

ANNUAL REPORT

14



ANNUAL REPORT 2013-14

FAMILY RESPONSIBILITIES COMMISSION



The Annual Report of the Family Responsibilities Commission summarises the Commission and its financial and corporate performance for the period from 1 July 2013 to 30 June 2014.

Only limited copies of this Annual Report will be available in hard copy. To obtain a copy please contact:

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Alternatively you can visit the following website:
www.frcq.org.au



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Front cover: Lex Bowen, Hope Vale

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Painting by Nathan Ampeybegin



The Commission recognises we are visitors to the country we travel across and work in and that many of our Local Commissioners are Traditional Owners and Elders of their communities. The Commission acknowledges and pays our respects to the Traditional Owners, Elders and Teachers of these lands; to those of the past whose unseen hands guide the actions and decisions of the Commissioners today; to those of the present working for their communities setting the example for the next generation; and to those of the future, the Elders not yet born who will inherit the legacy of our efforts.

*Back Row: Madge Bowen, Hope Vale Commissioner Victor Gibson, Dora Deemal
Sitting Down: Grace Rosendale and Wanda Gibson*





Family Responsibilities Commission
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24 September 2014

The Honourable Glen Elmes MP
Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
and Multicultural Affairs and Minister Assisting the Premier
GPO Box 15397
CITY EAST QLD 4002

Dear Minister Elmes

I am pleased to present the Annual Report 2013-2014 and financial statements for the Family Responsibilities Commission.

I certify that this Annual Report complies with:

- the prescribed requirements of the *Financial Accountability Act 2009* and the *Financial and Performance Management Standard 2009*, and
- the detailed requirements set out in the *Annual Report Requirements for Queensland Government Agencies*.

A checklist outlining the annual reporting requirements can be found at page 102 of this annual report.

Yours sincerely

David Glasgow
Commissioner
Family Responsibilities Commission

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Carved Dingo Dog by Craig Koomeeta





PREAMBLE - NOEL PEARSON

"It has been six years since we commenced the Cape York Welfare Reform (CYWR) trial and, as I have said on numerous occasions, it is impossible to overstate the role of the Family Responsibilities Commission (FRC) in the improvements we are seeing in the welfare reform communities.

The FRC is doing important work. They have their shoulders to the wheel turning around big problems that have been with us for too long.

Bringing about change in our small and remote Indigenous towns is underpinned by the establishment of social norms. The Commissioners are at the very heart of this ambition because they are part of the community. It should always be remembered that the people that they deal with are not strangers. They are people the Commissioners will see later in the street, in the shop, at the school, and at the clinic. This is a heavy duty that the Commissioners do but we can be sure that the efforts are bearing good fruit.

In the past year, the FRC has doubled the effort on getting the kids to school. This is not easy work but it is vital. Each year that passes the closer the communities are to reaching their potential. Each cohort of students that pass through our schools becomes an integral part of the change we want to see.

And the quality of our kids' achievement is improving every year and this year has seen us reach a new level. Make no mistake, we are creating the future leaders in these towns and the future is bright. The FRC is to be thanked for being the engine room for this change.

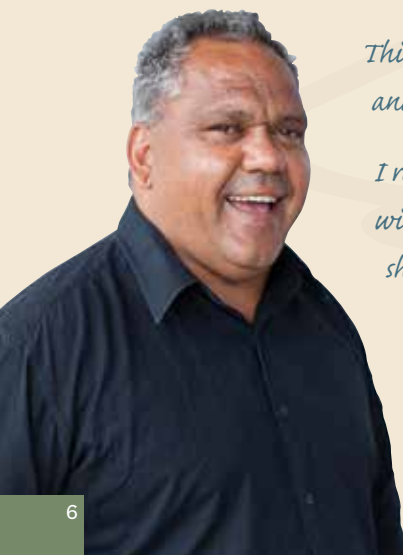
Standing up for change is not easy. Those addicted to grog and gambling, those threatened by change and those unable to see that life could be better often direct their hostility, resentment and anger at Local Commissioners.

But, as I said last year, the FRC has succeeded where many have failed. It is now common for us to hear from community members who were hostile, or at least ambivalent, toward the FRC and the wider CYWR trial, making positive changes and acknowledging the role of the FRC in this.

This is heartening and adds to the wonderful results we are seeing in school attendance and the quality of the student cohort across our schools.

I remain immensely proud of what the Local Commissioners are doing and achieving with the unfailing support of Commissioner Glasgow and his team. They continue to show that change can occur when local leaders are properly empowered to ask those around them to step up and take responsibility for their own lives and the lives of their children."

Noel Pearson



COMMISSIONER GLASGOW'S MESSAGE



From the Commissioner

What follows is an account and record of the Family Responsibilities Commission's activities in the CYWR communities, and its financial operations over the past 12 months to June 30, 2014. Including those matters required in the annual report of a Statutory Authority, this report has been designed to allow the reader to be part of, and an observer to, some of the activities of the children and families in the four communities. We report on many aspects of their lives: the good, the improvements in the past year, as well as the discouragements and challenges which remain.

It is not the intention to put the lives of these people on display, but to respond to the interest of many who wish to hear of the progress of the unique opportunity given local community people. The opportunity is to assist with the improvement of Indigenous authority, to provide a means for its genuine exercise, and to encourage individuals and families to accept change for the better by adopting acceptable community norms of social and personal behaviour.

Acknowledgement of the role of public servants in community

During six interesting years as Commissioner, I have observed many public servants who have spent a significant part of their lives in these communities, and who have shown outstanding dedication and commitment to their professions in the areas of health, education, police services and public administration. Few have been acknowledged publically for the important role each has played in the major improvements in the lives of community members. They are many. Hopefully they will understand by my comments here, I am acknowledging their personal commitment and outstanding service.

Commission staff

Our operations could not continue, uninterrupted as they have been over the past twelve months, without the dedicated commitment of our Local Coordinators, two of whom live and work in the communities. I acknowledge their dedication and resourcefulness - Dellis Gledhill, Local Coordinator based in Aurukun, Amy Barden, Local Coordinator for Coen, Sandi Rye, Local Coordinator for Mossman Gorge and Raymond Lennox, Local Coordinator based in Hope Vale.

Registrar Rob White and his dedicated small Cairns staff work to ensure that the high standard we set when we commenced in 2008 is maintained and we continue to find efficiencies in our service delivery.

Deputy Commissioner Curtin has taken on a greater role in the past six months with conferencing in Hope Vale. I thank him for his valued services.

Service providers

As in past years, staff retention continued to be of major concern in the delivery of services by most providers.

Members of the Health and Community Services Committee visited Aurukun at the invitation of Local Commissioners and, with the permission and consent of the parties involved took the opportunity to observe conferences, visited government services and service providers, as well as attended at the school and observed classes in progress. They, along with others who have had the opportunity to visit the Academy schools in Coen, Aurukun and Hope Vale have observed the marked improvement in the quality of learning of the children. The Commissioners acknowledge and applaud the commitment of the teaching staff in the schools, and the inspirational and innovative leadership of Noel Pearson in the education and protection of the communities' children.



COMMISSIONER GLASGOW'S MESSAGE

The Commission's future

The Family Responsibilities Commission (the Commission) continues to structure its operations in accordance with the objects and principles of the *Family Responsibilities Commission Act 2008* (the Act) and the Queensland Public Service values of: customers first, ideas into action, unleash potential, be courageous and empower people. The Commission's Service Charter pledges the best service we can provide and to deliver outputs for the Queensland and State Governments that achieve the outcomes sought for the CYWR communities. In doing so the Commission nurtures a spirit of inquiry and innovation. Our Local Commissioners are well acquainted with their community and the ancestry and family history of their community members. Decisions are made with an understanding of where each client comes from and what has influenced their behaviour. The exercise of their authority under the Act is governed by this understanding. They are challenging the old norms in their communities every day, encouraging clients to cross the boundaries of their inappropriate social behaviours. To do so requires courage from the Local Commissioners and from Commission clients.

The Local Commissioners are leading by example, trusting where their intuition demands consideration of the challenges faced by each individual, and at times demanding action by imposing restrictions. With each decision they take a calculated risk on the strength and capacity of their community members, whilst empowering them to be responsible to themselves, their family and their community.

In June the Honourable Glen Elmes MP, Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Multicultural Affairs and Minister Assisting the Premier announced the extension of the Commission until 1 January 2016. The Commission looks forward to accepting and working through the challenges ahead.

David Glasgow
Family Responsibilities Commissioner



Local Commissioners from Aurukun, Coen, Hope Vale and Mossman Gorge with Commissioner Glasgow, Deputy Commissioner Curtin and Registrar Rob White at the Local Commissioner Development Week May 2014

STRATEGIC OVERVIEW



Our vision

Vibrant Cape York Welfare Reform communities that are responsible, healthy, safe and sustainable.

Our purpose

Supporting Cape York Welfare Reform community members to restore socially responsible standards of behaviour, local authority and wellbeing for themselves and their families.

Our objectives

- Provide effective and efficient client services and influence the wider acceptance of socially responsible standards of behaviour at the individual, family and community level.
- Strengthen collaborative cross agency partnerships to support local Indigenous authority and influence the wider acceptance of socially responsible standards of behaviour at the individual, family and community level.
- Enhance community engagement and promote understanding of our role to support local Indigenous authority and promote the wider acceptance of socially responsible standards of behaviour so that each Cape York Welfare Reform community is a more caring and safe place to live.

Service Charter Statement

The Family Responsibilities Commission knows that you value good customer service. Our aim is to give you the best service we can. We will work with clients and stakeholders to deliver outputs for the Queensland and Australian Governments that achieve the outcomes sought for the Cape York Welfare Reform communities. In doing so, the Commission nurtures a spirit of inquiry and innovation. We will take up the challenge of unconventional or creative thinking that may be needed to address the complex problems that confront our communities.

The creation of the Family Responsibilities Commission

In early 2006 the Australian Government agreed to fund the development phase of the CYWR trial proposed by the Cape York Institute for Policy and Leadership (the Institute). The Queensland Government also agreed to participate in the development and provided in kind support and assistance throughout the development period.

The Institute subsequently released an interim report titled "From Hand Out To Hand Up" in May 2007 and a two volume final report with the same title in November 2007. The report outlined the Institute's proposal for the CYWR trial to be implemented in the communities of Aurukun, Coen, Hope Vale and Mossman Gorge. The objectives of the CYWR trial are the restoration of social norms and local Indigenous authority. In addition, the program aims to facilitate and support a positive change in social norms and community behaviours that have developed in response to chronic levels of welfare dependency, social dysfunction and economic exclusion within these communities.

In December 2007, the Queensland Government agreed to contribute \$40 million and the Australian Government \$48 million to finance the implementation of the CYWR trial over four years.



STRATEGIC OVERVIEW

The broad objectives of the CYWR agenda as stated by the Institute are to:

- rebuild social norms and restore Indigenous authority
- address the welfare pedestal through changing incentives
- support engagement in the real economy
- move from welfare housing to home ownership
- enable children to make full use of their talents and creativity and to enjoy the best of both worlds.

The reforms are designed with a strong emphasis on partnership, capacity building, respect and use of local authority. Emphasis is also placed on the enhancement of services and appropriate service delivery mechanisms. A range of policy, program and service delivery reforms and practical on-the-ground initiatives are being implemented to help reduce welfare dependency, promote social responsibility, provide pathways to participation in the real economy, improve school attendance and enhance educational opportunities.

These include:

- increased and comprehensive responses to alcohol and drug misuse, gambling, addictive behaviours and violence
- improved services to promote child, individual and family wellbeing including support services which assist expectant parents, encourage positive behaviour, optimise learning by improving school attendance, prepare students for secondary school and assist in maximising the transition to boarding school
- interventions which target employment assistance, sponsor individual enterprise, increase educational opportunities and encourage private home ownership
- increased investment in community capacity building through social capital building programs; and 'opportunity hubs' that provide a central location for products to assist the community, commercial, social and civic activities as well as service co-location
- money management services to promote financial literacy and capability, build assets and establish educational savings trusts to enable the continuing education of children and
- income management of individuals where appropriate to assist them to manage their finances and in some instances to encourage compliance with case plans aimed at improving social responsibility.

CYWR is a policy reform designed to initiate early intervention in order to address issues and behaviours before they escalate. A key feature of the CYWR trial was the creation of the Family Responsibilities Commission as an independent statutory authority. The Commission is regarded as a critical mechanism to facilitate the rebuilding of intra-community social norms and to encourage behavioural change through attaching reciprocity and communal obligations to welfare and other government payments. The intention of the reforms and of this Commission is to enhance and complement the existing responsibilities of Queensland and Australian Government agencies and service delivery and community organisations.

This philosophy is grounded in the Institute's view that historically policies have created a welfare dependency in Indigenous communities and that people in receipt of welfare payments, or who are participating in community employment programs, not only have an obligation to their community not to behave in ways which are detrimental, but must reciprocate with economic engagement and actively support their community.

STRATEGIC OVERVIEW



Indigenous and non-Indigenous people living in the four communities receiving welfare or community employment programs payments are subject to the Commission's jurisdiction. Jurisdiction continues if the individual relocates from the community.

The *Family Responsibilities Commission Act 2008* (the Act) was passed in the Queensland Parliament with bipartisan support on 13 March 2008. The Commission commenced operating on 1 July 2008 and conferencing began on 12 August 2008, with the first sitting being held in Coen. As regulated by the Act the Commission was to cease operations on 1 January 2012. Each subsequent year, following Australian and State Government consultations and budget allocations, the Commission has been granted 12 month extensions resulting in what was to be the current end date of 1 January 2015.

In May 2014 the Australian Government announced its financial contribution to the extension of the Commission and CYWR to 1 January 2016. On 3 June 2014 the Queensland State Treasurer Tim Nicholls released the 2014-15 State Budget wherein it was announced that the State Government would continue to revitalise frontline services with further financial support for CYWR until 31 December 2015.

About us

As part of the broader Cape York Welfare Reforms, the Commission has the lead role in these unique reforms aimed at restoring local authority and socially responsible standards of behaviour in Aurukun, Coen, Hope Vale and Mossman Gorge.

Local Commissioners are Elders or respected community members who encourage individuals appearing before the Commission to take the necessary steps to make lasting changes which will benefit their health, wellbeing, home and community life.

The Commissioner and Local Commissioners meet regularly to conference clients and make referrals to community support services, or in certain circumstances, to the Department of Human Services, Centrelink for income management.

Policy context

Our activities support the Cape York Welfare Reforms and the Statement of Objectives for the Community published by the Queensland Government. The Commission contributes specifically to the following Government objectives:

- "Grow a four pillar economy" – by working to reduce passive welfare and assisting clients to increase their financial stability
- "Revitalise frontline services" – by providing effective and efficient client services for families, improving access to relevant service provision in the communities, working to increase school enrolment and attendance and working for safer communities
- "Restore accountability in government" – by strengthening collaborative cross-agency partnerships to support local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander authorities and to influence the wider acceptance of socially responsible standards of behaviour, promoting Indigenous local authority, initiating a continuous improvement strategy in regard to our organisational capability and nurturing a spirit of inquiry and innovation in order to address the complex problems facing the CYWR communities.



STRATEGIC OVERVIEW

The fundamental principles of the Queensland Public Service Code of Conduct are strictly adhered to and the principles of natural justice, conflict of interest and confidentiality are established and strongly reinforced with employees and Local Commissioners through the Commission's Workplace Policy and Local Commissioner's Handbook.

Our activities also specifically support the Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Multicultural Affairs which is the department responsible for promoting and monitoring the government's progress in Closing the Gap on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander disadvantage. There are eight strategic areas for action established under the National Indigenous Reform Agreement (NIRA) for driving the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) reforms, each of which the Commission addresses through its conferencing processes and participation in collaborative cross-agency partnerships:

- Early childhood – improving child and maternal health care, supporting good parenting and strengthening childhood education and care through early intervention
- Schooling – supporting the improvement of literacy and numeracy levels and year 12 or equivalent attainment of children in our communities by providing guidance, encouragement and information to families on the requirement for children to attend school and by providing better access to educational services in relation to boarding schools
- Health – closing the gap in health and longevity
- Economic participation – closing the gap in employment outcomes between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples
- Safe communities – addressing the problem of violence, alcohol, criminal and anti-social behaviours
- Governance and leadership – enhancing government policies and systems to improve engagement mechanisms, developing and supporting community capacity and leadership and supporting the development of leadership for women and young people
- Land and culture – promoting and affirming Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures.

Our challenge

The Commission delivers services to communities which are culturally unique and geographically remote. Each community is different, however, each can be characterised by the entrenched disadvantage of Indigenous community members. High rates of Indigenous welfare dependency and multi-generational poverty has resulted in communities with high numbers of individuals and families with complex needs.

Our challenge is to work collaboratively with partner agencies, as part of a linked service system to engage, empower and enable individuals, families and the wider community to make positive and lasting change.

Strategic objectives

The objectives of the Commission, the practical means of implementing each objective and the key performance indicators by which the Commission can introspectively assess performance and be independently evaluated are:

STRATEGIC OVERVIEW



Objective one

Provide effective and efficient client services and influence the wider acceptance of socially responsible standards of behaviour at the individual, family and community level.

Strategies

- Support Local Commissioners in their role
- Continually improve performance through strong governance and management of resources
- Develop and support staff
- Process agency notices, conduct client conferences and undertake case planning, monitoring and Show Cause as required.

Performance indicators

- Local Commissioners and employees provided training on a regular basis
- employees have performance and development plans developed in line with the State Government's Capability Leadership Framework
- rate of employee turnover and sick leave
- delivery of high quality conferencing and referral processes
- conferencing processes achieved in a timely manner
- applications to amend/end orders and agreements processed in a timely manner
- client satisfaction
- rates of complaints from clients
- effective and efficient management systems are in place to support Local Commissioners and employees
- Local Commissioners' and community members' views are captured to inform FRC advocacy on the effectiveness of welfare reform
- the Commission's governance meets policy, fiscal and legislative requirements and aids the Commission in achieving its strategic and corporate objectives.

Objective two

Strengthen collaborative cross agency partnerships to support local Indigenous authority and influence the wider acceptance of socially responsible standards of behaviour at the individual, family and community level.

Strategies

- Build and maintain partnerships with partner agencies and community support services based on a mutual understanding of agency mandates and the importance of cooperative, collaborative and coordinated service provision
- Staff of the Commission, partner agencies and community support services recognise the importance of timely and lawful information sharing to enable quality case management



STRATEGIC OVERVIEW

- The Commission's service delivery is aligned with the *Family Responsibilities Commission Act 2008* and wider Cape York Welfare Reform objectives.

Performance indicators

- level of Commission engagement with stakeholders
- level of integrated case management provided
- level of stakeholder satisfaction with advice provided in regard to appropriate service provision in community
- level of stakeholder satisfaction with advice provided in removing barriers to appropriate service provision
- rates of complaints from stakeholders
- stakeholder satisfaction with the support provided by the FRC to promote the CYWR agenda
- the Commission's governance meets policy, fiscal and legislative requirements and aids the Commission in achieving its strategic and corporate objectives.

Objective three

Enhance community engagement and promote understanding of our role to support local Indigenous authority and promote the wider acceptance of socially responsible standards of behaviour so that each Welfare Reform community is a more caring and safer place to live.

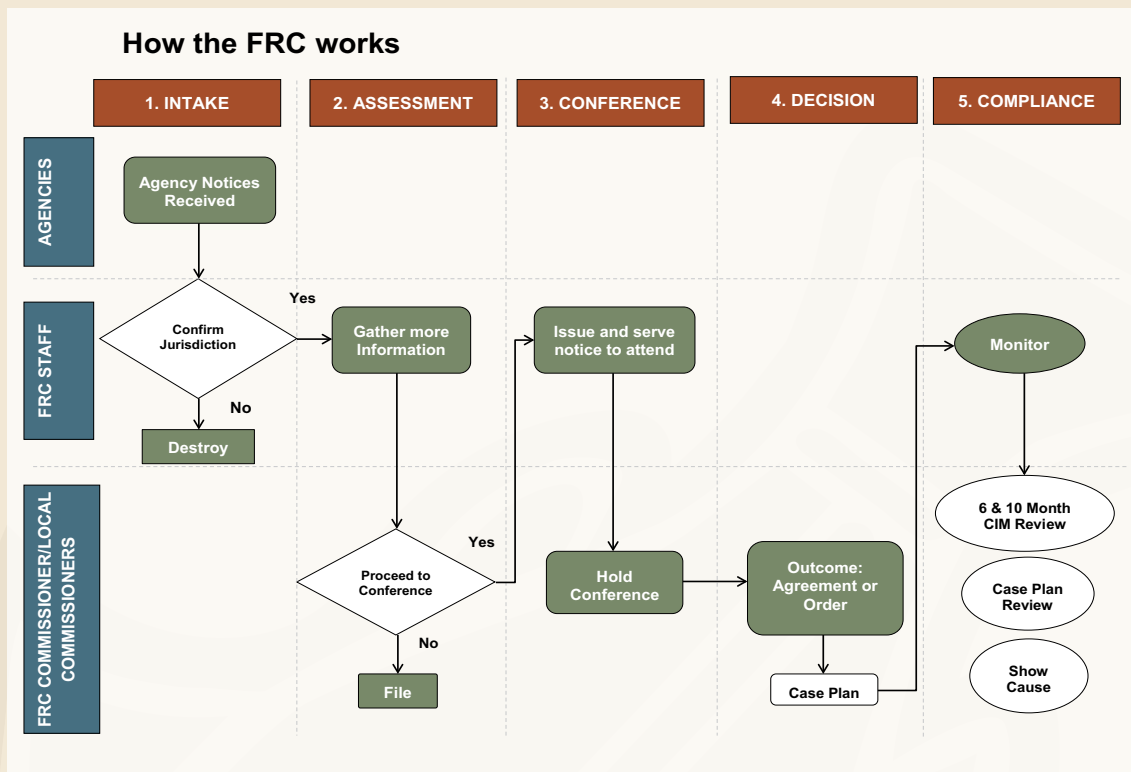
Strategies

- Promote understanding of our mandate to deal with matters in a way which supports local Indigenous authority, encourages positive social norms and which promotes the rights, interests and wellbeing of children and other vulnerable persons of the community
- Promote understanding of the Commission as part of the Cape York Welfare Reforms and as part of a wider service network aimed at enabling individuals and families to improve the quality of their lives.

Performance indicators

- percentage of clients attending conference
- number and percentage of clients reoffending after conference
- level of Commission engagement with stakeholders
- level of community confidence in the Local Commissioners
- level of Australian and State Government confidence in the Local Commissioners
- extent to which conference outcomes are used to drive systemic change
- Local Commissioners' and community members' views are captured to inform FRC advocacy on the effectiveness of welfare reform
- the CYWR communities value the contribution of the FRC in creating healthier and safer communities.

HOW THE FAMILY RESPONSIBILITIES COMMISSION WORKS



The objectives of the Commission, as set out in the Act, are primarily to hold conferences with community members. Conferences are held to encourage clients, individuals and families to engage in socially responsible standards of behaviour whilst promoting the interests, rights and wellbeing of children and other vulnerable persons living in the community.

The Commission may conference a welfare recipient living in a CYWR community from 1 July 2008 (a community member) if the person, or their partner, is in receipt of certain welfare payments. The full list of payments subject to income management under the Cape York initiative is available at <http://www.dss.gov.au/our-responsibilities/families-and-children/publications-articles/cape-york-welfare-reform-fact-sheets/income-management-for-cape-york-welfare-reform>.

Intake and assessment

The Act, passed by the Queensland Parliament on 13 March 2008, sets out the statutory obligations of relevant Queensland departments to notify the Commission when a community member is not meeting pre-determined obligations.

Agency notices are received in the following circumstances:

- The Department of Education, Training and Employment (DETE) must submit a School Attendance Notice to the Commission if a child is absent for three full, or part days of a school term without reasonable excuse, or submit a School Enrolment Notice where a child of compulsory school age is not enrolled to attend school.
- The Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services must submit a Child Safety and Welfare Notice where the Chief Executive becomes aware of an allegation of harm or risk to a child.
- The Department of Justice and Attorney-General (Magistrates Court) must submit a Court Offence Notice if a person is convicted of an offence.



HOW THE FAMILY RESPONSIBILITIES COMMISSION WORKS

- The Department of Housing and Public Works or the provider of social housing must submit a Tenancy Breach Notice if the tenant has breached their social housing tenancy agreement.

Once an agency notice is received, a determination is made as to whether the person/s notified are within the jurisdiction of the Commission in accordance with the Act. Section 49 of the Act provides that the Commission can deal with an agency notice relating to a community member. Section 7 of the Act defines a community member as being a person who is a welfare recipient and who also lives in one of the four CYWR communities, or has lived there for a period of three months since 1 July 2008. Upon a determination that the matter meets the relevant criteria it is deemed to be within jurisdiction. The matter is then referred to the Local Commissioners for a decision as to whether the client should be ordered to attend a conference and if other relevant persons should be invited or directed to attend the conference.

Service of Notice to Attend Conference

Following a determination to proceed to conference, the client is served with a 'Notice to Attend Conference' at which time the client is informed of the time, date and place of the conference, the purpose of the conference, what they can expect to occur and the ramifications if they fail to attend. The notice is served at least 7 days prior to the conference date. In the event that a client fails to attend as per the notice, the Commission re-schedules the conference and again a notice is served 7 days prior to the re-scheduled conference.

Conference

At the conference Commissioners discuss with the client the matter/s subject of the agency notice and any related problems the client wishes to raise. The conference is held in an atmosphere which is informal and confidential. Where the client's first language is not English, the conference is conducted in the local language of the client with Local Commissioners translating as required. Conferences are convened either with a panel comprising of the Commissioner (or Deputy Commissioner) and two Local Commissioners, or with a panel of three Local Commissioners. All Commissioners have equal authority in the decision-making process. The Commissioners must attempt to reach a unanimous decision. If a unanimous decision cannot be reached a majority decision is acceptable, however, the reasons as to why it was not unanimous must be documented. Decisions made at conference are made fairly and with the best interests of the client and their family in mind. At the conclusion of the conference Commissioners may decide that no action is necessary, reprimand the client, encourage the client to enter into an Family Responsibilities Agreement (FRA), direct the client to relevant community support services or place the client on a Conditional Income Management (CIM) order.

Referrals

During the conferencing process Commissioners may decide to refer the client to support services such as:

- Wellbeing Centres (WBCs) to address alcohol and/or drug misuse, gambling, parenting or social health related issues
- Parenting Programs to assist in implementing good parenting practices
- MPower, a money management program, to assist with budgeting and meeting priority financial needs
- Student Case Managers (SCMs) to assist parents to ensure children attend school
- Anger management programs (Ending Family Violence (EFV) program up to 31 December 2013) to assist the client in addressing offending and violent behaviours, and misuse of drugs and alcohol or
- other appropriate support services.

HOW THE FAMILY RESPONSIBILITIES COMMISSION WORKS



Conditional Income Management

A conference decision may include the issue of a notice to the Department of Human Services, Centrelink or a CIM order. Due consideration is given firstly to the individual circumstances of the client and whether it may be more appropriate to take alternative action. Primarily CIM orders are issued to stabilise a client's circumstances, particularly where children or other vulnerable people are concerned. CIM orders are also made where a client fails to attend two scheduled conferences, is not complying with their agreement or order, or the Commission is continuing to receive additional notices in relation to their behaviour. CIM orders are issued for a defined period (normally 12 months) with the Commissioners determining whether 60, 75 or 90 percent of fortnightly welfare payments are managed.

Centrelink enacts the notice and meets with the client to discuss their priority needs and financial obligations such as rent and bills and allocates the remainder of funds to a BasicsCard for the purchase of food and other consumables. The client receives the remaining funds (40, 25 or 10 percent) as discretionary spending. CIM orders are reviewed at the six and ten month point of the order. Some clients request extensions of the CIM order or a decrease of the percentage managed to ensure stability of their finances is maintained. Clients may also enter into a Voluntary Income Management (VIM) arrangement to assist them to manage their budgets and meet the costs of everyday essentials.

Case management

Clients who enter into an agreement, or who are ordered to attend community support services are case managed by the Commission. Service providers are required to submit a monthly progress report by the fifth day of each month advising if the client has attended and engaged with the provider and the progress they are making towards achieving their goals. The Commission collaborates with service providers to maintain consistent reporting criteria, encourages each service provider to engage in a quality assurance process in regard to the quality of information provided and conducts information sessions and updates in the communities. Service providers are encouraged to attend conference proceedings in each CYWR community and discuss with the Commissioners the decision-making processes.

Each agreement or order is monitored by the Commission for the period of the agreement/order. As a result of the progress reports received from service providers, clients are assessed to determine if they are fulfilling their obligations under the agreement or order. Together with local knowledge, additional information is sought from agencies and service providers where appropriate to decide upon the best course of action for the client.

It should be noted that the number of clients case managed includes those who are incarcerated, out of community, in hospital and on probation orders. Their circumstances are monitored to ensure that where change occurs, such as release from prison, they are supported on their return to the community.



HOW THE FAMILY RESPONSIBILITIES COMMISSION WORKS

Show Cause Notices

Where a client is suspected of not complying with their agreement or order, a preliminary assessment review is conducted in regard to their attendance and engagement with service providers. Subsequent to this review of the client's compliance with the case plan, the Commissioners may request an update on the client's current income management status. If the client is already on an existing income management order with a substantial amount of time remaining, the Commissioners may either elect to continue with the current income management order and review it at the six and ten month review periods, or may increase the percentage of income management. The client may also then continue to be conferenced throughout this period should new notices be received.

Where the Commissioners recommend proceeding to a Show Cause conference the client is ordered to attend before the Commission to explain their non-compliance. After due consideration where considered appropriate a CIM order may be made.

The complexity of client obligations requires comprehensive information sharing and cooperation between the Commission, service providers and associated agencies to ensure clients can realistically meet the requirements of their agreements or orders. Each Show Cause is therefore assessed on a case by case basis to ensure that clients are treated in a fair and just manner.

Applications to Amend or End Agreements or Orders

Clients may submit an Application to Amend or End their Agreement or Order. Commissioners view the hearing of the applications as an opportunity to engage with clients. For some clients this may be their first conference attendance as the CIM order may have been invoked due to their non-attendance at two previous conferences. The client is encouraged to provide evidence as to why the application should be heard and each application is considered on its own merit. When CIM orders are revoked clients are encouraged to continue to address any remaining challenges and to exercise personal responsibility in their lives.



Coen Commissioner Elaine Liddy and Aurukun Commissioner Doris Poonkamelya



COMMISSIONERS SITTING INDEPENDENTLY

In a conference about an agency notice, the Commission must deal with the matters for which the client was brought to conference in a way that: allows the client to seek assistance if necessary and/or change their behaviours as quickly as possible; supports the client to behave as expected by the community and in the best interests of the client, their family and the community; and utilises available community support services to assist the client to make lasting changes. When a child is involved in a conference, the child's views and wishes must be taken into account in a way that is sensitive to the child's age and the child's ability to understand. Procedures for and conduct of Commission conferences are governed by the *Family Responsibilities Commission Act 2008*. Commissioners must therefore comply with this legislation in all proceedings and decisions made.

Commissioner Glasgow has mentored the Local Commissioners through countless conferences since 2008, and has imparted to each of them the knowledge required to comply with legislative requirements, and most importantly, the confidence to independently make decisions in regard to their fellow community members.

Over the past 12 months Mossman Gorge Local Commissioners Karen Gibson, Karen Shuan and Loretta Spratt have commenced sitting alone in conference, with Commissioner Glasgow available

by telephone if required. In doing so they have faced some challenging situations that were at times quite confronting, but have found during these conferences that there is improved client attendance. This improved attendance they believe is partly due to the community's perception that the Local Commissioners can confidently and responsibly guide the community. Sitting alone, the Mossman Gorge Commissioners have found that the content of discussion is often more in-depth, with clients discussing issues they would normally not bring up with Commissioner Glasgow or Deputy Commissioner Curtin present. The quality of engagement has likewise improved, with clients arriving ready to facilitate a constructive conversation. The improved communication at conference has enhanced the development of comprehensive case plans which have in turn led to successful outcomes.

Mossman Gorge Commissioners Karen Gibson, Karen Shuan and Loretta Spratt acknowledge that sitting alone in conference would not have been possible without the guidance and support of Commissioner Glasgow, Local Coordinators Amy Barden and Sandi Rye, and the Cairns office staff. Together they have worked to streamline processes and guidelines for conferencing. Although Local Commissioners Gibson, Shuan and Spratt sit alone quite frequently, they will continue to further their knowledge and strengthen their capacity through the mentoring provided by Commissioner Glasgow.



Mossman Gorge Commissioners Karen Gibson, Karen Shuan and Loretta Spratt



CLIENT CASE STUDY - INCOME MANAGEMENT

A case study

Each year the Commission includes in its Annual Report at least one client case study as a means of relaying in real terms the experience of individuals in the CYWR communities: a measure of the quality of their lives; why change was needed; how change was initiated; and what outcomes were achieved. The social value created by the reforms is difficult to quantify. Asking the beneficiaries of the reforms, however, “What has changed for you?” can provide valuable qualitative data which the Commission and Government can use to inform its service delivery model.

The following article by Patricia Karvelas was published in The Australian on 21 December 2013 and captures a tangible beneficial outcome.

Since this article was published the Australian Government has passed legislation enabling the Commission to extend income management in the CYWR communities to 31 December 2015.

ABORIGINAL ‘RECIDIVISTS’ TO BE 90PC MANAGED

INDIGENOUS people in Cape York who repeatedly come before the Family Responsibilities Commission and refuse to address drug, alcohol and other problems will have 90 per cent of their welfare payments managed.

The Abbott government has agreed to calls by the Cape York Institute to increase the maximum rate for income management from the current 75 percent to 90 per cent for Aborigines who refuse to improve their behaviour.

The Cape York model of income management, operating in the communities of Aurukun, Coen, Hope Vale and Mossman Gorge, provides the Family Responsibilities Commission with the ability to refer individuals to income management over issues such as failing to ensure children attend school, or drug and alcohol problems.

The Commission currently directs the Department of Human Services to income manage either 60 per cent or 75 per cent of an individual’s welfare payments.

The institute, led by Noel Pearson, wanted 90 per cent income management as an additional tool to encourage more recalcitrant individuals, who have met with the Commission between 16 and 30 times with no demonstrable improvement in their behaviour.

Local Commissioners and the Aurukun Mayor have told departmental staff of their support for the move. The government has agreed to the income-managing of individuals at 90 per cent from January 1.

Social Services Minister Kevin Andrews said the Abbott government had been unable to pass legislation to continue the Cape York reform trial so he had signed an instrument to keep it going until the legislation was passed.

“There are a few difficult cases where people have been income-managed for a year or two and there are still difficulties in relation to them,” Mr Andrews said.

“In some cases, the 90 per cent will give (the Commission) the ability to try and get a better outcome for them and their families.”

CLIENT CASE STUDY - INCOME MANAGEMENT



“It’s a combination of alcohol and drug issues and only quarantining 75 per cent still allows those issues to occur.”

Mossman Gorge single mother Katrina Gibson has two children and says the Family Responsibilities Commission and income management had transformed her family’s lives. Ms Gibson is now no longer on income management. She says she has taken control of her life and has spent the past year ensuring her 12-year-old son, Xion, has gone to school consistently.

She said her bank account used always to be overdrawn and attracted lots of fees. She had also established a Student Education Trust for Xion, boosted by regular payments. “I’ve got my son attending school every day: he has only missed nine days the entire year,” Ms Gibson said.

“I’ve done everything to make sure my children have better health and a better education.”

“I knew that I had to improve my lifestyle and make sure that my children were well looked-after, and make sure that as a single mum I was looking after myself too.”

Ms Gibson said having her income managed helped her to spend a lot more money on her children. She said that, although she was a stay-at-home mother to six-month-old daughter Zaina, she planned to work in tourism when her children were older.

Mr Andrews said Ms Gibson was an example of someone who has used the system to her advantage and turned around her life.

“It really shows that if we can get the right mechanism there’s great hope,” the Minister said.

He said he had been told there were other communities in Queensland that had looked at the Cape York project and wanted the same scheme. “If others can see the advantage of it then they call for it themselves, so it is from the ground up, not top-down from government,” he said.

Last year’s Cape York Welfare Reform evaluation report found income management had positive effects on individuals and families by helping to ensure basic needs were met. The trial has had about \$100 million from the federal and state governments.

Under section 147 of the Act, the Commission preserves the confidentiality of information gained through involvement in the administration of the Act. Katrina Gibson, named in the above article, consented and authorised the publication of the data to The Australian newspaper.

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THE COMMISSION — WHO MAKES UP THE COMMISSION

FAMILY RESPONSIBILITIES COMMISSIONER

Commissioner David Glasgow



Commissioner David Robert Glasgow is a proud North Queenslander, having lived all but two or three years of his life in the north. Born in Cairns, he completed his schooling in Cairns, apart from boarding for a time in Charters Towers. He then studied law in Cairns with the firm McDonnell Harris & Co, today simply known as McDonnells Law. After admission as a Solicitor he joined the long-established and prestigious firm of Roberts Leu and North and quickly became a partner. He stayed with them for about 27 years, becoming a senior partner and gaining wide experience in virtually all areas of the law. In 1998 he was appointed a Magistrate and then served in Brisbane and the south-east for the next year. From there he was placed in Cairns and for nearly a year undertook his share of circuit work in the Cape York Peninsula region and on Thursday Island, becoming familiar with Indigenous communities and aware of their problems and social dysfunction. He was then transferred to Townsville where he became the Coordinating Magistrate. In that role he took a special interest in developing the work of the Murri Court and was instrumental in preparing the procedures of that Court throughout Queensland. His work in the Children's and Drug Courts in North Queensland further exposed him to the particular problems of Indigenous peoples, many quite young, who in numbers appeared before those courts at a much higher ratio than those who came from the wider community.

His experiences led the State Government to look to him for guidance as they went about implementing the Family Responsibilities Commission model of welfare and social reform in the Cape.

The model enshrined in the FRC Act provided for the appointment of a retired Magistrate or a person of like background to be the Commissioner, and Mr Glasgow was appointed to that position on 25 April 2008.

The Act provided for the trial of the reform model in Aurukun, Coen, Hope Vale and Mossman Gorge. Commissioner Glasgow has since then gained the respect of both the Queensland and Australian Governments who have sought to retain his services during the years in which the life of the trial has been extended. That it can work effectively is demonstrated by the fact that under his leadership and especially the leadership of Local Commissioners, the Commission is recognised as a true partner in reforming life behaviours in Indigenous communities.

LOCAL COMMISSIONERS

Aurukun



Commissioner Edgar KERINDUN (Sara Clan) was born and raised in Aurukun and is a traditional owner of the area. Aurukun Commissioner

Kerindun was elected to the position of Aurukun Shire Councillor in the Local Government elections conducted on 28 April 2012 and subsequently retired from the position of Engagement Officer at Queensland Health. He was one of the original Community Police Officers in Aurukun and continues to promote justice and rehabilitation for ex-offenders. Together with his partner, Aurukun Commissioner Doris Poonkamelya, they have in their care three children from their extended family. Aurukun Commissioner Kerindun has a strong belief that if you show respect to everyone, everyone will have more respect for you.

THE COMMISSION — WHO MAKES UP THE COMMISSION



Commissioner Doris POONKAMELYA (Putch Clan) was born at the Kendall River Outstation and her family moved to Aurukun when she

was a child. Aurukun Commissioner Poonkamelya retired as a senior health worker from Queensland Health in 2009 where she worked for 29 years. She is a founding member of the Aurukun Community Justice Group and is also deeply committed to education as the pathway to employment and a promising future for young people. As a recognised Child Safety Carer, Aurukun Commissioner Poonkamelya believes in ensuring a safe environment for children to grow and mature.



Commissioner Sarah WOLMBY (Aplach Clan) was born and raised in Aurukun, only leaving her home community to attend boarding school to obtain

a year 11 education. Aurukun Commissioner Wolmby previously worked for 15 years as a community health worker with Queensland Health and has worked in child care and teaching centres. She is an avid supporter of children receiving a strong education to allow them to successfully graduate from senior and tertiary education and gain employment either in Aurukun to enrich the community, or outside of Aurukun in their chosen career.



Commissioner Ada Panawya WOOLLA (Winchanum Clan) was born and raised in Aurukun, leaving the community to attend boarding school and later

Cairns Business College. Upon election to the position of Councillor of Aurukun Shire Council in April 2012, she retired from her position as a Recognised Entity where she worked alongside the Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services to assist families and children in Aurukun.

She is also a foster and kinship carer, an office bearer in the church, a founding Member of the Aurukun Community Justice Group, a respected mediator and community Elder. Aurukun Commissioner Woolla and her husband, Mayor Derek Walpo, support the education and training of young people and strive to improve opportunities for their community.



Commissioner Dorothy POOTCHEMUNKA (Winchanum / Aplach Clans) was born, raised and educated in Aurukun, and now has 10 children, 15

grandchildren and five great grandchildren. Aurukun Commissioner Pootchemunka's interests span the full spectrum of traditional activities including fishing, camping and the customary female craft of basket weaving using Pandanus and Cabbage Palm leaf. Her baskets are on display in national galleries in Australia and overseas. Aurukun Commissioner Pootchemunka is also a registered Wik interpreter and her expertise is utilised within the court system and also by the Department of Human Services. She views education as the key to employment and encourages all students to make the most of their education and training to enhance future job opportunities.



Commissioner Vera KOOMEETA (Aplach Clan) was born in Aurukun and attended primary school in Aurukun.

Upon completing a Junior Certificate she attended Technical and Further Education (TAFE) in Cairns, obtaining a qualification in community teaching. On 28 April 2012 Aurukun Commissioner Koomeeta was elected to the position of Aurukun Shire Councillor in the Local Government elections. She is a Justice of the Peace (Magistrates Court) and a registered interpreter as well as a member of the Aurukun Community Justice Group.



THE COMMISSION — WHO MAKES UP THE COMMISSION

As the representative of her clan group she is involved in several committees and holds positions on a number of boards. Aurukun Commissioner Koomeeta's experience assists in her ability to make independent and informed decisions as a Local Commissioner. When not working, she can be found spending time with her granddaughter, camping and fishing.



Commissioner Thomas TOIKALKIN (Wik Alkan Clan) was born in Aurukun. His homeland is Kenchrang and his totem is the White Cockatoo.

Aurukun Commissioner Toikalkin was educated at Scots PGC College in Warwick and is currently studying to become a Minister of the Uniting Church. Previously Commissioner Toikalkin served with the Army Reserve, 51st Battalion Far North Queensland Regiment, keeping our northern borders safe. Whilst in the Army Reserve he was employed in the following roles: patrolman, boating, four wheel drive and signalman. He has also previously worked for Queensland Health as an Engagement Officer, ACT for Kids and served as a Community Police Officer for a number of years. Thomas is a foster and kinship carer for the Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services. He is a traditional owner and continues to work closely with young people to ensure they receive a good education and enhance their employment opportunities.

Coen



Commissioner Peter Pedro PETER (Lama Lama Clan) is an Elder of great significance within the Lama Lama Clan and the wider community. Coen

Commissioner Peter is a valued member of the Coen Men's Group who pass on their skills and knowledge in leatherwork and woodwork to the younger men and produce goods for sale. He teaches the traditional art of carving spears and woomeras, as taught by his Elders, and passes on traditional wisdom.

Coen Commissioner Peter is also a member of the Coen Justice Group whilst providing respect and leadership as a Local Commissioner.



Commissioner May Mary KEPPLE (Winchanum Clan) is a Justice of the Peace (Qualified) and the Recognised Entity for Child Safety in Coen. Coen

Commissioner Kepple has had a variety of positions in retail and sales and currently works part-time at Mulley's Market. She enjoys painting on canvas and previously managed the Wunthulpu Visitor Centre in Coen. As an accredited foster carer since 2007 she remains committed to the welfare of children, ensuring they receive opportunities for self-development and a bright future. Coen Commissioner Kepple spends her weekends on country with her daughter and grandchildren passing on culture and the ways of the Elders.



Commissioner Garry Lloyd PORT (Lama Lama / Kuku Yalanji / Awapathu Clans) is from a well respected Coen family and son of Barry Port, the

famous Aboriginal police tracker. Coen Commissioner Port is a Justice of the Peace (Qualified) and works at the Hope Vale Campus of Cape York Aboriginal Australian Academy (CYAAA) as a School Engagement Officer. In his role with the CYAAA he works with the children encouraging attendance, conducting the breakfast program, dealing with behaviour issues and liaising with parents. He is deeply involved with supporting young people to ensure they reach their full educational potential, and also volunteers his time to junior sports development, providing guidance for young boys.



Commissioner Elaine Louise LIDDY (Lama Lama Clan) was born in Cairns. She is a fluent Umpithamu language speaker and has contributed to the

dictionary of the Umpithamu language. Coen Commissioner Liddy has been pivotal in

THE COMMISSION — WHO MAKES UP THE COMMISSION



establishing the Lama Lama Rangers who live and work on the Lama Lama homelands of Port Stewart and is now a fulltime Cultural Heritage Adviser. She is a Justice of the Peace (Qualified) and is a highly respected leader of the Lama Lama Clan. Coen Commissioner Liddy devotes her spare time to the care of her homelands, and to passing on tradition and culture to future generations.

Hope Vale



Commissioner Brian COBUS (Nruurruumungu / Muuli Clans) is an Executive Board Member and Field Officer for the Cape York

Land Council, Director on Hope Vale Congress Aboriginal Corporation and the Hope Vale Community Justice Group. As Hope Vale Commissioner Cobus did not get the opportunity of further education, leaving school in grade nine to work on farms, he encourages future generations to obtain the best education possible to ensure they have increased opportunities. As a traditional owner Hope Vale Commissioner Cobus passes on sustainable management to his grandchildren whilst also passing on his well-known fishing skills.



Commissioner Victor Patrick GIBSON (Binthi / Bulcan Clans) worked as a Student Case Manager for CYAAA in Hope Vale for three

years until his retirement. He is also a member of the Hope Vale Men's Group and organiser of the Young Leadership Forum, encouraging young people to become the leaders of tomorrow. Hope Vale Commissioner Gibson has devoted much of his working career to Hope Vale, serving as Deputy Mayor and a councillor. He remains a keen supporter of good governance and leadership for the future.



Commissioner Doreen HART (Binthi / Bulcan Clans) currently holds the position of Cape York Regional Coordinator for the

Empowered Communities program with the Institute. Her former roles included Community Development Officer, Living Change, in the Wunan Foundation, Chief Executive Officer for the Apunipima Cape York Health Council and Housing Officer for the Hope Vale Aboriginal Shire Council. She is a Justice of the Peace (Qualified) and a member of the Thurrbill Community Justice Group and the Local Advisory Group.



Commissioner Ivan DEEMAL (Thiitharr Clan) is the General Manager of Hope Vale Congress Aboriginal Corporation. Hope Vale

Commissioner Deemal gained trade qualifications once completing school, and has held a number of roles training and developing young people throughout Queensland. Upon returning to Hope Vale, he took up the role of Implementation Manager with the Hope Vale Aboriginal Shire Council whilst also being the council representative to the Local Program Office Welfare Reform Program. Hope Vale Commissioner Deemal and his family provide recreation camping to tourists on traditional lands in Elim Beach, rated in the 100 most incredible travel secrets by Australian Traveler magazine.



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Commissioner Erica DEERAL (Gamay Clan) holds the position of Administrative/Accounts Officer with the Hope Vale campus of CYAAA. She enjoys working at the school and seeing school attendance improve so that young children can obtain an education to better their futures. Prior to this Hope Vale Commissioner Deeral held administrative positions with the Cook Shire and Hope Vale Aboriginal Shire Councils. She is a traditional owner and a Director on the Hope Vale Congress Aboriginal Corporation.

Mossman Gorge



Commissioner Loretta SPRATT (Oikola / Lama Lama Clans) was born on Thursday Island but spent her infant years in Coen and Hope Vale. She remained in Hope Vale

throughout her childhood until her late teens when she met Nathan McLean, a young man visiting from Mossman Gorge. Mossman Gorge Commissioner Spratt later married Nathan and moved to the Gorge where she has resided for the past 16 years. Mossman Gorge Commissioner Spratt has previously worked in the areas of sport and recreation and is currently employed by Bamanga Bubu Ngadimunku Incorporated (BBNI) in the horticulture area where she can pursue her passion. She has a keen interest in art and continues to learn new skills to complement her Local Commissioner role in the community, recently undertaking mediation training. Mossman Gorge Commissioner Spratt continues to work closely with young people and the women of her community to promote strong, healthy and supportive families.



Commissioner Karen GIBSON (Nyungul / Kuku Yalanji Clans) was born and raised in the Mossman area. She is an artist whose work has gained increasing recognition

and exposure. As an artist Mossman Gorge Commissioner Gibson also enjoys inspiring other young artists to follow their dreams. She has previously held the position of Vice Chairperson of BBNI and is the current Chairperson. Other positions held include Board Member for the Cape York Land Council, Director of Kuku Yalanji Dreamtime Tours,

Attendance Case Manager with Cape York Partnerships and Local Coordinator for the Family Responsibilities Commission, Mossman Gorge.



Commissioner Karen SHUAN (Kuku Yalanji Clan) was born on 15 August 1972. As a Kuku Yalanji woman, she is a traditional owner of the Mossman area and has resided

in Mossman all of her life. After completing Year 11 at Mossman State High School, she gained a Certificate III in Tourism and a Certificate III in Business. Positions she has held include Director, Vice Chairperson and Secretary of BBNI. She is presently the gallery attendant at the Mossman Gorge Gateway Centre. As a custodian of the Kuku Yalanji culture she has led the Mossman Gorge girls in performance at the Laura Dance Festival.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER

Deputy Commissioner Rodney (Rod) Curtin



Deputy Commissioner Rod Curtin was born and raised in Cairns and completed his secondary education at St Augustine's College. He attained a Bachelor of Law degree

through the Queensland University of Technology and was appointed a Barrister-at-Law to the Supreme Court of Queensland and the High Court of Australia in 1987. Deputy Commissioner Curtin's practice has been predominately in the jurisdictions of Family Law and Criminal Law. His experience has involved the conduct of circuits in the Cape York Peninsula and Torres Strait region for over 20 years.

Deputy Commissioner Curtin is passionate in the pursuit of access to justice services for Indigenous people. He advocates for the advancement of programs to provide better resources and achieve better outcomes for Indigenous people who appear before the courts. Deputy Commissioner Curtin has been involved with the Cape York Peninsula Youth Justice Program and has been a strong advocate for Juvenile Justice issues. His service to the Indigenous communities has been acknowledged as dedicated and compassionate, having an in-depth knowledge of the cultural and social issues of people within

THE COMMISSION — WHO MAKES UP THE COMMISSION



those communities. Rod Curtin was appointed to the role of Deputy Commissioner in July 2010 and advises that he thoroughly enjoys his role, the most rewarding aspect of which has been his association with the Local Commissioners. Their dedication and tireless persistence in striving toward creating a better community and setting a wonderful example for the next generation has been inspirational.

Registrar Rob White



Rob White was appointed as the Registrar of the Family Responsibilities Commission on 14 November 2011. As the Registrar of the Family Responsibilities

Commission Rob leads and manages the human resource, administrative, financial and logistic support of the Commission which is based in Cairns. His role enables the Commissioners to exercise their powers effectively and the Family Responsibilities Board to perform its advisory role to the Queensland and Australian Governments.

Prior to commencing with the Commission Rob was the Department of Justice and Attorney-General (DJAG) Regional Director for Far North Queensland. During his lengthy career with DJAG Rob worked in many centres throughout Queensland including Brisbane, Ipswich, Coolangatta, Weipa, Innisfail, Atherton and Cairns. Rob has travelled extensively throughout Cape York and the Torres Straits over many years, and has worked in various Indigenous Justice programs with Community Justice Groups. He was instrumental in establishing court sittings in a number of Indigenous communities. Rob was articled as a law clerk prior to commencing work within the public service.

Rob's passion is rugby league and in particular assisting players to develop their talents. He is the Manager of the highly successful Northern Pride Queensland Cup Team and works closely with young Indigenous players and officials, mentoring them in life skills. Rob was recently appointed a Director on the board of the Northern Pride.

SUPPORT STAFF

Local Coordinators

A Local Coordinator has been appointed for each of the CYWR communities. The function of the Local Coordinators is to support, at the local level, the efficient and effective operations of the Commission in the CYWR community areas.

The Local Coordinators are:

Aurukun:	Ms Dellis Gledhill
Coen	Miss Amy Barden (Cairns based)
Hope Vale:	Mr Raymond Lennox
Mossman Gorge:	Ms Sandi Rye (Cairns based)

The Cairns registry

A central registry office has been established in Cairns to provide administrative and logistical support to the Commissioners and Local Coordinators in community by ensuring the efficient and effective operation of the Commission. The Cairns registry is comprised of 17 employees:

- Commissioner
- Registrar
- Executive Officer (Management)
- Client Manager
- HR and Policy Manager
- Statistical and Research Coordinator
- Database Administrator
- Finance Officer
- Information Officers
- Senior Case Management – Administration Officer
- Administration Officers Case Management
- Administration Officers.



LOCAL COMMISSIONERS' YEAR IN REVIEW

Aurukun Local Commissioners' report

We are in our sixth year of operation and are happy that we have been given the opportunity to work for the Commission for another year.

At the beginning of 2014 we welcomed Local Commissioner Thomas Toilkalkin to our team which now consists of seven Local Commissioners. It is good to have new blood and new ideas to tackle the issues in our changing community.

Every year we have found different problems to concentrate on. This year we have concentrated our efforts on conducting more conferences without the assistance of Commissioner Glasgow. As a result we have found that the community is showing greater respect for us as leaders. We have conducted crucial mediations at the request of our community and this has demonstrated their faith in us. In off-conference weeks we have held meetings with stakeholders in regard to some of our community members. Although the stakeholders differ from meeting to meeting, an example of those we engage with are the police, Wellbeing Centre, MPower and staff from the hospital. Discussions are held to create a holistic approach to case management and get everyone on the same page. We bring an in-depth knowledge to the table about each community member. As a result some clients are now 'mapped' for their mental health issues. This mapping helps us to proactively anticipate when a client is likely to be a danger to him/herself or the community, and we can act upon that likelihood. We also assist offenders returning to community by linking them with appropriate service provision. Everyone works together to resolve issues affecting the client's welfare. Communication has been enhanced and there has been an improved atmosphere which has also promoted the ability of the community to function at a more cohesive level.

We are not selling false hope

When performing our jobs as Local Commissioners we have continuously spoken with our community members to explain that we are here to assist them. These people are well known to us and we see them every day. Every day we continue to learn how to apply the Commission's decisions with consistency and fairness. We have found it is best to speak within and outside of the community with heart and soul, and in a language that reaches across the divides of education, social standing and race.

It has been and still is difficult, just as all change is difficult, but it is also simple. It was simple to make the decision to become a champion for our people and give back to our community. Now we simply want to share our knowledge and continue to encourage as many people as we can to strive for a better life for themselves and their families. We are not selling false hope. We are offering a chance to change.

We have seen the worst of people. We have seen violence, crime, addiction, neglect and abuse, yet we remain hopeful. We remain faithful to our community, and open to seeing the best in people, regardless of what they have done or are doing. We stay open to believing that no matter how hard the climb, or how frequently we may lose our way, there is always a light to show us a path forward. We all go through life discovering the truth about who we are, and determining who has earned the right to share our personal space. Along with Commissioner Glasgow there have been people we have worked with that have shown us the way forward. We have in turn allowed them to share our personal space. We have welcomed them to share in our work and allowed them into our hearts.

Our challenges this year have been many. We are still experiencing fluctuating school attendance, and there is improvement needed. We are hopeful that the introduction of 90 percent income management will assist us to improve this school attendance, however, we are also aware that new strategies will have to be introduced as well. We have conferenced some clients on many occasions and yet still they demonstrate minimal improvement.

Mental health assistance for our young people is still very lacking and is much needed, especially for those engaged in drug and alcohol abuse, and for those that have suffered prolonged domestic violence.

LOCAL COMMISSIONERS' YEAR IN REVIEW



During the year we waited to see improvements for our children, for those suffering abuse and those parents who desperately needed help to be better parents. We provided honest information and straight talking directly to Commissioner Tim Carmody, QC for the Queensland Child Protection Commission Inquiry in the previous year, but we still have insufficient resources and exhausted workers trying to manage an unmanageable situation.

It must be stated that we are finding good service delivery is still a challenge, though highly funded and resourced. We have limited referral options and limited faith in some service providers. We are tired of talking and waiting to get improved service delivery. It would seem to us that there are no ears to listen.

Yet we are encouraged by big picture changes with both levels of government promising change that would close the gap and recognise Indigenous leadership. We are hopeful that talk will become reality, but we are concerned that only 12 month extensions for the Commission have limited our capacity for long term planning. Only the ability to plan for long term changes will show our true capability. We know how hard politics can be and how difficult it is to manage the expectations of the community because we live it every day. We need solid ground upon which to move forward, share our successes and failures with both Indigenous and non-Indigenous leaders, and be given enough space and time to initiate, adjust and expand upon new strategies.

We are a strong team, proud of our achievements and in awe of the way our journey continues to unfold. Daily we are working alongside the community to celebrate and share in the good outcomes. The road has been marked with many milestones, but it is not only the rocks that we identify as the milestones. Little pebbles and grains of dirt are all as important as the rocks. One cannot exist without the other. As Local Commissioners we cannot exist without our community support, our family support, and our determination. Together they assist us to reach and pass the milestones along our journey.

Despite our challenges this year we have remained focused. We are not yet at the end of our journey, but we could never have imagined the changes in the community and ourselves that have occurred along the way. We have continued to gather the rocks, pebbles and dirt to reach the milestones that will bring our people along to a better life.

Aurukun Local Commissioners Edgar Kerindun, Doris Poonkamelya, Sarah Wolmby, Ada Woolla, Dorothy Pootchemunka, Vera Koomeeta and Thomas Toikalkin





LOCAL COMMISSIONERS' YEAR IN REVIEW

Coen Local Commissioners' report

In the beginning it was nerve wracking going to conference. Our clients viewed it as a 'second court' and we had to spend a lot of time explaining that we were not there to punish them further, but we were there to help them to improve their lives. We feel the Commission in Coen has reached a turning point. We are now viewed as a 'fair' organisation and we have a voice in the community. Things have slowly changed, and now when kids are in trouble our families come and talk to us to keep them out of trouble, so they understand that they can trust us to point them down the right path. We explain that in the end we are all responsible for ourselves, and asking for a guiding hand, or admitting that there are bad things happening in your life is not shameful.

This year we have been involved in supporting, understanding, and working together to reach a common goal. That common goal is to ensure that we all do our best to keep our children safe, linked to culture, happy and educated. We believe that these goals also require another ingredient and that is empowerment. We have learnt that empowerment can be gained in many different ways. As Local Commissioners we are not only able to offer this empowerment in our traditional ways to family, but also through our second relationship to our community as Local Commissioners in conference sittings.

Local Commissioner Elaine Liddy has been instrumental in establishing the Lama Lama Rangers who live and work on the Lama Lama homelands of Port Stewart. Through her involvement as a Ranger, and now a fulltime Cultural Heritage Adviser, she devotes her spare time to the care of her homelands, and to passing on tradition and culture to future generations. A Cultural Heritage Adviser is a person who has extensive experience and knowledge in relation to the management of Aboriginal cultural heritage, and is also able to assist with cultural heritage management plans. Together we now engage our children in the Junior Ranger Program, and when high school students return home we try to take them out on country, rather than have them stay in town.

The Junior Ranger program is about educating our youth in sustainable natural resource management. The program aims to mix Indigenous values for looking after country with student education. We care deeply for our children and the education they must receive to make their way in the world. We believe that by working with Indigenous Rangers, our youth will develop a deeper understanding of their culture, and this pride will show them the right way to live their lives.

This year has been one of maintaining our school attendance at between 85 and 92 percent, taking into account the usual cultural requirements of funerals and sorry business. The kids have picked up their game in relation to their uniform consistency and now we are seeing them pushing themselves to reach a new



LOCAL COMMISSIONERS' YEAR IN REVIEW



school readiness standard of arriving at school with not only their uniforms on, but their lunches, a water bottle, and a hat on their head. The school has reported a general increase in community involvement, in particular with the Elders. Our youth are again throwing down aces, this time quite literally as they were taught tennis this last year. We have also noticed that Transitional Support Services are back in force this year and have started talking to our children about what they need to do in order to improve their chances of getting a place at a boarding school.

As reported in last year's Year in Review, the Wellbeing Centre and service providers in Coen are accepted as part of the community, and the Wellbeing Centre staff are very supportive of our clients. The local police and some services are even working after hours to accommodate the community's needs. That is good, as problems do not disappear when the sun goes down.

Sometimes it is necessary to guide with a firm hand, and our firm hand is Conditional Income Management.

We have a voice

We have found that within the last year we have viewed Conditional Income Management more as a tool to empower. This form of empowerment we believe is not understood by most clients at the time of the decision to income manage them, but within time they understand that reducing financial stress personally, and within the family, is an empowering experience. When a client starts to walk the right path, they sometimes wish then to remain on income management. They also occasionally return to the Commission requesting income management. When clients request an amendment or end to income management, that in itself can be an empowering act largely due to the improvements experienced in their lives.

We are still facing challenges in our community. Some of our high school students act purposefully to become suspended from school as they wish to be with their friends. We also become very frustrated with community members who create trouble, but are not within the jurisdiction of the Commission. Our people view the Commission as having proved its success in the community; they trust us and feel these trouble makers should also be brought before the Commission so their behaviour can be addressed.

We look forward to continuing our roles within the Commission. The experience we have gained has empowered our voice as Elders to sing loudly within our community. We have a vision that the next generation of Elders will find their voice too, and join us in song.

Coen Commissioners Peter Peter, May Kepple, Garry Port and Elaine Liddy



Coen Police Station



LOCAL COMMISSIONERS' YEAR IN REVIEW

Hope Vale Local Commissioners' report

Looking back on our year as Local Commissioners, we are happy with the positive changes that are being made in our community. We acknowledge that whilst we are on the road to improvement, there are bumps along this road that as Local Commissioners we have had to battle over the past few years, and we continue to do so. In Hope Vale we are seeing improvements in school attendance and infrastructure, and the severity of crimes committed in our community is decreasing. We are proud of our clients who have made steps to better their lives with our guidance and assistance. We understand that the fruits of our work are not seen immediately, but we are starting to see some great improvements in our clients and in our community.

Our school at Hope Vale has seen some great improvements this year. We have supported parents with controlling the behaviour of their children, and in doing so we have engaged with the school when needed. We commend our principal for his ongoing professionalism and his cooperation with us in getting our youth back on track. He and his team have afforded us their time for meetings to coordinate a collaborative approach towards school attendance. Some days we have experienced 94 percent attendance which is great news for our community. Both Commissioner Glasgow and Deputy Commissioner Curtin have assisted us in encouraging and congratulating our clients where it has been appropriate. We are proud to have been asked to be the "Adopt-a-Class" agency in 2014 for years 5, 6 and 7. This is the second year we have supported some of these students and we are enthused to see the action they are taking in the classroom. We have greatly enjoyed our participation in their education, and we look forward to offering our continued support into the future.

We have found that one of our greatest challenges this year has been improving school attendance and enrolment for high school children who have become disengaged from school. We have had a number of our high school children re-engaged through the Cooktown State High School Quarantine Bay Hub, however, there are still a number of students who have been excluded from Cooktown State High School, and we are yet to re-engage them. There have been some ongoing discussions with the Catholic Diocese of Cairns through Brother Paul Hough and his team, who we are confident will be able to assist with this issue through the Special Assistance School to be introduced to Cooktown in 2015. We would also like to acknowledge the good work that our local Parents and Community Engagement Coordinator is doing in regard to our high school students.



LOCAL COMMISSIONERS' YEAR IN REVIEW



During our Local Commissioner Development Week this year we visited Djarragun Enterprises, Mookai Rosie and Red Cross. We had an opportunity to discuss matters of concern with the Department of Housing and Public Works, the Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services, Youth Justice – Department of Justice and Attorney-General, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Service, Cairns Regional Domestic Violence Service and the Queensland Police Service. We found this development week very beneficial to our roles, and in particular being able to speak to the service providers about the issues we are facing in our community. We were very proud to also host our colleague Local Commissioners along with some Commission staff in our very own community as part of this year's development week. As Local Commissioners we were very proud of what our community was able to showcase to our guests, and it gave us a chance to reflect on how far our community has progressed since 2008 when we began our work in Hope Vale. Our guests were able to view first-hand a class in our CYAAA Hope Vale Campus where students are learning the Guugu Yimidhurr language. The class is being taught by one of our own local teachers.

Looking forward we would like to engage further with our service providers as we believe these relationships are crucial to the improvement in our clients. We see new opportunities on the horizon specifically around improving wellbeing through the establishment of the new Cape York Family Centre.

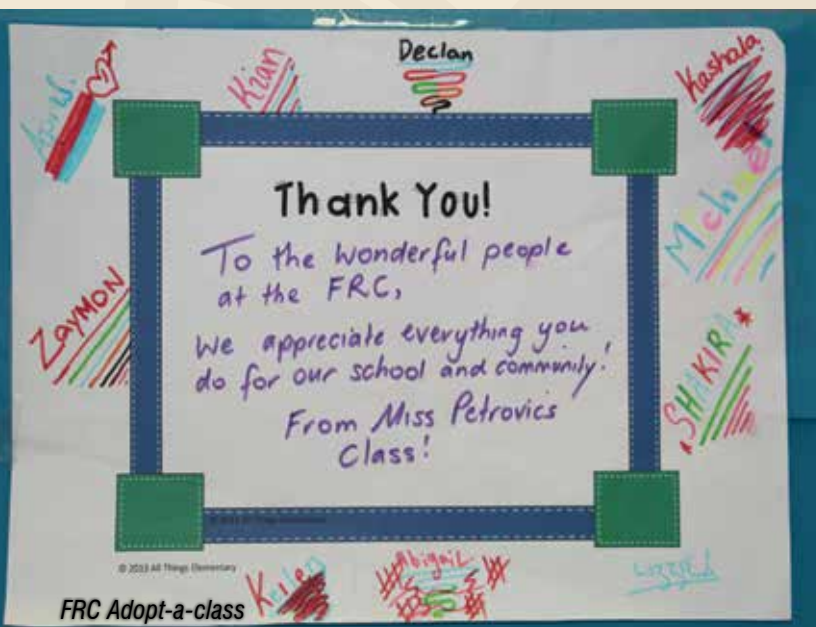
As we look back on our year we see that although we have come a long way, the road is long and there is still a trek ahead for us. Our continued support from our service providers is integral to the work we do and we look forward to an improvement in the service provision given to our clients through supporting them. We will continue taking steps to ensure our community knows we will give them a helping hand, but ultimately the future is in their hands and they need to take hold of it. Our passion for our community has fueled our desire to see continued changes in our people. We believe we will see these changes through linking with our community and the services around us. We are united as one in our journey representing Ngurraar and Waandaar.

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Hope Vale Commissioners Brian Cobus, Victor Gibson, Doreen Hart, Ivan Deemal and Erica Deeral





LOCAL COMMISSIONERS' YEAR IN REVIEW

Mossman Gorge Local Commissioners' report

Over the past year we have found ourselves playing with fire. We know that at times there is still heat in the community, and we have tried to cool it down. The fire has been fueled this past year from internal influences which are close, and also from external influences which are far and wide. These sparks have been truly challenging for us, and we have found ourselves pushing to dampen them. Thankfully at the beginning of 2014 we were granted a new stick, 90 percent income management. We have started to use this stick to gain the attention of our clients who are failing to engage with us at conference. We have found that by gaining their attention we have been able to communicate to these clients the requirement for them to satisfy their obligations under their case plans. Only with their compliance can they have a reduction in their income management percentage. Unfortunately the far and wide external influences are unable to be put out by this bigger stick, and they continue to cause problems for us

One of the external challenges in the past 12 months has come from individuals outside of our community who are engaging with our community and causing behaviours that we, as Local Commissioners, call the "old norm". We have needed the support and assistance from all community members to influence

***We need to
approach the future
hand in hand***

these non-community members and visiting individuals about our "new norms"; what we now consider is acceptable behaviour in our community. Out of this challenge we have seen some positive change in our young teenagers. Having been young before, we can see that the youth of today are approaching these situations differently. Some of them are coming to the Elders of the community and seeking advice on how to best approach fights

and arguments that arise. They are also voicing some expectations to others of what they consider is the right thing to do for the whole community.

Another challenge we faced at the beginning of 2014 was returning to conference after the Christmas break. We found it was a very tense time with many issues and conflicts to deal with. Mediation was organised through service providers in community with our assistance.

We have found the greatest challenge for the community throughout the past year has been the use of social media. This new way of communicating through electronic devices has added much fuel to the fire. This is one "new norm" that we'd like to shape and revert back to our "old norm". Our "old norm" was talking to each



LOCAL COMMISSIONERS' YEAR IN REVIEW



other face-to-face and one-on-one. We know though that we cannot be rid of this “new norm” so we have taken to educating our community about a safe way of using social media. We have also sought to influence the service providers to educate the young ones about social media through their group work.

Maintaining a strong mind frame of endurance and commitment has truly been our success with overcoming these issues. Having the endurance to be committed to challenges coming in all shapes and forms, from within and outside of the community, has continued to inspire us to make our community a more peaceful place.

Our relationship with stakeholders has had its ups and downs, however, overall there have been improvements. Mossman police have been working very well alongside the community when addressing social issues.

As this year draws to an end we ask ourselves, as Local Commissioners, what opportunities have we created for our community and for ourselves. As a group of Local Commissioners we have continued to develop a strong bond with each other. We have supported each other to take a step further in bettering ourselves. For our community we have encouraged them to walk alongside us in seeking to improve the situation for themselves and their families. We have now embraced the opportunity, and more importantly the responsibility, of conferencing in our community as three Local Commissioners. Although we were nervous about this change at the start, we have found that with change comes the opportunity to grow, to learn and to be a role model to our fellow community members. We are taking ownership of this opportunity to be strong Local Commissioners and leaders for our community. We have also, in this process of grabbing opportunities, voiced to our community that we need more strong leaders. We need them to stand alongside us, not only as new Local Commissioners, but as every day role models for the community. We need to approach the future hand in hand, to use all of our influence and endurance as a community to make positive changes for the future.

Mossman Gorge Commissioners Loretta Spratt, Karen Gibson and Karen Shuan

The Governor-General with Mossman Gorge Commissioner Karen Gibson, Mossman Gorge Local Coordinator Sandra Rye, Mossman Gorge Commissioner Loretta Spratt and Mossman Gorge Commissioner Karen Shuan at a community lunch at the Mossman Gorge Centre (14 May 2014). Photograph supplied by Lovegreen Photogtaphy





REGISTRAR'S YEAR IN REVIEW

From the desk of the Registrar

This year marks the sixth year of operation in the four welfare reform communities of Aurukun, Coen, Hope Vale and Mossman Gorge.

Local Commissioner numbers have remained stable with the exception being the welcome addition of Local Commissioner Thomas Toikalkin to Aurukun. The Commissioners have demonstrated a commitment and resilience in their leadership toward positive change. Communities report being safer places to live where responsibility for behaviour is being returned to individuals rather than viewed as a community issue.

Staffing within the Cairns registry and each regional office has also remained stable. The retention rate experienced by the Commission can be attributed to recruiting practices which are not solely aimed at seeking the right skill set, but also the right cultural fit with a view to succession planning, and reflects in no small way the dedication displayed by all Commission employees in achieving the goals of welfare reform.

The Commission farewelled its long serving Executive Officer (Management), Alison Kollmorgen, who was integral to the Commission's financial management and operations. She departed to Brisbane to accompany her partner in his employment, and continues to play a role in welfare reform within the Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Multicultural Affairs. Mitchell Holmes subsequently joined the Commission as Executive Officer (Management) and has made an immediate impact in his role.

The Commission has experienced a significant workload this financial year with regular conferencing in each of the four communities. A total of 3,392 notices within jurisdiction were received which resulted in 1,794 conferences held, 435 referrals to service providers and 13.98 percent of clients on case plans as at 30 June 2014. A total of 304 Conditional Income Management orders were issued throughout the same period.

Following an independent evaluation of the CYWR trial released in 2012, the Institute sought an increase to the maximum rate of income management from the existing 75 percent to 90 percent. The increase was subsequently legislated to take effect from January 2014. The introduction of 90 percent income management has given Commissioners an additional tool to encourage those members of the communities who show significant resistance to measures already placed upon them to comply with orders. Commissioners have adopted the increased level of income management and introduced it into their conferencing processes, whilst giving due consideration to the circumstances of each individual. The Commission will monitor the performance of those clients on the increased income management level to determine what outcomes are achieved.

Since the Commission's establishment in 2008 it has adopted a continuous improvement strategy in regard to its operations. As part of this strategy the Commission undertakes progressive reviews of its processes and policies to ensure that it provides a transparent, effective, efficient, healthy and safe working environment. A review of the forms used within the Commission and the Customer Relationship Management (CRM) database was conducted in late 2013 in order to comply with legislative changes and to streamline the Commission's method of operations. The Commission will continue to progressively review and identify areas for operational improvements into the future.

REGISTRAR'S YEAR IN REVIEW



During the latter half of 2013 the Commission continued its partnership with Queensland Corrective Services (QCS) to provide the Ending Family Violence (EFV) program to the CYWR communities. The Commission conducted the delivery of the EFV program utilising its own appropriately trained staff currently servicing the communities to deliver the curriculum. Eight programs were delivered within the four communities. Although attendance rates varied, the Commission considers the delivery of the program a success in that there was a notable increase in the number of attendees successfully completing the program.

At the direction of the Commissioner, the Commission has initiated an Education and Information Delivery Strategy in order to better educate service providers and government agencies on the purpose and operations of the Commission. The strategy includes providing agencies with an online tool for their employees to access a comprehensive induction before commencing work in a welfare reform community. This custom built tool will optimise the delivery of consistent and appropriate training. It is vital that both government and non-government employees have an understanding and appreciation of the Commission - what it does, and just as importantly, what it does not do. A presentation has been developed to provide onsite information sessions and has been tailored to suit partner agencies, other interested groups and community members.

In November 2013 the Queensland Parliamentary Health and Community Services Committee, chaired by the Honourable Trevor Ruthenberg MP, Member for Kallangur, visited Cairns, Aurukun and Mossman Gorge to witness firsthand the role the Commission plays in the communities, and in particular the work its Local Commissioners perform, and the conditions under which they perform it. The Parliamentary Committee then convened in Cairns to hear submissions in relation to the Commission.

Our Local Commissioners are regularly consulted by a wide variety of high profile people and groups including government Ministers and departmental directors, visiting dignitaries, local advisory groups and many other parties interested in the welfare reform initiatives. A number of visitors were welcomed to the Cairns Registry during the year. Most were parties involved in, or interested in, Indigenous welfare reform who shared their own experiences, and more importantly wished to take away the lessons learned by the Commission over the past six years. Visitors included: the Honourable Nigel Scullion, Senator for the Northern Territory and Minister for Indigenous Affairs; the Honourable Johan (John) Wessel Elferink Northern Territory Attorney-General and Minister for Justice, Minister for Correctional Services, Minister for Children and Families and Minister for Public Employment; Mr Jeremy Moore, President of the Guardianship Board of South Australia; Mr Colin McDonald Q.C., Former Chairman of Royal Darwin Hospital Board and Top End Health Council; Mr Edward Fraser, Central Desert Regional Council and Board Member of the Central Australia Health Network; and Mr Kym Davies, Project Manager, Family Responsibilities Project, Department of Attorney General & Justice, Northern Territory Government.

His Excellency Mr Paul Madden CMG, British High Commissioner to Australia visited Hope Vale in August 2013 and enjoyed lunch with the Local Commissioners.



REGISTRAR'S YEAR IN REVIEW

In May 2014 His Excellency General the Honourable Sir Peter Cosgrove, Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia and Her Excellency Lady Cosgrove visited Mossman Gorge and met with Local Commissioners Karen Gibson, Loretta Spratt and Karen Shuan, as well as Local Coordinator Sandra Rye. The Governor-General displayed a genuine interest in welfare reform and the work of our Local Commissioners in restoring local authority.

The Commission values the strong working relationships that it has with partner agencies. There are many who support the work of the Commission and their ongoing professional assistance and collaboration is most welcome. I acknowledge the support provided by our tripartite partners in the Australian and Queensland Governments and the Institute. Without their valued advice and guidance the Commission would not have achieved the high level of recognition it has.

I continue to appreciate the respect that the Local Commissioners have shown me and the staff of the Commission. The registry staff have again worked tirelessly to ensure that the goals of the Commission and welfare reform are being met. They have unselfishly supported the good work that the Local Coordinators perform on a daily basis in communities. The Commission has been able to recruit and retain where necessary quality people who display a genuine passion towards ensuring that the lives of others are being made better. I thank them all for their support.

Deputy Commissioner Rod Curtin's continued enthusiasm for welfare reform has been appreciated, whilst Commissioner David Glasgow, as always, has led by example and I thank him for his leadership and encouragement. I look forward to ensuring that the good work of the Commission continues into the future.

Rob White

Registrar



LOCAL COMMISSIONER DEVELOPMENT WEEK



Development week

Every year the Commission facilitates a Local Commissioner Development Week in Cairns where the Commissioners participate in various activities with Commission staff. The agenda is nominated and approved by the Commissioners, and they and attending staff are provided with a combination of training and networking activities including but not limited to:

- specific training in areas identified and requested by the Local Commissioners
- meetings with senior officers of government departments and agencies who provide service delivery in their communities followed by question and answer sessions
- opportunities to network with organisations who provide social services
- updates on Commission procedures and processes
- presentations from physical and mental health professionals
- participation in workshops to address common issues, review strategies and source solutions.



Coen Local Coordinator Amy Barden, Aurukun Commissioner Dorothy Pootchemunka and Mossman Gorge Local Coordinator Sandi Rye

The 2014 development week commenced on 5 May 2014 with a welcome from Commissioner Glasgow. In his welcome Commissioner Glasgow acknowledged the increased respect shown to the Local Commissioners within and outside of their communities which has enhanced Indigenous authority in the CYWR communities. He thanked them for the dedication they had each shown during the year and encouraged them as a group to consider future planning incorporating sensible, practical and economically viable initiatives. Commissioner Glasgow particularly asked each Local Commissioner present to consider whether there was anything within the framework of the FRC Act that they would like to see altered to create greater efficiencies, and asked that each consider how they may be able to make their community members more responsive to change. Commissioner Glasgow's welcome, asking all to consider the future and in what direction they would like the Commission to evolve, set the theme for the 2014 development week.

Presentations

Several government departments joined with the Local Commissioners during the week to discuss issues relevant to the CYWR communities. The Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services presented an outline of the department's role in ensuring the safety and protection of vulnerable children. The protocols and processes followed when intervention occurs with Indigenous children were outlined, together with the department's commitment to ensuring that Indigenous children are cared for in culturally appropriate ways when in care. A question and answer session followed with the Local Commissioners seeking clarification on issues of access to safety houses, reunification processes and whether the Commission could work collaboratively with Child Safety officers in their conferencing



LOCAL COMMISSIONER DEVELOPMENT WEEK

processes to provide a more holistic community driven approach. The Local Commissioners stressed the need for continuously engaging at the local level with the community to focus on proactive preventative strategies.

Representatives from the Mental Health and Alcohol Tobacco and Other Drugs Service (ATODS) and the Cape York Hospital and Health Service reflected with the Commissioners on the extent of cannabis use in the Cape communities and the relationship between mental health and the use of cannabis. Local Commissioners asked what range of resources they could access to increase community awareness of the damaging effects of cannabis and other drugs, and how they could scale up early detection and intervention. The possibility of collaborating with ATODS to provide training in motivational interviewing techniques would enable the Local Commissioners to target those people who wish to stop their drug use. The importance of redefining the lines in service provision and the need to use innovative approaches in service delivery was acknowledged in order to initiate preventative rather than reactive programs.

A representative from Centrelink together with three of the Centrelink Remote Service Team attended the conference to conduct a question and answer session with Commissioners based upon the BasicsCard, ABSTUDY and remote visiting. Centrelink processes and the impact of those processes on community members who are income managed or on ABSTUDY, together with the impact of funeral attendance on education were deliberated on during the discussions.

Concluding day one of the development week was a comprehensive consultation conducted between those attending the development week and delegates from Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Multicultural Affairs (DATSIMA), the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet and the Institute. A self-evaluation of welfare reform and the Commission was undertaken. Questions raised for discussion were: what have the benefits been for the CYWR communities; what has worked; what has not worked; and where do we go from here. The need to develop a vision for the future was identified with an acknowledgement that there are now many people looking to the Commission for new initiatives. The general consensus of those present at the workshop was that the CYWR trial had resulted in:

- safer communities
- improved educational opportunities and
- healthier children
- increased pride in the communities with positive changes being visually evident.
- improved school attendance

On day two of the development week Fiona Jose, Chief Executive Officer of the Institute, visited to acquaint the Local Commissioners on the Empowered Communities project. Empowered Communities is a joint project between Indigenous leaders from eight regions across Australia, the Australian Government, State Governments and Jawun Indigenous Corporate Partnerships. The project seeks to draft a “customised and coordinated” governance model for the regions to better enable local Indigenous leadership. There has historically been a large number of diverse programs and agencies that drive initiatives



Bryce Coxall FRC, Fiona Jose CEO the Institute, Jo Dennert Parenting Team Leader Cape York Partnerships and Mark Dennert Operations Manager Cape York Partnerships

LOCAL COMMISSIONER DEVELOPMENT WEEK



in Indigenous communities across Australia and Empowered Communities aims to not only coordinate how these initiatives are implemented, but also to set government policy in dealing with Indigenous affairs and to drive policy informed by Indigenous leaders. Fiona Jose informed the Local Commissioners that the FRC is considered “the greatest success and the highest watermark” of the CYWR trial.

Across the four CYWR communities, the Local Commissioners have a common concern in regard to juvenile crime. Of

particular interest to the Local Commissioners, therefore, was a meeting with Detective Senior Sergeant Glen Horan, His Honour Magistrate Trevor Black and senior staff of the Remote Youth Justice Service Centre. Police officers are working with Child Safety in an endeavour to place juveniles into safe environments, re-engage them with education and keep them away from drugs and violence. Senior Sergeant Horan informed those present on the general background of youth who become involved in crime. One commonality



Mr Gordon Dean, Raymond Lennox Hope Vale Local Coordinator and His Honour Trevor Magistrate Black

in these youth is that they all have a significant past history, with contact already made with the Queensland Police Service (QPS) and Child Safety. This contact with the authorities, violence in the family home and a lack of parental supervision desensitises them to violence. Other commonalities are substance abuse, disengagement from education and negative peer association. Of primary importance to the QPS in dealing successfully with juvenile crime is getting families on-board to take responsibility for the actions of their children.

Magistrate Black has been a Magistrate in North Queensland since 1980, mostly in Indigenous communities. Magistrate Black informed the Local Commissioners that Magistrates now have improved engagement with Indigenous communities and a better understanding of what drives people to offend. He spoke of how sentencing options are exercised for juveniles and what factors are taken into account. Unfortunately once a juvenile has been sentenced to detention, it is easier for them to return to detention. The Commissioners were advised that it is vitally important that Elders engage with the Courts to get a better understanding of the justice system and that history has shown that an efficiently functioning community justice group is the most effective strategy to tackle crime.

The Remote Youth Justice Service Centre offers programs for young people in contact with the youth justice system. The programs make young offenders responsible for their actions and work to reintegrate them into their families and the community. They conduct community conferencing which is on a referral system from the QPS. Of particular interest to the Local Commissioners was the possibility of training to perform mediation and community conferencing on behalf of Youth Justice. The Commissioners advised that very often time is of the essence in mediation and/or conferencing; they have an in-depth knowledge of their communities and the families who live in their communities; and would be well placed to meet the challenge.



LOCAL COMMISSIONER DEVELOPMENT WEEK

Conference delegates next listened to a presentation by Mike Fordham and Anne-Marie Roberts from the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, Schools Youth and Evidence Division, Remote Attendance Strategies Taskforce. The presentation outlined the Australian Government's Remote Schools Attendance Strategy which is aimed at getting more Indigenous children in remote areas back to school from the start of term 1 2014. The strategy commenced in 40 remote communities in the Northern Territory, Queensland, New South Wales, South Australia and Western Australia. It now operates in 73 schools in 69 communities where school attendance has been low, in some instances as low as 40 percent. Local Commissioners identified strongly with the strategy which was largely influenced by the operations of the Commission.

The Remote School Attendance Strategy is part of a range of strategies supported by the Australian Government to improve school attendance. The Council of Australian Governments which includes all states and territories has agreed a new school attendance Closing the Gap target. The new target is to close the gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous school attendance in five years. COAG agreed that each state and territory is to monitor Indigenous students' attendance rates in schools where they are below 80 percent and develop strategies to improve attendance.

Following presentations from the Department of Housing and Public Works, and the Cairns Regional Domestic Violence Service, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Service (ATSILS) addressed the conference on estate, debt, child safety, family law and domestic violence issues.

After meeting with the above government agencies and service providers the Local Commissioners agreed that with the information provided and comprehensive discussions undertaken, not only were they returning to their communities with a greater understanding of service provision and service provider capability, but the week had also provided them with the opportunity to strengthen their working relationships.

Networking

Throughout the development week Local Commissioners and staff visited various community organisations including Red Cross, Djarragun Enterprises and Mookai Rosie Bi-Bayan. Each of these organisations provides Indigenous health and support services to the Cape communities.



Cairns Wellbeing Centre

Red Cross has been providing services to the Indigenous communities for 60 years and has recently opened their new Wellbeing Centre.

The centre provides accommodation to clients utilising medical services in Cairns including oncology and renal services.

Ninety-six percent of the people utilising the new Wellbeing Centre are Indigenous people from the Cape, Torres Straits and remote western areas. Due to the high rate of Indigenous clientele, the centre was traditionally blessed to make clients feel safe and comfortable. A holistic

LOCAL COMMISSIONER DEVELOPMENT WEEK



engagement of the client's health needs is provided including the provision of recreational and cultural activities. Community consultation informed the final building structure and communal facilities.

Mookai Rosie By-Bayan has been operating for over 30 years and provides an accommodation base for women travelling to Cairns primarily for child maternal health and pregnancy support. Their function is to increase health and wellbeing whilst providing culturally appropriate accommodation. Health workers offer health education including breastfeeding and nutrition, counselling and playgroup coordination. The centre also offers respite for mothers, their children and female relatives.

Djarragun Enterprises links Indigenous male students from Far North Queensland and the Torres Straits with employment opportunities. Pastoral support is offered together with personal development, financial guidance and social and professional mentoring.

A tour of each of the above facilities was conducted and the Local Commissioners engaged in discussions with senior staff to identify common issues, seek solutions and familiarise themselves with the support offered outside of their communities.

Of special significance during the development week was a day trip to Hope Vale. Local Commissioners and Commission staff were hosted by the Hope Vale Local Commissioners and received a traditional welcome upon arrival from traditional owner and Elder Mr Herman Bambie. Shirley Costello, a respected local community member, then welcomed the special guests with a history of the Hope Vale community. Shirley Costello is a Thiithaarr-warra woman from the Guugu Yimithirr tribe, and is committed to assisting local people to learn, and to keep the local Guugu Yimithirr history and language alive. Visitors were given a guided tour of the Hope Vale FRC office, business precinct, Council, St John's Lutheran Church, CYAAA (where direct instruction classes were observed), Multi-Purpose Centre and Hope Vale Arts and Cultural Centre. The children of Hope Vale then performed a traditional dance and the FRC 'Adopt-a-class' thanked the visitors with letters of appreciation and showed examples of their school work.

The Hope Vale Banana Farm was visited next where farm workers met with the Commission and advised that unfortunately most of them had lost their jobs due to the destruction caused by Cyclone Ita. All displayed a resilience to the work of Mother Nature and discussed what was required to re-establish the farm to its previous level of production. The Hope Vale community is strongly committed to their own economic development and are shouldering the responsibility to implement a quick recovery for the farm in order to provide certainty for its workers and the community.



Devastation caused by Cyclone Ita to the Hope Vale Banana Farm



LOCAL COMMISSIONER DEVELOPMENT WEEK

Outcomes

The Local Commissioners from each community in turn addressed the delegates during the week and summarised the outcomes from their communities, reviewing their successes and failures, weaknesses and strengths. Together they identified current challenges, celebrated their successes and determined future priorities. As a starting point the Commissioners considered what would happen if the CYWR trial ended.

In summary the Commissioners would like more responsibility. They have the strength to expand on their skills and would like to further assist the community in other capacities.

Commissioners expressed concern that visitors can enter community and cause disturbances, yet cannot be dealt with as they do not fall within the Commission's jurisdiction. In order to close what they view as a gap in reforming behaviour they would like to see the FRC Act amended to delete the requirement of three months residency in determining jurisdiction. They would like the Commission to have jurisdiction over any welfare recipient as long as they live in a house in the community. In essence all people in community should adopt the community's values.

Mental health issues in young people were of grave concern, and assistance for young people is still very lacking and much needed, particularly for those engaged in drug and alcohol abuse and for those that have suffered prolonged domestic violence.

Aurukun, Coen, Hope Vale and Mossman Gorge Commissioners all expressed the view that their communities were "starting to turn", but they need an incentive to carry the momentum of change, be that training, apprenticeships or employment. New initiatives are required to increase economic growth and sustainability and a forum is needed to hear, consider and act upon the initiatives.

There are real concerns for juvenile offending in the communities, and a perception of a loss of control. Despite the numerous programs and strategies in place by various government departments and agencies to deal with juvenile crime, crime is continuing and escalating both in costs to the community in financial terms and in costs to the community in social terms. The Commissioners would like to exercise more influence over these problem youth, and over the parents/carers who cannot, or will not, control their children.

Although there is a general consensus that the Commission has achieved in a short timeframe visible improvements in the CYWR communities, the Commission must move forward and find new ground upon which to build social and economic stability.



Coen Commissioners Elaine Liddy and May Kepple

OUR PERFORMANCE — REVIEW OF OPERATIONS



Operational highlights

The Commission has implemented process improvements during the last 12 months, the success of which can largely be attributed to the Local Commissioners. Section 50A of the Act paved the way for the Commission to conduct conferences, in certain circumstances, constituted by three Local Commissioners. The Local Commissioners set the focus for the 2013-14 financial year by embracing this amendment, displaying their readiness and confidence in sitting independently. The Cairns registry has worked closely with the Local Commissioners to re-design conference documentation, ensuring that conferences undertaken independently by the Local Commissioners are not only resourced with streamlined document processes that comply with the new legislative requirements, but are also recorded via improved data collection and integrity processes to inform on the effects of the amendment. The Local Coordinators have reported that conferences conducted by three Local Commissioners have improved the quality and depth of communication with clients. By sitting independently, the Local Commissioners have directly role modelled the behaviour they are seeking in their clients – the acceptance of responsibility and self-empowerment.

School attendance rate for 2008-2014 term 2

School attendance data	Aurukun community ¹	Aurukun community primary	Aurukun community secondary ²	Coen ³	Hope Vale	Mossman Gorge community ^{3,4}
Prior methodology ⁵						
Term 2 2008	37.9%	44.0%	19.8%	96.8%	87.6%	60.9%
Term 2 2009	63.2%	68.8%	40.3%	93.6%	86.9%	81.6%
Term 2 2010	57.7%	64.7%	32.7%	92.2%	83.5%	79.1%
Term 2 2011	70.1%	73.2%	51.5%	86.6%	78.6%	79.5%
Term 2 2012	60.0%	61.5%	17.4%	88.5%	78.8%	74.7%
New methodology						
Revised term 2 2012	59.8%	61.3%	15.6%	87.9%	77.3%	70.0%
Term 2 2013		63.4%	-	89.3%	70.2%	84.0%
Term 2 2014	60.9%	64.7%	23.2%	92.6%	77.6%	64.0%

1. Aurukun community data prior to 2013 includes primary and secondary students attending the Aurukun Campus of CYAAA (PY-12). From Term 1 2013, Aurukun community data includes primary students attending the Aurukun Campus of CYAAA (PY-07) and secondary students attending Western Cape College (WCC) - Aurukun Secondary Campus.

2. Effective from 2013 Aurukun secondary campus schooling transitioned to the Alternative Secondary Pathway (ASP) program facilitated by WCC. Term 2 2013 attendance rate for WCC – Aurukun Secondary Campus has been withdrawn from the data table because administrative processes used at the school during that period resulted in attendance rates that were not comparable over time, or with other schools. The records collected from term 2 indicate an attendance rate of 92.5 percent. Using this data may result in invalid interpretations of the student attendance at this campus.

3. Caution should be used when examining the percentage changes in attendance for both Coen and the Mossman Gorge community. Both these have relatively small numbers of students and a small numerical change can result in a large percentage difference in the overall attendance figures.

4. Mossman Gorge community attendance includes attendance for school-identified students from Mossman State School and Mossman State High School.



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5. The transition of Queensland schools to the 'OneSchool' IT system has resulted in a variation in the calculation of student attendance. Effective from January 2013 statistics are being calculated on the attendance history of each student on each day, irrespective of enrolment history. Students with high mobility will now be accurately reflected in student attendance reporting. DETE advise that the student attendance series based on the new methodology is not directly comparable to the prior methodology.

Performance statement

The Commission has updated its performance measures to reflect the assigned work of the Commission. These performance measures are used to identify workload and operating results.

Performance measures	2012-2013 actual result	2013-2014 target estimate	2013-2014 actual result
Number of clients subject to agency notices	847	800	860
Number of clients who are on orders to attend support services	166	135	226
Number of client service referrals	339	225	435
Number of clients subject to Conditional Income Management (CIM)	268	255	239

Discontinued measures

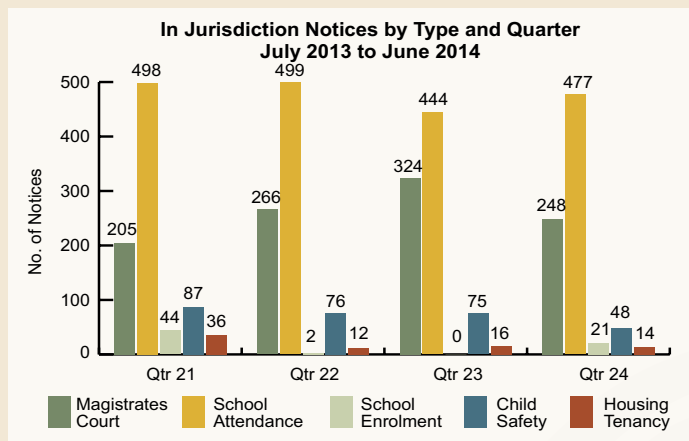
Performance measures included in the 2013-14 Service Delivery Statements that have been discontinued are reported in the following table. These measures were discontinued from the Service Delivery Statements because they do not demonstrate the effectiveness or efficiency of services.

Performance measures	2012-2013 actual result	2013-2014 target estimate	2013-2014 actual result
Number of agency notices received	4,778	4,475	4,246
Number of child safety and welfare notices received	178	215	311
Number of school attendance notices received	2,192	1,980	2,061
Number of school enrolment notices received	0	0	88
Number of housing tenancy notices received	129	210	79
Number of Magistrates Court notices received	2,279	2,070	1,707
Number of notices of conference issued	1,686	1,490	1,794
Number of clients with conference outcomes recommending no further action	240	195	243

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Notifications and conferences by community



**Graph 1: In jurisdiction notices by type and quarter
1 July 2013 to 30 June 2014.**

From 1 July 2013 to 30 June 2014, the Commission received a total of 4,246 agency notices of which 3392 were in jurisdiction, comprising:

- 1043 Magistrates Court notices
- 1918 School Attendance notices
- 67 School Enrolment notices
- 286 Child Safety and Welfare notices
- 78 Housing Tenancy notices

854 notices were not within jurisdiction, comprising:

- 664 Magistrates Court notices
- 143 School Attendance notices
- 21 School Enrolment notices
- 25 Child Safety and Welfare notices
- 1 Housing Tenancy notices

1794 conferences were held in the period.

Aurukun

Aurukun accounted for 1891 notices, 56 percent of the total notices that were in jurisdiction, comprising:

- 625 Magistrates Court notices
- 1080 School Attendance notices
- 33 School Enrolment notices
- 113 Child Safety and Welfare notices
- 40 Housing Tenancy notices

118 Magistrates Court notices, 50 School Attendance notices, 4 School Enrolment notices and 4 Child Safety and Welfare notices were processed as not within jurisdiction.

923 conferences were held in Aurukun.

Coen

Coen accounted for 129 notices, 4 percent of the total notices that were in jurisdiction, comprising:

- 34 Magistrates Court notices
- 62 School Attendance notices
- 6 School Enrolment notices
- 21 Child Safety and Welfare notices
- 6 Housing Tenancy notices

6 Magistrates Court notices, 19 School Attendance notices, 3 School Enrolment notices and 1 Child Safety and Welfare notice were processed as not within jurisdiction.

102 conferences were held in Coen.

Hope Vale

Hope Vale accounted for 1128 notices, 33 percent of the total notices that were in jurisdiction, comprising:

- 296 Magistrates Court notices
- 668 School Attendance notices
- 24 School Enrolment notices
- 128 Child Safety and Welfare notices
- 12 Housing Tenancy notices

30 Magistrates Court notices, 64 School Attendance notices, 14 School Enrolment notices, 12 Child Safety and Welfare notices and 1 Housing and Tenancy notice were processed as not within jurisdiction.

514 conferences were held in Hope Vale.

Mossman Gorge

Mossman Gorge accounts for 244 notices, 7 percent of the total notices that were in jurisdiction, comprising:

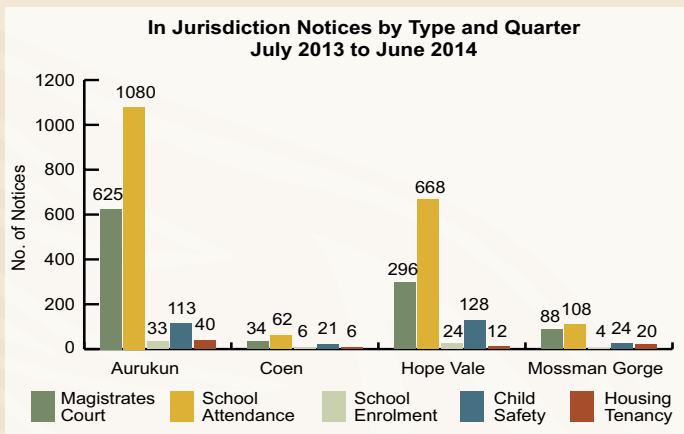
- 88 Magistrates Court notices
- 108 School Attendance notices
- 4 School Enrolment notices
- 24 Child Safety and Welfare notices
- 20 Housing Tenancy notices

510 Magistrates Court notices, 10 School Attendance notices and 8 Child Safety and Welfare notices were processed as not within jurisdiction.

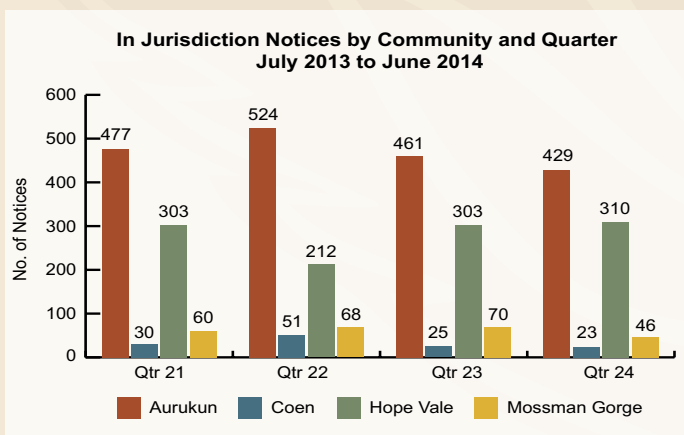
255 conferences were held in Mossman Gorge.



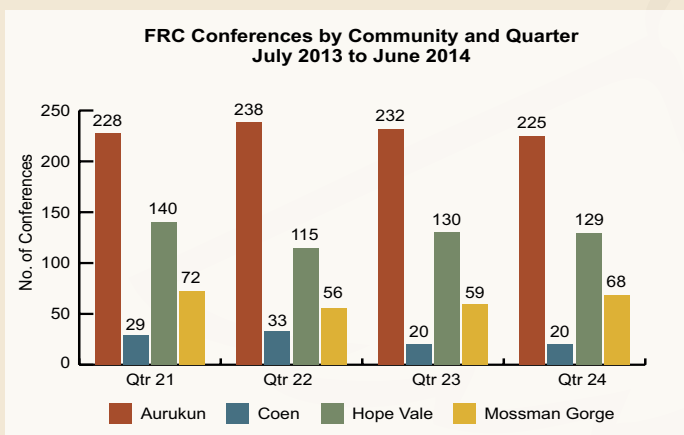
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**Graph 2: In jurisdiction notices by type and community
1 July 2013 to 30 June 2014.**

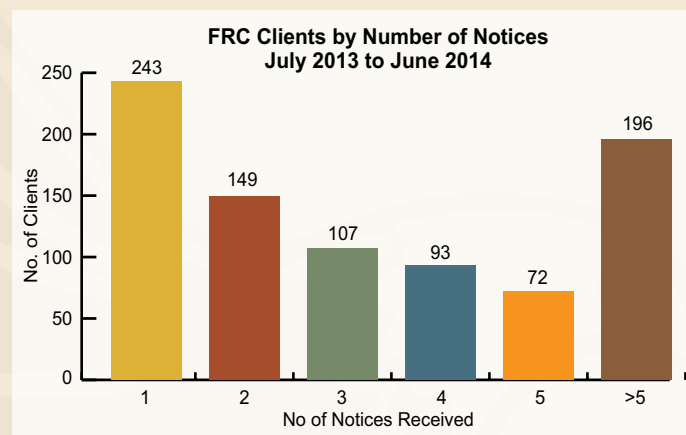


**Graph 3: In jurisdiction notices by community and quarter
1 July 2013 to 30 June 2014.**



**Graph 4: FRC conferences by community and quarter
1 July 2013 to 30 June 2014.**

In its sixth year of operation the Commission continues to develop a comprehensive client knowledge base from which the Commission manages, refers, reviews and provides ongoing support and assistance. From 1 July 2013 to 30 June 2014, 22.8 percent of the Commission’s clients received more than five notices. In past annual reports this statistic has been reported as a reflection of clients with multiple school absences for one child, or multiple Magistrates Court notices relating to one incident. This year we have also seen multiple child safety notices received for one incident, reflecting an enhanced understanding of the support child safety can offer and an increase in community members and services reporting unsafe behaviours.



**Graph 5: FRC clients by number of notices
1 July 2013 to 30 June 2014.**

Note: Counting rules are that an agency notice is counted on the basis of number of ‘clients’ on the notice. For example a Child Safety and Welfare notice relating to two parents is counted as two notices. Where multiple notices are received each notice is counted individually and each child’s absence is counted individually. For example, if three children from one family were absent on one day that is counted as three individual notices.

Whilst Aurukun accounts for 55.75 percent of the total number of within jurisdiction notices received, 57.11 per cent of Aurukun’s notices were related to school attendance. Eighty-five percent of the school attendance notices received were in relation to primary school aged children. Minimal notices were received in relation to secondary aged students in Aurukun due to the Aurukun Secondary Pathway model of short intense support programs.

Sixty-seven School Enrolment (SE) notices were received this year, relating to 47 children. This is the Commission’s first year of receiving SE notices, and the receipt of these notices has increased the Commission’s awareness of the gap in service accountability to these

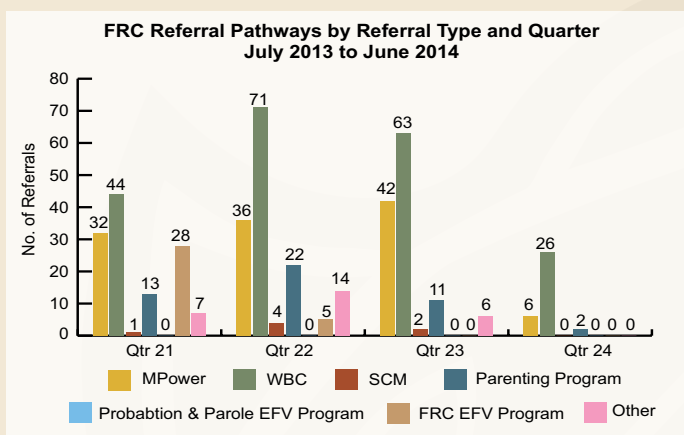
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high-end disengaged youth. This new target clientele for the Commission has influenced the Commissioners to advocate for alternative options for re-engaging these youth, and more importantly to advocate for more proactive programs to ensure that current primary aged students do not disengage from the education system, enabling them to reach higher education and employment opportunities.

Referrals

From 1 July 2013 to 30 June 2014, 435 referrals were made to service providers relating to 233 clients.



Graph 6: FRC referral pathways by referral type and quarter 1 July 2013 to 30 June 2014.

The Commission's referral options for the past year have included CYAAA SCM, WBC, MPower money management program, Queensland Health and the Parenting Program. As many of the Commission's clients have complex needs, it is often the case that there are multiple referrals on a case plan. More than 50 per cent of clients on case plans received more than one referral.

The Commission recognises that a lack of retention and continuity of skilled staff within the above mentioned services has continued to impede the quality of service delivery on the ground. Local Commissioners report that when services on the ground are delivered by skilled and consistent support staff, confidence in the quality of service delivery is enhanced and referrals increase as a result.

The WBCs have received between 38 to 49 percent of the referrals across the four communities over the past year. These referrals were for alcohol and substance misuse, anger management, domestic violence, grief counselling and general wellbeing counselling. Referrals have also been made to the WBCs in support of families with

disengaged youth, encouraging them to attend young women and young men's groups.

Within this reporting period the Local Commissioners have developed a family based solution to problems with school attendance. School attendance statistics are being utilised in conference to make parents/carers aware of the extent of their children's non-attendance, to monitor any improvements (or reductions) in attendance, and to seek a direct resolution at conference rather than make a referral. If the family based solution does not succeed, referrals are then made to encourage behaviour change.

Conditional Income Management

From 1 July 2013 to 30 June 2014, 304 CIM orders were issued to 239 clients. Effective from the 1 January 2014, the *Social Security (Administration) Act* was amended, increasing the maximum rate of income management from 75 percent to 90 percent.

Subsequent to the amendment there were 69 orders made in relation to 61 clients for 90 percent CIM orders, resulting from:

- 56 orders where the percentage increased from 75 to 90 percent
- 7 extension orders at 90 percent
- 3 new orders were made at 90 percent where the client was not currently on a CIM order but had been previously placed on a CIM order
- 3 new orders were made at 90 percent where the client had never been placed on a CIM order.

Six clients have had their 90 percent CIM orders revoked or altered from their initial order:

- 5 clients' 90 percent CIM orders revoked
- 1 client's 90 percent CIM order reduced from 90 to 75 percent.

The Commission can report that the application of 90 percent CIM orders has varied across the four communities. Aurukun has primarily utilised the new percentage to address school attendance, Mossman Gorge and Hope Vale have utilised the new percentage to gain the attention of clients who have continuously failed to appear for a conference, whilst Coen is yet to utilise the order.



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The Aurukun Commissioners have reported improved engagement with clients utilising the visual trigger of school attendance statistics, and are routinely sourcing and presenting attendance statistics at conference. Mossman Gorge and Hope Vale have reported a disparity in responses from their clients, some of whom have commenced engaging in conferencing, and some who continue to disengage.

Clients have communicated that it is easy to see the physical impacts of CIM on a family; children are clothed, provided with food and able to access educational opportunities. The Commissioners have noted that having MPower to support CIM clients has also resulted in the purchase of white goods and furniture for the family home. Since the commencement of the Commission, 77 community members have requested income management on a voluntary basis, including 1 client placed on a 90 percent VIM agreement in this financial year.

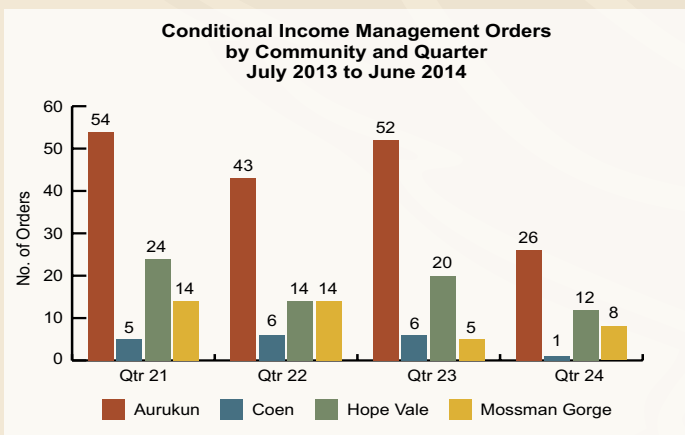
Mossman Gorge's fortnightly school case coordination meetings have continued this year with issues related to school attendance remaining the focus of the group. Due to consistent attendance by relevant stakeholders, strategic actions to address non-attendance have been developed.

Aurukun has created and implemented an integrated case management meeting model. The model has been designed with a graduated focus, the first being case coordinating mental health and community safety within the associated service delivery group.

Hope Vale has recently structured a multi-service meeting to address school attendance with a strong link to employment. The model is in the implementation phase, with strong and supportive attendance by service providers. The Commission will continue to support its development.

This year Coen has continued to maintain coordination of clients through a proactive Wellbeing Centre.

The Commission would like to report that the focus of each of the service models has been community driven. The Local Commissioners in each of the communities have engaged in the meetings and have ensured that the focus of the group has aligned with the focus of the community. The attendance of Local Commissioners has also ensured that discussions within the above mentioned meetings have provided the community with appropriately targeted service delivery initiatives.

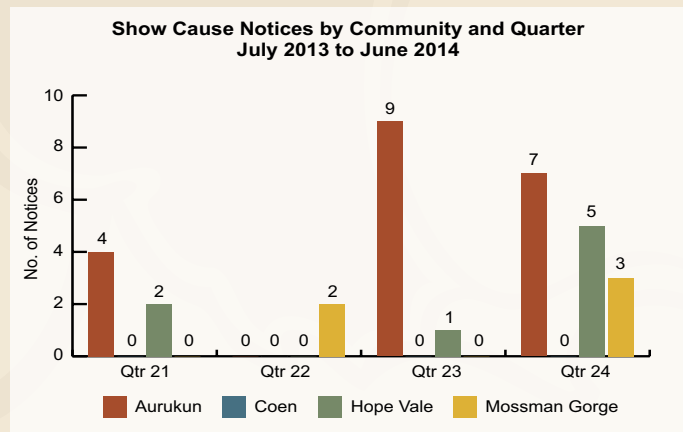


Graph 7: Conditional Income Management orders by community and quarter 1 July 2013 to 20 June 2014.

Case management

As at 30 June 2014, 219 clients were being case managed through active case plans. The Commission has continued to case manage clients by utilising a formal review process for clients on income management and other case plans. The Commission acknowledges that effective communication across service providers within a community is the key to ensuring clients are effectively engaged and case managed. As a consequence of this understanding the Commission has continued to support the development, implementation and enhancement of new and existing integrated case management meetings based in the communities.

Show Cause Notices



Graph 8: Show Cause Notices by community and quarter 1 July 2013 to 30 June 2014.

Show Cause recommendations continue to be assessed on a case by case basis by the Commission. This year there has been a marked increase in the number of show

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cause conferences undertaken. Local Commissioners have targeted non-complying clients in an effort to source solutions to improve their behaviour.

From 1 July 2013 to 30 June 2014, 33 Show Cause hearings were held. These matters resulted in:

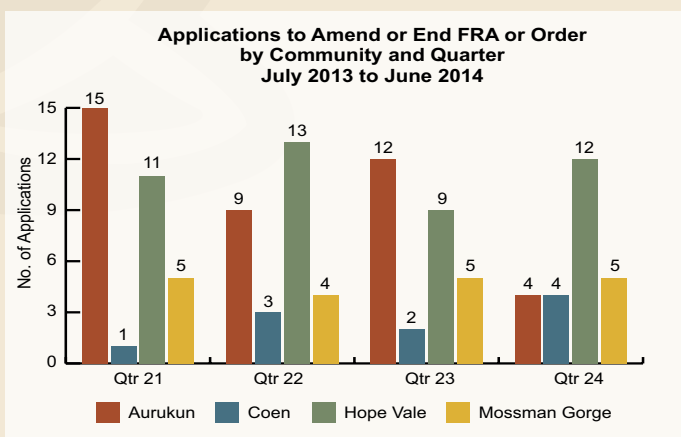
- 6 clients placed on CIM Orders at 75 percent
- 5 clients with previous CIM Orders revoked and placed on CIM Orders at 90 percent
- 2 clients' CIM Orders extended at 75 percent and ordered to comply with new case plans
- 2 clients placed on CIM orders at 75 percent and ordered to comply with case plans
- 1 client placed on a CIM order at 90 percent and ordered to comply with case plan
- 1 client's previous VIM agreement revoked, placed on a CIM order at 60 percent and ordered to comply with case plan
- 3 clients' case plans revoked and ordered to comply with new case plans
- 2 clients placed on monitor
- 1 client given a warning
- 1 client's CIM Order revoked
- 1 client's case plan revoked
- 3 Show Cause notices rescheduled until next quarter pending client completing actions directed by the Commission
- 5 no further action.

Amend or End Applications

The Act invites clients to apply for an amend or end of a Commission order or agreement. The Commissioners continue to consider a number of options when determining the outcome of applications, including varying case plans, amending the income management percentage or ending the order or agreement. The Commission views the number of applications to amend or end agreements or orders as an indicator of client confidence in the Commission to provide a fair, just and equitable process. Forty-eight percent of the applications received this financial year resulted in a revocation of the CIM order. Non-attendance at a conference for an application to amend has usually resulted in a dismissal unless the non-attendance is explained. This result highlights the Local Commissioners' voice in the community, that respect and attendance is a baseline expectation.

From 1 July 2013 to 30 June 2014 a total of 114 Applications to Amend or End an FRA or Order were received. The applications resulted in:

- 48 income management agreements and orders revoked
- 2 income management agreements and orders revoked and case plans revoked
- 5 income management agreements and orders revoked and clients ordered to comply with case plans
- 37 applications dismissed
- 3 applications dismissed and clients ordered to comply with case plan
- 1 application dismissed, 75 percent CIM order extended for 6 months and ordered to comply with case plan
- 1 application dismissed and client Conditionally Income Managed at 60 percent for 12 months
- 1 application dismissed and client Conditionally Income Managed at 90 percent for 12 months
- 1 application dismissed, client Conditionally Income Managed at 90 percent for 12 months and ordered to comply with case plan
- 4 applications dismissed and clients given a warning
- 1 CIM order percentage reduced from 75 to 60 percent and extended for 12 months
- 1 application rescheduled for the 2014-2015 financial year
- 9 applications received at the end of the financial year - decisions pending.



Graph 9: Applications to Amend or End FRA or Order by community and quarter 1 July 2013 to 30 June 2014.



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Financial summary

This financial overview is a summary of the financial performance and position of the Commission.

The Commission's financial reporting framework

A comprehensive set of 2013-14 financial statements covering all aspects of the Commission's activities commences on page 69. These statements include explanatory notes and comparative figures for 2012-13.

Internal audits are performed by the Executive Officer (Management) to ensure efficiency and economy of systems and to identify financial, operational and business continuity risks. Audit results are duly reported to the Commissioner and Registrar to determine whether any remedial actions are required and to establish compliance with statutory requirements and best practice.

Administering department

Effective from 3 April 2012 the Commission has been operating under the stewardship of the Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Multicultural Affairs.

Operating result

The operating result for 2013-14 was a deficit of \$0.396 million.

Income statement

Income statement	30 Jun 2014 \$,000	30 Jun 2013 Restated \$,000
Income	3,409	3,510
Less: operating expenses	3,805	3,542
Net result for financial year – surplus/(deficit)	(396)	(32)

Income for the year was comprised of Queensland Government funding of \$1.6 million for operations and \$0.049 million for delivery of the EFV program, Australian Government funding of \$1.7 million, \$0.028 million in bank interest and \$0.032 million received in other expense recoveries.

Expenses

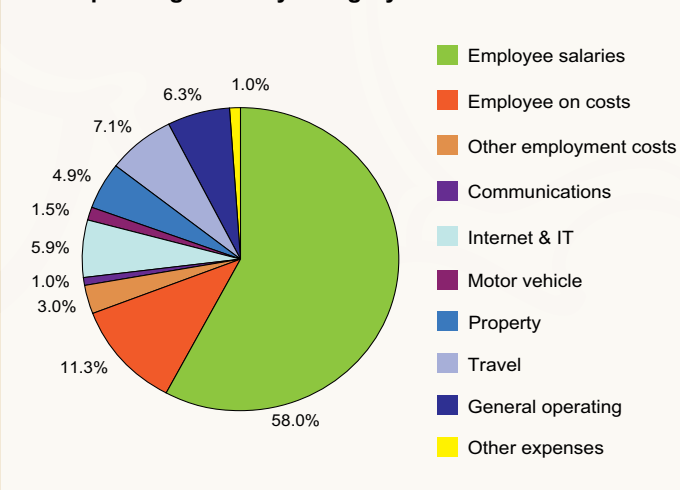
Expenses by type	30 Jun 2014 \$,000	30 Jun 2013 Restated \$,000
Employee expenses	2,752	2,459
Supplies and services	1,014	1,034
Depreciation and amortisation	-	11
Other expenses	39	38
Total	3,805	3,542

Employment expenses were restated in 2012-13 for Local Commissioners' superannuation entitlements, a matter established as a liability during 2013-14 and covering the period 2008-09 to 2013-14. Employment expenses otherwise increased in 2013-14 due to wage rises, increments and the accompanying increase in on-costs.

Supplies and services expenditure slightly decreased in 2013-14. This was due to ongoing effects of cost saving measures in the areas of external corporate service charges and information technology (IT) expenses. These savings were offset by increases due to inflation and new contracts for travel and office rentals.

Depreciation and amortisation of non-current assets was nil as all assets had previously been fully depreciated or amortised. All assets under \$5,000 are written off immediately and there were no new assets purchased for over \$5,000 in 2013-14.

Total Operating Costs by Category 2013-2014

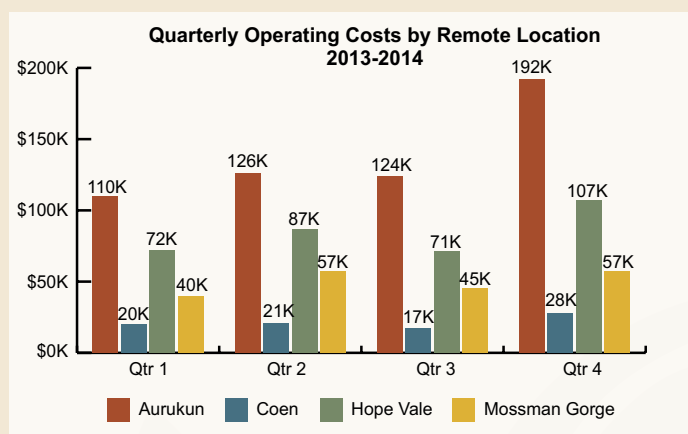


Graph 10: Expenses by category and percentage of total 1 July 2013 to 30 June 2014.

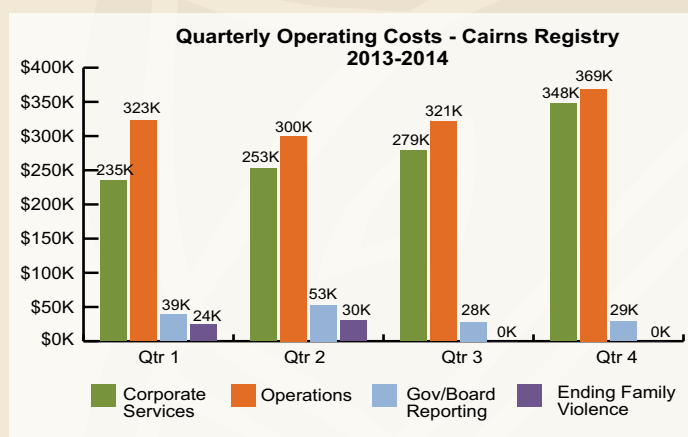
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Cairns registry and remote location expenditure



Graph 11: Operating costs by remote location 1 July 2013 to 30 June 2014.



Graph 12: Quarterly operating costs, Cairns Registry 1 July 2013 to 30 June 2014.

Statement of financial position

Total assets at 30 June 2014 consisted of current assets of cash and receivables.

Total liabilities as at 30 June 2014 consisted of payables and accrued employee benefits.

Statement of financial position	30 Jun 2014 \$,000	30 Jun 2013 Restated \$,000
Current assets	1,024	1,355
Total assets	1,024	1,355
Current liabilities	546	481
Total liabilities	546	481
Net assets	478	874
Retained equity	478	874

Cash flow statement

The cash flow statement shows the nature and amount of the Commission's cash inflows and outflows from all activities.

Cash flow statement	30 Jun 2014 \$,000	30 Jun 2013 \$,000
Operating activities	(344)	(217)
Net increase (decrease) in cash held	(344)	(217)
Cash at beginning of financial year	1,325	1,542
Cash at end of financial year	981	1,325



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Budget to actual comparative statement of financial position for the year ended 30 June 2014

		Original Budget 30 June 2014	Actual 30 June 2014	Variance Budget to Actual
	Notes	\$000	\$000	\$000
Current Assets				
Cash and cash equivalents	1	654	981	327
Receivables		10	12	2
Other		10	31	21
Total Current Assets		674	1,024	350
Total Assets		674	1,024	350
Current Liabilities				
Payables		100	123	23
Accrued employee benefits	2	212	423	211
Total Current Liabilities		312	546	234
Total Liabilities		312	546	234
Net Assets		362	478	116
Equity				
Accumulated surplus		362	478	116
Total Equity		362	478	116

Explanatory notes for the budget to actual comparative statement of financial position

1 Cash and cash equivalents

Cash at bank balance was more at the end of the 2013-14 year than budgeted due to a lower operating deficit than budgeted.

2 Accrued employee benefits

Actual includes Local Commissioners' superannuation liability, not previously budgeted – refer to notes in the Financials Section.

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Budget to actual comparative statement of comprehensive income for the year ended 30 June 2014

		Original Budget 2013-2014	Actual 2013-2014	Variance Budget to Actual
	Notes	\$000	\$000	\$000
Income from Continuing Operations				
Revenue				
Grants and other contributions	1	3,165	3,349	184
Other revenue		30	60	30
Total Income from Continuing Operations		3,195	3,409	214
Expenses from Continuing Operations				
Employee expenses	2	2,667	2,752	85
Supplies and services	3	1,215	1,014	(201)
Other expenses		44	39	(5)
Total Expenses from Continuing Operations		3,926	3,805	(121)
Operating Result from Continuing Operations		(731)	(396)	335
Total Other Comprehensive Income		-	-	-
Total Comprehensive Income		(731)	(396)	335

Explanatory notes for the budget to actual comparative statement of comprehensive income

1 Grants and other contributions

Australian Government grants were \$0.1 Million more than budgeted.

3 Supplies and services

Savings were made in the areas of external corporate services and IT expenses.

2 Employee expenses

Actual includes Local Commissioners' superannuation liability, not previously budgeted – refer to notes in Financials Section.



STAFF PROCESSES AND PROCEDURES - INTAKE TEAM

CONFERENCE INTAKE PROCESSES

The main objectives of the *Family Responsibilities Commission Act 2008* are to support the restoration of socially responsible standards of behaviour in the CYWR communities and to help those who live there to resume primary responsibility for the wellbeing of their community and particularly their children. Section 4(2)(a) of the Act states that to achieve these objectives, the Commission must hold conferences about agency notices. 'Conferencing' as such, is therefore the Commission's main focus. To achieve the process of conferencing the Commission must first determine whether the notices which are received in relation to community members fall within its jurisdiction.

The Commission is a small organisation comprised of various discrete operational areas. Several of these areas, in performing their own specialised functions, coordinate and combine to produce the process outcome of conferencing. The Commission's Intake Team is the first recipient for agency notices and forms one of these vital discrete operational areas. They are responsible for determining jurisdiction and processing client data in preparation for conference.

The team is comprised of three members: two Information Officers, Sandi Rye and Josephine Pinder; and one Administration Officer, Jacinta Baragud. Together they form a key component for the conferencing process, without which the Commission would be unable to achieve its objectives. Chiefly these officers source, input and securely store information for the purposes of determining jurisdiction and enabling the conferencing process. They are responsible for providing supportive information and documentation to the Commissioners, empowering them to make informed decisions regarding the outcomes of the conferencing process. Each of them collectively and individually is responsible for tasks such as:

- extracting and uploading data received
- analysing the data received to confirm jurisdiction
- linking and matching client data
- entering client information data into the CRM database
- setting, adjusting and updating conferencing timetables and monitoring spreadsheets
- preparing documents for conference
- maintaining relationships with agencies to ensure the provision of appropriate information
- providing data support services and advice pursuant to approved policies and protocols
- investigating and analysing data related problems and sourcing solutions and
- managing sensitive information in line with Commission policies and legislative requirements.

STAFF PROCESSES AND PROCEDURES - INTAKE TEAM



THE INTAKE TEAM

Sandi RYE was born in Brisbane and is one of seven children. After completing year 10 at Woodridge State High School she attended Seven Hills TAFE College to study business. Before joining the Commission Sandi was employed as a certified fitness instructor/personal trainer and a qualified swimming instructor. She has completed a Diploma of E-Business Support and in 2013 completed her Diploma of Community Services (Case Management). In 2014 Sandi will be commencing a Degree in Social Work through James Cook University. Sandi's hobbies are finding new ideas to enhance her health and fitness, playing netball, creative organic cooking and making natural cleaning products. Sandi has chosen to work and study in the humanities field because she loves working with people and empowering them to find the very best within themselves.

Josephine PINDER has been with the Commission since June 2010. She was born in Cairns and completed her schooling at St Monica's College. Josephine then completed a secretarial diploma at Cairns Business College which led her into the areas of tutoring in keyboarding, word processing, hospitality information systems and job placement for graduating students. She has coordinated homestay arrangements for students, enabling her to travel to overseas destinations to meet with agents in Thailand and Japan, marketing and recruiting at educational exhibitions. Work in hospitality then followed which included preparing promotional advertisements for tourism related publications and websites. Before joining the Commission Josephine was an Administration Officer/Hospitality Schools Program Coordinator with the Tropical North Queensland Institute of TAFE. Josephine has completed a Certificate IV in Training and Assessment. Her hobbies are reading, yoga and travelling. She is particularly fond of gourmet cooking and entertaining.

Jacinta BARAGUD was born on Thursday Island into a family of two brothers and one sister. She commenced her schooling on Yam Island which is a small island in the central Torres Straits. To complete her high schooling Jacinta moved to Cairns and attended Trinity Bay High School. After graduation in 2008, and wishing to further her skills, Jacinta completed Certificates II and III in Business Administration through the Tropical North Queensland Institute of TAFE. Having completed her certificates Jacinta felt she was at a cross-roads, "Where do I go from here?" With the assistance of her TAFE teacher she was successful in obtaining employment with the Commission in November 2010 and is currently enrolled in a Certificate IV Business Administration and Certificate IV Training and assessment. When not working Jacinta enjoys sports, and in particular cardio boxing.



Sandi Rye, Josephine Pinder and Jacinta Baragud



CHALLENGES AND OUTLOOK

Challenges and outlook

As stated in the Cape York Welfare Reform Evaluation 2012, there is clear evidence of improvement in the wellbeing of residents in the four trial communities, decreasing crime rates, improvement in infrastructure and services, and school attendance rates that have either risen or been maintained. The communities also quite rightly expressed an expectation, however, that the Commission would continue to deal with disengaged community members. In an attempt to engage with these disengaged clients, Commissioners have welcomed the ability to impose income management orders of 90 percent where appropriate. Whether the increased level of income management will have a positive effect will not be known until a sufficient amount of time has passed to provide some evidence. Meanwhile, in an attempt to meet the communities' expectations the Commission continues to seek new strategies and initiatives to aid in re-engaging these individuals.

Disengaged youth of high school age, between the ages of 12 and 16, present a major challenge. The reality of community life is that presently many children become disengaged from the education system after completing year 4 or 5. They then join the older disengaged students who are either not enrolled, or are enrolled at boarding schools, but refuse to return from school holidays or other leave. Several circumstances factor heavily in this disengagement. Of primary significance is substance abuse. Marijuana use is endemic and not exclusive to this age cohort. Bullying of parents and carers by these children has created an atmosphere which has disempowered the family unit.

Dealing with offenders has historically presented numerous challenges for government service delivery. The juvenile justice system emphasises the diversion of young people from the formal criminal justice system. Detention is seen as a last resort because it exposes the young person to a criminal environment. Unfortunately in many remote Indigenous communities not only are disengaged youth equally exposed to a peer group who commit offences in community, but they are also exposed to substance abuse. Local Commissioners feel helpless to reform youth who appear impervious to government and parent/carer control. They feel these children, who wreak havoc in community through property damage, have 'fallen through the cracks'. Where detention and offending behaviour is viewed as a badge of honour, the cycle of disengagement from education and criminal offending is difficult to break.

Local Commissioners consider that upgraded Child and Youth Mental Health services are desperately needed. Local Commissioners are supporting CYAAA and DETE with data to assist the prosecution of parents and carers whose children are not attending school. They also seek training in order to be able to assist with youth justice conferencing. A youth justice conference brings the young offender, their family, the victim (if possible) and a police officer together. The aim of a youth justice conference is to hold the young person accountable for their actions and to involve them in reparation of the damage caused. When conferencing is considered beneficial, it is important that the conference be held as soon as possible so that all parties, especially the offender, are able to focus on the actions committed and the impact of those actions. The Local Commissioners are in the ideal position to mediate and/or conference with an in-depth knowledge of their communities and the families who live in their communities, and would welcome the opportunity to feel more empowered to shape an outcome for their young people.

The Queensland Government is presently conducting a review into the Alcohol Management Plans (AMPs) operating in 19 discrete Indigenous communities across 15 Local Government Areas. Each community has been asked to develop a community proposal which outlines its preferred way of managing alcohol misuse and alcohol-related harm. A meeting of stakeholders was held in Hope Vale on 20 March 2014. It was indicated by stakeholders that consultations should be conducted with the community members of Hope Vale to determine their views prior to the formation of an

CHALLENGES AND OUTLOOK



AMP. The Commission advised those present that it respects the rights of community members to establish their own approach to the AMP. The community of Hope Vale expects to deliver a decision prior to March 2015.

School attendance

School attendance statistics continue to remain relatively stable while Local Commissioners work in conjunction with the SCMs to address absenteeism. Several factors remain as challenges. Explained absences are principally caused by illness, school approved activities, sporting activities, work experience and funerals. The Local Commissioners, however, challenge the need for students to be absent for a number of days on a passing in community. The Commission's Guideline 5 of 2010 – School Attendance states that funeral leave should be approved for a student on the passing of a family member (e.g. parent, grandparent, sibling or primary carer), and should be limited to the day of the funeral. An absence due to attendance at a funeral that is out of town is not always desirable or necessary and should only be considered to be reasonable if: the deceased person is an immediate family member; the principal is satisfied that the attendance at the funeral is necessary; no suitable child minding options are available to parents within the community; and a reliable method of transport is available to ensure the timely return to the community. In all instances the child's overall welfare should be balanced with his/her educational needs.

School attendance is also affected by factors which are pertinent to each community. In Hope Vale, primary and secondary schooling is affected by a short working day each Friday for many community members. Parents/carers often complete their working day at 1 pm and, together with their children, travel out of community. Community fighting in Aurukun frequently affects primary school attendance, whilst sly grogging causes aggressive behaviours and translates into all night parties and noise during the hours when children need their sleep. Family members are then also unable to take their children to school. A community effort is required to change the community 'norms' which affect school attendance.

Administrative challenges

The Commission collects and reports on statistics derived from its operations to inform government policy. With the evolution of welfare reform since 2008, it has sought to identify the strengths and weaknesses of its statistical data collection, and to evaluate whether the data in its current form continues to present value. As a result extra outcome actions were added to the CRM database this financial year to reflect more accurately on Conditional Income Management orders. Changes were initially made in the test environment prior to being replicated in the live environment. To provide for more efficient conferencing in school attendance matters, the Commission's Database Administrator created an upload tool from the roll tools provided by CYAAA. The upload tool allows for the import of school attendance data onto each client's conference coversheet in the form of a pie graph. Additional information is also available in regard to week by week school attendance trends which can be uploaded to the coversheets and made available whilst in conference.

The Commission sought legislative changes to the Act in order to enhance its operations in the communities. Subsequent to amendments to the Act which were effective from 29 October 2013, it became necessary to update the CRM database and amend forms to allow for process changes. Local Coordinator consultations were held to identify opportunities to improve processes and improvements were implemented and quality assured.

In line with the Commission's priority to strive for continuous improvement it will continue to review how and what data is collected in order to better inform decision-making and evaluation.



GOVERNANCE

Family Responsibilities Board

Part 12 of the Act provides for the establishment of the Family Responsibilities Board (FR Board). Under section 117 of the Act, the FR Board has a mandate to: give advice and make recommendations to the Minister about the operation of the Commission; give advice and make recommendations to the Commissioner about the performance of the Commission's functions; and to consider the reports submitted by the Commission. Section 118 of the Act provides for the membership of the FR Board, which is endorsed by the Queensland Governor in Council. The FR Board consists of one person nominated by the Minister (chairperson of the FR Board), one person nominated by the Australian Government and one person nominated by the Institute. Board members are appointed by the Governor in Council for the term stated in the member's instrument of appointment.

In accordance with section 123 of the Act the FR Board must meet every three months. The meeting may be held by using any technology available which will allow for efficient and effective communication, however, the Board members must meet in person at least once a year. A quorum for the Board is comprised of two members.

Composition of the Board

The current FR Board Members are:

- | | |
|------------------|---|
| Mr James Purtill | Director-General, Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Multicultural Affairs |
| Ms Liza Carroll | Associate Secretary, Indigenous Affairs, Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet |
| Mr Noel Pearson | Executive Chairman, Cape York Institute for Policy and Leadership. |

Executive Management Team

The Commission's Executive Management Team (EMT) is comprised of the Commissioner, the Registrar and the Executive Officer (Management). The EMT plays a critical role in the corporate governance and service delivery of the Commission by:

- providing value-based leadership
- demonstrating and incorporating high standards of integrity and ethical behaviour
- ensuring transparency and accountability through effective decision-making and communication with all employees (including Local Commissioners) and service providers
- providing a clear future direction for the Commission and
- providing leadership and direction on:
 - issues relating to the ongoing financial and non-financial operations of the Commission and the performance of its governance structure and
 - the operation, performance and reporting of the Commission with regard to its obligations under the Act and other relevant legislation.

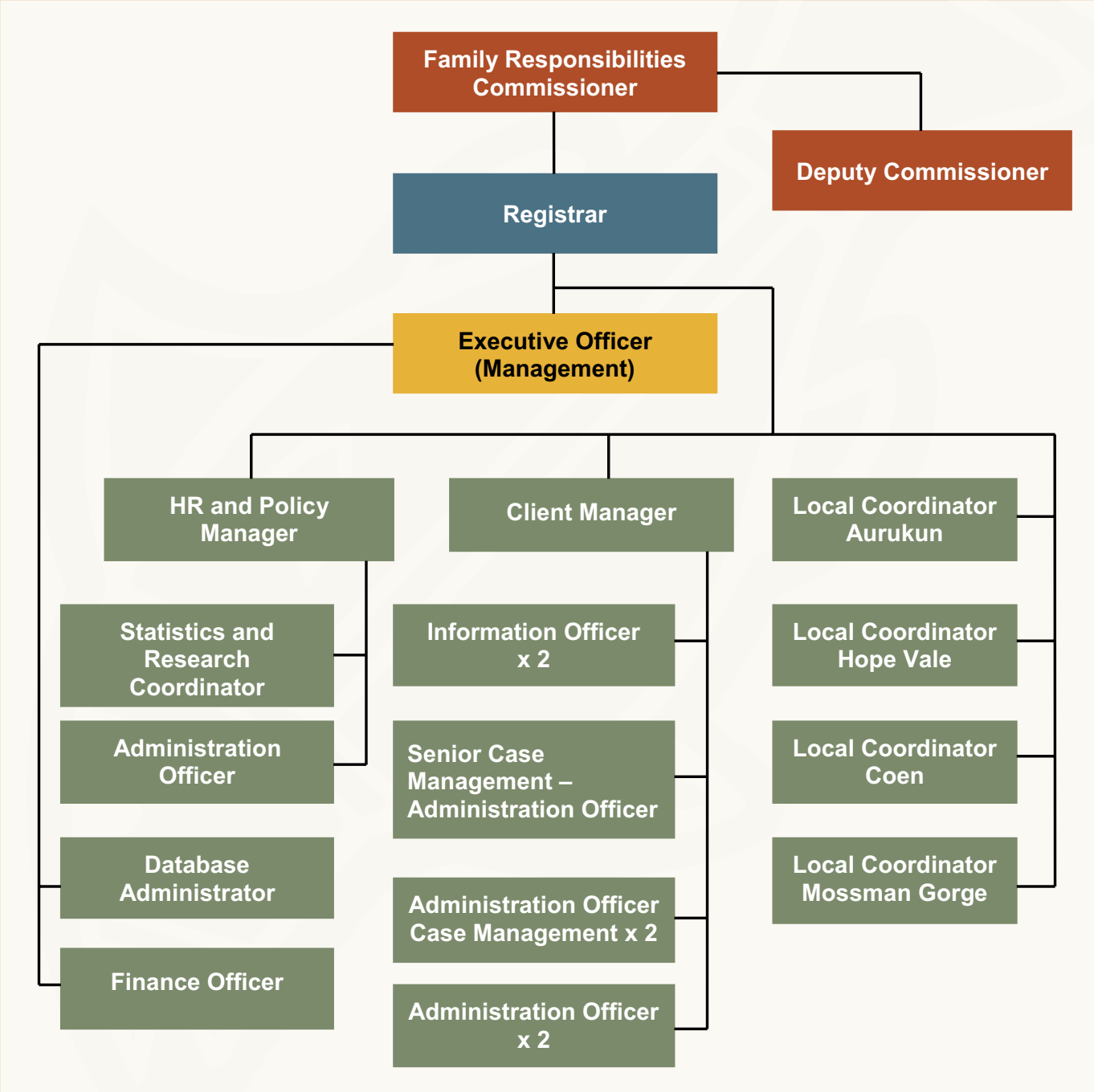
Due to the small size of the Commission, the role of the EMT also encompasses the corporate stewardship functions associated with the Commission's operational performance. In addition the EMT oversees the operations of finance, information management, human resources and planning, audit, risk management, systems review and workload and performance management. The EMT met on a regular basis throughout the 2013-14 year.

GOVERNANCE



Corporate structure

The Commission’s organisational structure includes a central registry office based in Cairns and a remote office in each of the CYWR communities of Aurukun, Coen, Hope Vale and Mossman Gorge. Each of the Commission’s remote community based offices has a Local Coordinator appointed to provide strategic, operational and administrative support to the Local Commissioners.





GOVERNANCE

Planning

The Commission has adopted a strategic plan which has enabled the Commission to develop goals and strategies to fulfil the mandate of the Commission. These goals are consistent with current whole-of-government priorities, including targets set by COAG under NIRA and other key financial, socio-economic and demographic challenges identified through research and consultation. The strategic plan is reviewed on an annual basis to ensure currency of performance measures and that objectives adequately reflect the Commission's vision and purpose.

Participation in external governance groups

In addition to the internal governance arrangement of the Commission, the Commissioner and other delegated employees participated in several external governance groups:

- Regional Leadership Group
- Program Office Group
- CYWRT Disengaged Youth Working Group
- Aurukun, Coen, Hope Vale and Mossman Gorge Service Delivery Working Groups
- Regional Managers Coordination Network
- Mossman Gorge School Case Coordination meetings
- Aurukun Intensive Case Management meetings
- Cape York Welfare Reform Education Stream Working Committee.

Remuneration statement

As disclosed in the Commission's 2013-14 financial statements, executive remuneration of \$397,000 was received by the Commission's Chief Executive Officer (the Commissioner). The amount calculated as executive remuneration in the financial statements incorporates the direct and indirect remuneration including salary and allowances, superannuation, annual provision for long service leave and the grossed up value of fringe benefits associated with accommodation and motor vehicles.

Human resource management

At 30 June 2014 the Commission had an employee establishment of 20 full-time equivalent positions, including four positions servicing the remote communities. Eighteen positions are based in the Cairns Registry office (including two Local Coordinators servicing Coen and Mossman Gorge), one position (Local Coordinator) is based in Aurukun servicing Aurukun and one position (Local Coordinator) is based in Cooktown servicing Hope Vale. The Deputy Commissioner and Local Commissioners are employed on a fee for service basis.

Since the establishment of the Commission employee and job classification levels have altered as a result of ongoing operational reviews. During this financial year the Commission has experienced a permanent separation rate of 30 percent, and a permanent retention rate of 83 percent. The retention rate reflects the number of employees who were with the Commission as at 1 July 2013, and who are still employed as at 30 June 2014.

The Commission promotes policies and activities to support a healthy work-life balance. Flexible work arrangements are actively accessed and employees are provided the opportunity to work from home where appropriate, part-time work opportunities and hours of work arrangements including the opportunity for purchased leave. These flexible arrangements are also offered in order to assist in balancing work and carer roles where required.



Recruitment, selection and retention of employees

The Commission conducts all recruitment and selection processes in accordance with the requirements of the *Public Service Act 1996* and relevant Public Service Commission policies and directives.

During the period 1 July 2013 to 30 June 2014 no redundancy, early retirement or retrenchment packages were paid.

Professional development

A key priority of the Commission is to maintain an environment of continual professional development and learning for all employees and Local Commissioners.

The Commission is committed to providing professional development to the Local Commissioners on a continual basis for the life of the Commission to ensure it actively works to restore local authority. Part of this professional development involves enhancing and expanding upon relationships with other Indigenous organisations, government departments and agencies. The Local Commissioners attended a development week in Cairns commencing on 5 May 2014 during which they met with senior staff from several organisations who provide social and government services to the CYWR communities including the QPS, James Cook University Associate Professor Alan Clough of the Community-based Health Promotion and Prevention Studies, DATSIMA, the Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services, Mental Health and ATODS, Centrelink, Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, the Institute, His Honour Magistrate Black, Remote Youth Justice Service Centre, ATSILS, Department of Housing and Public Works and the Cairns Regional Domestic Violence Service. Participation in the consultations and workshops allowed the delegates to address common issues, review strategies and source solutions. Local Commissioners also attended at Red Cross, Djarragun Enterprises and Mookai Rosie Bi-Bayan, each of which provide Indigenous health and support services to the Cape communities. The Hope Vale Local Commissioners then hosted Commission staff and Local Commissioners on a day trip to Hope Vale. A comprehensive summary of the development week can be found in this Annual Report entitled 'Local Commissioner Development Week'.

The broader focus of the Commission's professional development program for employees is on skills development, career enhancement, and supporting a culture of ongoing learning through participation in internal workshops, on the job training and courses conducted by specialist external training providers. This year Commission employees were provided access to DATSIMA's Learning Station e-learning site. Learning Station is an electronic central learning management system for managing and recording learning and development activities. Online eLearning courses such as Ethical Decision-Making and Harvard Manage Mentor management and executive development online courses are all hosted on Learning Station. To facilitate employees' development, each employee together with their manager signs a Performance Assessment and Professional Development Plan. The plan sets out identified learning activities, supports the development of competencies, professional skills and personal attributes, and is designed to identify and record knowledge and skills gaps together with learning objectives. The plans link in to the Commission's strategic and operational objectives and are reviewed on a six monthly basis. During 2013-14 employee professional development, training, and workshops cost \$46,856 excluding travel costs. This investment provides a platform for the Commission to foster the development of new skills and to improve business processes within the Commission.



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During 2013-14 the Commission organised a number of internal and externally sourced training programs and workshops to monitor, evaluate and continuously improve operations, internal administration and service delivery of the Commission. Training programs covered the key areas of:

- management, leadership and team building
- first-aid and cardiopulmonary resuscitation
- substance abuse
- mental health understanding and practice
- managing violent and potentially violent situations
- domestic violence prevention
- fire warden and trial evacuation
- training and assessment
- defensive driving
- Indigenous health
- Ending Family Violence program
- Queensland Public Service Code of Conduct and Ethical Decision-Making
- Good Decisions Training
- Measuring Social Outcomes
- Data and Evidence for Decision-making in Public Policy.

The Commission is also committed to providing support to employees who undertake further education and to providing flexible work practices to enable employees to study whilst continuing to meet operational and client needs.

Under the Commission's Study and Research Assistance Scheme (SARAS) Policy financial assistance and leave arrangements are administered subject to Directive 9/13 Special Leave in an equitable manner, ensuring effective usage of learning and organisational development funds, and taking into consideration available resources. As at June 2014 there are six employees enrolled with various academic institutions for the current 2014 calendar year to study the following:

- Certificate IV Business Administration
- Cert IV Community Services Work
- Diploma of Community Services (Case Management)
- Bachelor of Arts Anthropology and Indigenous Studies
- Graduate Certificate of Criminology and Criminal Justice
- Postgraduate Diploma of Policy and Applied Social Research
- Master of Criminology and Criminal Justice with Honours.

Through the provision of high quality and targeted professional development the Commission seeks to not only enhance the skills and competencies of its employees and Local Commissioners, but to also provide effective and efficient client service.



Information and communication technology

Coinciding with the establishment of the Commission in July 2008, a service level agreement was entered into with the Corporate Administration Agency (CAA) for information and communication technology services. This ensured the Commission complied with the *Information Privacy Act 2009*. The service level agreement also provides high level security and support.

The Commission, in conjunction with CAA, has policies and network protocols in place to ensure all Commission employees have a clear understanding of their responsibilities regarding ethical information access, transference, usage and management. The Commission's information and communication technology systems capture and retain information, preserve the integrity of information and also provide a high level of security and confidentiality. This year security has been boosted with a transfer from the RSA token to an Etoken. The Etoken allows employees to access the server outside of the network session securely. Further security maintenance was conducted with updated antivirus software installed on new computers and a new administrator password. The Commission can report that no breaches of information security have occurred to date, and no records have been lost due to disaster or other reasons.

The Commission complies with recordkeeping practices in accordance with section 141 of the Act, the *Public Records Act 2002*, Information Standard 40, Recordkeeping and Information Standard 31: Retention and Disposal of Public Records, through the service level agreement with CAA. Approximately 90 percent of Commission records are held in digital format.

Public Sector Ethics Act 1994 and Code of Conduct

All employees of the Commission, with the exception of the Family Responsibilities Commissioners, the Deputy Commissioner and the Local Commissioners are employed under the *Public Service Act (Qld) 2008*.

This year Commission employees completed their annual Code of Conduct training via DATSIMA's Learning Station e-learning site. The training incorporated the four ethics principles together with their associated values of integrity and impartiality, promoting the public good, commitment to the system of government and accountability and transparency. The Local Coordinators for the communities of Aurukun, Coen, Hope Vale and Mossman Gorge will be facilitating training for each Local Commissioner. New employees are provided with Code of Conduct and ethics training upon induction, and refresher training is conducted annually for all Commission employees.

To further assist Commission employees with ethical decision-making and in understanding the Code of Conduct, the Commission has created a supplementary policy document titled 'Workplace Policy'. This policy presents a broad framework for ethical behaviour, supports the Code and is consistent with the requirements of the *Public Service Act (Qld) 2008*, the *Public Sector Ethics Act 1994*, the *Family Responsibilities Commission Act 2008* and relevant Public Service policies and directives. The Code of Conduct and Workplace Policy are both available in hard copy at all Commission premises and are located on our webpage for access to both the public and employees.

Alignment with the ethics principles is further achieved through the Commission's Strategic Plan which incorporates three objectives based on enhancing and strengthening socially responsible standards of behaviour both within the Commission and in the four CYWR communities. Each of these objectives then forms the basis for employee Performance Assessment and Professional Development Plans to link ethics priorities with service delivery.



GOVERNANCE

Risk management

The Commission's risk management framework establishes a mechanism to identify, assess and manage real or potential risks. The framework supports a positive risk minimisation and management culture within the Commission which focuses on strategic risks (risks which present as challenges to the Commission's strategic direction and vision), and operational risks (risks which present as challenges to the daily activities of the Commission in delivering its services). In applying the risk management principles the Commission has developed a draft Business Continuity Plan (BCP). The framework of this plan incorporates five key elements – prevention, preparedness, response, recovery and review, and consists of a risk management and contingency plan, business impact analysis, incident response table and recovery plan. The plan states a shared legal responsibility and accountability between, and a commitment by, all employees to implement the BCP. Employees are individually responsible for contributing to the BCP and to the health and safety of others by reporting workplace injury, incidents, illness and hazards. Employees are also responsible for seeking to reduce the vulnerability of the Commission to internal and external events and influences that may impede achieving the goals of the Commission.

The Commission's BCP progresses from an integrated approach to managing all risks that impact on the achievement of the Commission's strategic and business objectives to reviewing and re-evaluating identified risks and reporting to the EMT regarding processes and recommendations.

External scrutiny

The Parliamentary Health and Community Services Committee have oversight responsibility for the Commission under the *Parliament of Queensland Act 2001*. Pursuant to its obligations under this Act the committee has prepared and released Report No 49 'Oversight of the Family Responsibilities Commission' dated May 2014. The report informs generally on the operations of the Commission, its achievements and finances as reported in the Commission's annual report, and in particular on the findings of the Cape York Welfare Reform Evaluation 2012. The committee has reflected that it recognises the limitations of using FRC data alone to assess the effectiveness of Commission operations in restoring social responsibility to the communities. Data collected by the Commission is not designed for evaluation purposes or measuring social outcomes. The committee stated that it is, however, satisfied that the Commission is meeting its obligations as a statutory body, and that, "Evidence presented to the committee at its Cairns hearing by the Commissioner, the Institute and others suggests that significant progress is being made in some areas".

Professional conduct

All employees of the Commission are required to adhere to the values of the Commission and undertake their duties with professionalism, respect for diversity and courtesy whilst utilising ethics in all decision-making. Employees are made aware of their ongoing responsibilities, duty of care and requirements under the core legislation governing the Commission as published through Commission policies, protocols and guidelines which are readily available to employees on the intranet. During the year the Commission has continued refining its strategies and processes to ensure its operations are effective and the strategic direction is maintained. The following policies and guidelines were revised to ensure efficiencies of process: Workplace Health and Safety Policy, Workplace Policy, Intranet Internet and Email Usage Policy, Employee Assistance Policy, SARAS Policy, External Complaints Management Policy, Travel Policy, Harassment Discrimination and Bullying Policy, Rural and Remote Area Incentive Policy and Guideline for Implementing the Fundamental Principles of Justice for Victims of Crime. An electronic Induction Manual was



created during the year to streamline induction procedures and provide a central location for all Commission policies and registers.

Commission policies are required to be read and understood as part of the Commission induction process and a register must be signed acknowledging an understanding of the policies. The Commission complies with the following legislative requirements in performing its functions:

- *Family Responsibilities Commission Act 2008 (the Act)*
- *Public Service Act (Qld) 2008*
- *Public Sector Ethics Act 1994*
- *Financial Accountability Act 2009*
- *Victims of Crime Assistance Act 2009*
- *Public Interest Disclosure Act 2010*
- *Anti-Discrimination Act 1991*
- *Information Privacy Act 2009*
- *Right to Information Act 2009*
- *Work Health and Safety Act 2011*
- *Work Health and Safety Regulation 2011*
- *Public Records Act 2002.*

Publication of information on line

For information regarding consultancies, international travel, corporate social responsibility including waste management and recycling policies, carbon emissions, reconciliation, right to information and information privacy, complaints management, corporate services and work health and safety refer to the Additional published information under Right to Information on the Commission's website at <http://www.frcq.org.au> and the Queensland Government Open Data website at <https://data.qld.gov.au>.

Publications by the Commission during 2013-14

1. Annual Report 2012-13
2. Quarterly Performance Report 20
3. Quarterly Performance Report 21
4. Quarterly Performance Report 22
5. Quarterly Performance Report 23

All publications are available on the Family Responsibilities Commission's website:
<http://www.frcq.org.au>.



AURUKUN COMMISSIONERS

THREE COUNCILLORS IN AURUKUN

In 2012 four of the Commission's Local Commissioners in Aurukun made the decision to invest further in their community and stood for the position of councillor on the Aurukun Shire Council. Local Commissioners Ada Woolla, Vera Koomeeta, Edgar Kerindun and Doris Poonkamelya based their decision to run for council on their commitment to the community and their desire to play a more active management role.

It was not an easy decision as this was an opportunity for the community to provide feedback on their perception of the roles played by the Local Commissioners since 2008, specifically as to whether they were regarded as successful and influential members of their community.

Three of the four Local Commissioners were successful in gaining seats on the council with Commissioner Poonkamelya narrowly missing out on obtaining the fourth seat. Their success has been a reflection of the acknowledgement of their roles as Indigenous leaders. Further, their election by the community is a positive indication that Indigenous leadership is an essential component to changing social norms.

The role played by a councillor incorporates reviewing matters before council including local objectives, policies, resource allocation and expenditure, and debating local issues including the efficiency of service delivery. An elected member is required to represent the interests of their community members. This role requires them to provide community leadership and guidance, and to enable transparent communication between the community and the council.

Since being elected to represent their community the Aurukun Commissioners have participated in many facets of decision-making in community including reviewing: potential mining leases; town planning submissions; the building of the Business Hub; resealing of the airport; location of a new cemetery; construction of a boat ramp to enable the barge to dock; the building of a day facility at the Home and Community Care Centre; future plans to extend the current residential area and build more houses to accommodate the community; and increasing community safety by initiating a night patrol.

Councillors Woolla, Koomeeta and Kerindun consider that when the Law and Order By-Laws are gazetted for the Aurukun Shire Council it will enable the Council to better police the community.

The incorporation of advocacy and community development functions into the role of the Local Commissioner has further cemented their participation in increasing Indigenous empowerment. The expansion of their advocacy role enhances their ability to form policy decisions to address the community's needs. When combining their roles as Local Commissioners and Aurukun Shire Councillors they are better able to evaluate the effectiveness of their policy decisions and indeed have become local service providers.

"The knowledge gained from the combined roles of Aurukun Shire Councillor and FRC Commissioner has enabled us to take a seat at the table and make more informed decisions. We have identified many areas of community development which involve both our roles, and the experience gained has been invaluable."



*Back Row: Aurukun Commissioner Edgar Kerindun
Front Row: Aurukun Commissioners Vera Koomeeta and Ada Woolla*

APPENDICES



APPENDIX A

Family Responsibilities Board – schedule of meetings

Date of FR Board Meeting	Venue	Attendees
31 July 2013	DATSIMA BOM Meeting Room Neville Bonner Building 6A/75 William Street Brisbane	Mr Ben Klaasen, A/Director-General, Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Multicultural Affairs (Chair); Mr Noel Pearson, Executive Chairman, Cape York Institute for Policy and Leadership; Mr Finn Pratt, Secretary of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs.
28 October 2013	DATSIMA BOM Meeting Room Neville Bonner Building 6A/75 William Street Brisbane	Mr James Purtill, Director-General, Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Multicultural Affairs (Chair); Mr Noel Pearson, Executive Chairman, Cape York Institute for Policy and Leadership; Ms Liza Carroll, Associate Secretary – Indigenous Affairs, Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet.
18 February 2014	DATSIMA BOM Meeting Room Neville Bonner Building 6A/75 William Street Brisbane	Mr James Purtill, Director-General, Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Multicultural Affairs (Chair); Mr Noel Pearson, Executive Chairman, Cape York Institute for Policy and Leadership; Ms Liza Carroll, Associate Secretary – Indigenous Affairs, Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet.
20 May 2014	Corporate Towers Level 9 15 Lake Street Cairns	Mr James Purtill, Director-General, Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Multicultural Affairs (Chair); Ms Fiona Jose, Chief Executive Officer, Cape York Institute for Policy and Leadership representative for Mr Noel Pearson, Executive Chairman, Cape York Institute for Policy and Leadership; Ms Liza Carroll, Associate Secretary – Indigenous Affairs, Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (by teleconference).



APPENDICES

APPENDIX B - SITTING CALENDAR

Family Responsibilities Commission 1 July 2013 to 31 December 2013

WEEK COMMENCING	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	OTHER
1 July						NAIDOC Week
8 July	8	9	10	11		
15 July		16	17	18	Public Holiday	19 Cairns Show Day
22 July		23	24			22 Mossman Show
29 July		30	31	1		31 FR Board Meeting
5 August						5 Aurukun Day
12 August	12	13	14	15		
19 August		20	21	22		
26 August		27	28	29		
2 September		3	4	5		
9 September	9	10	11	12		
16 September		17	18	19		
23 September						
30 September						
7 October	Public Holiday	8	9	10		7 Labour Day
14 October	14	15	16	17		
21 October		22	23	24		
28 October		29	30	31		28 FR Board Meeting
4 November		5	6	7		
11 November		12	13	14		
18 November		19	20	21		
25 November	25	26	27	28		
2 December		3 3	4			
9 December						
16 December						
23 December			Public Holiday	Public Holiday		25 Xmas Day, 26 Boxing Day
30 December			Public Holiday			29, 30, 31 December Office Closed, 1 New Year's Day 2, 3 January Office Closed

APPENDICES



Family Responsibilities Commission 1 January 2014 to 30 June 2014

WEEK COMMENCING	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	OTHER
6 January						
13 January						
20 January						
27 January	Public Holiday	28	29	30		27 Australia Day
3 February		4	5			
10 February	10	11	12	13		
17 February		18	19			18 FR Board Meeting
24 February		25	26	27		
3 March		4	5			
10 March		11	12	13		
17 March		18	19			
24 March	24	25	26	27		
31 March		1	2			
7 April						
14 April					Public Holiday	18 Good Friday
21 April	Public Holiday	22	23	24	Public Holiday	21 Easter Monday, 25 ANZAC Day
28 April		29	30			
5 May						Commissioner Week
12 May	12	13	14	15		
19 May		20	21			20 FR Board Meeting
26 May		27	28	29		
2 June		3	4			
9 June	Public Holiday	10	11	12		9 Queens Birthday
16 June		17	18			
23 June	23	24	25	26		
30 June						

	Aurukun		Coen		Hope Vale		Mossman Gorge		Office Days
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APPENDICES

APPENDIX C - Compliance checklist Family Responsibilities Commission 2013 – 2014 annual report

Summary of requirement		Basis for requirement	Annual report reference
Letter of compliance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A letter of compliance from the accountable officer or statutory body to the relevant Minister 	ARRs – section 8	Page 4
Accessibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Table of contents Glossary 	ARRs – section 10.1	Page 5 Page 105
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public availability 	ARRs – section 10.2	Page 2
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interpreter service statement 	<i>Queensland Government Language Services Policy</i> ARRs – section 10.3	Page 2
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Copyright notice 	<i>Copyright Act 1968</i> ARRs – section 10.4	Page 2
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information licensing 	<i>QGEA - Information Licensing</i> ARRs – section 10.5	N/A
	General information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introductory Information 	ARRs – section 11.1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agency role and main functions 		ARRs – section 11.2	Pages 9-18
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Operating environment 		ARRs – section 11.3	Pages 45-51, 58-59, 99
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Machinery of government changes 		ARRs – section 11.4	N/A
Non-financial performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Government's objectives for the community 	ARRs – section 12.1	Pages 11-14
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Other whole-of-government plans / specific initiatives 	ARRs – section 12.2	Pages 11-12, 61
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agency objectives and performance indicators 	ARRs – section 12.3	Page 13-14
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agency service areas and service standards 	ARRs – section 12.4	Page 46
Financial performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Summary of financial performance 	ARRs – section 13.1	Pages 52-55
Governance – management and structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organisational structure 	ARRs – section 14.1	Pages 60-61
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Executive management 	ARRs – section 14.2	Page 60

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Summary of requirement		Basis for requirement	Annual report reference
Governance – management and structure	• Related entities	ARRs – section 14.3	N/A
	• Government bodies	ARRs – section 14.4	N/A
	• <i>Public Sector Ethics Act 1994</i>	<i>Public Sector Ethics Act 1994</i> (section 23 and Schedule) ARRs – section 14.5	Page 65
Governance – risk management and accountability	• Risk management	ARRs – section 15.1	Page 66
	• External scrutiny	ARRs – section 15.2	Page 66
	• Audit committee	ARRs – section 15.3	N/A
	• Internal Audit	ARRs – section 15.4	Page 52
	• Public Sector Renewal Program	ARRs – section 15.5	N/A
	• Information systems and record keeping	ARRs – section 15.6	Page 65
Governance – human resources	• Workforce planning, attraction and retention and performance	ARRs – section 16.1	Page 62
	• Early retirement, redundancy and retrenchment	Directive No.11/12 <i>Early Retirement, Redundancy and Retrenchment</i> ARRs – section 16.2	Page 63
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APPENDICES

APPENDIX D

Cape York Welfare Reform

The Cape York Welfare Reforms are a partnership between four CYWR communities, the Queensland Government, Australian Government and the Institute. The Cape York Welfare Reforms aim to address passive dependence on welfare and rebuild social norms in the communities.

The participating communities

The CYWR communities are:

- Aurukun
- Coen
- Hope Vale
- Mossman Gorge.

Aurukun

Aurukun is on the western coast of Cape York and is approximately 900 kilometres northwest of Cairns, and about 200 kilometres south of Weipa. The community had an estimated resident adult population of 933 people as at 30 June 2013¹.

Coen

The township of Coen is approximately halfway between Cairns and the tip of Cape York. It is not a discrete Aboriginal community and is part of Cook Shire. The township had an estimated resident adult population of 237 people as at 30 June 2013¹.

Hope Vale

Hope Vale is situated on the Cape York Peninsula and is 46 kilometres northwest of Cooktown. The estimated resident adult population of Hope Vale was 750 people as at 30 June 2013¹.

Mossman Gorge

Mossman Gorge is a small Aboriginal community 75 kilometres north of Cairns, 4 kilometres from Mossman (the nearest town), and approximately 25 kilometres by road from Port Douglas. It is not a discrete Aboriginal community and is part of the Douglas Shire Council area. The community had an estimated resident population of 100 people as at 30 June 2013².

1. Note: Adults 17 years and over provided by the Queensland Government Statistician's Office, Queensland Treasury and Trade based on the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) small area unpublished preliminary Estimated Resident Population (ERP) data for 2013.
2. Note: Total population provided by the Queensland Government Statistician's Office, Queensland Treasury and Trade extracted from the ABS unpublished ERP data at the Statistical Area Level 1 for 2013.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS



Abbreviations

ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics	FR Board	Family Responsibilities Board
ATODS	Alcohol Tobacco and Other Drugs Service	FRC	Family Responsibilities Commission
ATSILS	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Service	IT	Information Technology
AMPs	Alcohol Management Plans	NAIDOC	National Aborigines and Islanders Day Observance Committee'
ARRs	Annual report requirements for Queensland Government agencies	NIRA	National Indigenous Reform Agreement
ASP	Alternative Secondary Pathway	QCS	Queensland Corrective Services
ATO	Australian Taxation Office	QLD	Queensland
BCP	Business Continuity Plan	QPS	Queensland Police Service
BBNI	Bamanga Bubu Ngadimunku Incorporated	SARAS	Study and Research Assistance Scheme
CAA	Corporate Administration Agency	SCM	Student Case Manager
CAL	Copyright Agency Limited	SE	School Enrolment
CIM	Conditional Income Management	TAFE	Technical and Further Training
COAG	Council of Australian Governments	TIS	Translating and Interpreting Service
CRM	Customer Relationship Management	VIM	Voluntary Income Management
CYAAA	Cape York Aboriginal Australian Academy	WBC	Wellbeing Centre
CYWR	Cape York Welfare Reform	WCC	Western Cape College
CYWRT	Cape York Welfare Reform Trial		
DATSIMA	Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Multicultural Affairs	Also:	
DETE	Department of Education, Training and Employment		Cape York Institute for Policy and Leadership (the Institute)
DJAG	Department of Justice and Attorney-General		Family Responsibilities Board (the Board)
EFV	Ending Family Violence		Family Responsibilities Commission (the Commission)
EMT	Executive Management Team		Family Responsibilities Commission Act 2008 (the Act)
ERP	Estimated Resident Population		Family Responsibilities Commission Registry (the Registry)
FAA	<i>Financial Accountability Act 2009</i>		Mr David Glasgow, Family Responsibilities Commissioner (the Commissioner)
FPMS	<i>Financial and Performance Management Standard 2009</i>		
FRA	Family Responsibilities Agreement		



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For more information on the communities and population compositions, view the Quarterly Reports at: <http://www.datsima.qld.gov.au/atsis/government/programs-and-initiatives/family-responsibilities-commission> and <http://statistics.oesr.qld.gov.au/qld-regional-profiles>.

