



# 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.

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**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.



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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

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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

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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.