orthodontic treatment available. It is worthwhile making sure that you have a dental check up before you arrive on island and have any major work completed as not all dental services are readily available. Appointments must be made in advance as there is usually a fairly long waiting period. Waiting periods can vary according to availability of the dentist.

Enquiries and appointments:
Dental care - 9164 8343 .

HEALTH

You don't need any special immunisations to travel to CI. Some residents who are prone to hay fever can find it is aggravated on island by mould spores, flora or phosphate. Mosquitoes are prevalent on island and can cause strong reactions in some residents new to the island. It is advisable to talk to the pharmacist about this and take necessary precautions (long clothes, repellents and mozzie coils).

THE ISLAND PHARMACY & NEWSAGENCY

The Island Pharmacy is situated at the Temple Court shops on Gaze Rd and stocks a full range of supplies for use in the hospital and also for the community. It would be advisable to contact the pharmacist prior to arrival on (08)9164 8337 to ensure that any special medications you need are in stock. Charges for prescriptions are similar to those on the mainland and non-prescription items can be purchased over the counter. The pharmacy is open on Mon-Fri from 9.00am to 5.00pm, Sat 9.00am to 12.00noon. If urgently in need of medication outside these hours please contact the Hospital.

The pharmacist advises that a good Christmas Island "survival kit" should include sun cream, vitamin supplements (for children as well as adults) and mosquito repellent. These items are available from the pharmacy as well as a range of other products found in mainland pharmacies such as skin and hair care ranges, sunglasses, beauty products, contact lens products and over the counter medications.

The Newsagency is located in the same building as the pharmacy, the two operate as one business. The newsagent sells a range of basic stationery, toys, cards, party supplies, kitchenware and some costumes. We do have a local newspaper printed fortnightly with local news. It is called the Islander.

MAIL

All mail to the islands comes via Australia Post and there is a Post Office on island. Incoming mail to Christmas Island arrives fortnightly. All mail is available for collection after noon on Mondays. Regular sized letters and Express mail comes on a flight. Larger mail packages, magazines, brochures etc often come via ship and may take 8 weeks to arrive.

CI POST OFFICE

If you have anything important that you would like to bring to the island and you are over your weight allocation, it is a good idea to post smaller items in 3kg or 5kg Express Post Bags. These white, yellow and red express post bags are available at the CI post office for around $25.00 (3kg bag) or $30.00 (5kg bag) each. In Perth they are slightly more expensive due to the fact that there is no GST charged on island. The weight of the bag must not exceed the limit and you will need to fill in a customs form detailing the contents of the package. It is slightly cheaper to purchase these bags in bulk packs of ten, and a good idea to leave some with family or friends in case of emergency needs. Don't forget to ask for ten customs forms too! If express mail is posted by Monday morning in Perth it will usually arrive on island by the



Friday. Contact the CI Post Office on 9164 8495 or by email on cipost@cipost.cx for any other questions you might have about mail.

The post office also has a retail area that stocks a range of stationery, some books, cards, wrapping paper, toys and gift items. There are a range of unique CI stamps available as well as books on CI, maps, postcards and souvenirs.

BANKING

There is a Westpac Bank on the island that offers full banking services. Otherwise the Post Office is a Commonwealth Bank agency and provides services for many other banks including Citibank, Statewest, Bankwest, NAB, Metway, Hong Kong Bank of Australia & Adelaide Bank. ANZ Banking services are not available. EFTPOS and EPOS are available as well as cash advances from credit cards of up to AUD$800 per day (see Post section for opening hours). There are no ATMs.

Many people on island also use internet banking to conduct regular transactions such as paying bills, credit card management and transfers between accounts.

TIME DIFFERENCE

Christmas Island is one hour behind Western Australian Standard Time and three hours behind Australian Eastern Standard Time. For example when it is 9.00am on CI it is 10.00am in Perth and 12.00pm in Sydney. Daylight savings is not observed on CI so during mainland daylight saving 9am on CI is 1pm in the Eastern States. This can make contacting relatives and business calls a bit tricky. For interviews and other important calls always make sure that the person you are dealing with is aware of the time difference. The time difference also means that the advertised times for television programmes are not correct. For example the ABC News is on at 6pm CI time not at 7pm as advertised.

LIBRARY

The Shire operates a free public library service for all permanent residents of the Shire of Christmas Island. Rhyme Time Better Beginnings Program is run for toddlers during the year. You can contact the librarian on 9164 8300 extension 236, or email susan@shire.gov.cx

TELEVISION & RADIO

Christmas Island, like the mainland has digital television. There are 21 digital TV stations and 4-5 radio stations. If you have a digital ready TV you should have no problems receiving this. If your TV is not digital ready you will need to purchase a set top box.

There is no access to Foxtel but you can stream NETFLIX, Prime, Disney etc if you have a Smart TV. The quality of broadcasts is usually very good, but this can be affected by seasonal bad weather, which may cause stations to cut out (usually in the middle of your favourite show!). The quality of your television reception may also be affected by where you live and you may find your house requires an external aerial to improve reception.

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Talk to your buddy about this.

The island broadcasts five radio stations with one of these being a local station. The local station is always looking for radio presenters to run programs. If you are interested in being a radio presenter contact Radio Christmas Island VLU2.

SHOPPING - FOOD

There are several stores on island which sell a range of foods and other items. Boong Trading is located in Drumsite on Tong Yan Loh Rd near Tracks Tavern. Meng Chong Trading is located in Poon Saan on Poon Saan Rd. Metro Supermarket and Kedai Albarakah are located in Kampong near the Mosque. The largest of the stores is CI Supermarket located on Gaze Rd in Settlement. Boong Trading, Meng Chong Trading and Metro Supermarket open at "island times" from 9am – 12pm then again from 4pm – 9pm 7 days a week. The CI Supermarket trading hours are 9am – 5pm Mon-Fri and 9am – 12pm Saturday.

Shipped goods such as fruit and vegetables, dairy products, cold meats and meat can be purchased from the above shops shortly after the ship arrives. There is also a fortnightly air-freight service that provides fruit, vegetables, dairy products and some meat. See Fresh Food below.

Dry store goods are also available from these shops though availability can fluctuate depending on shipping. Usually what you can't find in one shop, you will find in another. The CI mantra is "shop around". Christmas Island is GST Free and this can lead to savings when buying items such as cigarettes and some alcohol.

DRY GOODS

Many Island residents organize to ship their own dry store goods in bulk to the island. This is especially useful if you require specialty items. You can organize shipping of bulk dry store goods before you leave Perth or from the island. There are several ways this can be done.

You can purchase the goods yourself at the store of your choice, box them up and transport them to Zentner Shipping – 149 Barrington St, Bibra Lake (9337 5911). Ring before you drive out there to check on opening times and when the close off is for items for the next ship. All boxes will need to be clearly marked with your name and the destination (remember that the initials CI can also be interpreted as Cocos Islands – who Zentner also deliver to). You will also need to fill out and sign a form which lists the number of boxes and items in the boxes. This is a good way to get your initial household goods, yearly household purchases and kids' Christmas presents to island.

BREAD

There are two bakeries on island. CLA is located on Gaze Rd Settlement and provides fresh bread daily to the CI Supermarket and is also a small restaurant. Long's Bakery is located at 25 Lam Lok Loh Drumsite and provides fresh bread daily to the other stores. A loaf of white bread costs around $5.60. Bread can also be purchased directly from Long's early in the morning and larger orders can be placed. Breadmix for the breadmaker can be purchased from CI Supermarket and some of the other stores.

FRESH FOOD

Due to the island's isolated location all food (especially fresh fruit & vegetables and meat) is expensive to buy and sometimes difficult to get. Fresh fruit, vegetables, some dairy, meat and other products arrives fortnightly from Perth on Friday and can be found at Meng Chong Trading, Boongs and Metro's. The shops will be busy at this time, so be prepared for a true island experience! Most produce is sold on the day it arrives so only a limited range of fresh produce is available until the next freighter. The CI Supermarket also gets fresh produce fortnightly. Many residents have taken to ordering their own produce through Supa IGA-Hambleys (in Queens Park) You order online (www.hambleys.myfoodlink.com), pay for your produce plus $9.00 per kilo freight and $90 handling fee. This produce arrives on the Toll freight plane once a fortnight and you pick it up at the airport on a Friday afternoon.

MEAT & FISH

Frozen meat is usually available through all shops, though quality can vary. Limited amounts of fresh meat are sometimes available each fortnight at Meng Chong, but can be expensive. Many



islanders are now purchasing meat online through IGA which is delievered to Freightshop and bought to the island on the Friday freight plane as mentioned above. Others bring their own meat with them as part of their luggage allocation each time they fly to the island and keep it in freezers at home. It is useful to bring a freezer with you for this reason, and for the fact that many other things can be purchased and frozen for later use such as bacon, cold meats, butter and fish. If you are going to bring meat as part of your luggage allowance on your flight it is helpful to have it vacuum sealed – it keeps better this way. Refer to the 'Meat order' section for butchers familiar with the packing of meat for CI.

Many islanders go fishing regularly and the usual catch is wahoo (a firm fleshed white fish), tuna and trevally. Don't expect to catch much from shore though, these are deep sea fish and you need a boat to catch them, though we have had a few teachers catch fish from their ocean kayaks! Don't fret if you are not a fisherman/woman. When the fish are running it is available to buy from Shorefire fishing & tackle store. A notice on the roundabout or outside the shop will let you know when you can get it. Also, those who fish are usually generous with their catch and will drop bags of fish around to others.

SHOPPING - OTHER

There are many small shops on island. Opening hours vary and not all shops are open every day. Businesses here can change quickly. One minute they are open, the next they are closed, only to open some time later under new management.

There are several lovely gift shops on island, so you won't be completely deprived of retail therapy! See The Essential Christmas Island Travel Guide for a list of shops and what they sell..

HAIR & BEAUTY

There is currently no hair or beauty services avaailable on the island.

If you are into home colouring, it is a good idea to bring several colours with you as the on-island selection is limited.

ANIMALS AND PETS

Advice from Parks Australia which has jurisdiction over the import of animals, plants, etc to the island is that NO PERMITS WILL BE ISSUED to bring animals and pets to the island. This is due to the unique native fauna that has been significantly disturbed by earlier importation of domestic animals. Having said that - if you are someone who cannot live without a pet, you will be able to get chooks to keep in a pen. The laws regarding domestic cats have recently changed and depending on your location, you may be eligible to have a domestic cat. All island domestic cats are desexed and microchipped, and there is an eradication program for feral cats. For information on these cat laws please contact the Shire or have a look on their website. See internet listings at the end of this booklet

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SPORTS & RECREATION

There are a wide range of recreational activities and facilities available on CI. Notices of events are often posted in the local newspaper The Islander or on the blackboards at the Roundabout.

Christmas Island National Park covers approximately 63% of the island. There are great walks you can do, beaches, caves, freshwater streams and small waterfalls you can visit. The wildlife on CI is one of the main draw cards for tourists who come to see the red-tailed tropic birds or booby birds, the yearly red migration or the robber crabs. Human population on the island has a significant impact on the crabs, with many killed by vehicles, particularly during migration. Parks Australia in conjunction with the Australian Federal Police are running education programmes aimed at reducing the high number of crabs killed on the roads by vehicles. When crabs are on the road, particularly during migration (any time late September to early December) please take care. Parks advise that you should slow down and where safely possible go around instead of over, particularly with robber crabs. Some roads may be closed during migration to protect the crabs. If a road is not closed but has a lot of crabs on it, choose a different route or stop the car and find an alternate and less destructive way to get there (eg by walking). We all need to work together to protect the unique biodiversity of our island.

RECREATION CENTRE

Christmas Island has a Recreation Centre which is located on Vagabond Rd (off Phosphate Hill Rd) – 9164 7939. There is a multi-purpose sports hall which is used for indoor volleyball, netball, basketball, soccer and badminton competitions throughout the year. You can hire the hall or a section of the hall to play badminton (racquets & shuttlecocks are available for hire) or soccer or other games.

The centre is also home to a 25m pool plus a children's pool. Swimming lessons are run throughout the year and sometimes a swim club is run for children and/or for adults. There is also a free lap club, where you register the number of laps you swim each time.

The Recreation Centre has a fully equipped gym where you can do a workout. Yoga, Body Pump, Body Combat , SWAT and Body Attack video classes are sometimes available, please contact the Recreation Centre for session times.

You can join the Recreation Centre as a member or pay as you go to use the facilities. This will entitle you to free use of the pool, gym, reduced crèche rates and free group fitness sessions (yoga, body combat etc). You can also just join as an aquatic member (where pool use is free) or as a gym member (where gym use is free). As a guide fitness classes are around $11.00 per session for non-members.

CHRISTMAS ISLAND CRICKET & SPORTING CLUB

The Christmas Island Cricket and Sporting Club (CICSC) is a not for profit volunteer organization located at the end of Vagabond Rd near the Recreation Centre. The CICSC organizes many sporting events through the year, such as touch rugby, cricket, football and soccer. Most of these are run on weekday afternoons. Children's sport such as Milo Cricket, Auskick and Junior Soccer are some of the sports that have been run during the year. Membership costs are $60 for families and $40 for singles. The CICSC also organizes games against the visiting Navy teams when the crews are in, which are usually well attended. The club also organizes social events throughout the year such as quiz nights, Bingo and the very popular Cove to Club fun run. Most events and sports are publicized on the Roundabout noticeboard and Facebook.

BOATING

Boating is popular with residents who own boats (and there are a few!). Families often venture out for a spot of fishing and/or snorkeling on the weekend when the weather is right. You get a very different perspective of the island from a boat. All boat owners must comply with Western Australian boating legislation. You need a Registered Skippers Ticket to drive a boat. You can get these on island but if you are planning on getting out there early, make sure you have one when you arrive. There is a Volunteer Marine Rescue Service on island and they are always looking for new members. You need to register with them before you go out boating to let them know your intended destination, time of return, how many people you have on board and how much fuel you have. On weekends you will find them manning a station at the Cove near the boatramp.

Always be safe by telling people where you are going if you are boating or going into the jungle (we have had people lost before).

KAYAKS & PADDLE VESSELS

Many people on island own surf skis or some form of ocean kayak. Most of the year is good weather for paddling in the cove. Some people even fish from their ocean kayaks. It is advisable to take someone who knows the local conditions with you the first few times you go paddling. It is also advisable to wear a hat and take water and snorkeling gear – you never know when you will come across something interesting.

Be aware that if your vessel is stored at the cove, someone may help themselves to it, so it is safer to take it home and you will need roof racks.

FISHING

Fishing is also popular but it is mostly offshore fishing for big fish such as Wahoo and Trevally, so light gear is of little use. Fishing gear can be purchased on island at Shorefire (Gaze Rd Settlement) and you can seek advice here about local fishing conditions. If you enjoy fishing and boating, it is worth bringing your own boat and trailer. Many families go out in their boats each weekend, weather permitting, to fish and snorkel. You can organize a fishing charter through the Visitors Centre.

DIVING & SNORKELLING

The diving on the island is fantastic! You can organize your own shore or boat dives or just stick to snorkeling. You can also book a boat dive through Wet 'n' Dry Adventures & Extra Divers. It is advisable that you take a buddy who knows the local area and conditions on at least your first few dives or snorkels. For more diving information and bookings contact the Visitors Centre on 9164 8382 and read The Essential Christmas Island Travel Guide. Tanks and gear can be hired from the local dive shop, Wet'n'Dry Adventures 9164 8028 & Extra Divers 0438 364 221, but bringing your own is well worth it. Masks, snorkels and fins are worth bringing for snorkeling – even if you have never been before, this is the ideal place to learn! Diving or snorkeling with the whalesharks who visit the island each year is an experience never to be forgotten! The whalesharks visit during the migration.

TENNIS

There is one tennis court at the school. If you are an avid player, bring racquets and balls (these are hard to get up here). There are sometimes groups who organize regular days for a hit. Ask around

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and someone will fill you in on how to access the net for the court.

GOLF

Golf is a popular activity on island with men's and ladies days held during the week (Mens Fri from 3pm; Ladies Wed from 3pm) and more serious competition days on the weekend. The golf course is located on Golf Course Rd (follow Gaze Rd through Settlement and keep going) and is open daily. It has sweeping ocean views and is lined by coconuts, which makes playing some holes very interesting! If you're a golfer – bring your clubs! If you need to hire clubs before your gear arrives you can hire them from the Visitors Centre or ask around, people usually have spare sets floating around! New members are welcome.

HASH HOUSE HARRIERS

Hash House Harriers are a very active group on island with a run organized every Thursday afternoon – a great way to meet the locals and explore the island. The HHH run is usually advertised on the local radio station on Thursday morning and on the Roundabout noticeboard.

BICYCLES

In spite of the hills, bicycles are popular on the island, for general exercise, triathlons, touring, etc. The road surfaces can be a little rough so a mountain bike is a better bet than a racing bike. Try to ensure that as much of the bike as possible is aluminium, as anything metal rusts very quickly on island due to salt spray and moisture.

ARTS & CULTURE

Apart from sport, the island also has an Arts and Culture group that organizes regular workshops run by people on the island. You can contact them on 9164 8836 or by email on admin@artsandculture.cx In the past they have run mosaics, textile and card making workshops, and organized drumming, singing and other musical groups. The Arts and Culture Centre also has some art materials for sale and equipment for hire.

OUTDOOR CINEMA

There is an outdoor cinema that runs each Saturday and alternate Wednesday nights at 7.30pm (even when it rains) and is usually well attended. Movies are advertised on their website, cinema.org.cx, Roundabout Noticeboard and in the local paper – The Islander. The Christmas Island Cinema Club, like many community organizations, is run by volunteers and they are always looking for new hands. Contact them through the Visitors Centre.

If you are not into sport or art & music, there are still a lot of regular social gatherings at the various restaurants/pubs, and local sights, so bring eskies and deck chairs!

HOUSING

Housing is allocated to CIDHS staff by a Housing Committee in accordance with DoE policy. Staff are allocated housing based on their needs in compliance with this policy. You may move in to your allocated residence any time after January 1st of the year in which you commence teaching. Please let the Principal Sarah Fa know of your intended arrival date.

Please be aware that any information you receive regarding specific housing needs to be verified prior to arrival. Detailed descriptions and possibly photographs of your allocated housing can be obtained from your buddy. The quality of housing on the island can vary depending on how recently it was built. Most housing on CI is fairly old and you may have difficulty removing existing stains from flooring, surfaces and toilets. The housing may not be what you are used to on the mainland. Housing is in fairly short supply on the island.

When you leave the island at the end of your teaching tenure on CI, you will be asked to vacate your house by the 31st of December and complete an "exit' procedure. If you need to discuss this please speak with the Principal Ian Francis. You will also need to fill in an exit form on the Housing and Transport website to cease rent from the date you vacate the property.

RESIDENTIAL SITES OF CHRISTMAS ISLAND

Drumsite - This site is, at 250m, the highest residential site and contains housing, the school, a retail shop, a tavern and some industrial sites. The offices of Parks Australia and Christmas Island Phosphates are also located at Drumsite.

Poon Saan - 1.5 km down the hill lies Poon Saan, which means "half way". It is about 200m above sea level and many Chinese families live here. Its centre contains several shops, restaurants, the community hall and is also the site of the Union (UCIW) office. There is also an outdoor cinema.

Between Poon Saan and Drumsite is the Phosphate Hill turn off, which leads to the hospital, Recreation Centre, Detention Centre, Christmas Island Cricket and Sporting Club and the Airport.

Taman Sweetland - This is a relatively new housing development. Taman is located just across Murray Rd from Poon Saan and is right next to the Poon Saan Hall and Neighbourhood Centre.

Silver City - just below Poon Saan is another residential area, named after the original aluminium clad homes that were built there. Although mostly housing government employees, there are also several private homes.

Kampong - Flying Fish Cove is home to the Mosque, several small shops, the jetty and the phosphate loaders (cantilevers). There are a series of flats that were built in the 1970's. These flats have the advantage of being close to the Mosque and house many Malay families, though other cultural groups live here as well.

Roundabout Flats - Further along Jalan Pantai from Canberra Place and the Kampong is the Roundabout, where community events and notices are posted and where there is a set of flats. These flats are privately owned.

Temple Court - located further along Gaze Rd and is named after the Tai Pak Kong Temple in its midst. This area is home to several shops including the pharmacy and small privately owned flats.



Settlement - Further along Gaze Rd you will find the Police Station, several shops, restaurants, bars and visitors accommodation. The residential area is situated at the eastern end of Settlement, consisting of established homes and dongas (single quarters). Some of this housing is privately owned and some is government housing.

E-KITS

You will be provided with an "Emergency-Kit" when you first arrive, which contains basic household items to help you out until your own gear arrives. Once your gear arrives, you will need to return the E-Kit with all the items in a clean and unbroken condition to the Business Manager. If you break or lose something, it is your responsibility to replace it. If you cannot find a replacement item please liaise with the Business Manager. This ensures that the E-kits remain in a usable condition for all new staff. The following is a list of what is contained in the E-Kit.

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- Kitchen broom, dustpan & broom
- Blankets
- Mop & mop bucket
- Toilet brush & holder
- Bath mat
- Kitchen bin
- Basic crockery set
- Television
- Basic cutlery set
- Drinking glasses
- Casserole dishes
- Ironing board and iron
- Frying pan
- Washing Basket & pegs
- Saucepans
- Coat hangers
- Mixing bowl
- Vacuum cleaner
- Chopping boards
- Microwave
- Kettle & toaster
- Assorted kitchen implements
- *Please Note: Sheet sets pillows & Towels are not provided - please make sure you bring some with you on your flight.*

SUGGESTIONS

Living on Christmas Island is very much an individual experience. Some people bring very little with them and this suits them fine, others prefer to bring more personal effects to make their house feel more like home. Mould and salt are a problem here so leave leather shoes & clothing, silver frames, cutlery etc and photo albums behind. If you can't live without your photos bring a few copies (not originals). Although there are many items available through island stores, previous teachers have suggested that it is useful to bring certain things with you. The following is a list of items that island residents and recent arrivals have suggested are helpful to have on Christmas Island. They are in no particular order.

CLOTHING

Several pairs of bathers & swim shirts - you may find yourself out in the sun quite a lot

Swim/reef shoes - the beaches are largely coral and rock. Stone-fish have also been spotted in the cove.

Hats

Light long sleeved tops and light long pants - handy for keeping mozzies at bay – especially for children

Plenty of shorts, singlets and light t-shirts

A Couple of cardigans/hoodies/jumpers - it can get cool in the evenings at the Cricket Club or Cinema.

Exercise gear / Running shoes – walking is a popular form of exercise here and there are other exercise options that require shoes too, such as Hash House Harriers (a running group)

A Bright coloured outfit/shirt - to wear to celebrations such as Chinese New Year. Red is the favoured colour.

A long sleeved top and long pants made from cool material - You will need these when you visit the Mosque during the cultural tour that the school runs and for other Muslim celebrations.

Work wear – again light materials are best.

CIDHS dress standards are in line with DET recommendations. No one wears suits and ties here, but teachers dress smartly. School shirts, while not compulsory, are popular and are available to order through the front office.

HOUSEHOLD EFFECTS

A Freezer – most people buy meat in bulk and it is also handy for freezing those big hauls of fish!

Umbrellas - for the wet season as the rain is

heavy

A Dryer – without one it can be impossible to get clothes dry during the wet season – especially important for families. Clothes airers are also handy.

Some storage – houses have little in the way of storage. Some people have suggested things such as cheap Ikea bookshelves and plastic tubs are useful.

A rubbish bin - These are expensive on island

A microwave - These are expensive on island

Personal effects to make your house a home. Most people bring pictures to put up around the house. Be aware, however, that the high humidity and salt spray, in areas such as Settlement, can damage these. If they are very valuable or precious – leave them behind. Cushions for couches and rugs for the floor are also a good idea. Talk to your buddy about the colour of the couch in your house – they vary.

Television, DVD player/recorder, stereo

Computer, printer, gaming consoles

Coat hangers - to hang your clothes on when you arrive.

Bed linen – several sets are advisable as they can be difficult to get dry over the wet season

Towels – as for bed linen, it is a good idea to have several sets of towels. Once bath towels get wet in the high humidity they tend to stay wet and can start to smell after a few days. It is also a good idea to have quite a few beach towels for each member of the family – you will use them!

Mozzie repellent gear - such as nets and coil holders. New people usually find they react to the island mosquitoes for the first year or so, particularly children. Even though houses have fly-screens, some mozzies usually find a way in.

OUTDOORS

A good pram if you have a little one. Roads are often rough and a better pram makes it easier to go for walks.

Outdoor chairs – there are often outdoor social occasions to which you take a chair

An esky and cool bag – larger one for bigger events, smaller for an afternoon drinks somewhere.

A BBQ

Gardening gear - such as hedge cutters, secateurs, whipper snipper, lawn mower, rake, shovel. Gardens can get out of control here over the wet season and though most of these items are available at the local hardware store, they can be expensive. If you are planning on planting a veggie garden – bring seeds with you, the choice here can be limited. Check with quarantine first, what you are able to bring in.

Snorkelling gear

Bikes if you ride

Outdoor toys for little ones – swing sets, trampolines and small pools are popular. If you are planning on having a sandpit – bring the sand with you – it is very difficult to get up here. You can buy sandpit sand from Bunnings in large bags

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CONSUMABLE ITEMS

Many people find the following items cheaper to buy in Perth and ship up than to buy here.

Nappies/wipes/formula - etc for babies. Because the ship can take a while to get here though, it is advisable to send mostly the next size up. These items are also expensive on island.

Laundry powder/liquid/cleaning items

Napisan & laundry soakers

Long life milk – but check expiry dates as ship can take a while to get here.

Toothpaste, soap, deodorant female hygiene products

Canned food - such as tinned tomato, coconut

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milk etc

Check with your buddy for other suggestions.

REFERENCE BOOKS

The following are a list of books that have been written over the years about Christmas Island.

THE ESSENTIAL CHRISTMAS ISLAND TRAVEL GUIDE Beth & Shaun Tierney, Linda Cash (ed) Christmas Island Tourism Association 2007

WE WERE THE CHRISTMAS ISLANDERS Marg Neale, Publisher Bruce Neale

THE EARLY YEARS Marg Neale & Jan Adams Publisher Bruce Neale

CHRISTMAS ISLAND WILDLIFE GUIDE Neville Coleman World of Water 2006

NATIVE PLANTS OF CHRISTMAS ISLAND Jeff Claussen Flora of Australia Supplementary Series Number 22 Australian Biological Resources Study 2005

CHRISTMAS ISLAND CULTURAL HANDBOOK – A guide to the cultural life of Christmas Island Anne Price (ed) 2002

CHRISTMAS ISLAND NATURALLY (SECOND EDITION 1994) Gray, H. & Clark, R. 1995

A VISITORS GUIDE TO THE BIRDS OF CHRISTMAS ISLAND, INDIAN OCEAN. Barry J. Reville.

CHRISTMAS ISLAND-EXPLORERS GUIDE (1966) Lone Island Publications

FISHES OF CHRISTMAS ISLAND (2nd Edition) Dr Gerald R. Allen, Roger C. Steene & Max Orchard (1988) CI Natural History Association

CHRISTMAS S John Hicks, Holger Rumpff, and Hugh Yorkston, 1990

CHRISTMAS SHELLS Fred E. Wells, Clayton W. Bryce, John E. Clark, and Glad M. Hansen

THE UNION OF CHRISTMAS ISLAND WORKERS (1983) Les Watters

TAI KO SENG- GORDON BENNETT OF CHRISTMAS ISLAND Cyril Ayris.

GOLDEN LEAVES, AN INTRODUCTION TO THE CHINESE CEMETERIES OF CHRISTMAS ISLAND Helene Bartleson

SPIRIT OF CHRISTMAS ISLAND – FIFTY YEARS AUSTRALIAN 1958 – 2008 Michael Zekulich, Phosphate Resources Ltd, 2008.

ARRIVAL EXPERIENCES

Some Perspectives of the early weeks on Christmas Island

My arrival on Christmas Island 8 years ago took three attempts, with the plane having to return to Perth because of bad weather. So to say my daughters and I were itching to get there was an understatement and we were not disappointed, in fact on arriving we were blown away by the lush, green surroundings, very different from our previous home in the Pilbara! Topping it off, we were met by Frank (the principal), and Al (the primary deputy) who immediately made us feel like we were part of the CIDHS family and like we were home.

I still remember being driven down the hill from the airport and witnessing for the first time the spectacular view of the ocean and the coconut palms laden with bright green coconuts. I had to pinch myself many times in those first few days. We had landed in paradise!

Arriving two weeks before school started gave us time to explore and get our bearings. Something as simple as going to the shops became an experience. I still remember as I walked in hearing the sounds of Chinese and Malay voices all around and trying to decide what the weird and wonderful items on the shelves were, it was obvious we were in a place unlike anywhere else in Australia. My first big shock was when I went to the fresh food fridges and I saw the price of a lettuce, $13!! However, you get very good at making do with what's available and never waste a thing!

I had to learn many new things about living on a remote island in that first year, such as leaving your fans on while you go away for holidays so the mould doesn't take over your house and learning patience while waiting until April for my stuff to arrive on the ship. Funnily, once it all arrived I realised I didn't need all the 'stuff' I had brought and that I was living so much more simply. I mean where else can you live where you don't lock your doors, where you can walk alone at night and where you hop on a plane and you know nearly everyone on board?

For my daughters the move was fantastic. They were in a school that promoted excellence, so academically they both flew. Not only that, the small class sizes meant that their teachers and peers became a second -family, with everyone looking out for one another. Their lives outside of school were enriched by the freedom to go swimming and snorkelling with friends, walking in the rainforest and when they were older camping with their mates. The cultural aspect was also a really important part of our experience here, with the generosity of all of the cultural groups on island being remarkable. In our first month we were invited to Chinese New Year Celebrations, a Malay wedding and BBQs at the cove. It is truly a multi-cultural place and a model for the rest of Australia.

Teaching on Christmas Island is a joy! I started teaching in the primary and was amazed afters a decade in the Pilbara and Goldfields that I had no behaviour problems to contend with and I could actually get on with teaching. I then did the SWITCH program and taught in the high school which was been such an amazing experience. All across the school we have students who greet us, tell us to have a nice day and have the most wonderful manners. It is such a privilege to work in a place where you can truly love what you do and be surrounded by people who feel the same. It has been an honour to work here and I feel so lucky that I had the opportunity to be part of the CIDHS community.

(Sam Ellis Literacy Specialist GIRL teacher)

I moved to Christmas Island from Perth in January 2008. Having never lived in a small community before, the first thing that struck me about moving to Christmas Island was the overwhelming friendliness of the island's residents. When I was introduced to my new work colleagues, they greeted me with the familiarity and openness of friends and not just of future work colleagues.

As soon as I walked into the school I could just feel that it was going to be a good school to work in. As well as being better resourced that any other school that I had worked in, you could tell that the school had a good culture. The grounds were clean, there was no graffiti and there were brightly decorated noticeboards everywhere which focussed on things like "How to Help your Child Succeed at School".

The part I found most challenging about settling in to Christmas Island was the lack of boundaries between my work and social lives. Although I think the strategies that I've since learnt to cope with this are strategies that will serve me well for my future career.

It took me a good year to feel that I was truly settled here and that Christmas Island was my home rather than Perth. Initially, I was thinking I would do my minimum of two years here and then move back to the city but now, writing this at the end of my tenth year, I feel a sense of happiness and contentment that I have never felt before. I finally feel like I have my work-life balance right and I don't want to leave here any time soon!

A GUIDE TO CHRISTMAS ISLAND **2027**



(Amy Luetich Secondary Deputy)

As we left Perth International Airport to start our new life on Christmas Island, we knew that this was going to be the adventure of a lifetime. We had seen photos and heard many stories from people who had lived on CI, but nothing could have prepared us for life on this amazing island. My wife, three kids and myself were excited to be finally on our way. We had packed our belongings up and sent them to Christmas Island 6 weeks earlier and the kids were looking forward to not only seeing the island, but to getting their toys back. We weren't to know that we wouldn't see our things for nearly 5 more months.

Flying over the island for the first time was magnificent. This tiny island in the middle of the Indian Ocean was so green and lush with some of the clearest water you could imagine. From the plane I imagined the huge fish swimming around and couldn't wait to explore the depths. My son Hayden asked if there would be s everywhere. Alannah asked if they would bite her. I knew my wife had many questions but was most interested in seeing what our accommodation would be like.

We were met at the airport by Alan Thornton (Deputy) and taken to our house. It was a comfortable 3 bedroom place with a magnificent view of the ocean. We were given a very well put together survival kit and left to unpack. Within an hour of arriving, our neighbours had introduced themselves and offered to lend us anything until our things arrived. What a friendly place I thought. It was great to be back in a country town! That night we realised that the whole island was friendly including the wildlife. As I sat on the toilet I saw a centipede the length of my hand coming towards me to say hi. We didn't stay friends for long!

We explored our amazing island and soon realised how privileged we were to be living here. The forest was filled with life including red s, huge robber s, beautiful birds and super-sized plants that made you feel very small. We did regularly curse the mosquitoes that came for a feed every night as we did not have fly-wire on some of our louvred windows and our children would end up looking like they had the measles by morning. Mosquito coils became our best friend.

My first day at Christmas Island DHS I was nervous, excited and curious to say the least. By the end of the day I knew I would love working here. The staff were friendly and helpful, the school was well resourced and the overall feeling I got as I walked around put my nerves at ease. I could not have asked for a better welcome and introduction to my new place of employment. The experience improved as I walked into a multicultural year 7 class of 21 eager to learn students. During the year with this fantastic class I learnt many things from them and was amazed at the results that could be achieved when you have so few behavioural issues in the class.

The initial problems/shocks such as not receiving our belongings until May, paying $9 for a lettuce, being so far away from family and having exotic creatures invading our privacy were soon forgotten as the positives of this place far outweighed the negatives. In our tenth years on island we have grown to love the place, the people and the lifestyle. It is a safe place for our kids, everyone is friendly, there is always something exciting happening and the school is the most supportive workplace

anyone could hope for. Christmas Island is a great place to live and work and has far exceeded any of our initial expectations.

(Jon Faulkner Year 7 teacher)

I had always wanted to live on a tropical island. It was a dream I had as a boy and then one day I saw the David Attenborough documentary on Christmas Island and I knew THAT was the island that I wanted to live on. I grew up to become a teacher and found out that you could teach here, so I worked hard to build up a resume and then one day a job was advertised. I was lucky enough to be selected and a week later my wife and I found out she was pregnant with our first child.

It was not going to stop us living our dream. And what a dream it is! We were picked up at the airport by the deputy principal and his wife and driven to our house. We tried to make them stop so we could take a picture of a red crab but were assured we would see plenty more. We laugh about it now, but we were just so excited. The views were just magnificent and are something you could never tire of. I remember thinking that everything was just so alive.

People often ask me, "Why Christmas Island?" My response is, "Why not?" This is the most inclusive, friendly and safe community that I know of. There are of course things that you have to get used to. When it rains, it really rains. This can limit some outdoor activities, but it is still warm. Fruit and vegetables can be expensive, but that is why we get extra allowances in our pay and anyway I can get bananas, pumpkins, avocadoes and plenty of other fruit for free from the jungle. I have found that there is always a trade off.

Being remote (and having a pregnant wife) did require some planning. We put a lot of freight on the ship: baby products, nappies, canned food, coffee etc. The ship is not always able to land early in the year due to swell, so our freight did not arrive until around April, however the school provides an e-kit that has everything you need to get by. We also found a harmonious and sharing community that was always willing to offer and share whatever we needed.

The school is amazing. The students are respectful and so you spend all of your time teaching rather than disciplining. The teachers have a sharing culture which I found really progressed my teaching capabilities. The administration is open, honest and supportive. I always feel that this is how education is meant to be.

Another great aspect of working here is that we finish school at 2.10pm. If you are organised and well planned you can be home by 2.30pm and have the whole afternoon to spend with the family, exploring what the island has to offer. We love to go snorkeling in the cove, search for fruit in the jungle or adventure to some of the more remote parts of the island. The wildlife and scenery here is amazing and the fishing and diving world-class! Welcome to Christmas Island

(Brendan Taylor Year 6 teacher)

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

Christmas Island DHS	9164 8546
CI Administration	9164 7901
CI Airport	9164 8489
CI Cricket & Sporting Club	9164 8912
CI Daycare Centre	9164 7125
CI Internet Administration	9164 8808
CI Power Authority	9164 7901
CI Supermarket	9164 8370
CI Tourism Association	9164 8382
Emergencies (ambulance, police, fire)	000
Hospital	9164 8333
Indian Ocean Group Training	9164 7220
Meng Chong Trading	9164 8270
Parks Australia	9164 8700
Police	9164 8444
Post Office	9164 8495
Pharmacy	9164 8337
Recreation Centre	9164 7939
Shire Offices	9164 8300

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Visitor Information Centre	9164 8382
Westpac Bank	9164 8221

Further numbers can be obtained from The Essential Christmas Island Travel Guide or from the 2012/13 Christmas Island Directory.

NEED MORE INFORMATION?

The school will allocate you a buddy whom you can contact to ask for any information you need about the island. Most people phone or email from when they find out about their appointment and some even organise to meet their buddies in Perth over the Christmas Holidays. Every endeavour is made to match people with appropriate buddies. Please remember that buddies are volunteers and many holiday off-island during the Christmas period. This means that if you arrive on CI early to mid January your buddy may not be on island to help you. Most teachers will also be off-island during this time.

You will be sent information about your accommodation once houses have been allocated. In the meantime you can ring the school and ask to speak to the Principal Ian Francis or Deputies Tina Auld-Bower, or Sarah Faulkner. They will try to give you as much information as they can.

There are also quite a few websites of interest if you do a search for Christmas Island. Some sites that you may wish to browse can be found at;

http://cidhs.cx/ - information about Christmas Island District High, including a digital copy of this booklet

http://www.christmas.net.au/ - information from the CI Tourist Association.

http://www.shire.gov.cx - information from the Shire of CI including strategic plans for the island, public notices and the local newspaper online.

www.regional.gov.au/territories/christmas/index.aspx - Information on Christmas Island

www.environment.gov.au/parks/christmas/index.html - This is the site for CI Parks

www.divingchristmas.com - if you're interested in diving

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christmas_Island - general information on CI

Good luck and we look forward to meeting you.

ALLOWANCES

The conditions of employment for teachers employed on Christmas and Cocos Islands are generally in line with those set out in the Teachers Award and the Teachers and Administrators Certified Agreement 2008 as well as other entitlements that reflect the unique teaching and living context in which IOT teachers and administrators work.

The following is information on some of the allowances you may be able to claim as a teacher on Christmas Island. Please check this information against the information on the Housing and Transport website or for any further advice or assistance please contact the **Coordinator of the IOT schools Michael Nicholas** on: (08)

9285 3685 or michael.nicholas@education.wa.edu.au

For more details of some allowances please read the Teachers (Public Sector Primary and Secondary Education) Award 1993.)

DISTURBANCE ALLOWANCE

The disturbance allowance is the reimbursement of the costs to you of telephone installation at a new residence and the connection or re-connection of services to the household (gas, electricity and water)

The cost of the transfer of one car into your name and the payment for a Christmas Island driver's licence will also be included as a one off payment.

You have 12 months to claim this allowance after the commencement of your new position. You will need to keep receipts of any of these costs and fill in relevant forms available on the Housing and Transport website to claim the allowance.

DEPRECIATION

A teacher on transfer may claim, an allowace for accelerated wear and tear on necessary furniture, appliances and effects, provided that the current value of the necessary furniture and effects exceeds $3,143.00. The employee should insert the insured amount for the goods while being transported. Depreciation allowance is payable on appointment, transfer or promotion movements, not intra-town house moves, or second uplifts.

It should be noted that where an employee and their partner, who are both teachers and are both being transferred and/or promoted, a claim for self, partner and dependents may only be made by one employee, on behalf of both employees.

Claim for this allowance to be submitted within 12 months of date of appointment, promotion or transfer.

STORAGE & INSURANCE OF GOODS NOT TRANSFERRED

As accommodation on Christmas and Cocos Islands is furnished, insurance and storage of household goods and effects not transported will be met by the Department. The following goods will NOT be transported to the Island:

- Lounge suites
- Stoves
- Wardrobes
- Bookshelves*
- Dining suite
- Washing Machine
- Cupboards
- Trailers/Caravans

*Bookshelves in dismantled kit form are generally acceptable and very useful.

** If you wish to bring a boat you may substitute your car for a boat or if your boat is small enough you may be able to put it into your uplift sea container. The boat can only be 5.8m long (or under) in order to fit inside the container.

All goods taken must be within the removal



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allowance volume. Any excess will be the responsibility of the teacher.

PROPERTY ALLOWANCE

When a teacher is promoted or transferred from one locality to another, the teacher shall be entitled to be paid a property allowance for reimbursement of prescribed expenses incurred.In the sale of a residence in the teacher's former locality which, at the date on which the teacher received notice of transfer to the new locality;

- the teacher owned and occupied; or
- the teacher was purchasing under a contract of sale and occupying; or
- the teacher was constructing for personal occupation on a permanent basis, on completion of construction; and

In the purchase of a residence or land for the purposes of erecting a residence thereon for personal occupation on a permanent basis in the new locality.

A teacher is not entitled to be paid a property allowance under (ii) unless that teacher is entitled to be paid a property allowance under (i) unless the teacher can show that it is necessary to purchase a residence or land for the purpose of erecting a residence thereon in the new locality because of the transfer or promotion of the teacher.

Prescribed Expenses means:

Legal Fees in accordance with the Solicitor's Remuneration Order 1976, duly paid to a solicitor or in lieu thereof fees charged by a settlement agent for professional costs incurred in respect of the sale or purchase.

Disbursements duly paid to a solicitor or a settlement agent necessarily incurred in respect of the sale or purchase of the residence.

Fifty per cent (50%) of the fees set out under items of the Maximum Remuneration Notice being Real Estate Agent's commission duly paid to an agent for services rendered in the sale of the property.

Stamp Duty:

Fees paid to the Registrar of Titles or to the officer performing duties of a like nature.Expenses relating to the execution or discharge of a first mortgage.

NOTE: The amount of prescribed expenses reimbursed will be limited up to a ceiling determined by the Perth Median Price for housing. This amount shall be annually adjusted as of 30 September.

For further details regarding Property Allowance please contact your Housing & Transport Officer, (refer to contacts). When submitting your claim, copies of all documentation including offer and acceptance are to be attached.

To be eligible the sale and/or purchase must be

finalised within 12 months of date of transfer or promotion. In extenuating circumstances, prior approval may be given to an extension of time.

AIR-CONDITIONING SUBSIDY

Electricity on Christmas and Cocos Islands is expensive and therefore its cost is subsidised. Teachers receive a regular account for power usage. Copies of the account, when paid, are sent to the Department accompanying the Air Conditioning Subsidy form (found on the Housing and Transport Website) and the appropriate allowance is then refunded in your salary.

ANNUAL TRAVEL CONCESSION

Employees employed at CIDHS (and their family living on Island) are entitled to a return travel concession to Perth if the employee has served a full school year. They may elect to defer taking the concession until the following Term 1, Term 2 or Term 3 student vacation period. Otherwise, employees must take their concession during the Summer Student Vacation Period. Eligible employees may choose to self fund the travel and then claim the allowable amount back from Housing and Transport or to receive a Travel Exchange Booking Authority from Housing and Transport to book the flights with the designated Travel Agent.

ACCOMMODATION PRIOR TO DEPARTURE

Up to three days transit allowance in Perth may be approved for staff appointed to or leaving Christmas or Cocos Islands. Allowance payable relates to number of days between flights and includes accommodation (up to three nights) and meals (breakfast and dinner only). Allowance is based upon type of accommodation utilised - hotel/motel or self contained

How To Apply

Prior approval should be sought with the Housing and Transport Officer in writing. All receipts regarding costs incurred are to be forwarded to the Housing and Transport Services with the relelevent claim form.

VEHICLE TRANSPORT ALLOWANCES

The Department offers one choice of three options:

- Transportation of 1 motor vehicle OR
- Loss on sale of vehicle up to $1325.00 on arrival on the Island. Proof of advertising and sale will be required. The loss is the difference between the market value of the vehicle and the sale price OR
- Reimbursement for storage of one vehicle whilst on the Island. Proof of storage and costs will be required.

SHIPPING ALLOWANCE

Most goods sent to Christmas and Cocos Islands will need to be shipped. As a guide the initial shipping allocation is as follows:

- Teacher without dependants - 14 cubic metres.
- Teacher with dependants - 19 cubic metres plus 2 cubic metres per dependent child to a maximum of 27 or an amount that will fit into a 6 metre sea container.

Each teacher is allowed an additional 2 cubic metres as a concession for professional materials. Where both partners are teachers the limit is in accordance with the 'Officer with Dependants' Allowance.

NORTH WEST CHILD ALLOWANCE

The North West Child Allowance applicable above 26 degrees South Parallel, of $100 per annum

per child of school age will apply where children go to the island with their teacher parent/s. The maximum allowance under this allowance is $400 per annum.

LOCALITY ALLOWANCES

At the time of writing locality allowances are $8,874 pa for teachers with dependants and $4,437 for teachers without dependants. This is paid in fortnightly amounts as part of your take home pay. A rough estimate is $144/fortnight for singles and $289/fortnight for families. A ratio of these amounts is paid to part time teachers.

NOTE: If the employee's partner works part time in the school then the employee receives the double amount and the partner does not receive any.

IOT ISOLATION ALLOWANCE

In addition to the locality allowance an isolation allowance of around $8,020 per annum. This is to assist with the high costs of living on the islands. This allowance is also paid in fortnightly amounts as part of your take home pay approx $308/ fortnight.

COUNTRY INCENTIVES ALLOWANCE

Teachers at CIDHS will be paid an allowance for each continuous year of service completed at the school beyond the minimum compulsory service period applicable to the appointment. After 3 years at the school you can apply each year for a maximum of 4 years with payment being calculated on the following basis:1 year served beyond minimum service period 42.5% (Percentage of applicable locality allowance)

2 years served beyond minimum service period 47.5% (Percentage of applicable locality allowance)

3 years served beyond minimum service period 52.5% (Percentage of applicable locality allowance)

4 years served beyond minimum service period 57.5% (Percentage of applicable locality allowance)

If you have any questions or concerns please talk to the Principal and/or the **Coordinator of the IOT** on (08) 9285 3685